

# CABINET AGENDA

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.15pm**

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

This meeting is open to the public - This meeting will be available to view via the  
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**Members of the Cabinet are requested to attend this meeting to transact the business  
set out in the Agenda.**

**Overall Strategy**

Councillor G Butland (Leader of the Council)

**Innovative Environment**

Finance and Corporate Transformation  
The Environment

Councillor J McKee  
Councillor Mrs W Schmitt

**Connecting People, Places and Prosperity**

Economic Growth  
Housing, Assets and Skills  
Planning and Infrastructure

Councillor T Cunningham (Deputy Leader)  
Councillor K Bowers  
Councillor Mrs G Spray

**Supporting Our Communities**

Health and Wellbeing  
Communities

Councillor P Tattersley  
Councillor F Ricci

**Cabinet Support Members:** Councillors I Pritchard (Innovative Environment),  
J Wrench (Connecting People, Places and Prosperity) and Mrs I Parker (Supporting Our  
Communities)

**Invitees:** Councillors J Abbott, Mrs J Pell and D Mann are invited to attend as Group  
Leaders

Members unable to attend the meeting are requested to forward their apologies 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 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

### **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other Pecuniary Interests (OPI) or Non-Pecuniary Interests (NPI).**

Any Member with a DPI, OPI or NPI 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 DPI or OPI or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting. In addition, the Member must withdraw from the Chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

### **Public Question Time – Registration and Speaking:**

The Agenda allows for a period of up to 30 minutes for Public Question Time. Members of the public wishing to participate 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) **by midday on the second working day** before the day of the Committee meeting. For example, if the Committee meeting is due to be held on a Tuesday, the registration deadline is midday on Friday, (where there is a bank holiday Monday you will need to register by midday on the previous Thursday).

The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register for Public Question Time if they are received after the registration deadline.

All questions or statements should be concise and should be able to be read within 3 minutes allotted for each question/statement.

The Chairman of the Committee has discretion to extend the time allocated for public question time and to amend the order in which questions/statements are presented to the Committee.

### **Public Attendance at Meetings:**

Public attendance is welcomed, but is subject to restrictions due to the Council's arrangements for keeping Causeway House Covid secure and visitors safe.

Public attendance is limited and will be on a first come first served basis with priority given to Public Registered Speakers. In order to maintain safe distances, the Council may have to refuse entry to members of the public. The public will not be able to sit in the Council Chamber, but will be permitted to observe the meeting from a public gallery through a large screen. Alternatively, the Council meetings are webcast and are available via the Council's YouTube Channel and can be viewed by the public as a live broadcast, or as a recording following the meeting.

Public speakers and public attendees are required to attend on their own, and where possible only one representative of any community group, family household or Company should attend.

Members of the public intending to come to Causeway House to observe a meeting are recommended to watch the meeting via the webcast, or to contact the Governance and Members Team to reserve a seat within the public gallery.

### **Health and Safety/COVID:**

Causeway House is a Covid secure building and arrangements are in place to ensure that all visitors are kept safe. Visitors are requested to follow all instructions displayed at Causeway House or given by Officers during the course of their attendance. All visitors will be required to wear a mask or face covering, unless an exemption applies.

Anyone attending meetings is asked to make themselves aware of the nearest available fire exit. In the event of an alarm you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by staff. You will be directed to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building.

**Documents:**

Agendas, Reports, Minutes and Public Question Time questions and statements can be accessed via [www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk)

**Data Processing:**

For further information on how the Council processes data, please see the Council's Privacy Policy.

[https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200136/access\\_to\\_information/376/privacy\\_policy](https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200136/access_to_information/376/privacy_policy)

**Mobile Phones:**

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent during the meeting in order to prevent disturbances.

