

Council AGENDA

Monday, 23rd March 2020 at 7.15pm

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

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
(Please note this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded)
www.braintree.gov.uk

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

Membership:-

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

Members unable to attend the meeting are requested to forward their apologies for absence to the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email governance@braintree.gov.uk by 3pm on the day of the meeting.

A WRIGHT
Chief Executive

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

Any member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest must declare the nature of their interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Members must not participate in any discussion of the matter in which they have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting. In addition, the Member must withdraw from the chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

Question Time

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

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

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

Health and Safety

Any persons attending meetings in the Council offices are requested to take a few moments to familiarise themselves with the nearest available fire exit, indicated by the fire evacuation signs. In the event of an alarm you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by officers. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building.

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Webcast and Audio Recording

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Documents

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

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

PUBLIC SESSION	Page
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 17 th February 2020 (copy previously circulated).	
3 Declarations of Interest To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda having regard to the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.	
4 Public Question Time (See paragraph above)	
5 To receive any announcements/statements from the Chairman and/or Leader of the Council.	
6 Keep Britain Tidy Award Presentation by Councillor Mrs W Schmitt of the Keep Britain Tidy Award.	
7 Customer Services Award Presentation by Councillor John McKee of the Customer Services Award.	
8 Presentation of the Local Council Award to Halstead Town Council Presentation from the Chairman of the Essex County Accreditation Panel of the Local Council Award Scheme to Halstead Town Council.	
9 Motion by Councillor James Abbott - Cycling Motion	5 - 5
10 Recommendation from Cabinet - 9th March 2020 - Corporate Strategy 2020-2024	6 - 18
11 Recommendation from Cabinet - 18th December 2019 - Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 201920	19 - 20
12 Horizon 120 Local Development Order (LDO) and Design Code	21 - 66
13 Investing in Suffolk's Materials Recycling Facility	67 - 72

14	Proposed Merger Between Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society	73 - 82
15	Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members	
	To receive the following reports from each Portfolio Holder.	
	Oral Questions to the Cabinet: Members are reminded that following the presentation of each Cabinet Member's report, Members may put questions to the Cabinet Member on matters relating to their portfolio, the powers and duties of the Council or the District. Questions are not restricted to the contents of the Cabinet Member's report.	
	Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all Members. (Council Procedure Rules 29.1 to 29.4 apply).	
	A period of up to 1 hour is allowed for this item.	
15a	Councillor G Butland - Leader of the Council	83 - 86
15b	Councillor D Bebb - Finance and Performance Management	87 - 89
15c	Councillor K Bowers - Homes	90 - 92
15d	Councillor T Cunningham - Economic Development and Infrastructure	93 - 95
15e	Councillor J McKee - Corporate Transformation	96 - 101
15f	Councillor F Ricci - Communities Culture and Tourism	102 - 105
15g	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt - Environment and Place	106 - 109
15h	Councillor Mrs G Spray - Planning	110 - 111
15i	Councillor P Tattersley - Health and Wellbeing	112 - 114
16	List of public meetings held since last meeting	115 - 115

Motion by Councillor James Abbott - Cycling Motion

Agenda No: 9

Motion presented by:	Councillor James Abbott
Motion Seconded by:	Councillor Mrs Jenny Sandum
Motion support by:	Councillor Bob Wright
	Councillor Tom Walsh
	Councillor Nick Unsworth
	Councillor Miss Michelle Weeks
	Councillor Stevie Hicks
	Councillor Mrs Joanne Beavis
	Councillor Paul Thorogood

Cycling Motion

Council notes the multiple benefits of cycling which include:

- Achieving modal shift which in turn reduces the number of car journeys, reduces CO2 emissions and improves local air quality
- Improved health for those able and keen to take up opportunities to cycle
- Improved social wellbeing

Council also notes that segregation of cycling from traffic is important to maximise these benefits by making cycling as safe and as attractive as possible.

Therefore Council agrees that in developing the Local Plan, in working with partners such as Essex County Council on developing cycling strategies and in working with developers and local communities, Braintree District Council will positively support the long term development of a comprehensive cycling network that is, as far as possible, segregated from traffic and which serves residents both within towns and villages and between them, and which also links in with key public transport infrastructure such as railway stations.

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

Recommendation from Cabinet – 9 th March 2020 - Corporate Strategy 2020-2024		Agenda No: 10
Portfolio	Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services	
Report presented by:	Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council	
Report prepared by:	Jessica Mann, Governance and Members Officer	
Background Papers:		Public Report
Corporate Strategy 2020-2024		Key Decision: No
MINUTE EXTRACT		
CABINET – 9 TH MARCH 2020		
55	<u>CORPORATE STRATEGY 2020-2024</u>	
<p>INFORMATION: The Chairman expressed his thanks to Councillors and officers alike for their hard work and commitment to bringing the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 into fruition; particular thanks was given to Miss Tracey Headford, Business Solutions Manager, for her hard work in regard to the Strategy’s composition.</p> <p>It was explained that the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 set out the Council’s priorities for the next four-year period, and served to inform the organisation’s Annual Plan and Business Plans for each service. Consultation was carried out in the summer of 2019 to identify what was important to the District’s residents and local businesses and the feedback from this helped to inform the priorities. Further consultation was undertaken in December 2019 on the new set of corporate priorities. The consultations were complemented by an evidence base compiled from performance information, customer and business feedback, emerging issues both locally and nationally and research materials gathered both internally and externally.</p> <p>Members were informed that although there was a degree of continuity associated with the Strategy, the Council’s political and executive structures would be reviewed by the Leader, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, in order to ensure that the organisation could successfully deliver on its corporate priorities. It was expected that proposals in relation to the Council’s future political and executive structures would be made at the Annual General Meeting on 20th April 2020.</p> <p>DECISION: That the Corporate Strategy for 2020-2024 be recommended to Council for approval.</p>		

REASON FOR DECISION: To set the Council's priorities for the next four years and inform the Annual Plan and Business Plans.

Recommended Decision:

Council is asked to approve the Corporate Strategy for 2020-2024.

Purpose of Decision:

To set the Council's priorities for the next four years and inform the Annual Plan and Business Plans.

CORPORATE STRATEGY

2020-2024

FOREWORD



This Corporate Strategy builds on what we have achieved over the last four years.

The past decade has seen a seismic change in the role of local government and the way it is funded. Expectations are rising but budgets are shrinking. Over the last decade we have had to address both a reduction in Central Government Grant of £6.7million and an increase in the cost of providing services. We have balanced our budget by bringing in income, largely through careful financial management and investments including the buying of commercial buildings to rent out, and by reducing our costs without impacting on the services received by residents.

Since our last strategy we have invested £11.6 million into the district and have committed a further £45.7 million to tackle some of the big challenges we face. In many ways we face the same issues as districts up and down the country but what I'm really proud of is the way we've approached these challenges head on. We knew that if we didn't think the district was worth investing in, then who would? And our approach has paid off, unlocking more interest, excitement and investment into our towns and villages.

I am proud of our Health, Homes, Journeys and Jobs agenda. It has seen us invest in the things that are making a tangible difference to the lives of our residents. It has meant that businesses have seen what we are doing and want to be part of it too. A great example of this is our investment in the Horizon 120 Business and Innovation Park in Great Notley which will be a major new employment park that will set the standard for modern businesses. If we had not had that foresight, we would not now be home to the first Electric Forecourt under construction in the UK. That project alone puts our district on the map as facing the future with ambition and pride.

Growing the economy with investment, opportunities and our support for new and existing businesses is vital for us. The more innovation we can encourage, the better for our economy and the better the life chances for our residents.

We haven't shied away from our commitment to the climate either. Last year we declared a climate emergency and we have started the important journey to making sure that our activities are, as far as possible, carbon neutral by 2030. We all have to act fast to deliver on this ambition.

It has never before been more important to work in partnership as an outward and forward-looking district of Essex, with businesses, with our colleagues across local, regional and central government and, of course, with our communities. We all have a role in making sure our rural and urban hamlets, villages and towns can thrive. I am grateful to residents, businesses and partners for their contribution to this plan. It is not a plan that is ours alone, this is for the whole district. You have given us an important steer on what you want to see and what you expect from us and we commit to addressing the issues you have raised.


Cllr Graham Butland, Leader,
Braintree District Council

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to our Corporate Strategy which sets out the objectives and priorities for the district over the next four years.

Firstly, I am proud of the progress we have made delivering the current corporate strategy. A key factor in making this progress has been the support we have received from our partners, residents and businesses.

That's why we wanted our partners and residents to be at the very heart of the process to shape the future of our district through our new corporate strategy.

Through consultation we've done lots of listening and learning and we will continue to listen to what residents and businesses expect from us and learn from their experiences of the Braintree District as a place to live, work and enjoy life.

It is important to recognise that this plan has been developed against a backdrop of huge changes to the local government funding system, notwithstanding this I am pleased to say that our customer satisfaction rates remain higher than the national average and we've been awarded the Customer Service Excellence Standard for the fifth year in a row.

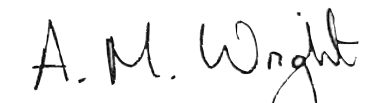
We've looked at the changing nature of how services are designed and delivered. We've also looked at local, regional and national trends that could affect our communities' future needs and their demand for our services throughout their lives and, of course, what residents want and need to keep healthy and happy.

That work resulted in a list of draft priorities which we put out to our residents and partners for their thoughts and comments and you can read the final priorities throughout this document.

Our Corporate Strategy looks to a future where we will help connect people and places, enhance and protect our environment, support our communities to reach their potential, promote prosperity and, importantly, continue to deliver and innovate.

A huge thank you to everyone who gave us their thoughts, opinions and ideas.

We will work with you over the coming four years to provide a thriving and sustainable future for current and future generations.


Andy Wright, Chief Executive,
Braintree District Council



Great **Towns**
and **Villages**
making up one
Great District

OUR DISTRICT

Our yearly satisfaction survey tells us that our residents are proud of their district and they should be. With the colourful, bustling market towns of Braintree, Halstead and Witham together with picturesque villages set in the most beautiful rolling countryside, the district of Braintree is a great place to live, work and visit.

90% of the Braintree District is classified as green space which is important for community cohesion, wellbeing and our wildlife

31 parks and open spaces

612 km² of largely rural land (2nd largest in Essex by size)

The district is made up of:

19.2% 0-15 year olds
(predicted to fall to 17.1% by 2035)

60.7% 16-64 year olds
(predicted to fall to 58.8% by 2035)

20.1% people aged 65+
(predicted to increase to 24.1% by 2035)

The Braintree District is the fourth most populated district in Essex with 151,561 (mid 2018) residents which is predicted to reach to over 164,000 by 2035.

There are an estimated **248 residents** per square kilometre, the third lowest population density in Essex

Our district has had a rich and varied history since the Bronze Age and is home to medieval barns, a Norman Keep, steam railways, magnificent houses with stunning gardens and listed windmills.

The oldest timber-framed barn in the world is at Cressing Temple near Braintree and is the largest of its kind in Europe

The 14th century woollen cloth trade brought prosperity and has left a legacy of fine architecture and listed buildings, whilst the 18th century heralded the arrival of silk weaving and the famous name of Courtauld.

Nowadays, the location of the district between London and the regional growth centres of Colchester, Chelmsford and Cambridge attracts new businesses and data now shows that the district is well established in construction, manufacturing and technology. Unemployment rates are low and businesses across the district are providing more employment opportunities than there are unemployed people to work in them, and this is a positive trend we want to continue to see.

979 miles of road in the district (major roads to narrow country roads)

Over 9,800 Businesses in the district of which 89% are micro businesses (0-9 employees)

3.2% unemployed below the Essex average of 3.5%

However, we need to see an increase in skills and productivity and high quality employment opportunities, especially in key economic sectors.

Average weekly income is **£630** which is higher than the average for Essex and England

The median salary for residents in our district is just over £600 per week due to the number of people who commute out of the district, probably to London. The median wage of employees working within the district is £514, slightly lower than the Essex average of £520. However, part-time workers in the district earned £194 per week, which is 6% more than the average for Essex.

31% of adults in the district are qualified to NVQ level 4 or above which is lower than the national average of 38%

93% of working age residents have some form of qualifications

The percentage of children achieving a good level of development and achieving early learning goals has improved since 2015 and is now above the average for Essex. Although we are doing

well for our younger children, since the introduction of the new GCSE grading system, pupil performance for 16 year olds across the district has gradually fallen. More needs to be done to ensure children are inspired to do well to provide a skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers in the future.

63% of pupils achieved a grade 4+ in English and Maths which is just below the average for Essex

The district is one of the least deprived areas nationally and is ranked 7th out of the 12 districts in Essex as only 2% of our residents live in deprived areas compared to an average for Essex of 8.6%. The most significant factors affecting deprivation in our district are employment, health and crime. In the last few years, positive changes in income, education and skills and reducing the barriers to housing and services, have helped to ensure the district has improved its ranking.

8.8% of households classed as fuel poor which is slightly higher than the Essex average of 8.6%

12.4% of children are recorded as living in low income households Lower than the Essex average of 14.4%

The overall crime rate for the district is low and we know from our recent consultation that feeling safe is the number one concern of our residents. We are aware that nationally, the number of crimes recorded by the police is increasing and it is no different for our district. Over the last four years, the number of crimes recorded across the district has increased by 48%.

This increase may be linked to the improvements in making people aware of reporting crimes following initiatives carried out by the police.

The crime rate across the district is **24% lower** than the average for England

Residents across the district are relatively healthy. Physical activity in adults has increased over the last few years with a high percentage of residents involved in organised sports.

60.84% of residents across the district aged over 18 are classed as **overweight or obese** which is lower than the average across Essex and England

Physical activity in adults across the district has **risen by 9.75%** and is the largest increase observed across all Essex districts

We still want to do more as taking part in physical activity plays an important role in the prevention of health issues and in maintaining physical and mental wellbeing. We also want to be well placed in understanding the demands on health and social care as the age of our population grows over the coming years.

83.3 years is the average female life expectancy

80.2 years is the average male life expectancy

ACHIEVEMENTS 2016 - 2020

These are just some of our achievements over the last four years. Details of all our achievements can be found in our Annual Plans.



Secured planning consent for the Manor Street development in Braintree Town Centre

Approved funds to develop up to seven council-owned sites to deliver new mixed tenure homes across the district

Secured £4.95m of Government funding towards new slip roads linking the A120 with Millennium Way

Launched a number of successful campaigns to tackle fly tipping and littering

Upgraded the lighting in our car parks with new energy efficient LED lights

Introduced the Braintree District Volunteer Awards recognising and rewarding extraordinary individuals who are making a difference in their community and inspiring others

Introduced a number of activities to benefit those living with dementia and their carers such as dementia friendly cinemas, tea dances, swimming and walks

Delivered a range of 'age well' activities across the district encouraging inactive over 60's to become active again

Introduced a Handyman scheme to help our disabled and frail residents lead more independent lives

Engaged 10 of our schools in the Livewell Child project to halt the rise of obesity in children across the district

Redeveloped 18 play areas and 5 sports pitches across the district

Enabled the delivery of over 430 affordable homes

Completed the acquisition of a new 65 acre Business and Innovation Park at Great Notley providing additional land to support business growth and create up to 2,000 jobs

Launched the 'Grape and Grain Trail' at the Essex Festival of Food and Drink enabling visitors to sample wines, beers and spirits from the finest local producers

Implemented a new discretionary business rate relief scheme aimed at helping businesses that have had a sharp increase in their business rates following the 2017 revaluation

Provided a rural business hub in Sible Hedingham for local start-ups and small businesses looking to grow in our rural communities

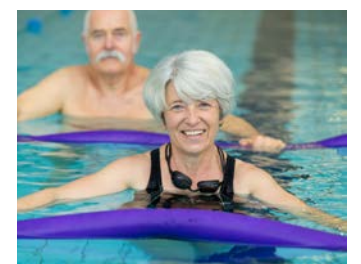
Established the Employment and Skills Board to address educational attainment and employment skills needs within the district

Regenerated the Spa Road shopping area in Witham, improving the visual impact and the facilities

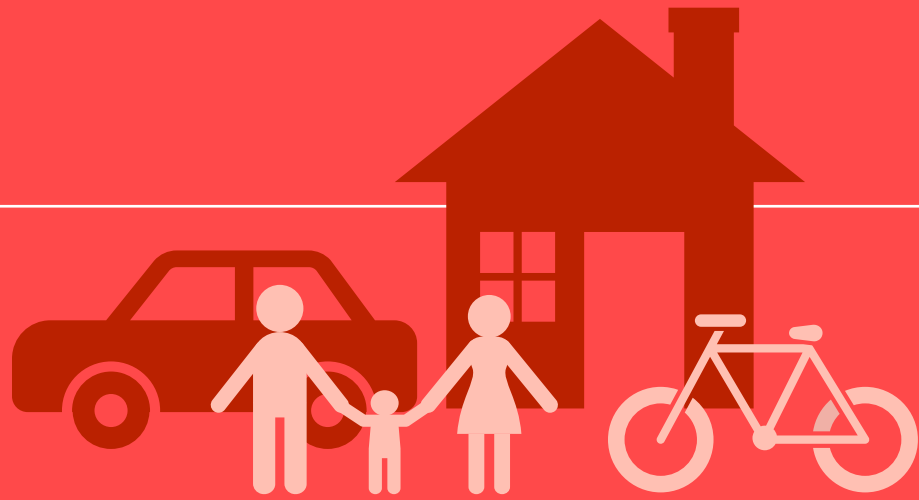
Completed the construction of four new industrial units and a 40 space car park providing much needed grow-on space to small businesses

Launched the Business Engagement Strategy to develop our support service, provide access to grants and funding as well as offering mentoring and training, to help businesses across the district grow

Retained the Customer Service Excellence accreditation demonstrating the high standard of customer service delivered in putting our customers at the core of what we do



Invested in local health facilities across the district to support the delivery of improved health care provision



CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES

The connections that link our people and businesses together provide the foundations of our district. They can be ‘physical’ – like homes, roads and good transport, or they could be virtual, like the digital connections and infrastructure behind it that helps our residents and businesses trade, access services and communicate online.

We need to build 14,000 homes by 2033. Through our Local Plan, we will guide development and plan for infrastructure as well as control where development is located rather than it being delivered in an ad hoc way. We will drive investment in rail, roads and the cycling infrastructure as well as looking at new modes of public transport.

We all value our town centres and want to see them thrive. We are on a journey to re-invent our town centres as a destination of choice and a place in which people connect and enjoy recreational activities.

Improving digital connectivity is vital in helping our communities and businesses to thrive. It is not good enough that only 85% of our district can access superfast broadband, so by 2022 we aim to reach 97% as well as providing free public wifi in our town centres.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Grow the district in the right way supported by the required services
- Develop our infrastructure leading to improved journeys in and across the district
- Deliver good quality affordable homes for local people
- Create thriving town centres for everyone to enjoy
- Improve the districts’ digital connectivity and harness innovation in technology to meet future digital needs

CASE STUDY

Creating a destination of choice



Our town centres are changing; with shopping habits changing nationally we know there are 21st century challenges. The towns are no longer just hubs for retail, but places to live, spend time, socialise and connect.

We also know, through consultation with residents and businesses, that having a thriving town centre is

something our residents value and will continue to support and we have seen this through the success of the monthly street markets in Braintree.

Braintree is set to undergo significant change over the next two years with the Manor Street regeneration and the pedestrianisation scheme. By 2021 the town will be home to 35 new apartments, a 70 bed Travelodge bringing visitors and generating new jobs, a bigger bus interchange that will have the capacity to provide services to a growing population and the first ‘livewell’ health hub providing residents with access to more integrated health services. There will also be a café or restaurant, and a new high quality public open space linking the new buildings to the new resurfaced pedestrianised high street providing a focus for events and activities, increasing the appeal of the town centre, connecting people and businesses both socially and economically.

It is an exciting journey ahead.

DID YOU KNOW...

We have invested
£962,000
in Superfast
Broadband
across the district



We provide over
45,000
Community
Transport journeys
each year



90%
of the district
is classified as
green space



There are currently
1,687
people on our
housing register





ENHANCING OUR ENVIRONMENT

This year we declared a 'Climate Emergency' and set an ambitious target to make the Council's activities carbon neutral where practical by 2030. We also committed to reducing district-wide energy consumption and emissions and to support our communities to adapt to climate change. To achieve this, we have created a community-wide Climate Change Working Group which is busy developing our strategy and introducing projects to achieve our targets.

Ultimately, we want a greener and environmentally sustainable community that is prepared for the future and that we can all be proud of, where people can enjoy cleaner air, cleaner streets and access to parks and green spaces.

Our built and natural environment significantly contributes towards people's quality of life and is key in making the district a more attractive place to live. We know our residents are proud to live here and together we have worked hard to keep the district clean and green. We want to keep up this momentum and encourage residents, businesses and other organisations to continue to work with us to further protect and enhance our district.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Develop and drive our Climate Change Strategy forward:
 - Working towards our target of making the Council's services carbon neutral as far as practical by 2030
 - Supporting the district to reduce waste, energy consumption, carbon emissions and pollution
 - Supporting Council services, residents and businesses to adapt to climate change impacts
- Ensure our district is well maintained with high quality parks and green spaces
- Continue to keep the district clean and tidy

CASE STUDY

Local group leading the way to a greener community

In 2019 Braintree District Council declared a Climate Emergency and set up a Climate Change Working Group to develop our 10 year Climate Change Strategy. Cherry McKean, a local resident from Earls Colne, is an active member of this group.

Cherry set up the 'Eco Colnes & Halstead' community group to give people passionate about the environment a place to chat, provide tips and ask for advice on making environmental changes and becoming more sustainable.

Over the past year the group has created two new terracycle collection points, planted 40 trees, held its first village event giving away upcycled cloth bags, courtesy of a Love Essex grant, and taken its climate emergency motion to parish councils.

Cherry said: "I started the group as I wanted to know what environmental changes other local people were making. People are more likely to make changes if they see someone doing it but also if they can actually see changes happen – that's why the group has been a success and has really helped bring the community together".

The group now has 763 members and has expanded to a sister group in another local village 'Eco Feering & Kelvedon'. Find out more about the work of the group by searching 'Eco Colnes & Halstead' and 'ECO Feering & Kelvedon' on Facebook.



Members of the ECO Colnes & Halstead Group

DID YOU KNOW...

Last year
we received

39 awards



from the Essex Playing
Fields Association for the
standard and quality of the
Council's playing fields and
play areas

Since 2005 the Council
has reduced its
emissions by over

3,000

tonnes of CO₂



and across the district,
residents and businesses
have reduced emissions by
over 720 kilotonnes

Since 2014 we have helped
residents install over

8,700 energy

saving measures
resulting in a
saving of over

1,000

tonnes

of carbon emissions



We have recycled

147,148

tonnes of waste

in the last
5 years





SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Our communities must remain at the heart of everything we do and we have listened to what you have told us is important to you when developing this strategy. We want to continue to have informed, open conversations with our residents and businesses to understand how we can support them to build resilient communities. We know the strength and value that our communities have when they come together and want to build on this and support them to make a difference connecting people and creating strong and friendly communities that care about each other.

We already know, through recent consultation, that feeling safe is a top priority for our residents. Crime rates remain low in the district and our Community Safety Partnership will continue to work relentlessly to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour and develop community led solutions.

