

LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL – 14TH DECEMBER 2009

Agenda Item 10 (i)

LEADER: Cllr Graham Butland

LEADER PORTFOLIO: Overall Vision and Strategic Direction

Portfolio covers:-

- Strategic Partnerships – National, Regional, County and District
- External Relationships (including PR and reputation)
- Local Strategic Partnership
- Corporate Governance

REPORT COVERS ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD COMMENCING 27TH OCTOBER AND ENDING 3RD DECEMBER 2009

1. Bid Proposal to Improvement East

At the meeting of District and Borough Leaders held on 10 November 2009 it was agreed that a project brief and bid would be developed for a review of opportunities to deliver significant improvements in efficiency and performance.

The project is likely to identify different models of partnership working for different activities or services. It may be that it identifies two/three Councils working together for some activities, all Councils working together for others or Councils working individually.

The funding required to support the twelve District and Borough Councils in Essex for phases one and two is estimated to be £300k. I will keep members informed of progress on this bid.

2. District Council Network

The Council has joined the District Councils Network. This is an organisation that will provide a strong voice for Districts within the Local Government Association. It will be an informed and representative advocate for Districts with Government and other national bodies, based upon Districts' unique position to deliver for 'local' people.

The subscription will be £150. Members may access further information at www.districtcouncils.info.

3. Local Government Association (LGA)

The Council's subscription to the LGA for 2010-11 will be £12850. This compares with £13485.72 in the current year

4. **A120 – Littering by the Highways Agency**

Members will recall that I drew attention to this issue at the last meeting. As a result I wrote to the Rt. Hon. Lord Adonis, secretary of State for Transport. At the time of writing this report no response had been received.

5. **Heart of Essex**

I have received a letter from County Councillor Peter Martin seeking my opinion on the opportunity to consolidate joint working arrangements in the sub-region and in particular for the preparation of an Integrated Development Programme (IDP) for the Heart of Essex. The Heart of Essex comprises Braintree DC, Chelmsford BC, Brentwood BC and Maldon DC.

I have responded as follows

“Dear Peter,

Thank you for your recent letter seeking our views on the preparation of an Integrated Development Programme (IDP) for the Heart of Essex.

As you will be aware Braintree District Council has some reservations about the Heart of Essex as a sub-region. The Council has strong links to the east with the Haven Gateway and to the west with the Stansted/M11 corridor as well as links with our neighbours to the south.

However the Council is keen to engage in issues relating to mid and north Essex and we recognise that we need to work with our neighbours to take advantage of opportunities to secure regional investment. The proposal presents a real opportunity for joint working between the Districts’ economic development and regeneration teams, particularly where regional investment is concerned.

On this basis I am therefore prepared to give my agreement in principle to the preparation of an IDP for the Heart of Essex and for this Council to be a partner in the process.”

**FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING:
Leader of the Council – Cllr Graham Butland Tel 01376 345681**