

# Council AGENDA



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**Date: Wednesday, 23 April 2014**

**Time: 19:15**

**Venue: Causeway Room, Causeway House, Braintree, CM7 9HB**

## **Membership:**

Councillor J E Abbott	Councillor M E Galione	Councillor Ricci
Councillor J S Allen	Councillor C Gibson	Councillor D E A Rice
Councillor M J Banthorpe	Councillor M Green	Councillor W J Rose
Councillor P R Barlow	Councillor P Horner	Councillor V Santomauro
Councillor J Baugh	Councillor S A Howell	Councillor W D Scattergood
Councillor J C Beavis	Councillor H D Johnson	Councillor W Schmitt
Councillor D L Bebb	Councillor S C Kirby	Councillor A F Shelton
Councillor E Bishop	Councillor M C M Lager	Councillor L Shepherd
Councillor R J Bolton	Councillor C Louis	Councillor C E Shute
Councillor L B Bowers–Flint	Councillor D J Louis	Councillor C Siddall
Councillor G Butland	Councillor D Mann	Councillor G A Spray
Councillor C A Cadman	Councillor J T McKee	Councillor J S Sutton
Councillor S Canning	Councillor R G S Mitchell	Councillor J R Swift
Councillor T G Cunningham	Councillor J M Money	Councillor P Tattersley
Councillor J G J Elliott	Councillor Lady P Newton	Councillor C M Thompson
Councillor Dr R L Evans	Councillor J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Councillor M Thorogood
Councillor A V E Everard	Councillor I C F Parker	Councillor L S Walters
Councillor J H G Finbow	Councillor J A Pell	Councillor R G Walters
Councillor M J Fincken	Councillor R P Ramage	Councillor S A Wilson
Councillor T J W Foster	Councillor D M Reid	Councillor B Wright

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

N BEACH  
Chief Executive

## QUESTION TIME

Immediately after the Minutes of the previous meeting have been approved there will be a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak.

Members of the public wishing to speak should contact Chloe Glock in the Council's Member Services Section on 01376 552525 or email [chloe.glock@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:chloe.glock@braintree.gov.uk) at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.

Members of the public can remain to observe the whole of the public part of the meeting.

**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 a continuous alarm sounding during the meeting, you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by the fire evacuation officer who will identify him/herself should the alarm sound. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building. Any persons unable to use the stairs will be assisted to the nearest safe refuge.

**Mobile Phones.** Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent or is switched off during the meeting.

**Documents.** Agendas, reports and minutes for all the Council's public meetings can be accessed via the internet at <http://www.braintree.gov.uk>

We welcome comments from members of the public to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. We would appreciate any suggestions regarding the usefulness of the paperwork for this meeting, or the conduct of the meeting you have attended.

Please let us have your comments setting out the following information:

Meeting Attended .....Date of Meeting.....

Comments.....

.....

.....

.....

Contact details.....

Members unable to attend the meeting are requested to forward their apologies for absence to Alastair Peace on 01376 552525 or email [alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk)

## **INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

### **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest:-**

Any member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest to indicate in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Such Member 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.

## **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 page 2)
- 5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 17th February 2014 (copy previously circulated).
- 6 Recommendations from Local Development Framework Sub-Committee, 8th April 2014** **7 - 28**  
Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan – Representations
- 7 Recommendations from Cabinet, 31st March 2014 - Linking the Basic Member Allowance to Training and D** **29 - 34**
- 8 Electoral Arrangements** **35 - 38**
- 9 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2013-14** **39 - 42**
- 10 Governance Committee Annual Report 2013-14** **43 - 46**

<b>11</b>	<b>Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members</b> To receive the following reports from each Portfolio Holder:	
<b>11a</b>	<b>Councillor Butland - Leader of the Council</b>	<b>47 - 50</b>
<b>11b</b>	<b>Councillor Beavis - People and Participation</b>	<b>51 - 54</b>
<b>11c</b>	<b>Councillor Bebb - Performance and Efficiency</b>	<b>55 - 56</b>
<b>11d</b>	<b>Councillor Lady Newton - Planning and Property</b>	<b>57 - 58</b>
<b>11e</b>	<b>Councillor Schmitt - Place</b>	<b>59 - 62</b>
<b>11f</b>	<b>Councillor Siddall - Prosperity and Growth</b>	<b>63 - 64</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Oral questions</b> Oral questions without notice on matters related to a particular portfolio, the powers or duties of the Council or the district (Procedure rules 7.1 to 7.3 apply). Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all members.  <i>(A period of up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item).</i>	
<b>13</b>	<b>List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting</b> To raise any matters arising from the Minutes of meetings that have been held in Public Session since the Council meeting of 17th February 2014.	<b>65 - 66</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Chairmen's Statements</b> To receive statements from those Chairmen who have given prior notification in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7.9 and to respond to questions on such statements. <i>None have been received.</i>	

**15 Statements by Members**

To receive any statements by Members of which the appropriate written notice has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7.6.

*There are none*

**16 External Organisations**

To receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of external organisations. **There are none.**

**16a Citizens Advice Bureau 67 - 68**

**16b Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency (BDVSA) 69 - 70**

**16c Ignite Business Enterprise 71 - 72**

**17 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**

**18 Leader's or Cabinet Member Statements - Private Session**

Leader's Statements or statements by Cabinet Members containing exempt information on a key issue. *There are none.*

**19 Policy Recommendations and References - Private Session**  
**There are none.**

**20 Reports from the Leader or Cabinet Members - Private Session**

To receive any reports from the Leader of the Council and each Portfolio Holder containing exempt information and to ask questions on matters contained in the reports. *There are none.*

- 21 Oral Questions from Councillors - Private Session**  
Oral questions without notice on matters related to a particular portfolio, the powers or duties of the Council or the district containing exempt information. (Procedure Rules 7.1 to 7.3 apply). Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all members
- 22 Private Meetings Held Since the Last Council Meeting**  
To raise any matters arising from the Minutes of meetings that have been held in Private Session since the Council meeting of 17th February 2014. *There are none.*
- 23 Chairmen's Statements - Private Session.**  
To receive statements containing exempt information from those Chairmen who have given prior notification in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7.9 and to respond to questions on such statements - *There are none.*
- 24 Statements by Members - Private Session**  
To receive any statements by Members of which the appropriate written notice has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7.6. *There are none.*

COUNCIL  
23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014



<b>Recommendations from Local Development Framework Sub-Committee - 8th April 2014</b>		<b>Agenda No: 6</b>
<b>Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan – Representations</b>		
<b>Portfolio Area:</b>	<b>Councillor Lady Newton, Cabinet Member, Planning and Property</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>

**Minute Extract:**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SUB-COMMITTEE - 8TH APRIL 2014**

**PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN - REPRESENTATIONS**

Details are set out in the report on page 8.

<b>Report upon Representations received to the Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.</b>		<b>Agenda No: 6</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Building a prosperous District – Boost employment skills and support businesses, Promoting and improving our Town Centres, Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth <b>Portfolio:</b> Planning and Property <b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Walters <b>Report prepared by:</b> Emma Goodings, Alan Massow, Julie O'Hara, Jonathan Crane		
<b>Background Papers:</b> Pre-Submission Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (Feb 2014); Site Allocations and Development Management Plan Draft for Consultation (Jan 2013); Core Strategy (2011) National Planning Policy Framework Local Development Framework Sub-Committee Agenda, Reports, Minutes 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2014		<b>Public Report YES</b>
<b>Options:</b> To approve or not to approve, changes to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan as set out in this report.		<b>Key Decision: NO</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b> This report sets out a brief background to progress on the Local Development Framework (LDF) and the public engagement period which has taken place in February and March 2014 on the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP), following its approval by Council on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2013. The report recommends a number of technical changes to the Plan should be made, before it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The report was recommended for Council approval by Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on the 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2014.		

## Decision

### Recommendations to Council:

1. To approve the changes to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan as set out in this report and Appendix 1 and following a further public engagement period, submitted to the Planning Inspector for examination.



**2. To approve the minor changes to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan and following a further period of public engagement, submitted to the Planning Inspector for examination.**

**Purpose of Decision:**

To consider changes to the Pre Submission ADMP which will be the subject of a six week engagement period before the Plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.

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

<b>Financial:</b>	Cost of preparing the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan
<b>Legal:</b>	The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan cannot be adopted unless it is found to be sound by the Planning Inspectorate. It will be the basis for future planning decisions.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	None.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	The Council's policies should take account of equalities and diversity and has been subject to an equalities impact assessment.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Providing housing, employment, open space and infrastructure and protecting the countryside and the environment.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	Impact on environment of sustainable policies and sustainable design of housing.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Consultation with the public and stakeholders between the 17 <sup>th</sup> February and 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2014.
<b>Risks:</b>	That the Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan may not be found sound when it is examined by the Planning Inspector.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Goodings
<b>Designation:</b>	Interim Head of Planning Policy
<b>Ext. No.</b>	2511
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:Emma.goodings@braintree.gov.uk">Emma.goodings@braintree.gov.uk</a>

## **1. Background**

1.1 The Council is preparing the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan to set out land allocations and policies, which will be used to determine future planning applications in the District, over the period to 2026.

1.2 The Council has already prepared a Core Strategy, which sets out the overall strategy for future development in the District and aims to concentrate future growth in sustainable locations and to promote the development of previously developed land and urban regeneration. The Core Strategy sets out the overall numbers of dwellings for which land should be allocated over the period to 2026 and the Site Allocations Plan must be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

1.3 A period of consultation was carried out on the draft plan in January and February 2013. The Pre-Submission document was approved for public consultation at the Full Council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013.

1.4 This report considers amendments to the Pre Submission Plan which was approved by Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013. The amendments were approved by Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 for recommendation to Council.

## **2. Public Consultation**

2.1 The public consultation on the Pre-Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) took place between the 17<sup>th</sup> February and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The Council held public exhibitions in Braintree, Halstead and Witham and unstaffed displays were also available at libraries in Halstead and Witham and at Braintree District Council offices in Braintree. Copies of the consultation document were available in all libraries in the District and in Haverhill and Sudbury library.

2.2 All consultation documents were available to view on the Council's website and public notices appeared in the Braintree and Witham versions of the Braintree and Witham Times, Halstead Gazette and Haverhill Echo (to ensure coverage for residents in the north of the District). The consultation has also been prominently featured on the front page of the Council's website, throughout the engagement period. Site notices were also placed at new sites allocated in the Plan for residential or employment development.

2.3 Direct notification via email or letter was sent to all those on the consultation database (around 2000) which includes local residents, businesses, Parish Councils and other statutory consultees.

2.4 At this formal stage of public engagement and as set out in the Planning Inspectorate guidance, responders were asked to state whether or not they felt the plan was "sound" or not. A guidance note was produced to accompany the representation form explaining technical terms such as soundness. Responses were also accepted via email or letter. A brief explanation of the terms used is set out below.

## 2.5 Soundness

Soundness is explained in paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Inspector has to be satisfied that the Plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

## 2.6 Positively prepared

This means that the Plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

## 2.7 Justified

The Plan should be the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence.

## 2.8 Effective

The Plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.

## 2.9 Consistent with national policy

The Plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

## 2.10 Legal Compliance

The Inspector will check that the Plan meets the legal requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

## 2.11 Duty to Co-Operate

The Local Planning Authority will have to demonstrate and produce evidence that they have complied with the duty to co-operate. That is that they have engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of the development plan. It is not a duty to agree but LPA's should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matter before the submission of the development plan.

# **3. Timetable/Next Steps**

3.1 If Council approves the recommended changes set out in this report, then a further 6 week period of public engagement will be undertaken. This will ask for additional comments on the proposed changes only. Following this consultation period, the Plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate along with any further comments received for examination. It is hoped that the examination would take place in late 2014 and the Plan would be approved by early 2015.

If Council approves the recommended changes set out in this report, then a further 6 week period of public engagement will be undertaken. This will ask for additional comments only on the proposed changes. Following that consultation, the Plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate along with any further comments for examination. It is hoped that the examination would take place in late 2014 and the Plan would be approved by early 2015.

## 4. Comments Received and Changes Proposed

4.1 In total 780 comments were received from 421 responders. These are summarised in Appendix 1 of the Local Development Sub-Committee Report dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014. The responses are available to read in full on the Councils website <http://braintree-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/>

4.2 The LDF Sub Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 was presented with a report setting out the summary of comments which had been received and a schedule of recommended changes in relation to those comments, to update the Plan approved by Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013. These amendments, to ensure the Plan is sound and it reflects the most recent national guidance, are being recommended by the LDF Sub Committee to Council.

