

# **Cabinet**



The Cabinet will meet at Council Chamber , Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9HB on MONDAY, 20 JULY 2015 at 19:15

## **Membership**

### Portfolio

Leader of the Council

Environment and Place

Planning and Housing

Economic Development

Health and Communities

Finance and Performance

Corporate Services and

Asset Management

Councillor G Butland (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs W Schmitt (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Councillor R Mitchell

Councillor Lady Newton

Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint

Councillor T Cunningham

Councillor Mrs J Beavis

Councillor P Tattersley

Councillor D Bebb

Councillor J McKee

## **Invitees**

Other invitees:- Representatives of the Labour Group, Halstead Residents Association Group and Green Party and Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For enquiries on this agenda please contact:  
Governance and Members Team – 01376 552525

e.mail: [demse@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk)

This agenda is available on  
[www.braintree.gov.uk/Braintree/councildemocracy](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/Braintree/councildemocracy)

Nicola Beach  
Chief Executive

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### **Question Time**

Immediately after Declarations of Interests, there will be a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak about Council business or other matters of local concern. Whilst members of the public can remain to observe the whole of the public part of the meeting, Councillors with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest must withdraw whilst the item of business in question is being considered.

Members of the public wishing to speak should contact the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email [demse@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk) at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.

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### **Mobile Phones**

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### **Webcast and Audio Recording**

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## **INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

### **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary 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 paragraphs 6 to 10 [inclusive] of the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.
- Any member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest to indicate in accordance with paragraphs 10.1(a)(i)&(ii) and 10.2(a)&(b) of the Code of Conduct. Such Member must not participate in any discussion of the matter in which they have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting. In addition, the Member must withdraw from the chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

## **AGENDA**

<b>No</b>	<b>Title and Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  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.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Public Question Time</b>  (See paragraph below)	
<b>4</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>  To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15th June 2015 (copy previously circulated).	
<b>5</b>	<b>OVERALL CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DIRECTION</b>	
<b>5a</b>	<b>Leader's Update</b>  The Leader of the Council to provide a brief update on key issues and activities.	
<b>5b</b>	<b>Community Housing Investment Partnership (CHIP) Growth Fund</b>	<b>6 - 11</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE</b>	
<b>6a</b>	<b>Cabinet's response to the recommendations arising from the Task &amp; Finish Group's Review of the North Essex Parking Partnership</b>	<b>12 - 17</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>PLANNING AND HOUSING</b>	

<b>7a</b>	<b>Cabinet Response to the Recommendations from the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee's Review into poverty in the Braintree District</b>	<b>18 - 22</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>8a</b>	<b>Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Scheme Development</b>	<b>23 - 28</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE</b>	
<b>9a</b>	<b>Fourth Quarter and Annual Performance Management Report 2014-15</b>	<b>29 - 60</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>CABINET MEMBERS'UPDATES</b> to receive Cabinet Members verbal reports on key issues within their portfolio.	
<b>11</b>	<b>REFERENCES FROM COUNCIL/COMMITTEES/GROUPS</b>	
<b>12</b>	<b>REPORTS/ DELEGATED DECISIONS/MINUTES TO BE NOTED</b>	
<b>12a</b>	<b>Local Plan Sub-Committee - 11th June 2015</b>	<b>61 - 63</b>
	<b>Developing Democracy Group - 15 June 2015</b>	<b>64 - 66</b>
<b>12b</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Decisions made under Delegated Powers</b>	<b>67 - 68</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN</b>	

- 14        EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS TO CONSIDER REPORTS  
IN PRIVATE SESSION**  
for reasons set out in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A)  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **AGENDA – PRIVATE SESSION**

<b>No</b>	<b>Title and Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Pages</b>
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<b>Community Housing Investment Partnership (CHIP) Growth Fund</b>		<b>Agenda No: 5b</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> <b>Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth</b>		
<b>Portfolio Area:</b> <b>Overall Corporate Strategy and Strategic Partnership</b>		
<b>Report presented by:</b> <b>Cllr Graham Butland</b>		
<b>Report prepared by:</b> Jon Hayden		
<b>Background Papers: None</b>		<b>Public</b>
<b>Options:</b> To agree, reject or recommend amendments to the proposed split of funding.		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b></p> <p>The Community Housing Investment Partnership (CHIP) Fund was set up at the time of the stock transfer in 2007. The fund is managed by a board comprising 3 members appointed by Greenfields and 3 appointed by the Council. Currently, the Council representatives are Cllr Butland, Cllr Lady Newton and Cllr Schmitt.</p> <p>In late 2012, it was agreed to change in the way the CHIP Fund was split between the themes of 'People', 'Place' and 'Growth' to reflect both organisations' priorities. £7.35m was set aside for the 'Growth' theme. Funding identified for 'Growth' has been allocated to new affordable housing schemes and has been an important element in the delivery of Greenfields' and the District's programme of new homes.</p> <p>It is now proposed to equally divide the remaining balance of the 'Growth' fund between the Council and Greenfields. At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Growth Fund stood at £5.4 million.</p>		
<p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p>To approve equally dividing the remaining CHIP 'Growth' fund between Greenfields and the Council.</p>		
<p><b>Purpose of Decision:</b></p> <p>To ensure that best use is made of the resources available to BDC and Greenfields.</p>		

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
<b>Financial:</b>	The District Council will need to decide how the share of the growth fund should be used to deliver affordable homes, once the CHIP Board has approved the equal division.
<b>Legal:</b>	The CHIP board is in a position to determine whether or not to divide the Growth fund within the terms of the legal framework creating it through the Housing Stock Transfer. The decision will be made by the Board taking into account the views of both the Council and Greenfields Housing Association.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	None arising out of this report
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	None arising out of this report
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	No direct customer impact until the resources are invested.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None arising out of this report
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	No public consultation or community engagement until the resources are invested.
<b>Risks:</b>	<p>Ensure future co-ordination of new schemes for affordable housing</p> <p>Risk issues relating to the remaining funds are set out in the report.</p>
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Jon Hayden
<b>Designation:</b>	Corporate Director
<b>Ext. No.</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	jon.hayden@braintree.gov.uk

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 During Braintree District Council's stock transfer to Greenfields Community Housing in 2007, The Community and Housing Investment Partnership (CHIP) Fund was created as a joint partnership fund between Greenfields and Braintree District Council. The CHIP Fund had £11 million of grant funding to spend throughout the Braintree District, supporting a range of projects including the development of new affordable social housing, the development of facilities for community benefit, environmental improvements and regeneration activities.
- 1.2 In late 2012, it was agreed to change the way the CHIP Fund was allocated between the themes of 'People', 'Place' and 'Growth' to reflect both organisations' priorities. £7.35m was set aside for the 'Growth' theme.
- 1.3 Expenditure and commitments from the CHIP Fund since 2012 are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

## **2.0 Reasons for Dividing the Fund**

- 2.1 Until now, Greenfields' programme has been made up of development on its own land, on land owned by Braintree District Council (BDC) and the purchase of properties on the open market. All development has been for affordable rent, with no other tenures to this point.
- 2.2 The Council's programme with other providers since 2012 has concentrated mainly on the provision of supported housing and on homes and development sites purchased on the open market by Housing Associations. Again, most of the homes in the Council's programme in recent years have been for affordable rent.
- 2.3 As the supply of land owned by the Council and Greenfields is used up, both organisations will have to look to secure a programme through other mechanisms, including some open-market purchase. Greenfields may need to consider mixed tenure to make such schemes viable and a number of housing associations have established 'market' arms to enable units to be sold on the open market without compromising their charitable status.
- 2.4 There are a number of challenges that result from this change in activity which could cause problems for the process established for using the CHIP Fund. These include the following:-
- The growth requirement in the District requires delivery of up to 14,000 new homes over the next 15 years, led by large growth location sites in the District. These sites will supply new affordable housing through S.106 affordable housing provision. We do not have control over the choice of housing association for these schemes – the developer will invite offers from associations active locally.
  - Activity in the open market is necessarily opportunistic and at times, requires quick decisions. The governance arrangements for the CHIP Fund can make it difficult to ensure both adequate scrutiny and speed of decision-making.



- To secure the best possible value for the fund, BDC has sought to ensure that either very low amounts are used per property, or the fund is used as a loan fund. This has not always dovetailed with Greenfields' requirements or those of its funders.
- 2.5 In addition, as Greenfields has refined its development programme to include other tenures and develop over a wider geographic area and government policy has pushed the Council to seek ways to generate income, so the focus for both organisations has changed. Both organisations may be able to secure better value outcomes with the discretion to use the resources separately.
- 2.6 BDC is exploring housing development investment as both an opportunity to help meet the housing need in the district and providing a financial return to the Council for reinvestment. This requires BDC to explore different models such as establishing a trading company and also the need to work with other partners such as other housing providers and other public sector partners.
- 2.7 Through splitting the CHIP Growth Fund there will be benefits for both organisations in allocating the funding to deliver housing in the District which will provide a more effective contribution towards required growth.

### **3.0 Conditions on funding split**

- 3.1 The CHIP Board has approved the principle of splitting the Growth Fund. The approved report made a range of observations and commitments which are summarised here.
- 3.2 Following the terms of the original CHIP funding agreement the sole purpose of the funding will involve the development of new Social Housing in the District (32.1.1 of housing transfer agreement)
- 3.3 The CHIP Board has approved the principle that both organisations invest their share of the growth fund into housing delivery within the Braintree District. Both organisations will submit an annual report to the CHIP Board on where these monies have been expended until such times as the money has been completely invested by both parties.
- 3.4 The District Council's legal department has looked through the original transfer agreement and CHIP Fund clauses. There are no legal impediments which prevent the CHIP Board or the Cabinet approving the recommendation set out in this report to equally divide the CHIP Growth Fund.
- 3.5 Greenfields' loan agreement with Santander includes a requirement to seek the lender's consent to variations to the housing transfer agreement. The split of the Fund may not be seen as a variation to the agreement but Greenfields may seek a view and if necessary get consent from Santander ahead of finalising any decision.
- 3.6 It would be appropriate to consider an external audit of the Fund value at split and this could be completed as part of Greenfields' annual audit process. The cost of this is likely to be negligible and would be borne by the Fund administration budget.

- 3.7 The Chip Board has agreed to freeze the existing CHIP Growth fund from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and to meet no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> September to make a final decision on the fund.

#### **4.0 Risk implications**

- 4.1 The CHIP Fund arose from the negotiations undertaken at the time of the stock transfer. Action to divide the CHIP Fund may be perceived by some as a 'weakening' of the partnership between Greenfields and BDC.
- 4.2 The remaining funding that supports community investment and activities will continue. The CHIP Board will meet to discuss future governance and use of the CHIP Fund (under People and Place themes).

#### **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 The CHIP Board agreed to seek the views of Greenfield's Board and the District Council seek the views of its Members through its Cabinet.
- 5.2 During this period no further funds will be drawn down from the CHIP Housing Growth Fund and a final decision be made no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.
- 5.3 If a final decision is made to equally divide the remaining CHIP Growth fund , then 50% of the fund will be transferred to the District Council.

#### **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet endorse the decision taken by the CHIP Board and agree in principle that the balance of the CHIP Growth Fund (as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015), totalling £5.4m is divided equally between BDC and Greenfields.

## Appendix 1

### GROWTH CHIP FUND ALLOCATION 2012-2015

ALLOCATION		Growth/ Housing Development £
	Nov-12	7,350,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,350,000</b>
<b>AWARDS</b>		
Open Market Purchases ( £25,000 subsidy per property towards property purchases for affordable housing	17 homes @ £25,000 plus 1 @ £12,500	437,500
Forest Road, Witham subsidy towards developing affordable housing scheme in Witham	Land Purchase and property subsidy	750,000
Affordable housing £10,000 per home subsidy towards delivery of affordable homes in the District	100 properties @ £10,000 each	1,000,000
<b>TOTAL AWARDED</b>		<b>2,187,500</b>
<b>BALANCE AVAILABLE</b>		<b>5,162,500</b>
Interest Added		240,414
Less administration costs		3,155
INTEREST NET OF ADMIN		<b>237,259</b>
<b>TOTAL BALANCE</b>		<b>5,399,759</b>

<b>Cabinet's response to the recommendations arising from the Task &amp; Finish Group's Review of the North Essex Parking Partnership</b>		<b>Agenda No: 6a</b>
<p><b>Corporate Priority:</b> Protecting Our Environment, Promoting and Improving our Town Centres, Providing Value for Money</p> <p><b>Portfolio Area:</b> Environment and Place</p> <p><b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Robert Mitchell</p> <p><b>Report prepared by:</b> Paul Partridge, Head of Operations</p>		
<p><b>Background Papers:</b> Overview &amp; Scrutiny Meetings - 4 June, 16 July and 26 November 2014; 28 January and 11 March 2015 Full Council – 13 April 2015</p>		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b> To accept or reject the proposed response.		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<p>The report on the Task &amp; Finish Group's Review of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 March 2015 and by Full Council on 13 April 2015.</p> <p>A copy of the report was also considered by the NEPP Joint Committee on 18 June 2015. The Committee welcomed the report which they found very comprehensive and have asked officers to consider all the recommendations to help develop and improve service provision to the NEPP's customers and its partner Authorities.</p> <p>The recommendations from the Task &amp; Finish report are set out in the main body of this report, together with my recommended responses from Cabinet.</p>		
<p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p>To agree Cabinet's response to the recommendations made by the (NEPP) Task &amp; Finish Group, as set out within this report, and delegate the actions to the Corporate Director/Head of Operations to pursue with the North Essex Parking Partnership.</p>		
<p><b>Purpose of Decision:</b> To agree the actions arising from the recommendations made by the Task &amp; Finish Group.</p>		

Corporate implications	
<b>Financial:</b>	None identified.
<b>Legal:</b>	Nothing specific to the recommendations.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	None identified.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Many of the recommendations, if actioned, will improve the overall customer experience for users of the NEPP.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None identified.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	The Task & Finish Group's report was sent to the North Essex Parking Partnership for comment.
<b>Risks:</b>	None identified.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Paul Partridge
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**RECOMMENDED RESPONSE FROM CABINET TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
MADE BY THE TASK & FINISH GROUP (North Essex Parking Partnership)**

