

9 October 2012		ITEM 5
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Pupil Place Planning		
Report of: Janet Clark, Strategic Leader, Operations, Resources & Libraries		
Wards and communities affected: ALL	Key Decision: Key	
Accountable Head of Service: Carmel Littleton, Head of Learning and Universal Outcomes		
Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Corporate Director, People Services		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To outline the Local Authority's strategic approach to pupil place planning, including the preparation and publication of an annual Pupil Place Plan.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last few years Thurrock has transformed its education and school support services, working to an agreed set of priorities. Pupil place planning was established as an improvement priority for 2012/13.

New leadership of pupil place planning is in place to ensure that we take a strategic approach, avoiding reactive planning measures. Our approach puts school improvement, pupil achievement and social inclusion at its heart ensuring that pupil place planning is understood as a critical piece in a whole system. Historically pupil place planning was understood as a transactional or analytical process requiring exclusively technical solutions.

We intend to publish an annual Pupil Place Plan, to ensure the public and colleagues in schools have a clear and shared understanding of the landscape now and into the medium term. The plan will shape the council's education capital priorities. The plan is presented in draft tonight.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment and propose any additions or amendments to help shape the plan prior to cabinet consideration.

2. ISSUES:

- 2.1 The draft Pupil Place Plan is attached. It is an important next step in Thurrock's improvement journey. Our intention is to have outstanding Children's Services in Thurrock.
- 2.2 The population in Thurrock is projected to increase; in some areas we predict significant pupil place pressures, some of which are emerging now. We are at the beginning of a process that ensures we have shared and robust data on which to base planning and decision making.
- 2.3 A strategic approach will enable the council to be joined up and proactive taking opportunities to develop popular and well performing schools and to improve unpopular or poorly performing schools.
- 2.4 Effective pupil place planning is a tool to ensure the council meets its statutory responsibilities (to provide the appropriate number of school places), but also to drive up standards, levels of attainment and improve social inclusion. Changes to school organisation leading to more diverse and complex provision in Thurrock makes it even more important for schools and the local authority to work closely together to meet the needs and ambitions of people in Thurrock.
- 2.5 We intend to take the plan to Cabinet in November 2012. A full timetable is attached to this report; this includes consultation with key stakeholders including the Schools Forum, Schools, Academies & Diocese.
- 2.6 In future years updating the Pupil Place Plan will be embedded in the annual school organisational planning cycle which will include;
- Updating of pupil forecast data (at least termly)
 - Analysing pupil forecasts, including for early years and children (June)
 - Identifying appropriate solutions to meet changes in demand (June/July)
 - Publication of the annual Pupil Place Plan (July)
 - Statutory consultation regarding any proposed school organisational changes (September/October)
 - Implementing agreed building solutions (November onwards)

- 2.7 Work has commenced (but not yet completed) on integrating the findings of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment into the plan. We hope to complete this prior to presentation at Cabinet.

3. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 3.1 Schools, Academies & other stakeholders – October 2012
3.2 Overview and Scrutiny – October 2012.

4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 4.1 The Pupil Place Plan is fully aligned to corporate policies and priorities and will make a positive contribution to performance of the council and to the community

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**
kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no financial implications to this report. However, the production of robust detailed pupil place planning information, will greatly aid future decisions regarding Schools Capital expenditure.

5.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell for Fiona Taylor**
Telephone and email: **01375652204.**
Lucinda.bell@thurrock.gov.uk

As a Local Authority Thurrock has a statutory duty under s14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of 'sufficient schools' for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area. This is recognised as being more challenging due to growing numbers of free schools and academies that are not maintained by the Authority. In addition, the Authority has a statutory duty under s13A of the Education Act 1996 to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential and fair access to educational opportunities for children of compulsory school age at school or otherwise or if under age at maintained schools.

5.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
 Telephone and email: **01375652472**
sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The Pupil Place Plan aims to inform the Thurrock Schools Capital Programme to improve learning environments for young people, support improvements in standards, raise aspirations and give all children the best possible life chances.

5.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable.

6. **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Current and forecast data indicate demand for early years and primary school places is increasing significantly in a number of planning areas across Thurrock and, whilst there is currently a sufficient number of secondary school places, the trend now seen in the primary sector will soon be reflected in the secondary sector.
- 6.2 It is important that Thurrock takes a long term strategic approach to pupil place planning to ensure enough places are provided to meet need but also to use pupil place planning as a tool to drive school improvement as well as ambition and expectation for children.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

- 2011 Census for demographic Information
- Office of National Statistics for overview of pupil numbers nationally and some demographic information
- January School Census returns for Pupil Information
- DfE guidance on expanding and maintained school by enlargement or by adding a 6th form.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Pupil Place Plan including pupil forecasts.

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