

<b>21 January 2013</b>		<b>ITEM: 6 Appendix 2</b>
<b>Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny</b>		
<b>THURROCK TRANSPORT STRATEGY REFRESH</b>		
<b>Report of:</b> Cllr Andy Smith, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways and Transportation		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Andy Millard, Head of Planning and Transportation		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull, Director for Planning and Transportation		
<b>This report is public</b>		
<i>If the report, or a part of this, has been classified as being either confidential or exempt by reference to the descriptions in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is hereby marked as being not for publication. The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any confidential or exempt items of business to which the report relates.</i>		
<b>Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report:</b> not applicable		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the necessary updates and changes to the Thurrock Transport Strategy 2012-26 and to seek approval of the Strategy refresh.		

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since the Thurrock Transport Strategy (2008 – 2021) was developed there have been a significant number of changes in the national, regional and local context surrounding the delivery of transport improvements in Thurrock. Consequently, a light touch refresh of the Strategy has been progressed.

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Members consider and comment upon the refresh of the Thurrock Transport Strategy with the view to endorse and recommend it to Cabinet.**

## **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

2.1 Based on a robust evidence base and feedback from residents and key stakeholders, the Transport Strategy sets out the aims, objectives and a series of policies for delivering transport improvements in Thurrock.

2.2 Thurrock is undergoing significant change. It is part of the Thames Gateway national growth area, the UK's top priority for social and economic regeneration, and between 2001 and 2026 there is planned to be an additional 18,500 new homes and 26,000 new jobs in the Borough. Challenges facing Thurrock include:

- There are very low levels of skills which are and could continue to be a barrier to greater aspirations and generating good job opportunities
- There are low numbers of people in professional or knowledge based jobs
- High levels of obesity in key communities will impact adversely on long-term health
- Multiple deprivation is high compared to the region, especially in some urban areas, which may harm social well-being and create community tensions
- High numbers of HGVs and high traffic flows on strategic roads are adversely impacting on local air quality, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and congestion. Growth could well make this worse. Worsening air quality will increase respiratory problems, whilst increasing congestion which in turn could harm job creation prosperity.
- There is generally good accessibility by public transport and walking to many services, but poor access to further education and hospitals could exacerbate low skills and health issues. Many of the planned new jobs will be at London Gateway, which is away from the main urban areas and so less accessible for employment access by non-car means, which may limit opportunities for many social groups and fail to deliver equality of opportunity
- There are very low levels of walking and cycling which could fuel increasing obesity and so it will be necessary to learn from the success of recent School Travel Plans in increasing walking and cycling
- It will be important to maintain the increasing use of public transport to limit traffic growth, especially given forecast increases in congestion and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Reducing the number of accidents where people are killed or seriously injured has implications on incident based congestion and the chances of encouraging people to walk or cycle more

2.3 For the growth to be delivered, and delivered sustainably, a solid and sound Thurrock Transport Strategy is needed. The Thurrock Transport Strategy has been reviewed in this context.

## **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

3.1 The Transport Strategy 2008 – 2021 sets out the Council's transport policies and priorities. However, there arises a need for this to be refreshed in

response to a number of important changes to the context in which the Thurrock Transport Strategy was developed. These changes include:

- Lakeside expansion to a Regional Town Centre consisting of 3,000 additional homes and 9,000 additional jobs;
- Tilbury Port expansion including 4,000 additional jobs;
- London Gateway Port consisting of approximately 12,000 direct jobs by 2021, with a further 30,000 indirect jobs created in the UK
- The delivery of the local growth agenda in Thurrock, focussed around five growth hubs in Grays, Lakeside and West Thurrock, London Gateway, Purfleet and Tilbury;
- The creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP), and their role in establishing a Local Transport Board.
- A change to the timescale of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development (previously to 2021, now to 2026) and its progress through to its adoption in December 2011;
- The Highways Agency proposals to implement a highway improvement scheme at Junction 30/31;
- Developing 'free flow' tolls at the Dartford River Crossing;
- Significant additional funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to deliver sustainable transport improvements; and
- The significant progress made on developing local operational policies for traffic management and maintenance.
- The proposed demise of the East of England Plan and Regional Planning bodies;
- The Transport White Paper, published in January 2011;
- The economic downturn since 2008;

