

1. The timetable for the new Local Plan has been revised. The Local Plan sub committee will meet in Feb and March 2025 to discuss the Issues and Options for the new Local Plan. This will then be followed by a series of meetings in May and June 2025 at which the sites which have been put forward in the call for sites will be considered for allocation for housing or employment. The Local Plan will need to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by December 2026. The Government's ambition is to increase the number of new homes and is proposing giving Councils mandatory housing targets. Braintree's housing target is to increase by 35% to 1098 new homes per year. Many more sites have been submitted than are needed to meet this target including some very large sites.
2. BDC are consulting on a new Design Code for the District. I would encourage parish councils to respond to this.
3. The Government is keen to proceed with devolution and meetings are taking place with Essex leaders about proposed devolution for Essex. This is likely to involve elected mayors.
4. The Government is also proposing changes to waste collection. Officers are currently considering these proposals and I will be attending a presentation on this next week at which we will find out the implications for households and the Council.
5. In the first half of this year, BDC secured 128 affordable homes against an annual target of 250.
6. In the second quarter, BDC prevented 48 cases of homelessness.
7. In the second quarter, there were 134,196 visits to our 3 leisure centres. This is less than our target and we are investigation which visits have reduced.
8. Licensing officers in collaboration with Essex Police have conducted a series of our of hours checks on licensed taxis and premises.
9. A Public Spaces Protection Order has been imposed in certain parts of Braintree. This prohibits certain activities and is a way of controlling anti-social behaviour.
10. I have been notified that Suffolk CC is consulting on imposing a weight restriction on HGVs over 7.5 tons using the A1092 between Long Melford and Baythorne End except for access. Traffic would be routed via Bury and Halstead. The consultation closes on 9th December. I have details of how to respond if needed.