

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

# Cabinet

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **14 October 2015**

**Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.**

## Membership:

Councillors John Kent (Chair), Barbara Rice (Vice-Chair), Oliver Gerrish, Victoria Holloway, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, Gerard Rice, Richard Speight and Lynn Worrall

## Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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#### Exclusion of the Public and Press

Members are asked to consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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#### **Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

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Agenda published on: **6 October 2015**

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# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

### Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

**Vision: Thurrock:** A place of **opportunity, enterprise and excellence**, where **individuals, communities and businesses** flourish.

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

**1. Create** a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspiration and attainment so that residents can take advantage of local job opportunities
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

**2. Encourage** and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Promote Thurrock and encourage inward investment to enable and sustain growth
- Support business and develop the local skilled workforce they require
- Work with partners to secure improved infrastructure and built environment

**3. Build** pride, responsibility and respect

- Create welcoming, safe, and resilient communities which value fairness
- Work in partnership with communities to help them take responsibility for shaping their quality of life
- Empower residents through choice and independence to improve their health and well-being

**4. Improve** health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being and safeguard the most vulnerable people with timely intervention and care accessed closer to home
- Enhance quality of life through improved housing, employment and opportunity

**5. Promote** and protect our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock's river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock's natural environment and biodiversity
- Inspire high quality design and standards in our buildings and public space

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 9 September 2015 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-in is Friday 18 September at 5.00pm

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**Present:** Councillors John Kent (Chair), Barbara Rice (Vice-Chair), Oliver Gerrish, Victoria Holloway, Bukky Okunade, Jane Pothecary, Gerard Rice, Richard Speight (from 7.30 pm) and Lynn Worrall

**In attendance:** David Bull, Interim Chief Executive & Director of Planning and Transportation  
Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive  
Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services  
Roger Harris, Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning  
Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing - Investment and Development  
Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance  
Mike Heath, Head of Environment  
Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications  
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer  
Stephanie Cox, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **32. Minutes**

The Minutes of Cabinet, held on 8 July 2015, were approved as a correct record.

### **33. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **34. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **35. Statements by the Leader**

The Leader welcomed Councillor Pothecary to her first meeting of Cabinet, as portfolio holder for Communities and Public Protection.

The Leader further thanked Mr David Bull for his work as Interim Chief Executive, as this was his last meeting in this capacity.

### **36. Month 3 / Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2015-16**

Councillor Holloway, Cabinet Member for Central Services, introduced the report which summarised performance against the Corporate Scorecard 2015-16, a basket of key performance indicators (KPI's), as at Month 3/Quarter 1 (end of June 2015). Members were informed that at the end of Month 3, 72.5% of these indicators were either meeting or within an acceptable tolerance of their target, and that this figure was lower than usual at this stage of the year.

The Cabinet Member reported that the KPI's needed to be considered against the backdrop of reduced resources, which had begun to have an impact on corporate performance, and that in light of this all 'red' KPI's had been put into focus so that Portfolio Holders could monitor these carefully. Members were advised that Cabinet would continue to receive an update each month, with a more detailed report referred to Cabinet every quarter.

Councillor B. Rice reported that the target for self-directed support was below the provisional year-end target but performance was expected to increase with one-off direct payments and that the service was reviewing its strategy for personal budgets through the delivery of the Care Act 2014. Members were further advised that performance should also be viewed alongside direct payments, which was the second part of the indicator, as Thurrock continued to be one of the best performers nationally with 32% of self-directed support service users gaining their support through a direct payment, compared to the national average of 27%.

Councillor B. Rice further highlighted that the 77% June indicator of older people still at home following discharge was below the year-end target of 91%, and that although a slight dip had been anticipated with the introduction of the Care Act 2014, the service faced a number of pressures which included:

- The amount of people who required hospital admissions were increasing, especially with the aging population.
- Complexity of need
- Pressure on beds
- That cuts to five social worker posts had not helped with discharges.

Councillor B. Rice explained that as a result of such pressures she was less confident that the target would be met by the end of the year.

Councillor J. Kent reported that the percentage of primary schools judged "good" or better was 71.4% but felt that the indicator was skewed as those schools who had amalgamated could not be included in the figures, which included Arthur Bugler Infant and Junior Schools (which had both been judged as "good"). Members were advised that Benyon Primary School and Horndon Primary School, which were also both judged as "good", were not included



within the figures and that if they had been the indicator would have been higher.

Councillor J. Kent explained that there was little that could be done to encourage Ofsted to inspect schools early, which he felt would in turn increase the percentage of “good” or outstanding schools in Thurrock, but requested the Director of Children’s Services to write to Ofsted to encourage them to inspect some schools sooner.

Councillor Worrall requested that Cabinet review a detailed breakdown by department of the percentage of complaints resolved within timescale for the Council so that trends could be identified.

Councillor J. Kent explained that the Information Manager held this information which was regularly shared with Directors Board, and suggested that this more detailed information also be presented to Cabinet for consideration, to which all Members were in agreement.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That Cabinet comments and notes the performance at this early stage in the year and identifies, where it feels necessary, any further areas of concern on which to focus.**
- 2. That the report be referred to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3. That Cabinet recommends the areas In Focus to be circulated as appropriate to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs.**

**37. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public**

There were no petitions submitted.

**38. Questions from Non-Executive Members**

No questions were submitted.

**39. Matters Referred to the Cabinet for Consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the following matters had been referred by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and both had been scheduled on the Forward Plan for October Cabinet.

- Thurrock Primary Care referred by the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration referred by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **40. Shaping the Council and Budget Progress Update (Decision: 01104408)**

Councillor J. Kent, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report which set out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28 million for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. In introducing the report he raised the following key points:

- That there were considerable budget pressures as the government grant settlement had reduced by one third, from £40 million to £30 million and it was expected that the core grant would reduce by a further £10 million to a total of £20 million in 2016/17.
- That cross-party consensus had been reached during the budget review panel process, where Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders had met with Senior Managers to discuss issues and possible solutions with a view to looking ahead over the next 2-3 years.
- That this year the authority faced additional pressures due to the shortfall in Serco Terms and Conditions targets and the impact of the Sita recycling arrangements.
- That due to the Serco contract coming back in-house, 400 people were expected to return to direct employment at the Council, but that £3 million of savings were expected to be delivered from December 2015 which would go back into the General Fund.

Councillor J. Kent felt that in March 2016 the Council would be well prepared to meet the challenges to come.

Councillor Okunade felt that the budget review panel process had been a useful tool in identifying the pressures in her portfolio.

Councillor B. Rice emphasised that it was important to understand what the government grant settlement cuts meant for local residents and reported that the total gross spend on older persons had reduced by approximately one third per person, from:

2009-10 – £1495  
2010-11 – £1381  
2011-12 – £1342  
2012-13 – £1122  
2013-14 – £1106

Councillor B. Rice further emphasised that the budget savings that needed to be delivered by the Council were a result of national government cuts to local government grants, and that this would impact across all service areas including education and social care.

Councillor J. Kent observed that it was important to view the cumulative savings that had been delivered over the past five years, and that despite the

considerable cut to the local government grant settlement, Thurrock had delivered a balanced budget and built up reserves.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That Cabinet note the current financial position and potential pressures in both 2015/16 and 2016/17 and to agree for officers to bring back options to address the pressures for member consideration in the Autumn.**
2. **That Cabinet support the governance arrangements for the Serco transition as set out in paragraph 3.12 with a further update report to be brought back to Cabinet in October.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**41. Borrowing and Investment Performance and Policy Review 2014/15 (Decision: 01104409)**

Councillor J. Kent, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report which reviewed borrowing and investment activity for 2014/15 and reported the treasury outturn position for 2014/15 in accordance with the revised CIPFA Prudential Code.

Members were advised that £0.75 million had been borrowed from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) in order to assist with the refurbishment of Grays Magistrates Court and the Council had acted in a smarter way to reschedule debts, which had saved £15.5 million to help build reserves.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Head of Corporate Finance for delivering the considerable level of savings.

**RESOLVED:**

**In line with the Treasury Management Policy Statement approved by Council on 26 February 2014 and the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Cabinet is asked to comment on the borrowing and investment performance for 2014/15.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**42. Grays Town Centre Traffic Management (Decision: 01104410)**

Councillor Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, introduced the report which set out the results of the public consultation and appraised the proposed changes to the Grays Town Centre traffic management scheme. The Cabinet Member felt that it was exciting and long

overdue to introduce a two-way traffic system in Grays and reported that the vast majority of residents (81%) supported the proposal for two-way traffic in Crown Road.

Councillor J. Kent felt that it was important the Council listened to residents' views through the Public Consultation and agreed that the proposed removal of the Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane should not proceed at this stage as there were further discussions to be had between residents and local businesses so as not to prejudice parking.

Councillor J. Kent further reported that he was also concerned about the signalling of the existing width restriction on Bridge Road as the railway bridge was weak and needed to be protected, in addition to the fact that the pavement in that area was very narrow, and he did not want to jeopardise the safety of pedestrians. He remarked that both issues needed to be addressed but the proposal was a major milestone for the revitalisation of Grays, alongside other developments such as the Grays Magistrates Court and Level Crossing.

Councillor Worrall welcomed the proposal which would allow drivers to turn left out of the multi-story car park on Crown Road and felt that this would boost the retail sector in Grays.

Councillor Gerrish advised that engineers were working with partners and Network Rail to consider the strength of the bridge in order to ensure it was safe and agreed that the phased approach was good news for Grays Town Centre and bus users.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 1. It is recommended that Phase 1 is implemented; including the design and construction of:**
  - **Signalising the existing width restriction Bridge Road, to encourage Grays south traffic to avoid Orsett Road. Reviewing the capacity of the bridge to accommodate buses.**
  - **Allowing all turning movement at the Stanley Road/Clarence Road junction.**
  - **A 12 month suspension of the east bound bus lane on Crown Road to allow the multi-storey traffic to legally turn left and leave in an easterly direction.**
  - **Better cycle links**
  - **Banning HGV's from turning left from Derby Road to London Road at the Theatre**
  - **"Kiss and Ride" facility to drop off at the Rail Station**
  - **Additional cycle parking**
  - **Improvements to the public realm at the northern end of the High Street**
  - **Gateway/Welcome schemes at the main entry points**

2. **It is also recommended that as part of the Phase 1 works the following options are developed and implemented, subject to further discussions with stakeholders:**
  - **Providing a Bus gate at Argent Street/Wouldham Road to allow bus services to pass from Bridge Road, along Argent Street and onto London Road.**
  - **Exploring an alternative access to Town Centre car parking via Hogg Lane and Titan Quarry**
  - **Closing the Morrison's Hogg Lane egress in favour of a roundabout at Seally Road/Eastern Way junction. (Subject to further consultation with Morrisons supermarket).**
  
3. **It is recommended that the phase 2 works are designed and implemented following monitoring of the impact of the phase 1 works, to determine whether the new traffic flows can be successfully managed. The phase 2 works will include changing Orsett Road to two-way between Derby Road and Stanley Road. The monitoring of the phase 1 works will be reviewed and phase 2 will proceed in consultation with the leader of the Council and portfolio holder.**
  
4. **It is recommended that the proposed removal of the Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane does not proceed at this stage and that there are further discussions with businesses to agree a cycling scheme that does not prejudice parking as part of the phase 2 works.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**43. Annual Parking Report 2015 (Decision: 01104411)**

Councillor Pothecary, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, presented the Annual Parking Report and outlined the performance of parking services for 2015 in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004. In introducing the report the following key points were highlighted:

- Seven full-time Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) covered three controlled parking zones (CPZs), two permit parkins areas, 10 off-street car parks and off street and on street car parking, in addition to enforcement at Morrison's supermarket car park in Grays by agreement.
- In 2014-15 over 9,000 penalty charge notices had been issued.
- The number of residents' and visitors' parking permits issued had increased significantly from 2424 to 2992 respectively in 2013/14 to 2731 and 3251 respectively in 2014/15.
- That temporary staff had been employed to cover unforeseen staff absences in parking services and new management put in place to address issues and improve efficiency.

- That the service was considering improvements to parking software and hardware in addition to investigating the feasibility of increasing the supply of chargeable spaces, the employment of more Civil Enforcement Officers and pay-by-phone opportunities.
- That HGV parking enforcement remained a priority for the service and officers were working closely with the port and partners to ensure that HGV's did not cause a nuisance to residents.
- That a School Pilot Scheme had begun where schools had been offered the opportunity to be trained to enforce outside of schools and educate the parents of the legality of where they could park.

*Councillor Speight arrived at the meeting at 7.30 pm.*

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That Cabinet approves the publication of the Annual Parking Report for 2015, in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.**
- 2. That Cabinet approve that Senior Officers continue to review the service and enforcement with a view to improve efficiency.**
- 3. That the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the possible impact of any proposed car parking charges for 2016/17 on parking in Grays prior to any changes being agreed.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**44. Transfer of Commissioning Responsibility for 0-5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to Local Authority, 1 October 2015 (Decision: 01104412)**

Councillor B. Rice, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, explained that as part of the reforms detailed within the Health and Social Care Act 2012, commissioning responsibility for most public health functions transferred to local authorities in April 2013. In introducing the report the Cabinet Member reported that Commissioning responsibility for the Healthy Child Programme age 5-19 was included within this, whilst commissioning of the Healthy Child Programme ages 0 – 5 was retained by NHS England to deliver the new service vision set out in the Health Visitor Implementation Plan by April 2015. Members were advised that the transfer of commissioning responsibilities for the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to local authorities would be from 1 October 2015 and that this would create more opportunities for Thurrock.

Councillor Okunade echoed the sentiments raised and explained that the commissioning responsibility would be a seamless transition with no impact on service delivery.

Councillor Worrall recognised the positive effects the Tilbury Active Scheme had made to residents' health outcomes and welcomed the fact that obesity rates had fallen in Tilbury. She added that anyone who took part in any of the health initiatives would have a longer-term benefit for the Council and thereby were cost-effective.

Councillor J. Kent welcomed the targeted work that had been undertaken in Tilbury and questioned whether there was a way of measuring health outcomes to identify which schemes were working and where they had been successful.

Councillor B. Rice commended the work of the new Director of Public Health and added that he was good at breaking down the statistics. She reported that statistics were available for initiatives such as smoking cessation and the reduction of obesity rates in order to identify which initiatives were cost-effective and how health inequalities between wards in Thurrock were being reduced.

Councillor Speight felt that the initiatives would make savings across the public sector and be cost effective in the long-term.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Cabinet approves the variation of the contract Thurrock CCG (clinical commissioning group) hold with NELFT (North East London Foundation Trust) for the provision of community services within Thurrock, including Public Health services, to include commissioning responsibility for the 0-5 HCP.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**45. Housing Estate Regeneration and Local Growth Fund Update (Decision: 01104413)**

Councillor Worrall, Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report which updated Members on the progress that had been made on the housing estate regeneration programme and the next steps required to prepare for and facilitate the procurement of a regeneration partner to assist in the programme's delivery. In introducing the report the Cabinet Member highlighted the following key points:

- That the Council had been successful in securing additional borrowing and HCA grant for developments across the Borough.
- That it was proposed to increase the Tops Club development in Grays from 16 units to 40 units and re-provide a play area.
- That it was important a play area remained in Seabrooke Rise as residents had campaigned for this and a replacement site needed to be secured.

- That the former Prince of Wales public house site in South Ockendon had been secured to facilitate regeneration of the Flowers Estate.

The Cabinet Member explained that she was passionate about providing low-cost, high quality housing.

Councillor G. Rice welcomed the fact that the under-utilised garage site was being utilised in Defoe Parade, Chadwell St. Mary but felt that parking should be considered in all schemes to mitigate any problems for residents. In response the Cabinet Member assured Members that this would be taken into consideration.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. Cabinet to note the progress of the Housing Development Programme being funded by Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) through the programmes under the Local Growth Fund and approve the feasibility studies for these potential developments.**
- 2. Cabinet to endorse the exploration of potential additional Growth Fund Bids with HCA to support the housing estate regeneration plans within the borough.**
- 3. Cabinet to approve the consideration being given to the use of sites identified within the Council's emerging Grays Town Centre master plan to facilitate the development of new, high quality housing and the wider housing regeneration proposals for the Seabrooke Rise Estate.**
- 4. Cabinet to approve, subject to consultation with residents, the development of the extended Tops Club site in South Grays and re-location of community play area to support the on-going regeneration of the Seabrooke Rise estate.**
- 5. Cabinet to note the progress in relation to the potential joint development of the Riverside/Rippleside site on Argent Street, South Grays and approve for the inclusion of the Council-owned part of the site within the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration plans if a joint development with the adjacent owners is not deliverable.**
- 6. Cabinet to note the progress that has been achieved on the Housing Estate Regeneration programme and the publication of the Prior Information Notice (PIN) in relation to the proposed housing regeneration opportunity.**
- 7. Cabinet to note the HRA's acquisition of the former Prince of Wales public house in South Ockendon as a strategically**



**important development site to facilitate the wider estate regeneration plans for the Flowers estate.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**46. Community Delivery of Environmental Services in Parks and Open Spaces (Decision: 01104414)**

Councillor G. Rice, Cabinet Member for the Environment, introduced the report which set out how a number of activities and services that the Council has delivered but could no longer fully fund may be able to be delivered by the third sector. He explained that a number of community groups had come forward, which included the Grays Beach Café and Friends of Hardie Park, who had expressed an interest in taking over the day-to-day running of these areas.

Councillor J. Kent recognised the work of the Blooming Marvels in Stanford-le-Hope and felt that they had a positive impact on the community. He thanked the group for all that they had done and explained that the Blooming Marvels had requested £5,000 to enable them to deliver projects and that the Friends of Hardie Park had bid for £16,000 so that they could improve the parks water drainage system.

Councillor J. Kent felt that such investments would make community delivery sustainable in the longer-term and instructed officers to investigate whether Section 106 monies could be used in order to meet such requests.

Councillor Speight echoed the sentiments raised and commended the proposal. He welcomed the fact that community groups could drive forward projects and be able to access funding from others that the Council could not.

Councillor Worrall remarked that residents could not fail to miss the positive changes at Grays Beach by the Grays Beach Café and welcomed the fact that community groups overcame so much to create a lasting impact, for example with vandalised play areas. She added that she hoped the initiative would encourage others to come forward in their communities.

Councillor G. Rice advised that he was the Council appointed representative on the Veolia North Thames Trust and explained that the charity was able to help communities deliver environmental projects. He called on all residents to take pride in their community and encouraged residents to litter pick outside their homes.

Councillor G. Rice further assured Members that he would work with officers to identify whether community groups could be allocated small pots of funding to deliver environmental services.

**RESOLVED:**

**That officers be authorised to enter into detailed negotiations with groups who have expressed an interest in developing community based services and report back as appropriate.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in

**The meeting finished at 7.58 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 6.1</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Update Report: Corporate Performance Summary – Month 4 (Up To End of July 2015)</b>	
<b>Update report of:</b> Councillor Victoria Holloway, Portfolio Holder for Central Services	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
<b>This report is public</b>	

This briefing note provides Cabinet with a summary of performance against the Corporate Scorecard 2015-16, a basket of key performance indicators, as at Month 4 ie end of July 2015. These indicators are used to monitor the performance of key priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and enables Members, Directors and other leaders to form an opinion as to the delivery of these priorities.

At the end of each quarter a full report will be presented to Cabinet and to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This briefing note is high level and there are no direct legal, financial or diversity implications arising. Within the corporate scorecard there are some specific financial and diversity related performance indicators, for which monitoring is undertaken each month. A full implications assessment is undertaken for the quarterly performance reports.

### Performance Report Headlines

At the end of Month 4, 77% of these monthly indicators are either meeting or within an acceptable tolerance of their target.

RAG status	Monthly KPIs at end of July 2015	<i>Direction of Travel (DOT) compared to last year</i>	DOT at end of July 2015
<b>GREEN</b> - Met their target	54.6%	↑ IMPROVED	47.9%
<b>AMBER</b> - Within tolerance	22.7%	→ STATIC	21.7%
<b>RED*</b> - did not meet target	22.7%	↓ DECLINED	30.4%

*\*Please note that in the case of some indicators, the in-year use of RED status is an alert rather than necessarily an indication of poor performance.*

The performance of the indicators within the corporate scorecard need to be considered against the backdrop of the national austerity measures and reduced resources, and in particular, how these measures impact on the Council’s finances and demands for services.

However, the fact that 77% of the monthly KPIs are currently hitting or within tolerance of target is encouraging.

### KPIs ‘IN FOCUS’

The Performance Board has identified the following issues to be **IN FOCUS** this month:

RAG	DOT from last year	Measure	Data	
GREEN	Better	% of adult social care users in receipt of Self Directed Support	July Actual	75%
			July Target	75%
			Year End Target	75%
<p>July saw an improvement in this indicator of 11% (an increase from 64% up to 75%). This was due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An additional 10 individuals being commissioned a Direct Payment during the month of July</li> <li>• Carers now being excluded – this is in line with the updated definition of the ASC Outcomes Framework, whereby carers are to be reported separately from service users</li> <li>• Inclusion of an additional 66 individuals in receipt of a homecare service via personal budget, which were not included in year to date reporting in error</li> </ul>				

RAG	DOT from last year	Measure	Data	
RED	Worse	% of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	July Actual / YTD	41% / 43%
			July YTD Target	47.8%
			Year End Target	48%
<p>The recycling performance this year has lagged behind target with the current projected outturn being circa 39%.</p> <p>Nationally, recycling levels have been falling in many areas of the country as packaging has been reduced by manufacturers and supermarkets seeking to reduce costs. In Thurrock, the levels of recycling are lower than in many areas due to the high proportion of flats (30% of all properties). The communal bins used at those properties are not separating waste adequately due to the storage arrangements, tending to lead to cross-contamination of waste streams.</p> <p>A small but significant number of residents are using their blue bins to dispose of general waste rather than recyclable materials. This has led to an increase in the contamination level of our recycling and as a result many loads have been rejected</p>				

from the recycling processing plant and have had to be disposed of as residual waste. A large scale project is underway within the department to tackle the levels of contamination with detailed information of the materials that can be recycling provided to every household. A process is in place whereby the recycling bins are checked before being loaded into the waste trucks and tagged if they are contaminated. Residents with tagged bins are contacted directly and the recycling process and implications of contamination further explained. As a last resort we are now removing recycling bins from persistent offenders.

A further consequence of a contaminated recycling stream is that disposal costs increase from £55 per tonne to £95 per tonne. We collect and dispose of 13,000 tonnes of recyclable material per year and as contamination levels rise, so do the costs.

**Report Author:**

Sarah Welton  
Strategy & Performance Officer  
Strategy Team

**Monthly Key Performance Indicator summary**

Monthly KPI	Unit	High/Low	Jul 2014	Aug 2014	Sep 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015	Jul 2015	Latest Target	Year End Target	DOT (since last year)	RAG
16-19 yr old Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	%	Low	6.7	7.2	6.2	5.6	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.8	5.7	5.5	6.1	6.1	5	Better	G
% of 19-21 yr old care leavers in Education, Employment or Training	%	High	n/a			n/a			35			TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	70	70	n/a	n/a
Children subject to Child Protect Plan*	Rate	-	49	49	48	43.7	42.4	42	46	51	52	54	54	51	53	n/a	n/a	Worse	n/a
Rate of Looked After Children*	Rate	-	75	77	78	76.6	78	75	74	71	72	71	73	74	75	n/a	n/a	In Line	n/a
Major planning applics processed in 13 wks	%	High	72.7	75	80	83.3	85	85.7	86.4	87.5	84	66.7	60	71.4	75	75	75	Better	G
Minor planning applics processed in 8 wks	%	High	92.3	93.5	94.7	91.8	90.4	89.9	89	88.8	88.3	76.9	81.5	83.7	85.2	88	88	Worse	R
No of new apprenticeships within the council	No	High	18	20	24	27	27	35	43		52	2	4	9	11	19	65	Worse	R
No of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	No	Low	n/a			n/a			2670			203	473	716	989	800 (Baseline)	2400	n/a	n/a
% General Satisfaction of tenants with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	%	High	67	67	69	70	74	70	70	70	70	73	71	71	70	75	75	Better	A
% of properties transformed against planned programme	%	High	100			100			100			100	100	100	100	100	100	In Line	G
Permanent admissions to residential / nursing homes per 100K pop. 18yrs+	Rate	Low	25	37	56	71	85	88	100	126	132.6	10	20	30	33	40	121.1	Worse	G
% adult social care users in receipt of Self Directed Support	%	High	70.4	70.9	72	71.9	72	72	72	72	72	64	64	64	75	75	75	Better	G
No of households assisted to move to a smaller property (downsize)	No	High	18	21	24	33	41	49	56	62	68	10	17	21	24	15	55	Better	G
% Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted (in month)	%	High	44	43	43.5	43	37	36	34	33	40.38	43	44	44.4	41	47.8	48	Worse	R
Municipal waste sent to landfill (cumulative)	%	Low	18	17	20.8	20	20.2	19	20	19	19	24.2	27.25	30.6	27.3	19	19	Worse	R
% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	%	High	n/a			n/a			98			98.8	97.8	97.6	99.4	98.5	99	n/a	G
Tonnage of street waste (In month - not cumulative position)	Tonnes	Low	n/a			n/a			n/a			293.3	304.5	261.0	294.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Average sickness absence per FTE	Days	Low	3.11	3.77	4.63	5.6	6.52	7.42	8.27	9.02	9.87	0.76	1.5	2.32	3.16	3	9	In Line	A
% long term sickness	%	Low	49	50	50	51	51	50	48	48	46	49	46	43	47	42	34	Better	A
% stress/stress related absence	%	Low	22.3	28.57	24.1	21.52	19	20.5	16.87	16.9	17.5	19.1	18.7	19.45	19.2	21	18	Better	G
Overall variance on General Fund	%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	/	/	0	0	0	0	In Line	G
Overall variance on HRA	£k	0	0	0	0	0	-617	-413	-600	-600	-2485	/	/	0	0	0	0	In Line	G
Invoices paid within timescale	%	High	94.6	93.92	91.8	93.97	94.37	94.6	94.62	94.76	95.01	96.92	95.46	95.22	95.2	97	97	Better	A
Council Tax collected	%	High	36.6	45.32	53.98	62.8	71.28	79.8	88.23	93.31	98.71	10.67	19.4	28.21	36.95	36.9	98.9	Better	G
National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) collected	%	High	39.1	48.54	57.72	66.37	74.97	83.9	92.13	96.37	99.68	10.12	20.2	29.76	39.66	39.72	99.3	Better	A
% Rent collected	%	High	92.2	92.84	94.9	95	95.5	97.1	97.1	97.1	99.4	78.8	85.45	91.48	92.54	91.5	99.5	Better	G
% timeliness of all Complaints	%	High	99.1	98.69	98.88	98.8	98.21	98.2	98.23	98.38	98.3	94.8	96.8	96.5	96.5	98	98	Worse	R

<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 10 01104415</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Housing Estate Regeneration Update</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Lyn Worrall, Portfolio Holder for Housing	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing Investment and Development and Corporate Commercial Services	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull, Director of Planning and Transportation	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## **Executive Summary**

Reports to Cabinet in December 2014, June and September 2015 updated Members on the progress that had been made on the housing estate regeneration programme, obtained approval for the vision and objectives for the programme, and approved the exploration of other potential residential development sites within the Council's emerging Grays Town Centre masterplan to facilitate the development of new, high quality housing to support the wider housing regeneration proposals for the Seabrooke Rise Estate in Grays.

This report provides a further update to Cabinet and, in particular, updates Cabinet on the results of the recent consultation regarding high rises in Grays and the progress that is being made on the Council's other key housing estates that is necessary to appropriately package a housing regeneration opportunity to the market later in the year following the publication of a Prior Information Notice (PIN) in late August 2015.

## **Recommendations**

- 1.1 Cabinet not to award decant status to three Grays high rises – Butler, Davall and Greenwood House at this stage, but instead to note that continued consultation should take place with residents to include detailed design on alternative home provision to ensure residents are given a clear unambiguous set of choices.**

- 1.2 **Cabinet to agree that officers consider feedback from this consultation as part of the development of the emerging master plan for Grays Town Centre.**
- 1.3 **Cabinet to note that the Council's new build development on Seabrooke Rise will be allocated in accordance to the Council's existing Lettings Policy and existing residents of the Seabrooke Rise high rise towers will not benefit from enhanced priority status at the current time.**
- 1.4 **Cabinet to note that the Council is currently reviewing the proposed Housing Development Plan and Estate Regeneration Programme in the light of the Government's imposed reductions in rent. The Council are assessing the implications and options available to ensure that the financial parameters of the HRA are met, whilst retaining an affordable and deliverable programme of housing investment and new build development.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 Since 2013, Cabinet have approved key objectives and programmes designed to improve the quality homes within the borough and in June 2015, approved the vision and strategic objectives associated with a broader programme of regeneration on our key housing estates. Estates where the cost of meeting the Transforming Homes standards are very high, will not provide comparable benefits in terms of regeneration and on estates that were built to very low-density standards with under used and poor quality garage and open space provision.
- 2.2 Adopting a wider regeneration approach, the Council will be able to provide better quality housing for existing residents, better meet future housing needs of the borough by providing much needed additional housing within the footprint of the existing housing estates and adjacent opportunity sites and secure additional investment for the improvement in related infrastructure and local community facilities.
- 2.3 The Housing Department was successful in securing additional borrowing and HCA grant for a number of potential developments across the borough. Further feasibility, coupled with further discussions with planning and further exploration on the scope and phasing of any potential estate regeneration programme has required us to re-evaluate individual developments and make amendments to our programme.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 Our housing estate regeneration proposals are progressing well and we are working with our advisers to better establish the proposed scope and phases of any regeneration plans on each of the key estates to ensure they deliver the required mix and numbers of new housing that meets local need, are affordable to the Council and can be delivered by a suitably experienced regeneration partner.



- 3.2 The Government's recent announcement to impose a 1% reduction on rents over the next four years has a significant impact on the HRA Business Plan and as a consequence the housing development plan and regeneration programme needs to work within revised financial parameters. The Council is currently appraising the options to ensure the revised financial parameters of the HRA are met. This work is on-going and recommendations will be brought forward for Cabinet approval in due course.
- 3.2 As outlined within previous reports and reinforced by our agreed objectives for the Housing Estate Regeneration Programme, we will ensure that existing residents lead the debate on the future of their own estates and influence the proposals and recommendations brought forward by the Council. It is important to do this through local consultation structures on each estate as well as using community forums and hubs in the area.
- 3.3 The master planning and feasibility exercises for the Flowers Estate and the Garrison are well underway and it is important that a well-structured programme of resident and stakeholder consultation is commenced on both estates to inform the Council's housing regeneration proposals for these two key estates.

#### **Flowers Estate, South Ockendon**

- 3.4 The Flowers Estate in South Ockendon provides largely family housing on a large area in close proximity to Ockendon Station and good road connections to the M25, A13 and other key destinations within and outside of the borough. Ockendon is a popular housing area and a number of developers have been investing in and delivering housing schemes in Ockendon over recent years.
- 3.5 The Flowers estate provides low density and comparatively poor quality housing when compared to current quality standards for modern housing. There are real issues with damp and mould within these properties and the current levels of investment required to bring these properties up to appropriate standards under the Transforming Homes Programme is being reviewed further given the Government's imposition of the 1% reduction on rents over the next 4 years. There is, an opportunity to develop a phased programme of housing regeneration that will utilise existing and poorly utilised land and create a new community/village hub for South Ockendon that delivers improved local neighbourhood and community facilities that are better connected to other existing and popular local amenities.
- 3.6 The master plan and feasibility study for the Flowers Estate is well progressed and it is important that we now commence resident and stakeholder consultation so that the views and opinions of local people can influence and tailor the plans prior to taking the regeneration opportunity to market. It is also important that appropriate local consultation structures are well established in each area to support the procurement of a suitably experienced and capable regeneration partner for each estate.

## **Garrison Estate, Purfleet**

- 3.8 The Garrison Estate in Purfleet is a Thames side site East of the Tank Hill Road and in close proximity to Purfleet Station and the proposed Purfleet Town Centre regeneration. There are also a number of buildings and monuments that are listed and are of historical significance and interest. Any proposed regeneration of the Garrison Estate will need to be sympathetic to such buildings and monuments and it will be the intention of the Council to lever in additional investment through the procurement of a suitably experienced and capable regeneration partner for these important features within the Garrison. .
- 3.9 Similar to Flowers, the current housing within the Garrison is of varying nature and quality. Current provision is of fairly low density housing and the estate layout means that it cannot be easily navigated, there are many cul-de-sacs and dead ends, is inward facing and does not fully utilise its proximity to and, therefore, does not benefit from the potential views of the Thames or Rainham Marshes. There are a number of homeowners and leaseholders on the estate so any proposed regeneration proposals will need to fully consider the implications of the current home ownership and leaseholder profile on the estate. There is also considerable on site parking and garage provision that needs to be further assessed and the findings of which, incorporated into the proposed regeneration plans.
- 3.10 Similar to the Flowers Estate above, the master planning and feasibility work is progressing well and it is important that we commence a programme of resident and stakeholder consultation and establish appropriate structures for on-going resident and stakeholder consultation throughout the development of the housing regeneration plans and the procurement of an appropriate regeneration partner.

## **Seabrooke Rise Estate, Grays**

- 3.11 As Cabinet are aware, the consultation and engagement process for Seabrooke Rise regeneration has followed a number of stages and used a variety of mechanisms to engage residents. This includes:
- Housing surgeries: weekly surgeries at 168 Seabrooke Rise;
  - Resident Steering Group: established for the regeneration process, meets monthly, with regular attendance from leaseholders & tenants from the high rise blocks. The establishment of a dedicated steering group focused on the regeneration of the area means there is a focused forum for residents to engage in the process and raise and questions or concerns;
  - This group is supported by the Independent Resident Advisor in reviewing Council plans;
  - Seabrooke Rise Regeneration Booklet: issued in order to update residents on the consultation so far, and respond to questions raised during the consultation. The booklet described space standards for new build, availability of properties; rent levels, recommended decant principles, and advertised opportunities for further consultation through workshops.

- Consultation Survey 2014: broad based survey for all Seabrooke Rise residents, covering experience of living on the estate & aspirations for the future;
- Consultation Survey 2015: broad based survey targeted at residents of high rise blocks, covering a range of questions on the potential regeneration of the blocks and the area;
- Ongoing Resident meetings: a number of meetings provided the opportunity for residents to provide a more detailed feedback on regeneration;
- Consultation on proposed recommendations July- September 2015: Letters to tenant and leaseholders, setting out offer of appointment with a housing officer, as well as Council statutory obligations; and invitation to Workshops & Independent Consultation Sessions: undertaken in August and September 2015, providing residents a means of engaging with specific details of regeneration, and the options and process of this.

3.12 This extensive process has resulted in significant engagement with an overall response rate with over two thirds of residents and half of all leaseholders participating. This broad based yet detailed process established a clear evidence base for decision-making. A summary of the key themes provided through the consultation are set out below. Full analysis of the feedback from the consultation can be found in Appendix 1. Summary of the key themes are:

- **Desire for regeneration:** there is a clear demand and interest from a substantial number of residents for regeneration and new build housing, and options for different tenure and ownership.
- **Options for high rise blocks:** there is a clear desire on the part of a substantial proportion of high rise block residents for options for new build housing or moving to other housing. However this must be balanced with the wishes of the substantial minority of the population – typically older, longer term or retired residents – to retain the blocks.
- **Contrasting views across high block groupings:** at different stages of consultation, it is apparent that resident views differ by blocks – typically across two groups of blocks. Residents of Butler, Davall and Greenwood Houses typically less in favour of proposals than residents of the other three blocks – both in terms of general opinions on regeneration and the process for regeneration.
- **Housing options available for tenants & leaseholders:** there is demonstrable interest in the options to be made available in the process of regeneration.
- **Process for regeneration:** consultation, and particularly workshops and independent consultation sessions, reveals a need for the Council to appropriately articulate the offer to residents – in terms of what housing options will be made available, but also in terms of the process for regeneration.

3.13 In moving through the stages of consultation as noted above, the Council has intended that issues and concerns commonly raised in the consultation are taken up in subsequent stages – with consultation becoming more specific

and focused as it progressed. As detailed above, moving through the consultation stages, the Council has focused progressively on the high rise blocks, and subsequently the specifics of the potential regeneration of these – ensuring the Council understands the requirements of residents who may be affected. A consequence of this is that support for proposals at one stage may differ to support for more specific aspects of proposals in subsequent stages – an example being support for the broad principles and ideas of regeneration (new build, demolition) in the 2015 Consultation Survey, contrasted with support for the specifics of the practical- and process-focused aspects of regeneration (decant and housing options, purchase and disturbance compensation) in the subsequent workshops and consultation sessions. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

- 3.14 While the consultation has highlighted considerable resident support for regeneration of the estate, the findings have established the need for the Council to better articulate the detailed offer to residents directly affected by any decant status and, in particular, to more clearly define the replacement homes that would be offered under the local decant plan. A strong theme which has emerged is a keen desire among residents to understand how the potential regeneration of the estate will fit within and support the Council's wider proposals for Grays Town Centre.
- 3.15 In July 2013 Cabinet approved a vision for Grays Town Centre which sought to broaden its appeal as a destination for people to live, work, learn shop and socialise whilst also reconnecting Grays to the riverfront. A series of projects have been, or are in the process of being, delivering against this vision including the opening of South Essex College's Thurrock Campus in 2014, the refurbishment of the Magistrates Court as business accommodation, the redevelopment of the Rail Station and introduction of a boulevard underpass and the recent announcement of the acquisition of the State Cinema by JD Wetherspoon. The potential regeneration of Seabrooke Rise could play a critical part in the continued delivery of the Council's vision.
- 3.16 The Council is currently developing a high level masterplan for Grays which is anticipated to ultimately form a dedicated part of the Borough's Local Plan. This masterplan draws heavily on the adopted vision for Grays and seeks to set out a series of short, medium and long term proposals which will, among other things, improve circulation around the town, increase the number of homes in and around the town, diversify the uses on the High Street, reconnect the town to the riverfront and encourage the further use of Kilverts Field and Grays Beach. The plan is still at an early stage of development and will need to be the subject of formal public consultation as well as consideration by Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet before it can be adopted.
- 3.17 Whilst the Seabrooke Rise consultation highlighted significant support for the potential regeneration of the estate, it also identified concerns over the location and nature of any replacement homes together with the wider impact on Grays as a whole. Both of these areas are anticipated to be covered within

the development of the wider Grays masterplan. On this basis, it is proposed that the consultation results be used to further inform the masterplanning work currently expected to be summer 2016. This approach will allow Members to consider a more coordinated and complimentary series of proposals within the context a full consulted master plan.

- 3.18 The current Housing Development pipeline is set to continue to deliver high quality new homes on Seabrooke Rise at The Echoes and has recently commenced detailed design of the former Tops Club site. The Echoes development is progressing well and the new homes will be ready to let in due course. It is important for Cabinet to note that these homes will be allocated in accordance with the Council's existing Lettings Policy. Due to there being no decant status assigned to the homes on the Seabrooke Rise Estate, existing residents of the Seabrooke Rise high rise towers will not benefit from enhanced priority status at the current time.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 Quality housing provision and choice in areas that people live are central to us achieving our vision for Thurrock. The Housing Estate Regeneration Programme aims to deliver new, high quality, mixed tenure housing provision across the borough to better meet local housing needs and to offer a genuine choice of tenure to local people.
- 4.2 Housing regeneration proposals that are informed by local stakeholders and residents are also important to ensure support for such schemes and to meet the aspirations and desires of local people.
- 4.3 Any Housing Estate Regeneration proposals need to be achieved within the financial and affordability parameters of the HRA Business Plan.

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

- 5.1 Our programme of consultation with all relevant stakeholders associated with all proposed housing developments and regeneration proposals are on-going. Local support and influence is critically important for all housing development and regeneration.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Achieving regeneration for the Council's housing stock is a key priority and part of the Council's overall growth targets and corporate objectives, helping to deliver improved health and wellbeing, build pride in our communities and their environment and promote skills development and job creation.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Management Accountant**

7.1.1 The medium to long term financial implications of any project undertaken for housing development or estate regeneration will be, and are considered as, part of both the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the HRA business plan which evaluates both the financial viability and affordability of the schemes incorporating both Capital and Revenue implications with regards to funding and additional revenues generated.

7.1.2 Work is ongoing to ensure the viability of the estate regeneration proposals as they are developed within the HRA Business Plan and a further report on the financial implications and the HRA Business Plan will be made to Cabinet in November 2015, including the impact of the government's budget announcements on 8 July 2015.

7.1.3 Further reports to Members will be presented on the affordability position of the housing development and regeneration plans on conclusion of the feasibility and affordability studies outlined above. We will also seek approval from Cabinet on the proposed delivery mechanisms and any changes to the required HRA expenditure and business plan as a result of these programmes.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Assaf Chaudry**  
**Major Project Lawyer**

7.2.1 There are no specific legal implications of the recommendations contained within this update report.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Diversity  
Manager**

7.2.1 Regeneration of the Council's housing estates will have positive impact on the availability of high quality affordable housing in Thurrock, including for vulnerable groups and will be developed through a process of consultation and engagement with all residents and the local community. Regeneration

objectives include not only high quality housing but also holistic objectives around health and wellbeing, improving education and job creation and improving economic prosperity. Contractors and developer partners will be required to have relevant policies on equal opportunities, be able to demonstrate commitment to equality and diversity and to supporting local labour initiatives that achieve additional social value.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

Not applicable.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report**

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Detailed Analysis of Consultation on Gray's High Rises

**Report Author:**

Kathryn Adedeji

Head of Housing Investment and Development

Housing

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## Appendix 1: Consultation Overview & Results

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### Executive Summary

This report sets out a review of the consultation process, together with analysis of results for the Seabrooke Rise regeneration proposals. An overview of the process of consultation and engagement is presented – a period covering 2014-15, including how this process has been driven and tailored to meet the expressed views, concerns and aspirations of residents engaged.

The consultation and engagement process for Seabrooke Rise regeneration has followed a number of stages, ensuring a broad based yet detailed process establishes a clear evidence base for decision-making:

- Consultation Survey 2014: broad based survey for all Seabrooke Rise residents, covering experience of living on the estate & aspirations for the future – 57% Seabrooke Rise residents responded to the survey;
- Ongoing Resident meetings: a number of meetings provided the opportunity for residents to provide a more detailed feedback on regeneration;
- Consultation Survey 2015: broad based survey targeted at residents of high rise blocks, covering a range of questions on the potential regeneration of the blocks and the area – 72% high rise residents responded to a request to meet housing officers; 56.3% high rise residents responded to the survey;
- Resident Steering Group: the establishment of a dedicated steering group focused on the regeneration of the area means there is a focused forum for residents to engage in the process and raise and questions or concerns;
- Workshops & Independent Consultation Sessions: detailed consultation sessions were undertaken in August and September 2015, providing residents a means of engaging with specific details of regeneration, and the options and process of this. 23.5% high rise residents attended the workshops, while 55.1% attended independent consultation sessions.

A number of key outcomes can be determined from the consultation to date:

- **Desire for regeneration:** there is a clear demand and interest from a substantial number of residents for regeneration and new build housing, and options for different tenure and ownership. The Council will take forward this demonstrable interest in progressing regeneration options.
  - 57% respondents supported demolishing all 6 high rise blocks, 15% supported demolishing 3 blocks (2015 survey);
  - 40% respondents would consider buying a home, with a strong preference for houses 93% rather than flats (6%) (2015 survey);
  - Respondents show a strong interest in mixed tenure housing (50%), or social housing (47%) (2015 survey);
- **Options for high rise blocks:** there is a clear desire on the part of a substantial proportion of high rise block residents for options for new build housing or moving to other housing. However this must be balanced with the wishes of the substantial minority of the population – typically older, longer term or retired residents – to retain the blocks. The Council will undertake further consultation & engagement to determine what range of options are available to satisfy the need and desire for regeneration, while considering the wishes of those who are happy with existing homes.
  - 62% residents over 65 support no demolition, 76% of those under 65 support demolition of all or half of the blocks (2015 survey);

- 70% of retired high rise respondent group 'like their current home and do not envisage moving in the future', whereas 62% of the employed/homemaker/other group disagreed with this statement (2014 survey);
- **Contrasting views across high block groupings:** at different stages of consultation, it is apparent that resident views differ by blocks – typically across two groups of blocks. Residents of Butler, Davall and Greenwood Houses typically less in favour of proposals than residents of the other three blocks – both in terms of general opinions on regeneration and the process for regeneration.
  - 68% of residents in Arthur Toft, George Crooks and Lionel Oxley houses support demolition of all blocks, contrasting with 48% for Butler, Davall and Greenwood Houses (2015 survey);
  - Regarding the detailed proposals around the process for regeneration, 44% of residents in Arthur Toft, George Crooks and Lionel Oxley houses support demolition of all blocks, contrasting with 17% for Butler, Davall and Greenwood Houses (residents attending independent consultation sessions).
- **Housing options available for tenants & leaseholders:** there is demonstrable interest in the options to be made available in the process of regeneration, and the Council will use further engagement to ensure residents are updated with this information.
  - 47% of high rise respondents (employed/homemaker/other group) stated they would like to buy a property in Seabrooke Rise or the high rise (2014 survey);
  - Respondents show a strong interest in mixed tenure housing (50%), or social housing (47%) (2015 survey);
  - Feedback from the workshops & surveys demonstrated an interest in options for downsizing, options available to leaseholders, and ongoing new build developments in the area;

**Regeneration Proposals: consultation, and particularly workshops and independent consultation sessions,** on draft recommendations identified the need for residents to be provided with further detail of the specific of the alternative housing provision that would be on offer should the any or all of the current high rises be demolished to support the reprovision of a greater diversity of high quality affordable homes. Feedback from the workshops & surveys demonstrated a number of points regarding options and offers as part of the regeneration proposals such as – decant, right to return, , compensation for moving, timeframes for regeneration, specific tailored offers for elderly & vulnerable residents so support them in moving, etc.

In reviewing the responses below it is important to note that the 2014 survey covered all residents in the Six high rises and Seabrooke Rise estate, while the 2015 survey covered residents in the Six high rises.

It should also be noted that in moving through the stages of consultation, the Council has intended that issues and concerns commonly raised in the consultation are taken up in subsequent stages – with consultation becoming more specific and focused as it progressed. As detailed above, moving through the consultation stages, the Council has focused progressively on the high rise blocks, and subsequently the specifics of the potential regeneration of these – ensuring the Council understands the requirements of residents who may be affected. A consequence of this is that support for proposals at one stage may differ to support for more specific aspects of proposals in subsequent stages – an example being support for the broad principles and ideas of regeneration (new build, demolition) in the 2015 Consultation Survey, contrasted with support for the specifics of the practical- and process-focused aspects of regeneration (decant and housing options, purchase and disturbance compensation) in the subsequent workshops and consultation sessions.

## **1. Key survey consultation outcomes**

### **1.1. Demolition and Reprovision of homes:**

Consultation results showed a contrasting view across residents of the high rise blocks, with views about current homes and regeneration typically being split between retired/long-term resident and non-retired/newer resident demographics. The majority of retirees are happy with their current home, do not want to move and are less enthusiastic about regeneration. In contrast, the non-retired demographic are positive about new build housing, with a corresponding negative view about their current homes.

The views of residents contribute to two groups that can be considered as 'pro-high rise' and 'pro-demolition/new build':

	<b>'Pro-High Rise' Group</b> Approximately on third of respondents express satisfaction with current home and desire to retain the status quo	<b>'Pro-Demolition / New Build' Group</b> Approximately two thirds of residents express dissatisfaction with their current home, a desire to move home, a positive view about regeneration, and a positive view about demolition of the high rise blocks
<b>Views on Current Home</b>	<b>2014 Resident Survey Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% agreed with the statement 'I like my current home and do not envisage moving in the future' (retired category)</li> </ul>	<b>2014 Resident Survey Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62% disagreed with the statement 'I like my current home and do not envisage moving in the future' (employed/homemaker/other category)</li> </ul>
<b>Views on Moving Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>81% disagreed with the statement 'I do not like my home and want to move to another property on the estate' (retired category)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34% agreed with the statement 'I do not like my home and want to move to another property on the estate' (employed/homemaker/other category)</li> </ul>
<b>Views on Demolition - Analysis by Tenure</b>	<b>2015 Resident Survey Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>83% of those living at their property for more than 20 years would prefer no demolition, 47% of those living at their property for 10-20 years would prefer no demolition</li> </ul>	<b>2015 Resident Survey Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Across those groups living at their property for less than 10 years, more than 60% would prefer demolition of all blocks</li> </ul>
<b>Views on Demolition - Analysis by Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62% of those over 65 would prefer no demolition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For residents under 65, more than 50% would prefer demolition of all blocks, with this figure at 89% for those under 25.</li> </ul>

Taking these two contrasting groups together, there is evidently a need to find a compromise option for regeneration to progress. An option to demolish 3 high rise blocks was included for respondents in the 2015 survey – receiving 15% support as shown above, while there is also significant support for alternative options (demolition of all blocks 57%, demolition of no blocks 34%).

## 1.2. New Build & Desire to Move Home – Moving Home

Survey results from 2014 demonstrate a substantial proportion of the non-retired demographic have a preference to move home:

- 62% would like to move off the estate (employed/homemaker/other category);
- 34% agreed with the statement that 'I do not like my current home and want to move to another property on the estate' (employed/homemaker/other category).

This demonstrates a considerable desire to move out from the high rise home, though not always away from the area. Combined with further questions on new build and moving home as below, this demonstrates a strong interest in potential outcomes of the regeneration and development proposals.

## 1.3. New Build & Desire to Move Home – Areas to Move to

Following an apparent interest in moving home as demonstrated in the 2014 survey, the 2015 survey investigates further the places residents would like to move to:

- The vast majority would like to stay in the Thurrock area (75%) if not stay on the estate itself (20%) – based on first preference;
- The second preference is in line with this – 70% and 27% for each option respectively.

Therefore, while residents are often interested in moving, they demonstrate a preference to stay in the local area. This further substantiates a proposal for regeneration of the estate which has at its core a provision for residents to remain.

## 1.4. New Build & Desire to Move Home – Buying Interest

Survey results show a good level of interest in buying a property on the estate:

- 2015 Survey: 40% across all age groups would consider buying a property;

- 2014 Survey: 47% across non-retired high rise demographic would consider buying a property on the estate.

This demonstrates that the Council, in developing new building programmes, needs to set out a clear range of options and avenues for current residents to buy properties on the estate. The 2014 survey also demonstrated a strong support (80% across all respondents) for the preferential treatment of current local residents where new build properties are available.

#### **1.5. New Build & Desire to Move Home – Tenure Options**

The survey results show a strong preference for a range of options including social housing and mixed tenure types, backing up the levels of interest in buying a property:

- 2015 Survey: 47% back a Social Housing option, 50% back a mixed tenure option;
- 2014 Survey: 59% of residents agreed that new build properties should provide a mixture of social and private housing.

Support for a range of tenure options, together with the strong interest in buying a property and for residents to remain on the estate, demonstrate that there is a substantial need to develop housing provision which satisfies this aspirational demand – beyond current housing provision which is typically tenanted.

Through the course of the workshops, it is clear that rent costs of any new homes is a concern of residents, and the Council has set out costs associated with the Echoes new build development as a means of providing context.

#### **1.6. Community Engagement, Development & Wellbeing – Training & Employment Opportunities**

Survey data suggests that there is the potential to bring real value to some residents of the Seabrooke Rise area through provision of training and employment support opportunities:

- 2015 Survey: Of residents responding to the survey as unemployed, 35% expressed an interest in further support in finding work;
- 2014 Survey: 37% of respondents had no tertiary or further education beyond secondary school, including a number of unemployed.

Therefore, where proposals regarding estate regeneration are approved, it is apparent that the recommended local consultation structure will be supported and attended by residents that may be affected. This demonstrates potential strength in the cohesive and consultative approach undertaken by the Council.

#### **1.7. Community Engagement, Development & Wellbeing – Ongoing Consultation**

As well as undertaking a consultation process which puts residents at the centre of developing regeneration proposals, there is a need to further maintain this engagement through the implementation of any approved proposals. The numbers of residents responding positively to being engaged in some form of voluntary activity should therefore be encouraging for the Council.

- 2014 Survey: 74% of the employed/homemaker/other category and 51% of retirees, state they would like to be involved in proposals, or influence decisions, about the estate;
- 2015 Survey: 60 residents state they would like to be involved in some form of volunteering, including attending meetings – 32% of the total respondents.

## **2. Background**

Thurrock Council, as part of its corporate plan, has prioritised furthering the borough as an area with improved facilities, environment and housing for local residents, as well as encouraging further economic development and improving the appeal of the borough for business. In developing and progressing these ambitions for the borough, the Council is committed to ensuring residents are central to shaping any development and regeneration that takes place.

Seabrooke Rise estate and high rise blocks are a key focus for regeneration proposals – with the potential to substantially improve existing housing, environment and facilities, provide new homes with a range of tenures to suit local need, and engage the local community in the development of improved community facilities, economic wellbeing and health.

Taking together the Council's wider improvement ambitions and the desire to engage residents in developments, a process of consultation and engagement has been undertaken with residents of Seabrooke Rise estate and high rise. Engaging with residents provides an opportunity to shape regeneration options and proposals tailored to local needs and aspirations.

Consultation has been undertaken over a period from early 2014, with a series of engagements with residents – a process which includes the tailoring and refinement of consultation to improve understanding of resident aspirations for regeneration of the area. Through this process the Council has been able to further refine and shape proposals for regeneration and development – with resident feedback providing key input for this process.

### **2.1. Consultation Overview**

A process of consultation and engagement commenced in January 2014, with the first comprehensive survey of residents undertaken to provide an initial understanding of resident perceptions of life on the estate, their homes and their aspirations for the future. This informed subsequent consultation with residents, tailoring the focus of themes and questions included.

The 2014 survey was conducted across the estate, engaging residents on the Seabrooke Rise Estate and High Rise blocks. The survey encompassed a broad range of issues, including their experiences of current living on the estate, what community spirit exists, their experience of their current home and what their educational and working situation was. The survey also then focused about their aspirations for the future, including what they would like to see on the estate, and what housing they consider appropriate in any regeneration.

Following this initial survey and analysis, further resident engagement was undertaken through a resident meeting in July 2014 – at which initial survey results were presented. The key outcomes of this meeting were twofold. Firstly, residents expressed a desire for ongoing engagement & consultation regarding regeneration – with the result that the formation of a Resident Steering Group was agreed. Secondly, it was apparent both from the survey and the meeting there were a number of issues which substantiated a further survey, investigating in more detail resident views and aspirations with regard to development of the area.

Subsequent meetings of the Resident Steering Group were held in October 2014 and January 2015. The former established an agenda which would form a basis for discussions with the Council to improve the estate. The latter meeting provided residents with a presentation on other ongoing developments in Thurrock, and the potential development options for Seabrooke Rise, including the options for demolition of high rise blocks.

A further substantial resident survey was undertaken in March-May 2015, taking forward the key themes of the 2014 analysis in a survey of residents of the High Rise blocks. Engaging with residents of the high rise blocks followed the desire of the Council to investigate the potential development of this area, and the results of the 2014 survey - which demonstrated a contrasting picture in resident opinion of future development.

Section 3 below sets out the themes of the 2015 survey, which take forward key issues such as a contrast across demographics of the way forward for the area, options for future housing, the desire for community engagement and the potential for provision of employment and training for residents. Section 4 details the outcomes of the survey and analysis of results. Section 5 sets out the latest phase of consultation and engagement – workshops and independent consultation sessions – and the detailed feedback provided here.

Section 6 provides a summary analysis of the outcomes of the consultation & the potential implications for regeneration of Seabrooke Rise. Section 7 sets out associated recommendations for next steps in regeneration consultation.

### **3. Consultation Structure & Themes**

Consultation and engagement with residents regarding Seabrooke Rise regeneration has comprised various stages using a range of survey methods, ensuring sufficiently broad and detailed information has been gained. The following section provides an overview of the key consultation stages undertaken to date, comprising:

- **Consultation Survey 2014:** broad based survey across Seabrooke Rise using quantitative and qualitative methods to understand resident experiences of the estate and opinions on regeneration;
- **Consultation Survey 2015:** broad based survey focusing on residents of the high rise blocks, using quantitative and qualitative methods to understand resident desire for regeneration, and the potential nature and process for this;
- **Consultation Workshops & Independent Consultation Sessions 2015:** in order to provide a detailed qualitative understanding of high rise block resident opinion on regeneration and the specifics of the process for regeneration offers, decant and property design, Council-led workshops and Tenant Participation Advisory Service independent consultation sessions have been undertaken.

#### **3.1. Consultation Survey 2014**

Following the comprehensive survey undertaken in January 2014 across residents of Seabrooke Rise and High Rise blocks, a number of key themes emerged in resident feedback. Analysis by demographic group, and across Seabrooke Rise houses and high rise blocks, showed:

- High Rise blocks:
  - Different aspirations between two groups: younger demographics, or more recent residents of high rise blocks, were more positive about regeneration and new developments – whereas the retired demographic were generally more content with current homes;
  - Community spirit: a general consideration of a lack of community spirit in the blocks;
  - Desire for engagement: for any development and regeneration there was a desire amongst respondent for involvement in the process.
- Seabrooke Rise:
  - ASB & community spirit: general perception of issues with ASB, however a greater experience of community spirit;
  - Dissatisfaction with homes: general dissatisfaction with standard of homes, and in contrast to high rise blocks this was mirrored in the retired demographic;
- General:
  - Housing options: New build houses with a range of tenure and ownership options, was apparent across respondents;
  - Development opportunities: a broad scope of respondents considered taking advantage of the Grays Beach location to be important in any future development;
  - Employment & training: developments have the potential to target particular needs and desires in the respondent cohort, with the Council having a leading role in this provision.

Further analysis of the 2014 resident survey can be found in the report '*Seabrooke Rise Resident Survey: Analysis & Implications*'.

#### **3.2. Consultation Survey 2015**

The 2014 survey provided a number of key insights into the experience of residents living in the area, and amongst these was the strong desire expressed by younger demographics resident in high rise blocks to move from their properties and see new development in the area. In parallel to this, the retired demographic in the high rise blocks showed substantially higher levels of satisfaction in living on the estate, in their current home, and their desire to not move from the estate.

