

# Council AGENDA

**Monday, 10th December 2018 at 7:15 PM**

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

**THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
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**Members of the Council are requested to attend this meeting to transact the business set out in the Agenda.**

**Membership:-**

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

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

A WRIGHT  
Chief Executive

## **INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

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

### **Question Time**

The Agenda allows for a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak. Members of the public wishing to speak are requested to register by contacting the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email [governance@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:governance@braintree.gov.uk) no later than 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting. The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register to speak if they are received after this time. Members of the public can remain to observe the public session of the meeting.

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

### **Health and Safety**

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

### **Mobile Phones**

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**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 To receive any announcements/statements from the  
Chairman and/or Leader of the Council.**

**3 Declarations of Interest**

To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda having regard to the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.

**4 Public Question Time**

(See paragraph above)

**5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 8th October 2018 (copy previously circulated).

**6 Presentation of the Local Council Award Scheme**

To receive a presentation from Councillor Peter Davey, Chairman of the Essex County accreditation Panel of the Local Council Award Scheme.

**7 Essex Playing Fields Awards**

Councillor Schmitt to make the presentation of the Essex Playing Fields Awards to Full Council.

**8 LGA Local Government Challenge 2018 Awards**

Councillor McKee to make the presentation of the LGA Local Government 2018 Awards to Full Council.

**9 To consider the following MOTION submitted by Councillor**

**Butland:**

*“This Council reaffirms its commitment to Health, Homes, Journeys and Jobs through its £100 million-pound investment strategy, underlining a long-standing commitment to promoting growth and opportunity.*

*The Council continues to fully embrace and appreciate the opportunities presented by addressing the ongoing housing need in upcoming decades. Key to this is ensuring the correct onus on delivering the right housing supply allowing: choice of tenure, including social housing, affordable housing for those who want to get on the housing ladder and the right supply for those who wish to move up the housing ladder from starter properties. In addition, suitable housing provision for an elderly population is also essential.*

*The Council also acknowledges its strong record in investing the proceeds of Housing Growth, (New Homes Bonus) to support and lever additional funding for infrastructure improvements and economic development. Examples have included: Millennium Slips, Superfast Broadband and Grow on Units.*

*Thanks to sound financial management, this Council is able to continue to invest to improve our District for our residents.”*

Appropriate notice of the motion has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Rule 18 of Chapter 2 of the Constitution.

The motion has been proposed by Councillor Butland and seconded by Councillors Mrs Bowers-Flint, T Cunningham, Tattersley, Bebb and McKee.

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|-----------|---|----------------|
| <b>10</b> | <b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 –<br/>Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2019-20 to 2022-23</b>   | <b>7 - 11</b>  |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 –<br/>Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018-19</b>   | <b>12 - 13</b> |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 –<br/>North Essex Garden Communities Ltd – Shareholder<br/>Approvals and Update</b>                             | <b>14 - 16</b> |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 –<br/>Proposed Development of New Healthcare Facilities on the<br/>Premdor Site in Sible Hedingham - PUBLIC</b> | <b>17 - 21</b> |

<b>14</b>	<b>Voter ID – Braintree pilot</b>	<b>22 - 26</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Polling District and Polling Place Review</b>	<b>27 - 32</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Election Fees and Charges</b>	<b>33 - 39</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Proposed Amendment to Public Question Time Rules</b>	<b>40 - 43</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members</b>	
	To receive the following reports from each Portfolio Holder.	
	Oral Questions to the Cabinet: Members are reminded that following the presentation of each Cabinet Member's report, Members may put questions to the Cabinet Member on matters relating to their portfolio, the powers and duties of the Council or the District. Questions are not restricted to the contents of the Cabinet Member's report.	
	Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all Members. (Council Procedure Rules 29.1 to 29.4 apply).	
	A period of up to 1 hour is allowed for this item.	
<b>18a</b>	<b>Councillor G Butland - Leader of the Council</b>	<b>44 - 45</b>
<b>18b</b>	<b>Councillor D Bebb - Finance and Performance</b>	<b>46 - 47</b>
<b>18c</b>	<b>Councillor T Cunningham - Economic Development</b>	<b>48 - 51</b>
<b>18d</b>	<b>Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint - Planning and Housing</b>	<b>52 - 55</b>
<b>18e</b>	<b>Councillor J McKee - Corporate Services and Asset Management</b>	<b>56 - 58</b>
<b>18f</b>	<b>Councillor Mrs W Schmitt - Environment and Place</b>	<b>59 - 62</b>
<b>18g</b>	<b>Councillor P Tattersley - Health and Communities</b>	<b>63 - 69</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting</b>	<b>70 - 70</b>

**20 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To agree the exclusion of the public and press for the consideration of any Items for the reasons set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**PRIVATE SESSION**

**21 Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 –  
Proposed Development of New Healthcare Facilities on the  
Premdor Site in Sible Hedingham - PRIVATE**

<b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 – Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23</b>		<b>Agenda No: 10</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Finance and Performance</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcome:</b>	<b>A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Cllr. David Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Trevor Wilson, Head of Finance</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>	
Council Budget and Council Tax 2018/19 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2021/22 report to <a href="#">Cabinet 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018</a> and <a href="#">Full Council 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018</a> ; <a href="#">Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2021/22 Update report to Cabinet 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018</a> ; Local government finance settlement 2019 to 2020: technical consultation issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2018. MHCLG issued an invitation to local authorities in England to pilot 75% business rates retention in 2019/20 on 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2018. <a href="#">Cabinet Report and Minutes – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>	
<b>DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT</b>		
<b>CABINET – 26th November 2018</b>		
<b>42</b>	<b><u>MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2019-20 TO 2022-23</u></b>	
<b>INFORMATION:</b> Councillor Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, introduced the report to Members and underlined the following information.		
The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published a Technical Consultation on the 2019-20 Local Government Finance Settlement. A response was submitted on behalf of the Council by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance.		

The Government in the consultation paper proposed:

- Confirmation of the final year of the four-year offer as set out initially in 2016/17.
- To apply the same referendum principles in 2019/20 as applied in 2018/19. Shire districts in two-tier areas will be allowed increases of up to 3% or up to and including £5.00, whichever is higher.
- To eliminate the negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) included in the provisional Settlement Funding Assessment for 2019/20 the amount for this Council is £291,482.
- That it would have to increase the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme baseline in 2019/20 (from 0.4%) due to the continued upward trend for house building. Also further consultation would be undertaken on the NHB scheme after 2019/20 and whether this was the most effective way to incentivise housing growth.

MHCLG issued a prospectus inviting local authorities to submit proposals to pilot 75% business rates retention in 2019/20. On 25<sup>th</sup> September a bid was submitted on behalf of fifteen of the sixteen authorities in Essex. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, in consultation with the Corporate Director (Finance), agreed to this Council's participation. The outcome of the consultation and the announcement of the successful bids to pilot 75% Business Rate Retention would be included in the Provisional Funding Settlement Assessment for 2019/20 which MHCLG was aiming to publish on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Local Government funding reforms were due to be introduced from 2020/21, which would include a 75% Business Rate Retention scheme and a reset of Business Rate Baselines as informed by the outcomes of the Fair Funding Review and of the Government's Spending Review 2019.

Bids for revenue funding to meet unavoidable budget demands and new investments total £1,480,230, in 2019/20 and £187,730 in 2020/21. Just over half (£787,160) of this was an ongoing requirement and therefore was needed to be added to the base budget. Other requests, totalling £693,070 in 2019/20 and £122,000 in 2020/21, were for one-off budget requirements.

The requests for an addition to base budget include a request from Development Management for additional staff to process the increased volume and complexity of major planning applications. Five additional staff were requested with a budget requirement of £231,560. The additional staff would also enable the use of Planning Performance Agreements and this combined with an anticipated continuation of planning application fee income exceeding the current budget provide funding sufficient to meet the additional budget request. With qualified planning professionals in short supply it was anticipated that it would take time to fill the new posts and therefore it was requested that Full Council gives early consideration of approving these budget increases (expenditure and income) to allow the recruitment process to commence in December/early January.

The unavoidable budget demands included a proposal to allocate a proportion of the estimated surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund from 2018/19 of



£113,625 between the Town/Parish Councils and this Council. The proportion payable to the Town/Parish Councils was £21,040 and was for 2019/20 only. It was proposed that this was recommended for approval by Full Council in order that the Parish/Town Councils could be notified in sufficient time to enable this resource to be discussed as part of their budget and precept setting for 2019/20.

The review of service budgets had identified budget adjustments with a total of £886,990. These had been agreed by Management Board as they did not have a direct impact on customers or service delivery. In addition to the agreed budget adjustments there were three proposals for additional income which would either have a potential impact on residents, customers or local organisations or involve policy issues and therefore would require decision by Members. These proposals had a total value of £158,200 in 2019/20 and were as follows:

- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) – proposed increase in the amount taken from the grant allocation to meet the cost of administering the scheme. Current charge was 10% of the value of each grant approved, up to a maximum of £500, it was proposed to increase this to 15% up to a maximum of £750.
- Investment returns – an analysis of the Council's cashflow over the next four years shows that there were sufficient funds available to invest a further sum of £2million in pooled funds.
- Development Management – proposal to expand the use of Planning Performance Agreements (PPA). A PPA was a bespoke programme agreed with developers to cover all pre-application discussions and a timetable for the determination of the planning application for a 'premium fee'.

The Council had participated in an Essex Business Rates Pool since 2015/16. For the three years, 2015/16 to 2017/18, the Council had received a total of £1.515million from the Essex Pooling arrangements. Fifteen authorities were participating in the Essex Pool for 2018/19. Whilst final shares for 2018/19 would not be determined until early October 2019 it was anticipated that the Council could receive approximately £560,000.

The Council agreed to participate in an Essex bid to be a pilot of 75% Business Rate Retention for 2019/20. If the bid was successful this Council could receive an allocation of £86,000 plus access to a share of £4.26million allocated to the three North Essex Councils, of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring. This was in addition to the amount that would be received under a 'no worse off' arrangement if an Essex Business Rate Pool was in operation. For this Council the estimated amount receivable from a share of an Essex Business Rate Pool, consisting of the fifteen authorities, was £646,000. If the Essex bid was unsuccessful the fifteen participating authorities had requested that an Essex Pool be approved for 2019/20.

The Business Rates Retention scheme had been in operation in its current form since April 2013. Under the scheme the Government calculated a baseline amount of business rates which it allows local authorities to retain as part of the Government's funding for local government. The Council's provisional baseline figure for 2019/20 was £3,428,553 as provided in the updated four-year settlement.

It was proposed that the existing Local Council Tax Support Scheme should remain unchanged for a third year. On the basis of there being no changes there was therefore no requirement for consultation.

The budget setting process included estimating the amount of council tax expected to be collected. Variation from the estimate results in either a surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund which must be either returned to or requested from council taxpayers in the following year. The surplus or deficit is allocated between the four major preceptors: Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Policing & Community Safety and for Fire and Rescue Authority. It was estimated that the balance on the Collection Fund available for distribution was a surplus of £888,833. The Council's proportion of the council tax surplus, to be returned to council taxpayers in 2019/20 is £113,625. It was proposed that £21,040 of this surplus was allocated To Town and Parish Councils in 2019/20.

In anticipation of the referendum limit being confirmed by the Government at the current level it was proposed that the council tax increase for 2019/20 be £5.22 (at Band D). This was considered necessary to help address the anticipated budget shortfalls over the medium-term and due to the uncertainty over future changes to Local Government funding. The increases in the level of council tax provided in the Finance Profile for 2019/20 to 2022/23 for planning purposes were:

- 2019/20 – 2.99% providing a Band D level of £179.73;
- 2020/21 – 1.95% providing a Band D level of £183.24;
- 2021/22 – 1.96% providing a Band D level of £186.84;
- 2022/23 – 1.97% providing a Band D level of £190.53.

The updated financial profile 2019/20 to 2022/23 shows for:

- 2019/20 – addition to Balances of £45,098;
- 2020/21\* – shortfall of £507,618;
- 2021/22\* – addition to balances £10,459; and
- 2022/23\* – shortfall of £230,447.

A review of the earmarked reserves had identified that two reserves had not been used and after consideration of future need it was proposed that the balances were transferred back to the General Fund unallocated balance. The two reserves were:

- Business Investment Fund created in 2015/16 with £500,000. To provide financial loan support for District businesses who needed assistance in growing their business.
- Community Infrastructure Levy created in 2014/15 with £100,000. This was to engage consultants in order to prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy.

The MHCLG has indicated it would change the scheme baseline for the New Homes Bonus from 0.4% for 2019/20. The number of dwellings in the District, expressed as Band D equivalent, as at October 2018 was 60,943. This represents an increase of 389 or 0.64% since October 2017. Whether the Council would receive an allocation for year 9 of the scheme would depend on the change to the baseline and this was expected to be included with the Funding Settlement Assessment on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

**DECISION:** That **Cabinet recommends to Council:**

- a) A total of £21,040 of the surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund be allocated to parish/town councils as detailed in Appendix A to this report;
- b) The requested increases, of £231,560, to the staffing and income budgets for Development Management for 2019/20 be agreed to enable the recruitment process to commence in advance of the start of the year (sections 8.2, 9.3 and 9.4 of the attached report refer); and
- c) The balances on the two earmarked reserves (Business Investment Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy), totalling £600,000, be transferred back the General Fund unallocated balance;

Cabinet agreed that:

- d) No changes are proposed to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2019/20 and consequently there is no requirement for consultation to be undertaken; and
- e) The Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2019/20, as presented in this report, constitute the initial Budget proposals and that views are sought as appropriate.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** Good governance arrangements through the proactive management of the Council's finances over the short and medium term.

**Recommended Decision:** That Council agrees:

- a) A total of £21,040 of the surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund be allocated to parish/town councils as detailed in Appendix A to this report;
- b) The requested increases, of £231,560, to the staffing and income budgets for Development Management for 2019/20 be agreed to enable the recruitment process to commence in advance of the start of the year (sections 8.2, 9.3 and 9.4 of the attached report refer); and
- c) The balances on the two earmarked reserves (Business Investment Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy), totalling £600,000, be transferred back the General Fund unallocated balance;

Members are advised that Decisions d) and e) set out in the Minute extract above were matters for Cabinet and do not require the approval by Full Council.

**Purpose of Decision:**

Good governance arrangements through the proactive management of the Council's finances over the short and medium term.

<b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 – Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018/19</b>		<b>Agenda No: 11</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Finance and Performance</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcome:</b>	<b>A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Cllr. David Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Trevor Wilson, Head of Finance</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>	
Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2018/19 – approved by Full Council on 19 February 2018 as part of the Council’s Budget for 2018/19	<b>Key Decision: No</b>	
<a href="#">Council Budget and Council Tax 2018-19 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 to 2019-20</a>		
<a href="#">Cabinet Report and Minutes – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a>		
<b>DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT</b>		
<b>CABINET – 26th November 2018</b>		
45	<b><u>RECOMMENDATION FROM GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2018-19</u></b>	
<b>INFORMATION:</b> Members considered a recommendation from Governance Committee held on 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 in respect of the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018-19.		
The Council’s treasury management activities were regulated by statutory requirements and by a Code of Practice (“the Code”) issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA). One of the key elements of the Code was that, along with an annual strategy to be approved prior to the commencement of the financial year and an annual report after the financial year-end, the Council should also receive at least one mid-year report on its treasury management activities.		
Cabinet Members were asked to accept the Mid-Year Report, prior to being considered by Full Council.		

**DECISION:** That Cabinet accepted the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018/19, prior to its submission to Full Council

**REASON FOR DECISION:** The Council had adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services, which required that the Council received an annual report on the treasury management function. This report was to be considered first by the Governance Committee in order to exercise its responsibility for scrutiny over treasury management activities. The report will then be considered by Cabinet before submission to Full Council with the benefit of any proposed changes and/or comments of the Governance Committee.

**Recommended Decision:**

That Council accepts the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018/19.

**Purpose of Decision:**

The Council had adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services, which required that the Council received an annual report on the treasury management function. This report was to be considered first by the Governance Committee in order to exercise its responsibility for scrutiny over treasury management activities. The report will then be considered by Cabinet before submission to Full Council with the benefit of any proposed changes and/or comments of the Governance Committee.

Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 – North Essex Garden Communities Ltd – Shareholder Approvals and Update		Agenda No: 12
Portfolio	Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction Environment and Place Planning and Housing Economic Development Finance and Performance Corporate Services and Asset Management	
Corporate Outcome:	A sustainable environment and a great place to live, work and play A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure A prosperous district that attracts business growth and provides high quality employment opportunities Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council	
Report prepared by:	Jon Hayden, Corporate Director	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
<a href="#">Cabinet report and minutes 4th February 2016</a> <a href="#">Cabinet report and minutes 29th November 2016</a> <a href="#">Council report and minutes 12th December 2016</a> <a href="#">Cabinet report and minutes 5th September 2017</a> <a href="#">Cabinet Report and Minutes – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a>	Key Decision: No	
DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT		
CABINET – 26th November 2018		
41	<b><u>NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES LTD – SHAREHOLDER APPROVALS AND UPDATE</u></b>	
		Minutes Published: 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2018 Call-in Expires: 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2018 *Only relates to recommendations 1 to 3, 5 and 6
INFORMATION: Members were asked to consider the report, which sought the Council to continue to support North Essex Garden Communities Ltd as the		

strategic delivery vehicle for the North Essex Garden Communities projects through approval of both an Interim Business Plan, Budget and Financial Procedures.

The Leader of the Council identified the key operational priorities, which included:

- Continuing to advocate and work with Government for the establishment of a locally led Development Corporation in North Essex including the preparation of a Development Corporation operating structure and funding requirements for testing with Government;
- Undertaking initial work with the Councils to prepare a mandate in support of a designation for a locally led Development Corporation that is financed and supported by all NEGC directors and shareholders;
- Stepping up engagement with the existing and proposed new communities to give them a strong sense of ownership of the emerging new Garden Communities;
- Assisting the Councils as planning authorities by carrying out further work in relation to the Local Plan evidence base including: additional infrastructure, delivery and phasing work; demonstrating the viability of the Garden Communities; and input into the Rapid Transit System work;
- Assisting in the creation of a North Essex Economic Strategy, and ensuring that it maximises the benefits to Garden Communities;
- Preparing a costed Business Plan for approval by the Board by January 2019;
- Exploring the approach to secure an interest in land either via negotiation or compulsory purchase;
- Evolving the optimum approach to delivery including the corporate delivery and financing structure, exploring finance agreements with potential external funding and delivery partners;
- Engaging with Infrastructure and Utility providers to confirm anticipated infrastructure demand and how it may be provided (considering the benefit of public/private ownership options), over the proposed NEGC development period.

**DECISION:** That Cabinet agreed:

1. To approve the implementation of an Interim Business Plan (subject to confirmation of government funding) for NEGC Ltd for 2018/19 including the associated Budget as set out in Appendix A;
2. To approve the Financial Procedure Rules for NEGC Ltd as set out in Appendix B;
3. To authorise the Section 151 Officers to agree any allocation of the project funds held by Colchester Borough Council between NEGC and the North Essex Authorities;

4. That Cabinet recommends to Council that it allocates £100,000 from the balance of unallocated New Homes Bonus to fund the work of NEGC Ltd in the development of the project upon a formal request by way of a NEGC Board resolution.
5. To note that a report will be considered at a future Cabinet and Council meeting in respect of funding assumptions for 2019/20; and
6. To agree the preparation of a full options appraisal of the Garden Communities delivery options to enable members to take future decisions on potential Development Corporation proposals, with linked oversight arrangements between the North Essex Authorities.

#### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

1. The report provided an update on progress to date and the current position regarding the North Essex Garden Communities Project and sought the approval of key documents which were necessary to enable North Essex Garden Communities Limited (NEGC Ltd) to operate more effectively.
2. Note that the report does not, other than for information, address any Local Plan issues. Decisions relating to the Local Plan and any wider planning functions are dealt with separately. Any decisions made in relation to, or by, NEGC Ltd cannot predetermine or prejudice the outcome of the proper Local Plan process.

#### **Recommended Decision:**

That Council agrees to allocate £100,000 from the balance of unallocated New Homes Bonus to fund the work of NEGC Ltd in the development of the project upon a formal request by way of a NEGC Board resolution.

Members are advised that Decisions 1 to 3, 5 and 6 set out in the Minute extract above were a matter for Cabinet and do not require the approval by Full Council.

#### **Purpose of Decision:**

1. This report provides an update on progress to date and the current position regarding the North Essex Garden Communities Project and seeks the approval of key documents which are necessary to enable North Essex Garden Communities Limited (NEGC Ltd) to operate more effectively.
2. Note that this report does not, other than for information, address any Local Plan issues. Decisions relating to the Local Plan and any wider planning functions are dealt with separately. Any decisions made in relation to, or by, NEGC Ltd cannot predetermine or prejudice the outcome of the proper Local Plan process.



<b>Recommendation from Cabinet – 26th November 2018 – Proposed Development of New Healthcare Facilities on the Premdor Site in Sible Hedingham</b>		<b>Agenda No: 13</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Corporate Services and Asset Management</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcome:</b>	<b>A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure</b> <b>Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported</b> <b>Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Councillor John McKee, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Asset Management</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Andrew Hull, Head of Strategic Investment</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
The relevant Agenda and Minutes for the: <a href="#">Cabinet 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018</a> Cabinet District Investment Strategy Report 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2016 Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 <a href="#">Cabinet Report and Minutes – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a>		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT</b>		
<b>CABINET – 26th November 2018</b>		
48	<b><u>**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HEALTHCARE FACILITIES ON THE PREMDOR SITE IN SIBLE HEDINGHAM</u></b>	
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;"> Minutes Published: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018  Call-in Expires: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018  <small>*Only relates to recommendations 1 to 3, 5 and 6</small> </div>	
	<b>INFORMATION:</b> Members were reminded that this Item was linked to Item 12a in the Private Session of the Agenda, and that if any Member wished to refer to the private information contained within the report for that Item, it would be necessary for the meeting to be moved into Private Session.	
	<b>DECISION:</b> That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting if it is necessary to discuss Item 12a of the Agenda and the Private Report, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.	

Both Agenda Items were taken together to enable consideration of all issues. It was not necessary for the meeting to be moved into Private Session.

**INFORMATION:** The Leader invited Councillor Johnson to join the table to make a statement on this item as the local Member.

Members were advised that the Council's District Investment Strategy recognised the need for the Council to provide investment in infrastructure improvements to support growth across the District and provide a return for the Council. Improved healthcare provision had been identified as a key priority area, both to support growth and replace outdated, unfit-for-purpose existing provision.

Working in partnership with NHS England, the Council had identified an opportunity to deliver a new healthcare facility on the Premdor site in Sible Hedingham and create a valuable property investment for its commercial portfolio. The existing doctors' surgeries in Sible Hedingham and Castle Hedingham did not meet modern standards and did not allow a wider range of healthcare services to be delivered. The NHS was therefore looking at the opportunity to jointly relocate these surgeries into a modern scheme on the Premdor site.

In July 2018, Cabinet approved £80,000 of unallocated New Homes Bonus to enable a fully costed design to be undertaken. Furthermore, the scheme featured in the NHS's Sustainability Transformation Plan and the NHS had signed off a Project Initiation Document to enable this project to move forward.

It was reported that the required level and uncontaminated clean land would be transferred to the Council at nil cost as part of the Section 106 Agreement obligations connected with Bloor Homes' Premdor development.

A high-level financial appraisal had been carried out which indicated that the development scheme should provide a return within the Council's acceptable investment parameters and provide a small annual surplus to support the General Fund.

**DECISION (PUBLIC REPORT):** That Cabinet approved:

1. The principle of the proposed development as set out in the report, and approval for the implementation of the proposed development.
2. The following delegations to the Corporate Director (Sustainable Development) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management to:
  - a) Approve the project key decision gateways outlined in the report.
  - b) Approve the submission of a full planning application, provided that the terms set out in the report are met;
  - c) Approve the commencement of a tender process for construction contracts subject to the planning application being submitted and validated by the planning authority;
  - d) Approve the Agreement for Lease relating to building, land, access and the management of third party interests within the budget for the project and within the agreed gateways;

- e) Approve entering into an appropriate build contract with the Council's selected contractor, provided the terms set out in the report are met;
  - f) Approve entering into necessary service contracts for ongoing maintenance and management of the site within the budget for the project.
3. The proposal for Braintree District Council to fund and deliver the Healthcare Centre together with a recommendation to Council to approve an overall capital budget towards the project scheme for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs.
  4. Delegation to the Corporate Director (Sustainable Development) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management, to approve revised scheme costs with the ability to vary costs based on a 5.00% variation to the total scheme costs.

That **Cabinet recommends to Council:**

5. That Council notes the principles of the decisions of Cabinet and approves an overall capital budget towards the project scheme for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs, and including an allowance for up to 5% cost variation.
6. That Council notes that funding of the project costs (excluding the amount already approved from unallocated New Homes Bonus) is currently proposed to be from prudential borrowing, subject to the Corporate Director (Finance) reviewing the overall financing of the capital programme taking account of the potential availability of the capital balances over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

**PURPOSE OF DECISION:** To enable the Council to facilitate the provision of much needed modern, fit-for-purpose healthcare facilities in Sible Hedingham.

**DECISION (PRIVATE REPORT):** That Cabinet approved:

1. The principle of the proposed development as set out in the report, and approval for the implementation of the proposed development.
2. The following delegations to the Corporate Director (Sustainable Development) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management to:
  - a) Approve the project key decision gateways outlined in the report.
  - b) Approve the submission of a full planning application, provided that the terms set out in the report are met;
  - c) Approve the commencement of a tender process for construction contracts subject to the planning application being submitted and validated by the planning authority;
  - d) Approve the Agreement for Lease relating to building, land, access and the management of third party interests within the budget for the project and within the agreed gateways;
  - e) Approve entering into an appropriate build contract with the Council's selected contractor, provided the terms set out in the report are met;

- f) Approve entering into necessary service contracts for ongoing maintenance and management of the site within the budget for the project.
- 3. The proposal for Braintree District Council to fund and deliver the Healthcare Centre together with a recommendation to Council to approve an overall capital budget, as set out in the report, towards the project scheme for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs.
- 4. Delegation to the Corporate Director (Sustainable Development) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management, to approve revised scheme costs with the ability to vary costs based on a 5.00% variation to the total scheme costs, as set out in the report.

That **Cabinet recommends to Council:**

- 1. That Council notes the principles of the decisions of Cabinet and approves an overall capital budget, as set out in the report, towards the project scheme for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs, and including an allowance for up to 5% cost variation.
- 2. That Council notes that funding of the project costs (excluding the amount already approved from unallocated New Homes Bonus) is currently proposed to be from prudential borrowing, subject to the Corporate Director (Finance) reviewing the overall financing of the capital programme taking account of the potential availability of the capital balances over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

**PURPOSE OF DECISION:** To enable the Council to facilitate the provision of much needed modern, fit-for-purpose healthcare facilities in Sible Hedingham.

**Recommended Decision:**

1. That Council notes the principles of the decisions of Cabinet and approves an overall capital budget towards the project scheme for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs, and including an allowance for up to 5% cost variation.
2. That Council notes that funding of the project costs (excluding the amount already approved from unallocated New Homes Bonus) is currently proposed to be from prudential borrowing, subject to the Corporate Director (Finance) reviewing the overall financing of the capital programme taking account of the potential availability of the capital balances over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Members are advised that Decisions 1 to 4 set out in the Minute extract above were matters for Cabinet and do not require the approval by Full Council.

**Purpose of Decision:**

To enable the Council to facilitate the provision of much needed modern, fit-for-purpose healthcare facilities in Sible Hedingham.

Voter ID – Braintree pilot		Agenda No: 14
Portfolio	Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction	
Corporate Outcome:	Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Andy Wright, Returning Officer	
Report prepared by:	Andy Wright, Returning Officer	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
Securing the Ballot.		
A Democracy that works for Everyone: A Clear and Secure Democracy	Key Decision: No	
Report and Minutes of Developing Democracy Group 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018		
Executive Summary:		
<p>This report updates Members on the Returning Officers decision to be a pilot area for Voter ID at the forthcoming elections in May 2019.</p> <p>Following a high profile electoral fraud case in 2014 the Minister for the Constitution responded to Sir Eric Pickle’s enquiry report with the Publication of the Governments aims “A Democracy that Works for Everyone”.</p> <p>Government are keen to promote three short term priorities which will enhance the democratic system and, it is hoped, improve the overall confidence in the electoral process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevention of intimidation and undue influence of voters;</li><li>• Ending the practice of Postal Vote doorstep collection (harvesting)</li><li>• Piloting the use of voter ID in polling stations</li></ul> <p>In May 2018 the Returning Officers from Gosport, Swindon, Watford, Woking and Bromley successfully piloted a range of identification models.</p> <p>Members are advised that the Minister for the Constitution accepted Braintree District’s application to Pilot Voter ID using a mixed identification model for the 2019 District and Town/Parish elections.</p> <p>A comprehensive Multi-channel communications strategy which will include direct mail to ALL Households and Electors. A separate Social media campaign will underpin traditional Poster and leaflet campaigns will support the delivery of the project.</p>		

<b>Recommended Decision:</b>
That Members note the decision of the Returning Officer to Pilot Voter Identification at Polling Stations using the Mixed ID Model for the 2019 District and Town/Parish Elections.
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b>
To note Braintree District's participation as a Mixed Model pilot in the Cabinet Office Electoral Integrity ID Pilot in 2019.

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.	
<b>Financial:</b>	There will be no additional corporate funding requirements, any additional costs will be subject to retrospective claim to Cabinet Office.
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>A formal Pilot Order will be made by the relevant Minister to ensure the legal authority of the pilot process.</p> <p>The determination of whether to take part in a pilot is a function of the Returning Officer.</p>
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	Safeguarding has been considered and there are no obvious implications
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed on the model proposed prior to the making of the relevant order. However a preliminary assessment based on the previous pilots indicates that there are no significant impediments, which are not subject to mitigation.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	The ability of all registered electors to vote is uppermost in our considerations. The range of acceptable identity documents have therefore been developed to support everyone who wishes to vote
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	A wide range of household and personalised communications will inform the electorate to ensure that all electors are aware of the revised legislative requirements.
<b>Risks:</b>	<p>Any pilot carries a level of risk, the process will be carefully managed to mitigate risk wherever possible. The most significant risk is that any elector is unable to vote due to a lack of awareness of the Pilot.</p> <p>A comprehensive communications campaign will mitigate this risk.</p> <p>In the event that there is a National election event on the same date, Pilots will be stopped to ensure that all electors across the Country are using the same system.</p>
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Steve Daynes
<b>Designation:</b>	Democracy Manager
<b>Ext. No:</b>	2750
<b>E-mail:</b>	Steve.daynes@braintree.gov.uk



## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Following a high profile Electoral Court case in the 2014 Mayoral election for London Borough of Tower Hamlets which resulted in the election being declared void, the then Prime Minister (David Cameron), commissioned the former Minister for Communities and Local Government (Sir Eric Pickles) to head a review of electoral fraud.
- 1.2 In response to the findings of Sir Eric's report 'Securing the Ballot' the Minister for the Constitution (Chris Skidmore) published the Government response "A Democracy that works for Everyone: A Clear and Secure Democracy".
- 1.3 In 2018 a range of identification requirements were successfully piloted in Bromley, Gosport, Swindon, Watford and Woking.
- 1.4 Following this success of the 2018 pilots The Minister for the Constitution is keen evaluate pilots spread over a wider socio economic demographic amongst both Urban and Rural communities.
- 1.5 The Cabinet Office and Electoral Commission have evaluated both the 2018 pilots and those proposed for 2019 and determined that there is an overriding case for the range of pilots to be limited to four Polling Station models:

- Poll Card
- Poll Card (Technology based)
- Photo Only
- Mixed Model

In addition a number of Postal voting pilots have also been authorised.

## **2.0 Braintree District Returning Officer comment**

- 2.1 Across the country there have over recent years been an increasing number of alleged voter fraud cases which have led to a small number of successful prosecutions. Any future allegations or prosecutions could therefore result in a loss in confidence of the security and validity of the ballot by electors across the Country.
- 2.2 In Braintree we are indeed fortunate that, to date, there has not been any suggestion that the ballot integrity has been compromised. This is not to say that it could not happen and we should not therefore become complacent.
- 2.3 The Voter ID programme provides a legislative framework whereby differing models can be piloted and evaluated ahead of the introduction of Primary legislation.
- 2.4 It is important that we ultimately see Voter ID legislation which is robust, inclusive and allows all who are entitled to vote the opportunity to do so.
- 2.5 Evaluation reports published by the Electoral Commission following the 2018 Pilots indicate that 207,600 electors provided the required identification. A

further 340 (0.16%) electors chose not to return to vote having initially been declined a vote due to lack of appropriate identity.

### **3.0 Braintree 2019**

- 3.1 Having reviewed the original proposal Cabinet Office has requested that Braintree Pilot the “Mixed Model” which will require all Electors to present evidence from a prescribed list of Photographic and Non Photographic documents.
- 3.2 The final list of documents is still being finalised and will be made available to Members when formally released by Cabinet Office.
- 3.3 Members will be comforted with the requirement that, should an elector not have access to sufficient qualifying evidence application can be made to the Council’s Electoral Registration Officer for an Electoral certificate. This will satisfy the identification requirement at the Polling Station.
- 3.4 Although there are some Postal Vote pilots Braintree District is not included within these. Therefore any elector who wishes to vote by post can do so using the established unchanged processes. The Braintree District pilot only impacts on those electors who attend Polling Stations.

### **4.0 Communication strategy - Braintree**

- 4.1 Clearly it is vital that our communication strategy informs all electors within the Braintree District. The Communication strategy will therefore be targeted to utilise a range of traditional direct contact channels (mail shots sent to all households), use of social media, web based promotion and District wide advertising such as Posters and Refuse vehicle advertising etc.
- 4.2 Direct communication will include a minimum of two household contacts and one personalised contact in the form of the Official Poll Card which will have additional voter information included. In addition we will initiate and engage with electors via an extensive social media campaign.
- 4.3 In developing our communication strategy we have built on the experiences and learning from both the 2018 pilot authorities and the Cabinet Office communication team. This input will assist us in, not only informing the style of communication, but also the most effective timing of message delivery.
- 4.4 During this very focussed and high profile campaign we will continue to engage with Members using a variety of communication channels.

<b>Polling District and Polling Place Review</b>		<b>Agenda No: 15</b>
<b>Portfolio</b> <b>Corporate Outcome:</b> <b>Report presented by:</b> <b>Report prepared by:</b>		
<b>Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction</b> <b>Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b> <b>Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council</b> <b>Andy Wright, Chief Executive</b>		
<b>Background Papers:</b> Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006  Public consultation responses  Report and Minutes of Developing Democracy Group 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018		<b>Public Report</b>  <b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a duty on Local Authorities to ‘carry out and complete’ reviews of polling districts and polling places. The current review must be completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020.  Our consultation ran from 1 October 2018 to 30 October 2018 and invited comments from the District’s two Members of Parliament, County and District Councillors, Parish Councils, Political parties (agents) and the District Access Group. In addition Notices were placed on the Council website inviting Members of the public to comment. Responses can be viewed at : <a href="http://www.braintree.gov.uk/pollingstationreview">www.braintree.gov.uk/pollingstationreview</a>  In summary the District is currently divided into 109 polling districts, many of which utilise pre-defined Parish boundaries. In more Urban areas, polling districts link together neighbourhoods using strong geographical and built environment features.  Legislation requires that, where practicable, the polling place should be located within the polling district. Comments were invited on the suitability and access arrangements to the polling place (building) in which the polling station (room) is located.  Members of Developing Democracy Group (DDG) considered representations made during the consultation and those made by the Returning Officer, the outcome of these considerations is reflected in the recommendations.		

### Recommended Decision:

Developing Democracy Group recommend to Full Council :

- 1) That in respect of:
  - 2.2 Coggeshall** – There will be no change to Polling arrangements.
  - 2.3 Halstead** – That, the Returning Officer be authorised to secure a suitable alternative temporary solution.
  - 2.4 Braintree AY(1)** – That the existing polling place be retained.
  - 2.5 Braintree (Manor) & (St Pauls)** – That the Polling District AT/AV be redefined to using East Street and Lakes Road.
  - 2.6 Witham (Dorothy Sayers)** – That the Sports Pavilion be retained as Polling Place for this Polling District.
  - 2.7 Rivenhall** – That no change be made to the Polling arrangements to the electors of Rickstones Road/Rectory Lane, Rivenhall.
- 2) **CN - Witham (West)** - Members support the relocation to Witham Town Football Club of the polling place
- 3) Members support the Returning Officer, where practicable, in providing access arrangements in Council buildings to polling places for the physically disabled which are proportionate and appropriate

### Purpose of Decision:

To provide the Returning Officer with facilities appropriate to the conduct of future elections

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.	
<b>Financial:</b>	None
<b>Legal:</b>	The review fulfils the Council's legislative requirements
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	Considered with no issues identified
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	The Braintree Local Access group was invited to contribute to this review.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	The overriding consideration is that all polling places are accessible to the appropriate electorates
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	Considered with no issues identified
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	The consultation invited comments from District's 2 Members of Parliament, County and District Councillors, Parish Councils, Political parties (agents) and the District Access Group
<b>Risks:</b>	The Council must have adequate polling stations/facilities for the delivery of an Election.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Steve Daynes
<b>Designation:</b>	Democracy Manager
<b>Ext. No:</b>	2750
<b>E-mail:</b>	Steve.daynes@braintree.gov.uk

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Returning Officer has a Statutory Duty to deliver the Election using the locations identified by the Council. In general the designated polling places made available are central to their communities whether as Community/Village Hall, School, Church or Public House.
- 1.2 There are of course a small number of Polling Districts where the choice and range of location is limited and this results in polling places where access is either limited or indeed poor both for able and disabled electors.
- 1.3 This issue introduces a real dilemma as we have a statutory obligation to provide a polling place for each polling district; however, there is often only one location available which is of sufficient size and has adequate vehicular and pedestrian access. Regrettably, many of the locations used are not in our ownership or control and as such we are reliant on the owners to make their facility available for hire at very short notice. To further insist that their facility be adapted with ramps and safety rails may be both costly and physically intrusive and result in the facility being withdrawn.
- 1.4 I am acutely aware of the difficulties a small percentage of electors may encounter and with this in mind, my staff continue to seek ways to eliminate disabled access issues.
- 1.5 The Electoral Commission, in their guidance to polling station staff, provides the following pragmatic solution where electors are unable to physically enter the polling station:

### ***Assistance to electors unable to gain access to the polling station***

*“ if an elector is unable to enter the polling station because of any physical disability, the Presiding Officer , after informing any agents present , may take the ballot paper to the elector. After the ballot paper has been marked, the Presiding Officer must place the folded paper into the ballot box immediately. It is essential that the secrecy of the vote is maintained in all circumstances. The ballot box must not be left unattended or removed from the polling station at any time.”*

## **2.0 Representations received**

- 2.1 A full version of representations can be viewed at [www.braintree.gov.uk/pollingstationreview](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/pollingstationreview) however a summary of representations is contained within this report:

### **2.2 Coggeshall**

Coggeshall Parish Council proposed a reduction in Polling Places from 4 to 2

#### **Returning Officer Comment**

Each Polling District is required to have a designated Polling Place. The proposal would require Polling Districts to be merged to serve a wider geographic area and present significant issues for both the Electorate and

administration of the Polling places. >Whilst appreciating that this would reduce the number of Polling Places, the increased number of electors served by each would create some risks, it is therefore recommended the present arrangements remain in place.

