

Council AGENDA

Monday, 27th March 2017 at 7:15 PM

**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)

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

Membership:-

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

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.

N BEACH
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 no later than 2 working days prior to the meeting. 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.

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PUBLIC SESSION	Page
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 To receive any announcements/statements from the Chairman and/or Leader of the Council.	
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 Minutes of the Previous Meeting To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 22nd February 2017 (copy previously circulated).	
6 Polling Station Review	5 - 7
7 Update on the work of the Grants Panel and Councillors' Community Grant Scheme	8 - 11
8 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.	
8a Councillor G Butland - Leader of the Council	12 - 13
8b Councillor D Bebb - Finance and Performance	14 - 15

8c	Councillor T Cunningham - Economic Development	16 - 18
8d	Councillor Lady Newton - Planning and Housing	19 - 21
8e	Councillor J McKee - Corporate Services and Asset Management	22 - 24
8f	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt - Environment and Place	25 - 27
8g	Councillor P Tattersley - Health and Communities	28 - 32
9	List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting	33 - 34
10	Exclusion of Public and Press: - To give consideration to adopting the following Resolution: - That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.	

PRIVATE SESSION

There is no items of business for Private Session.

Polling Station Review	Agenda No: 6
<p>Portfolio: Corporate Services and Asset Management Corporate Outcome: A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Report presented by: Councillor G Butland, Leader of the Council Report prepared by: Steve Daynes, Local Democracy Manager</p>	
Background Papers:	Public Report
Representation of the People Act 1983	Key Decision: No
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>Polling Stations</p> <p>Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 places a duty on the Council to designate a Building or Area for use as the Polling Place. There are few restrictions on the Location of the “Place” however this should, “where practicable” be within the Polling District thereby providing those electors with an accessible location. Having designated the Polling Place it is for the Returning Officer to secure suitable accommodation for the Polling Station within the Polling Place.</p> <p>Traditionally Public buildings (schools, church and community halls etc) are used as these afford the Returning Officer with reasonable access, sometimes at relatively short notice.</p> <p>The Returning Officer has been advised that the Foley House, High Garrett has ceased to be a Care Home for the elderly and as such is no longer available for hire as a Polling Station.</p> <p>The report therefore seeks Member support for the formal designation of Bocking Village Hall as the permanent polling place for electors of BH – Bocking (High Garrett)</p> <p>District Council Ward Members have been consulted and are content with the change in Polling arrangements as outlined in the report.</p>	

Recommended Decision:
That Members support the following change in Polling places for the electorate of High Garrett
Purpose of Decision:
To ensure that a suitable venue is secured for the conduct of elections for the electorate of High Garrett

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
Financial:	Costs will be met within existing budgets.
Legal:	The proposals comply with Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983
Safeguarding	There are no apparent issues from the changes to the Polling Places.
Equalities/Diversity	The proposed Polling Places provide for suitable access for all electors
Customer Impact:	It is anticipated that the change of locations will not adversely impact on customers.
Environment and Climate Change:	None
Consultation/Community Engagement:	All affected Members of DDG and Political Parties have been consulted and support the proposal related to the designation of alternative Polling Place
Risks:	There are no significant risks to be considered
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POLLING PLACES

1.0 BH- Bocking (High Garrett)

- 1.1 The designated Polling Place for this Polling District is Foley House, High Garrett.
- 1.2 The Returning Officer has been advised that, as a direct result of Foley House ceasing trading this location was no longer available for hire.
- 1.3 Regrettably, Returning Officer staff have been unable to secure alternative accommodation within the Polling District and as such have concluded that a return to the Polling District's former Polling Station of Bocking Village Hall, Church Street, Bocking represents the only sustainable solution.
- 1.4 All households within the Polling District have been consulted and advised that, should any elector have difficulties in attending Bocking Village Hall they can, on completion of an application form be issued with a permanent Postal Vote.
- 1.5 District Ward Councillors have been consulted and support the proposals.
- 1.6 Given that the designation of Polling stations is ultimately a Council function Members are asked to support the designation of Bocking Village Hall as the permanent polling place for Polling District **BH – Bocking (High Garrett)**.

Update on the work of the Grants Panel and Councillors' Community Grant Scheme		Agenda No: 7
Portfolio:	Health and Communities	
Corporate Outcome:	Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported	
Report presented by:	Councillor Mrs G Spray, Chairman of the Grants Panel	
Report prepared by:	Councillor Mrs G Spray, Chairman of the Grants Panel	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
<u>Council Agenda 27th June 2016 – Item 7 Councillors' Community Grant Scheme</u>	Key Decision: No	
Executive Summary:		
<p>This report provides an update on the work of the Grants Panel and Councillors' Community Grant Scheme that was launched in September 2016.</p> <p>The new grant scheme enables all 49 Ward Councillors within Braintree District the opportunity to support not for profit organisations and groups to develop and deliver community projects that benefit local residents.</p> <p>The budget for the new scheme was agreed at Council on the 22 February 2016. Grant funding of £1,500 per annum was allocated for each Councillor to award in 2016/17 and 2017/18 making the total grant funding available £147,000. The Council will need to consider the future of the scheme later in the year as part of the 2018/19 budget process.</p> <p>As at 28 February 2017 a total of 36 grants have been awarded with 32 Councillors supporting these projects.</p> <p>During the first six months after launch the feedback to the Panel and officers has been one of enthusiasm and many comments on how straightforward it is to implement.</p> <p>A summary of grants allocated is published on each individual Member's page on the Council's website.</p>		
Recommended Decision:		
To note the report.		
Purpose of Decision:		
To inform full Council on the work of the Members Grant Panel.		

