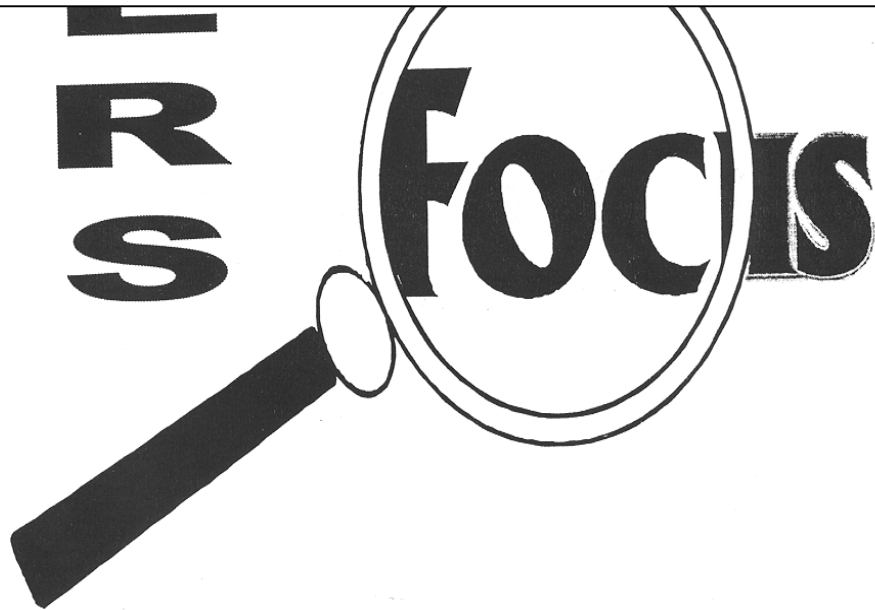


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*Members' Focus is available on-line at www.braintree.gov.uk
- Choose "Council & Democracy" from the menu on the left,
then "Members Focus".*

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Focus

September 2006

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MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: All

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: **Help People to Feel Safe and Well**

SUBJECT: Public Protection and Healthy Living – Health Activities Update	CONTACT OFFICER: Kryshia Fuller, Leisure Development Officer
TEL/EMAIL No.: 01376 551414 ext 2313 kryshia.fuller@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None
<p>INFORMATION:</p> <p>This briefing is to update Members on the Health Walk Activities that have taken place during the month since the previous Members Focus Briefing.</p> <p><u>Walking for Well Being</u></p> <p>The walks attracted 196 walkers during August (an increase of 70 walkers on the previous month). A programme of walks and starting points was distributed to all Councillors in August and can be found on the Council's website www.braintree.gov.uk/Braintree/leisure/walks A hard copy of the programme can be provided on request</p> <p>Heart and Sole</p> <p>Heart and Sole is Braintree District Council's new programme of short walks. The led walks last approximately 30 minutes and are of benefit to everybody, especially people who may be overweight or may have diabetes.</p> <p>Following the launch of 2 new pilot schemes in August, there are currently 3 walks a week from the following surgeries. Elizabeth Courtauld (Halstead), Douglas Grove (Witham) and the Coggeshall Surgery.</p> <p>GP's recommend the Heart and Sole walks to patients who they believe would benefit from the 30 minute brisk exercise and Braintree District Council provide a walk leader for a 12 week period. The walks are followed by tea and coffee with a chance for patients to socialise with one another.</p> <p>On Wednesday 16th August the first walk from the Coggeshall Surgery took place and a pilot period will continue for 12 weeks. Since the walks started an average of 5 patients have attended each week.</p> <p>Although patients are referred by their GP's the walks are also open to everybody across the District.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued ..</i></p>	

MEMBERS' FOCUS

On Tuesday 29th August the first walk from the Douglas Grove Surgery, Witham took place and will also continue for a pilot period of 12 weeks.

The Leisure Development Officer delivered a presentation about the benefits of walking to the Surgeries well attended obesity clinic. Unfortunately only 2 patients from that particular clinic have attended the walks so far and the Surgery has not referred as many patients as the Halstead and Coggeshall Surgeries did in their first weeks. Further work will need to be carried out with the Surgery to increase the number of participants.

The Heart and Sole project was initially piloted by the Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery in Halstead and has now been running successfully (and almost independently) for six months.

More volunteers are required to ensure that the projects continue after the initial pilot period which is led by Braintree District Council. The Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency will be contacted to see if they are able to assist with the volunteer recruitment.

News

40,000 bins on the move

Page 1 of 2

The task of delivering 40,000 wheeled bins begins on Monday, in the latest phase of a new refuse and recycling collection scheme.

Braintree District Council is extending the scheme following its dramatic success in boosting recycling rates since it was introduced in Witham and Braintree.