The Braintree Health & Wellbeing Board is made up of partners from across the public, private and community sector who are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our communities. We want to support people in taking control of their own health and wellbeing, helping them to be as independent as possible through early intervention and prevention. We especially want to work with the most vulnerable people in our communities.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Build on the strengths of our communities and what they can do to support themselves and help each other
- Help people to make positive lifestyle choices, increasing their physical and emotional wellbeing
- Focus on prevention and early intervention so residents can lead independent and active lives
- Provide support and protection to our most vulnerable residents, their families and carers
- Support and inspire young people to raise their aspirations and reach their full potential

CASE STUDY

Maltings Lane Community Facility Steering Group

Local residents and community groups are involved in shaping plans for a new community facility in Witham. The development, which is funded from section 106 contributions from various planning applications, will be located behind Aldi supermarket off Owers Lane and Duncombe Close in Witham.

Braintree District Council and the local community are now directly involved in the delivery of the project ensuring that the money is spent on what residents and community groups want.

The local community has contributed its thoughts on the layout of the overall site, the design of the building and the outdoor space. Proposals include a main hall and smaller hall to cater for various activities including indoor sports, community events, meetings, children's activities, a café and social area and changing rooms for the outdoor sports space.

This facility will create a centre that will be run by the community for the community with more indoor and outdoor space available for people to come together and take part in social and sporting activities.

It will create opportunities for communities to come together, reducing social isolation and loneliness and increasing emotional and physical wellbeing.



DID YOU KNOW...

Since its launch
in 2016, over

320
grants



have been provided to
local groups through our
Councillors' Community
Grant Scheme **totalling over**
£230,000 investment into
our communities

We have provided over

550
Disabled
Facilities Grants



in the last four years

61%

of our adult
population are active
for more than 150
minutes a week

(Based on Sports Englands Active
Lives Survey)



Over

280

residents
have accessed
our handyman service



PROMOTING PROSPERITY



Thriving high quality businesses are fundamental to our long term local economy in that they create jobs, wealth and wider prosperity.

The district is ideally located between London and the regional growth centres of Chelmsford, Colchester and Cambridge as a global technology research and development centre; and the international transport hubs of Stansted Airport and the Haven Ports, providing a significant competitive advantage to attract and grow businesses.

Our 'Plan for Growth' sets out our approach in creating the right conditions to support and grow the district's existing businesses as well as attracting new businesses. Our aim is to attract companies to our district from a number of business sectors and to help our businesses to grow, offering residents high quality job and training opportunities in an attractive setting closer to home. We will look to ensure that people in our district have the right skills to fill jobs.

We also want to grow our visitor numbers by promoting everything the district has to offer including visitor attractions, our heritage offer, locally produced food and drink, street markets and our vibrant market towns and picturesque villages.

We know we cannot deliver economic growth alone. The North Essex Economic Strategy sets out the shared ambitions of the North Essex local authorities for long term sustainable and inclusive prosperity. Looking forward to 2040, by working closely with our partners, businesses and residents we will make our district a place of ambition and growth where opportunities are plentiful and businesses thrive, delivering a stronger economy for all.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Make use of the competitive advantage of our location to attract new business
- Support the growth of key employment sectors
- Enable businesses to thrive with access to business support and key networks
- Ensure skills and training provision is aligned to meet the needs of the local economy now and in the future
- Develop our culture and heritage offer in shaping opportunities for tourism and investment

CASE STUDY

Horizon 120 Business & Innovation Park

We recently purchased a 65 acre site in Great Notley with a vision of creating an employment site which attracts exciting new businesses into the district offering residents high quality job and career opportunities.

This new business park is set to be an exemplar site offering modern flexible work spaces, amenities and facilities, electric vehicle charging points and best in class fibre optic internet connectivity.

Horizon 120 appeals to many businesses because of its ideal strategic location, close to the A120 and well connected to Stansted Airport, the Harwich port, London and Cambridge and is already attracting a great deal of interest from a number of locally and regionally based well-established businesses across a number of sectors. It has the potential to create 2,000 jobs offering local residents better access to skilled jobs and apprentice and training opportunities in an attractive setting close to home.

The park will be a great place to work with extensively landscaped areas, scenic views over the countryside and is set to become a real business community, where employees can socialise, exercise at a gym, participate in social events, drop their children off at childcare and enjoy a lunchtime run in Great Notley Country Park.

For more information, visit: www.horizon.com



Artists impression @ Horizon 120

DID YOU KNOW...

There were
934
new business
start-ups across the
district in 2018/19



£788,602
of funding
secured
to support
businesses
in 2018/19

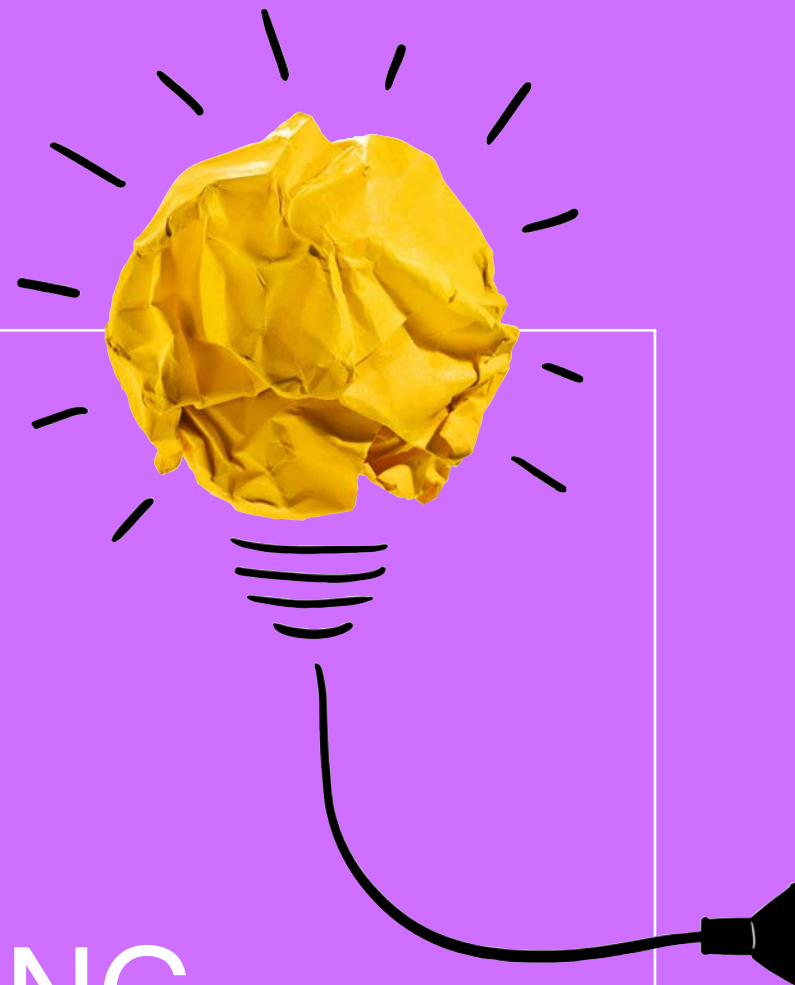


7%
of the working
age population
are in
apprenticeships



87.2%
of working
age adults
(16-64) are
economically active
(higher than the Essex average
of 80.8%)





DELIVERING AND INNOVATING

Key to the success of this strategy is how it is delivered. We recognise the importance of listening to and engaging with our residents and we aim to improve engagement through regular communication and consultation, providing opportunities for people to have their say, making sure we balance their needs and protect the things they value most.

The challenges facing us are ones that we need to work on together and across our strategy you will notice a much stronger focus on delivering together through partnerships and working more closely with communities.

We will maximise opportunities to develop stronger relationships with our partners in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors and other stakeholders. Our aim is to create safer, healthier, stronger communities ensuring there is mutual understanding between us all of the shared issues, challenges and solutions.

We recognise that our successes will be judged by the outcomes we achieve, not by the processes we follow. We will explore innovative approaches to address the challenges we face driven with a determination to achieve financial self-sufficiency, commitment to excellence and continuous improvement in responding to the changing needs of our district and the lives of the people within it.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Listen to our residents and businesses more and use this information to improve our services
- Involve communities in the design, development and delivery of services
- Build strong, effective partnerships across the public, private, voluntary and community sector taking a place-based approach to achieve more for the district
- Modernise the way we work to ensure we continue to deliver high quality services
- Consider new ways to generate income achieving financial self-sufficiency

CASE STUDY

Livewell

Braintree District Council set up a Health and Wellbeing Panel consisting of partners from across various sectors who are passionate about the health and wellbeing agenda and share the vision of working together to make a greater impact.

This effective partnership across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors has been instrumental in delivering a number of initiatives to reduce obesity, getting all ages and abilities active and improving their diet, working with others to support residents to improve their emotional health and wellbeing and introducing interventions to prevent illness and injury.

To ensure all the activities and information are easy to follow, a Livewell brand and website has been developed providing a joined-up approach and consistency across health and wellbeing messages in our district and across Essex.

All partners appreciate there is still much work to do to find solutions that contribute towards wellbeing in order to reduce the cost to health and social care but we have started the journey, are starting to have an impact, have been recognised nationally, and will continue to work together to maximise opportunities and support our communities.



Children from Ridgewell Church of England Primary School in Halstead

DID YOU KNOW...

By 2034 it is expected that there will be

12,000

more people

living in the district with the greatest growth being in the over 65's



The Council generates over

£1.3m

each year through our commercial activity to invest into front line services



Each year, over

75,000

people access our services digitally and transact with us on line



Our latest satisfaction results show that

80%

of residents

in the district are happy with the way the Council runs things

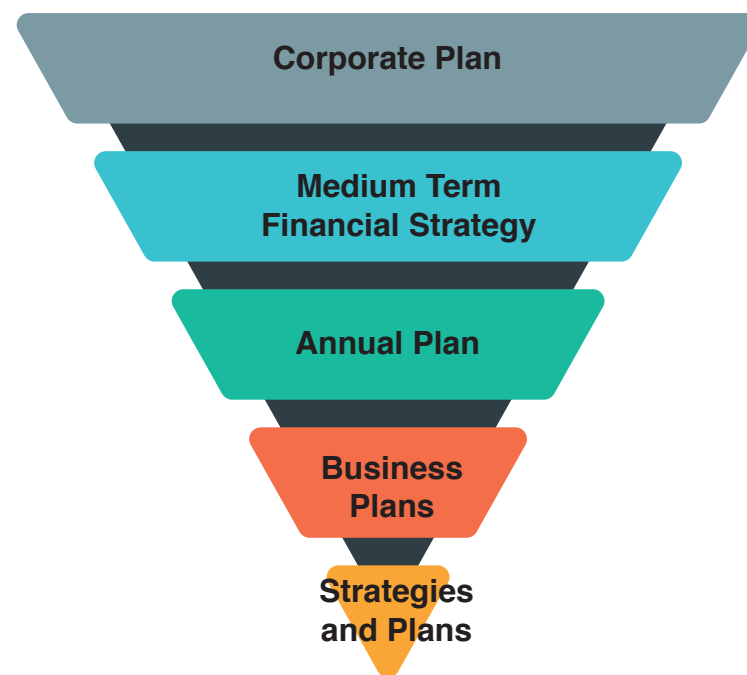


HOW OUR PLANS FIT TOGETHER

The Corporate Strategy sets out our priorities up to 2024. To deliver this, we have an Annual Plan which will set out our actions against each priority together with how we measure our success. Progress against the Annual Plan is regularly reported to Cabinet.

Underneath our Annual Plan sits our business plans for each service. They set out how the service will meet the priorities and actions required of it over the year to support the delivery of the Annual Plan and the Corporate Strategy.

We also have a number of Strategies and Plans that will support delivery of actions.



COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

We always welcome comments, suggestions and feedback (critical or otherwise) on our plans and improvements and in the way that we write our documents and communicate them.

You can e-mail our Customer Service Centre at csc@braintree.gov.uk

You can drop written comments off at one of our main offices:

Braintree – Causeway House, **Halstead** Library or **Witham** Library

You can telephone our Customer Service Centre on **01376 552525**.

You can speak to your local Councillor who will be able to pass your comments back if you wish. Contact details for your Councillor can be found on our website: www.braintree.gov.uk/councillors

If you require this booklet in an alternative format, please call 01376 552525

Recommendation from Cabinet – 18 th December 2019 – Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2019/20		Agenda No: 11
Portfolio	Finance and Performance	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Cllr. David Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	
Report prepared by:	Jessica Mann, Governance and Members Officer	
Background Papers:		Public Report
Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20 – approved by Full Council on 25th February 2019 as part of the Council’s Budget for 2019/20		Key Decision: No
Council Budget and Council Tax 2020-21 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24		
Cabinet Report and Minutes – 18th December 2019		
MINUTE EXTRACT		
CABINET – 18 th DECEMBER 2019		
41	<u>RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE GROUP – 24TH OCTOBER 2019 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2019-20</u>	
INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report on the Council’s treasury management activities. The Council’s treasury management activities were regulated by statutory requirements and by a Code of Practice (“the Code”) issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance. A key requirement of the Code was that, along with an annual strategy, the Council would also receive at least one mid-year report on its treasury management activities.		
It was reported that capital expenditure and financing were forecast to be £11.603m, which represented a £18.738m reduction from what had been estimated originally under the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS). This slippage was attributed to a number of District Investment Strategy (DIS) projects (such as the Manor Street Regeneration and Horizon 120 projects) and as such, was largely reflected in the reduced amount of borrowing expected to be required in 2019/20.		

With regard to investment activity, investments had averaged £64.403m with a peak of £71.414m for the period 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019. The current forecast was that investments would average around £60m for the year, which was higher than the amount that had been originally assumed in the TMSS at £41m. It was anticipated that these balances would reduce in the medium-term as the programme for the District Investment Strategy progressed.

Members were advised that on 8th October 2019, an additional £1m had been invested in the Kames Diversified Fund, and that a further £1m would be invested in mid-November, subject to the outcome of a further review at that time.

In respect of investment returns, it was stated that the overall return to 30th September 2019 was £681,044, or 2.11%. Dividends from long-term pooled funds were paid quarterly and subject to variation, and up to the end of September, amounts received or declared were £491,766, or 5.45%. The budget for investment income was £996,000 and it was currently expected that this would be overachieved by £157,000 to give a projected income of £1.153m.

With regard to non-treasury investments, it was reported that the Council held direct property investments with a market value of £36.303m; these comprised industrial land and units, shops, offices and other commercial property. For the period 2019/20, the net rental income was expected to be in excess of £2m, which represented a return of approximately 6%. Further income was also generated from non-commercial property, such as through the mixed usage of Causeway House.

DECISION: That Cabinet accepted the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2019-20 and recommended that Full Council accepts the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report.

REASON FOR DECISION: The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services which required the Council to receive at least one Mid-Year Report on its Treasury Management activities. This report was considered first by the Corporate Governance Committee before being recommended on to Cabinet and Full Council.

Recommended Decision:

That Council accepts the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2019-20.

Purpose of Decision:

The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services which required the Council to receive at least one Mid-Year Report on its Treasury Management activities. This report was considered first by the Corporate Governance Committee before being recommended on to Cabinet and Full Council.

Horizon 120 Local Development Order (LDO) and Design Code		Agenda No: 12
Portfolio	Planning	
Corporate Outcome:	A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure A prosperous district that attracts business growth and provides high quality employment opportunities	
Report presented by:	Councillor Gabrielle Spray, Portfolio holder for Planning	
Report prepared by:	Christopher Paggi, Planning Development Manager	
Background Papers:		Public Report: Yes
Adopted Local Plan 2005 Core Strategy 2011 Draft Local Plan 2017 <u>Report to Cabinet, February 2019</u> <u>Report to Council, February 2019</u> <u>Report to Planning Committee and Draft Minute Extract 3rd March 2020</u>		Key Decision: Yes
Executive Summary:		
<p>The proposed Local Development Order (LDO) is being considered by Braintree District Council in its capacity as the relevant Local Planning Authority pursuant to Section 61A (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).</p> <p>If adopted, the Horizon120 LDO will grant planning permission for development, as set out within Schedule A to D of the LDO, subject to conditions and limitations set out within the LDO for the creation of a Business and Innovation Park.</p> <p>The site is allocated in the Adopted Core Strategy and in the Draft Local Plan as a strategic employment site for Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and C1 (Hotel) uses. Subject to the controls and restrictions set out within the LDO, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable and would accord with the Adopted Local Plan, Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan. While it is acknowledged that the floorspace restriction on B8 use is proposed to be increased (compared to the restrictions set out within the Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan), as this has been market tested by the Council, the 14,000sq.m floorspace restriction proposed is considered to be appropriate. Furthermore, these larger B8 uses are restricted within the LDO to the southern part of the site away from the Country Park, which is considered acceptable.</p>		

The LDO would facilitate the provision of a well-connected Business and Innovation Park with the potential to create a large number of jobs, both during construction and following the completion of the development. There would also be economic benefit to the wider economy through the provision of good quality and accessible employment land. These represent a significant economic and social benefit which weighs heavily in favour of the proposal in the overall planning balance.

The accompanying Design Code, which has been revised by the Local Planning Authority as part of the assessment process, would also ensure that a high quality design and layout for the Business and Innovation Park is delivered on the Horizon 120 site. The more aspirational elements of the Design Code will be incorporated into detailed design proposals and realised on site.

Full copies of the LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons can be found in Appendix 2 to this report.

Impacts arising during the construction of the development and post completion have been assessed and it is considered that these can be adequately mitigated through the conditions included within the Draft LDO.

Overall it is considered that the proposed Draft LDO and accompanying Design Code constitute a sustainable development in an accessible and well-connected location.

Recommended Decision:

It is recommended that:

1. The Director of Growth be given delegated authority to make any minor changes to the final documents (LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons);
2. To adopt and publish the Horizon 120 Local Development Order, Design Code and Statement of Reasons as amended;
3. Authorise the Head of Planning to provide copies of the required documents to the Secretary of State (the LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons within 28 days of the adoption);
4. Authorise the Planning Development Manager to place the LDO, Design Code and Statement of Seasons on the Planning Register within 14 days of the date of adoption.

Purpose of Decision:

To approve the LDO and Design Code for Horizon 120.

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.	
Financial:	<p>The costs of producing the Local Development Order and Design Code have been met from existing budgets.</p> <p>The LDO will likely result in a reduction in planning application fees compared to if the site had been brought forward in the 'traditional' way. However it is considered that the benefit of attracting new and expanding businesses to the District, increasing job opportunities and economic prosperity, outweighs the loss of planning fee income.</p>
Legal:	<p>The Local Development Order must comply with all relevant legislation. In common with many planning documents there is the potential that the adoption of the LDO could be subject to a legal challenge. However it is considered that all appropriate legal requirements have been met.</p>
Safeguarding:	<p>No matters arising out of this report.</p>
Equalities/Diversity:	<p>An equalities impact assessment has been completed to consider the implications of the Local Development Order. A copy of the assessment can be found below:</p> <p>Overall the equalities impact assessment found that no groups will be disadvantaged by the production or implementation of the LDO.</p>
Customer Impact:	<p>If approved the Local Development Order will allow significant new employment opportunities to be developed on the site which will have a positive economic impact on the District and provide new job opportunities.</p> <p>The Local Development Order will enable proposals for specific developments which meet its terms to be approved within 28 days and without the need for a full planning application process.</p> <p>The proposal will result in the loss of current agricultural land but will create new publically accessible landscaping and pathways around the site and linking with neighbouring areas.</p> <p>Increased vehicle movements in the area are a consequence of new development but these have been</p>

	<p>considered by the relevant highway authorities and considered acceptable subject to mitigation measures which are secured through the LDO. The site must also make a contribution to public transport to increase provision in the local area.</p>
<p>Environment and Climate Change:</p>	<p>This site was allocated for employment development within the Adopted Core Strategy where detailed consideration of the environmental impacts of development on this site were considered, including through the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment process. This was examined by an independent Planning Inspector and found to be a suitable site for allocation.</p> <p>A full range of further work to consider the detailed impact of the proposal on the environment, protected species and heritage was completed in support of the LDO and includes an arboriculture impact assessment and air quality report.</p> <p>The LDO and Design Guide have also been carefully written to ensure that the site respects and responds to the local environmental considerations and includes for example the requirement to deliver 30% of energy on the site from renewable sources, above that required in the emerging Local Plan policy.</p>
<p>Consultation/Community Engagement:</p>	<p>A public consultation on the Draft Local Development Order was undertaken between 12th September 2019 and 24th October 2019. The steps taken to publicise this consultation included coverage in social media and newspapers, direct notification to all those on the Planning Policy database and site notices around the site. A public event was also held during this period in Great Notley community centre for the public to see the proposals in more detail and ask questions.</p> <p>This consultation period resulted in 18 responses from a range of statutory consultees and local residents, the contents of which are summarised within Section 6.5 of the report.</p> <p>A further public consultation was held between 10th February 2020 and 12th March 2020. This was publicised in the same way as a planning application and included the wide distribution of notification letters to nearby properties in Great Notley. The consultation resulted in additional comments from consultees and Parish Councils, but no additional representations from members of the public. These are summarised within Section 6.7 of the report.</p> <p>All consultation responses and representations can be viewed in full via the Council's Public Access Website:</p>

	www.braintree.gov.uk/pa (utilising application reference number 19/00001/LDO).
Risks:	<p>The relevant risks of the use of a Local Development Order are discussed at Section 2 of the report but are summarised below.</p> <p>As an LDO effectively grants planning permission there is no scope for public or statutory consultee consultation or engagement on subsequent applications.</p> <p>An application which meets the terms of the LDO must be approved even if the application is not in accordance with the “intended way” that the LDO should operate.</p> <p>A business looking to develop on the site in a way that is not in accordance with the LDO may be put off from developing on the site as even if a planning application is submitted for a proposal outside of the LDO, the LDO is a material planning consideration for any other application on site.</p> <p>B1(a) office space has been capped on the site which could result in businesses looking for that type of use to have to locate elsewhere in the District or outside of the District.</p>
Officer Contact:	Christopher Paggi
Designation:	Planning Development Manager
Ext. No:	(01376) 551414 EXT: 2548
E-mail:	christopher.paggi@braintree.gov.uk

REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

- 1.1 The Council is the owner of the Horizon 120 site in Great Notley and is seeking to encourage and deliver the development of a new Business and Innovation Park known as Horizon 120.
- 1.2 Following the acquisition of the site, Cabinet and Council considered the outline approach to development at their meetings in February 2019. The key elements of the approach as proposed were:
 - The creation of a new business and Innovation park focusing on advanced manufacturing, research and development, professional services, creative and digital sectors.
 - The site to be built to high standards of design and sustainability.
 - The creation of a sense of place based around a Hub providing ancillary retail, food outlets, childcare a gym, hotel and serviced offices.
 - Extensive structured landscape linked to the great Notley Country Park.
- 1.3 In order to facilitate the development of the site detailed work has been undertaken to develop an overarching Local Development Order (LDO) which will establish a planning framework for the site.
- 1.4 This report assesses the proposed LDO in the Council's capacity as the Local Planning Authority. The decision making in regard to this report can only be considered on planning grounds and should not take into account non-material considerations as to the Council's economic or other interests as land owner.
- 1.5 In order to implement an LDO there needs to be a formal decision at Full Council. This report seeks the Planning Committee's comments and recommendation which will be included in the report to Full Council.

