Welcome

to our Annual Plan 2012/13

In February 2012, following consultation with our customers about what is important to them, we agreed the Council’s priorities for 2012-16. These priorities are set out in our Corporate Strategy and will be the focus for the Council’s resources over the next four years as we work to improve the well-being of residents, communities and businesses in the district.

This Annual Plan sets out our key activities for 2012/13 and the measures we will use to report and manage our performance for the forthcoming year.

At a time when resources are scarce, our overriding focus is to accomplish our priorities whilst achieving the best possible value for money for all our residents. For the last two years we have been able to freeze Council Tax to ensure that we support all of our residents during this financially challenging period, and we will endeavour to do the same for 2013/14.

Over the last 5 years we have saved £6.83 million by being more efficient and performing better. Tough times call for creative solutions and we are spear-heading new ways of working by generating income, sharing services, and building new and stronger partnerships. In this way we plan to make a further £4 million savings over the next 4 years.

Councillor
Graham Butland
Leader of the Council

Allan Reid
Chief Executive

Corporate Priorities 2012-16

- Keeping our district clean and tidy
- Protecting our environment
- Providing green space for everyone to enjoy

- Supporting vulnerable people in our community
- Promoting safe and healthy living
- Encouraging flourishing communities

- Boost employment skills and support business
- Promoting and improving our town centres
- Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth

- Providing value for money
- Delivering excellent customer service
- Improving our services through innovation

delivering through partnership
public services, communities, voluntary sector and private sector
Our Priorities

• Keep our district clean and tidy
• Protecting our environment
• Provide green space for everyone to enjoy

In 2012/13 we will:

• Improve the appearance and visual impact of the key gateways leading into our towns and villages
• Reduce the number of households in fuel poverty by working with national organisations to reduce energy costs and installing energy saving measures in domestic properties
• Encourage households to produce less waste and recycle more
• Expand the anti-litter campaign with a focus on litter thrown from cars
• Work with schools and local communities to encourage more people to take pride in their neighbourhoods and to actively get involved in keeping their local areas clean
• Work with Southview School and the local community to provide a community orchard and allotments
• Complete the Halstead River Walk pathway
Our Priorities

- Support vulnerable people in our community
- Promote safe and healthy living
- Encourage flourishing communities

In 2012/13 we will:

- Increase our support to vulnerable people to enable them to stay in their own homes by increasing the investment in disabled facilities grant schemes
- Develop the Community Transport Service further by increasing passenger numbers and journeys, with a focus on vulnerable people living in the most isolated areas
- Work in partnership with other agencies (e.g. Trading Standards and Police) to tackle ‘rogue traders’ who prey on vulnerable people
- Improve play facilities making these fun and safe places for young people and families to enjoy by:
  - Refreshing three play areas, providing new equipment and fencing
  - Creating a Skate park in Silver End
  - Installing play equipment in Witham Town park.
- Continue to build the Witham Leisure Centre to deliver a new leisure facility by the end of 2013 that meets the needs of customers, schools and sports groups.
- Improve our cycling network through the completion of John Ray Park Phase 2 cycleway
- Support and monitor the projects selected for Mi Community funding to ensure successful implementation and community benefits
Prosperity

Our Priorities

- Boost employment skills and support business
- Promote and improving our town centres
- Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth

In 2012/13 we will:

- Provide more opportunities and access for people not in employment, education or training by launching a landscape employment/training initiative
- Provide further places on the modern apprentice scheme at Braintree District Council
- Improve the attractiveness of Braintree town centre by:
  - Establishing a town centre improvement design
  - Completing improvements to Sandpit Lane, Braintree and starting work on improvements to St Michael’s Fountain
  - Introducing initiatives to assist businesses in the town centre
  - Working in partnership with developer on the land behind the Town Hall
- Improve the attractiveness of Witham town centre by:
  - Establishing a town centre improvement design
  - Introducing initiatives to assist businesses in the town centre
  - Working in partnership with owners of the Newlands Centre.
- Spring clean the town centres including a deep clean of pavements and refurbishment of street furniture where required
- Secure the provision of 50 affordable homes and bring 55 empty homes back into use
Our Priorities