A timetable has been drawn up of when residents can expect to see their green and grey bins and when their first collections will be. All households affected by the change will receive a letter several weeks before bins are delivered and a detailed information pack explaining the new system will be attached to the lid of the bins.

Each household will receive a green bin for compostable kitchen waste and garden waste and a grey bin for anything which cannot be composted or recycled. They will be collected on alternate weeks and a sticker on the bin will indicate the date of new collections.

Peter Chisnall, Environmental Services Manager, said everything possible was being done to ensure smooth delivery and urged residents to be patient if there were a few teething problems.

"If anyone does have a problem, like the wrong size bin being delivered, I would ask that they bear with us and we will sort it out as soon as we can - delivering 40,000 bins is a major operation."

Councillor Michael Gage, who is responsible for the local environment, said: "We hope the operation will run smoothly but apologise in advance for any hiccoughs which may occur. It is vital we get this new system to as many people as we can, as soon as we can. The recycling rate has increased in Braintree and Witham to nearly 50 per cent since wheeled bins were introduced and we are looking for similar results, or better, in the new areas."

MEMBERS' FOCUS

The provisional timetable for the bin delivery is as follows:

Week Commencing	Parishes
Monday September 18th	Hatfield Peverel, Silver End and Rivenhall
Monday September 25th	Halstead
Monday October 2 nd	Sible Hedingham, Gosfield, Greenstead Green & Halstead Rural, Panfield and Shalford
Monday October 9 th	Stisted, Bradwell, Coggeshall and Feering
Monday October 16 th	Kelvedon and The Colnes

The timetable is subject to change and more details will be available on the Council's web site and from Customer Services as deliveries progress. In some areas such as Halstead and Gosfield deliveries are expected to carry on into the following week.

The deliveries will take place between 7am and 7pm with contractors and council staff on a very tight schedule. Anyone with a query should ring the council's Customer Service Centre on 01376 552525.

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact: Ros Alam or Jenny Nice on 01376 551414 - just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR SEPTEMBER 12 2006

ENDS

News

Councillors go back to school

Page 1 of 2

Councillors are going back to school to give them a better insight into the issues affecting young people.

Take Your Councillor to School day is just one of a series of special events being organised by Braintree District Council to mark local democracy week.

The national campaign, running from October 16 to 20, is aimed at raising awareness of the role local authorities play and encouraging more involvement from the community in local decision making, particularly from young people.

During the week about 150 pupils from Year 9 at Alec Hunter Humanities College will be taking part in activities.

Councillors will have the chance to get to know them on home turf by sitting in on a morning's lessons and joining in class debates.

A group of pupils will also be presenting an agenda item on a topical local issue at a meeting of the council's Braintree area committee.

Other events include an open day at the council offices for the young people, a chance to quiz councillors on any issues in a Question Time format and a tour of the district with councillors to give an insight into the different issues faced by them both in the towns and villages.

Councillors hope it will show the challenges and rewards of working for the community.

Councillor Lady Pat Newton, lead member for children and young people, said: "I believe local democracy week provides a real challenge for us as councillors to go out and meet young people and make our political system more relevant to them so they can play a full role in the political process, both local and national.

"Young people will be able to gain first hand experience of how local government works and what is meant by local democracy in practical terms. By going back into the classroom councillors will be talking to young people on their own territory and

MEMBERS' FOCUS

will gain a better understanding of what young people want and their attitude to local and national issues.

“It is important this is not a one-off exercise; we need to continue to develop ways in which young people can contribute to the wellbeing of our – and their – local communities.”

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: During the morning of Monday October 16 councillors will sit in on lessons at Alec Hunter Humanities College in Braintree as part of Take Your Councillor to School day. Contact Wendy Morgan, head of citizenship at the college, to arrange time.

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact Mel Reynoldson, senior democratic services officer, on 01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR September 18 2006

News

Making the most of Olympic opportunities

Page 1 of 1

BUSINESSES across the Braintree district need to prepare now to make the most of opportunities created by the 2012 London Olympics.

That is the message Braintree District Council is hoping to drive home at a special briefing to raise awareness of the importance of the event in terms of business, tourism and investment openings.

The aim is to identify ways local businesses can contribute to and benefit from a successful Olympics.

Gold medal winning Paralympian Danny Crates will be at the event to talk about his experiences and to inspire enthusiasm for the 2012 celebrations.

Other speakers include Loretta Sollars, head of Olympics and sports development at Essex County Council, who will talk about county initiatives for business and tourism. Keith Hughes will represent Business Link and explain what businesses should be doing now to get in on the act.

Braintree and Witham MP Brooks Newmark will join in a question and answer session at the briefing.

