

# Minutes



## Braintree Local Committee

24th November 2009

Present:

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Present</b>
M J Banthorpe	Apologies	J McKee	Yes
J Baugh	Yes (from 7.28pm)	Lady Newton	Yes
E Bishop	Yes	D M Reid	No
G Butland	Apologies	D E A Rice	No
M Dunn	Yes	Mrs C Sandbrook	Apologies
Mrs E Edey	Apologies	Mrs J W Schmitt	Yes
A V E Everard	Yes	Mrs L Shepherd	Yes
J H G Finbow	Yes	Mrs J A Smith	Yes
Ms L B Flint	Yes	Miss M Thorogood	Yes
E R Lynch	Yes	S M Walsh (Chairman)	Yes
M Lynch	Apologies	R G Walters	Yes
D Mann	Yes	R N Wilkins	Apologies
T McArdle	Yes	T S Wilkinson	Yes

### 28 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Councillor Lady Newton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 (b) - Braintree Outdoor Gym Project as she was a non-Executive Director of Mid Essex NHS Primary Care Trust which was funding the project.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Lady Newton remained in the meeting for this item and took part in the debate and decision thereon.

### 29 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the minutes of the meetings of Braintree Local Committee held on 14th July 2009 and 29th September 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 30 **QUESTION TIME – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**INFORMATION:** There was one statement made, a summary of which is contained in the Appendix to these Minutes.

31 **FOOTPATH 61 PORTERSFIELD PLAYING FIELD TO PANFIELD LANE, BRAINTREE – ADDITIONAL WIDTH AND CYCLE TRACK**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the proposed construction of a missing link of cycle track/pedestrian path between Portersfield playing field and Panfield Lane, Braintree. The route formed part of the wider strategic cycle network and, in particular, a link between Rayne Road and Panfield Lane. The proposed route and design details had been approved under planning application number 02/02040/FUL which related to the site.

Members were advised that the proposed route of the cycle track followed the line of Public Footpath 61 which was currently two metres wide. However, in accordance with Essex County Council design guidance the proposed cycle track/pedestrian path should be constructed as a three metre wide segregated path. In the circumstances, Braintree District Council as the landowner would be required to designate an additional one metre of land as a permissive cycle track.

Following the construction of the path, a conversion order would be required under Section 3 of the Cycle Tracks Act 1984 and the Cycle Tracks Regulations 1984 to enable the current Public Footpath to be used as a cycle track. In order to pursue a cycle track Conversion Order, the agreement of Braintree District Council as the landowner was required.

Construction of the proposed route was due to take place during the Summer of 2010.

**DECISION:** That the designation of an additional one metre of Braintree District Council owned land at Portersfield playing field, Braintree as a permissive cycle track/pedestrian path and the making of the necessary cycle track Conversion Order by Essex County Council be approved.

32 **LOCAL COMMITTEE BUDGET AND PRIORITIES**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the Braintree Local Committee budget and priorities for 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Members were reminded that an Action Plan and priorities for the Committee's 2009/10 budget had been determined, but it had been agreed that specific funding should not be allocated until a business case and detailed costs had been calculated for each project. It was proposed that a Sub-Group of Braintree Local Committee Members should be formed to assess each business case and to approve the allocation of funding from the current financial year.

A consultation event had been held on 29th September 2009, at which Members of the Committee had been joined by representatives of community groups, public service providers, and local people to discuss how to make the area a better place in which to live and to identify priority issues and projects. The results of the Place Survey undertaken in 2008 to determine the views and perception of local people about services provided by the Council, and the Comprehensive Area Assessment process which

examined how effectively local public services were performing and working together to meet the needs of local people, were used to assist the discussions.

People were asked what was needed to make the Braintree locality a better place and the key priorities were anti-social behaviour; transport; town improvements; open spaces; and obesity. Ideas on how these priorities could be tackled were also discussed and a list of potential actions/projects was identified. These were attached to the Agenda report at Appendix C.