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
Financial:	Budget for the new scheme was agreed at Council on the 22 February 16. Grant Funding of £1,500 per annum allocated for each Councillor to award in 2016/17 and 2017/18.
Legal:	Individual Councillor decision making in relation to their own ward can be undertaken in relation to an adopted scheme further to the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Members have to comply with the Code of Conduct and specifically the provisions in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
Safeguarding	Organisations where relevant are required to confirm that they have a safeguarding policy.
Equalities/Diversity	When deciding whether or not to award a grant Members must give due regard to the public sector's equality duty by consciously thinking about to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination including harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it and Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. As part of the decision making process, protected characteristics are – age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
Customer Impact:	The scheme operates district wide with all wards benefiting from the scheme.
Environment and Climate Change:	No direct implications although Members would be expected to consider this as part of the grant application process.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Scheme aims to enhance the Council's engagement with local communities.
Risks:	None arising out of this report.
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Background and Update

The Grant Panel comprises of nine Members and their role includes the monitoring of those projects funded as part of the last round of the Mi Community Grant Scheme and to oversee and monitor the introduction of the Councillors' Community Grant Scheme. The Panel also can provide support to Ward Councillors if there is any uncertainty with any applications submitted and help promote the new scheme with other Councillors.

The Grant Panel met in May 2016 to finalise the scheme format, the application form and timescales. The Panel has since met twice more, in November and the first week of February, with a further meeting scheduled for May 17. Officer support is provided by the Community Services Team, the key contact is Moira Groborz, Community Services Officer, also with support from Tracey Parry, Community Services Manager.

This scheme is designed to be managed by the Ward Councillors at a local level with £1,500 grant funding per Member available to allocate between September 2016 and March 2017. A further £1,500 is available from April 2017 to March 2018. Any unspent funds from the first grant period can be rolled forward and added to the second grant period. Ward Councillors are also able to pool their monies together either within their Ward i.e., multi Member Wards, or with adjoining Wards, providing they can demonstrate the funding will benefit local residents.

As at 28 February 2017 a total of 36 grants have been awarded with 32 Councillors supporting these projects. £23,285 has been spent so far with the average grant being £647; further details are set out in appendix 1. We had anticipated the scheme would take time to gather pace and this was the reasoning behind agreeing to any underspend being carried forward to 2017/18. The Panel feels that this is an encouraging start and we are aware that some Ward Members will be using 'rollover' monies to fund slightly larger schemes later in 2017.

During the first six months after launch the feedback to the Panel and officers has been one of enthusiasm and many comments on how straightforward it is to implement. Members have also taken the opportunity to avail themselves of the support provided by the members of the Grant Panel and the Community Services Team.

Every opportunity has been taken to promote and publicise the scheme using local media, e.g. photos at cheque presentations, and many Ward members have actively promoted the fund at a local level. It was also pleasing to see that the BDVSA E-Bulletin flagged up the scheme as the first item in their January 17 edition.

In summary, as Chair of the Community Grant Scheme I am pleased with progress thus far. The Panel is working well with the Community Services team whose support, as always, is much appreciated.

Gabrielle Spray
Chair of the Grants Panel

Appendix 1

Councillors' Community Grants Summary Sept 16 – Feb 17

Up to the end of February 2017;

£23,285 awarded in grants

31% of total funding available has been allocated

36 grants applications approved

£647 average grant

32 councillors have awarded grants

24 grants have been provided by a sole councillor

12 grants have been awarded jointly by 2 or more councillors

2 councillors have awarded their full allocation

- Information on the types of organisations receiving grants;

Voluntary and community sector 19

Parish Councils/meetings 7

Sport clubs 6

Church 1

Village halls 3

- Information on the age range of people benefiting from the grants;

Children & young people 8

Older people 3

All age ranges 25

LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL	Agenda No: 8a
OVERALL CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DIRECTION	

New Church Lane Surgery, Braintree (formally known as St Lawrence Medical Practice)

On the 3rd March 2017 I visited the new Practice building at the Braintree College Campus. The new surgery will be open to patients on Monday 20th March 2017 with an official opening on the 17th March 2017.