Councillor Tim Wilkinson, lead member with responsibility for London 2012, commented: "The 2012 London Olympic Games offer the Braintree district tremendous opportunities for business, sport, education and culture across all age ranges and sections of the community.

"However, it is very important that we start preparing now if we are to make the most of this exciting event. The world's attention will be on London in less than six years' time and we're hoping to divert some of that attention our way."

The briefing, which includes a buffet breakfast, is being held at The Essex Golf and Country Club in Earls Colne on Wednesday September 20 with registration from 7.30am and the event starting at 8am.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

It is being jointly sponsored by the council, Business Development Services Ltd, Business Link, Earls Colne Business Park, Freeport Braintree, Smith Law Partnership and The Essex Golf and Country Club.

It is free to businesses in the Braintree district and those wanting to attend should contact Russell Everard on 01376 551414 or email him at london2012@braintree.gov.uk

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact Russell Everard 01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR September 4 2006

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Switch to solar to help combat climate change

Page 1 of 1

Residents who switch to a solar hot water system are in line for a £1,000 grant from Braintree District Council.

They are being urged to make the change to save on their energy bills and to cut carbon emissions. The only condition to qualify for a grant is that the work is done through the council scheme, which uses installers accredited to the DTI's Low Carbon Buildings Programme, managed by the Energy Saving Trust. (EST)

This also gives householders the added bonus of being able to claim a further £400 grant from the EST and ensures the system complies with building regulations.

The system works by capturing light from the sun and converting it into heat in much the same way as a greenhouse. This heat is then passed to a liquid, which preheats the water in the property's hot water cylinder.

The cost of a system is about £4,000 before grants for an average-sized house, although it varies according to the hot water demands of different families. It should provide up to 60 per cent of the hot water needed, mostly in the summer.

Savings depend on which fuel is being replaced. An average household on mains gas spends about £500 a year for hot water, more on electricity, oil or solid fuel, so the system would take about nine years to pay for itself.

Councillor Michael Gage, who is responsible for the local environment, said: "As part of our commitment to sustainable energy we need to encourage as many as possible to consider ways of adapting to the impact of climate change. We hope the grant, which makes it much cheaper to switch to solar, will enable more people to take this step."

ENDS

For more press information contact: Peter Chisnall, Waste & Energy Manager,
01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR 17 August 2006

News

Sports development officer appointed

Page 1 of 2

A sports development officer has been appointed to work closely with clubs, coaches and volunteers across the Braintree district.

Mark Aldous, 33, says he is joining Braintree District Council at a very exciting time for sport and leisure in the area.

"I am delighted to be in at the start of the Bramston sports ground development and look forward to building on existing work in the future, working closely with local sports clubs and all the volunteers and coaches."

Earlier this year the council was successful in winning a £1 million grant from the Football Foundation for the all-weather pitch, changing rooms and pavilion. It is the largest grant it has ever given and the pitch should be completed by the end of November.

Mr Aldous, who is married with two stepchildren, was previously working with the county sports partnership sportessex. The Leyton Orient supporter plays golf and as a schoolboy represented Essex at cricket.

One challenge he is relishing is helping to ensure the district benefits as much as it can from the 2012 Olympics in sport, economically and through tourism.

For him the legacy of the Games is also vital, with a need to find ways of ensuring the people who take up a sport after being inspired by them stick with it afterwards.

He said: "That is the key, keeping people's interest and also making them aware of all the opportunities that we have throughout the district.

"Braintree is leading the way in many respects – the huge Football Foundation grant is a good example – and I want people to know they are lucky to have so much on offer."

- Sports and leisure clubs are being asked to make sure their details are with Braintree District Council so they can be added to a comprehensive database of facilities in the area.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

The council is keen to include as many clubs as possible to show the range of sporting, leisure and recreational facilities on offer in the district, particularly in the light of the increasing focus on this area in the lead-up to 2012.

A letter has gone out to 300 clubs asking for information but officials of any which have been missed are asked to contact Russell Everard, economic development officer on 01376 551414 – just say the name – or email at

Russell.everard@braintree.gov.uk

ENDS

Note: For more information or to arrange a photograph please contact Mark Aldous on 01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR September 12 2006

News

Wheeling out important information

Page 1 of 2

A new system of refuse and recycling collections in parts of the Braintree district has been so successful it is being extended.

Residents in Hatfield Peverel, Silver End, Rivenhall, Halstead and Sible Hedingham are being sent letters this week explaining what it will mean when they join the alternate weekly wheeled bin scheme. Residents in other villages who will receive the bins will be sent letters within the next couple of weeks.

The scheme has been operating in the Braintree district for five years and has led to the recycling rate rising to about 50 per cent. This success has prompted Braintree District Council to roll out the scheme to more of the district and only 18 per cent of properties will be outside the scheme after October.