Site Location

- 1.6 The site is located outside the Great Notley Village Envelope as designated in the Adopted Local Plan. It consists of an area allocated for strategic employment land provision. A site location plan is included within Appendix 1.
- 1.7 The site also covers an area proposed for allocation for employment use in the Draft Local Plan which would be located within the revised Village Envelope.

Site Description

- 1.8 The site is located within the countryside and measures approximately 27.27 hectares. It consists of the majority of a single large agricultural field and part of a second smaller field and includes areas of boundary trees and hedges. The site is bounded to the east by the A131 and there is currently access to it from the roundabout at the north eastern end of the site, and an application (Application Reference 19/01525/FUL) has been granted planning permission

to add a second access directly from the A131 at the southern end of the site. Great Notley Country Park is located immediately to the north. To the south is Slamseys Farm. To the west lies further agricultural land. In terms of the wider context, there is existing residential development to the east beyond the A131 and sporadic residential development in the countryside to the south.

2. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDERS (LDO)

- 2.1 Local Development Orders or LDOs were introduced as part of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. They provide a further layer of permitted development rights in addition to those which are established nationally.
- 2.2 An LDO applies over a defined area of land. It allows certain types of developments to take place on that land, subject to those developments meeting a set of criteria and any conditions set out within the LDO. Once an LDO has been made if the development being proposed meets the requirements of the LDO then a specific planning permission is not required to be submitted. Instead a Confirmation of Compliance will need to be applied for, once submitted the Council as Local Planning Authority has 28 days to consider the submission and issue a Confirmation. If the development being proposed is not in line with the LDO, a separate planning application can be submitted and consulted upon in the usual way. In the event that the Council does not issue a decision within 28 days the application is deemed to be in accordance and can proceed.
- 2.3 There are not currently any LDOs in operation in Braintree District and this is the first being proposed in the District. LDOs are in place across other parts of the Country, often supporting Enterprise Zones, regeneration proposals or other commercial developments. Harlow for example has three current LDOs in place.
- 2.4 The principal benefit of an LDO is to developers and businesses who wish to develop the site. They are in a position where there is a clear framework establishing the parameters of what can be built within the site. This means that providing that they can meet the expectations they are assured of a rapid and clear planning process which will not take longer than 28 days from submission. In addition, a significant amount of work has been undertaken to establish the LDO and therefore those individual applicants benefit from this in that their individual applications are more straightforward. This is a significant benefit to business and should not be underestimated.
- 2.5 Whilst the creation of an LDO provides significant benefits in making applications more straightforward, it does create some risks. It should be noted that given permission is effectively already granted, these subsequent specific applications have no scope for public or statutory consultee engagement. However, this restriction in public access must be balanced with this process and the benefits accruing from the use of the LDO. Where an application meets the terms of the LDO this has to be approved, even if the application is not in accordance with the “intended way” that the LDO should operate. This means that there has to be significant care and attention paid to the detail of the LDO and the limitations within it to ensure that the future development accords with the planned desire for the site.

- 2.6 Whilst the LDO does not preclude bespoke planning applications on the site where a business wishes to develop in a way which is outside the terms of the LDO, there may be pressures not to do this. The LDO will become a material planning consideration for any other application on the site, accordingly any application would need to additionally justify why it does not accord to the framework, in addition there would be a commercial pressure to adopt a more compliant development to save time and cost in development. The LDO may therefore constrain some development.
- 2.7 These two factors operate against one another placing a pressure on the LDO to be restrictive and developed to ensure a desirable outcome, whilst remaining flexible enough to permit as wide a range of businesses and design parameters as needed.
- 2.8 An LDO once established can operate indefinitely or it can be time limited. For the proposed Horizon 120 LDO, the Council has decided to implement it for up to 10 years to allow sufficient time for the business park to establish and develop. It can be withdrawn, modified or a further LDO can be implemented. However any development which is approved under the life of an LDO retains that approval notwithstanding any subsequent changes to the LDO.
- 2.9 If the LDO is approved, applicants seeking permission for development on the Horizon120 Business & Innovation Park, will be required to submit a 'Compliance Checklist' to the Local Planning Authority. This would include all required supporting plans and documents as set out on the Checklist.
- 2.10 The Local Planning Authority must issue a decision within 28 days to confirm whether the proposed development complies with the LDO and Design Code. If the submission is in compliance, development can proceed subject to any conditions and limitations set out within the LDO.
- 2.11 If it does not comply, the applicant would either need to revise their proposals and submit an amended 'Compliance Checklist' for consideration, or submit a Planning Application for consideration.

3 PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER (LDO)

Introduction

- 3.1 The proposed Local Development Order (LDO) is being considered by Braintree District Council in its capacity as the relevant Local Planning Authority pursuant to Section 61A (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 3.2 Subject to approval from Full Council, the Horizon120 LDO grants planning permission for development, as set out within Schedule A to D, subject to conditions and limitations set out within the LDO. Any development that does not fully comply with the conditions and limitations of the LDO will require planning permission and a planning application to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration.

Structure of the Horizon120 LDO & Supporting Documentation

3.3 The Draft Horizon120 LDO comprises the following sections:

- Contents
- An explanation of a Local Development Order
- Interpretations and Definitions
- Schedule A Building Development
- Schedule B Strategic Infrastructure
- Schedule C Extensions or Alterations
- Schedule D Change of Use
- Conditions
- Appendices

3.4 A Statement of Reasons has also been produced for the Horizon120 LDO. This document satisfies the requirements of Article 38(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 which states that where a Local Planning Authority proposes to make a LDO they shall first prepare:

- A Draft LDO
- A statement for their reasons for making the order. Article 38(2) states that the Statement of Reasons shall contain:
 - o A description of the development which the order would permit; and
 - o A plan or statement identifying the land to which the order would relate.

3.5 A Design Code is proposed to sit alongside the Horizon120 LDO. The purpose of the Design Code is to set further parameters for the development of the site, including the design of the buildings, landscaping and parking standards.

3.6 A range of other supporting documentation has also been prepared by the Council which has been subject to consultation/subject to the current public consultation. This is detailed below:

- Agricultural Land Classification, dated September 2019
- Air Quality Assessment, dated September 2019
- Archaeological Survey, dated March 2011/revised July & October 2012
- Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, November 2019
- Ecological Impact Assessment, dated August 2017
- Badger and Skylark Survey Report, dated July 2019
- Great Crested Newt Non-Licensed Method Statement, November 2019
- Great Crested Newt Survey Report, August 2019
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy, dated September 2019
- Heritage Statement, dated September 2019
- Sound Level Assessment, dated October 2018
- Transport Assessment, dated February 2020
- Travel Plan Framework, dated July 2019
- Geotechnical & Land Contaminated Assessment, dated September 2018
- Arboricultural Survey, dated September 2019
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, dated October 2019

- Arboricultural Method Statement, dated October 2019

Use Classes

- 3.7 The LDO permits development within Use Classes. These are defined parameters of development which are established under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987/764. This provides a clear and nationally recognised set of categories of development, it has the benefit of ensuring clarity and consistency, however the definitions of what is included within a particular use class can be varied over time at a national level, this risk is considered minimal against the risk of endeavouring to create alternative definitions of land use and the potential for uncertainty and challenge.
- 3.8 The Uses proposed within the site are as follows (together with example uses):
- **A1 Shops:** Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes;
 - **A3 Restaurants and cafés:** For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes;
 - **B1 Business:** Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity. This class is formed of three parts:
 - B1(a) Offices: Other than a use within Class A2 (see above);
 - B1(b) Research and development of products or processes;
 - B1(c) Industrial processes;
 - **B2 General industrial:** Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste);
 - **B8 Storage or distribution:** This class includes open air storage;
 - **C1 Hotels:** Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excludes hostels);
 - **D1 Non-residential institutions:** Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non-residential education and training centres;
 - **D2 Assembly and leisure:** Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

Description of LDO Schedules

Schedule A Building Development

- 3.9 'Schedule A Building Development' sets out within Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 (relating to Zones A, B and C of the site respectively) the scope of development which is permitted and not permitted under the LDO. Each Class also sets out the conditions which the grant of planning permission is applicable to. It should be noted that whilst the three Classes broadly correspond to the zones within the site they are not directly aligned and create categories of acceptable development.
- 3.10 Class 1 states that within Zone A, the erection of buildings for the following uses will be permitted:
- B1(a) (Office)
 - B1(b) (Research and Development)
 - C1 (Hotel)
- 3.11 Class 1 further states that within the 'Horizon Hub Core' within Zone A, in addition to the uses specified within Zone A, the erection of buildings for a mixed use hub comprising a mix of the following uses will be permitted:
- A1 (Shop)
 - A3 (Restaurant and Café)
 - D1(a) (Medical or Health Services)
 - D1(b) (Early Years Childcare, Day Nursery or Preschool)
 - D2(e) Gymnasium
- 3.12 The Horizon Hub Core is identified within the Interpretations and Definitions section under 'j' as a single continuous area covering a maximum of 2 hectares within Zone A, as shown indicatively on the 'Horizon Hub Core' Plan in Appendix H. This seeks to provide a sense of place within the Hub area, as sought by the Council when initially setting the aims and aspirations for the site.
- 3.13 Class 1 also allows for site investigation, demolition, engineering operations, and the provision of associated infrastructure and facilities directly required by development permitted within Zone A or the Horizon Hub Core by Class 1 of Schedule A.
- 3.14 The restrictions on the development not permitted by Class 1 can be summarised as follows:
- It would result in the total amount of Primary B1(a) Office development within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 3,800sq.m.
 - It would result in the total gross internal floor area within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 65,000sq.m.
 - A building includes a drive-thru facility;
 - It would result in the total gross internal floor area within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding:

- 300sq.m for Use Class A1
 - 100sq.m for Use Class A3
 - 150sq.m for Use Class D1(a)
 - 350sq.m for Use Class D1(b)
 - 700sq.m for Use Class D2(e)
 - It would result in more than one building comprising a hotel (Use Class C1)
 - It would result in the total number of bed spaces for a hotel (Use Class C1) exceeding 120 bed spaces
 - It would comprise a standalone building for any of the following uses: A1, A3, D1(a), D1(b), or D2(e).
- 3.15 Class 2 states that within Zone B, the erection of buildings for the following uses will be permitted:
- B1(a) (Office)
 - B1(b) (Research and Development)
 - B1(c) (Industrial Process)
 - A mixed use comprising either B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c), and B8 where at least 50% of the floorspace is either B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c) and where all ancillary uses are included in the non-B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c) calculation.
- 3.16 Class 2 also allows for site investigation, demolition, engineering operations, and the provision of associated infrastructure and facilities directly required by development permitted within Zone B by Class 2 of Schedule A.
- 3.17 The restrictions on the development not permitted by Class 2 can be summarised as follows:
- It would result in the total amount of Primary B1(a) Office development within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 3,800sq.m.
 - It would result in the total gross internal floor area within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 65,000sq.m.
 - More than 50% of the building or plot would comprise a use under Use Class B8.
 - It would include customers purchasing goods regardless of where these were purchased, and receiving them within the Horizon120 LDO area. The direct sale of goods to customers within the plot is not permitted, including, for example through a trade counter.
- 3.18 Class 3 states that within Zone C, the erection of buildings for the following uses will be permitted:
- B1(a) (Office)
 - B1(b) (Research and Development)
 - B1(c) (Industrial Process)
 - B2 (General Industrial)
 - B8 (Storage or Distribution)
 - A mixed use building comprising any of the above uses under Class 3 of Schedule A.

- 3.19 Class 3 also allows for site investigation, engineering operations, demolition, and the provision of associated infrastructure and facilities directly required by development permitted within Zone C by Class 3 of Schedule A.
- 3.20 The restrictions on the development not permitted by Class 3 can be summarised as follows:
- It would result in the total amount of Primary B1(a) Office development within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 3,800sq.m.
 - It would result in the total gross internal floor area within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 65,000sq.m.
 - It would include customers purchasing goods regardless of where these were purchased, and receiving them within the Horizon 120 LDO area. The direct sale of goods to customers within the plot is not permitted, including, for example through a trade counter.
 - Any building erected for B2 or B8 Uses would have a total floor area of more than 14,000sq.m.

Schedule B Strategic Infrastructure

- 3.21 Class 1 of Schedule B allows for the construction of 'Green Links' to provide access from the Spine Road throughout the site. 'Green Links' are defined as any road off the Spine Road, as indicatively shown on the 'Safeguarded Road Area Plan' in Appendix G.
- 3.22 In addition, Class 1 of Schedule B allows for 'Spine Road associated infrastructure and facilities' as directly required alongside the Spine Road. 'Spine Road associated infrastructure and facilities' are defined as hard and soft landscaping, drainage in the form of swales or French drains, junctions to connect the Spine Road and Green Links, pedestrian crossings, foot and cycle paths, outdoor furniture, signage, lighting, refuse bins and recycling facilities, some of which are included in approved planning permission 19/01525/FUL.
- 3.23 Class 1 also allows for site investigation, demolition, engineering operations, and the provision of associated infrastructure and facilities directly required by development permitted within Zone C by Class 1 of Schedule B.
- 3.24 Class 2 of Schedule B allows for the provision of landscaping around the boundaries of the Horizon 120 LDO area, as set out in Section 5.2 of the Design Code.
- 3.25 Class 3 of Schedule B allows for the provision of landscaping within Zone D.

Schedule C Extensions or Alterations

- 3.26 Schedule C allows for the extension or alteration of all buildings constructed under Schedule A for the same use as the existing building.
- 3.27 Schedule C also allows for site investigation, demolition, engineering operations, and the provision of associated site infrastructure and facilities directly required by development permitted by Schedule C.

- 3.28 Development is not permitted if the resultant building (comprising the existing building and extension and/or alteration) would not comply with the Design code as a whole. In addition, the restrictions as set out within Zones A, B and C are replicated within Schedule C. Development would also not be permitted if it resulted in the total gross internal floor area within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 65,000sq.m.

Schedule D Changes of Use

- 3.29 Schedule D Changes of Use sets out that within the Horizon120 LDO area, development consisting of the following changes of use of a building will be permitted:
- From Use Class B2 (General Industrial) to B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c)
 - From Use Class B8 (Storage or Distribution) to B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c)
 - From Use Class B8 (Storage or Distribution) to B2 (General Industrial)
- 3.30 Development is not permitted by Schedule D if it would result in the total amount of Primary B1(a) Office development within the Horizon 120 LDO area exceeding 3,800sq.m.

4. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Currently the Council's development plan consists of the Braintree District Local Plan Review (2005) and the Core Strategy (2011).
- 4.2 The Council is currently working on a Draft Local Plan, which was approved by the Council unanimously for consultation on the 20th June 2016 and was the subject of public consultation between the 27th June and 19th August 2016. The Draft Local Plan, now referred to as the Publication Draft Local Plan, was approved by the Council on 5th June 2017 for consultation and for submission to the Secretary of State. The public consultation ran from 16th June to 28th July 2017. The Publication Draft Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th October 2017.
- 4.3 The Publication Draft Local Plan is currently the subject of an examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 4.4 The joint North Essex-Authorities (NEAs) have received a post hearing letter dated 8th June 2018. This letter outlined a number of areas in the Section 1 Plan relating to transport infrastructure, employment, viability, and the sustainability appraisal where additional work was required.
- 4.5 The North Essex Authorities have produced further evidence in support of the plan and following formal consultation this has been submitted to the Planning Inspector on the section 1 Local Plan. The Inspector has undertaken additional hearings during January 2020 to test this evidence and the Council is awaiting the conclusion of their considerations.

- 4.6 In accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF, from the day of publication the Council can give weight to the emerging Draft Local Plan and the weight that can be given is related to:

“The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given) and;

The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”.

- 4.7 Accordingly the Council can currently afford some weight to the emerging Publication Draft Local Plan 2017.

- 4.8 In making its determination on the proposal for an LDO the Council as the Local Planning Authority must have consideration to the relevant policies and guidance which are applicable. The key provisions are detailed in this report and discussed in detail within the narrative, however a full list is provided for reference.

4.9 National Planning Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.10 Braintree District Local Plan Review 2005

RLP27	Location of Employment Land
RLP31	Design and Layout of Business Parks
RLP33	Employment Policy Areas
RLP34	Buffer Areas between Industry and Housing
RLP36	Industrial and Environmental Standards
RLP49	Pedestrian Networks
RLP50	Cycleways
RLP53	Generators of Travel Demand
RLP62	Development Likely to Give Rise to Pollution or the Risk of Pollution
RLP63	Air Quality
RLP64	Contaminated Land
RLP65	External Lighting
RLP67	Flood Risk in Undeveloped Areas
RLP69	Sustainable Urban Drainage
RLP70	Water Efficiency
RLP74	Provision of Space for Recycling
RLP77	Energy Efficiency
RLP80	Landscape Features and Habitats
RLP81	Trees, Woodland Grasslands and Hedgerows
RLP84	Protected Species

RLP90	Layout and Design of Development
RLP92	Accessibility
RLP100	Alterations and Extensions and Changes of Use to Listed Buildings and their settings
RLP105	Archaeological Evaluation
RLP106	Archaeological Excavation and Monitoring

4.11 Braintree District Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011

CS4	Provision of Employment
CS5	The Countryside
CS7	Promoting Accessibility for All
CS8	Natural Environment and Biodiversity
CS9	Built and Historic Environment

4.12 Braintree District Publication Draft Local Plan 2017

SP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP2	Spatial Strategy for North Essex
SP4	Providing for Employment and Retail
SP5	Infrastructure & Connectivity
SP6	Place Shaping Principles
LPP1	Development Boundaries
LPP2	Location of Employment Land
LPP3	Employment Policy Areas
LPP7	Design and Layout of Employment Policy Areas and Business Uses
LPP44	Sustainable Transport
LPP50	Built and Historic Environment
LPP51	An Inclusive Environment
LPP55	Layout and Design of Development
LPP60	Heritage Assets and their Settings
LPP63	Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Recording
LPP67	Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
LPP68	Protected Species, Priority Spaces and Priority Habitat
LPP69	Tree Protection
LPP70	Protection, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity
LPP71	Landscape Character and Features
LPP73	Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources, Minimising Pollution and Safeguarding from Hazards
LPP74	Climate Change
LPP78	Flooding Risk and Surface Water Drainage
LPP79	Surface Water Management Plan
LPP80	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
LPP81	External Lighting

4.13 Neighbourhood Plan

The site is not within a designated Neighbourhood Plan area and there are no proposals for a Neighbourhood Plan which the Council is aware of.

4.14 Other Material Considerations

External Lighting Supplementary Planning Document

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 As highlighted within the site history (see Section 8 below), a request for a Screening Opinion was submitted on 10th July 2018. In response, the Local Planning Authority issued a formal Screening Opinion on 6th August 2018.
- 5.2 The Screening Request was based on a proposed development of up to 65,000sq.m of B1, B2, B8 and C1 uses, together with associated structural landscaping, allotments, and a new access from the A131. The submission set out that 18.5ha of the site would comprise the built area of the development with the remaining 7.5ha as strategic landscaping.
- 5.3 As set out within the Screening Opinion, the Local Planning Authority concluded having regard to the scale, nature and location of the development, that the proposal would not require an Environmental Impact Assessment and that an Environmental Statement will not be required to be submitted to support any planning application for this development in accordance with the relevant regulations. In reaching the conclusion, the Local Planning Authority considered that features of the development would not have unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects, and would not occur within a particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location.
- 5.4 The proposal has however been assessed for environmental impacts in a proportionate way and the detailed analysis of this is set out later in the report.
- 5.5 Following a review of the floorspace that would be consented under the LDO, a cap on the maximum quantum of floorspace that can be developed pursuant to the LDO has been introduced. The cap has been set at 65,000sq.m to reflect the EIA Screening undertaken, which found the development not to be EIA development. The cap has been introduced within the relevant sections of Schedule A and C of the LDO.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 A public consultation took place for a 6 week period between 12.09.2019 and 24.10.2019. Alongside the Draft LDO and Design Code the range of supporting documentation was also available for consultation.
- 6.2 The consultation was advertised in the newspaper and via the Councils website and social media platforms. A direct notification of the consultation was sent to all those registered on the Councils Planning Policy consultation database and to all statutory consultees.
- 6.3 A public exhibition on the proposals for the Horizon 120 LDO was held on 30th September 2019. The event was held at Great Notley Community Centre between 4pm and 8pm. It was felt by the Council that this was the most convenient location and time for residents of Great Notley and existing businesses and stakeholders to ensure maximum attendance.

- 6.4 The event was held in a drop in style. Numerous boards were set showing different areas of the LDO, such as design, landscaping, roads, building sizes and the general vision of what the Council are trying to achieve, as well as detailed copies of the draft documents and evidence base for people to read if they wished. In attendance at the event were project managers of the scheme, the lead architect, landscape architect and planning consultant. These were available to answer any questions visitors had on the day or to signpost them to further information. Approximately 50 people attend the exhibition.
- 6.5 A total of 18 comments were received to the public consultation. These were received from Essex County Council, Great Notley and Black Notley Parish Councils, Chelmsford City Council, a number of statutory consultees including Natural England and Historic England and local residents and stakeholder groups. A summary of the comments made can be found below:

Essex County Council Spatial Planning

- Noted and welcomed many of the transport requirements, but required further time to consider the detailed Transport Assessment. Supports the need for pedestrian and cycle routes and welcomes further discussions in relation to bus service provision.
- Essex County Council requested to be involved in the arrangements for any day nursery on the site.
- Supported the enriching of existing habitats and provision of additional habitats, and routes for walking/cycling and running enabling employees to enjoy the country park adding to their health and wellbeing.
- In respect of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs), raised no objections but commented that they would need to be satisfied that the details of surface water drainage proposed for each plot, and measures to control surface water runoff, are appropriate and consistent with policy guidance.

Great Notley Parish Council

- Considered its response at the meeting held on 21.10.2019. Raised no specific objections, but wished to request that BDC consider offering a financial contribution to the village as part of this proposal.

Black Notley Parish Council

- Raised strong concerns about the increase in traffic and asked for investment in infrastructure within the Parish and cycle access to the site for workers.

Chelmsford City Council

- Raised no objection but noted that as several developments are planned in the vicinity the authorities must work together to consider highway implications.

Historic England

- Did not wish to make any comments on the proposals.

Natural England

- No comments.

Sport England

- Proposal does not fall within Sport England's statutory remit. Offered general guidance and advice.

Transport for London

- No comments.

ECC Highways

- Satisfied that the part of the network which is the responsibility of ECC should be able to accommodate any additional trips generated by the proposed development. Mitigation measures recommended.

Highways England

- Highways England responded to the original consultation on 24.10.2019. Although the response raised no objections, Highways England recommended that further information was provided to understand whether the total B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c) quantum of development is likely to exceed the estimated quantum specified in the Transport Assessment, in order to establish whether the proposals are acceptable from a highway perspective and whether any mitigation is required.

Environment Agency

- Noted no ecological concerns with the site but suggested a range of biodiversity studies which may need to be carried out.

Residents commented :

- How much consideration has been given to using brownfield or existing sites?
- There should be investment in a footpath/cycleway running along the A131
- The use of shielded lighting should be used to protect the night sky
- There should be effective protection for Great Notley Country Park from the development
- All bridleway and other accesses into Great Notley Country Park should be protected
- Questioned the need for a hotel on the site.