### **2.3 Halstead**

Halstead Town Council and District Councillors advised that the polling place for Holy Trinity South is subject to a planning application for development.

Returning Officer Comment

The Baptist Church, White Horse Avenue represented the only appropriate location within the area. Staff are currently researching an alternative temporary solution. When arrangements have been confirmed I will inform all registered electors in the Polling District.

### **2.4 Braintree (AY(1) Lodge)**

Two residents from London Road, Braintree expressed concern about the Polling Place they now use which is located at Notley High School.

Returning Officer Comment

The Polling place was changed following the Electoral Review of the District in 2014. Whilst accepting that the designated Polling Place is not central to the Polling District it does represent the only available location. It is recommended that this is retained.

### **2.5 Braintree Beckers Green and Central**

Representation was received from one Ward Councillor in respect of the AT and AV polling district boundary. In redefining the boundary using Lakes Road and East Street the proposal provides residents of Cressing Road and St Mary's Road a more convenient Polling Place.

Returning Officer Comment

I am grateful for the suggestion which has practical merit. The use of strong definable features, namely East Street and Lakes Road are unlikely to be compromised and represent a sustainable proposal. It is recommended that the boundary is changed to reflect these proposals.

### **2.6 CJ- Witham (Dorothy Sayers)**

Witham Town Council proposed the relocation of the Polling Place for this Polling District.

Returning Officer Comment

Accepting that the Polling Place is not ideal it does represent a central location within the Polling District. The proposal to relocate would result in the location

being both outside the Polling District, Ward and Parish and transfer from a location central to the community to one at the edge.

I could not therefore support the use of Rickstones School as the Polling Place for Polling District CJ, and recommend that the established Polling Place be retained.

## **2.7 Witham/Rivenhall**

Witham Town Council expressed their view that residents of Rickstones Road, Rivenhall and Rectory Lane, Rivenhall should be able to vote locally rather than travel to Rivenhall as proposed. There is no suitable location closer to the area identified and therefore it is recommended that the present Polling Place be retained.

Returning Officer Comment

Rickstones Road and Rectory Lane form part of Rivenhall and therefore polling arrangements cannot be amended.

## **2.8 Relocation of Polling Place - CN Witham (West)**

The Returning Officer advised that, the established Polling Place for this District located at Powers Hall Infants School is no longer available to him.

He has been advised that due to the need to maintain their operation targets they longer have the capacity to support the Election delivery. Following consultation with Ward Councillors, staff have negotiated use of Witham Football Club. Whilst not central to the Polling District it is directly opposite the supermarket which serves the area and is the only alternative location which can be identified. It is recommended that this change be supported.

## **2.9 Various Parish Council responses**

The following Parish Councils responded advising that the current Polling arrangements reflected their respective community needs:

Hellions Bumpstead Parish Council  
White Colne Parish Council  
Rivenhall Parish Council  
Castle Hedingham Parish Council  
Toppesfield Parish Council



<b>Election Fees and Charges</b>		<b>Agenda No: 16</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcome:</b>	<b>Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Steve Daynes, Democracy Manager</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>Public Report</b>	
<b>Local Government Reform Group – February 2011</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>	
<b>Developing Democracy Group – 6 October 2014</b>		
<b>Developing Democracy Group – 14 November 2018</b>		
<b>Executive Summary:</b>		
<p>The Council has an established scale of Allowances and Fees made available to the Returning Officer and staff employed in the overall delivery of District, Town and Parish elections.</p> <p>The scale of Fees were last reviewed by the Council in 2014 with the recommendation that fees be increased to reflect annual salary movements in Local Government since the previous review.</p> <p>The Council has traditionally tracked the increase in the nationally set Local Government salaries in the setting of the Returning Officer's fees. Over the current period of review this equates to a 9.24% increase. Members of Developing Democracy Group have reviewed the fees and options for review and recommend to Council therefore that the Returning Officer Allowances, Fees and Charges be increased as outlined at Appendix 1 of this report.</p> <p>Members are however advised that, should local elections coincide with any Parliamentary Election or Referenda fees payable to Polling Station staff and other ancillary fees and charges will be set by Government under Statutory Instrument and will therefore override any scale determined by Council</p>		
<b>Recommended Decision:</b>		
<p>That Council approve the Returning Officer Allowances and Fees outlined in this report.</p>		

**Purpose of Decision:**

To review the framework of Allowances and Fees made available to the Returning Officer and staff employed for the delivery of District and parish elections

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

<b>Financial:</b>	There is adequate provision within the election delivery budget.
<b>Legal:</b>	The Council has a statutory duty to set appropriate fees and charges.
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	No issues identified.
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	Considered and no issues identified.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	No issues identified.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	No issues identified.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Not required
<b>Risks:</b>	Failure to set appropriate fees may affect the delivery of the elections.
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## **Background**

Every Local Authority is required to appoint a Returning Officer who is responsible for the organisation, conduct and legislative compliance of all elections within the Authority's administrative boundaries. The appointment is a separate appointment to that of the post holder's main employment contract. This requirement allows the Returning Officer the latitude to make decisions in relation to all elections based on legislative guidance and electoral practice without being constrained by either Corporate or political issues.

At Braintree District Council, the Chief Executive is the appointed Returning Officer for the Braintree District and as such his role is pivotal to the overall conduct of election delivery. The post holder is personally responsible for every aspect of an election from the initial publication of Notice of Election through to the Declaration of Result. It is therefore this personal liability which is recompensed at all elections either by statutory instrument or locally determined fees.

Where elections are national in nature the fees payable to the Returning Officer and staff employed in the delivery of the election are prescribed by way of statutory instrument. The Council does however need to determine a local scale of fees which will be applied to both the Scheduled elections in May 2019 and any subsequent by-elections which may occur throughout the lifetime of the new Council.

For the period 2014 to 2018 Local Government salaries have, following the national collective negotiations on average increased by 9.24% and Appendix 1 of this report therefore reflects this movement which Members are now asked to consider.

The levels of fees set out are consistent with those applied to comparable Returning Officer appointments and slightly lower than the statutory scale set for the 2017 UK Parliamentary Election.

## Braintree District Council

## District/Parish Council Elections

1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

## Scale of fees, allowances and expenses available to the Returning Officer at Elections of District and Parish Councillors

	Oct-14	Oct-18
<b><u>1 Returning Officer's Fee</u></b>		
Fee for conducting election and generally performing duties which a Returning Officer is required to perform under any enactments relating to Local Government elections, other than any duties for which separate allowances are prescribed herein :-		
a) for each electoral area contested	£120.50	£131.63
b) at each contested electoral area, for every 1,000 electors or part thereof within each electoral area	£41.50	£45.33
c) for each uncontested electoral area, countermanded election or elections at which there are insufficient valid nominations	£59.00	£64.45
<b><u>2 Clerical Fees and Allowances</u></b>		
For supervisory and clerical assistance, including the services of one or more deputy returning officers (other than counting the votes – section 4) the following fees and allowances are payable:-		
a) for each electoral area contested	£56.00	£61.17

b) for each uncontested electoral area, countermanded election or elections at which there are insufficient valid nominations	£29.50	£32.23
c ) Per Presiding Officer/Poll Clerk training Session	£50.00	£54.62
d) for the arrangements in connection with the production and dispatch of official Poll Cards per 100 electors or part thereof in each electoral area	£2.50	£2.73
<p><b><u>3 Postal Voting</u></b></p> <p>An allowance for the employment of staff to issue, dispatch, receipt and verify ballot papers of electors entitled to vote by post :-</p> <p>a) for every 50 postal voters in each electoral area or part thereof</p>	£45.50	£49.70
<p><b><u>4 The Count</u></b></p> <p>Verification</p> <p>For each election area for which a <b>Deputy</b> is appointed</p> <p>Count</p> <p>For each election area for which a <b>Deputy</b> is appointed</p>	£53.00	£57.90
<p><b>Allowance for the Count</b></p> <p>For every person employed to assist on the count</p>	Oct-14	Oct-18

<u>Evening/weekend</u>  (a) for every hour or part thereof after the close of the poll and up to the time of the completion of the verification (SCP 16 x 1.5 rounded up to nearest 5p)	£13.00	£14.20
<u>Office hours</u>  (b) for every hour or part thereof up to the time of the completion of all Counts(SCP 16 rounded up to nearest 5p)	£8.50	£9.60
<b>5 Polling Station Staff</b>  (a) Presiding Officer including subsistence  (b) Poll Clerk including subsistence  (c) Travelling Presiding Officers  (d) Training sessions  (e) Travelling allowance: Presiding Officer Poll Clerk  <i><b>Note</b> the fee for a combined election may be increased by 50%)</i>  <i><b>Note</b> figure in brackets above represent Statutory fees applied to 2017 UK Parliamentary Election</i>	£186.00  £99.00  £186.00  Up to £42.50  20.00 15.00	£203.19* (£205)  £108.15* (£110)  £203.19 (£205)  Up to £42.50 (£50.00) (dependent on time)  20.00 15.00
<u>Travelling allowances</u>		

(a) Where polling screens are transported by the Presiding Officer an All Inclusive fee will be paid in complete recompense	£16.00	£17.48
Or	OR	OR
(b) Where polling screens are not transported reimbursement will be at the rate of	45p per mile (approved Inland Revenue rate)	45p per mile (approved Inland Revenue rate)

## 6 Miscellaneous Disbursements

The actual and necessary costs shall be payable in respect of each of the following items :-

- (a) printing and providing ballot papers and official poll cards;
- (b) printing and providing notices and other documentation required in and about the election or poll and costs of publishing the same;
- (c) the renting of any building or room for the purpose of the election and for the expenses of heating, lighting and cleaning any building or room for such purpose;
- (d) adapting and fitting-up any building or room for the purpose of the election (including the provision of voting compartments and any necessary furniture) and restoring it to fit condition for it's normal use;
- (e) providing ballot boxes, including any repairs or replacements;
- (f) transportation of ballot boxes if not covered by Presiding Officer expenses;
- (g) general stationery, postage telephone calls, bank charges, insurance premiums and all other miscellaneous expenses.

## 7 Marked Registers

Copies or extracts of the marked registers open to public inspection will be supplied in accordance with the following scale of charges:-

- 1) Data copies £1.50 per 1,000 entries or part thereof plus £20.00 administration fee
- 2) Paper copies £5.00 per 1,000 entries or part thereof plus £10.00 administration fee

<b>PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO PUBLIC QUESTION TIME RULES</b>		<b>Agenda No: 17</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Corporate Services and Asset Management</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcome:</b>	<b>A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services</b> <b>Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers</b>	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	<b>Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council</b>	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	<b>Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
<a href="#">Constitution - Chapter 2 – Council Procedure Rule 15</a> Minutes of Full Council – <a href="#">8<sup>th</sup> October 2018</a> Report and Minutes of Developing Democracy Group – 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>		
<p>The Leader of the Council called for a review of the Public Question Time process following a number of issues that were raised by Councillor James Abbott during the meeting of Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.</p> <p>The Developing Democracy Group undertook the review of the Council's Public Question Time Procedure Rules and have consequently made recommendations to Full Council to amend the Constitution's Procedural Rules to enable greater transparency and accessibility to meetings of the Council.</p>		
<b>Recommended Decision:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To amend the deadline for registering to speak at a Committee meeting (including Full Council and Cabinet) to midday on the previous working day.</li> <li>2. To allow a maximum of 30 minutes for Public Question Time during Committee meetings (including Full Council and Cabinet).</li> <li>3. That Members should provide a written response to members of the public, where a response cannot be provided at the meeting, within 5 working days of the respective meeting.</li> <li>4. That the above recommendations come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and are applied to meetings from that date.</li> <li>5. The Monitoring Officer to be duly authorised to amend the Constitution to reflect these recommendations.</li> </ol>		



**Purpose of Decision:**

To amend the Constitution's Council Procedural Rules for Public Question Time to enable greater transparency and accessibility to meetings of the Council.