Recommendation	Recommended Response from Cabinet
<p>1. That the NEPP reviews the SLA for off-street parking, undertaking a zero based budget as part of that exercise; and brings forward its annual budget setting process for off-street parking so that it informs its partners' own budgetary processes.</p> <p>(Para 7.1 and 8.1 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet has been advised that a zero based budget has been completed for 2015/16 and, in future, Finance Officers from each partner authority will be engaged in the annual budget setting process prior to individual Districts'/Boroughs' annual budget being agreed.</p> <p>Cabinet notes that during 2014/15 the NEPP undertook a fundamental review of its off-street parking budget for the current financial year, as a result of which, partner authority contributions were only increased by 1%.</p>
<p>2. That the NEPP considers other income-generating opportunities to reduce reliance on PCN income by expanding its customer base; and avoids unnecessary expenditure by ensuring that utility companies reinstate lines/signs following any road-works they carry out (or pay for works in default).</p> <p>(Paras 7.1 and 8.1 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet recognises that the primary role of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) is to ensure the free flow of traffic and feels that other income generating opportunities would be very limited if they are not to adversely impact on their enforcement role.</p> <p>However, Cabinet does agree that there should be better liaison between the NEPP and the Highways Authority (Essex County Council) to ensure that lines and signs are reinstated following works carried out by utility companies. The NEPP has agreed to pursue this with Essex County Council (ECC).</p>

Recommendation	Recommended Response from Cabinet
<p>3. That the NEPP fills vacant CEO posts promptly to ensure that there is a full complement of staff (using agency staff if necessary). <i>[At the time of the review the Central Area had 3 of the 4 vacant CEO posts filled.]</i></p> <p>(Paras 7.1 and 8.1 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet fully supports this recommendation in order to maintain service resilience and continuity of the enforcement role.</p>
<p>4. That the NEPP encourages County Council Members to attend partnership meetings to reinforce the concept of partnership working.</p> <p>(Paras 7.1 and 8.1 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet is pleased to note that the NEPP Chairman (Cllr Robert Mitchell) has spoken to the Leader of Essex County Council (Cllr David Finch) and has been given an assurance that improved attendance from ECC Members can be expected at future Committee Meetings.</p>

<p>5. That the NEPP has further discussions with ECC about the disparity in funding received by the NEPP and SEPP (South Essex Parking Partnership) for Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).</p> <p>(Paras 7.1 and 8.1 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>There have been a number of meetings and discussions between the NEPP and ECC over this issue. Whilst retrospective funding is not available, ECC has agreed that a £100k contingency fund given to the NEPP at its inception can be used to offset ongoing TRO costs and does not need to be repaid.</p>
<p>6. That the NEPP reviews the CEO patrol schedules to ensure that it is delivering the required level of off-street enforcement in the Braintree District i.e. 70:30 ratio of CEO time on-street to off-street respectively.</p> <p>(Paras 7.2 and 8.2 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet is satisfied that the level of enforcement between on and off-street parking is now in accordance with the agreed ratio, as evidenced by enforcement statistics.</p>
<p>7. That the mobile CCTV car becomes a permanent fixture (subject to changes in legislation) and the NEPP is asked to provide a schedule of planned visits within the Braintree District; that the NEPP clarifies service standards for parking enforcement in rural parishes.</p> <p>(Paras 7.2 and 8.2 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet supports the recommendation and understands that a report on the CCTV vehicle will be considered at a meeting of the NEPP Joint Committee in October 2015.</p> <p>The NEPP Joint Committee has agreed an approach to enforce restrictions in parishes by exception, as it is not cost effective or viable to routinely patrol all areas. Cabinet agrees that the focus must remain on the areas of greatest need e.g. town centres and urban estates.</p>

Recommendation	Recommended Response from Cabinet
<p>8. That the NEPP ensures that the virtual permit system (MiPermit) is sufficiently robust to deliver expected improvements in customer service in terms of access and timeliness.</p> <p>(Paras 7.2 and 8.2 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet supports this recommendation.</p> <p>Members also suggest that the NEPP liaises with partner authorities on an integrated approach to promoting the use of MiPermit.</p>
<p>9. That the NEPP improves the customer experience by:-</p> <p>(a) Issuing a comprehensive TRO user guide in consultation with partner authorities to clarify the TRO process including eligibility criteria, expected timescales, the scoring matrix and the date of committee meetings;</p> <p>(b) Simplifying the TRO application form to ease completion;</p>	<p>(a) Cabinet acknowledges that the TRO process is complex, contentious and</p> <p>(c) emotive and there is a need to ensure that the process is clear, open and transparent.</p> <p>It is pleasing to hear that the NEPP has undertaken a fundamental review of this aspect of their service and has revised its TRO policies and</p>

<p>(c) Ensuring good liaison with applicants, particularly with regard to extensive or complex TROs;</p> <p>(d) Publishing a quarterly or six-monthly newsletter on its website to update customers on new initiatives and issues that may be of interest;</p> <p>(e) Explaining enforcement relating to dropped kerbs;</p> <p>(f) Publishing its service standards; and</p> <p>(g) Seeking customer feedback and using this to deliver service improvements.</p> <p>(Paras 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>procedures to incorporate many of the recommendations included in the Task and Finish report.</p> <p>(d) The NEPP has introduced a Blog to improve communication with and understanding by its customers.</p> <p>(e) Covered in new TRO policy (see above).</p> <p>(f) Cabinet supports the recommendation to improve access to this information. Discussions with the NEPP have already commenced on this particular issue.</p> <p>(g) (See 'd' above). The NEPP is actively making better use of social media sites.</p>
<p>10. That the TRO process be amended to require applicants to clearly demonstrate majority support for their proposal from other local residents, as well as support from their local County &amp; District Councillors and Parish or Town Councils <i>before</i> they submit an application. (This is the approach adopted by the Local Highways Panels for highway schemes.)</p> <p>(Paras 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet agrees that applicants should include evidence of democratic support at a local level as part of the TRO application process.</p> <p>This has been included in the revised TRO policy referred to in 9(a) to (c) above.</p>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Recommended Response from Cabinet</b>
<p>11. That the NEPP considers reinstating white advisory H-bars across dropped kerbs <u>in rural areas only</u> on request and at residents' expense, to discourage inconsiderate parking.</p> <p>(Paras 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet acknowledges that whilst enforcement across dropped kerbs is effective in urban areas where CEOs routinely patrol, it is less so in rural areas, where visits can prove abortive owing to the geographical size of the District and the distance the CEO has to travel.</p> <p>The NEPP has advised that this is not their decision to make, as it is the approach adopted by ECC. Cabinet therefore requests that the NEPP be asked to contact County Highways with a view to reviewing their approach to using advisory H-bars (as a deterrent) in rural areas <u>on request and at residents' expense</u>.</p>
<p>12. That consideration be given to creating a common/shared database for use by ECC and NEPP to avoid duplication of TROs.</p>	<p>Cabinet agrees that customers should be able to track progress with their request and would be pleased to see such a</p>



<p>Customers could be given (restricted) access to enable them to track progress with their requests.</p> <p>(Paras 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>facility made available by the NEPP, irrespective of whether a shared database with ECC is achievable.</p> <p>Where ECC is dealing with schemes that involve TROs, it is recommended that they liaise with the NEPP to avoid any duplication of effort and abortive work being undertaken.</p>
<p>13. That the NEPP reviews staffing levels to reduce Call Centre waiting times, lets the caller know where they are in the queue and includes information that is helpful and more generic to the whole partnership (rather than just Colchester) e.g. availability of MiPermit.</p> <p>(Paras 7.1, 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet considers that it is for the NEPP to determine an appropriate level of resources to meet customer demand.</p> <p>As an integral part of Colchester BC (CBC), the NEPP uses common systems including IT. Cabinet acknowledges that it may not, therefore, be possible or cost effective for CBC to modify the messages being delivered via their phone system, but other forms of communication including social media could be used to promote the Partnership.</p>
<p>14. That the NEPP challenges ECC's 5-yr policy relating to the introduction of TROs following adoption of new roads and that consideration of TROs is included as part of the planning application process where appropriate.</p> <p>(Paras 7.3 and 8.3 of the Task &amp; Finish Group's report.)</p>	<p>Cabinet accepts that, in some instances, there is a need to introduce additional TROs within 5-yr of highway adoption to ensure the free movement of traffic, avoid inconsiderate/dangerous parking and maintain an attractive street environment.</p> <p>Cabinet also welcomes the recommendation to include TROs as a fundamental part of the planning application process</p> <p>so that restrictions can be introduced at an early stage where deemed appropriate. It will be necessary for the NEPP, the Planning Authority and the Highways Authority to agree a suitable approach.</p>
<p>15. That the NEPP undertakes benchmarking with the SEPP and other local authorities who have formed a similar partnership for parking services (e.g. Bromley and Bexley) to demonstrate that it provides value for money.</p>	<p>The NEPP has agreed to explore opportunities for benchmarking with the East Anglian Parking Partnership and other local authorities with similar demographics to the NEPP partners.</p>

<b>Cabinet Response to the Recommendations from the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee's Review into poverty in the Braintree District</b>		<b>Agenda No: 7a</b>
<p><b>Corporate Priority:</b></p> <p>Supporting vulnerable people in our community, Promoting safe and healthy living, Encouraging flourishing communities Boost employment skills and support business, Providing value for money, Delivering excellent customer service, Improving our services through innovation</p> <p><b>Portfolio Area:</b></p> <p>Planning and Housing</p> <p><b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Lady P Newton <b>Report prepared by:</b> Ian Hunt, Head of Governance and Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager</p>		
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Reports and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b></p> <p>At the Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented their report which made recommendations relating to poverty in the Braintree District.</p> <p>This report sets out the Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>		
<p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>That Cabinet approves the responses outlined in the report and delegates the actions to the Corporate Director to take forward.</p>		
<p><b>Purpose of Decision:</b></p> <p>Cabinet is required to receive and respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's report into Poverty in the Braintree District</p>		

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

<b>Financial:</b>	<p>Recommendations 1 to 8 have no additional financial implications for the authority and the work indicated can be managed within existing budgets.</p> <p>Recommendation 9 could have implications which would need to be fully considered in light of the proposals made and the outcomes sought.</p>
<b>Legal:</b>	None directly arising out of this report, although implications for individual projects will be monitored.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	None directly arising out of this report, although implications for individual projects will be monitored.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	Service delivery will be monitored to ensure all groups are enabled to fully access necessary services and support.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Service delivery will be monitored to ensure all groups are enabled to fully access necessary services and support.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None directly arising out of this report
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Community involvement was secured through the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and will be considered in service plans.
<b>Risks:</b>	None directly arising out of this report
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<b>Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Cabinet Member's response</b>
<p>1. Prior to the implementation of Universal Credit the Council works with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Job Centre Plus to identify those claimants who will be affected to offer appropriate support replicating the good practice established with the Welfare Reforms.</p>	<p>I can confirm that the Council is currently negotiating a Local Support Agreement with DWP, to ensure that we provide support to those transferring over to Universal Credit from 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Further welfare reforms in relation to the Benefit Cap and Housing Benefit for young people aged 18-21 will be carefully managed and joint working undertaken between the Council, relevant landlords and DWP, following the successful partnership approach followed with the reforms in 2013.</p>
<p>2. To improve access to appropriate advice and support, including sign posting to individuals to external organisations.</p>	<p>I am advised that the Braintree Advice Services Partnership (BASP) web based/telephone service which the Council have been partners of since the pilot commenced in 2013, is now fully operational, and will facilitate customer support.</p> <p>There is a Service Level Agreement with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide a Money Advice Service to those struggling with their Council Tax payments this is in place and working well.</p> <p>The Councils Benefit Welfare Officer will continue to work with individuals and families struggling to meet their Council Tax or rent costs. They also signpost customers to other support organisations where additional support is needed.</p>
<p>3. To provide internet access for customers in the Council reception to access advice and supporting organisations.</p>	<p>There are currently three self-serve computers in the Reception Area at Causeway House for customers to gain access to Council and Essex County Council facilities.</p> <p>The facility to make an online claim to Universal Credit will be available from its commencement in this district on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Staff will also be able to offer assistance to those who have difficulty using the service.</p>

4. To promote schemes which help individuals to manage their finances, receive debt management advice.	In addition to the detailed work highlighted with external organisations listed at 2 above, I can confirm that the Council will continue to promote individual financial management to customers where relevant and signpost to relevant resources as a core part of its services.
5. Improve communications between Job Centre Plus, the Council, Food Banks, Citizens Advice Bureau, service providers and residential groups to ensure that those accessing food banks are aware of the support available to enable them to develop income management skills.	I am advised that there are various regular liaison meetings between Officers and social landlords, private landlords, CAB, DWP, Job Centre Plus, Braintree Advice Services Partnership (BASP), & Community Agents. This also includes promoting the availability of Food Banks within the Braintree District, with these organisations.
6. That Council works with the Credit Union to promote the availability of low interest loans as a better alternative to pay day lenders, including providing links on the Council's website.	<p>I am advised that where relevant the opportunities for customers to use Credit Union or other similar savings or loan products are promoted particularly in relation to discussions with customers considering access to the Private Rented Sector.</p> <p>I am aware that the National Trading Standards Team has recently been in contact to run a week-long awareness programme in Braintree about loan sharks. This is a very early approach and work will be undertaken to consider how best to work with this proposal.</p>
7. To consider the opportunity for the Council to work with Greenfields Academy to provide budgeting support to residents of the district.	I have asked officers to look at opportunities to work with Greenfields to deliver appropriate support to residents.
8. To encourage Greenfields Community Housing Association to open up its Greenfield Academy to non-tenants of the district.	I have asked officers to write to Greenfields to request that this is explored as an option for future programmes.
9. To consider developing a programme with community groups, organisations and the Greenfield Academy to engage with schools and children to develop	Such programmes if proposed by a community organisation would need to be considered in light of corporate priorities and available resources with a

understanding of money management and budgeting from an early age.	view to ensuring effective outcomes.
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<b>Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Scheme Development</b>		<b>Agenda No: 8a</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Promoting and improving our town centre <b>Portfolio Area:</b> Economic Development <b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Tom Cunningham <b>Report prepared by:</b> Andrew Epsom		
<b>Background Papers:</b> Cabinet Report 9th June 2011		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b> Note the report for information.		<b>Key Decision: No.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  At the Cabinet meeting on the 9th June 2011 Members recommended to Council:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) <i>That Henry Boot Developments Limited be selected as the 'Development Partner' for the Braintree Town Centre regeneration site. That subject to decision 2 being agreed by Council:</i></li> <li>3) <i>That powers be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Development to agree final terms of the Development Agreement in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member(s).</i></li> <li>4) <i>That powers be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Development to agree a lease on the regeneration site with the 'Development Partner' for a 200 year term in accordance with the proposals set out in the report.</i></li> </ol> Decision 2) above was approved by Council at its meeting on the 27th June 2011 and the Development Agreement was then entered into.  The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of the latest scheme proposals which are a variation to the original outline scheme. The scheme has now changed from a retail led scheme to a Doctors Surgery/restaurant led scheme.  Members will also note that the date by which Henry Boot Developments Limited shall prepare and submit the Specification and the Scheme Drawings in accordance with the terms of the Development Agreement is to be extended to the 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2015. The submission extension has been approved by Councillor Tom Cunningham under Delegated Authority to enable the proposed scheme to progress without any further delay.		