Essex Assembly 6th March 2017

I attended the Essex Assembly event which brought together leaders across Essex to develop new ways of working together, reviewing delivery of shared strategies and agreeing future collaborative action. The Essex Assembly will meet twice per year, in March and September. Over the past few months, a series of conversations and events have been taking place to develop a shared vision for Essex. The first Assembly meeting served as an opportunity to all get together to discuss the draft of the vision and how we can take it forward together. On the day, six themes (set out below) were prioritised for further action and I will keep Members updated on progress.

- Health and wellbeing
- Transport (i.e. congestion, frustration and costly transport)
- Culture and image of Essex
- Communities, cohesion and buy-in
- Developing the economy
- A positive future for the next generation

Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Meeting on 9th March 2017

I attended this meeting as did the Chief Executive. The agenda items discussed were:

- 1. Chairman for 2017/18** – confirmed as Cllr Neil Stock, Tendring DC
- 2. Councils for Voluntary Services Specification** – aligning financial support with joint priorities of Essex County Council and district councils
- 3. Growth and Infrastructure Framework** – a detailed document setting out key issues of growth for Essex, Thurrock and Southend and infrastructure needs now and in the future – this was welcomed and supported. A Chief Executive led group will take actions forward.
- 4. Police and Fire Collaboration – the Local Business Case** was presented by Roger Hirst, the Essex PCC and consultation closes on the 10th May 2017. Details can be found at <http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/localcaseforchange/>

5. **Council Tax Sharing Agreement** – there was support for this scheme being extended beyond 2017/18; there was also support for exploring whether Essex could be put forward as a business rate pilot in a two-tier area.
6. **Planning in Essex** – a number of issues discussed on growth, planning fees, section 106 and community infrastructure levy and housing white paper. A group will be established to explore these matters further and any joint work.
7. **Essex Pension Fund** – it was agreed that Cllr Terry Cutmore, Leader of Rochford DC, would be the representative from Essex Leaders to sit on the Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board.
8. **Tovi Eco Park, Basildon** – an update was given on air quality at the site by Essex CC

Councillor Graham Butland
Leader of the Council

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

Agenda No: 8b

Tax Collection Rates as at end of February

Council Tax – The running total collected was 97.2% (compared to 97.1% at the same time last year), and amount collected was £78.09million.

Business Rates – The running total collected was 96.6% (96.7%), and amount collected £42.678 million.

There continues to be encouraging trend in the success rate of council and business tax recovery, and decline in the number of recalcitrant council tax payers, with accompanying reduction in required recovery interventions.

The number of dwellings attracting the 50% council tax premium (empty for 2 years+) is 212. (199 at end of December)

Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme

A review has been completed on the Council's Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Charities and Not-for-Profit Organisations. The purpose of the review is to ensure the criteria used is clear and transparent; and to introduce a time limit on awards and a process for re-application.

Proposals were circulated to current recipients and stakeholders for comment. A report on proposals was submitted to the 13th March Cabinet meeting. If agreed the scheme will be implemented on 1st October 2017.

2017/18 Business Rate Bills

Bills were despatched in the week commencing 6th March 2017. The bills are based on the 2017 Rating List and include Transitional Relief and the revised Small Business Rate Relief and Rural Rate Relief schemes, as appropriate.

Whilst the Government announced New Business Rate Relief schemes (Supporting Small Businesses; new Discretionary Relief Scheme; and Business Rate Relief Scheme for Pubs) in the Spring Budget, the detail of these schemes and how they are to be applied is awaited.

Businesses should make their first instalment payment on 1st April 2017 based on the bill recently issued. The new Relief schemes will be applied to accounts, as appropriate, with revised bill and payment plan issued as soon as possible.

Performance

In the third quarter, a total of nine projects are now complete and a further 36 projects are progressing well. One project has an amber status. Twelve performance indicators have achieved or exceeded target, and one marginally less than 5%, but has recovered since.

The performance indicators that have missed target by more than 5% are in relation to tonnage of residual waste, business start-ups and jobs created through business advice and support, number of visitors to our leisure centres and passenger journeys through our community transport scheme.

Finance Performance

An overall positive variance for the year is forecast of £487,000 (-3.7%) against the budget of £13.107million. This represents a positive change of £184,000 from the position reported on at the end of the second quarter. Income is forecast to be overachieved by £273,000; and there is a projected net underspend of £214,000 on staffing and other expenditure.

The 2017/18 Budget already makes provision for £407,000 of the current year variance where this has been assessed as having an on-going effect.

Performance for payment of supplier invoices within 30 days continues well on track at 99.86% for January 2017 against the target of 99.0%.

Overall Cash balances increased in December following receipt of £2.718million, being the Council's share of the development element of the Community Housing Investment Partnership (CHIP) Fund. This resource is earmarked for affordable housing investments

Investments

Following consultation with Arlingclose, Treasury management advisors, a further sum of £2million was invested in Equity Funds in the last quarter. This takes the Council's total investment in Equity and Property Funds to £14million, the limit in the current Treasury Management Strategy for these investments is £15million. Market valuation at end of the February for long-term Pooled Funds is a net +£1.423million since initial investment.