The other villages involved are Bradwell, Coggeshall, Colne Engaine, Earls Colne, Feering, Gosfield, Greenstead Green, Kelvedon, Panfield, Shalford, Stisted and White Colne. Residents in Castle Hedingham will be included once new collection routes have been worked out.

The letters being sent out will give people a rough idea of when their new bins, clear sacks and information packs will be delivered and what size bins have been allocated to their property.

Each household will be given a green bin for compostable kitchen waste and garden waste. Grey bins will take anything which cannot be composted or recycled and they will be collected on alternate weeks. A detailed information pack explaining the new system will be attached to the lid of the bins when delivered.

Collections will be phased in from Monday October 2 and until then the current black sack collections will continue.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

Councillor Michael Gage, who is responsible for the local environment, said residents should quickly get used to the new collections and see the benefits.

“Since we introduced the wheeled bins in Braintree and Witham the recycling rate has gone up to 50 per cent and we hope for a similar figure in the new areas joining.

“Experience has shown us that recycling levels increase once people have wheeled bins. People tell us they want to recycle more and that’s what we are helping them to do.”

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact: Ros Alam,
environmental communications officer on 01376 551414 – just say
the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR August 30 2006.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

"An excellent deal for tenants" - outlined in newsletter to every household in District

This was the overwhelming view of Council Members as Braintree District Council formally agreed to consult its **13,000** tenants on the future of the Council's homes. Every household, as well as tenants, will have received by Saturday a newsletter outlining the proposals, which will affect everyone in and around neighbourhoods where there are council properties. Tenants will receive the offer document in October.

And when council tenants vote at the end of this year on whether to transfer the ownership of their homes to a new housing association; they'll be accepting or turning down a huge £150 million investment programme over the next 30 years, enough to make every home decent* and to provide much needed extra resources to improve the environment and to tackle anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhoods. It will also give a massive boost to the local economy, with positive benefits for everyone in the District.

At the full council meeting on 11th September, Council members backed the contents and agreed to publish a formal consultation document to be issued to all tenants across the district next month. Tenants will then have 28 days to give their feedback to the Council before the confidential ballot is held later in the year, to decide whether transfer goes ahead.

Tenant representative Neil Coughlan said: "This is a very positive change, with no loss of democratic control because tenant involvement in the way the housing service is managed has been built in to the heart of the new organisation. Tenants really will be in control. This is the best offer that could be made, and with a new tenancy agreement, it will be even better for tenants."

(more comment and notes on next page)

MEMBERS' FOCUS

"An excellent deal for tenants" p2

Council Leader Graham Butland said: "This is an extremely good offer to tenants and I would urge them to read it very carefully. It contains all the information they need to make an informed choice when the time to vote comes. It is a legal document and if transfer does go ahead, all the promises contained in the document will be written into a legal contract between the Council and Greenfields Community Housing so that tenants can rest assured that promises will be kept."

A separate consultation document will also be sent to the Council's 400 plus leaseholders, who will also be directly affected by the outcome of the tenants' ballot.

Richard Tincknell, Leader of the Opposition on the Council said: "We have always said that as a group we would look at what transfer could mean for tenants before making our position clear. Having seen the offer document, there is now no doubt in our minds that transfer would offer tenants a far better deal than we as a Council ever could under current rules. For this reason, we are fully backing the offer. It's now up to tenants to give the Council their comments and ultimately use their vote when the time comes."

ENDS

Notes: * The Decent Homes standard is defined by central government, to ensure all properties have high quality kitchens and bathrooms, heating and insulation. Working with tenants' representatives, the Council aims to broaden that standard to include improvements to neighbourhoods and other advantages for tenants themselves.

Housing associations are allowed to borrow money for investment from the open financial markets, whereas councils cannot. Government policy over the past thirty years has been to prevent council borrowing, which would add to the PSBR (public sector borrowing requirement) with adverse effect upon the health of public accounts and government financial targets. Housing associations operate outside these rules and have far greater financial freedom.

Tenants can call Solon Community Network: independent advisers chosen by local tenant associations to provide impartial advice to anyone seeking a better understanding of the pros and cons of housing transfer. Solon's costs are paid indirectly from housing rent and their priority is towards the best interests of tenants. Freephone: 0800 169 4406.

The council's own housing team can be contacted on Freephone 0800 7811 344. For more press information, a copy or pdf newsletter or enquiries contact: Amanda Bhavnani, 01376 551414.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR 18 September 06

News

Tenants have their say

Page 1 of 1

Tenants in the Braintree district are being asked what they think of the housing service in a special survey.

From this week 2,500 tenants are being picked at random across the district. The postal survey is being managed by ORC International on behalf of Braintree District Council.