The Council, in progressing development and regeneration proposals, has determined to investigate further the potential options for the high rise blocks – and in doing so a further survey was

commissioned for 2015 to further understand the residents opinions living in the high rise blocks and the opportunities for new build housing.

The 2015 survey took forward the key results from the 2014 survey, and developed a number of themes to engage with residents. Table 4 demonstrates the focus of the surveys undertaken, including the themes resulting from 2014 survey feedback and how this shaped subsequent consultation.

The survey sought to review further residents perceptions and views on:

- Demolition of high rise blocks: considering the apparent desire amongst a substantial number of the younger demographic in the block to move to new build housing, what were the opinions of residents on demolition, and the range of options associated with this;
- New build housing & desire to move home: if new housing was built, what type of housing, tenure and what area should it be built;
- Community engagement, development & wellbeing: considering the apparent desire amongst some 2014 respondents for engagement in the regeneration process, as well as need for employment & training, what would residents of the high rise blocks like to see offered in regeneration proposals.

Further analysis of the results can be found in section 4 below.

### **3.3. Resident Consultation Workshops 2015**

Subsequent to the consultation survey 2015, further detailed consultation and engagement was undertaken in July to September. In order to provide assurance, accountability and impartiality in consultation regarding the specifics of the process, this stage of engagement involved sessions being undertaken by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS).

While the 2015 consultation survey provided further evidence strong interest in new build housing and options of ownership, there remain contrasting view on demolition of blocks and the process for regeneration (see section 4). Therefore the Council considered further consultation on these issues appropriate.

A detailed, qualitative exercise provided the Council with an opportunity to gain an improved level of understanding of the specific opinions of residents on:

- The Council's offer to Tenants: for example, what decant and like-for-like housing options would be made available, what opportunities there would be to stay on or move from the estate;
- The Council's offer to Leaseholders: for example, purchase price & disturbance compensation, options for shared equity, new build or purchase of an existing Council property;
- Design standards: including the design of homes, the estate and green spaces;
- Regeneration benefits: the mix of types of home & ownership, shared equity, and improved design.

Providing residents with the opportunity to engage with an independents party ensures that where residents may have resisted raising concerns directly with the Council, these may be presented TPAS.

Further details and results of this stage of consultation can be found in section 5 below.

## 4. Consultation Survey 2015 – Results

The following section provides an overview of results from the consultation survey undertaken for residents of high rise blocks in Seabrooke Rise. In total 240 (72%) residents responded to a request by the Council to meet with housing officers to discuss the regeneration proposals. Of these, 187 residents (56.3%) completed a formal survey by interview with a housing officer, and it is their views which are reflected in the section of the report which describes the survey results. Across 332 properties (total 348 excluding void and temporary let properties), this gives a rate of 56.3% high rise residents completing the survey.

*NB: Where 'Grand Total' across multiple fields produces a total of >100%, respondents have been able to choose one or more fields for that question*

### 4.1. Respondent Profile

Figure 1 Age bracket of respondents

Unknown	Under 25	25 to 50	Over 50	Over 65	Grand Total
27.27% (51)	14.97% (28)	37.97% (71)	13.90% (26)	5.88% (11)	100.00% (187)

Figure 2 Tenure length of respondents

Unknown	Less than 1Y	1-2Y	2-5Y	6-10Y	10-20Y	20Y+	Grand Total
0.53% (1)	6.95% (13)	16.58% (31)	21.39% (40)	23.53% (44)	18.72% (35)	12.30% (23)	100.00% (187)

Figure 3 Block composition of respondents

Unknown	Arthur Toft House	Butler House	Davall House	George Crooks House	Greenwood House	Lionel Oxley House	Grand Total
0.53% (1)	12.83% (24)	20.32% (38)	16.58% (31)	16.04% (30)	18.18% (34)	15.51% (29)	100.00% (187)

### 4.2. Demolition of High Rise Blocks

Figure 4 View on demolition, by length of tenure

	Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 20	Over 20	Grand Total
Option 1 - % of Residents that Agree with Demolishing all 6 Blocks	64.7%	69.0%	63.0%	46.9%	9.5%	56.7%
Option 2 - % of residents that agree with demolishing 3 of the blocks	18.8%	15.2%	17.4%	12.5%	9.5%	14.9%
Option 3 - % of Residents who want none of the blocks demolished	26.7%	19.7%	21.7%	47.2%	82.6%	33.9%

This chart suggests that there is a substantial contrast between those who have been long-term resident of the high rise blocks – strongly against demolition, and those who have moved there more recently – strongly in favour of demolition.

Figure 5 View on demolition, by age of resident

	Unknown	Under 25	25 to 50	Over 50	Over 65	Grand Total
Option 1 - % of Residents that Agree with Demolishing all 6 Blocks	56.9%	89.3%	50.7%	53.8%	18.2%	56.7%
Option 2 - % of residents that agree with demolishing 3 of the blocks	2.0%	16.0%	20.3%	20.0%	27.3%	14.9%
Option 3 - % of Residents who want none of the blocks demolished	42.3%		36.1%	30.8%	61.5%	34.2%

Mirroring response by length of residency, this chart shows similar contrasts across the age groups.



**Figure 6 View on demolition, by block**

	Arthur Toft House	Butler House	Davall House	George Crooks House	Greenwood House	Lionel Oxley House	Grand Total
Option 1 - % of Residents that Agree with Demolishing all 6 Blocks	70.8%	50.0%	45.2%	66.7%	47.1%	65.5%	56.5%
Option 2 - % of residents that agree with demolishing 3 of the blocks	17.4%	13.2%	23.1%	3.3%	26.5%	3.4%	14.4%
Option 3 - % of Residents who want none of the blocks demolished	13.0%	39.5%	53.1%	30.0%	29.4%	31.0%	33.9%

There are contrasting views across the blocks with regards demolition – Arthur Toft, George Crooks and Lionel Oxley being most strongly in favour of demolition of all blocks. Figure 7 demonstrates the contrast in views across the two groupings of blocks – a theme which is also consistent in later consultation (section 5.2 below):

**Figure 7 View on demolition, by block grouped**

	Arthur Toft House, George Crooks House, Lionel Oxley H..	Butler House, Davall House, Greenwood House	Grand Total
Option 1 - % of Residents that Agree with Demolishing all 6 Blocks	67.5%	47.6%	56.5%
Option 2 - % of residents that agree with demolishing 3 of the blocks	7.3%	20.4%	14.4%
Option 3 - % of Residents who want none of the blocks demolished	25.6%	40.4%	33.9%

### 4.3. New Homes & the Desire to Move Home

**Figure 8 Views on buying a home, by age of resident**

	Unknown	Under 25	25 to 50	Over 50	Over 65	Grand Total
Yes	40.4% (23)	46.7% (14)	50.7% (36)	26.7% (8)		39.9% (81)
Do not Know	7.0% (4)	16.7% (5)	18.3% (13)	10.0% (3)		12.3% (25)
No	50.9% (29)	36.7% (11)	31.0% (22)	63.3% (19)	100.0% (15)	47.3% (96)
Not Decided	1.8% (1)					0.5% (1)
Grand Total	100.0% (57)	100.0% (30)	100.0% (71)	100.0% (30)	100.0% (15)	100.0% (203)

Those in the younger age brackets are most likely to be interested in buying a property.

**Figure 9 Views on buying a home, of those who would not consider initially, would you consider with financial discount**

	Unknown	Under 25	25 to 50	Over 50	Over 65	Grand Total
Possibly & Yes	34.6% (9)	61.5% (8)	62.1% (18)	47.1% (8)	16.7% (2)	46.4% (45)
No	65.4% (17)	38.5% (5)	37.9% (11)	52.9% (9)	83.3% (10)	53.6% (52)

Where residents have responded no, don't know or not decided to the preceding question on buying a home, if there was a financial discount their views frequently change – 46% of this group show an interest in the option, indicating financial constraints play a role.

## 5. Workshop & Independent Consultation Sessions 2015

The format of the workshops was different to the earlier quantitative survey undertaken and detailed above as it there were designed to ensure residents were able to feedback on the proposed recommendations were developed, as a result of the earlier consultation, this format allowed for more detailed consultation on the specific proposed recommendations, ahead of a recommendation to cabinet. These included:

- The Council's offer to Tenants: for example, what decant and like-for-like housing options would be made available, what opportunities there would be to stay on or move from the estate;
- The Council's offer to Leaseholders: for example, purchase price & disturbance compensation, options for shared equity, new build or purchase of an existing Council property;
- Design standards: including the design of homes, the estate and green spaces;
- Regeneration benefits: the mix of types of home & ownership, shared equity, and improved design.

The below provides a detailed overview of the issues raised at these sessions.

### 5.1. Workshops Overview

Residents were invited to attend a series of workshops between July and September, to discuss the Council's proposals for the regeneration of the estate, with a number residents attending:

Arthur Toft House	10
Butler House	22
Davall House	10
George Crooks House	11
Greenwood House	12
Lionel Oxley House	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>

Across 332 properties (total 348 excluding void and temporary let properties), this gives a rate of 23.5% high rise residents attending workshops.

### 5.2. Independent Consultation Sessions Overview

The Council appointed the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) in June, to provide independent advice to both tenants and leaseholders during the consultation. The estate's Independent Resident Advisor issued a newsletter which both encourages residents to participate in the consultation and offers access to independent advice. The independent resident advisor met residents in each of the six blocks between 24 August and 7 September, with the following number attending and providing their overall opinion on proposals:

Block	No. of resident s spoken to	Residents in support of proposals		Residents not in support of proposals		Residents undecided or stated not interested	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
<b>Arthur Toft House</b>	26	12	46.2%	8	30.8%	6	23.1%
<b>Butler House</b>	29	4	13.8%	17	58.6%	8	27.6%
<b>Davall House</b>	34	6	17.6%	19	55.9%	9	26.5%
<b>George Crooks House</b>	28	14	50.0%	6	21.4%	8	28.6%

<b>Greenwood House</b>	30	6	20.0%	13	43.3%	11	36.7%
<b>Lionel Oxley House</b>	36	14	38.9%	7	19.4%	15	41.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>31.1%</b>

Across 332 properties (total 348 excluding void and temporary let properties), this gives a rate of 55.1% high rise residents attending independent consultation sessions.

Grouping the blocks demonstrates the contrast in view on proposals subject of this later stage of consultation – with residents of Butler, Davall and Greenwood Houses typically less in favour of proposals than residents of the other three blocks. This reflects the earlier consultation survey, focusing more generally on regeneration and demolition, where resident views across these block groupings is consistent in being pro- and against regeneration (section 4.2 above).

Block	No. of residents spoken to	Residents in support of proposals		Residents not in support of proposals		Residents undecided or stated not interested	
<b>Butler House, Davall House, Greenwood House</b>	93	16	17.2%	49	52.7%	28	30.1%
<b>Arthur Toft House, George Crooks House, Lionel Oxley House</b>	90	40	44.4%	21	23.3%	29	32.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>31.1%</b>

### 5.3. Workshops: detailed review of resident questions & concerns.

The workshop format was designed to instigate discussion around regeneration proposals, ensuring residents were provided with an opportunity for comment on proposed recommendations. The summary below is a reflection of residents' comments and questions, with Council responses. Quotation marks have been used to illustrate a comment or question made by a resident.

Resident Comments / Concerns	Council Responses based on current
1) Residents are unhappy that redevelopment will potentially have a negative effect on parking on the estate. Did not agree with any suggestion that Seabrooke Rise should form part of the Council's policy for 'zero' parking	<p>The potential for the regeneration of the estate provides an opportunity to completely redesign the parking offer on Seabrooke Rise. Regeneration would enable residents to work closely with the Council's appointed architects to redesign the external areas of the estate, including the current arrangements for car parking.</p> <p>The context for the reference to the Council's policy on zero parking refers to the areas around Grays town centre, and the train station.</p> <p>The Council's housing management team have had recent success in improving the parking arrangements on the estate, and has worked with the parking enforcement team to create new enforcement zones. To date 372 parking notices have been issued on the estate and the Council's performance continues to be subject to scrutiny by the residents steering group.</p>
2) Some residents felt that there had not been full consultation in respect of the Echoes development, and hoped that the Council will learn lessons when considering future projects.	<p>The Council acknowledges that residents rightly have an expectation that during all phases of regeneration there should be full and comprehensive consultation. Following the commencement of the Echoes scheme, the Council has embarked on an intensive programme of consultation with residents which began in January 2014. Officers have been recruited to form a local team with a remit to work together with residents to develop regeneration proposals to improve the estate.</p> <p>In October 2014 the Council supported residents in the formation of a</p>

	<p>residents steering group. Meetings between the Council and steering group members take place on a monthly basis and this has created an additional forum for discussions on regeneration.</p> <p>The current discussions with residents on the proposals for the high rise blocks have resulted in over 200 resident one to one discussions with Council officers.</p> <p>We hope that the amount of consultation undertaken demonstrates the Council's commitment to place residents at the heart of all regeneration plans.</p>
3) "I am a leaseholder and I want to continue as a home owner. I want to remain in Grays. My main concern is whether I will be able to afford an alternative property".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A leaseholder living on the estate was recently made an offer by the Council which allowed her to move out</li> <li>• Regeneration would allow the Council to provide low cost home ownership options. Some low cost new build properties could be reserved for leaseholders.</li> </ul>
4) "I own my property and do not want to move. If I have to move I would consider downsizing into a one bedroom property, and would like to know if I can rent a property through the Council?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For older residents there is a potential to move into a sheltered accommodation (if resident is over 55 years old).</li> <li>• As part of the potential offer to resident leaseholders the Council would consider offering a Council tenancy. Under this option leaseholders would be entitled to exercise the right to buy.</li> </ul>
5) "If most residents support demolishing six of the high rise blocks, why is the Council only proposing to demolish only 3?"	<p>The proposed recommendation was seeking to achieve a balanced decision which gives the maximum number of people what they want. By retaining 3 high rise blocks, the Council would create an opportunity for the introduction of a block for residents who are 55 years and over, if this is what residents want.</p>
6) "Under the current proposal, my block would be retained. I am in support of regeneration but if my block is not demolished, does this mean I cannot move?"	<p>Under the proposed recommendations currently being consulted on residents, who live in high rise blocks which are to be retained, would be given the opportunity to move if this is what they want to do. Residents in a retained block would be awarded the highest priority for a move, but would not be entitled to the statutory home loss and disturbance payments.</p> <p>This is fair because these residents would have a choice as to whether or not they move, but this choice is not available to residents who live in a block set to be demolished.</p>
7) "Will the land resulting from the demolition of the high rise blocks be sufficient to rehouse all residents?"	<p>If there is a decision to demolish the high rise blocks the Council would re-provide the number of homes demolished. This would create sufficient homes to rehouse all residents, and this would be evidenced by the work we would undertake during the master planning phase. Residents would be invited to contribute to the development of the master plan and comment on the proposals for new build as part of the Council's consultation process.</p>
8) "This has been a long time coming and Grays deserves regeneration".	<p>The consultation undertaken by the Council since January 2014 confirms there is support for regeneration on the estate. If regeneration is approved, the Council would take a balanced approach to the delivery of regeneration so that the needs of all residents, including those who are not currently in support, are met.</p>
9) "Will there be opportunities for residents to move out of the borough or back to London?"	<p>The Council would support all residents during the decant process and would attempt to persuade other Councils to agree a like for like swap of properties. We would also support residents who wish to arrange their own move through the mutual exchange scheme.</p> <p>The Council does not manage the allocation of housing outside of Thurrock, therefore we would be unable to say with certainty whether housing applications made to other local authorities, would be successful.</p>
10) "Will all residents be provided with a new home?"	<p>The Council is currently building 53 new properties on the Seabrooke Rise estate. Residents in the high rise blocks would be given the highest priority to move into these properties if the decision is made to undertake demolition.</p> <p>All residents would also be offered the right to return. This means if a resident has to move off the estate in order to facilitate a new build</p>

	scheme, they would be able to return to the estate upon the completion of the new build, and move into a new home.
11) "If I have a 2 bedroom property and my son is over the age of 18 can we both be provided with a 1 bedroom flat each?"	Under the proposed recommendations, yes this would be possible.
12) "When will the decision be made?"	Recommendations informed by the outcome of this consultation are set to be presented to October Cabinet meeting.
13) "New homes are being built behind the technical college, are any of them Council homes?"	This is a private development.
14) "Will I have the opportunity to move to a larger home?"	<p>Under the proposed recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Allocations Officer would work with residents to identify a property which would best meet their need for accommodation. Following an assessment of the individual circumstances of each household, if it is determined that a larger home should be provided, this would form part of the offer to the resident.</li> <li>• Residents would not be permitted to move to a larger property if following an assessment, it has been determined the property is not suitable to meet the needs of the family.</li> <li>• Residents have commented extensively during the consultation on their desire to retain their two bedroom homes (in most cases the high rise flats are 2 bed units).</li> <li>• The Council would offer residents who are required to move home as a result of regeneration a like for like move. For example, if you currently live in a 2 bedroom property, you would be entitled to move into another 2 bedroom property. In addition you would be entitled to downsize from a 2 bedroom property into a 1 bedroom property. Under these circumstances the Council would pay the resident for the loss of one bedroom (£1,000), if they decide to downsize.</li> </ul>
15) "If a decision is made, which of the 3 blocks would be demolished first?"	Under the proposed recommendations being consulted on Butler, Duvall and Greenwood Houses were proposed, However any final recommendations will be informed by this consultation process and on a more detailed evaluation
16) "How does the Council prioritise during the decant process?"	<p>The Council operates a choice based lettings system. The allocations policy confirms residents who need to move home as a result of regeneration would be awarded the highest priority for a move.</p> <p>Under the current proposed recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a decision is made to demolish a high rise block, the Council would award decant status to residents residing in the high rise block. Decant status offers residents with the highest priority for a move, which is Band 1.</li> <li>• At the end of this year the Council would be able to provide 53 new homes on the estate. There is a good turnover in our existing stock and we do not anticipate there would be a difficulty in providing residents with the type of properties they want.</li> </ul>
17) "What about tenants who are in debt and don't pay their bills, why are they allowed to be high priority status?"	<p>The Council has a legal obligation to offer all high rise block tenants with a high priority status, if a decision is made to decant.</p> <p>In circumstances where tenants are in rent arrears, Home loss &amp; disturbance money would be used to repay the debt first, and the remaining balance would then be paid to the tenant.</p> <p>Tenants who are in rent arrears and who have not been awarded decant status; would not be allowed to move.</p>
18) "How long would it be before we move?"	Were decant status to remain as a recommendations and a decision be made to award then, there is likely to be a period whereby the Council would ensure that the records we hold on residents are updated. Following this process the offers to residents would be made almost immediately. The new properties being built on the estate are on target to be completed by the end of this calendar year. It is

	anticipated that 53 families would be able to move into the new properties towards the end of the year.
19) "Can we have a look at 'The Echoes' properties when they are ready?"	The Council has noticed significant interest from residents to view the Echoes properties. We are working with our contractors to create safe areas on the site to allow residents to view the properties in October.
20) "My mother is bedridden and does not want to move, this is a big concern".	As a result of the recent consultation exercise, the Council has created a database of vulnerable and older residents. Initial discussions are taking place with those residents, and this would be followed up by more detailed discussions with a dedicated Allocations Officer, if the regeneration of the estate is approved. The offer to vulnerable and older residents would include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An individual plan agreed with by family members/carers</li> <li>• The involvement of Adult Social Care, GPs, and local hospitals, as appropriate</li> <li>• The Council would allocate a named caseworker to manage the move. A Council officer would be present on the day of the move to support residents.</li> <li>• The support offered would include packing and unpacking boxes, and liaison with services such as utilities, post office etc.</li> <li>• Following the move the caseworker would work with the appropriate family member or carer to ensure all has gone correctly, and would visit the resident to ensure they have comfortably settled into their new home.</li> </ul>
21) "I am worried because I live in one of the rear high rise blocks, plans to move me would be pushed back".	The Council has not made a decision as to which blocks would be demolished. If there is a decision to demolish the front 3 blocks, then anybody living in the rear blocks who want to move would be awarded Band 1 priority. This offer is replicated if the decision made is to demolish the rear blocks and retain the front 3. The consultation has identified there are a number of residents who like living in the high rise blocks. There is a benefit in retaining some of the high rise blocks to accommodate these residents. By retaining some high rise blocks, a resident decanted from one block would have an opportunity to move into an identical property in a retained block, as soon as the property becomes available.
22) "I am interested in one block being retained for those over 55yrs old".	During the consultation, a number of residents who are 55 years and over have expressed an interest in viewing one of the Council's schemes for residents who are 55 years and over. The Council intends to work with the residents steering group to improve the provision of homes for older residents. Currently a visit is being organised with residents to view an over 55yrs scheme at Derry Avenue, South Ockendon.
23) I am not in support of the proposals to demolish the high rise blocks. If I move home, the size of the rooms in the new build property would be a huge concern.	The new build properties are designed to THE London Space Standard. Residents would be given the opportunity to view new build properties on the Echoes and elsewhere so they decide for themselves whether the proposals on space are suitable.
24) New build property would mean the Council would put the rent up, it is all about revenue!	Rent levels would be set at social rent and information has been sent to residents in respect of the rent estimates for the Echoes.
25) If I move off the estate as a right to return, would the Council pay my removal costs if I decide to move back?	The Council would consider discretionary payments for all reasonable move costs on a case by case basis.
26) There has been no proper survey carried out to justify demolition. What are the maintenance costs for these blocks?	A 30year plan estimates the costs to be £30m
27) Residents should be provided with a copy of the Council's recommendations before they are discussed at the Cabinet meeting.	The Council would continue to inform residents of the process for comments on the final recommendations.

## Independent consultation sessions: detailed review of resident questions & concerns.

**5.4.** The Council appointed the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) in June 2015 to provide independent advice to both tenants and leaseholders during the consultation. TPAS has conducted three hour sessions in the entrance to each High Rise block as part of ongoing discussions with residents about the future of Seabrooke Rise.

The sessions have been arranged to provide residents with a further opportunity to discuss the Council's proposals for the high rise blocks. Council Officers were not in attendance during these discussions, enabling TPAS to encourage residents to be open in providing their feedback. The TPAS sessions ran from Monday 24th August to Monday 7th September.

The summary below is a reflection of residents' comments and questions, with Council responses.

<b>Resident Comments / Concerns</b>	<b>Council Comments</b>
<p><b>1)</b> "Where would we go?"</p> <p>Comments from TPAS: This question was asked several times and there is a belief that the Council does not have enough properties to re-house all of the people in the blocks, even those in favour of the proposals raised this issue.</p>	<p>The Council has previously stated that should there be approval for demolition, all homes demolished would be replaced. The details of the type of homes to be provided would be discussed with residents as part of the ongoing consultation.</p>
<p><b>2)</b> Several residents expressed concern about the size of any new properties and also the rents and running costs of new homes. Currently water rates are collected with the rent.</p>	<p>Residents have recently been provided with the cost related to the Echoes scheme. Residents have been informed that as the Echoes is being built to a higher quality standard (this would be the case for all new homes built), though the Council has made a commitment to charge a social rent, there would be an increase in rental costs. Additional information would be provided to residents regarding all charges for new build property, including water rates.</p>
<p><b>3)</b> "The Council has made their decision and they would do what they want anyway. We can't influence it."</p>	<p>Residents have been informed during a number of consultation meetings, that the final decision on the future of the high rise blocks would be decided by the Council's cabinet.</p>
<p><b>4)</b> "We keep hearing and being told different things. Want to know what is going on."</p>	<p>The Council continues to provide information to residents about the current proposals, and has recently completed a series of workshops during July and August. The Independent Resident Advisor has also been actively engaging with residents to ensure they are receiving independent advice on the current proposals.</p>
<p><b>5)</b> Some residents asked if it is cheaper to refurbish the blocks rather than demolish them.</p>	
<p><b>7)</b> There appears to be some belief that the desire to demolish the first three high –rise blocks is somehow related to the desires of the college. Several residents commented about this saying that it doesn't blend in with the college and is an eyesore to the college and that they want the land for student accommodation and car-parking. Reference was made to the fact that the college was built on previous housing land</p>	<p>The Council is committed to exploring opportunities to regenerate the Seabrooke Rise estate. The decision regarding the future of the high rise blocks would be driven by the outcome of the consultation with residents and would not be decided by the future development of the college.</p>
<p><b>8)</b> Several residents raised the concern that new properties for Seabrooke Rise would either not be built or would not be made available to existing residents</p>	<p>The Council is due to completed 53 new properties on the estate, known as the Echoes. If the current proposals to demolish some or all of the high rise blocks are approved, then residents would be awarded a Band 1 priority to enable them to move to new properties. Residents who wish to move into the Echoes would have an opportunity to do so.</p>
<p><b>9)</b> Some residents would like to view the Echoes and expressed an interest in moving there</p>	<p>Council Officers would invite residents to view the Echoes in October.</p>
<p><b>10)</b> Concern that people have spent money on flat e.g. new carpets and it is expensive and they would lose</p>	<p>The Council is obligated to provide a statutory compensation payment to all residents who are awarded decant status. In</p>

this	most cases the compensation awarded would meet the cost of items such as carpets. During the decant process the Council would discuss with residents on a one-to-one basis the appropriateness of claims for additional compensation to meet legitimate costs incurred as a result of a move.
<b>11)</b> Residents were happy with the river views and the size of their flats	The Council has noted these comments throughout the consultation process. It is acknowledged for those who do not support the proposals; the river views and the size of the flats are contributory factors when residents have expressed satisfaction with the high rise blocks.
<b>12)</b> Several residents used the word 'disgusted' with the proposals and the way the Council has gone about this process.	The Council has introduced a number of ways in which residents can engage during the consultation process. To date, over 200 residents have completed interviews with Council Officers, and over 70 residents have attended the consultation workshops. The Council would continue to engage with residents, and as part of the on- going correspondent sent to homes, residents would be reminded of the weekly housing surgeries held on the estate, and the contact details for the Council's housing team and the Independent Resident Advisor.



## **6. Consultation Analysis: Shaping Regeneration Proposals**

The consultation process undertaken by the Council is viewed as critical to developing regeneration proposals which are grounded in the views and aspirations of the residents living on Seabrooke Rise and in the high rise blocks. Developing proposals grounded in resident views is key to the success of regeneration – both in terms of the success of the outcomes of regeneration, as well as the engagement of residents in implementation.

The consultation set out in this report has been implemented to ensure the process of engagement is clear in methodology and transparency in supporting this wider regeneration goal. Taking a structured and inductive approach to consultation implementation, the Council has ensured that resident opinion drives the process of engagement.

Results demonstrate:

- Regeneration: a strong interest in options & opportunities for new build housing and associated ownership/tenure options;
- Demolition: contrasting views on demolition, characterised by a split along age/retirement lines, meaning the Council needs to explore options to provide for both groups;
- Regeneration process: a number of questions & concerns raised regarding the process for decant, right to return and prioritisation of properties, indicating the Council needs to set out further detail on these aspects of regeneration;
- New build & new home options: a number of questions regarding the likely opportunities for new houses, as well as options of moving home, indicating the Council needs to set out further detail on these aspects of regeneration.

In shaping any more detailed Housing regeneration proposals informed by the detailed feedback in the workshops plus the earlier survey responses the following key issues set out will need to be explored, in more detail as part of any future proposals

### **6.1. Regeneration process – right to return**

In order for any process of regeneration with demolition to take place, an offer of right to return is necessary for those tenants affected. The 2015 survey set out this as a question to resident in order to understand the likely take up of the option. There has been a strong interest in this – with 70% (2015 consultation survey) showing an interest in right to return – and therefore the recommendation for demolition is accompanied by the need for provision for a right to return process.

### **6.2. Regeneration process – leaseholder options**

Through the course of workshops & independent consultation sessions, it is apparent that some leaseholders have concerns about the options to be made available to them. It is apparent there is interest in a range of options – including moving to other council properties, renting a council property, downsizing amongst others. The Council will undertake further consultation and engagement to understand demand and set out options for leaseholders.

### **6.3. Regeneration process – prioritisation of rehousing options**

Workshops & independent consultation sessions also revealed concern from residents regarding the prioritisation of affected residents in the process of moving to new build housing, existing council housing, or in options for buying. The Council has set out how affected residents will be given highest priority in the choice based letting service, however through further consultation and engagement will set out the process for prioritisation across the range of options.

### **6.4. Regeneration process – timeframes**

Survey, workshops and independent consultation sessions reveal concern on the part of residents regarding the timeframes for regeneration. Some residents are keen to see regeneration start immediately, while others express concern regarding how quickly they would be expected to move, or make a decision on the options available.

#### **6.5. Regeneration process – decant statutory compensation**

Residents have, through workshops and independent consultation sessions, raised concerns about the process for compensation for moving house, as well as for money they have spent on their current home. As set out here, the Council has provided reassurance that residents will be appropriately compensated for costs of moving home, for downsizing, for elements of spend on existing homes, where appropriate. Through further consultation & engagement, the Council will provide further detail on the process for decant compensation.

## 7. **Summary: Informed Regeneration, Prioritisation & Options**

In order to develop regeneration proposals for the Seabrooke Rise estate, the Council recognises that successful regeneration is founded on the engagement and involvement of existing local residents. This report has set out a process of consultation, survey results and analysis, which has been directed and informed throughout by resident views, perceptions and aspirations.

Ensuring residents are consulted has been key to development of regeneration proposals, and the Council is committed to continuation of this process through further engagement and consultation, particularly with the newly formed Resident Steering Group for Seabrooke Rise.

The overview provided here of the consultation & engagement process clearly sets out the measures taken by the Council to ensure residents are involved in the regeneration process – and the numbers of residents responding to surveys and attending workshops demonstrates that this opportunity has been welcomed and taken up by residents. These levels of engagement are important in moving forward with an evidence based approach to establishing decisions on the future of Seabrooke Rise, and the Council will seek to further build on this engagement in putting forward clear recommendations in the future.

### 7.1. **Summary results & recommendations**

The results of the various stages of consultation process substantiate a number of recommendations for further progressing Seabrooke Rise regeneration options:

- **Desire for regeneration:** there is a clear demand and interest from a substantial number of residents for regeneration and new build housing, and options for different tenure and ownership. The Council will take forward this demonstrable interest in progressing regeneration options.
- **Housing options available for tenants & leaseholders:** there is demonstrable interest in the options to be made available in the process of regeneration, and the Council will use further engagement to ensure residents are updated with this information.
- **Options for demolition of high rise blocks:** there is a clear desire on the part of a substantial proportion of high rise block residents for demolition and for options for new build housing or moving to other housing. However this must be balanced with the wishes of the substantial minority of the population – typically older, longer term or retired residents – to retain the blocks. The Council will undertake further consultation & engagement to determine what range of options are available to satisfy the need and desire for regeneration, while considering the wishes of those who are happy with existing homes.
- **Process for regeneration:** consultation, and particularly workshops and independent consultation sessions, reveals a need for the Council to appropriately articulate the offer to residents – in terms of what housing options will be made available, but also in terms of the process for regeneration. The Council will further engage with residents to ensure the various aspects of the process for regeneration – decant, compensation, prioritisation of housing options – is clearly set out.

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<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 11</b> <b>01104416</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Shaping the Council and Budget Update</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor John Kent, Leader of the Council	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer; Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## Executive Summary

The Council set a balanced budget for 2015/16 having made some difficult decisions about where savings could be made. Pressures remain in the current financial year and will escalate in the following years. The cumulative effect of £83.2m savings over 6 years now visibly impacts on communities. It will also make the Council's ability to make further savings increasingly challenging.

This report sets out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28m for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. The latest MTFS includes the impact of the cessation of the Serco contract although this is significantly offset by changes to the Environment Services savings targets.

The cross-party Budget Review Panel endorsed by Cabinet in July 2015 started a series of meetings during August to inform the strategic approach to shaping the Council in this financial context with consideration of the complexity and scale of the challenge that lies ahead.

This report seeks Cabinet approval for the approach to dealing with the budget pressures in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

### 1. Recommendation(s):

- 1.1 **That Cabinet note the current financial position and that a future Shaping the Council and Budget Update report will set out any financial impact of pressures within the Children's and Housing Services budget, as set out in the report; and**

## 1.2 That Cabinet note the latest update on the Serco transition.

## 2 Introduction and background

2.1 This report sets out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28m for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. The latest MTFS includes the impact of the cessation of the Serco contract and the additional pressures from the Environmental Services budget.

2.2 A robust approach to considering the future shape of the Council and budget planning process was agreed by Cabinet in July 2015 including the establishment of a cross-party Budget Review Panel.

## 3 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

3.1 The MTFS is set out at Appendix 1 of this report, as presented to Cabinet in September 2015. There have been no changes since the last report though officers are now recognising pressures within Children's and Housing Services as set out below. Officers will review the 2015/16 pressures to minimise the impact on future years and include a detailed analysis in the report to Cabinet in the Autumn.

### 2015/16

3.2 The following pressures were reported to Cabinet in September 2015 and remain although officers are working to reduce these where possible. There are a number of reserves that can be used to finance current expenditure where appropriate and further mitigation will be possible through the capitalisation of the Minimum Revenue Provision:

	<b>2015/16</b>
	<b>£m</b>
Shortfall in Serco and Terms and Conditions targets	0.219
Shortfall in Shared Services Recharges	0.200
Environmental Services (part year)	0.650
Impact of Sita recycling arrangements (part year)	0.400
Shortfall in the ability to meet Public Health In-year Reduction	0.100
Uncommitted budget in transformation contingency	(0.300)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1.269</b>

**Note:** this assumes that all but £0.1m of the Public Health Grant reduction of £0.654m will be met from within that budget.

- 3.3 The Council has maintained the General Fund balance (reserves) at £8m and, in addition, is forecast to have an additional £1.4m in a Budget Management Reserve. It is the Budget Management Reserve that has been earmarked to meet the cost pressures although discussions are continuing on whether any expenditure reductions can be met to mitigate this pressure.
- 3.4 The Environmental Services' related pressures have been added into the MTFS for 2016/17 as, unless permanent alternative savings are achieved, they will be a base budget pressure going forward. Officers are working on options to reduce the high cost of recycling and these will be reported in due course.
- 3.5 The last report to Cabinet did comment that services were recognising additional pressures. Since that report, pressures have been identified within Children's and Housing services and are currently being quantified.
- 3.6 The pressures in Children's Services include a reduction in the contribution by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) towards placement costs, an increase in numbers of unaccompanied asylum seekers which are not fully funded by government grant, withdrawal of the adoption support grant and the need to support newly qualified social workers through their post qualifying year with additional support. Thurrock has successfully recruited a good cohort of newly qualified social workers which will reduce the need for agency workers in future years, but presents a temporary pressure while they hold reduced and appropriate caseloads. In response to recent national concern, additional specialist resources for Child Sexual Exploitation prevention have been necessary. This is in the context of £1.7m less in the budget for Children's Services in 2015/16 than 2014/15.
- 3.7 The pressures in Housing are driven by the increase in households presenting to the authority for homelessness assistance and the consequential rise in numbers requiring temporary accommodation. The lack of affordable private rented sector accommodation, an increase in evictions, and recent welfare reforms are key drivers. To effectively prevent homelessness, and thereby mitigate the need to provide interim accommodation, additional staffing is being put in place for improved caseload management. There is an anticipated cost pressure on the re-tendering of the Homeless Hostel and Crisis Intervention contract from next year.

### **Serco**

- 3.8 The termination of the Serco contract is a key facilitator to being able to reshape the Council. The service currently costs in excess of £18m and employs circa 450 permanent and temporary staff. Having control over the financial and staff resources will allow the Council greater flexibility in changing its approach to service delivery.

- 3.9 Members were updated on the background and position in respect of the termination of the Strategic Services Partnership Agreement (SSPA) with Serco within the September 2015 Shaping the Council Cabinet report. At the time, the Council was working with Serco to complete due diligence to prepare for the transfer of services back to the Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015. The due diligence exercise, which focussed on the staff, systems and processes which deliver services including Customer Service, Revenues and Benefits and Business Administration, has now been concluded and both the Council and Serco have signed off a high level transition plan which outlines the various tasks required on both sides to successfully transfer services to the Council.
- 3.10 Whilst the due diligence process did not identify any issues which preclude the return of the services or explicitly challenge the timing of the transfer it has undoubtedly identified issues which will need to be addressed as the transition process proceeds. Work going forward is broadly contained within three areas; people, contracts and systems.
- 3.11 Consultation has commenced with the c.350 permanent Serco staff who will transfer to the Council through TUPE. It has been agreed that the HR/Payroll functions will return to the Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015; one month ahead of the planned transfer of the majority of the functions on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015. Discussions are well advanced with Adecco to ensure that the existing agency staff remain available to support the services as we seek to minimise disruption on day one.
- 3.12 In total around 75 contracts have been identified which Serco use to support the delivery of services to the Council., covering everything from the provision of agency staff and facilities management through to the licenses and services which support the Council's IT systems. The contracts total around £8m in value. The Council is working with Serco to novate or transfer all of those that it will be required to continue the delivery of the services and terminate those which will no longer be required.
- 3.13 The majority of the transferring services are using systems which are already owned by the Council and operated/serviced on their behalf by Serco. This makes the transfer of the majority of this area relatively straightforward, however an issue has emerged in respect of the transfer of the systems which support the Council's call centre – a critical area of the Council's operations. The current system has reached the end of its working life and is no longer supported by the provider. Prior to the termination of the SSPA the Council and Serco were in discussions to move the Council onto a new, Serco owned virtual system but, with the contract now being terminated, that is no longer appropriate. On this basis the Council is considering its options for implementing a series of short term measures (for c.6 months) to ensure that the call centre is able to function effectively from the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 and will then consider the options for a longer term solution alongside a wider review of its approach to customer service.



## **2016/17**

- 3.14 The MTFFS still shows a projected deficit for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 of £28.4m of which £3.4m relates to 2016/17. The projected deficit of £3.4m needs to be addressed for 2016/17 and Directors' Board will work with Cabinet Members to bring back proposals to a future meeting.

## **4 Budget Review Panel**

- 4.1 In July 2015, Cabinet endorsed the establishment of a cross-party Budget Review Panel. The purpose of the Panel is to:

- Build and strengthen awareness and ownership of portfolio budgets and issues across Group Leaders, shadow portfolio holders and other opposition leads;
- Consider and comment on the Council's draft 2020 Vision, the four change programmes, and the on-going bottom up review of Council functions; and
- To explore options for budget savings in either 2015/16 or 2016/17 to be taken forward through the autumn scrutiny process, ensuring proposals are broadly consistent with the 2020 Vision and direction of travel.

- 4.2 Six Panel meetings have taken place during August and September covering Environment, Central Services, Adult Social Care and Health, Children's Services and Education, Housing and Communities, and Regeneration, Assets, Planning, Growth, Highways and Transportation.

- 4.3 Key cross cutting themes discussed have included:

- Exploring alternative delivery models and income generation opportunities;
- Supporting growth and inward investment enables jobs, skills and improved wellbeing reducing impact on other Council services;
- Maximising opportunities for joint commissioning and managing the market for services;
- Addressing the impact of national shortages in key professions e.g. social workers, planners etc. on the recruitment and retention of staff and reliance on agency support;
- Developing further our changing relationship with the voluntary and community sector;
- Benefits of early intervention and prevention on helping to manage the growing demand for adult, health and children's services;
- Recognising the impact on our reputation of poor public realm e.g. litter, fly tipping etc. and ability to attract inward investment; and
- The importance of communications to help educate residents and encourage behaviour change where it can improve the customer experience and reduce costs to the Council e.g. accessing services online.

- 4.4 The Panel is not decision making and officers will now consider all the information from the Panel sessions and build them into development of the budget planning process. Further details will then be brought forward as part of a quarterly update focused on addressing the budget challenge for 2016/17 and beyond. Officers will now cost out what potential efficiencies may be delivered and risks to service delivery if applicable.

## **5 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 5.1 The issues and options are set out in the body of this report in the context of the latest MTFs and informed by discussions with the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Directors Board.

## **6 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually. This report sets out a proposed approach to dealing with budget pressures in 2015/16 and for 2016/17 and beyond in the context of needing to achieve over £28m of budget reductions over four years.

## **7 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 7.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the summary information from each of the Budget Review Panels and will continue to have a role in overseeing the process.
- 7.2 This report has been developed in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holders and Group Leaders and Directors Board.

## **8 Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 8.1 The implementation of savings proposals has already reduced service delivery levels and our ability to meet statutory requirements, impacting on the community and staff. Delivering further savings in addition to those previously agreed is particularly challenging in light of the cumulative impact of such a significant reduction in budget and in the context of a growing population and service demand pressures within children's and adult social care and housing, and legislative changes. As such, a new approach aims to establish sustainable and innovative ways of delivering services in the future to mitigate this impact.
- 8.2 There is a risk that some agreed savings may result in increased demand for more costly interventions if needs escalate particularly in social care. This will need to be closely monitored. The potential impact on the Council's ability to safeguard children and adults will be kept carefully under review and mitigating actions taken where required.

## **9 Implications**

### **9.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**  
**Head of Corporate Finance/S151 Officer**

The financial implications are set out in the body of this report and in the attached MTFS.

Council officers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the Council can contain spend within its available resources. Regular budget monitoring reports will continue to come to Cabinet and be considered by the Directors Board and management teams in order to maintain effective controls on expenditure during this period of enhanced risk. Austerity measures in place are continually reinforced across the Council in order to reduce ancillary spend and to ensure that everyone is aware of the importance and value of every pound of the taxpayers money that is spent by the Council.

### **9.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
**Deputy Head of Legal & Governance - Deputy Monitoring Officer**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

There are statutory requirements of the Council's Section 151 Officer in relation to setting a balanced budget. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Section 114) prescribes that the responsible financial officer "must make a report if he considers that a decision has been made or is about to be made involving expenditure which is unlawful or which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency to the authority". This includes an unbalanced budget.

### **9.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Equalities Manager**

There are no specific diversity and equalities implications as part of this report. A comprehensive Community and Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) will be completed for any specific savings proposals developed from the Panel's discussions and informed by consultation outcomes to feed into final decision making. The cumulative impact will also be closely monitored and reported to Members.

**9.4 Other implications (where significant – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)**

Any other significant implications will be identified in any individual savings proposal business case to inform the consultation process where applicable and final decision making.

**10 Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Budget working papers held in Corporate Finance
- Budget Review Panel papers held in Strategy and Communications

**11 Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

**Report Authors:**

Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance/S151 Officer, Chief Executive's Office

Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy and Communications, CEDU

Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration/Serco Transition Project Manager, CEDU

## Appendix 1

<b>Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Local Funding</b>				
Council Tax / Council Tax Grant	(1,700)	(1,335)	(1,362)	(1,368)
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	208	382	390	0
Business Rate Growth	(651)	(475)	(1,500)	0
Business Rate - Collection Fund Deficit	(2,644)	(860)	(860)	0
	<b>(4,787)</b>	<b>(2,288)</b>	<b>(3,333)</b>	<b>(1,368)</b>
<b>Total Government Resources</b>				
Revenue Support Grant	9,500	9,000	6,500	1,665
New Homes Bonus	(665)	(529)	(253)	(253)
Other Central Grants	265	228	196	398
	<b>9,100</b>	<b>8,698</b>	<b>6,443</b>	<b>1,810</b>
<b>Net Additional (Reduction) in resources</b>	<b>4,313</b>	<b>6,410</b>	<b>3,111</b>	<b>442</b>
<b>Inflation and other increases</b>				
Pay	1,796	1,596	831	848
Contract Inflation	379	407	424	442
Non Contract Inflation	496	563	619	681
Fees and Charges	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
	<b>2,571</b>	<b>2,466</b>	<b>1,775</b>	<b>1,871</b>
<b>Capital Financing</b>				
Prudential Borrowing & Treasury Management	(971)	1,151	1,011	0
	<b>(971)</b>	<b>1,151</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>0</b>
Finance and Education	(480)	(232)	0	0
Housing	0	0	0	0
Adult Social Care & Health	(750)	(750)	0	0
Children's Social Care	(516)	0	0	0
Regeneration	(329)	(35)	0	0
Highways and Transportation	(240)	(510)	0	0
Central Services	(600)	(632)	0	0
Communities & Public Protection	(75)	(75)	0	0
Environment	(868)	0	0	0
<b>Total Net Service Reduction</b>	<b>(3,858)</b>	<b>(2,234)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Impact of 2015/16 decisions</b>				
Reversal of green bin charging	550			
Additional environmental services works	100			
Unachieved SERCO and terms and conditions savings	219			
Changes to recycling contracts	600			
Termination of SERCO Contract (net of HRA elements)	(3,100)			
	<b>(1,631)</b>			
Demographics	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Total Savings to Identify</b>	<b>3,424</b>	<b>10,793</b>	<b>8,896</b>	<b>5,313</b>

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<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 12</b> <b>01104417</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2010-15</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Dawn Shepherd, Housing Strategy Manager, Housing	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Dermot Moloney, Strategic Lead, Housing	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull, Director of Planning & Transportation	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## Executive Summary

There is a statutory duty on every Local Authority to have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

The local authority must ensure that all organisations whose work can help to prevent homelessness and/or meet the needs of homeless people are involved in the strategy.

The last strategy was adopted in Thurrock in 2010.

A new homelessness prevention strategy is required which takes into account current homelessness in the borough, the impact of recent welfare reforms, and opportunities for preventing homelessness.

To inform the strategy a review of current homelessness in Thurrock has been undertaken.

The new strategy was presented to the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015.

A new five year Homelessness Prevention Strategy is now presented to Cabinet for approval.

The action plan will be regularly updated to meet emerging needs, and will be monitored by a homelessness forum, to include Council and non-Council staff. Members are encouraged to take part in the forum.

There will be an annual review of the strategy in September each year.

**1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That Cabinet notes the review of homelessness in the borough - Appendix 1.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approves the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2015 to 2020 - Appendix 2.**
- 1.3 That Cabinet approves plans for an annual review of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy – to be presented at the September Housing Overview & Scrutiny committee meeting.**

**2. Introduction and Background**

Every Local Authority must have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

The local authority must ensure that all organisations whose work can help to prevent homelessness and/or meet the needs of homeless people are involved in the strategy.

Thurrock Council last implemented a homelessness strategy in 2010. Since then there have been many changes which have impacted homelessness including welfare reform, the Localism Act, a new housing allocations scheme, a new tenancy policy, recession and funding changes.

A review of current homelessness in the borough has been carried out in consultation with staff, agencies, local housing providers, the general public and Members.

This review has identified actions to address the causes of homelessness in the borough, and these actions have been laid out in the Strategy in the form of an action plan.

A homelessness forum will be set up to monitor and drive forward the action plan.

**3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

Consultation and statistical analysis identified the following key issues, which the action plan will seek to specifically address;



- There are four main causes of homelessness in Thurrock:
  - Eviction by parents, family or friend;
  - The ending of an Assured Short hold tenancy;
  - Violence or harassment;
  - Mortgage or rent arrears.
- Non priority groups, i.e. those without children or vulnerabilities who would not be accommodated by the Council under a statutory duty if homeless, have few housing options:
  - Home ownership is beyond the reach of many;
  - Low cost home ownership is a more viable option for working residents;
  - Private renting can be expensive with increasingly rising rents;
  - Non-working residents in receipt of Housing Benefit may struggle to obtain good quality affordable rented accommodation since there is an increasing shortfall between Local Housing Allowances (the subsidy paid under benefit rules) and actual market rents.
- The impact of recent and future welfare reforms could make rehousing for clients more difficult - particularly the introduction of Universal Credit and the non-payment of Housing Benefit to young people claiming benefit. There are reports of local landlords refusing to take tenants in receipt of Universal Credit, due to concerns over potential non-payment;
- A number of London boroughs have purchased or rented property in the borough, as a means of accommodating people to whom they owe a duty to house. The impact is that landlords are asking for higher rents which widen the gap between Local Housing Allowance and actual market rent. This means fewer properties are available for Thurrock residents;
- Anecdotally, a number of people have been moved into the borough with complex needs which are not being supported and there has been no pass over of services – this requires further investigation and agreed move on plans with other boroughs.
- Debt and poor money management is a key factor to homelessness with rent and mortgage arrears as one of the top four reasons

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

The Council has a statutory duty to consult on and implement a five year homelessness strategy in order to set out the Local Authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness, and for securing that sufficient accommodation

and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

It is good practice to review and update the strategy annually to ensure that it continues to meet the local needs and any emerging issues.

## **5. Consultation**

To inform the review of homelessness a two stage consultation was implemented:

Stage 1: Between February and April 2015 an initial consultation was undertaken, which included:

- Face to face consultation sessions with Council staff and partner agencies (both Housing and non-Housing);
- An online survey was sent to 850 recent service users and 116 responses were received;
- A statistical analysis of local, national and regional data was undertaken.

Stage 2: A draft review document and action plan was written and further consultation took place between April and July 2015 on the proposed actions. Consultation included:

- Presentations to senior managers and directors of Children's and Adult's services;
- Presentations to the Health & Wellbeing scrutiny board and the Youth Cabinet;
- 10 face to face consultations with staff, partner agencies, providers of temporary and supported accommodation in the Borough, Members, and Registered Providers;
- Face to face consultation session with representatives from BME groups;
- An online public consultation – advertised on the Council and the Thurrock Choice Homes websites and within the Thurrock Enquirer.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

The Strategy dovetails with the Housing Strategy 2015-20, incorporating and expanding on a number of the actions identified within that plan.

It also identifies specific areas for future work which address the corporate priorities of building pride, responsibility and respect within the home and improving health and wellbeing by preventing homelessness which can have an adverse impact.

During the consultation the impact of proposed actions was considered as part of the equality assessment. Specific face to face sessions with

representatives of BME groups and the vulnerable were held. A community and equality impact assessment has been completed – **Appendix 3**.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Finance Manager**

This strategy will formalise the objectives for the service; it is hoped an increase emphasis on prevention will help reduce costs and reduce homelessness in the long term.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Martin Hall**  
**Housing Solicitor / Housing Team Leader**

The Homelessness act 2002, s1 (3) requires a Local Authority to review homelessness in its area and to produce a strategy. Section 1(4) requires that the strategy is reviewed and updated at least every 5 years

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development & Equalities manager**

A community and equality impact assessment was conducted as part of the consultation process to assess the impact of the proposed strategy. Actions identified through this will inform the strategy and action plan – for example, the establishment of a homelessness forum with partners to support key issues and to support a regular review of the CEIA.

### **7.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

## **8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

## **9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Review of Homelessness in Thurrock 2015
- Appendix 2 – Thurrock Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2015-20
- Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

### **Report Author:**

Dawn Shepherd

Housing Strategy Manager

Housing, Business Development

**Thurrock Homelessness  
Review  
2015**

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# Thurrock Homelessness Prevention Strategy Review - 2015

## 1. Background

### Legal background

Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to formulate a homelessness strategy by carrying out a homelessness review for the district.

Section 2 of the Homelessness Act 2002 prescribes the considerations that local authorities should undertake in conducting a review of homelessness and the purpose of the review in terms of informing a future homelessness strategy.

The Homelessness Act 2002 determines that local authorities must formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review – the life of the strategy should be no more than 5 years, and when the strategy expires or is due for expiry, the authority must publish a new homelessness strategy.

There is a further duty on local authorities to keep the strategy under review – and they may modify it from time to time – however, any modifications must be published and before adoption of a homelessness strategy, or prior to modifying an existing strategy, the authority must carry out consultation.

In formulating or modifying a homelessness strategy, under section 153 of the Localism Act 2011, a local housing authority in England must also have regard to—

- (a) Its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996
- (b) Its current tenancy strategy under section 150 of the Localism Act 2011

### Local background

Thurrock Council last reviewed its homelessness strategy in 2009 and implemented a new strategy in 2010.

In line with the legislative requirements and in view of the many changes over the past 5 years, including welfare reform, a new strategy is now required.

