

Since the last Council there has been one meeting of the Asset & Enterprise Committee, 18 November 2014, and a number of key decisions have been made, and detailed information provided on key issues affecting the Council.

The Committee discussed or were updated on the following issues:

The terms for the acquisition of 5 residential units as part of the sale of Warley Training Centre have been agreed. The developer has submitted a pre planning application to Planning and legal process to agree and exchange contracts has been instigated.

Housing have referred Hallsford Bridge back to the Asset and Enterprise Committee indicating that they are not interested in acquiring the site. Several offers have been received from parties interested in using the site for employment use and the Committee resolved to grant the Acting Chief Executive delegated powers to conclude a sale at best value.

Conditional contracts for the sale of Bell Mead, Ingatestone have been exchanged. The developer is under an obligation to submit a planning application within 12 weeks of exchange for 14 residential units 5 of which are to be affordable units.

Legal Services have been instructed to seek a resolution of the Guardian Trustee position of the Council at Herongate & Ingrave Village Hall.

A Report was presented to the Committee on the Asset Management Strategy. Action Plan Update.

The Committee on the 18 November approved the settlement of an outstanding rent review at Harewood Road.

The Committee were presented with two proposals for the development of the under-utilised car park at Westbury Road. It was resolved that officers would develop further options that provided additional public car parking as well as a mixed residential/retail scheme.

The Committee also approved the refurbishment and letting of two vacant cemetery lodges to the private rented sector.

The Committee agreed to the wide marketing of Hutton Community Centre to community and voluntary groups to identify organisations that are willing and capable of managing the Centre on the best terms for the Council.

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Audit & Scrutiny Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor Graeme Clark**

Since the last Ordinary Council meeting, the Audit and Scrutiny Committee met on 28 October and 26 November 2014. Task and Finish Groups continued with their work programme.

*Risk Management Training and Awareness:* Sue Fretwell, Strategic Risk Consultant, Zurich Risk Engineering UK attended the Committee. 16 members attended the training which was webcast so that members who did not attend could benefit from the training.

*Report of the William Hunter Way Task and Finish Group:* The Lessons Learned Report was created by the William Hunter Way Lessons Learned Task and Finish Group of Councillors Clark, Kerlake and Mynott. The report recorded and shared lessons learned from the William Hunter Way Project 2005-2014.

*Report of the Hutton Community Centre Task and Finish Group:* A presentation on the findings of the Task and Finish Group was delivered by Cllr Barrett, Cllr Mrs Hubbard and Cllr Ms Sanders to the Committee.

*Audit:* The 2013/14 Annual Audit Letter was received as were reports on the progress of Internal Audit, Fraud Statistics and the Strategic Risk Review.

*Budget Scrutiny Role:* The Committee agreed to create a Task and Finish Group to review the four areas of the Budget: Proposed Savings, Proposed Budget Investment, Working Balance & Reserves and Council Tax. The findings of the group will be presented to the Committee on 27 January and any recommendations from the Committee will be heard at Finance and Resources Committee on 11 February.

*William Hunter Way Procurement:* The Committee considered an urgent request to prioritise a task and finish review on William Hunter Way Procurement. Cllrs Clark, Barrett, Hones and Kerlake undertook the review. The group set its own scope and reported its findings. The report recommended training for Councillors on public procurement procedures and that the Monitoring Officer should refer the report to the Constitution Working Group.

*ICT Resilience and Business Continuity:* The Committee received a report about the impact of ICT on Business Continuity.

*Customer Services Transformation – Customer Contact Centre:* The Committee received a status report on the progress of the contact centre against the original business case. The recommendations of the Committee will inform a report to Finance and Resources Committee 14 January 2015 on the Customer Access Strategy.

The Chair would like to thank all Members and Officers who are working on task and finish groups.