A meeting was held with Arlingclose with the Strategic Investment Group on February 21st to review the investment climate and consider further expansion of investment in pooled funds. As a result it was agreed to invest a further £1m, which will take us up to our current limit of £15m within our investment policy. With significant growth in accumulation of overall investment capital, the majority earning very limited interest, it was also agreed to propose the raising of the limit for investment in pooled funds, for consideration by Council.

Cllr David Bebb
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Contact:	Cllr David Bebb
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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Agenda No: 8c

Enterprise Centres

In January 2017, detailed planning permission was granted for the construction of four commercial grow-on units as a further phase of the Braintree Enterprise Centre. The construction contract is currently out to competitive tender, with the project now programmed to reach completion by the end of 2017.

We are continuing to work with the developer on the Rural Business Hub proposal as part of the Premdor scheme in Sible Hedingham. Planning permission has been granted and Planners are in the process of agreeing the final specification. The developer, Bloor Homes, is looking to commence construction as soon as possible and has advised that completion will occur by the end of 2017.

Industrial Estates

We are coming to the end of year two of our industrial estate improvement programme, where we have worked with partners to fund a range of enhancements including new signage, CCTV and car park resurfacing in Braintree and Witham. Through contact we have with businesses on the Springwood Industrial Estate I am aware that issues of congestion at the roundabout remains a major issue at peak time, that's why we are continuing to work closely with Highways to press for an interim solutions whilst plans are brought forward elsewhere on the wider road network which will ultimately help to alleviate this issue.

In the Halstead area we have had initial conversations with businesses on the Bluebridge Industrial Estate about issues that they are experiencing and will be looking at projects that we can support in the north of the District in the next financial year.

Regeneration

The recent news that Townrow, among other smaller shops, is to close in the High Street has brought sharp focus by the local communities and the media the condition of Braintree town centre. There are a lot of misconceptions around the role of the Council and its powers in Braintree town centre and we have sought to dispel these through an interview with the Braintree and Witham Times. We are seeking to hold a workshop with the community and stakeholders and thereafter a joint Member workshop with Essex County Council to establish a vision which will dictate activity to commence as soon as possible.

Our work on town centre improvements in Halstead and Witham town centres is being refined in partnership with the Highways Authority. This dialogue is advancing us towards a point where we can be clear on what can be built and when.

Business Engagement

On 17th March 2017 we held our business exhibition at the Fennes in Bocking which included a full day of presentations on topics including Apprenticeships, Exporting and Future plans for Stanstead Airport, as well as stands from a wide range of local companies and business support agencies. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the businesses and organisations involved for helping to showcase the breadth of local entrepreneurial talent we have in our district, as well as our sponsors who helped make the event possible.

Looking forward we are already planning our new programme of business engagement activities for the next year which will continue on with our successful series of business breakfasts on topics of importance to local businesses. As well as these events that we are hosting, we are also talking to businesses across the District about hosting a series business roadshows at their own premises to showcase the work they do and to share their experiences with other local companies.

Broadband

Tendering for Phase Three of the Superfast Essex Programme is continuing with announcements of shortlisted companies expected soon. This month the Superfast Essex Steering Board is also visiting the BT research facility at in Ipswich where we have the opportunity to find out more about their plans for new broadband technologies to help get our communities online and with faster speeds.

Skills

The recent Job Fair on Saturday 4th March 2017 was our most successful yet with 468 members of the public attending. Feedback from exhibitors noted the calibre of attendees was extremely high and were genuinely looking for new opportunities. A full evaluation will be produced shortly and shared with the Essex Employment and Skills Board who provided funding for the event. The event was hailed as a great success and the Chairman and Cllr Rose were pleased to welcome James Cleverly MP. A local employer confirmed to Officers that as a result of the job fair they had a candidate to interview the afternoon of the following Monday 6th March 2017, with further candidates to consider for other opportunities.

Monday 6th March to Friday 10th March 2017 marks the tenth annual National Apprenticeship Week. The week will highlight the success of apprenticeships over the last decade, celebrating the positive impact on individuals, businesses and the economy. Officers have produced a series of themes to promote during the week through our social media channels to publicise apprenticeship opportunities and the benefits.

Greg Tye, BDC's Health & Well Being apprentice was invited to represent the Council at a reception hosted by The Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, The Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, as part of National Apprenticeship Week. The reception was held on 9th March 2017 at the House of Commons and was part of a bigger media campaign for apprentices. This was a great opportunity for Greg and a great way of getting Braintree's Apprenticeship Scheme noticed.