## 2. Consultation

In February and March 2015 an initial consultation was undertaken to review current homelessness. Meetings were held to receive feedback and those taking part included partner agencies, frontline housing staff and Council staff from other directorates. Three questions were asked:

- What are the issues & biggest challenges?
- Existing services & provision – what works well & where are the gaps?
- Identifying key areas for change / action points

Feedback from the groups can be broadly summarised into the following areas:

Private Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of incentives for landlords working with the Council</li> <li>• Improve working relationships with landlords</li> <li>• Consider use of private landlords outside of the Borough where appropriate</li> </ul>
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase education &amp; training on money management, budgeting and debt management</li> <li>• Provision of dedicated and specialised welfare advice for people across all tenures</li> <li>• Investigate options to increase Local Housing Allowance levels to meet higher market rents</li> <li>• Increase joint working over Discretionary Housing payments</li> <li>• Enable use of the homelessness prevention fund to include more creative options to prevent homelessness</li> <li>• Address welfare reforms in a more pro-active manner</li> </ul>
Housing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the supply of accommodation for single people and those with no priority need including young people under 25</li> <li>• Increase the supply of supported accommodation – particularly for people with complex/dual needs</li> <li>• Increase the number of alternative housing options for working households on a low income e.g. shared ownership schemes</li> <li>• Investigate options for direct access hostel accommodation – possibly for the sub region</li> </ul>
Education & Mediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer school programmes to educate on homeless prevention &amp; money management as part of their curriculum from year 7</li> <li>• De- incentivise homeless applications through use of the allocations scheme to prioritise those who remain at home with family</li> <li>• Increase the use of mediation services to enabling people to remain in their current homes e.g. between landlord &amp; tenant, Parent &amp; child</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve working relationships through better understanding of roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Agree clearly defined working practices and robust service level agreements and protocols between partners</li> <li>• Strive for the earlier identification of vulnerable people</li> <li>• Agree pathways into housing for clients</li> <li>• Increase joint professionals working groups</li> </ul>
Regional Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange and monitor working agreements with London and regional boroughs particularly around moving people across boroughs and ensuring adequate support is in place</li> <li>• Joint working with other boroughs to minimise competition for private</li> </ul>



	landlords
Tenancy Sustainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase resources for helping people to sustain tenancies – both Private and Social</li> <li>• Maximise the length of private sector tenancies to prevent the AST “revolving door”</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the implications of losing a social housing tenancy and be proactive in offering lessons in tenancy management</li> <li>• Robustly implement new Council introductory tenancy processes and intervene at an early stage to prevent evictions</li> </ul>
Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make improvements to the online housing options assessment (HED)</li> <li>• Improve signposting and the customer service experience</li> <li>• Explore options for a one stop shop for housing to incorporate all tenures and options</li> </ul>
Health & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure temporary accommodation is used for only minimal periods and that residents are still linked into medical services e.g. GPs/health visitors</li> <li>• Temporary accommodation should have appropriate facilities to meet basic needs e.g. cooking &amp; laundry facilities, access to public transport</li> <li>• Ensure people have access to other services such as alcohol and drug support, debt advice and counselling services</li> <li>• Improved hospital discharge procedures and provision of adapted accommodation including temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Expand use of the mental health forum</li> </ul>

In addition to the meetings above, an 8 week online survey was also undertaken. Around 850 recent service users were contacted and invited to take part and 116 (14%) responded. Key points and actions can be broadly identified as follows:

Results from Service Users survey	Actions Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>66% expected the Council to rehouse them</li> <li>85% felt that expectations were not fulfilled</li> </ul>	Need to better manage the expectations of service users before and after they approach for advice and assistance
<p>Around 30-45% of those surveyed felt that staff never</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listened to their problems</li> <li>Understood them</li> <li>Offered helpful advice</li> </ul>	<p>This matter will need to be addressed through training and monitoring.</p> <p>NB. Caution should be given that those presenting unfavourable information to the service users can often be seen as unwelcoming and impolite.</p>
<p>Approximately 50% of service users stated they were not given a Housing Officers name and contact details</p> <p>In addition, 60% stated they were not given any written information to take away with them</p> <p>55% claimed they did not know what would happen once the application had been made</p>	Need to improve initial contact between service users and front line officers and to ensure that every service user receives written advice along with contact details for the case officer
<p>90% felt that the council did not stay in regular contact with them regarding their housing circumstances</p> <p>96% of those responding felt that the council did not stay in touch with them during their stay in temporary accommodation and provide them with support.</p>	Need to improve communication between service users and front line officers throughout the assessment process and whilst in temporary accommodation
<p>Over 80% felt that the advice and information they were given was unhelpful for their housing problem</p> <p>72% of those responding felt that the Allocation Policy was not explained to them clearly</p> <p>86%, of those responding felt that although accommodation was not offered they were still not given good advice and guidance</p>	<p>Need to improve the standard of information and advice provided</p> <p>Need to ensure that advice given is relevant to the service users specific situation</p>

### 3. Statistical Background

- A) Thurrock Population
- B) Migration in and out of Thurrock
- C) Housing Stock and tenures
- D) Thurrock Housing market
- E) Thurrock Privately rented market
- F) Thurrock Social housing
- G) Homelessness
- H) Homeless Prevention & Relief
- I) Rough Sleeping
- J) Temporary Accommodation

#### A) Thurrock Population

##### Population:

At the 2011 census the population of Thurrock was recorded at just under 160,000

The population is predicted to grow by 5.2% over the next 5 years, which is not unexpected due to Thurrock being an area of regeneration – see A1

However, it is the 65+ age group that is anticipated to increase the most with an increase of over 13% on its 2011 level

A1 – Age comparison and predicted levels of population

	Current (at 2012)	Predicted (at 2017)	Increase	increase
<b>0 to 19</b>	42,700	44,800	2,100	4.92%
<b>20 to 29</b>	20,700	21,000	300	1.45%
<b>30 to 44</b>	36,300	36,400	100	0.28%
<b>45 to 64</b>	38,600	41,600	3,000	7.77%
<b>65+</b>	21,200	24,000	2,800	13.21%
<b>Total</b>	159,500	167,800	8,300	5.20%

Source: 2012 based ONS sub-national population projections

##### Ethnicity & Language

Thurrock has become increasingly diverse in the past 10 years; Black and Black British residents have replaced Asian and Asian British as the second largest group, with an increase of 6.65%, whilst white groups have reduced by over 9% - see A2

1.14% of the Thurrock population cannot speak English well or at all. This is higher than the neighbouring boroughs and the East of England see A3

**Actions:**

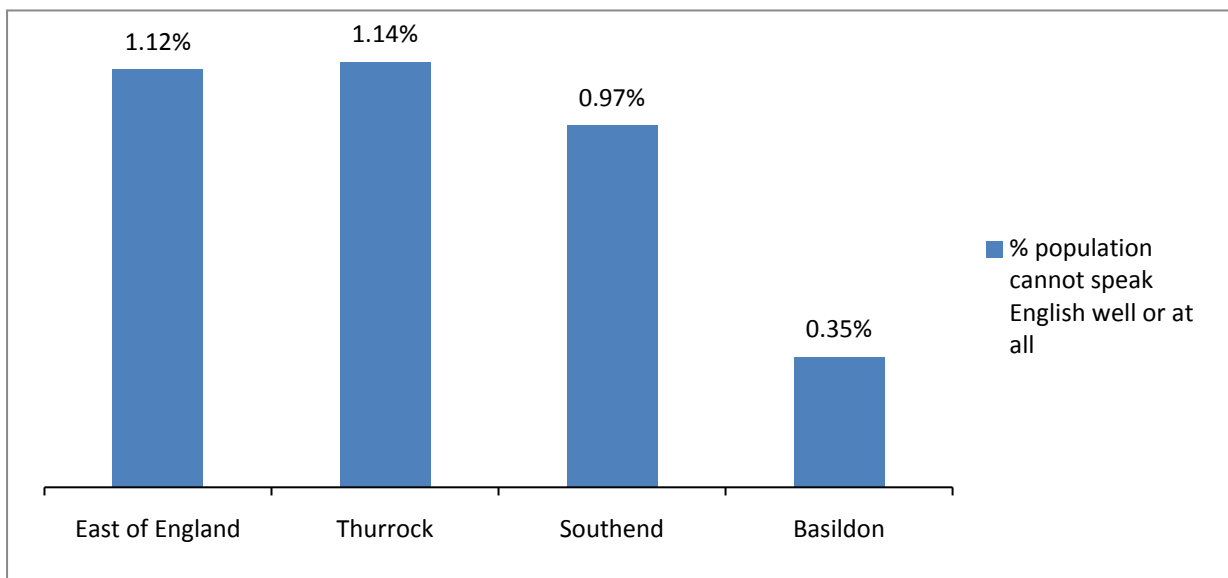
- Complete an equality impact assessment on the new strategy to monitor for adverse impacts on ethnic groups
- Continue to collect data on ethnicity of homeless households and monitor for any deviance from local data
- Ensure there are means of communication available for non-English speakers e.g. translations on web pages & application forms, translators available at interviews
- Encourage minority groups to be represented on Homelessness forums and during consultations

A2 – Ethnicity Comparison

	2001		2011		Change
<b>White</b>	136,399	95.30%	135,429	85.87%	-9.43%
<b>Mixed</b>	1,319	0.92%	3,099	1.97%	1.05%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	3,405	2.38%	5,927	3.76%	1.38%
<b>Black or Black British</b>	1,659	1.16%	12,323	7.81%	6.65%
<b>Other Ethnic Group</b>	346	0.24%	927	0.59%	0.35%

Source: ONS Census data 2011

A3 – English speaking



Source: ONS Census data 2011

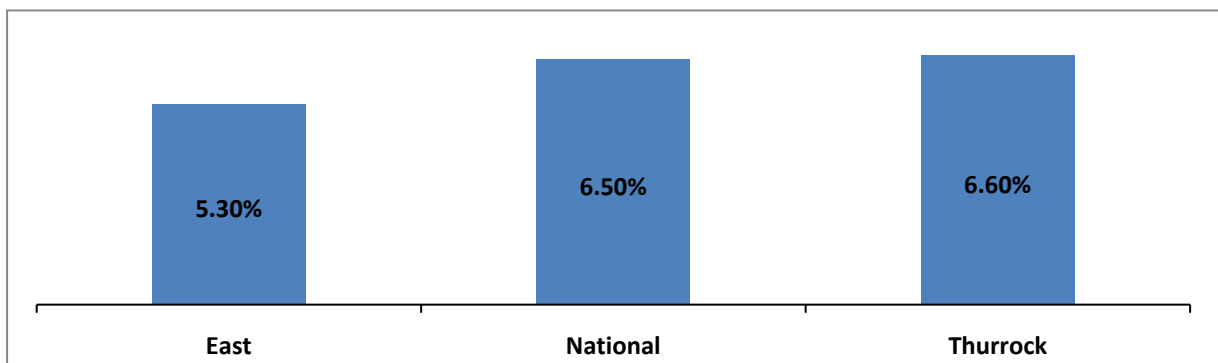
### Unemployment:

Thurrock has a slightly higher level of unemployment compared to the regional and national picture – see A4

### Actions:

- Ensure housing options incorporate employment advice and signposting
- Work in partnership with the Jobcentre to ensure access to skills training and employment services

### A4 – Unemployment levels

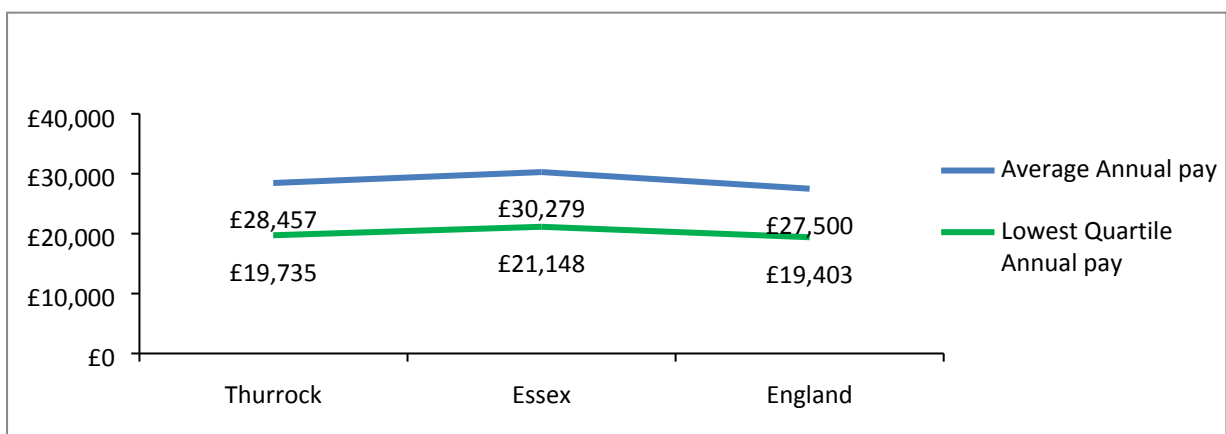


Source: ONS Census data 2011

### Pay levels

Thurrock has slightly lower pay levels than Essex but is marginally higher than national figures – see A5

### A5 – Pay levels



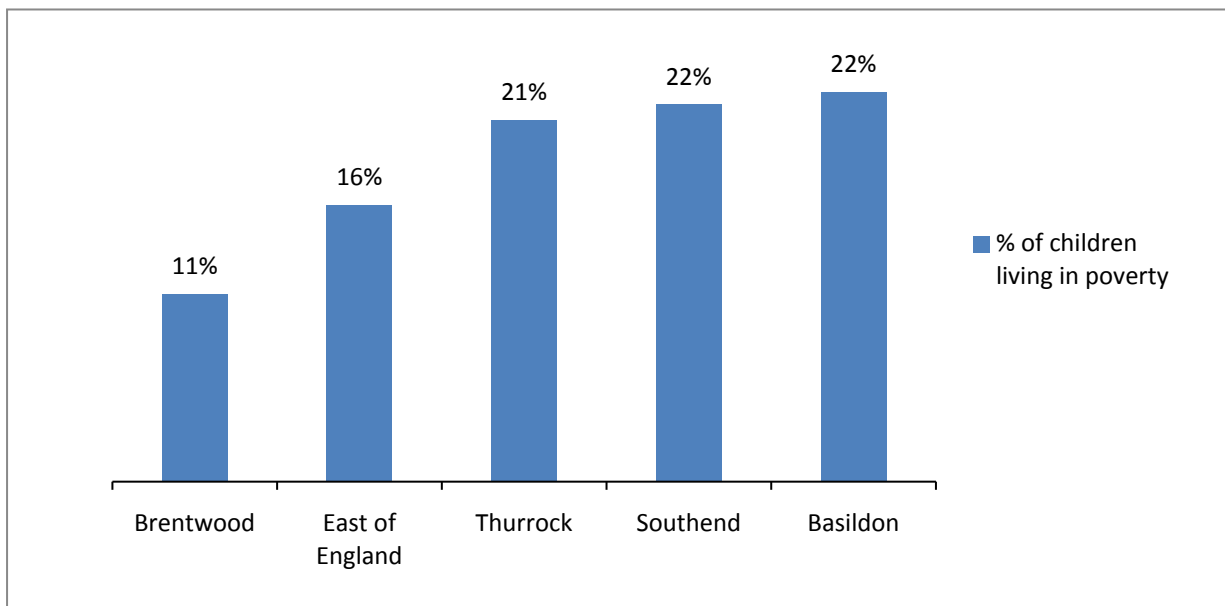
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2014)

## Child Poverty

A6 shows the percentage of children in households where the income is less than 60% of the median income

Thurrock is higher than the East of England and the neighbouring borough of Brentwood and only slightly lower than its other neighbours Basildon and Southend

A6 – Child poverty levels



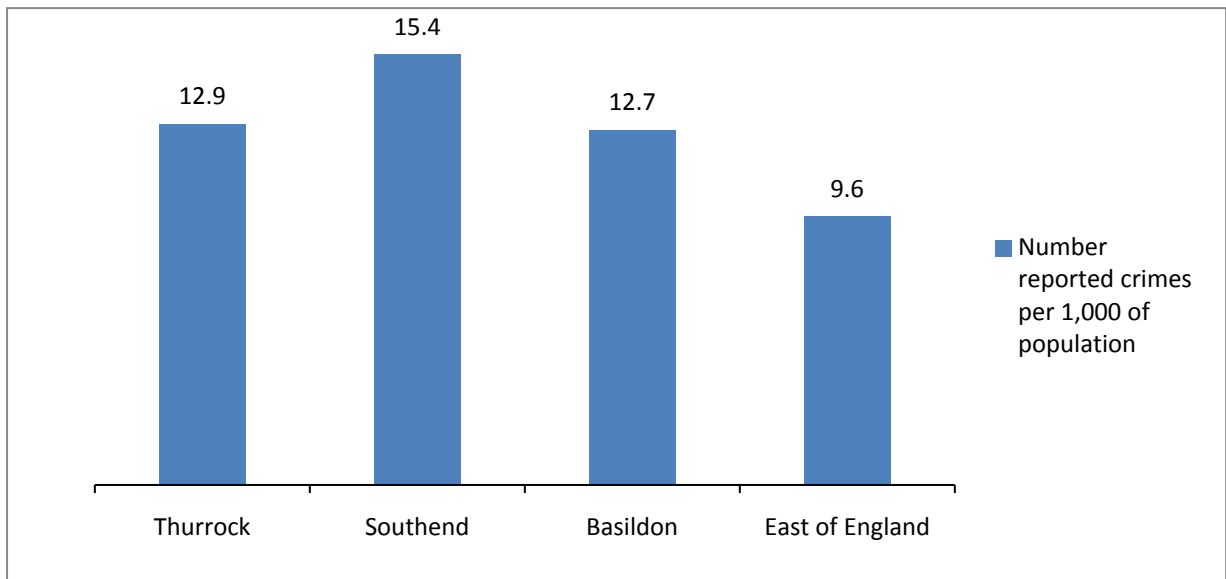
Source: Public Health England 2012

## Crime levels

The borough has a higher level of reported violent crimes than the east of England as a whole but is lower than Southend and similar to Basildon - see A7

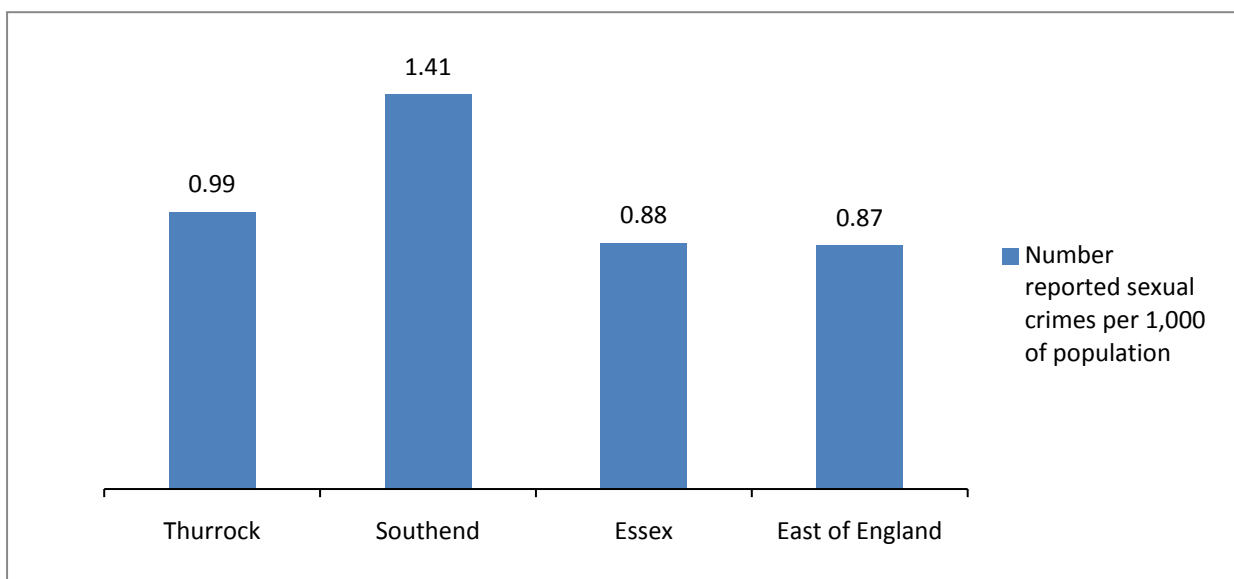
The picture is similar for sexual offences – see A8

### A7 – Reported violent crimes and offences against a person



Source: Public Health England

### A8 - Reported sexual offences



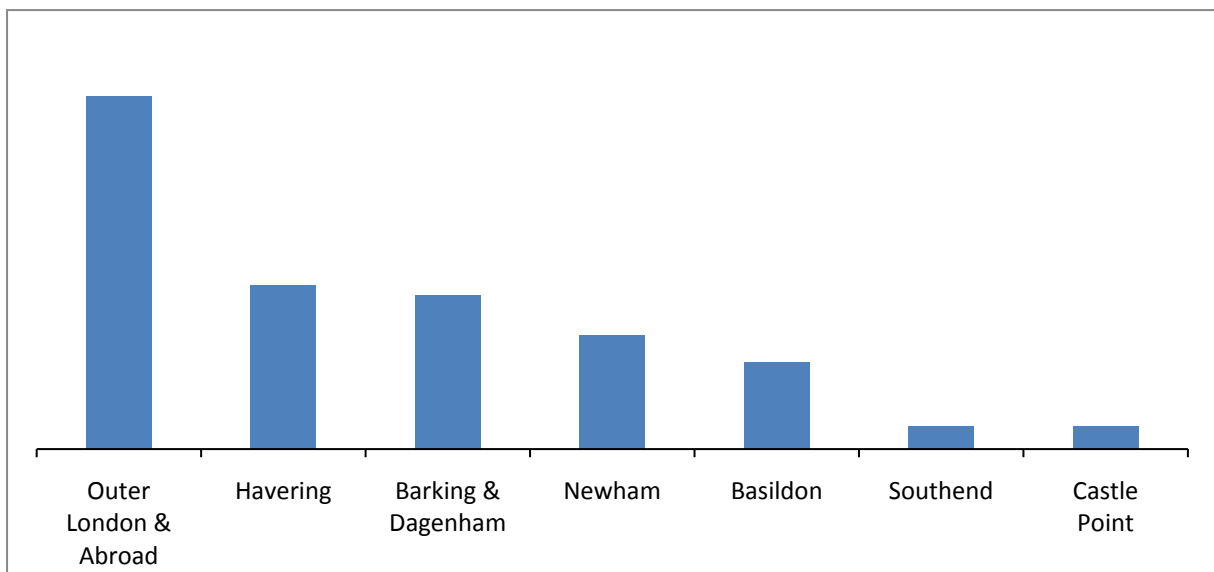
Source: Public Health England

## B) Thurrock Migration

The 2011 census collected data on where people had migrated from and to and showed a net migration into Thurrock. It does not however show reasons why they have migrated.

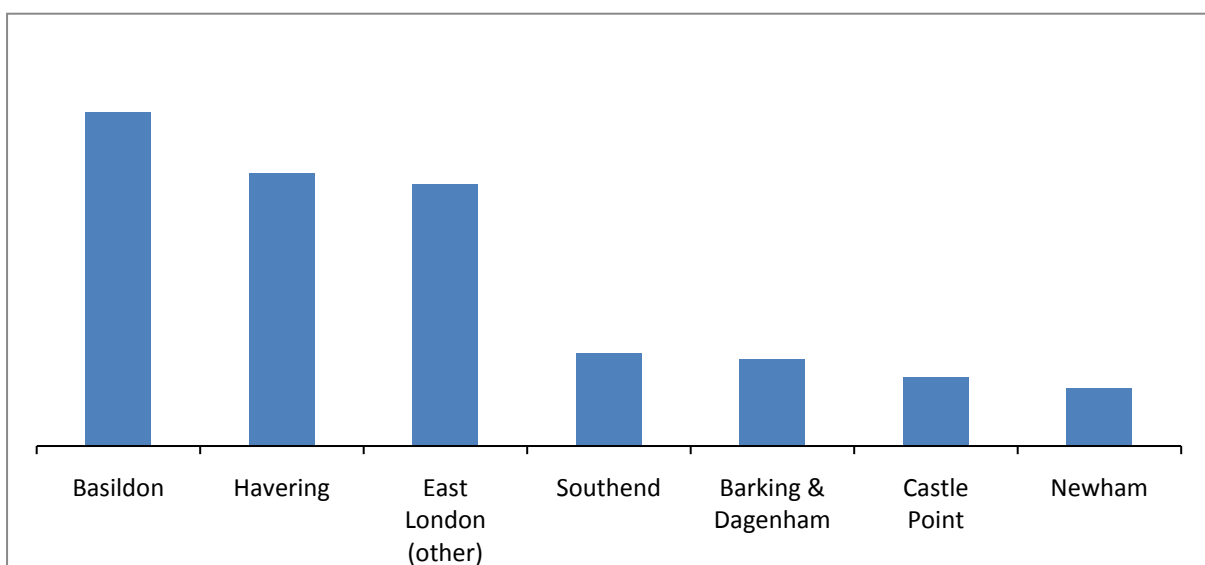
See B1 and B2

### B1- Migration into Thurrock - Borough migrated from



Source: ONS Census data 2011

### B2 – Migration out of Thurrock - Borough migrated to



Source: ONS Census data 2011



## **Out of borough placements in Thurrock:**

### **London Boroughs:**

A number of London boroughs are discharging their rehousing duty into Thurrock following greater freedoms introduced by the localism Act 2011 and a cap on benefits which makes local rents less affordable

Private properties in Thurrock are being used for accommodating London households in temporary accommodation either to meet the interim housing duty or whilst awaiting discharge of the full rehousing duty

#### **Recent Examples:**

- Havering Council are offering Landlords financial incentives for private sector leasing schemes and assured short hold tenancies
- Westminster Council has purchased 25 properties in the borough
- Newham Council placed at least 16 households in the borough in 2014
- Tower Hamlets advertised a £2,500 payment for one-bedroom properties to landlords agreeing to let to council-vetted tenants for two years and a £4,000 lump sum for homes with two or more bedrooms
- Westminster Council pay up to £4,000 as an incentive to Landlords

Under s 208 Housing Act 1996 local authorities who secure accommodation for applicants outside of their district, should give notice to the local housing authority in whose district the accommodation is situated. However, this is not consistently being followed and a recent Freedom of Information request by Inside Housing showed that at least 8,000 households have been placed outside of London in the past 2 years with no notification to the receiving local authority. (Source: Inside Housing 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015)

Anecdotally, local partner agencies such as CMHT and Sericc have reported cases of households either being placed in inappropriate accommodation or in need of support services due to complex needs, with no referrals being made to the support services required

#### **These events raise the following issues:**

- London boroughs can offer greater incentives to private landlords due to greater resources
- There are concerns that this has led to an increase in notices on assured short hold tenancies in Thurrock (highest cause of homelessness)
- Because landlords can sign up to “better offers” with London boroughs, this reduces the private rented stock available to Thurrock residents

### **Neighbouring Boroughs**

Basildon Council is also offering incentives to landlords in Thurrock and the surrounding areas with an offer of £1,000 for 12-month tenancies and £1,500 for 24-month tenancies.

Other neighbouring boroughs (within the sub-region) have indicated that they will not be offering incentives to Thurrock landlords in the near future

**Actions:**

- Investigate improved landlord incentives for Thurrock clients
- Improve working relationships with landlords
- Set up information sharing agreements with London boroughs, particularly regarding households with complex needs such as mental health, medical, specialist schooling and ASB issues
- Remind London boroughs of their duty to notify Local Authorities when placing people out of borough under s208 Housing Act 1996
- Work with other boroughs in the sub region to consider cross boundary joint partnerships to incentivise landlords

**C) Thurrock housing stock**

**Tenures:**

More than two thirds of the housing stock in Thurrock is owner occupied. This is slightly lower than figures for the region but slightly higher than the national figure. See C1 & C2

Nationally there has been a s50% increase in the private rented sector over the past 10 years, but the increase in Thurrock is more than twice this figures at 130%

Subsequently, the Private rented sector is now at similar levels to the social rented sector see C1 and C3

Reasons for the increase could include:

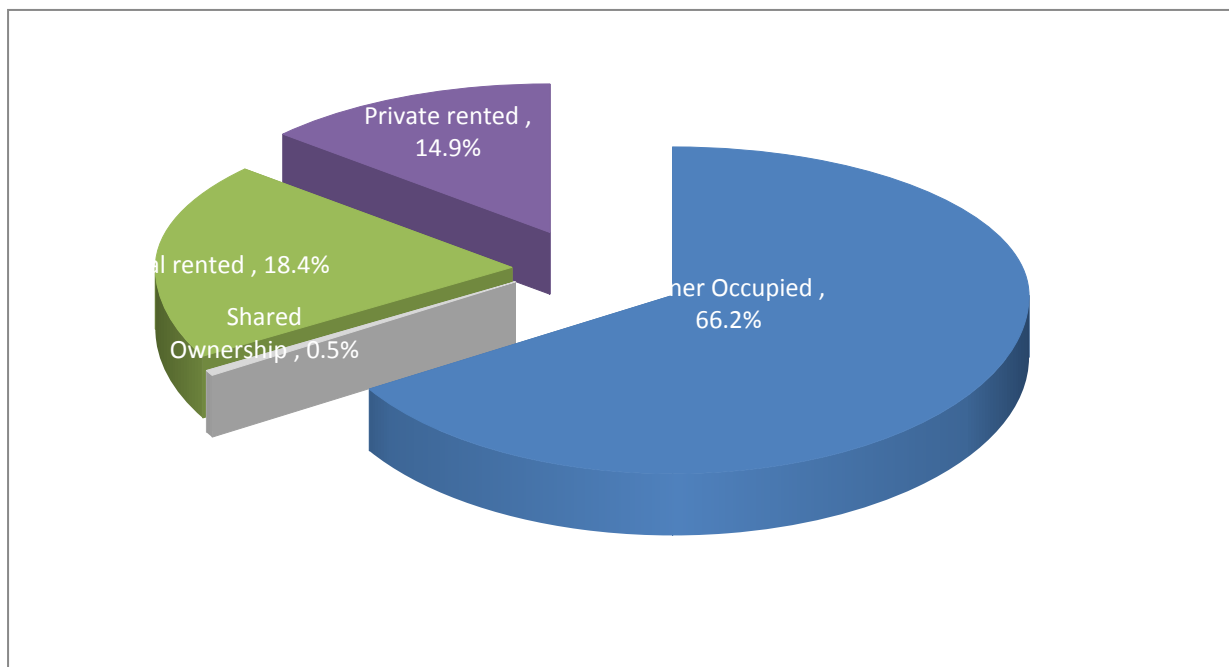
- reduced house prices over the past 10 years
- low interest rates for landlords buying to let
- an increase in the buy to let market

The increase provides greater opportunities for Thurrock residents to privately rent but also provides more opportunities for migration into the borough

**Actions**

- Explore incentives to landlords to offer accommodation to potentially homeless households
- Explore options for longer tenancies with private landlords
- Explore the long term impacts of welfare reforms on privately rented households – particularly Universal Credit - and any mitigations
- Consider improved monitoring of private landlords – e.g. Landlord licensing schemes

C1 – Tenure comparisons - Thurrock



Source: Source: ONS Census data 2011

C2 – National tenure comparisons

National Comparison				
	Thurrock	Essex	East	England
Tenure	%	%	%	%
<b>Owner Occupied</b>	66.2	71.4	67.6	63.4
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8
<b>Social rented</b>	18.4	14.3	15.7	17.7
<b>Private rented</b>	14.9	13.8	16.0	18.1

Source: ONS Census data 2011

C3 – Changes to tenure

Thurrock Housing Tenure Profile – Comparison 2001 & 2011			
Tenure	2001	2011	Change
<b>Owner Occupied with Mortgage</b>	47.9%	40.7%	-7.2%
<b>Owner Occupied no Mortgage</b>	23.8%	25.5%	1.7%
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
<b>Social rented</b>	20.4%	18.4%	-2.0%
<b>Private rented</b>	6.5%	14.9%	8.4%

Source: ONS Census data 2001 and 2011

### Property type and size

Houses represent over 77% of all housing - See C4

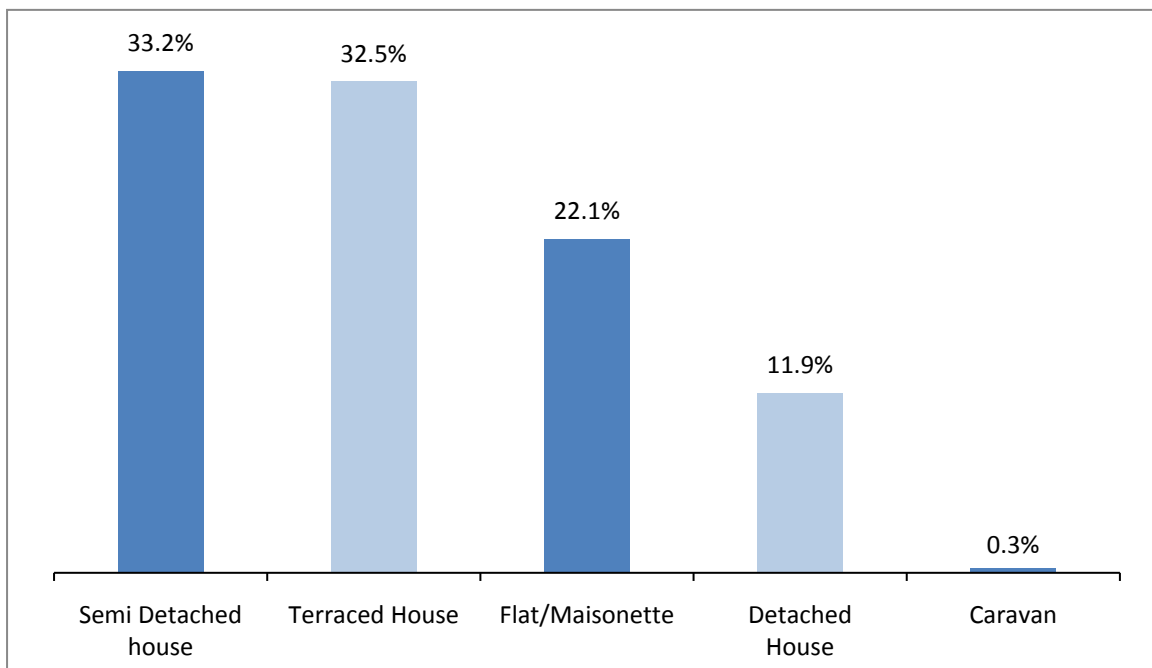
Over 75% of all housing stock is 2 or 3 bed roomed whilst just less than 12% is bedsit or 1 bed roomed. See C5

In comparison - 49% of households only require 1 bedroom (Singles and couples with no children). See C6

#### Action

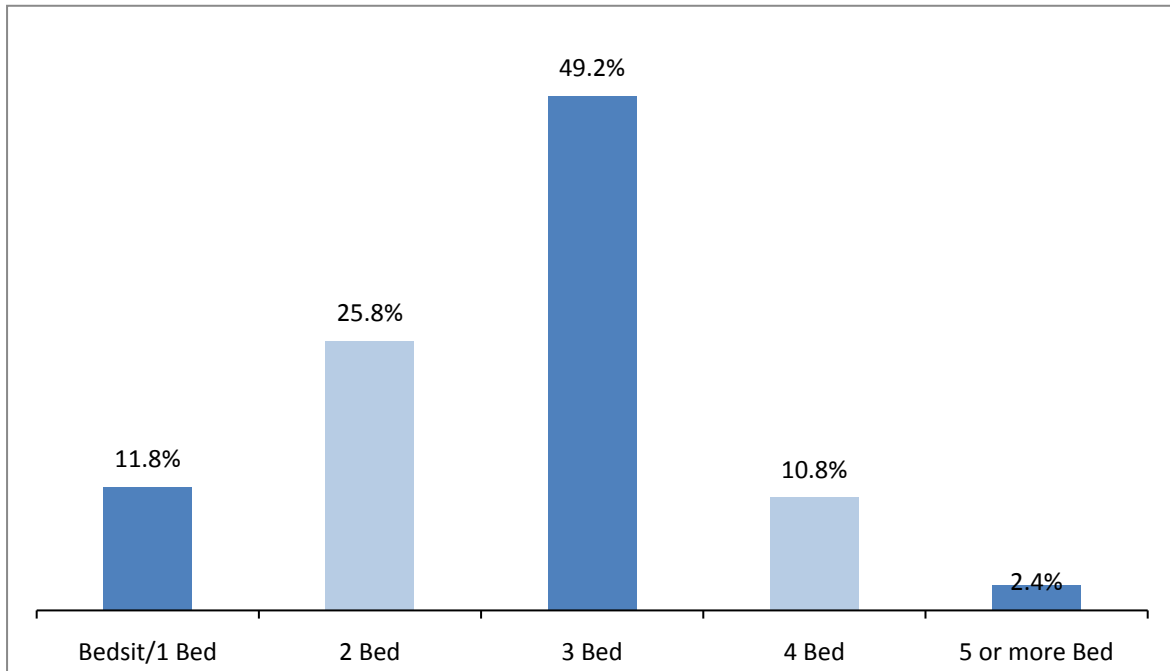
- Influence future house building and planning to achieve an increase in smaller properties (1 bedroom or studio) to meet smaller household needs

C4 – Comparison by property type (all tenures)



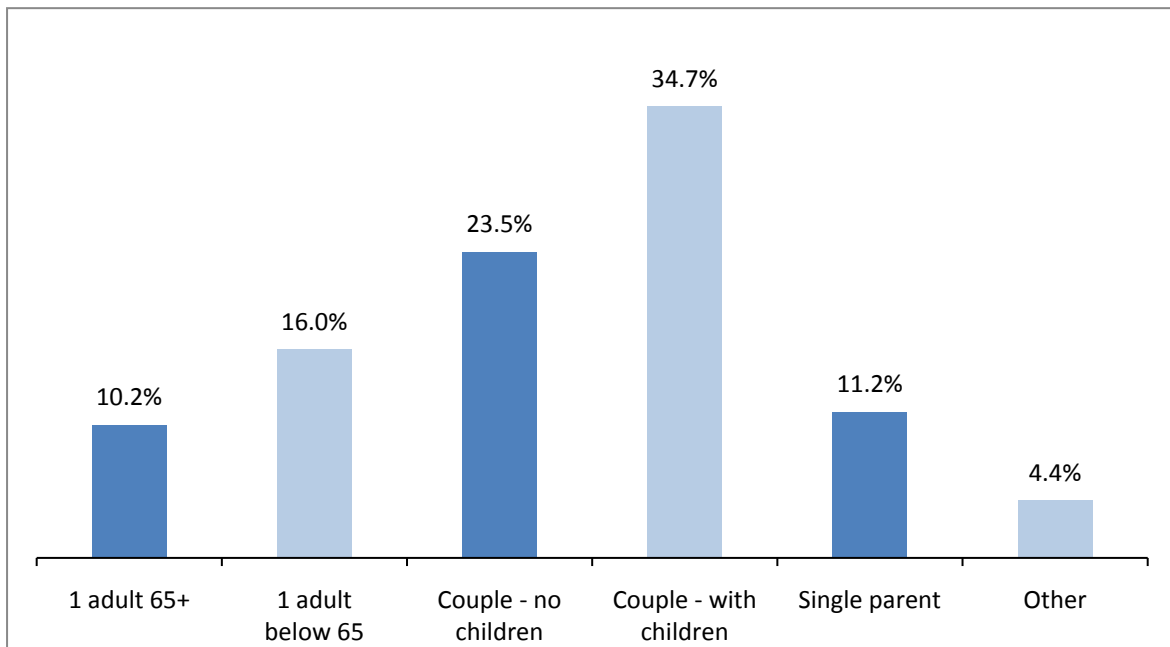
Source: ONS Census data 2011

C5 – Comparison by bedroom numbers (all tenures)



Source: ONS Census data 2011

C6 – Comparison by household make up (all tenures)



Source: ONS Census data 2011

## Occupation levels

5.4% of households are over occupied (over crowded) in comparison to 64.3% who are under-occupied in the borough. See C7

The greatest overcrowding is in the private rented sector at 11.9% see C8  
This is almost double the national average at 6% (Source: Survey of English Housing 2013/14)

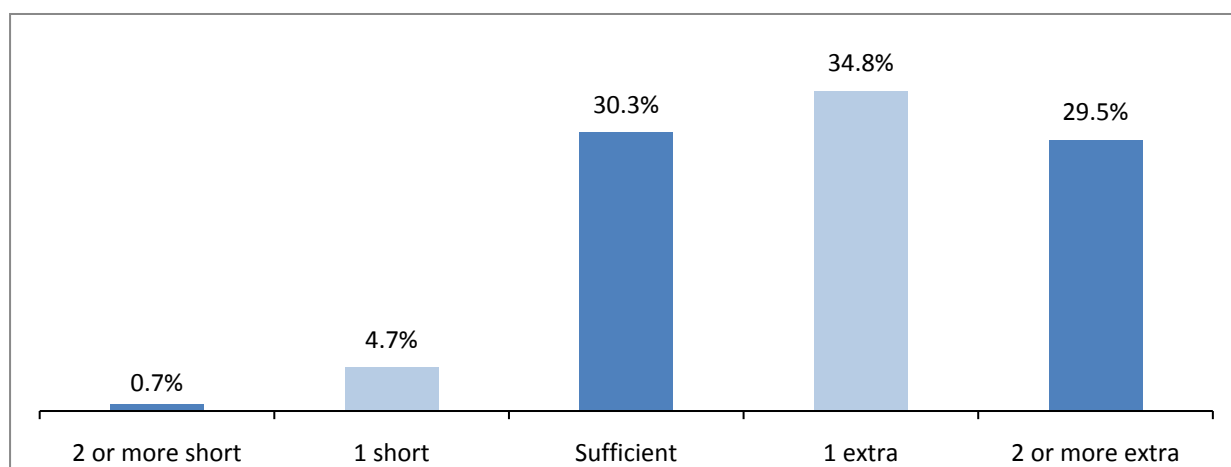
14.8% of socially rented stock is under occupied by 2 or more bedrooms – although lower than the owned stock, this represents around 1700 properties i.e. 36% of the total 3 and 4 bedroomed social stock

### Actions

- Tackle under occupation across all tenure types
- Consider options for older under-occupiers (all tenures) to move into sheltered accommodation and rent out their properties to private renters
- Explore options for encouraging under-occupiers to take in lodgers

### C7 – Comparison of overcrowding with under occupation (all tenures)

The chart shows the number of bedrooms short or extra to that required by the household size



Source: ONS Census data 2011

### C8 – Overcrowding & under occupation by tenure comparison

Variance by tenure type	Under occupied (2 or more bedrooms)	Over occupied
<b>Owned or shared ownership</b>	37.6%	3.3%
<b>Social rent</b>	14.8%	7.8%
<b>Private rented</b>	10.9%	11.9%
<b>All Stock</b>	29.5%	5.4%

Source: ONS Census data 2011

## D) Thurrock Home Ownership

### Purchasing property

The average house price in Thurrock is £167,608 - lower than both the national and local figures. Average house prices in Thurrock have increased in the past 6 years by 12.35%. This also represents a lower increase than both Essex and the national figures – see D1 and D2

A survey in January 2015 identified lowest and average prices of properties available for sale - see D3

In order to outright purchase the cheapest property in Thurrock at that time, an annual income of at least £26,300 and a substantial deposit is required – see D3 and D4

Shared ownership allows households on a lower income the option to purchase a share of a property – lowest income requirement is £15,420 plus a deposit of £5,500 – see D5

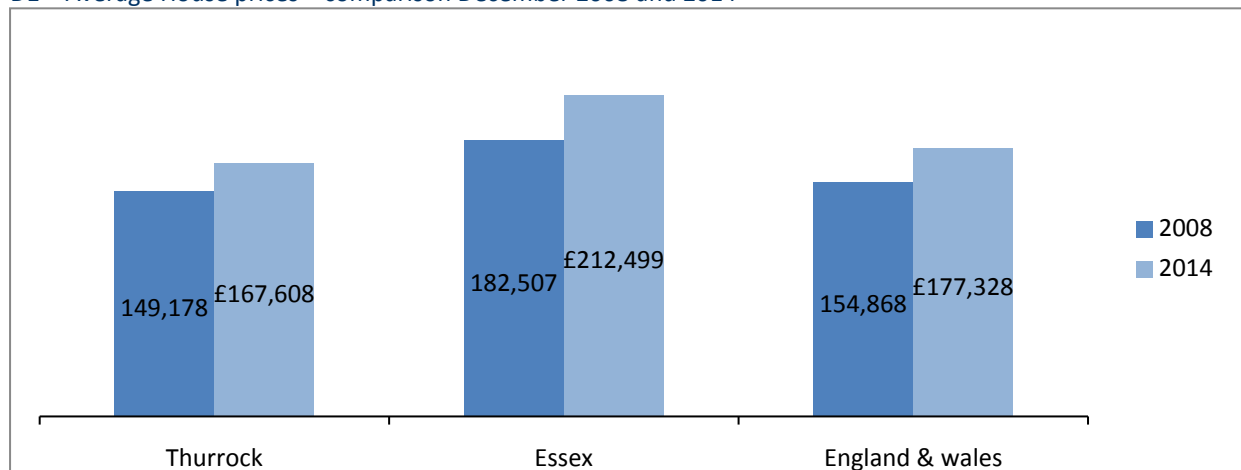
Help to Buy was introduced by the Government in 2013. Buyers can purchase a property with a 5% deposit and take out an interest free loan or mortgage guarantee for 20% of the purchase price.

Between April 2013 to March 2015, 47,018 properties were purchased across the country using the scheme of which 956 were purchased in Thurrock.

### Actions

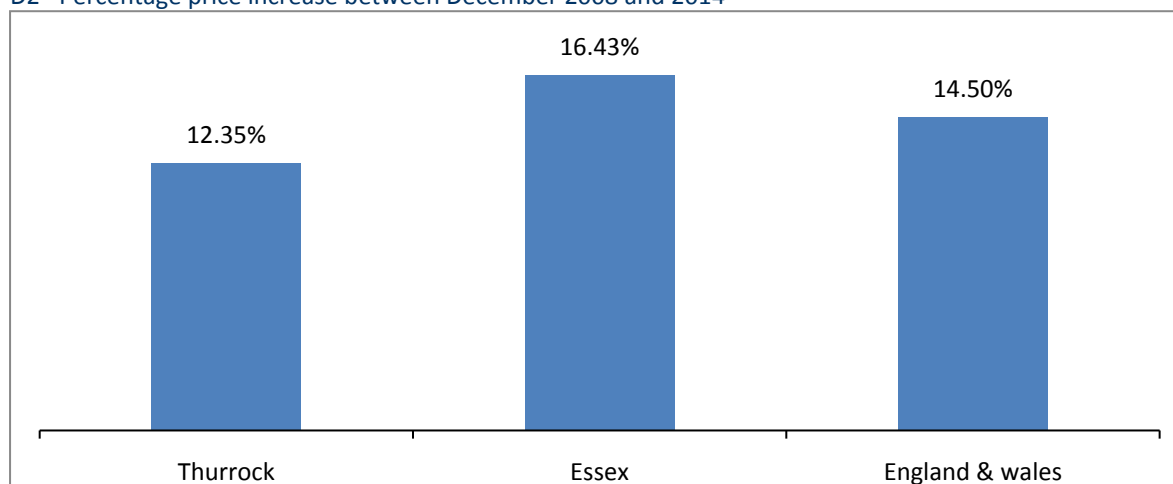
- Ensure all purchasing options are considered as a prevention to homelessness when providing advice and assistance through the housing options team
- Influence future housing supply to include more affordable purchasing options such as shared ownership

D1 – Average House prices – comparison December 2008 and 2014



Source: Land Registry

D2– Percentage price increase between December 2008 and 2014



Source: Land Registry

D3 – Property prices at January 2015

House Prices - sales	Lowest prices	Average prices
1 bed flat	£97,000	£115,313
2 bed flat	£124,995	£150,309
2 bed house	£178,995	£196,054
3 bed house	£199,995	£228,351

Source: DCA House price survey January 2015

D4 – Income Thresholds required to purchase

	Single income	Dual income	Deposit required 20%
1 bed flat	£26,300	£31,800	£19,400
2 bed flat	£33,900	£40,900	£24,999
2 bed house	£48,600	£58,600	£35,799
3 bed house	£54,300	£65,500	£39,999

Source: DCA House price survey January 2015

D4 – examples of shared ownership properties at January 2015

	Price	Share price	Share %	Rent	Mortgage	Total	Deposit needed	Income required
1 bed flat	£110,000	£55,000	50%	£126	£298	£424	£5,500	£15,420
2 bed flat	£150,000	£52,500	35%	£223	£284	£507	£5,250	£18,473
2 bed house	£200,000	£60,000	30%	£321	£325	£646	£6,000	£23,491
3 bed house	£230,000	£69,000	30%	£369	£374	£743	£6,900	£27,018

Source: share to buy



## E) Thurrock Private Rental market

### Privately renting property

The cost of privately renting is influenced by supply and demand and there are no restraints on how much rent a landlord can charge or achieve – see E1

Income threshold requirements are shown in E2

Average and lower quartile pay levels are shown in E3

Therefore whilst someone on an average income in Thurrock could afford to privately rent a one bedroom flat, if they are on an income in the lowest quartile or require a larger property, private rental becomes unaffordable without financial assistance (benefits). Affordability is determined as monthly housing costs not exceeding 33% of gross income

Housing Benefit provision for private tenants is available through Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and is means tested

LHA rates relate to the area in which the claim is made. These areas are called Broad Rental Market Areas (BRMA). A BRMA is where a person could reasonably be expected to live taking into account access to facilities and services

LHA rates for Thurrock at January 2015 are shown at E4

LHA rates are based on the lowest third of private market rents being paid in the BRMA; these can differ widely from advertised rents. Valuation Office Agency (VOA) Rent Officers collect the rental information from letting agents, landlords and tenants.

The BRMA for Thurrock includes Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford

There is a shortfall between the Local Housing Allowance for Thurrock and actual rents in the borough – both average and lowest quartile – see E5

The impact of London Boroughs moving people into the area and paying London rates and incentives could lead to even higher market rents. In addition, the increasing population will also lead to higher demand. Therefore the shortfall could worsen over time

### Actions

- Improve working partnerships with Housing benefits
- Investigate possible influences on LHA rates

E1– Cost of private rentals

	Average monthly rental (Jan 2015)	Lowest quartile monthly rental (Jan 2015)	Local monthly Housing Allowance (Jan 2015)
<b>1 bed flat</b>	£650	£595	£550
<b>2 bed flat</b>	£849	£750	£692
<b>2 bed house</b>	£885	£850	£692
<b>3 bed house</b>	£1,055	£950	£808

Source: Thurrock Housing Needs Assessment 2015 and GOV.

E2 - Income required

Income thresholds required for private rental	
<b>1 bed flat</b>	£28,600
<b>2 bed flat</b>	£36,000
<b>2 bed house</b>	£40,800
<b>3 bed house</b>	£45,600

Source: DCA House price survey January 2015

E3 – Pay levels Thurrock

	Average	Lowest quartile
	£28,457	£19,735

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2014)

E4 – LHA rates Thurrock

	Local monthly Housing Allowance (Jan 2015)
<b>1 bed flat</b>	£550
<b>2 bed flat</b>	£692
<b>2 bed house</b>	£692
<b>3 bed house</b>	£808

Source: Gov.UK

E5 – Shortfall levels

	Monthly shortfall for average rental (Jan 2015)	Monthly shortfall for lowest quartile (Jan 2015)
<b>1 bed flat</b>	£100	£45
<b>2 bed flat</b>	£157	£58
<b>2 bed house</b>	£193	£158
<b>3 bed house</b>	£247	£142

## F) Social Housing

### Social Housing stock

Thurrock Council own just over 10,000 properties and Registered Providers have around 1500 properties for social renting in Thurrock. Both are let through the Council's Choice based Lettings scheme Thurrock Choice Homes.

Waiting lists are long but the number of years required to supply full demand varies greatly according to the size of property required – see F1

Almost half of people waiting need a 1 bedroom property and of these almost 30% are aged 25 and under – see F2

Over 25% of people on the waiting list have a need for 2 bedroom properties but the time taken to supply full demand is the highest at more than 11 years.

Only 12.3% need a 3 bedroom property but 3 bedroom relets represent almost 30% of the total, hence the much shorter wait for a 3 bed property

### Future building

Thurrock Council has an ambitious building programme with plans to build almost 1300 new affordable homes within the next 5 years, subject to planning etc. – see F3

### Actions:

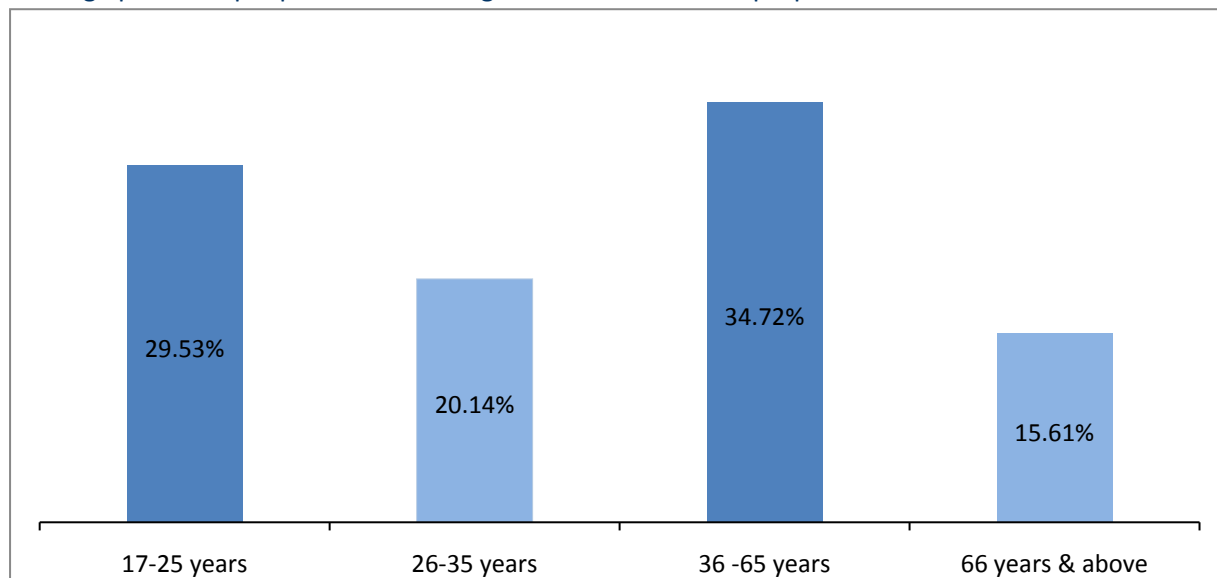
- Manage the expectation of being housed into social housing
- Ensure all housing options are represented in advice given
- Ensure a representative supply of 2 and 3 bedroom properties are included in the building programme

F1 – Council Housing stock

	Council stock	Waiting List (excl transfers)	% of waiting list	Relets in 2014	% of relets	*Years to supply full demand
<b>1 bed</b>	3,109	2,880	49.6%	317	44.1%	9.1
<b>2 bed</b>	2,307	2,066	25.6%	182	25.3%	11.4
<b>3 bed</b>	4,520	715	12.3%	214	29.8%	3.3
<b>4+ bed</b>	204	144	2.5%	6	0.8%	24
<b>Total</b>	10,140	5,805		719		

\*Indicates the number of years required to fulfil the demand of current waiting list, through current rate of relets – i.e. takes no account of increases in waiting lists or other demands

### F2 – Age profile of people on the waiting list for one bedroom properties



### F3 – 5 year Building programme

	Total No. of units to be built	Of which - Affordable Homes	% of Affordable Housing on scheme	No. of units – affordable rented	No. of units – shared ownership/ LCHO
2014-15	709	148	20.9%	97	51
2015-16	305	142	46.6%	126	16
2016-17	635	419	66.0%	293	126
2017-18	1119	533	47.6%	328	205
2018-19	55	55	100.0%	30	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>2823</b>	<b>1297</b>	<b>Av. 45.9%</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>423</b>

The information is based on current planning permissions (April 2015) and the Council's own housing development programme

## G) Thurrock Homelessness

### Homelessness data

Data is provided to the DCLG quarterly via the P1E statutory return, and is broken down into:

- The number of people approaching the local authority for advice and assistance
- The numbers of homeless applications subsequently taken (where homelessness could not be prevented or relieved) and decisions made
- The number of people for whom a rehousing duty has been accepted by the Council

Thurrock Council has a Housing solutions team who provide a generic service incorporating housing advice, homeless prevention and homeless applications

### Key Points

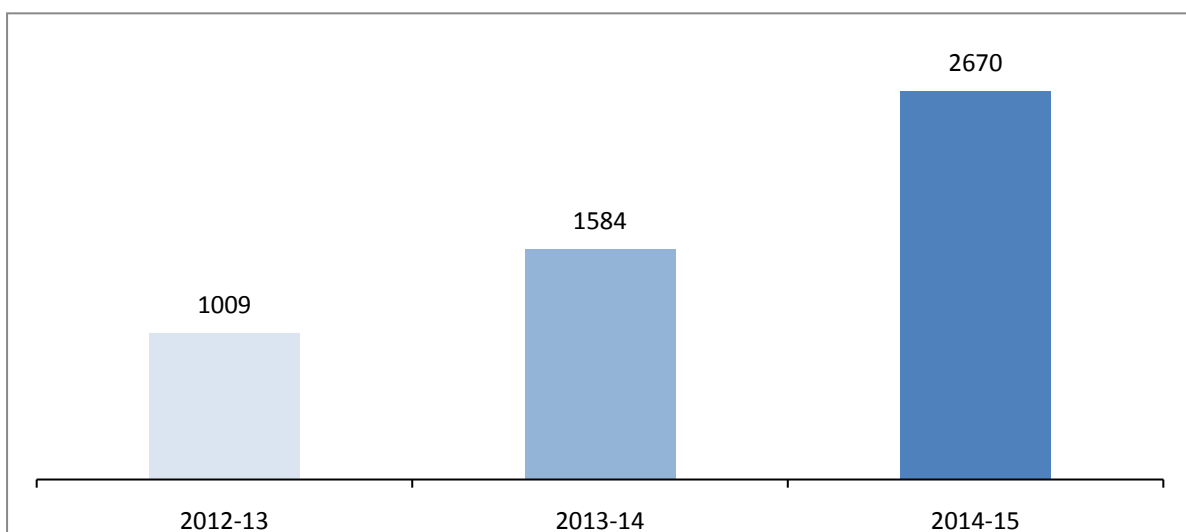
- The number of people approaching has increased by more than 260% in the past 3 years – see G1
- The ability to prevent homelessness has varied over the past 3 years but averages out at 38% of cases – see G2
- The number of homeless decisions made has also varied over the past 3 years but averages out at 254 decisions per year – see G3
- Of decisions made, just over half result in the full rehousing duty being accepted by Thurrock Council – see G5
- Reasons for homeless can be broken down into five main areas – see G6 and G7
  1. Exclusion (36%)
  2. Termination of an AST (27%)
  3. Violence (17%)
  4. Arrears (8%)
- Lone female parent households with dependent children have consistently been the largest household type – see G8
- Younger households (16 to 44) have also been more predominantly represented - see G9
- The largest reason for priority need has consistently been dependent children and/or pregnancy - see G12
- The 2nd largest reason for priority need is mental illness – see G12

- The ethnic makeup generally mirrors the population of Thurrock and does not identify any specific ethnic group as being over represented - see G10 and G11
- The number of 16 & 17 year olds for whom a rehousing duty was accepted has decreased dramatically since 2010-11. See G13. This follows the implementation of a Thurrock Council Housing and Children’s services protocol
- Council evictions were higher in 2014-15 than at any time in the past 7 years – see G14. The Council implemented a policy of Introductory tenancies for all new non sheltered tenancies from March 2014 in line with its Tenancy Policy. This allows a “trial” tenancy period during which tenants receive greater monitoring (quarterly visits) and more support if required to enable them to manage their tenancies. However, it also allows a mandatory right to possession within the introductory period where tenancies fail. It is impossible to determine whether or not the new policy has impacted eviction figures yet but careful monitoring is required

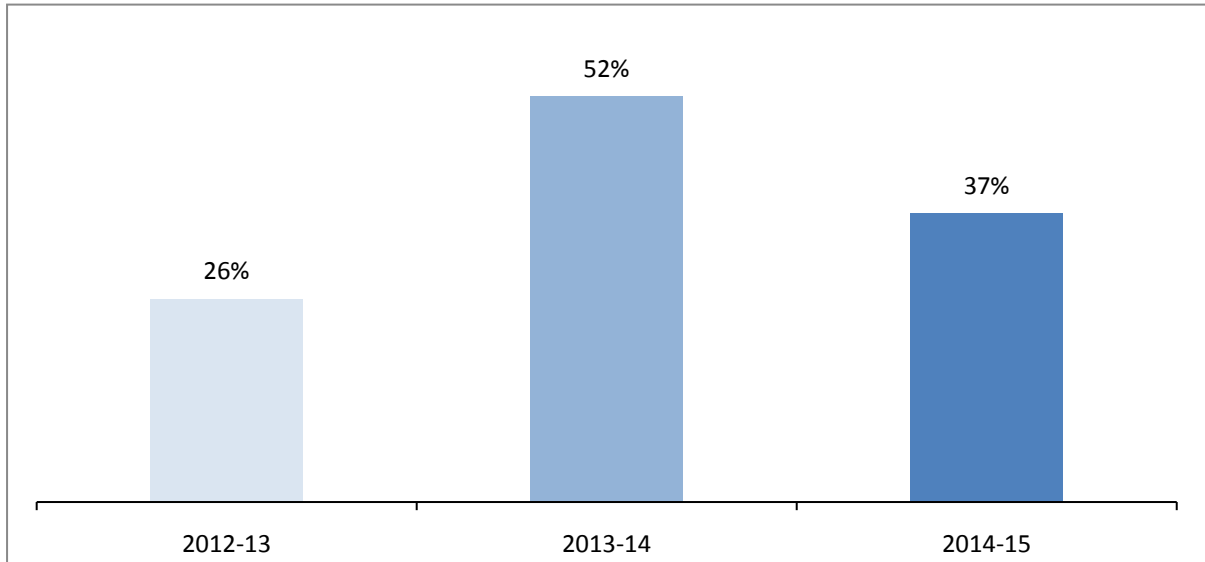
**Actions:**

- Develop action plans to specifically target the top 4 reasons for homelessness
- Continue to monitor ethnicity against local and national trends to ensure no specific ethnic groups is being adversely impacted
- Monitor Council evictions of Introductory tenancies to determine appropriate levels of support and monitoring
- Consider options for pre-tenancy training for potential tenants

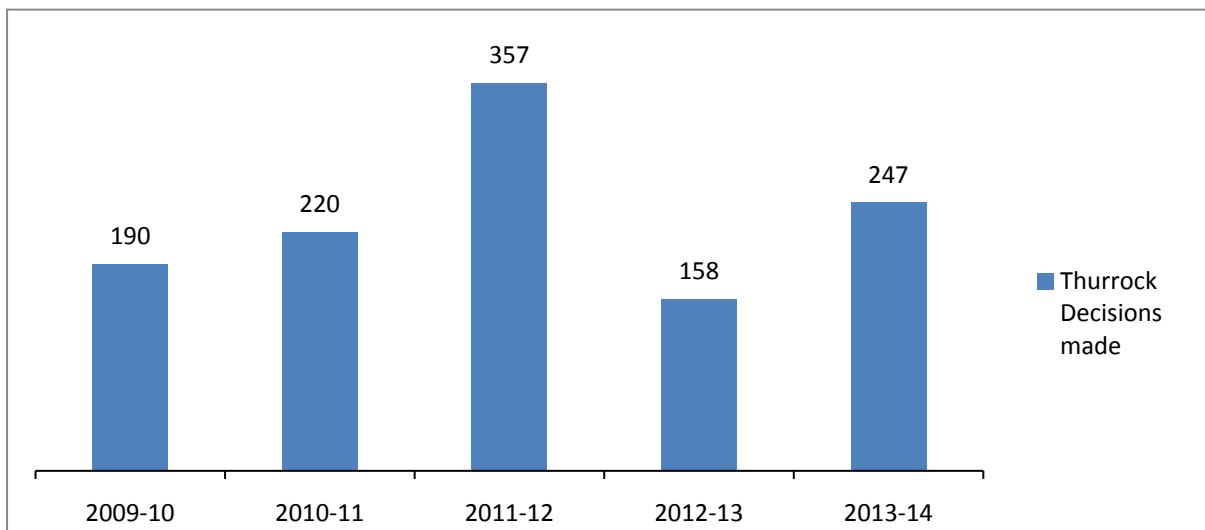
G1 – Number of households approaching for advice & assistance in Thurrock over past 3 years