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Business & Town Centres Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor David Kendall**

The first stage of developing A *Business Directory* has completed successfully to support businesses and progress the Economic Development agenda for the Borough. This will enable us to understand who our businesses are so that we can engage, support and communicate with them effectively to support their growth and development. The last business listing was undertaken as a hard copy directory in 2008 and is out of date. Half of the borough's businesses have already been contacted and the second stage of the work will be completed in early 2015/6.

A *free Brentwood Business Funding and Advice Event* was held on Wednesday 29 October 2014 in partnership with Invest Essex's Innovation Programme at Hutton Poplar Hall. 50 businesses attended and 15 exhibitors were available on the day providing information and advice to support business covering areas such as grants, loans, business rate relief, business mentoring and advice, start-up support, European and Regional funding, bid writing and working with universities. The event provided a fantastic opportunity for businesses to find out about the different types of business advice, grants and funding that is available to support their business, and to network with other businesses. Feedback from both attendees and exhibitors was excellent.

A *free training seminar on "Marketing and Social Media"* was held in partnership with Pro-actions Ltd on 11 November 2015 at Merrymeade House. This was well attended with 30 businesses learning how it could support their companies. Feedback from attendees has been positive and future events are being planned for different subject areas

Brentwood Borough Council, in conjunction with Groundwork, was thrilled to present the *3<sup>rd</sup> low carbon grant for the borough to Granite Transformations*. The grant of £3,600 was awarded to install new energy efficient heating and lighting in the showroom of the business.

*First ever quarterly Economic Working Group* between Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council was held on 12 November 2014 to ensure greater synergy and joined up working on key economic issues. It was agreed that the meetings would continue and were helpful.

A *charge for night time parking* commenced on the 20 October 2014. This is being monitored and the outcome will be reported back to the Business and Town Centre Committee in February 2015.

The *Brentwood Borough Council Renaissance Group* has developed 4 *Local Business Trade Clusters* to deal with matters and issues at a local trade level and inviting Cluster representatives to attend BB Renaissance Group meetings. The Clusters will help to address the declining engagement with traders and their input into Renaissance Group projects, bids and decision making.

*A Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group website is due to go live in December 2014. This will provide a marketing and promotional tool for the Renaissance programme, including the ability to submit funding bids online and individual Cluster Groups pages.*

*A Friday High Street market has been successfully launched to complement the Saturday market and the development of a regular Saturday Community Market for Crown Street.*

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Community Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor Karen Chilvers**

Apart from the day to day responsibilities of working on making sure Brentwood remains a safe place through our partnership working the team have:

Alongside our community partners we have continued to promote Keep Safe and now have over 100 local residents signed up to the scheme.

Following delivery of a very successful Senior Safety Day we are now working on a Senior Safety Roadshow with our partners which will hopefully be delivered from Jan 2015. The plan is to visit existing local groups, sheltered schemes, Parish Councils and provide crime prevention and safety advice.

The CSP Door Chain Project launched in October is going from strength to strength with over 10 door chains fitted to vulnerable elderly resident's homes free of charge so far.

To ensure Members are supported in terms of the new powers available under the ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014 two training sessions have been organised for 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. We are also developing a training package for all staff.

In November we ran an extremely successful young person Firebreak course with 12 young people taking part.

Two schools benefited from the Prison Me No Way Crime Awareness Day that was run in Brentwood County High School and Shenfield High School

During 22-29 Nov various activities were organised to raise awareness of domestic abuse including a gazebo in the High Street with the assistance of partners and community groups.

We hosted a very positive visit from the Police & Crime Commissioner at Hutton Community Centre.

The Community Safety Partnership also launched their Community Safety Consultation in October. So far we have received nearly 100 responses from the website and almost 50 postal replies. We are planning a special edition of the CSP newsletter in December to respond to concerns raised by local residents.

**Assets of Community Value**

It was agreed by Members at Community Committee on 20 November that the blue badge holder car parking in William Hunter Way Car Park will be added to the Council's list of Assets of Community Value. It was also agreed by Members to list the amenity green adjacent to number 41 and 62 Iris Close as an Asset of Community Value.

