Annual Plan
2018/19
Our plans for the District
In what is the biggest shake up of local government funding, our central funding for council services will whittle away to nothing by 2020. That's a cliff edge we cannot tip over. The financial pressures we are under are the catalyst for change but they aren’t the driver. The driver is and has always been making life easier for our residents and improving the services they rely on.

That is why we are working hard to work smarter, to think more commercially and to invest in your future in areas which otherwise wouldn’t see investment - health and homes, journeys and jobs - while also giving us a good return on investment that we can continually plough back into the community.

This document will show you some of the projects we are working on. You will be able to see that local government is about more than bins: it’s about life chances. Our staff and your local councillors get involved in local government to make lives better.

We are working with others too, this year we signed up to The Future of Essex which is a vision shared by more than 100 partners, all dedicated to improving the county over the next 18 years and helping to:

1. Unite behind a sense of identity
2. Enjoy life long into old age
3. Provide an equal foundation for every child
4. Strengthen communities through participation
5. Develop our county sustainably
6. Connect us to each other and the world
7. Share prosperity with everyone.

Throughout this document you will find reference as to how we are supporting this vision marked with E. You can also find out more here: www.essexfuture.org.uk

Councillor Graham Butland
Leader of Braintree District Council

Andy Wright
Chief Executive
To support this in 2017/18 we have:

• Installed fencing and bollards to nine open spaces across the District protecting them from unauthorised access including illegal encampments

• Organised energy switching schemes throughout the year for both residents and businesses providing cheaper energy tariffs with an average saving of £125 per household

• Installed a fast electric car charger at Causeway House

• Provided two new narrow track refuse vehicles for waste collections helping us to collect from hard to access roads

• Delivered a cost saving of £35k by maintaining the suspension of the green waste collection service over the winter period

• Introduced a trial kerbside textile recycling collection service to approximately 8,000 households (excluding flats) in Halstead, Coggeshall and Feering

• Increased the numbers of compost bins sold in the District, helping waste minimisation

• Delivered a grounds maintenance service to 40 local schools, academies, leisure centres and parish councils.

• Achieved 38 awards from the Essex Playing Field Association (including 10 gold, 15 silver and 13 Merit awards) for the standard and quality of the Council’s play areas.

• Launched the #crimenottocare campaign to tackle fly tipping across Essex

• Won Gold for Best Medium Sized Park for Halstead Public Gardens in the Anglia in Bloom awards

• Joined forces with environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy to launch the ‘We’re watching you’ campaign in a bid to reduce dog fouling by thoughtless dog walkers

• Provided a seven day cleaning programme in Town Centres including litter picking, bin emptying and sweeping

In 2018/19 we will:

Minimise waste

• Continue to support the Essex Waste Management Partnership to reduce waste and increase recycling and participate in countywide campaigns.

• Work with other Essex Councils and the University of Essex to better understand people’s attitudes towards waste and recycling.

• Offer our commercial customers a more tailored refuse and recycling service that will help them reduce, re-use and recycle their waste

Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions

• Develop an improved low tariff energy switching scheme for both residents and businesses in the District improving the customer experience and offering additional benefits and improved rates for residents on pre-paid meters

• Increase the electric car charging infrastructure by installing chargers at the three leisure centres across the District

• Upgrade the lighting in our car parks with new energy efficient LED lights to reduce costs and benefit the environment

Keep the District clean and tidy

• Trial the use of Compaction bins in Braintree Town Centre to see if they offer better value for money for the tax payer

• Continue to maintain a focus on investigating and enforcing littering, dog fouling and fly tipping to help keep the District looking clean and tidy

• Run a car litter campaign to reduce litter and raise awareness of the increase in fines

Maintain green spaces

• Continue to protect our larger open spaces from illegal encampments by installing perimeter fencing and lockable bollards to prevent disruption and inconvenience to local residents
Strategic Growth and Infrastructure

Vision/Outcome
A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure.

To support this in 2017/18 we have:

• Submitted the Draft Local Plan to Government for examination
• Granted planning permission for over 1,800 dwellings supporting the delivery of much needed housing across the District
• Enabled the delivery of 130 affordable homes across the District
• Continued to lobby Network Rail to improve the rail services for the District
• Secured £4.95m of Government funding towards new slip roads linking the A120 with Millennium way
• Consulted with businesses and residents over plans for two Garden Communities
• Completed due diligence and indicative financial model for setting up a Housing Development Company
• Helped over 250 households from becoming homeless

In 2018/19 we will:

Develop a Local Plan
• Complete the examination and adoption of the Local Plan

Increasing the number of homes
• Continue to work on the development of Garden Communities to provide housing, employment and supporting infrastructure to address our long term housing and community needs
• Set up a Housing Development Company to deliver new mixed tenure homes across the District
• Secure planning consent to deliver new homes in Braintree Town Centre as part of the Manor Street Regeneration Project

Affordable Housing
• Provide 100 affordable homes across the District

Support sustainable transport and infrastructure links
• Continue to work with partner agencies to drive forward improvements to the Braintree and Witham Rail link
• Work with Essex County Council to deliver an improvement scheme at Springwood Drive roundabout and Panfield Lane to reduce congestion.
• Alleviate the congestion at Galleys Corner by progressing the delivery of new slip roads linking the A120 to Millennium Way
To support this in 2017/18 we have:

- Delivered a package of business engagement events providing advice and support to businesses across the District
- Established the employment and skills board to address educational attainment and employment skills needs within the District
- Published detailed guides and held events with Businesses to raise awareness of the Apprenticeship Levy
- Delivered a business hub on the Premdor site in Sible Hedingham
- Developed a vision for the regeneration of the land to the rear of Braintree Town Hall to enhance the appeal of the Town Centre to visitors
- Launched the Grape and Grain Trail at the Essex Festival of Food and Drink enabling visitors to sample wines, beers and spirits from the finest local producers

- Hosted an enrichment day attended by over 30 apprentices from across Essex providing them with the opportunity to learn new skills ready for the world of work
- Secured planning consent and started on site to deliver four new grow on units at Braintree Enterprise Centre

In 2018/19 we will:

Provide employment sites and premises

- Complete the acquisition of strategic employment land at Great Notley providing additional employment sites to support business growth
- Complete the construction of four new high quality grow-on units at the Braintree Enterprise Centre

Provide support to help businesses start and grow

- Implement the new Business Engagement Strategy to develop our business engagement service, supporting businesses to grow and develop
- Work in partnership with Essex County Council and the Haven Gateway to secure grant funding to support delivery of a Construction Innovation Centre

Support our economy

- Commence work on the regeneration of Braintree Town Centre enhancing the appeal of the town to residents and visitors
- Continue to work in partnership with key community partners to deliver the regeneration schemes in Witham and Halstead
- Support businesses and increase tourism by launching the ‘Visit Braintree’ website to highlight key events and attractions across the District
- Create an event that celebrates the 90 year anniversary of the opening of the Braintree Town Hall which enhances the heritage & commercial offer of the Town Hall

Secure broadband links

- Promote high speed and reliable broadband across the District through the support of phase 4 of the Superfast Essex rollout

Develop educational attainment and skills

- Work with the Braintree Education and Skills board to broker stronger engagement between education providers and businesses to provide a workforce that meets employers’ needs
Health and Communities

Vision/Outcome
Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported.

To support this in 2017/18 we have:

- Installed state of the art disability access hoists at Halstead and Braintree swimming pools to enable easy access in and out of the water for individuals with reduced mobility
- Replaced the artificial surface at Witham Sports Ground
- Refurbished the safety surfacing at play areas at Clare Road, Twelve Acres, Riverside, Panners Bridge, Chelmer Road and Meadowside Braintree
- Held a Community Awards Event to recognise the contribution volunteers make to our District
- Delivered a range of ‘age well’ activities across the District encouraging inactive over 60’s to become active again
- Awarded over 80 grants through the Councillors’ Community grant scheme
- Delivery of the Live Well Keep Safe event in Witham which 56 people attended and received information and advice from a variety of organisations, and participated in seated exercise and a tea dance
- Set up dementia friendly swimming sessions in partnership with Fusion and Sport for Confidence
- Developed a Young Peoples online forum and website in partnership with students from Braintree College to engage with young people and seek their views across a range of topics
- Successfully developed a Livewell website for all local authorities across Essex providing residents with everything they need to know about local health initiatives and activities in Essex
- Successfully rolled out the Livewell brand which has been adopted by Essex County Council
- Delivered in to 10 schools, a range of fun events and educational interventions on exercise and diet to enable the pupils and their families to make lifestyle changes helping them to live well
- Negotiated a new funding agreement with the Braintree Museum Trust enabling the Trust to manage the Councils museum services
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In 2018/19 we will:

Support residents to be healthy and live well

- Ensure the football pitches on the Deanery Gardens sports ground and the rugby pitch on King George V playing field are in year round good condition through the installation of a piped drainage system
- Continue to invest in our recreational open spaces by enhancing the play equipment at Meadowside and Twelve Acres, Braintree
- Continue to deliver the Livewell child project working with families with young children providing support and advice on nutrition and healthy activities.
- Introduce a new programme to encourage junior school children to be more healthy, looking at fitness and eating in a fun and informative way.
- Provide children and parents with activities which gets them to explore the green areas in our three main towns whilst increasing their activity levels during the school holidays
- Improve the outdoor playing experience at Halstead Leisure Centre by installing a new 3G surface
- Understand the range of services available to improve mental health and support early interventions for those residents with mental health issues, identifying any areas for improvement.

Improving services to meet the needs of the older people in the District

- Work with Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group to see how Braintree District Council can be part of the Home First Programme which ensures residents recuperate in the best environment after receiving hospital treatment
- Identify and provide opportunities that would benefit those with dementia and their carers through the Braintree District Dementia Alliance and engagement with those living with dementia and their carers.

Encourage Independent and resilient communities

- Support community groups to deliver local projects and activities through the Councillors’ Community Grant Scheme
- Work with partners across the community to raise awareness and reduce the impact of social isolation and loneliness

Protect the vulnerable

- Implement a winter warmth campaign providing advice on improving energy efficiency helping vulnerable residents stay warm during the winter months
- Improve the handyperson scheme by expanding the service to help disabled and frail residents lead more independent lives
- Raise awareness of child exploitation amongst the business community and licensed trades through the use of the Spot It, Stop It campaign
To support this in 2017/18 we have:

- Implemented a new discretionary business rate relief scheme aimed at helping businesses that have had a sharp increase in their business rates following the 2017 revaluation.
- Successfully transitioned our ICT service to an in-house model which has improved customer satisfaction and reduced costs of the service.
- Launched the ‘do it online’ campaign to promote digital services.
- Achieved the Customer Service Excellence Standard for the third year in a row recognising the high standard of customer service provided.
- Published the Digital Strategy setting out the vision for digital services over the next four years.
- Increased the limit on the amount that can be invested in Pooled Funds from £15m to £20m.
- Acquired industrial investment at 15 Springwood Drive, Braintree.
- Received a ‘highly commended’ for Innovation at a leading local government awards ceremony.
- Provided over 100 Community Priced weddings at the Town Hall.
- Maintained high customer satisfaction levels.
- Achieved planned savings of £877k through reducing costs and increasing income.
- Developed our online booking and payment systems enabling residents to book and pay for more services through our website.
- Provided over 100 Community Priced weddings at the Town Hall.
- Maintained high customer satisfaction levels.
- Achieved planned savings of £877k through reducing costs and increasing income.

In 2018/19 we will:

Review our services and processes to ensure they continue to provide value for money.

- Review our waste service, identifying ways to manage the impact of District growth on the future cost of the service.
- Review options to secure a sustainable future for our Community Transport service.
- Ensure that our Housing service is resilient to respond to the new demands placed on it through the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Improve access to services through the use of technology.

- Develop our online booking and payment systems enabling residents to book and pay for more services through our website.
- Improve our mobile working technology to allow our staff to be more flexible and customer focussed.
- Continue to respond to emerging cyber security threats, protecting our network and information by regularly reviewing our approach and training.
- Introduce in-cab technology into our street scene vehicles to improve the efficiency of the service.

Improve performance in services that are a priority for customers.

- Improve customer focused services by delivering a programme of continuous improvement to achieve the Customer Service Excellence Standard.
- Prepare the organisation for the changes in data protection legislation due to commence 25th May 2018.

Strengthen the council’s financial independence.

- Develop our commercial programme to generate income that can be reinvested in front line services.
- Identify and progress investment opportunities that support us to deliver our corporate strategy whilst providing a return on investment to strengthen our financial independence.
- Ensure the 2017/18 accounts are produced, audited and published by the 31st July 2018.

Finance and Performance

Vision/Outcome

A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services.
2017/18 we have:

• Contributed towards the consultation on the preferred routes for the A120 and widening of the A12
• Continued to work in partnership to provide modern health care facilities in Witham, Sible Hedingham and Braintree
• Granted outline planning consent for Braintree Enterprise Centre for construction of four commercial grow on units
• Completed the due diligence and indicative financial model for the Housing Development Company enabling this to move forward in 2018
• Submitted 3 bids totalling £28.7m under the Housing Infrastructure Fund
• Published our ‘Plan for Growth’ setting out how we will deliver growth and prosperity to the District over the next 5 years

In 2018/19 we will:

Work with Councils, other public bodies and the private sector across Essex, to achieve greater local control of decisions to enable us to deliver better outcomes for residents, businesses and customers

Continue to develop our strategic partnerships with public, private and voluntary organisations to provide excellent and cost effective services

• Work effectively with our partners to deliver the Essex Vision to give communities, groups and businesses in Essex a way to collaborate in planning their future, recognising the collective power of Essex as a whole
• Ensure that Braintree District Council is financially sustainable and fit for the future by delivering a balanced budget and becoming financially independent by 2020 whilst ensuring we remain a resilient organisation providing effective frontline services through smarter working
• Deliver projects under the District Investment Strategy to achieve better outcomes for the District and a return for the taxpayers’ purse by:
  - Working in partnership to improve health provision across the District
  - Facilitating the need for housing by providing homes and supporting infrastructure
  - Improving our most congested roads and journeys across the District
  - Planning for growth by providing 9,000 jobs by 2026 by delivering increased opportunities for new businesses and employment
  - Delivering investment opportunities that support growth and provide a return for the District Council
• Work with partner authorities (Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council) and other public and private sector organisations to plan for and enable sustainable growth in homes and jobs in the north Essex area
• Support Essex County Council in the management and operation of the Country Park to enhance the visitor experience, making full use of the leisure, recreational and natural facilities the park has to offer
Measuring Success

In addition to the projects and actions described in this annual plan we also measure these indicators which focus on some of our broader priorities.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment and Place</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The percentage of land that falls below cleanliness standards for litter</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonnage of household waste not recycled</td>
<td>430kgs</td>
<td>442kgs</td>
<td>430kgs</td>
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<tr>
<td>The percentage of accessible non-hazardous fly tips on public land cleared within 24 hours of being reported</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of fuel poverty and domestic energy reduction installations carried out</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>350</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Growth and Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of affordable homes delivered**</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of homes granted planning permission</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>845</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Average waiting time for applicants on the Disabled Facilities Grant (calculated in days from point of referral to approval).</td>
<td>New Indicator</td>
<td>84 Days</td>
<td>75 Days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achieve a 2% increase on the contract baseline in participation levels across all our sports centres</td>
<td>923,655</td>
<td>926,040</td>
<td>942,128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achieve at least a 1% increase in adults being active for 150 minutes per week***</td>
<td>New Indicator</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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**Finance and Performance**

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<tr>
<td>Average call answer time in the Customer Service Centre</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>13 seconds</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time taken to process housing benefit/Council tax support new claims</td>
<td>18 days</td>
<td>19 days</td>
<td>22 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time taken to process housing benefit claim changes</td>
<td>6 days</td>
<td>5.5 days</td>
<td>6 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within target</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collection rate for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Council Tax</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Business Rates</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99.25%</td>
<td>99.25%</td>
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</tbody>
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** The number of affordable homes delivered is targeted at providing 400 affordable homes over a four year period.

***The outturn figures will be provided by Sport England Active Lives Survey
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.

• You can e-mail our Customer Service Centre at csc@braintree.gov.uk.

• You can drop written comments off at one of our main offices: Braintree – Causeway House, Halstead Library or Witham Library.

• You can telephone our Customer Service Centre on 01376 552525.

• You can speak to your local Councillor who will be able to pass your comments back if you wish. Contact details for your Councillor can be found on our website: www.braintree.gov.uk.