The apprentices have also produced a YouTube video which can be viewed using the following link:-

<http://bit.ly/2maHIIY>

Councillor Tom Cunningham
Cabinet Member for Economic Development

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Designation:	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
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INFRASTRUCTURE

Recent Consultations

A120 Consultation

At the time of writing, the Council's formal response is awaiting Cabinet's consideration before formal sign-off by the Leader and me. The response has been compiled by a cross-departmental working group. In order to produce thorough and meaningful consultation response, a detailed analysis has been undertaken of the route options, taking into account:-

- Impacts on communities and businesses;
- Impact on delivery of the housing and economic growth proposed in the draft Local Plan;
- Environmental, biodiversity and landscape matters;
- Impacts on operational matters (e.g. waste collection).

The response will signify strong support for the project without confirming a specific option. However, I have recommended that Option A is withdrawn as it would not deliver sufficient resilience in the network and would have significant impact on villages.

A12 Consultation

The process outlined above was also undertaken for the A12 project. The Council's submitted response indicated strong support for the principle of improvements, without explicitly supporting a single route option.

The Council's response does however explicitly ask for Option 1 to be discounted, as it would not deliver sufficient resilience in the network, does not address significant severance issues in village locations and would create numerous complex rear entrances to existing properties.

A report providing detail on both the A120 and A12 projects was presented to Cabinet on 13th March 2017.

Housing Development Company

On 12th September 2016 Cabinet approved the resources to develop a full business case for the establishment of a Housing Development Company (HDC). In partnership with Colchester Borough Council the consultants have now produced a report covering

company structures, legal matters and governance, and a high-level financial appraisal for the proposed development programme.

The consultant team is now preparing a detailed financial model, together with the formal report, containing financial, legal, tax and governance advice. Once the financial analysis is completed and the report is received and reviewed, the full business plan will be finalised, ahead of presentation to Cabinet in May 2017.

PLANNING POLICY

Evidence base work to support the Local Plan continues to be completed and technical work on the Water Cycle Study, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Community Halls has been completed since the last Council meeting. Work is due to be completed shortly on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy and updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

The Local Plan including the joint strategic plan for North Essex remains on course to be presented to Members on the 5th June 2017 and subject to its final consultation period shortly thereafter.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

I can report that from April 2016 to the end of February 2017 planning consents have been granted for 1,659 homes.

HOUSING

Development Programme

As anticipated last month, there have now been 48 new affordable homes completed during 2016/17. We were expecting additional completions in 2016/17 but these will now complete in May 2017.

We are predicting 130 new affordable homes to be completed during 2017/18. There is a significant number (70 homes) forecast for completion in March 2018, so it will be difficult to make accurate predictions until later in the financial year.

Contracts for Housing Related Support

We are awaiting the announcement by Essex County Council of the new contract for housing related support for under 21 year olds. This is due to be confirmed during March 2017.

We are working with officers at Essex to consider the future of funding for 'floating support' services and support to schemes providing for homeless people.

We responded to the Government's consultation on new ways to fund supported housing in the future and will be drafting our response to the consultation questions in the Housing White Paper.

Homelessness Reduction Bill

The Bill is now progressing through the House of Lords. The Bill intended to refocus English local authorities on efforts to prevent homelessness. There will be some additional costs for local authorities and we understand there will be some new funding made available.

Councillor Lady Patricia Newton
Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF
CORPORATE SERVICES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Agenda No: 8e

LEGAL

- Continuing work on formation of the North Essex Garden Communities Limited, working in partnership with colleagues in Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District and Essex County Council to move forward the Garden Communities Project.

GOVERNANCE

Elections:

- Preparations for Essex County Council elections scheduled for 4 May 2017 are well underway and proceeding to plan.

BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

ICT and Digital

In March 2017 the contract with Capita to deliver IT services comes to an end and we will be bringing the IT service back in-house to be run by BDC staff and those staff that transfer across from Capita. We are aware for the need of a smooth transition so IT services and communication remains stable, resilient and effective for our customers, Members, staff and partners.

We continue to work with partners across Essex and more widely providing solutions to several IT issues including hardware procurement, cyber security, communications and networking and sharing IT resources.

In April 2017, we will start work on our digital strategy, working with our customers, partners and staff and members across the organisation to develop our digital vision for the future. This process will help us to think about how we can use digital to improve the lives of people across the district, support people to access our services and ensure that our organisation can meet the challenges of the future in an efficient and effective way.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset management have been active during the past month, and have made significant progress with many of investments that form part of our overall investment strategy and recent approved schemes are all on track

- Purchase of Headlease at 15 Springwood Drive Contract Signed completion imminent
- Acquisition of Freehold Office Premises at Century Drive, Freeport Village Status Completed, Contracts signed and exchanged.
- Relocation of St. Lawrence Surgery Planned Project Completed on time and now the marketing programme underway. The new Surgery will be known as Church Lane Surgery. NHS will complete in early March 2017
- Access to Twin Oaks Travellers Site at Stisted, Highways England have completed all the access work, and have included the A120 signage into the road

improvement scheme underway. The Traveller site is now fully legal.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Communications and PR

Communications Team activities:

