

COUNCIL REPORT
The Braintree District Sustainable Community Strategy (to 2025)

Agenda Item 7(ii)

Portfolio Area: Overall Vision and Strategic Direction
Report Presented by: Cllr Graham Butland

Background Papers: 'One District – One Vision. A Draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2005'.

Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report

Options: To agree or not agree the content in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

Risks: The SCS forms the basis for all partnership working in the District. It will be a major element of our (and our partners) future performance framework and our audit and inspection process by the Audit Commission

Executive Summary

The draft Sustainable Community Strategy was prepared by the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership and combined with the draft Core Strategy as a joint framework document entitled 'One District – One Vision'. A draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2025'.

Following the consultation process, the Sustainable Community Strategy element has required amendment. These amendments require approval by the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership and Council.

The background to the framework document and the approval process are set out in the main body of the report.

Decision

That the Sustainable Community Strategy be agreed.

Background

- 1.1 In late 2008, the draft Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) was prepared by Braintree District Council on behalf of the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership. The Strategy was combined with the draft Core Strategy into a joint framework document called 'One District – One Vision. A Draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2025'.
- 1.2 The framework document enabled a joined-up approach to the consultation process on the proposed Community Priorities contained in the SCS element and the proposed Growth Locations and Core Planning Policies contained in the Core Strategy element. The consultation took place during October to December 2008.
- 1.3 As a result of the consultation process, amendments have been made to the framework document. The changes to the Core Strategy element will be reported to the Local Development Framework Panel. The changes to the SCS element will be reported to the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership and its key members in particular.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this report – and in order to differentiate between the two elements, the Core Strategy element has been formatted to *red italic text* and the SCS element remains in normal font.
- 1.5 The 'Vision for the District' in Part 3 of the framework document is a shared Vision for both the SCS and Core Strategy elements. It has been expanded from the original version, to take into account the spatial need for a sense of 'place' in a Vision that is shared by both the SCS and Core Strategy. The Local Development Framework Panel, which is part of the separate statutory process of examination for the Core Strategy, recommends the shared Vision to the Braintree District LSP and Braintree District Council.
- 1.6 The Core Strategy element of the framework document requires approval only by Braintree District Council. Progress is reported on a regular basis to the Local Development Framework Panel. It is subject to a separate statutory process of examination with the adoption of the Strategy intended for late 2010 or early 2011.
- 1.7 The SCS element of the framework document requires approval by both the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership and Braintree District Council. Future proposals for amendment require the approval of both parties. The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to recommend approval of the SCS element to Council.
- 1.8 At the Cabinet meeting on the 8th June 2009, an additional amendment was agreed (Amendment H in the attached précis).

Corporate Implications	
Financial:	There are none arising out of this report
Legal:	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which places a duty on Braintree District Council and the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership to assess community priorities and produce a SCS for a local area.
Equalities & Diversity:	The projects and actions that will be developed to deliver the Strategy will be assessed for their impact on equalities and rural issues.
Customer Impact:	It is a framework strategy for the future of the District until 2025.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	There has been a joint consultation process with the draft core strategy during October – December 2008 involving all stakeholders (public, staff, partners, organisations).
Environment & Climate Change:	Priority Theme 2 of the Strategy is “creating a clean and green environment and addressing climate change in the Braintree District”.
Key Decision:	No
Public/Private Report:	Public
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‘One District – One Vision. A Draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2025’

Sustainable Community Strategy element

Précis of proposed amendments

Link to the ‘One District – One Vision’ October 2008 draft.

<http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/47C0BD38-60BC-48E9-8915-212D4585860F/0/OneDistrictOneVisionFinalPrintVersion.pdf>

The page numbers below relate to the October 2008 draft of the document.

Part 1 – Introduction and Background:

This Part has been updated following the consultation process.

Part 2 – A Portrait of the District:

This Part has been updated with the most recent statistics and the addition of information on ethnicity and migrant populations in the District.

Part 3 – A Vision for the Braintree District:

Amendment A (page 21) - The ‘Vision for the Braintree District’ has been expanded to take into account the spatial need for a sense of ‘place’.

3.1 The Vision for the Braintree District

‘To improve the well-being of people and communities in the Braintree District now and for future generations– ensuring that local needs are met, that development is sustainable and accessible and that our historic towns, villages and attractive countryside are maintained, improved and protected.

