

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

Council

To the Members of Thurrock Council

The next meeting of the Council will be held at **7.00 pm** on **29 March 2017**

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

Membership of the Council:

Cathy Kent (Mayor)
Tunde Ojetola (Deputy Mayor)

Tim Aker
John Allen
Chris Baker
James Baker
Jan Baker
Clare Baldwin
Russell Cherry
Colin Churchman
Gary Collins
Mark Coxshall
Jack Duffin
Tony Fish
Leslie Gamester
Oliver Gerrish
Robert Gledhill
Garry Hague

James Halden
Graham Hamilton
Shane Hebb
Clifford Holloway
Victoria Holloway
Deborah Huelin
Roy Jones
Tom Kelly
John Kent
Martin Kerin
Steve Liddiard
Brian Little
Susan Little
Sue MacPherson
Ben Maney
Bukky Okunade

Terry Piccolo
Jane Potheary
David Potter
Joycelyn Redsell
Barbara Rice
Gerard Rice
Sue Sammons
Angela Sheridan
Peter Smith
Graham Snell
Luke Spillman
Michael Stone
Pauline Tolson
Aaron Watkins
Kevin Wheeler



Lyn Carpenter
Chief Executive

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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	To receive any declaration of interests from Members.	
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	In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2(Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
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In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

15	Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies	
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Name of Committee	Date
Standards and Audit Committee	15 November 2016
Planning Transport Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 January 2017
Corporate Parenting Committee	10 January 2017
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Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17 January 2017
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Future Dates of Council:

24 May 2017 (Annual Council)

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- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

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- Enter your username and password

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.

PROCEDURE FOR MOTIONS

No speech may exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Mayor [Rule 19.8], except for the proposer of any motion who shall have 5 minutes to move that motion (except on a motion to amend where the 3 minute time shall apply) [Rule 19.8(a)]

All Motions will follow Section A and then either Section B or C

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|--|----------------------------|
| A. | A1 | Motion is moved | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A2 | Mover speaks | [Rule 19.8(a) (5 minutes)] |
| | A3 | Seconded | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A4 | Secunder speaks or reserves right to speak | [Rule 19.3] (3 minutes) |

Then the procedure will move to either B or C below:

B.		C.	
IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)		If NOT amended i.e. original motion	
B1	The mover of the amendment shall speak (3 mins).	C1	Debate
B2	The seconder of the amendment shall speak unless he or she has reserved their speech (3 mins).	C2	If the seconder of the motion has reserved their speeches, they shall then speak
B3	THEN debate on the subject .	C3	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply
B4	If the seconder of the substantive motion and the amendment reserved their speeches, they shall then speak	C4	Vote on motion
B5	The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply		
B6	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply		
B7	Vote on amendment		
B8	A vote shall be taken on the substantive motion, as amended if appropriate, without further debate		

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

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100 Years in Memoriam

Remembering Thurrock's Fallen of World War One

Each month during the centenary period of the First World War, Thurrock Council will pay tribute to the 834 local residents known to have lost their lives due to causes associated with the war and their service. At each meeting of Council until November 2018, the 100th anniversary of signing of the Armistice with Germany, a Roll of Honour will be published with the agenda detailing the casualties from that month 100 years ago to commemorate the sacrifice made by Thurrock residents.

March 1917

DATE	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	WARD	RANK	SERVICE	DIED
03-Mar	SLATTERY	DUNCAN VINCENT	19	G	2/LT	RFC	HOME
08-Mar	JONES	JESSE HOPKINS	31	BUL	L/CPL	R. WELSH FUS – 2	FRANCE
11-Mar	RAMSEY	RONALD CHESTERTON	19	G	PTE	R/FUS – 22	FRANCE
14-Mar	FLEMING	ANDREW	36	G	2/ENG	MERC. MARINE	CHANNEL
14-Mar	GOODRUM	ROBERT WILLIAM	56	G	STORE	MERC. MARINE	CHANNEL
14-Mar	SPARROW	WILLIAM ERNEST	19	E/TIL	TRIMR	MERC. MARINE	CHANNEL
15-Mar	BISHOP	ALBERT HARRY	38	G	PTE	SOUTH STAFFS - 1/5	FRANCE
15-Mar	BLUNDELL	WILLIAM	35	L/TH	PTE	BEDFORD – 7	FRANCE
16-Mar	DUSS	LEONARD FRED	17	G	GREASER	MERC. MARINE	ATLANTIC
16-Mar	GODMAN	EDMUND JOSEPH	22	G	FMN	MERC. MARINE	ATLANTIC
16-Mar	GODMAN	WILLIAM ALBERT	18	G	FMN	MERC. MARINE	ATLANTIC
18-Mar	MEEN	HENRY BENJAMIN	32	L/TH	PTE	K.S.L.I. -5	FRANCE
19-Mar	NEWBOULD	JOHN	20	PUR	L/CPL	KRRC – 20	FRANCE
19-Mar	KIRBY	JOHN HENRY	20	W/TH	PTE	ESSEX – 9	FRANCE
21-Mar	CLARKE	GEORGE WILLIAM	21	PUR	SGT	ESSEX - 9	FRANCE
26-Mar	SIMS	JAMES HENRY	28	G	PTE	ESSEX – 4	ISRAEL
26-Mar	CAPRON	THOMAS HARVEY OVERBURY	21	G & L/TH	PTE	ESSEX – 5	ISRAEL
26-Mar	MURRAY	JAMES	24	BUL	CPL	ESSEX – 5	ISRAEL
26-Mar	ELLIS	ALFRED ROBERT	23	S.OCK	PTE	ESSEX – 6	ISRAEL
27-Mar	PARKER	FREDERICK	27	G	SGT	RE	ISRAEL
27-Mar	SILVERWOOD	HUGH FLETCHER	24	G & L/TH	CAP	ESSEX – 6	ISRAEL
27-Mar	WOOD	GEORGE JAMES	26	G & W/TH & L/TH	PTE	ESSEX – 4	ISRAEL
27-Mar	BAKER	JAMES	26	G	PTE	ESSEX – 4	ISRAEL
28-Mar	PENTECOST	LEONARD DENYER	26	G & L/TH	PTE	WEST LEMT – 2/4	EGYPT

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 22 February 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Cathy Kent (Mayor), Tunde Ojetola (Deputy Mayor), Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish (*arrived 7.24*), Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Joycelyn Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson, Aaron Watkins and Kevin Wheeler

Apologies: Councillors Clare Baldwin, Russell Cherry, Clifford Holloway and Luke Spillman

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sharon Bayliss, Director of Commercial Services
Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Environment and Place
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Ian Wake, Director of Public Health
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Matthew Boulter, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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.

110. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 25 January 2017 were approved as a correct record.

Councillor Collins stated that his declaration of interest should have read "Bata" instead of "Barter" at Item 94 of the minutes.

111. Items of Urgent Business

The Mayor informed the Council that she had not agreed to the consideration of any items of urgent business.

112. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

113. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council

Firstly, the Mayor invited all those present to reflect on and remember Thurrock's fallen of World War One.

The Mayor reminded Members that tickets were still available for the Blue Light Charity Ball being held on the 3 March 2017.

The Mayor informed Members that a Golf Charity Day in aid of the Fire Fighters, Epilepsy Action and Thurrock Community Chest Charities would be held on the 21 March 2017 at the Langdon Hills Golf and Country Club.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, informed Members of the following updates:

The Council had secured a funding grant of £10.8 million for the regeneration of Grays Town Centre. Councillor Gledhill stated that this was the kick start to the regeneration of Grays to bring it into the 21st Century.

That the consultation by the Police Crime Commissioner on the proposal to merge the police and fire services together under a single organisation in Essex was available on-line and encouraged members to take part. This consultation would run for the next 12 weeks.

114. Questions from Members of the Public

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed under the relevant meeting date at <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock> and are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

115. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's petition Scheme, the requisite notice had been given by two members who wished to present petitions at the meeting.

Councillor Allen presented a petition on behalf of residents of Grays South Estate on the caretaking quality and proposed reduction in service levels.

Councillor Barbara Rice presented a petition on behalf of residents on the proposed service charge for sheltered accommodation.

116. Petitions Update Report

Members received a report on the status of those petitions handed into Council Meetings and Council Officers over the past six months.

117. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels

There were no changes to the appointments previously made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.

118. Review of Vision and Corporate Priorities

Councillor Hebb, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal, introduced the report to review the vision and priorities so that they better reflected the ambition of the Council and Thurrock. The aim was to make both more succinct and easy to communicate and to articulate the new focus and priorities. Feedback from recent consultations had given some clear opinions from residents on the most important issues for Thurrock and these had been used to focus on the new vision and priorities.

An initial draft of the proposed vision and priorities had been presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other stakeholders during November and December 2016 to which feedback had been used to focus on the final proposed version.

Councillor J Kent stated that he would not be supporting the recommendation tonight as he thought the process was to arrive at the priorities collectively and to give members the opportunity to take part in the process. He had only seen the report on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda in December 2016 to which members had disagreed with the recommendations. Councillor J Kent questioned Councillor Hebb whether the report and the recommendations made by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had already gone through Cabinet.

Councillor J Kent agreed that education had improved over the years and that this had been a measureable priority in the past. Councillor J Kent stated that education would fail if it was not a measureable priority and asked Councillor Hebb why this had not been included in the review.

Councillor Snell stated that he would not be supporting the recommendation tonight and that the report was full of unnecessary jargon and had not focused on anything in particular. Councillor Snell stated that the Council had been driving the borough forward well before the Conservatives came into administration.

Councillor Gledhill stated that he would be supporting the recommendation tonight and that the process of reports going to overview and scrutiny committees before Cabinet still stood. Councillor Gledhill stated that the Council should be striving for quality and had to move forward and in doing so listen to residents views.

Councillor Duffin stated that it was ironic that recommendations made by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been ignored by Cabinet.

Councillor Gerrish stated that he would not be supporting the recommendation tonight as he believed more work was needed to be undertaken in narrowing the ambition of the review and that all members should come to the same consensus.

Councillor G Rice stated that recommendations made by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been ignored by Cabinet and that members should have been involved in the workshops and the consultation process.

Councillor Hebb stated that a report had gone to Cabinet where no opposition member attended to ask a question and that the administration cared and listened to their residents and the results from the surveys had been fed into the vision.

Councillor Hebb thanked Members for an interesting debate and he would take on board the comments made and proposed an amendment to the recommendation as follows:

“That we defer the recommendation to a working party to continue the piece of work already undertaken on refreshing the vision and to report back to Full Council in due course”.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the amended recommendation.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the amended recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED

That the Council defer the recommendation to a working party to continue the piece of work already undertaken on refreshing the vision and to report back to Full Council in due course.

119. Annual Pay Policy Statement 2017/18

Councillor Hebb, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal, presented the report which sought the approval of the Council’s Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18. It included the requirement, under the Localism Act 2011, to publish its policy relating to pay for chief officers.

Councillor J Kent stated that he would be supporting the recommendations tonight. He felt that Public Sector Chief Executive salaries should be benchmarked against the salaries of senior civil servants and not the Prime Minister or other politicians, which he felt, were not comparable posts. Councillor J Kent also commented that he was glad to hear that there would

be no five per cent reduction cut on senior management pay. Councillor J Kent also thanked Officers for the sterling job that they undertake.

Councillor Coxshall commented that the no five per cent reduction on senior management pay indicated that times and economy had changed and that everyone deserved a pay rise.

Councillor Gledhill congratulated the Chief Executive in reducing staff numbers as part of the five per cent reduction.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the recommendations.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations, whereupon the Mayor declared these to be carried.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 was agreed in line with the Council's obligations under the Localism Act 2011, the Single Status Agreement and the recommendations by the independent market assessment.**
- 2. That the Agreement to continue to pay the UK Living Wage as a supplement to its lowest-paid employees and remain competitive. This rate should rise on 1 April 2017 in line with the Living Wage Foundation's recommended rate of £8.45ph.**

120. General Fund Budget Proposals

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, to introduce the budget and advised that he had 20 minutes to do so.

Councillor Gledhill

As already mentioned by Councillor Hebb, last May I received the privilege of becoming Leader of Thurrock Council.

I inherited a budget that I did not agree with, a budget we were told that was too small to supply basic services like street cleaning, grass cutting, pothole filling. A budget where the reserves had not been reviewed for six years. Although in good fairness to Councillor Kent had increased to a more acceptable level. A budget where despite repeated calls for a complete change in approach the previous administration were doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result, I know Councillor Duffin will understand that statement. A budget that frankly was dying the death of a thousand cuts.