Tenants will be asked what they think of the repairs service, value for money, standard of the homes and neighbourhood.

The feedback will be used by the council to monitor the services it is providing and to target areas which need attention in the future.

All those who take part will be entered in a prize draw with the chance to win Woolworth vouchers.

Councillor Simon Walsh, cabinet member with responsibility for housing, said: "It is important to give tenants the chance to let us know what they think of our services so we can react to their views. It's an ongoing process to make sure standards are up to scratch in our day-to-day working."

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact Liz Petchey on 01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR September 4 2006

News

Litter louts boost soaring rat population

Page 1 of 1

LITTER louts are being targeted in a campaign to halt the soaring rat population.

Braintree District Council has teamed up with environmental charity ENCAMS to issue a stark warning to fast food consumers to clean up their act.

They are being blamed for helping to increase rat numbers by not binning their fast food leftovers.

Now an advertising campaign is designed to scare them into changing their ways.

Cinemas are showing a 30-second advertisement, which begins with the rodents scratching, scuffling and devouring the discarded remains of a meal and ends with a couple sleeping soundly in their bed, unaware that they are sharing their duvet with a group of rats.

On Wednesday the message will be further highlighted with a special roadshow in George Yard shopping centre in Braintree between 10am and 3pm.

Leaflets will be handed out and a dance group will give displays throughout the day.

Councillor Michael Gage, who is responsible for the local environment, commented:

“The number of rats in Britain has increased by almost a quarter in the last two years and with 60 million of them now living in the UK there are more rats than people.

“Every bit of food on the ground is a potential meal for a rat. How close do you want them to be to you before you use a bin and do your bit to halt this rising population of rats?”

ENDS

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: Wednesday August 23, George Yard, Braintree, 10am to 3pm, dance shows 11.45am, 12.30pm and 1.45pm.

For more press information or inquiries contact Tania Roberge, environmental promotions officer, on 01376 551414 – just say the name.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR August 22 2006

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

A welcome guide for newcomers

A WEALTH of information for newcomers has been brought together in a handy welcome guide distributed by Braintree District Council.

Over the next couple of months copies of the updated free guide will go out to all estate agents in the district so they are waiting to greet people as they move into a new home.

They will also be available at George Yard shopping centre in Braintree and The Grove Centre at Witham. Libraries and the tourist information centre and the district council offices at Bocking End in Braintree will also hold copies.

The guide is packed with useful information, starting with essentials needed on the first day, from emergency numbers to food outlets.

Advice on getting around the district, brief histories of Braintree, Witham and Halstead and an introduction to some of the places worth a visit are also included, as is a comprehensive guide to recycling.

A handy tear-off directory of essential services completes the guide, which is produced by Partners and Communities Together and sponsored by George Yard shopping Centre, The Grove Centre and Freeport.

Councillor Roger Walters, cabinet member for efficiency and performance, said: "First impressions are always important and we want people to feel welcome right from the start.

"This guide is packed with useful information and also gives a flavour of our district. As well as being practical we hope it shows newcomers just how much this area has to offer them."

ENDS

For more press information or enquiries contact PR Department on 01376 557752.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR August 23 2006

News

Working together

Page 1 of 2

Residents are to have a bigger say in the way council services are run in their area.

In a bold new pact, aimed at improving services to people at local level, Braintree District Council and Essex County Council have agreed to work more closely together to deliver better-integrated services.

If successful the pilot scheme could be extended across Essex.

As part of the partnership deal a senior manager, jointly appointed by the councils, will be based in Braintree and will work through local councillors to react quickly to residents' needs and wishes. This will ensure the right action is taken, regardless of which council is responsible.

Road repairs, grass cutting and encouraging people to take part in consultations about controversial decisions in their area will be among issues dealt with by the new manager.

Existing shared front office space will be extended and residents will be able to get a much wider range of information from one-stop information points.

An increasing number of services between the two councils will be shared to improve efficiency and a study begun into the possibility of sharing offices, allowing more efficient use of existing buildings and cutting costs.

The aim is to get better value from the two-tier system of local government, to which both councils are committed.

The initiative comes ahead of a White Paper on local government, which Ministers have hinted may call for a change in structure. All councils in Essex recently agreed a statement rejecting the need for such changes.

continued...

News

Working together

Page 2 of 2

Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council, said of the deal: "I am delighted that the Braintree district is leading the way in this pilot scheme.

"The two councils already have a strong track record of working together and we aim to show the rest of the county the great benefits to be had from this partnership. The more integrated approach to issues can only benefit residents."

Lord Hanningfield, leader of Essex County Council, said: "We know that most people who use council services simply don't care which organisation is doing the work. What they tell us they want is more control and influence over services that are provided in ways that suit them. The best way to do that is to focus on really local communities and join services up across organisational boundaries.