**Webcast and Audio Recording:**

Please note that this meeting will be webcast . You can view webcasts for up to 6 months after the meeting using this link: <http://braintree.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. The meeting will also be broadcast via the Council's YouTube Channel.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

We welcome comments to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. If you have any suggestions regarding the meeting you have attended, you can send these to [governance@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:governance@braintree.gov.uk)

**1 Apologies for Absence****2 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.

**3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (copy previously circulated).

**4 Public Question Time**

(See paragraph above)

**5 OVERALL STRATEGY****5a Bouncing Back Together - Our Plan for the District October 2021 to March 2023 5 - 16****6 Urgent Business - Public Session**

To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

**Agenda Item: 5a**

<b>Report Title:</b> Bouncing Back Together – Our Plan for the District: October 2021 to March 2023	
<b>Report to:</b> Cabinet	
<b>Date:</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	<b>For:</b> Decision
<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes	<b>Decision Planner Ref No:</b> DP/2021/25
<b>Report Presented by:</b> Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council	
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Tracey Headford, Business Solutions Manager <a href="mailto:Tracey.headford@braintree.gov.uk">Tracey.headford@braintree.gov.uk</a>	

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. Bouncing Back Together is our Annual Plan covering the period October 2021 up to March 2023 and proposes our actions and performance measures to support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2024. The actions and performance measures are aligned to each corporate strategy theme as follows:

- Connecting People and Places
- Enhancing our Environment
- Supporting our Communities
- Promoting Prosperity
- Delivering and Innovating

- 1.2. The Plan also provides the performance framework for managing the delivery of the actions and priorities by regularly reviewing the activity and achievements against it and reporting on the progress on a quarterly basis to Cabinet.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve our Plan for the District titled 'Bouncing Back Together' over the next 18 months from October 2021 up to March 2023.
- 2.2 To agree the proposed Council's key actions and performance measures up to March 2023.

## 3. Summary of Issues

- 3.1 Due to the pandemic, our approach to the Annual Plan has changed. There have been a number of challenging circumstances over the last 18 months

and the Council has shown how agile and adaptable it can be in responding to the needs of our residents, communities and businesses.

- 3.2 Our business planning process needed to be flexible to account for the changes and the challenging circumstances of the last 18 months. The previous Annual Plan was extended to the end of September 2021 to allow services adequate time to fully take stock and consider what actions they are able to deliver over the coming months and years to deliver the priorities of the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024. At the time of extending the previous Annual Plan, it was agreed to follow with a further 18 month Plan to take us through the recovery process from October 2021 up to March 2023.
- 3.3 Within the 18 month timeframe of the new Plan, there will be additional budgets agreed, new legislation introduced and reviews of services and service plans taking place.
- 3.4 The Plan will therefore be subject to regular review to take into account any changes required and will remain flexible enough to include additional actions on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the Plan. New actions will be reviewed and introduced through quarterly Corporate Management Team meetings.
- 3.5 Performance targets cannot yet be set for all performance indicators due to the disproportionate impact the pandemic had on some areas of performance. Targets will be reviewed on a quarterly basis along with the actions and as we start to recover from the pandemic, we will strengthen our targets to ensure they remain challenging and achievable. Targets for the performance indicators will be identified in our quarterly performance reports.
- 3.6 The Plan sets out the delivery ambitions of the Council. The public will be able to see how the Council intends to deliver services and can be held to account for its performance against the priorities of the Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2024.
- 3.7 The recommendations set out in this report will help the Council to deliver the following corporate objectives:
  - Connecting People and Places
  - Enhancing our Environment
  - Supporting our Communities
  - Promoting Prosperity
  - Delivering and Innovating

#### **4. Options**

- 4.1 There are no options to consider as a result of this report.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The projects in the Plan have been or will be considered as part of the annual budget setting process. Budgets were approved in February 2021 and will be

approved again in February 2022 and any subsequent projects added at a time when the Plan is reviewed.

- 5.2 Each project will have its own budget which will be monitored as part of the project management process by the project manager and sponsor. Budget issues will also be reviewed as part of the quarterly reporting process.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 There are no identified legal implications arising from the approval of the Plan. As part of the project management process for each project, there will be an assessment of any legal implications.

## **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1 Any other implications to the Council, residents and businesses will be detailed as part of the business case as it is developed or the project management process for each project.

## **8. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 8.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
  - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 8.3 Equalities and diversity issues are considered fully and where appropriate, an equality impact assessment is prepared and considered for any key projects identified.