**Decision:**

That Members note the attached report for information.

**Purpose of Decision:**

This report provides Members with an update on the progress of the Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project.

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

<b>Financial:</b>	Any financial terms agreed will be subject to the Council obtaining independent commercial property advice.
<b>Legal:</b>	Once the Council approves the scheme design and specification this triggers the provisions of the Development Agreement which will be closely monitored by the Council's Legal Service and Asset Management Service to ensure the Council's interests are protected at all times.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	The construction of the new premises will be required to comply with all disabled access requirements and the employment of staff therein will need to comply with all equalities and diversity legislation.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	A modern and much larger Doctors' surgery will be made available to the residents of Braintree together with the availability of new restaurants in the Town Centre which are currently lacking.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	The newly constructed buildings will need to comply with current environmental and climate change requirements.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Community consultation was previously undertaken as part of the process of appointing Henry Boot as the Council's development partner. Further public consultation will take place when a planning application is submitted.
<b>Risks:</b>	A full risk assessment will be included in the future report for approval.
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<b>E-mail:</b>	andrew.epsom@braintree.gov.uk



## 1.0 **Background**

1.1 In June 2011, following a Competitive Dialogue process, the Council appointed Henry Boot Developments Limited (Henry Boot) as its preferred Development Partner.

1.2 At this time Henry Boot's indicative scheme proposals consisted of the following mix of uses:-

- 32,000 sq. ft net of A1 units (retail)
- 5,990 sq. ft net of A3 units (1-2 restaurants/cafes)
- 60 bedroom hotel
- 250 car parking spaces
- 6 stand bus interchange with café/WC's
- Public realm

1.3 Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, Henry Boot has been unable to deliver the original indicative scheme. A number of factors have impacted on these proposals including the recent long running and deep economic recession and the rise of internet shopping. These factors have significantly impacted on consumer spending and shopping trends resulting in shrinking demand for town centre retail premises. Henry Boot has advised that the original scheme is no longer financially viable.

1.4 As a result of these changes in the market place developers and retailers nationwide have had to adapt and review their schemes and delivery models.

## 2.0 **Current Position**

2.1 The Council had extended the Development Agreement with Henry Boot to the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 to enable Henry Boot to review the scheme mix for the site in Braintree Town Centre. Henry Boot has come forward with a revised scheme that is viable and meets current demand. The latest scheme proposals comprise:-

- GP Surgery – 14,230 sq. ft net at 1st floor level
- Pharmacy – 1,506 sq. ft net at ground floor level
- Restaurants – 4 units totalling 11,969 sq. ft net at ground floor level
- GP Staff car parking – 35 spaces
- Public car parking – 151 spaces
- Bus interchange – 6 bay self-contained bus interchange
- Public realm

2.2 Whilst there is a reduction in car parking compared to the original scheme this helps to reduce the density of the development on site and improve the scheme from a design and planning perspective. Also, the loss of the retail elements reflects prevailing market conditions whereby there is a very limited appetite and demand for new retail schemes in smaller provincial locations. The loss of the hotel does not impact on the scheme and is off-set by the overwhelming need for modern and expanded GP facilities in Braintree to meet the current and increasing future demand.

- 2.3 The Council has been working with Mount Chambers Surgery (Mount Chambers), Henry Boot Developments and the NHS over the past 18 months to facilitate the delivery of modern, expanded and fit for purpose surgery facilities on the site behind the Town Hall in Braintree.
- 2.4 Over this period Mount Chambers Surgery and Henry Boot have worked together to agree the scheme design and Henry Boot has submitted a price for a 'turn-key' scheme to Mount Chambers. Mount Chambers has also been liaising with the NHS to secure financial support and obtain a clear indication of the funding to be provided by the NHS for the scheme.
- 2.5 Unfortunately, the scheme has experienced on-going delay as Mount Chambers had been unable to obtain a clear commitment and understanding of the financial support to be made available by the NHS. Without this information, Mount Chambers has not been able to enter into detailed negotiations with Henry Boot Developments to agree a price to purchase the new premises.
- 2.6 Mount Chambers also decided recently, following advice from the NHS, to obtain a price from Henry Boot to purchase the premises on a 'shell and core' basis with the NHS helping Mount Chambers to arrange the fit out of the premises separately. This in turn has caused further delay.
- 2.7 The District Council recently wrote to NHS England requesting confirmation that the NHS is committed to funding and supporting the delivery of a new Surgery premises in Braintree Town Centre.
- NHS England has written to the Council setting out that financial support will be provided in line with their 'Premises Directions 2013'. The NHS has also provided confirmation of their dedication to the delivery of the new surgery.
- 2.8 A meeting was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015 between the NHS, the Council, Henry Boot and Mount Chambers to resolve outstanding issues and agree a way forward. The meeting was very positive and clarified the NHS's approval procedures and the level of scheme detail that both the NHS and Mount Chambers require in order to sign-off the scheme.
- 2.9 The next and final requirement of the NHS is to be provided with full drawings and a specification (tender pack) together with a planning consent as part of a full business case in order to give the scheme final sign-off. This is the fourth and final stage of the NHS process and is dealt with when all of the final scheme details are to hand.
- 2.10 The NHS has also confirmed that they have approved and ring-fenced funding for the scheme and are committed to providing surgery premises in this location.
- 2.11 Following the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015 it was agreed that Henry Boot would decide on their preferred delivery option and submit either a 'shell and core' price or 'turn-key' price to Mount Chambers. This will enable Mount Chambers to move forward and conclude their negotiations with Henry Boot. This in turn will then allow the Council to conclude its financial arrangements

with Henry Boot in respect of the overall scheme.

### 3.0 **Benefits of Latest Scheme**

- 3.1 Provides modern and much larger medical premises for the Mount Chambers surgery which is desperately needed to meet both current and future demand (from projected housing growth figures) for GP services.
- 3.2 Braintree Town Centre has a limited restaurant offer and the additional restaurant units will help improve the variety and quality of the offer in the town centre for residents.
- 3.3 An increase in public car parking spaces from the existing 108 spaces to 151 spaces.
- 3.4 This scheme should generate additional footfall into the Town Centre which will provide a boost to the local economy.
- 3.5 Improve the public realm around behind the old town hall.

### 4.0 **Outstanding Issues.**

With regard to the latest Henry Boot scheme proposals the next steps in the process, and the steps as set out in the Development Agreement, would be:-

- The extension of the date by which Henry Boot Developments Limited shall prepare the Specification and the Scheme Drawings in accordance with the terms of the Development Agreement shall be extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 and such extension shall be approved by the Portfolio holder for Economic Development under Delegated Authority to enable the proposed scheme to progress without any further delay.
- Henry Boot and Mount Chambers Surgery to agree terms for the acquisition by Mount Chambers of the first floor surgery accommodation, ground floor Pharmacy premises and associated car parking.
- The Council and Henry Boot agree financial arrangements for the scheme which the Council will get signed off by an independent commercial property consultant.
- Henry Boot can then submit scheme plans and specification to BDC to approve.
- Once the Council receives the scheme proposals from Henry Boot, a report can be presented to Cabinet and Council for approval. In relation to current timescales it is likely these reports will come to Cabinet and Council in late autumn.
- Once the Council approves the scheme plans and specification then this

triggers the provisions of the Development Agreement and timetable set out therein.

- Henry Boot then has 3 months to prepare detailed scheme plans in readiness for the submission of a planning application.
- Once the Council has approved the detailed scheme plans (within 15 days of receipt) then Henry Boot has 8 weeks in which to submit a planning application.
- Should planning permission be granted it would take a further 16 months to complete the construction of the development

<b>Fourth Quarter and Annual Performance Management Report 2014/15</b>		<b>Agenda No: 9a</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b> Providing value for money and delivering excellent customer service <b>Portfolio Area:</b> Finance and Performance <b>Report presented by:</b> Cllr David Bebb <b>Report prepared by:</b> Tracey Headford –Performance Improvement Officer		
<b>Background Papers:</b> Fourth Quarter and Annual Performance Management Report 2014/15		<b>Public Report</b>
<b>Options:</b> To endorse the report		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<p>The purpose of the attached report is to summarise the performance of the Council at the end of the year and the fourth quarter (January to March 2015).</p> <p>As at the end of March, 39 projects have been completed, six are on track to meet their target dates and one project has an amber status as the project has been delayed due to difficulties in forming a new allotment association. The project will go through the appropriate change control process once a review of the way forward has been agreed.</p> <p>For performance indicators at the end of the year, twelve have met target and four haven't met target. Three of the performance indicators that have missed target have missed by less than 5% and one performance indicator has not met target by more than 5%.</p> <p>Meeting the high recycling performance target remains a challenge. This is mainly due to the amount of recyclable waste falling by 1000 tonnes and waste to landfill increasing. This is a national trend being reported by many other councils and Braintree District Council continues to actively tackle this issue. The targets for 2015/16 will be profiled using historical trend data that takes into account seasonal variations. This will provide more meaningful information to measure the actual recycling performance. Reducing the amount of residual waste that cannot be recycled, increasing the number of customers in flats who can recycle and targeting low participating households through door-stepping remains a priority.</p> <p>The processing of planning applications has been affected by the loss of a number of planners throughout the year which has placed an increased demand on the rest of the service. A recruitment drive commenced in June and once new planners are in post, performance will improve as a result.</p> <p>The time taken to process housing benefit claim changes has been challenging throughout the year and the department has seen a 38% increase in the number of cases the department are dealing with. The time taken to process a change in a</p>		

claimant's circumstance is dependent on receiving all the required evidence of the change from the claimant and there have been delays in receiving additional information required.

Performance in respect of the cumulative collection of business rates missed target by 0.15%. A review of non-domestic properties took place between October and March which identified a number of new businesses. The owners were billed towards the end of the year and there were still amounts outstanding at the end of March and target was not met.

Over the year, the Council has performed well in maintaining front line services whilst responding to reductions in government funding. We have seen the successful opening of the Witham Leisure Centre, provided a total of 173 affordable homes and re-routed the waste collections for the whole District following the introduction of in-cab technology providing efficiency in collections and contributing towards yearly savings of £400,000. We have been awarded the Diamond Jubilee Partnership Award by Keep Britain Tidy which recognises the success of the partnerships between local authorities, highway agencies and fast food outlets in keeping the District clean.

We have continued to support business start-ups and apprentices for young people and we will continue to work on plans to invest money into major projects to boost the local economy, create jobs and improve the infrastructure around the District.

### **Financial Performance**

The financial information in the performance management report details the financial position as at the end of March 2015.

The financial position statement for 2014/15 shows an overall positive variance of £547,100 against the original budget of £15.2million. The main reason for the variance is an over achievement of income of £686,800. This resulted mainly from actions agreed by the Council during the course of the year, principally: investment income from funds placed in Pooled Funds (equities and property) and rental income from the purchase of 870 The Crescent, Colchester Business Park, and as a result of increased demand for some services, principally: Development Control, Refuse and Recycling and Land Charges.

Service management requested that £135,060 of unspent budgets be carried over and used in 2015/16. This was approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 15th June 2015, and reduces the outturn variance transferred to General Fund balances to £412,040.

For a detailed explanation of the financial performance, please refer to page 18 onwards of the full report.

<b>Decision:</b> To note and endorse the report.	
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b> To inform the Cabinet of the performance of the Council.	
<b>Corporate implications</b>	
<b>Financial:</b>	An assessment of the Council's financial position against the agreed budget for the year is provided and is based on income and expenditure during the year.
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no legal issues raised by this report.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	There are no safeguarding issues raised by this report.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	Equalities and diversity issues are considered fully in the Council's key projects, where appropriate.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Performance of front line services, including Customer Services, Housing Benefits and Planning, for the quarter and year is provided. A summary of complaints received in the quarter, analysed by outcome (justified, partially justified or not justified) is provided.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	The report provides details of progress in the delivery of the Council's key projects, including: installation of solar panels at the sports centres, 'Love Essex' litter campaign, campaign encouraging recycling, and promotion of the Essex energy switching scheme.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Consultation is considered fully in the Council's key projects, as appropriate.
<b>Risks:</b>	Risks regarding the assumptions used in determining the predicted financial outturn for the year are identified.
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# FOURTH QUARTER 1ST JANUARY 2015 TO 31ST MARCH 2015

## AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15





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## Section 1: Introduction and Summary






### Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to demonstrate the performance of the Council at the end of the year and the fourth quarter in relation to the publication of 'Our plans for the District 2014/15'. This sets out the key activities and measures used to check our performance for the year and along with the Corporate Strategy 2012-16 sets out the priorities we are working towards. Further detail is given in relation to a set of business performance indicators covering finances, customer focus, our people and health and safety.






This report does not contain details of the numerous activities ongoing in each service area that also contribute to delivering what is important and will make a difference to all in the District. Full details of all projects and local and national indicators used to measure the outcomes are available upon request.