- Official opening of the new Church Lane Surgery (formally St.Lawrence Surgery) on 17th March 2017.
- Business rates and Council tax booklet
- The Comms team are pushing the 2018 Boundary Review messages from the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) re plans to change Parliamentary constituency boundaries (second consultation). #OnYourDoorstep
- MJ Awards Submission Innovation in Finance category – project title ‘Healthy Investments’ focusing on the innovative investment in health centres across the district. Submissions to be shortlisted in April. Article in the MJ ‘A healthy return on investment for the community’. E-Contact – end of March
- Livewell Stay Safe event – March 29th
- National Apprenticeship Week & National Careers Week 6-10th March
- Gift of Care recruitment event at Town Hall, supporting ECC to promote event to attract people into the social work field– Sat 11th March
- District Business Exhibition planned for the 17th March at the Fennes, Bocking
- Chairmen’s Rural Business reception
- Do it on line campaign
- Job Fair Promotion for the 4th March Event led to 468 attendees which was a 50% increase from September 2016

Livewell Program

Communication activities to promote and sustain the Program continue through February and March and the activities are having a beneficial effect with awareness; The campaign increased visitors to the Livewell website by 53%, and Livewell Facebook engagement increased by 123%.

Better at Business

As part of the B@B programme, 4 sponsorship streams were identified as potential revenue generation opportunities and consequently, two of the refuse freighters will be carrying NHS promotional messaging.

HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

KPIs for the performance of the HR service are all Green and the key indicators indicate a healthy and motivated staff: low staff turnover %, low levels of sickness, high % of staff with nil sickness and indicating improvement in the key metrics over FY 15/16

Employee of the Month Award Scheme

In January 2017, we started a new employee of the month scheme, introduced as part of our ongoing review of reward and recognition and has been welcomed by staff. We have had two winners so far who receive a day’s annual leave and a certificate in recognition of their award and a congratulations letter from the Chairman:

Phil Shears, Operations - On a day when many staff were preparing for their Christmas celebrations, Phil stepped in to not only help a fellow officer who had

exhausted all other avenues, but also to make a house in South Street, Braintree safe to protect the local community following a fatal fire. Phil demonstrated many of the core values in his ability to find a solution to a problem, his flexible approach - coming in on his day off, and his 'nothing is too much trouble' attitude in what was very difficult and sensitive circumstances.

Anita Emery, Town Hall - Anita is a huge asset to the Town Hall co-ordinating weddings, room bookings and events. Anita excels in customer service - cleaning a stained bridesmaid dress for a worried Bride; calming down anxious couples and ensuring events run smoothly. Cllr Ricci who attended an event organised by Anita commented "Anita was approached by a local young designer to hold an evening to showcase her designs. With Anita's help and guidance this was turned into a fashion show with a full cat walk set up with enough space to invite family, friends and public to view the exclusive collection. Anita added to the evening by co-ordinating a secondary area for additional displays and stalls, changing areas for the models, organising refreshments and a raffle for the Chairman's charities."

Councillor John McKee
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management

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

Agenda No: 8f

BUILDING CONTROL

The recent Storm “Doris” resulted in several call-outs for our Building Control Manager to various dangerous structures across our District. The most pressing was a collapsed ceiling at B and M Bargains in Braintree Town Centre. As the storm continued into the evening he was called out to a collapsed chimney stack at a domestic dwelling in Witham and, lastly, in the early hours, he had to attend a call about some loose slates on a roof to commercial premises in Coggeshall causing a danger to motorists and pedestrians on the street below.

As a precaution for the safety of the public, Operations closed Halstead Public Gardens and Halstead Cemetery due to the high winds, as some branches fell although no trees were uprooted and there was no damage to any of the memorials.

LANDSCAPES AND COUNTRYSIDE

Storm Doris also caused some damage to trees across the District including a number on BDC land. A major problem occurred when a dead Elm tree fell onto highways land resulting in traffic delays. Landscape Services has arranged for a number of fallen trees to be removed from areas of open space, but there were no reports of major damage to any neighbouring properties. A tree was uprooted in Notley Road, Braintree, and was left balancing precariously on power lines, resulting in the road being closed and the emergency services being called.

LAUNCH OF THE OPEN WATER CAMPAIGN

From April 2017 most businesses and organisations in England will be able to choose which company will supply their retail water services. Eligible businesses, charities and public sector customers will no longer be restricted to buying retail water services from their regional water company. Instead, they will be free to choose their water retailer. Officers in the Sustainability Team have produced a leaflet which will go out in the Business Rate pack outlining water efficiency scheme and water switching. The team is also attending the Business event on 17th March and will be promoting the Open Water initiative amongst local businesses.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

I am pleased to report that all 60 places have been booked for the special free to attend ‘Live Well, Stay Safe’ event on Wednesday, 29 March, from 10am to 2pm at Braintree Museum.

The event, organised by Braintree District Council and the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership, will be providing valuable knowledge to guests including crime prevention information from Essex Police, and fire prevention and support from Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Guests will also be informed of ways to protect themselves, live independently and save money, with presentations from Trading Standards, Community Agents and Energy Management.