4.3 Where text is to be deleted this is shown as a ~~strike through~~ and where new text is added this is shown as underlined. For context Members should refer to the Pre-Submission Document on the Council Website <http://braintree-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/>

### Recommendations

1. **To approve the changes to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan as set out below and following a further public engagement period, submitted to the Planning Inspector for examination. The proposed changes are set out in maps in Appendix 1 of this report.**

a) Revised paragraph 1.3 'The Core Strategy requirements were based upon evidence of housing and Travellers needs prepared for the East of England Plan. The Council intends to commence ~~an early review of the Core Strategy work on a new Local Plan~~ in 2014, as set out in the updated LDS, which it is anticipated will be adopted in early 2017. This will include a review of the strategic policies in the Core Strategy and the work which has been undertaken in this Plan and will ensure full compliance in order to base future housing and Travellers requirements for the District upon locally determined need, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) ~~over a plan period to 2031. This early review will also enable the Council to revise the wording of any strategic policies, where necessary, to fully comply with the NPPF. In the interim period before the Core Strategy Review has been prepared, it is clear that sufficient land has been identified through the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan to continue to meet the District's housing needs and five year land supply. The Council has the ability to bring forward the phased development of the housing at the growth locations, if monitoring identifies a need to do so. The ADMP therefore provides an interim position which includes updated development management policies which are in compliance with the NPPF and PPG and certainty for communities as to what residential sites will be expected to come forward in the short term~~'.

b) Amendment to paragraph 1.17; 'The Proposals Map does not identify mineral safeguarding areas, or proposed mineral and waste development sites, **as these are**

yet to form part of an adopted Plan from the County Council ~~is~~ as the minerals and waste planning authority. Draft proposals These are set out in County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plans'

c) Remove paragraph 1.20.

d) Changes to ADM3, paragraph 3.7 and 3.10 as set out below

~~ADM3 The land between London Road, Pods Brook Road and the A120 (site BRC7H) will be phased between 2018 – 2026 to ensure that the requirement for a continuous supply of housing land is met. If monitoring shows that a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites is not being maintained, then this phasing will be altered to bring the site forward earlier than is being proposed.~~

~~The additional 100 dwellings at the Witham south west Core Strategy growth location at Lodge Farm, off Hatfield Road (site WIS6) will be phased between 2017 – 2026 in line with the phasing set out in the Core Strategy for 600 dwellings at this location.~~

The indicative provisional dates for phasing Braintree north-west Growth Location West of Panfield Lane, Witham south west Growth Location North of Hatfield Road and Witham north-east Growth Location off Forest Road included in Table CS1 Braintree District Housing Provision in the Core Strategy are being removed in line with the provision within policy CS1 of the Core Strategy.

~~3.7 The Core Strategy Policy CS1 sets out phasing for the growth locations to ensure a continues housing land supply in the District. It is proposed that one of the largest draft allocated sites in Braintree, between London Road, Pods Brook Road and the A120, should also be phased for the same reason~~

~~3.10 As the growth locations and the proposed housing allocation off London Road Braintree are phased, the phasing of one or more of these sites could be altered to bring them forward earlier than proposed. If it were necessary to meet either the five year supply or the provision of the 5% buffer. (The 5% related to the District housing supply as a whole and not to individual settlements).~~

e) Amendment to 3.24; '..provided. An important demographic trend is the aging population and therefore all sites should be encouraged to provide single storey units where appropriate'.

f) Amendment to policy ADM8 Housing Mix and Density; '**...house types, including bungalows, and sizes ...**'

g) To amend the final clause of ADM8 to; 'All new dwellings should seek to meet Lifetime Homes Standards'

h) Additional text to paragraph 3.30 '...setting. Additional or ancillary residential accommodation in the countryside will be expected to be provided in the form of an extension to the existing dwelling or through the conversion of existing outbuildings in the first instance. Only when these options have been proven to the satisfaction of the District Council that this would not be appropriate in design or other terms, will new outbuildings be considered. New outbuildings will be required to be well related

to existing built development on the plot and have a functional relationship to the host dwelling, for example by having a shared access and driveway, garden space and be designed to be easily incorporated into the main dwelling’.

i) Amendments to policy ADM10 Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings in the Countryside, 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point; ‘....Where new buildings are proposed they should be well related to the existing development and have a functional link with the host dwelling’.

j) Amendments to policy ADM13A Previously Developed Infill Sites in the Countryside; ‘Where there is a defined nucleus group of at least...’ and ‘This policy will not apply to proposals for isolated new dwellings, ~~or the extension of ribbon development. Proposals which would consolidate sporadic or ribbon development or the infilling of large gaps, will be resisted’.~~

k) Amendments to policy ADM15 Employment Policy Areas - Delete ‘Ramsden Mills, Chipping Hill Industrial Estate, Braintree Road’.

l) To include the following additional policy and supporting text.  
To add ‘Kelvedon Park’ to the list of industrial development boundaries in policy ADM18.

‘ADM18A Essex Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters – Kelvedon Park

Land at Kelvedon Park is allocated as a Special Employment Area specifically to meet the requirements of Essex Fire and Rescue Service for 999 facilities, training and administrative uses and vehicle maintenance facilities. Additional built development on site must provide sufficient parking and will make appropriate provision for boundary screening and the retention of the parkland setting to the front of the site’.

New Paragraph ‘The headquarters for Essex County Fire and Rescue is located at Kelvedon Park, located off the A12 between Kelvedon and Rivenhall. The site was a historic house and gardens and has been the subject of a number of recent planning applications to extend and centralise facilities for the Fire service. The site now employs a large number of people and is allocated as a special employment area to support the continued development of facilities for this site to ensure an efficient and effective emergency service for the District and County. However there are a number of particular issues which will need to be addressed to ensure growth on the site is sustainable. These are sufficient car parking facilities and a Travel Plan for employees and uses on the site and landscaping including the maintenance of the current historic parkland setting bordering the A12 at the front of the site and appropriate landscaping on the other boundaries of the site’.

m) Policy ADM27 Town, District and Local Centre Improvements - Change policy to read; ‘....enhance conservation areas ~~and~~ public open spaces and green infrastructure within town, district and local centres’.



- n) Update key to add ADM30 to Commercial Leisure.
- o) Change paragraph 5.21 to final bullet point in policy ADM32.
- p) Policy ADM33 – Retail Site Allocations - Add site reference numbers to policy.
- q) Additional bullet point to policy ADM37 Comprehensive Development Area – Land at Railway Garage, Kelvedon – ‘Protection and enhancement of the adjacent Conservation Area’
- r) Amendment to policy ADM41 Community Uses: ‘Land at Hunnables and Nuns Walk Field, West of the The Street Great Yeldham’
- s) Amendment to policy ADM42 – Provision and Enhancement of Local Community Facilities - Add phrase “or community” after “Parish Council”.
- t) Add additional sentence to end of paragraph 7.36; ‘Any proposal for the Halstead Bypass should be accompanied by an assessment of the impact on Suffolk’s highway network’
- u) Add the route of the Sudbury Bypass to the Proposal Map as shown in Map 1 of the appendix. Add additional bullet point to policy ADM49 New Road Schemes; ‘The route for the Sudbury Western Bypass shown on the Babergh Local Plan Proposals Map Inset 1 where this traverses the Braintree District’
- v) Paragraph 8.10 ‘...in the NPPF. Legislation in section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires that in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or affecting land, in an AONB, a relevant authority shall have to regard to the statutory purpose for which the land is designated. In the case of an AONB this is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The upper ...’
- w) Add in paragraph 8.15; ‘...District. A Habitats Regulation Screening Report specifically for the ADMP has also been produced which forms part of the evidence base for the Plan. The European..’
- x) Add additional paragraph to end policy ADM51 Protection of Biodiversity and Geodiversity and Protected Species; ‘Development proposals on land adjoining water courses should provide for a buffer zone of at least 20m between the top of the bank of the watercourse and the proposed built development’
- y) Add additional paragraph to end 8.15; ‘The creation of a buffer zone between a watercourse and adjoining built development is to both; provide protection to ecological features afforded by the watercourse; and allow wildlife to use the watercourse and immediate surroundings as a corridor for movement without suffering impedance and undue disturbance’
- z) Add to end of paragraph 8.19. ‘Applications for new built development in the countryside will need to be accompanied by detailed justification of the requirement for a new building of the scale proposed in the application and will be required to be the minimum necessary size to meet the identified need’

aa) Add to end of paragraph 8.20; 'Permitted development rights may be removed for buildings which are allowed under this policy'

bb) Amendment to paragraph 8.33; '.. 150sqm. As at March 2014, the Government has also announced its intention to proceed with new PD rights which would allow the conversion of up to 450sqm of redundant or under used agricultural buildings to provide a maximum of three new dwellings, or in agricultural buildings of up to 500sqm to change to a state funded school or registered nursery. During the course of these changes..'

cc) Amendment to policy ADM55 Energy Efficiency - ...not prejudice the character significance of the building...

~~To remove the first two paragraphs of the policy; 'All proposals for residential development will be required to comply with the minimum level Code 3 for Sustainable Homes (or equivalent replacement standard), until CO2 reduction targets are met or exceeded by National Building Regulations Standards, at which point revised Code for Sustainable Homes levels (or equivalent replacement standard) will apply.~~

~~All other proposals for development over 500sqm will be required to comply with the minimum level 'very good' for BREEAM standards (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method).'~~

dd) Amend the following references in paragraph 8.54:

- 'Sustainable Urban Drainage' to 'Sustainable Drainage Systems'.
- 'SUDS' to 'SuDS'; and
- 'National SuDS Standards' to 'SuDS National Standards'

Amend 4<sup>th</sup> sentence to read:

'The SuDS Approval Body (SAB), Lead Local Flood Authority, Risk Management Authorities and planners...'

ee) Add the following new supporting paragraph and policy after current paragraph 8.24; 'A Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) is a plan produced by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and outlines the preferred surface water management strategy in a given location. These Plans focus on areas of highest surface water flood risk and consider flooding from sewers, drains, groundwater, and runoff from land, small water courses and ditches that occurs as a result of heavy rainfall.

These Plans outline the causes and effects of surface water flooding and recommend the most cost effective way of managing surface water flood risk for the long term. A SWMP is carried out at an intermediate risk assessment level identifying those parts of the study area that are likely to require more detailed assessment to gain an improved understanding of the causes and consequences of surface water flooding.



The intermediate assessment identifies areas where the flood risk is considered to be most severe; these areas are identified as Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs). They are typically located within EA Flood Zone 1 but should not be excluded from other Flood Zones if a clear surface water (outside of other influences) flood risk is present.

It is important to recognise that flooding within the study area is not confined to just the CDAs, and therefore, there are opportunities for generic measures to be implemented through the establishment of a policy position’.

New Policy ‘The Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) for the district will be defined through the establishment of a SWMP.

Within the identified CDAs development must not increase the risk of fluvial or surface water flooding, and should seek to reduce the risk of fluvial and surface water flooding through the delivery of the following measures as appropriate to the location of the proposal and recommendations from a Surface Water Management Plan once produced.

- a. Increased community awareness;
  - b. Improved management regimes of main rivers, ordinary water courses and their tributaries;
  - c. Increased conveyance;
  - d. Retention and increased flood storage capacity;
  - e. Improved land management;
  - f. Increased online storage; and
  - g. Incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) appropriate to the development type, size and location.
- b. The Council will require development to be in compliance with and contribute positivity towards delivering the aims and objectives of water management plans affecting the area such as a Surface Water Management Plan’.

ff) 8.55...agreement from the sewerage undertaker in order...

gg) Add text to paragraph 9.4; ‘..., listed building consent, has an impact on archaeological deposits, advertisement consent...’.

hh) Amend bullet 7 of policies ADM60 Layout and Design of Development to read; ‘Landscape design shall promote and enhance local biodiversity and historic environment assets’;

ii) Policy ADM 60 Layout and Design of Development add the following new bullet points:

'Development will be planned to minimise vulnerability to climate change impacts and that such development will not exacerbate vulnerability in other areas

New properties shall be served where ever possible by a fibre optic connection

The development should not have a detrimental impact on highway safety'

jj) Delete second bullet point of ADM66 Alterations and Extensions and Changes of Use to Listed Buildings or Structures and their Settings and replace with the following new text; 'The works or uses do not result in the loss of, or damage to, the building or structures historic and architectural elements which are considered to be of significance or special importance'.

kk) Add the following additional bullet points to Policy ADM 66 Alterations and Extension and Changes of Use to Listed Buildings or Structures and their Settings; 'The application submitted contains details of the significance of the heritage asset (either within the design and access statement or within a Heritage Statement) which should include any contribution made by their setting'.

'There may be a requirement for appropriate specialist recording to be carried out prior to the change of use, demolition or conversion of a listed building or associated historic building'.

ll) Policy ADM67 Demolition of Listed buildings or Structures - Delete criteria 4 and replace with: 'Appropriate specialist recording is likely to be required prior to demolition'

mm) Policy ADM69 Archaeological Evaluation, Excavation and Recording amend to read: 'Where important archaeological remains are thought to be at risk from development, or if the development could impact on a scheduled ancient monument, or historic park and garden, the developer will be required...'