### Summary of the Corporate Projects current position for the end of the year

The following table provides updates for the end of the year in relation to the key activities in 'Our plans for the District 2014/15'




Corporate Priorities	Status of projects and actions				
					
Place	9	2	1	0	0
People	7	1	0	0	0
Prosperity	9	2	0	0	1
Performance	5	1	0	0	0
Partnership	9	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

#### KEY:




-  Project completed
-  Project on target
-  Project scope/target date requires attention
-  Project requires amendment
-  Project aborted/closed

### **Summary of the Performance Indicators position for the end of the year**

The following table shows the performance for the end of the year in relation to the quarterly and annually reported Performance Indicators that have targets set as defined in 'Our plans for the District 2014/15'.

Corporate Priorities	Status of indicators			
				Data Only
Place	2	0	1	1
People	3	0	0	1
Prosperity	3	0	0	0
Performance	4	3	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **KEY:**

-  Performance Indicator has achieved target
-  Performance Indicator is up to 5% below target
-  Performance Indicator is 5% or more off target

### **Summary Position**

Over the last year the council has performed well completing 39 projects and exceeding targets for 12 performance indicators.

In 2014/15, we have seen the successful opening of the Witham Leisure Centre, provided a total of 173 affordable homes and re-routed the waste collections for the whole District following the introduction of in-cab technology providing efficiency in collections and contributing towards yearly savings of £400,000. We have been awarded the Diamond Jubilee Partnership Award by Keep Britain Tidy which recognises the success of the partnerships between local authorities, highway agencies and fast food outlets in keeping the District clean.

We have continued to support business start-ups and apprentices for young people and we will continue to work on plans to invest money into major projects to boost the local economy, create jobs and improve the infrastructure around the District.







We have maintained front line services whilst making savings to respond to reductions in government funding whilst ensuring we deliver the best service to our customers, provide value for money and create a District which is a good place in which to live, work and do business.



## Our Priorities

- Keep our district clean and tidy
- Protecting our environment
- Provide green space for everyone to enjoy

Project description and comments	Target Date	Status
<b>Maintain cleanliness standards across the Braintree District by continuing a seven day cleaning programme in the town centres, including the use of barrow beats to litter pick, street washing and mechanical sweeping</b>		
The cleaning programme is an integral part of the day to day work of the team ensuring high standards of cleanliness and a reduction in the levels of litter.	March 2015	✓
<b>Continue to encourage the 'See-it, Report-it' initiative to take action against litter bugs</b>		
In the fourth quarter, there have been 1017 'see-it, report-it' calls received regarding waste and litter around the district. A total of 3255 reports were received throughout 2014/15	March 2015	✓
<b>Join forces with all Essex Authorities to deliver an Essex wide campaign to reduce litter by 50%</b>		
The 'Love Essex' litter campaign achieved a 65% reduction in litter in the Braintree District and a 41% reduction in fast food litter across Essex. As a result of the success of the partnership between the local authorities, the highways agency and fast food outlets, the campaign was awarded the 'Diamond Jubilee Partnership Award' at the 2015 National Keep Britain Tidy Awards. Business partners and Local Authorities are keen to continue this partnership and deliver a further campaign in 2015.	March 2015	✓
<b>Introduce a further recycling doorstepping campaign to offer residents practical advice and guidance to help them recycle more, with the aim of diverting an extra 400 tonnes of recyclable waste from landfill</b>		
Currently working with Greenfields Estate Managers to develop an installation programme to help residents living in flats recycle their waste which they are currently unable to do. To date, 17 sites have been identified which is more than originally planned and recycling bins have been installed.	March 2016	▶
<b>Introduce a new household and commercial refuse and recycling routes including extending the commercial waste recycling service to support local businesses, particularly in rural areas, and improve customer service across the district from 2015</b>		
The new household and commercial refuse and recycling routes went live on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2015 and affected more than 60,000 homes across the district. The changes to the service mean that real time information can now be provided to customers regarding their waste collections through the introduction of in-cab technology which reports directly to the customer service centre.	March 2015	✓
<b>Commence a three year car park improvement plan, including introducing cashless/flexible payments, resurfacing and redecoration works, new bay markings and improving disability bays and access to blue badge holders</b>		
All year one projects have been completed as programmed and projects have been set up for the second year of the car park improvement plan	March 2015	✓

<b>Complete the extension of Bocking Cemetery and increase the space available for burials and cremated remains at Braintree Cemetery</b>		
The extension to Bocking Cemetery is now complete increasing the space available for burials and cremated remains.	<b>May 2014</b>	
<b>Create new allotments at Church Lane Braintree to increase the number of plots available that can be self-managed by an Allotment Association</b>		
This project has been delayed due to the difficulty in forming a new Allotment Association from perspective new tenants. A review of the way forward will be discussed in a meeting with all stakeholders in June. The end date of the project will be amended once discussions have taken place.	<b>February 2015</b>	
<b>Update the Council's commitment to climate change, by addressing the wider issues of carbon emissions, energy usage, and fuel poverty by producing a new climate local strategy and delivering its associated action plan, which will also focus on building resilience against the impacts of climate change across the District</b>		
The Climate Local strategy and associated action plan was agreed by Cabinet in March 2015.	<b>March 2015</b>	
<b>Develop and maintain a collective energy switching scheme to help reduce residents energy bills</b>		
All Essex Authorities set up a scheme to encourage residents to sign up and switch their energy tariffs. Residents signed up to the scheme in February and received details of how much they can save by switching to a different provider.	<b>March 2015</b>	
<b>Complete the installation of Solar panels on the roofs of the Braintree Swim and Halstead Leisure Centres</b>		
Halstead Leisure Centre and Braintree Swim Centre have solar panels fitted and are now generating electricity.	<b>January 2015</b>	
<b>Develop a district wide Local Heritage List to enable the community to nominate buildings of local architectural interest –</b>		
Additional resource has been secured to enable the next stage of the project which involves writing to property owners, co-ordinating responses; launching the Local List (trial tranche) and identifying the trial group. A report is being prepared to consider candidates selected for inclusion. With this revision to the project, the likely programme for the launch is now later than anticipated and the project completion date has been amended accordingly.	<b>December 2015</b>	



## Our Priorities

- Support vulnerable people in our community
- Promote safe and healthy living
- Encourage flourishing communities

Project description and comments	Target Date	Status
<b>Complete the transfer of the Allotment, Public Convenience and Car Park to Earls Colne Parish Council and the rural car parks at Coggeshall and Hatfield Peverel to the Parish Councils</b>		
The transfer of all facilities to Parish Councils is complete and the facilities are now managed locally to meet local needs.	November 2014	✓
<b>Work in partnership with Braintree District Museum Trust Ltd to complete a feasibility study into options for the future operation of Braintree District Museum, Braintree Town Hall and the Warner Textile Archive</b>		
A feasibility study has been completed and accepted by the project board in December.	March 2015	✓
<b>Work with the tour organisers and Essex County Council to make the 3rd stage of the Tour de France a success in our District in July 2014</b>		
The Tour was a complete success. All our communities embraced the tour coming through their village along with thousands of visitors.	July 2014	✓
<b>Open the new Witham Leisure Centre in summer 2014</b>		
Witham Leisure Centre opened to the public on 12 <sup>th</sup> August and was delivered well within budget. Fusion is now managing the leisure centre and held a launch event in September to celebrate the opening. There has been a 28% increase in membership since opening the doors to the public.	August 2014	✓
<b>Set up a Braintree Health and Wellbeing Panel along with our partners in the NHS and Greenfields Housing Association, to work towards reducing overall health inequalities in the District and tackling two major public health issues affecting the district: adult obesity and hip fractures in the over 65's</b>		
The 'Live Well' campaign was launched in September with a new website promoting the live well programme which focuses on working with partners to inform residents on local initiatives to improve on health issues with particular focus being on obesity and hip fractures.	September 2014	✓
<b>Coordinate the work of partners to develop the Our Witham project, improving the health and wellbeing, employment and skills outcomes in the Witham area of young people</b>		
Funding has been secured and allocated to pilot projects and a new partnership structure has been established. The Health and Wellbeing working group is now working together to plan a summer programme of healthy living days around Witham in residential areas.	March 2015	✓
<b>Develop a new Housing Strategy for the Braintree District for 2014 to 2019 to ensure that resources are directed to meet the housing needs of the district</b>		
An affordable housing conference jointly hosted by Braintree and Colchester was held in February 2015. The conference was for registered providers and aimed to promote discussion on the role of Housing Associations in respect of the housing growth planned for the Braintree and Colchester areas.	March 2016	▶

**Refurbish 4 play areas across the District - King George V Playing Field Braintree, Fisher Field Braintree, Glebe Avenue Braintree and Church Street Bocking and create a new one at Windsor Close Witham.**

The play areas at King George V playing fields, Fisher Field, Glebe Avenue and Church Street were all completed in February. The new play area at Windsor Close did not proceed following consultation with local residents who wanted the open space to remain as a 'green' area with no play equipment.

**March 2015**










## Our Priorities

- Boost employment skills and support business
- Promote and improving our town centres
- Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth

Project description and comments	Target Date	Status
<b>Offer up to 50 mortgages to residents under the Local Authority Mortgage scheme to help first time buyers onto the housing ladder</b>		
As at the 31st January 2015, the latest report received from Lloyds Bank, 15 mortgages were completed with an indemnity value of £543,004 with a further four offers made but not completed with an indemnity value of £155,200. The scheme will run for a minimum of five years. On the basis of average house prices in the District it is anticipated the scheme could assist up to 50 first time buyers.	<b>March 2015</b>	
<b>Publish an Investment Prospectus promoting the Districts strengths as a business location and marketing the Prospectus to attract inward investment and create businesses and jobs growth`</b>		
A draft District Investment Prospectus is in production. Partners have being consulted, including Haven Gateway Partnership and Invest Essex with a view to launching the brochure after the local elections in May 2015.	<b>June 2015</b>	
<b>Work in partnership with IGNITE Business Enterprise to provide 75 new business start-ups in the District through the provision and management of business start-up space and the provision of business advice, training and support</b>		
As at the end of March IGNITE have supported 79 new business start-ups, and created total of 109 new jobs. They have also delivered 301 advice sessions and held 25 events.	<b>March 2015</b>	
<b>Produce a guide to broadband for District Businesses and promoting the guide to businesses to enable them to make informed choices in purchasing broadband and improve their competitiveness</b>		
Superfast Essex has produced a draft business guide to Broadband and businesses were consulted at an event in February 2015. The District Business Leaders Board was consulted in March 2015 a draft brochure has been produced and will be launched after the local elections in May 2015.	<b>June 2015</b>	



<b>Establish a District Business Leaders Board to engage effectively with strategic businesses and hold an annual business conference in partnership with the Board and IGNITE Business Enterprise</b>		
A District Business Leaders Board has been established which meets on a quarterly basis to discuss events and interests in the District.	June 2014	
The annual business conference was planned for Oct 2014 but was cancelled due to low demand. This has provided an opportunity to run two business forums to the same format as the Rural Business Forum held in April 2014 - which will be delivered in 2015/2016.	October 2014	
<b>Appoint a Business Liaison manager to improve access for businesses to Council services and ensure that those services are 'business friendly'</b>		
The Business Liaison Manager post was filled in July 2014. Improving business access to Council services has now been taken on as a corporate activity under the Better at Business programme, and the post has been replaced with an Economic Development Officer role with a specific focus on business engagement.	July 2014	
<b>Continue the '10p after 3pm' car parking initiative and offer parking at a flat rate evening charge to support the night-time economy</b>		
The '10p after 3pm' parking initiative has been extended until March 2015 but will now run from 3pm to 7pm Monday to Saturday and all day on Sunday. This comes into effect from the 1st July together with a slight increase in some short stay tariffs.	March 2015	
<b>Complete improvement works to St Michaels fountain in Braintree</b>		
The area around St Michaels Fountain has been transformed and is now a space for people to sit, spend time and enjoy.	July 2014	
<b>Develop a programme of work experience placement at Braintree District Council</b>		
A policy is now in place together with guidelines for managers so work experience requests can be dealt with on a structured basis supporting youth employment and people returning to work	March 2015	
<b>Continue our corporate apprenticeship programme</b>		
The apprenticeship programme grew over the year and we were able to recruit 9 new apprentices and develop some of the existing level 2 apprentices into a level 3 programme. All apprentices are settled into their roles and have been signed up onto their relevant qualification, undertaking college training days every 2 months.	March 2015	
<b>Deliver a business apprenticeship support campaign for 30 apprenticeship placements with 25 businesses across the district</b>		
A joint launch for the '30 in 30' Campaign with Colchester Institute was held on 26th February 2015 with 16 businesses represented, and 40 pledges from business were received by the end of the campaign.	March 2015	





## Our Priorities

- Provide value for money
- Deliver excellent customer service
- Improving our services through innovation

Project description and comments	Target Date	Status
<b>Deliver a balanced budget over the next four years by continuing to review how we deliver and commission services and focussing our resources on what is important to our customers</b>		
The East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) has been commissioned to work with the Authority to identify potential commercial opportunities for our services. Ideas put forward in October have been shortlisted and split into phases for implementation next year.	March 2015	✓
Business Efficiency reviews have now been completed and are defined in the Mid Term Financial Strategy. Savings have been identified and reported to the business efficiency review board.	March 2015	✓
<b>Use a range of new technology to improve the way we deliver services and make our services easier to access for our customers</b>		
A new web service called 'My Location' is now available that provides residents with easy access to essential information about where they live. Work is ongoing with service areas to update and develop the content of business webpages to implement a new layout. Funding has been agreed to upgrade the website and make it more responsive.	March 2016	▶
<b>Maintain high levels of customer satisfaction, seeking feedback from customers to identify where we can improve services</b>		
The 2014/15 customer satisfaction survey closed on the 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015 with a response rate of 1018. The data has been analysed and the results will be published on our website. Service areas have also undertaken customer satisfaction surveys and their results have been published on our website together with details of any improvements made.	March 2015	✓
<b>Review our investment strategy to maximise income</b>		
The investment strategy has been reviewed and an action plan agreed to place a proportion of the Council's monies in investments with a longer term time horizon. The investments will be in pooled funds which are covered by the current investment policy.	June 2014	✓
<b>Improve the operational efficiency of the waste collection service and reduce costs by £200,000 per year</b>		
The new system went live in February with the implementation of in-cab technology enabling crews to provide real time information on collections and the re-routing of collections to the whole district enabling waste to be collected more effectively and efficiently. These changes will help us to make significant ongoing savings to this service.	February 2015	✓





















The majority of our services and improvements are provided in partnership with others, whether it is with community groups, voluntary organisations, public sector or private sector organisations.