In the 9 months since taking the administration we have seen the highest number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children, over 100, an unbudgeted pressure costing the Thurrock taxpayer £3.2 million since June alone. Staffing

levels cut to the bone from previous budgets. Vital equipment was either sold or unserviceable. Claims that we overspend and would wipe out reserves in a matter of weeks. Significant increases in criminally organised fly-tipping and unlawful incursions causing our green spaces to be dumped on and become diminished.

However, 9 months later I bring to you the results of that same budget, the same amount of money, where we have put the priorities of Thurrock residents first. As I say, remember with the same amount of money we had last year and we have delivered.

An increase in the number of street cleaners and enforcement officers in the environment team with residents saying how much nicer areas of the borough looks. All parks no longer have grass long enough to lose a small child in as I found out on the day I look over administration. Fly-tipping and incursions hotspots target hardened. Thousands of extra bags of rubbish off our streets. Hundreds of acres of extra grass had been cut. Thousands of potholes filled. Nearly half a million pound extra in to the reserves. Kept weekly bin collections. Brought non-essential budgets that overspent year on year in on budget.

Those are some of the positive headlines of last year. But again I said on day one we would be an open and honest administration and as such I would highlight just some, and it is just some, of the things that we have not managed to do. We have not cleaned every street to the high standard of some of town centres, every pothole hasn't been filled and every green space isn't perfect, but again I made clear on day one that it wouldn't happen, six years of neglect cannot be fixed overnight, we also need residents to do their bit to help, you know what they are coming out in their droves and doing it either individually and collectively. Something that has got to be congratulated by all 49 members in this chamber.

Some of the play equipment in our parks are damaged beyond repair and had not been replaced. This is going to be addressed in our capital program which I will come to later.

One of my biggest bugbears is the spend on non-permanent staff hasn't decreased as much I would have liked although indeed in some areas it has increased. Some of this is for the clean it cut it fill it but sorry we still have a long way to go on this.

I haven't managed to decrease the cost of the Thameside complex or indeed get the theatre to at least break even however, I know Councillor Halden has some very good news on Grangewaters which traditionally another taxpayer expense that has cost them dearly year on year with money being thrown at it and not break even.

But I am sure members across the chambers will highlight others and I am not going to stand here and denounce that we have not managed to do it yet but

we will be manage to do it in the next few years. Assuming that we keep administration.

This administration has started the transition from a budget that year on year has been cut, combined, added to, deleted from and fudged about without actually any real change. The budget that we will move into will reflect better where the money is properly allocated to. Where instead of looking inward and salami slicing frontline and support services to the bone we are looking outwards to commercialise. Looking outwards to commercialise on what we do well. What we haven't done before but want we can do at a profit and I know that is a word that many of you do not like but profit is what it is.

- What we do well,*
- What we haven't done before but can do at a profit,*
- Better utilise our staff, assets and buildings,*
- Make prudential investments that bring returns we can spend on frontline services.*

And as we move forward we will be examining every service we provide. Analysing to see:

- If need to provide it,*
- How we can provide it more efficiently, and*
- If it can be traded commercially, not only to local government but to also other organisations.*

This will help achieve the goal of a zero based budget something that we have banged on about year after year that we can build up on, but supply services that residents want, need and in some cases rely on.

So to the detail:

Tonight we are looking for agreement for a council tax increase of 1.98 per cent, a 3 per cent increase in the adult social care precept, also not only a capital investment program to be agreed but a future and aspirational list which highlights what we are aspiring to achieve and also the dreaded budget envelopes.

The 1.98 per cent council tax increase coupled with

- Achievable income targets,*
- An increase in band d equivalent properties in the council tax base and previously agreed reductions will help to deliver for example £1 million increase in the environment department to continue clean it cut it fill it*
- £420 thousand in reserves,*
- £1.3 million investment in play equipment for our parks over three years,*
- £8.75 million extra for new refuse and environmental support vehicles ensuring bin collections remain weekly and we can continue on with clean it and cut it,*

- *Up to £2.6 million redeveloping the civic amenity site, the council tip, to make it easier for both residents and hopefully the trade to properly dispose of waste rather than fly-tipping it and making our borough look a shambles in places.*

Examples on the future and aspirational list:

- *Smart bins that will help reduce the number of times they need to be emptied, by emailing the council when they are nearly full. That saves a person going round to empty half empty bins or three quarter empty bins we wait until they are full,*
- *Improving Blackshots field by the removal of a building no longer fit for purpose and improving the car park,*
- *And of course money for the replacement theatre, something I hope we will all agree in Councillor Kent's motion later this evening. I know I will be agreeing it.*

Why are these and others not on the confirmed capital list?

It's simple, we know we need them but I for one will not commit to a figure for a project until it is fully scoped.

The smart bins for instance, we will use our free trial to assess how well they will do in different areas to help shape up any further implementation across the borough. Putting projects on the capital program that just don't happen, or worse legally can't happen sets expectations too high and demoralises residents when it is not delivered. That is why we still have some £70 million of un-started or part finished capital schemes from previous budgets that will need financing in the future.

Now to the bit that annoys me the most, the envelope setting. I have said it before and will say it again; I do not believe setting budget envelopes is setting a budget. A budget is not just an amount on a vague heading for a department it should be outlining what you will be delivering for that amount.

However legislation and case law is very clear, only the cabinet, as the executive, have the power to decide exactly where the money is spent so I will only draw member's attention to the budget envelopes as outlined on page 82 at 4.6. The reasons why I do not like the budget envelopes they don't tell you what we are doing. It doesn't tell you that we will be keeping

- *Weekly bin collections,*
- *Our legal service is looking to become a full traded service,*
- *We will be reaching out to more parents by reorganising children centres,*
- *Supplying area based assistance to our most vulnerable.*

These are just a few examples so you can see my frustration at how this flies in the face of being open and transparent.

Many of you will know, who take the time to look back on previous years, as I did. It appears on the table to have a massive £7 million reduction in the environment team from previous year reports; I have challenged officers on this but have been assured and can assure everyone this is solely to do with accountancy recharge issues. It does not express any reduction in spending power in environment only the location of where the money is originally allocated before transfer.