"I am now very excited that we are moving to the sort of devolution that can actually make a positive difference in Braintree. I hope this is just a first step and that other Essex communities can benefit from this approach in the future."

The pact will be signed by Mr Butland and Lord Hanningfield at Braintree library in Fairfield Road at 11.30am on Thursday September 7.

NOTE: Photographers are welcome at the signing, which will be followed by a short presentation on the pact by the two leaders at Braintree Town Hall Centre.

ENDS

For more press information or inquiries contact Cllr Butland on 07768 357571, Chris Trim on 01376 557752 or Eleri Roberts at Essex County Council on 01245 430650.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR 5 September 2006

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: All

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Helping People Feel Safe and Well

SUBJECT: Pandemic Influenza	CONTACT OFFICER: Kathy Brown
TEL/EMAIL No.: 01376 557753 katbr@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: NHS Flu Pandemic Key Facts Leaflet, PCT Influenza Pandemic Plan. Braintree District Council Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan.
<p>INFORMATION:</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The recent incidents of Avian Flu have raised concern with the public that a human 'flu pandemic will affect the U.K. In December 2005 Members will have received the NHS leaflet "Flu Key Facts". Information posters from the Care Trust have been issued to Parishes along with the leaflets. The leaflet is an aide-memoire to develop an understanding of the action we can take to assist the Health Services in the event of a flu pandemic.</p> <p>Statistics to the 11th August 2006 show that a total of 236 people have been affected by the current strain of Avian Flu and 138 deaths have occurred as a result of the virus. The present virus only affects birds – those humans who have been affected by the virus were reported to have been in very close contact with an affected bird. The strain of the virus found in all cases so far has been the H5N1 strain. Until the virus mutates from birds to humans and/or human to human that strain of the virus remains unknown.</p> <p>An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus subtype appears to which no-one is immune. If the virus mutates from another species to humans, then it could spread quickly worldwide with over 25% of the population affected. As soon as the strain can be identified the appropriate vaccination will be developed, but this is likely to take 4-6 months.</p> <p>If the virus reaches a pandemic level it is likely to last approximately 3-4 months and come in two or three waves with affected cases remaining seriously ill for up to 10 days or more.</p> <p>Current action in the UK</p> <p>The UK is currently stockpiling the anti-viral drug Tami-flu. A total of 14.6 million doses are required to cover a quarter of the population (25% likely infected cases). The Government has stated that the anti-viral drug will be distributed to Priority Workers in the first instance, and then the elderly and those people with long-term chronic illnesses.</p> <p>Local Action</p> <p>Braintree District Council has developed it's own Contingency Plan in case of an Influenza Pandemic.</p> <p>It incorporates aspects of the National Influenza Plan and local elements from the Strategic Health Authority plan, and links into the Pan Essex Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan. It utilises as much common practice/business as usual as possible from existing Human Resources procedures and policies and Health & Safety practices to ensure that the plan is flexible and easy to implement when required. It also follows a set protocol of activation from the World Health Organisation through to local level.</p>	

MEMBERS' FOCUS

The Plan incorporates District Council roles and responsibilities

During an incident

- BDC's role will be essentially a Management Role
- Coordinating and assisting the Care Trust with mortuary issues. Liaising with funeral directors/undertakers.
- The Strategic Health Authority would forward information to the Essex County Council Emergency Planning team and also to the Care Trust who would link into BDC Public Relations Team to assist with communicating key messages to the public.

Actions already completed

- ✓ Local venues e.g. village halls/community centres/ centres used for polling stations have been identified across the District - 3 large venues (priority locations) and a number of smaller locations in the more rural areas have been identified to be used as Vaccination centres if required by the Care Trust
- ✓ A list of Vulnerable Groups within the Community has been compiled with the assistance of Ward Members and Parish councils. This will assist the information sharing process. It will also assist with providing support to those who may require a home visit
- ✓ Work in partnership with the Care Trust and their Flu Pandemic Co-ordinator to develop plans and assist in issuing information to our communities via a variety of media leaflets, posters, web page and local papers.
- ✓ A basic information leaflet has been created for Braintree District Council Staff, which incorporates aspects of information from various Department of Health leaflets.
- ✓ References to Pandemic Influenza plans have also been placed on the recently updated Emergency Planning pages on the intranet and the internet.
- ✓ Key workers for Braintree District Council have been identified based on the Business Continuity Plan so that when the 2nd wave of a pandemic strikes and vaccine has been developed then "key staff" can be vaccinated to ensure a continuous service to the community e.g.
 - Refuse collectors – human health issues
 - Benefits staff
 - Cemetery staff
 - Environmental health officers – avian flu issues

Based upon the authority's Business Continuity Plan

MEMBERS' FOCUS

3. Further information

There are a number of useful web sites and leaflets that are available: -

www.ukresilience.info

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu

www.immunisation.nhs.uk

www.hpa.org.uk

www.who.int/csr/disease/avianinfluenza/chronology/en/

Explaining Pandemic Flu (CMO Guide)

UK Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan (October 2005)

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: PLANNING

SUBJECT: Planning Appeals	CONTACT OFFICER: Linda Brown
TEL/EMAIL No.: 01376 551414 Ext. 2604 linda.brown@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: Nil
INFORMATION: To provide details of recently lodged planning appeals and appeal decisions.	