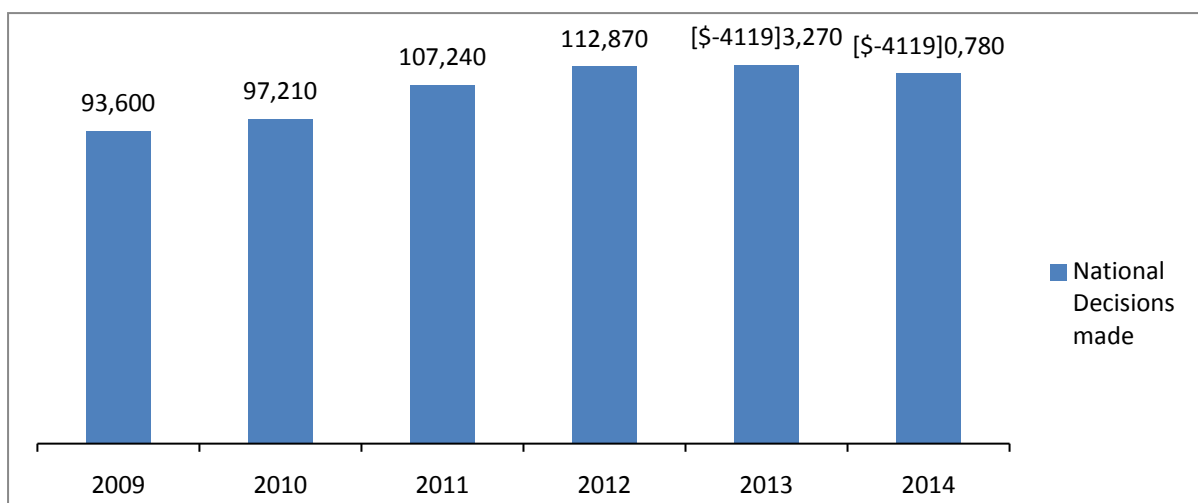
G2 Of these approaches –percentage where homelessness was prevented or relieved



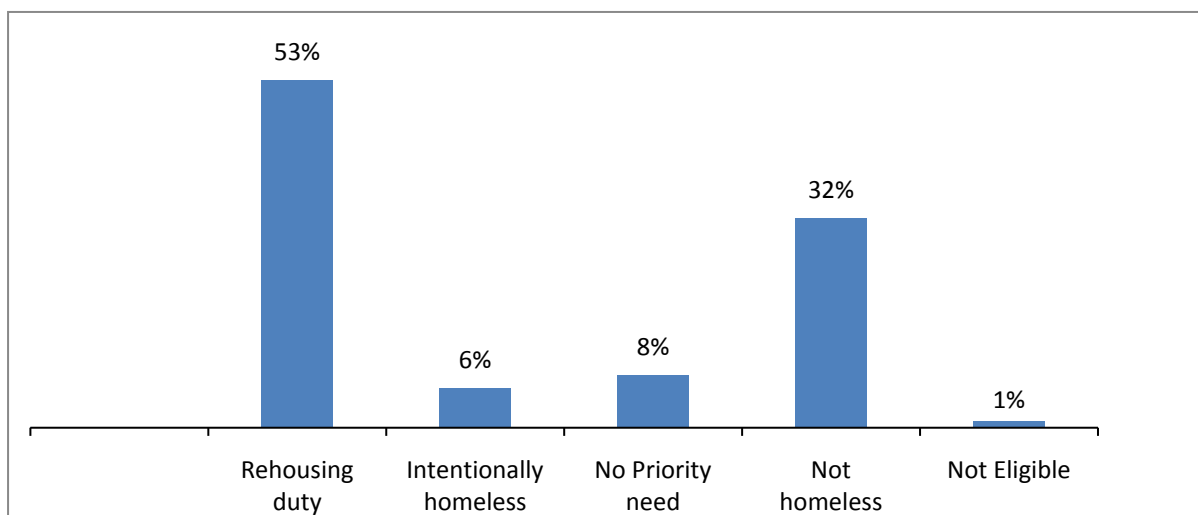
G3 – Number of homeless applications taken & decisions made in Thurrock



G4 – Number of homeless applications taken & decisions made nationally



G5 Decisions made in Thurrock as a percentage over past 5 years

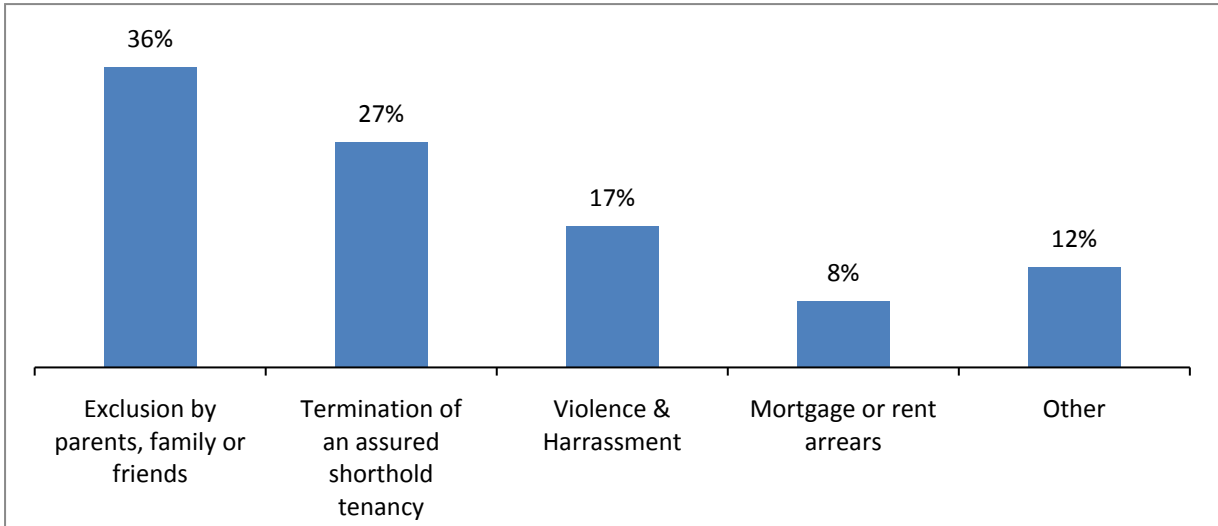


G6 – Top 10 reasons for homelessness in Thurrock for past 5 years (where rehousing duty accepted)

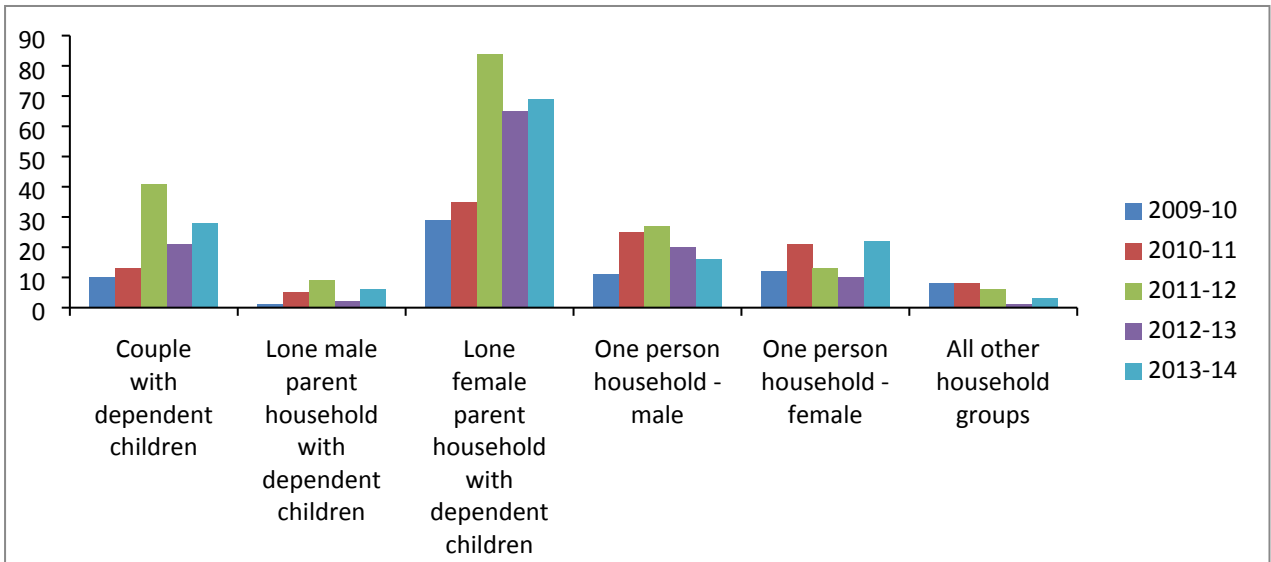
Causes of homelessness (2009 -14)	
Parental exclusion	25.44%
Termination of Assured short hold tenancy	23.67%
Other family or friends exclusion	10.95%
Violent relationship breakdown - partner	9.98%
Non-violent relationship breakdown	6.60%
Other reasons for ending AST	4.03%
Mortgage arrears	3.54%
Other forms of violence	2.74%
Violent relationship breakdown - associated person	2.42%
Rent arrears - Local Authority	2.25%

G7 – Homeless reasons by broad areas (where rehousing duty accepted)

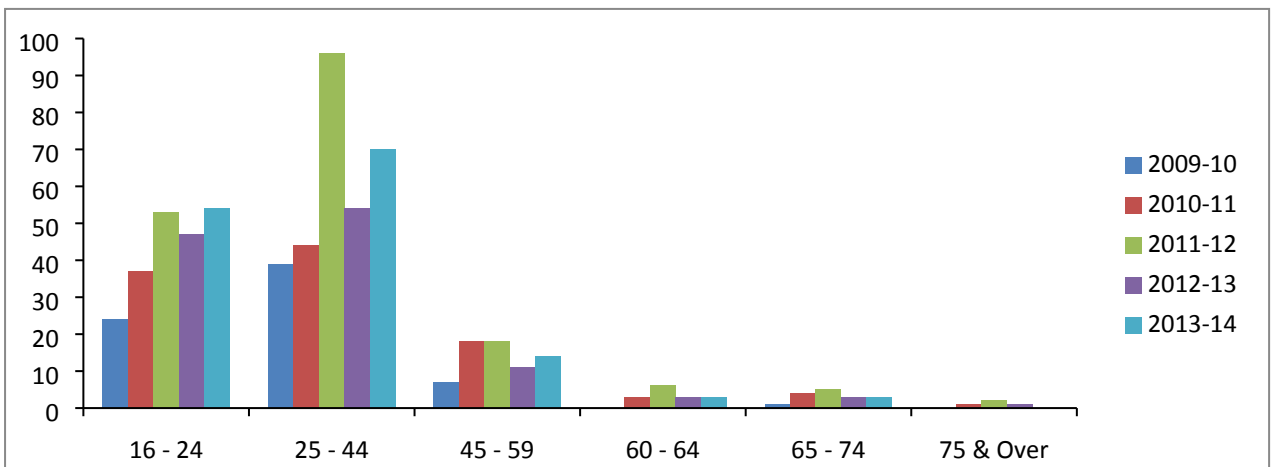




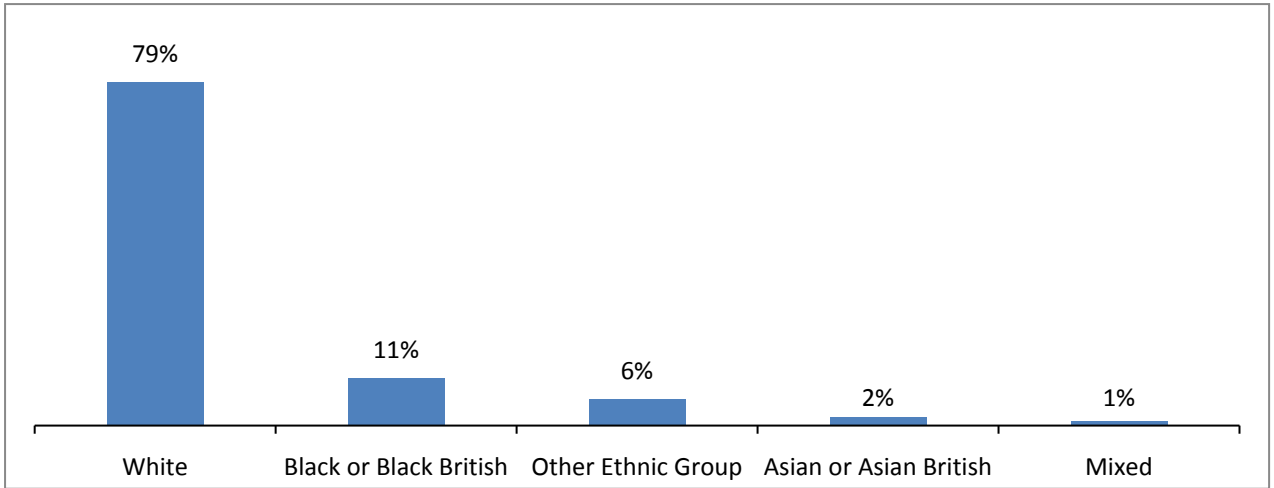
G8 -Household makeup (where rehousing duty accepted)



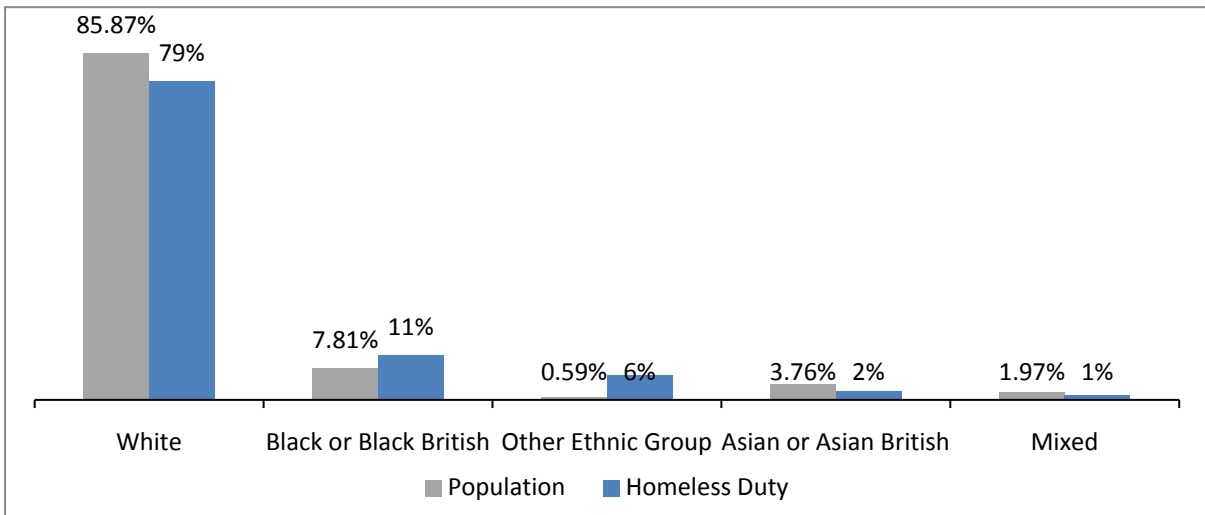
G9 - Household make up by age (where rehousing duty accepted)



G10 – Household make up by Ethnicity for past 5 years (where rehousing duty accepted)

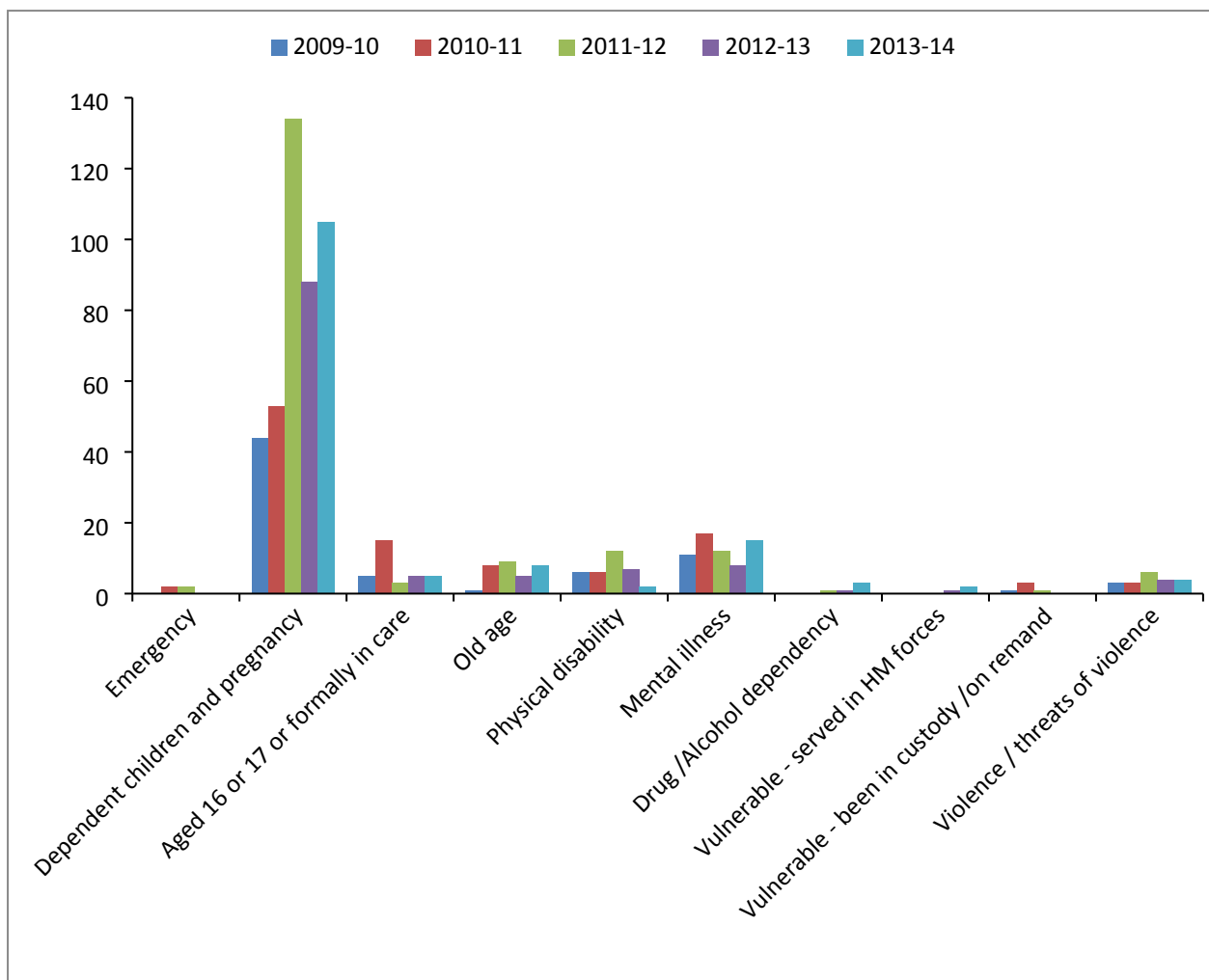


G11 – Comparison of Household ethnicity for homeless cases with the population of Thurrock

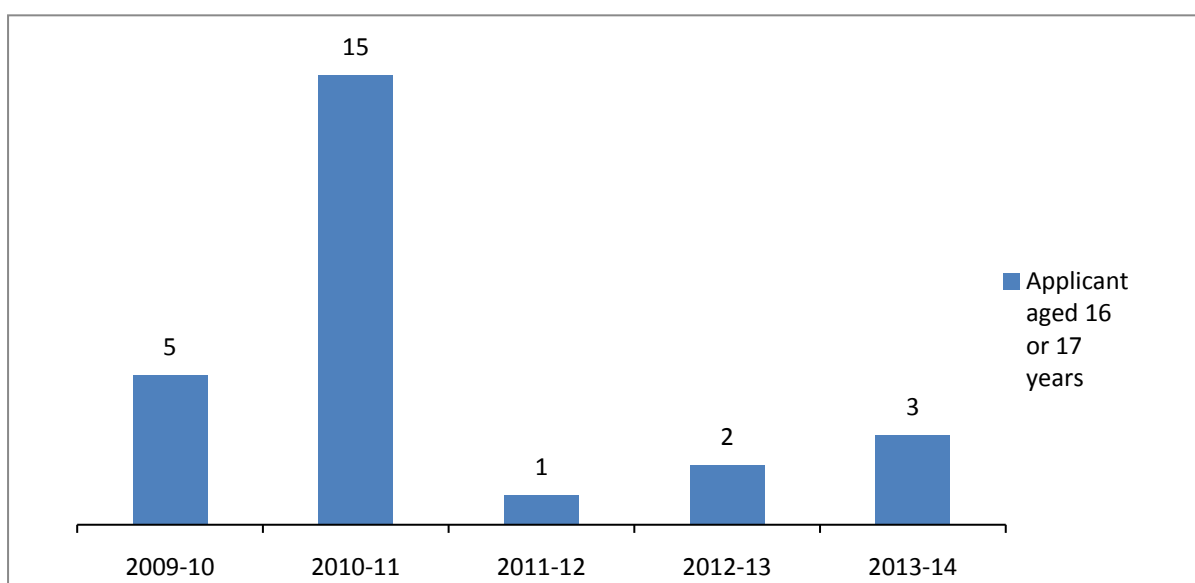


Source: ONS Census data 2011 & Thurrock Council data

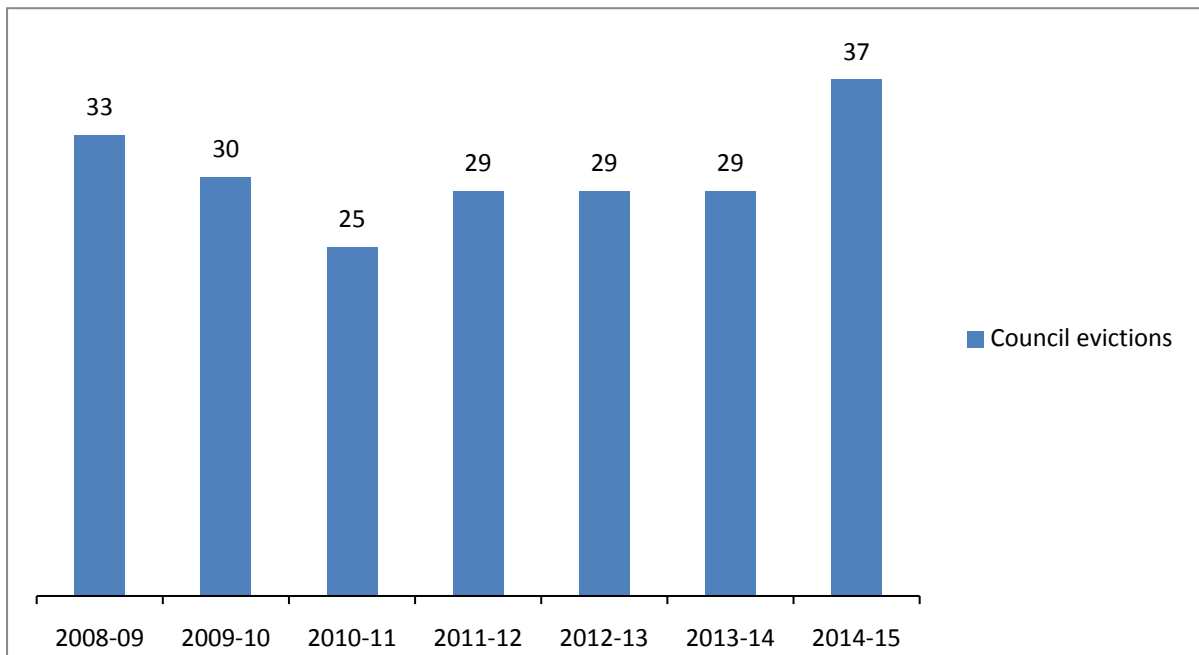
G12 - Household make up by Priority Need (where rehousing duty accepted)



G13 – Number of 16 & 17 year olds for whom a rehousing duty was accepted



#### G14 – Number of Council evictions



#### H) Homelessness Prevention & Relief

Where a person approaches the Council as homeless or potentially homeless but actions taken by the local authority mean that the homelessness does not materialise, then prevention is counted.

A prevention is the result of either

- i) An actual prevention where an action taken prevents the homelessness from happening – e.g. mediation with the excluder
- ii) A relief – where an action to find alternative accommodation for the household prevents the homelessness from happening - e.g. where alternative private rented accommodation is found

Prevention numbers were fairly consistent until 2012-13 but have decreased after that – see H1. Unfortunately, the statistics collected have not been consistently detailed – for example in quarter 4 of 2013-14, of the 120 cases where homelessness was prevented, 100 are described as “other” for the reason prevention was achieved.

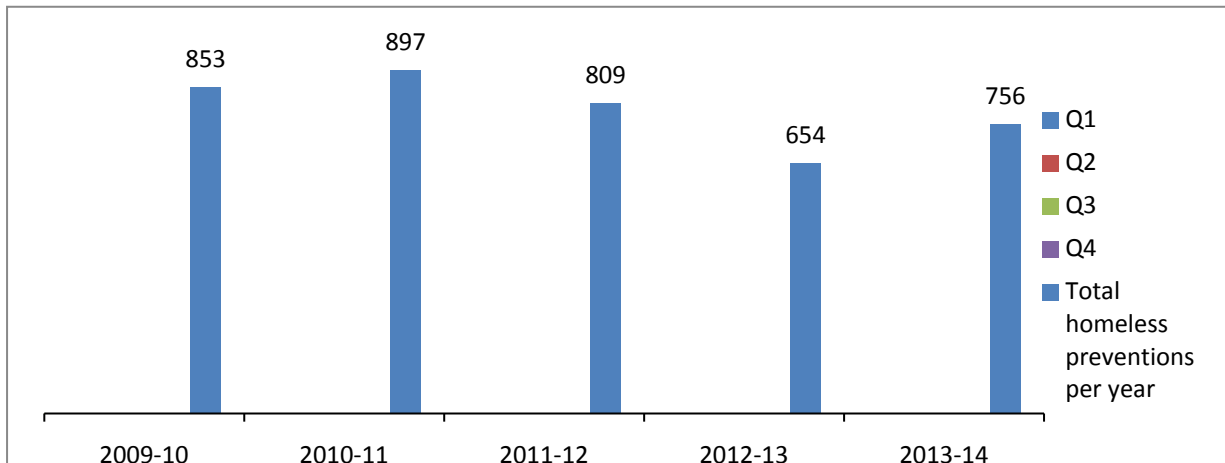
Homeless prevention is a primary aim and therefore it is essential to monitor the actions which are successful and those which are not in order to direct future limited resources

To do this a more detailed picture is required. Data is obtained through an integrated Housing IT system. The Council will be updating its IT system in 2014-15 so it is essential that the new system is configured to capture appropriate data.

**Action:**

- Ensure statistics collected are more detailed and consistent to enable a better understanding and assist with forward planning
- Ensure staff are trained in how to capture data accurately and that consistent definitions are used
- The new Housing IT system must capture appropriate and accurate data - ensure the correct parameters are set during the implementation programme
- Ensure sufficient expertise within the Housing department to update data requirements if necessary

H1 – total homeless preventions per year



**I) Rough Sleepers**

**Rough sleeper count**

Each year (October/November) local authorities report on the number of people sleeping rough in the borough on a specific night. This can be estimated through liaison with appropriate agencies such as the police, or an actual count can be organised.

Thurrock carried out an actual count in 2014 after 4 years of estimations. See I1

Of the ten people identified as meeting the criteria only one was actually sleeping rough on the street. The other nine were sleeping in 2 cars in a service station car park and were thought to be workers staying overnight in cars to prevent accommodation costs, however this could not be verified as the nine people were unwilling to engage.

**Outreach & reconnection**

In October 2014 Thurrock Council launched a new outreach and reconnection service through a sub-regional contract with St Mungos' Broadway. The key aims of the contract are

- (1) providing an outreach and intensive support service, to identify rough sleepers and enable them to access appropriate support such as health and substance misuse
- (2) providing assistance to reconnect where appropriate or to access new accommodation

A support worker is allocated to cover Thurrock, Basildon and Brentwood areas and he/she responds to reports of homeless individuals made via the national Street link website, which enables members of the public to report any person they believe is sleeping rough. Referrals are also made direct

The worker will attempt to locate the rough sleeper and support them as required. This involves joint working with the local authority and other partner agencies

Data provided by St Mungos Broadway show that 14 people were referred between the launch of the service and the end of year (Nov 14 to April 2015) - see I2 and I3

Of the 14 people identified 9 were rehoused from the streets – the other 5 refused to engage

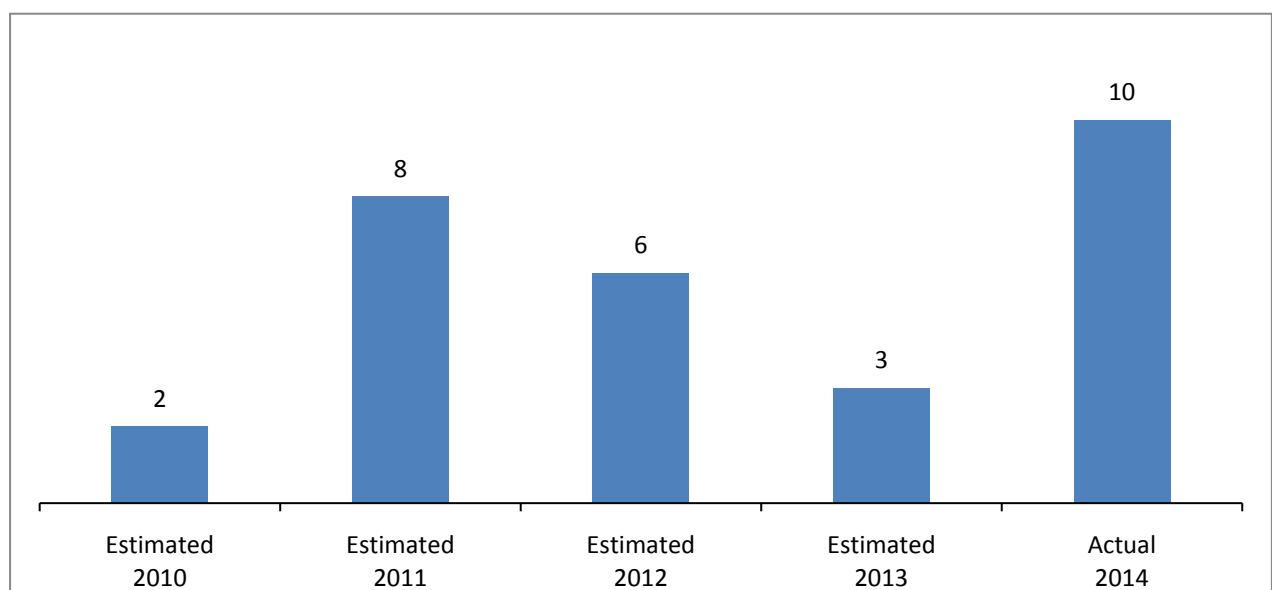
Whilst the data indicates that rough sleeping is not a large problem within the borough the Council is keen to promote the No second Night Out programme instigated by the DCLG – see section 5 below

Thurrock Council does not have a direct access hostel or night shelter and relies on space within other boroughs.

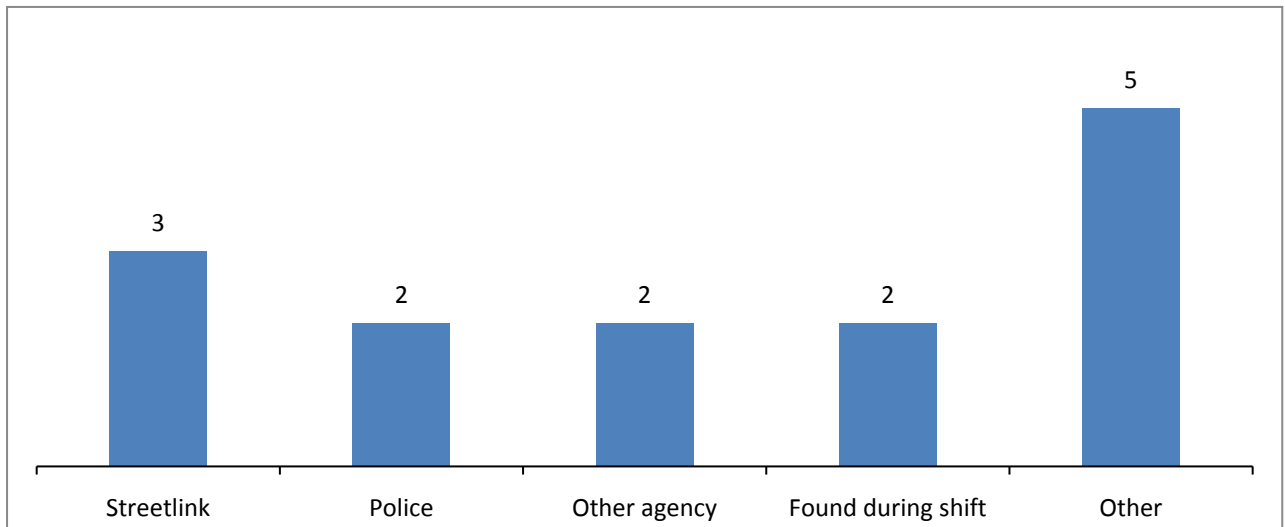
Action:

- Investigate options for non-priority need homeless applicants

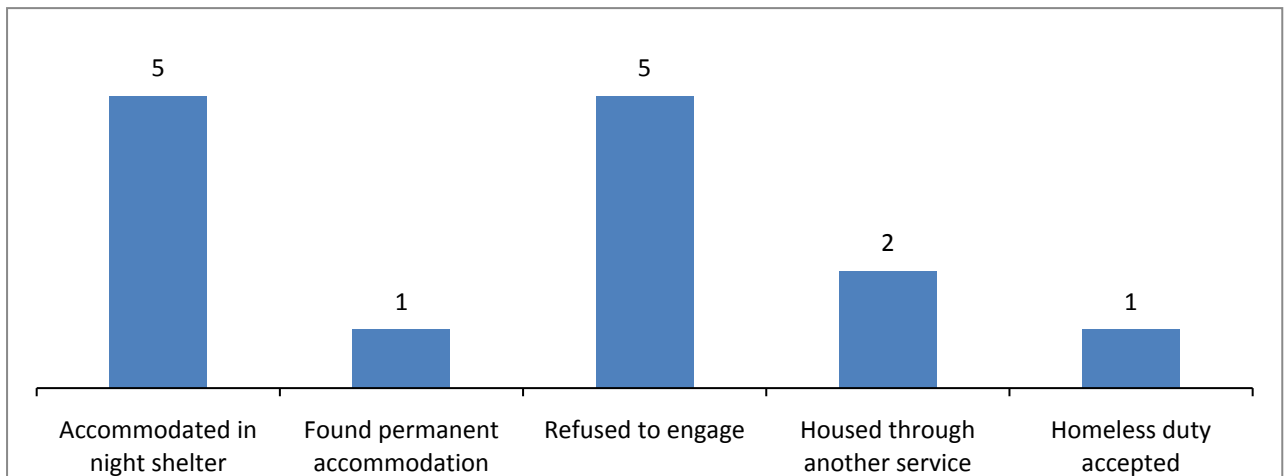
I1 – Rough Sleeper counts in Thurrock for past 5 years



### I2 Referrals to St Mungos (Nov 2014 – April 2015)



### I3 Outcomes of referrals received by St Mungos (Nov 2014 – April 2015)



## J) Temporary Accommodation

### Accommodation profile

There is a duty to provide temporary accommodation to applicants where there is reason to believe the applicant is homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need. The duty continues whilst a homeless assessment is made and may continue until a rehousing duty is discharged

In order to meet this duty Thurrock Council uses the following types of temporary accommodation

- Bed & Breakfast (private establishments)
- Hostel ( Charles Street hostel in Grays)
- Self-contained (Private accommodation rented on a nightly basis)
- Furnished lets (Furnished accommodation within the Council's own stock)

Thurrock Council recognises the unsuitability of bed & breakfast (B & B) accommodation for families and young people and is committed to using alternative suitable temporary accommodation

wherever possible

Charles Street hostel provides 29 units of supported accommodation for single people and families and includes 5 rooms for 16 & 17 year olds supported by Children's Services.

The Council acquired a new 18 bed hostel in Clarence Road, Grays which is due to open in May 2015. The accommodation consists of

- 16 single person rooms with en-suite shower rooms and shared kitchens.
- 2 self-contained family units

The accommodation will be managed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party who will provide intensive housing management and support services. Four of the 16 single rooms will be provided to Children's Services as move on accommodation for care leavers and unaccompanied asylum seekers with a higher package of support

Brooke House in Grays accommodated 10 people, with referrals through a multi-disciplinary panel and was used to provide accommodation for single people who do not meet the priority need threshold. Due to funding cuts Brooke House closed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and there is subsequently no hostel or night shelter provision in the borough

During the recent Gold Standard peer review the standard of temporary accommodation was recognised as high with an overall score of 86%

#### **Statistics**

The number of households being provided with temporary accommodation has increased by 13.5% over the past 2 years –see J1

However the average time spent in the accommodation has decreased by more than 50% – see J2

Four households with children have been accommodated in B & B for more than 6 weeks in the past 5 years (2009 – 2015)

No 16 & 17 year olds have been accommodated in B & B for more than 6 weeks in the past 5 years (2009 - 2015)

#### **Actions:**

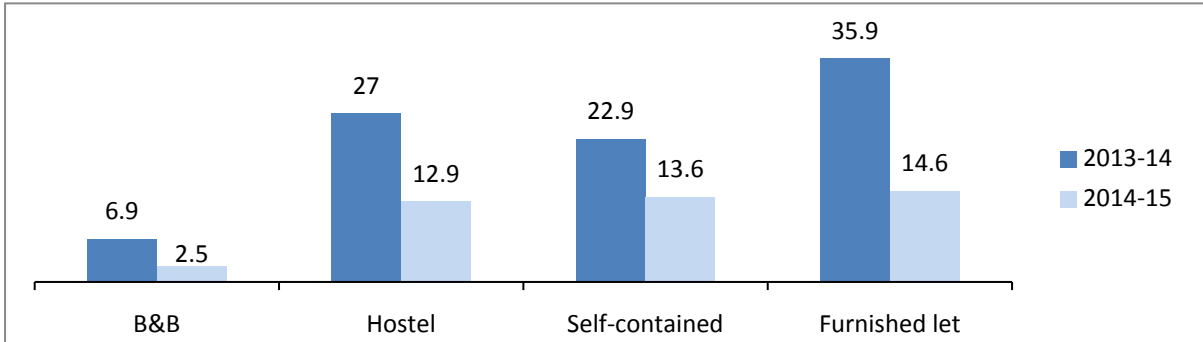
- Ensure there is sufficient supported accommodation available so that no 16 & 17 years are placed in B & B accommodation
- Ensure no households with children are placed into B & B unless in an emergency
- Eliminate the use of B & B for all customers except in an emergency and then for a minimal period
- Work closely with children's services to provide suitable (supported) accommodation for homeless 16 & 17 year
- Ensure temporary accommodation meets high standards
- Consider options for accommodation for homeless non-priority need customers

J1 – Households provided with temporary accommodation during the year

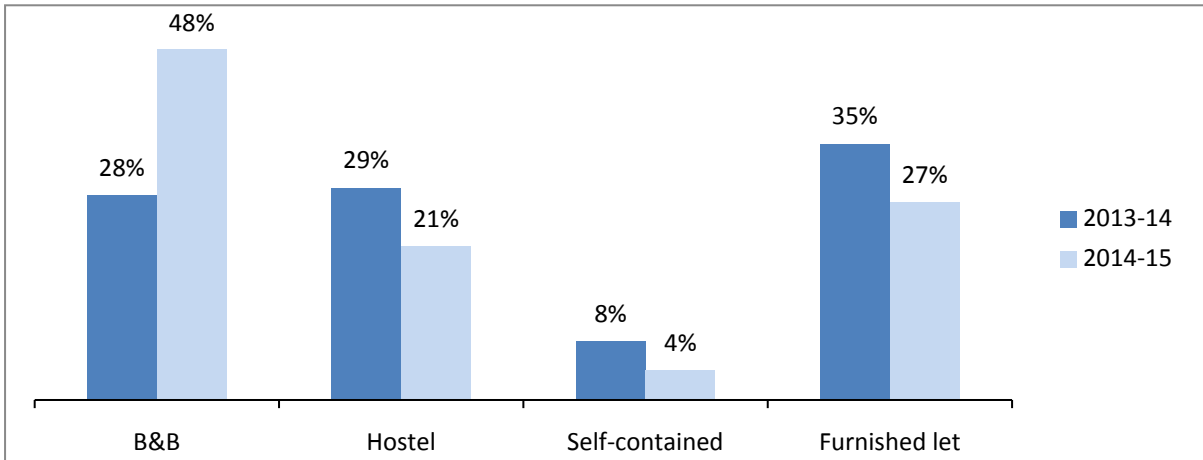




J2 – Average number of weeks spent in Temporary accommodation



J3 – Type of accommodation used as a percentage of total accommodation



## 4. Health & Wellbeing

### Physical health & disability

Thurrock has a worse than average figure for overall premature deaths in England. It is particularly badly placed in the listings for lung cancer, heart disease and stroke

These statistics are supported by high overweight and obesity levels in the borough, both adults and children, which are linked to the prevalence of these diseases - see 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3

Obesity figures show that Thurrock is the worst local authority area in the east of England region with almost one third of adults categorised as obese and more than two thirds categorised as either

overweight or obese.

It is also the worst local authority area for smoking related deaths

Poor quality housing has long been established as a contributor to poor health:

- damp, mould and excess cold increases the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease
- psychological illness such as depression and anxiety are linked to poor housing and uncertainty around homelessness
- falls are more common when residents need adaptations or where there are structural faults
- high housing costs often lead to the purchase of cheaper unhealthy food

Thurrock Councils' Housing allocations scheme recognises the need to prioritise people with insanitary or hazardous housing conditions through its priority banding for reasonable preference groups. It also prioritises those with medical conditions which are worsened by their housing situation.

However, removing people from poor housing does not resolve the root of the problem and could result in those people simply being replaced with others. It is therefore important to tackle landlords of poor quality housing and provide alternative options for owner occupiers who are unable to meet the costs of repairing their own unsatisfactory housing.

People with disabilities who face homelessness will not only suffer the uncertainty of a homeless situation but may also be placed into temporary accommodation that is not adapted to meet their specific needs. Prevention of homelessness in such circumstances is of an even high priority.

**Actions:**

- Housing solutions team to work closely with environmental health and other enforcement agencies to ensure that landlords carry out their responsibilities to provide safe and sanitary conditions in order to prevent homelessness
- Consider options for offering alternative accommodation to owners who are frail or elderly and repairing their properties in return for long lease arrangements
- Ensure the Council makes good use of adapted properties via its Accessible Housing Register – for example by early maximisation of priority banding for potentially homeless applicants in need of adapted properties, even where they are not yet homeless within 28 days
- Ensure temporary accommodation meets disability criteria wherever possible

**Mental health**

Thurrock has a slightly lower percentage of people with long term mental health problems than the national picture but mental health is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest reason for priority need in homeless people (after dependent children and/or pregnancy) - see 4.4

South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT) provide mental health services across Essex including the Assertive Outreach service from Grays Hall and the Community mental health team from Basildon hospital.

The Housing and Mental Health forum was established as a joint project between SEPT and Housing

in June 2011 and brings together housing, mental health and other professionals on a regular basis. Individual cases can be brought to the group for a multi-disciplinary approach to resolving housing issues and a number of successful homeless preventions have been achieved. However numbers attending can be low and when this is the case it is more difficult to resolve issues.

Thurrock has a supported housing scheme for adults with mental health problems – Balfour Court – which accommodates 8 people

Unfortunately a number of the tenancies at Balfour Court (historically) are assured tenancies which indicate a lifetime tenancy rather than a supported housing move on plan. This has meant that very few properties become available for new residents and subsequently people in need of supported accommodation may have to be housed in general needs without the support needed.

Thurrock has a number of agencies and charities that offer other support to people with mental health problems including Mind, POhWER and Family Mosaic. Support ranges from day to day budgeting skills & maintaining a tenancy through to advocacy and counselling

Often such support can prevent a homeless situation from occurring or escalating and therefore it is essential that all agencies are aware of service provision and how to access it

Thurrock Councils' housing strategy recognises the need to provide more specialist housing for those with mental health problems and one of its action points is to "support those with mental health needs, autism and learning disabilities through working with Adult Social care and identify suitable accommodation and support services meeting REACH standards"

**Actions:**

- Research the need for more supported housing accommodation for people with mental health problems and feed into development programmes
- Work with ASC to identify suitable accommodation and support services which meet REACH standards
- Improve knowledge of partnership support provisions and how to access them
- Improve commitment to, and attendance at, the mental health forum by all partners
- Encourage a programme of move on from Balfour Court to free up valuable supported accommodation

**Learning Disabilities**

Thurrock has a slightly lower percentage of adults with learning disabilities compared to Southend and Essex at 3.6% of the population - see 4.9. This equates to around 5700 people

Just over a quarter of these adults are living in unsettled accommodation – see 4.10

There are two supported housing accommodation schemes in Thurrock for adults with learning disabilities –

- Lloyd House – accommodates 8 people
- Devon House – accommodates 10 people

It is envisaged that many people with learning disabilities will be able to live independently but may

require a period of time in supported accommodation in order to build their independent living skills. The two schemes offer supported accommodation for up to two years

It is essential that spaces become available within supported housing schemes and that a robust move on programme is maintained

Thurrock council does not have statistics which quantify the number of adults who come through the housing solutions service and who need supported housing

Thurrock Councils' housing strategy recognises the need to provide more specialist housing for those with a learning disability and one of its action points is to "support those with mental health needs, autism and learning disabilities through working with Adult Social care and identify suitable accommodation and support services meeting REACH standards"

**Actions:**

- Promote and encourage move-on from the supported housing schemes
- Feed into the Councils housing development programme
- Work with ASC to identify suitable accommodation and support services which meet REACH standards
- Maintain statistics on people with learning disabilities approaching the Council for assistance

## **Young parents**

Thurrock has a much higher level of teenage conceptions than neighbouring boroughs - see 4.5. However for live births the figure is similar to neighbouring areas. Subsequently there is a large gap between the two in comparison, suggesting higher levels of aborted pregnancies

The highest priority need group amongst homeless acceptances is single females with children or pregnancy

Thurrock has young parent accommodation at Ruth House which provides supported accommodation services for 9 people. There are also two move-on flats and a floating support service. The client group is primarily aged 16 to 25

Between January and December 2014

- 35 referrals were made to the scheme
- Referrals came from the Housing solutions team, Social care and self-referrals
- Of the 35 referrals made, 30 were added to the waiting list and of these 21 were accommodated during the year (60% of referrals)
- 10 of the 35 referrals were aged 16-17 years and 25 were 18 to 25 years

The Council offers a move on priority banding through its allocations scheme where residents of Ruth House have completed the required support programme and are ready to live independently – usually this lasts up to 2 years and allows a flow through of supported accommodation

**Actions:**

- Ensure all partners are aware of the young parent scheme and services for young people and

- make referrals to prevent homelessness
- Make use of the floating support service as a means of helping young women to remain at home where they are threatened with exclusion

### **Drug and Alcohol abuse**

The percentage of people in drug treatment in Thurrock is lower than Southend but higher than the rest of Essex.

For alcohol treatment the figures are fairly consistent across Essex - see 4.6

20% of those in drug treatment and 15% in alcohol treatment have a housing problem – see 4.7 and 4.8

KCA have been commissioned by the Council to provide drug and alcohol services. Their aim is to provide a simplified whole treatment system to make it easier and more accessible for adults with drug and alcohol issues to get the support, guidance and treatment they need to achieve their recovery goals

Often people have both alcohol and drug abuse, and accompanied with mental health problems prove to have complex needs which often result in homelessness and abuse

There is no specific supported accommodation for people with complex needs. Where the person faces homelessness and has to be placed in temporary accommodation this often fails due to a chaotic lifestyle and/or behavioural issues. Subsequently the person loses their accommodation which exacerbates the problems. Often housing is an essential first requirement before any support can be implemented

#### **Actions:**

- Ensure all partners are aware of the young parent scheme and services for young people and make referrals to prevent homelessness
- Make use of the floating support service as a means of helping young women to remain at home where they are threatened with exclusion
- Explore options for a “Housing First” approach

### **Domestic Abuse and Sexual violence**

Violent relationship breakdown with a partner represents almost 10% of reasons for homelessness where a rehousing duty has been accepted over the past 5 years – this equates to around 62 cases over 5 years but does not account for cases where Thurrock tenants apply to other local authorities for rehousing

Violent relation breakdown with an associated person represents a further 2.4%

The Council’s housing allocations policy provides for the highest banding (Band 1 priority) for applicants who need urgent rehousing due to violence or threats of violence and a housing management panel regularly reviews applications.

Band 2 priority can be awarded where the urgency to move is less

Thurrock Council has recently adopted a Community Safety Strategy which states the following:

- *We will not tolerate domestic abuse perpetrated by our tenants against their partners, family members or others who live with them*
- *We will work with other agencies to empower survivors and reduce immediate harm and use existing legal remedies against any tenant causing domestic abuse*
- *We will seek to reduce harm to both adults and children who are at risk as a result of domestic violence*
- *We will support survivors who report of domestic violence*
- *We will facilitate effective action against offenders so that they can be held accountable*
- *We will adopt a proactive multi-agency approach in preventing and reducing domestic abuse and violence*
- *We will work with Essex Police to allow victims to remain safe in their home with professionally installed security measures through the Sanctuary Project*
- *Our Domestic Abuse Officers are trained to carry out risk assessments and appropriate referrals; give practical information and advice on housing options and referrals to secondary support agencies for residents suffering domestic abuse*

The council uses management moves for Council tenants fleeing domestic abuse and provision of Sanctuary schemes where appropriate – both are effective homeless prevention measures

Thurrock has refuge provision which accommodates 15 women (plus children) and offers a floating support service

South Essex rape and incest crisis centre (SERICC) is based in Thurrock and offers information, support, advocacy and counselling

The housing directorate has dedicated domestic abuse officers who assess all homeless applicants and tenants who are victims of Domestic Abuse

Recent cases with very complex needs have highlighted requirements for safe houses/refuge with high levels of support especially around drug & alcohol abuse and mental health problems which are often associated with domestic abuse and sexual violence

Closer working with support agencies and defined housing pathways have been identified as necessary and a dedicated protocol is required

#### **Actions**

- Increase access to specialised refuge spaces
- Improve working relationships between housing solutions team and partners
- Promote the domestic abuse service within housing as the single point of entry for all homeless domestic abuse cases
- Increase training and awareness for housing staff
- Research options for safe houses within Council stock
- Promote the sanctuary scheme as an alternative to moving home – across all tenures
- Agree a working protocol with support agencies

## **Autism**

Thurrock Council has a specialist school for children and young people (aged 3 to 19 years) on the autistic spectrum. A recent OFSTED report (November 2014) found the school to be Outstanding and subsequently it is a popular choice for parents around the country. This in turn has led to more people moving into the borough to attend the school and subsequently a higher chance of homelessness amongst households with a member who is on the autistic spectrum

Thurrock Council developed an autism strategy in 2014 which states:

*“People with autism have varying levels of support and housing needs with some being able to live completely independently whilst others need full residential care*

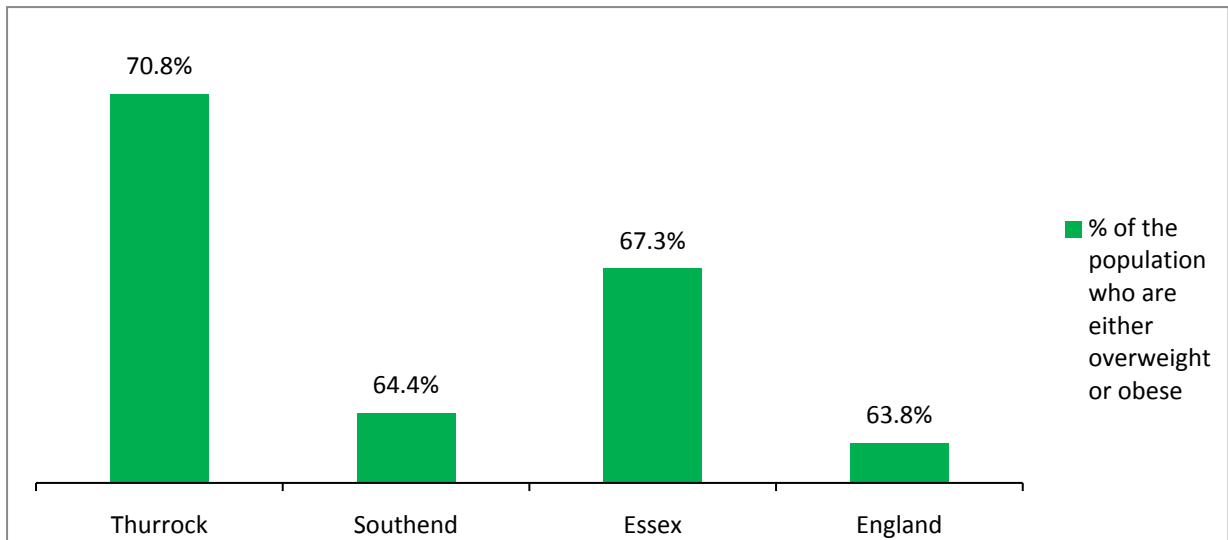
*Currently there is no specific provision within Thurrock and therefore no options for a household with a member on the autistic spectrum. Should the local authority have a homeless rehousing duty it would be very difficult to discharge that duty into a suitable accommodation locally”*

Thurrock Councils’ housing strategy recognises the need to provide more specialist housing for those with autism and one of its action points is to *“support those with mental health needs, autism and learning disabilities through working with Adult Social care and identify suitable accommodation and support services meeting REACH standards”*

### **Action**

- Work with the housing development team to ensure adequate numbers of supported accommodation are included in work programmes
- Work with ASC to identify suitable accommodation and support services which meet REACH standards for those in temporary accommodation or facing homelessness
- Improve the collection of data around homeless applicants with supported housing needs and autism in order to inform further development