Now earlier I mentioned that the non-permanent staff spend had not come in anywhere near as low as I had wanted. So as further example of how we are transforming the way taxpayers money is spent, this budget where we have set reduced spending limits we are removing the money from that budget in advance so it cannot be spent. Something that sounds so obvious but has not been done in the past. The money is not there you can't spend it.

Moving away from the central spend we are also spending Deficit School Grant £7 million in capital for improving our schools and over 98 per cent of the £112.5 million dedicated schools grant is going directing to schools. To make sure they can supply good and better services that our children actually deserve to find in the adult world.

So in closing I present to you a number of things with budget paper puts forward.

I already demonstrated that instead of spending time bemoaning that the government isn't giving councils enough to money, that

- *Working out how best to spend the taxpayers money we have got,*
- *By challenging why and how it is spent*

That not only can you supply services which residents want you can close the year with more money in reserves and next year a small surplus.

I have shown that this administration is committed to supplying the services residents want like street cleaning, pothole filling, weekly bin collections but also those services that are hidden that only a few will receive.

That putting in high quality bids and working closely with our MPs whilst applying for grants from growth bids and regeneration vast amounts of capital to help improve infrastructure that is long overdue in Thurrock as I mentioned in my opening remarks this evening.

That commerciality and making a profit to plough back into services are no longer dirty words.

That we are determined to review every service to drive out every efficiency and commercial possibility to protect resident services on the front line.

And most importantly for a modest increase we will see a significant investment in services everybody in the borough use, significant investment in

our open spaces and significant investment in the equipment and infrastructure that helps us deliver our promises.

This is an open and transparent, no hidden cuts in the background, formed with the input from members across the chamber who attended the council spending review budget, that's a budget that works for all.

I know I have done this before, but I am going to say it again and I will name names. I would like to thank Councillors Snell, Jones and Duffin for attending the meetings at the council spending review and hope they will do so again in the next financial year. Your input was important and ideas proposed have been included in the saving targets we have set and I thank you for that input.

In closing I will mention the funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau. With the budget put in front of us of £44,000 underspend at the end of the year and with some other unspent funding we will be able to fund the Citizens Advice Bureau once again. A cut that would have affected so many in need of help hopefully reversed by good money management. I therefore put this budget to the chamber.

The Mayor then invited the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Snell, to respond and advised that he had 15 minutes to do so.

Councillor Snell

As had been pointed out more than once recently, and again just now, I have, as leader of the UKIP Group taken a full and active part of the budget review process. Indeed, with the Council being split between three groups with none having a clear majority, I feel it is important that each group should take part in this process so that as wide a variety of opinions and ideas as possible are aired and taken into consideration when the budget is finally set.

That said, what are we asking to agree tonight? Many Thurrock residents are under the impression that we are agreeing each line of service provision but as Councillor Gledhill has just stated that this not the case at all. We are agreeing which services will continue and which won't, they think we are deciding what the Council will continue to do and what it won't. As we in this chamber know, that is not the case. We are asked only to agree the budget envelopes, how much each department has to spend, not what they spend it on. We are asked to make a decision on the here and now, not what might happen a few months' time should circumstances change. Cabinet can change the spending priorities as and when it needs to. It's an important point that residents should be aware of.

Now to the substantive points. It's impossible to look at our budget in isolation. We have to take into account the effect the Government policy as on us here, in Thurrock. There can be no doubt that the year on year reduction in the revenue support grant has had a major effect on the way we do things. We have had to become leaner as an organisation. We have had to develop a more commercial way of doing things, we have to try to earn more

of our own money and that we will continue to do so as time goes by rather than just spend our council taxpayer's money all the time which has tended to be done in the past. That can only be a good thing. We have to try to do the same things we've always done but better and with less money. Our officers are constantly challenged to come up with new, innovative ways of getting things done and all the time under the increasing pressure of ever shrinking budgets. The officers have been magnificent and I thank them for the great work they have done and continue to do.

But, and there is a but, they have a limit. Support from Government has been withdrawn too quickly. None of the new working practices are given any time to bed in before yet more cuts are required; stretching everything almost to breaking point. Whilst there is no doubt that local authorities were once over-indulged with Government funding, that is not the case anymore. We say, UKIP, enough is enough, we have taken the hits up to now but it's time for the Government to stop punching.

There is a crisis in Adult Social Care as well. All of us in the chamber know it. Indeed, the Tory Chair of the Health Select Committee has been telling it to anyone that will listen, clearly, up to now at least, to no avail. We in Thurrock are asking to provide excellent Adult Social Care to a rapidly growing number of people with ever diminishing government support. This Tory Government have very magnanimously passed the bill onto Thurrock Council Taxpayers even though it is fully aware that even with the 3 per cent rise in the adult social care precept and the one off payment of approximately £657,000 there is still severe pressure on the budget. This is unjust. Through government policy, people in need of decent social care are being put at risk, the government has the power to change that and we call on them tonight to do so. However, if we don't agree the rise tonight, the service will likely fail, we cannot allow that to happen and we won't.

Let me return to those budget envelopes. On the face of it they appear reasonable. However, in my opinion there is far too much reliance on expected future savings that each directorate is supposed to realise. As an example and as Councillor Gledhill has just mentioned, it is budgeted that there will be a reduction in the cost of agency and temporary staff. Not that there might be, but there will be. It is one thing to aspire to make that saving but quite another to actually realise it. And I do take the point on board about not providing the budget but when push comes to shove when staff are required what's going to give? Is the level of service or the budget? I am not convinced. That particular saving hasn't been realised in previous years, despite the same commitments being made.

What happens when one or more of those savings targets are not met. Do we dip into reserves or do we cut services to cover any shortfall. What happens should, for example, an already stretched environmental budget come under pressure. Would cabinet curtail their clean it, cut it, fil it or will it change the way the bins are collected. I am not convinced this budget provides security or peace of mind on such matters.

In any event, the budget does balance. How do I know that? The section 151 officer's report says it does. But it is a budget fraught with risks at a time when we can ill afford to take any. To my mind, this budget places a question mark against every service the council provides. I could not vote in favour of it with any confidence that the device landscape at the end of the next municipal year within reason be as it was at the start.

I began my speech by pointing out that this Council is split three ways. We have a minority administration and yet we are asked tonight to agree a budget set by a group that represents less than half of the wards in Thurrock. It is really democratic to leave decisions on spending what is many millions of pounds to a minority and un-representative group on council. I don't think so. The minority should not be the final arbiter of council policy and spending decision. This is a conversation for another day, but it is one we will have and it will be with the aim of making council more democratically accountable.