Project description and comments	Target Date	Status
<b>Economic Growth and Infrastructure:</b>		
<b>Lobbying campaign to secure funding for A120 improvements</b>		
The Economic Impact Study has been completed and a campaign brochure has been launched. A business reception was held in December 2014 hosted by local MPs at which Essex County Council confirmed funding of £5million towards design works complementing Braintree District Council's allocation of £2.5million towards improvements works.	March 2015	✓
<b>Feasibility study into highway and junction improvements to the A120 at Galleys Corner</b>		
An options study has been completed and discussions are now underway with Essex County Council's Highways department and the Highways Agency on the economic impact study. Awaiting Government's announcement on funding for route based strategies which will inform further work	September 2014	✓
<b>Lobbying campaign to improve the frequency and reliability of the Braintree/Witham rail link</b>		
A revised East Anglia Rail Prospectus (including the need to improve the Braintree/Witham Branch) was submitted to Government. The Council responded to the Anglia Route Study Consultation supporting the inclusion of the Braintree/Witham Branch line rail loop. A response was submitted to the Anglia Rail Franchise Consultation following discussion at the Business Leaders Board specifying improved frequency and reliability on the branch line by the consultation deadline of March 2015.	March 2015	✓
<b>Production of a handbook/web resource for businesses on options for improving broadband access</b>		
Superfast Essex has produced a draft business guide to Broadband and businesses were consulted at an event in February 2015. The District Business Leaders Board was consulted in March 2015 a draft brochure has been produced and will be launched after the local elections in May 2015.	June 2015	✓
<b>Health Improvements</b>		
<b>Engaging with key partners to support the integration of health and social care and improvements to local health services</b>		
Living Safe and Well – A social prescription model will be used throughout Essex linking people up with activities in the community and to non-medical sources of support. A referral portal called 'Essex Connects' is also being developed.	March 2015	✓
Promoting healthier communities - A systematic approach to promoting healthier communities and health facilities is on-going through the planning	March 2015	✓

process which involves consulting with the NHS on the health impacts for large developments ensuring a high quality local health, social care and wellbeing service provision. Work has commenced on a new Local Plan to set out the Council's planning policies for the next 15 years and a live well officer group are now being consulted with on the needs and requirements of larger developments to ensure the provision of leisure and health and wellbeing facilities.		
Active Braintree District Network (ABDN) has been launched and they have set up a number of sport, physical and health related activities across the District. Further activities are planned for 2014/15	March 2015	✓
<b>Young People, Skills and Education</b>		
<b>Work with key partners to influence change and improvement to the Educational attainment and aspiration of young people in the district, including the promotion of apprenticeships, partnership with business and boosting employability skills.</b>		
A Skills and Employment Review highlighting key employment skills issues was reported to the District Employment and Skills Board in October 2014. The review highlighted the need to: improved educational attainment; ensure that vocational training matched employer needs; provide support for NEETs; support employers to take on apprentices (particularly SME's); and improve employability skills. A campaign to encourage and support employers to commit to an apprenticeship was launched in February 2015 and 40 pledges were made by businesses in the District.	March 2015	✓
<b>Parishes</b>		
<b>To work with the Rural Community Council for Essex to assist communities</b>		
Final arrangements for the Community Led Planning small grants scheme have been made and thirteen areas are receiving support to develop parish or community led plans in their neighbourhood.	March 2015	✓

## Section 3: Managing the Business

### Our Performance Indicators in Detail

Performance Indicator	2014/15									Comments
	Q1 Outturn	Q2 Outturn	Q3 Outturn	Q4 Outturn	Target for the Quarter	Status at the end of the Quarter	Yearly Outturn	Yearly Target	Status at the end of the year	
Place										
Percentage of land that falls below cleanliness standards for litter	n/a	5%	2%	6%	7%		5%	7%		Recorded 3 times a year – July, November and March
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	58.74%	57.73%	52.37%	47.59%	60%		54.22%	60%		Meeting the recycling performance target remains a challenge. The amount of waste recycled fell by 1,000 tonnes and waste to landfill increased by the same amount in comparison to the previous year. This is a national trend being reported by many other District./Borough Council's across Essex and the Country. BDC is actively working with Essex County Council and the other waste collection authorities throughout Essex to tackle this issue.
Percentage of fly tips cleared within 24 hours of being reported	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%		Represents a total of 764 fly tips cleared within 24 hours of being reported in 2014/15
Public Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	Annually reported indicator						79%	n/a	Data only	
People										
Total number of visits to our leisure facilities	246,515	245,070	240,701	297,024	253,018		1,029,310	893,475		
Number of visitors to our leisure facilities from under-represented groups	220,017	192,897	188,679	224,984	211,868		826,577	679,809		
Number of passenger journeys on the Community Transport Scheme	17,127	14,812	15,601	13,508	14,988		61,048	60,000		Although the target was not met in the fourth quarter of the year, the overall target has been exceeded.
Percentage of Mi Community projects successfully completed	Annually reported indicator						100%	n/a	Data only	
Prosperity										
Number of empty homes in the district returned to use	24	21	14	18	18		77	75		
Number of affordable homes delivered	3	52	27	91	91		173	100		
Number of new business start-ups in the district created in partnership with IGNITE Business	11	22	25	18	17		76	75		

Performance Indicator	2014/15									Comments
	Q1 Outturn	Q2 Outturn	Q3 Outturn	Q4 Outturn	Target for the Quarter	Status at the end of the Quarter	Yearly Outturn	Yearly Target	Status at the end of the year	
Performance										
Percentage of enquiries resolved at first point of contact within the Customer Service Centre	94.6%	95.8%	97.4%	94.7%	85%	✅	95.5%	85%	✅	Represents 55,597 calls out of 58,204 resolved at first point of contact
Time taken to process housing benefit/council tax benefit new claims	19.1 days	16.37 days	17.35 days	16.9 days	18 days	✅	17.43 days	18 days	✅	
Time taken to process housing benefit claim changes	6.53 days	7.51 days	6.16 days	4.16 days	6 days	✅	6.09 days	6 days	⚠️	The time taken to process a change in a claimant's circumstance is dependent on receiving all the required evidence of the change from the claimant. There has been a 38% increase in the number of cases received in 2014/15 which has impacted on performance at the beginning of the year.
Percentage of minor planning applications processed within 8 weeks	61.34%	75.82%	69.32%	67.82%	72%	❌	68.9%	72%	⚠️	The fourth quarter results represents 59 out of 87 planning applications determined within timescales. For the year, 235 out of 341 minor planning applications were determined within timescale. Target has not been met due to the loss of two planners placing an increase demand on the service. Short term support has been engaged and the service will address the lack of resource longer term with a major recruitment exercise over the summer.
Percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within target	90.32%	92%	92.3%	95.2%	90%	✅	93.3%	90%	✅	Represents 589 out of 631 complaints responded to within 7 working days in 2014/15. The increase in the number of complaints received is due to the roll out of the re-routing to the whole of the district and embedding issues with the new in-cab technology.
Cumulative collection rate for Council Tax	30.81%	59.30%	86.29%	98.16%	98.00%	✅	98.16%	98.00%	✅	
Cumulative collection rate for business rates	31.80%	58.63%	84.03%	98.35%	98.50%	⚠️	98.35%	98.50%	⚠️	The collection rate is marginally lower than the target. This is due to new premises being identified as a result of a review of non-domestic properties in the District between October and March. As a consequence the occupiers were billed toward the year end and there were still amounts outstanding.

## **Customer Services & Views**

The following is a selection of our customer service performance measures:

<b>Customer Service: Indicators of Performance</b>					
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Target</b>
Average telephone response time in the Customer Service Centre	21 seconds	17 seconds	12 seconds	18 seconds	15 Seconds
Number of transactions carried out via the Council website	28,195	28,210	25,172	27,283	21,250
Number of unique visitors to the Council website	104,032	105,922	90,293	107,561	95,000
Percentage of avoidable contacts (collected twice a year)	n/a	n/a	9.45%	8.89%	Data only

There have been a number of resource issues alongside a number of projects that have impacted the average telephone response times in the Customer Service Centre this year. They are working on a resource model that will enable them to better predict the demand for the service and ensure that they can allocate resources accordingly.

## **Complaints**

The quarterly complaints analysis for the fourth quarter and the end of the year 2014/15 is detailed below. This is compared with 2013/14 figures shown in brackets. The figures represent all three stages of the complaints process.

<b>Complaint Category</b>	<b>Q1 2014/15</b>	<b>Q2 2014/15</b>	<b>Q3 2014/15</b>	<b>Q4 2014/15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Justified	36 (45)	39 (45)	32 (29)	189 (49)	296 (168)
Not Justified	48 (58)	105 (62)	44 (45)	81 (62)	278 (227)
Partially Justified	12 (11)	22 (7)	13 (13)	26 (15)	73 (46)
Not known	0 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (2)	2 (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>96 (114)</b>	<b>168 (114)</b>	<b>89 (87)</b>	<b>296 (128)</b>	<b>649 (443)</b>

## **Comments**

The number of complaints received in the fourth quarter of 2014/15 has increased significantly since the third quarter of the year.

This is due to the introduction of in-cab technology to all of the waste vehicles and the re-routing of the whole District. All customers in the District were affected by this change and complaints were anticipated whilst the new routes were embedded and crews familiarised themselves with the new technology. This now provides real-time information to our customer service centre as to where the crews are on their routes so up to date information can be provided to customers. This will therefore improve the service and information available to the customer which should reduce the number of complaints received in the future.

In the fourth quarter of 2014/15, of the 296 complaints received:

- 288 are stage one complaints
- 6 are stage two complaints
- 2 are stage three complaints

### **A summary of Local Government Ombudsman cases: 3 cases**

In the fourth quarter of 2014/15 the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) has received three complaints.

The LGO declined to investigate two of the complaints as no injustice has been caused to the complainants. The LGO upheld one complaint on the basis that the Council failed to provide full information which lead to a misunderstanding of the customers housing eligibility and recommendations were made to remedy the injustice.

### **Our Organisation**

The following is a selection of our people performance measures:

<b>People: Indicators of Performance</b>	<b>Q1 14/15</b>	<b>Q2 14/15</b>	<b>Q3 14/15</b>	<b>Q4 14/15</b>	<b>Change on previous period</b>	<b>Yearly Target</b>
Total headcount	479	473	475	472	- 3	-
Total number of posts	490	484	486	482	- 4	-
Number of temporary staff	43	45	53	52	- 1	-
Total staff FTE	433.88	429.67	431.73	426.13	- 5.6	-
Level of employee turnover	2.1%	2.5%	3.4%	2.5%	- 0.9%	-
Number of vacant posts	14	19	22	25	+ 3	-
Number of leavers	10	12	16	12	- 4	-
Number of starters	9	6	18	9	- 9	-
Working days lost to sickness per employee	2.1 days	2.0 days	2.5 days	3.1 days	+ 0.6 days	8.0 days
Percentage of staff with nil sickness	77%	70%	69%	67%	- 2%	-
Number of learning hours	1166	900	2650	7411	+ 4761	-
Number of delegates	200	173	227	148	+ 79	-
Number of apprentices	15	15	18	18	-	-

Year on Year Headcount Analysis	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	541	503	485	466	478	472

## **Health & Safety**

The following is a selection of our health and safety performance measures. The data is for information purposes only.

Health and safety is a crucial legal responsibility of everyone within the organisation. This information is used to improve the management of health and safety of staff, our customers, residents and other non-employees we come into contact with. Monitoring is undertaken by the corporate health and safety committee and action plans will be put in place where necessary.

<b>Health &amp; Safety: Indicators of Performance</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	
	(2013/14 figure in brackets)				
Total number of reported accidents/ incidents, calculated from:	11 (14)	6 (14)	9 (11)	14 (9)	
<i>a. Accidents/ incidents to employees</i>	9 (9)	5 (10)	5 (9)	13 (7)	Slips and trips are the main causes of accidents in the fourth quarter. In addition two accidents were fractures, one to an employee's foot and one to an employee's hand. All accidents were in Operations.
<i>b. Accidents/ incidents to contractors</i>	2 (2)	1 (2)	3 (0)	1 (2)	There was one reported incidents (dg bite) to agency workers in Waste Management. The Dog Warden was informed
<i>c. Accidents/ incidents to non-employees</i>	0 (3)	0 (2)	1 (1)	0 (0)	
Time lost in days due to employee accidents/ incidents	5 (23)	27 (8)	17 (38)	61 (7)	The majority of the lost days were as a result of three accidents; two were due to fractures and one where an employee damaged their rib whilst removing a refuse bag from a Trade Waste Bin.
Number of reported verbal/ physical incidents to employees	1 (2)	0 (1)	0 (0)	2 (0)	Both incidents occurred at Causeway House when members of the public verbally abused staff and used threatening behaviour. The Police were informed on both occasions.
Number of near miss incidents	0 (2)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (2)	
Number of Accidents/ incidents registered resulting in insurance/ compensation claim	1 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)	
Number of claims settled	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	



## Financial Performance

This part of the report provides a review of the outturn financial position for the 2014/15 financial year. It examines the spending on day-to-day service provision compared to the budget for the year. Also included is a summary position for treasury management at the end of the year; movements on the General Fund balances and earmarked reserves; and a summary of spending on capital investment projects.

### Outturn Financial Position Statement for 2014/15

#### Key Points:

- An overall positive variance of £547,100 (3.6%) against the original budget of £15.2 million.
- The main reason for the variance is an over achievement of income of £686,800.
- Whilst there was an overall underspend against service staffing budgets of £170,500 this was short of achieving the £324,600 corporate efficiency target agreed as part of the budget by £154,100.
- Other expenditure budgets are underspent by £14,500.