6.6 All responses to the consultation are able to be read in full at https://braintree.objective.co.uk/portal/stratinv/horizon_120_ido?tab=list

Re-consultation

- 6.7 A further round of public consultation took place (from 10th February 2020 until 12th March 2020). A summary of the comments received can be found below:

Sport England

- No additional comments. Refers to original response.

Historic England

- No objections. Refer to guidance to consider the impact upon the setting of nearby heritage assets. Also suggests views are sought from specialist conservation and archaeological advisors, as relevant.

Transport for London

- No comments.

Environment Agency

- No additional comments. Refer to comments within original response.

Natural England

- Natural England do not consider that the Draft LDO poses any likely risk or opportunity in relation to their statutory purpose, and offer no comments on the consultation.

Black Notley Parish Council

- The Parish Council reiterate the concerns raised within their previous response, namely that the proposals will add substantially more traffic onto the village road system. Specific concerns are raised in relation to the impact upon Bakers Lane and the cumulative impact of Horizon 120 and the proposed new housing on the land between London Road and Bakers Lane in the Draft Local Plan and the new housing planned for Great Leighs. Comments that investment in infrastructure is paramount, including new road through the new housing site and other traffic measures to mitigate localised impacts which should be funded by the new housing developments and by Horizon 120.

Chelmsford City Council

- Advised they have no comments to make in respect of the LDO itself but supports the principle of the development of the site for employment/business uses and comments that this will support the economy and offer jobs to new and existing residents expected through new housing developments both in Braintree and surrounding Districts/Boroughs, including Chelmsford.

Rayne Parish Council

- Comments that as there is no public transport link to the site, there will be a huge impact on local roads including Queenborough Lane. The Parish Council were also concerned about the detrimental impact of new industrial units on the Great Notley Country Park.

Historic Buildings Consultant

- Comments that no heritage assets will be directly affected by the proposals, however identifies that the site is north of Great Slamseys Farm, which features two Grade II listed barns and a Grade II listed Dovecote. Acknowledges that the setting of the farm has changed greatly in the twentieth century due to the construction of the A131 and Great Notley Garden Village. The response identifies that the proposals would have less than substantial harm to the setting of the above heritage assets, however due to the proposed landscape buffer at the southern edge of the site, the level of harm is identified as a low level of less than substantial harm. As such, the proposals therefore need to be considered against Section 196 of the NPPF, which states that the harm toward a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

Highways England

- A response from Highways England was received on 12th March 2020. This considered the additional transportation analysis undertaken which explored the impact of increasing the level of B1(a) floorspace from 3,800sq.m to 5,000sq.m. The conclusion set out in the technical note is that an increase in the level of B1(a) employment office floorspace from 3,800sq.m to 5,000sq.m should not give rise to highway capacity concerns as the junction capacity assessments for the sensitivity development scenario are not materially different from those presented within the TA report for this proposal. It further concludes that there is capacity above 5,000sq.m but there would be a threshold level at which intervention measures are likely to be required.
- Highways England commented that the TA does not include the original outputs but when you compare the outputs from the original modelling with this test, this ties up with the conclusion and are therefore accepting of this position that the assessment is robust.
- Highways England further commented that the technical note produced shows a predicted increase in queues on the A120 slip (West) from 57 to 198 vehicles when the sensitivity analysis is included, which is an increase in length to that greater than the length of the slip road. This analysis indicates that the slip is over capacity. As such, Highways England have advised that without mitigation, the increase in B1(a) floorspace from 3,800sq.m to 5,000sq.m is not appropriate. The appropriate mitigation is identified as extending the length of the two lanes on the slip road (length to be agreed).

- In conclusion, Highways England has no objection to the proposed LDO provided that widening of the A120 on-slip (West) at Pannors Interchange north is included in the required mitigation measures.
- 6.8 No additional comments from residents have been received in connection with the re-consultation.
- 6.9 All responses to the consultation are able to be read in full at:
www.braintree.gov.uk/pa utilising application reference 19/00001/LDO.

Referral to Planning Committee

- 6.10 The Draft LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons was considered by Members at Planning Committee on 3rd March 2020. Members resolved to recommend to Council that the LDO and Design Code should be adopted.

7. SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO LDO

- 7.1 Following the re-consultation on the LDO, the following changes have been made to the LDO.
- Through a review of the floorspace that would be consented under the LDO, a cap on the maximum quantum of floorspace that can be developed pursuant to the LDO has been introduced. The cap has been set at 65,000sq.m to reflect the EIA Screening undertaken, which found the development not to be EIA development. The cap has been introduced within the relevant sections of Schedule A and C of the LDO.
 - Following further transport analysis, a floorspace cap of 3,800sq.m is proposed to limit the quantum of Use Class B1(a) floorspace that can come forward within the Horizon 120 LDO area. The cap has been introduced within the relevant sections of Schedule A, C and D of the LDO.
 - Condition G11 (Highway Improvements) has been added in relation to highways mitigation following on from discussions with ECC Highways. This condition requires mitigation measures (widening the A131/London Road south roundabout to create two lanes at the north eastern arm and bus service improvements), including timescales for implementation, to be submitted to Local Planning Authority for approval prior to the first occupation of any building within the Horizon 120 LDO area. This condition addresses the consultation response received from ECC Highways.
 - Condition S3 (Landscape Maintenance) has been added to ensure that prior to the occupation of any building, a maintenance strategy for all landscaping outside of the plot boundaries is in place.
 - Schedule C restrictions for extensions and alterations has been updated to ensure that it is clear that any future extensions or alterations to buildings have to comply with the Design Code, and that the whole building must still comply.

- Lastly, the wording for Condition G5 (Great Crested Newts) and Condition P8 (Noise) have been updated to reflect the updated technical reports produced to accompany the LDO (Great Crested Newt Non-Licensed Method Statement, dated March 2020 and Sound Level Assessment, October 2019).

8. SITE HISTORY

- 8.1 **89/00641/P** – Application Permitted with S106
 'Neighbourhood development comprising residential development (maximum 2000 dwellings); business park (Class B1 uses up to maximum of 400,000 sq. ft.); neighbourhood supermarket and ancillary shop units; primary school site and primary school extension site; health centre; community centre; church site; public house; restaurant; hotel with conference facilities; public open space; country park including sports centre and outdoor pitches; woodland and balancing lake; associated landscaping; highways, and associated mounding and landscaping; associated and ancillary development'
 Great Notley Garden Village, Great Notley, Braintree, Essex
- 8.2 **97/01430/FUL** – Application Permitted with S106
 'Variation of condition 7 of outline planning consent ref P/BTE/641/89 to increase number of dwellings to be commenced on site by 31.12.2000 from 1000 to 1250 and delete phasing restriction at 31.12.2004'
 Great Notley Garden Village, Great Notley, Braintree, Essex
- 8.3 **15/00015/SCO** – Application Withdrawn
 'Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 - Scoping Opinion Request - Proposed business park'
 Land West Of Garden Village Way, Great Notley, Essex
- 8.4 **18/00003/SCR** – Screening Opinion Issued
 'Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 - Screening Request - Erection of Business Park comprising up to 65,000sq.m of B1, B2 (light industrial, business and general industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) accommodation, together with C1 Hotel; associated structural landscaping; allotments; and a new access from A131'
 Land West Of A131, Great Notley, Essex
- 8.5 **19/01092/FUL** – Application Permitted
 'Proposed development of an Electric Forecourt, comprising of 24 core electric vehicle charging points, energy storage, a mix of ancillary dwell facilities, car parking, hard and soft landscaping and access arrangements off the A131, Great Notley'
 Land West Of A131 London Road, Great Notley, Essex
- 8.6 **19/01855/DAC** – Application Permitted
 'Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 12, 14, 18, 21 and 22 of approval 19/01092/FUL'
 Land West Of A131 London Road, Great Notley, Essex

- 8.7 **19/01616/FUL** – Application Permitted
'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)'
Land West Of A131 London Road, Great Notley, Essex
- 8.8 **19/01525/FUL** – Application Permitted
'Construction of two access points into the site through a fourth arm from the A131/Cuckoo Way roundabout and a left in/left out junction from the A131. Construction of roads between the two access points within the site and associated drainage, landscape and other engineering works'
Land West Of A131 London Road, Great Notley, Essex
9. **ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING MERITS BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**
- 9.1 Principle of Development**
- 9.1.1 The Development Plan for the District must set an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for amongst other areas employment and other commercial development. As well as safeguarding existing commercial development whilst they remain suitable and appropriate for that use, the Plan will also allocate new land for employment uses.
- 9.1.2 Policy RLP28 of the Adopted Local Plan sets out the type of uses which are acceptable on industrial estates and business parks, namely B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution).
- 9.1.3 The Council's Adopted Core Strategy allocates the site for employment uses. Policy CS4 of the Adopted Core Strategy states that the Council and its partners will support the economy of the District between 2001 and 2026. Employment sites in current or recent use in sustainable locations will be retained for employment purposes. The Policy and related table/inset map (Table CS4 and Inset 1b) identifies 18.5ha of land to the west of the A131 at Great Notley (the site) for an Innovation and Enterprise Business Park for Use Classes B1, B2, B8 and C1 purposes. It also states that in order to ensure a mix of uses on the site, the overall quantum of B8 use on the site should be restricted to no more than 40% of the total floor area and the largest unit size restricted to 7.500sq.m. This restriction was to ensure a mix of uses on the site. Structural landscaping/wildlife corridor is indicated to comprise as 7ha, although the exact location of this on the site was not defined at the strategic policy stage.
- 9.1.4 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in September 2011, a Masterplan was produced and approved for the development in January 2012. This document implemented the requirements of the Core Strategy policy and remains a material consideration in the determination of planning applications on the site. However it should be noted that this Masterplan is now almost 8 years old and was produced prior to the publication of the latest version of the NPPF. As such the weight it can be afforded at this time is limited. It is also

relevant to note that development on the site has not come forward in this time.

- 9.1.5 The allocation of the site for employment uses is proposed to be carried forward to the Council's Publication Draft Local Plan. Policy LPP2 of the Draft Local Plan allocates 18.5ha of land for an Innovation and Enterprise Business Park for uses B1, B2 and B8. It states that part of the site may be developed for a hotel (C1 use) and that B8 uses should be restricted to no more than 40% of the total floor area and no single unit should be larger than 7,500sq.m. As with the Adopted Core Strategy, Policy LPP2 of the Draft Local Plan includes 7ha of structural landscaping.
- 9.1.6 As outlined within Section 3 above, the Draft LDO proposes a range of Use Classes across Zones A, B and C within the site. These predominately include Use Classes: B1(a) (Office); B1(b) (Research and Development); B1(c) (Industrial Process); B2 (General Industrial); B8 (Storage or Distribution); and C1 (Hotel). These uses accord with Policy CS4 of the Adopted Core Strategy and Policy LPP2 of the Draft Local Plan. All of the Use Classes, with the exception of Use Class C1 (which is specifically provided for within the relevant site specific policies) also accord with Policy RLP28 of the Adopted Local Plan.
- 9.1.7 As originally drafted, in addition to the above Use Classes, the Draft LDO also proposed the following Use Classes: A1 (Shop); A3 (Restaurant and Café); D1(a) (Medical or Health Services); D1(b) (Early Years Childcare, Day Nursery or Preschool); and D2(e) Gymnasium. These uses would not accord with the policies of the Adopted or Emerging Development Plan. Furthermore, as each of the above Use Classes were expressed separately, other than the restrictions proposed to limit the total floorspace of a building, there was no restriction on the proportion of Zone A which could be used for these purposes. Without tighter controls, the concern was that the employment offer of the site could be diminished through the introduction of non B1, B2 and B8 uses.
- 9.1.8 The Council's vision for the site however, sets out the aspiration to create a hub to the north of the site, to provide a key focal space for the development. It is envisaged that this would include an outdoor square for public seating, socialising and events such as markets. The hub facilities could include a gym, nursery, café and food outlets, as well as other 'shared' facilities such as meeting rooms/conference facilities to serve the wider Business and Innovation Park. This vision adds to the sustainability and attractiveness of the site as a vibrant employment destination, providing sufficient controls and restrictions are put in place within the LDO to address the aforementioned concerns.
- 9.1.9 Following discussions, the Draft LDO as originally proposed, has specifically been amended by the Local Planning Authority to include more restrictions and a greater level of control to ensure compliance with the relevant policies. To achieve this, the ancillary uses specified above would be restricted and limited to a sub-zone with Zone A, referred to as the 'Horizon Hub Core'.

- 9.1.10 Additional limitations are included within the Draft LDO for Zone A to prevent the inclusion of a drive-thru facility for an associated A1 or A3 use and the limit the total floor area for particular use classes. These are considered essential in order to protect the District Centre at Great Notley. It has also been confirmed that the aspiration is only for one hotel on the site. As such, the LDO includes restrictions to limit the number of buildings for Use Class C1 to one and to limit the maximum number of bed spaces to 120.
- 9.1.11 Restrictions are proposed within Zones B and C to prevent an excessive quantum of B8 (Storage or Distribution) uses. This is achieved within Zone B by a 50% restriction on B8 use on either a building or plot, and within Zone C by a maximum floorspace restriction of 14,000sq.m. This is higher than the maximum floorspace restriction set out within both the Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan, however the Council in its capacity as land owner has market tested this restriction and considers it to be too onerous and has instead proposed a 14,000sq.m floorspace restriction. The Local Planning Authority has considered this request and considers that this is, on balance, acceptable, having regard to the other restrictions proposed within Zone B to limit the extent of B8 uses. The amount of B8 floorspace that can be delivered is also restricted by virtue of the zones within the Draft LDO, as stand-alone buildings for B8 purposes only are only permitted within Zone C. This ensures that these uses are not in close proximity to the Great Notley Country Park, which is considered the most sensitive use immediately surrounding the site. This compromise provides the commercial flexibility desired, but also provides for the greatest opportunity for the Council to secure more intensive B1 and B2 employment uses across Zones A and B of the site.
- 9.1.12 In order to prevent retail sales from taking place, Zones B and C also restricts the sale of goods (i.e. from a trade counter) from the Horizon120 LDO Area. This safeguards the site from becoming a retail area through planning creep.
- 9.1.13 Lastly, while Schedule D permits changes of use within the Horizon 120 site from lower to higher employment generating uses, it also includes a 'catch all' restriction to prevent any other changes of use from occurring. Any such proposals would require specific planning permission enabling a full consideration of all relevant issues at that point in time.
- 9.1.14 Subject to the controls and restrictions set out within this report, it is considered that the policy principle of the proposed development is acceptable and would accord with the Adopted Local Plan, Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan. The proposals would facilitate the provision of well-connected Business and Innovation Park with the potential to create a large number of jobs, both during construction and following the completion of the development. This would represent a significant economic and social benefit which weighs heavily in favour of the proposal in the overall planning balance.

9.2 Design

- 9.2.1 Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It also states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in

which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states, amongst other things, that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Furthermore, the Government's 'National Design Guide 2019' places increased importance on the importance of good design, amenity, wellbeing and sense of place for all developments.

- 9.2.2 The NPPF also states within Paragraph 38 that "Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible".
- 9.2.3 Policy RLP31 of the Adopted Local Plan states that new employment development will be required to conform to suitable design and layout standards with adequate car parking, and provision for public transport, cycling and walking, landscaping and servicing.
- 9.2.4 In addition to the above, Policy RLP90 of the Adopted Local Plan requires designs to recognise and reflect local distinctiveness in terms of scale, density, height and massing of buildings, and be sensitive to the need to conserve local features of architectural and historic importance, and also to ensure development affecting the public realm shall be of a high standard of design and materials, and use appropriate landscaping. Policy LPP55 of the Draft Local Plan seeks to secure the highest possible standards of design and layout in all new development and the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 9.2.5 The Horizon 120 LDO proposals are accompanied by a comprehensive Design Code document which sets out detail over building design, landscaping, parking standards and various other aspects. Some parts of the Design Code are applicable across the site as a whole whereas some are specific to certain uses or areas, with these set out in the Design Code itself.
- 9.2.6 The Design Code has been subject to considerable consultation with the Local Planning Authority which has been critiqued and tested from both an urban design and landscape perspective.
- 9.2.7 The revised Design Code is considered to be a robust document which ensures that a high quality Business and Innovation Park will be delivered on the Horizon 120 site, and that some of the more aspirational elements of the Design Code, will be incorporated into detailed design proposals and will be realised on site. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the relevant policies in respect of design and layout.
- 9.2.8 Lastly, the importance of connectivity into existing surrounding networks has been recognised by the Council. A footpath/cycle connection is proposed from

the primary access to LDO site (adjacent the existing roundabout) to the existing signalised crossing on A131. This ensures the LDO site links to Great Notley, including the District Centre and provides a means for residents and employees to walk and cycle which addresses general comments received during the consultation process. These measures are secured within the Infrastructure application (Application Reference 19/01525/FUL) which has been granted planning permission by the Local Planning Authority.

9.3 Landscaping, Trees & Hedgerows

- 9.3.1 Policy RLP80 of the Adopted Local Plan states that proposals for new development will be required to include an assessment of their impact on wildlife and should not be detrimental to the distinctive landscape features and habitats of the area such as trees, hedges, woodlands, grasslands, ponds and rivers. Development that would not successfully integrate into the local landscape will not be permitted. All new development will be expected to provide measures for any necessary mitigation of their impact upon wildlife and for the creation and management of appropriate new habitats. Additional landscaping including planting of native species of trees and other flora may be required to maintain and enhance these features.
- 9.3.2 Policy RLP84 of the Adopted Local Plan states that planning permission will not be granted for development, which would have an adverse impact on badgers, or species protected under various UK and European legislation, or on the objectives and proposals in National or County Biodiversity Action Plans as amended. Where development is proposed that may have an impact on these species, the District Council will require the applicant to carry out a full ecological assessment. Where appropriate, the Planning Authority will impose conditions and/or planning obligations to:
- a) Facilitate the survival of individual members of the species
 - b) Reduce disturbance to a minimum; and
 - c) Provide supplementary habitats.
- 9.3.3 The LDO seeks to create an attractive public realm with high quality landscaping throughout the site. Public footpaths and cycleway connections are also proposed throughout the site to achieve permeability with existing routes and networks. The existing pedestrian pathway and bridleway to the west and north of the site will be protected under the LDO, with new landscaping alongside to ensure an attractive and user friendly path is retained. Additional new landscape is also required within individual development plots.
- 9.3.4 To the north of the site, the land is separated from the rest of the site by hedgerow, with some gaps for the footpath/bridleway. The LDO seeks to leave this area largely undeveloped as a parkland for use as recreational space. This is indicated as Zone D on the submitted plans.
- 9.3.5 The LDO has been accompanied by an Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment and Method Statement, including a Tree Protection Plan (which is cross referenced within Condition G3 of the LDO). The proposed removal of existing vegetation on the site (trees and hedgerows) is limited and has

already been accepted through the grant of the recent planning permissions to facilitate site access and infrastructure for the future development. The significant additional tree planting and landscaping proposed for the site is considered to provide adequate mitigation to compensate for the loss of existing vegetation.

9.4 Ecology

- 9.4.1 The LDO submission is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment for the site. The report prepared by Green Environmental Consultants is dated August 2017. In addition, a Great Crested Newt Non-Licensed Method Statement and a Great Crested Newt Survey Report dated August 2019 have been submitted. As set out above the LDO does not require a formal Environmental Statement under the regulations, however relevant ecological impacts, particularly on protected species have to be considered and have been set out below.
- 9.4.2 These same reports were also submitted in support of the recent planning application for 'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)' (Application Reference 19/01616/FUL). This planning application (also submitted by the Council as the applicant for the application) was however accompanied by a Badger and Skylark Survey Report (dated July 2019) which has also subsequently been submitted to accompany the range of supporting documentation for the LDO.
- 9.4.3 In considering Application Reference 19/01616/FUL the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Council's Ecology Consultant assessed the ecological impacts of the development. Given that the baseline survey data is the same it is considered that the conclusions of this assessment are relevant to the assessment of the Draft LDO.
- 9.4.4 As highlighted earlier within the report, the majority of the site is agricultural land and is not of notable ecological value, being both habitat and species poor. The proposed removal of existing vegetation on the site (trees and hedgerows) is limited and has already been accepted through the grant of the recent planning permissions to facilitate site access and infrastructure for the future development.
- 9.4.5 The interior of the site is identified as being of low local significance for farmland birds – most specifically Skylarks (at least 6 breeding pairs). The submitted Ecology Report notes that although this territory will be lost there are large areas of suitable arable agricultural land remaining in the immediate locality and the report considers that the loss of the site would not have an impact on the long term survival of this species in the area.
- 9.4.6 In response to Application Reference 19/01616/FUL, the Council's Ecology Consultant however recommended that mitigation be sought in the form of off-site compensation for Skylark habitat due to their status as red listed birds and the fact that existing breeding habitat will be lost. To secure this mitigation a condition was included within the planning permission (Condition 21) which

requires that this is in place prior to the commencement of the next Skylark breeding season in March 2020.

- 9.4.7 There is a dried pond located on the site which previously (when it held water) contained Great Crested Newts. To support the recent application for 'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)' (Application Reference 19/01616/FUL), the applicant submitted supplementary reports to ensure impacts upon Great Crested Newts were fully considered. The dried pond was obviously found to be unable to host a Great Crested Newt population and overall no Great Crested Newts were found in a pond located off site, however this would remain unaffected by both the development proposed pursuant to Application Reference 19/01616/FUL and the Draft LDO.
- 9.4.8 The dried pond reference above is proposed to be infilled under Application Reference 19/01616/FUL. A previously approved application for an electric vehicle charging station on adjacent land to the site (Application Reference 19/01092/FUL) proposed to retain the majority of this dried pond. However, the Council as the applicant for both Application Reference 19/01616/FUL and as the proposer of the Draft LDO has advised that the Gridserve access plan was incorrect and that the plans/documentation submitted with their application, should have shown that the pond and associated trees cannot be retained.
- 9.4.9 As identified earlier in the report, a large attenuation pond is proposed in the northern end of the site, adjacent to the Country Park. This provides a substantial new water body habitat with associated grassland and shrub planting to the benefit of birds, bats and amphibians. Importantly, it has been specifically designed to accommodate Great Crested Newts and the proposed planting scheme has been tailored to this. It is anticipated that the Council will construct this new pond by end of June 2020 to ensure that Great Crested Newt habitat is provided..
- 9.4.10 In terms of foraging habitat, the site itself offers potential terrestrial and aquatic habitat for Great Crested Newts in the form of ditches and hedgerows at the boundaries of the site. This habitat would remain largely unaffected and would be enhanced as part of the development proposals. Overall the submitted report finds a negligible impact upon Great Crested Newts and it is identified that the proposed habitat creation will enhance the ability of Great Crested Newts to forage and commute across the site.
- 9.4.11 The additional trees proposed for removal pursuant to Application Reference 19/01616/FUL, which are located to the northern side of the dried pond, are all either Category C (trees of low quality and value) or Category U (trees for removal – any existing value lost within 10 years) and are not considered to be prohibitive to development. The removal of these trees has already been approved under Application Reference 19/01616/FUL.
- 9.4.12 Overall the Draft LDO proposals would result in a limited degree of ecological harm. As with the recent application reference 19/01616/FUL this harm would

include the loss of habitat for at least 6 pairs of breeding Skylark and the loss of the dried up pond area with associated trees. However, the above planning application included conditions to mitigate the harms identified, namely the Skylark mitigation (compensation) strategy pursuant to Condition 21 of that planning permission, and the requirement to install a new attenuation pond in the northern part of the site to ensure adequate surface water drainage measures are provided and to provide a new ecological habitat with associated grassland and shrub planting for the benefit of birds, bats, amphibians and specifically Great Crested Newts.