There are other areas of concern, namely Gloriana and the Thameside Theatre but they both appear later in the agenda for night so I'll reserve any comments until then.

Thank you Madam Mayor.

The Mayor invited Councillor Gledhill to respond and advised that he had 10 minutes to do so.

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Snell for your response and your very constructive criticism. I shall do these in no particular order. I can remember standing exactly where you are saying I had no faith in the administration to be able to deliver a budget year on year. Surprisingly every year I was proved wrong and I am sure that you will be proved wrong as well. I mean that in a good sense because if you are proved wrong its means our residents are getting the services they deserve. Is there risk in this? Yes. The expert in this, the section 151 officer, highlights these risks but at the end says there is sufficient ability for us to come in on budget. I have got 8 cabinet members and section 151 officer who has confidence in this budget, I would hope that you had a little bit more confidence in it yourself. However, I can understand where you are coming from on this. It is very good to hear the things you have said that in the past local government has been overly indulged with money. It has been really strange ever since I have been a local government officer and indeed a councillor year on year we have been budgets declined. We have seen gershon savings here and seen savings there and obviously through the administration seen cuts here cuts there but less effectively there is less money in the pot. We have rose to that through this administration to a degree and in deed us to a greater degree. If we look at the children's centres for example fewer buildings better services less money. We are looking at the area based assistance for our vulnerable adults again going onto a much smaller package that can be delivered that gives us much more flexibility within the system. So I think if anything reducing local

authority budgets has made us sit up and focus and start giving good value for money rather than doing the same old, same old. Something that we should never have done in the first place but what ever reason we got complacent and we carried on doing it. We moaned at whatever government it was for not giving us enough. You will notice I have not moaned at the government for not giving us enough. I've just got on with the job and that is what we need to do. I fully understand where you are coming from on the adults social care statement and indeed the statement from Councillor Kent came from on this. However to try and hook-win the administration in trying to say that our government is not doing enough is really poor politics. It is despicable to use that our receiving adult social care as pawns to score political points. So to take the political pressure out of this I am going to put forward an alternative recommendation within the recommendations outlined on page 74 and that will be recommendation 1.2.1. and the words will be exactly the same as Councillor Kent's recommendation which is following the consideration of overview and scrutiny committee and that cabinet agree to the proposed amendment is as it is stated there that

"Thurrock Council believes that the adult social care precept is unable solve the Adult Social Care funding crisis that exists, not only here in Thurrock but, nationally. Council calls on central government to urgently put in place proper and sustainable funding of adult social care and put in place a long - term strategy to deal with increasing pressures."

This will mean that every member can vote for the three per cent without having to think politics and can get on and think people and that is what we should be thinking about, people. And then recommendation 1.2.1 as I have just proposed, certainly this group has a free vote and the other groups will also have free vote on that and it will be up to members to decide whether this council will have a right to government accordingly. As such Madam Mayor I will pass it to you.

Councillor J Kent stated he was happy to proceed with Councillor Gledhill's alternative recommendation and withdrew his amended recommendation.

The Mayor then invited Member comments on the report.

Councillor J Kent stated that the Environmental and Place Directorate, who were the people who Clean It, Cut It, Fill It, will have £6.6 million less to spend next year and that the report did not explain where that money had gone and how the shortfall would be made up.

Councillor J Kent stated that there was an Adult Social Care crisis up and down the country and at the January 2017 Full Council the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2016 had been received and stated that Thurrock was £18-22 million in deficit in adult social care spending over the next three years. Councillor J Kent agreed with the three per cent precept and the one off government adult social care support grant of £657,000 which would equate to £2.4 million extra for adult social care. Councillor J Kent stated that he thought this was not good enough and that the elderly and vulnerable

residents of Thurrock deserved better and the Council would not be able to offer these services if we accepted the budget envelopes being proposed by the administration.

Councillor J Kent stated that items on the table of savings were too aspirational and the budget being proposed was not robust enough, not fit for purpose and would not be a budget that could be delivered.

Councillor Jones spoke on behalf of the residents that Members had no choice but to agree with the administration's increase on council tax. Councillor Jones stated that the government should be condemned for making these cuts too sharply and without the consideration of residents.

Councillor Jones also questioned whether the £6.2 million allocated to new refuse vehicles and plant hire should be leased instead of purchasing.

Councillor Duffin thanked the Section 151 Officer for the meetings that he had attended throughout the year as shadow portfolio holder for finance.

Councillor Duffin stated that it was bizarre that the council that made major financial decisions where 50 per cent of votes in the chamber counted for nothing and that Cabinet could go away and make the executive decision. Councillor Duffin further commented that he would be voting against this report as nobody would vote for a budget which could not be held to account.

Councillor Wheeler stated that the young families in the borough would suffer due to the tax increases and this was unfair and unjust.

Councillor Halden stated that the administration's goal was doing more for less, reforming, investing and striving forward. Children's Centres were reforming to offer a more comprehensive offer to more people. Investments in schools where expansion plans had already come forward in St Clere's and Ockendon and that £1.4 million would be made available immediately for East Tilbury Primary School to help expand and deliver the class rooms they deserve. Councillor Halden commented that the approved capital was that what was needed and not simply wanted and that the Council was striving with investments in cases such as Grangewaters which now breaks even and hopefully will make a profit next year.

Councillor Redsell thanked the Leader for the positive way the budget was presented and how this was the vision of the administration. Councillor Redsell welcomed the news on funding for the Blackshot fields.

Councillor G Rice stated that the administration should listen to the residents in the public gallery tonight on how the budget was being spent and that the three per cent increase cannot keep happening.

Councillor Sheridan stated that she was sad and angry that £1 million had been allocated to foreign aid and that the government should be helping local residents first.

Councillor Huelin stated that the Council needed to work smarter, learn from the mistakes made and how important it was that the Council listened to local residents and delivered what they ask for by spending money wisely.

Councillor Coxshall referred Members to the Asset Team where there had been £61 million of disposal income in the last budget and that the £800,000 was a reasonable figure to find and what the Council had to do was get this money back, mainly from the Purfleet Regeneration.

Councillor Coxshall stated he was proud that the administration had a foreign aid budget.

