

Annual Report 2023/24 Councillor George Courtauld

General:

The past year has been uniquely challenging for the District Council with the cost-of-living crisis continuing to raise costs and reduce revenue. Like all other District Councils Braintree has had to consider charging for non-mandatory services, and even cutting some, to achieve a balanced budget. The necessary changes have been managed remarkably smoothly by the officers and members. It has been a pleasure to work with the fresh influx of District Councillors since the last election, who have added new expectations, perspectives and approaches to the day to day running of the Council.

My Role:

Within the District Council itself I am Chairman of the Corporate Policy Development Committee, examining our current policies, how they are implemented, and identifying ways they might be updated and improved. I am also a member of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, which keeps tabs on the finances and performance of the Council and our partners.

Our Ward:

Whenever possible I have attended the Parish Council Meetings in all four Parishes.

I remain enormously grateful for the advice, expertise, and diligence of my fellow ward councillor, Gabrielle Spry, particularly her help with planning matters.

As a partner in a local farm, I have focused particularly on rural issues, especially fly tipping, footpaths and potential cycle ways, hedges, and flooding.

As a church warden I was delighted to be able to arrange for the police to visit St Andrew's Colne Engaine to brief concerned locals on a temporary upsurge in rural crime, and how they were tackling it.

I have exploited my Community Grant to the full on projects in the Ward and have also harnessed other grants. I am proud to be one of our two District Councillors, learning something new about our four exceptional villages on an almost weekly basis.