'Where permission is granted, conditions will be imposed to ensure that the archaeological remains are properly excavated and recorded appropriately mitigated by excavation or survey prior to the development commencing. There will be a requirement to make the results of these investigations publically accessible.'

nn) Amendments to paragraphs 9.20, 9.21 and 9.22

'9.20 A Historic Environment Characterisation Report (HECR) has been produced for Braintree District which outlines the sensitivity, diversity and value of the historic environment within the District and provides a comprehensive account of the character of the Districts historic environment and the heritage assets that contribute towards that character

9.21 Braintree has a rich and varied historic environment with evidence of human activity dating back to the Palaeolithic period between c.700,000 and 10,000 years BC. As such, it is important to assess areas within the District for their archaeological potential, as and when opportunities arise to do so. The Historic Environment Record contains 6622 records relating to the historic environment in Braintree District (this includes all designated sites described under 9.16). The majority of archaeological sites are not designated, however, it is recognised that many are of a similar significance to designated assets.

9.22 Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets applications should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. As a minimum the Historic Environment Record should have been consulted and an appropriate assessment produced’.

oo) After paragraph 10.19 add the following text: ‘As set out in the Core Strategy one way to protect international or European sites of importance for wildlife, is to ensure that the Plan has an appropriate allocation of SANG (Sustainable Accessible Natural Greenspace). These are set out on the Proposals and Inset Maps’  
Changes to policy ADM73; ‘ADM73 River Walks, Linear Parks, Disused Railway Lines and SANGs  
‘...informal recreation. Areas of SANG are also defined on the Proposals Map’

pp) Add the following definition to the Glossary; ‘Critical Drainage Area. A discrete geographic area (usually a hydrological catchment) where multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk cause flooding during a severe rainfall event thereby affecting people, property or local infrastructure. The CDA comprises the upstream contributing catchment, the influencing drainage catchments, surface water catchments and, where appropriate, a downstream area if this can have influence on CDA.

qq) Change the notation in Appendix 1 Housing Allocations for site SIL7H from ‘without’ to ‘full’ under type of permission.

rr) To amend the site area for site BOB20H in Braintree to exclude the residents parking area as shown on map 2 in the appendix.

ss) To amend the site area for site BRC6H in Braintree to include an additional area for development as shown on map 3 in the appendix.

tt) To remove the employment allocation for site WCH7E, Ramsden Mills in Witham as it is not deliverable as an employment site.

uu) To allocate White Colne Meadows as informal recreation as shown on map 4 in the appendix.

vv) To make a minor development boundary amendment at Pale Green, Helions Bumpstead to exclude an area of agricultural land and therefore approve the boundary as set out on map 5 in the appendix.

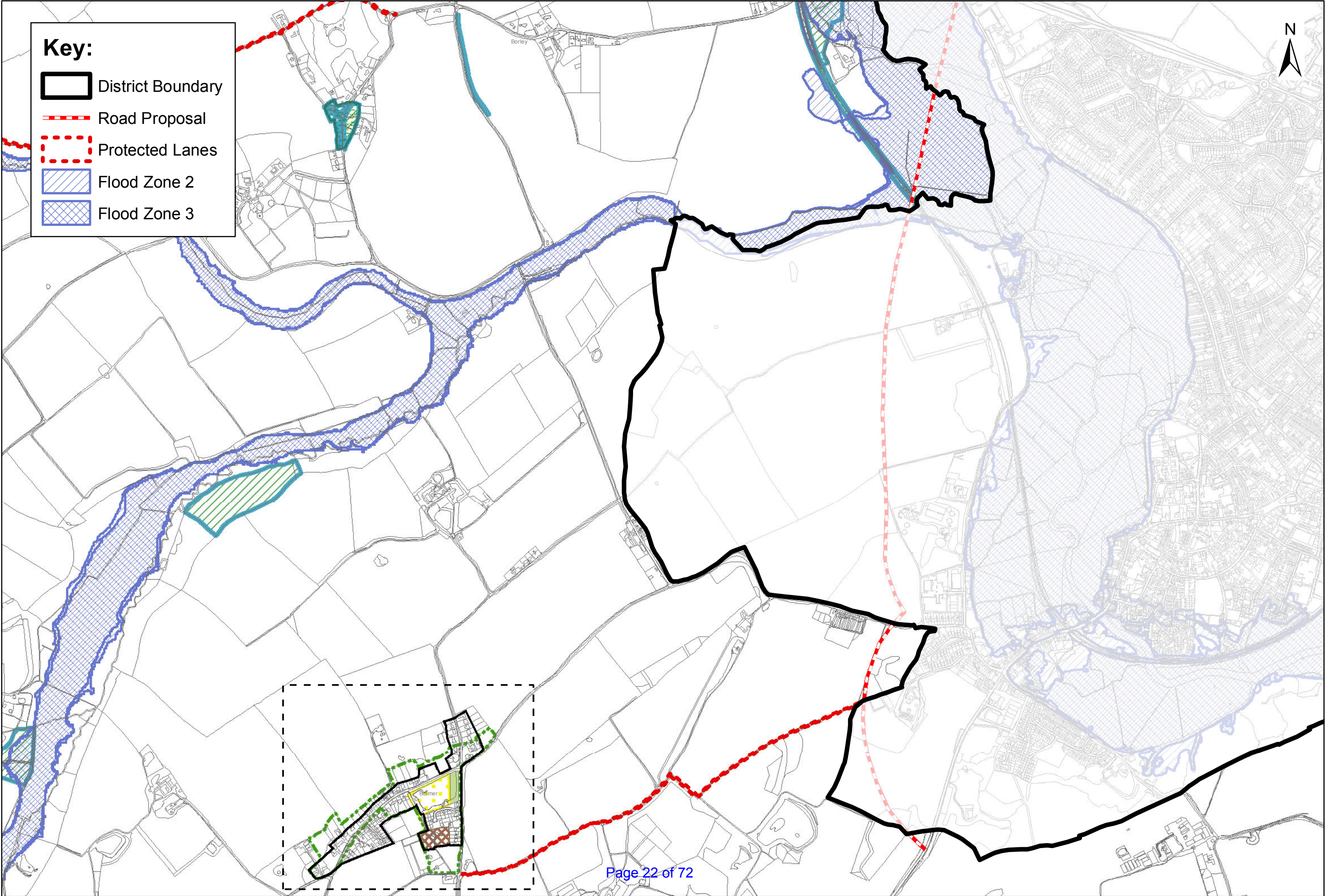
ww) To include a new special employment area at Kelvedon Park as shown on map 6 in the appendix.

**2. To approve the minor changes to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan as set out below and following a further period of public engagement, submitted to the Planning Inspector for examination.**

Paragraph/Policy	Change
1.5	Minor word change “The NPPF <u>and</u> PPG”
1.15	Minor wording change “...guidance set ou in the NPPF <u>and</u> PPG, will be used”
1.16	Minor wording change “...guidance set out in the NPPF <u>and</u> PPG. The policies..”
ADM5	specialists
ADM6	have <b>s</b>
3.25	The layout will need to provide garden sizes and car parking in line with the Council’s standards and any required landscaping <u>and public realm</u> .
ADM8	The existing vegetation, including trees on site and the necessity for further landscaping <u>and/or public realm</u>
ADM8	Layout amendment remove last bullet point and re position text to the edge of the box
3.42 point 2	To deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products, <del>for example, by frost damage or the failure of automatic systems.</del>
ADM12 e	rural enterprise’s needs
4.1	Move paragraph 4.1 to beneath the Core Strategy box
4.2	The South East Local <del>Economic</del> <u>Enterprise</u> Partnership
7.27	Line 2 add an ‘s’ to indicate to make indicates
ADM50	....scale, design and ...
8.20	...equestrian, sports or activities...
ADM52 3 <sup>rd</sup> bullet	...generated by an new building...
8.24	Farm diversification schemes should be complementary to the agricultural operations and well founded in terms of effectively contributing to the on-going farming activity and <del>the farm diversification scheme</del> <u>evidence of this</u> must be submitted with all applications
8.27	There are a number of buildings <del>and sites</del> in the countryside...
8.32	Proposals considered under this <del>application</del> <u>policy</u> would also...
11.2	...have regard to the regulations set out in S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2005, as amended, <del>and Government circular 05/2005.</del>
Glossary Housing Supply	Annually

Glossary	Term used – PPG, explanation Planning Practice Guidance
Appendix 1	Spelling corrections in table
Pre Submission Map List	Braintree and Bocking ( <del>North</del> ) <del>Braintree and Bocking (South)</del>
Pre Submission Map List	Witham ( <del>North</del> ) <del>Witham (South)</del>
Pre Submission Map List	Proposals Map ( <del>North</del> ) <del>Proposals Map (South)</del>