Councillor Piccolo stated that the Council should work with the money it had now and to ensure that the money the Council spent was the money that it earned. Councillor Piccolo commented that the Local Area Coordinators were doing a fantastic job and saving social care an enormous amount of money.

Councillor B Rice stated that the administration had to acknowledge real life issues and those residents that were under privileged. That there was nothing in the budget to address such issues.

Councillor Hamilton echoed Councillor Sheridan's comments and was disgusted on where foreign aid money was being allocated.

Councillor S Little stated that adult social care was being addressed to try and devise what residents want rather than what the Council think they want. Councillor S Little also stated that Collins House, an unused asset, required to be brought up to date and she also praised the work done by the Local Area Coordinators.

Councillor Gerrish commented that the budget summary proposals presented were more like a "Wing It, Fudge It, Dodge It" budget. Councillor Gerrish had concerns over the budget that there were too many saving proposals which were too speculative, the proposals were too vague and that too many of the big issues for the future had been ducked. Further clarity was required before the budget could be set and that the proposals were hugely speculative.

Councillor MacPherson stated that she looked forward to the sporting facilities being available and was thrilled that the Citizen Advice Bureau would continue to support vulnerable residents.

Councillor Watkins stated that improvements had been made to the budget going forward and he was proud of the proposed budget.

Councillor Hebb stated that the Council Spending Review was designed to get every member around the table and get a cross party budget. There were 10 meetings held to which all members had sight of all papers being presented giving all members the opportunity to comment and contribute. Councillor Hebb confirmed that the government cuts were a full suite of service reviews

which would look bottom up for the next three years and to look at what was statutory and what was preferable for the tax payer to ensure that the right base was presented.

Councillor Tolson stated that the environmental services, such as grass cutting and cleaner streets, had improved and forward thinking was essential for providing services for residents in the future.

The Mayor explained that a non-recorded vote would take place on recommendation 1.1.

A non-recorded vote took place on recommendation 1.1 the result of which was:

For	:	(31)
Against	:	(0)
Abstain	:	(15)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.1 to be carried.

The Mayor explained that a recorded vote would take place on recommendation 1.2.

A recorded vote took place on recommendation 1.2 the result of which was:

For : Councillors Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Joy Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerald Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson, Aaron Watkins and Kevin Wheeler (45)

Against : (0)

Abstain : (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.2 to be carried.

At 9.16pm the Mayor requested that standing orders be suspended to provide time to hear and debate the remaining items from Members. Members voted in favour of this and agreed to finish at 9.45pm.

The Mayor explained that a recorded vote would take place on recommendation 1.2.1.

A recorded vote took place on recommendation 1.2.1 the result of which was:

For : Councillors Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Graham Hamilton, Victoria Holloway, Roy Jones, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Michael Stone and Kevin Wheeler (27)

Against : Councillors Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, , Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Shane Hebb, Deborah Huelin, Tom Kelly, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Terry Piccolo, Joy Redsell, Pauline Tolson and Aaron Watkins (18)

Abstain : (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.2.1 to be carried.

The Mayor explained that an individual recorded vote would take place on recommendations 1.3 and 1.4.

A recorded vote took place on recommendation 1.3 the result of which was:

For : Councillors John Allen, James Baker, Jan Baker, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Joy Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson and Aaron Watkins (41)

Against : Councillors Chris Baker and Kevin Wheeler (2)

Abstain : Councillors Tim Aker and Jack Duffin (2)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.3 to be carried.

A recorded vote took place on recommendation 1.4 the result of which was:

For : Councillors Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, , Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Shane Hebb, Deborah Huelin, Tom Kelly, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Terry Piccolo, Joy Redsell, Pauline Tolson and Aaron Watkins (18)

Against : Councillors Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Graham Hamilton, Victoria Holloway, Roy Jones, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue

Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell,
Michael Stone and Kevin Wheeler (27)

Abstain : (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.4 lost.

The Mayor adjourned the Full Council at 9.24pm for 10 minutes to enable the Leaders, the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Finance & IT and the Monitoring Officer to debate and agree the way forward.

Full Council reconvened at 9.35pm.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on recommendations 1.5 to 1.7 as printed in the report. This was a non-recorded vote.

For : (45)
Against : (0)
Abstain : (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendations 1.5 to 1.7 to be carried.

Finally, the Mayor explained that a recorded en-bloc vote would take place on recommendations 1.8 to 1.13 the result of which was:

For : Councillors Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Pothecary, David Potter, Joy Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson, Aaron Watkins and Kevin Wheeler (45)

Against : (0)

Abstain : (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendations 1.8 to 1.13 to be carried.

RESOLVED

That the Council:

- 1.1 Considers and acknowledges the Section 151 Officer's (Director of Finance and IT's) report on the robustness of the proposed budget, the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the Reserves Strategy as set out in Appendix 1, including the conditions upon which the following recommendations are made;**

- 1.2 Following the considerations of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny and the Cabinet, agree to a 3% council tax increase in respect of Adult Social Care;
- 1.2.1 Thurrock Council believes that the adult social care precept is unable solve the Adult Social Care funding crisis that exists, not only here in Thurrock but, nationally. Council calls on central government to urgently put in place proper and sustainable funding of adult social care and put in place a long - term strategy to deal with increasing pressures;
- 1.3 Following the considerations of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny and the Cabinet, agree to a 1.98% council tax increase in support of the general budget;
- 1.5 Approve the Dedicated Schools Grant as set out in section 7 and Appendix 4;
- 1.6 Approve the new General Fund capital proposals, including the allocation for feasibility work on future and aspirational proposals, as set out in section 8 and Appendix 5;
- 1.7 Delegate to Cabinet the ability to agree schemes where it can be evidenced that there is a spend to save opportunity or that use any unbudgeted contributions from third parties, including those by way of grants or developers' contributions, and these be deemed as part of the capital programme;

Statutory Council Tax Resolution

- 1.8 Calculate that the council tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2017/18 is £61,682,537 as set out in the table at paragraph 4.6 of this report;
- 1.9 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2017/18 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £381,756,591 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act.
 - (b) £320,074,054 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £61,682,537 being the amount by which the aggregate at 1.9(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.9(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).