It was noted that in the current economic climate, it was even more important for organisations to work in partnership and many of the ideas would require further discussion with partner organisations and members of the public before they could be developed.

Members were requested to identify which projects should be given the most importance in order that the Cabinet could be recommended to allocate funding in the 2010/11 financial year. The other projects listed in Appendix C would be included in a one/two year work programme and the final decision on which projects would be taken forward for 2010/11 would be made in February 2010.

Members were reminded that Councillor Simon Walsh had been appointed to represent Braintree Local Committee on a Focus Group which would consider how to involve people in the work of the Local Committees. It was noted that the Focus Group would be meeting in the New Year.

#### **DECISION:**

- (1) That the Braintree Local Committee budget 2009/10 financial summary as at 8th October 2009 be noted.
- (2) That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee together with Councillors Ms Flint, E Lynch, McArdle, Mrs Shepherd and Wilkinson be appointed to a Sub-Group, which shall meet in early December 2009, to assess all business cases and authorised to approve projects to be funded from the 2009/10 budget.
- (3) That the projects set out in Appendix C of the report be included in a one/two year work programme and that representations be made to the Local Strategic Partnership with regard to those proposals which do not relate to Braintree District Council services.

**That it be Recommended to Cabinet** that the proposed Local Youth Forum and increase/extension of the community transport scheme, as set out in Appendix C of the report, be identified as priorities for funding from the 2010/11 budget.

### 33 **LOCAL COMMITTEE DRAFT ACTION PLAN AND KEY PRIORITIES**

**INFORMATION:** The Committee was requested to endorse the action of the Chairman in approving seasonal tree planting and coppicing works under the Living Landscapes initiative.

Members were advised that when the above-mentioned matter had been discussed at the Braintree Local Committee meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2009, Councillor Mrs Schmitt as Chairman of the Living Landscapes Sub Group had requested that tree planting schemes at Pierrefitte Way, Little Square, and Bank Street, Braintree should be expedited to enable them to be carried out during the current year's planting season. At the meeting, Members of the Committee had indicated their agreement and, in view of timescales, the Chairman had authorised that the work should go ahead.

In addition, the coppicing of an area of overgrown hazel in woodland at Marks Farm, Braintree, which had also been listed under the Living Landscapes initiative, required attention in the current year's planting season. The Landscapes Manager had engaged a contractor to undertake this work in early November 2009 and, in the circumstances, the Chairman had authorised this work also.

**DECISION:** That the action taken by the Chairman in authorising tree planting schemes at Pierrefitte Way, Little Square, and Bank Street Braintree and the coppicing of an area of overgrown hazel in woodland at Marks Farm, Braintree be endorsed.

#### 34 **LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL – LOCALISM SCHEMES**

**INFORMATION:** The Committee received a report on the Braintree District Local Highways Panel and localism schemes.

It was reported that the Local Highways Panel would be considering priorities for localism schemes for 2010/11 onwards at its next meeting and the Committee had been requested to put forward suggestions. Members were advised that the list of localism schemes was compiled by Essex County Council's Area Highways Manager from suggestions put forward by local Members and Parish Councils. The type of schemes that were appropriate for inclusion in this list were footways, pedestrian crossings, traffic management schemes and other small-scale improvements. The level of funding that would be available was not yet known.

Members were advised that as part of the localism agenda, a highways ranger service was also being established to carry out minor highway works. This would be a dedicated gang of two men, funded by Essex County Council, undertaking minor highway works within the District that could be carried out with hand tools. It was intended that the bulk of work would be identified through Parish or Town Councils. The County Council would then put together a programme of work based on the Parish Council priorities. For Braintree town it was proposed that a Sub-Group of the Local Committee, comprising all Ward Members for Braintree and Bocking should be set up to determine priorities.

In discussing the establishment of a Sub-Group, Members expressed concern that the Group would not be effective unless it met on a regular basis in order to highlight works as and when they arose. It was suggested that in addition to the Sub Group, Ward Members for Braintree and Bocking

should be able to report matters requiring attention as they occurred and that this facility should be available on-line.