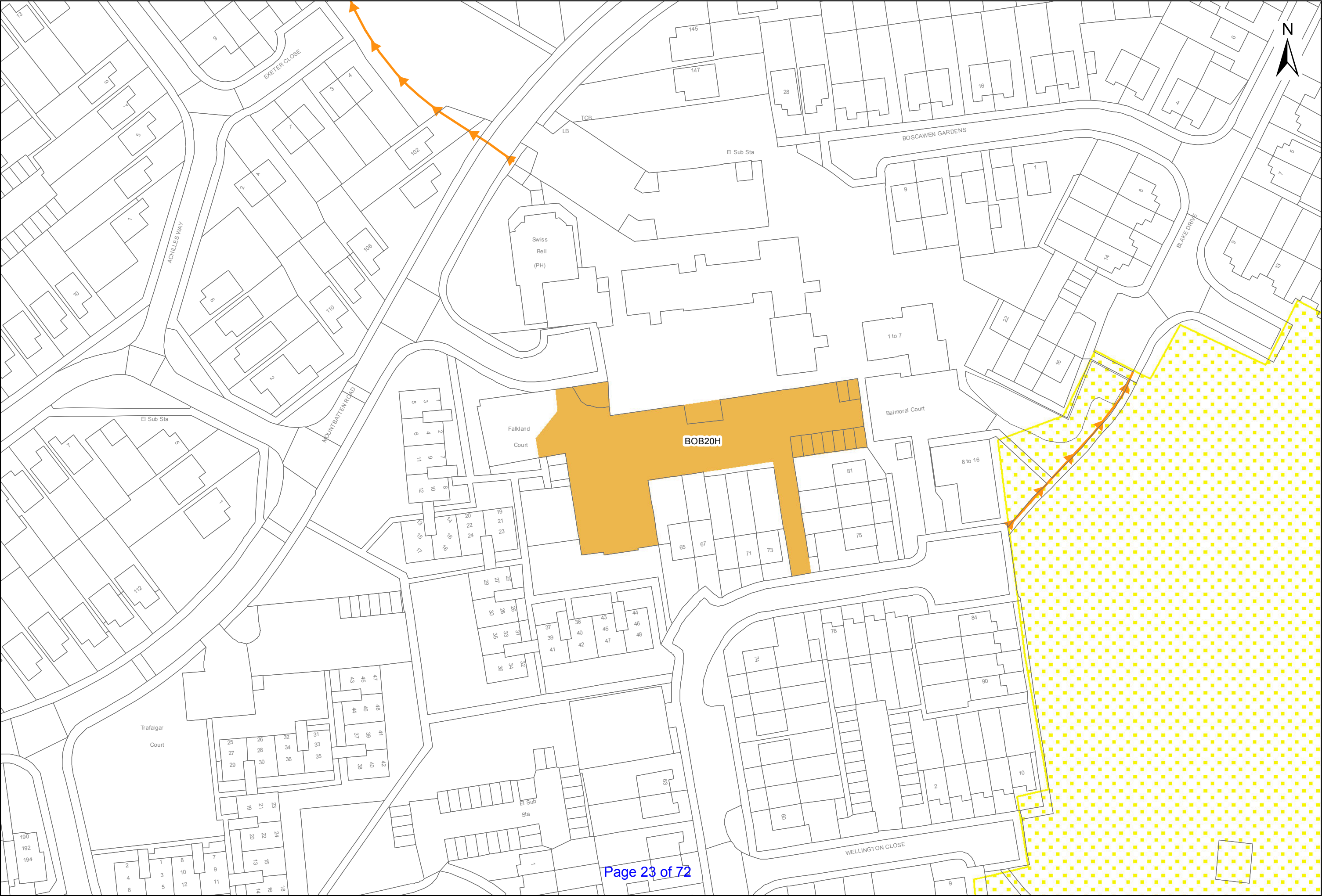




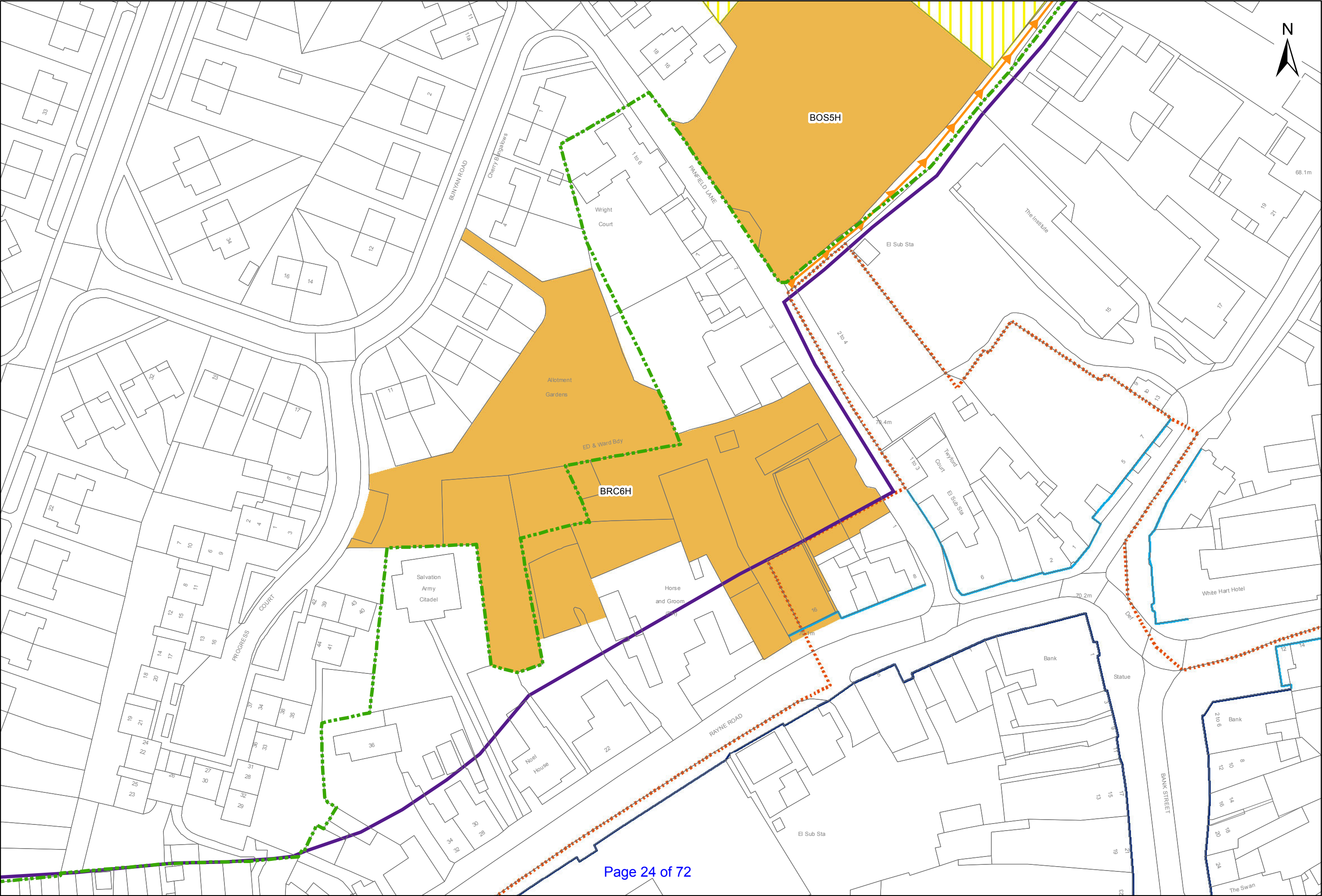
**Key:**

- District Boundary
- Road Proposal
- Protected Lanes
- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3





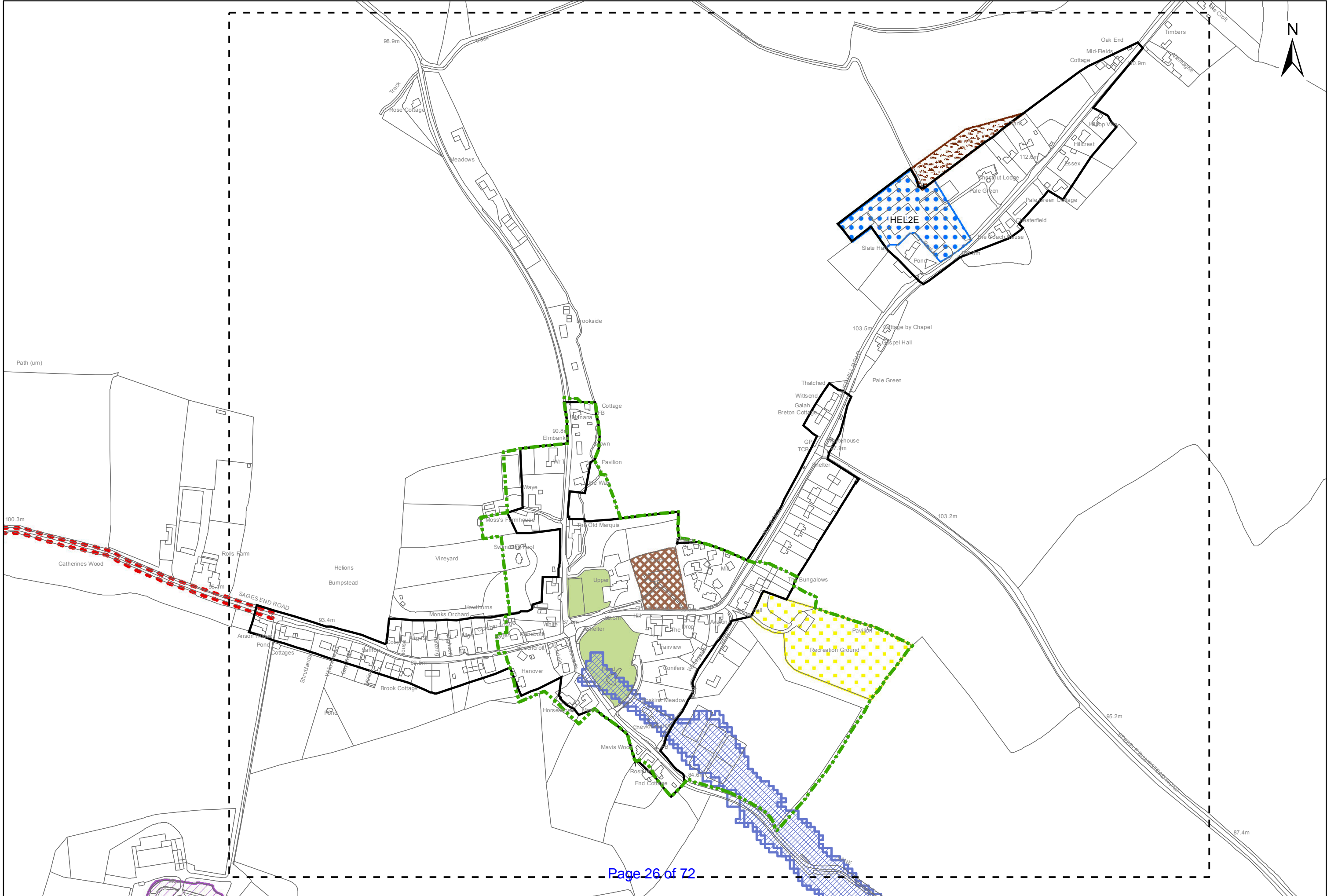


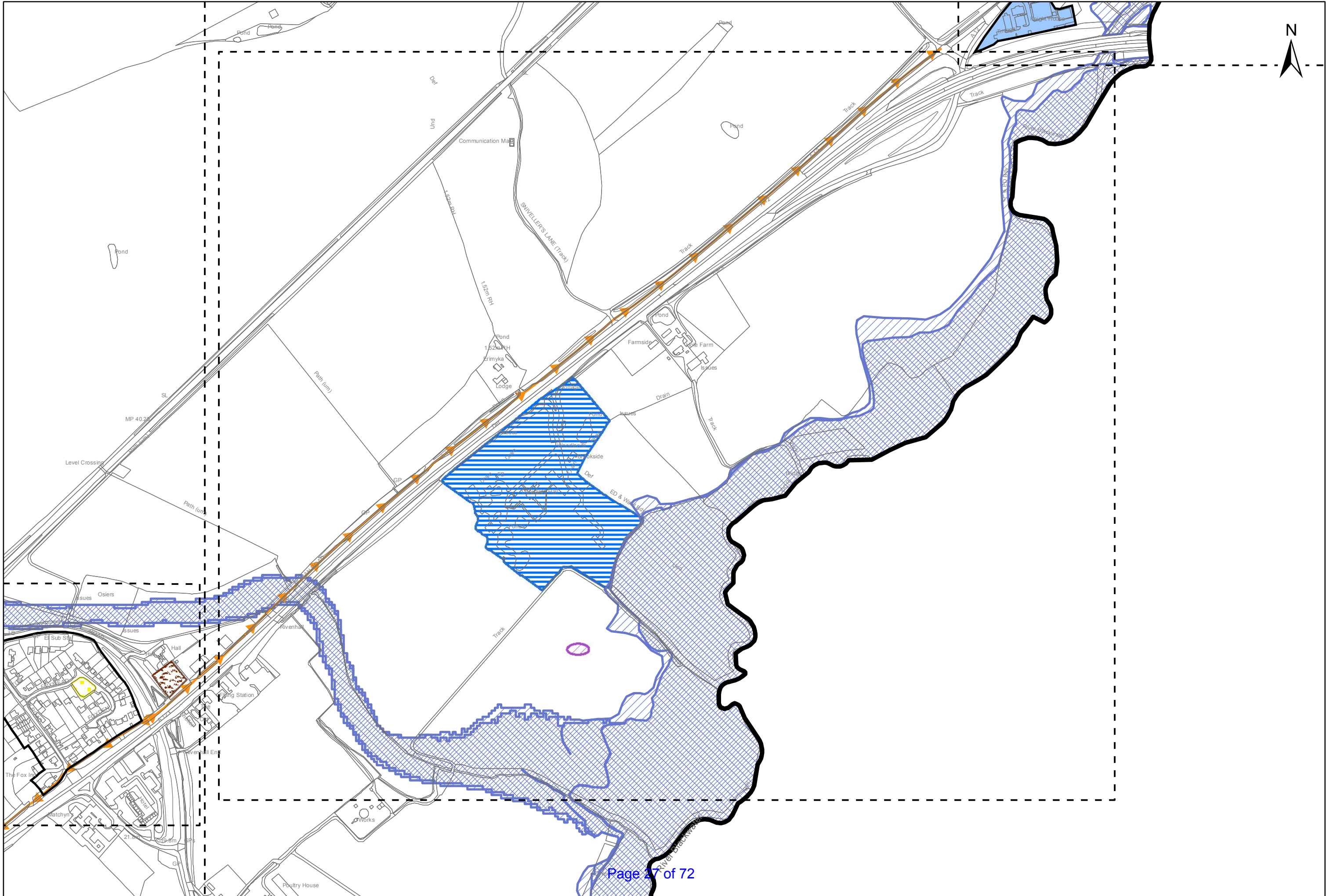














Recommendations from Cabinet, 31 <sup>ST</sup> March 2014		Agenda No: 7
Linking The Basic Member Allowance To Training And Development Undertaken		
Portfolio Area:	Councillor Beavis, Cabinet Member, People and Participation	
Background Papers:		Public Report

**Minute Extract:**

**CABINET – 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2014**

**82. LINKING THE BASIC MEMBER ALLOWANCE TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UNDERTAKEN**

**INFORMATION:** Members agreed to support the proposal to link the basic Member allowance to training and development subject to the following:

- That Member induction events held specifically for newly elected Members be excluded from the proposal;
- Clarity is provided as to the training sessions to which this scheme applies;
- That the proposal be based on withholding an element of the current basic allowance which Members would then receive in the final month of the year as a bonus related to their attendance at Member evening training events as set out in the report.

**DECISION:** That it be recommended to Council that subject to the amendments set out above, the amount of the basic Member allowance paid to individual Members be linked to their attendance at Member evening training events as set out in the report and that the scheme commences on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

**REASON FOR DECISION:**

To promote and demonstrate commitment to Member development and support learning needs.

A revised report following the meeting of Cabinet is attached.



<b>Linking the Basic Member Allowance to Training and Development Undertaken.</b>		<b>Agenda No: 7</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Performance – Providing value for money <b>Portfolio Area:</b> People and Participation <b>Report presented by:</b> Cllr Joanne Beavis <b>Report prepared by:</b> Helen Krischock		
<b>Background Papers:</b>  Council meeting – 22nd April 2013 - item 5		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b>  To agree or not to link part of the basic Member allowance to attendance at Member evening training events		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  1. <b>Background</b>  At its meeting on 22nd April 2013, Council agreed, in response to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, that part of the Basic Member Allowance be linked to training and development undertaken by Members.  Council also agreed that the Member Development Working Group should develop proposals for consideration by Council. This report is presented by Cllr Joanne Beavis, as Chairman of the Member Development Working Group, reflecting the work this Group has done on developing this proposal.  Currently there is no link between payment of the basic Member allowance and attendance at training/development events.  The proposal that follows was debated at Cabinet on 31 March 2014 and this report reflects Cabinet's comments and recommended changes.  2. <b>The aims of the proposal are to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote Member development</li> <li>To improve the knowledge and skills of Members</li> <li>To increase levels of Member engagement in respect of Member development generally.</li> </ul>		

This proposal only relates to Braintree District Council's Member Development Evening Programme which is designed to encompass essential information on issues at a local level. It excludes other internal and external training events including Member Induction.

The Member Development Evening Programme usually consists of 9 events during the course of the year. An update of the Programme is sent out monthly to all Members and will also be published on the Member Portal.

**3. How this would work:**

The basic Member allowance is £4,491.00 annually and the monthly allowance is £374.25.