The following table shows the reported full-year variance at each quarter end during this financial year:

	Quarter 1 Projected	Quarter 2 Projected	Quarter 3 Projected	Quarter 4 Actual
Reported Full-Year Variance	-£148,000	-£421,000	-£540,000	-£547,100

At Q2 projections were updated to reflect the additional rental income expected following the acquisition of Connaught House, along with an upturn in Development Control income. The projections were further revised at Q3 due to the planned investment into a mixture of equity and property funds generating a higher investment return on cash balances.

Service management requested that £135,060 of unspent budgets be carried over and used in 2015/16. This was approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 15th June 2015, and reduces the outturn variance transferred to General Fund balances to £412,040.

## Revenue Spending by Services

Business Plan Service	Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Adverse (positive) variance against budget				RAG Status
			Staffing £'000	Other Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Total £'000	
Asset Management	(1,602)	(1,787)	1	(15)	(171)	(185)	-12%
Business Solutions	1,878	1,775	(44)	(75)	16	(103)	-5%
Community Services	499	369	(42)	(73)	(15)	(130)	-26%
Corporate Management Plan	1,305	1,286	(10)	(1)	(8)	(19)	-1%
Cultural Services	266	291	21	17	(13)	25	9%
Environment	992	1,034	(11)	(47)	100	42	4%
Finance	1,572	1,194	(48)	(118)	(212)	(378)	-24%
Governance	1,037	1,023	(9)	10	(15)	(14)	-1%
Housing Services	746	675	(12)	(52)	(7)	(71)	-10%
Human Resources	367	364	-	(3)	-	(3)	-1%
Leisure Services	811	815	-	(12)	16	4	-
Marketing and Communications	409	387	10	(7)	(25)	(22)	-5%
Operations	4,157	4,073	83	(5)	(162)	(84)	-2%
Sustainable Development	1,077	1,014	(110)	277	(230)	(63)	-6%
<b>Service Total</b>	<b>13,514</b>	<b>12,513</b>	<b>(171)</b>	<b>(104)</b>	<b>(726)</b>	<b>(1,001)</b>	<b>-7%</b>
Corporate Financing	2,011	2,140	0	90	39	129	6%

Efficiency target	(325)	-	325	-	-	325	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,200</b>	<b>14,653</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>(14)</b>	<b>(687)</b>	<b>(547)</b>	<b>-4%</b>

RAG Status: G = favourable or nil variance, A = up to 5% adverse variance or <£50k, R = > 5%

## Staffing

Across service business plans there is an underspend against staffing budgets of £170,500. A corporate efficiency target was set at £324,600 that would normally be met through staff turnover and other efficiencies. After allowing for the salary underspend, there is a shortfall against this target of £154,100.

Business Plan – Salary Budgets	Budget £'000	Actual for the year £'000	Adverse/ (positive) variance £'000	RAG Status
Asset Management	260	261	1	-
Business Solutions	857	813	(44)	-5%
Community Services	450	408	(42)	-9%
Corporate Management Plan	1,130	1,120	(10)	-1%
Cultural Services	183	204	21	11%
Environment	1,577	1,566	(11)	-1%
Finance	2,298	2,250	(48)	-2%
Governance	373	364	(9)	-2%
Housing Services	658	646	(12)	-2%
Human Resources	286	286	-	-
Leisure Services	105	105	-	-
Marketing and Communications	269	279	10	4%
Operations	4,596	4,679	83	2%
Sustainable Development	1,541	1,431	(110)	-7%
<b>Service Total</b>	<b>14,583</b>	<b>14,412</b>	<b>(171)</b>	<b>-1%</b>
Efficiency target	(325)		325	
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>14,258</b>	<b>14,412</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>1%</b>

RAG Status: G = favourable or nil variance, A = up to 5% adverse variance or <=£50k, R = > 5%

### Commentary on staffing variations:

- Underspends on staffing budgets include early achievement of savings planned in 2015/16, which were expected from management changes in Community Services (now managed jointly with Housing services) and Sustainable Development (currently under review); and from staffing changes in the Revenues and Benefits Service.
- Other savings on staff costs have occurred due to delaying filling vacant posts, appointments being made at lower salary grade points, and some reductions in working hours.
- Services showing an overspend on staffing costs is due to either cover for maternity leave and long-term sickness, or where additional staff resources have been employed to generate off-setting income.
- The overspend on staffing in Operations has increased from that reported at the last quarter by £61,000 which is due mainly to additional staff costs incurred during implementation of new collection routes.

### Other Service Expenditure

Overall there is a net underspend against non-staffing expenditure budgets of £14,500. The services reporting an overspend include:

- Development Control** - The Council has been engaged in a number of planning appeals, including a significant retail appeal. In 2014/15 total spend was £146,000 (£96,000 in 2013/14) against a budget of £52,000 resulting in an overspend of £94,000. This is

£48,000 higher than service management were predicting at Q3 – the increase being attributable to higher than originally anticipated legal charges. The 2015/16 Budget has reflected the risks associated with the new local plan and includes a provision of £300,000 as contingency against future challenges and appeals.

- **Landscape & Countryside** - A number of claims for damage caused by tree roots have been received. Whilst claims are challenged wherever possible, a risk exists that the Council is required to provide compensation which if the claim is related to a tree that is subject to tree preservation order is not covered by the Council's insurance. In total the Council has incurred or committed to a total of £136,000 in 2014/15 to settle two claims.
- **Land Charges** – In 2012/13 the Council established a £215,000 provision for the potential refund of property search fees following revocation by the Government of the charging regulations. The Council has been working with the Local Government Association (LGA) and legal representatives to agree settlements with a number of search companies. £102,000 has been settled in the year and legal services have provided an updated estimate of outstanding liabilities totalling £157,000, which meant that the provision was increased by £44,000 and which shows as an overspend in this financial year. The Government previously provided a New Burdens grant of £34,000 relating to this matter which was used to part fund the original provision set aside. Recently the LGA has advised that further New Burden grants may be paid but as yet no indication has been given as to the amount the Council is likely to receive.
- **Corporate Financing** – the original budget assumed a withdrawal from earmarked reserves of £100,000 to reflect the estimated impact on income received by the Council under the Business Rate Retention Scheme (or BRRS) as a result of a new local discretionary business rate relief scheme. However, the method for supporting businesses has now been changed and the earmarked reserve is now required to fund the revised scheme.

Services reporting an underspend include:

- **Housing Benefits** – Following the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) from April 2013, any backdated changes to the award of council tax benefit (or CTB, which was the former scheme) is either a cost to the Council, if additional CTB is granted, or benefit to the Council if CTB is reduced. Prior to the LCTSS such changes would have been offset by corresponding changes to the amount of government subsidy received by the Council. These changes arise for a variety of reasons and are therefore difficult to predict. At the end of 2014/15 the net impact was a benefit to the Council of £135,000.
- **Business Solutions** - £75,000 overall underspend on this service mainly relating to a delay on a CCTV camera project as well as reduced maintenance and operating costs of the website/ intranet and voice network. Service management have requested that this underspend is carried over into 2015/16 to complete the CCTV and mobile device management projects.
- **Community Services** – underspend of £59,000, mainly due to spending against project budgets being put on hold whilst the service was reviewed. This saving is one-off as the project budget has now been realigned against spending priorities for 2015/16 in agreement with the Community Safety Partnership.
- **Housing Services** – underspend of £52,000, mainly due to lower demand for the rent deposit scheme and lower payments to Greenfields Community Housing for temporary

properties.

- **Operations - Waste Management** – Underspend on this service of £68,000, which is mainly due to a one-off reduction in the rent and rates payable on Cordons Farm agreed with Essex County Council to recognise service disruption whilst capital improvements were being made to the facility. Part of this underspend has been requested to be carried over into 2015/16 in order to fund reviews of the existing operation of this facility in accordance with the Environmental Agency permit and site licence, as well as a haulage procurement exercise.

## External Income

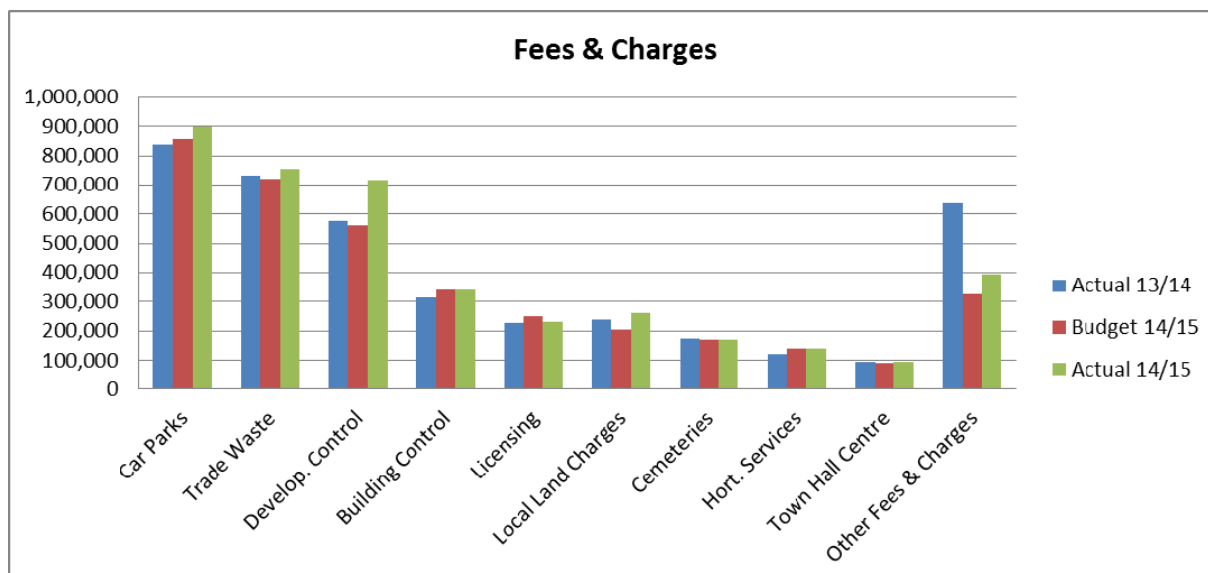
A significant proportion of the Council's budget is reliant on external income. Grants and subsidies from Government, alongside income from business rates are major elements, totalling over £53 million for 2014/15. The amount of business rates ultimately retained will vary depending on the actual amounts collected. Other external income comes from a variety of sources that are subject to external demands and influences, meaning these income sources are susceptible to variations against budget. For 2014/15 services over achieved against their income budgets by a net £686,600, as shown in the table below:

Other External Income	Budget £'000	Adverse (positive) variance against budget						RAG Status
		Fees & Charges	Land & Property income	ECC Joint Financing & contributions	Sale of Recycling Materials	Other Income	Total	
		£'000	£'000	£000	£'000	£'000	£000	
Asset Management	(2,206)	(29)	(118)	-	-	(24)	(171)	8%
Business Solutions	(37)	-	-	-	-	(1)	(1)	3%
Community Services	(273)	(2)	-	-	-	(13)	(15)	5%
Corporate Management Plan	(5)	-	-	-	-	(8)	(8)	160%
Cultural Services	(109)	(6)	-	-	-	(7)	(13)	12%
Environment	(840)	28	-	-	-	42	70	-8%
Finance	(1,426)	-	-	-	-	(212)	(212)	15%
Governance	(12)	(11)	-	-	-	(4)	(15)	125%
Housing Services	(107)	(4)	26	-	-	(29)	(7)	7%
Human Resources	(8)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leisure Services	(310)	-	-	-	-	16	16	-5%
Marketing and Communications	(26)	(10)	-	-	-	(15)	(25)	96%
Operations	(5,313)	(97)	13	(37)	(1)	(40)	(162)	3%
Sustainable Development	(872)	(210)	-	-	-	(20)	(230)	26%
<b>Service Total</b>	<b>(11,544)</b>	<b>(341)</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(315)</b>	<b>(773)</b>	<b>7%</b>
Corporate Financing	(290)	-	-	-	-	(18)	(18)	6%
Staff costs recharged to capital projects	(354)	-	-	-	-	104	104	-29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>(12,188)</b>	<b>(341)</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(229)</b>	<b>(687)</b>	<b>6%</b>

RAG Status: G = favourable or nil variance, A = up to 5% adverse variance or <£50k, R = > 5% (or >£50k at Service level)

## Fees & Charges

The budget for income from fees & charges was £3.665 million, which was exceeded for the year by £341,000. The following chart shows the position for the main income streams



### Forecast highlights:

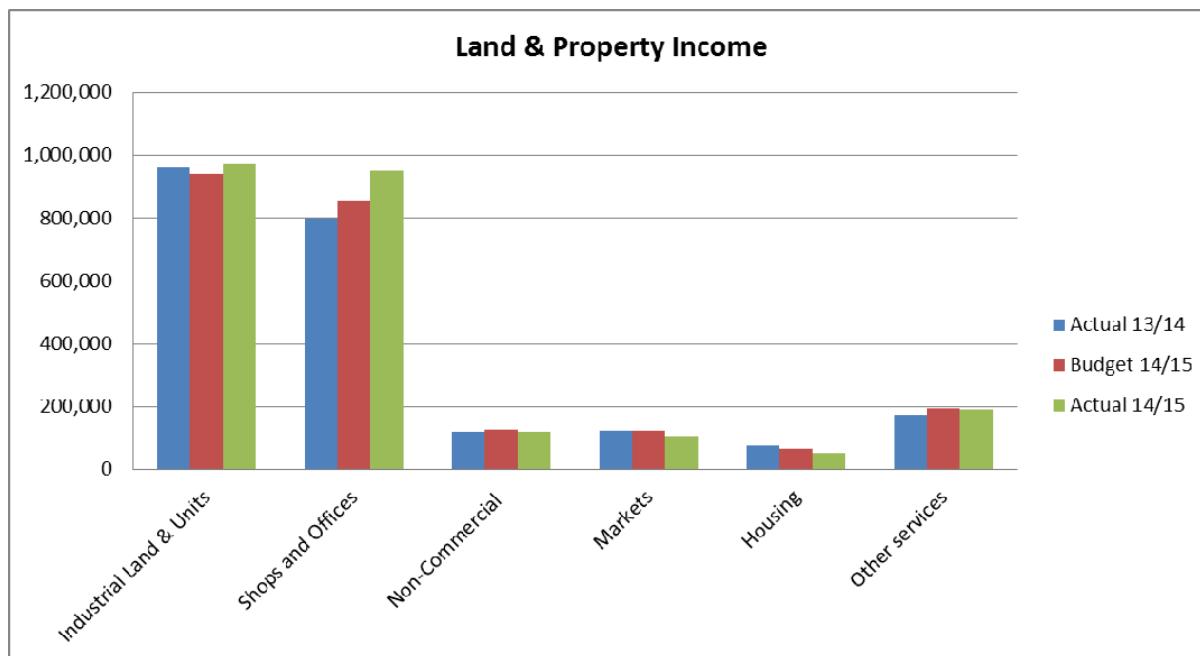
- Development control application income was £700,000. This was higher than the budget for the year of £555,000 by £145,000, and an increase over last years' outturn of £562,000. Early indications suggests this trend may continue into 2015/16 as a number of major housing development applications are expected to be received.
- Land Charges search fee income achieved was £260,000 which is £57,000 higher than provided in the budget and £23,000 more than the previous year. This reflects the upturn in demand that this service has experienced over the last year.
- Car park income was higher by a total of £42,000 than originally anticipated with the total achieved being over £900,000. During the year new tariffs had been introduced as well as increased capacity with the opening of the new Easton Road car park. Improvement works were also undertaken on a number of existing car parks, particularly George Yard.