4.1 – Overweight and obesity levels



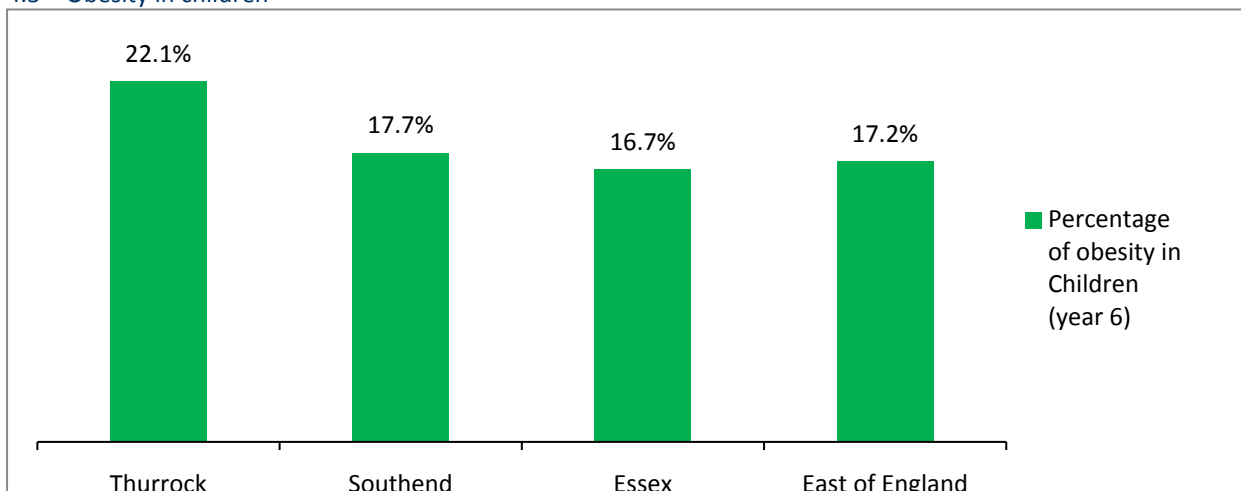
Source: Public Health England

#### 4.2 – Obesity in Adults



Source: Public Health England

#### 4.3 – Obesity in children



Source: Public Health England

#### 4.4 Prevalence of mental health problems





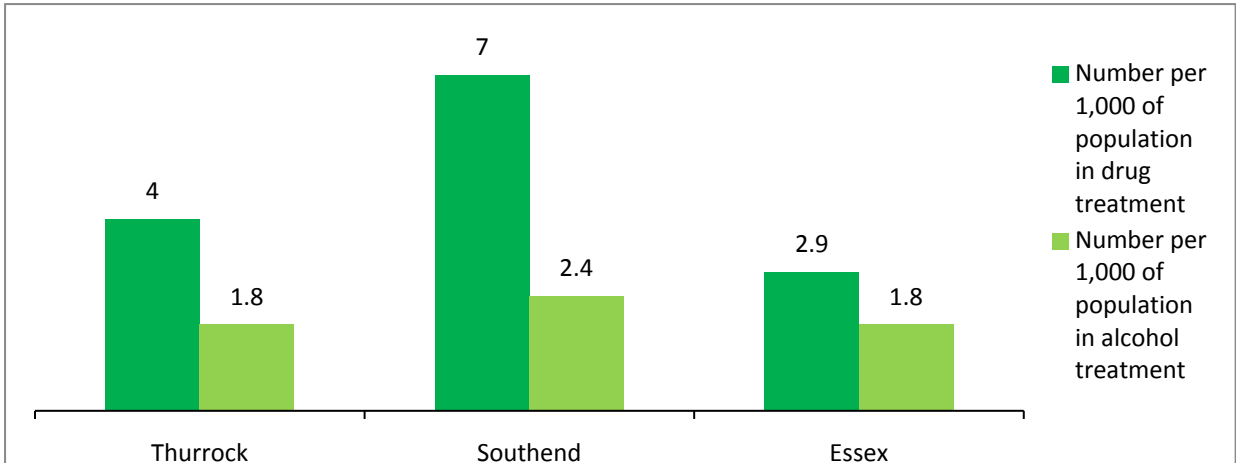
Source: Public Health England

#### 4.5 Teenage pregnancies – rates per 1,000 of the population



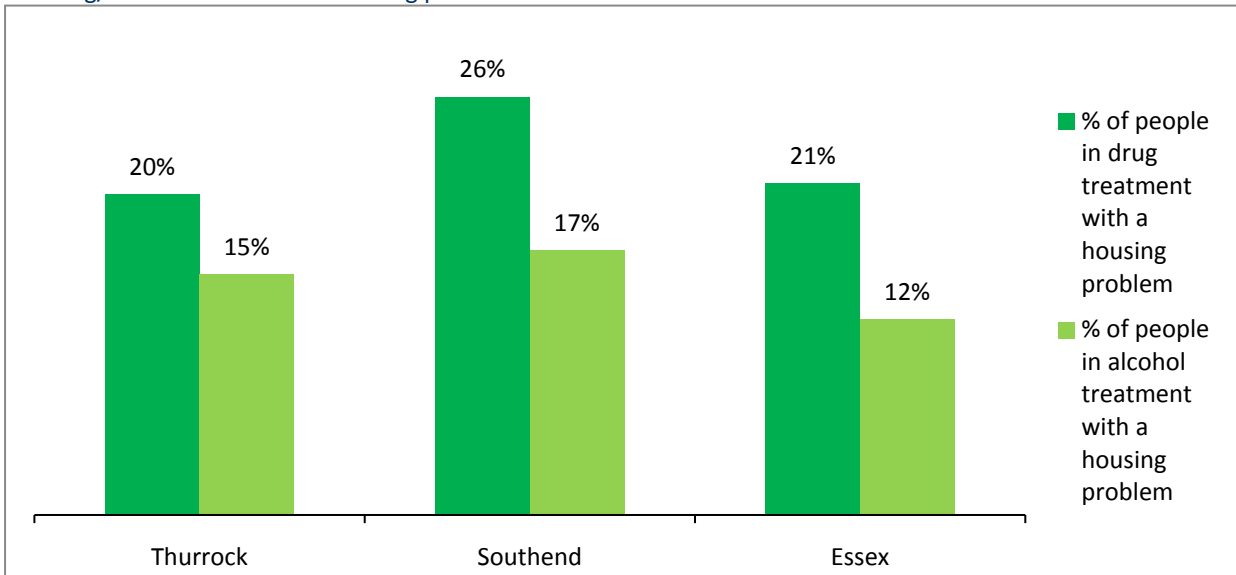
Source: Public Health England

#### 4.6 Drug & alcohol treatment



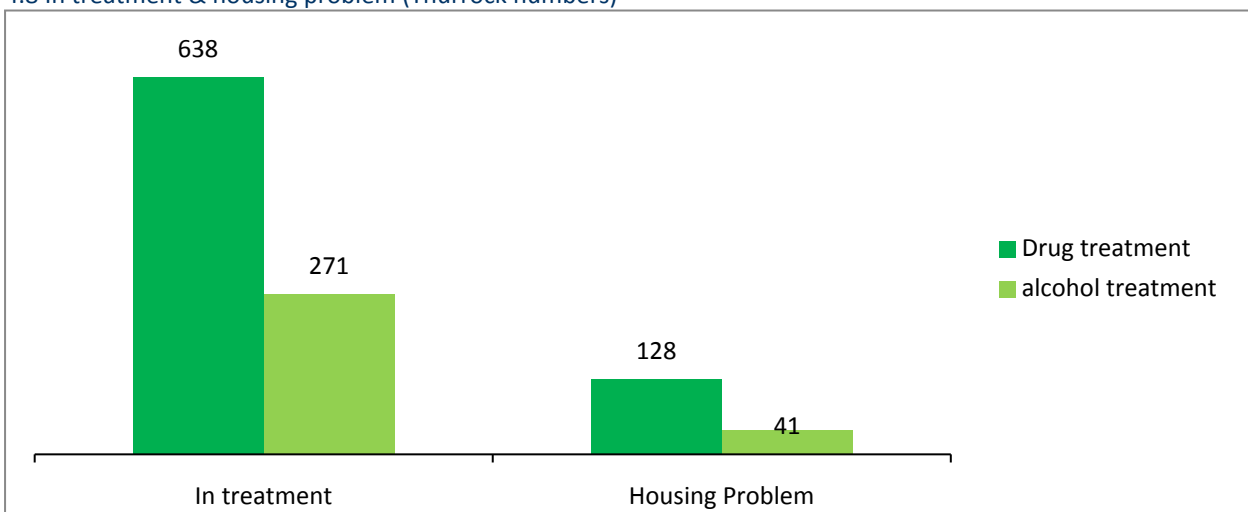
Source: Public Health England

#### 4.7 Drug/alcohol treatment & housing problem



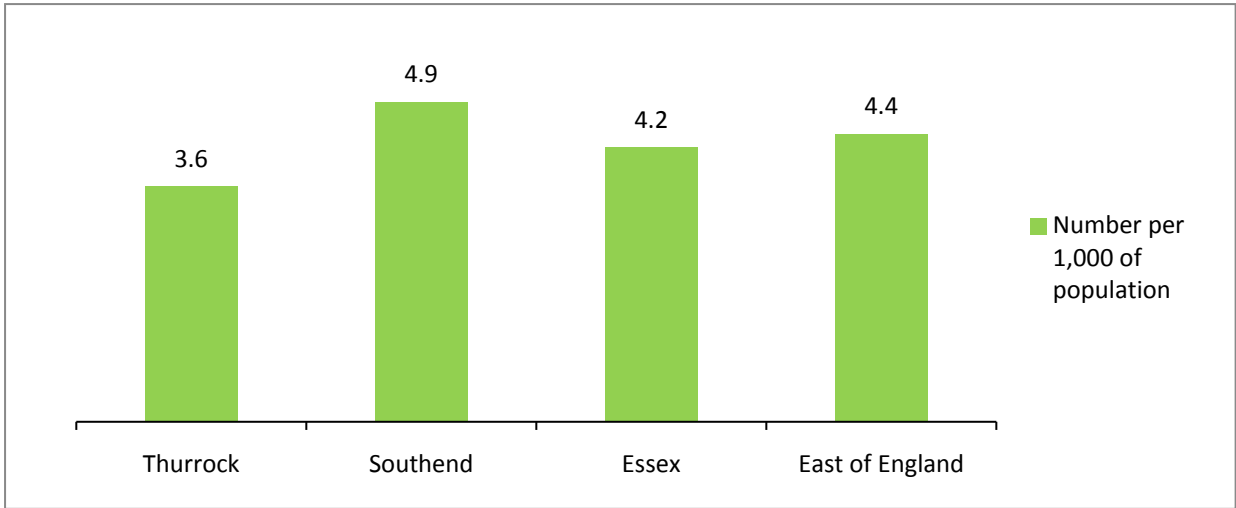
Source: Public Health England

#### 4.8 In treatment & housing problem (Thurrock numbers)

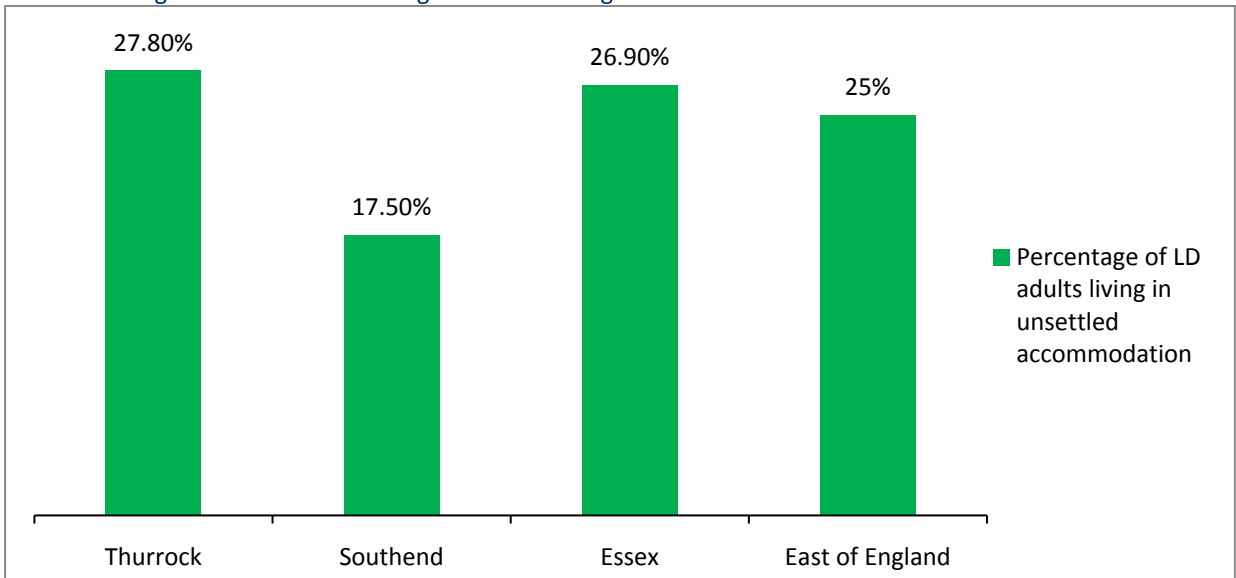


Source: Public Health England

#### 4.9 Percentage of adults with learning difficulties who are known to the local authority



4.10 Percentage of adults with learning disabilities living in unsettled accommodation



## **5. Policy, legislative and the socio economic context**

### **5.1 The recession, austerity measures and economic downturn**

Due to the world economic situation and the need for financial austerity, the government has prioritised reducing the national deficit and both local authorities and voluntary sector organisations have seen a significant reduction in budgets over the last 5 years.

The impact of the reductions in public expenditure locally is:

- An end to ring fencing of LA grants – including supporting people and homelessness grant
- Reduction in homeless prevention budget
- Reduction in government subsidy for Council tax and localised schemes from 2013 – Thurrock council residents will have to make a contribution of at least 25% of their Council tax bill
- Localised welfare system has replaced community care grants and crisis loans for general living expenses (including rent in advance)
- Changes to the Legal Aid system resulting in decreased funding

### **5.2 Localism and social housing reform**

The Localism Act 2011 gave new flexibilities and powers to local housing authorities and providers of social housing to meet local needs more effectively. The key measures of the Localism Act with regards to homelessness and housing include:

#### **Flexible tenancies**

From April 2012 all registered providers were able to introduce fixed term tenancies or continue with lifetime tenancies. These tenancies could be as short as two years although this would be viewed as exceptional.

Some Registered Providers in the borough have subsequently introduced flexible tenancies.

Thurrock Council Members chose not to introduce fixed term tenancies and the Council's Tenancy Strategy lays out its intention to continue with secure tenancies but to introduce an Introductory Tenancy period of one year with the option to extend if required.

#### **Discharge homelessness duty into the private rented sector**

Provisions allow Councils to end the main homelessness duty with the offer of a private rented property and unlike the preceding provision of a "Qualifying Offer" the duty may be ended without the applicants consent. The tenancy needs to be for a minimum period of 12 months and suitable in terms of affordability, property condition and household circumstances. Guidance on what constitutes suitability is provided.

Thurrock Council has chosen to use the new provisions as a means of discharging its main rehousing duty and has produced a policy document outlining how and when the provisions will be used.

Guidance on suitability with regards to location given in the recent case of *Nzolameso v City of Westminster* [2015] UKSC22 will also be taken into account.

## Housing allocations

Provisions allow Local authorities to restrict who can access their Housing Waiting list by means of Qualification criteria. Thurrock Council reviewed its Allocations Scheme and in May 2013 implemented 5 year local connection, financial threshold and behaviour requirements.

However, applicants meeting the reasonable preference criteria within Part 6 of the Housing act 1996 cannot be disqualified.

Neighbouring boroughs have also implemented qualifying criteria including Basildon Council with a 7 year local connection qualification rule.

The new housing allocations scheme awards a priority banding (Band 3) to applicants who meet any of the Reasonable Preference criteria including the main rehousing duty under Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act.

A higher (Band 2) priority can be awarded where there is cumulative priority.

### 5.3 Welfare benefit reform

The government's welfare reforms have set out to cut the increasing expenditure on benefits, reduce benefit dependency, reduce the budget deficit, provide incentives for people to work and reduce under occupation of rented accommodation.

Reforms have included the following:

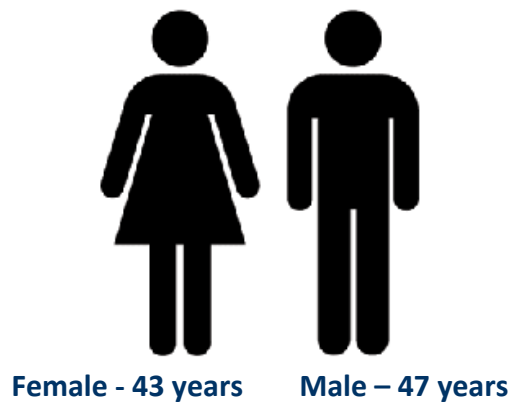
- Local Housing allowance – now fixed at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile rather than the previous 50<sup>th</sup> – this means the LHA covers only one third of private rents rather than a half;
- An increase in non-dependent deductions for Housing benefit – this means council tenants with non-dependents will have to find more of their rent;
- Increasing the age threshold for the shared room rate in housing benefit from 25 to 35 years old – this means single people under the age of 35 will receive the lower level and may only be able to access shared accommodation; there are exemptions for certain categories;
- LHA rates set annually and indexed to CPI;
- The spare room subsidy – widely referred to as the “Bedroom Tax”. This affects social housing tenants of working age who are under-occupying their property. Tenants have had their housing benefit cut by 14% for one bedroom under-occupied and by 25% for two or more bedrooms under-occupied. Thurrock Council has offered incentives to council tenants wishing to downsize including a priority banding to transfer and financial payments. Where tenants have indicated a wish to down size and are actively bidding for properties Discretionary Housing Benefit has generally been awarded to meet any shortfall;
- Household benefit cap – this provides a cap (limit) to the total benefits a household can receive – currently capped at £500 a week for couples (with or without children living with them) and for single parents whose children live with them and £350 a week for single adults who don't have children, or whose children don't live with them

- Universal Credit replaces six benefits, including Housing Benefit and aims to give individuals responsibility to manage their own benefits; It is paid directly to the individual who is responsible for making payments for rent, Council tax etc. direct to their landlord. Payments are made monthly rather than weekly and in arrears. Thurrock has started to move over to Universal Credit, initially with all new claims for single people from April 2015. Private and social housing landlords have expressed concerns regarding potential arrears and some are refusing to offer tenancies/licences to people in receipt of Universal Credit

#### 5.4 No Second Night Out

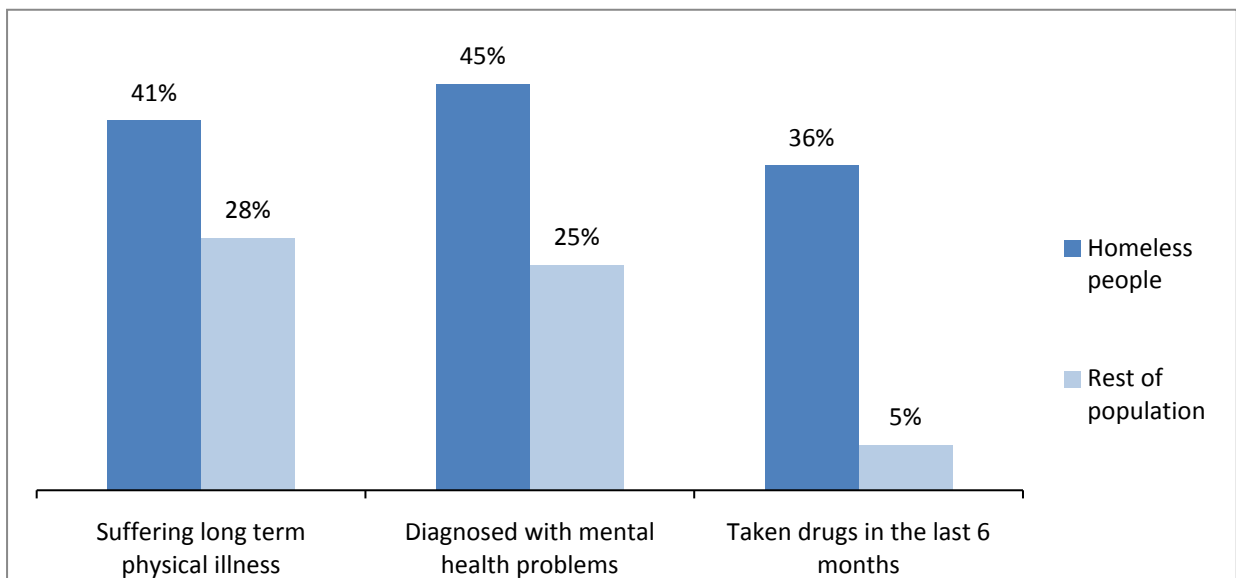
The government introduced a programme to identify new rough sleepers and reconnect them so that their rough sleeping was minimised.

It is estimated that rough sleeping shortens life expectancy by about 30 years with the average life expectancy of a rough sleeper estimated at:



Source: Crisis 2012

Rough sleeping can also lead to higher levels of illness and substance misuse



Source: Homeless Link 2014

Thurrock Council has joined with eight other local authorities in the region to provide a reconnection and support service through a joint contract with St Mungos Broadway

A reconnection worker seeks out rough sleepers in the borough following referrals from Homeless Link who provide a reporting mechanism for members of the public identifying rough sleepers. Referrals can be made via telephone, email or via an online form

The worker will assess any rough sleepers found and offer support to reconnect them or to find alternative accommodation. Referrals to support agencies can also be made

The contract which started in September 2014 lasts 18 months

### **5.5 Making every contact count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness**

The government's second report on preventing homelessness was published in August 2012 and focuses on how services can be managed in a way that prevents all households, regardless of whether they are families, couples, or single people, from reaching a crisis point where they are faced with homelessness

The report aims to make sure that every contact local agencies make with vulnerable people and families really counts and it brings together a number of government commitments to:

- Tackle troubled childhoods and adolescence
- Improve health
- Reduce involvement in crime
- Improve skills; employment; and financial
- Pioneer social funding

From this report the DCLG posed ten local challenges to all local authorities:

1. Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
4. Adopt a *No Second Night Out* model or an effective local alternative
5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging need
9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency

These ten challenges form part of the Gold Standard programme which has been developed and administered by the National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) to encourage local authorities to develop a continuous programme of improvement. Thurrock Council has pledged to develop this improvement and has subsequently signed up for the Gold Standard challenge.

## **5.6 The Test for Priority Need**

The “Pereira Test” has been established law since 1998 and is identified within the 2006 Homelessness guidance as the test for vulnerability in homeless applicants without dependent children or pregnancy. The test required officers to determine:

*“[whether the applicant] when homeless [will be] less able to fend for himself than an ordinary homeless person so that injury or detriment to him will result when a less vulnerable man would be able to cope without harmful effects”*

Lord Justice Hobhouse in *R v Camden London Borough Council, Ex p Pereira* (1998) 31 HLR 317 at p.330

That test has been challenged in the courts through three joined cases and a Supreme Court ruling in May 2015 has determined that a different test now applies.

“In order to decide whether an applicant falls within section 189(1)(c), an authority or reviewing officer should compare him with an ordinary person, but an ordinary person if made homeless, not an ordinary actual homeless person.”

Lord Neuberger in *Hotak v London Borough of Southwark; Kanu v London Borough of Southwark; Johnson v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council* [2015] UKSC at 58

The correct comparator is then, not the “ordinary homeless person”, but the ordinary person who is homeless.

We have yet to see further court definitions of the “ordinary person who is homeless” but the implication is that a wider group may now meet these criteria and that they are likely to be singles or couples with no children/pregnancy.

Since Thurrock Council’s highest cause of homelessness is eviction by family/friends this could increase the number of people owed a duty in the coming years and the requirement for studio or one bedroom accommodation.

It is also important to note that, following the Conservative Governments re-election on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 with a majority of seats in the House of Commons, further welfare reforms are expected. The possibility of removing Housing benefits for under 21 year olds job seekers has been widely predicted.

It is important to monitor the impact of any proposed reforms and to ensure a better supply of affordable accommodation for smaller households is available.



## 6. Gold Standard – Ten local challenges

As part of the Gold standard programme, Thurrock Council Housing solutions team undertook a Peer review of its services in November 2014 and achieved an overall score of 64%. This involved an intensive review of current services by housing service managers from Basildon and Southend Council's and enabled the service to move onto the next stage of the programme.

Subsequently, the service is working on the ten challenges set out by the Gold Standard Programme (see above) in order to achieve Gold Standard status and has identified specific areas work for improvement:

- To develop a Homelessness Prevention strategy with a proactive approach to preventing homelessness;
- To continually monitor the quality of the service provided including frontline service provision, case work and new procedures;
- To review and make good use of online services including an online Self-assessment programme (HED) which allows clients to access housing advice and information on line with sign posting to appropriate services including the facility to identify potentially homeless applicants at an earlier stage in order to take a more proactive approach to homeless prevention
- To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs & to ensure partners are fully aware of the Councils strategic objectives
- To agree housing pathways with key partners and client groups that include appropriate accommodation and support
- To set up quarterly partnership forums for sharing information, training & developing links with the Housing solutions teams
- To work with partners to investigate the impacts of welfare reforms & austerity measures & develop an action plan to mitigate the impacts
- To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has “buy in” across all local authority services
- To investigate all funding streams to ensure effective use for homeless prevention including homelessness grant, DHP & DWP funding and one off government funding opportunities
- To develop a Housing advice service which encompasses all housing options  
To investigate the option of a one stop shop for all housing options either within the Civic offices or in another location
- To investigate a local mortgage rescue scheme
- Prepare a pre-tenancy information programme/workshop and roll out for all new incoming tenants
- Develop specific Temporary Accommodation options for 16 & 17 year olds to eliminate the use of B & B for this group
- Review the terms of reference for the Joint Referral Panel to ensure co-operation and pathways through accommodation for non-statutory homeless
- Improve and develop services for all client groups – statutory and non-statutory homeless

## **7. New ways of working**

Since the last homelessness strategy was implemented (2010) new operational working practices have been introduced:

- The Homeless and allocations teams were restructured into one Housing Solutions team in 2012
- An online Housing application form was introduced in 2013 and applications for housing (new applicants and transferring tenants) are accessed through this single entry
- An online single point of access for housing advice and options (HED) was introduced in 2014. Applicants completing the assessment who are facing homelessness are highlighted within the system and offered face to face and telephone appointments whilst those requiring only advice and information can obtain this 24/7. A specific action plan is produced to meet the individual requirements depending on the information provided.

## **8. Partnerships**

Thurrock Council housing solutions work in partnership with many agencies including the following:

- Adult Social Care
- Children's Services
- Probation
- SEPT
- NHS Trust
- Public Health
- Education
- Police
- Family Mosaic
- Sanctuary housing association
- Open Door
- Mind
- POhWER
- Women's Aid
- Sericc
- Thurrock Racial Unity Support Task group (TRUST)
- St Mungos Broadway

## 9. Next steps

This review document and accompanying initial action plan will feed into a further consultation period and will provide an evidence base to identify key areas for improvement and development.

This second consultation period will provide an opportunity for meaningful and effective discussions on the issues identified, and communication of ideas for tackling them. It will be delivered across a range of mediums including

- Face to face conversations
- Joint meetings with a wide range of partners, staff, private and social landlords, and Members
- An online public survey

The review will also be presented to the Councils Youth Cabinet, the Education, Children's and Social Care directorates and the Health & Wellbeing Strategic Board for further consultation.

Because Prevention is key the Action plan will link every actions to one of the four main causes of homelessness which have been identified – this should focus attention on prevention

The Four main causes of homelessness are:

1. Exclusion by parents, family or friends
2. Termination of an assured short hold tenancy
3. Violence or Harassment
4. Mortgage or rent arrears

Clear proposals will be identified within the action plan that

- Are able to drive through improvements
- Are "SMART" with short, medium & long term aims
- Involve Partnership working – particularly amongst Social Care & Registered Providers who have a statutory duty to assist with the Homelessness strategy

There will be an Emphasis on positive and proactive actions and more delegated leadership across partners

Following the consultation period a new homelessness strategy will be completed with identified links into Thurrock Council's

- Allocations scheme
- Tenancy strategy
- Discharge into private sector strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Autism Strategy

Mechanism for regular reviews will be identified – including shorter (annual) reviews with the first review being 12 months after implementation of the strategy.

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**Thurrock Council**

**Homelessness Prevention Strategy**

**Action Plan**

**2015-20**

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
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1	Housing Supply	Increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough	Influence future house building and planning to meet smaller household needs –i.e. studio, one and two bedroom properties	Reduction in the percentage of people waiting for 1 and 2 bedroom properties on the Housing Register	Increase in % of smaller properties built each year	April 2020	Housing Investment & Development Team
Page 124			Influence future housing supply to include more affordable purchasing options such as shared ownership & help to buy	Increase in the number of Housing register applicants who are removed because they have purchased a property	Increase in number of applicants on Housing register taking up shared ownership & other purchasing options	April 2020	Housing Investment & Development Team
3			Raise awareness of purchasing options & ensure all are considered as a prevention to homelessness when providing advice and assistance through the Housing Solutions service	All clients approaching the Housing Solutions team will receive information and advice on purchase options – target people via text messaging & social media	100% Housing Solutions team fully trained on purchasing options	April 2016	Homeless Triage and Housing Allocations Managers
4			Ensure the Council makes good use of adapted properties via its Accessible Housing Register	Early maximisation of priority banding for potentially homeless applicants in need of adapted properties, even where they are not yet homeless within 28 days	Implement a process for fast tracking homeless applicants who are in need of an adaptation	November 2015	Homeless Triage and Housing Allocations Managers

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
5	Housing Supply	Increase the supply of supported housing in the borough	Research the provision and need for supported housing for specific groups of people – to include those with Autism, learning difficulties, mental health, complex and dual needs and the under 25s	Extensive report on housing needs through liaison with support groups and partner agencies	Sufficient information and evidence base to support the next stage	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team
Page 125			Work with Adult Social Care to increase the provision of supported housing in line with the research undertaken - to include private options and empty homes	Supported housing schemes built/identified/refurbished/designated to meet the needs identified in the research report Accommodation developed meets REACH standards and represents a joint working approach	Ongoing development plan All new schemes meet REACH standards	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team
7			Encourage a programme of move on from Supported accommodation to free up spaces	All eligible supported housing residents are on the Housing Register and are awarded the appropriate priority and encouraged to bid once ready for move on	Supported schemes have no more than two people waiting for supported accommodation at any time	April 2016	Housing Allocations Manager

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
8	Housing Supply	Increase the supply of good quality private rented housing in Thurrock	Improve working relationships with private landlords and options for longer tenancies	Re-establish a working Landlord forum	Landlord forum meets twice per year	April 2016	Housing Solutions - Private Housing Team
9			Develop incentives for Thurrock landlords to take Thurrock homeless applicants as a discharge of duty or prevention – including pre-tenancy training, gas servicing and extensive monitoring of tenants to mirror introductory tenancies processes	Officers are using a variety of incentives to entice landlords to work with the Council	20% increase in the number of landlords offering properties to the Council year on year	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team
10			Tackle under occupation across all tenure types including social housing tenants unaffected by the bedroom under- occupation reform and elderly home-owners	Incentive schemes in operation for all tenures to reduce under-occupation including options available for elderly owner occupiers to lease back properties to the Council	Reduction in under occupation across the borough	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team
11			Joint working with environmental health and other enforcement agencies to ensure that landlords carry out their responsibilities to provide safe and sanitary conditions in order to prevent homelessness	Reduction in number of homeless approaches and priority bandings due to insanitary conditions	Reduction in the number of priorities awarded year on year due to insanitary conditions	April 2020	Private Housing Team



No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
12	Housing Supply	Improve cross boundary working and monitoring of placements within Thurrock to reduce adverse impacts on Thurrock services	Improve working relationships with London boroughs and set up information sharing agreements particularly regarding households with complex needs such as mental health, medical, specialist schooling and ASB issues	Protocol in place with London boroughs identified as placing people in Thurrock – including a data sharing agreement.	Year on year reduction in the number of cases presenting to services in crisis where the resident is unknown to the service	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team
13			Monitor the impact of placements on services within the borough	Set up monthly reporting and monitoring of placements within the borough and share with partner agencies as appropriate	Monthly monitoring reports set up with partner agencies Detailed knowledge and understanding of the impact on services	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team and Housing Quality Team
14	Education & Mediation	Reduce number of parental evictions	Develop an education programme for school staff to enable them to teach pupils about homelessness and its implications and to promote staying at home	Annual conferences set up with school staff providing access to resources and knowledge updates	One school conference held in September each year with representation from every secondary school and college in the borough	September 2015	Housing Strategy Team
15			Reduce the number of parental evictions through use of mediation and floating support services and crash pads for periods of respite for 16 to 25 year olds	Reduction in the number of homeless applications from young people under 25 evicted by family or friends	10% reduction year on year in number of homeless applications from under 25s Mediation service extended to 18 to 21 year olds	April 2016	Housing Solutions & Housing strategy Team

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
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16	Finance	Improve knowledge & understanding of money management and budgeting skills	Improve access to debt advice and encourage its use	Recruitment of a dedicated housing & welfare advice officer within the Housing solutions team	Officer in post	September 2015	Strategic Lead Housing
17			Improve working partnerships with Housing benefits & agree fast tracking of claims for the housing solutions service where all documentation is provided	Reduction in NTQs and evictions for non-payment of rent where delay in HB payment is the cause	Zero evictions caused though non-payment of HB	April 2016	Housing & Welfare Advice Officer
18			Increase understanding of access to welfare benefits amongst staff and customers through regular training updates	All Housing solutions staff can give accurate advice to clients on how to claim appropriate benefits	All housing solutions staff receive training at least once per year	April 2016	Housing & Welfare Advice Officer
19			Offer programmes to Increase understanding of money management & budgeting skills within secondary schools & colleges	Include money management & budgeting skills in annual conference for skills with offer of ongoing training for individual schools	Annual schools conference in place	September 2015	Housing Strategy Team
20			Prevent mortgage repossessions	Build expertise amongst staff and partners to enable negotiation with mortgage providers in order to prevent mortgage repossessions	Staff actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions	Reduction in homeless application taken due to mortgage repossession	April 2017

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
21	Tenancy Sustainment	Improve Tenancy sustainment across all tenures	Monitor Council evictions of Introductory and secure tenancies to determine appropriate levels of support and monitoring	Support provided in a timely manner to tenants in need	Decrease in Council evictions of secure and introductory tenancies year on year	April 2020	Thurrock Council Rents and Estates Management Managers
22			Investigate options for increased floating support across all tenures – offer as part of the incentive to private landlords	Business case for Senior management outlining floating support requirements – in preparation for procurement of service for 2016 onwards	Appropriate levels of support in place so that tenants wait no longer than one week for an assessment	September 2015	Housing Strategy Team
23			Develop mandatory pre-tenancy training for potential Council tenants and across all tenures where the Council introduces the tenant to a landlord. Increase awareness of the implications of eviction amongst tenants of all tenures	Production of a DVD outlining what can happen when a family are made homeless – “busting the myths” DVD sent to all failing Council tenants and all new tenants at Sign Up – including private tenants assisted by the Council A package of mandatory pre-tenancy training available across tenures in a number of formats e.g. DVD / on line learning / classroom learning	Increased awareness amongst tenants – evidenced through floating support agencies (base lines to be agreed) Decrease of 10% year on year in evictions from all tenancy types due to tenancy breaches	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
24	Domestic abuse & sexual violence	Appropriate emergency and ongoing housing and support available	Increase access to specialised refuge spaces for people with complex needs such as drug, alcohol, mental health issues and complex needs and those with no recourse to public funds Research options for safe houses within Council stock including options for a Crash Pad facility for short term needs and move on accommodation from the refuge	Increase usage of the UK Gold online refuge service to enable links with specialist services Business case detailing requirements to senior managers with recommendations	Appropriate accommodation available to meet all client's needs (including support needs) in 100% of cases	April 2017	Housing Safeguarding Team
25			Promote the sanctuary scheme as an alternative to moving home across all tenures and increase awareness of services available to support clients with a variety of support needs	Increased awareness of how the Sanctuary Scheme works amongst staff, agencies and clients – through use of literature, schools, advertising etc. Increased use of Lead professionals to set up joint meetings involving partner agencies and support groups	Increase of 20% in the number of Sanctuary Schemes used year on year to prevent a homeless application being made Appropriate support is provided to clients in 95% of cases – evidenced through survey following episodes of involvement with the Housing department	April 2020	Housing Safeguarding Team

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
26	Domestic abuse & sexual violence	Increase awareness of and appropriate responses to suspected and actual cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence	Increase training and awareness of sexual and domestic abuse for all housing staff	All Housing staff attend mandatory training on Domestic abuse and sexual violence and undertake the new process training	100% attendance at training by all Housing frontline staff every 3 years – monitoring programme in place	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team
Page 131			Improve working relationships between professionals – including Council (all directorates) and partner agencies	<p>Opportunities made available to shadow Domestic Abuse officers and/or partner agency staff</p> <p>Open days, conferences etc. highlighted to Housing and other partner agencies</p> <p>Partners to be invited to team meetings and events</p>	<p>At least 5 people per year undertake a shadowing opportunity</p> <p>At least 5 teams per year invite partners to team meetings</p>	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team
28			Agree a working protocol with Domestic abuse support agencies with an agreed sharing data protocol. Protocol to include simplified flowchart for quick reference	All Housing staff have access to and regularly refer to the working protocol	Protocol completed and regularly updated; access given to all housing staff	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
29	Partnership working	Develop agreed housing pathways	Develop SLAs and working protocols between Housing solutions and partner agencies - to include a robust hospital discharge policy for both mental health and physical health	Working protocols in use by all staff and regularly updated	Reduction in emergency presentations of homeless applicants because of a hospital or prison discharge	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team
Page 132			Explore options and consult with partners on a "Housing First" approach to include improved support provision by supporting agencies and partners	Business case presented to senior management with recommendations for future programme	Housing first approach in place with working agreements for support from partner services and agencies	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team
31			Homelessness forum to be set up to drive forward the action plan with identified leads for specific areas - leading on actions with regular updates	Quarterly homelessness forum in place for sharing information, training & developing links with the Housing solutions  Ongoing monitoring of outcomes with clearly defined baselines	Action Plan is a living document with identified objectives and successful outcomes	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
32	Partnership working	Adopt a corporate commitment to preventing homelessness	Provision of regular opportunities for joint working, shadowing and training across the Council and with partner Agencies	Agreed programme in place allowing opportunities for shadowing and training	At least 5 shadowing opportunities are completed every year  At least 2 joint training events completed every year	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team
33			Increase the knowledge of members around homelessness prevention and the advice they can provide to constituents	Regular Members training sessions provided	All members offered a training session at least once every two years	April 2016	Housing Triage Managers
34		Work in partnership with the DWP to maximise job opportunities for customer	Housing options advice incorporates signposting to employment and training advice	Increase in number of applicants on Housing waiting lists who are referred to DWP	April 2019	Housing Welfare Officer	
35		Adopt a corporate commitment to supporting homeless households	Improve communication between Housing solutions staff and health professionals to enable links between health professionals and those in temporary accommodation	Systems set up to communicate details to health care professionals as appropriate	All families and vulnerable people in temporary accommodation have the opportunity to link up to health visitors, GPs, support services etc.	April 2016	Housing Triage Managers

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
36	Strategic planning	Improve monitoring to enable the highest standards of future strategic planning	Continue to monitor equality strands against local and national trends to ensure no specific equality group is being adversely impacted	Quarterly monitoring reports produced and presented as part of the annual strategy review	No evidence of adverse impacts identified	Ongoing	Homelessness Forum
37			Ensure statistics collected are more detailed and consistent to enable a better understanding and assist with forward planning including the collection of data around homeless applicants with supported housing needs	A comprehensive set of data with consistent written definitions is identified; the new Housing IT systems is programmed to capture the appropriate data and staff are fully trained in how to input the data accurately	Accurate comprehensive set of statistics is available quickly and easily, that managers are confident reflects the current housing climate	April 2016	Performance Manager
38		Decrease use of B & B	Ensure there is sufficient provision of adapted temporary accommodation	Review of temporary accommodation completed to identify availability of adapted accommodation against anticipated need	Zero number of incidents when adapted accommodation is not available when required	April 2016	Temporary Accommodation Manager
39			Eliminate the use of B & B for all customers except in an emergency and then for a minimal period;	Sufficient temporary accommodation is available within the borough to meet needs as required	Use of B & B only in an emergency No 16 & 17 years are placed in B & B accommodation or families for more than 6 weeks	April 2016	Temporary Accommodation Manager



No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
40		Review priority banding	Consider impact of priority bandings for statutory homeless and those who are homeless at home and options for improving priority to non- statutory homeless groups	Research paper produced which outlines all impacts and enables senior managers to make recommendations for the Housing Allocations Scheme review	Decisions made with highest level of information available	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team
Page 135	Customer services	Communication	Improve effective communications between officers and customers – both verbally and written including adequate means of communications for Non-English speakers and those with sight and hearing impairments	Improved delivery of advice ensuring accuracy and relevance and written advice is always provided in a language which the customer can understand	Improved satisfaction levels amongst service users	April 2016	Housing Triage Managers
			Improve the online housing advice tool to incorporate better options advice, signposting to employment and other services and to manage customer expectations better	The online advice tool provides sufficient information to allow customers to access all services required themselves and to fully understand any processes and next steps	25% reduction in appointments with Housing solutions staff year on year	April 2019	Housing Strategy Team
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No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead responsibility
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43	No Second Night Out	Increased options for rough sleepers	Increase emergency provision and self-referral options – HMOs, hostels etc.	Direct access available to suitable emergency accommodation for rough sleepers	100% of rough sleepers can access accommodation within 24 hours	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team
44			Effective system in place for forming an assessment of rough sleepers within 72 hours of identification, including those with no local connection/entitlement	All rough Sleepers taken to a safe place, their needs assessed and given housing options advice	100% of identified rough sleepers are assessed within 72 hours of identification and	April 2016	Reconnection worker
45			Reconnection protocol in place which includes access to funding for documents and travel - includes support to prevent a return to rough sleeping	Offers of reconnection are made where possible and appropriate	100% of customers are reconnected where this is identified as a viable option	April 2016	Reconnection worker
46			Ensure that data around rough sleepers is accurate	Carry out a formal rough sleeper count every 2 years and an informed estimate on alternate years with the assistance of agencies and partners	Formal count completed every 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Ongoing	Housing Strategy Team

Name of service or policy	<b>Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2015-20</b>
Lead Officer	Dawn Shepherd
Contact Details	dxshepherd@thurrock.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?
<p>The number of households approaching Thurrock Council as homeless or potentially homeless has almost trebled in the past three years - from 1009 in 2012-13 up to 2670 in 2014-15.</p> <p>The Homelessness Act 2002 requires a Local Authority to review homelessness in its area at least every five years and to produce a strategy to prevent homelessness and to provide accommodation for those who are homeless or likely to become so.</p> <p>The last review was carried out in 2010 – a further review has now been completed.</p> <p>The review identified areas where homelessness is most prevalent and in particular the four main causes of homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eviction by parents, family or friends</li> <li>• The ending of an Assured Short hold tenancy</li> <li>• Violence or harassment</li> <li>• Mortgage or rent arrears.</li> </ul> <p>It also identified the need for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an increase in the supply of housing within the borough</li> <li>• better education around the reasons for homelessness and how to prevent it</li> <li>• increased support to help tenants sustain their tenancy – particularly around debt advice and money management</li> </ul> <p>A strategy action plan has been identified with the emphasis on preventing homeless at an earlier stage and thereby reducing the need to make a homeless application and for temporary accommodation.</p> <p>This action plan will identify areas of work over a five year period but it will be regularly reviewed by a multi-agency homelessness forum and will report back to Members annually with updates</p>

The impact of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy on the Community and on groups with “protected characteristics”		
	Impact of homelessness on the group	Actions taken to minimise the negative impact
Local communities	<p>Homelessness affects people from across all communities and it is well established that being homeless has a negative impact in terms of mental and physical health, future development and education.</p> <p>The use of temporary accommodation can be particularly detrimental and unsettling because of the need to move into areas and communities that are unknown to the household – this can impact education and the ability to settle down into a sustainable way of life – particularly for children and young people</p> <p>It also impacts health needs – for example being able to cook healthy and nutritious food with limited facilities or linking in with appropriate health care professionals</p>	<p>The strategy is a prevention tool with actions to prevent people from falling into homeless situations in the first place</p> <p>It identifies the causes of homelessness and promotes actions for dealing with these at an early stage to lessen the detrimental impacts</p> <p>The strategy also identifies ways of managing the needs of those who come into temporary accommodation</p>
Age	<p>The homelessness review identified that the majority (83%) of homeless households where a rehousing duty is accepted were aged below 44 years</p> <p>35% were aged between 16 and 24 years.</p> <p>The biggest cause of homelessness was eviction by a family member, relative or friend and this is also most likely to be seen with younger people who are</p>	<p>The strategy emphasises the need to prevent homelessness particularly in younger people and identifies the following specific actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating young people whilst at school / college to understand the implications of becoming homeless and to educate on ways in which they can prevent this from happening</li> <li>• Providing a mediation</li> </ul>

	<p>seeking their first home.</p> <p>Where young people are homeless they are at risk of other kinds of harms such as physical, mental and financial abuse. Their immaturity means they do not easily cope with the responsibilities of money and housing management</p> <p>It is clear that the best option for young people is to remain in the family home provided it is safe to do so</p>	<p>service for young people under 25 and their evictors to help keep young people at home where it is safe to do so</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the need for respite/short term emergency accommodation such as a crash pad to alleviate relationship difficulties and to enable mediation to take place</li> <li>• Reviewing the allocations policy to consider options for giving higher priority for Council housing where families keep older children and relatives within the family home for longer</li> </ul>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority need group – after households with dependent children - was those with mental health problems.</p> <p>These tend to be single people who are usually placed into bed &amp; breakfast for a temporary period.</p> <p>The accommodation may be within their usual area of residence but is likely not to be so since the Council has to accommodate using whatever resources are available at the time.</p> <p>Placements outside of the borough are also possible but only where no local placement can be found – such placements have a detrimental effect on those with mental health problems since they remove them from areas of support, and in particular, out of the reach of mental health professionals who tend to be area</p>	<p>The strategy recognises the need to keep temporary accommodation to a minimum and to provide support wherever possible.</p> <p>A new single person hostel has been opened in Clarence Road in Grays within walking distance of the Grays Hall mental health unit.</p> <p>The hostel provides onsite support through Family Mosaic support workers who will encourage residents to stay connected to health professionals, attend appointment etc.</p> <p>For the physically disabled there is some adapted temporary accommodation but the action plan recognises the need to provide more if required and also that people need to link in with support and health care professionals</p>

	<p>based – leaving the homeless person isolated and unsupported</p> <p>Temporary accommodation for those with physical disabilities was also recognised</p>	
Gender re-assignment	<p>Gender data is captured by the Council for national statistics but is based only on male / female definitions and does not capture reassignment.</p> <p>Therefore it is difficult to determine whether there has been any adverse impact on this equality group above that of any other homeless person</p>	<p>One of the actions from the strategy is the improved collection of many areas of data and gender reassignment will be one of these areas so that research into the needs of specific groups can be undertaken – this will be picked up through the new homelessness forum</p>
Marriage and Civil partnership	<p>49% of homeless households where a rehousing duty was accepted were single parents and a further 29% were single households.</p> <p>Married couples and those in a civil partnership represented less than 22% indicating that this is not a group highly impacted by homelessness</p>	<p>One of the actions from the strategy is the improved collection of many areas of data and marriage and civil partnership will be one of these areas so that research into the needs of specific groups can be undertaken – this will be picked up through the new homelessness forum</p>
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>7% of homeless households where a rehousing duty was accepted had a member of the household who was pregnant.</p> <p>Being placed into temporary accommodation whilst pregnant can be detrimental because of the need to link in with medical practitioners such as midwives and health visitors. It can be difficult to register with GPs without a permanent address. This can prove stressful for pregnant mothers and could result in them not receiving the help and</p>	<p>The strategy specifically identifies the need to eliminate the use of B &amp; B accommodation by providing alternative longer term accommodation for every age group and household make up.</p> <p>In particular B &amp; B accommodation will not be used for families and young people under 18.</p> <p>Improved working partnership will mean linking families in with appropriate health visitors and GPs etc. when they are placed into temporary accommodation</p>

	<p>advice required to ensure a safe delivery of their baby</p>	
Ethnicity	<p>Numbers of homeless households in Thurrock broadly reflected the population.</p> <p>BME groups represented around 20% of the total number of households where a rehousing duty was accepted. 80% were white.</p> <p>National statistics show that around 19% of Thurrock residents represent BME groups whilst 81% were white</p> <p>Black or Black British represent the 2nd largest population group in Thurrock at 7.8%</p> <p>The number of homeless Black or Black British was slightly higher than the Thurrock population at 11%</p> <p>Other BME groups generally reflected the local population percentages</p> <p>There does not appear to be an obvious detrimental impact on any particular ethnic group</p>	<p>Homelessness is detrimental to all communities, but one of the action points from the action plan is to continually monitor equality strands against local and national trends to ensure that no specific group is over represented and thereby being adversely impacted.</p> <p>This will be taken forward through the homelessness forum which will be a multi-agency group</p>
Gender	<p>At least 76% of homeless households with a rehousing duty had a female head of the household – either single or as part of a couple.</p> <p>This compares to 38% for males, indicating that females are twice as likely to be homeless than males – however these statistics only take account of households where a duty is accepted and since pregnancy and dependent children represent the highest</p>	<p>The action plan identifies the need for more refuge and safe house accommodation for all needs and in particular for those with complex needs.</p> <p>This means identifying safe accommodation other than the traditional refuge style i.e. for male victims and for those with older male children.</p> <p>The strategy plan also identifies the need for self-referral hostels</p>

	<p>priority need group, this statistic is not surprising.</p> <p>Domestic abuse, although affecting all genders, is still more likely to be against a woman and represents one of the 4 highest causes of homelessness at 17%.</p> <p>Where victims of abuse have older male children it can be difficult to accommodate them in a refuge since most will not take boys above 10 or 11 years of age.</p> <p>Where male domestic abuse is present refuge and safe accommodation is also much harder to find</p> <p>The Council identified a number of rough sleepers within the borough and clearly rough sleeping can be more dangerous for women with greater safety risks.</p>	<p>and the continuing support of the St Mungo's outreach and reconnection work for rough sleepers.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Sexual orientation data is not captured by the Council for national statistics.</p> <p>Therefore it is difficult to determine any adverse impact on this equality group</p>	<p>One of the actions from the strategy is the improved collection of many areas of data and sexual orientation will be one of these areas</p> <p>This will be undertaken by the new homelessness forum</p>





**Next steps**

**Implications/ Customer Impact**

Detailed research and consultation was undertaken to inform the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. This is outlined in the Thurrock Homelessness Review document and this has been presented to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Strategy will be presented to Cabinet for adoption on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

If adopted the Council can move forward with the actions identified within the plan and will immediately set up a multi-agency homelessness forum

**Sign off**

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Dermot Moloney	Strategic Lead Housing	10/08/15

<b>14 October 2015</b>		<b>ITEM: 13</b> <b>01104418</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>		
<b>Right to Move</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Lyn Worrall, Cabinet Member for Housing		
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Dermot Moloney, Strategic Lead, Housing		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull, Director of Planning, Transportation and Housing		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

## Executive Summary

On 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015 new statutory rules called the “Right to Move” come into force.

The new rules affect who can be offered a Council property

Previously in order to qualify for Thurrock’s Housing Waiting list a person had to have a local connection of 5 years with the borough. This can be achieved through residence, employment or family connections.

The new requirements mean that Thurrock Council cannot disqualify someone from joining their housing register on the grounds of no local connection where they meet certain criteria.

However, the Council can restrict the number of properties allocated under the new rules to an agreed annual quota – the recommended quota is at least 1% of relets.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet agree the annual quota be set at 1% of the preceding years housing allocations. Currently this would represent 6 properties per year.

The Committee also recommended that officers seek mutual exchanges for those who meet the Right to Move requirements where possible in order to mitigate the impact on Council stock for Thurrock residents.

A further report outlining the impact of the recommendations should be reviewed by Housing Overview and Scrutiny committee in January 2016.

## **1. Recommendation(s)**

**1.1 That the new “Right to Move” regulations be noted.**

**1.2 Cabinet approve the annual quota of properties to be allocated under the new provisions be set at 1% of all Council housing allocations for the preceding year (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March) with the provision that officers endeavour to seek mutual exchanges, where possible, to mitigate the impact on levels of Thurrock Council housing stock.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

2.1 Thurrock Council implemented a new housing allocations scheme in May 2013. In order to qualify for housing applicants are required to have a local connection to the borough of 5 years. This can be achieved through residence, employment, local connection or some other “special reason”

2.2 On 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015 new statutory rules called the “Right to Move” came into force

2.3 The new requirements mean that Thurrock Council cannot disqualify someone from joining their housing register on the grounds of no local connection where they meet the following criteria:

- The person is already a social housing tenant (Council or Registered Provider tenant) in another borough in England  
AND
- They have a need to move to Thurrock to avoid hardship  
AND
- They need to move to Thurrock because they either already work in Thurrock  
OR  
They need to take up an offer of work in Thurrock.

2.4 “Work” includes apprenticeships but not voluntary work

2.5 The other qualifying criteria for the Housing Waiting list will still apply i.e. Financial and Behaviour criteria so a person could still be disqualified on these grounds

2.6 Where a person does qualify under the new Right to Move rules they will also be awarded a priority (Band 3) because they meet the reasonable preference criteria i.e. need to move to avoid hardship

2.7 Local Authorities may restrict the number of allocations made under the Right to Move rules and the government recommendation is an annual quota of 1%

- 2.8 Applicants will still need to make an online application
- 2.9 Applicants will not qualify for working household properties unless they meet the additional criteria i.e. in permanent employment for at least the past 12 months and that employment is for at least 16 hours per week
- 2.10 Applicants will still be subject to the usual rules regarding rent arrears i.e. they will not be allocated a property unless the arrears to their current landlord are cleared
- 2.11 The Housing allocations scheme will be updated with the new provisions

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to implement the new rules but has discretion over the quota of properties to be allocated
- 3.2 The government recommendation is a quota of at least 1% of properties available to relet
- 3.3 Once the quota has been reached no further properties would be let under these provisions until the following year
- 3.4 In order to determine the 1% quota the previous year's total relets would be calculated
- 3.5 In 2014-15 the total number of relets in Thurrock was 631

Therefore if the 1% quota is used – 6 properties would be available for reletting under these new provisions

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Right to Move regulations have already come into force and need to be recognised within the Council's allocations scheme
- 4.2 The quota of properties to be allocated under the rules needs to be determined.

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

- 5.1 Not applicable

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The new provisions will enable people to move to the borough in order to take up employment which will help to achieve the corporate priority:

“Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity”

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jo Freeman**  
**Finance Officer**

There will be an increase in administration costs in order to implement the new processes and monitor and assess appropriate cases. The DCLG has awarded the Council extra funding of £3,044 in 2015-16 in order to meet these costs and this has already been received into the Authority

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**  
**Principal Solicitor, Housing & Regeneration**

The Council has a statutory duty to implement the new provisions and will be required to amend its Housing allocations scheme in order to allocate properties legally

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Teresa Evans**  
**Equalities and Cohesion Officer**

The new provisions will have a positive impact on working households by allowing preferential treatment where they meet the criteria; however the number of allocations will be restricted to an annual quote of 1% of total lettings, which will not prove an onerous or disproportionate benefit

### **7.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

## **8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council’s website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

## **9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Extract from minutes of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 June 2015

### **Report Author:**

Dawn Shepherd

Housing Strategy Manager

Housing, Business Improvement

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## **APPENDIX ONE:**

### **Minutes from Housing O & S meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**(Extract)**

#### **8. Right to Move**

The Strategic Lead Housing introduced the report which detailed a new statutory rule called the 'Right to Move' which came into force on the 20 April 2015. In introducing the report it was proposed that the annual quota of properties to be allocated under the new scheme be set at 1% of all council housing allocations for the preceding year, which equated to six properties.

The Committee were advised that Member's recommendations would be referred to Cabinet for determination and approval.

The Strategic Lead Housing set out the strict criteria that needed to be met in order to qualify for the scheme and confirmed that the 1% quota equated to six properties, based on the total number of relets in 2014-15 that would be available for re-letting under the new provisions.

The Housing Tenant representative asked for clarification as to whether someone outside the Borough or even Essex could move into Thurrock if they qualified. In response officers explained that someone from outside of the Borough could qualify if they met the strict criteria set out in scheme, and that they would be awarded Band 3 priority but would be required to follow the established bidding process and meet the behavioural and financial requirements set in the Allocations Policy.

Councillor Ojetola questioned why the annual quota proposed was set at 1%, to which it was explained that this was government's recommendation but that the local authority could increase or decrease the figure. However it was noted that if the quota was determined at less than 1% Thurrock would be required to issue a public statement to state the reasons why the quota was lower than the governments recommended standard.

Councillor MacPherson asked if the six properties allocated under the scheme would remain empty until required, following which it was clarified that properties would not be held empty and it was a case that once the quota was reached further lettings under the Right to Move regulation would cease for that year.

Council Ojetola felt that the set criteria were not clear enough and that the implications needed to be more defined.

Members were concerned that the introduction of the new quota could unfairly disadvantage Thurrock residents in favour of housing people from outside of the Borough and that it would in effect reduce the number of council housing stock available for Thurrock residents.

Officers explained that they believed it would be unlikely that there would be significant demand under the regulation in Thurrock and proposed that the Committee review the figures again at the end of the year, when if there had been any uptake the quota could be reconsidered if appropriate.

In response to the concerns raised by Members, the Director of Housing proposed that officers work to foster mutual exchanges with any 'Right to Move' applicant so as to reduce the impact on Thurrock Council housing stock.

Members indicated their agreement with the proposal and a brief discussion took place to re-word recommendation 1.2, as printed in the report, to read:

*1.2 That it be recommended to Cabinet for approval that the annual quota of properties to be allocated under the new provisions be set at 1% of all Council housing allocations for the preceding year (1st April to 31st March), with the provision that officers endeavour to seek mutual exchanges where possible to mitigate the impact on levels of Thurrock Council housing stock.*

Councillor MacPherson requested that the minutes of discussion be referred for consideration with the accompanying Cabinet report and asked for the Housing Service to work closely with the Leaving Care team to ensure that young people leaving care were adequately supported.

The Committee agreed that the 'Right to Move' item be referred back to the Committee in January 2016 for review.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the new 'Right to Move' regulations be noted.**
- 2. That it be recommended to Cabinet for approval that the annual quota of properties to be allocated under the new provisions be set at 1% of all Council housing allocations for the preceding year (1st April to 31st March), with the provision that officers endeavour to seek mutual exchanges, where possible, to mitigate the impact on levels of Thurrock Council housing stock.**
- 3. That an update on the Right to Move scheme be referred back to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2016.**

<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 14</b> <b>01104419</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Denominational Transport – Service review</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor J Kent, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Education	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> N/A	
<b>Accountable Directors:</b> Roger Harris – Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning / Carmel Littleton – Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

Transport on denominational grounds (hereinafter referred to as “denominational transport”) other than for low income pupils attending secondary school, is not a statutory duty and the Council is entitled to use its discretion with respect to such transport. In 2013, following an extensive consultation exercise, Cabinet exercised its discretion and decided to continue denominational transport, but charge for places. Pupils accessing the transport prior to the implementation of the changes were offered a 50% discount to reduce the financial impact of the charging regime. Although a significant number of parents said they were prepared to pay, the numbers of full-payers has been lower than expected as parents have found alternative ways of transporting their children to school, there have also been a higher number of children whose family are on low income and so attract the full subsidy. As a consequence, although savings have been made, the Council still heavily subsidises the service. The numbers of children using transport and to which school is shown in Appendix 4. In light of the Council’s financial position Cabinet is asked to agree to go out to further consultation on the future of the service including possible de-commissioning. .

## Recommendation:

- 1. Cabinet approve a review of denominational transport with the option of discontinuing the service after July 2016.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 In September 2013, Cabinet approved the recommendations contained in a report providing feedback on a consultation regarding, among other issues, the review of denominational transport to denominational schools. The report made recommendations to Cabinet to introduce a charging regime that would deliver the savings in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The consultation process considered several options including whether to withdraw all denominational transport as from September 2014 or to continue denominational transport, but introduce a charging regime as from September 2014.

Cabinet agreed to continue the transport, but charge a flat rate of £1,117.00 per pupil. Consideration was given to the financial impact upon the families of children who were already accessing the transport at the time of the change and a 50% discount (£550.00) was offered to existing pupils. New pupils paid the full amount.

Reasonable estimates were made on the level of savings based on the student profile at the time and the take-up of transport. Exact costs could not be provided for the purposes of the 2013 Cabinet report as it was not possible to predict how many parents would pay the full tariff nor how many parents would be entitled to the full subsidy because they were on a low income,

The large number of pupils eligible for the 50% discount and an equally high number of pupils in receipt of benefits coupled with the small numbers of pupils paying the higher rate has led to a reduction in the amount of savings forecast when the charges were introduced. Families were aware when charges were implemented that an annual review of charges would take place. In accordance with that information, a reduction in the subsidy was implemented in September 2015 and the current charges are £1,172.85 for new and a discounted rate of £586.42 for all those pupils who were on transport prior to September 2014.

- 2.2. The breakdown of the cost of transport within each of the categories discussed in this section is provided in Appendix 2.
- 2.3. A recent review of the potential cost of transport to denominational schools revealed that some of the charging options proposed may prove financially challenging to some families. The Council foresaw this and initiated an Exceptional Circumstances policy aimed at supporting families with children currently attending a denominational school who can evidence their inability to afford the cost of transport.
- 2.4 The Council also recognises its statutory obligation to provide free education transport for eligible children resident in the borough of Thurrock. The legislation defining the 'eligible child' is contained in Section 508B and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 (See Appendix 3).