A well attended Members evening took place regarding policing matters, Community Safety Partnership and the Essex Police and Crime panel. The presentation from the District Commander, Chief Inspector Craig Carrington was very well received.

STREET SCENE AND GREEN HEART

I am pleased to report that the Council and its partners supported the Great British Spring Clean over the weekend of 3-5 March. This is a national event promoted by Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) which saw many organisations, community groups and individuals across the Country do their bit to clean up. The intention is that this becomes an annual fixture in the KBT calendar and it is very pleasing that cleanliness will remain a prominent issue in the public domain.

The event was extremely well supported in our District and those who participated included:-

Sible Hedingham Parish
Rivenhall Parish
Rayne Parish
Helions Bumpstead Parish
Witham Wombles
Hoppit Mead Local Nature Reserve
Halstead River Care Group
70 BDC staff and Members Including Cllr Mitchell and me.

At the time of writing, in excess of 100 sacks of waste had been collected by volunteers.

In addition to the above, the Council undertook cleaning of the A120 by-pass (from Marks Farm to the London Road slip road – both sides) and collected 75 bags of litter and 35t of sweepings, as well as other debris. Unfortunately it was not possible to complete the full stretch in one go owing to road closures. However, our staff will complete the remainder of the A120 (from London Road 1st slip road to the Felsted slip road) over the weekend of 7-9 April.

CEMETERIES

The Lodge at Braintree Cemetery will be occupied by a new tenant from the end of March which will provide a reassuring presence to visitors. The tenant will undertake a range of duties to supplement the existing maintenance service as an integral part of the tenancy agreement.

WITHAM TOWN PARK

I was recently contacted by Cllr. Angela Kilmartin with a conundrum following an enquiry from a resident about a hollow in the ground at the Town Park. The resident had concerns as to whether this could be the result of a bomb falling there during the 2nd World War. I am pleased to say that there is no evidence that any bombs fell in the park and further research suggests that the hollow is more likely to have been a former pond that was filled in many years ago. This just goes to show the variety of issues brought to the Council's attention.

CIRCUS ADVERTISEMENTS

It's that time of the year when circus and fun fairs start to visit the District. Members will undoubtedly have seen the posters advertising a recent circus that visited Spa Road, Witham. Whilst it may appear that these adverts are fly-posting, this is not the case, as they have deemed consent under current planning legislation (subject to satisfying certain conditions). For more information, please contact the Planning Enforcement Team.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Schmitt
Cabinet Member for Environment and Place

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Be Healthy & Live Well

Braintree Swimming Pool re-lining



On Monday 27th February 2017 preparation works started on Braintree swimming pool to reline the pool tank. Two submersible pumps were dropped in to the pool to drain the 630 cubic meters of water. The pool took seven days to empty and works have now started on removing the tiles from the pool tank. Once the concrete has dried sufficiently the epoxy resin coating will be applied. The pool is due to re-open towards the end of April 2017.

The St Lawrence Medical Practice

The St Lawrence Medical Practice, currently located in the town centre at 4 Bocking End, Braintree, will be moving to its new purpose-built premises on the campus of The College at Braintree from Monday 20th March 2017.

The practice, which will be renamed Church Lane Surgery, will provide a range of GP medical services to the local community in a modern, fit-for-purpose building. Services will continue to be delivered by Virgin Care Services Limited, which was awarded a ten-year contract in June 2016.

The size and location of the new building means that there is car parking available for patients and the new building is big enough to allow for the projected population growth of patients to Braintree.

NHS England is working with the St Lawrence Medical Practice to make sure that all registered patients are aware of what is happening and that they receive all the information they need. All registered patients will be receiving a letter in the coming days to inform them of the changes and the options open to them, and to provide advice and support.

The Community Transport Team will also be raising awareness of how they can help patients access the new surgery. Members of the team will be present at the St Lawrence Surgery from 6th – 10th March 2017 and at the new Church Lane Surgery from 20th March until 13th April 2017.

Livewell Child

The following initiatives have been introduced as part of the Livewell Child project, whose key aim is to halt the rise in childhood obesity in our District.

(1) Donation of free fruit to a local school



Local businesses, located near the participating Livewell Child schools, have been encouraged to play their part in reducing child obesity. The One Stop shop on Coldnailhurst Avenue, Braintree has pledged to supply John Bunyan School pupils with free fruit to help them meet the required five a day.

(2) The Daily Mile introduced at Silver End School

Silver End School is one of the Braintree District schools involved in the Livewell Child project, which involves the delivery of a series of initiatives and support as a joint project by Essex County Council and Braintree District Council. One example being promoted to schools is the Daily Mile initiative led by Active Essex.

The Daily Mile is an approach to help children achieve their recommended amount of physical activity within their school by allowing the children to walk, jog or run one mile per day.

Increasing the amount of physical activity in the everyday life of the school in an easy, inclusive and fun way will bring the benefits of improved health and wellbeing of the school children and teachers who also take part. Encouraging exercise at an early age may provide an initiative for later life.