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

<b>Financial:</b>	No matters arising out of this report.
<b>Legal:</b>	Amendments to the Council's Constitution are a function of Full Council.
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	No matters arising out of this report.
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	<p>It has not been necessary to conduct a detailed Equality Impact Assessment for this matter. The recommendations seek to revise existing provisions of the Constitution for Public Question Time which apply to potential speakers equally.</p> <p>Should any registered Speakers for Public Question Time advise of any specific adaptations they may require for the purpose of the Equality Act 2010, the Council will seek to work with the Speakers to facilitate their requirements.</p>
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	The recommendations seek to give greater accessibility to members of the public to meetings of the Council by amending the deadline for registration for Public Question Time.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	No matters arising out of this report.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Consultation was carried out with the Developing Democracy Group which is Cabinet Sub-Committee with a cross party membership.
<b>Risks:</b>	If the recommendations from the Developing Democracy Group are not accepted there are no risks for the Council. The recommendations seek to amend the existing Council Procedure Rules (Rule 15 of Chapter 2 of the Constitution) for Public Question Time.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Wisbey
<b>Designation:</b>	Governance and Member Manager
<b>Ext. No:</b>	01376 552525
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk">emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk</a>

The Leader of the Council called for a review of the Public Question Time process following a number of issues that were raised by Councillor James Abbott during the meeting of Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

The current provisions as set out in the Constitution (Council Procedural Rule 15, Chapter 2) has raised a number of issues with members of the public when trying to register to speak at Public Question Time.

In recent months there has been an increase in occasions where members of the public have tried to register to speak during Public Question Time after the deadline and unfortunately their requests have been declined. The Council recognises that this is disappointing for those wanting to speak, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the Council has to be consistent and uphold its deadlines.

Committee Chairman do have discretion to allow members of the public to register for Public Question Time after the deadline, however this does not guarantee that that individual will be able to speak. Where appropriate Officers make enquiries of the relevant Chairman to seek guidance and their decision as to whether they wish to exercise their discretion.

One of the reoccurring issues raised is Rule 15.1 which sets the deadline as “2 clear working days before the day of the meeting”. This Rule has been considered ambiguous and can be misinterpreted causing people to miss the deadline for registration.

In order to assist those wishing to register for Public Question Time and to give clarity to on Rule 15.1, the Council’s website was updated to include an example of how the deadline is applied.

The Developing Democracy Group (DDG) considered the current provisions of the Council’s Constitution which included a comparison against other Local Authorities (not limited to Essex Authorities) procedures for Public Question Time.

The comparison indicated that the Council’s procedures were consistent with a number of Authorities in Essex; however, there were a number of Authorities who enable registration nearer to the day of the meeting. The significant majority of the Authorities required members of the public to register for Public Question Time. The comparison also revealed that some Authorities have different deadlines for each of their Committees.

DDG considered the following options:

1. To continue with current provisions of Rule 15.1 (deadline of 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting) but offer additional guidance including examples of deadline dates.
2. Review the timescales for registering to speak, with the potential of reducing the time required to register.
3. Setting down different deadlines for individual Committees.

DDG concluded its discussion of the above options with a view that Council continue to have a requirement for registration for Public Question Time, however, the deadline should be reduced from 2 clear working days before the meeting to midday on the previous working day.

For example: a Meeting to be held on a Monday, the deadline for registering for Public Question Time would be 12noon the Friday before.

It is the Council's convention that a period of up to 30 minutes is permitted for Public Questions Time at each Committee meeting, however DDG considered this period should be safeguarded with a clear reference in the Council's Constitution.

It is noted that the Planning Committee currently operates Public Question Time to enable the speakers to address the Committee immediately before the relevant items. This arrangement is under the Planning Committee Chairman's discretion. However, the registration requirement and the total period permitted is consistent with all other Committees of the Council. This report also makes no changes to the accepted practice of the Planning Committee to allocate speaking slots based upon support or objection to an application, or to allow elected representatives to speak, as this ensures balance, consistency and proportionality

DDG therefore makes the following recommendations to Full Council:

1. To amend the deadline for registering to speak at a Committee meeting (including Full Council and Cabinet) to midday on the previous working day.
2. To allow a maximum of 30 minutes for Public Question Time during Committee meetings.
3. That Members should provide a written response to members of the public, where a response cannot be provided at the meeting, within 5 working days of the respective meeting.
4. That the above recommendations should come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019, for all meetings from that date.

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

**Agenda No: 18a**

**1. Local Plan**

At the Cabinet meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018, I reported to colleagues that Mr. Roger Clews, the Planning Inspector, had responded to the letter sent by the North Essex Authorities.

In order that all Members are kept fully informed of progress, I have reproduced below the statement I made to Cabinet.

*Statement for Cabinet (26.11.18)*

*As all Members will be aware the North Essex authorities have received a positive response from the Planning Inspector to the letter sent to him in October, which set out the proposals to continue to progress the shared strategic section 1 Local Plan examination.*

*In the letter, the Inspector commends the local authorities for constructive proposals for taking the examination forward. Whilst of course he cannot prejudge whether or not the outcomes from the additional evidence will allow the Local Plan to be found sound, it shows that the Plan is well worth continuing to develop.*

*The Inspector has also confirmed that he believes the authorities are approaching the work with an appropriately open mind and without preconceptions as to the outcome and it is hoped that this provides comfort to those who have questioned this element of the Council's approach.*

*The letter requires the North Essex Authorities to provide a number of clarifications in relation to the evidence base and the Sustainability Appraisal process and these will be sent to the Inspector as soon as possible. Once these are received it is expected that the examination will be formally suspended by the Inspector until the evidence work has been completed. To aid the consideration of this, the Inspector has asked for a monthly update on progress which will help with the planning of the timetable for the remaining elements of the Local Plan examination.*

*The Inspector notes that the North Essex Authorities should take as much time as is needed to address the points raised in the June letter and in light of this we have been reconsidering the timetable to ensure that the evidence base that is being produced is the most comprehensive and thorough possible and there is sufficient time built into the programme to allow for constructive local*

*engagement and the transparent approach we have always prided ourselves on at Braintree. I shall therefore be suggesting to the other authorities that when we write to the Inspector at the end of this week we propose that the consideration of revisions to the Local Plan is moved to mid-summer 2019 rather than earlier in the year as it was previously intended. This would mean further examination sessions would hopefully take place in the late Autumn with a final Inspector's report before the end of 2019.*

*As we have done throughout this process I will continue to keep Members updated on the progress of the Local Plan.*

**2. Meeting with Mr Kit Malthouse MP, Minister of State for Housing - 9th October 2018**

Together with Sir Bernard Jenkin MP and the Leaders and Chief Executives of Colchester and Tendring Councils, Andy Wright and I met with the Minister of State for Housing to discuss the plans that the North Essex Authorities are working on to meet future housing needs in our area.

The meeting was extremely constructive and enabled us to personally brief the Minister on our aspirations.

**3. Meeting of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) - 25th October 2018**

As a representative of Essex District, Borough and City Councils, I attended the SELEP Board meeting.

The three main areas of discussion were:-

- (i) the proposed Lower Thames Crossing;
- (ii) the Government's Review of Local Enterprise Partnerships;
- (iii) SELEP's draft Strategic Economic Plan.

The draft minutes of the meeting can be viewed at [www.southeastlep.com](http://www.southeastlep.com)

Councillor Graham Butland  
Leader of the Council

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

**Agenda No: 18b**

**Council Tax and Business Rates:**

**Tax Collection rates as at end of October**

- **Council Tax** collected was 68.27% for October compared to 68.67% for the previous year and the target for the year is 98.3%. Amount collected £60.36 million.
- **Business Rates** collected was 66.98% for October compared to 67.51% for the previous year and the target for the year is 98.6%. Amount collected £29.15 million

The number of dwellings in receipt of 50% Council Tax premium (empty for two years+) is 197. A review was undertaken up to early-October with the aim to reduce the number of dwellings classified as empty (for over 6 months) as this total reduces New Homes Bonus entitlement. Notification of the Council's New Homes Bonus allocation for 2019/20 is expected in early December.

**Business Rates pilot**

In response to an invitation from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) we are participating together with other Essex Local Authorities (except Thurrock), in a bid to pilot 75% business rates retention for 2019/20. We anticipate that we will be notified in early December whether the bid has been successful or not.

**Essex Business Rates Pooling arrangements**

The Council has participated in an Essex Business Rates Pool since 2015/16. For the three years, 2015/16 to 2017/18, the Council has received shares totalling £1.515million. Fifteen Authorities are participating in the Essex Pool for 2018/19. Whilst final shares for 2018/19 are not yet determined it is anticipated that the Council could receive approximately £560,000.

**Council Tax Sharing Agreement 2019/20**

Under this agreement, Essex District Councils invest additional resources to improve the amount of Council Tax collected. The major precepting Authorities, ie Essex County Council, Essex Police and Essex Fire Service, whilst contributing toward the cost of the investment also receive their proportion of the additional Council Tax collected. However a proportion of the additional Council Tax due to the major preceptors is then shared back with the District Councils.

The agreement has been in operation for 7 years. We have recently received notification from Essex County Council that they are proposing a modified sharing arrangement whereby a higher share will be retained by the major preceptors, with the Council's share falling from the current level of 16% to 14% from 2019/20, with the inference that there would be subsequent further reductions.

## **Second Quarter Performance**

As at the end of the second quarter, 13 projects have been completed, a further 46 projects are on track and progressing well, six projects are experiencing delays which will push back the end dates to the projects and one project has been closed due to a change in the scope of the project for which a new project is required.

Nine performance indicators have achieved or exceeded target, two have missed target by less than 5% and four have missed target by more than 5%.

The performance indicators that have missed target by less than 5% relate to the Collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates. Both targets have been marginally missed and it is expected that the shortfall will be met and targets achieved by the end of the year.

The performance indicators that have missed target by more than 5% are in relation to the tonnage of residual household waste not recycled, the percentage of waste recycled, call answering times in the Customer Service Centre and the time taken to process housing benefit claim changes.

Where performance is not meeting the expected outcome or target, action plans will be in place to identify and/or rectify the issues with the aim of turning performance around.

## **Financial Performance**

An overall positive variance for the year of £127,000 (-0.9%) is projected against the budget. The projected variance has improved from the position reported at the end of the first quarter which forecast an overall adverse variance of £87,000. This change is mainly due to higher estimated income (+£311,000), partially offset by a net change in the projected variances for Staffing and Other Expenditure (+£97,000).

## **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

Work continues on updating the MTFS and projected shortfall challenges including: a review of the current year's budgets in light of the 2017/18 financial outturn. The review also encompasses the recent welcome proposal from MHCLG to abandon the introduction of Negative Revenue Support Grant for 2019/20, which for this Council would be £291,482. The review assesses savings/additional income proposals to be delivered; review of other financial assumptions; and assessment of information received which have financial consequences for the Council. The main variations include: staffing resources for Development Management, planning appeal costs, recycling with increases in gate fees which has resulted in an expectation that the budget will be exceeded by approx. £300,000 for 2019/20, vehicle fuel cost increases, but partly mitigated by increased revenue streams under Asset Management.

A high level assessment of the pressures and/or events which will impact on the Council's financial position for 2020/21 and the following two years has identified a number of emerging issues, in particular the proposed introduction of the 75% Business Rates Retention scheme, the majority of which are not quantifiable at this time:

Councillor David Bebb  
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

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

**Agenda No: 18c**

**Regeneration – Town Centres**

**Manor Street, Braintree**

It is anticipated that the planning application will be determined in early 2019. The procurement process has commenced with the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and submissions having now been evaluated and shortlisted to five contractors who all have appropriate experience and expertise to deliver the scheme. The programme (subject to planning) is as follows:-

- Let contract – Summer 2019
- Construction start – Autumn 2019
- Scheme completion – Autumn 2021

**Town Centres**

***Halstead Town Centre***

Officers held a positive meeting with Officers from Essex County Council this month to consider a range of potential schemes for improving the street furniture and look of the High Street. This will allow Officers to draw up a more detailed scheme of improvements which we hope can be implemented during 2019.