3.2 Of particular importance is the growth agenda and the need to make sure that transport helps to deliver sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough. The growth Thurrock needs to accommodate is significant. Between 2001 and 2026 an additional 18,500 new homes need to be built and 26,000 new jobs created. Growth and regeneration in Thurrock will be driven forward by the Council's Local Development Framework, and Thurrock Council's transport policies and priorities need to keep pace with this.

3.3 The wider planning context is now at a stage where a much greater degree of certainty is available compared to that in recent years. The Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development has been through its Examination in Public and was formally adopted by Thurrock Council in December 2011, providing a clear direction for the spatial distribution of jobs and housing.

3.4 Now that this greater certainty is available, with a longer time horizon of 2026, it is important to refresh the Transport Strategy to align and integrate it with the Local Development Framework.

3.5 In summary this required the following broad changes to the Strategy:

- Timescale of TTS changed from 2008 – 2021, to 2012 – 2026 to align with the LDF
- Revisions to Chapter 1: Introduction, particularly Section 1.2 Context, to account for the changes to the national, regional and local policy context;
- Revisions to the Policy Context within each “thematic” chapter (i.e. Accessibility, Congestion, Air Quality and Climate Change, Road Safety and Regeneration);
- Revisions to policy supporting text and where absolutely necessary policies themselves within the “thematic” strategies, in light of any relevant changes to the wider context;
- Integration of local maintenance policy and procedure, where appropriate, within each of the thematic chapters and strategies; and
- Removal of detailed implementation and monitoring information as this has been replaced by the separate production of the LTP3 Implementation Plan.

These key changes are identified in greater detail in Appendix B.

3.6 Moving forward, the Transport Strategy will be used to inform critical interventions that will individually and collectively contribute to the wider regeneration agenda. Notably, with the recent creation of the new Local Transport Board comes a need to identify a set of priorities across the wider LEP area by March 2013. This work needs to inform the provision of the necessary infrastructure investment to support viable investment and development in the Borough’s five growth hubs. Allied to this is the requirement to improve the quality of the public realm and the integration of services across Thurrock.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The recommendation will enable the refreshed Thurrock Transport Strategy to be presented to Council.

**5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 The Transport Strategy refresh has been produced with input from members, key stakeholders, statutory consultees and members of the public.

5.2 A draft version of the strategy was placed on-line in February 2012 for comment and input and the final version of the Thurrock Transport Strategy reflects that input.

5.3 A summary of the changes recommended to the refreshed strategy are set out in Appendix B.

## 6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 6.1 The refresh of the Thurrock Transport Strategy addresses the Council's priorities within the community, with emphasis on the priorities to encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity and to ensure a safe, clean and green environment.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**  
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**mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk**

This report and attached strategy set out the Thurrock Transport Strategy for 2012 to 2026. The strategy itself does not discuss the funding of its activities, however, the existing level of funding, as well as agreed funding from central government, is available to support meeting the objectives of the strategy. The details of how this is to be applied will need to be formulated as part of ongoing annual delivery programmes.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652040**  
**astuart@thurrock.gov.uk**

Section 108 of the Transport Act 2000 provides that a local authority must develop policies in a strategy for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities. Because these policies supersede the policies in the adopted Thurrock Transport Strategy they have to be adopted by the Council.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652472**  
**sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

The Council is under a statutory obligation to ensure that local policy decisions are subject to an Equality impact Assessment to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to statutory obligations under appropriate legislation arising from the Equality Act 2012.

An EIA has been conducted with regards to the Thurrock Transport Strategy 2012-2026.

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

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- Thurrock Transport Strategy 2008 - 2021

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- Appendix A – Thurrock Transport Strategy 2012 – 2026
- Appendix B – TTS document changes

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