INFORMATION: APPEALS LODGED

Appellant: Mr D Hill
Site: The Old School, Church Road, Bradwell
Development: Erection of triple garage
Application No: 06/00257/FUL
Start Date: 4th August 2006

Appellant: Longmead Homes Ltd
Site: 259 Coggeshall Road, Braintree
Development: Demolition of existing industrial units and erection of 3 no. two storey houses with associated parking and turning facility
Application No: 06/00934/FUL
Start Date: 24th August 2006

Appellant: Mr M Jose
Site: The Nursery, Bardfield Road, Finchingfield
Development: Conversion of store into living accommodation with roof conversion and single storey rear extension
Application No: 06/00869/FUL
Start Date: 14th August 2006

INFORMATION: APPEAL DECISIONS

Appellant: Mr S Buckley
Site: Fairview Cottage, Shalford Road, Jaspers Green, Shalford
Development: Erection of single dwelling
Application No: 05/02339/OUT
Decision and Date: DISMISSED – 6th September 2006

Appellant: Rivers Homes Ltd
Site: Land rear of 39 Julien Court Road, Braintree
Development: Erection of 4 dwellings, garages and private drive
Application No: 05/01188/FUL
Decision and Date: DISMISSED – 11th September 2006

September 2006

MEMBERS' FOCUS

Appellant: Mr W Buckley
Site: Land corner of Halstead Road and Hovis Mill Lane, Sible
Hedingham
Development: Erection of a detached house and garage
Application No: 05/01376/OUT
Decision and Date: DISMISSED – 7th September 2006

Appellant: Mr E King
Site: 18 New Road, Kelvedon
Development: Proposed demolition of existing property and construction of 1
pair of semi-detached 2 bedroom dwellings and 1 pair of semi-
detached 3 bedroom dwellings
Application No: 05/01347/FUL
Decision and Date: DISMISSED – 11th September 2006

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: RURAL ISSUES

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Create a Better Place to Live, Work & Play, Create a Cleaner, Greener District, Help People to Feel Safe and Well

<p>SUBJECT: Rural Communities Development Fund - Achievements</p>	<p>CONTACT OFFICER: Angela Verghese, External Funding & Voluntary Sector Development Manager</p>
<p>TEL/EMAIL No: 01376 551414 Ext 2329 – angve@braintree.gov.uk</p>	<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</p>
<p><i>“The Parish Council is very grateful to BDC for initiating this Fund. Relatively modest sums of money can make a huge difference in a small community such as this, and after years of local fundraising this support provided the boost we needed. We are very proud of what we have been able to achieve”</i></p> <p>The above comments from Helions Bumpstead Parish Council, who received a grant of £5,000 to improve the physical and environmental access to the village hall, reflect exactly what the Rural Communities Development Fund set out to achieve, and this is just one of the many positive comments received.</p> <p>The Fund was set up by this Council in 2005 with £100,000 to distribute in maximum grants of £5,000 to Rural Parish Councils who, in turn, were required to provide at least 25% match funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants allocated totalled £97,923 • 26 projects were funded • 9 projects were for play/recreation facilities • 4 projects improved access to village facilities • 4 projects provided CCTV for village facilities • 2 projects provided Parish Offices, one of which was for a Youth Council • 5 projects provided local environmental improvements • 1 project in Little Yeldham was unable to proceed due to lack of volunteers <p>Grant monitoring information received from completed projects demonstrates that the Rural Communities Development Fund has achieved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater use of play/recreation facilities • Play/recreation facilities provided for a wider age group 	

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- Improved engagement and involvement of young people
- Residents feeling safer
- Local people working together for the benefit of their local community
- Acted as a catalyst for Parishes to apply for funds elsewhere, with success, and to develop new projects or expand existing ones
- Added value/impact to the original grant where the project funded is one component of a much larger project.

For 2006/7 the Fund has already agreed to make grants to 16 projects but funding is still available and further applications are encouraged.