It is proposed that the monthly Member's allowance will be reduced to £343.00 per month and an amount equivalent to the current monthly allowance of £375.00 will be directly linked to Member's attendance at Member Development Evening Programme events on a sliding scale as follows:

Percentage annual attendance	0 – 10%	10 – 25%	25 – 50%	50 – 75%	75%+
Percentage of one month's allowance	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Value of attendance allowance	£0	£93.75	£187.50	£281.25	£375.00

In summary, this means that a Member attending 75% or more of the scheduled events will receive the full payment of £375.00.

**4. How this would be processed:**

The Human Resources (HR) team would calculate overall attendance for each Member at the end of each financial year.

Payroll would need to be informed by the end of February each year to pay the additional amount to Members in March of the same year.

**5. Implementation:**

It is proposed to implement this new scheme from 1st July 2015. The HR team will process attendance figures between July 2015 and February 2016 at Member Development Evening Programme events. Payroll will be informed in the first week of March 2016 and additional allowances will be paid in March 2016. Adjustments will be made in respect of the introductory period being 8 months instead of 12. Thereafter, calculations will be made on the basis of a 12 month period.

**Decision:**

To recommend to Council that the amount of the Basic Member Allowance paid to individual Members is linked to their attendance at Member Development Evening Programme events as set out in Section 3 of this report and this new scheme commences on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

**Purpose of Decision:**

To promote and demonstrate commitment to Member development and support learning needs.

To increase attendance at corporate training events and to increase levels of member engagement with learning interventions generally.

To demonstrate that Braintree District Council continues to meet the standard of the East of England Charter for Elected Member Development. This was awarded in July 2011 and is due for renewal in October 2014.



Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
<b>Financial:</b>	Potentially negative impact on individual Members in respect of reduced basic allowance. There would be a reduction in the cost of Members allowances if Members do not attend the required training. However, it is not intended to reduce the Members allowances budget at this stage.
<b>Legal:</b>	Decisions on Member allowances must be made by the Full Council having regard to the Independent Remuneration Committees recommendations. In this case the Independent Remuneration Committee has already indicated that this form of scheme is appropriate and therefore Council can implement such a change.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	None
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	None
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	None
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	None
<b>Risks:</b>	None
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Helen Krischock
<b>Designation:</b>	Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager
<b>Ext. No.</b>	2711
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:helkr@braintree.gov.uk">helkr@braintree.gov.uk</a>



<b>Electoral Arrangements</b>	<b>Agenda No: 8</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	
<b>Report presented by: Nicola Beach, Returning Officer</b>	
<b>Report prepared by: Steve Daynes</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b> Developing Democracy Group	<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b> A limited number of options related to Polling Stations are available and discussed in the report.	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	
<b>Polling Stations</b>	
<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>Across the District there are however 3 Polling Districts where the designated Polling Places are located in residential properties. Access to the Polling Places serving two Polling Districts, <b>Little Maplestead (DL)</b> and <b>Tilbury Juxta Clare (DX)</b> have been declined and as such alternative locations are required.</p> <p>The Developing Democracy Group considered this matter on the 26th March 2014 and supported proposals which amend the locations of the following designated Polling Places:</p> <p><b>Little Maplestead (DL)</b> - St John the Baptist's Church, Church Road, Little Maplestead</p> <p><b>Tilbury Juxta Clare (DX)</b> – Community House, Belchamp St Paul</p>	

<b>Decision:</b>	That the proposals to re-designate two Polling Places as outlined in the report be supported.
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b>	To ensure that suitable venues are secured for the conduct of elections.

Corporate Implications	
<b>Financial:</b>	None
<b>Legal:</b>	The proposals comply with Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	The proposed Polling Places provide for suitable access for all electors
<b>Safeguarding</b>	No apparent issues.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	It is anticipated that the change of locations will not adversely impact on customers.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	All affected Parish Councils, Members of DDG and Political Parties have been consulted and support the proposal related to the designation of alternative Polling Places
<b>Risks:</b>	There are no significant risks to be considered
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Steve Daynes
<b>Designation:</b>	Democracy Manager
<b>Ext. No.</b>	2751
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:Steve.daynes@braintree.gov.uk">Steve.daynes@braintree.gov.uk</a>

## **POLLING PLACES**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to revise the current polling places due to the unavailability of current buildings.

### **2.0 Polling Districts**

#### **Tilbury Juxta Clare (DX)**

The designated Polling Place for this village is the Artist Studio at The Pines, Tilbury Juxta Clare. It is however located at the end of the Garden (approx 75 yards) with access being across the lawn with no clearly defined pathway.

By way of background, the owner indicated that whilst she was happy for The Studio to be used as a Polling Station for the Police and Crime Commissioner election in November 2012, she was concerned that access arrangements would not be appropriate.

Given the physical restrictions of using the Studio in winter Members accepted that there was an overriding case to make temporary arrangements for the community to vote at Belchamp St Paul and revert to the established Polling Place for future elections.

In planning for the European Parliamentary elections scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014 the Returning Officer's staff have been unable to secure access to the designated Polling Place.

The overriding principal when designating the Polling Place is to provide the electorate with a consistent location for the purpose of voting and whilst we have been indebted to the owners of The Pines over many years the Returning Officer has a duty to provide both a sustainable and accessible Polling Place.

Following consultation with the Tilbury Juxta Clare Parish Council they have reluctantly accepted that temporary arrangements used in November 2012 would now represent a more sustainable solution for the electorate of Tilbury Juxta Clare.

### **2.1 Polling District**

#### **Little Maplestead (DL)**

The designated Polling Place for this Polling District is the residential property known as Baytrees, School Road, Little Maplestead. The current owners have however declined the Returning Officer's request to use their property for the European Parliamentary election.

Alternative accommodation has however been secured in the Parish Church in Church Road, Little Maplestead.

Given that St John the Baptist's Church serves as both a place of community worship and as a focal point for community social events it is proposed to designate this location as the new Polling Place.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2013-14</b>		<b>Agenda No: 9</b>
<b>Report presented by:</b>	Councillor Dr. Evans, Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>	
<b>Options:</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>	
<b>Executive Summary:</b>		
<b><u>Key Scrutiny Topics 2013-14</u></b>		
<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s key areas of scrutiny in 2013-14 have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enabling Young People Who Are Not in Education, Employment or Training(NEET) to Participate in Education, Employment or Training;</li><li>• Council’s Budget.</li></ul> <p>Brief details on each are set out below.</p> <p><b>Enabling Young People Who Are NEET to Participate in Education, Employment or Training</b></p> <p>The Committee has reviewed the issues surrounding young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). The review focused on those who are in the 16 to 24 group, and enabling them to participate fully to ensure the project was manageable; although recognising that there are specific issues for Graduates and disabled young people.</p> <p>The Committee agreed the topic due to its importance within the District and recognising the national implications. Increasing the participation of young people in education, training and employment not only makes a lasting difference to their individual lives, but can improve social mobility, develop well-being in communities, and stimulate economic growth.</p>		

The key objectives of the review included:

- Identifying the number of young persons who are NEET and the problems this causes;
- Understanding the skills gaps being faced by local employers and whether the training available meets the gaps;
- Identifying and evaluating the organisation and support services available to help young people who are NEET participate in education, employment or training.

The Committee carried out several formal and informal meetings with a wide range of invitees including Braintree District Council, Essex County Council, Jobcentre Plus, National Apprenticeship Service, Colchester Institute (the College at Braintree), schools, businesses, young people and youth support workers.

In working with the young people it was clear that the traditional committee approach would not generate the best result. A series of informal sessions were held in local hostels where Members were able to better understand the issues and challenges facing the young people.

Committee Members also held informal meetings with businesses including visits to employers such as Stansted Airport to understand the issues from their perspective.

The Committee will be considering its final report at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June. It is expected that the report will then be considered by Council on 16<sup>th</sup> June and by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July. The Committee has collated a substantial body of evidence and is likely to make recommendations on a range of potential service improvements for both the Council and partner agencies.

### **Council's Budget**

The Committee scrutinised the Council's budget at 2 meetings in December 2013 and January 2014 with Cabinet Members. Both meetings included presentations from the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member, Performance and Efficiency, on the Council's proposed priorities for 2014-15, Council Budget and Council Tax 2014/15 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18.

The Committee's meetings on scrutiny of the budget were opened to all Council Members to attend. It is pleasing that many Members who are not Members of the Committee were able to attend these meetings and participated in the questioning sessions.

As Members have commented favourably on opening the Committee's meetings on scrutiny of the budget to all council members, the Committee's budget meetings in 2014-15 will again be open to all Members to attend.



### **Task and Finish Groups**

The Committee established the following Task and Finish Groups in 2013-14:

- Provision of Public Services in Rural Areas
- Operation of the Council's Tax Support Scheme

The Committee has received progress reports on the work of the Task and Finish Groups, both of which are progressing and looks forward to seeing the recommendations of both groups.

### **Meeting of Scrutiny Chairman –Essex and Suffolk**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014, I attended a meeting, along with the Members Services Manager, of Scrutiny Chairmen from Essex and Suffolk Councils hosted by Colchester Borough Council. The meeting provided a useful exchange of best practice in scrutiny. All those attending found the meeting useful and agreed that a further meeting should be held later in the year.

### **Acknowledgement**

Committee Members are grateful to all those who have attended its meetings over the year and assisted with its enquiries and studies. This includes Cabinet Members and all members attending the Committee's budget scrutiny meeting and all those attending scrutiny meetings on the enabling young people who are NEET to participate in education, employment or training.

I would particularly like to thank the young people who met with Members of the Committee and their frank and open comments were much appreciated.

### **Decision:**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report for 2013-14 be noted.

**Purpose of Decision:** To note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report.



COUNCIL  
23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014



<b>Governance Committee Annual Report 2013-14</b>	<b>Agenda No: 10</b>
<b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Johnson, Chairman, Governance Committee <b>Report prepared by:</b> Lesley Day, Audit Insurance and Risk Manager	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  The following activities were considered by the Committee during 2013/2014:  <b><u>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE</u></b>  <b>Report: Annual Governance Statement 2012/2013</b>  Received for approval the Annual Governance Statement for incorporation into the Statement of Accounts. Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 require "The relevant body shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of that body's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk."  <b>Report: Annual Internal Audit Report 2012/2013</b>  Received the Annual Report on Internal Audit Activity for 2012/2013.  <b>Reports: Internal Audit Activity (quarterly)</b>  Received and noted details of the audit assignments completed together with status updates in respect of Reportable Recommendations.	

**Report: Annual Audit Letter 2012/2013**

Received the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter covering the Council's financial audit. The Committee receives the report on behalf of the Council and may make observations to Cabinet who can decide to take action to make improvements based on the external auditor's assessment.

**Report: Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2014/2018**

Received and approved the Internal Audit four year plan supported by Risk Assessment.

**Reports: External Audit Plan 2013/2014****Audit Commission Work Programme and Scale of Fees 2012/2013****Report: Grant Claim Certification year end 31/03/13**

Received a report from the external auditor summarising the main issues arising from the certification of grant claims for the financial year ending 31st March 2013.

**Report: Public Sector Internal Audit Standards**

Approved the Internal Auditor Charter and adopted the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

**Report: Whistleblowing Policy**

Received details of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy with the opportunity to review.

**Report: Protecting the Public Purse 2013**

Acknowledged the Audit Commission's publication and received details of the counter fraud arrangements in place.

**RISK MANAGEMENT****Report: Strategic Risks**

Received two reports detailing reviews undertaken of the Council's Strategic Risk Register by Management Board and Cabinet together with details of how the significant business risks are being monitored and managed by Management Board in line with the Council's Risk Management Strategy.

**Report: Operation Risks**

Received details of the annual review of the Council's Operational Risks.

**MONITORING AND FINANCE****Report: Receipt of the Statement of Accounts for 2012/13 together with the External Auditor's Annual Governance Report**

Considered and approved the Statement of Accounts for 2012/2013 having received details of the external auditors' annual governance report.

The external auditor's report is presented to the Governance Committee in accordance with the provisions of International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) 260 Communication with Those Charged with Governance, ISA 265 Communicating Deficiencies in Internal Control and Management, and the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice

**Reports: Quarterly Performance Management Reports and Briefings**

Received and noted the quarterly Performance Management Reports. In addition, the Committee received briefings covering Performance and Project governance, Change Control process and Covalent reporting system

**Reports: Financial Indicators (quarterly)**

Received and noted details of key financial indicators.

**Report: Treasury Management Annual Report 2012/2013 and Mid-Year Report 2013/2014**

Noted and advised Cabinet to accept the reports.

**Report: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2014/2015**

Reviewed and provided comments on the draft Strategy prior to its submission to Cabinet.

**STANDARDS**

Received the Monitoring Officer's Annual Standards Report.

**COMMITTEE OPERATION**

Completed a Committee self-assessment checklist and produced an action plan as required.

**Other reports received**

**Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)** - Noted the current proposals and implications of the introduction and implications of the introduction of the SFIS.

**Fraud & Error Discussions** - External auditor's discussion with those charged with governance on fraud and error.

**Office of Surveillance Commissioners Inspection Report** – received report of inspection and noted recommendations made and the acceptance thereof.