### Note on Other Fees and Charges in 2013/14

The amount shown includes £261,000 of one-off recharges to third parties which were largely matched by expenditure incurred by the Council

## Land & Property Income

The budget for rental income from land & property was £2.311 million – comprising the investment property portfolio, markets, housing properties, and other let properties. The outturn for year was an overall over achievement of £79,000.

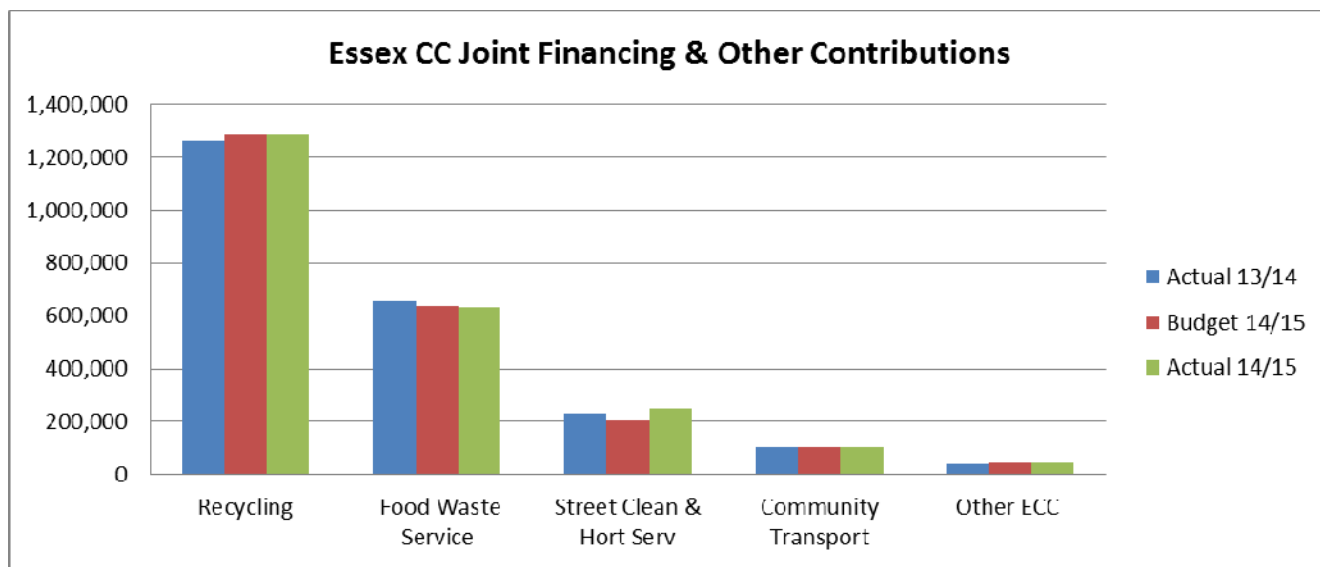


**Forecast highlights:**

- The outturn allows for the acquisition of Connaught House in September 2014. The Council became aware of this investment opportunity after the original budget was approved, therefore, whilst the revenue impact is in line with the business case approved by Members, there is a net increase in rental income over budget of £97,700 from this investment.
- There is a further £27,800 of net additional income from the Council's commercial property portfolio which is mainly due to the level of void periods being lower than assumed when setting the budget.
- Income from Housing properties was lower due to the transfer of Craig House to Family Mosaic during the year. This reduced income has been partially offset by lower operating costs.

**Essex County Council Joint Financing & Contributions**

The Council receives a significant amount of income from service arrangements with Essex County Council (ECC). The updated budget for the year is £2.275 million. The outturn position was a net over achievement of £37,000, mainly from horticultural works carried out on rural verges.



### Sale of Recycling Materials

Income from the sale of recycling materials was £618,000 which was slightly more than the budget of £617,000. However, whilst this income stream is currently subject to contracted prices the current contractor has given notice of potential future pricing arrangements which would see this income being reduced significantly in the medium-term.

### Other Service & Corporate income

Total budgeted other income was £3.320 million, with a net over achievement of £229,000. Significant areas within this overall position include:

#### Areas achieving more income:

- **Treasury Management** – an extra £198,000 of investment income and other interest. (Further details on investment activities is provided in the section below)
- **Housing benefit overpayment recoveries** – Income was higher than budget by £138,000. This in part reflects the success of directing staff resources to target reducing the level of outstanding debt in this area.

#### Areas where income was lower than anticipated:

- **Housing benefit subsidy** – the final subsidy amount for the year (after allowing for the cost of benefits paid) was a reduction of £187,000 from that originally budgeted. Whilst this variance is significant in cash terms, in percentage terms, it represents less than 0.5% of the £42.415 million budget for subsidy.
- **Staff costs charged to capital projects** (and therefore not funded from the General Fund revenue account) were budgeted for the year at £353,000. The outturn recharges were £249,000, meaning that additional costs of £104,000 were borne by the General Fund. This variance is partially offset by a saving on related staffing costs where posts were vacant during the year. Other areas where lower recharges to capital have arisen in the 2014/15 year and which are expected to be on-going have already been taken into account in the base budget for 2015/16.



## **Budget Carry Forwards**

Service requests to carry forward unspent budgets totalling £135,060, with a further £349,042 in respect of balances on carry forwards previously agreed in 2013/14, were approved by Cabinet on 15th June 2015. This reduced the outturn variance to be transferred to the General Fund balance to £412,040.

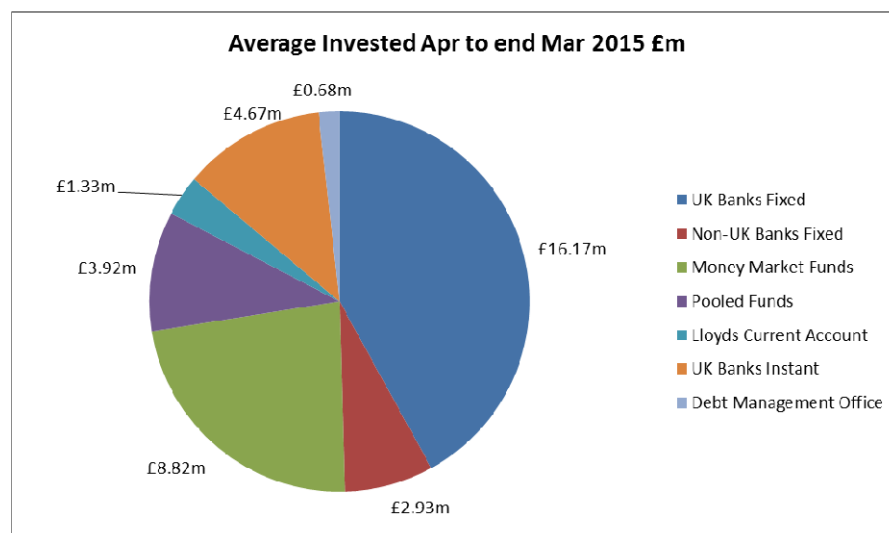
## **Treasury Management**

The average cash balance invested in the year was £38.52 million (this compares to £43.77 million for last year and reflects the planned reduction in cash balances as funds have been used on capital projects and a number of “invest to save” schemes). Cash balances ranged between £25.42 million and £50.09 million, ending the year at £27.96 million. Over the course of the year £107 million of new investments were made – mainly short-term, but also included £10 million of long-term investments placed into four pooled funds (three equity funds and one property fund).

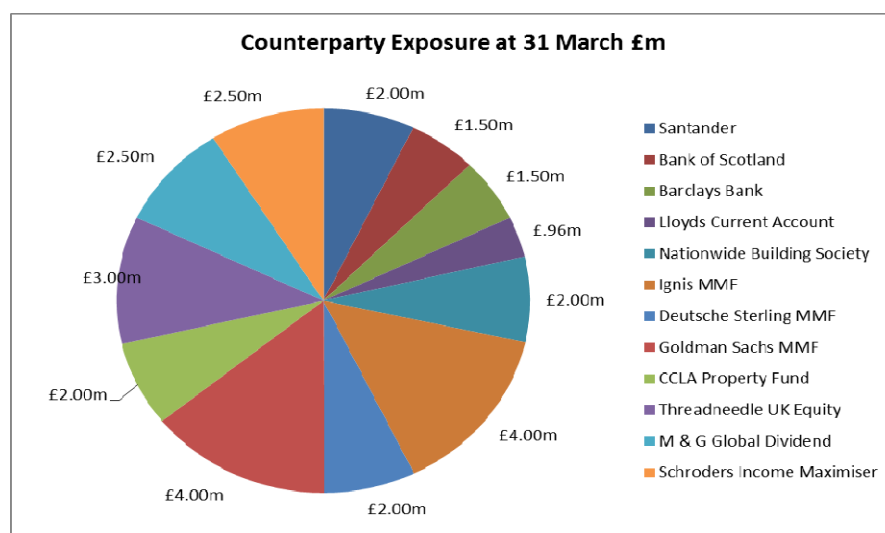
Interest from investments during the year was £198,043 with a further £183,000 of dividends earned from the pooled funds, resulting in an overall over-achievement of income of £160,000 from investment activities. A further £38,000 of interest was obtained on the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme along with some other smaller loan/ deferred income arrangements.

At 31 March 2015, the pooled funds had a market value of £10.414 million, resulting in a net unrealised gain of £414,000. However, the fund valuations are susceptible to financial market conditions and therefore are likely to fluctuate from their nominal value +/- and hence the reason for these being viewed as long-term investments.

Investment counterparties for the year and exposure at end of March is shown in the following charts:







## General Fund Balances

General Fund balances are held for the following reasons:

- As a contingency against unforeseen events that may require funding above that originally provided for in the approved budget
- To meet short-term or non-recurring one-off costs that are not provided in the base budget and/ or are incurred to achieve future savings and efficiencies.

Based on the outturn set out above, the movement on the General Fund balance is:

	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Balance at 1 April 2014</b>	<b>8,244</b>
Less:	
Budgeted withdrawal	(485)
Match funding for flood management	(50)
Investments at risk	(77)
Business rate retention iro 2013/14	(320)
Add:	
Outturn budget variance (after carry forwards)	412
VAT refund	74
Transfer from earmarked reserves	30
<b>Balance at 31 March 2015</b>	<b>7,828</b>

Movements shown on the General Fund balance are in respect of:

- The budget approved by Council for 2014/15 included an anticipated drawdown from balances of £484,608.
- Cabinet agreed at their meeting held in September 2014 to match fund money available by Essex County Council to increase flood management work in the District.
- Investments at risk – the Council continues to receive funds that were held with the Icelandic banks. During the year the Council participated in an auction to exchange funds its Icelandic Krona (ISK) held in an escrow account to sterling. Whilst the Council was successful in realising some of these funds this was achieved at a discount against their carrying value. A provision has been made against the remaining balance of ISK which

the Council continues to seek to repatriate. The movement shown against the General Fund balance is the net impact of all these adjustments.

- At the meeting of Cabinet on 15th June 2015, it was agreed to transfer the balance of business rate retention income in respect of 2013/14 held in the General Fund balance to a new earmarked reserve. This amount, along with an in-year variance on business rate income of £309,103, will be held in the reserve to offset a forecast reduction in business rate income in 2016/17.
- The outturn budget variance was £547,100, and after allowing for carry forwards approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 15th June 2015, results in a transfer to the General Fund balance of £412,040.
- Trade waste VAT refund in respect of prior years' income where HMRC had incorrectly advised local authorities to charge VAT.
- During the 2015/16 budget process service management reviewed the balances held on earmarked reserves resulting in £30,322 being transferred back to the General Fund balance.

The 2015/16 Budget currently provides for a withdrawal from the General Fund balance of £894,484.

### **Earmarked Reserves**

The outturn reflects changes to earmarked reserves, including the creation of six new reserves, and additions/ withdrawals in accordance with their approved purpose. In summary, changes on earmarked reserves were:

<b>Category of Earmarked Reserve</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April 2014 £'000</b>	<b>Transfer out £'000</b>	<b>Transfer in £'000</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2015 £'000</b>
Capital Investment (incl.New Homes Bonus)	4,927	(1,792)	2,203	5,338
Risk Management	334	(28)	74	380
Service Reserves	3,068	(889)	3,949	6,128
Change Management	268	(211)	25	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,597</b>	<b>(2,920)</b>	<b>6,251</b>	<b>11,928</b>

Transfers in to new earmarked reserves have a total value of £2.317 million and relate to: money received in advance in respect of ongoing projects for which the Council is the lead authority or acting as banker; a change in accounting arrangements agreed with the external auditor; and monies set aside from the Business Rate Retention Scheme to meet a forecast reduction in business rate income in 2016/17.

### **Risks and Assumptions to the Outturn**

The outturn is subject to finalisation of the Council's Statement of Accounts which will be completed by end of June, before BDO LLP commence their audit. The outcome of the audit could lead to changes in the outturn details of which will be reported to the Governance Committee and Cabinet when receiving the audited financial statements.