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AREA:

CORPORATE THEME HEADING:

SUBJECT: Scrutiny and PDG News	CONTACT OFFICER: Linda Morgan
TEL/EMAIL No.: Ext 2602	BACKGROUND PAPERS:
INFORMATION:	
<p>The Leader has identified a sum of money to assist Scrutiny and the PDGs to achieve their work programmes this year. The groups will bid for a share of this money at a meeting of the Co-ordinating Group to be held on 27th September 2006. As a reminder, these are the remaining items on this year's work programme.</p>	
<p><u>Public Safety Policy Development Group</u></p>	
<p>Alcohol, young people and drug related crime/youth nuisance and town centre safety Local Area Agreement Health and Leisure in the provision of health promotion. How is it delivered and promoted?</p>	
<p><u>Environment Policy Development Group</u></p>	
<p>Delivery of the Sustainability Strategy Involvement with the production of a sustainability document as part of the Local Development Framework process.</p>	
<p>The PDG will also keep a watching brief on such environmental issues as arise from time to time in the District</p>	
<p><u>Community Policy Development Group</u></p>	
<p>Children's Care Trust, to include the Children's Act Local Area Agreement.</p>	
<p><u>Better Value Policy Development Group</u></p>	
<p>Value for Money Review of Partnerships. Efficiency Reviews</p>	
<p><u>Scrutiny Panel</u></p>	
<p>Module 2 (Environmental Protection/Street Scene) of the Enforcement Study to commence in early 2006/07.</p>	

MEMBERS' FOCUS

Single Non-Emergency Number for Essex (101) Briefing for BDC Members

This briefing is designed to update Members on the latest position regarding the roll out of the Single Non-Emergency [telephone] Number (SNEN) across Essex.

The national 101 project is funded by the Home Office and the Dept. for Communities and Local Govt.

The 101 project in Essex is being driven by Essex Police and being managed by the Essex 101 Partnership.

Full information on the national 101 project can be found at <http://www.101.gov.uk>

1. Process and progress

The expression of interest (non-legally-binding agreement) submitted by the Essex 101 Partnership was accepted, and the Home Office has invited the Partnership to submit a 101 solution for Essex to go live in 2007. This will then be subjected to a bidding process with all the other partnerships included in Wave 2. A successful bid will secure capital funds for implementation together with revenue contributions for operational costs going forward until 2010. Full national coverage is expected upon the completion of Wave 3 during 2008.

The Home Office bidding process has an extremely tight timetable with a requirement that Essex Local Authorities (The Partnership) agree an operational model and implementation plan for Essex during August & September for submission by 5th October.

To move the project forward quickly to meet the timetable the Partnership has set up a Project team with appropriate governance. All Local Authorities in Essex are parties to the Partnership although Tendring have expressed concern about capacity to commit human resource to the project and elected not to be within the Partnership. This position however appears likely to change.

The task has been to design a call handling capability, to deliver the 101 operation across Essex, and to prepare and submit the bid. Brian Cox, also our Customer First Programme Manager, was appointed to manage this project. The Essex On-Line Partnership has agreed to supply human resource to support and assist in producing the bid.

2. The 101 service in brief

The 101 service is designed to give the public one number to call (24/7) in relation to the following:-

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- Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property
- Noisy neighbours
- Threatening and abusive behaviour
- Abandoned vehicles
- Rubbish and litter including fly tipping
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places
- Drug related anti- social behaviour
- Problems with street lighting

People should still dial 999 when there is immediate danger or they witness a crime taking place.

The concept is based around a telephone contact centre environment where 101 operators will take details from callers and forward service requests to the appropriate service delivery partner, i.e. to BDC/Police/ECC where appropriate. The arrangements are already operating in parts of the Country where 101 was rolled out earlier this year in Wave 1.

The ambition is to make local communities safer places to live and work through an easily accessible 24/7 service that will provide action, advice and information to the public on these community safety and anti social behaviour issues. A joined up service that will create improved co-ordination between Councils and Police and provide better information about what problems are happening where, leading to improvement in the management of resources and services to the public. The new service is also designed to take such calls out of the 999 environment.

3. How 101 could work in Essex

The Essex Partnership considered that 101 in Essex should build on the existing investments in local authority call centres in Essex rather than the creation of a new facility which would duplicate resources and investment.

The original plan to link together all existing contact centres has not proved feasible or acceptable to the Home Office and therefore the Partnership has now expressed a preference for a single call-taking partner for the whole of Essex. The rest of the Essex Partnership, including Braintree, will be receiving service requests from the chosen call taker.

This has formed the basis for a competitive bid situation. Essex County Council (At ECC Contact Centre, Colchester Business Park) and Thurrock Council (Vertex) both took part in the bidding. This bidding and subsequent evaluation by the Partnership will have been completed by 15th September and therefore Cabinet can be updated on 25th September.

Roger Bramwell, 6th September 2006