- (d) £1,226.61 being the amount at 1.9(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (Council Tax Base of 50,287), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (e) £0 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £1,226.61 being the amount at (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by Item T, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

1.10 To note that the Police Authority and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the tables below;

1.11 That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of council tax for 2017/18 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;

2017/18 COUNCIL TAX FOR THURROCK PURPOSES EXCLUDING ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY AND ESSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

Amounts for the Valuation Bands for 2017/18							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
817.74	954.03	1,090.32	1,226.61	1,499.19	1,771.77	2,044.35	2,453.22

1.12 That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 Essex Police Authority has stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council for each of the categories of dwellings as follows:

Amounts for the Valuation Bands for 2017/18							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
104.70	122.15	139.60	157.05	191.95	226.85	261.75	314.10

1.13 That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 Essex Fire Authority has stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council for each of the categories of dwellings as follows (waiting on formal confirmation):

Amounts for the Valuation Bands for 2017/18							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
46.02	53.69	61.36	69.03	84.37	99.71	115.05	138.06

2017/18 COUNCIL TAX (INCLUDING FIRE AND POLICE AUTHORITY PRECEPTS)

Amounts for the Valuation Bands for 2017/18							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
968.46	1,129.87	1,291.28	1,452.69	1,775.51	2,098.33	2,421.15	2,905.38

121. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budgets 2017/18

Councillor Gledhill, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing, introduced the report that set out the base position after developing a new Housing Review Account Business Plan for 2017/18. This Plan needed to be financially viable whilst being able to continue to deliver the Council's Housing priorities.

Councillor Gledhill stated that the continuation of the government's rent reduction policy reduced the resources available in the Housing Review Account and as a result other ways of generating additional resources had been explored.

A review of the housing service which included all activities funded by the Housing Review Account was currently underway.

Councillor Gledhill stated that no agreement would be given to any new proposals that were under consultation.

Councillor B Rice stated that she was delighted that the consultations had been noticed and that the Council should respect all residents views and to recognise the anger that some residents are currently feeling.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the recommendation.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted as follows:

For	:	18
Against	:	19
Abstain	:	5

Whereupon the Mayor declared the recommendation lost.

122. Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18

Councillor Hebb referred members to the report in the agenda and asked requested the recommendation go to the vote.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the recommendation.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 including approval of the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement.**
- 2. That the Council approves the adoption of the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix 1.**
- 3. That the Council notes the revised 2016/17 and 2017/18 Treasury Management projections as set out in paragraph 2.33.**

123. Appointment of External Auditor

Councillor Hebb referred members to the report in the agenda and asked requested the recommendation go to the vote.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the recommendation.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED

That the Council opts in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the Council's local auditor appointments from 2018/19.

124. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Members that questions submitted would either receive a written response or have the option to withdraw and resubmit.

Councillor Kerin requested a written response from Councillor Tolson.

Councillor Fish requested a written response from Councillor Halden.

Councillor Sammons withdrew her question and would resubmit.

Councillor J Kent withdrew his question and would resubmit.

125. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

The Mayor informed the Chambers that no reports had been received.

126. Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of Committees as set out in the Agenda were received.

127. Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year

Members received an information report updating the progress in respect of Motions received at Council over the last year.

128. Motion Submitted by Councillor Duffin

Councillor Duffin withdrew and would resubmit this Motion.

129. Motion Submitted by Councillor J Kent

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor J Kent and seconded by Councillor Gledhill. The Motion read as follows:

The Thameside Theatre is held in great affection by residents across Thurrock. Therefore the sudden announcement that the theatre is likely to close by April 2019 is causing real concern in many quarters. Council is of the collective view that the Thameside Theatre should remain open until a new civic theatre for Thurrock, situated in Grays, has opened.

Councillor J Kent introduced the Motion and stated that a unanimous message should be sent out that the Thameside Theatre would not close until a provision had been provided elsewhere in the borough.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a clear majority in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

130. Motion Submitted by Councillor Snell

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Snell and seconded by Councillor Gledhill. The Motion read as follows:

In order to demonstrate transparency on its policies, implementation of its policies and overall performance and further to Gloriana Limited willingness to co-operate with such scrutiny from Members, Thurrock Council believes that Gloriana Limited should: provide an Annual Report to the Council; provide regular quarterly updates to our General Services Committee, voluntarily submit to the full democratic scrutiny of Full Council and General Services Committee on the thoroughness of its Business Plan and funding requirements. This is not to seek to inappropriately discuss the specific merits of any material planning considerations or predetermine the quasi-judicial

decision properly within the remit of our Planning Committee on the current part heard planning application.

Councillor Snell introduced the Motion to bring Gloriana Limited into the scrutiny of Full Council and have the opportunity to have an oversight of the substantive amount of monies being put into Gloriana Limited. Councillor Snell stated that although in full support and Gloriana Limited being a worthwhile scheme it required more scrutiny and that Full Council was the place for this to be undertaken.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a clear majority in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

131. Motion submitted by Councillor Hebb

Councillor Hebb withdrew and would resubmit this Motion.

The meeting finished at 9.56 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**

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 22 February 2017

Item 6 – Questions from Members of the Public.

Three questions were submitted from members of the public.

1. From Peter Perrin to Councillor Gledhill

During a debate at last month's Council meeting Councillor Gledhill indicated that he did not accept that the NHS, nationally or locally, was in "crisis" but rather that there were "problems". In view of reports since then that 137 out of 152 hospital trusts have been at "unsafe" levels so far this winter, Basildon University Hospital being one of the 137, would Councillor Gledhill now consider changing his assessment from "problematic" to "crisis"?

Mayor

Councillor Gledhill

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. Obviously after answering the same kind of question three times with the same answer last month...The short answer is no, but I think it would do you a bit of a disjustice just to say no. It is clear that the NHS are experiencing problems, and as I said last month, this is a lot to do with the lack of proper planning and the way that the services are being used by some. Councillor Halden later in the same meeting outlined things like, in 14-15, 24,424 patients attended A&E from Thurrock who received advice only i.e. no significant investigation or clinical treatment; that was 41% of all attendances. A further 25,652 patients attended from Thurrock who received the most minor level of investigations or treatment, for example blood test or a wound dressing change; that was 42%. Of all of these cohorts, sorry these cohorts made up 83% of all A&E attendances. 27% of those who turned up in these two cohorts turned up in an ambulance and I'm sure the well-trained and somewhat hard-pushed paramedics were very pleased to see them being used as a taxi service. The total cost to the NHS for treating these patients in A&E was somewhere in the region of £4.4million. Now, if you can imagine, if we put up with that misuse of public funds elsewhere there'd be an outcry. This needs to change. Public perception of what A&E is there for needs to change, and needs to change quickly. Imagine what that £4.4million could do just for Thurrock residents at Basildon Hospital. It could mean that there'd be more staff, it could mean more buildings so there could be more patients there for the longer, Winter period. So again, no, I will not change my statement from last month.