The Deputy Head Teacher has commented that the school signed up to Livewell Child because it wanted the school pupils to have all of the opportunities available to support them to stay healthy.

Members are encouraged to promote the Active Essex Daily Mile too by asking the primary and junior schools in their wards to participate.

(3) Active Hearts sessions to keep children healthy



Active Hearts is an informative educational programme that is in line with the National Curriculum and delivered by the Council's leisure contractor Fusion Lifestyle's instructors who are trained in the Active Hearts programme. The five week scheme is aimed at Year Five students and will enhance pupils' awareness of the importance of exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Each of the five lessons lasts one hour and consists of classroom activities, followed by a practical session.

The programme is being funded by the Braintree District Health & Wellbeing Panel and will initially be delivered in six schools that are taking part in the Livewell Child project.

It is pleasing to see that increasing numbers of schools are fully committed to encouraging children to live an active lifestyle. The pupils are having fun whilst learning the importance of keeping active and eating well to keep their bodies fit and healthy.

Braintree Town Hall Tea Dances

Monthly tea dances have been introduced at Braintree Town Hall primarily aimed at residents of retirement age.

The tea dances give participants the opportunity to become more active, socialise and learn or practice dances such as; Rock n' Roll, Sequence, Latin and Ballroom.

Since the dances began there has been a steady increase in the use of the Town Hall facility.

Encourage independent and resilient communities

Community Transport

We are still awaiting confirmation from Essex County Council of the 2017/18 grant funding. In 2016/17 we received £105,541 from ECC to help support the service but we anticipate a reduction in funding for 2017/18.

Councillors' Community Grant Scheme

This month saw ten grants approved totalling £7,968. The cumulative total of spend from the scheme is £23,005 for 35 applications.

In early February each councillor was sent a summary of how they had spent their allocation to date. Thirty two councillors have now made awards, a number of which have been jointly funded with fellow ward councillors.

Volunteer Awards

We have received 50 nominations to the Braintree District Volunteer Awards A judging panel has been appointed and the winners will be celebrated at an event due to be held on 4th April 2017 at Causeway House.

To highlight the army of people who volunteer to work in charity shops, a 'most attractive charity shop window display' competition has been arranged. Guests will be asked to vote for their favourite window from photographs provided. Some 14 shops have signed up to participate. The winner will be announced at the event and will receive a £50 donation.

BDVSA/CCVS Merger

Meetings have taken place with the CEO of Colchester Community Voluntary Service (CCVS) to discuss changes as a result of the merger, including rebranding, infrastructure for staff and membership of the board of trustees, etc.

Protect the Vulnerable

There are many activities across the Council that receive little political or public profile but which nevertheless are significant in the Council's overall responsibilities and obligations.

Safeguarding

An action plan has developed and agreed following the completion of the Safeguarding Adults audit. This includes some updates to the Council's policy, training in relation to the Mental Capacity Act and a review and refresh of the e-learning modules.

Braintree District Dementia Alliance

With the aim of continuing increasing awareness and understanding of dementia we are bringing a 'Virtual Dementia Tour' to BDC. The Virtual Dementia Tour is a scientifically proven method of building a greater understanding of dementia through the use of patented sensory tools and instruction. The session is designed to give individuals the ability to help identify with and understand the behaviour and needs of people with dementia. After experiencing the Tour delegates will have a better understanding of these needs.

Members will have the opportunity to attend a session on Thursday 13th July 2017 from 6.30pm–8.45pm.

Live Well/Stay Safe Event

The Community Services Team has continued to promote this event which is nearly full to capacity and will take place on 29th March 2017 at Braintree Museum. Community Transport will be providing transportation to some of those attending.

Equalities

The Community Services Team is in the process of ensuring that, as a public sector organisation, we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The Team will look at reviewing the equality actions as identified in the corporate strategy, and make amendments to the equality impact assessment process and e-learning module for staff.

Councillor Peter Tattersley
Cabinet Member for Health and Communities

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COUNCIL
27th March 2017



List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting	Agenda No: 9
Portfolio: Not applicable Corporate Outcome: Not applicable Report presented by: Not applicable Report prepared by: Chloe Glock, Governance Business Officer	
Background Papers:	Public Report
Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.	Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: Since the last Council meeting held on 22 nd February 2017, the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session: (1) Planning Committee – 28 th February 2017 (2) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 th March 2017 (3) Local Plan Sub-Committee – 9 th March 2017 (4) Cabinet – 13 th March 2017 (5) Governance Committee – 22 nd March 2017	
Recommended Decision: Members are invited to note the Minutes published.	
Purpose of Decision: Not applicable.	

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

Financial:	Not applicable
Legal:	Not applicable
Safeguarding:	Not applicable
Equalities/Diversity:	Not applicable
Customer Impact:	Not applicable
Environment and Climate Change:	Not applicable
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Not applicable
Risks:	Not applicable
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