## **Lighting Up Brentwood**

Lighting Up Brentwood took place on Saturday 29 November and proved to be extremely popular again with large crowds throughout the day. There was plenty of festive fun for all the family.

This year's event was hosted by Phoenix FM from the main stage near Wilson's Corner, but there were additional stages outside Suite 104 and Crown Street providing live music throughout the event.

There were plenty of other activities on offer such as 60 stalls providing food, drink arts and crafts in the High Street and Crown Street. As in previous years there was a variety of walkabout acts, fairground rides and a snow globe at the Baytree Centre and the Royal British Legion Youth Band led the spectacular candlelit parade along the High Street with over 100 people taking part.

The culmination of the event was the switch on of the Christmas lights by the Mayor of Brentwood, Cllr Vicky Davies ably assisted by Postman Pat and the Christmas Card Winner, Jess Prentice.

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

Officers have been working on the the health and wellbeing workplan which has three main aims:

- Improving Older People's Health
- Increasing Uptake of Vaccination and
- Reducing Cardio-vascular disease through reduction in obesity.

A successful Health and Wellbeing Board meeting took place in October and work was underway to make links and signpost services in these areas. Funding has been secured for staff and members to have a flu vaccination, details of which were provided in the Town Hall Tabloid.

This was a new event for Brentwood Borough Council on Sunday 30 November. There was great support from Shenfield traders throughout the event with loads of free activities on offer to local residents. Live music was hosted by Phoenix FM and provided by local school choirs.

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Environment Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor William Lloyd**

The Environment Committee made some important decisions at the meeting on 12 November.

**TEEP Assessment (Technical, Environmentally, Economically Practical)**

It was agreed to approve the report, which is to cover the Council against new legislation being introduced in January 2015, regarding the separation of paper, glass, plastic and metals from waste. If the Council had to introduce the separate collections it was estimated that this would cost an additional £600,000.

**Textiles**

The Council will introduce a monthly collection of textiles from the kerbside from April 2015. This will provide residents with a choice as to how they dispose of them, either through this service or take to local charities.

Through the discussions with charity shops it was identified that there is an opportunity for them to increase their funding, by providing the Council with Waste Transfer Notes, which can then be used to claim recycling credits of over £60 per tone.

**Bring Sites**

Members agreed to close two more bring sites, at Hunter Avenue and William Hunter Way, and further discussions will be held at Mountnessing as to the future of their site. All sites across the Borough will be monitored, and a resolution was approved to give delegated powers to the Head of Street Scene, and the Chair of Environment, to close further sites through discussion with local Members, if required.

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Finance and Resources Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor Barry Aspinell**

**Cycling Provision for BBC:**

The Committee approved that the Council will register with Cyclescheme which will offer employees tax incentives to enjoy savings on the cost of a new bicycle and safety equipment, as well as associated health benefits.

The Committee also agreed that new cycle racks would be installed at Town Hall, and further investigation will be carried out into improvement of shower/changing facilities as part of the Town Hall Development.

**Half Year Budget Review 2014/15:**

The Committee noted that the projected outturn position surplus for the Council's General Fund at 30 September 2014 was £90k, compared to an original £81k surplus.

The Committee also noted that that Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was projecting a possible deficit of £18k compared to an original £86k surplus.

The Committee noted that the projected capital spend stood at £6.7m compared to an original budget of £11.1m.

**Treasury Management Mid Year Review Report 2014/15:**

The Committee agreed that changes to credit methodology where viability, financial strength and support ratings would not be considered as criteria in choosing investment counterparties.

**Performance Indicators – Second Quarter 2014/15:**

The Committee agreed that performance indicators would be reviewed and will focus on delivering the Council's Corporate Plan and service plans. Key indicators will be reviewed annually and will be gauged by a customer/resident survey.

The Committee noted and reviewed the Operational Performance Indicators for 2014/15.