Under the Education Act 11-16 year olds in receipt of benefits are entitled to free transport to all schools including denominational schools. This entitlement is linked to the receipt of public benefit and distance and is not direct support to attend a denominational school.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 The consultation held in 2013 provided the following options:

- to withdraw all transport to denominational schools for all pupils in September 2014.
- to continue transport to faith schools, but introduce a charging regime from September 2014. Within this option there were further options as to how the charging regime would work in practice i.e. charge of a flat rate for all pupils or charges set according to distance travelled.

3.2. The Council considered the impact of the proposed changes upon various income levels. Although some are able to afford the charge other families are on benefit. There are also families with an annual income that although considered low would not entitle them to any form of public benefit.

3.3. The Council considered the factors noted above and agreed to charge all pupils with the exception of those in receipt of benefits

In order to ease any hardship faced by existing pupils accessing transport at the time an Exceptional Circumstances policy was introduced to support families on a very low income who were not entitled to benefits, but could prove that their circumstances were exceptional and warranted financial support from the Council.

3.4 This situation poses a financial risk as the Council is likely to bear the burden of the full cost of pupils in receipt of benefit and also face the loss of income from pupils who may opt to out of the system. The majority of those who opted out would have paid the full cost of denominational transport. In order to avoid the amount charged by the Council (which in some instances is more expensive than public transport) they have chosen to find alternative means of travelling to school such as car share or use of public transport.

3.5 In order to reduce the risk identified above, consideration should be given to the fact that the Council does not have a legal duty to provide denominational transport particularly where the provision of such transport is hindering the accrual of any savings and, in fact, may lead to increased expenditure going forward. As the rationale behind this review of Education Transport is to reduce expenditure and where possible increase savings, the recommendation is made that the Council retain the current charging regime until September 2016.

3.6 Any potential risk to low-income or vulnerable families of such a decision will be mitigated as the Council will continue to provide free transport to families in receipt of benefit. Also, families experiencing hardship may apply for support via the Exceptional Circumstances policy.

- 3.7 The Council will endeavour to write to all parents of Year 6 pupils in September 2015 explaining that they should not take a decision regarding a child's secondary school choice based upon the fact that they will receive transport as this is reviewed annually.

#### **4. Reasons for recommendation**

- 4.1 Officers seek Cabinet approval to commence a consultation around the future of denominational transport and the impact of any changes to this aspect of education transport. The reason for this is that the current trend shows that the Council may not be in a position to generate the levels of income expected from new pupils who pay the full cost recovery rate as the number of new pupils applying for a seat has reduced drastically. Also, further financial pressure arises from the pupils in receipt of the subsidy who are more likely to continue to access denominational transport for a substantial period of time (In many cases this will be until they complete their current key stage at primary or secondary school).

#### **5. Consultation (including overview and scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The details and results of a borough-wide consultation undertaken with respect to proposed changes around denominational transport are contained in the Cabinet report dated 4 September 2014.
- 5.2 In September 2015 the recommendations being made were considered by Children's Overview and Scrutiny and given their full support.
- 5.3 From October 2015 officers will undertake a public consultation involving families, schools and a wide range of stakeholders to seek the views of interested parties on denominational transport after the current arrangements end in July 2016.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Families whose overall income level places them just above the threshold for qualifying benefit choose to work to support their children rather than initiate a reduction in the number of hours worked in order to qualify for benefits and consequently free transport. The discounted rate and exceptional circumstances policy support such families to remain employed and align with the Council priority aimed at encouraging and promoting job creation and economic prosperity.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Chief Accountant**

The medium term financial strategy includes a targeted budget saving in relation to denominational travel. The detailed financial implications of the current scheme are clearly set out in the report and indicate that the targeted budget savings are not currently being met and hence it is proposed to review the scheme going forwards from September 2016.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Angela Willis**  
**Major Projects Solicitor**

The Education Act 1996 sets out the Council's duties relating to school transport and makes it clear that free transport only has to be provided for "eligible children" and these include disabled children and those from low income families. Transport on denominational grounds other than for low income families is not a statutory duty and the Council is entitled to make its decision as to what transport support it will offer to pupils on denominational grounds.

Local authorities have discretionary powers under Section 508C of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements for those children not covered by Section 508B. A local authority has discretion to provide transport for children who are outside of the statutory eligibility criteria and where such transport is provided to make a charge for it. There is no requirement for these discretionary arrangements to be provided free of charge. However, if a local authority decides to levy charges this should be made clear in the school travel policy documents.

Section 509D of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities when fulfilling their duties and exercising their powers relating to travel, to have regard to, amongst other things, any wish of a parent for their child to be provided with education or training at a particular school on grounds of the parent's religion or belief. Local authorities must make travel arrangements for pupils from low income families to attend the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief where such pupils live more than 2 miles, but not more than 15 miles from that School.

The Equality Act 2010 does not apply to the provision of transport on faith grounds as the discrimination provisions on the grounds of age and religion or belief do not extend to transport arrangements.

Local authorities must publish general arrangements and policies in respect of home to school travel and transport for children of compulsory school age. Such documents should explain both statutory transport provision, and that provided on a discretionary basis. Local authorities should also consult widely on any proposed changes to their local policies on school travel arrangements with all interested parties. Consultations should last for at least 28 working days during term time.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Equalities  
Manager**

Consultation on future options will include dialogue with stakeholders to inform a Community Impact and Equality Assessment – this will further inform the future option to be shared with Cabinet in September 2016’.

### **7.4 Other implications**

#### **7.4.1 Pupils in receipt of Income Support**

We are statutorily obliged to offer financial support to these pupils. The amount of income used to fund such places is currently greater than the income generated from pupils paying the full-cost recovery rate. These factors have the potential to reduce the amount of savings the Council is able to generate

#### **7.4.2 Pupils living in rural areas**

As the decision has been taken to provide transport to denominational schools, but charge for it, contracted vehicles transporting pupils who reside in rural areas to denominational schools are likely to be more expensive as taxis may be the most cost effective option for small numbers of pupils. The pupils affected may, therefore, require a higher subsidy, as opposed to the proposed reduction in subsidy.

### **8. Background papers used in preparing this report**

There are no background papers to consider.

### **9. Appendices to this report:**

- Appendix 1 – Denominational transport – charges for 2014/15
- Appendix 2 – Denominational Transport – potential subsidy rates for 2015/16



- Appendix 3 – The Education Act 1996 – relevant legislation
- Appendix 4 – Current use of denominational transport and its cost

**Report Author:**

Temi Fawehinmi

Contract and Performance manager

Children's Services

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## Proposed Denominational Costs 2015/16

<b>Current Annual Charge</b>	<b>5% Increase</b>	<b>10% Increase</b>	<b>15% Increase</b>	<b>20% Increase</b>	<b>25% Increase</b>	<b>Full Recovery</b>	<b>Bus Tickets in Thurrock</b>
<b>14/15</b>							
<b>£1117 Full Charge</b>	<b>1172.85</b>	<b>1228.70</b>	<b>1284.55</b>	<b>1340.40</b>	<b>1396.25</b>	<b>1618.03</b>	<b>£330 per year per pupil</b>
<b>£550 50% discount</b>	<b>586.42</b>	<b>614.35</b>	<b>642.27</b>	<b>670.20</b>	<b>698.12</b>	<b>809.02</b>	

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## Appendix 2

<b>Council charge</b>	<b>Council action</b>
New pupils from September 2014 :  Full cost recovery rate – <b>£5.88 per day</b> <b>(£1,117.00 pa)</b>	Will be introduced for all families from next academic year (subject to people on qualifying benefits receiving a free service). This will allow the Council to deliver significant savings on this budget.
Existing Pupils:  Discounted rate - <b>£2.89 per day</b> <b>(£550.00 pa)</b>	Offer a fifty percent rebate as families made a decision on their choice of school when the service was free. Numbers will decrease as pupils come off roll.
Exceptional Circumstances rate	Support families on low income who are unable to afford the discounted rate yet not entitled to receive any of the qualifying benefits.
<b>Free transport - £0.00</b>	<b>The Council is statutorily bound to provide transport to families entitled to qualifying benefits.</b>

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**Section 508B of the Education Act, 1996:**

The criteria for eligible children are outlined below:

- An eligible child is aged between 5 and 16 years old
- Children qualify for free transport no matter what distance they live from the school - if they are unable to walk to school due to Special Educational Needs (SEN), disability, mobility or lack of a safe walking route.
- The allowable statutory walking distance is up to 2 miles for pupils under the age of 8 and up to 3 miles for pupils over 8

(Low Income):

- A 'low income' family is one whose children are entitled to free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum Working Tax Credit.
- Primary school children from low income families qualify for free school transport if they:
  - are aged 8 to 11
  - go to their nearest suitable school
  - and live more than 2 miles away
- Secondary school pupils (11 to 16 years old) from low income families are entitled to free school transport if:
  - they go to a suitable school between 2 and 6 miles away from their home address, as long as there are not 3 or more suitable schools nearer to home
  - the nearest school chosen on the grounds of religion or belief
  - and the school is between 2 and 15 miles away from their home address.

**Section 508C of the Education Act, 1996:**

Section 508C of the Act provides local authorities with discretionary powers to make arrangements for those children not covered by Section 508B

**Section 509AD of the Education Act, 1996:**

Section 509AD of the Act places a duty on local authorities in fulfilling their duties and exercising their powers relating to travel, to have regard to, amongst other things, any wish of a parent for their child to be provided with education or training at a particular school or institution on grounds of the parent's religion or belief.

This duty is in addition to the duty on local authorities to make travel arrangements for children of parents on low incomes who attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, where they live more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from that school considered.

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CONTRACT NUMBER	SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PUPILS	DAILY COST	ANNUAL COST	COST PER STUDENT PER YEAR	COST PER STUDENT PER DAY
TM 0288	BULPHAN C OF E SCHOOL	1	£56.00	£10,640.00	£10,640.00	£56.00
TM 0029	CAMPION SCHOOL	35	£229.00	£43,510.00	£1,243.14	£6.54
TM 0033	CAMPION SCHOOL	24	£203.16	£38,600.40	£1,608.35	£8.47
TM 0016	DE LA SALLE	17	£135.00	£25,650.00	£1,508.82	£7.94
TM 0019	GRAYS CONVENT	10	£124.94	£23,738.60	£2,373.86	£12.49
TM 0133	GRAYS CONVENT	16	£151.30	£28,747.00	£1,796.69	£9.46
TM 0040	HOLY CROSS	20	£180.00	£34,200.00	£1,710.00	£9.00
TM 0165	HOLY CROSS	4	£80.00	£15,200.00	£3,800.00	£20.00
TM 0227	HORNDON ON THE HILL	6	£108.80	£20,672.00	£3,445.33	£18.13
TM 0004	ORSETT PRIMARY	13	£140.00	£26,600.00	£2,046.15	£10.77
TM 0028	ORSETT PRIMARY	3	£50.00	£9,500.00	£3,166.67	£16.67
TM 0034	ST EDWARDS ROMFORD	8	£205.00	£38,950.00	£4,868.75	£25.63
TM 0203	ST JOSEPHS	6	£80.00	£15,200.00	£2,533.33	£13.33
TM 0026	ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY	18	£231.00	£43,890.00	£2,438.33	£12.83
TM 0069	ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY	7	£122.00	£23,180.00	£3,311.43	£17.43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15 CONTRACTS</b>	<b>188</b>		<b>£398,278.00</b>		
	(Note : Number of students who attract full subsidy)	69				

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<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 15</b> <b>01104420</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Thameside Complex Review</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Grays Thurrock / All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Report of:</b> The Thameside Complex Review Panel	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

The report attached at appendix 1 details the work of the Thameside Complex Review Panel, including the recommendations they wish Cabinet to endorse.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 Cabinet accept the conclusions set out on page 22 of the report (attached as Appendix 1) as a set of guiding principles when exploring future cultural provision at the Thameside Complex.**
- 1.2 A site that represents the Arts should remain in Grays.**
- 1.3 The Council should endeavour to improve and modernise the library, museum and registry service whether this be in the Complex or in another location.**
- 1.4 Any theatre needs to cater for the community but also a variety of professional acts and productions. It should represent the aspirations of a competitive regional theatre.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee initiated the Thameside Complex Review Panel in January 2015 to look at the options for the building and services contained within the Thameside Complex.
- 2.2 The Panel duly met and in collaboration with officers undertook research and community engagement to produce the report attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 The findings of the Thameside Complex Review Panel were referred to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 September 2015, an excerpt of the minutes of the meeting is attached at Appendix 2 which set out Members comments.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 The full report attached at Appendix 1 outlines the options available to the Thameside Complex and each is considered in turn in the report.

3.2 Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee did have a differing view to some of findings contained within the panel's final report when it was considered at the meeting on 17 September 2015, the minutes of which are attached at Appendix 2 for Cabinet's consideration.

3.3 The Cabinet may wish to form an alternative view to those set out and agreed by the cross party panel.

3.4 By agreeing to the recommendations of the report, the Cabinet will still need to decide from a number of options that will arise. The intention and understanding of the Review Panel is that a separate officer report will be able to provide the professional and specialist advice needed to consider these further options.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 These are set out in the report at Appendix 1.

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

5.1 The Panel consulted service officers, members of the public and professional theatre consultants as part of their work. This is detailed in Appendix 1.

5.2 The report and its recommendations were referred to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 September 2015, Members did have a differing view to some of findings contained within the panel's final report when it was considered, the minutes of which are attached at Appendix 2 for Cabinet's consideration.

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 The Thameside Complex has a significant impact on many residents' lives and it is important for the Council to decide on the future of the building and services to best suit residents' needs and aspirations.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Strategic Resources Accountant**

The financial implications of the preferred option will need to be considered as part of the Councils overall financial position once the cost is fully accesses.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**  
**Principal Solicitor**

Any legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Equalities  
Manager**

The report takes note of and makes recommendations based on the physical accessibility of the Complex and also the needs of those who require access to IT for education and information purposes.

### **7.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

At this stage, the Panel's report does not make recommendations that impact on staff terms and conditions.

## **8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Not applicable.

## **9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Thameside Complex Review Panel final report
- Appendix 2 – Excerpt of the minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 September 2015.

**Report Author:**

Matthew Boulter

Principal Democratic Services Manager

Legal Services



# Thameside Complex Review

## July 2015

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## Chair's Introduction

As councillors we value the artistic and cultural impact the Thameside Complex has on both Grays and Thurrock as a whole. It was with eagerness we embarked on this review as every member of the Panel felt it important to understand and progress the issues involved with the Complex. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who originally established the Panel, thought it extremely important that all political parties had a voice on the Panel as the Thameside Complex is for all and everyone. The original chair of the Panel, Councillor Charles Curtis, lost his seat in the 2015 local elections so I stepped up to the position from mid-May 2015 onwards to finalise our recommendations.

During the review it struck me how many residents were concerned that the Council was seeking to do away with either the building or the services at the Complex. I hope that this report goes some way to reassure residents that the Council is committed to the Arts and culture and will seek to improve it where it can.

We have taken a different approach to this review by listing some conclusion statements before moving on to our recommendations. We hope that by making these conclusions we give the Council some guiding principles to base their future decisions around. For example, keeping cultural provision in Grays and identifying greater aspiration for our theatre provision.

Throughout our review many officers, specialist companies and residents took the time to speak to us and for that I would like to thank them. I would also like to thank especially Matthew Essex and Stephen Taylor of the Regeneration Team for being so attentive to our questions and ensuring the review was well informed. Finally I would like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors who sat on the Panel for their insightful and frank views on the issues at hand. Through the debate and discussion they thought only of improving services for Thurrock and for that I am thankful to them.

### **Councillor Graham Snell**



## Introduction

The future of the Thameside Complex has been a longstanding, recurring topic of discussion which has been thrown into sharp focus in recent years as cuts in public sector spending have given rise to linked debates over the costs of running and maintaining the building, its use, the quality of the services being provided from within it and its ultimate fitness for purpose in a much changed cultural landscape. These debates routinely provoke passionate responses from various parties, driven by concerns that the Council is seeking to unilaterally close the building and cease providing the services currently hosted therein – particularly the Thameside Theatre.



In August 2014 Cabinet received a report entitled ‘Thameside Complex – Securing theatre provision for Thurrock’. The report set out some of the context surrounding the Thameside and sought approval, duly given, to undertake an options appraisal with a view to securing the long-term future for a theatre within the Borough.

The complex is important to many local people both for the services it contains and for what it represents; placing Grays at the heart of culture, heritage and the Arts in Thurrock and as the administrative and civic centre of the Borough. As was apparent from discussion amongst Cabinet Members during the meeting even the proposal to carry out an options appraisal has raised concern.

In January 2015, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on the Thameside Complex. It was decided at this meeting that a cross party task and finish group could usefully support the detailed consideration of the options for the future of the services and the complex. Members of the committee felt the complex and its services were vitally important to Thurrock and needed proper consideration.

Following this meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members were requested from all four political groups represented at the Council to form a Thameside Complex Review Panel.

## Purpose and Aims of the Thameside Complex Review Panel

- Building upon the work completed to date, understand the current challenges and benefits of the Thameside Complex and providing services from it.
- Support the consideration of the future options for the services as outlined in the Cabinet report of February 2015, using witness sessions, consultation and other research to provide a balanced view of each.
- Provide a thorough and balanced report to Cabinet outlining the Group's consideration of each option.

### Membership

Because the Group undertook its work over the local and general elections in May 2015, two of our group lost their seats following the election.

#### The Current Membership

Councillor Graham Snell (UKIP) – *Chair of the Group from May 2015*

Councillor Robert Gledhill (Conservative)

Councillor Yash Gupta MBE (Labour) – *Member of the Group from May 2015*

#### Past Membership

Councillor Charlie Curtis (Labour) – *Chair of the Group until 7 May 2015*

Councillor John Purkiss (Independent) – *Member of the Group until 7 May 2015*

## Timeline of Review

3 March 2015	First meeting of the Panel to plan the review
12 March 2015	Panel visit Thameside Complex to meet services and gain an understanding of the building and its services
Late March to early May 2015	Consultation launched to gain views from the public on the Thameside Complex
19 May 2015	Witness day to meet with voluntary sector tenants, service managers and theatre specialists.
2 July 2015	Panel convenes to finalise Report.

## What is the Thameside Complex?

The Thameside Complex is a building on the Orsett Road, in Grays, which houses:

- Grays Library
- Thurrock Museum and Archives
- Thameside Theatre and Box Office
- The Registry Office (for birth, deaths and marriages) and the Hawthorne Suite (for wedding ceremonies)
- Expressions Cafe
- Office space that is currently occupied by voluntary organisations (Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions, Trans-vol, CSV, TRUST and the Talking Newspaper)
- Office space used by the Council for library services
- Office space that is currently empty and unused

The Complex had been planned from 1967 and was finally opened to the public in January 1972. The building was specifically designed to contain the new library, the local history museum and the Thameside Theatre in one building.



*View of Thameside Complex from Orsett Road, Grays*

## What Residents think of the Thameside Complex and its Services

**134** people responded to our consultation and it gave us a thought provoking insight into how the Thameside Complex was viewed by the community.

The library was the most used service in the Complex according to our consultation with the theatre coming second. These services accounted for 58% of visits mentioned in the survey.

15% of respondents identified the Expressions Cafe as a reason for visiting, whereas 13% listed the museum and 10% of the respondents listed the registry office, baby activity groups and visiting voluntary organisations as the reasons for using the Complex.

The majority of people who responded to our survey felt passionately in favour of the look and feel of the Complex, as well as the services it provided. It is seen by many as a haven of learning and culture. There also seemed to be a concern among those who responded that the Complex and services were being considered for removal to make way for housing or another development.

The concern for the future of the staff who worked for the services was also a prevalent feature of many responses.

There was a clear division among users of the Complex between those who expressed views to keep the Complex and the services exactly as they were and those who felt that there was more the Complex and services could achieve through innovation.

We were interested in this outcome as we felt that many visitors did not know about the potential for improving or modernising services and many responses expressed a fear that the Panel was investigating options to demolish the Complex and remove services entirely to make way for housing rather than potentially improving and modernising them. The Panel agreed that this report would outline all options and be transparent in its aims.

## Is the Thameside Complex an attractive building?

One of our key interests was whether people thought the Thameside building was iconic. In other words, did people find the Thameside Complex attractive to look at?

**80%** of respondents thought the building benefitted the look of Grays town centre. On deeper analysis of the written responses we felt that some of these responses were informed by a fear that the Complex was to be demolished and the services removed. Likewise, a number of responses said the building was ugly or in need of renovation in later answers.

It was clear that most people cherished the Complex for what it represented in Thurrock. It seemed important that there be an iconic focus for the Arts in Grays/Thurrock.

We visited the Thameside Complex to see firsthand some of the issues raised in the survey and we found the Complex fairly unattractive and dated on the outside. We were able to see some of the original prototype architectural models for the building in the museum archives and noted that some of the earlier prototypes looked more attractive, for example using glass frontages and not the largely concrete facings we see today.

Although we cannot change the past and the decisions of our predecessors we felt as a panel that a more modern and inspirational building could enhance the attractiveness of both the Complex and the services to the people of Thurrock.

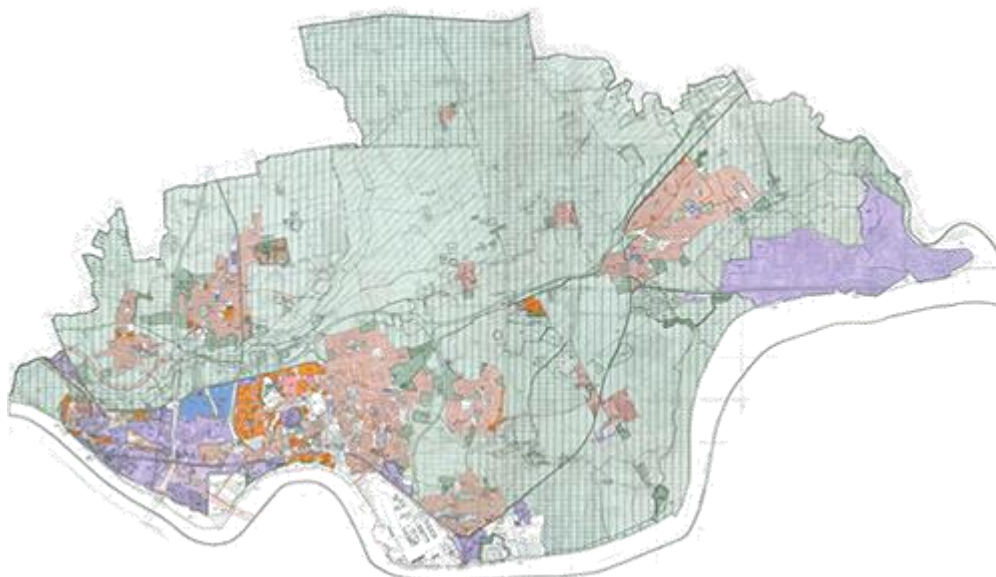


*One of the original architectural model of the Thameside Complex*

## Is the Thameside Complex best placed in Grays?

This became a key line of enquiry for the Panel and we shall return to this later in the report but responses to our survey were strongly in favour of the Complex being located in Grays.

Over **90%** of people lived close to the Complex (Grays is one of the biggest urbanised centres in Thurrock) or found travel easy due to the closeness of bus and rail links. Parking was also largely seen as a positive feature of the Complex.



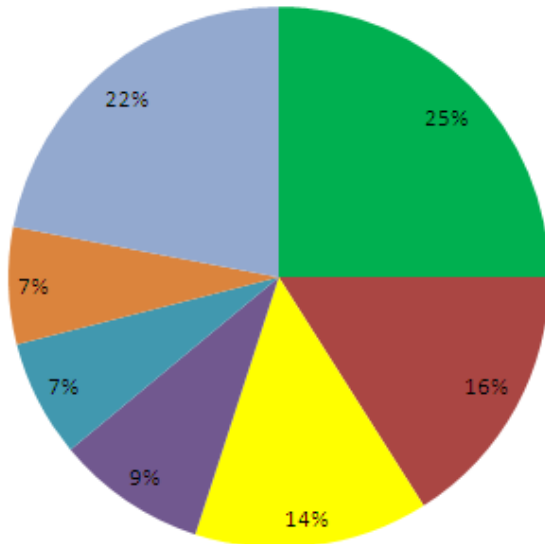
## Key Concerns

We received a lot of passionate responses which we are grateful to residents for. The key messages people communicated to us during the review were:

- Do not lose the library
- Do not lose the theatre
- We do not want to lose amenities
- Disabled access is very important to location of services within a town

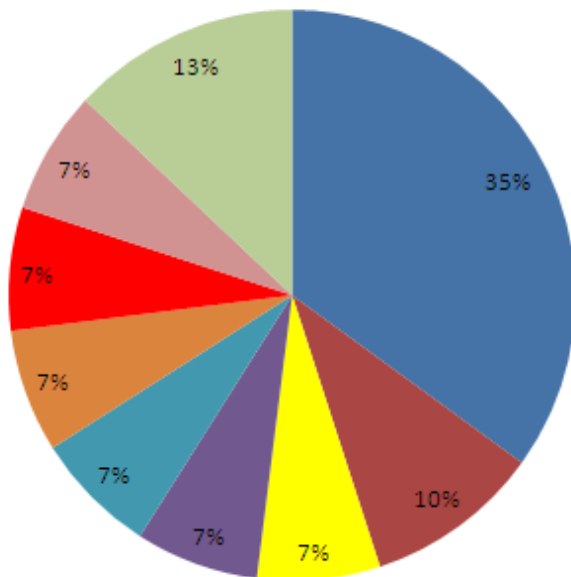


## What People **like** about the Thameside Complex



Everything - 25%  
Library - 16%  
Location - 14%  
Staff - 9%  
Easy Access - 7%  
Theatre - 7%  
Other - 22%

## What People **do not like** about the Thameside Complex



Building - 35%  
Noise Level in Library - 10%  
Parking - 7%  
Theatre - 7%  
Nothing to Dislike - 7%  
Opening Hours - 7%  
Cafe - 7%  
Staff - 7%  
Other - 13%

What are the challenges facing the Thameside Complex and its Services and how can these be resolved?

## The Complex

### ***Floor Space***

We learnt from officer reports that around a third of the floor space in the Complex was communal circulation space such as corridors and foyers, or storage facilities.

When we visited the Complex we walked through large office spaces that were empty and unused. This gave us the impression that the building was not being used to its full potential and there seemed to be a discrepancy between the cramped spaces available for services like the theatre compared to the large unused office spaces.

This was highlighted when we saw the very small area that was used for the Theatre's backstage storage compared to another floor in the Complex that was entirely empty.



*A vacated floor in the Thameside Complex*



*Cramped and inadequate storage for the Thameside Theatre*

We learnt that the theatre and the museum combined only occupied around 25% of the building with the library taking a further 23% of the floor space. Therefore, over half the floor space in the Thameside Complex was not used for the three main services in the complex, namely the theatre, library and museum.

### ***Maintenance and Refurbishment***

Although many people who responded to our survey recognised the Complex as an iconic building, we spotted need for refurbishment on our visit. We also learnt that since it had opened, the Complex had not undergone any wholesale refurbishment.

The Council had undertaken a recent condition survey of the building and many of the mechanical and electrical systems in the Complex needed replacing or significant upgrading. Estimates for upgrading these elements of the building had been priced at **£412,000** to be spent over five years. There were also structural and physical improvements in the region of **£976,000**, which we noted was a one off cost as well.

We also noted that the Complex cost, on average, **£336,207** per year to keep running, which included all utility bills, business rates and other running costs. We learnt that these running costs were well within the budget assigned to the Complex and that extra capacity for spend had been included in the budget to safeguard against increased electricity costs. The running costs of the Thameside Complex are therefore not over budget.

Although the running costs of the Complex are within budget now, we were aware that the Council continues to face pressure to reduce budgets and we felt it was the Council's duty to ensure services were provided in the most cost effective and beneficial way for residents.

### ***Potential Improvements for the Complex***

The Potential improvements to the Complex building seemed obvious during our visit. There was a clear set of works that would cost £412,000 which would improve the mechanical and electrical systems in the building. Further money could be spent on decorating and ensuring all available space was utilised by Council services, community services or for business rent.

However, the question we explored further during our review was whether these improvements were the best option for the Complex or not.

### **Voluntary Groups**

The Complex is used as office space for a number of community and charity organisations. We learnt that Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions rented the seventh floor and had refurbished this. Trans-Vol and the other groups in the building had similarly been asked to enter a rent agreement.

TRUST and Talking Books did not pay rent; neither did CSV who did not currently support any services in Thurrock.

We met with representatives of the voluntary sector who highlighted the importance of affordable office space that was easily accessible and safe for clients. Daily visitors to these organisations did not exceed twenty or thirty and it was understood that the majority of work undertaken at the Thameside was administrative.

The organisations told us there was a real buzz in the Complex and the services worked well together and complemented the services to clients for these organisations. The Panel was asked to convey to the Council an option for the Complex to be taken over as a community asset run by some of the community organisations.

## The Museum

Thurrock Museum has a very active service within the Council and the Complex houses the static museum displays on the first floor. In addition, there are large archives on a number of levels in the Complex that house precious and interesting objects from Thurrock's history.

It is noticeable that the archives, which are not open to the general public, take up much more floor space than the publically open museum.

We found the museum interesting but very dated when we visited. We questioned who actually visited the museum and although there were a number of organised school visits, we learnt that the museum staff generally visited schools as part of an outreach programme.

The displays were old and some councillors on the panel recognised the displays from their own childhood growing up in Thurrock. We discussed this aspect with the museum officer during our witness day and he stated that the galleries could potentially be modernised with a Heritage Lottery Funding bid but there was a requirement for the service to commit to a twenty five year tenure in the Complex, as a funding condition, and with current considerations ongoing, this commitment was not possible.



*Artefact room at Thameside Complex*

### ***Potential Improvements for the Museum***

The Panel discussed access to heritage in the borough and we strongly felt that instead of concentrating Thurrock's history in one place in Grays, there was a need to make artefacts and exhibitions available to the localities within Thurrock. For example, objects relevant to Aveley history should be placed somewhere in Aveley.

We recognised that there were many historic locations (such as Coalhouse Fort and the Purfleet Gunpowder Magazine), as well as libraries that could exhibit these objects. This would have the added benefit of utilising the archives for public use.

We learnt that a heritage trail could potentially be developed along the Thames coastline using key sites such as Coalhouse Fort, Tilbury Fort, Purfleet Gunpowder Magazine and the Tilbury Cruise Terminal among others to house, display and communicate Thurrock's history.

Supported by a comprehensive schools programme this would utilise heritage buildings and increase public access to the museum's collections rather than concentrate the service in one location.

The Museum officer expressed a desire, during our witness session, to keep both the static displays and the archive close together but he also recognised there was an opportunity for heritage displays to become part of the regeneration that was occurring across the borough.





## The Registry Office

The Registry Office currently fulfils two main functions, which are to register birth, deaths and marriages and to provide a venue for marriages and citizenship ceremonies. Following our visit we thought the offices that housed the service were adequate and conducive to their role. It was a quiet and respectful place.

The ceremony room (The Hawthorne Suite) we felt was not a competitive wedding venue compared to surrounding provision in other councils, which included historic buildings and stately homes. We recognised that the room was used by many residents, especially in the summer season and that for some the venue offered a cost effective alternative to costly wedding venue hire.

We recognised that there were a number of sites in Thurrock that could potentially become wedding venues, such as Coalhouse Fort. During our witness session, the Superintendent Registrar stated that Thurrock's service lost significant trade to bordering councils because there were not picturesque venues readily available in Thurrock.



*Visiting the Hawthorne Suite in the Registry Office*

## The Thameside Theatre

Out of all the services in the Thameside Complex we felt the theatre had the most challenges to overcome. There was a core programme of events that included both amateur and professional productions. In 2013/14, 39,581 people attended 219 events, with the most successful being the Christmas pantomime. We learnt the pantomime made enough money to cover losses on other shows and the good attendance at the pantomime meant there was an average of about **57%** audience capacity for each show across a year.

### ***Facilities***

CharcoalBlue are a specialist consultancy firm that help develop and assess theatres. They attended our witness day and we discussed in detail the provisions currently at the theatre. Similarly our visit highlighted the same challenges, namely that:

- The theatre seats are cramped and uncomfortable
- The stage wings are small and inadequate
- There are significant limitations on the size and transportability of any stage backdrops
- Theatre prop storage is limited
- Dressing rooms are adequate but located on a separate level of the Complex

### ***Attendance and Popularity***

There is no doubt that there are a number of dedicated groups who utilise the theatre both for performing and attending performances. During our witness session, representatives of Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions and the CVS both championed the theatre as a community resource for Thurrock Arts Council, South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre and the local Diwali Festival.

At present the theatre is very much a local theatre serving local residents and there is a core audience. Our survey results showed that some people were unhappy with the quality and variety of shows at the theatre and wanted acts that would normally use much bigger venues.

As a Panel we recognised that to attract bigger acts or nationally recognised stage productions, the theatre needed to have a certain capacity to return enough profit for the performers. At roughly 300 seats, the theatre could not achieve this in its present capacity.



We discovered through our conversations with officers and CharcoalBlue that to become a competitive and viable regional theatre we would require a minimum of 650 to 700 seats. The current capacity of the Thameside Theatre, we were informed, could be extended in its current state to 400. Surrounding theatres such as the Queen's Theatre (Hornchurch) and the Orchard Theatre (Dartford) had 700 seats or more.

In our survey, the most popular theatre venues for Thurrock residents outside Thurrock were the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend (over 1500 seats) and London theatres.

It was clear to the Panel that there needed to be a clear vision of what the theatre should be. If it was to remain a local theatre for largely local productions then the current space could be enhanced. However, if the theatre wished to attract more varied and better known acts and productions, it would need to enlarge significantly and enhance the facilities available to performers and audiences alike. However, to achieve this it needed to become commercially viable.

Some members of the Panel felt the location of the theatre was the key challenge and it was discussed whether moving the theatre to another place in Thurrock that had greater foot traffic might be better. Lakeside was used as an example. It had large visitor numbers and was served well by public transport and could encourage larger audiences. It also had a large selection of restaurants and facilities.

Other members of the panel disagreed with this and stated that Grays was a key urban area and as such needed cultural services close by. Being situated in Grays also encouraged local people to walk to the venue. Our consultation results supported this view identifying Grays as the desired location for a theatre or arts centre.

The Panel thought about the wider issue of Grays as a destination and recognised that Grays needed to develop a night time economy to improve the popularity of a theatre. Restaurants, bars, parking and a safe environment were all important contributing factors to the success of a theatre. Similarly, a more commercial theatre attracting better known acts would have a positive impact on Grays as well.



*Thameside Theatre Stage*

### ***Potential Improvements for the Thameside Theatre – A Question of Aspiration***

Our meeting with CharcoalBlue gave us a very clear message. Thurrock Council could have whatever theatre it wanted but it was essential to:

- 1) Have the funding to equip and manage that theatre appropriately.
- 2) Have a clear vision as to what theatre Thurrock wanted to have.

Our research demonstrated that the current Thameside Theatre provided a valuable service to the community, especially amateur dramatics, dance schools and community/voluntary groups. Whether there was a need for a bigger and better theatre to attract professional touring productions and acts would dictate the future of the theatre.

We noted four future options for the theatre:

- Keep it in the Thameside Complex with a view to improving the capacity and quality of the theatre. This was estimated to cost an additional £3 million
- Move it to a new building somewhere in the borough
- Re-build the theatre in the place where the Thameside Complex currently is
- Offer a multi-venue service whereby there was no fixed theatre space and other venues are used across Thurrock

We learnt that maintaining a core audience was key to any theatre's success and if a new theatre was to be built or relocated, some theatre provision would need to be maintained in the interim period to sustain interest in theatre in Thurrock. During our witness session we learnt that building a new theatre did not guarantee commercial success and proper research would need to be undertaken to estimate the commercial viability of a larger theatre. We noted that many surrounding theatres were subsidised significantly by their councils.

We learnt that a multi-venue programme allowed for many venues to be used across the borough to suit different events. Shakespeare at Coalhouse Fort, modern drama at the new college or gigs in Blackshot's Sport Centre were all potential options. This would have the potential of utilising more of Thurrock for the Arts. The CVS highlighted that if varied venues were to be used in the future, they would need to ensure that they remained affordable to community groups so they were not priced out of putting on their shows.

## The State Cinema

The potential for the State to be used as a new theatre was raised and discussed several times throughout our review. It became apparent that to convert the State into a mid-level theatre would cost in the region of £15 million and as such, was not considered a viable or affordable option for future theatre provision.

## The Library

The Library is spacious and well stocked in Grays but we noted that the bookshelves were static and could not be moved to suit different layouts. We felt the library could use its space more efficiently. This made us wonder how prepared for the future the library was and did it represent modern library provision or something that was becoming dated.

We discussed the use of apps to widen the use of the library. An example given was that graphic novels could be made available on iPads but could only be downloaded and/or accessed in the library itself. It was also discussed whether the size of Grays library could better place it as an information hub as well.

The survey results showed that the library was well used and valued in the community. On our visit it was fairly quiet and some of us wondered whether there was potential for the services in the Complex to work with each other to improve an overall offer. For example, could an improved cafe offer with better seating facilities in the library encourage people to drink their coffees in the library and use it as a place to relax and use library services?

### ***Potential Improvements for the Library***

Library officers identified a great spectrum of improvements during the witness session that could take place in Gray's library:

- More space is needed and this could be achieved by reducing the number of desktop computers and increasing the ability for people to use their own laptops and tablets with access to Wi-fi.
- A 'wow' factor could be incorporated into the library service by introducing more touch screens and interactive elements.
- Staff could start using tablets.

## Expressions Cafe

Expressions Cafe is housed near the entrance to the Thameside Complex. It is managed by South East Essex College and provides valuable work experience to students at the college and clients of Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions. During our witness session community organisations highlighted the social value of the cafe. At the same session officers working in the services at the Complex told the Panel that the cafe did not always work on a commercial basis and was not open on Saturdays or during special weekend events such as citizenship ceremonies.

We as a Panel felt that the cafe was a crucial part of the service network in the Complex and could be responsible for drawing customers into the complex who could potentially use the other services but also, could provide a better refreshments service to existing customers, thereby increasing the commercial potential of the building.

We observed the cafe during our lunchtime visit to the Complex and noted it was not busy.

### ***Potential Improvements for the Expressions Cafe***

Expressions Cafe provides a valuable resource for Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions and the college. Any potential improvements would have to be along commercial lines and might impact on the social and educational provisions currently provided.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

What became wholly evident during our review was the exciting potential to improve and modernise cultural provision in Grays and Thurrock. Therefore our first conclusion is:

- 1) There is potential to modernise and improve the Museum, Library, Theatre and Registry Services. The Council should take the opportunity with relevant funding, if available, to improve services as much as possible.**

38% of people who responded to our survey felt the services in the Complex could not be improved. This Panel firmly believes this is not the case and there is great potential to improve services for residents.

It was clear from our investigations that the services in the Complex, excluding the theatre, could be moved without any major negative impact on the delivery of them. However, there were clear essentials that were highlighted by residents and officers, which we feel are important for any future options, therefore we also conclude that:

- 2) Services must remain accessible to all and close to transport links and other related amenities.**

The theatre remained a unique challenge and we came to a number of conclusions regarding its current and future delivery:

- 3) The theatre plays an important role in the lives of many residents and community groups. However, there is potential to improve it to become a viable regional theatre attracting more popular acts with wide appeal.**
- 4) If the theatre offer is to be improved it must maximise its commercial revenue and not rely on Council funding.**
- 5) The theatre should remain in Grays as it is a key urban centre as well as helping to contribute to the economy of the town.**

Our conclusions on the Complex are as follows:

- 6) The Thameside Complex is not suitable for the future aspirations of the services currently residing there.**
- 7) There is no evidence that housing is being considered to replace the Thameside Complex and the Arts and culture within the borough are not under threat.**

*We note that if the Thameside was to be relocated to another site, there would be potential for the site to be put to another use, which may include housing. However, we have seen no evidence of this being a motivation to review the services at Thameside at present.*

These conclusions were used to form our recommendations below.

## Recommendations

### **Recommendation 1**

**Cabinet accept the conclusions set out in the previous section as a set of guiding principles when exploring future cultural provision at the Thameside Complex.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**A site that represents the Arts should remain in Grays.**

*This could represent a number of options from a combined Arts Centre that includes a modernised museum, library and theatre or it could represent a vastly improved stand alone theatre with a hub for other arts activities.*

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Council should endeavour to improve and modernise the library, museum and registry service whether this be in the Complex or in another location.**

*There is compelling evidence to suggest that some aspects of the services, such as the registry office's wedding provision and the museum's archive, could best serve the community by being spread across the borough rather than located in one place. We learnt about sites such as Coalhouse Fort being potential wedding venues and the option to link the museum with the Thames and utilise the footpath and historic sites along the river as a heritage trail. Similarly, we heard about how the Heritage Lottery Fund could be used to improve the in situ galleries in the Thameside Complex. Regardless of the final option on the Thameside Complex, we should ensure the services modernise.*

### **Recommendation 4**

**Any theatre needs to cater for the community but also a variety of professional acts and productions. It should represent the aspirations of a competitive regional theatre.**

*This recommendation sets a vision for Thurrock in terms of theatre provision. We hope this gives Cabinet a clear steer by which to pursue options. We feel that Thurrock could offer more and be more. The strong proviso we would add to this recommendation is that the establishment of a regional theatre would require proper market research and funding before it is developed and there would need to be a very strong case to demonstrate that the theatre could finance itself. We were very aware that similar regional theatres were supported by their councils and this was not an option open to Thurrock.*

*In this Panel's opinion, the Thameside Complex will not be able to accommodate the aspirations for this future theatre provision. If Cabinet agree to this recommendation then they will have to pick one of the following options:*

- either develop the Complex significantly*
- re-build on the site of the complex*
- re-build the site in another location in Grays*

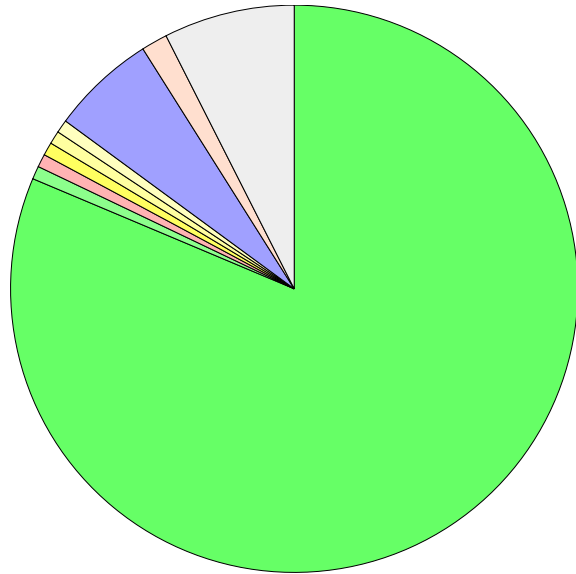
**Report Settings Summary**












Event	<b>Thameside Complex Review</b>
Total Responses	<b>134</b>
Total Respondents	<b>2</b>
Questions	<b>All</b>
Filter	<i>(none)</i>
Pivot	<i>(none)</i>
Document Name	Thameside Complex Final Report Part 2
Created on	2015-05-08 10:40:05
Created by	Jenny Shade












**Ethnicity**

Question responses: **124 (92.54%)**



	<b>% Total</b>	<b>% Answer</b>	<b>Count</b>
<b>White</b>			
 English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	81.34%	87.90%	109
 Irish	0.75%	0.81%	1
 Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Any other White background	0.00%	0.00%	0
<b>Mixed</b>			
 White and Black Caribbean	0.00%	0.00%	0
 White and Black African	0.00%	0.00%	0
 White and Asian	0.75%	0.81%	1
 Any other Mixed background	0.00%	0.00%	0
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>			
 Indian	0.75%	0.81%	1
 Pakistani	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Bangladeshi	0.75%	0.81%	1

	<b>% Total</b>	<b>% Answer</b>	<b>Count</b>
 Chinese	0.75%	0.81%	1
 Any other Asian background	0.00%	0.00%	0
<b>Black or Black British</b>			
 Caribbean	0.00%	0.00%	0
 African	5.97%	6.45%	8
 Any other Black background	0.00%	0.00%	0
<b>Other ethnic group</b>			
 Arab	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Prefer not to say	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Any other ethnic group	1.49%	1.61%	2
 [No Response]	7.46%	--	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

Other ethnicity

Question responses: 2 (1.49%)

If you selected other, please write in your ethnic group in the box below










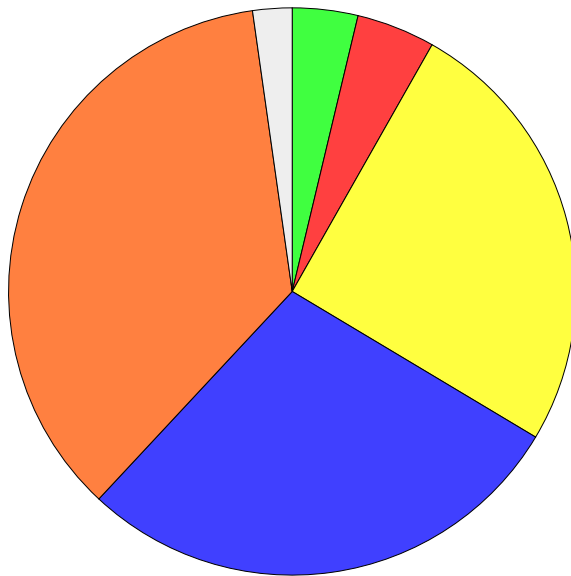
	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	1.49%	100.00%	2
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	98.51%	--	132
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
45				Vietnamese	01/04/15 09:39	0.2	Submitted	letter
57				Other mixed	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter

Age
Question responses: 131 (97.76%)
Please specify your age group

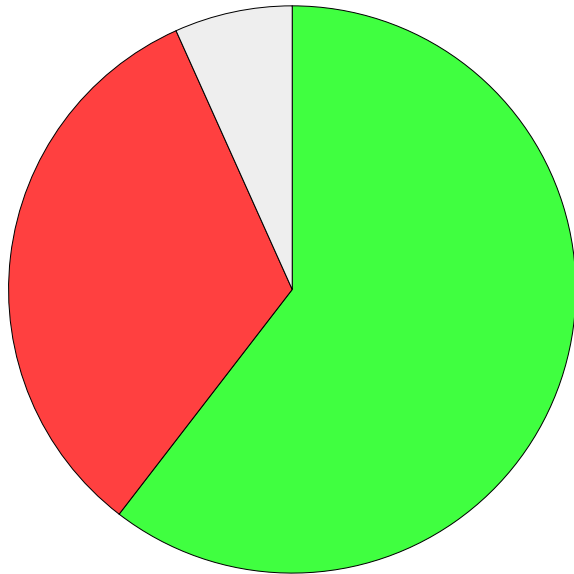
	% Total	% Answer	Count
 17 or under	3.73%	3.82%	5
 18-24	4.48%	4.58%	6
 25-44	25.37%	25.95%	34
 45-59	28.36%	29.01%	38
 Over 60 years	35.82%	36.64%	48
 Prefer not to say	0.00%	0.00%	0
 [No Response]	2.24%	--	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>



**Gender**

Question responses: **125 (93.28%)**

Please specify your gender









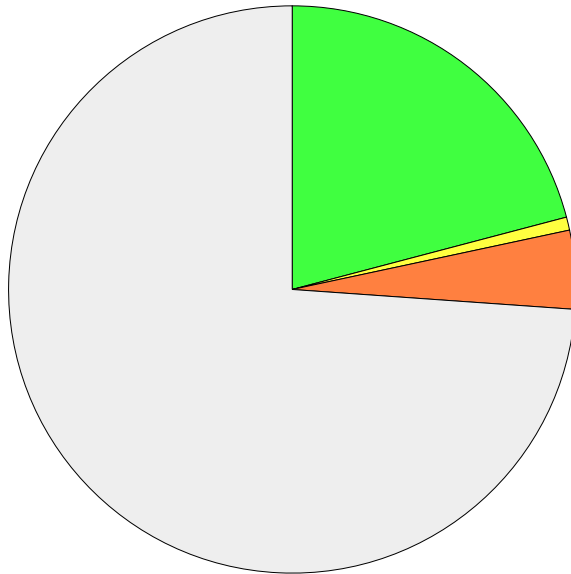
	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Female	60.45%	64.80%	81
<span style="color: red;">■</span> Male	32.84%	35.20%	44
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Transgender	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Prefer not to say	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	6.72%	--	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

## Sexual orientation

 Question responses: **35 (26.12%)**

How would you define your sexual orientation?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
 Heterosexual	20.90%	80.00%	28
 Gay	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Bisexual	0.75%	2.86%	1
 Lesbian	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Prefer not to say	4.48%	17.14%	6
 [No Response]	73.88%	--	99
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

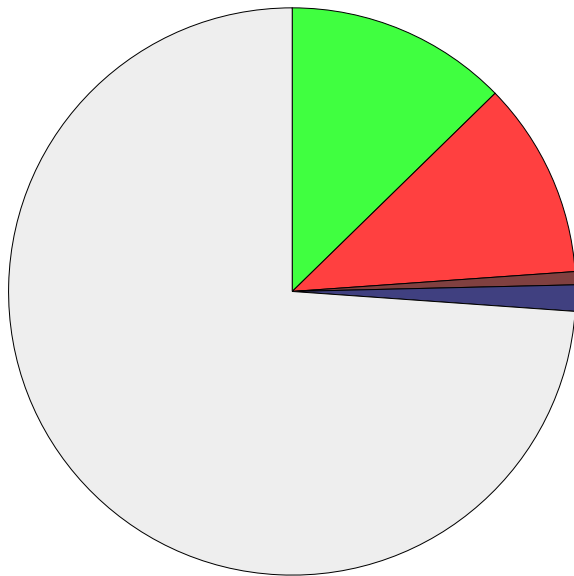











Religious belief

Question responses: **35 (26.12%)**

What is your religion?

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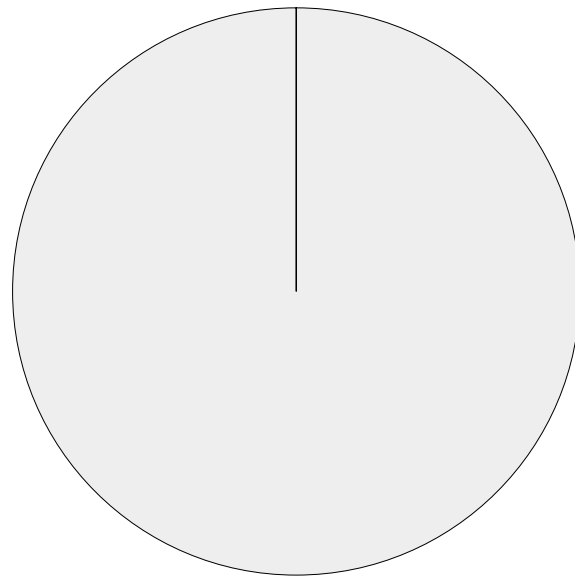
	% Total	% Answer	Count
 No religion	12.69%	48.57%	17
 Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	11.19%	42.86%	15
 Buddhist	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Hindu	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Jewish	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Muslim	0.75%	2.86%	1
 Sikh	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Any other religion	1.49%	5.71%	2
 [No Response]	73.88%	--	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

## Other religion

Question responses: **0 (0.00%)**

If you selected other, please write in your religion below

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	0.00%	0%	0
<span style="background-color: #cccccc;">■</span> [No Response]	100.00%	--	134
Total	100.00%	0%	134



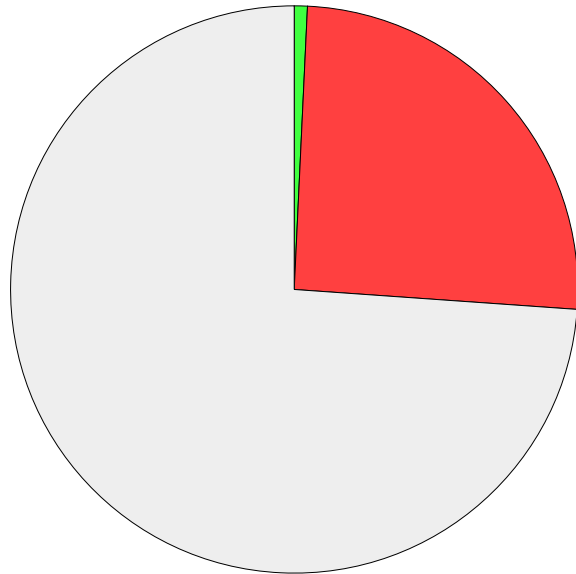
There is no data to display for this question



## Disability

Question responses: **35 (26.12%)**

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Yes	0.75%	2.86%	1
<span style="color: red;">■</span> No	25.37%	97.14%	34
<span style="color: lightgrey;">■</span> [No Response]	73.88%	--	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

## Impairment

Question responses: 1 (0.75%)

If you are disabled, how would you describe your disability? (tick all that apply)

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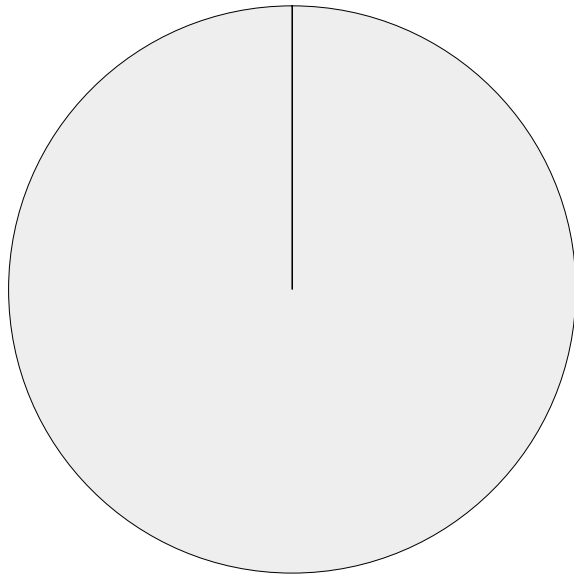


	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Visual impairment	0.74%	50.00%	0.75%	1
<span style="color: red;">■</span> Speech impairment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Hearing impairment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Mobility (a wheelchair user)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Mobility (not a wheelchair user)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Mental health condition	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> Long term medical condition	0.74%	50.00%	0.75%	1
<span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> Learning disability	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Hidden impairment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: purple;">■</span> Other	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	98.52%	--	99.25%	133
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>135</b>

## Impairment other

Question responses: **0 (0.00%)**

Please specify disability



	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	0.00%	0%	0
<span style="background-color: #cccccc;">■</span> [No Response]	100.00%	--	134
Total	100.00%	0%	134

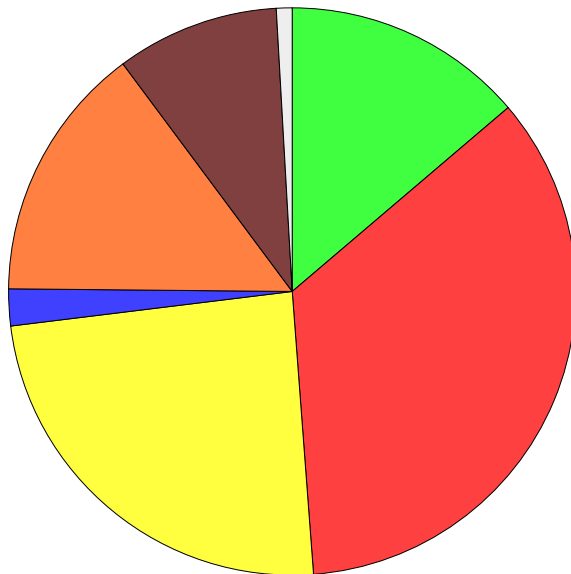
There is no data to display for this question








Which services do you use when visiting the Thameside Complex?

Question responses: 131 (97.76%)

Which services do you use when visiting the Thameside Complex?

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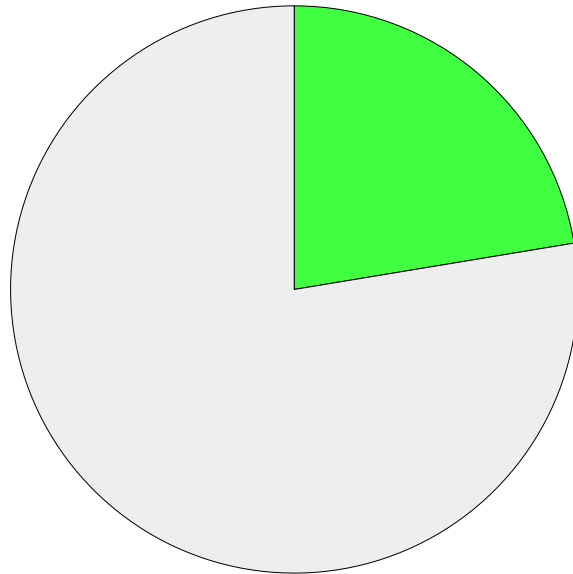


	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
 Museum	13.77%	13.90%	34.33%	46
 Library	35.03%	35.35%	87.31%	117
 Theatre	24.25%	24.47%	60.45%	81
 Registry office	2.10%	2.11%	5.22%	7
 Cafe	14.67%	14.80%	36.57%	49
 Other	9.28%	9.37%	23.13%	31
 [No Response]	0.90%	--	2.24%	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>334</b>

which services do you use, if other

Question responses: 30 (22.39%)

If other, please specify:



	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	22.39%	100.00%	30
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	77.61%	--	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				TRANS-VOL	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web
4				Trans Vol	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
8				Trans-Vol	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
11				Trust	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web
12				Transvol	19/03/15 10:40	0.1	Submitted	web
21				transvol	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web
23				transvol	21/03/15 18:01	0.1	Submitted	web
24				CSV Charity on 2nd floor by lift	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web
29				Foyer for book club and read aloud	01/04/15 08:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
32				Multi Zone	01/04/15 09:09	0.4	Submitted	letter
36				Registration services	01/04/15 09:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
46				Rhyme time	01/04/15 09:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
50				Registration Services and Rhyme Time	01/04/15 09:47	0.3	Submitted	letter

which services do you use, if other

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
53				Rhyme makers	01/04/15 10:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
57				quiet space/sitting area	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
59				Baby Rhyme Time	01/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
60				registration services	01/04/15 10:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
61				Registration Services	01/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter
63				Registration Services	01/04/15 10:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
65				Registration Services	01/04/15 10:39	0.2	Submitted	letter
68				Registration Services	01/04/15 10:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
70				Registration Services	01/04/15 10:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
80				Other meetings	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
89				computer lessons	07/04/15 10:22	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
92				Registration Services	07/04/15 10:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
95				Registation Services	07/04/15 10:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
109				knitting grou and sometimes quite room, call out loud	15/04/15 15:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
110				Photocopying, Computing, Printing	16/04/15 07:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
118				The computer	16/04/15 07:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
119				Computers	16/04/15 07:53	0.2	Submitted	letter



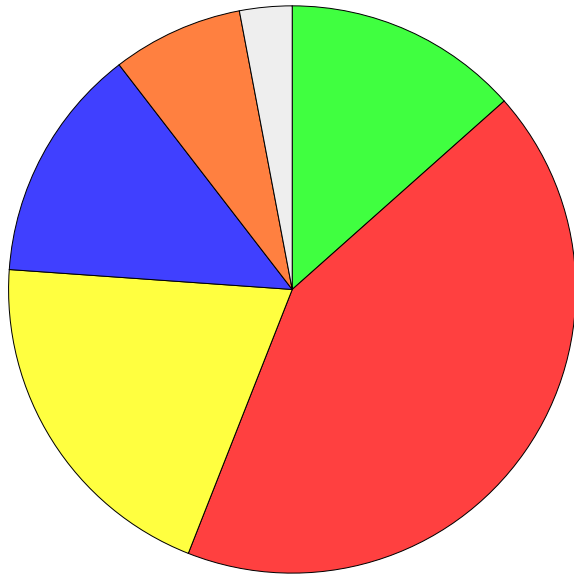
How often do you use those services?