**Training** – Training session on understanding the Council's Financial Statements was provided by LG Futures. The session was open to all Members of the Council.

Induction training on the role and work of Committee was also provided to new Members of the Committee.

**Decision:**

That the Governance Committee's Annual Report for 2013-14 be noted.

**Purpose of Decision:** To note the Governance Committee's Annual Report.

**LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**Agenda No: 11a**

**1. Police & Crime Panel (PCP) – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

The main item on the agenda was to consider the revised proposed police precept following the Secretary of State for DCLG decision to require a local referendum if any proposed increase in precept was in excess of 2%.

As a result the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) proposed an amended increase in precept down from 3.5% to 1.97%.

The minutes of the meeting record the following:

*“Councillor Butland reiterated his concerns expressed at the last meeting, namely that he believed the decision to increase the precept showed a lack of political acumen; that the Commissioner was showing the potential to be a serial increaser of taxation; that the impact of the budget on policing outcomes is not explicit. He considered that the percentage budget savings were at the lower end of those being faced by other local authorities which were coping and still delivering high quality services without raising taxes; the Commissioner by increasing the precept stood out against this trend.”*

The PCC's proposals were agreed by the PCP with representatives of Basildon, Thurrock and Braintree recording dissent.

The meeting continued with a very informative report from the Chief Constable.

He reported that he had taken up office on 9 May last year, and was proud to have been appointed to the post. His focus is on keeping Essex safe. He wants the Force's senior management to be more visible to the public and to the Force in general.

He has re-emphasised standards and will be holding the senior leadership to account. He wants to engender a sense of pride in being part of the Essex Force.

With that in mind he has taken the three Seaxes from the County Badge and given each one a value as follows:

- reducing crime and harm
- the number of crimes solved
- the level of satisfaction with the service.

He is looking to simplify the performance regime, to drive out further efficiencies and to stress the importance of time management. He is also looking at demand profiling to help determine the most efficient use of resources. He also wants to have a better understanding of partnership working and the opportunities for efficiencies. He undertook to keep the Panel informed of the significant decisions that will need to be made.

He has decided to make a priority of the policing issues relating to the night time economy of the County, ensuring that people are able to enjoy themselves in safety.

The Chief Constable set out some figures for crime trends comparing 1 April with 31 December 2013, as set out on page 57 of the Agenda under Agenda item 8 (Police and Crime Plan Refresh 2014/15). These showed reductions in a number of categories of crime, but of concern to the Chief Constable were increases in the incidences of shoplifting, serious assaults and serious sexual crime.

He is also looking closely at sickness levels amongst officers which are causing him concern. In addition, he is giving his personal attention to the issues involved in responding to Domestic Abuse.

He stated that his commitment to the local policing model is absolute. He acknowledged that he had moved away from joint funding for PCSOs and was moving to a greater focus on local responsibility and working more effectively in policing hubs.

## **2. EELGA – Economic Growth in the East of England – 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

Together with officers, Jon Hayden and Peter Smith, I attended this seminar on economic growth in the region at Girton College, Cambridge.

The half day event, chaired by Cllr Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council, examined the key challenges to generating sustainable growth in the region, the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), and how local authorities can rise to the challenge. It provided Members and officers the opportunity for learning and constructive debate on the practical steps being taken to progress economic growth ambitions in the East.

Copies of the presentations can be accessed at <http://www.eelga.gov.uk/events/leading-the-way-economic-growth-in-the-east-of-eng/>

## **3. Witham Industrial Watch (WIW) – 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

Along with Cllr Chris Siddall and senior officers I attend the launch, by WIW, of its BID (Business Improvement District) 2014 at Tiptree Patisserie. The proposal document with plans for the next five years will be delivered to each business on the industrial estates in Witham and the rate payers will then have an opportunity to vote Yes or No in the July ballot.



The BID has clearly made some significant achievements in its first period and I very much support WIW's bid for an extension of the BID.

#### **4. Business Excellence Awards – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

This award evening was held at Prested Hall, Feering and showcased the excellent service of many of our local businesses throughout the District. It was a very successful evening and I would like to congratulate all the businesses that took part and our staff for organising the event.

#### **5. Braintree Joint Locality Board – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014**

This meeting of the Board considered the following items:

- An update on Health & Social Care Integration
- An update on the work of the District's Health & Wellbeing Panel
- A report on the Domestic Abuse Pilot being carried out in the District and parts of Essex
- Broadband

The Board continues to provide a useful vehicle for co-ordinating the work of the County and District Councils.

#### **6. Braintree Rural Businesses Event – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014**

The Council's Chairman, Cllr Wendy Scattergood, hosted an evening for rural businesses at The Essex Club, Earls Colne.

Some 40 rural businesses were represented as were a number of exhibitors (both public and private) that interface with business. Feedback from the businesses was extremely positive and I would like to congratulate the Chairman on her fine initiative.

#### **7. Essex Leaders' Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014**

The following items were on the agenda for this meeting:

- Community Resilience Fund (CRF)  
Bob Reitemeier, CEO of the Essex Community Foundation, gave a presentation on CRF. As we consider the future direction of our own Mi Community Fund I have invited Bob to Braintree to explore ways in which we may be able to make even more effective use of our community support resources.
- SELEP: Strategic Economic Plan 2014-21 (SEP)  
Leaders considered a briefing paper on the SEP which set out:
  - Background and context for the SEP
  - Expectations on the Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)
  - An overview of the proposed growth deal for Essex and the Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE)
  - An overview of LEP wide governance
  - The case for building on the SEP; and
  - Next steps for local partners

The SEP is the South East LEP's proposed growth deal with HM Government. It is hugely important as the Government is to make a sum of £2billion a year, for five years, available to the 39 LEPs through the SLGF. The fund brings together specific resources to support transport, housing, and skills, with transport funding making up the largest component.

After a process of negotiation between the LEP and Government, in mid-2014, an allocation from the SLGF will be made to LEPs to invest in growth from April 2015. It is a competitive process. The more convinced the Government is by the appetite and ability of a LEP to deliver growth, the more money it will get.

The Essex SEP is a part of the overall South East LEP plan which also covers Kent and East Sussex. Members wishing to see the full submission to Government should go to the SELEP website at [www.southeastlep.com/](http://www.southeastlep.com/)

Cllr Graham Butland  
Leader

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATION**

**Agenda No: 11b**

**LEISURE SERVICES**

**1 – The Fusion Leisure Contract**

I continue to monitor, along with Officers, the excellent progress of the leisure contract. The most recent data received is demonstrating that in the past year there is a 26 per cent increase in leisure participation since the commencement of the new contract with Fusion Lifestyle. These figures include leisure and fitness activities run by Fusion in and outside of Braintree District Council owned centres. Work has commenced to organise this year's Inspired Sports Festival. A schedule is currently being finalised to organise activity days for young children in the rural areas of the district during the summer months.

**2 – Leisure Centre Improvements**

Along with Cllr. Tattersley I have been delighted to attend the organised tours of the soon to be open new Witham Leisure Centre. Cllr. Tattersley and I have been overwhelmed by the interest from local radio and newspapers to be part of this exciting project and between us we have hosted a number of interviews with the local media. Priti Patel MP will shortly be joining Cllr. Tattersley and me for the latest organised tour of the construction site. The new £9.5m project for the people of Witham and surrounding areas will help to further increase leisure and fitness activities within the Braintree District and will undoubtedly support better health outcomes for people year on year.

Work is due to commence on the improvements to the Braintree Swim Centre in early spring. The improvements will create a new state of the art gym and fitness studio.

**ACTIVE COMMUNITIES**

**1 – Active Communities Plan**

The Active Communities Plan, soon to be made available to all Members, is being finalised and encompasses the health agenda along with the District Council's approach to strong partnership working. The Active Communities Plan is being embraced throughout the organisation and will allow for a more joined up approach to community and locality based working.

## **2 – Community Builders**

The Braintree District Community Builders project is supporting the key health and wellbeing outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Panel and recognises high levels of child obesity and hip fractures in the village of Sible Hedingham and the Humber Road/Spa Road area of Witham. The funding for the project has been devolved by Essex County Council as part of the Strengthening Communities strand of the Whole Essex Community Budget.

## **3 – Our Witham**

The Council has been successful in securing £3,000 of national funding to enable partnership working in Witham with a range of partner agencies and the local community. As part of the Council's involvement in the national Our Place Scheme we are required to produce a strategy by the 9<sup>th</sup> May. A mapping exercise has begun to establish the main concerns for the people of Witham around health and wellbeing and employment and skills and identifying those organisations who are responsible for addressing health and employment issues.

## **4 – Tour de France (TDF)**

Members will be aware that the Tour de France passes through our district in July. Together with Essex County Council the Council is holding planning and briefing events for those parishes on the route and there are a series of exhibitions being held in village locations in order to advise the local residents and hear their concerns and comments. The TDF has provided many opportunities for local communities to benefit including promoting their village and to raise funds from such things as temporary car parks and camping sites. My thanks to Cllr. Tattersley and Officers for enabling good progress to be achieved. The experience and memories from this great sports race will leave a strong legacy to benefit health and wellbeing outcomes within the Braintree District.

## **5 – Health and Wellbeing**

### **Health & Wellbeing Panel**

Currently we are extending invites to join the panel to the Rural Community Council for Essex, Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency, Active Braintree and Age UK. The Panel is collectively addressing two priorities for the Braintree District: Adult Obesity and the level of hip fractures in the over 65's. The Panel has been surprised and impressed by the level of activity that already exists between partners. The focus over the next six months will be to develop a communication plan to highlight the work being done in these areas, increase the awareness of those organisations involved and signpost residents to these services. The panel will also be looking to launch and promote the "Livewell" brand. My thanks to Cllr. Dr Anne Naylor, Cabinet Member for Health at Essex County Council, for supporting and contributing to our work.

### **Active Braintree**

Sitting beneath the Health and Wellbeing Panel is the newly established Active Braintree District Network (ABDN). The ABDN has an independent Chairman and a strong group of partners including the NHS; Braintree District Council; Fusion Lifestyle; Essex County Council; Greenfields Community Housing; Braintree College; Provide; Essex Cares; Active Essex and Essex County Council School Games Officer.

Its recent successes include setting up a network of all clubs; re-introducing organised health walks; funding workshop; the introduction of Park Run from Great Notley Park; Inspired Sports Festival; the introduction of Braintree District Sports Awards 2014 and free instructor-led cycle schemes.

#### **“Livewell”**

This year is set to be a big year for health and wellbeing with the launch of the “Livewell” brand. This campaign will underpin a number of projects and will see the Council working with health partners to promote health and wellbeing. 20 Council staff have volunteered to become Health and Wellbeing Champions who have all undertaken a two day intensive training course including qualifying with a professional qualification from the Royal Society of Public Health. As part of the initiative staff organised a Health and Wellbeing day in early April to promote “Livewell” to staff and have three more days planned for the rest of the year.

### **6 – Community Transport**

I am delighted to announce that the Essex County Council Cabinet has committed to funding our valued and essential community transport service for yet another year. The funding amounts to £105,540. Total monthly passenger journeys are approximately 5,000 per month. The service began many years ago and was set originally set up for ‘taking Mrs Jones shopping’....

### **7 – Museum Service and Town Hall Feasibility Project**

Braintree District Council and Braintree District Museum Trust Limited are working in partnership to create a shared service with a sustainable future vision for the heritage services they fund and manage in the Braintree District. An options and feasibility study is being commissioned, jointly funded, for an external specialist consultancy to review the current Museum Trust proposals for increased revenue generation at the Warner Archive; capital redevelopment at Braintree District Museum; management of Braintree Town Hall and creation of a Braintree District Heritage Forum. The work is due for completion by late summer 2014.

From the 43 expressions of interest and subsequent application process, three consultancies are being invited for the final interview stage on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014, before starting work in May.

Cllr Joanne Beavis  
Cabinet Member – People & Participation

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

**Agenda No: 11c**

**Banking arrangements**

Following the Co-operative bank's autumn announcement that they would be withdrawing from the local authority market, the Council obtained agreement to terminate its contract two-years early, without penalty. Lloyds Bank have been appointed to provide banking services to the Council, and following transfer arrangements, including BACS details, the Council's bank accounts at Lloyds are now fully operational. The Council has advised tax payers on the changeover arrangements.

**Meeting with Council's Financial Advisors**

We met with our financial advisers, Arlingclose, at the end of March to review the changing risk horizon and impact and opportunities to revise our treasury management investments options.

**Customer Service Excellence Standard**

All BDC key frontline services have now been assessed and awarded for the Customer Service Excellence Standard, the most recent services assessed being Finance and Sustainable Development. With recognition from an impartial third party it is further reassurance that we are delivering very high standards of service to our customers.

**Third Quarter Performance Review**

**Projects**

Of 35 projects, eight projects are now complete and three have an amber status

**Performance Indicators**

Of 14 Performance indicators, seven have exceeded target and six have missed their target by less than 5% (one indicator does not have a target set). Any under-performing performance indicators need to continue to be monitored.

