

Report by Julia Allen.

District Councillor for Halstead Trinity.

So another year comes to an end and an end to the current Conservative administration at Braintree District Council. Again I have enjoyed a busy year as District Cllr for the Trinity Ward, here in Halstead.

For the past 8 years I have been an active member of The Licensing Committee. This committee has many functions from: Street Trading, Gambling, Sex Establishments to Animal Licensing. It is also the responsibility of the committee to ensure that all Taxi and Private Hire drivers are “fit and proper” persons to hold a licence. I have been a member and chaired many Drivers Hearings where issues have arisen. These meetings are always private.

All District Cllrs are given the opportunity to attend Member Development Evenings, these have varied from: Health & Wellbeing, Planning Enforcement, to the latest with Roger Hirst our Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. Since the closure of our Police Station in Halstead, I raised concerns at the apparent rise in crime and anti social behaviour, the response I received back was from Janette Rawlinson (also present) who is Braintree & Uttlesfords District Commander, she said that was actually not the case and there was no increase. We now live in a world of social media and it seems to be a daily occurrence that a crime has been committed in town from serious to petty. Many issues in the past would have gone unnoticed but dealt with when reported.

Roger confirmed that by the end of this year we would see a visible increase with Police patrols in Halstead and actually that is happening now and hasn't gone unnoticed. We also have our Special Constable Mihalfi who is doing a fantastic job for our town.

Member Development Evenings are vital in ensuring that all Cllrs have the correct knowledge and understanding to be effective Cllrs in the wards they represent.

I have recently taken part in a Task & Finish group looking into recycling in our district, in particular how we can encourage more “Reduce & Recycle” especially engaging with school children to get the message across at a young age and the importance of the affect our actions have on our planet.

Recommendations from the group will go before the new administration at Braintree District Council following the May elections.

For the past 2 years I have been Chairman of the Cllr Grants Committee. Each Cllr is awarded £1,500 per year to spend in their Ward on various organisations that benefit their community. My allocation this year has gone to Halstead in Bloom to purchase new containers and The Ramsey Academy to put towards the refurbishment of the Library & Learning Centre.

It has been confirmed that the scheme will continue for the next 2 years starting May of this year.

I mentioned supporting The Ramsey Academy and wanted to say a huge congratulations to the head Rob James after he was crowned Headteacher of the year at the 2019 Essex Teacher Awards.

As we are all to aware Halstead is receiving more than its fair share of new housing developments, this is undoubtedly putting a strain on our key services, our roads, doctors surgery and our primary schools. We have and will continue to have new families choosing to make Halstead their home, it is fantastic and long overdue that our children can leave local primary schools and attend their local secondary school which now has a rating of “GOOD”

It has been a privilege to represent the constituents of Halstead for the past 8 years and it not a role I have taken for granted. I would like to wish all candidates the very best of luck in the upcoming elections and if I am re-elected I will continue to be a voice to raise mine and my constituents concerns at every opportunity.

Julia Allen.