

**CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009**

Agenda Item 9(i)

**CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Mrs Joanne Beavis**

**CABINET PORTFOLIO: Customers & Communication**

Portfolio covers:-

- Member Development
- Rural and Locality (Place Shaping) Development
- External Communications and Marketing Strategy
- Customer Access Strategy
- Democratic Support
- Corporate Consultation
- Customer Standards and Relationships

**REPORT COVERS ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD COMMENCING 7<sup>th</sup> April 2009 AND ENDING 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009**

## **RURAL AFFAIRS**

1. On the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2009 Braintree District Council will be hosting a Sustainable Rural Communities seminar. The event will be at Causeway House and is being facilitated by the Rural Services Network.  
The Rural Services Network comprises 250 organisations involved in rural services delivery from local authorities and public bodies, through to local businesses, charities and voluntary groups. The event will be useful and I will report back in my next Cabinet Report.
2. The Essex Rural Partnership is in the process of updating the Essex Rural Strategy. At our recent meeting I had the chance to work with other local authorities and partnership groups to agree the new priorities. Affordable housing, support of rural enterprise, community involvement and empowerment, improving transport links, accessible green spaces, health issues were some of the top priorities. The strategy should be completed later this Autumn.

The Rural Community Council of Essex Conference. This year the RCCE celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Supporting Community Led Planning was high on the agenda and it was good to see some case studies from our own Braintree District Council. Braintree is clearly leading the way with 27 completed plans.

## **CORPORATE CONSULTATION**

### **1. THE PEOPLES PANEL**

The Peoples Panel has been set up to help us consult with local people. The road show has now visited our three main towns and the uptake has been good. We will

be consulting with people approximately four times a year. All panel members will receive a news bulletin to enable us to share information.

## **2. THE PLACE SURVEY (Value for money survey)**

The results of the Place Survey are soon to be published. The Place Survey is carried out every two years and allows our authority to benchmark itself against other authorities Countrywide. Customer satisfaction and improved service delivery will be my focus of interest.

### **The Marketing and Communications Strategy**

- 1.** The new Marketing and Communications Strategy was presented at the May Cabinet meeting.  
Since that Cabinet Meeting, I have met with Cllr's Harley and Bebb to discuss enlarging the brief to incorporate the promotion of the district to the business community.
- 2.** I have been working with Cllr Bebb and the appropriate Officer to produce a 'new look' In Touch. In Touch, with its new face-lift, will be distributed soon, in a magazine style, and will incorporate town and village alike.

### **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

#### **1. MEMBER SUPPORT**

We have now recruited the new Member Support Officer. Our new Officer will be in post in July.

This years Annual Plan has highlighted the councils desire to make it easier to contact local councillors and raise the profile of ward Councillors in their wards.

#### **2. Member and Democracy Web Site**

This piece of work is currently in progress and will be continued by our new Member Support Officer.

### **The Local Public Service Provision Project**

I made a presentation at the May Cabinet meeting. Face to Face communications are still an area for consideration particularly in our rural areas. We will be investigating modern forms of working and embracing potential new partners to carry out this project.

***FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING:***

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