Examples of achievements include:

- A total of 69 affordable homes have been delivered
- A total of 171 customers have signed up to the new trade waste recycling service which is more than triple the number of existing customers
- Call answering times in the Customer Service Centre are exceeding our corporate target of 15 seconds to answer calls by averaging a call answering time of 7seconds for the third quarter of the year.
- Sickness continues to be good with 73% of staff not having any days off due to sickness in the third quarter. Performance continues to be under the two days target with the third quarter averaging 1.66 working days lost to sickness per employee.
- The number of complaints received by the Authority has fallen for the third

consecutive quarter (a total of 315 complaints have been received between April and December 2013 compared to 640 for the same period in 2012)

## **Financial Performance**

We are forecasting an overall underspend for the year of £99,000 (<1%) against the budget of £15.841 million. This is an improvement of £39,000 over the position reported at the second quarter mainly due to an overall improvement in expected external income. The service area that has improved the most is Development Control where the projection of income for the year has increased by £43,000 since Q2. In December three planning applications were received contributing over £81,000 of income towards the total for the month of £123,000, which is the highest recorded monthly total for over three years.

## **Business Rates – New Discretionary Relief**

With Government full reimbursement, a business rates discretionary relief scheme is being introduced offering three new types of rate relief:

**Retail Relief** - Properties that will benefit from the relief are those with a rateable value of £50,000 or less that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments. The relief is available in the years: 2014/15 and 2015/16. The maximum amount of relief under this scheme is £1,000. It is estimated that 747 premises are likely to be in scope for this relief.

**Re-occupation Relief** - A discount of 50% for new occupants of previously empty retail premises. The discount will last for 18 months. The relief will be available to businesses moving in to properties between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2016. It is estimated that 75 premises are likely to be in scope for this relief.

**New Build Empty Property Relief** - Properties that will benefit from the relief will be all unoccupied non domestic properties completed after 1 October 2013 and before 30 September 2016. It is estimated that 10 premises are likely to be in scope for this relief.

Businesses identified as potentially being entitled to Retail Rate Relief are being contacted and invited to apply for the relief by completing an application form.

## **District Council Network**

As the BDC representative, I attended the Council at the Spring DCN Assembly, which was focused upon housing development, and included an address from Kris Hopkins, the Housing Minister.

Cllr David Bebb  
Cabinet Member – Performance and Efficiency

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PLANNING AND PROPERTY**

**Agenda No: 11d**

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Braintree Town Centre Regeneration

The latest proposals from Henry Boot to redevelop the land behind the Town Hall in Braintree will now incorporate health and leisure facilities. The proposals will provide the opportunity to attract footfall into the town centre, benefiting existing stores. The scheme also incorporates some restaurants which will improve the night time economy. The Development Agreement with Henry Boot has now been extended until December 2014 to submit final plans. When the plans are submitted, residents, local businesses and interested parties will have an opportunity to view and comment on the plans prior to the formal planning application submission.

**PLANNING POLICY**

Replacement Minerals Local Plan Examination

Following the examination at the end of last year the Planning Inspector recommended a series of changes to the Plan before the Minerals Local Plan can be considered sound. The main revision is in respect of sites A6 and A7 which are extensions to Bradwell Quarry. These sites become reserve sites. This means they will only come forward within this Plan period if there is not a 7 year supply of sand and gravel extraction sites, based on a 10 year rolling average of sales.

Essex County Council began a further 6 week period of public consultation on 13<sup>th</sup> March with a deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> April for responses. Following consultation with local Members I shall respond on behalf of the Council. Responses to this consultation will be considered by the Planning Inspector before he issues his final report.

Silver End Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

The 4 week consultation period on the Conservation Appraisal ended on the 14<sup>th</sup> March. The Council is currently considering the comments received on the Appraisal before a final Plan will be presented to Planning Committee in April.

**HOUSING**

Homelessness & Temporary Accommodation

Between April 2013 and the end of February 2014 the Council accepted 147 households as being eligible, homeless and in priority need. The total for 2012/13 was 164 households and therefore we are predicting a similar number to last year's total. At the end of February 2014 there were 62 homeless households in temporary accommodation arranged by the Council. This figure has only varied by small amounts throughout 2013/14.

As part of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol arrangements for rough sleepers, the Council worked again this winter with the local charity BENS (Braintree Emergency Night Shelter) to ensure that there was shelter available in the event of very cold weather. Although individuals who were sofa surfing/rough sleeping did approach the Council during the winter months, the team was able to successfully refer to other night-shelters and BENS did not have to open for this purpose. The threshold for very cold temperatures was not met, but the incessant rain and period of high winds would have been sufficient to justify opening the provision had alternatives not been available.

#### Affordable Housing Development

For the year April 2013 to March 2014 there has been a total of 103 new affordable homes completed.

The next completions of new homes are expected between April and June 2014 when it anticipated there will be 32 units completed. The 32 units include:-

- A development in Braintree by Colne Housing of 24 flats at the former garage site In South Street
- Completion of 6 homes by Colne Housing through a programme of open market purchase

#### The Housing Register

In the last quarter 216 housing association homes were let in the Braintree District via the Gateway to Homechoice, Choice Based Lettings scheme.

As of the 31st of March there were 2504 applicants on the Housing Register consisting of:-

108 – Band A  
 241 – Band B  
 658 – Band C  
 107 – Band D  
 1378 – Band E

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT**

#### Eckard House Site, Witham

The Council completed the purchase of Eckard House on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014. A planning application has been submitted for the construction of a 68 space commuter car park on the site.

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

**Agenda No:11e**

**BUILDING REGULATIONS**

**PM to cut red tape**

The Government have announced a drive to build thousands more homes by cutting building regulations. Plans propose reducing current building control rules, applied to new homes, from over 100, to fewer than 10. Developers would expect to save £60m a year, equivalent to £500 for every new property built. Rules setting out minimum window sizes; dimensions of rooms; strength of front doors; and arrangements for lavatories, lighting, 'phone lines and disabled access will be culled. The Government have also announced that 80,000 pages of "green tape" environmental rules will be removed by March 2015, saving firms £100m a year.

**ENERGY**

**DIY energy fund**

Local communities will be offered up to £150,000 each, from Government, to create their own renewable energy through solar panels or wind turbines. Climate Change Secretary, Ed Davey, has launched a £10m Urban Community Energy Fund to kickstart projects in England that could see 1m homes supplied with electricity from "home-made" generation by 2020. Neighbouring households are being encouraged to group together to apply for the funding, which could pay for solar panels, wind turbines or hydroelectric generators that could save families hundreds of pounds a year in fuel bills.

In partnership with RCCE, BDC is already promoting the take up of rural energy projects with parishes and community groups across Braintree and Uttlesford districts. This new funding stream will be promoted alongside WRAP's Rural Community Energy Fund. The next community workshop is on the 14<sup>th</sup> May in Great Yeldham.

**LICENCING**

**Public health rules questioned**

The Local Government Association has said that rules preventing councils from rejecting licensing applications on public health grounds should be scrapped. Currently, councils leave themselves open to prosecution if they reject a licence on public health grounds, but as some areas struggle with high levels of alcoholism, councils are demanding the power to block new clubs, pubs and off-licences on advice from public health experts.

**New Laws – Mobile Homes**

The Mobile Homes Act 2013 has made sweeping changes to the law on park homes giving better rights and protection to park home owners, whilst ensuring that honest professional site owners can flourish.

As part of the changes, a new licensing scheme is now force, from 1st April 2014, which enables local authorities to monitor site licence compliance more effectively. Authorities now have the tools to take enforcement action, where owners are not managing and maintaining their sites and services, to ensure residents' health and safety are better protected and the value of their homes safeguarded.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY ENFORCEMENT**

### **Health and safety red tape to be slashed**

The Government are spearheading a deregulation bill that will see millions of self-employed people exempted from assessing the risks of their own health and safety at work. Mike Penning, the minister with responsibility for health and safety, said he wanted to stop businesses being bogged down in “overcomplicated and often contradictory regulations”.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Tree Planting**

This season's tree planting activities are now complete, with 109 large trees and over 1000 smaller trees planted across 14 different sites around the District. The planting season involved many local volunteers and school children, Witham Tree Group, Woodland Trust and assistance from BDC Grounds Maintenance teams, and has included replacement trees in Weaver's Park, Braintree, Howbridge Infants and Junior School in Witham, and the old hospital site in Black Notley.

### **Hoppit Mead Local Nature Reserve**

Site Notices and a press release were posted for w/commencing 17th March announcing the Council's intention to designate a Local Nature Reserve for the open space along the river valley at Hoppit Mead in Braintree. It is proposed to establish a “friends group” for this area and Landscape Services staff will be talking to local residents who showed interest at the public consultation event last summer.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Partnership Working**

Officers have successfully negotiated a 12-month Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the emptying of all litter and dog waste bins and other ad-hoc works including removal of graffiti and fly-posting on Greenfields' land with effect from 1 April 2014. This is supplementary to the contract that Greenfields has with Sodexo for the maintenance of its grounds.

### **Recycling**

We have started to refurbish our recycling banks, with 10 sites to be addressed over the coming weeks, in liaison with relevant Parish Councils, ensuring facilities meet local requirements.

The winners of the Essex Schools Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Competition 2013 (run by Essex County Council) were announced in early March and Belchamp St Paul C of E Primary School, Braintree, won second prize. The competition was sponsored by Veolia who presented a cheque for £150 to the School last month. Overall, 2.28 tonnes of electrical equipment was sent for re-use or recycling after collection from the participating schools.

### **Door-stepping (domestic recycling)**

As previously reported, we recruited a new Recycling Advisor in February and another is due to commence this month. These are front-line roles, working directly with our refuse and recycling staff and local residents, to encourage greater participation in recycling and increase recycling performance across the District.

### **ICDC (Integrated Commercial and Domestic Collections)**

As part of the proposed re-routing exercise (commencing February 2015) we have invited Parish and Town Councils to let us know about any local issues that may inform how the new routes are designed.

### **Transfer of Rural Facilities**

As from 1 April 2014, Castle Hedingham Parish Council has taken on the management and maintenance, including control & accountability, of the public toilets as part of a 5-year SLA.

The transfer of the car park, public toilets and allotments at Earls Colne is progressing well and should be completed by the end of May. These facilities will then be owned and managed directly by the Parish Council.

Discussions with Coggeshall Parish Council have recommenced, regarding the transfer of the car park at Stoneham Street.

### **Vehicle and Plant Workshop**

Contractors (Granville Developments) commenced works on the refurbishment of the old Materials Recycling Facility at Lakes Road in March. The building is being converted to a new vehicle and plant workshop that will be shared between the Council and its vehicle procurement and maintenance provider (Riverside Truck Rental Ltd.). Works are due to finish by the end of June, creating new jobs (plans include a workshop apprentice) with Riverside.

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

### **Funding**

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has confirmed the 2014/15 funding allocation to the CSP of £16k.

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service has confirmed their contribution of £3k.

### **CSP Action Planning Workshop**

An action planning workshop was held on Friday 7th March with over 30 people, representing 17 partner agencies, in attendance to identify current service delivery, where the gaps are in provision and identify actions for the 2014/15 CSP annual plan against the four priorities: Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence, Acquisitive Crime and Drugs Offences. A draft plan will be taken to the Responsible Authority Group on 23rd April.

### **Domestic Abuse Pilot**

To date, the pilot has engaged with 123 victims across the Braintree District, 88 high risk victims, 34 medium risk victims and 1 standard risk. Referrals have been made to a variety of agencies, including Safer Places for outreach support, the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) service for support during the court process and solicitors to obtain non-molestation orders.

Cllr Wendy Schmitt  
Cabinet Member – Place

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PROSPERITY AND GROWTH**

**Agenda No: 11f**

**Business support**

An event for rural businesses was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 at the Essex Golf and Country Club on the Earls Colne Industrial Estate. Hosted by the Chairman, the event provided information and advice to rural businesses on Council services and support as well as support provided by other agencies such as Ignite Business Enterprise. The event also provided valuable feedback on how we can improve our services to meet the needs of rural businesses.

Witham Industrial Watch is proposing to renew their successful Business Improvement District initiative which provides CCTV on the Witham Industrial Estates and has reduced business crime and increased business confidence on the Witham Industrial Estates. I attended the launch event for this proposal at Village Glass on 14<sup>th</sup> March and was happy to confirm the Council's support. The ballot will be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

**Economic Development**

South East Local Enterprise Partnership has now submitted its Strategic Economic Plan to government. This should be approved by July this year with project funding available from April 2015. The District can play a key role in delivering the jobs and housing growth ambitions of the Plan, and we have submitted proposals for our strategic development sites at Skyline II and Panfield Lane to be included in the Plan delivery arrangements, as well as the further regeneration of Braintree town centre, and rolling out enterprise support for start up businesses across the District.

**Business engagement**

I chaired the first formal meeting of the District Business Leaders Board at Village Glass in Witham on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 where George Kieffer, Chairman of the Haven Gateway Partnership, briefed the Board on the campaign to improve the A120 as a strategic growth corridor. I am pleased that the A120 Corridor has been included in the South East LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. The Board also received an update on the programme to roll-out improved broadband from Superfast Essex and made strong representations that the programme needs to be targeted to the District's key employment areas to enable business growth and prosperity.

