

Cllr. Jackie Pell – District Council report 2021-2022

I have now completed 35 consecutive years on Braintree District Council and I have to say that this year has been the most challenging. Due to Covid we have conducted our business via Zoom with the Chief Executive given decision making permission. We then resumed meetings in person and met at Rickstones School in Witham and sat in raked seating to enable social distancing. This was so difficult. We have at last returned to meeting in Causeway House and attendance has been gradual with some via zoom and having no voting right and others in the chamber and we are now back to normal thankfully.

I am the Group Leader of Halstead Residents' Association and have monthly meetings with the Leader of the Council and other group leaders. This is really worthwhile. As a Leader I have an invite from the Leading group to attend Cabinet meetings and to speak but not to vote. This invite is unusual as it doesn't occur in other authorities

I sit on the Licensing Committee and am a member of the following scrutiny groups – Partnership development and community development and Member Development group. These scrutiny groups have discussed sporting facilities, woodlands, cycling and walking, enforcement. I also sit on the cycling group that includes ECC, BDC and other interested groups. A lot of work has been done on this as they are trying to achieve the cycling route to Kelvedon and including Halstead. Lastly I sit on the Standards Sub-Committee that has not had to meet this year. At the AGM held recently I was re-elected to the Public Gardens Management Committee and lastly I have attended the HIB regular partnership meetings for years and this has now been regularised so I am officially their Councillor representative.

I have represented the District Council on several occasions as past Chairman including Remembrance Sunday and a former past Chairman's funeral

The District Council have distributed lots of business grants to the District including Halstead. The planning enforcement team has been increased since the AGM. The planned public realm works to Halstead have been agreed to go out to tender and we await the results.

I have attended member training and skills training which are useful

The community grant that I have I have allocated some to Halstead Empire, The Brownies that meet at Courtaulds Ground, Halstead Swimming Club and The Salvation Army for their Christmas Dinner that they provide to those that need one.

Over the last year we have seen quite a few long standing Senior Officers retire and new people brought in. This has involved me in the interview process. The next people that will be leaving is Steve Daines who runs the elections and many people will have had dealings with him over the years and he will be sadly missed for his help to all those involved with elections. The Chief Executive is also leaving and the process has started to recruit his replacement. This will be a long process. We are indebted to him for all his work during the pandemic

Jackie Pell – Trinity Ward