## **9. List of Appendices**

Bouncing Back Together – Our Plan for the District: October 2021 to March 2023.

## **10. Background Papers**

Corporate Strategy 2020 to 2024.

# Bouncing back together

Our Plan for the District



October 2021 to March 2023



# Welcome

## Welcome to Braintree District Council's plan for the District up to March 2023

The past 18 months have been particularly difficult for everyone not least because of the new challenges we have all had to negotiate and the uncertainty we have all faced.

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked hard to offer as much support as we can to our residents and businesses. From administering business grants quickly, to calling and checking on vulnerable residents and helping to keep our town centres and businesses safe – all while keeping our frontline services running.

As we carefully transition into a time of recovery, we are keen to build on the community spirit which shone throughout the pandemic. We want to build on the sense of community we all experienced. We want to encourage more residents to get involved in their communities to strengthen the places we call home. We are committed to listening to what our communities need and we will work to strengthen and support them. Ultimately, we want to bounce back together.

Throughout our plan you will see a number of threads running through the work we want to accomplish and those threads can be distilled into four priorities: sustainable growth and prosperity, strengthening our communities, unlocking more chances for all residents and protecting our environment for future generations.



We will make sure that ours is an inclusive district where people have access to good homes and good jobs. A district where people are supported when they need it the most.

Our district is a wonderful place in a well-connected location. Over the next few years we want to unlock our district's potential further. Opportunities which come from many of our projects for example the creation of our Horizon 120 Business and Innovation Park will make a real difference to the life chances of our residents and businesses. This flagship development exemplifies our ambition for sustainable growth and having skilled jobs, businesses and opportunities on our doorstep will make a difference as we come out of the pandemic.

Although town centres are changing, they are still the heart of our communities. We will continue to support the safe return to our town centres and help them bounce back better from the pandemic. We are looking forward to doing our bit to create thriving town centres for everyone to enjoy. The completion of The Victoria Square development and the pedestrianisation scheme in Braintree is centre to that as is delivering physical improvements to Witham and Halstead town centres.

Like many people and organisations, much of our focus over the coming years will be on tackling climate change. We are committed to doing our bit to reduce our impact on the environment and working with the community to do the same. Our long term aim is a huge one: to become a carbon neutral district.

We will continue to invest in the open spaces we have and improve them. We will provide more inclusive play facilities, keep our outside areas free of litter and involve our communities in schemes such as community tree and bulb planting.

We know we can do much more when we work together with our partner organisations so you will see throughout this plan just some of what we aim to achieve with the support of other agencies such as Community360, Braintree District Community Safety Partnership, Essex County Council and many more.

Given the nature of where we are and what we have all been through and how we need to recover and grow over the next few years, this plan will be reviewed and refreshed as we progress so it can remain flexible enough to support the people who need it most.

Overall our aim is to make our district a happy and healthy place to live, work and play. A place where residents and businesses can reap the rewards of our investment, services and support and together we can bounce back stronger, healthier, greener and more prosperous than ever.



*Graham Butland*  
**Councillor Graham Butland**  
Leader of Braintree District Council



*A. M. Wright*  
**Andy Wright**  
Chief Executive



# Connecting People and Places

## Priorities:

- Grow the district in a sustainable way supported by the required services such as health, leisure and community facilities
- Develop our infrastructure leading to improved journeys in and across the district
- Deliver good quality affordable homes for local people
- Create thriving Town Centres for everyone to enjoy
- Improve the districts digital connectivity and harness innovation in technology to meet future digital needs



## We will:

- Adopt the Braintree District Local Plan providing a vision for the future growth of the district
- Rejuvenate Braintree town centre by completing the Victoria Square development providing a Livewell health hub, 35 apartments, a hotel, bus interchange and public open space
- Continue to support the safe return to our town centres and help build back together from the pandemic using the Welcome Back fund and other available funding
- Deliver events in Braintree town centre to increase footfall and support local retailers taking advantage of the newly pedestrianised town centre
- Deliver physical improvements to the town centres of Witham and Halstead
- Enable the delivery of 500 affordable homes across the district from April 2021 until March 2023
- Develop a new Housing Strategy setting out how the Council will support the availability of good quality homes which best meet the needs of the current and future residents