**Skills**

The District Leaders Board agreed to set up an Employment and Skills Board for the District. This will be a small, employer-led Board involving the college, schools and Jobcentre Plus, to help them equip young people with the skills and attributes that employers need. I attended Brooks Newmark MP's jobs fair in Braintree on 21<sup>st</sup> March and was encouraged to see the number of employers and young people attending.

## **Regeneration**

Highways works at the corner of South Street and Fairfield Road will be undertaken by County Highways and are programmed by the County Council to commence on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014. We have been liaising with the County Council over the detailed design of the landscaping scheme for the site. This project should be finished by the Summer, improving traffic flow and providing a more attractive gateway to the town centre. Work to the St. Michael's Fountain site is substantially complete but with some further improvements to the fountain bowl to be undertaken. Exploratory dig works at Sandpit Lane were undertaken over a 3 day period in March to identify engineering solutions for this public realm scheme. We will now be progressing with detail design and further discussions with traders in the area.

The 'Love Where You Shop' Awards for 2014 were held at Prested Hall on 25th March 2014. Around 40 retailers and small businesses along with representatives from the Town Teams, Town Council and District Council were in attendance to celebrate the success of these small businesses. The awards were presented to businesses who were nominated by the general public in the following categories: Independent Business of the Year, Best Business for Marketing, Best Window Display and Town Champion. This year's deserved Town Champion was Lorne Campbell from Witham. The event was sponsored by the District Council, the Newsquest Group and New River Retail.

Cllr Chris Siddall  
Cabinet Member – Prosperity and Growth

Further information on the contents of this report can be obtained by contacting:

Cllr Chris Siddall, telephone: (01376) 565302

<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Cllr Chris Siddall</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Prosperity and Growth</b>
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<b>LIST OF PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD SINCE COUNCIL MEETING OF 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014</b>		<b>Agenda No: 13</b>
<p><b>Corporate Priority:</b> Not applicable</p> <p><b>Report presented by:</b> Not applicable</p> <p><b>Report prepared by:</b> Alastair Peace – Member Services Manager</p>		
<b>Background Papers:</b> Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b> Report for noting		<b>Key Decision:</b> No
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b></p> <p>Since the Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Council – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014</li> <li>(2) Planning Committee – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014</li> <li>(3) Council Tax Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014</li> <li>(4) Planning Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014</li> <li>(5) Licensing Committee – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014</li> <li>(6) Local Development Framework Sub-Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014</li> <li>(7) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014</li> <li>(8) Governance Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014</li> <li>(9) Cabinet – 31st March 2014</li> <li>(10) Planning Committee – 1st April 2014 (copy to follow)</li> <li>(11) Braintree District Local Highways Panel – 3rd April 2014 (copy to follow)</li> <li>(12) Local Development Framework Sub-Ctte – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (copy to follow)</li> <li>(13) Planning Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (copy to follow)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Hard copies of minutes are sent to Members of the relevant meeting. Copies are available for all Members to view on the Council's website at <a href="http://www.braintree.gov.uk/meetings">http://www.braintree.gov.uk/meetings</a></i></p>		
<p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p>Members are invited to note the Minutes published.</p>		
<p><b>Purpose of Decision:</b> Not applicable</p>		
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Alastair Peace	
<b>Designation:</b>	Member Services Manager	
<b>Ext. No.</b>	2602	
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk">alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk</a>	





Council  
23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014



<b>Business of External Organisations</b>	<b>Agenda No: 16a</b>
<b>Annual Report on the Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Supporting vulnerable people in our community. <b>Report presented by:</b> Cllr Jennie Sutton <b>Report prepared by:</b> Cllr Jennie Sutton	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>
	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
<p>Executive Summary: Report on the Citizens Advice Bureau April 2013 - Feb /March 2014.</p> <p>Citizens Advice – which I must stress is a charity – is one of the few industries in recent years where demand for its help has increased greatly. What with all the changes in benefits etc and debt (from all walks of life) being an increasing problem, demand has been high.</p> <p>Generalist Advice - the total number of clients seen by CAB between April and Sept 2013 (6 month period) can be broken down into months ( as yet we do not have the figures for Oct, Nov, Dec 2103 and Jan Feb March) 2014 :-</p> <p>April/May/June 2013 was 1,033 July/Aug/Sept 2013 was 1,059 making a total of <b>2,092</b></p> <p>Total number of Client Activities (Telephone calls, letters, referrals etc)</p> <p>April/May/June 2013 was 4,527 July/Aug/Sept 2013 was 4,674 making a total of <b>9,174</b></p> <p>These covered enquiries in many different categories – Consumer. Welfare, Housing, Taxes, Health, Money Advice, Employment, Family &amp; Personal, Immigration, Education, etc</p> <p>All these problems are dealt with by trained Volunteers and Supervisors, who work at the three centres. Between April and Sept 2013 there has been 60 volunteers, 13 clerical, 28 trained advisers, 11 trustees and 8 trainees. Over the 6 month period the trainees work on average a 10 hour week, giving a weekly total of 80 hours. So in 6 months they give a total of 1,840 hours. In addition the trained advisers continually monitor updates to the information system and engage periodically in more formal refresher training. They on average work a 6 hour week and over a period of 6</p>	

months this gives approximately 8,280 hours voluntary work. This is just one CAB office in the country, I wonder what the total would be for the whole country!

One of the aims of the Citizens Advice Service is – To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. The bureau network gathers evidence on issues with policies and practices that impact clients and we call these - Social Policy Issues. These are then reported to the Social Policy Unit within Citizens Advice who compile reports and inform their campaign work team. It must be said that issues around decisions and administration within the benefits system still dominate. Unethical employment practices and over zealous debt collection agencies have also been identified and reported on.

CAB has been very active in pushing for change in various employment areas – the Government has now agreed that there will no longer be sanctions against job seekers for refusing to attend interviews or to apply for jobs with zero hours contracts. This is called the Claimant Commitment which started in October 2013 with high hope that it would greatly reduce misunderstandings between DWP and claimants that lead to sanctions. This formal signed agreement between two parties is about their joint responsibilities, and is built around the work plan that claimants will agree with the Jobcentre. Whilst there is sense in making everything clearer for both sides – it could cause an influx of worried claimants to the CAB.

The DWP have also been asked to change their approach to the jobs it offers and expects people to take, to one of offering jobs that are paid at a reasonable level and which offer some protection such as sick pay – paid leave and a stated number of minimum weekly hours. In this way jobseekers will hopefully have a better chance of moving away from the need to rely on benefits.

CAB also had a change of Chairman at its AGM in October last year. Rules state that you can only be chairman of a bureau for 6 years – after that you must hand over to someone new. So great thanks were given to Don Smith for all his efforts in the past 6 years (Don will still be very much involved with CAB, but in many different ways) and Lawrence Duncan is now the new Chairman. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Lawrence good luck in his new role.

CAB hopes to upgrade all of its Windows XP PCs to Windows 7 and its Microsoft Office suite from 2003 to 2010 as Microsoft will be ending their support of these products in March 2014 – this will be done out of normal office hours.

CAB is still looking for new premises in Braintree, but as a moral booster CAB has given the present office a lick of paint to brighten the surroundings.

CAB engaged with the BIG Energy Saving week at the end of January – this was a national Citizens Advice campaign where CAB also worked locally with the BDVSA – BDC and Village Agents. Survival packs, containing campaign materials were delivered by BDC Community Transport Team to those identified as being in need.

<b>Business of External Organisations</b>		<b>Agenda No: 16b</b>
<b>Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency (BDVSA)</b>		
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Encouraging Flourishing Communities <b>Report presented by:</b> Cllr Sandra Howell <b>Report prepared by:</b> Cllr Sandra Howell		
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
		<b>Key Decision:</b> No
<p>The BDVSA is a registered charity whose aim is to give help and support to the many voluntary and community groups in the Braintree district. It is envisaged that approx. 150 voluntary organisations benefited from the grant received from Braintree District Council and Essex County Council.</p> <p>The charity maintains close liaison with the voluntary and community sector through its newsletter and regular e-bulletins. These communications ensure that the voluntary and community sector, especially the smaller groups, are kept up-to-date with developments in the charity world and the public sector/policy affecting voluntary groups.</p> <p>BDVSA still feel their most important role is to enable local statutory and voluntary organisations to work together openly and to help small groups in the community with funding advice, training and governance and management issues.</p> <p>One such project this year has been the Winter Warmth Project which has been funded by Essex County Council Public Health. 180 packs were delivered by Community Transport and the Village Agents. In addition to the practical winter warmth items such as gloves, hot water bottles etc. the packs also included a thermometer and information from BDC, energy saving advice from CAB, benefits advice leaflet from Age UK Essex, advice on bogus callers and doorstep safety from Trading Standards and an additional goody bag from Community Transport. The feed- back from recipients has shown this to be a resounding success.</p> <p>There have been several changes in the voluntary sector including a newly formed Essex wide voluntary sector alliance. At present it is focusing on structures within the Alliance and has formed four sub groups on:</p> <p>Community mobilisation            Employment, worklessness, education and training            Health and well being            Crime prevention and justice</p>		

There is also a consortium of Essex based charities called 4SX being formed. The purpose of which is to create an entity of tender ready charities who can respond to contracting opportunities issued by the County Council.

There have also been changes at BDVSA during the 2013/14 financial year, a new Chief Executive Officer, Rachel Fahie, has been appointed and two other members of staff retired recently.

BDVSA was also the subject of an Overview and Scrutiny review, a copy of the Task and Finish Group report was circulated to all members and ratified by full council.

A brief summary of the recommendations is as follows:

- For BDC to continue to provide financial support and maintain close partnership working.
- For BDC to identify ways in which it could provide non-financial support to BDVSA
- To increase members awareness of the service BDVSA provides
- BDVSA (through Cabinet) should investigate alternative premises to provide a higher standard of accommodation and a more positive environment.
- To consider ways of raising its profile to ensure more organisations could benefit from their services.

Since the report was published there has been a closer working relationship with BDC which has resulted with BDVSA having a place on the Responsible Authority Group and the Health and Wellbeing Panel. There is also a possibility that accommodation may be found within Causeway House.

Every year volunteering enquiries continue to increase and in 2013 they received nearly 1400. About 250 people go on to register and another 300 are referred directly to other agencies. Figures show that 90% of all volunteers come from the 18 to 35 years age group, followed by 8% of 36 to 60 years and 2% over 60 years.

Finally could I remind members that BDVSA produces a regular newsletter, copies of which are now emailed to you and which I hope you enjoy reading.

<b>Business of External Organisations</b>		<b>Agenda No: 16c</b>
<b>Ignite Business Enterprise</b>		
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	<b>Boost employment, skills and support business Promoting and improving our town centres</b>	
<b>Portfolio:</b>	<b>Prosperity and Growth</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Councillor Chris Siddall</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Peter Smith, Head of Economic Development</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>	
<b>Options:</b> Report for information	<b>Key Decision:</b> No	
<b>Executive Summary:</b>		
<p>Ignite Business Enterprise was formed from the merger of Business Development Services (BDS) and Braintree Enterprise Acorn Units (BEAU) in April 2012 to deliver business support and work space options for SME's (small and medium sized enterprises) and new start-ups in the district. The purpose of the merger was to create an efficient organisation that would be sustainable in the long term.</p> <p>Ignite Enterprise Centre at Springwood Drive, Braintree has 30 incubator units providing start up businesses with integrated business support and work space options. The Centre is currently full and has shown an increase in full time employment over the last year from 64 to 75, including 6 new start up businesses. In addition to the Enterprise Centre, Ignite also took on a temporary lease for the former Community Centre in Victoria Road, Braintree during 2013 and created a Jewellery Village – a craft- based retail space that has supported 16 start-up &amp; growth businesses to date, of which 7 were new starts. Ignite also lease the Corner House in Braintree town centre from the Council and have supported business start- ups through a 'pop up shop' complementing the Town Team's activities in regenerating the town centre. In total, 4 start up businesses have been supported (with a fifth in progress): Party Inspirations; Milk and Cupcakes; Tynska Designs; and Chic Décor.</p> <p>Ignites enterprise agency activities over the past year have delivered: 243 pre start counselling sessions; 82 start ups; 137 individuals on business planning workshops; 245 employment skills and 18 business health checks. Ignite delivered a District Business Showcase event on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 with over 40 businesses attending, and managed an indoor market at the Town Hall as part of the Braintree Town Christmas event.</p>		



Planning is underway for an extension to the Springwood Drive Enterprise Centre. The extension will provide 12 new business incubator units (6 x 20m<sup>2</sup> and 6 x 40m<sup>2</sup>) as well as training and conference facilities. The extension will provide a revenue stream to support sustainable delivery of business start-up and growth advice at no net ongoing cost to the Council. The total cost of the project is £1,166,000 with the Council investing £866,000 of Growth Area Funding and a further £300,000 funding committed by Essex County Council. This will create 50 direct jobs and a total of 1100 jobs. Planning permission for the extension was secured in October 2013, tenders have been evaluated with an anticipated start on site in June 2014.