- Provide value for money
- Deliver excellent customer service
- Improving our services through innovation

In 2012/13 we will:

- Improve customer service by achieving the Customer Service Excellence Standard for our key services
- Ensure our services continue to be fit for purpose and offer value for money by undertaking a programme of Efficiency Reviews
  - Corporate Management
  - Refuse and Recycling
  - Environment
  - Revenues and Benefits
  - Building Control
  - Community Support/Safety
- Prepare for government changes to Benefits, Council Tax & Business Rates in the Local Government Finance Act 2012
- Implement the new leisure contract to deliver a customer-focused, accessible and cost-effective leisure service
- Improve the regulatory service provided to businesses by working together with Trading Standards and other partners to reduce red tape, avoid duplication of inspections and ensure that compliant business is encouraged and supported
- Endeavour to deliver a 0% Council Tax increase for 2013/14
The majority of our services and improvements are provided in partnership with others, whether it is with community groups, voluntary organisations, public sector or private sector organisations.

There are key areas we will focus on over the next twelve months. We will:

- Lobby for A120 improvements and a Braintree rail loop, through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Work with local doctors and other health partners to develop and improve local health services
- Work with our partners to deliver better outcomes for our residents through the county-wide Community Budget programme and a neighbourhood budget pilot in Witham.
- Work with our community safety partners and the new Police and Crime Commissioner to make our district safer
- Work with water companies and the Environment Agency to increase resilience to drought by promoting the efficient use of water across the district.
- Work in partnership with businesses across the district to create economic growth and new jobs
- Work in partnership with retailers and town centre stakeholders to attract new businesses to our towns and increase footfall
### Measuring success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual 2010/2011</th>
<th>Target 2011/2012</th>
<th>Target 2012/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of land that falls below cleanliness standards for litter</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%**</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting</td>
<td>53.87%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of fly tips cleared within 24 hours of being reported</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public satisfaction with parks and open spaces</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>84%*</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of households supported by installing energy saving measures</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>150^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of households &amp; businesses assisted to install water efficiency measures</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>500^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of customers using our leisure centres</td>
<td>950,029</td>
<td>960,000</td>
<td>970,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of passenger journeys on the Community Transport Scheme</td>
<td>52,366</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>58,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Mi Communities projects successfully completed</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of prosecutions against “rogue trading”</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>10^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of empty homes in the district returned to use</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>55^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of affordable homes delivered</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of young people assisted into education, employment or training through council and partnership schemes</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>75^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of empty shops in the district</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new business start ups in the district</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>120^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people using council owned car parks in Braintree, Halstead and Witham town centres</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>615,000</td>
<td>630,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of enquiries resolved at first point of contact within the Customer Service Centre</td>
<td>92.82%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time taken to process housing benefit/council tax benefit new claims and changes</td>
<td>6.83 days</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>8 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing of minor planning applications within 8 weeks</td>
<td>84.33%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of stage 2 complaints received</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Activity indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to in 7 working days</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall customer satisfaction with the way Braintree District Council runs things</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>88%*</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of residents who agree that Braintree District Council provides value for money</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>66%*</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Actual totals from last customer survey

**The way this target is measured was changed in 2011-12

^ These are new key indicators for 2012-13 to reflect our Corporate Priorities. There is no comparable information for previous years.

^^Including Halstead Town Council
Comments and Feedback

We always welcome comments, suggestions and feedback (critical or otherwise) on our plans and improvements and in the way that we write our documents and communicate them.

If you would like to comment, you can:

**call** our Customer Service Centre on **01376 552525**.

**e-mail** our Customer Service Centre at: **csc@braintree.gov.uk**.

**write** to any of our main or area offices at:

**Braintree District Council**,  
Causeway House  
Braintree, Essex CM7 9HB

**Halstead Public Library**  
Bridge Street,  
Halstead, CO9 1HU

**Witham Public Library**,  
18 Newland Street  
Witham CM8 2AQ

or at any other library in the District  
- please ensure letters are clearly addressed to Braintree District Council.

Contact your local councillor  
- you can speak to your local Councillor who will be able to pass your comments back if you wish.

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[www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk)