

## **Report to the Council 19 October 2016**

**Committee: Audit and Scrutiny**

**Chair: Councillor Jan Pound**

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### **Audit & Scrutiny Committee 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

#### **Audit Results Report 2015/16**

The Committee was presented with the draft findings of the External Auditors in respect of the audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2015/16. The report was a positive one and there were relatively few issues to address.

One significant audit risk had been identified, ie the risk of capitalisation, and this had been tested and no issues found.

#### **Statement of Accounts 2015/16**

The Committee was presented with the Council's 2015/16 Statement of Accounts which had been updated for changes to date which had arisen from the audit by the external auditors.

The accounts had been presented to the Committee two months earlier than the statutory deadline.

### **Audit & Scrutiny Committee 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

#### **Internal Audit Progress Report**

Internal audit provided a report which detailed the progress to date against the 2015/16 and 2016/17 internal audit plans. Overall the Council had achieved a majority of ratings at moderate or limited, which was an average rating in terms of the auditor's scoring system.

The audits completed since the last Committee were IT security and governance, Localism, Policy Review and Licensing and a summary of the findings were also included in the report.

#### **Strategic & Operational Risk Review**

This report updated members of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on new, closed or changes to risks and also the new revised Insurance & Risk Management Strategy.

**Work Programme 2016/17**

The Committee considered its work programme for the coming year and following discussions a revised programme was agreed.

## **Report to the Council 19 October 2016**

**Committee: Community, Health and Leisure Committee**

**Chair: Councillor Keith Parker**

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### **Community Services Update**

#### **Leisure Strategy**

4 Global have been appointed to undertake the next stage of the Leisure Strategy, with a Value for Money Review and Options Appraisal. Work is currently underway and a report will come back to Community Health and Leisure Committee

#### **Volunteering Policy and Procedures**

The revised Volunteering Policy and Procedures were agreed by 5 September Community, Health and Leisure Committee. The Policy is for Brentwood Borough Council staff and for those departments looking to use volunteers within their own service areas to ensure that they are correctly supported.

Council staff undertook a voluntary litter pick on Shenfield Common and Hartswood area on 21 September as part of the Cleaner, Greener Litter Campaign.

Staff can register their volunteering opportunities through the Volunteer Essex website which was launched this year. This monitored through the Council for Voluntary Services team.

A number of National Citizenship Scheme groups have supported the Council by volunteering in areas of need.

#### **Youth Strategy Group**

The priorities for the Youth Strategy Group are Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Safer Communities – protecting young people from harm.

The Council will be supporting the Young Essex Assembly elections by hosting the hustings declaration day in December 2016.

#### **Brentwood Art Trail**

The use of recycled materials was promoted in two artworks as part of the Brentwood Art Trail which were on display at the Town Hall and at some of the Family Fun Days.

## **Winter Warmth Campaign**

A part of the Essex Wide Winter Warmth Campaign, Brentwood Borough Council officers have met with a number of voluntary sector organisations to look at the areas of support required to help our most vulnerable residents in Brentwood during the winter months. The countywide campaign website is launched on 1 October 2016.

## **Brentwood Community Fund**

For 2016/17 Community Fun the total pot of funding available was £16,800 and the maximum amount that applicants could apply for was £2,000. The Council received 24 applications for the 2016 Community Fund, requesting a total of £41,896 of support. The decision on the award of funding will be decided at the 5 December Community, Health and Leisure Committee.

## **Community Events**

This year's Strawberry Fair took place on Shenfield Common on 11 June to coincide with the Queen's 90 birthday celebrations. The weather did not dampen the spirits as local performers continued performing despite the rain under cover in the Big Top. There was also entertainment from a 'Queen' lookalike with her corgis, Punch and Judy, and Bird of Prey display, together with the usual strawberries and cream, Pimms and local beer.

This year the Council introduced a wristband for £2.50 for the Family Fun Days which included use throughout the day of the bouncy castles and the children's rides. One of the Family Fun Days (Ingatestone) had to be cancelled due to heavy rain, but each of days provided plenty of activities for all the family to enjoy.

The Lighting Up Brentwood event date has been set for Saturday 26 November from 1-5.30pm and Shenfield Christmas Fayre event is on Sunday 4 December from 1-5pm.

## **Hutton Community Centre**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> July the management of Hutton Community Centre was handed to over to Hutton Community Centre (CIO). The Centre currently has over 40 organisations regularly using the centre and supporting the local community.

## **Active Brentwood**

The Community Services team have a new apprentice starting in October, Michael Cox who will supporting Active Brentwood initiatives over the next year.

## **Brentwood Mind**

Brentwood Mind have recently relocated into the Town Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

## **Staff health activities**

A number of staff health initiatives have been piloted within the Town Hall which have included lunchtime walks, Pilates, meditation and Bangra sessions.

## **Community Safety Update**

**Community Safety Partnership Plan 16-17** – The plan was finalised and agreed at the CSP Strategy Group Meetings. It contains all updates and plans for this financial year.

**Senior Safety Roadshow** – The roadshow continues to grow from strength to strength and the team is booked up to Christmas. It's a real partnership project involving Essex Police, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, NHW, Home Instead and Age UK.

**Domestic Abuse Awareness** – 16 Days of Domestic Abuse Campaign starts on the 25 November. The campaign began a soft launch in June with a till roll campaign in Argos. The till roll has messages revolving around domestics abuse, CSE and elder abuse. The till roll signposts victims to the services available. An awareness day will take place on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December in Brentwood High Street. The day will see agencies come together to talk to the public and advise what support services are available. DA Training provided to staff and partners in May.

**Firebreak** – A firebreak course for 12 students is taking place in March. The 12 students are from 4 different schools and the Pass Out Parade will be on Friday 7 October from 1pm. Partners and agencies welcome.

**CSE & Trafficking Conference** – The Conference is set to take place on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October. The Deputy PCC Jayne Gardener will open the event. This short awareness session is developed in association with Brentwood Borough Council and Essex Police, specifically for taxi drivers, licensed premises and hotels/B&Bs. It aims to raise awareness of CSE and trafficking, illustrates the key and vital role taxi drivers and licensed premises play in identifying CSE and trafficking, and aims to promote confidence and understanding in reporting concerns.

**Keep Safe** – Keep Safe was expanded into Ingatestone. 7 shops in Ingatestone High Street have now signed up to the scheme. There are over 20 shops signed up in the Borough. The new Keep Safe representative is Matty Prothero, he is a hate crime embassafor based at Sawyers Hall Church.

**Staff Training** - Staff will receive 2 days training on Anti-Social Behaviour and will be using the new Corporate ASB Policy to ensure consistency across the Council. We shall also be welcoming Mallard Consultancy who will be delivering training on

neighbour nuisance which as hosts the Council will receive 10 free places for staff. Gang awareness training for staff is currently being developed to ensure staff can identify the signs of potential risk to vulnerable tenants.

**Gang Prevention Work** - Applications are currently being drafted in order to secure funding for a bespoke gang awareness sessions in local secondary schools as well as a new young person intervention post who will provide 1-2-1 support to young people and their families as well as ensuring appropriate referrals are made and any gaps in service delivery are identified in order to allow for potential commissioning of services.

**PREVENT** - Home Office funding was awarded in order to raise awareness of radicalisation and counter terrorism. Staff and Member training was undertaken as well as workshops and assemblies in local schools. Four further schools will be receiving the workshops and assemblies during October.

### **Environmental Health Update**

#### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Basildon and Brentwood Public Health Partnership Strategic Plan was agreed by 5 September Community & Health Committee. The three key priorities within the Partnership Plan are Ageing Well, Tackling Obesity and Improve Physical Health and Mental Health and Wellbeing. There are a number of projects that sit under each of the three priorities that will be delivered over the course of the year.

#### **Open Space Protection Measures**

Following a substantial increase in unauthorised encampments in the Borough in the last two years we are making arrangements to enter the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit partnership with other districts and Essex County, who will be dealing with encampments on Council land in future once we have joined.

We have reviewed the expenditure on protection measures identified for Council land and have proposed further security works to sites including Seymour Field Ingatestone, Alexander Lane Shenfield, Hutton Poplars and Larkins Playing Fields.

#### **CCTV Code of Practice**

The Code of Practice for our CCTV operation in the Borough has been updated to incorporate the latest guidance from the Surveillance Camera Commissioner which requires us to review the privacy impact and operation of cameras to ensure that they meet the guiding principles set out by the Commissioner.

## **Report to the Council – 19 October 2016**

### **Committee: Environment and Housing Management**

**Chair: Councillor Hossack**

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## **HOUSING MANAGEMENT**

### **Development of Council Garage Sites**

The Committee will be aware of the Council's aspirations to build affordable homes on under used Council garage sites. Planning permission was obtained on the 1 December 2015 to build:

- 4 x 1 bedroom single storey units for older persons at Fawters Close, Brentwood
- 3 x 3 bedroom Houses for families at Magdalen Gardens, Brentwood

Design drawings and specification are being produced by architects in preparation to start the procurement of a building contractor to construct the properties on behalf of the Council. We aim to start building works on site mid September 2016.

Consultation meetings have taken place with the residents at Fawters Close and Cedar Road in relation to asbestos roofing removal from garages, dismantling of garages and new boundary wall.

The project for the development of new affordable housing has progressed some what over the last few months.

The asbestos removal in Fawters Close has been successfully completed, and we are now in a position to begin deconstructing the garages and completing the boundary works to erect new concrete fencing as agreed with the residents, on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

As part of the Fawters Close development, our application for additional community parking was also unanimously agreed at planning committee on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

Magdalen Gardens residents have also been kept up to date with a progress letter.

The procurement tender process for both sites ends on 30<sup>th</sup> September, and the results will then be evaluated with contractor interviews being conducted. We hope to start on site at the beginning of November.

### **Stock Condition Survey**

The Council has awarded a contract to Pennington's surveyors to complete a stock condition survey on all its housing stock. The survey of 2,479 properties and communal areas commenced in August 2016 and surveys should be complete by mid November. Access from residents is going well and Pennington's have now completed 378 surveys

as of 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016. The results of the survey will inform the Council HRA business plan over the next 10, 15 & 20 years. Robust data management is critical for effective decision-making on assets; information gathered from the surveys will be entered into the Keystone asset management database and used to inform our future investment decisions on the Council housing stock.

### **Parking at Gibraltar House, Mayflower House & The Keys**

Members and residents raised concerns over the lack of parking at the above schemes end of 2015 caused by parking spaces being used by workers of local businesses during the day.

Following a meeting held with residents and business owners on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to consult them on proposed options, it was agreed by the Head of Housing and Chair of Housing Cllr Hossack that the below will be implemented once formal consultation has taken place.

	Type of Car park Measure to be implemented	Number of permits per resident	Cost per permit for residents	Number of Permits per business	Cost per permit for businesses
Gibraltar House	Resident only permit parking between 8am and 8pm	2 per household	Free for the first 12 months then £34 per permit per year *Lost/stolen/change of details that require a new permit will incur a £10 administration fee	N/A	N/A
Mayflower House	Resident only permit parking between 8am and 8pm	2 per household	Free for the first 12 months then £34 per permit per year *Lost/stolen/change of details that require a new permit will incur a £10 administration fee	N/A	N/A
The Keys	Limited stay 2 hours no return within 4 hours Permit holders all day	2 per household	Free for the first 12 months then £34 per permit per year *Lost/stolen/change of details that require a new permit will incur a £10 administration fee	Unlimited	Free for the first 12 months then £34 per permit per year *Lost/stolen/change of details that require a new permit will incur a £10 administration fee

The signed paperwork is now with Alan McBean in Parking Enforcement who will facilitate the formal consultation. We anticipate that enforcement will begin in January 2017 providing no objections are received.



### **Drake House**

Following a formal procurement exercise the contract was awarded to BSW Heating Limited.

The renewal of the heating, cold and hot water systems is underway. Vertical infrastructure pipework has been installed to all levels and work has commenced installing the horizontal pipework to common areas. Access has been arranged with 91% of the residents in readiness to complete individual flat installations. Local temporary heating will be supplied to each flat whilst they are under installation.

Once the system pipework is complete the temporary boiler and boosted water plant will be delivered and commissioned. This will allow the redundant systems to be switched off and systematically removed in preparation for new to be installed.

The work is on schedule and expected to be complete by 23/12/16.

The new system will offer residents superior control of their heating and hot water. This will enable them to monitor usage and make changes where they feel it necessary.

The new energy management system will allow the council to accurately bill each end user for their gas consumption. A significant change to the current system whereby each household is billed a percentage of the overall expenditure; subject to factorisation for dwelling size.

### **Three Arch Bridge Estate**

Armour Group Limited were awarded this contract after a procurement and selection process.

Their first task was to complete the 8 blocks left unfinished by the previous contractor. This is due to be achieved by 07/10/16.

Work to the first of the remaining 7 blocks is due to commence 26/09/16. This will involve the demolition of the existing balcony perimeter and stairwell brick wall. Once removed, the new steel handrail system will be installed followed by the renewal of the asphalt floor covering, render finish and other associated work. The other 6 blocks will follow in swift sequence.

The work is expected to be completed by 09/12/16.

### **Transformation Project**

The Housing & Health Committee on the 7 January 2015, approved the implementation of a transformation programme for the Housing Department called "Getting Our House In Order". The programme was expected to be completed within 12/18 months.

At the recent Environment and Housing Management Committee a recommendation was put forward for members to endorse the continuation of the transformation project.

The new revised date to deliver the key improvements in the transformation programme was the end of December 2016. The report outlined the key improvements achieved so far, and the key improvements to be delivered before the end of December 2016.

The transformation programme was a cultural change in the Housing Department which had a focus on performance, customer service and new methods of working. On completion of the transformation programme, there would need to be a period of stabilisation within the Housing Department to allow new methods of working to embed for the first half of 2017 and return to a steady state.

The improvements delivered and improvements made in performance, coupled with the results of the Stock Condition Survey would enable the Housing Department to be in a good position to make informed decisions on how to meet challenges of the future.

This recommendation was approved at committee on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016, and the transformation programme will therefore continue in the coming months.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Assessment of Bring Sites (Report)**

The Committee agreed to the closure of three bring sites – Brentwood Centre, Rayleigh Road and the Town Hall.

It was recognized that bring sites in the past played an important part but now regarded as an anachronism due to the comprehensive kerbside collection the Council offer. The non-recyclable waste material deposited at bring sites has had an adverse impact on street scene and can be hazardous. The sites are continually contaminated and regularly have trade waste fly tips left at the sites.

The Committee recognized that a number of residents may wish to continue to dispose recyclables at a bring site so it was further agreed that the site at Warley adjacent to the Works Depot would remain and would receive additional investment to enhance and as next to the Depot staff will be able to monitor etc.

Time wise the team will firstly implement changes and update the Warley Bring site prior to closing the other three sites. We envisage this to be completed mid November when we will then be able to close the other sites.

## **Cemetery Management plans – Woodman Road & London Road Cemetery (Report)**

Members approved the works programmes for Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery subject to successful capital funding bids or availability of funding from S106/CIL contributions.

The provision of management plans with structured programmes for improvements within the two cemeteries would help Officers to focus and direct resources where they were needed. This would help manage resident expectations with regards to future provisions and improvements as well as ensuring that value for money is obtained with the works undertaken.

## **Pilot Scheme for Refuse/Recycling Bins in West Horndon (Report)**

A waste and recycling pilot scheme had taken place in West Horndon (since 1 April 2016) entailing the use of wheeled bins for the containment of general waste and dry recyclables.

The committee agreed that there was no longer sufficient business justification to continue with the pilot scheme and agreed to terminate the pilot scheme and re-introduce the collection of sacks for refuse and dry recycling. The Committee further agreed to permit individual households to retain their residual bin for personal use however they would be advised that they need to place their recycling in sacks within the bin. The 240 litre wheeled bin for recycling will be collected by Operational Services and re-used.

West Horndon PC and all the residents were thanked by the Chair of Environment and Housing Management Committee and it should be noted that all residents would receive a letter explaining outcome of pilot scheme and time lines for collection of bins and delivery of roll of orange sacks.

## **Changes to the use of ECC's Recycling Centres for Household waste (RCHWs)- (Verbal update)**

### **Summary of changes**

- ECC have identified that RCHWs are targeted by small businesses, with as many as a third of users arriving in commercial type vehicles. The Environmental permits for the RCHWs do not allow trade waste; therefore raising a legal compliance issue. RCHWs are only for use by residents bringing in household waste from their own property; legislation does not count DIY and construction waste as household waste.
- The rule of thumb of how the law works: household waste covers things which a householder would normally take with them when they move house. If the waste is

something you would leave behind, like doors, a fitted kitchen or bathroom, or soil and hardcore from a garden, it is construction waste. And business waste of any kind is strictly excluded.

**EFFECTIVE FROM 31 OCTOBER 2016:**

- **MOUNTNESSING RCHW will not accept DIY and construction waste:**
- **BRENTWOOD RCHW** in Coptie Green Road will continue to accept all waste materials, but with reasonable limits applied, to allow small DIY disposals but not trade waste:

Full details of changes are on ECC website and we have put a link to this on our own website.

**Update on Cleaner Greener Campaign (Verbal Update)**

The Campaign with other Local Authorities in Essex and partners such as MacDonald's, Dominos etc commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2016, and ran till the end of September. Locally we held some Litter Awareness Road shows and community litter picks including one with staff from Brentwood Centre and one with staff at Town Hall. Environmental Health Officers also supported by holding a 'Stop and Search' alongside the police.

**Update on Waste Strategy Group Meeting (Verbal Update)**

Members of the Waste Strategy group continue to meet (4<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> Oct) to discuss and exchange ways to improve and enhance the waste and recycling services and to contribute towards future committee meetings.

## **Report to the Council 19 October 2016**

### **Committee: Planning and Licensing Committee**

#### **Chair: Councillor Roger McCheyne**

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Since my last report in June the planning team have continued to identify potential service improvements including working with the team from Thurrock. The improvements would affect the whole development management process from initial pre-application discussions through the application stage and on to implementation on the ground, including compliance with conditions and S106 agreements. The team remains enthusiastic as it moves into the implementation phase, which is to be managed by the team from Thurrock. The changes are quite wide ranging and include modifying ways of managing work streams, using technology better and improved working with members and agents. The Development Management structure is also being reviewed. Members will be encouraged to become involved in these changes where appropriate and officers will report back on the progress of implementation as we move forward.

The number of applications received remains higher than the same period last year and the pre-application service continues to be extremely popular particularly with developers proposing to submit applications for larger housing schemes. Both application and pre-application fee income remains ahead of last year and our forecast. The publication of the draft local development plan has ignited developer interest in some of the larger sites identified within the borough and officers are collaborating with those parties to identify deliverable sites which will support the work of the policy team when the plan comes to examination. We expect that as we move through the local plan inquiry to adoption that developer contact will increase markedly and we have ideas about how to best meet this challenge with regard to workload and quality of development. For this reason we need to implement move swiftly through the implementation of these improvements to put us in the best position to meet these future challenges.



## **Report to the Council 19 October 2016**

### **Committee: Policy, Finance and Resources**

**Chair: Councillor Louise McKinlay**

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#### **Council Restructure**

The report covered the request to allow the Chief Executive delegated authority to conduct, manage and implement restructures in service areas of the Council. The report also stated that whilst the Council's Organisational Change Policy made it clear that approval was not sought from Members in relation to the service areas under review, it was important that Members were aware of the potential changes to the way in which services were delivered prior to any restructuring being carried out.

The areas that were under consideration to be restructured are:

- a. Senior Management Team, also known as the Corporate Leadership Board (CLB). Because of budget pressures and realignment of services
- b. Planning – to make the service more reactive and in-line with the current service delivery model.
- c. Housing – operations to be reviewed to meet service delivery

The aim of the restructures is to focus on service delivery and improvement in the customer journey and not driving efficiency benefits.

It is envisaged that the restructures would be in place by the end of this calendar year.

#### **Key Project Updates**

The report provided an update on the achievements and targets to date of the key corporate projects of the Council.

An update of the actions which have been completed since the previous report and the actions to be taken in the next three months were discussed on the projects listed below:

- a. The Town Hall and Service Delivery Hub – Business case coming to Ordinary Council in October. Open days/evening recently held for staff and members.
- b. The Local Development Plan (LDP) – 3,900 individual comments from the draft Local Development Plan consultation earlier this year have now been published live on our website. All comments are now being considered and a feedback Consultation Statement summarising these will be presented at committee later this year. The Consultation Statement will provide a summary of the main issues arising from the comments received to the Draft Local Plan and its associated

Sustainability Appraisal. The comments received will be used to assist the Council in the preparation of the next version of the Local Plan. There will be a further round of consultation for this next version of the Plan.

- c. The Town Centre (incorporating William Hunter Way) – We recently attended a site visit of the new Bond Street development in Chelmsford ahead of its opening. That project was more than 12 years in the planning and the development there now is much bigger than the original concept. The aim of the visit was to learn from their experience as we develop our Town Centre Action Plan and William Hunter Way Projects.
- d. The Transformation Agenda of the Council – Members and staff were recently appraised of the technology developments within the Council at the recent Town Hall open days/evening.

The projects listed above are not an exhaustive list and other projects might be incorporated as determined by the committee. However, such projects are defined as being integral to the delivery of the revised Corporate Plan 2016-2019.

### **South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP)**

From 1 April 2011 two new parking partnerships (South East - SEPP and North East - NEPP) were established to operate the on-street parking enforcement on behalf of Essex County Council. Chelmsford is the Lead authority in the South and Colchester in the North. The Parking Partnerships are governed by a Joint Committee Agreement.

A report from the Parking Partnership Manager to extend the current Joint Committee Agreement by Four years to 31 March 2022 was included.

The report detailed the requirements that were set out within the Joint Committee Agreement that related to the possible extension, explained the Partnership Reviews that had taken place and set out the financial case demonstrating that SEPP could become self-sufficient throughout the four year extension period and set out the Risk of a partner Authority withdrawing from the partnership.

The report required that each Partner Authority provide their written consent to continue the delegated function by 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

### **Illegal and Unlawful Encampments Roundtable meeting**

This was well attended by local authorities, Essex Police, and relevant stakeholders and was very productive. We all raised our concerns and shared our experiences. As I did in my open letter to Essex PCC, Roger Hirst in August, I shared our experience that in the last year, we have invested £150,000 in extensive works to protect our open spaces against unauthorised incursions and more than £10,500 on the legal process to regain possession of public land and that cost is rising as we have had more unauthorised



incursions so far this year, than the whole of last year. Just like the other Essex Councils at the meeting, this is money that we would rather is spent delivering Council services.

The meeting wasn't just about sharing our experiences, it was to secure support from other authorities regarding unauthorised incursions and we achieved this. We also secured the commitment of Essex Police to work with us and local communities. And we also agreed to collectively pursue pressure for a strengthening of laws regarding unauthorised incursions with government.

### **Car Parking Review**

The Council is carrying out the review to update our strategy for managing Council-owned off-street car parking in Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone. We need to plan now for changes in future parking demand that will come from new development across the borough. The public consultation started on **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September and runs until Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016**. As well as the public consultation, the Council is seeking the views of key stakeholders like Essex County Council, Ingatestone Parish Council, Brentwood Access Group, Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Brentwood Renaissance Group, South Essex Parking Partnership and the Shenfield Traders Group (this isn't an exhaustive list and meetings are currently being organised).

### **Devolution**

Work is continuing to explore closer working opportunities and the potential opportunities that devolution could offer with our partners across the county. Exploration of the opportunities is key; however, nothing will be signed unless it is in the best interests of our residents and businesses.