9.4.13 In addition to the mitigation measures already provided for, the LDO provides a further opportunity to provide ecological habitats throughout the proposed development.

9.4.14 The Draft LDO includes conditions in relation to: Tree and Hedgerow Protection (Condition G3, which requires trees and hedgerows, other than those proposed to be removed within the submission, to be protected); Nesting Birds (Condition G4, which prevents vegetation removal during the nesting season); and Great Crested Newts (Condition G5, which requires all demolition and construction works to be carried out in complete accordance with the Great Crested Newt Non-Licensed Method Statement, dated August 2019). The conditions also include Condition G6 which requires the bat and bird boxes, as set out within Appendix H, to be provided prior to the first use of the first building on the Horizon 120 LDO area.

9.4.15 In response to the consultation on the Draft LDO Natural England raised no comments or objections in respect of the proposals or supporting documentation.

9.4.16 The Environment Agency commented that further ecological surveys to include protected species (water vole, otter, Desmoulin's whorl snail, great crested newts, bats, barn owl) and priority species and habitats should be undertaken. The Environment Agency also commented that in line with the Government's 25 year Environment Plan, and in accordance with Paragraph 170 of the NPPF, Horizon120 should adopt an 'environmental net gain' approach, which could be achieved through:

- Enhancements of existing habitats;
- Creating a net increase in priority habitats such as woodland and wetland, including by integrating features as part of the scheme design (for example shallow graded and planted drainage features);
- Implementing measures laid out in the River Basin Management Plans to improve and enhance the ecological status of any affected waterbodies;
- Contributing to river and floodplain restoration projects.

9.4.17 While the comments from the Environment Agency in relation to additional surveys are noted, following consultation with the Council's Ecologist, it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted in support of the proposals to adequately assess the ecological impacts of the proposal. Furthermore, while the last two bullet points recommended by the Environment Agency to achieve a biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved due to the lack of river basins and river/floodplains on/adjacent the site, it is

considered that the Draft LDO provides the opportunity to achieve an environmental net gain across the site through the creation and enhancement of existing habitats and the creation of a priority habitat, namely the large attenuation pond and associated grassland in the northern part of the site. The ecological impacts arising from the Draft LDO have therefore been fully considered and assessed, and subject to the mitigation identified, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in this regard.

9.5 Heritage

- 9.5.1 There are no heritage assets located on the site. There are two Grade II listed buildings and a Grade II listed dovecote located to the south of the site at Slamseys Farm.
- 9.5.2 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts of substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 9.5.3 Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.
- 9.5.4 Policy RLP100 of the Adopted Local Plan supported by Policy CS9 of the Adopted Core Strategy and Policy LPP60 of the Draft Local Plan states inter alia that works will be permitted where they do not harm the setting, character, structural stability and fabric of the building (or structure); and will not result in the loss of, or significant damage to the building or structure's historic and architectural elements of special importance, and include the use of appropriate materials and finishes.
- 9.5.5 The Council's Historic Buildings Consultant has been consulted and has identified that the proposed development would result less than substantial harm to the setting of these heritage assets. In considering the level of harm, the Historic Buildings Consultant considers that the harm would be at the lower end of less than substantial harm.
- 9.5.6 As identified above, development resulting in less than substantial harm to a heritage asset(s) should be weighed against the public benefits that would arise from a proposal. In this case, there are considerable public benefits which would arise from the development. These include, but are not limited to, the economic benefit to the wider economy through the provision of good quality and well-connected employment land, and significant job creation and generation, both during construction and post completion of the development, which would have both economic and social benefits.
- 9.5.7 As such, in the heritage balance, it is considered that the harms to the heritage assets identified above, would not outweigh the public benefits. The

overall planning balance is concluded at the end of the report which considers all harms and benefits of the proposal.

9.6 Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

- 9.6.1 The supporting documentation provided to accompany the Horizon120 LDO proposals, included a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.
- 9.6.2 The site is located within Flood Zone 1, where there is a low risk of fluvial flooding.
- 9.6.3 Tidal flooding is not considered a risk to the site due to the inland location of the development.
- 9.6.4 In terms of surface water flooding, the site is a greenfield site, mostly used as agricultural land. The site has a gentle fall towards the north east. Given the topography, existing land use and surface water flood map information, the site is considered to be at a low risk from surface water flooding.
- 9.6.5 In respect of groundwater flooding, the site is classified as being underlain by unproductive superficial and bedrock strata, or negligibly permeable non-aquifers. As such, the existing flood risk from groundwater is therefore identified as low.
- 9.6.6 The risk of foul sewer flooding is also identified as low, as there is no foul water drainage within or adjacent the site.
- 9.6.7 Lastly, the report identifies that the site is at a low risk of flooding from artificial sources such as raised channels (i.e. canals) or storage features (such as ponds or reservoirs) as there are no such features adjacent or on the site.
- 9.6.8 The proposed drainage strategy for the site includes various features based on sustainable urban drainage principles, including drainage channels and gullies, an attenuation pond, swales and filter/French drains. The drainage strategy for the site has evolved and has been considered in connection with two recent planning applications on the site, namely:
- Application Reference 19/01092/FUL - 'Proposed development of an Electric Forecourt, comprising of 24 core electric vehicle charging points, energy storage, a mix of ancillary dwell facilities, car parking, hard and soft landscaping and access arrangements off the A131, Great Notley'; and
 - Application Reference 19/01616/FUL - 'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)'.
- 9.6.9 The drainage strategy for the site is for surface water runoff being discharged into the main carrier drain which would run along the proposed spine road from the site (subject to the current 'Infrastructure' proposals pursuant to application reference 19/01525/FUL) and discharge surface water into the proposed SUDS pond located in the northern part of the site.

- 9.6.10 The recent planning application for 'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)' (Application Reference 19/01616/FUL), was granted planning permission by the Local Planning Authority subject to Condition 13 which requires the applicant to submit a detailed surface water drainage strategy for the site for approval, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development. No objections were raised by Essex County Council, as the relevant Local Lead Flood Authority subject to the imposition of these conditions.
- 9.6.11 The applicant will submit details to discharge the abovementioned condition to the LPA which, subject to approval, will provide the overarching strategic drainage strategy for the site. Condition G9 of the Draft LDO provides the reassurance that the overarching surface water drainage strategy for the site is implemented as this requires the SuDS Pond in the northern part of the site to be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of a building.
- 9.6.12 The Draft LDO subject to this report, includes Condition P6 which requires future applicants seeking permission for the development of specific land parcels to submit details of surface water drainage for the relevant plot alongside the 'Compliance Checklist'.
- 9.6.13 In response to the consultation on the Draft LDO, Essex County Council as the relevant Local Lead Flood Authority, have commented that they support the overall aims and aspirations for Horizon120 to provide an integrated and green approach to dealing with surface water drainage which also considers the impact of climate change. They support the systems which will be designed to ensure discharge rates do not exceed the appropriate greenfield equivalent, to mitigate the impact of the development and welcomes the requirement within the proposed Design Code (Paragraph 6.4.4) for design parameters for the principles of SuDS as defined in the 'CIRIA SuDs manual' and the 'Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide' produced by Essex County Council, to be used in the design of surface water drainage.
- 9.6.14 The Local Lead Flood Authority have therefore raised no objections, but have commented that they will need to be satisfied that the details of surface water drainage proposed for each plot, and the measures proposed to control surface water runoff, are appropriate and consistent with policy guidance. Furthermore, no objections or comments were raised by the Environment Agency in relation to flooding or surface water drainage.
- 9.6.15 As noted above, details of surface water drainage for each specific plot is required by Condition P6. In addition, Condition G1 requires development to be carried out in strict accordance with the Design Code. As such, having regard to the consultation responses received and subject to the inclusion of the abovementioned conditions, the Draft LDO and accompanying Design Code are considered to adequately address flood risk and surface water drainage.

9.7 Loss of Agricultural Land

- 9.7.1 An Agricultural Land Classification Report has been produced in support of the Horizon120 LDO proposals.
- 9.7.2 The development would result in the loss of an area of agricultural land and would help facilitate the development of the employment site which as a whole covers an area of approximately 27.27 hectares, the majority of which is classified as Grade 2 (best and most versatile) agricultural land.
- 9.7.3 While the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land is noted, and weighs against the proposal in the overall planning balance, the site has been allocated for development as a Business and Innovation Park within the Adopted Core Strategy and within the Draft Local Plan. The site is required for development to meet the identified need for employment land within the District. Accordingly, the loss of this land is therefore considered to be acceptable in this context and has already been considered as acceptable through the allocation for a Business and Innovation Park.

9.8 Archaeology

- 9.8.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been produced in support of the Horizon120 LDO proposals. The report dated in March 2011 and revised in July 2012 and October 2012 was prepared for Countryside Properties, the previous applicant for the site. The report concludes that it is unlikely that any archaeological finds would be a constraint on development, but highlights the requirement for prior archaeological survey and excavation to be undertaken prior to commencement of development. A Written Scheme of Investigation has also been submitted to accompany the range of supporting documentation for the LDO in November 2019.
- 9.8.2 Places Services at Essex County Council, who provide the Local Planning Authority with specialist archaeological advice have not provided any specific comment on the LDO proposals. The Historic Environment Officer at ECC did however provide a consultation response for the recent application for 'Engineering works to re-level the site to provide building plots and the construction of three roads to link into the strategic infrastructure (subject to separate planning application reference 19/01525/FUL)' (Application Reference 19/01616/FUL). This raised no objections to the proposals, but in line with the NPPF recommended conditions requiring archaeological trial trenching to be undertaken on the site. These recommendation were duly secured by way of an appropriate planning condition, namely Condition 9 pursuant to Application Reference 19/01616/FUL.
- 9.8.3 As with the surface water drainage strategy for the site, the requirement for archaeological trial trenching is a prerequisite for the development of the site and needs to be undertaken by the Council. These requirements would be fulfilled pursuant to the planning permission under application reference 19/01616/FUL, rather than through the LDO.

9.9 Highways and Parking

- 9.9.1 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 9.9.2 With the National Planning Policy Framework in mind, particularly Paragraph 109, the Highway Authority have been consulted and have assessed on the proposals, including the submitted Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan, against its own Development Management Policies to ensure the proposal site can be accessed safely, any additional trips would not be detrimental to highway safety and capacity and to ensure as far as possible the proposal site is accessible by more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking.
- 9.9.3 The Supporting Documentation submitted to accompany the LDO included a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan Framework. These have been assessed as part of the consultation process that has taken place by the two Highway Authorities, namely Highways England and ECC Highways.
- 9.9.4 ECC Highways as the Highway Authority responded on 21.01.2020 and advised that they were satisfied that the network which is the responsibility of ECC should be able to accommodate any additional trips generated by the proposed development, subject to a range of mitigation measures.
- 9.9.5 Following further discussions with ECC Highways during the re-consultation on the LDO, Condition G11 (Highway Improvements) has been included within the LDO to secure the highways mitigation required by ECC Highways within their consultation response, namely the requirement to widen the A131/London Road south roundabout to create two lanes at the north eastern arm and bus service improvements. The condition requires details of the above mitigation measures, including timescales for implementation, to be submitted to Local Planning Authority for approval prior to the first occupation of any building within the Horizon 120 LDO area. This condition addresses the consultation response received from ECC Highways.
- 9.9.6 While the concerns of Black Notley Parish Council and Rayne Parish Council are noted, it is considered that the addition of Condition G11 ensures that the impacts on the local highway network (as identified by the statutory highway authority) have been mitigated.
- 9.9.7 Highways England responded to the original consultation on 24.10.2019. Although the response raised no objections, Highways England recommended that further information was provided to understand whether the total B1(a), B1(b) or B1(c) quantum of development is likely to exceed the estimated quantum specified in the Transport Assessment, in order to establish whether the proposals are acceptable from a highway perspective and whether any mitigation is required.
- 9.9.8 Following Highway England's original consultation response, further work and analysis has been undertaken by the Council on the Transport Assessment. This has highlighted that while the quantum of B1(a) floorspace could be increased, it would likely require further off-site mitigation.

9.9.9 As highlighted within Highways England's follow up consultation response, additional analysis, over and above that undertaken to date is required in order to fully assess and understand the impacts of increasing the quantum of B1(a) floorspace. In order to progress with the LDO, as highlighted within Section 7 above, a floorspace cap of 3,800sq.m is proposed to limit the quantum of Use Class B1(a) floorspace that can come forward within the Horizon 120 LDO area. The cap has been set at this level, as this is the quantum of B1(a) floorspace included within the original Transport Assessment. The cap has been introduced within the relevant sections of Schedule A, C and D of the LDO.

9.9.10 The Local Planning Authority considers this approach to be acceptable however further discussions are ongoing with Highways England in respect of the acceptability of introducing a floorspace cap of 3,800sq.m and whether any mitigation measures are required. Any further updates will be reported at the meeting.

9.9.11 Subject to approval at Full Council, the Council will undertake a review of the LDO within 6-12 months of adoption. This will revisit this issue and allow further time to explore whether the quantum of B1(a) floorspace can be increased, and if so, details of any measures that would be required to mitigate the impacts of the development.

9.10 Climate Change

9.10.1 As identified above, the site is allocated for development as a Business and Innovation Park. The site is well-connected, adjacent to Great Notley, adjacent the A131 and within close proximity to the A120. As set out above the proposals for the site include a significant amount of additional tree planting and landscaping across the site. Further, it is considered that the Draft LDO provides the opportunity to achieve an environmental net gain across the site through the creation and enhancement of existing habitats and the creation of a priority habitat, namely the large attenuation pond and associated grassland in the northern part of the site.

9.10.2 In order to enhance the sustainability credentials of the development, Condition P12 within the LDO requires the provision of 30% of the projected energy requirements of a plot, including the building, to be provided through renewable energy technology. It should be noted this is higher than required through the Draft Local Plan, given the overall aims and aspirations of the site. As future occupiers are not required to apply for planning permission and to meet these aims and objectives, the Council felt a higher level of sustainability should be sought accordingly.

9.11 Impact upon Amenity

9.11.1 A core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework is that development should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy RLP90 of the Adopted Local Plan and Policy LPP55 of the Draft Local Plan states that development shall not cause undue or unacceptable impacts on the amenities of nearby residential properties.

9.11.2 The Draft LDO was accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment, dated September 2019. This report considers the impacts of the Horizon 120 development which have the potential to cause air quality impacts, both during construction and post completion of the development. The report outlines that the use of good quality practice control measures during the construction of development, would provide suitable mitigation for a development of this size and nature and reduce potential impacts to an acceptable level. The impact post completion was also considered and modelled (dispersion modelling) in order to predict pollutant concentrations at sensitive locations as a result of emissions from the local highway network. The report concludes that predicted air quality impacts would not be significant at any sensitive location in the vicinity of the site and therefore indicates that air quality issues would not be a constraint on development.

9.11.3 The Draft LDO submission was also accompanied by a Sound Level Assessment report, dated October 2018, for the proposed development. The report indicates that the development of the site can be designed and operated so as not to cause significant harm from adverse impacts from noise on the health and quality of life of residential receptors. It also considers that the proposed hotel use can be constructed to achieve acceptable internal noise levels.

9.11.4 A number of conditions are included within the Draft LDO to mitigate the impact of the development on nearby residential properties and to safeguard their amenity. The conditions include:

- Condition G7 (Construction Management Plan) which requires details to be submitted with the Compliance Checklist to mitigate the impact of development during the construction period. The details are required to include: safe vehicular access and parking; loading, unloading and storage of plant; measures to control dust and dirt; a scheme for reusing, recycling or disposing of waste, a scheme to control noise and vibration; hours of construction work; and a scheme to minimise off-site flooding.
- Condition P8 (Noise) which requires proposals any use under Use Classes B2 or B8, to be accompanied by a noise assessment with the Compliance Checklist demonstrating compliance with the noise levels set out in the submitted Sound Level Report.

9.11.5 Subject to the abovementioned conditions, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable and would ensure construction impacts arising from the development of the site are mitigated. The details submitted alongside the Compliance Checklist, would be subject to consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Officer, who would need to confirm within the 28 day timeframe that the details were acceptable.

9.12 Maintenance

9.12.1 The Statement of Reasons which accompanies the Draft LDO outlines that the general ownership and maintenance of the site, namely public highway, building set back landscape, perimeter buffer landscape, and parks and public

spaces will fall under the remit of the Council as land owner. All other areas will be the responsibility of a developer and/or individual plot owners. The Statement of Reasons indicates that this could be subject to change over time and any requests would be considered on a case by case basis.

- 9.12.2 The Statement of Reasons indicates that maintenance and management plans should be established for both plots and public realm based on a number of principles outlined. This is supported by the Local Planning Authority. In order to secure this, and following the re-consultation on the LDO, Condition S3 (Landscape Maintenance) has been added to ensure that prior to the occupation of any building, a maintenance strategy for all landscaping outside of the plot boundaries is in place.

10. OFFICER PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Under Article 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, when considering whether to adopt an LDO a local planning authority must take into account any representations made. As the LDO effectively grants planning permission, the Local Planning Authority also consider it is relevant to consider Paragraph 47 of the NPPF, which states that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 The site is allocated in the Adopted Core Strategy and in the Draft Local Plan as a strategic employment site for B1, B2, B8 and C1 uses. Subject to the controls and restrictions set out within the LDO, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable and would accord with the Adopted Local Plan, Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan. While it is acknowledged that the floorspace restriction on B8 use is proposed to be increased (compared to the restrictions set out within the Adopted Core Strategy and Draft Local Plan), it is considered that as this has been market tested by the Council in its capacity as land owner, and as the LDO includes a restriction on where the B8 uses can be located within the site, the 14,000sq.m floorspace restriction is considered to be appropriate in this case.
- 10.3 As set out in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF, achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and needed to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): an economic objective (to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure); a social objective (to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being); and an environmental objective (to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to

improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy).

- 10.4 In this case, the proposals would facilitate the provision of well-connected Business and Innovation Park with the potential to create a large number of jobs, both during construction and following the completion of the development. There would also be the economic benefit to the wider economy through the provision of good quality and accessible employment land. These represent a significant economic and social benefit which weighs heavily in favour of the proposal in the overall planning balance.
- 10.5 The accompanying Design Code, which has been considered by the Local Planning Authority and amended since the initial consultation, would also ensure that a high quality design and layout for the Business and Innovation Park will be delivered on the Horizon 120 site, and that some of the more aspirational elements of the Design Code, will be incorporated into detailed design proposals and will be realised on site. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the abovementioned policies in respect of design and layout.
- 10.6 The Council's Historic Buildings Consultant has been consulted and has identified that the proposed development would result less than substantial harm to the setting of these heritage assets. In considering the level of harm, the Historic Buildings Consultant considers that the harm would be at the higher end of less than substantial harm. However, in accordance with Paragraph 196 of the NPPF, it is considered that the benefits of the development (as outlined within this report) would outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.
- 10.7 Impacts arising during the construction of the development and post completion have been assessed and it is considered that these can be adequately mitigated through the conditions included within the Draft LDO.
- 10.8 It is pertinent to note that despite being allocated and subject to a masterplan, development on the site has not come forward. It is therefore hoped that adoption of the LDO will encourage potential occupiers to come forward and that it will facilitate the development of the Business and Innovation Park. This is reflected by discussions the Council have been having with potential occupiers, with interest in the site from a variety of different businesses.
- 10.9 Overall it is considered that the proposed Draft LDO and accompanying Design Code constitute a sustainable development in an accessible and well-connected location, and consequently it is recommended that the proposals are supported.

11. EQUALITIES

- 11.1 The Council in its consideration has to have regard to the public sector equalities duties under the Equality Act 2010. In exercising its functions regard must be had to ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination in respect of the relevant protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment,

pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation.

- 11.2 It is not considered that the LDO in and of itself will directly impact on any of the protected characteristics. The differing needs of people, including those with different protected characteristics, will need to be considered during the detailed design and planning of the development particularly for individual buildings and will be kept under review as the scheme progresses.
- 11.3 An equalities impact assessment has been completed to consider the implications of the Local Development Order. A copy of the assessment can be found within the 'Equalities/Diversity' section above.

12. RECOMMENDATION

12.1 It is recommended that:

1. The Director of Growth be given delegated authority to make any minor changes to the final documents (LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons);
2. To adopt and publish the Horizon 120 Local Development Order, Design Code and Statement of Reasons as amended;
3. Authorise the Head of Planning to provide copies of the required documents to the Secretary of State (the LDO, Design Code and Statement of Reasons within 28 days of the adoption);
4. Authorise the Planning Development Manager to place the LDO, Design Code and Statement of Seasons on the Planning Register within 14 days of the date of adoption.

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan



Appendix 2: LDO Documentation

The updated versions of the LDO, Design Code (low and high resolution versions are available) and Statement of Reasons can be viewed online via the Council's Public Access Website: www.braintree.gov.uk/pa (utilising Application Reference 19/00001/LDO).

Equality Impact Assessment

Basic



This basic impact assessment is an initial screening process to help identify if a full Equality Impact Assessment is required and, if it isn't, to record the reasons why.

It considers positive, negative or no impact on each of the 9 protected characteristics in relation to addressing the 3 aims of the Equality Duty that we as a public body must give due regard to;

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Directorate	Planning
Service	Planning Policy and Development Management
Title of policy, strategy, project or service	
Local Development Order – Horizon 120, Business and Innovation Park	

Is the policy, strategy, project or service;

Existing ☐ New/proposed ☒ Changed/Reviewed ☐

Q 1. Aim of the policy, strategy, project or service

To put in place a Local Development Order for the Horizon 120 Business and Innovation Park

Q 2. Who is this policy, strategy, project or service going to benefit or have a detrimental impact on & how?

Benefit to local people by speeding up the delivery of the site, enabling local employment opportunities. No detrimental impacts have been identified.

Q3. Is this policy, strategy, project or service aimed at one of the protected characteristics?
If so, what justification is there for this?

No.

Q 4. Thinking about each of the protected characteristics does or could the policy, strategy, project or service have a negative or positive impact?

Group	Negative	Positive/ No impact	Unclear
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership (only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer for any group is 'negative' or 'unclear' do a full EIA

Q5. Thinking about each of the protected characteristics does or could the policy, strategy, project or service help to support the 3 aims of the Equality Duty?

Group	Yes	No	Unclear
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership (only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer for any group is 'no' do a full EIA

Q 6. What evidence has been used (e.g. data, feedback, consultation & engagement, surveys) that may influence the policy, strategy, project or service?

Group	Evidence
Age	Public consultation
Disability	Public consultation
Gender reassignment	Public consultation
Pregnancy & maternity	Public consultation
Race	Public consultation
Religion or belief	Public consultation
Sex	Public consultation
Sexual orientation	Public consultation

Q 7. Using the responses to questions 4 & 5 should a full EIA be carried out on this policy, strategy, project or service?

Yes

No

☒

Provide your reasons for your response showing how you have considered due regard

No consultation response has raised issues relating to EQI.

Completed by (Print name):

Alan Massow

Signature :

Approved by Head of Service (print name):

Emma Goodings

Signature :

Date:

20/02/20

Investment in Suffolk's Materials Recycling Facility		Agenda No: 13
Portfolio	Environment and Place Finance and Performance Management	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Cllr. David Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance Management and Cllr. Mrs Wendy Schmitt, Cabinet Member for Environment and Place	
Report prepared by:	Trevor Wilson, Head of Finance	
Background Papers:		Public Report
<p>Sorting and Marketing of Mixed Dry Recyclate contract between Suffolk County Council and Viridor Waste Management Limited dated 1st February 2019.</p> <p>Agreement regarding the contract for the provision of Sorting and Marketing of Mixed Dry Recyclate between Suffolk County Council and Braintree District Council.</p> <p>Report and minutes regarding Investment in Suffolk's Materials Recycling Facility to Suffolk County Council Cabinet meeting on 8th October 2019.</p>		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary:		
1. Background		
<p>1.1 Suffolk County Council (Suffolk CC) procured the Sorting and Marketing of a 10-Year Mixed Dry Recyclate contract with Viridor through the EU Negotiated Procedure. The negotiation phase of the procurement process started on 30th August 2018 and ended on 26th October 2018. There were a number of issues that Suffolk CC negotiated on with Viridor. One issue was the potential inclusion of mixed dry recyclate from the Braintree area as this Council was considering being a party to the arrangement. Another issue was the potential for Suffolk CC to make a capital contribution toward the cost of refurbishing the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham by Viridor. Viridor in return would reduce the gate fee (by £21.41 i.e. from £79.61 down to £58.20), with the potential saving being shared between the County and the District/Borough Councils in the Suffolk Waste Partnership.</p>		

- 1.2 At the end of the negotiation phase, Suffolk CC asked Viridor to price the capital contribution option in their Final Tender submission, which was received on 14th November 2018. This included proposals that both included and excluded the estimated tonnage (10,113) for this Council, as at that time this Council had not confirmed whether to participate in the Contract. Unfortunately, this Council was neither aware of this option nor given the opportunity to consider if it wished to participate in this specific arrangement. This Council confirmed its decision to join the Contract at the end of November 2018 and the Contract commenced on 16th May 2019.
- 1.3 On 8th October 2019, Suffolk CC's Cabinet was asked to decide if it wished to exercise the option to make a capital contribution to Viridor, which was agreed. This was reported in the local press and on waste industry websites, which is how officers from this Council became intrigued and subsequently asked questions about what the proposal was that the Suffolk Councils within the partnership had been invited to participate in.
- 1.4 A copy of the report to and relevant minute of the Suffolk CC Cabinet meeting on 8th October 2019 can be viewed using this [Link](#). This provides full details of the initial investment opportunity, the anticipated return and the potential risks associated with the investment.
- 1.5 Following extensive discussions with Suffolk CC, on 11th February 2020, the Council's Head of Operations received notification that this Council could join the arrangement that it had negotiated on behalf of the other Suffolk Council's with Viridor for a capital contribution toward the refurbishment of the MRF. The timing of this was too late for the proposal to be included in the Council's annual budget setting process for 2020-2021
- 1.6 The following day detail of the proposed level of investment was received: this being £1,227,743 and was calculated on this Council's estimated tonnage of 10,113 tonnes as a proportion of the estimated overall tonnage under the contract of 61,778 tonnes.

2. Financial Assessment of the Investment Opportunity

- 2.1 The investment of £1,227,743 would require a capital budget to be allocated. In return, the Council would receive a reduction in processing cost per tonne of £21.41 which after allowing for capital financing costs, based on a PWLB annuity loan over the remaining 9-years of the contract at an interest rate of 2.25%, provides an estimated net annual saving to the General Fund revenue account of £65,062 per annum, a rate of return of 5.3%. A potential saving over the remaining 9 years of the contract of in excess of £580,000.
- 2.2 In cash terms, this saving would increase in future years in line with the annual contract indexation.
- 2.3 The capital budget requirement would be financed as part of the overall capital programme, either from the unallocated balance of capital receipts or from borrowing (internal/external) which would be determined by the Corporate Director (Finance). Any variation, positive or negative, on the estimated financing costs would be reflected in the Council's overall treasury management position. By

offsetting capital financing charges from the revenue savings, the capital resources applied would be replenished (or repaid if borrowed) at the end of the contract term.

3. Risk Implications

3.1 The report to the Suffolk CC Cabinet meeting provides details of the risks including potential implications and proposed mitigation.

3.2 An update on these and how they relate to this Council are provided below:

- The refurbished MRF fails to operate successfully. The capital contribution would not be paid until the refurbishment is complete. *Suffolk CC has confirmed that the facility passed the acceptance tests and that it was content that the facility was operating in accordance with the contractual standards and therefore the investment contribution was duly paid to Viridor.*
- Changes to the tonnage of recyclable materials that the councils provide under the contract. *This continues to be conceivable as the Government's new Environment Bill 2020, which includes resources efficiency and waste reduction, is likely to lead to changes.*
- Tonnage changes impacting savings exist because the agreed contract price reduction is on a per tonne basis: overall reduction in contract payments will be lower if the tonnage falls and higher if the tonnage increases. *Over the last four years, for this Council, tonnage has averaged 10,113, but 2019 was the lowest at 9,935. Tonnage would need to reduce by over 29% to eliminate the benefit obtained from the investment.*

4. Contract Variation

4.1 The provision to make a capital contribution in exchange for a reduction in processing costs is contained in the main contract agreement between Suffolk CC and Viridor Waste Management Ltd, whereas this Council's agreement is with Suffolk CC. Consequently, if the investment is agreed it is recommended that a variation is agreed to the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) that effectively replicates the provisions in the main contract, to cover the following:

- The Council agrees to pay to the Service Provider (Suffolk CC) a sum of £1,227,743 being the Council's Contribution towards capital refurbishment costs for which the Service Provider has confirmed to the Council in writing it has paid a sum of £7.5m to Viridor; in accordance with Section 47.14a of the main Contract.
- Payment of a sum by the Council under the above clause is subject to receipt of a copy of the Notice given to Viridor by the Service Provider in accordance with clause 47.14a of the main Contract, and the Council accepting any additional terms and conditions that have been determined for the Capital Contribution Amount paid to Viridor.
- The Council shall be entitled to repayment of the Council's Contribution based on the calculation set out in Paragraph 61.3.2 of the main Contract where a Termination Compensation Payment is due to be paid to the Service Provider under the terms of the main Contract.
- In exchange for payment of the Council's Contribution in accordance with the above clause, the Council will receive a reduction in the charge under paragraph

4.1(a) of the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) of £21.41 per tonne, indexed in line with paragraph 4.2 of the IAA.

Recommended Decision:

Full Council is recommended to:

1. Approve a capital budget of £1,227,743 for this Council's share in the investment by Suffolk County Council, of £7.5million, in the Materials Recycling Facility at Great Blakenham, owned by Viridor Waste Management Limited, subject to appropriate revisions to the Inter-Authority Agreement between Braintree District Council and Suffolk CC as detailed at section 4.1 of the report; and
2. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Finance) in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance & Performance Management and Environment & Place to undertake the appropriate action necessary to give effect to this capital financing proposal subject to the revision to the Inter-Authority Agreement.

Purpose of Decision:

The investment is an 'invest to save' opportunity for the Council to act in a commercial manner and reduce the revenue budget required for Waste Management services with no impact on the quality or quantity of services received by residents of the District.

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

Financial:	<p>Opportunity to share in Suffolk County Council's (Suffolk CC) investment, of £7.5million, in the MRF at Great Blakenham owned by Viridor Waste Management Ltd. Based on this Council's estimated tonnage of recyclates the share has been calculated at £1,227,743; in return the Council will receive a reduction in the gate fee payable to Viridor of £21.41 per tonne.</p> <p>Assuming borrowing costs, principal and interest, of £151,457 per annum (PWL 9 year annuity loan at 2.25%) and reduced gate fees of £216,519 per annum (10,113 tonnes x £21.41) these produce a net saving of £65,062 per annum.</p> <p>This represents a return on the investment of 5.3% per annum.</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Investment Evaluation Tool has been completed by the appropriate officers in relation to this investment opportunity. The investment was assessed and recorded a score of 8.0.</p>
Legal:	<p>The provision to make a capital contribution in exchange for a reduction in processing costs is contained in the main contract agreement between Suffolk CC and Viridor Waste Management Ltd, whereas this Council's agreement is with Suffolk CC. If the proposal is approved a variation to reflect this Council's investment would need to be agreed in the Inter-Authority Agreement.</p>
Safeguarding:	<p>No matters arising out of this report.</p>
Equalities/Diversity:	<p>It has not been necessary to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment for this investment. The proposal will have no impact on service.</p>
Customer Impact:	<p>No matters arising out of this report.</p>
Environment and Climate Change:	<p>This proposal supports the Climate Change objectives to reduce waste by recycling, energy consumption and pollution and contributes towards the target to be carbon neutral by 2030. The 10-year Contract with Suffolk CC provides stability in relation to the on-going cost of its dry mixed recycling being processed and the income we receive from the sale of the high quality material.</p>
Consultation/Community Engagement:	<p>No matters arising out of this report.</p>

Risks:	Risks are detailed in section 3 of the report.
Officer Contact:	Trevor Wilson
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E-mail:	Trevor.wilson@braintree.gov.uk

Proposed Merger Between Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society		Agenda No: 14
Portfolio	Homes	
Corporate Outcome:	A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported	
Report presented by:	Cllr. Kevin Bowers, Cabinet Member for Homes	
Report prepared by:	Jo Albini, Head of Housing and Community	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
Unlocking Eastern Potential Together – Formal consultation with Braintree District Council 26/2/2020 – 25/03/2020 Braintree District Council Monday, 9th March 2020 – Item 5 Presentation Emma Palmer, Chief Executive, Greenfields Community Housing Association		Key Decision: N/A
Executive Summary:		
<p>This report considers the Council's response to the formal consultation from Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society to merge. The draft outline business case was approved by both Boards at the end of January 2020 and they are now in a period of consultation with residents and other stakeholders in order to inform the full business case. They expect to present the full business case to both Boards on the 16 April 2020, and if approved the merger will happen on 1st July 2020.</p> <p>Greenfields was established in November 2007 with the transfer of the Council's 8,000 plus homes. Colne is a housing association which was formed in 1973. Their 3,288 properties are spread across nine local authority areas in the eastern region. Just over 170 homes are in the Braintree District.</p> <p>The case for merger is set out as a response to the national and future regional challenges and opportunities. The business case also identifies the strategic, geographic and financial drivers for the merger.</p> <p>The combined financial capacity of the joint organisation would enable the delivery of up to 3,800 homes over the next 5 years, an additional 1,300 homes.</p> <p>Both Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society are well-regarded housing providers with complementary operating areas and similarly expressed values.</p>		

There is a logic for a merger, with the potential to achieve significantly more than the two organisations continuing to operate independently.

The arrangements as set out in the Stock Transfer Agreement between the Council and Greenfields will continue.

Recommended Decision:

1. That the Council notes the report.
2. The Council supports the merger on the basis that it provides at least the same service levels and ideally improved.
3. The Council authorises Cllr. Kevin Bowers, Cabinet Member for Homes to respond on behalf of the Council to the formal consultation from Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society to the merger.

Purpose of Decision:

To formally confirm the Council's support to the proposed merger of Greenfields Community Housing and Colne Housing Society.

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

Financial:	No matters arising out of this report.
Legal:	No matters arising out of this report.
Safeguarding:	No matters arising out of this report.
Equalities/Diversity:	No matters arising out of this report.
Customer Impact:	The impact on existing tenants and the community will be positive.
Environment and Climate Change:	No matters arising out of this report.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Consultation has taken place with tenants of both housing associations.
Risks:	No matters arising out of this report.
Officer Contact:	Jo Albini
Designation:	Head of Housing and Community
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E-mail:	joaal@braintree.gov.uk

1. The New Housing Association

The proposed partnership between Greenfields and Colne would create one housing association of just over 12,000 homes. This would be done by a Transfer of Engagements from Colne into Greenfields. This means the Rules of Association for Greenfields will remain as they are keeping the community gateway model at the heart of the organisation.

The proposed new organisation will be a single Community Benefit Society, with charitable status and the constitutional protection of the Community Gateway (resident membership) model. They will be the largest Community Gateway association in England.

Greenfields is just one of four Community Gateway Associations in the country and gives residents the opportunity to make key decisions about their homes and services.

Greenfields shareholders will vote on whether to approve a proposed new name.

The combined financial capacity created by a merger will enable the new organisation to deliver more affordable homes over the next five years and beyond.

It will also continue to invest in existing homes, taking account of higher health and safety and environmental and quality standards.

Both Greenfields and Colne have shared ethos with residents being at the centre of what they do. The merger will mean an additional £550,000 is available as part of a £1.75m resource investment to empower residents and communities to improve lives.

2. Continuing to Work Together

2.1 The Council's role as the local authority with responsibility for housing means that it retains duties towards people who are homeless. It continues to administer the Housing Register and manage the way in which social housing is allocated as well as overseeing how the District's social housing stock grows as the number of homes increases.

The Stock Transfer Agreement sets out how the Council and Greenfields work together. Over time, the strands of the agreement have become day-to-day custom and practice; officers don't continually refer back to the Agreement but work closely together using procedures that have been established.

For the Council's Housing Service, the key areas of joint operation are:-

- Temporary accommodation; Greenfields provide up to 35 units of accommodation used by the Council as temporary housing for households who are homeless. The Stock Transfer Agreement sets out the financial arrangements for that provision;
- Nomination rights and the operation of the Housing Register;
- Development of new social housing in the District.

These arrangements have worked well and will continue.

The Council has also worked closely with Colne on a number of affordable housing schemes in the Braintree District.

2.2 Greenfields is also a key organisation across a number of partnerships within the Braintree District.

- It has been a non-statutory partner of the Responsible Authority Group of the Community Safety Partnership for a number of years and more recently on the Community Safety Hub, which is at an operational level.
- Greenfields has allocated a single point of contact to liaise with all partners with regard to cases of anti-social behaviour, identification of vulnerable people, domestic abuse and general crime. Their staff work alongside partners in the development and delivery of prevention and education projects with schools and community groups.
- Greenfields is also a partner of the Health and Wellbeing Board that is looking at the local priorities of obesity, inactivity, frailty and mental health and has delivered a number of projects around healthy eating and activity within the communities it serves.
- The Council and Greenfields have also been working together around social isolation and loneliness including a countywide campaign called United in Kind. This has included developing ways of bringing children together with sheltered housing residents who are often elderly, through intergenerational work.



Unlocking Eastern Potential Together

Formal consultation with Braintree District Council

26/02/2020 – 25/03/2020

Dear Braintree District Council colleagues,

I'm excited to write to you today to seek your views on the proposed merger between Greenfields Community Housing (Greenfields) and Colne Housing Society (Colne).

Recently, the boards of Greenfields and Colne have approved an outline business case which sets out the compelling strategic, geographic and financial drivers for a merger. We are now drawing up a full business case which, if approved, would result in the merger being completed and a new, co-created organisation created on 1 July 2020. Your views will be considered by our Boards when they decide whether the merger goes ahead.

Our vision is to create a strong, resilient Community Gateway organisation which actively responds to the challenges and opportunities faced by current and future residents and communities. We strongly believe our community gateway model is a value proposition for stewardship and affordable new home delivery within the North Essex Garden Settlements.

As one vibrant, innovative organisation we will optimise our financial strength, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Creating a new organisation together will mean that we build more and better opportunities, in our North Essex core and wherever we work.

The majority of our homes would continue to be in Braintree District. Our commitment is that the merger of our two community invested organisations would only strengthen our ability to work alongside you and other organisations who invest in Braintree.

There is significant opportunity to deliver a step change in the level and range of social and affordable rented homes, together with accessible home ownership, for a diverse and growing population. Together, we can invest more in existing homes, and in developing excellent services for our residents and communities, while building many more genuinely affordable homes every day for those who need them.

This document summarises our outline business case and I hope it explains why we are so enthusiastic about the potential of this proposed merger. Please do contact us with your views and let us know your questions.

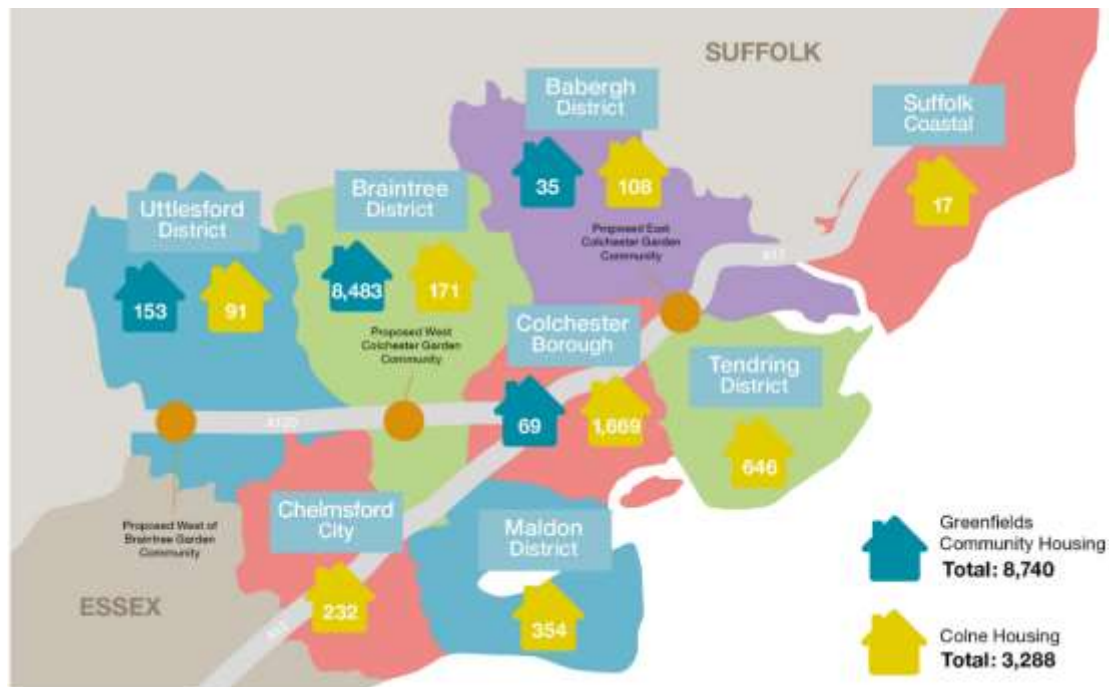
Yours sincerely,



Emma Palmer
Chief Executive
Greenfields Community Housing

Greenfields and Colne

The table and map on this page summarise Colne and Greenfields, including the similarities between our two organisations and the similarities in our operating areas. As 'Placeshaper' community invested organisations, we are community invested; we provide affordable homes and services that build local communities. The well-being of residents and our people is important to us both.



	Colne	Greenfields
Background	Traditional HA formed in 1973	LSVT transferred in 2007
Area of operation	Colchester & surrounding local authority areas	Predominantly Braintree
Constitution	Charitable CBS	Charitable CBS with Community Gateway status
Regulatory ratings	G1/V1	G1/V1
Credit Rating	A S&P	NA
Units owned	3,288	8,740
Staff (FTE)	48	242
Shareholders	7	5,499

A Catalyst in the East

Our case for a merger is as a direct response to the national and future regional challenges and opportunities.

- It proposes how we will grow and thrive in the conditions likely to prevail in the coming decade.
- We believe that the East of England would benefit from a strong and clear voice; vocalising the opportunities of our shared region and articulating how it is making the most of them.
- We believe that there is a space for our new locally embedded, well-resourced organisation to become a regional pioneer; accelerating affordable housing delivery - directly and with other partners.
- As a new organisation Colne and Greenfields will be positioned to exploit opportunities in the market through increased influence and financial capacity.
- We will invest in strong governance and management, with systems, policies and practices aligned to our business plans and risk appetite. We will be better positioned to mitigate and manage market risk.
- By focussing on North Essex and Suffolk, the new organisation will be operating in an area with high levels of housing need likely to attract significant strategic and infrastructure investment over the medium term. There is real potential to make a difference; the region has high levels of need.
- Combined financial capacity would enable the delivery of up to 3,800 (an additional 1,300) homes over the next five years, with sustained delivery beyond 2025.
- We are in a strong position to deliver this ambition, with 893 homes already contracted and around 1,500 homes in our pipeline.
- We will balance our new home growth plan alongside investment in existing homes; reflecting emerging higher health and safety, environmental and quality standards.
- Our offer will be distinctive. As a Community Gateway organisation, our residents have a greater say in their services and the resources to have a powerful, positive influence in their communities.
- Together we will add even more value as a key strategic partner, landlord, significant developer and employer.

Our Partnership – Better Together (1)

The new organisation

- Having analysed the options, we are proposing the co-creation of a single Community Benefit Society, with charitable status and constitutional protection of the Community Gateway (resident membership) model.
- Three routes to create a single organisation were reviewed. A Transfer of Engagements from Colne to Greenfields was recommended as the preferred process.
- The intention is to co-create a new organisation with a new name and identity, using the Greenfields legal vehicle. Greenfields shareholders will vote on whether to approve the proposed new name.

A Shared Ethos

- In merging we will co-create and embed values and behaviours that reflect our shared ethos. Our residents and customers will continue to be at the centre of what we do, their influence on our organisations will be part of our DNA.
- We are committed to the principle of being 'more than a landlord' supporting communities to thrive, residents to have improved life chances and the supply of new homes to reflect the needs of existing and future residents.
- We will respect the history and achievements of Colne and Greenfields as we co-create our new combined organisation.
- Our merger will accelerate our existing corporate strategies and build on the best of our combined force.

Influence

- A bigger, better, bolder, single organisation
- A vibrant, innovative, influential Placeshaper with North Essex at its core
- A catalyst for change in the East of England; a partner of choice for other community invested organisations and statutory bodies
- The largest Community Gateway association in England, a national exemplar of a successful association with empowered residents and communities

Our Partnership – Better Together (2)

Services

- A broader, deeper management and property offer for residents, drawing on our respective skills and expertise.
- Services that are easy to use and trusted to deliver.
- Wellbeing support targeted at older people and the most vulnerable to enable independent living.

Homes

- Sustainable development growth, with upper quartile new home supply delivered in North Essex and Suffolk. The preferred delivery partner will be Icen Homes. The new organisation will be a 50% shareholder in this development partnership.
- Quality, affordable, new homes in great places, delivering in garden villages and rural communities.
- Sustained investment in our existing homes, and robust compliance assurance.

Our top commitments

- £125m invested in existing homes in maintaining and improving existing homes to make them safer, more sustainable and efficient, while investing in communities where people want to live.
- Financial capacity and resource for up to 3,800 new home start on sites (an additional 1,300 homes via our merger) with targets to limit environmental impact.
- £1.75m resource investment to empower our residents and communities to improve lives and enable independent living (an additional £550k via our merger).
- Improved Value for Money, efficiency and capacity release. Together we are stronger financially and better able to cope with downside risk (see table, right).

	2019 Colne	2019 Greenfields	Combined
Turnover	£20.3m	£47.6m	£67.9m
Operating margin	37.0%	35.8%	36.2%
Operating surplus	£7.5m	£17.1m	£24.6m
Gearing	54.1%	37.1%	46.4%
Homes owned	3,288	8,740	12,028

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

Agenda No: 15a

Success Essex Board Meeting (17.02.20)

Together with Cllrs Neil Stock (Tendring District Council), Marie Goldman (Chelmsford City Council) and John Lodge (Uttlesford District Council) I represent Local Authorities on the Success Essex Board which feeds into the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).

Success Essex is a business led committee chaired by Miles Adcock, President – Space Imaging at e2v. Inclusive.

The main business of this meeting was to receive feedback from the four working groups that have been established around the themes of a Dynamic, Connected, Inclusive and Resilient area. The main points being considered by each of the groups is as set out below.

Dynamic

- Focus on 2 clusters: Quantum, Space & Technology and AI (UoE)
- Potential to broaden out to other areas in future
- Data is already available on dynamic infrastructure available and innovation centre mapping
- Importance of speaking to businesses about how to drive an innovative culture
- Looking at creating a hub, possibly using existing space and promoting it to businesses in terms of the place

Connected

- Working with Transport East looking at potential investment opportunities and how they make decisions
- Looking for meeting with DFT to understand how to align with local government
- Need to look at 5G opportunities and how can we unpack these opportunities and present to businesses
- Looking at case studies from universities
- Need to consider opportunities arising out of NEGC
- Storage and distribution – opportunity from Freeport
- Joining up dots and coming up with a credible plan

Inclusive

- 2 target groups:
 - access to work
 - upskilling of existing workforce
- Balance between prosperity and productivity.
- Could we deliver a 4th industrial revolution and change the workforce dynamic? By retraining?
- Fair Work - what does it mean? How do we apply this across the county, as part of the growth of social consciousness? Could we benchmark our success across other areas – internationally or anchor Institutions
- How do we make ourselves attractive: taking into account demographic change
- Recognised the London drain element in the Dynamic mission
- Potential to align retraining with the flexible working focus
- Not many large companies in Essex unlike USA where the ambition of SMEs is to grow. How to get more of that culture here.
- Barriers: access to finance and grow on space

Resilient

- Climate emergency has been declared across Essex
- Need to move to action on climate emergency and discover where the focus is through a baseline review
- Speak to all councils to understand plans and find alignment
- Glasgow Climate Emergency conference will be in November
- Proposal for Essex to follow with a Summit a week after that.
- How can we replicate in Essex – investment in hydrogen, invested, SELEP, entrepreneurship
- UK Science Fair in Chelmsford an opportunity
- Thought Leadership Workshops to be held over next few months

Transport East (26.02.20)

Transport East held a summit at Ipswich Town FC. Around fifty organisations from across East Anglia were represented.

There were presentations from Paul Davey, Head of Corporate Affairs, Hutchinson Posts (UK) Limited, The Rt. Hon. Lord Haselhurst, Chairman of West Anglia Taskforce and Nicola Beach, Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council.

These were followed by round table discussions on what should be the key features of a Transport Strategy for the East of England. The four areas covered were:-

- Inclusive Growth
- Improving Connectivity
- Reducing Carbon Emissions
- Working Beyond Boundaries

Essex Leaders and Chief Executives (12.03.20)

The meeting elected Cllr Neil Stock, Leader of Tendring District Council, as Chairman for the year.

The items covered were as follows:-

(i) Covid-19/Coronavirus

Dr Danny Showell, Public Health Consultant at Essex County Council, and the Chief Constable of Essex, as Chair of the Essex Resilience Forum, briefed Leaders on the current situation regarding the spread of the virus. By the time of our Council meeting I am sure that the position will have changed and I will give an update at the meeting.

(ii) Essex Vision: Two Years On

The purpose of this item was to update Leaders on progress in achieving the Vision and the proposed next steps.

(iii) Deprivation in Essex

Leaders received an update on the new 2019 analysis of deprivation in Essex.

(iv) Use of Large-Scale Temporary Accommodation

This item was a report back on negotiations that have taken place with London Boroughs about placements from London into Essex.

In the quarter ended June 2019 there were over 2000 households in temporary accommodation in Greater Essex. It was agreed to request officers to continue to negotiate with London Councils on placements of households into Essex, in particular to secure re-settlement support funding, and ask authorities to review their use of temporary accommodation in Essex with a view to signing up to the same requirements as we expect of London Boroughs.

(v) Responding to the Challenge of Empty Homes in Essex

Leaders received a report back from the Essex Housing Officers Group (EHOG) on the progress that has been made in developing an understanding of practice across Essex, and the formation of the Empty Homes Task and Finish Group to take action forward.

(vi) Consultation on the Proposed Bradwell B Nuclear Power Station

There was a presentation on the proposed new nuclear power station at Bradwell-on-Sea. Bradwell B is holding its first stage of consultation on its proposals. Details of the consultation, including public exhibition events and a feedback form are available at the following link: <https://bradwellb.co.uk>

(vii) Estimating the cost of Domestic Violence

Assistant Chief Constable Andy Prophet gave a presentation about domestic violence and abuse in Essex. He posed the question, "Are we doing enough collectively to tackle the harm caused by domestic abuse?"

Whilst the Police will keep addressing the symptoms there is a need to galvanise partnership resources (people and money) to more effectively target repeat perpetrators of abuse.

It was agreed to prepare a business case for a radically different partnership response to domestic abuse across Greater Essex.

(viii) Essex Police Knife Use Project

Essex Police presented an update on the Essex Knife Use Project. They have developed a model which is proving successful in identifying people who will have a high probability of committing knife crime. Using this model they have identify a cohort of 90 potential offenders.

Councillor Graham Butland
Leader of the Council

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

Agenda No: 15b

Council Tax and Business Rates

Tax Collection rates

- **Council Tax** collected to end of February was 96.6% compared to 97.07% for the previous year. The target for the year is 98.3%. Amount collected was £91.126million.
- **Business Rates** up to the end of February the collection rate was 96.95% compared to 96.5% for the previous year. The target for the year is 98.6%. Amount collected was £42.183 million.

2020/21 Council Tax and Business Rate bills were despatched on 10th March and 4th March, respectively.

I am pleased to report that Business Rate bills incorporated all mandatory and discretionary reliefs, as appropriate; the number of businesses, charities, etc receiving the reliefs are:

- Mandatory Charitable relief – 252
- Mandatory Community Amateur Sports Clubs relief – 22
- Discretionary Charitable and Not-for-Profit Organisations relief – 164
- Pub Discount – 50
- Retail Discount – 307
- Rural Rate relief – 6
- Small Business Rate relief – 2,165
- Supporting Small Business relief – 7
- Local Newspaper relief – 1
- Discretionary Rate relief – 158

(it should be noted that some businesses may have received more than 1 of the reliefs)

Treasury Management

Given the recent reaction to the coronavirus (Covid-19) by the global financial markets, I felt it appropriate to update Council on the impact on the valuation of our investments in pooled equities, property and mixed asset funds. The total of £19million we have currently invested in these funds had a market value of £20.83million as at the end of January 2020, but this declined to £19.366million as at the end of February 2020; a reduction of £1.464million or 7%. The Council's Treasury Advisors, Arlingclose, advise '*not to sell our strategic equity or*

multi-asset income funds. While the funds' prices will be volatile in the near term, it is best to avoid whipsaw momentum selling. The managers of the funds in your portfolio concentrate on longer-term company fundamentals, target income generation and aim to achieve risk-adjusted returns. In addition, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's statutory override which is in place until at least March 2023 avoids changes in the funds' capital values on 31st March impacting the General Fund.'

Performance

Performance Management – Projects:

As at the end of December 2019, eight projects are complete and a further 45 projects are on track and progressing well.

Performance Management – indicators:

Eleven performance indicators have met or exceeded target and four performance indicators have missed their target of which three missed by less than 5%, and one missed by more than 5% (recycling rates).

Financial Performance.

An overall positive variance is projected for the year of £530,000 (-3.6%) against budget.

- Across all services staffing budgets are forecast to be underspent by £327,000; and after allowing for the corporate efficiency target of £200,000, this results in a net projected underspend of £127,000.
- Other expenditure is projected to be marginally over budget by £7,000.
- Income is projected to be overachieved by £410,000.

The overall forecast variance for the year has changed adversely by £185,000 from that reported at Q2, which projected a positive variance of £715,000. This change is mainly due to forecast additional expenditure of £199,000, a reduction in projected income -£92,000, partially offset by an increase in the projected underspend on staffing +£106,000.

Customer Services

The Bulky Waste Collection service, previously operated by Tendring Reuse and Employment Enterprise (TREE), has been brought back in-house, with the Customer Service Centre taking the bookings/payments for the service. The Customer Services Centre worked together with the Web Team and Waste Management to ensure that all the necessary arrangements and processes were up and running within one week to minimise the disruption to the service.

Human Resources

Senior Appointments

Senior Management recruitment for Corporate Director has been successful with the appointment of Dominic Collins, who started with us on 2nd March. The Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer post has been successfully recruited and Kim Cole will join us on 27th April. In the meantime, with the departure of Ian Hunt in February Clare Pattinson has been appointed on an interim basis.

Employee of the Month

Our Employee of the Month for February 2020 is **Michael Graham** in **Housing Options**.

Michael has been nominated for his determination and dedication when dealing with a highly complicated case.

“Michael started work with the Housing Options Team at the end of June 2019. One of Michael's very first cases evolved into one of the most complicated we have ever dealt with. The situation presented us with a set of circumstances (which included immigration status, benefits issues, ownership of a property abroad, domestic abuse and mental health difficulties) we had never encountered before and required significant research to be undertaken.

Throughout the six months Michael worked with the customer he was unfailingly positive and supportive through all the challenges faced. Other agencies were involved and, on a number of occasions, gave advice to the customer which was incorrect and/or unhelpful: Michael therefore also had to liaise with them in considerable detail to ensure that everything remained on track.

At every single step Michael encountered a new problem but, where others may have despaired, Michael maintained a positive approach and doggedly continued to research, support, negotiate and advise. I cannot emphasise enough how difficult this case has been and the amount of time and effort Michael has put into achieving a positive outcome: he has shown enormous strength of character.

Finally, a positive outcome has been achieved and the customer has moved into new accommodation. I am in no doubt that this would not have happened without Michael's determination and dedication.

Special mention for two nominees this month – **Will Arthur in Digital Services** and **Tim Havers in Planning (Development Management)** for being Highly Commended.

Finally, a **special Initiative Award** to two officers who showed initiative and demonstrated bravery when faced with house fire whilst undertaking their work.

On the 16th January 2020, **Paul Williams** and **Andy Ashfield** from **Operations (Waste Services)** discovered and responded to a house fire at a property in White Colne whilst completing their route. Thanks to Paul and Andy, they saved a 4 month old puppy named Tilly and prevented the fire within a grade 2 listed building from engulfing further. The house owners were eternally grateful to Paul and Andy and wrote to the Council praising and thanking them. They were also mentioned in the Halstead Gazette that reported on the fire. Andy and Paul are a real credit to themselves and great ambassadors for the Council with their actions on the day.

Cllr David Bebb
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF HOMES

Agenda No: 15c

HOUSING

New Affordable Housing

As previously reported, this has been a very positive year for new affordable housing completions in the District. To the end of January, 186 new homes were completed and the total will be above 200 by the end of the financial year 2019/20.

To the end of January, there were starts on 236 new affordable homes, most of which will be completed during 2020/21. The Housing Team has adopted a target of 200 affordable homes to be completed during the coming financial year. This is higher than any adopted target during the last 20 years.

Abbeyfield, the housing provider specialising in housing for older people is making good progress with its new scheme in Church Lane, Braintree, just along from Braintree College. The development includes 100 self-contained apartments with communal facilities, including a restaurant, meeting rooms and a cinema. 37 of the apartments are for social rent and an additional 30 homes will be sold on a shared equity basis. The scheme will be staffed for 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Previous needs assessments for this type of accommodation have suggested that this scheme will help meet the current demand identified for this type of housing in the District.

First Homes

The Government published its consultation paper for the new 'First Homes' announced in the Queen's Speech. The closing date for comments is 3rd April 2020.

Under the proposal, homes will be offered with 30% discount off the market price. They are purchased in the normal way, using conventional mortgage products. The homes will always remain at 70% of the market price each time they are re-sold.

The homes will form part of the affordable housing negotiated for during the planning approval process, avoiding any need for Government subsidy. We will know more as the scheme proceeds but it looks likely that the tenure will mainly replace the shared ownership element that we normally seek.

The scheme is likely to have a different impact around the country depending on local market conditions. In the Braintree District, prices on existing developments of new homes start at around £300,000, which means that a prospective purchaser would have to be able to secure sufficient deposit and mortgage to cover the discounted purchase price of £210,000.

Housing Register Applications

January 2020 was a record month for new housing applications. Most people complete

their housing applications online and in January, the Housing Assessment Team received 361 new applications. This is the highest number of new applications for any month during the last 5 years. The monthly average over the last 2 years has been around 200, so this has represented a big jump in numbers. Things slowed a bit in February but the month was still well above average.

The Team are conducting research into the reasons behind the increase, looking at the profile of the households that applied to see if there are identifiable trends that may relate to the record high.

Housing Options

The Housing Options Team also experienced an increase in demand during January, with approaches reaching their highest since January 2019. Presentations typically increase after the Christmas/New Year period so we hope they will begin to reduce soon. We have now completed nearly 2 years working with the Homelessness Reduction Act and data for 2019-20 should be more reliable.

The team continue to achieve some very good outcomes for customers, often in very challenging circumstances.

Peabody, in collaboration with Sanctuary and SAHA (Salvation Army Housing Association) have been awarded the contract for support in homelessness accommodation (to be known as the 'Essex Housing Partnership') by Essex County Council. The contract is due to commence from 1st April 2020.

In the Braintree District this will provide continued support in four housing schemes.

Officers will be meeting with Peabody in March to discuss the contract and any implications it may have for the Council and our customers.

Housing Development Sites

Due diligence continues with Chelmer Housing Partnership, with the intention of an exchange of contracts, subject to planning permission, early in 2020. Heads of Terms have been provisionally agreed subject to agreement on performance, e.g. the time within which CHP will submit planning applications and the basis for valuations.

Chapel Hill

The Council is exploring Heads of Terms proposed by a residential developer. The terms include, but do not require, a joint venture with the Council. It is proposed to present the final terms to a joint briefing with the Homes and the Corporate Transformation portfolio holder in due course. In the interim, exploratory talks have been held with the tennis club concerning relocation of the club.

Braintree Town Centre – Manor Street Project

As previously reported, Heads of Terms have been agreed with Greenfields Community Housing (GCH), for the acquisition of all 35 residential units. This proposal has now received GCH Board approval. As a result, solicitors have been instructed and due diligence commenced. GCH are currently waiting for confirmation of the Homes England grant allocation.

GCH intend to make the 23 units in the main building available to local first-time buyers, on a shared ownership basis. Subject to confirmation of Homes England grant,

the 12 units in the east-block will be available for letting at social or target rents, i.e. substantially below the more usual affordable rents (up to 80% of market rent).

Progress Court – temporary accommodation project

Draft employers requirements have been prepared to reflect the particular requirements of this project. A suitably experienced, multi-disciplinary practice has been identified and a meeting arranged to discuss commercial arrangements and programme.

Councillor Kevin Bowers
Cabinet Member for Homes

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Agenda No: 15d

Skills

The Braintree District Apprenticeship event received excellent feedback and coverage in the week that followed and I am very pleased to report that all eight secondary schools in the District participated. As a result, over 1,400 students benefitted from learning about an apprenticeship as a post-16 option. Since May 2010 over 13,000 people in the parliamentary constituencies of Witham and Braintree have started an apprenticeship and we are proud to continue supporting and showcasing these opportunities.

Following successful partnerships with Google and Facebook last year to run free digital training sessions, we were extremely pleased to secure another opportunity for our residents. The #IamRemarkable workshop was timed to coincide with International Women's Day on 8th March 2020 and aimed to inspire women and underrepresented groups to celebrate their achievements in the workplace and beyond. The workshop highlighted the importance of self-promotion in their careers and provided them with the tools to practise this skill. The four-hour session was held on Friday 6th March 2020 from 10am-2pm at the Colchester Institute's Braintree Campus.

Our annual Job Fair, organised in partnership with JobCentre+ and proudly sponsored by Braintree Village, was held on Saturday 7th March 2020. We welcomed over 20 employers and support providers into Causeway House for those looking to change careers, a first job or a parent returning to work after having a family.

Pedestrianisation

Braintree District Council's long-standing ambition for a fully pedestrianised town centre is finally becoming a reality. An extensive consultation exercise was held during 2018 and this gave a clear indication that the public and businesses backed the proposal to create a traffic free and high quality public realm.

During 2019 the scheme was designed and developed to an extent that it was submitted into a competition for Department for Transport funding. By publically contributing £750k, Braintree District Council secured match funding from Essex County Council of a further £750k and it has now been confirmed that Braintree has won £1m towards the total scheme cost of £2.5m.

With extensive support of the Marketing and Communications Team a further seven week public consultation took place from 20th December 2019 to 6th February 2020. With 70% public support, officers are now considering points of detail on the nature of how the scheme is delivered and how construction impacts can be minimised.

Braintree District Council will be project managing the investment through a S278

Highways Agreement where Essex County Council consent to allow us to undertake works on their Highway. Advanced investigatory works on ground conditions, including trial holes, are already taking place and advanced works to Fairfield Road and Bank Street will take place straight after Easter.

The main works will be phased and it is expected that the main works to Market Square will be completed during July and August 2020, followed by the High Street during later summer and autumn 2020. The whole scheme is planned to be completed by Christmas 2020, although discussions with the contractor will prioritise early completion.

As promised during the recent consultation, a series of further specific engagement events will take place including those who responded to the online survey, along with discussions with local schools and groups. This will explore how the transformed public realm will support new and vibrant activities and events.

Business Engagement

Following the successful competition launched in December 2019 to promote Small Business Saturday, the winner of the funded short promotion film has now been contacted and accepted their prize. Winner Lizzie Hakes Bakes, a small independent business in the District, has been working with the Economic Development Team and has produced their draft film, which is currently undergoing final comments and amendments before it is showcased and promoted by the Marketing and Communications Team.

Visit to Toppesfield Vineyard

Last month, Councillors, Senior Management and the Economic Development Team visited Toppesfield Vineyard to explore routes to business growth for the rural tourism and drink business. Jane Moore, owner of the vineyard has also been supporting the Young Entrepreneur Programme, launched by Braintree District Council last year, by providing free mentoring to young aspiring business owners, which has allowed the business to give back into the community, from which they have received support from themselves.



Councillor Tom Cunningham
Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure

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

Agenda No: 15e

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Manor Street Regeneration Project

Significant progress continues to be made on various work-streams connected to the delivery of the Manor Street project. Essex County Council has now issued the required Traffic Regulation Orders, enabling the temporary relocation of bus stops, the gas mains diversion has been completed and the UKPN diversion is still progressing. Kier remain on programme taking full possession of the site on 23rd March 2020, by which time the Manor Street car park and bus station will close and the taxis will be re-located to the Town Hall car park.



Horizon 120 Business Innovation Park

Good progress continues to be made on various work-streams connected to the delivery of Horizon 120. Planning permission has been granted for the infrastructure works. The Local Development Order was presented at a Members evening on 6th February 2020 and considered by Planning Committee on 3rd March 2020, with an endorsement and

recommendation to approve at Full Council on 23rd March 2020. Timescales on all work-streams are tight, however the Strategic Investment team are confident that they will be met. Balfour Beatty, the contractor for the earthworks, plan to be on site on 16th March 2020, and although not part of our programme of work, Gridserve's construction works continue, as per their programme, with the modular building units due to arrive on site mid-March 2020. Due to their confidence in the programme and its delivery, Marshgate have instructed solicitors to firm up legal commitment to 5 businesses, which will occupy approximately 17 net developable acres (over 300,000ft² of employment space) and secure 400 jobs on-site. They are now approaching their limit of land under the option agreement and the Strategic Investment team are in discussion about the future growth that they believe they can deliver.

Enterprise Centres

Witham Enterprise Centre: Progress on the transfer of land remains slow, but detailed terms have been finalised and there is no apparent reason why the transfer cannot be expedited without further delay.

A technical team has been appointed and is working up proposals for the initial business case, now planned for September.

Horizon 120 Enterprise Hub

A technical team is being selected and appointed, with a view to a committed programme of design development in 2021. Fee proposals have been appraised and the technical team is being appointed.

The programme will be 6/8 weeks behind Witham as an Enterprise Centre will form an integral part of the proposed Hub.

I-Construct, Construction Innovation Hub:

At the time of writing, the Council has still not received confirmation of the terms of the ERDF grant finance. However, through work with Haven Gateway we are now confident that the scheduled costs are within budget and Haven Gateway have submitted the final business case to MCHLG and expect the contract to be signed in the next few weeks. Through officer contact, Essex County Council (ECC) has now agreed to confirm their agreement following Cabinet Member approvals.

Housing Development Sites

Detailed Heads of Terms were reviewed at a meeting with Chelmer Housing Partnership (CHP), and a series of detailed amendments identified. These are currently being reviewed by CHP.

Chapel Hill Housing Site

The Strategic Investment team is working with a residential developer who is undertaking a revised and updated land appraisal which is expected imminently.

The team has recently met the Tennis Club to review options for its relocation.

Sible Hedingham Medical Centre

The appointed architect is preparing design proposals to be reviewed by the GP practice, and the CCG, in advance of a planning pre-application meeting. The necessary site surveys are being procured.

The capital budget will be kept under review and, if necessary, will be resubmitted to Cabinet in May 2020, by which time a preferred bidder will be identified.

COMMERCIALISATION, INCOME GENERATION, & EFFICIENCY

Commercial activity continues in support of delivery of the **Delivering and Innovating** Corporate Priority, specifically:

- Consider new ways to generate income achieving financial self-sufficiency
- Modernise the way we work to ensure we continue to deliver high quality and value for money services
- Build strong, effective partnerships across the public, private, voluntary and community sector taking a place-based approach to achieve more for the District.

The 2019/2020 net income projected across traded services is circa £192,000.

ICT & DIGITAL SERVICES

Digital Strategy Update

At the end of another busy year in the delivery of the digital strategy, I wanted to take the opportunity to update Members on some of the key projects that our teams have been working on:

Digital Council

- **UNiform Enterprise** – we are just putting the finishing touches to the IDOX Enterprise system in Planning, which introduces an electronic case management, workflow and performance management system designed to improve productivity in the service. Once this is implemented, we will start implementation in the Environmental Health team.
- **Mobile working** – the Planning team is about to start implementation on a mobile working tool, which will assist our Planners and Planning Enforcement Officers with access to key documents in the field.
- **Business Continuity** – we have recently completed implementation of our new Business Continuity solution for key systems. This will increase the speed that we can get our services back up and running again in the event of an incident.
- **Cyber Security** - in the last month we have been successful in retaining our Public Sector Network Accreditation, following a successful health check on our security systems.
- **Sharepoint/OneDrive** – we now have three services successfully migrated to Sharepoint and OneDrive, increasing their flexibility, access to data and collaborative working tools. The services are operating as showcases for the rest of the organisation.

Digital Customer

- **Tourism Website** – Members will be aware that we have recently launched the Tourism website, which is proving incredibly popular already. This gives our

businesses and residents a resource to find out more about our fantastic District and what is going on that they can get involved with.

- **Online Bookings** – we have successfully introduced new case management systems for Pest Control booking, the Enterprise Centre and Bulky Waste collections. We have also implemented online bookings for the Enterprise Centre and within the next quarter, will be able to provide online bookings for Pest Control and Bulky Waste collections.
- **Web Accessibility** – we have recently completed an audit of our website to understand what is needed to ensure that it is compatible with new accessibility regulations from September 2020. Over the next few months, we will be working across the organisation to review all content, making it more customer friendly as well as compliant with the new regulations.

Digital District

- **Broadband** – over the period of this strategy, we have invested £606,000 in Broadband, supporting the countywide programme to ensure that more properties across our District have access to Superfast Broadband. In the last year there have been over 1,700 properties connected to superfast broadband in the District. We will continue to work with ECC and partners to ensure that this service is rolled out as quickly as possible across all areas of the District.
- **Skills for businesses** – over the last year we have been working with businesses to signpost them to services that can support them and have hosted popular workshops from Google and Facebook to support small businesses who want to increase their skills. There will be more coming in the year ahead.
- **Skills for our communities** – our partners Community 360 have been running iTea sessions throughout the year, supporting residents to improve their digital skills and tackling social isolation and loneliness at the same time.
- **Research and Innovation** – we have started to work with two of the universities in the county to understand how we can take advantage of new technology and digital innovation to improve the lives of our businesses and communities. We are planning some exploratory projects over the next year with them particularly focussed in the health and wellbeing area.
- **WiFi 4 EU** – the team is continuing to work with planning colleagues to identify suitable sites to install free WiFi in our town centres, which we hope will be completed in Spring 2020. Once this is completed, we will be looking at some of the larger villages in the District to see whether WiFi rollout is feasible.

Future Plans

- **Cybersecurity Members evening** – I would like to encourage all Members to attend the Cybersecurity briefing on 7th April 2020. Our team and Essex Police will be updating you on the latest issues and how we can help to protect ourselves.
- **Technology Day** – with so much going on and things moving so fast, we want to take the opportunity to hold another Technology Day to update staff and Members. We are planning this for Autumn 2020 and will be showcasing how we are using technology to innovate and improve performance and customer service. We will also be looking at the future and what we can expect from technology in our organisation, across our District and in our day to day lives.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Pedestrianisation of Braintree Town Centre

The second pedestrianisation consultation was held from 20th December 2019 to 6th February 2020. The online survey and public engagement events provided residents, visitors and businesses with an opportunity to shape the project and say what they wanted to see in their town centre.

The survey was promoted through a number of communication channels including social media, press, email, newsletters and the local newspaper. In total 435 surveys were completed.

The top five features respondents requested were: trees, CCTV, planting, Wi-Fi and water features. The top three events respondents want to see: music, seasonal and family themed. The full results and updates on the project are available on our website at www.braintree.gov.uk/pedestrianisation.

Face-to-face drop in sessions were also held in Braintree Town Centre, providing an opportunity for people to see a map of the proposed area under consideration for pedestrianisation and ask questions. 151 people attended, ranging from residents, visitors, businesses, market traders and landlords.

The Department of Transport recently announced £1million funding towards the project, which was promoted via email newsletters, social media and press and media interviews.

Manor Street Development

Communication to residents and businesses is increasing as we approach the closure of the site to commence the build. Messaging for buses, car parks and the extension of Manor Street's one-way system has been distributed widely.

Manor and Victoria Street car parks closed on Sunday, 1st March 2020.

The bus park closes on Sunday, 22nd March 2020 evening. Temporary bus stands have been positioned around the old bus park site and will be open to services from Monday, 23rd March 2020. Signage has been placed in the bus park telling bus passengers where the new stands are following the closure.

Residents and businesses can also pick-up alternative car parking and temporary bus stop leaflets from the Town Hall, Causeway House, Library and the Museum. This information can also be downloaded from our website. The bus drivers will also distribute bus leaflets to bus passengers.

Officers will be on site for the first three days, (following the closure of the bus park, with 'high vis' vests displaying a 'how may I help you?' message), to support people.

The designs for the hoarding (which will be erected by the 23rd March 2020) will feature our key messages and material design inspired by the Warner Textile Archive which is celebrating its 150-year anniversary this year.

Councillors, officers and community members will join Kier for a ground breaking ceremony w/c Monday, 16th March 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Communications team is getting regular information from Public Health England and has been sharing its messages with staff and residents through its internal and external channels. The first port of call for the public and staff is

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Councillor John McKee
Cabinet Member for Corporate Transformation

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

Agenda No: 15f

TOURISM

We were very pleased to launch our new tourism website
www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk on Monday 17th February 2020.

I would like to share with you some statistics on the website and social media performance in the first week (17th February – 24th February) which we are very pleased with and officers will continue to ensure that this level of positive engagement is maintained.

Objective	Achieved as at 24 th Feb	On target?
To achieve at least 200 followers/likes on Instagram and Facebook in the first month of website launch (<i>mid-February to mid-March</i>)	558	+179%
To encourage the media to report positively on the new website	Braintree and Witham Times B&W Times Facebook	Completed. Support also received from Visit Essex .
To receive at least 200 views on the website in the first month of the launch (February 2020)	1,219	+ 509.5%

In-depth stats

Platform	Users	Page Views	Average Page View	New events uploaded by external users
www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk	1,219 *	5,411	3	59

Top 5 most popular pages:-

1. Home page <https://www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk/>
2. Submit an event <https://www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk/whats-on/submit-event>
3. What's On > Markets <https://www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk/whats-on/markets>
4. What's On <https://www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk/whats-on>
5. What's On > Events <https://www.visitbraintreedistrict.co.uk/whats-on/events>

We have a number of events planned and officers will be undertaking promotional activity to raise the profile of the Visit Braintree District brand. This includes:-

- Greater Anglia Branch Line Filming
- Street Market Promotion
- English Tourism Week 18th – 25th April 2020
- Community Rail Event in collaboration with Braintree Museum – 14th April 2020
- Easter/Half-term activity promotion
- Community Rail in the City (promotional stand at Liverpool Street Station – free of charge) – 13th May 2020
- English Wine Week 23rd May – 31st May 2020
- VE Day; social media, Press Release, Website, Case Studies and local event promotion 8th May 2020

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Braintree District Volunteer Awards

Members will hopefully have seen the launch of this year's volunteer awards which is due to take place on Wednesday 3rd June 2020. The awards recognise the vital role that volunteers, adults and young people have within our communities. At the last Full Council meeting many of you shared examples of volunteers working within your community and I encourage you to spread the word or nominate them yourself. It would be great to see an increase in nominations this year.

The nomination categories are:

- Inspirational Role Model
- Going the Extra Mile
- Volunteer group
- Long Service

The closing date for nominations is Friday 1st May 2020. Nominations can be made via the website www.braintree.gov.uk/volunteerawards.

The volunteer awards have been designated as a corporate project for our apprentices and they have been instrumental in assisting officers in the planning and organisation of this year's event.

Social Isolation and Loneliness

The Green Dragon on London Road, Braintree has requested to become a Meet Up Monday venue. The team will be putting together promotional material for distribution.

Slow Shopping

Officers are looking to introduce the Slow Shopping initiative to Witham with support from the management of both town centre shopping centres. Contact is being made with businesses in the Grove Centre and Newlands Shopping Centre to invite them to an awareness session at the end of March.

Slow Shopping provides dedicated times in the week for those who live with anxiety,

mental illness, those who have communication challenges, the elderly, in fact anyone who wants to go shopping and feels they may need a bit more time or support.

Community Transport

Members will recall that the team has introduced a number of new routes across the District since the beginning of the year where passengers can use their bus pass for payment. These services are alongside the usual services provided by one of our fleet of minibuses or through the social car scheme run by our fantastic pool of volunteers.

In January 2020 the routes introduced were:-

- Tabor Place, Braintree to Braintree Shopping Village Fortnightly on a Thursday
- Victoria Court, Braintree to Morrisons in Witham fortnightly on a Tuesday
- Riverside Court, Halstead to Braintree Town Centre fortnightly on a Monday
- Abbeyfields, Braintree to Braintree Shopping Village monthly on a Tuesday

The latest routes to be introduced are:-

- Homeweave House, Coggeshall to Braintree Town Centre fortnightly on a Tuesday
- High Elms, Braintree to Witham Town Centre fortnightly on a Wednesday
- Priory Hall, Halstead to Braintree Shopping Village monthly on a Friday

Community Marketplace

We supported Community360 to host a Community Marketplace event which saw approximately 30 organisations come together to hear about the Livewell agenda and discuss how the community and voluntary sector could become more involved in the delivery of projects that meet the District's health, wellbeing and community priorities. Information was also provided on a range of funding streams that are currently available including Councillors Community Grants, Reaching Communities and Awards for All. The event was opened up to the public in the afternoon which allowed local residents to see the fantastic work that is being delivered across the District and the services available to them.

HERITAGE



Windmill

Storm Ciara caused some significant damage to one of the sails at Bocking Windmill. The damage has been registered with insurers and officers are looking to obtain quotes from millwrights and heritage building restoration firms to price the repairs required. The millwright has managed to turn the sails to a position which reduces the wind loading on the remaining sails.

Town Hall

The Town Hall continues to apply its customer retention strategy to keep as many bookings as possible when the Manor Street development begins in March 2020. A close working relationship has been established to re-direct hires directly impacted by the works to the Braintree Enterprise Centre as an alternative.

One additional hire feature which is becoming popular with wedding bookings is the pop-up bar. Originally constructed for last year's Christmas event, the bar is being utilised now to offer guests drinks at wedding ceremonies.

The 60+ on board group, which was introduced to combat social isolation issues in Braintree Town by providing a venue for elderly residents to interact with others through the playing of board games, is proving very popular with now over 30 members attending the sessions.

The Town Hall has revised its funeral wake offer and is now actively marketing the offer with local funeral directors for consideration.

Heritage Open Day

I am pleased to announce that the Windmill and the Town Hall Centre, along with the Museum and the Warner Archive, will all be open for "Heritage Open Day" on Saturday 12th September 2020. All the local venues opening on the same day will give our residents and visitors a more comprehensive offer. The opening day will be publicised on our new tourism website nearer the time. Please visit www.visitbraintree.co.uk for further information.

Councillor Frankie Ricci
Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Tourism

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

Agenda No: 15g

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Panners Pond repairs

Unfortunately there has been significant erosion of the banks at Panners Pond, Gt. Notley and quotes are being sought to carry out remedial works. The reinforcement works will be undertaken using coir rolls pre-planted with native aquatic plants which will help establish/maintain wildlife habitats and help to improve site biodiversity, whilst offering a solution that is sensitive to the natural surroundings.



Partnership working at Humber Road, Witham

On 24th January, the Council joined forces with Greenfields Community Housing, Humber Road Residents' Association and local schools to help litter-pick the Humber Road estate. Two teams of litter-picking staff plus mechanical sweepers were involved on the day.

New Floodlights at Gt Notley Country Park

The Council plans to replace the flood lighting at the Artificial Grass Pitch at Gt. Notley Country Park with new LED lamps. Planning permission is being sought for the lighting design which, if approved, will provide the required level of illumination with only half of the electricity supply used by the existing floodlights.

STREET SCENE PROTECTION

For two weeks in January, the team was filmed by Lambent Productions for a new series of Grime and Punishment which is due to be screened on Channel 5 this Summer. This focuses on the work carried out by enforcement officers to tackle environmental issues (litter, fly-tipping etc.) as well as fearless cleaners and sewage warriors who deal with other types of human waste and mess.

Use of CCTV in conjunction with fly-tipping hot-spots is continuing to have a positive impact on dealing with waste offences. In January, a male was captured fly-tipping some catalogues in Straits Mill, Braintree. He was interviewed under caution and served with a £400 fixed penalty notice for fly tipping.

Waste was witnessed being discharged from a vehicle owned by a female from Felsted. She was asked to provide details of the person who committed the offence by way of a statutory notice issued under Section 108 Environment Act 1995 (a Requisition for Information). However, she failed to reply and was subsequently prosecuted for failure to comply with the Notice. She pleaded guilty to the offence and received a 3 month conditional discharge, as well as being ordered to pay a £20 victim surcharge and £50 towards Braintree District Council's costs.

CAR PARKING

Proposed Traffic Regulation Order, Galleys Corner

The Council has been working with the North Essex Parking Partnership and local businesses to find a solution to traffic congestion and safety issues on the Galleys Corner estate. This has culminated in a proposed Traffic Regulation Order which went out to formal consultation at the end of February. It is anticipated that the new waiting restrictions will be in place by early Summer.

GREEN HEART OF ESSEX

Great British Spring Clean

Keep Britain Tidy's spring clean is taking place between 20th March and 13th April this year. As usual we have timed our cleaning of the A120 to coincide with this. This will involve traffic calming measures and a 15 mile round trip from Marks Farm to Felsted.

If during this period volunteer groups wish to take part, we will provide litter picking equipment and arrange to remove rubbish collected by the volunteers. For those wishing to participate please contact csc@braintree.gov.uk. Also new anti-littering signs will be deployed in various parts of the District.

Plastics Pledge

The next phase of **Say No to Plastics** has been launched and is aimed at businesses, schools and community groups, although it is still open to residents to sign up to. This will encourage them to take the pledge and see how they can reduce single use plastic waste at work and at school. A free online resource pack will be available full of ideas, hints and tips on quick and easy suggestions to help inspire people to get

involved. For more information or to make a pledge, please click on this link www.loveessex.org/plastics

By the end of February, 1,243 individuals had signed the pledge, with Braintree District Council leading table at 209. For household pledges, the Council was in 2nd place just behind Chelmsford.

Individual pledges			
District	January	February	Total
Basildon	126	22	148
Braintree	183	26	209
Brentwood	28	12	40
Castle Point	48	13	61
Chelmsford	155	33	188
Colchester	96	18	114
Epping Forest	24	7	31
Harlow	29	6	35
Maldon	37	17	54
Rochford	79	8	87
Tendring	50	18	68
Uttlesford	51	49	100
Out of County	87	21	108
Total	993	250	1243

Household pledges			
District	January	February	Total
Basildon	284	54	338
Braintree	441	70	511
Brentwood	64	21	85
Castle Point	110	31	141
Chelmsford	407	113	520
Colchester	233	43	276
Epping Forest	56	23	79
Harlow	61	18	79
Maldon	102	32	134
Rochford	184	24	208
Tendring	130	36	166
Uttlesford	125	94	219
Out of County	208	49	257
Total	2405	608	3013

Some time ago via Keep Britain Tidy I was invited to participate in research by The Head of School of Law at Essex University on the development of the Litter Law Report. I have been invited to attend a presentation on 24th March on this research on how councils and others can use the law to tackle litter and the resulting challenging recommendations for improvements.

LANDSCAPES AND COUNTRYSIDE

Essex County Council recently planted 100+ saplings at Gt. Notley Country Park.

The Head Teacher at Great Bradfords School, Cllr. Justin Wrench, took delivery of 120 saplings from The Woodland Trust. As this was too many for the school to use, I introduced them to The Friends of Bocking Blackwater Nature Reserve, who I knew were going to be doing further tree planting in the reserve in March. This I am sure will be very beneficial for both parties and most important of all to nature and the environment. I am delighted to have been asked by the school to participate in their tree planting on 31st March.

ESSEX POLICE FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

I will be attending the Commissioner's conference on Perspectives of Violence on 13th March. I will also be visiting the Force Control Room on 16th March.

MILITARY COVENANT

On 24th March I have been invited to attend the 75th Anniversary of Operation Varsity, at the Marks Hall Estate. Operation Varsity was the largest airborne operation in history to be conducted on a single day and in one location. It was collaboration between British and American Airborne Divisions and played a vital role in the final assault in

Germany during WW2. Marks Hall Estate was the HQ of the RAF's 296 and 297 squadrons based at Earls Colne Airfield which took part in the assault. The casualties were devastating and the memorial site was created within the arboretum.

I am appalled to have to report that the 'Tommy' Silhouette that we bought for the Witham Memorial Gardens has been stolen; we are hoping to be able to purchase a replacement before V.E. Day.

Councillor Mrs W Schmitt
Cabinet Member for Environment and Place

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF PLANNING

Agenda No: 15h

Neighbourhood Planning

Cressing Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by the Council on 17th February 2020.

The Neighbourhood Plan for Coggeshall has been submitted under Regulation 15, and a consultation will be arranged shortly. The submission documents include a village design statement for the village.

Feering Neighbourhood Plan is currently undergoing Regulation 14 consultation which is the stage prior to submission to the Local Authority.

Local Plan

The re-opened Part 1 examination started on 14th January 2020 at Colchester Football Stadium. The full timetable was available on the Council's website, and those who were unable to attend could listen to a live audio recording of proceedings. The sessions were on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, between 9.30am and 5.30pm, with the last session on 30th January 2020.

We are awaiting the Inspector's initial findings letter which is due in a matter of weeks.

Conservation Area Appraisals

Three Conservation Area Appraisals are to be considered by Planning Committee in April 2020 (subject to confirmation).

Work has now started on a further appraisal for Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street.

We have received several requests for Conservation Area Appraisals to be carried out, including one for Halstead. Anyone can request an appraisal for an area, and requests are considered on the following basis:-

- Time since the last appraisal or original designation
- Development pressure
- Areas with fewer listed buildings (the fewer listed buildings the greater the risk to the conservation area)
- Parish and Town Council requests

Requests should be submitted to the Planning Policy Team.

Funding is available for a further three Conservation Area Appraisals which will be conducted next financial year.

Requests for new conservation areas will be considered on a case by case basis. Paragraph 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) makes it clear that when considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

Bradwell B Project

The Bradwell Power Generation Company, known as BRB (a partnership between CGN Energy and EDF Energy), is developing proposals for a new nuclear power station (Bradwell B) at Bradwell-on-Sea in Maldon. On 4th March 2020 BRB launched a Stage One consultation, which closes on 27th May 2020, seeking views on their initial proposals and options for the new power station and its associated development. Working with Cabinet and other Member colleagues I will be drafting an official response from Braintree District Council, however Members are encouraged to review the consultation documentation both in the Members area and available at www.bradwellb.co.uk.

Councillor Mrs Gabrielle Spray
Cabinet Member for Planning

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL –
PORTFOLIO AREA OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Agenda No: 15i



Tour de France passing through the Braintree District 2014

Leisure

Vélo Essex

The largest mass participation sporting event in Essex's history will be held on Sunday 20th September 2020.

- It is estimated that there will be 15,000 riders taking part in the event
- There are two routes – 100 mile and 50 mile
- Some of the route will re-trace the 2014 Tour de France Stage 3 route
- The cycle rides will take place on a closed road circuit and include many roads in our District

With over half of the riders likely to travel from outside the County, the event is expected to bring significant business to local shops, restaurants and hotels, culminating in a substantial economic impact for the District. As well as bringing custom to local businesses, Vélo Essex is also expected to raise millions of pounds for a range of local and national charities.

The 100 mile route sets off from Hylands Park, Chelmsford and heads west to Leaden Roding, Bran End, Great Dunmow and Finchingfield and then north to Saffron Walden. Heading east, the route will take riders to Steeple Bumpstead, Ridgewell, Toppesfield and Wethersfield. The riders will then head south to Rayne, Felsted and Howe Street before returning to Hylands Park.

The 50 mile route designed for families and leisure cyclists will take riders directly from Bran End to Rayne.

The organisers and Essex County Council will execute a robust Business & Resident Communications Strategy aimed at raising awareness of the road closures within our District and will be working closely with individuals and businesses to help overcome any access issues caused by the road closures. I would encourage residents who will be affected by the road closures to plan ahead. Further information and contact details are listed on the [Vélo Essex website](#). The experience of the Tour de France showed that few problems arose in practice and the Sunday timetable will also help minimise difficulties.

Leisure Centres moving towards Cashless payments

On 13th February 2020 all Members received a letter from Lee Crabb, Head of Environment, Heritage, Leisure, Health & Wellbeing informing them about the proposal made by Fusion to go cashless in April 2020. In view of a number of concerns that have been expressed by Members, I arranged for a Senior Contracts Manager from Fusion to brief Members before the recent Member Development evening. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and hear about the experience of other sites that have moved over to cashless payments.

Fusion Annual Price Increase

Core fees and charges at leisure facilities operated by Fusion Lifestyle will increase by 1.9% from 1st April 2020. This is for “pay and play” activities such as casual swimming, badminton etc. The increase is in line with the contractual agreement to raise fees and charges annually by CPI-X indices. The rise reflects Fusion’s increased costs on utilities and staffing which are well above inflation rates. Fusion had previously set annual core price increases at the turn of the contract year in September, but have now aligned these increases with the Council’s financial year.

District Council Health Profile

At the recent meeting of the District Health & Wellbeing Panel, officers presented the 2020 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the Braintree District produced by medical and public health experts. The data allows the Panel to identify the current and future health, wellbeing and social care priorities for the District.

The document presents data from a range of topics which contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of our residents. It also highlights areas of inequality and identifies opportunities to improve the healthy lives for our residents.

Some of this data makes interesting comparisons between the Braintree District, England and Essex and can be viewed at <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/essex-jsna-reports-2019>.

At the next meeting of the Panel the partners will be using the data to identify priorities for the District.

Dementia

Work is taking place with the Community Rail Partnership and the Alzheimer's Society to make Braintree Railway Station Dementia Friendly. The Community Rail Partnership is a partnership between Greater Anglia and Essex County Council to engage local communities with their railway stations. It is hoped that by making alterations and additions at the station the Alzheimer's Society can brand the station Dementia Friendly as part of its Dementia Friendly Communities initiative.

Work taking place at Braintree Station includes:-

- Offering Dementia Friends sessions to station staff & volunteers
- Improving signage at the station
- Asking existing dementia groups to act as critical friends by visiting and using the station
- Promote the use of the Radar key at the toilets
- Offering Dementia Friends sessions to taxi drivers (people's journey to the station is an important factor)

A celebratory event is planned to take place on the train which local people living with dementia and their carers will be invited to attend.

This latest initiative supports various other dementia awareness programmes across the District, which includes:-

- Dementia Cinema at Halstead, Witham and Coggeshall
- Walk and Talk in Braintree, Halstead and Witham
- Cream Teas
- Sport for Confidence

Councillor Peter Tattersley
Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

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List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting		Agenda No: 16
Portfolio Not applicable Corporate Outcome: Not applicable Report presented by: Not applicable Report prepared by: Jessica Mann, Governance and Members Officer		
Background Papers:		Public Report
Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: Since the last Council meeting held on 17 th February 2020, the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Planning Committee – 18th February 2020 (2) Community Development Group – 19th February 2020 (3) Licensing Committee – 26th February 2020 (4) *Planning Committee – 3rd March 2020 (5) Performance Management Board – 4th March 2020 (MEETING CANCELLED) (6) Cabinet – 9th March 2020 (7) *Planning Committee – 17th March 2020 (8) *Partnership Development Group – 18th March 2020 (9) *Local Plan Sub-Committee – 19th March 2020 (MEETING CANCELLED) <p>*Those Minutes identified by the prefix * were not available at the time of publishing the Agenda, but are intended to be available to view on the Council's website prior to the meeting.</p>		
Recommended Decision: Members are invited to note the Minutes published.		
Purpose of Decision: Not applicable.		