- *By 2025 a more sustainable future will have been secured for all the people and places in the Braintree District.*
- *The development, growth and regeneration of Braintree, Halstead and Witham will have delivered most of the housing, jobs and services needed for the District, including shopping, health, education and leisure.*
- *Our villages and rural areas will have been made more sustainable by delivering regeneration where needed and acting on local needs by supporting the provision of local housing, jobs and services.*
- *All development across the District will have been built to the highest design and energy efficiency standards, will have enhanced our historic towns, villages, buildings and countryside and minimised our impacts on the local and global environment.’*

Amendment B (page 21) – The Aims have been expanded to include ‘Accessibility’ as an aim and the ‘Clean and Green’ aim has been extended to cover the issue of climate change.

3.2 The Aims

- *To promote accessibility for all*
- *To create a clean and green environment and address climate change*
- *To achieve a prosperous local economy*
- *To enable everyone to enjoy a safe and healthy lifestyle*

Amendment C (page 21 – 22) – The Key Objectives have been amended as follows:

Objective 2 -To secure developments that make the minimum use of scarce natural resources *and energy*, both in construction and everyday use.

Objective 9 - To promote and secure high quality, environmentally friendly *and low carbon generating* design in all aspects of new developments, in order to create sustainable, attractive, safe and healthy places in which to live, work and play.

Objective 10 - To protect and enhance the unique historic character and identity of the District, by ensuring that new developments are appropriate in terms of scale, location and character to their local environment, and that our built heritage is not ~~irretrievably~~ lost or damaged.

Objective 11 - To protect the countryside and improve and manage the diversity of the *landscape*, wildlife and habitats and protect and improve open spaces within our towns and villages.

Part 5 – The Four Priority Themes for the Braintree District

Amendment D (page 47) – the second Community Priority Theme has been extended to cover the issue of climate change.

5.1 The Four Priority Themes are:

1. Promoting accessibility for all
2. Creating a clean and green environment *and addressing climate change*
3. Achieving a prosperous local economy
4. Enabling everyone to enjoy a safe and healthy lifestyle

Amendment E (page 50) – the first Community Priority for the Theme of ‘Promoting Accessibility for All’ has been amended to reflect the role of the highways authorities.

Promoting Accessibility for All

The Proposed Community Priorities

- To *work with Highway Authorities* to ensure that key road and transport infrastructure and public transport improvements will have been made and that improvements will have been made to existing congestion hot-spot areas
- Encourage transport providers to provide services which better meet local transport needs
- Improve access to services and information in rural areas
- Support the retention of village services and facilities
- People who come to live and work in the District will be able to easily find out about the District and the services that are provided here

Amendment F (page 58) – the first Community Priority for the Theme of ‘Clean and Green Environment’ has been amended to cover the need to recycle and compost waste. A Community Priority has been added to respond to climate change.

Creating a clean and green environment and addressing climate change in the Braintree District

The proposed Community Priorities

- To reduce the amount of waste being land-filled *by reducing waste and increasing the amount of recycling and composting*
- To ensure high standards of cleanliness and to maintain the appearance of the District
- To protect and enhance its biodiversity
- *To respond to climate change*
- To reduce our carbon footprints

Amendment G (page 64) – A Community Priority has been added for the Theme of ‘A Prosperous Local Economy’ to promote and sustain the viability of town centres and rural areas.

Achieving a prosperous local economy in the Braintree District

The Proposed Community Priorities

- To increase opportunities for long-term inward business investment in the District
- To increase basic skills levels and vocational training opportunities in the District
- *To promote and sustain the viability of our town centres and rural*

areas

Part 6 – Delivering the Strategy:

The tables in this Part have been updated.

Amendment H (page 109) – wording has been added to ensure that there is a joined-up approach to the communication and delivery of the Strategy with our neighbouring authorities.

The Strategy will be communicated and shared with our neighbouring authorities to provide a joined-up approach to the delivery of priorities that impact on infrastructure that crosses our District's boundary.

(Insert between paragraph 6.8 and 6.9 and re-number)

Glossary

This Part has been updated for the description of the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership.

Note:

The 'One District – One Vision' framework document has been reformatted and paragraph numbered to reflect the proposed amendments made to the document. Typing and numbering errors will be corrected at the publishing stage.

The complete amended document can be accessed using the following link:
[One District\Master One District May 09.doc](#)