**Election Review:**

The Committee were advised that the Council should go to consultation in relation to commencing Borough election counts on 8 May 2015 and Parish counts on 9 May 2015. A further report will be presented at Full Council on 10 December with findings from the consultation.



### **Subscription and Membership Review:**

The Committee agreed that all non-essential memberships were to be cancelled resulting in a £7680 per annum saving with Officers to review any further subscriptions which could be removed.

Essential Subscriptions will continue at a cost of £82,587.39 however these will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Residents Survey:**

The Committee was presented with a report from Westco which outlined the responses to the survey carried out between 9 and 25 July 2014.

The Committee noted the content of the report and also that the results would be used to develop the Council's service and delivery plans. The Committee also noted that the Council will develop an e-panel for future satisfaction surveys and consultation projects.

### **Future Work**

The Committee was advised of a paper which outlined changes to the distribution of business rates effective from December 2012. The Committee agreed that the Council should join the Essex Wide Pool for business rates in 2015/16.

In January the Committee will consider draft budget proposals as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan work for 2015/16 onwards.

**Report to the Council 10 December 2014**  
**Committee: Licensing Committee**  
**Chair: Councillor Gareth Barrett**

An application by the Taxi Trade made through the Taxi Trade consultative group was agreed in principle by Licensing Committee on 11 November. This was advertised for 14 days from 20 November and will be reconsidered on 12 December by Licensing Committee if objections are made or will come into force on 5 December if no objections are made. The application was facilitated at very short notice and I would like to extend my thanks to both Officers and Members of the Licensing Committee from all parties for their allowing the process to run smoothly and efficiently. I would also thank Members of the Licensing Committee for coordinating an additional meeting date on 12 December to enable any objections to be considered.

Following the proposal on the increase in Taxi Fares I have asked that a cross-party task and finish group be set up to look at the fares in detail and the process that must be followed in order to set amended tariffs. This will be confirmed at the next Licensing Committee meeting and the recommendations of the group will be reported back at a date to be set in 2015.

I am informed that enquiries pertaining to the possibility of setting up Markets or street trading areas are increasing. Under the governing legislation, if the Council wishes to regulate such areas they must be adopted as 'licence' or 'consent' streets. It is also possible to pass resolution to prohibit street trading in any given area. Such regulation is important for the purposes of public safety and I therefore wish to look into the prospect of designating further areas. In the first instance I have asked the licensing team to write to all Parish Councils to ask if they would like an area of their parish designated for the purpose of holding a Market. Any requests from other Councillors for their own wards are also welcome.

BASLE (Brentwood Association of Safer Licensed Establishments) is a group of local licensed traders who meet together with Police, Council Officers and other agencies in order to promote best practice. They currently operate a Behave or Be Banned scheme whereby persons causing crime or disorder on premises may be banned for a period of time from all licensed establishments. This clearly assists in promoting a safe yet vibrant nightlife in particular. Officers are currently looking to present the possibility of a Best Bar None scheme at local level to this group. Such a scheme sets standards for licensed premises and awards those that achieve these standards.

A full review of Councillor training for Licensing Committee is being undertaken. This follows request from some Members of the Licensing Committee for more information on certain areas of licensing. Whilst Members receive the statutory training required under the relevant Acts, this does not cover every aspect of licensing. The Licensing

Manager will over the next months put together a package and deliver targeted sessions on the various regimes within the licensing portfolio. All members will be welcome.

The Council is preparing to introduce a new licensing system for mobile homes sites following changes brought in by the Mobile Homes Act 2013. This Act provides for new licences for mobile homes with full planning permission for permanent residential occupation. The licensing scheme was agreed by Members at Licensing Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> November and will be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. The scheme allows the Council to recover their costs in administering the scheme and in carrying out regular inspections of licensed sites to ensure compliance with licence conditions. Existing sites which were licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 will be issued with a new licence under the new legislation free of charge. There are currently about 12 sites in the Borough, most of which are small sites occupied by single families.