***Witham Town Centre***

Officers have been reviewing the success of the first Witham Street Market with key stakeholders and can confirm that the day saw around a 20% increase in footfall which is a great result for the town. We are working to agree dates for further street markets in 2019. Away from the town centre, the Council is supporting work to renew the Witham Business Improvement District (BID).

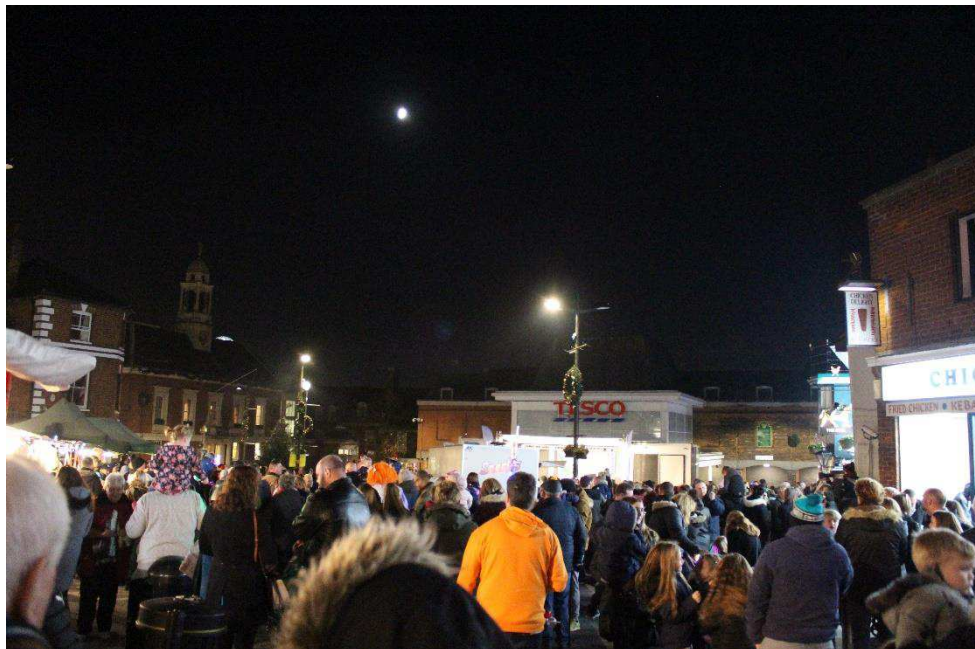
***Braintree Town Centre***

The Festival of Christmas got off to a great start in Braintree on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The town held its biggest ever street market with over 70 stalls selling food, drink, Christmas gifts and crafts across the High Street, Bank Street, George Yard, Market Square and in the Town Hall. Many retailers joined in with events and giveaways of their own.

There was entertainment in the Town Hall with children's craft activities, a caricaturist and face painting as well as afternoon tea and performances from the Braintree ladies choir. The main stage in Market Square had entertainment from 12pm with a variety of local performers, groups and schools on the stage, hosted by Radio Essex, and a further entertainment stage at the fountain end of the High Street kindly organised by businesses including The Boars Head.



The night saw three Christmas light switch-on events with the George Yard lights being switched on at 5pm, the Market Square lights at 5.30pm and the fountain end of the High Street at 5.45pm accompanied by fireworks. Father Christmas had a busy night switching on the George Yard Christmas lights with Braintree Sports Personality of the year Ollie Cutmore, as well as the Market Square lights with Young Volunteer of the Year Mégane Sykes Bimsenstein. He was also out and about during the day meeting children and presenting them with small gifts.



Crowds gathering for the switch on at Market Square



The Lights and tree on in Market Square

The Town Centre Christmas Elf Trail also launched on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2018 with 25 elves hidden throughout the town centre to find. Participants who hand their completed form into the Town Hall are awarded with a free certificate and entered into a prize

draw to win a hamper of goodies donated by the businesses on the trail. We also have a roving Dave Elf who will be appearing throughout the District on social media.

### **Tourism**

Our Tourism Plan for Braintree District is currently still in development and will be brought to Cabinet in February 2019. Officers are continuing to deliver the agreed recommendations from the Task and Finish Group into Tourism Potential in the Braintree District.

### **Business Engagement**

The business visits have been ongoing recently with visits to Nexus, Eat Natural, Haymans, Baileys Farm Seeds and MDS Civil Engineering in the District. These visits have provided further context in understanding the successes and challenges of the District and have resulted in awareness of services offered by the Council including funding and support opportunities. The Economic Development (ED) Team has successfully introduced Eat Natural to The Big Bear Cider Mill for “Peer to Peer” support, resulting in the cider company agreeing to keep bees for Eat Natural to pollinate the orchards whilst making honey for the health bars. Comms will be visiting the cider mill later this month to report on the new business partnership between the two companies during apple pressing season. It has only been possible to identify and act upon such needs of both businesses through the ongoing face-to-face visits and they have been invaluable in communicating the support that the Council can offer to businesses. More visits have been planned for the month and a refreshed schedule will be explored after the Christmas period.

[LEADER](#) funding through Wool Towns and Essex Rivers Local Action Groups (LAGs) is now closed to new applications following a forecasted overspend. There are four Braintree District businesses in the pipeline with a request for £285,600 of grant funding. Not all of these businesses will be granted in this final assessment due to the overspend, however Officers are currently assessing all LAG applications for decisions to be reached in the new year. To date, seven district businesses have successfully secured £521,471.26 grant funding, creating 15.79 FTEs.

The Transport and Logistical Efficiencies ([TALE](#)) programme has now launched, offering 200 businesses within the Haven Gateway support, training and funding up to £60,000 (40% match funding). TALE is supported by the European Regional Development Fund and managed by the Haven Gateway Partnership. This project will support SMEs in the logistics sector to better understand and analyse their data to increase their efficiency. It will also help them to understand cyber security and the implications on their data. A district business has already been referred to this support and an ongoing campaign to target relevant businesses will continue.

The Business Engagement and Support Strategic Plan was presented to Cabinet for a decision on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The Strategic Plan is structured with five key priorities; Business Engagement, Business Support, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Strategic Partnerships and Business Intelligence and aims to bridge the gap between areas of weaker support delivered by partners and focuses on high growth sectors for maximum economic impact and value for money. If this is agreed by Cabinet, it is expected for adoption in April 2019 for the new financial year.

The Economic Development Team met with Witham Industrial Watch this month to discuss the renewal proposal of the Business Improvement District (BID). Officers are working with them to revise the survey and plan for Ballot Day, scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

Ribbon cutting took place at the new grow-on units on Springwood Industrial Estate this month. Two existing businesses from the industrial estate have moved in for expansion purposes and two established businesses from outside of the District have relocated in the units. Introductions have been made and offers of support have been shared.

### **Broadband**

Countywide, 70% of the overall target has been delivered in Essex to date. The current confirmed view shows 26,000 premises (3% of Essex) with no existing or planned superfast broadband connectivity, subject to change. Connectivity is ahead of target for Phase 1 and delivery of Phase 2 remains 1 quarter ahead of its delivery schedule. Phase 3 delivery has started in Braintree and Phase 4a is in mobilisation.

Superfast Essex (SFE) is currently preparing a business case for SELEP to request more funding (£4m from the Local Growth Fund). A decision is expected in January/February 2019.

Officers are continuously working to promote the [Gigabit Voucher Scheme](#) to those not currently in existing plans. Gigabit vouchers can be used by small and medium-sized businesses and the local communities surrounding them to contribute to the installation cost of a gigabit capable connection. Businesses can claim up to £3,000 against the cost of connection either individually or as part of a group project. Residents can benefit from the scheme as part of a group project which also includes businesses, and can claim for a voucher for £500.

### **Skills**

The Braintree District Education and Skills Board has agreed to fund an engaging video case study on the advanced manufacturing and engineering sector. The video would be 1.5-2 minutes long and feature local employers and education providers discussing the opportunities within the District and career pathways. It will be used to promote learning and career opportunities in the sector and is aimed at students and parents/guardians. The final version will be made available for promotion via social media, email and to show in lessons should schools wish.

The Board is currently reviewing its Terms of Reference and setting out a work plan for the upcoming year supported by officers.

Councillor Tom Cunningham  
Cabinet Member for Economic Development

<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Councillor Tom Cunningham</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Economic Development</b>
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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PLANNING AND HOUSING**

**Agenda No: 18d**

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Braintree Integrated Transport Package**

Following on from Essex County Council's consultation on highway improvements schemes proposed as part of the Braintree Integrated Transport Package (ITP). We have asked Essex County Council for feedback from the consultation and I will update you further once this is received.

**PLANNING POLICY**

**Local Plan**

The North Essex Authorities wrote to the Planning Inspector on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018 regarding the proposed way forward on the Section 1 Strategic Local Plan. The letter has been published and can be read in full here:-

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/file/8065/nea005> -  
[letter to inspector 19th october 2018 and enclosures](#)

The letter sets out that the Authorities wish to continue with the Plan and proposes a range of additional evidence base that will be prepared. It also includes a detailed *Draft Method Scoping Statement* for a revised Sustainability Appraisal which we have invited the Inspector to comment upon.

The North Essex Authorities received a positive response from the Inspector on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018 which can be read in full here:-

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/file/8118/ied014> -  
[inspectors section 1 response to nea005 - 21st nov 2019](#)

The North Essex Authorities will be responding to this further letter with the clarifications that the Inspector has requested and an update on the timetable. Councillor Butland provided a more detailed overview of this letter and our likely response, in a statement to Cabinet on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018. This is repeated in full within the Leaders Report to Council.

**Neighbourhood Planning**

The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan is currently the subject of its final consultation before being sent to an examiner in the new year. I wish to congratulate the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan group on their hard work in getting to this stage, being only the second in the District to do so.

At the time of writing this report it is expected that the Hatfield Peverel Neighbourhood Plan will be subject of a further period of public consultation this year which is required



to be undertaken due to changes to the Habitats Regulation Assessment. Once completed it is hoped that the examiner will be able to make a decision on this Plan in the new year.

### **Housing Land Supply**

I recently wrote to the Minister to express our concern about the uncertainty around the calculation of housing need and the issues that this is causing us and many other Local Planning Authorities. A further consultation on revisions to the methodology was published in November and the Local Plan Sub-Committee has approved a robust response to government on the proposed changes.

Finally the Housing Delivery Test results for every Planning Authority in the County were expected to be published in mid-November, but have yet to be received. These results will determine whether the Authority needs to produce an Action Plan as an 'under delivering authority'.

### **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

#### **Planning Permissions for New Residential Development**

The service is monitoring applications granted for new dwellings on a quarterly basis. The most up-to-date figures relate to Quarter 2 2018/19 (July to September 2018). During this quarter planning permissions have been granted for a total of 111 dwellings which can be summarised as follows:-

	<b>Market Housing</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Granted by BDC on Allocated site/within Development Boundary	67	33	100
Granted by BDC on Unallocated site/outside Development Boundary	11	N/A	11
Allowed at Appeal on Allocated site/within Development Boundary	N/A	N/A	N/A
Allowed at Appeal on Unallocated site/outside Development Boundary	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>111</b>

The current Quarter 3 2018/19 position (October to December) as at 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018 is that planning permissions have been granted for a total of 82 dwellings which can be summarised as follows:-

	<b>Market Housing</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Granted by BDC on Allocated site/within Development Boundary	28	N/A	28
Granted by BDC on Unallocated site/outside Development Boundary	34	19	53
Allowed at Appeal on Allocated site/within Development Boundary	1	N/A	1
Allowed at Appeal on Unallocated site/outside Development Boundary	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>82</b>

## **Development Management Performance**

Although the Development Management Service is currently under significant pressure due to the volume and complexity of applications and current levels of resourcing, the Team determined 100% of major applications within the agreed time within Quarter 2 (July to September) 2018/19. To put this into context, this has not been achieved as a Team for a number of years.

## **Admin and Validation Team**

The Team has exceeded expectations over the last month ensuring that new planning applications were validated within an average of three days. To put this into context, this level of performance has not been achieved for a number of years which is a really promising start for a fairly new Validation Team. An additional Validation Officer post was created and funded through the 20% planning application fee increase which came into effect earlier this year. This additional resource within the Team has been a significant factor in contributing towards this level of performance.

## **HOUSING**

### **Affordable Housing Development Programme**

We expect there to be around 130 new affordable homes completed before the end of 2018/19. Completions are expected at the Lodge Farm and Forest Road sites in Witham and at Oak Road, Halstead. These sites are being developed by Redrow, Bellway and Bloor Homes respectively. If the affordable housing on all three sites is completed on schedule, we may see as many as 150 new homes by the end of March 2019.