### How often do you use those services?

Question responses: **130 (97.01%)**

How often do you use those services?

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
	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Daily	13.43%	13.85%	18
<span style="color: red;">■</span> 1 to 3 times a week	42.54%	43.85%	57
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Once a fortnight	20.15%	20.77%	27
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Once a month	13.43%	13.85%	18
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Less than once a month	7.46%	7.69%	10
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	2.99%	--	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

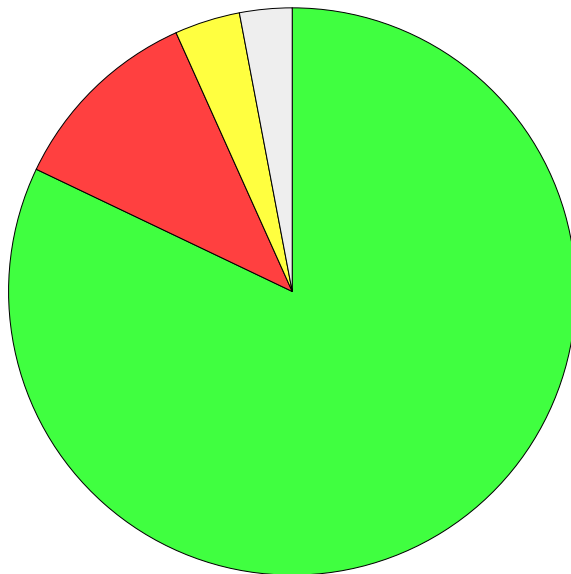
Do you think the Thameside Complex is an iconic building within Grays that benefits the look and feel of Grays?

**Do you think the Thameside Complex is an iconic building within Grays that benefits the look and feel of Grays?**

Question responses: **130 (97.01%)**

Do you think the Thameside Complex is an iconic building within Grays that benefits the look and feel of Grays?

	<b>% Total</b>	<b>% Answer</b>	<b>Count</b>
 Yes	82.09%	84.62%	110
 No	11.19%	11.54%	15
 No opinion	3.73%	3.85%	5
 [No Response]	2.99%	--	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>



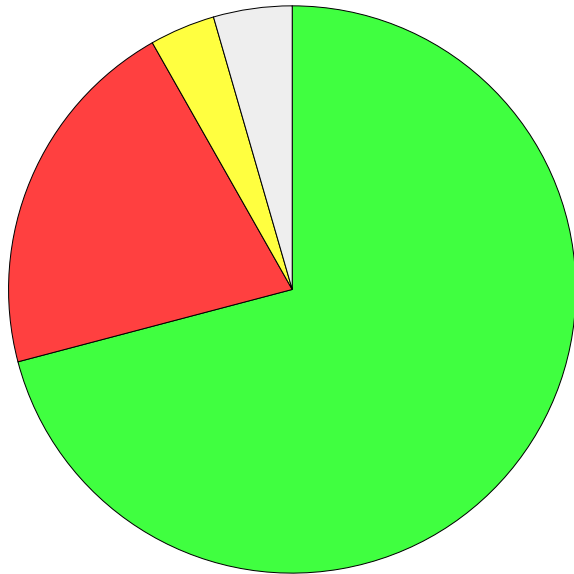
How convenient is the Thameside Complex to where you live?

### How convenient is the Thameside Complex to where you live?

Question responses: **128 (95.52%)**

How convenient is the Thameside Complex to where you live?

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	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Very Convenient	70.90%	74.22%	95
<span style="color: red;">■</span> About right	20.90%	21.88%	28
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Not convenient	3.73%	3.91%	5
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	4.48%	--	6
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

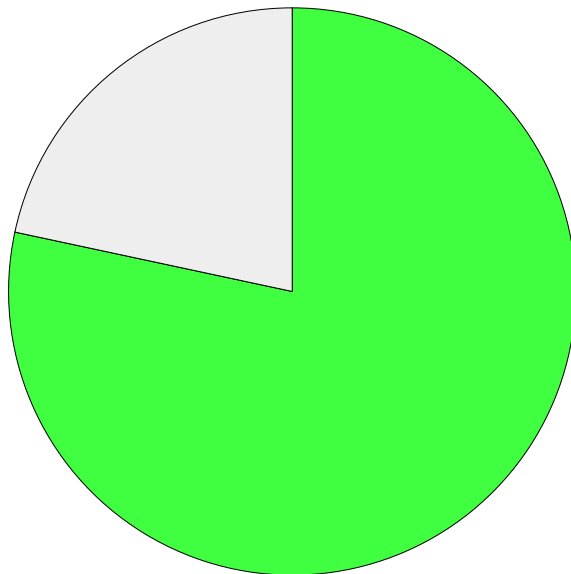
Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

Question responses: **105 (78.36%)**

Please explain the reason for your response to the above question:

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	78.36%	100.00%	105
<span style="color: gray;">■</span> [No Response]	21.64%	--	29
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				Thameside Complex is very accessible for elderly and disabled residents, it is central to Grays Town Centre.	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
4				It is easy to access when I visit Trans Vol. It is disabled friendly and the office is spacious.	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web
5				Its not to far from where i live and is easy to access as it is close to the train, bus stations and shops.	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web
6				Centre of Town easy access parking right outside in Cromwell Road and Orsett Road	18/03/15 16:04	0.1	Submitted	web
7				I work in the Thameside complex and travel approx 10 miles from my home each day	18/03/15 16:10	0.1	Submitted	web
8				To seek information on the day trips that Trans-Vol have to offer, and other services that they provide for the elderly and wheelchair uses.	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
9				There is ample parking, it's close to the bus and rail station. It's a peaceful place to study away from the hustle and bustle of grays	18/03/15 18:18	0.1	Submitted	web
10				Easy parking	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				I live in Grays.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
12				Working part time for Transvol our office is located within the building and parking facilities within easy access	19/03/15 10:40	0.1	Submitted	web
13				We use the Thameside a lot. We go to shows, the library and the cafe quite regularly. It is easy to get to and very convenient for us as we have to get public transport to get to Grays. It is central and easy to get to.	19/03/15 11:09	0.1	Submitted	web
14				Only a short car or bus ride away from where we live	19/03/15 16:17	0.2	Submitted	web
16		Major Trevor Rawson		It is a central venue for the community to meet and socialise	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
17		Major Trevor Rawson		It is a central venue for the community to meet and socialise	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
18				I live in LittleThurock and the complex is just a short walk from home.	20/03/15 11:40	0.1	Submitted	web
19				It's just down the road from where I live and has parking just behind building which makes it easier.	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web
20				It's just down the road from where I live and has parking just behind building which makes it easier.	20/03/15 23:31	0.1	Submitted	web
21				there is a car park near by and local bus and train stations are not too far	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
22				I can get a bus from Tilbury to Grays and it isn't far to walk either end	21/03/15 12:48	0.1	Submitted	web
24				I am a resident of Grays and this is my local theatre, library, office it is central and easy to park very nearby, it is not isolated from the town like the civic offices and is a general throughway on a main thorough road, easy to find by car and on foot.	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web
25				Its in walking distance of where I live and everything is under the one roof.	30/03/15 17:41	0.1	Submitted	web
26				Plenty of parking in the Town Centre. Local buses with bus stops near.	31/03/15 19:11	0.1	Submitted	web
27				Easy parking, Central location for Thurrock, good access to public transport.	31/03/15 19:20	0.1	Submitted	web
29				I live in Grays	01/04/15 08:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
32				A bus ride away	01/04/15 09:09	0.4	Submitted	letter
33				Nearby	01/04/15 09:11	0.2	Submitted	letter
35				Close to town centre, north of railway line	01/04/15 09:16	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
36				Car park and town centre	01/04/15 09:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
37				Just down the road	01/04/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
38				Easy to reach by bus	01/04/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
39				Live in Grays	01/04/15 09:25	0.2	Submitted	letter
40				Because its close and has everything I need	01/04/15 09:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
41				Easily accessible for train/bus	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
42				Within walking distance	01/04/15 09:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
43				I like the way they make things available for the people	01/04/15 09:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
44				Short walk	01/04/15 09:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
48				Within walking distance	01/04/15 09:44	0.2	Submitted	letter
49				Close to the stations	01/04/15 09:45	0.2	Submitted	letter



Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
50				Pass it on way to town	01/04/15 09:47	0.3	Submitted	letter
51				Its within 1 1/4 miles from my home and I can walk to it or catch a bus to nearby	01/04/15 09:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
52				Quite adequate parking	01/04/15 10:01	0.2	Submitted	letter
53				Walking distance surrounded by shops so easy to pop in whenever in town	01/04/15 10:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
54				A few minutes walk from home	01/04/15 10:12	0.2	Submitted	letter
55				It is central/easy access on my walk to or from home	01/04/15 10:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
56				Easy transport	01/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter
57				Easy access/attractive building. Good staff	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
59				It is in walking distance	01/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
60				It is within walking distance	01/04/15 10:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
61				Its the closest to us and right at the middle of town centre	01/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
62				It has all I need in one spot	01/04/15 10:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
63				On a bus route	01/04/15 10:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
64				10 mins walk	01/04/15 10:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
66				Close to home and has good parking facilities	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
67				Easy walk/bus ride	01/04/15 10:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
68				Central situation	01/04/15 10:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
69				Near to where I live	01/04/15 10:48	0.2	Submitted	letter
71				Very close to my house	01/04/15 11:59	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				I live in Tilbury. Its far and I have to park all the way in Morrisons with two babies so it should provide parking	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
76				loads to do	01/04/15 12:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
79				I can walk comfortable from my home to the complex - not having to worry about buses or a lift	01/04/15 12:37	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
80				The previous carnegie library was iconic. The current Thameside is useful and functional. Its close to where I live :-)	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
81				I can reach it by public transport to Grays and then a short walk or go by car and park conveniently.	02/04/15 10:59	0.1	Submitted	web
83				Limited parking facilities especially at sch holiday times	04/04/15 09:36	0.1	Submitted	web
84				Only 20 minutes walk away	07/04/15 10:13	0.3	Submitted	letter
85				I work close by	07/04/15 10:16	0.2	Submitted	letter
86				I dont like parking fees to go to library	07/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter
87				Within walking distance	07/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
88				I live nearby	07/04/15 10:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
90				Within walking distance	07/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
91				Within walking distance	07/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
93				Close enough to walk	07/04/15 10:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
94				local, parking good	07/04/15 10:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
95				I can walk to or park easily when I need to use the facilities offered	07/04/15 10:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
96				Less than 10 mins walk	07/04/15 10:38	0.2	Submitted	letter
97				Being a pensioner its local and central Grays	07/04/15 10:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
98				Within walking distance	09/04/15 12:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
99				It is easy to get to by either car or public transport.	09/04/15 14:32	0.1	Submitted	web
100				I live in North Grays and drive to the complex. There are a number of paid parking spaces available close by the complex but there are not always enough spaces available especially when there is a show on in the theatre.	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web
102				Accessible by car or 15 minute walk	15/04/15 15:25	0.2	Submitted	letter
103				Because I can catch a bus outside my house straight into Grays	15/04/15 15:30	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
104				I live in Chafford Hundred - 15 minutes drive	15/04/15 15:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
106				Most buses go into Grays where the theatre is situated	15/04/15 15:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
107				10 minutes down road and near work	15/04/15 15:44	0.2	Submitted	letter
108				Book for the children are always available and staff are so friendly and helpful	15/04/15 15:47	0.2	Submitted	letter
109				Non fiction floor and knitting group, call out loud	15/04/15 15:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
110				Easy parking neaby. Not too far to walk	16/04/15 07:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
111				Ease of access for disabled person	16/04/15 07:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
112				centre of town	16/04/15 07:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
113				Central and close	16/04/15 07:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
117				Good hours. About 15 mins from home	16/04/15 07:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
118				Because it gives me a lot of information	16/04/15 07:51	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
119				Because it gives me a lot of information	16/04/15 07:53	0.2	Submitted	letter
121				It is very important to have this complex right in the middle of Grays for all to access in the same way that we can access Morrisons.	23/04/15 20:35	0.1	Submitted	web
122				Very convenient, its within walking distance.	28/04/15 07:55	0.1	Submitted	web
123				As I visit my mother	07/05/15 08:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
124				Local shopping area to me	07/05/15 08:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
126				It is a 15 minute walk from my house	07/05/15 08:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
127				I can walk into town and enjoy show at night or library by day	07/05/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
128				We live nearby	07/05/15 09:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
129				Live within 5 mins walk	07/05/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
130				Good service, friendly staff	07/05/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
131				I live very close	07/05/15 09:24	0.2	Submitted	letter

Please explain the reason for your choice in the above question.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Consultation Point</b>	<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Agent</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Type</b>
134				Within walking distance	07/05/15 09:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
135				I live in Aveley and only visit when I come to Grays	07/05/15 09:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
136				Easy walking distance and easy to reach shops from it	07/05/15 09:46	0.2	Submitted	letter

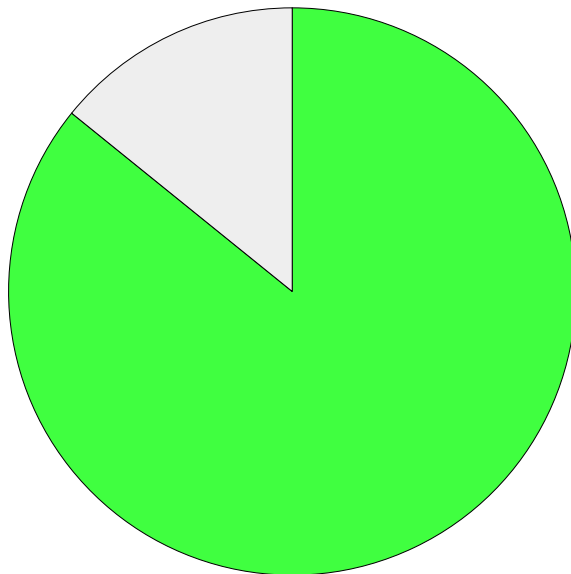
**What do you like about the Thameside Complex?**

 Question responses: **115 (85.82%)**

What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	85.82%	100.00%	115
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	14.18%	--	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				The location. Central to Town Centre.	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web
4				It is easy to access, disabled friendly and central.	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web



## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
5				I like the facilities in the building and the easy access.	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web
6				Large, roomy, welcoming, helpful staff	18/03/15 16:04	0.1	Submitted	web
8				The location is excellent for the community to access and meet up with friends that have disabilities	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
9				it's heritage, the openness	18/03/15 18:18	0.1	Submitted	web
10				The library is very welcoming and the new self service things are good	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				It's been part of my life for thirty years. The library got me through school, college, university and into my first job. While the rest of Grays becomes a trash-filled, Blade Runner-esque sell-out, Thameside is the last standing icon of freedom and culture.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web
12				It is easily accessible for the many disabled people who travel with Transvol,has access to lifts which might not be the case in other buildings,also ideally located for access	19/03/15 10:40	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
13				Everything. The theatre is comfortable and put on some very good shows and as we are pensioners, it is easy to get to. The library is very convenient and the staff very helpful. We also use Trans Vol and it is easy to get to their office if we need to speak to someone personally. They are also very helpful in every way.	19/03/15 11:09	0.1	Submitted	web
14				it has a varied programme of events and the pantomime is excelent and very reasonably priced.  it would be a travesty if it was not there	19/03/15 16:17	0.2	Submitted	web
16		Major Trevor Rawson		Theatre has good veiw wherever you sit	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
17		Major Trevor Rawson		Theatre has good veiw wherever you sit	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
18				I ues the library to borrow books, use the the computer system to research family history, and to get local information.	20/03/15 11:40	0.1	Submitted	web
19				The range of services it provides all under one roof.I love the library. It's a great size library.You need at least one library in Thurrock that is the flagship for all the others and provides	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web

## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				<p>enough space for studying(especially with the new college opened up in town) , internet access and of course a variety of books.I love to go to the theatre too and have been to see many shows at the Thameside.We need a theatre in Thurrock to enrich the area for young and old alike.I love that the theatre and library are under the same roof.</p>				
20				<p>The range of services it provides all under one roof.I love the library. It's a great size library.You need at least one library in Thurrock that is the flagship for all the others and provides enough space for studying(especially with the new college opened up in town) , internet access and of course a variety of books.I love to go to the theatre too and have been to see many shows at the Thameside.We need a theatre in Thurrock to enrich the area for young and old alike.I love that the theatre and library are under the same roof.</p>	20/03/15 23:31	0.1	Submitted	web
21				<p>It has a pleasant atmosphere is clean and tidy.. Is accessible for wheelchair users</p> <p>It is in a safe area</p>	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
22				It has a local theatre	21/03/15 12:48	0.1	Submitted	web
23				Easily accessible to the community in the centre of Grays	21/03/15 18:01	0.1	Submitted	web
24				it's not so big you have to ask people the way when you come in - the lifts are on view and easily accessible, it feels friendly and is USER friendly and easily accessible when on the way home.	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web
25				As I said before everything is under one roof. All departments easy to get to. Friendly atmosphere. The Building is easy to get to. Parking at the back of the building.	30/03/15 17:41	0.1	Submitted	web
26				Plenty of books and other media for hire. Nice theatre within the local vicinity of where I live. Easy access for disabled. Good IT facilities.	31/03/15 19:11	0.1	Submitted	web
27				good signage, other events on site, e.g literary Frstival, lifts, easy to access all facilities.	31/03/15 19:20	0.1	Submitted	web
29				My children and me grew up with "Thameside Complex" it has served our families well for reading, entertainment etc purposes. I like its location and helpful staff.	01/04/15 08:14	0.2	Submitted	letter

## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
30				There os nothing not to like about Thameside Complex	01/04/15 08:58	0.2	Submitted	letter
31				Everything under one roof and location.	01/04/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
32				Convenient place to meet in Grays.	01/04/15 09:09	0.4	Submitted	letter
33				Everything in one building	01/04/15 09:11	0.2	Submitted	letter
34				Friendly. Informative. Unfied	01/04/15 09:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
35				Close to centre. Open plan library. Muuseum relates to local history. Well looked after, warm and clean	01/04/15 09:16	0.2	Submitted	letter
37				There is nothing I dont like	01/04/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
38				Use of computers, up to date. I get a lot of work done here	01/04/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
39				Staff very helpful. Oasis of quiet in a busy town, useful for research and book references	01/04/15 09:25	0.2	Submitted	letter
40				Its friendly and inviting!	01/04/15 09:27	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
41				It looks inviting from the outside and welcoming from the inside. Beautiful layout.	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
42				Convenient for me to get to	01/04/15 09:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
44				I enjoy the library and its layout, the childrens area is away from the adults	01/04/15 09:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
49				Warm welcoming staff and resourceful for community information	01/04/15 09:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
50				Everything in one place	01/04/15 09:47	0.3	Submitted	letter
53				Its convenient, it has the things I need, books for kids, rhyme makers for toddlers, computers, printers, play/reading area for children. The rhyme makers staff are very welcoming and my children and myself enjoy attending very much	01/04/15 10:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
54				Alot of facilities under one roof	01/04/15 10:12	0.2	Submitted	letter
55				Well layed out - spacious - good facilities - helpful staff - easy access	01/04/15 10:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
56				Atmosphere is friendly and helpful	01/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter

## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
57				The good use of computers/scanners/printers and books	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
58				Location is ideal	01/04/15 10:21	0.2	Submitted	letter
60				Everything is in one place	01/04/15 10:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
61				The library	01/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter
62				Its like visiting a friend and all the staff so out of their way to see to all our needs	01/04/15 10:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
63				Convenience of all the services even if I dont use them all personally	01/04/15 10:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
64				Well run and especially like the childrens area - my granddaughter uses	01/04/15 10:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
65				Library. Theatre.	01/04/15 10:39	0.2	Submitted	letter
66				This complex holds many of the reasons people come to Grays before going into the two centre/morrissons	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
67				Library - as Chafford Hundred library closed	01/04/15 10:43	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
68				It affords access to the whole community (children to OAP) to a complete range of social and educational facilities	01/04/15 10:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
69				Convenient and good looking	01/04/15 10:48	0.2	Submitted	letter
70				Everything is in one place and is easily accessible	01/04/15 10:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
71				Provide various services to local	01/04/15 11:59	0.2	Submitted	letter
72				Very friendly staff. Very Clean and catering	01/04/15 12:02	0.2	Submitted	letter
73				A variety of well ran events are always available apart from the library. A well run integral part of our community	01/04/15 12:04	0.2	Submitted	letter
74				Size	01/04/15 12:12	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				I like its spacious	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
76				I like everything	01/04/15 12:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
77				Everything	01/04/15 12:29	0.2	Submitted	letter



## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
78				I think all the facilities in the library are good with a good choice of books and easy access to computers.	01/04/15 12:31	0.2	Submitted	letter
79				I like the complex as it is central to Grays. Has eay access, it is a light and welcoming building. Nothing negative	01/04/15 12:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
80				The building is a "block", a "shoebox" in the centre of mainly victorian surroundings.  It is useful especially the theatre, library and museum etc.	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
81				The location is easy to reach. I like that everything is in one place, such as theatre, library, museum.	02/04/15 10:59	0.1	Submitted	web
82				It's combination of leisure options helps Grays thrive. I especially like the library though. As the borough's largest library, it is a delight to visit and it would be sad to see it go.	02/04/15 22:09	0.1	Submitted	web
84				Friendly efficient staff, comfortable sitting, the daily newspaper service.	07/04/15 10:13	0.3	Submitted	letter
85				Opening hours	07/04/15 10:16	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
88				Staff, easy to use, spacious	07/04/15 10:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
90				It is convenient and would really miss the library. I always aim to have a library book on hand to read	07/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
91				Like the library and the service received. Like the intimate theatre. Like the coffee served and service.	07/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter
93				Tidy, good condition, helpful staff	07/04/15 10:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
94				Local, always good shows	07/04/15 10:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
95				Clearly laid out, can use each area with ease when bringing my son in his buggy. Theatre cheaper than others in the area. Staff are very friendly and helpful and know the building well, feel safe.	07/04/15 10:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
96				Alot of different things are housed including voluntary groups	07/04/15 10:38	0.2	Submitted	letter
97				Location and friendly and very helpful staff	07/04/15 10:41	0.2	Submitted	letter

## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
98				The fact that it seems to be civilised and a place of cultural value ie. promoting art, literature and local history	09/04/15 12:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
99				It is an impressive building and never makes you feel crowded. I have grown up with the library and museum being an important part of my childhood and i now take my children there so it feels part of my family heritage. My parents took me to the theatre on many occasions as a child and i now do the same with my children who especially enjoy the pantomimes. It is nice to be able to use the different facilities under one roof.	09/04/15 14:32	0.1	Submitted	web
100				The fact that there are a number of services available in the one complex . I like the fact that there is a theatre in the complex but have a number of issues with it (see below)	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web
101				yes want to stay open	13/04/15 16:49	0.1	Submitted	web
102				Quiet and relaxed atmosphere  Range of good facilities eg. library, theatre, cafe  Staff very polite and friendly	15/04/15 15:25	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				One of the few good facilities in Grays itself				
103				I like using this library because its light and airy and all the staff are very helpful and friendly	15/04/15 15:30	0.2	Submitted	letter
104				Has a very welcoming feel	15/04/15 15:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
105				Love the library	15/04/15 15:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
106				It is central in Grays. It houses the library which has a wide range of books. The theatre is intimate and puts on a wide variety of both amateur and professional productions.	15/04/15 15:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
107				Open and inviting very clean	15/04/15 15:44	0.2	Submitted	letter
108				Staff are friendly, clean	15/04/15 15:47	0.2	Submitted	letter
109				The service is helpful. The library is clean and relaxing	15/04/15 15:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
110				Large airy building with several amenities under one roof. Friendly and knowledgeable staff	16/04/15 07:35	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
111				Staff very helpful in library and good sized theatre	16/04/15 07:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
112				Theatre is the only one that local people can get to and is a services to children	16/04/15 07:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
113				Love the theatre, cafe and library, easy parking	16/04/15 07:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
114				Centralisation	16/04/15 07:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
115				I like the fact that every thing is under one roof. I like browsing round looking for favourite authors. The cookery section and garden section	16/04/15 07:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
116				Its an educational outing for my son	16/04/15 07:47	0.2	Submitted	letter
117				Good atmosphere, helpful staff, clean and tidy	16/04/15 07:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
118				I like that we can use the computer that ten and over play in the baby area	16/04/15 07:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
119				That we can use the computers for free. That 10 and over play in the baby area	16/04/15 07:53	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
120				I like being able to use the curatural services that Thurrock has to offer in one place	16/04/15 15:27	0.1	Submitted	web
121				See above, Gives a sense of belonging to my local community.	23/04/15 20:35	0.1	Submitted	web
122				That it offers a variety of things, when my son was younger we used the library every week, and he loved going, now i use it fortnightly. I have seen many shows there, and it is move accessible and reasonably priced for many people.	28/04/15 07:55	0.1	Submitted	web
123				This complex has been an inspiration to so many, to move it takes away opportunities for all to learn and enjoy	07/05/15 08:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
124				It offers a lot and is informative	07/05/15 08:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
125				Opening Hours. Accessibility	07/05/15 08:54	0.2	Submitted	letter
126				I enjoy being able to go to the cafe to have a light snack and a pot of tea in a convivial atmosphere. I then like to browse in the library itself (including the DVD section and the biography section). There is nothing I dislike about the complex.	07/05/15 08:57	0.2	Submitted	letter

## What do you like about the Thameside Complex?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
127				I like the complex and it has moved with the times, it gives variety and caters for all. I am old school and would like the libraries to be quieter.	07/05/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
128				Everything is under one roof. Its in the centre of Grays.	07/05/15 09:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
131				There is free wifi	07/05/15 09:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
132				I dont have to use transport. And it is not inconvenient.	07/05/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
133				Library	07/05/15 09:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
134				The library - Good selection of books and other services. The theatre - Always good performances - especially the christmas panto	07/05/15 09:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
135				I love the library and its resources. I love that it has a cafe and museum	07/05/15 09:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
136				Like - Everything is in one place and its convenient for the town centre	07/05/15 09:46	0.2	Submitted	letter

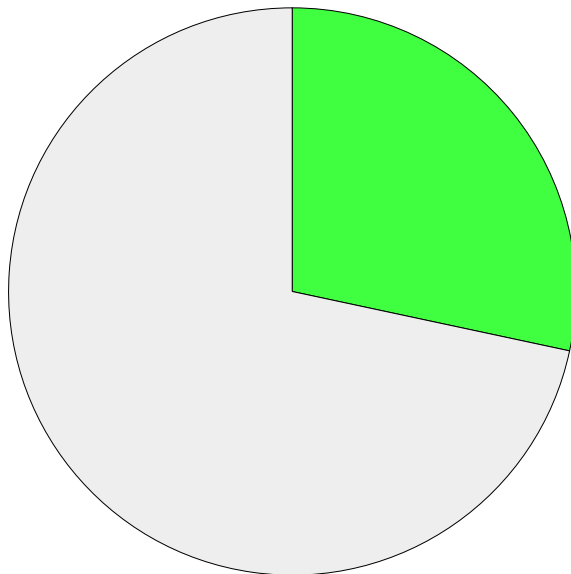
**what do you not like about the Thameside complex?**

 Question responses: **38 (28.36%)**

What do you not like about the Thameside Complex?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	28.36%	100.00%	38
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	71.64%	--	96
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				Parking prices in the Car Park in Cromwell Road + not enough parking spaces.	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web
4				Nothing.	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web



ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
5				I think the building could look nicer as it is abit run down.	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web
7				I think the building looks quite negeted and in need of soem TLC	18/03/15 16:10	0.1	Submitted	web
8				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy location</li> <li>• Excellent access for wheelchairs uses</li> <li>• Warm and friendly atmosphere</li> <li>• Good reception area</li> </ul>	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
9				It needs updating to meet modern technological needs	18/03/15 18:18	0.1	Submitted	web
10				The theatre seating is very cramped and the museum is too dark and creepy	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				The wi-fi should be better throughout, the DVD rental scheme should be more reasonable and fetching and they should use their subsidised money to put on some actual, professional theatre productions, not waste our money with amateur dramatics, strippers, psychics and tribute bands.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web
16		Major Trevor Rawson		Ugly exterior	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
17		Major Trevor Rawson		Ugly exterior	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
18				It could do with getting more books in the adult section and a faster computer system.	20/03/15 11:40	0.1	Submitted	web
19				The lighting isn't the best in the library and colour scheme could be a bit more cheerful. Also it's either too hot or too cold in study rooms. They can't seem to get temperature right.	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web
20				The lighting isn't the best in the library and colour scheme could be a bit more cheerful. Also it's either too hot or too cold in study rooms. They can't seem to get temperature right.	20/03/15 23:31	0.1	Submitted	web
21				nothing to dislike	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web
22				Bit dark and dingy	21/03/15 12:48	0.1	Submitted	web
24				people looking miserable as they feel uncertain about their futures.	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web
25				N/A	30/03/15 17:41	0.1	Submitted	web
26				The fact that you are thinking of closing it.	31/03/15 19:11	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
31				All the rumours about closures.	01/04/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
41				Toilet not on all floors???	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
49				Early closing hours	01/04/15 09:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
51				Eating in library areas is allowed. Loud talking by people bot using the library for library purposes is allowed. The use of mobile ophones is endemic and totally tolerated to such an extent that it has become an all pervasice menace moit of the time.	01/04/15 09:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
52				Its use as after school club, youth club without adequate supervision, telephone chats in room	01/04/15 10:01	0.2	Submitted	letter
66				Longer opening hours for the cafe	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				Its got no parking	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
78				I dont like the self service printers as ofte they charge you for copies you do not need. The staff in the cafe are rude as they never say simple things such as please or thank you when serving.	01/04/15 12:31	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
81				Doesn't look very nice, needs lots of attention.	02/04/15 10:59	0.1	Submitted	web
82				The cafe, as it is rarely open and serves a fraction of people on a daily basis where opening it for a few more hours would kick in some more trade.	02/04/15 22:09	0.1	Submitted	web
83				building is old Not enough lift capacity during theatre performances	04/04/15 09:36	0.1	Submitted	web
84				Perhaps, these days, too many conversations - loss of quiet	07/04/15 10:13	0.3	Submitted	letter
100				The theatre design was compromised from the very start of its life in a number of ways - it's neither fish nor fowl as the expression goes. Is it a theatre or lecture room or cinema? It works as a cinema and a lecture theatre far better than it does a stage for live shows. There is little or no wing space, the floor to ceiling height on stage is so restricted as to make it impossible for many touring professional companies with scenery to visit. Being on the third floor makes scenery access almost impossible, There are no appropriate dressing/green rooms, no prompt corner, a poor lighting rig with severe limitations both on stage and FOH. None of these faults can be rectified	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				whilst the theatre is still in that space so other venues should be considered and options such as a partnership with a private sector company should be actively pursued				
107				Better all under one roof	15/04/15 15:44	0.2	Submitted	letter
120				The building is somewhat tired and either needs a big dose of care and attention or a rebuild!	16/04/15 15:27	0.1	Submitted	web
122				I don't think the entrance is as welcoming as it could be, a bit clinical.	28/04/15 07:55	0.1	Submitted	web
129				Entrance cafe is underused	07/05/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
131				However this does not always work, which is extremely inconvenient as I have to use the internet for my studies. Please fix this! Two routers maybe?	07/05/15 09:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
134				There's nothing not to dislike about it	07/05/15 09:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
136				Dislike - Nothing	07/05/15 09:46	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

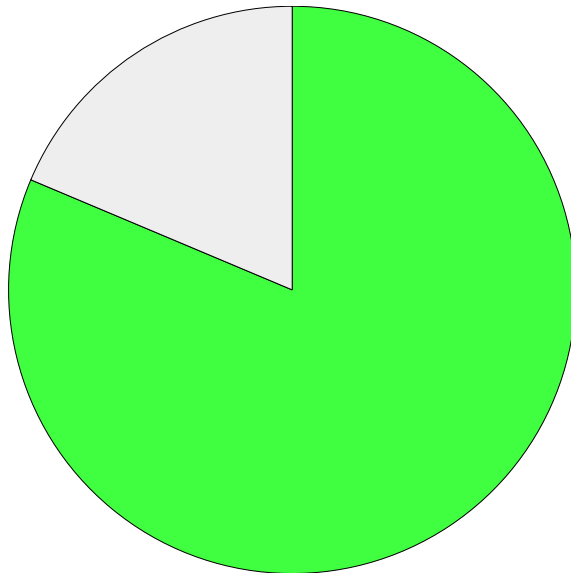
**If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre**

Question responses: **109 (81.34%)**

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in Thurrock? For example, Thameside Theatre

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	81.34%	100.00%	109
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	18.66%	--	25
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				As long as it is accessible for elderly and disabled visitors.	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web
4				Trans Vol is perfect where it is. It's easy to access for me especially as I	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				visit Grays a lot by bus and it's easy to pop in when I need to pay money.				
5				I would use them if they were still close to where they are at the moment in grays not if they were further away in surrounding areas.	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web
6				Yes	18/03/15 16:04	0.1	Submitted	web
7				Yes	18/03/15 16:10	0.1	Submitted	web
8				Not if they were located in different places	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
9				No, on pure support for the people that work in the building who will lose their jobs in a downsizing operation	18/03/15 18:18	0.1	Submitted	web
10				Depending where the relocation was and how accessible it is.	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				I wouldn't use the theatre if it were to relocate - the quality of the shows is awful. I would use the library because I need to, like to and because it's my democratic right to, but would hope that should it relocate, it won't be downsized or compromised - remember only the most wretched councils screw over its library service.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				The museum does nothing for me - it's become a hangout for school kids!				
13				It all depends on where they were moved to. If they were in central Grays maybe we could but anywhere else, we would not be able to get there if there was not a regular bus service.	19/03/15 11:09	0.1	Submitted	web
14				probably not	19/03/15 16:17	0.2	Submitted	web
16		Major Trevor Rawson		yes	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
17		Major Trevor Rawson		yes	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
18				It would depend on where the alternative was situated.	20/03/15 11:40	0.1	Submitted	web
19				Only if the services improved with more money going in to improve them.Can't the library and theatre go in the state cinema building if you can't keep the thameside or if you're scrapping the walk in medical centre ( another good service) can't the library go in there? As the library needs a big area.I struggle to find a spot to study some days as lots need the space for quiet study time.	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web



If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
20				Only if the services improved with more money going in to improve them.Can't the library and theatre go in the state cinema building if you can't keep the thameside or if you're scrapping the walk in medical centre ( another good service) can't the library go in there? As the library needs a big area.I struggle to find a spot to study some days as lots need the space for quiet study time.	20/03/15 23:31	0.1	Submitted	web
21				It would depend where they were rehoused	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web
22				Depends on what the new Theatre would look like. It needs a refurbishment whether it goes or stays as the seats look worn, they are not very big and the spacing between seats/rows/leg room is very small and uncomfortable. And also depends if it is on a convenient bus route, or has better parking facilities.	21/03/15 12:48	0.1	Submitted	web
23				no	21/03/15 18:01	0.1	Submitted	web
24				Not really as they would not be accessible by car as there is no parking or very little elsewhere in Grays.	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
25				Depends where it was and if there was parking.	30/03/15 17:41	0.1	Submitted	web
26				No because where it is now it is convenient to get to and there are local restaurants and pubs to go to for a meal before or after a show.	31/03/15 19:11	0.1	Submitted	web
27				No.	31/03/15 19:20	0.1	Submitted	web
29				Yes, although I like the feel of the library complex	01/04/15 08:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
34				Yes	01/04/15 09:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
35				I would still use the services but I question if they could be as well provided as currently within the Thameside building	01/04/15 09:16	0.2	Submitted	letter
36				Yes	01/04/15 09:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
38				Yes but I prefer it here	01/04/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
39				Would not be happy to use services in separate venues as this is easy to access and very convenient to me as a pensioner	01/04/15 09:25	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
40				I would prefer it to be all together as a communal building	01/04/15 09:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
41				I'll prefer to have it at it's current venue	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
42				Depends where they are	01/04/15 09:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
44				Yes, if still withing walking distance	01/04/15 09:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
45				Yes Thameside Theatre	01/04/15 09:39	0.2	Submitted	letter
47				Yes	01/04/15 09:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
49				Yes	01/04/15 09:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
50				Not sure depends where it is	01/04/15 09:47	0.3	Submitted	letter
51				No. Why put the library in the cramped Thameside threatre. It is not a particularly large library as it is.	01/04/15 09:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
52				Doubtful	01/04/15 10:01	0.2	Submitted	letter
54				No	01/04/15 10:12	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
55				May be not if it was a long walk or off the bus route	01/04/15 10:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
56				Please dont move it	01/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter
57				Not really, it would loose the atmosphere of a library	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
58				No	01/04/15 10:21	0.2	Submitted	letter
59				It would depend how far away it was	01/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
60				Depends how far away they are	01/04/15 10:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
61				Not necessarily. Its convenient all together	01/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter
62				No way dont try to mend something that is not broken	01/04/15 10:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
63				No	01/04/15 10:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
64				Satisfied with existing venue - like all under one roof. May not use if elsewhere - depending on convenience	01/04/15 10:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
65				No	01/04/15 10:39	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
66				No I like the fact that all the services I use are under one roof and I can get a hot drink/sandwich	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
70				Probably not as often. It would be a tragedy for the town to lose the Thameside complex	01/04/15 10:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
71				Yes	01/04/15 11:59	0.2	Submitted	letter
72				I live in Upminster and still use them	01/04/15 12:02	0.2	Submitted	letter
73				Yes	01/04/15 12:04	0.2	Submitted	letter
74				Yes	01/04/15 12:12	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				Yes may be	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
76				I use it lots	01/04/15 12:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
78				I do not use Thameside Theatre because no seating is provided for bigger people who can't fit in a standard size chair	01/04/15 12:31	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
79				I would only use the services I frequent if they were still central Grays eg. walking distance from my home	01/04/15 12:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
80				I would use the services, library and theatre - here or elsewhere.	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
81				Possibly but depends how easy it is to get too and whether there is easy parking for the Theatre. Parking and walking to the theatre would definitely put me and my family off from buying tickets.	02/04/15 10:59	0.1	Submitted	web
82				I would, but I would miss the convenience. The Thameside building was designed as a library building right from the start. There is no other suitable space within the town or even the borough that would deliver a similar sized library at a cost effective way. The only answer should the complex be closed would mean to move the library but this would mean less space so less room for books and a horrible downer on the library service.	02/04/15 22:09	0.1	Submitted	web
83				depends where the services were located	04/04/15 09:36	0.1	Submitted	web
84				No	07/04/15 10:13	0.3	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
85				Perhaps not	07/04/15 10:16	0.2	Submitted	letter
87				Yes	07/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter
90				I expect I would	07/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
91				Would use library if still in Grays Not sure about theatre if moved to Purfleet	07/04/15 10:26	0.2	Submitted	letter
92				Yes	07/04/15 10:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
93				Yes - depends on location though	07/04/15 10:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
94				Yes	07/04/15 10:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
95				depends how accessible they are, both to the town and inside the building	07/04/15 10:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
96				Only if the facilities were in walking distance of my home would I use as often	07/04/15 10:38	0.2	Submitted	letter
97				No	07/04/15 10:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
98				Yes. What about state cinema?	09/04/15 12:57	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
99				If the services were split up i would find it difficult to get to each venue on a regular basis and i feel the Thameside complex is the best way to have library, museum, theatre etc so that people can use these various facilities at the same time and without having to walk or drive to many locations. I feel this is especially beneficial for the elderly or disabled so that they don't have to waste more time or money trying to reach each new location	09/04/15 14:32	0.1	Submitted	web
100				Yes - more so if it was a modern facility and was solely for theatrical use	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web
101				yes stay	13/04/15 16:49	0.1	Submitted	web
102				Yes but the location of Thameside Complex is not convenient for the town centre and high street	15/04/15 15:25	0.2	Submitted	letter
103				Where else could all the books be housed? The library should stay where it is in the centre of the town the same goes for the theatre.	15/04/15 15:30	0.2	Submitted	letter
104				It depends on where these services were located	15/04/15 15:32	0.2	Submitted	letter



If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
105				Yes probably	15/04/15 15:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
106				It depends where they were in the borough. As Grays is the central twon in Thurrock it would seem absurd to have the theatre elsewhere	15/04/15 15:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
109				Theatre seats need improving. New ceiling paper for maintenance on ground floor	15/04/15 15:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
110				Depends where they would be situated	16/04/15 07:35	0.2	Submitted	letter
111				Ideal where situated at present	16/04/15 07:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
112				Why move its great as it is	16/04/15 07:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
113				Only if easy to get to	16/04/15 07:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
114				No	16/04/15 07:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
115				Why break up a completely good seervice that satisfies the whole of the community	16/04/15 07:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
116				No we use all these services as they are under one roof	16/04/15 07:47	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
118				No I live to far to go so it is hard even to go daily. I live in Purfleet	16/04/15 07:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
119				No because I live to far to go one way and after another because I live in Purfleet	16/04/15 07:53	0.2	Submitted	letter
120				Probably not	16/04/15 15:27	0.1	Submitted	web
121				Better to have all togther.	23/04/15 20:35	0.1	Submitted	web
122				Maybe, depending on location, and I like the Theatre as it isn't too big.	28/04/15 07:55	0.1	Submitted	web
123				Maybe its a disgrace that it should be separated after all these years!!	07/05/15 08:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
124				Maybe, more convenient together	07/05/15 08:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
126				I would be less likely to, as the Thameside Complex is perfectly fit for purpose. The local council needs to support the Thameside Theatre as its Jewel in the Crown, rather than dumb down. You only have to look across the river at Dartford to see what can be achieved.	07/05/15 08:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
127				It would take getting used to, eventually. I expect I would, but many	07/05/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter

If you use the services within the Thameside, would you still use these services if they were housed in separate venues or elsewhere in the Borough? For example, Thameside Theatre

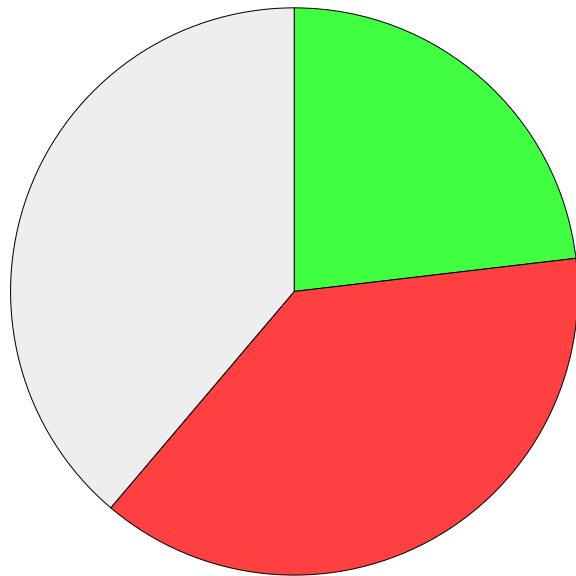
ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				may not use it as regularly and then stop				
128				Yes	07/05/15 09:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
129				Less likely to use if moved outside Grays	07/05/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
130				Probably	07/05/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
131				I'd use the library as long as I could get there on foot/by bike	07/05/15 09:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
133				No	07/05/15 09:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
134				This would depend where they would be located if local - yes - if further field - no	07/05/15 09:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
136				Probably not - what is the point in putting these facilities in separate venues;especially if the library is moved to the civic offices (as suggested)	07/05/15 09:46	0.2	Submitted	letter

**Do you think Thurrock Council could provide these services better?**

 Question responses: **82 (61.19%)**

Do you think Thurrock Council could provide these services better?

	<b>% Total</b>	<b>% Answer</b>	<b>Count</b>
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Yes	23.13%	37.80%	31
<span style="color: red;">■</span> No	38.06%	62.20%	51
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	38.81%	--	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

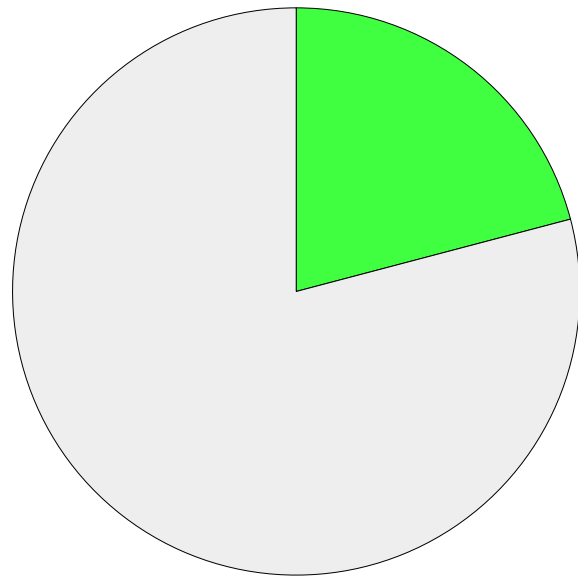


If so, how?

If so, how?

Question responses: **28 (20.90%)**

If so, how?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	20.90%	100.00%	28
<span style="color: lightgrey;">■</span> [No Response]	79.10%	--	106
Total	100.00%	100.00%	134

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
4				Keep Thameside Theatre how it is. There's no need to change it.. it's easy for all sorts of people and central/local for everybody in Grays.	18/03/15 15:54	0.1	Submitted	web
5				I think some things seem run down or not like they are trying to encourage	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				people to use the facilities so there could be more promotion or activities in the library or theatre.				
9				Put more money into the services and staff.	18/03/15 18:18	0.1	Submitted	web
10				Bringing the building up to date	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				Like Redcar, give the theatre an artistic director, a rep company, actor/crew apprenticeships and a presence in the fringe theatre scene. The library could be the makerspace of the borough - fuelling a new generation of skilled people with burning ambition and cultural aspiration! That building is a goldmine - why tout about that opera place in Purfleet, when you've been sitting on a fortune for years, in the heart of Grays. You call yourselves innovators of people, and value the artistic scene so much, and yet the Thameside complex, whether you like it or not, is the face of art in Thurrock, and has been since you opened it back in the 60s. Well - be innovative, then.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web
13				They could make sure that the Thameside Theatre is never closed, as I believe has been suggested. We	19/03/15 11:09	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				Would find it very difficult to get anywhere else in Thurrock, if there was not a regular bus service. We also use the train and Grays Station is very central. Not everywhere is accessible by train.				
19				Yes by stop keep cutting front line paid staff, who provide services for us public. We need staff around to help book show tickets too. There should be staff visible in all departments to help provide support when needed especially with the new college opened up in town .Why are there more and more services being cut when we need them in this deprived area? There's lots of houses going up in area, so we can't afford to cut services when more and more people are moving in.	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web
41				I believe so, friendly helpful staff in a very warm and loving environment	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
50				More for pre school	01/04/15 09:47	0.3	Submitted	letter
51				Thurrock Council should clamp down on eating in library. It should stop. Its noisy use by people not using library facilities (such people have all Grays to talk in including the two arcade and	01/04/15 09:50	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				morrison's cafe areas etc). Mobile phone use should be totally banned. They destroy the library				
66				The division of funds needs to be calculated so less is spent on expensive managers and more on services as we need libraries	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
71				Provide additional services to match people's requirements such as short courses for building new careers etc	01/04/15 11:59	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				Provide better parking also	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
78				Because in regards to overweight and disabled people the only way you can access some of the services is to sit in a wheelchair.	01/04/15 12:31	0.2	Submitted	letter
80				The library service is very good and I hope it continues. If you were to re-locate the library it is possible the complex would die...	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
83				More variety of books	04/04/15 09:36	0.1	Submitted	web
86				More library resources for studying	07/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter



ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
98				Keep services as they are !	09/04/15 12:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
100				As stated above, a stand alone theatre option needs to be provided	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web
111				More money spent on library especially range of audio books or agree with Essex libraries to rotate audio book collection	16/04/15 07:37	0.2	Submitted	letter
112				The service is great as it is	16/04/15 07:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
113				Use the building - rent out (at reasonable cost) to outside community and other organisations	16/04/15 07:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
114				Satisfied as they are	16/04/15 07:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
120				Investment in making the building more attractive.	16/04/15 15:27	0.1	Submitted	web
123				Dont shut it down or move it. Disgraceful!!!	07/05/15 08:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
126				The services you have in place are fine. Grays has already lost the rec (Grays athletics football ground) all in the name of building more flats and houses, which is what I suspect is at the heat of this matter. Maybe the	07/05/15 08:57	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				council could sell off their fancy offices and work out of somewhere more modest!!!!				
127				Yes but it all costs money to provide new services - so just keep up with new technology and encourage children coming into the library	07/05/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
132				Yes, respect the staff more and the management more power	07/05/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter

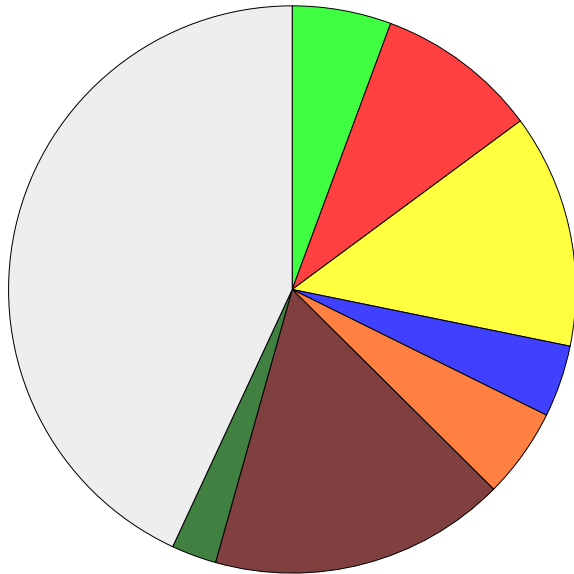
In relation to theatre provision within Thurrock, have you visited any other theatres near Thurrock in the last year?

**In relation to theatre provision within Thurrock, have you visited any other theatres near Thurrock in the last year?**

Question responses: **50 (37.31%)**

In relation to theatre provision within Thurrock, have you visited any other theatres near Thurrock in the last year?