## Working with others we will:

- Continue to work with our partners on the planning decisions of strategic highway schemes for the A12, A120 and A131 Chelmsford Bypass
- Work with partners including Essex Highways on the delivery of our Cycling Strategy and implementation plan which includes developing integrated, high quality cycle routes that are safe to use and connected across our district
- Introduce the new Digital Demand Responsive Transport service, linking Horizon 120, with a fleets of electric mini-buses, to surrounding areas and central Braintree
- Continue to support and monitor Superfast Essex in the delivery of Superfast Broadband across the district
- Facilitate the delivery of a purpose-built medical centre in Sible Hedingham



# Enhancing our environment

## Priorities:

- Ensure our district is clean and well maintained with high quality parks and green spaces
- Encourage others to change their behaviour to protect and enhance the environment
- Minimise pollution by promoting sustainable energy sources, construction and transport
- Ensure Braintree District Council reduces its own environmental impact and be carbon neutral where practical by 2030
- Support residents and businesses to reduce, re-use and recycle



## We will:

- Carry out air quality reviews in known air pollution hot spots across the district to improve the knowledge of local air quality and the proposed actions to take
- Provide replacement litter bins along the A120 and A12 to keep laybys litter free and our district clean and tidy
- Continue to deliver campaigns and work with our communities to:
  - Reduce litter, keeping our district clean and tidy
  - Reduce waste and increase recycling
  - Improve awareness and understanding of climate change
- Carry out drainage works at Braintree cemetery to eliminate flooding and increase burial capacity
- Carry out refurbishments to eight play areas across the district providing improved facilities for young people to enjoy
- Consult with local residents and users of our skate parks at Weavers Park in Braintree and Spa Road in Witham around replacement of facilities
- Create a garden of remembrance at Bocking cemetery providing a peaceful environment for families to visit

## Working with others we will:

- Deliver actions set out in our Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to achieve our long term aims of being a carbon neutral district
- Involve residents and communities in tree and bulb planting across the district
- Complete our trial of anti-litter signage and continue to deter people from littering along highway verges





# Supporting our Communities

## Priorities:

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



## We will:

- Replace the artificial grass pitch at Braintree Sports and Health Club
- Carry out physical improvements to Braintree Sports and Health club and Halstead Leisure Centre\*\*
- Revitalise our Community Transport scheme and increase the number of volunteers
- Deliver the Braintree District Volunteer Awards to recognise the contribution volunteers make in our district
- Continue to work with communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live through the development of local neighbourhood plans
- Set up a young people's panel to encourage more young people to have their say on things that matter to them
- Continue to deliver our LiveWell programme, focussing on:
  - Supporting children and their families to have the best start in life
  - Supporting older people to age well
  - Supporting children and adults to have good mental health
  - Tackling obesity in adults and children
  - Reducing hip fractures in over 65's

## Working with others we will:

- Work with Community360 and Active Essex to provide support to children and families who need it during school holiday periods through the provision of activity sessions
- Continue to work with Community360 to promote volunteering opportunities and support the voluntary sector
- Continue to develop a range of initiatives to address social isolation and loneliness across the district
- Continue to work with Essex County Council on the Governments 'Next Steps Accommodation Programme' on initiatives to prevent rough sleepers returning to the streets
- Continue to raise awareness through the Community Safety Partnership of hidden harms such as exploitation and domestic abuse
- Work with the integrated care system and Health and Wellbeing panel to understand local health inequalities and develop the role of Primary Care Networks to support and improve the health of our communities
- Work with our leisure providers to get people back into activity improving their physical and mental health
- Engage with school age children and young adults through careers, jobs and apprenticeship fairs to inspire young people to raise their aspirations