22 of the homes are for shared ownership, with the balance for rent.

Greenfields' regeneration schemes in the Church Road, Croft Road and Thorne Road areas of Kelvedon are now completed and the official opening of the new development in St Andrews, Hatfield Peverel took place at the beginning of November.

As well as the sites referred to above, a number of mainstream development sites across the district that will provide affordable homes are at early stages of construction. These include sites adjacent to:-

- Rayne Road, Braintree
- London Road, Braintree
- Boars Tye Road, Silver End
- Mill Lane, Cressing
- Monks Road, Earls Colne

We are therefore hoping that we may see 200 completions next year.

### **Homelessness Reduction Act**

The Housing Team has expanded, with 4 new posts in the Housing Assessment and Housing Options Teams. This is a response to the added intensity of working required under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

A couple of years ago, we were part of a successful bid to MHCLG for funding to support the work of the Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge. Colchester led on a new round of bidding in the summer for a project called 'No Woman Turned Away'. The

bid was successful, with a grant of £398,643 to enable the recruitment of 8 specialist support workers and more than doubling the existing number of units available to the refuge. Given that people experiencing violence locally often have to move out of the District for their safety, we were keen to support the scheme and officers will be part of the steering group for the project.

Councillor Mrs Lynette Bowers-Flint  
Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing

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

**Agenda No: 18e**

**GOVERNANCE SERVICE**

The Governance Service continue to have a very full workload supporting the work within Business Development and Asset Management which includes many of the projects that are part of the Authority's key initiatives.

**Elections**

Working with the Cabinet Office Working Group – Polling Station Voter identification pilot review group and Braintree confirmed to be included in the Voter ID Pilot for the District Council Elections in May 2019.

**BUSINESS SOLUTIONS**

**ICT and Digital**

Work continues on implementing the Digital Strategy projects for 2018/19 including: customer on-line booking systems, on-line payment system, Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery procedures, improved on-line services for staff including collaboration on-line and enhancements to the phone system.

Office 365 Mail migration almost complete, with majority of members of staff migrated to Outlook on Office 365 and the remaining few members and senior management migrations to be completed by end of November.

**Cyber Security**

**EndPoint Analysis**

A module in the anti-virus tool allows checks to be carried out on all items that have been attached to any computer. This is being used to identify where USB sticks are being used and to identify if they are encrypted. If they are not encrypted the ICT team will contact the user and encrypt the stick for them.

**LGA Stocktake**

The LGA undertook a cyber security stocktake of all English Councils. Braintree District Council were assessed as Amber-Green which is a satisfactory mark. The EOLP will collate a table of Essex Councils so we can assess how well we perform against our partners.

**Customer Service Excellence Standard**

The yearly external assessment of how we deliver customer service was carried out on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of November and involved an external assessor meeting with a number of staff including Management Board and the Portfolio Holder for Customer Services. This



year, there was a focus on internal services and the assessor also met staff from internal services and discussed how they met the needs of their internal customers and also how they supported front line services to meet the needs of their customer groups.

The Council have been successful in retaining the Customer Service Excellence Standard and achieved compliance plus in 13 areas of the assessment (in total, 19 areas were assessed so this is a great achievement). The assessor also commented that internal services clearly have a customer focused approach and are effective in supporting front line staff to deliver responsive and quality services. Performance is good and the council demonstrated particular strength in the customer focused culture of the organisation and partnership working.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Asset Management continued to be very active and have made significant progress with many investments that form part of our overall investment strategy and recent approved schemes are all on track:

### **Premdor Business Hub (Osier House)**

As previously reported the construction of Osier House has been completed, but last minute transfer issues are being agreed before transfer to BDC ownership can take place. In view of the impending handover The Council has commenced marketing the 7 small offices spaces within the building and is seeking to attract start-up or small local businesses. The Council has interest in 4 office units from prospective tenants but cannot progress with any lettings until the building has been transferred to the Council. Asset Management and Legal are working with the developer to expedite the handover.

### **Premdor Healthcare Land**

The Council is still waiting for developer to provide a full contamination report to establish whether there are any contamination issues associated with this site. If a report is not forthcoming, then the Council will seek an undertaking from Bloor Homes to remediate the site if contamination is discovered in the future, and the Council cannot assume the risks involved in completing the transfer of this land until the contamination issue has been resolved.

Asset Management and Legal Services are working with the developer to expedite the transfer to allow the development of the health facility to commence.

### **Braintree Enterprise Centre Grow on Units**

Braintree Enterprise Centre was handed back to Braintree District Council from Ignite Business Enterprise Limited on the 1st May 2018 and Asset Management is undertaking the day to day management of the facility with a total of 44 units. All of the units are currently let or under offer.

There has been a healthy turnover of tenants and Asset Management continues to actively market these premises with a lot of tenant interest. We are now able to let to stronger businesses capable of growth.

The 4 Grow-on units have been completed and were handed over to the Asset Management Service on the 25th September 2018. All 4 units are now let.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Due to increased commercial activity, the Marketing Team has been busy with a significant increase in press releases and social media campaigns across the full range of the Council's activities including:

- **Local Plan**
- **Town Centres** Manor street and Street Markets
- **Great Notley /Horizon 120** Branding on Horizon 120
- **Grow on Units** marketing
- **Braintree Town Centre** pedestrianisation survey closed
- **Strategic Growth and Infrastructure** £100 million investment communications strategy

## HR REPORT

The key performance indicators of the authority show a healthy organisation with a low level of days lost due to sickness per employee ( 1.71 days in Q2) , a healthy staff turnover with average 2.54% per quarter in the first half year comparing favourably with 9.01% last year. The authority had 24 apprentices in Q2

## EMPLOYEE of MONTH

There was no award in October as there were no clear stand out nominations.

## APPRENTICE of the YEAR

Lawrence Stokes reached the finals of the County Wide Business Awards in the category of Apprentice of the Year. We attended the event at the end of October. Lawrence came in the top 4 of the county so we were extremely proud of him, and this was recognised by the Chairman.

## LOCAL AUTHORITY CHALLENGE

Th Council entered a team for the 6<sup>th</sup> East Of England Challenge in Colchester at the end of October. The team made up of Ian Hunt, Danielle Putt, Paula Jarvis, Gabriella Asara, Alex Chamberlain and Nicola Nicholson who spent the day as the management team of a fictional Council, encountering many challenges under huge pressure.

Our delegation won three of the seven awards – Best Team, Best Partnership Working and Best CEO (Ian Hunt). We are the only Council who has had a team win the “Best Team” award twice and we are the only Council who has won three awards at the same event.

A great achievement especially because there were 21 teams from the East of England involved in the challenge demonstrating the quality of the officers at the Council.

Councillor J McKee  
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management

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

**Agenda Item: 18f**

**OPERATIONS**

**Car Parks Lighting Upgrade:** In August, the Council invited tenders to upgrade the lighting in its car parks to energy saving LED lights. The work will commence in the New Year and will be completed by end-March. In the event that it over-runs, the impact on car park users will be minimal as it will involve the temporary loss of 1 or 2 parking bays whilst working on each light column. The car parks affected are:-

1. Braintree Road (Residents Only) Car Park, Witham
2. Lockrams Lane Car Park, Witham
3. Mill Lane Car Park, Witham
4. Newlands Drive Car Park, Witham
5. Silks Way Car Park, Braintree
6. Station Approach Car Park, Braintree
7. George Yard Multi Storey Car Park (top floor only)

**Christmas Opening Times for George Yard MSCP:** The George Yard Shopping Centre has asked that we open the car park on Boxing Day and New Year's Day from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

**Halstead in Bloom:** The Council was once again delighted to be awarded Gold and Best Medium Park (3rd year running) for Halstead Public Gardens. Halstead retained its accolade of Gold and Best Town in their category. This year, we also received Silver for Halstead Cemetery. I was very pleased to hear that Gosfield and Coggeshall received Silver Gilt and thanks go to all those volunteers who help keep their town and village clean, tidy and well maintained. The Overall Winner for Anglia in Bloom 2018 was Wisbech.

**Essex Playing Field Association Awards:** Again an embarrassment of awards: 40 won this year thanks to our dedicated staff.

**Outdoor gyms:** Braintree District Council has invested £50k in revamping two of its outdoor gyms so that local people of all ages can continue to get fit for free. The old equipment has been replaced at the outdoor gyms at Spa Road in Witham and Meadowside in Braintree with more modern and durable pieces.

The weatherproof equipment comprises 22 exercise stations (10 at Meadowside and 12 at Spa Road) typically found in indoor gyms including a cross trainer skier for cardiovascular fitness, a leg press, and a sit up bench to tone up. To help users get the most out of the equipment, on-site instructions explain how each piece of equipment works to offer different types of cardiovascular, tonal and well-being exercise.

**Cut Throat Lane Allotments, Witham:** The footpath has been upgraded and standpipe tap cases have been replaced.

**Glebe Wood, Braintree:** The boardwalk at Glebe Wood was vandalised again and further repairs were carried out in October.

**Alan Road Play Area, Witham:** Wicksteed Leisure has been appointed to refurbish the play area funded from Section 106 monies. At the time of writing, no start date has been confirmed, but we expect work to commence towards end November.

**WW1 Centenary Commemorations:** In liaison with the Landscapes Department, three Tommy Silhouettes were purchased to help commemorate the centenary of the end of WW1. These were in-situ at each tree planting (as notified in my last report to Council) and have now been permanently sited at Braintree & Bocking Public Gardens, Halstead Public Gardens and Witham Memorial Gardens as a lasting tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Great War.



**Silver Street Pavilion, Silver End:** I was delighted to accept an invitation to the formal handover of the pavilion to the Francis Crittall Pavilion Trust on Saturday, 15 September, which was also attended by the Chairman and Councillors Peter Tattersley, Kevin Bowers and James Abbott. This is a great example of where different organisations, local residents and the Parish Council have worked together to directly manage and operate a facility for the benefit of the whole community.

**Theft of Lead:** On or about 8th November, thieves stole lead from the roof of the chapel in Braintree Cemetery, damaging the roof in the process.

**Prosecutions taken between 25 August 2018 and 24 October 2018:** The Council has taken three successful prosecutions during the period: 2 for Duty of Care Offences resulting in fines of £120 to each defendant and total costs awarded to the Council of £700; and 1 breach of a Community Protection Notice for dogs being out of control, resulting in a fine of £150 and costs of £458.50. Two other individuals failed to attend court hearings and warrants are out for their arrest.

**Other actions**

- Dealt with 16 reports of stray dogs.
- Inspected 52 reports of abandoned vehicles.
- Actioned 212 complaints/offences.
- Issued 16 written warnings under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- Issued 12 notices enforceable through the Court.
- Issued 13 fixed penalty notices.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

We are delighted that the Braintree Town Hall has achieved a super energy efficient 'B' rating; this is amazing given the age and nature of the building. The improved performance is due to a number of energy saving measures including an 'A' rated gas boiler which reduces gas consumption by 40%. Historic England approved secondary glazing throughout the building using low emissivity glass reflecting heat back into the building. Another noticeable benefit is that it has greatly improved the sound insulation from the busy town centre.

Thanks to the hot summer, income from our solar panels has been very good.

The electric car charging point at Causeway House is being well used and we are planning to put one in each of our Leisure Centre car parks to meet growing demand.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY**

The 'Spot it Stop it' Campaign was runner up in the Safer Environment category of the national Working Group awards.

We are working with Essex Police's Licensing Department to offer 'Spot it Stop it' training to licensed premises and taxi drivers. Stickers will reassure young people that they are in a safe place where staff will know what to do should they need help and make perpetrators aware that staff know what signs to look for and may report them to the police.

We are working with Essex Police and The College at Braintree to run a safety day for students to include personal safety, road safety, child sexual exploitation and gang involvement.

We hosted a visit by the High Sheriff which included a visit to First Stop and New Directions to show him the excellent work carried out by these organisations and met with the Local Police Inspector and Sargeant to inform him of the joint work that we do.

On 6<sup>th</sup> November, I attended the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's public meeting in Braintree. This was attended by 3 Councillors and 11 members of the public, one of whom came from outside the District. The Commissioner updated the meeting on what he is doing and also updates were given by Essex Fire and Rescue and myself in my capacity as Chairman of The Braintree District Community Safety Partnership. Questions were then asked and answered.