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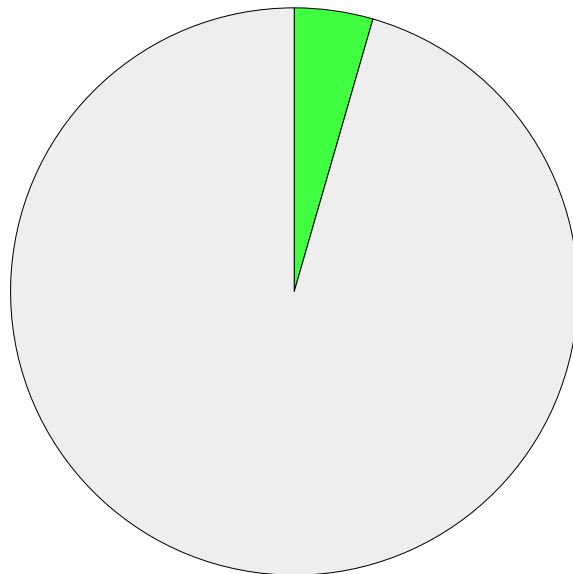


	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Orchard Theatre, Dartford	5.64%	9.91%	8.21%	11
The Palace Theatre, Westcliff-on-Sea	9.23%	16.22%	13.43%	18
The Cliffs Pavilion, Southend	13.33%	23.42%	19.40%	26
Towngate Theatre, Basildon	4.10%	7.21%	5.97%	8
The Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch	5.13%	9.01%	7.46%	10
London theatres	16.92%	29.73%	24.63%	33
Other	2.56%	4.50%	3.73%	5
[No Response]	43.08%	--	62.69%	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>195</b>

**If other, please specify**

 Question responses: **6 (4.48%)**

If other, please specify



	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	4.48%	100.00%	6
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	95.52%	--	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>

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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
16		Major Trevor Rawson		Buxton Opera House	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web
17		Major Trevor Rawson		Buxton Opera House	20/03/15 10:18	0.1	Submitted	web

If other, please specify

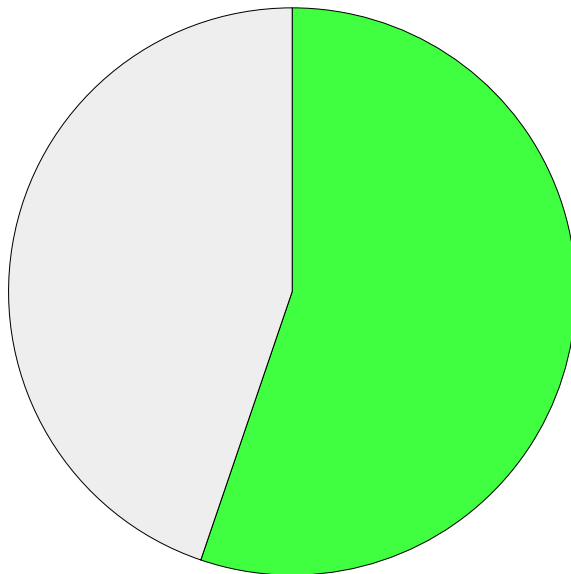
<b>ID</b>	<b>Consultation Point</b>	<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Agent</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Type</b>
49				Sadlers Well	01/04/15 09:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
81				Brookside Theatre, Romford	02/04/15 10:59	0.1	Submitted	web
133				Chelmsford	07/05/15 09:34	0.2	Submitted	letter
135				No, I am new to the area still exploring	07/05/15 09:40	0.2	Submitted	letter

**Any other comments?**

 Question responses: **74 (55.22%)**

Do you wish to make any other comments concerning the Thameside Complex?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<span style="color: green;">■</span> [Responses]	55.22%	100.00%	74
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> [No Response]	44.78%	--	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>134</b>



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ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
3				I think the Thameside Building should stay with all the facilities. I would not visit if the facilities were moved i.e. to the Council Offices, as I find it hard to push my spouse in a wheelchair over the Rail Crossing and Bridge to Council Offices.	18/03/15 15:28	0.1	Submitted	web

## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
5				I think the facilities are well used in the building but the building it self could use some work.	18/03/15 16:00	0.1	Submitted	web
7				I think the Thameside is worth saving and spending some money on to improve the facilities provided.	18/03/15 16:10	0.1	Submitted	web
8				As above	18/03/15 17:14	0.1	Submitted	web
10				i	18/03/15 22:00	0.1	Submitted	web
11				Make the car park cheaper - you're scaring away the punters! Maybe that's the plan? I suspect you want to turn it into flats, or a McDonalds or something, but I've had to sit in that library every week, and I promise you it's a busy place, and the staff look stressed for it! It has quiet moments, but then so does the Civic Offices - you wouldn't close that down! Thurrock has a great library, a publicly-funded theatre, all in one building (its own Barbican!) - can you not see the potential in that? If you don't, maybe you should knock it all down, it would kinder.	18/03/15 22:04	0.1	Submitted	web
13				I think I have covered everything above.	19/03/15 11:09	0.1	Submitted	web

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
19				If you are not going to put money into the thameside, then we want a bigger better building for our library, theatre and not forgetting museum.Why do we have to keep settling for less all the time?The area needs money put into it, not taken away.	20/03/15 23:29	0.1	Submitted	web
20				If you are not going to put money into the thameside, then we want a bigger better building for our library, theatre and not forgetting museum.Why do we have to keep settling for less all the time?The area needs money put into it, not taken away.	20/03/15 23:31	0.1	Submitted	web
21				it would be a crying shame to change the facilities, it is a very nice space.	21/03/15 11:34	0.1	Submitted	web
23				If we were to loose another amenity in the borough it would be disastrous for the community	21/03/15 18:01	0.1	Submitted	web
24				I love it here - it's like home and the building is known by everyone as they pass by either by car or on foot.	23/03/15 13:18	0.1	Submitted	web
25				Think it is in a good central position and parking is very important.	30/03/15 17:41	0.1	Submitted	web
26				I do not see any other building suitable for a Theatre in Grays. The Thameside Theatre has hosted productions by	31/03/15 19:11	0.1	Submitted	web



## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				Thurrock Court Players and these are very popular. If you are thinking of moving the Theatre this would be too far away and more expensive to go to.				
29				Since I retired, I recognise the services the library offers and I think they are going a splendid job.	01/04/15 08:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
31				Charge users a small yearly fee ie. 50p would raise money. Get the council to make up there minds instead of squabbling.	01/04/15 09:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
34				A valuable asset to the community	01/04/15 09:14	0.2	Submitted	letter
37				We need this theatre to stay!!!	01/04/15 09:20	0.2	Submitted	letter
38				I like the library to be in this building. The library here is useful and convenient	01/04/15 09:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
39				In a civilised social libraries and local theatres should be there for all to use	01/04/15 09:25	0.2	Submitted	letter
40				Keep the library as it is!	01/04/15 09:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
41				It is always a beautifully interesting to visit this building	01/04/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
42				Would not like to see this library closed or moved	01/04/15 09:33	0.2	Submitted	letter
51				Please do not close or restrict central Thameside library. Dagenham & Havering and Barking & Dagenham have all recently opened new or totally refurbished libraries. May I add that Grays Thameside library is not the best I have ever encountered over 70 years of life and in any place in England, Scotland or Wales???	01/04/15 09:50	0.2	Submitted	letter
52				If it isn't broken don't fix it. Other libraries in adjacent boroughs are expanding their services (London Boroughs) while Thurrock contracts	01/04/15 10:01	0.2	Submitted	letter
53				Toilets could be kept cleaner (gents)	01/04/15 10:03	0.2	Submitted	letter
54				They are fine as they are. No need to have any change	01/04/15 10:12	0.2	Submitted	letter
55				I think it is ok at the present time	01/04/15 10:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
56				It's ok for now. Computer system and access if very useful	01/04/15 10:17	0.2	Submitted	letter
57				Because the library is a great place already. Great library/good services and staff	01/04/15 10:19	0.2	Submitted	letter

## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
62				Please leave well alone	01/04/15 10:29	0.2	Submitted	letter
66				Think more about what the public want in relation to services and less about cutting these services to keep less necessary services running	01/04/15 10:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
67				This building is a necessary iconic building within Grays	01/04/15 10:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
68				As they exist - the facilities are excellent	01/04/15 10:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
72				Enough said	01/04/15 12:02	0.2	Submitted	letter
73				This facility must remain available to Thurrock residents	01/04/15 12:04	0.2	Submitted	letter
75				Thank you for the services I really appreciate it.	01/04/15 12:18	0.2	Submitted	letter
76				Its good as it is	01/04/15 12:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
79				I would request that the panel would seriously consider keeping the Thameside complex in same situ and with same services intact as at present. I use the library facilities, cafe, book club and read aloud apart from lending library regularly including	01/04/15 12:37	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				these as an important part of my social life.				
80				The Thameside complex is a useful meeting and social point of contact for many. Overall the spaces - the floors seem to be under used. A difficult decision - keep open or close? Re-vamp or demolish? Rent as offices or convert to flats? Build homes that fit in with the terraced homes - sensitively? A difficult decision in times of huge cuts. Good Luck !!!	01/04/15 12:42	0.2	Submitted	letter
82				The Thameside Complex dates back many years to when money from the Carnegie Foundation was used to fund the building of a library in Grays. It is sad that in 2015, the decision to close such a viral building to this town and it's people is one you are considering making. Many people value the services that the Complex provides. Community groups like Trans-Vol would be homeless without it. And it isn't just me that shares these concerns, I visited the library today and overheard staff talking about their worries. If the Thameside closed, they'd lose jobs, they'd lose space, they'd lose their purpose. Libraries aren't for profit. The building on the whole is not for profit. The Council is	02/04/15 22:09	0.1	Submitted	web

## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				well within it's rights to review spending patterns. But libraries are valued by far too many people, and so is the Thameside. It is not fair to close a building that is valued by so many.				
84				If the library were ever closed down (god forbid!) - after these 50 years in Grays I would leave and return to the civilised north.	07/04/15 10:13	0.3	Submitted	letter
85				In one place is logical and viable I do not believe any libraries should close within the area	07/04/15 10:16	0.2	Submitted	letter
89				Excellent service always	07/04/15 10:22	0.2	Submitted	letter
90				I am satisfied with the service as it is My concern is it would be a shame to lose the Thameside Complex. My main reason for coming into the town.	07/04/15 10:23	0.2	Submitted	letter
92				This is central and useful - Dont try to fix what isnt broken.	07/04/15 10:27	0.2	Submitted	letter
96				I am happy with Thameside Complex. If the Council is concentering moves, what would these be?	07/04/15 10:38	0.2	Submitted	letter
97				Moving the library will be another big mistake Thurrock Council has made.	07/04/15 10:41	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
98				Grays appears to have de-generated to an area of take aways, estate agenda and pound shops - please keep at least one area for self improvement of a cultural value.	09/04/15 12:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
99				I feel it would be a bad day for Grays if the Thameside were to close and the services it provides were to be moved. I hope they decide to keep things as they are.	09/04/15 14:32	0.1	Submitted	web
100				I do not think of this building as iconic or beautiful. I have used the theatre as a performer, director and audience member and always found it lacking except possibly in one way - it's been about the right seating capacity for the kind of show that can play there. I do believe that better provision is needed and that providing nothing new and/or closing this complex is not a viable option.	13/04/15 12:18	0.1	Submitted	web
101				none	13/04/15 16:49	0.1	Submitted	web
102				No, services are already convenient in terms of opening times and location. Staff are also great and provide a fantastic service Thameside Complex is a valuable facility. The library in particular is well used and encourages	15/04/15 15:25	0.2	Submitted	letter

## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				reading and studying for children and young people.				
104				These services are very good as they are	15/04/15 15:32	0.2	Submitted	letter
106				The services are fine, they just need to be sustained. I believe that Thurrock Council are letting Grays decline in many ways. It makes no sense to put the new campus in Grays , attempts to give it university status and move the best library and theatre out. As above, it makes no sense to move the college campus to Grays, upgrade its status, then move the main library and theatre out. We are also told these will be improvements to the railway station etc. Where is the sense in coordinating services.	15/04/15 15:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
108				We need this library so dont shut it. I would be more than happy to donate two pounds to use the library	15/04/15 15:47	0.2	Submitted	letter
109				No other comments	15/04/15 15:49	0.2	Submitted	letter
111				The ELAN system is excellent (personal experience of a similar but inferior system is another county) and should be maintained at present	16/04/15 07:37	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				standard. Excellent staff in Grays library, always obliging.				
112				Keep it as it is	16/04/15 07:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
113				Keep it alive!	16/04/15 07:41	0.2	Submitted	letter
114				I think its disgraceful to contemplate closing this library	16/04/15 07:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
115				Do the council want to turn the library into a block of flats?	16/04/15 07:45	0.2	Submitted	letter
118				I wished there was more children activities	16/04/15 07:51	0.2	Submitted	letter
119				No, because it is already perfect in its way now. I wish there was more children or teen activities.	16/04/15 07:53	0.2	Submitted	letter
120				The library is a bit dark, maybe all that grey? They staff are great though! The theatre has some great shows but is a bit cramped! The museum is so dark I really wouldn't go in there on my own.	16/04/15 15:27	0.1	Submitted	web
122				I think it would be a shame to lose another complex in Grays that has been used for many years and people have come to love. Everything seems to be broken up and outsourced and	28/04/15 07:55	0.1	Submitted	web



## Any other comments?

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
				I don't think the services would be used as often. I think that the Thameside should be made more use of not abandoned.				
123				I think its an abonimation to even consider changing this, the staff and services they provide are fabulous.	07/05/15 08:43	0.2	Submitted	letter
126				If money is an issue why not raise council tax instead of freezing it. Grays is slowly or should I say quickly becoming a cultural desert. The Thameside Complex should become a listed building in order to protect ir for future generations.	07/05/15 08:57	0.2	Submitted	letter
128				We have enjoyed using the library, museum and theatre as a family, over the years. I think it is an excellent service.	07/05/15 09:15	0.2	Submitted	letter
131				Please could the library be open later on Sat - until 7pm may? Many of my friends feel the same - its a quiet place for us to study as at home we have nowhere quiet to concentrate - it would make a massive difference to those revising for A Levels/GCSEs.	07/05/15 09:24	0.2	Submitted	letter
132				Yes, pay the employee more because they are qualified staff and they treat the public with respect.	07/05/15 09:29	0.2	Submitted	letter

ID	Consultation Point	Consultee	Agent	Answer	Date	Version	Status	Type
134				I feel the Thameside Complex should stay exactly where it is	07/05/15 09:36	0.2	Submitted	letter
135				Thameside is a beautiful building and provides excellent resources. Let it stay!	07/05/15 09:40	0.2	Submitted	letter
136				If there is going to be a chane in the facilities why dont the powers that be think about working with Wetherspoons to develop the old state buuilding and putting everything in there?? It would be very central	07/05/15 09:46	0.2	Submitted	letter

**Draft Excerpt of the Minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee held on 17 September 2015**

**15. Thameside Complex Review**

Councillor Snell, Chair of the Thameside Complex Review Panel, introduced the report which detailed the findings of the Thameside Complex Review Panel and the recommendations they wished the Committee, and subsequently Cabinet, to endorse.

In introducing the report, Councillor Snell explained that the panel had visited the Thameside Complex and noted that museum displays were dated and needed refreshing, and opinion was divided about the building. He explained that following discussions with some of the charitable organisations located within the complex, some felt that they could locate elsewhere but were happy being based at Thameside.

Councillor Snell advised Members that the panel were in agreement that the Thameside Complex required modernisation, that it should be commercially viable and that a theatre should remain in Grays.

Councillor Ray acknowledged that a decision about the future of the Thameside Complex was likely to be a difficult one, however the decision did need to be made and it was evident that the theatre in its current form was commercially unviable, with a small seating capacity and compact space which did not lend itself for audience comfort. He further reported that many smaller museums around the country faced closure and were merging with larger institutions to secure their future.

Councillor Snell highlighted the following key points:

- That the seats in the current theatre were cramped and too close together, however a decision needed to be made as to whether modernise and improve the Thameside Complex or relocate theatre provision elsewhere.
- That the museum also had a lot of exhibits in storage that the public were not able to view, some of which were highly renowned and required security.
- That the panel considered whether artefacts of local importance could be displayed in the local community, for example in a library, depending on adequate security and protection.
- That the museum could apply for Lottery Funding however applicants were required to have evidence of 25 year tenure.

Councillor Liddiard commended the report and explained that he valued the theatre, museum and library, but felt that the report contained little information regarding possible options going forward and the full cost implications of any alternatives, for example relocating the library in the Civic Offices or building a theatre elsewhere.

A brief discussion took place on the utilisation of the theatre, during which it was reported that there was an average of 57% audience capacity for each show across a year, although it was questioned whether this included school performance and youth productions.

Councillor Ray suggested that high value exhibits not on display at the museum should be sold to generate income if they were not going to be available for public view.

In response Councillor Snell highlighted that no curator would want to willingly sell their collection but it was suggested that Cabinet could evaluate this and an inventory supplied.

Councillor Liddiard reported that security was essential if displaying high value artefacts which could make it difficult for public displays in the local community, however if adequate security could not be guaranteed for such items to be on public display, the Council could donate to the British Library or sell them.

Councillor Hebb felt that there was not a winning situation but difficult discussions needed to start taking place. He highlighted that the building itself was not fit for purpose, and whether alternatives could be explored, such as locating a theatre at High House Production Park in Purfleet, although he recognised the panel recommended maintaining a theatre provision in Grays.

Councillor Hebb further asked for clarification as to whether there were any capital spends to facilitate the construction of a new theatre in Grays or whether the Council would need to dispose of the Thameside Complex to secure funds.

The Assistant Chief Executive observed that it was a significant question as to whether the Council would want to borrow funds to build and run a theatre, but that there were possible alternatives that could mean a theatre remained in Grays.

Councillor Hebb remarked that he did not believe it was the role of a local authority to provide a theatre and that Thurrock needed to think 'outside of the box' for a solution, which could include part or complete privatisation or the formation of a charitable trust.

The Head of Adult Services explained that the formation of a trust had been considered but there were a number of limitations, which included:

- The building was not fit for purpose and would require significant refurbishment that would incur considerable cost.
- Competitors included the Queens Theatre in Hornchurch, the Towngate Basilson and the West End.

Councillor Snell remarked that it was aspirational to have a theatre in Thurrock, otherwise residents would be required to travel outside of the

Borough for entertainment and Thurrock would be stripped of its cultural assets.

Members debated a number of options for the local a theatre which included High House Production Park and school auditoriums, which some Members felt would be impractical and unviable.

There was a discussion as to whether the recommendations included with the Thameside Complex Panel review report should be approved as some Members were not in agreement, during which the Chair suggested that more work should be undertaken before the matter was referred to Cabinet in order to determine the full cost implications of any alternative delivery model.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that the Thameside Complex Review Panel was member-led and their findings were detailed in the report, it was not within the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to overrule or change the panel's findings, however the Committee's comments could be taken into account by Cabinet – alongside those of the panel – when the information was presented to Cabinet.

Members were further advised that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had no formal decision making powers and it was the role of Cabinet to consider the alternatives in more detail and report back to Scrutiny at a later date when more comprehensive information was available for consideration and comment, including that of any costs.

The Chair explained that he was not satisfied to approve the recommendations printed in the report in their current format, to which it was suggested that the recommendations be amended slightly to replace the words of 'endorse' and 'accept' with to 'note'. Members were in agreement with the proposed amendments.

### **RESOLVED:**

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny to note the following recommendations of the Panel which will be put to Cabinet:**

- 1. Cabinet notes the conclusions set out on page 22 of the report (attached as Appendix 1) as a set of guiding principles when exploring future cultural provision at the Thameside Complex.**
- 2. A site that represents the Arts should remain in Grays.**
- 3. The Council should endeavour to improve and modernise the library, museum and registry service whether this be in the Complex or in another location.**
- 4. Any theatre needs to cater for the community but also a variety of professional acts and productions. It should represent the aspirations of a competitive regional theatre.**

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<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 16</b> <b>01104421</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Devolution, Combined Authority and South East Local Enterprise Partnership Update</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All wards	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor J. Kent, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Education	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

## Executive Summary

This paper sets out the progress being made in discussions involving the Council on devolution and combined authorities and the latest position with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

It seeks the Cabinet's support for the positions taken with regard to devolution and SELEP.

### 1. Recommendations

**That Cabinet:**

- 1.1 Confirms its commitment to pursuing a devolution deal with Government and to continue to work with partners across South Essex and Greater Essex on a mechanism to achieve that, such as a Combined Authority.**
- 1.2 Agrees that a devolution deal must be underpinned by a business case that demonstrates benefits for Thurrock, that could not otherwise be achieved, which have the support of local businesses and are underpinned by a governance framework that localises decision-making.**
- 1.3 Strongly supports the creation of a SELEP vice chair position for the federated area of South Essex.**

#### **1.4 Notes that Thurrock Council has signed the SELEP Joint Committee Agreement.**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

2.1 Thurrock has an established and clear ambition for growth set out in the economic development strategy. The strategy is based upon the Borough's six growth hubs and an aspiration to deliver 26,000 new jobs and 18,500 new homes. This clarity of ambition combined with the development of a strong project pipeline enabled the Council to secure over £100m of Local Growth Funding in 2014/15 for projects including the A13 and improvements at Stanford-Le-Hope station.

2.2 The delivery of this ambition and ensuring it delivers benefits for Thurrock residents and businesses requires the Council to continue playing a full and active role in processes and structures set up by Government to channel funding and powers to local areas. They include the process of devolving funding and powers to local government, potentially through a combined authority, and further funding via the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). Updates on both of these are set out in this paper.

2.3 It is important that any bid or proposal for funding or powers is based upon a strong evidence base and strategic rationale that has the support of businesses. That is why the Council has been working very closely with businesses and councils across South Essex to refresh the Growth Strategy for South Essex. The key principles underpinning this strategy, which reflects the priorities for Thurrock, were considered and agreed by the South Essex Growth Partnership in September (Appendix 1). The final draft strategy will be presented to a workshop for South Essex businesses later in October.

2.4 This evolving South Essex Growth Strategy is being used as the evidence and policy basis to shape the devolution proposition for South Essex and specifically a range of emerging 'asks' of Government. The strategy will also be used to inform a set of investment priorities for South Essex to be submitted via the South Essex Growth Partnership and SELEP as bids to the next round of Local Growth Funding expected early in 2016. Thurrock's current priority projects, are based upon our economic development strategy.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

#### **3.1 Devolution and Combined Authority**

3.2 In January 2015 both Thurrock and Southend Councils indicated their intention to pursue a Combined Authority as part of the Government's devolution process. Further work was undertaken with Southend Council and specialist advisors to test the feasibility of a joint submission, and the likelihood of it leading to a detailed devolution deal negotiation with Government. The advice received, including from Government, was that South Essex represented a stronger economic geography upon which to base



a devolution proposition. Southend and Thurrock Councils have therefore been working jointly with South Essex district councils (Basildon, Castle Point, and Rochford) as well as Essex County Council to prepare a set of draft devolution 'asks' and 'offers' to Government (Appendix 2).

- 3.3 In parallel to this work local authorities across Greater Essex, including Southend and Thurrock Councils, have been working to develop a devolution proposal for that area (the area covered by Essex, Thurrock and Southend Councils). The thematic areas for Greater Essex are very similar to those identified for South Essex. On 4th September all 15 local authority leaders across Greater Essex signed a joint letter to Government committing to further work to develop a Greater Essex devolution proposal (Appendix 3).
- 3.4 A very important feature of that letter and of the on-going Greater Essex work is the role of area 'quadrants' or 'growth areas'. South Essex is one of four growth areas that make-up Greater Essex. From a Southend and Thurrock perspective the commitment to further work, made in the letter, is on the basis of a governance model that applies the principle of subsidiarity and so results in decisions being taken at the geographical level closest to businesses and communities. For Thurrock that is sequentially at the Thurrock level, the South Essex level and only where there is demonstrable benefit to Thurrock, at the greater Essex level. To reinforce this very important principle the Leaders of Southend and Thurrock Councils submitted a second letter to Government, also on 4th September (Appendix 4).
- 3.5 The second letter also draws a direct link between the 'growth area' for the purposes of devolution and the South Essex federated area of SELEP. They represent the same coherent economic area, an area that is recognised by business, has a strong track record of collaboration, and is tied together by commuting patterns, access to markets and business supply chains, and underpinned by radial road and rail corridors into London. They are bound by the same economic growth strategy, referred to earlier. They are also joined by a strong Growth Partnership for South Essex, chaired by Kate Willard from Stobarts Ltd that includes the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Thurrock Business Board and the Leader of the Council.
- 3.6 Work is continuing to finalise the devolution 'asks' and 'offers' for Thurrock and South Essex, securing the support of businesses, in order that they can be recognised and incorporated within the Greater Essex submission. Thurrock's agreement to the submission will be based upon a variety of factors which will include three key tests: that the South Essex 'growth area' propositions are clearly represented; that the governance requirements ensure localised decision-making in South Essex; and that alignment with the South Essex federated area of SELEP is secured.
- 3.7 Thurrock will continue to work to establish a deal that brings real and tangible benefits for the Council, for Thurrock businesses and communities. Any final deal proposal must be underpinned by a robust business case that clearly

demonstrates a significant strengthening of the Council's financial position against that anticipated in the MTFs.

### **3.8 SELEP**

- 3.9 The success achieved by Thurrock and South Essex in rounds 1 and 2 of the Local Growth Fund in 2014/15, securing over £100m and £164m respectively, can be directly attributed to ensuring the status of South Essex as one of SELEP's four federated areas. As a federated area it was able to manage its own strategy, prioritisation and advocacy programme driven and supported by South Essex businesses. Thurrock's position with regard to SELEP as advocated by partners across the public and private sectors, is to work through the South Essex federated area, deliver the projects for which it has received funding, to prepare fresh funding ideas and proposals as required, and to support SELEP's strategic objectives to promote the economy of the South East.
- 3.10 The Council was disappointed to learn of the proposal in the Summer by Essex County Council and the Greater Essex Business Board (GEBB) to break up SELEP and create a Greater Essex LEP, a LEP that would include Thurrock and Southend. The submission was made despite constant opposition to the idea from Thurrock and Southend Councils and the business community across South Essex. A similar proposal was submitted from Kent and Medway. A number of written representations were made opposing the change by Thurrock Council and South Essex partners, preferring that focus and energy was given to delivering projects and supporting business. Government has since rejected Essex and Kent proposals to break-up SELEP.
- 3.11 Also over the Summer a panel comprising the Leaders of Essex, Kent and East Sussex County Councils and the three vice chairs for Greater Essex, Kent and Medway and East Sussex decided against renewing the contract of SELEP Chairman, Peter Jones, by a majority of 4:2. At the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 25 September it was agreed that a review of the Chair's role, and the role of vice chairs, be undertaken ahead of the recruitment of a new Chair.
- 3.12 Thurrock Council, working with business partners, has fought hard to establish and sustain South Essex as one of four federated areas of SELEP, which has been in place now for over three years. While there are four federated areas there are only three vice chairs. South Essex falls within the remit of the vice chair for Greater Essex. It is the view of businesses across South Essex that their interests would be better represented by a dedicated vice chair for South Essex. This is consistent with the principle of subsidiarity embedded within SELEP's terms of reference and would better reflect the interests of South Essex businesses and communities and ensure alignment of vice chairs to federated areas.
- 3.13 SELEP Joint Committee Agreement

- 3.14 South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) was established in 2010 as one of 39 LEPs across the county to provide *'clear vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation'*. In February 2014, the Partnership's terms of reference were amended to streamline the operation of the SELEP Board structure and embed an innovative federal model of operation. South Essex is one of the four federated areas.
- 3.15 To support this the Partner Authorities sought to delegate responsibility to a Joint Committee for the local implementation of SELEP's accountability and assurance framework and all local processes within it by which bids are formally assessed and agreed, risks considered, approvals made and performance managed. The vision and aim of the Joint Committee (known as the Accountability Board) will be to support the distribution of funding from Government and project delivery and will assist in securing the outcomes set out.
- 3.16 The Partner Authorities, including Thurrock Council, have agreed to form a Joint Committee to manage the distribution of funding from Government managed by SELEP (by way of grants and loan funding) in accordance with the provisions contained in sections 101 and 102 of the Act, the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 and any other enabling legislation.
- 3.17 Next Steps**
- 3.18 Partners across South and Greater Essex will continue discussions with Government departments over the Autumn on the details of a devolution deal. The intention is to submit final proposals in December and for detailed negotiations to take place early in the New Year.
- 3.19 The review of the SELEP Chair's role and that of the vice chairs is due to take place during October and for the appointment process for the new Chair to take place over the Autumn. The next round of bidding into the Local Growth Fund is expected to take place in early 2016.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 To set out the Council's position regarding devolution and in respect of SELEP and the review of the chair and vice chairs.

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

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Thurrock Business Board, the South Essex Growth Partnership, local MPs and Members across the main political parties.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The formation of a combined authority and negotiation of a devolution deal with the Government will provide new powers and potentially new fiscal freedoms which accelerate the achievement of key economic and community priorities.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**  
**Head of Corporate Finance**

At this stage there are no financial implications although as the deal develops it will be important to prepare a more detailed consideration of the likely 'fiscal freedoms' and the financial consequences of any offers. At this stage there isn't sufficient clarity to conduct a detailed analysis but the direction of travel of more local freedoms is one that is both supported and encouraged.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
**Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal & Governance**

At this stage there are no legal implications. While the devolution deal seeks new freedoms and flexibilities these will be the subject of negotiation with Government.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Equalities Manager**

None.

### **7.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

**8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Report to Cabinet in January 2015.

**9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – South Essex Growth Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Draft South Essex Devolution Asks and Offers
- Appendix 3 – Letter to Government from Greater Essex authorities
- Appendix 4 – Letter from Cllr Kent and Cllr Woodley (Southend)

**Report Author:**

Steve Cox/Tim Rignall

CEDU

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## **South Essex Growth Partnership – our vision and role**

South Essex Growth Partnership is driven by the private sector with support from the public sector and is part of the federated structure of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). This relationship is critical in achieving our ambitious growth plans and in securing resources to support project delivery. The partnership seeks to draw upon the areas key assets to help address the challenges that we face and unlock the growth potential of South Essex.

*Our Vision is for South Essex to have one of the fastest growing, and most valuable economies in the UK providing opportunities and benefits to local communities.*

In pursuing this vision the Growth Partnership has a number of priorities and has a strong pipeline of investment propositions.

### **Priorities for Intervention**

The Growth Partnership has identified five priorities for intervention and for each of these priorities there is a strong pipeline of investment propositions that are identified in the appendix. This pipeline will remain fluid to reflect investment decisions, changes in the South Essex economy and new opportunity investments.

#### ***Priority 1: Driving Growth – securing resources for priority projects and supporting business growth with a strong integrated offer***

- 1.1 Supporting the delivery of priority investment projects to secure significant employment growth in South Essex.
- 1.2 Making it simpler for businesses to access the support they need. Through our business-led Growth Hub, we will offer specialist help, advice and support to start-ups, SMEs and those businesses with the greatest growth potential. We will work with Government to make the most of national programmes as well as encouraging businesses to support each other through mentoring programmes and creating links between HE and the workplace.
- 1.3 Ensuring that suitable sites and premises are available to support business growth.

#### ***Priority 2: Outstanding connectivity – Improving connectivity locally, nationally and internationally***

- 2.1 Securing investment in the road network and infrastructure which increases capacity to unlock growth and create jobs.
- 2.2 Influencing the timing and routing of any Lower Thames Crossing and working to secure maximum benefit from any decision.
- 2.3 Increasing capacity of the rail network and coordinating bus and rail services.
- 2.4 Developing high speed broadband infrastructure across South Essex.

**Priority 3: Quality of Place**

- 3.1 Enhancing the quality of the built environment and increasing access to the natural environment to improve the image of South Essex and increase its desirability as a place to live to retain and attract high skilled workers to the area.
- 3.2 Coordinated package of town centre regeneration across South Essex to improve and diversify local offers, deliver significant housing expansion and support local employment growth.

**Priority 4: Skills for Growth – developing, attracting and retaining talent (To be developed based on the work Kate Willard is leading with business reps).**

- Building upon the existing links between business and education providers to ensure that the existing workforce, together with those coming through the education system, are aware, engaged and able to provide the skills needed to support the delivery of the potential growth which has been identified.
- Ensuring our young people receive guidance and support to take full advantage of education, training and employment opportunities, and developing more effective approaches to supporting unemployed people back into work.

**Priority 5: Housing - Stimulating and reshaping our housing market**

- Finding innovative ways to offer existing and potential residents a place to live that meets or exceeds their expectations, and which they can afford.
- Promoting housing growth by creating new development models; unlocking stalled sites; tackling financial barriers; investing in infrastructure and easing the development process.
- Developing and implementing a coordinated housing estate renewal programme across South Essex to increase housing supply, support town centre regeneration and address historic image issues.



## Appendix 2

### The devolution response

The challenge, proposed offers and asks have been gathered from a range of sources, discussions and workshops and can be summarised as below:

Category	Challenge	Offer	Ask
<b>Fiscal</b>	<p>Significant investment and funding to bring forward growth needs is required</p> <p>Decisions on funding priorities and investment is not aligned to local needs</p>	<p>A clear uplift in GVA aspiring to the South East average of £1.7bn GVA increase ensuring net contributions to the National purse.</p> <p>Entry into a gain share agreement under which to share additional revenues generated through growth and invested in the light of South Essex priorities.</p> <p>A genuinely collaborative approach to prioritising the use of resources and assets across the geography</p>	<p>South Essex retention of Business Rates growth including local input on rebasing.</p> <p>Ability to import principles of Enterprise Zone status tailored to local needs across South Essex to meet broad growth agenda.</p> <p>An agreement to retain a proportion of the container tax from key ports as well as air passenger tax from the airport and funds from M25 toll.</p> <p>Removal of Prudential Borrowing Cap</p>
<b>Housing</b>	<p>Land values prohibiting delivery in certain areas and lack of ability to deliver in others.</p> <p>Lack of sites coming forward.</p> <p>Inertia of house builders.</p> <p>Richer housing mix</p>	<p>More collaboration and alignment of planning process, possibly as far as a joint core strategy in order to deliver a step change in housing development.</p> <p>Creation of a single LA housing company for the sub-region to build a better mix of more expensive homes for sale, supporting the construction of more affordable stock across the geography.</p> <p>Economies of scale</p>	<p>Exploration of a bespoke devolved housing finance model with government to ensure that appropriately timed and allocated financing e.g. for housing for an aging population and starter homes, is able to come forward.</p> <p>Removal of HCA decision-making layers to ensure covenants are relaxed or lifted and land is made more readily available to improve the pace of delivery.</p> <p>5-year funding settlement</p>

	required to attract diverse workforce and support local communities.	<p>across the geography to make investment more attractive to investors through collective decision making and accelerate house building.</p> <p>Delivery of a review of Green Belt land.</p> <p>Building confidence of private sector.</p> <p>A new housing forum to discuss policy (in conjunction with the private sector) and implement recommendations made by the sector while creating an environment to bring forward South Essex as a location for investors.</p> <p>Share expertise on estate regeneration.</p>	for NHB.
<b>Category</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Offer</b>	<b>Ask</b>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Clear skills mis-match with business base and their requirements</p> <p>Lack of aspiration and attainment</p> <p>If reduction in FE, greater control required over remaining resources</p>	<p>Reduction of Work Programme clients as well as JSA and ESA claimants through investment afforded by devolution delivering a more resilient workforce to deliver 52,000 jobs locally.</p> <p>A reduction in NEETs and reduced dependency.</p> <p>A more closely aligned business and skills investment programme tailored at a South Essex level to focus on growth sectors.</p> <p>Delivery of a business-led skills strategy at a south</p>	<p>Pooling of Department for Work and Pensions, Skills Funding Agency, Education Funding Agency further education funding to manage locally by 2019.</p> <p>Powers to start influencing funding mechanisms in 2016 to better direct support to employers including the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers.</p> <p>Control over funding mechanism to ensure FE colleges can respond to demand from employers and deliver less courses with limited employment</p>

		<p>Essex level to design curriculum support and work based progression with which to challenge providers.</p> <p>Strengthening of employer engagement through a Skills Board to sign off curriculum and investment priorities at a local level.</p> <p>A dedicated resource to coordinate provision across South Essex and a pool of business champions to advise on skills-related issues and deliver activity to support career progression.</p>	<p>potential. Deliver HE which meets local demand (i.e. keep cap off).</p> <p>Work Programme - devolved responsibility enabling co-design at an employer &amp; local level. A pilot programme for unemployed people to take advantage of large scale employment opportunities.</p> <p>Additional funding for higher education research and teaching, to be established to improve productivity across key sectors. Access to remaining adult skills funds to pool supporting career development matched by businesses.</p>
Category	Challenge	Offer	Ask
Infrastructure	<p>Projects slow to be approved and commitment made in infrastructure to support growth</p> <p>Certainty and speed of decision required</p>	<p>Creation of a Transport Board locally governed and involving strategic partners such as Local Authorities and DfT.</p> <p>Delivery of transport outcomes that provide greater value for money and innovative SMART models.</p> <p>Ability to connect geography to unlock growth as a potential for wider regeneration schemes i.e. should the decision be taken to proceed with a Lower Thames Crossing to regenerate south Essex, South Essex will maximise</p>	<p>Gain more influence over Highways England and Network Rail through a single decision-making process.</p> <p>Investment in north-south routes to expand workforce opportunities, trade links and productivity and dialogue with bus service providers to ensure that routes better connect workforce and businesses.</p> <p>Support a multi-year transport settlement to at the next Spending Review.</p> <p>Involvement in the decision-making process</p>

		<p>opportunities relating to jobs and housing.</p> <p>Delivery of significant impact through more reliability and reduction of congestion.</p> <p>Promotion of South Essex as a demonstrator project for SMART cities.</p> <p>A commitment to pooling Local Authority skills and resources to accelerate the delivery of this programme.</p>	<p>for procurement of new sustainable transport contracts i.e. Abellio renewal in 2016.</p> <p>That an early decision on LTC is reached and that in the event of a decision to proceed that the benefits to South Essex are maximised.</p> <p>Expediting the process for signage on motorways for ports and airports.</p>
<b>Business / Employment</b>	<p>Lack of productivity</p> <p>Unfulfilled potential</p> <p>Expansion of exporting routes required to drive productivity</p> <p>Employability concerns from employers Quantum of ESA / JSA Claimants</p>	<p>A better aligned programme of support to businesses to increase productivity through business start-up survival rates, support to innovation and exports to new markets.</p> <p>A pooled Economic Development resource to ensure priorities are delivered across the whole South Essex geography i.e. town centre management model.</p>	<p>A single funded model of all business support programmes to be developed by 2017 to enable businesses to access support through Growth Hubs ensuring funds allocated can be best channelled to business needs.</p> <p>In advance of 2017 co-develop a delivery plan with UKTI to respond to business needs to ensure a key sector response to export innovation. This will be delivered in conjunction with skills providers to ensure a dual impact of upskilling the existing workforce and improving productivity.</p>

**Contact details:**

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4<sup>th</sup> September 2015

The Rt. Hon. George Osborne, MP,  
Chancellor of the Exchequer, HM Treasury  
And The Rt. Hon. Greg Clark, MP,  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government,

By email

Dear Chancellor and Secretary of State,

## **Greater Essex Devolution – Submission Outline**

In March 2015 we wrote to the Rt. Hon Sir Eric Pickles MP registering our interest in developing a devolution deal for Greater Essex (covering the geographic county of Essex comprising the twelve Districts/Boroughs/City councils, the two Unitary councils of Southend and Thurrock and Essex County Council). Since that time, as the fifteen Leaders of these local authorities, we have been meeting regularly to shape an exciting new agenda for our communities, which we believe will provide long-term economic growth, increased productivity, provide greater certainty on housing delivery and world-class, financially sustainable public services. The Greater Essex area has been described as the most complex public service environment in the country. We recognise that challenge and we are now meeting with a renewed spirit of collaboration and partnership on a fortnightly basis to turn the high-level ambitions and proposals set out below into more detailed plans. We are already a major player in the Government's drive for economic prosperity and in ensuring our residents benefit from this. We would welcome continued engagement with you and your civil servants in the development of this next phase of the work, in time to contribute to the Spending Review.

## **Ambition**

Our ambition is for Greater Essex to become the fastest growing UK economy outside London that delivers the opportunity of a high quality standard of living for our residents, with increased and accelerated local and national dividends that are re-invested into world-class public services and infrastructure. We have a strong track record of delivery, for example enabling major port development and expansion at London Gateway and Port of Tilbury in Thurrock; the delivery of the South East's only City Deal and a £20m forward funding for road infrastructure; and a primary school that enabled a stalled housing site of 1,500 homes in N. Colchester to be developed. We have airports which have over 19m passengers a year and ports that provide the throughput for over 40m tonnes of goods. We are ranked third by the Stock Exchange, after London and Manchester, in having the most innovative companies, and in 2013 we saw 10,220 new business start-ups, justifying our reputation for entrepreneurialism.

However we also have untapped potential, where, with the right mechanisms, freedoms and flexibilities in place, we can:

- bring productivity into line with comparable areas;
- accelerate economic growth;

- close the gap between current rates of house building and the level required to meet needs within our communities;
- improve skills levels to better meet the needs of business now and in the future;
- attract foreign investment;
- increase the resilience and robustness of Greater Essex to adapt to economic shocks and shifts in the future;
- and enable strategic planning and investment in infrastructure, including attracting more private sector investment.

Underpinning our devolution approach is a new approach to investment, including attracting private sector investment. Our ambition is to become increasingly self-sufficient of government grant. Greater Essex people and businesses are already net contributors to the Exchequer and our proposals present a real opportunity to significantly increase that contribution. To stimulate increased growth and re-investment in infrastructure, homes, skills and public services we want to enter into a **gainshare agreement** under which the additional revenues generated through local growth would be shared between local and national partners.

We know that given the diverse nature of the Greater Essex economies, a centralised one-size fits all approach will not work. We need an approach which enables and supports our natural economic markets, whether they are rural, coastal, the Thames Gateway, commuter belt or part of the London-Cambridge corridor. That is why we are adopting a bespoke, pragmatic and powerful approach through our strategic growth areas, rather than the City region model which is more relevant in other parts of the country. This understanding will underpin our governance principles.

We believe that a devolution deal will be the spring-board to give us the freedoms, flexibilities and opportunities to deliver a step-change in outcomes, with benefits for the people and businesses of Greater Essex, London and neighbouring areas and, through our increased contribution to the Exchequer, to the wider country. Our ambition is that by 2025, with a devolution deal in place, we will have:

- The strongest economy outside London, increasing our economic output from £33.5bn to £60bn by supporting our economic growth areas to realise their full potential.
- A reputation as an internationally recognised and successful location for inward investment and have doubled the number of our businesses exporting from 7% to 14% in line with UKTI targets to double output by 2020.
- Outstanding connectivity, both transport and digital, that enables our businesses to grow and flourish and strengthens links between key transport hubs, including our airports and ports, with London and neighbouring areas.
- Further improved the rate and reliability of housing delivery to meet local housing plans, by promoting a targeted number of locally identified large-scale developments, including those on garden settlement principles, and utilising brownfield and public land. This will also provide opportunities for science and business parks and inward investment, and utilise SmartCity thinking to provide 'places' designed for healthy living and wellbeing. Due to Green Belt constraints a number of Greater Essex authorities have found it challenging to fulfil their Local Plan targets whilst others who are more ambitious for housing growth are held back by a lack of infrastructure, particularly roads. We seek to work with Government to bring forward schemes and approaches which can address housing need in Greater Essex with greater certainty, quality and pace and ensure that new businesses can locate to our excellent county.

- The most technically skilled workforce in the UK. We will increase by 20% the number of higher apprenticeships completed, focusing upon key growth sectors across the growth areas, such as advanced manufacturing and engineering, health and life sciences, low carbon and renewables, digital and creative industries and ports and logistics.
- Financially sustainable solutions that transform complex public services, focused on supporting sustainable communities, promoting economic wellbeing and healthy lifestyles
- Increased our net return to HMT and through gainshare models which we will be reinvesting in our growth areas and in public services across Greater Essex, to create a virtuous investment circle

## Governance

The local authorities of Greater Essex are exploring a combined authority model which captures the cumulative strength and advantage of Greater Essex, but which is based upon our natural economic areas and proposed growth area boards. These arrangements will strengthen the joint public and private sector leadership of growth and, in addition, will strengthen democratic accountability for delivery of our shared ambition and outcomes.

The principles we are developing assume a subsidiarity model where decisions are taken at the most effective level to deliver outcomes with the most impact at the most efficient cost. We see our growth area boards creating an opportunity for strategic localised decision-making and public service transformation through local leadership, shared services and collaboration. The Combined Authority, consisting of leaders of the fifteen authorities, will take decisions and commission activity where there are strategic benefits or gains from economies of scale. We are also exploring the appropriate devolution of powers by County, City, District & Borough councils to lower tier authorities and communities as part of our commitment to ensure all communities gain from the benefits of devolution.

We will ensure that any governance proposals are aligned to the current federated working model within SELEP and that strong business engagement is continued through bodies such as the Greater Essex Business Board, the Growth Partnership for South Essex and the Greater Essex Skills Board.

Our intention is to bring forward a timetable for a formal governance review to support our combined authority proposals.

## Next Steps

Our officers have had early discussions with your civil servants and would like to intensify these over the next few weeks, so that we can develop these ideas for the Spending Review. They will be writing to your civil servants with more detailed proposals to explore further. At the same time we will be intensifying our engagement with business leaders, wider public service partners and with our communities. We would also welcome the opportunity to explore some of these issues with you in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

Leaders of :





Cllr Phil Turner  
Basildon Council



Cllr Graham Butland  
Braintree District Council



Cllr Louise McKinlay  
Brentwood Borough Council



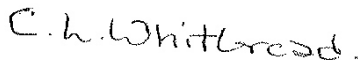
Cllr Colin Riley  
Castle Point Borough Council



Cllr Roy Whitehead  
Chelmsford City Council



Cllr Paul Smith  
Colchester Borough Council



Cllr Chris Whitbread  
Epping Forest District Council



Cllr David Finch  
Essex County Council



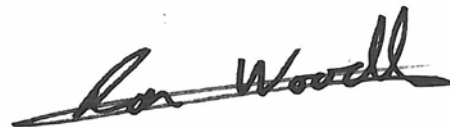
Cllr Jon Clempner  
Harlow Council



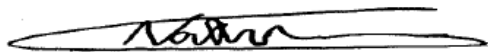
Cllr Miriam Lewis  
Maldon District Council



Cllr Terry Cutmore  
Rochford District Council



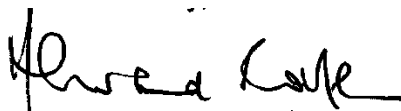
Cllr Ron Woodley  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council



Cllr Neil Stock  
Tendring District Council



Cllr John Kent  
Thurrock Council



Cllr Howard Rolfe  
Uttlesford District Council



4 September 2015

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State

### Devolution

We are writing to follow up the letter we sent to the Rt Hon Sir Eric Pickles MP in March regarding our plans to pursue a combined authority.

During the course of the Spring and Summer we have been very open and transparent in pursuing a twin track approach to devolution. We have worked very closely with colleagues across Greater Essex and contributed fully to the emerging ideas and proposals contained in the letter signed today by all Essex authorities and ourselves. In particular we welcome the very strong emphasis placed on the role of growth areas that will form the basis for any future governance arrangements, enable decisions affecting South Essex to be taken locally and for delegations to the area to be maximised.

In parallel we have worked together with other South Essex authorities, including Essex County Council, on exciting and more bespoke devolution proposals for the Thames Gateway South Essex area. These build upon our strong track record of delivery, the significant ambitions we share for growth and the strength of our partnerships, including with the business community.

It is our intention over the coming weeks to further develop the ideas and proposals for South Essex in a way that will deliver real opportunity for our businesses and communities and which are able to 'fit' within the growth area structure, and its associated governance, set out in the Greater Essex letter.

We are pleased that the Greater Essex letter also draws a line under the protracted discussions about SELEP by committing to recognise and work with SELEP through the two federal area boards in Greater Essex: the Greater Essex Business Board and the Growth Partnership for South Essex. This will establish stability, ensure that SELEP and devolution work is aligned in South Essex, build confidence across the South Essex business community and create a powerful mechanism for business engagement in finalising and taking forward our devolution proposals.

We look forward to continuing our direct dialogue, alongside Greater Essex colleagues, with yourself and the Minister for Thames Gateway, as well as your officials, in finalising a devolution proposition for South Essex that is able to 'fit' within a Greater Essex submission to you later in the Autumn.

Yours sincerely



Cllr John Kent  
Leader, Thurrock Council



Cllr Ron Woodley  
Leader, Southend-on-Sea Council

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<b>14 October 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 17</b> <b>01104422</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Purfleet Centre – Award of Contract</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> West Thurrock and South Stifford	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Richard Speight, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
<b>This report is</b> Public, apart from Appendix 2 which is exempt due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	
<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> 12 May 2015	

## Executive Summary

The regeneration of Purfleet Centre is the largest regeneration programme which the Council is directly responsible for delivering. Through a series of reports over the past three years, Cabinet has been consistently updated on progress in the Council's efforts to secure the implementation of this high profile scheme which will ultimately deliver more than 2,300 new homes and a state-of-the-art film, television and media studio complex around a new town centre featuring a primary school, health centre and local shops, leisure and community facilities.

In March 2014, following the conclusion of a competitive procurement exercise, Cabinet approved the appointment of Purfleet Centre Regeneration Limited (PCRL) as the Council's development partner which would ultimately take on responsibility for delivering the project. Through a report in December 2014 Cabinet was updated on the progress towards completing the Development Agreement between PCRL and the Council, securing funding for the scheme, site acquisitions, the approach to planning and public consultation undertaken following PCRL's selection.

Since the last update report, a funding partner has been identified by PCRL (London and Quadrant Housing Trust) and, following an extended due diligence process, terms have been agreed (subject to Board/Cabinet approvals) which will secure the funds necessary to secure the delivery of the first phase of the project. This report reviews the work which has been completed since December 2014 and, through a confidential appendix, outlines the substantially settled commercial terms between the Council, PCRL and its funder together with the results of the Council's own due diligence and identifies the remaining risks and mitigation measures. This report recommends that Cabinet approves these commercial terms and enters into the various legal agreements with PCRL to enable the scheme to proceed.

## **1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That Cabinet notes the progress made since the selection of PCRL as the Council's development partner for the Purfleet Centre scheme;**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approves the commercial terms outlined in Appendix 2 as the basis for the contractual agreements between the Council, PCRL and L&Q and authorises the completion of those agreements; and**
- 1.3 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, to conclude any remaining discussions necessary to complete those agreements on the Council's behalf provided that they are on substantially the same terms as those contained within this report.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 Purfleet is one of six Growth Hubs in the Borough identified within the Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Strategies and the Local Development Framework. Whilst the majority of the Borough's growth is private sector led; the Purfleet Centre proposal is the largest regeneration programme which the Council is responsible for directly delivering through maximising the value of its significant land holding in the area. The Council has set out a vision to create a new town centre in Purfleet to support the development of more homes but also address existing deficiencies in services and facilities as well as maximising the benefit of Purfleet's riverside location.
- 2.2 On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the Council closed the OJEU Competitive Dialogue process which sought to identify and select a development partner who would be responsible for delivering the proposals for Purfleet. In March 2014 Cabinet approved the selection of PCRL and delegated authority to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways and Transportation to negotiate the remaining terms of the Development Agreement and associated documentation. Given the time that has elapsed since this delegation was given, and the scale of the commitment being contemplated, it is considered prudent to refresh the delegation through this report.

- 2.3 PCRL's formal submission included a high level masterplan (attached at Appendix 1) which set out an exciting vision for Purfleet Centre. The proposal took the critical elements of the Council's original scheme and augmented them to propose a high quality, aspirational development featuring:
- A state-of-the-art film, television and media studio complex;
  - More than 2,300 new homes set around a new town centre;
  - A new primary school;
  - A redeveloped station; and
  - Local facilities including a supermarket, community hall, health centre, retail units and spaces for cafés/bars.
- 2.4 In making their submission to the Council in February 2014, PCRL made it clear that they would need to secure an investor/funder to support the delivery of their vision. The implications of this in terms of certainty of delivery were weighed up in the assessment conducted at the time. As a result, since their selection, PCRL has focussed the majority of its effort on identifying a suitable and appropriate funding body and negotiating the terms on which the necessary funds will be provided.
- 2.5 The conclusion of PCRL's work to identify and secure a funding partner and the settled terms of the Development Agreement are reviewed within this report together with general updates on planning/design, acquisition activity and public engagement. A broad outline of next steps, assuming acceptance of the recommendations made, is also provided.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

#### **Funding, Development Agreement and Commercial Terms**

- 3.1 As has been noted in previous reports, the ability for PCRL to progress the delivery of the scheme is entirely dependent on identifying a funder (or funders) to meet the costs of development. Whilst there has never been an issue in identifying funders for later parts of the project (when there is an asset to secure debt against) there has always been a need for a c.£20m facility to support the upfront costs associated with planning, land acquisition and remediation before any development can take place. Having held positive discussions with a variety of national and international investors (including banks, institutional investors, sovereign wealth funds and high net worth individuals) to explore options for securing this funding, PCRL ultimately selected London & Quadrant Housing Trust (L&Q) from five shortlisted funders.
- 3.2 L&Q is one of the country's leading housing associations and one of London's largest residential developers. As well as building high quality homes directly and managing more than 70,000 homes in London and the South East, L&Q also invests in property development to generate revenue in support of its charitable objectives. It is on this basis that L&Q is working on the Purfleet Centre scheme. L&Q are considered to be an ideal funding partner for this

project as their organisational aims align so closely with the vision for the project.

- 3.3 Since their selection, L&Q have undertaken a comprehensive due diligence assessment of the project including considering the vision for the scheme, the feasibility and viability of the proposals, assessing the local housing market, reviewing the financial modelling which underpins the scheme and reviewing the terms of the Development Agreement and associated documents/agreements. No significant issues have been highlighted through any of these assessments.
- 3.4 The terms of the Development Agreement, which sets out the roles and responsibilities and commercial arrangements over the lifetime of the 10-12 year project, were largely agreed during the Competitive Dialogue process and were signed off by Cabinet as part of the approvals given in March 2014. A limited number of refinements were discussed by PCRL and the Council following the close of dialogue and the document was largely settled by the end of 2014. However, the identification of a funding partner has necessitated a limited review of the Development Agreement to incorporate the funder's reasonable requirements. This was anticipated at the close of competitive dialogue.
- 3.5 The review has had no material impact on the vision for the scheme, PCRL's commitment to its delivery or the Council's level of influence/control over the partnership. As has always been the case, the commercial principles underpinning the relationship between the Council and PCRL see the Council's land being committed on a phased basis together with a limited amount of capital funding to support land acquisition and the development of a primary school within the first phase of the scheme. In return, the Council will receive payment for its land at the end of every phase, reimbursement of the costs of developing the school and will receive half of all surpluses generated through the development. Recognising that the details of the commercial relationship between the Council and PCRL remain confidential, the broad terms of the Development Agreement are reviewed within the exempt appendix (2) to this report. Appendix 2 also reviews the results of the Council's own due diligence assessment of L&Q together with reviews of the positions in respect of State aid and procurement.
- 3.6 At the time of writing, the terms of the Development Agreement have been approved by PCRL's Board and are due to be signed off by the relevant L&Q committee in early October 2015. In the event that Cabinet approves the recommendations made within this report, it is anticipated that the Development Agreement will be completed by the end of November 2015.

### **Planning and Design**

- 3.7 As reported in December 2014, PCRL has selected and appointed an extensive professional team to lead the work on the broad masterplan, the residential/town centre elements (led by ALL Design and KSS) and the film

and television studios (AHMM, AKTII and Arup). Over the past six months the design teams have been reviewing the existing masterplan and refining the detailed requirements of the film studios. There remains a strong commitment to delivering the key elements of the masterplan identified at the close of competitive dialogue but opportunities have been identified to further enhance the integration of the town centre with other uses – particularly the film and television studio complex – and the riverfront.

- 3.8 Meetings and discussions have continued to be held with key statutory and non-statutory stakeholders (including the Environment Agency, RSPB, Buglife and others) to ensure that their requirements are fully understood prior to the development and submission of any planning applications. Whilst the detailed design and planning work remains dependent on completing the Development Agreement, PCRL has undertaken a number of seasonal ecology surveys (nesting birds, bats etc) to ensure that the project is ultimately able to move forward quickly.
- 3.9 It is anticipated that, on completion of the Development Agreement, a new outline application for the Purfleet Centre project will be developed accompanied by a reserved matters application for the first phase of development. This is likely to take around 12 months to develop and submit. PCRL continues to consider ways in which it can make use of elements of the existing consent to bring forward remediation and site servicing on those areas of the site that the Council already owns.

### **Acquisition activity**

- 3.10 It was reported in the December 2014 update that, as a consequence of seeking to remove the existing level crossing as part of the Purfleet Centre project, an additional 14 residential properties would have to be acquired on top of the six which were already required. Following more detailed investigation it has become clear that the 20 properties are contained within only 18 freehold titles. In the intervening period, the Council has continued to engage with the owners and occupiers of those properties and, at the time of writing, has acquired eleven of the properties and agreed terms on a further two properties which are expected to complete shortly. Discussions in respect of the remaining five properties are at various stages of progression. All of the residential acquisitions to date have been completed through negotiation without the need to progress Compulsory Purchase.
- 3.11 Outside of the residential interests, the Council has continued to discuss purchasing the remaining commercial land with affected landowners. Whilst these discussions remain positive, no further commercial acquisitions are imminent. The main focus for the Council and PCRL continues to be securing the sites identified in the early phases of the development, these being mainly industrial properties in the south west corner of Botany Quarry. Should it not be possible to agree terms through negotiation, the Council will need to make use of Compulsory Purchase powers in order to ensure delivery of the scheme.

## **Public Engagement/Consultation**

- 3.12 Since the last report, PCRL have again attended the Purfleet Forum to update local residents on progress in delivering the scheme, outline some early emerging thoughts and start the discussion on existing issues which the scheme could address either through the development phases or when completed. Local people continue to be supportive of the project and there was a clear, genuine desire among attendees to get involved in the design process as the project proceeds.
- 3.13 The Council has continued to focus on defining the local service needs with a particular emphasis on school and health provision. The procurement of a sponsor for the new primary school to be delivered through the Purfleet Centre project is well advanced and officers are working with health colleagues to develop a brief for a new health centre and consider the delivery and management options of any new facility. PCRL remains committed to bringing forward local services within the first phase of the project and it is critical that the Council and its partners can provide the necessary information in a timely manner to support the design process.

## **Anticipated next steps**

- 3.14 As is noted above, it is anticipated that the Development Agreement will be completed by the end of November 2015. Thereafter, around 12 months will be required to develop the detailed masterplan, new outline application for the whole scheme and reserved matters application for the first phase of the development. It may be possible to undertake some groundworks in the intervening period, however, any residential/commercial development will need planning consent to be granted. Assuming that the applications are submitted in late 2016, planning consent could be granted in Spring 2017 which would see development starting on the land that the Council already owns in Summer 2017.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Purfleet Centre project is a key element of the Council's Regeneration and Economic Development strategies. Having identified a development partner in March 2014, securing a funding partner is a major milestone in the delivery of the project. With the Development Agreement now settled, the Council is in a position to formally enter into the contractual agreements which will ultimately bring the project to fruition.
- 4.2 Delegated authority has previously been given to the Assistant Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder to complete discussions with PCRL and enter into Development Agreement. However, given the length of time which has elapsed since this delegation was given and the scale of commitment



involved, it is considered prudent to outline the commercial terms of the agreement and seek a fresh delegation through this report.

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

- 5.1 Progress in securing the delivery of the Purfleet Centre project has been reported to Cabinet and Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a number of occasions. General progress has been reported regularly to the Purfleet Community Forum. The contents of this report, including the confidential appendix, have been presented to Group Leaders and Portfolio Holders through briefing sessions.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Securing the delivery of the Purfleet Centre project is a key priority within the Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Strategies together with the Local Development Framework. It is anticipated that, as well as local housing and employment, the nature of the development will serve to greatly increase the profile of the Borough and raise aspirations among developers and communities in terms of the benefits that new development can bring.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**  
**Head of Corporate Finance**

On the abolition of the Development Corporation, the Council received both sites and funding relating to the Purfleet site. The capital programme also provides for the costs of further site acquisition and for the school (as articulated within the report) when appropriate. Completing the agreement will commit the Council to the transfer of these assets on a conditional and phased basis.

The due diligence around this project, conducted on the Council's behalf by CBRE and PWC, recognises that it is financially viable and that, over the coming years, it should generate funds to reflect the value of the Council's land, repay the costs of the school as well as providing a dividend return to the Council as a commercial partner.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Daniel Toohey**  
**Principal Corporate Solicitor**

In awarding the Development Agreement discussed in this report, the Council must comply with the requirements of the EU public procurement regulations. As set out in the body of this report the Council conducted a competitive dialogue process, and in March 2014 the Council selected the contractor PCRL, taking advice on EU procurement compliance from external legal advisers. External legal advice has also been sought in relation to the commercial terms, and this is summarised in Appendix 2.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development and Equalities  
Manager**

The Purfleet Centre project has the ability to deliver a significant level of change to Purfleet, with the introduction of employment opportunities together with community facilities which will provide significant growth to the area.

### 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

N/A

### 8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Cabinet Report dated 19 March 2014 – Purfleet Regeneration Programme – Selection of Preferred Developer.

### 9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Site Masterplan
- Appendix 2 – Exempt due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

#### **Report Author:**

Matthew Essex  
Head of Regeneration  
CEDU





**FILM STUDIOS**

A- Studio X-Large	1 storey	4,000 sqm
B- Studio Large	1 storey	2,500 sqm
C- Studio Medium	1 storey	1,500 sqm
D- Studio Small	1 storey	1,000 sqm
E- Offices, Post Production, Retail, staff facilities, generic technologies, M&E	4 storeys	9,800 sqm
Reception, retail, security	1 storey	200 sqm
Below ground- Production support, car parking, storage rehearsal studios, back of house, staff facilities, M&E	2 storeys	15,255 sqm
G- Hotel (200 keys) + offices	15 storeys	32,000 sqm
Additional retail	1 storey	2,800 sqm

**PHASE 1**

4-bed houses	4 storeys	186 no.
Parking at ground level		
30-40 sqm garden		
Retail or cafe/bar at ground level	3 storeys	13 no.
3-bed maisonette at upper levels		
Parking below ground		
No garden, roof terrace for maisonette		
2-bed apartment at ground level	3 storeys	46 no.
3-bed maisonette at upper levels		
Parking below ground		
No garden, roof terrace for maisonette		
3-bed houses	3 storeys	47 no.
Parking at ground level		
30-40 sqm garden		
1- Primary School	2 storeys	1290 sqm
2- Community use	1 storey	500 sqm
3- Mini supermarket	4 storeys	1200 sqm
1 bed apartments (10 no.)		
2 bed apartments (14 no.)		
4- Gym	7 storeys	3600 sqm
1 bed apartments (30 no.)		
2 bed apartments (21 no.)		
5- Health centre	4 storeys	1600 sqm
1 bed apartments (15 no.)		
6- Oyster bar	1 storey	50 sqm
7- 1 bed apartments (21 no.)	7 storeys	2600 sqm
2 bed apartments (24 no.)		
8- 1 bed apartments (18 no.)	8 storeys	3150 sqm
2 bed apartments (16 no.)		
9- 1 bed apartments (12 no.)	6 storeys	2250 sqm
2 bed apartments (12 no.)		
Total phase 1 residential units		531 no.
Of that- total houses		233 no.
Total maisonettes		59 no.
Total apartments		239 no.
Total below ground parking spaces		300 no.

**PHASE 2**

4-bed houses	4 storeys	89 no.
Parking at ground level		
30-40 sqm garden		
Retail or cafe/bar at ground level	3 storeys	13 no.
3-bed maisonette at upper levels		
Parking below ground		
No garden, roof terrace for maisonette		
2-bed apartment at ground level	3 storeys	30 no.
3-bed maisonette at upper levels		
Parking below ground		
No garden, roof terrace for maisonette		
10- 1 bed apartments (12 no.)	6 storeys	4800 sqm
2 bed apartments (12 no.)		
Station (mostly below ground)		
Film Academy		
11- Cinema	5 storeys	2500 sqm
12- Care Home	3 storeys	3350 sqm
Total phase 2 residential units		186 no.
Of that- total houses		89 no.
Total maisonettes		43 no.
Total apartments		54 no.
Total below ground parking spaces		500 no.





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