In considering this item, the Committee received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Braintree District Local Highways Panel held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

**DECISION:**

- (1) That possible schemes to be put forward to the Local Highways Panel for inclusion in the Localism Scheme Programme be referred to the Head of District Development as soon as possible.
- (2) That a Sub-Group consisting of the Ward Members representing Braintree and Bocking be established to meet in approximately three months time to put forward priorities for the Highways Rangers to deal with in Braintree town, and that a form be made available to these Members to enable them to report matters requiring attention in between meetings.
- (3) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Braintree District Local Highways Panel held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2009 be noted

35 **BRAINTREE OUTDOOR GYM PROJECT**

**INFORMATION:** It was reported that Braintree District Council was working with Mid Essex NHS Primary Care Trust to address the health of the community within the Braintree area through a number of initiatives. One of the projects which had been identified was the purchase of outdoor gym equipment.

The Primary Care Trust had agreed to make a grant of £20,000 to Braintree District Council to cover the purchase and installation of the equipment, with the Council being responsible for any repairs. The contract would last for five years and it was proposed that it should be reviewed at the end of the period to determine whether it should be renewed.

The equipment to be provided would be low impact, resistance-based equipment suitable for children and adults. The equipment would provide the user with different types of cardiovascular, tonal and well-being exercise and there would be on-site instructions explaining the safe and effective use of all pieces of equipment. Finance had been secured to fund a Physical Activity Co-ordinator for a period of six months to help to increase the level of use of the equipment.

It was proposed that the equipment should be placed in an area of health inequality where it could be seen from the roadside and near to a residential estate. Two possible sites had been considered and these were Meadowside playing fields, and Riverside playing fields, Braintree. Meadowside was the preferred location.

**DECISION:** That Meadowside be approved as the location for the outdoor gym project in the Braintree area.

36 **FUTURE ITEMS**

**INFORMATION:** It was reported that the following matters were scheduled to be considered at the meeting of Braintree Local Committee to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

Budget Consultation  
Cultural Strategy  
Litter Strategy  
Review of Off-Street Car Parking

**DECISION:** That the Agenda items for the meeting of Braintree Local Committee to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010 be noted.

Urgent Item

The Chairman agreed to consider the following item of business as a matter of urgency in view of the need to submit comments as soon as possible.

37 **BRITISH TELECOM TELEPHONE KIOSK CONSULTATION**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a schedule of BT telephone kiosks in the Braintree area which were apparently under-used and were being offered for adoption.

In discussing this item, Members of the Committee expressed concern about BT's consultation process which had been directed to Parish Councils. However, it was noted that adoption of a kiosk could only take place with the consent of the District Council. Members asked to receive a copy of the District Council's written response to BT.

**DECISION:** That the item be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm.

S M Walsh

(Chairman)

## APPENDIX

### BRAINTREE LOCAL COMMITTEE

24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009

### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

#### Summary of Questions Asked / Statements Made During Public Question Time

1. Statement by Mrs A Bishop, Chairman of Braintree District Arts and the Cultural Partnership Board, 95 Mountbatten Road, Braintree

Mrs Bishop stated that she was speaking as Chairman of Braintree District Arts and Chairman of the Cultural Partnership Board.

Mrs Bishop indicated that Braintree Local Committee had agreed on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2009 that £10,000 should be allocated to arts projects. Mrs Bishop asked whether any proposals had been put forward yet for the allocation of funds and what would happen if the budget had not be spent by the end of the financial year.

Response by Councillor Tim Wilkinson, Deputy Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Culture and Mrs Kitty Barrett, Locality and Rural Co-ordinator

Councillor Wilkinson stated that a bid had been submitted for an Arts Trail in Braintree, Halstead and Witham. Mrs Barrett confirmed that any unspent funds would be carried forward to the next financial year.