## Braintree - October 2018

District Commander: Chief Inspector Janette Rawlingson



### Your Priorities

#### You Said:

Increased Visibility & local policing

Respond to Anti-Social Behaviour & drug use concerns

#### We Did:

Increased foot patrols, Coffee events, Anti-social behaviour patrols, local community meetings, Youth engagement, Anti-social behaviour partnership activity, days of action, traffic and speeding operations

Warrants executed, 3 children safeguarded, 3 people Arrested, large quantity of drugs seized

Councillor Mrs Wendy Schmitt  
Cabinet Member for Environment and Place

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

**Agenda No: 18g**

**HEALTH AND LEISURE**

**Leisure Contract**

A presentation from our leisure provider, Fusion, to Cabinet in November 2018 demonstrated that there has been a steady rise in the numbers using our leisure centres. Their contracted target is for an overall increase of 2% from the beginning of the contract to the year 2022. Emphasis was to be given to increasing participation in previously under-represented groups such as the under-16s and over-60s.

In 2012/2013 the number of under 16 year olds visiting our leisure facilities was in the region of 113,500, in comparison last year we had over 167,000 visits by the same age group. Back in 2012/13 we only had 26,150 visits made by over 60 year olds this figure has risen to over 70,400 last year.

The loss in the number of children attending swim school following the closure of the Braintree swimming pool during its refurbishment has now been reversed, and compared to the figure before the pool was shut there has been a 150% increase in swim school attendees.

**Active Lives Survey results for the Braintree District 2018**

This national survey asks residents about healthy lifestyles and leisure and recreational activities. It is conducted on behalf of government agencies including Sport England and Public Health England by IPSOS MORI. The results tell us how active our residents are. This year's results are particularly impressive for the Braintree District.

In comparison to the baseline figures set in 2015, Braintree District shows the greatest increase in the number of active residents in the country and the greatest reduction in the number of inactive residents compared to the rest of Essex (see table below for Essex comparisons).

Braintree District Council is working with a number of partners including the Active Braintree Network, Fusion Lifestyle, local sports clubs and physical activity organisations to help support and empower residents to get active and live well. The Council's commitment to health and well-being is demonstrated by its Bewell Strategy and by its livewell campaign, which has now been adopted by all 12 local authorities across Essex and Essex County Council.

This survey is an indication that the Bewell strategy is working and together with our partners we are motivating our residents to be more active.

Sport England Active Lives Survey						
Change compared to baseline (2015)						
	Active		Fairly Active		Inactive	
	(150+ minutes a week)		(30-149 minutes a week)		(<30 minutes a week)	
	Absolute	Significance	Absolute	Significance	Absolute	Significance
Greater Essex	1.0%	No Change	-0.5%	No Change	-0.6%	No Change
Southend-on-Sea	1.1%	No Change	0.7%	No Change	-1.7%	No Change
Thurrock	6.2%	Increase	-1.9%	No Change	-4.3%	Decrease
Basildon	-4.1%	Decrease	1.9%	No Change	2.2%	Increase
Braintree	16.1%	Increase	-8.9%	Decrease	-7.2%	Decrease
Brentwood	-2.9%	Decrease	-1.9%	No Change	4.8%	Increase
Castle Point	-6.3%	Decrease	1.7%	No Change	4.6%	Increase
Chelmsford	-2.5%	Decrease	1.9%	No Change	0.6%	No Change
Colchester	-4.4%	Decrease	2.6%	Increase	1.9%	No Change
Epping Forest	-1.4%	No Change	-2.6%	Decrease	4.0%	Increase
Harlow	-1.6%	No Change	2.5%	Increase	-0.9%	No Change
Maldon	5.0%	Increase	-3.0%	Decrease	-2.0%	Decrease
Rochford	5.7%	Increase	-6.4%	Decrease	0.7%	No Change
Tendring	1.8%	No Change	4.0%	Increase	-5.7%	Decrease
Uttlesford	3.2%	Increase	-2.2%	Decrease	-1.0%	No Change

## Museum Service

The Council handed over control of the Museum Services in April this year. Since that time the number of visitors events and education activities has increased significantly which bodes well for the future of the service.

## Town Hall

The Town Hall service continues to expand with new initiatives being introduced on a regular basis. Recently a new role-play gaming experience called The Escape Room is being trialled. 16 sessions are being held between now and Christmas, all of which are sold out.

## Livewell Child Project

### *Tesco Bags of Help*

The Livewell Child Project was successful in attracting funding through the Tesco Bags of Help funding with an award for £500. This will support our Livewell Child Schools in starting and maintaining cookery lessons, and introducing school breakfast clubs.





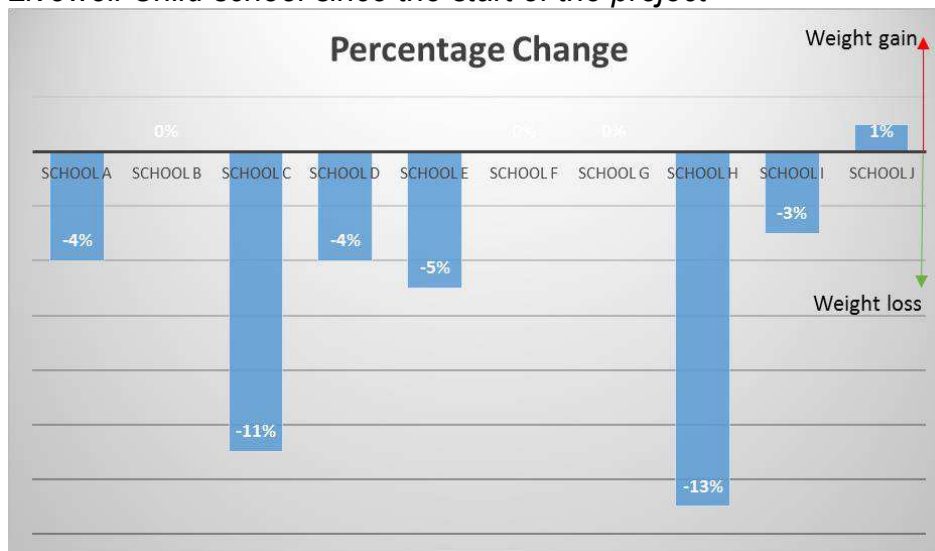
*Cookery Classes at John Bunyan School*

### ***Preliminary Results of the impact the project is having in halting the increase in obesity***

A key measure of the success of the Livewell Child project was to halt the rise in obesity in primary school children in ten pilot schools. The preliminary results from our first year of measuring the weight of the pupils in the participating schools are very encouraging.

The results show that in six out of ten schools there was an actual decrease in the number of overweight and very overweight children from the reception year to year six. In three of the schools there was no change in the number of overweight and very overweight children and only a one percent increase in the weight in the one school.

*Percentage Change in the number of overweight or very overweight children in each Livewell Child school since the start of the project*



These preliminary results indicate a potentially positive change in the number of very overweight or overweight children in the participating schools. However, we need future years' measurement results to demonstrate a clear relationship between the Livewell Child interventions and the reduction in the number of very overweight and overweight children.

### ***Further National Recognition of the Livewell Child Project***

The Local Government Association has produced an update on National best practice on how local authorities can take action to tackle childhood obesity called “Healthy weight, healthy futures”. There are a whole two pages detailing the work we have undertaken as part of the Livewell Child project. Below is a link to the national document.

[https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/22.16%20-%20Health%20weight%2C%20healthy%20futures\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/22.16%20-%20Health%20weight%2C%20healthy%20futures_WEB.pdf)

### **Community Development**

A key feature of the Leisure Contract with our leisure partner, Fusion, was to encourage sporting activities outside of leisure centres, and there has been a significant increase in participation numbers in a variety of activities. Examples include Park Run, use of outdoor gym equipment, fitness trails and river walks, dementia friendly walks and the Easy Riders Cycling Club, as well as a whole host of activities being delivered by community or organisations.

### **Opening of an outdoor gym in Witham**

New outdoor exercising equipment has been installed in Witham. The equipment is of a very high quality and is expected to contribute to our aims of encouraging residents to be more active.



### **Bocking Windmill**

Bocking Windmill is only a small part of the Council’s heritage assets, however working with volunteers it has been possible to make the windmill significantly more accessible to the local community.

### **Bocking Windmill - Visitors on Open Days**

Dates in 2018	Adults	Children	Total	Comments
07-May	194	116	310	May Day Bank Holiday
13-May	21	9	30	National Mills Day
28-May	30	19	49	Spring Bank Holiday
24-Jun	8	6	14	
29-Jul	18	7	25	
27-Aug	29	15	44	Bank Holiday
16-Sep	78	25	103	Heritage Open day
30-Sep	30	20	50	
Thurs 6 Sep*	16		16	* Dementia Group special visits
Wed 12 Sep*	10		10	* Dementia Group special visits
<b>Total</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>651</b>	

Work will take place during the winter and spring to refurbish the outside of the windmill. The arms and sails will be working for next year with braking system. A millwright will assess the structural strength of the beams to ascertain whether it will be possible to make the steam stones work.

### **Sports Awards**

The Braintree Sports Awards took place on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. At the time of writing the results are not known, however the initiative looks like being a success once again with 136 nomination throughout the categories:-

Category	Sponsor	Category	Sponsor
Sports Personality of the Year		Young Sports Personality of the Year	
Physical Activity project of the Year		Services to Disability Sport	
Unsung Hero (Volunteer)		Young Community Volunteer	
Community Club of the Year		Coach of the Year	
School or College of the Year		Life Time Services Award	

### **Men's Health Day**

The Archer Community Centre is hosting a mens' Health Day early next year where health checks for heart disease, prostate cancer, blood pressure, aortic aneurysm, diabetes and skin cancer will be carried out free of charge. It is hoped that these can

be extended throughout the District and held on a regular basis if funding can be achieved.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **Dementia**

There appears to be increasing concern throughout the District about the care and welfare of those suffering from dementia and their carers. The Council provides a number of activities which are proving to be very popular and will continue to promote these throughout the District. These include tea dances, cinemas, swimming and walks.

### **Social Isolation and Loneliness**

#### **Meet Up Mondays**

This initiative has been launched at Cool Beans Café in Braintree & Bocking Public Gardens, Braintree and the Valero Lounge in Witham. This initiative was originally started by a pub landlord in London who was frustrated about reading about loneliness and decided to act. He began offering free refreshments to people who were in need of company and were starting to feel isolated.

The Council has written to all the pubs within the Braintree District to identify those that may be offering services and activities to their communities in addition to their usual business.

#### **Silver Sunday**

A number of activities took place across the District as part of this initiative including a pop up cinema at Witham Library, a partnership event between The Council, Essex County Council, Witham Town Council and Braintree East.

A Silver Sunday event held in October attracted over 36 residents who enjoyed bingo and other games. There was a particular emphasis on providing a meeting opportunity for those older residents who may feel socially isolated.

#### **60+ On Board**

A new weekly club has been launched at Braintree Town Hall for adults to socialise and enjoy friendly games with other. Two ladies who attend this but had not previously met went for lunch together are now going on holiday together to the Isle of Wight where they had both wanted to visit but did not have anyone to go with.

#### **Believing in Communities**

The Council organised a workshop at the Town Hall to hear about the work of Community Services, share information on the activities and services the faith groups provide in their community and to identify how we could work together moving forward to support and deliver projects. 19 faith groups from across the District attended.

The workshop highlighted the wide range of activities and services that faith groups are providing for the benefit of the community that meet council priorities. Further discussion about how these are promoted and how the faith community could be more involved in the Council's work.

### **Maltings Lane Community Facility**

Consultation with the community has been completed, a leaflet and questionnaire were delivered to approx. 1300 properties within a specific catchment area. Members of the public were able to complete the consultation which was carried out through the website and social media and two face-to-face sessions which were held at Witham Leisure Centre.

### **Community Transport 20th Anniversary Celebration**

An event was held at Braintree Town Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Community Transport and allowed the Council to thank the volunteer drivers who are critical to the success of the scheme and a lifeline to residents within our community.

Councillor Peter Tattersley  
Cabinet Member for Health and Communities

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<b>List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting</b>		<b>Agenda No: 19</b>
<b>Portfolio</b> Not applicable <b>Corporate Outcome:</b> Not applicable <b>Report presented by:</b> Not applicable <b>Report prepared by:</b> Chloe Glock, Governance Business Officer		
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  Since the last Council meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) <a href="#">Planning Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018</a></li> <li>(2) <a href="#">Braintree Local Highways Panel – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018</a></li> <li>(3) <a href="#">Governance Committee – 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018</a></li> <li>(4) <a href="#">Planning Committee – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018</a></li> <li>(5) <a href="#">Planning Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a></li> <li>(6) <a href="#">Local Plan Sub-Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a></li> <li>(7) <a href="#">Planning Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a></li> <li>(8) <a href="#">*Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018</a></li> <li>(9) <a href="#">*Cabinet – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</a></li> <li>(10) <a href="#">*Planning Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018</a></li> <li>(11) <a href="#">*Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018</a></li> </ul> <p>*Those minutes identified by the prefix * were not available at the time of publishing the Agenda, but are intended to be available to view on the Council's website prior to the meeting.</p>		
<b>Recommended Decision:</b>  Members are invited to note the Minutes published.		
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b>  Not applicable.		