As in previous years, the outturn will be reviewed to ensure that any on-going issues have either been/will be addressed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy as detailed planning commences for the 2016/17 budget and beyond.

## **Capital Investment**

The total capital investment expected in the year was as follows:

<b>Approved New Programme for 2014/15</b>	<b>£'000s</b> <b>5,014</b>
<b><u>Add:</u></b>	
Projects approved previously where spending is profiled into the current year	5,386
Projects approved in-year	6,506
<b><u>Less:</u></b>	
2014/15 projects profiled into future years	(1,000)
<b>Programme for 2014/15</b>	<b>15,906</b>

There has been a net increase in the programme for 2014/15 of £190,000 since Q3 which has been funded mainly from revenue contributions or external contributions.

The capital investment programme is reported over two themes:

- General Fund Services – Spending on Council owned/ used assets and services.
- Housing investment – mainly spent on partnership schemes with social landlords, and providing disabled facilities grants and home improvements grants.

The spend against the programme for the year is shown below:

	<b>Planned Spend 2014/15  £000</b>	<b>Actual Spend to end March  £000</b>	<b>Grants approved not yet claimed £000</b>	<b>Budget remaining  £000</b>	<b>Spend/ Committed to date  %</b>
General Fund Services	13,608	12,155	-	1,453	89%
Housing Investment	1,945	1,098	214	633	67%
Capital Salaries	353	249	-	104	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,906</b>	<b>13,502</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>86%</b>

The General Fund Services programme for the year included:

- Final phase of construction of the new Witham Leisure Centre which opened in August
- Improvement works to other leisure facilities and site preparations for the redevelopment of the former Bramston Sport Centre site
- Commencement of the construction of new business units on the Springwood Industrial Estate
- A programme of planned maintenance on other Council buildings and provision of a new vehicle and plant workshop
- Acquisition of investment property which will generate additional income for the Council and other land for future redevelopment
- Installation of solar panels on Council buildings
- Upgrades to the Council's telephone system and computer servers, and the introduction of in-cab technology for waste service vehicles

The housing investment programme includes: £716,000 for disabled facility grants (DFGs), which has been fully spent or committed; and £1.2 million for social housing grants against which £340,000 has been spent by the end of the year. The balance of funds for social housing grants has been pledged as 'in principle' support allowing social landlords to confidently develop schemes which may in turn attract other sources of funding.

Whilst the level of spend is lower in the year by £2.19 million across the whole programme, £2.036 million of this will be required in future years to complete approved projects. This leaves an underspend of £154,000, of which £104,000 relates to capital salaries where time recharged by officers to capital projects has been lower.

Projects totalling £4.33 million will be financed from the future revenue income generated by the relevant assets, e.g. Connaught House and solar panels. The balance of capital spend (£9.172 million) has been financed mainly from £6.25 million of capital receipts generated from the sale of assets or through arrangements with Greenfields Community Housing, with the balance coming from a mixture of government grants, other external contributions, or the Council's own revenue resources and reserves.

During the year the Council obtained 14 new vehicles via its contract with Riverside Truck Rental which have a Balance Sheet value of £495,000 and which will be financed by annual lease payments.

### **Capital resources**

The main source of new capital resources anticipated for the year are from preserved right-to-buy receipts (£750,000) and the Council's share of the VAT shelter operating in conjunction with Greenfields Community Housing (£522,000).

Greenfields Community Housing has reported that there were 51 right to buy sales completed in the year, generating £3.081 million for the Council. The higher number of right to buy sales may be due to increases in the discounts available to eligible purchasers, together with the introduction of government assisted mortgage schemes. The amount of capital resources generated by the VAT shelter arrangement is £809,000.

Government grants totalling £364,000 were received, of which £331,000 was funding towards the disabled facility grant programme, with the balance provided for flood prevention (£12,000) and ICT spending on electoral services (£21,000).

# Minutes

## Local Plan Sub-Committee

11th June 2015

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
D Bebb	Yes	Mrs J Money	Yes
Mrs L Bowers-Flint (Chairman)	Yes	Lady Newton	Yes
G Butland	Apologies	J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Yes
T Cunningham	Yes	Mrs W Scattergood	Yes
D Hume	Yes	Miss M Thorogood	Yes

Councillors J Abbott and P Schwier were also in attendance.

### 1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** The following interest was declared:

Councillor Lady Newton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7 – 'Essex County Council: Sustainable Drainage Systems – Design Guide' as Essex County Council's elected Member for Braintree Eastern Division.

### 2 **MINUTES**

**INFORMATION:** The Minutes of the meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 12th January 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 3 **QUESTION TIME**

**INFORMATION:** There were no questions asked, or statements made.

Principally, these Minutes record decisions taken only and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

### 4 **LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND SCOPING CONSULTATION DOCUMENT - RESPONSES**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the outcome of consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Scoping document. Members were advised that the publication of the Issues and Scoping document was the first stage

of public participation in the production of a new Local Plan for the District to cover the period up to 2033.

The Issues and Scoping document had been subject to public consultation between 26th January 2015 and 6th March 2015. A total of 308 individual responses had been submitted which included 1442 separate comments. A summary of the comments received was set out in the report and all comments were available to view on the Council's website.

It was noted that a number of comments highlighted the need for infrastructure, especially schools, health facilities, roads and public transport to be improved significantly before new homes could be built. All responses would be considered in detail and they would assist in shaping the new Local Plan to be published in draft form in late 2015. Further discussions would take place with key stakeholders, landowners, Councillors and Parish Councils as part of this process.

It was reported that in May 2015 the Council had received a petition from Kelvedon and Feering Heritage Society signed by 574 people. The petition asked the Council not to allocate substantial new housing development in Kelvedon, Feering and their surroundings as it was considered that this would destroy the character and rural setting of the villages and overload road and rail infrastructure. In addition, the petition asked the Council not to co-operate with Colchester Borough Council in releasing development land within the Braintree District to form an extension to a proposed new settlement at Marks Tey. Members were advised that the petition did not form part of the consultation responses to the Issues and Scoping document. It was reported also that the Council had a statutory duty to work with neighbouring authorities on Local Plan matters and that the Council would continue to engage with Colchester Borough Council.

**DECISION:** That the consultation process on the Local Plan Issues and Scoping document and the responses received be noted.

## 5 **DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES – CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the proposed methodology and criteria to be used for reviewing development boundaries as part of the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.

It was noted that development boundaries were denoted by a black line drawn on a plan around a settlement. Development boundaries were recognised as a tool to define established built-up areas and to conserve the character of the open countryside. The boundaries sought to prevent unnecessary urban sprawl and the loss of greenfield sites in the open landscape.

It was noted that there were currently 66 defined development boundaries in the District. There were also a number of smaller settlements/hamlets in the District without development boundaries which were considered to be in the countryside.

The proposed review of the District's development boundaries would assist in meeting housing targets, indicate whether features defining a boundary had

changed, ensure that development was focused in the most sustainable settlements, and assist in protecting local landscapes and the character of settlements.

It was reported that since the adoption of the Braintree District Local Plan 1995 and the development boundaries contained within it, there had been significant changes to national planning policy. As part of the review, regard would be had to the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.

**DECISION:** That the proposed methodology and criteria for reviewing development boundaries in relation to the preparation of the emerging Local Plan be approved.

## 6 **ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL: SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS – DESIGN GUIDE**

**INFORMATION:** It was reported that Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) had produced a Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide (December 2014) for development throughout Essex. It was proposed that the document should be approved by Braintree District Council as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and in the development of policy within the emerging Local Plan.

Members were advised that with effect from 6th April 2015, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) had to be considered as a material planning consideration in the determination of major planning applications. In considering such planning applications, Local Planning Authorities were required to consult the relevant LLFA on the management of surface water; satisfy themselves that the proposed minimum standards of operation were appropriate; and ensure through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations that there were clear arrangements in place for on-going maintenance over the lifetime of a development.

It was noted that the SuDS Design Guide did not make detailed recommendations regarding maintenance arrangements.

**DECISION:** That the Essex County Council: Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide (December 2014) be approved as planning guidance.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 6.31pm.

Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint  
(Chairman)



# Minutes



## Developing Democracy Group

15<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
Councillor J E Abbott	Yes	Councillor Mrs J Pell	Yes
Councillor Mrs J Beavis	No	Councillor C Siddall	Apologies
Councillor G Butland (Chairman)	Yes	Councillor Mrs G Spray	Apologies
Councillor D Mann	Yes		

Members in attendance: Councillor Mrs I Parker for item 4 of the Agenda – Dissolution of the Foxearth and Liston Grouping Order 1976.

Officers in attendance: Nicola Beach, Chief Executive, Ian Hunt, Head of Governance and Emma Wisbey, Governance and Members Manager.

### 35 **Former Councillor – The late Dr Robert Evans**

It was with sadness that Councillor Butland announced the death of their former colleague Dr. Robert Evans. Dr. Evans had been a Member of Braintree District Council and had participated in the Developing Democracy Group as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee until he decided to retire from local government and not stand for re-election in May 2015.

Councillor Butland advised that a minutes silence would be held at Cabinet and tributes will be paid to their former colleague at Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

### 36 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Developing Democracy Group held on 3rd February 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 37 **Dissolution of the Foxearth and Liston Grouping Order 1976**

**INFORMATION:** Members were reminded that the Council had received from Liston Parish Meeting a request that the grouping order be revoked in order to enable the separation of the two parishes of Foxearth and Liston.

Councillor Mrs I Parker was invited to speak on this item as the relevant Ward Member.



The Head of Governance outlined the report and reminded Members that a two stage consultation process had been carried out and the consultation responses reflected the view that has been expressed in the original request.

Members noted the strong feeling of residents and the Parish Meeting. However they were particularly mindful of the statutory guidance in this matter. It is clear from the supporting information from the Residents Association and the public consultation that the request has been driven in light of some strong concerns with the proposed development in the village and the perception that the personalities on the Parish Council would not allow for there to be a full representation of the views of residents to be expressed through that application. In addition it was seen that the Parish Council was not serving the needs of the residents of Liston generally.

Members noted that there has been a substantial change in the Parish Council following the May 2015 election and that this may well cause there to be a change in the relationships within the community.

Taken together the Developing Democracy Group determined that it would recommend to Council that the request be declined in light of the statutory guidance.

**DECISION:** That it be **Recommend to Full Council** that the request for dissolution of the Foxearth and Liston Order 1976 be refused on grounds that application cannot be justified as it does not meet the criteria for as set out in the statutory guidance, namely that there is no evidence that can demonstrate that there has been local support for abolition over a period equivalent to two terms of office of the Parish Councillors, ie eight years.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To consider and determine the request of Liston Parish Meeting, to revoke the 1976 Grouping Order to enable the separation of the parishes of Foxearth and Liston.

Councillor Iona Parker left the meeting after this item at 4.54pm.

## 32 **Parish Council Elections Outcomes**

**INFORMATION:** Members were advised that following the Elections on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 there were a range of results in relation to the take up of vacancies within the Parish and Town Councils across the district.

The Head of Governance advised Members that all Parish Councils were now in a position where they have sufficient Members to be considered quorate. Remaining Parish Council vacancies would be filled by way of co-option by the respective Parish Councils. A small number of Parishes had been inquorate potentially requiring temporary appointments, this need was however averted through discussions.

**DECISION:** Members noted the position with Parish Council elections. Members further asked the Head of Governance to draft a policy for the appointment of Temporary Councillors for Parish Councils and to bring this to the committee for consideration.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform Members of the outcomes of Parish Council elections and the issues that was raised.

## 33 **Electronic Filing of Member Expenses**

**INFORMATION:** Member were advised that consideration had been given to enable the direct filing of Member expenses, following available practice at the County Council with the potential for savings in time and effort by both Members and officers.

Members were advised that consideration was given to use of the Council's current HR/Payroll system which has the potential to provide a similar level of functionality with direct claim management. Unfortunately given the position with the current contract and the licensing/installation costs Members were advised that it was considered that there was insufficient return on investment to make this a viable option at this time.

Members were advised that this could be reviewed when the contract for the system was retendered, however, this would not be for a number of years.

Members were advised that some Members were undertaking electronic filing of expenses, through a process which met reasonable audit requirements. Members were advised that a full electronic claim form would be developed and promoted to all Members which could be used as an alternative method to paper submissions.

**DECISION:** Members noted the position in respect to electronic filing of Member expenses claims.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep Members updated and advised.

34. **Future Work Programme**

**INFORMATION:** Members were asked to note the work expected to come before the Sub-Committee in the civic year 2015/16.

**DECISION:** Members noted the future work programme for 2015/16.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep Members updated and advised.

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 6:12pm.

G BUTLAND  
(Chairman)

<b>Cabinet Member Decisions made under Delegated Powers</b>		<b>Agenda No: 12b</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>		
<b>See body of report</b>		
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>		
<b>Report presented by:</b>		
<b>Report prepared by:</b>		
<b>Not applicable –Report for noting</b> Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager		
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
Cabinet Decisions made by individual Cabinet Members under delegated powers		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>		
All delegated decisions taken by individual Cabinet Members are required to be published and listed for information on next Cabinet Agenda following the decision.		
Since the last Cabinet meeting the following delegated decisions have been taken (details as at time of decision):-		
<b>Councillor Lady Newton – Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing</b>		
<b>Decision taken on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b>		
To approve the Borley Village Design Statement as a Material Planning Consideration.		
<b>Councillor John Mckee – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management.</b>		
<b>Decision taken on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b>		
That the Council terminates its lease of the Empire Theatre, Halstead with the Town Council giving 6 months prior written notice.		
Cabinet Decisions made by individual Cabinet Members under delegated decisions can be viewed on the Access to Information page on the Council's website.		
<a href="http://www.braintree.gov.uk">www.braintree.gov.uk</a>		

<b>Decision</b>  For Cabinet to note the delegated decisions.
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b>  The reasons for decision can be found in the individual delegated decision.

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
<b>Financial:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Legal:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Risks:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Wisbey
<b>Designation:</b>	Governance and Member Manager
<b>Ext. No.</b>	2610
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk">emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk</a>