\*\*subject to approval of capital bids



# Promoting prosperity

## Priorities:

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



Credit: The Marshgate Group



## We will:

- Continue with the development of Horizon 120 Business and Innovation Park creating up to 2,000 high quality jobs
- Complete the Horizon 120 Enterprise Centre providing space for conferences and events as well as serviced offices, café and public plaza for startup companies and SME's
- Develop the Witham Enterprise Centre providing small industrial units for startup companies and SME's \*\*
- Complete the I-Construct innovation centre supporting the development of SME's in the construction sector
- Refresh our Plan for Growth to identify future priorities and deliver the outcomes of the associated Action Plan
- Deliver campaigns to promote Braintree District as a place to invest in, live in and visit
- Support individuals back into employment by addressing barriers and providing tailored support and access to training



## Working with others we will:

- Rise to the economic challenges by working in partnership with members of the North Essex Economic board to provide support to businesses and create opportunities to boost growth
- Continue to develop the business support offer for the construction sector as part of the I-Construct innovation centre
- Continue to provide signposting to business support, advice and suitable grants
- Ensure residents have access to the skills programmes and education they need to access employment opportunities including in new and expanding sectors

\*\* Subject to approval of the business case



# Delivering and Innovating

## Priorities:

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



## We will:

- Through our Investment and Development Programme, continue to develop and implement a pipeline of projects focussed on reducing costs, improving efficiency, generating income and becoming more commercially focussed to deliver against the £1.6m financial gap over the next four years
- Refresh our Digital Strategy and action plan to address future demand and improve the way we use technology to deliver services
- Encourage residents to transact with us on line by developing our website to allow customers to make bookings, track requests and sign up to receive council tax bills electronically
- Develop a plan of community engagement to better understand the needs of our local communities
- Use customer information and feedback to improve services whilst working towards retaining the accreditation for customer service excellence
- Review the criteria for the discretionary business rates scheme for charitable and non-profit organisations
- Monitor changes to various legislation to understand the impact on services including but not limited to the Domestic Abuse Act 2020, Environmental Bill 2020 and Planning reforms

## Working with others we will:

- Work with Fusion to recover and develop leisure services following the pandemic ensuring the district has the right type and level of leisure provision to meet resident's needs



# Measuring success

In addition to the projects and actions described in this plan, we also measure the following performance indicators. The majority of the indicators focus on what the Council is directly delivering, whilst some will focus on broader priorities and how delivery of our actions contribute to the overall picture of what is happening in the district.

## Connecting people and places

Number of affordable homes delivered

- Percentage of superfast broadband coverage across the district
- Number of homes granted outline and full planning permission



## Enhancing our environment

- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- Kilograms of residual household waste collected per household
- The percentage of land that falls below cleanliness standards for litter
- The percentage of accessible non-hazardous fly tips on public land cleared within 24 hours of being reported
- Number of residents assisted in installing energy saving measures (annually reported)

*Further work is currently being undertaken to develop a monitoring plan for the Climate Change Strategy which could identify further performance indicators*

## Supporting our Communities

- Average waiting time for applicants on the Disabled Facilities Grant (calculated in days from point of referral to approval)
- Participation levels across all our sports centres
- Percentage of adults being active for 150 minutes per week
- Number of customers using our Handyman scheme
- Number of homelessness cases prevented

## Promoting prosperity

- Percentage of people in the district claiming out of work benefits rate (aged 16 - 64)
- Number of new business startups across the district
- Number of businesses that have contacted us for business support

## Delivering and innovation

- Percentage of calls resolved at first point of contact in the Customer Service Centre
- Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt
- Number of people transacting with us online
- Time taken to process housing benefit/council tax benefit new claims
- Time taken to process housing benefit claim changes
- Percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within 7 working days
- Collection rate for Council Tax
- Collection rate for Business Rates
- Customer satisfaction with the Council (reported at the end of consultation period)

# Comments and feedback

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

- You can go online and make a comment at **[www.braintree.gov.uk/comment](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/comment)**
- You can e-mail our Customer Service Centre at **[csc@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:csc@braintree.gov.uk)**
- You can drop written comments off at our main office - Causeway House, Braintree
- You can telephone our Customer Service Centre on **01376 552525**
- You can speak to your local Councillor who will be able to pass your comments back if you wish. Contact details for your Councillor can be found on our website: **[www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk)**