

Report for Parish Councils from Cllr Iona Parker, Braintree District Council – Jan 26

Please see below my report for January 2026. I hope this gives you a flavour of some of the activities of Braintree District Council over the last few months. Not all is directly relevant to my ward but I hope you find it interesting.

1. The Government consultation on local government reorganisation in Essex has now closed and we are expected an announcement to be made in min February.
2. BDC is in the process of setting the budget for 2026/27 and the 4 year medium term strategy. The budget proposals will come to full council on 16th February. I will report on the main changes at the next meeting.
3. The draft local plan with proposed allocations for housing and employment and updated planning policies will go to the meeting of the full council on 2nd February. There will then be a public consultation on the proposals (known as regulation 18 consultation).
4. The Government is proposing to bring forward changes to the planning system which will require local planning authorities to inform the Government if they intend to refuse planning permission for developments of 150 or more homes. BDC has written to the Secretary of State expressing concerns at this change which will place pressure on LPAs to grant permission for sites which have not been allocated.
5. BDC has renewed its contract with Suffolk County Council for handling dry recylates. The contract is for 13 years with a 6 year break clause and takes into account the upcoming changes to recycling.
6. The street scene department received 195 requests for help in September (the latest figures I have received). Of these, 106 related to fly tipping and 28 for abandoned vehicles.
7. BDC is continuing its efforts to support business through the North Essex Economic Board (NEEB) and held a number of events at the end of 2025 including a jobs and skills fair aimed at mid life employment, a session on start ups and budgeting and a session on overcoming hurdles. These are very well received.
8. The numbers requiring temporary housing, including families with children, is gradually increasing. In the 12 months ending October 2025, 52 households were in temporary housing including 85 children. We suspect this may be due to lack of private rental accommodation.