Mayor

Thank you. Mr Perrin, would you like to ask a supplementary question?

Mr Perrin

Thank you, Madam Mayor. In an attempt to please the Monitoring Officer I will try to comply with the rules of the Council's Constitution, CPR 14 which

I'm informed requires that a question name the individual to whom it is addressed. Would you, Councillor Gledhill, tell me, Mr Perrin – don't get alarmed I'm not about to plight my troth – what criteria you, Councillor Gledhill, would require to be met before you, Councillor Gledhill, would be prepared to admit that the NHS was, is, in crisis?

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. In the same vein I, Councillor Gledhill, I'm not an NHS expert, clearly. If I was standing outside A&E with a 4 ½, 8hour, 10hour wait in an ambulance or in a corridor I would say this is a terrible crisis, this is something that affects me directly, now. However, most people do that, a lot of people wouldn't look at the fact that 83% of the people that have gone in front of me probably didn't need to be there. So I will admit that it is in crisis when the waste, the misuse, the poor use and all the missed opportunities within the NHS are addressed, and then if it is still not performing up to a level that everybody finds acceptable then, and only then, will I say it's a crisis.

Mayor

Thank you, Mr Perrin. Mr Taylor, would you please like to make your way forward to ask your question.

2. From Barry Taylor to Councillor Gledhill

Can you tell us why you think it is acceptable to propose a £15 a week charge on the elderly residents living in sheltered housing in Thurrock?

Mayor

Councillor Gledhill

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you for your question, Mr Taylor. The reason I think it's fair to propose these, and I must stress again and I will be stressing throughout the evening these are propositions, this is not something set in stone, to introduce these proposals is that I don't think it's fair that residents, 100% of tenants in social housing, in Council social housing in Thurrock, are paying for services that less than 15% receive. I am a strong believer in pay for what you get, but more importantly get what you pay for. So not only will these proposals, if accepted, go forward and there will be a graduated charge over a period of time, a graduated charge that will not apply to somewhere in the region, in full, of 70% of residents in there. It will mean that they will get a service that is much better than it is now [*heckling from members of the public*] Madam Mayor?

Mayor

Please, please. Members of the public can we please listen to the answers given? Thank you.

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. I shall continue with my [*heckling from members of the public*].

Mayor

Please. I know this is an issue you feel very strongly about but we need to have rules in the meeting, otherwise you can't hear what the Councillors are saying. [*Heckling from members of the public*]. We need to listen to the Councillor to let him answer the question. Okay? I understand that you're feeling very passionate about this, believe me, but we do need to have the meeting run to a certain order. Councillor Gledhill?

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. I will continue and of course I will not rise to the bait of being called a liar. [*Heckling from members of the public*].

Mayor

Please, public can we please make sure we're quiet; listen to the meeting and let the Councillors answer the questions asked, please. [*Heckling from members of the public*]. Councillor Gledhill?

Councillor Gledhill

Again, I shall try to finish what I was saying. ...and you also get what you pay for, I have understood from [*Heckling from members of the public*]. Madam Mayor, am I going to be continually interrupted, because if I am I shall just sit down and I shall just wait for the supplementary.

Mayor

Can you answer the question, please?

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. ...and you get what you pay for and you pay for what you get. I've already heard that residents are saying that they're not getting the service that they pay for already, and if that's the case this consultation is the right place to highlight that and find out where the problems are and resolve them. Today I understand from officers they went to a sheltered housing complex where they said it's absolutely great, we get to see our warden every single day, we couldn't do without them. So clearly, clearly, it's from complex to complex and if there is a problem at any particular complex I need to know about it so my Officers will know about it and trust me, when my Officers know about it they will get it fixed.

Mayor

Mr Taylor, would you like to ask a supplementary question?

Mr Taylor

Yes, Madam Mayor. We've worked all our lives to ensure that we can pay our way when we retire and you want to take every shilling away from us. Do you think we are an easy touch? Well, we're not. We have fought many battles in our lives, than you can imagine. This is an unfair charge attacking some of the most vulnerable in our borough and my question is, why do you think the elderly are your cash cows, just to balance your books?

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Gledhill?

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor, I'm sure the applause wasn't for me yet. You said in your response there that throughout your lives you've paid your way, we'll you're getting a service at the moment which you're not paying for. So, if you're going to continue to pay your way you would need to carry on paying your way. I do not see the elderly as cash cows, we are consulting on this. If we were going just to rush forward and do it we wouldn't have gone through consultation. If we were going to do that it wouldn't have happened, trust me. You're not cash cows, this is asking for people to pay for the services they receive. A significant number of people already pay for the services in here, £8 a week, this was introduced in 2014. This is pretty much trying to bring this in line and actually making sure that the service you get is covered by the charges you pay.

Mayor

Thank you, Mr Taylor. Ms Cunningham, would you please like to make your way forward to ask your question. Thank you.

3. From Maureen Cunningham to Councillor Gledhill

Why are you setting residents against residents by introducing a huge service charge for us elderly who you say can pay, and others who are on benefits and will get this tax paid for them?

Mayor

Councillor Gledhill

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor and thank you, Ms Cunningham. I'm not setting resident against resident. There is currently a system that effectively does that was introduced by the previous Administration in 2014. If you moved into sheltered accommodation in March of that year you pay nothing, irrespective of how much income you have outside of the State Benefit System. If you moved in on 1 April of that year you pay £8, irrespective of whether you're over the threshold for benefits. That is not fair. It's also not fair, as I've already said, that the current system which is a tax on 100% of housing residents to pay for the services that are received by 15% of the residents. That is a real tax, not what you're asking. As to the question of benefit, this is the same for rent; this is the same for all those on housing benefit, those who do not have sufficient get a State top-up. Those that have more than what the State say they should have, or can have; they have to pay the extra. That's the same for rents, the same for anybody in ordinary housing, same with social housing. This is not me setting it, this system has been in place for decades.

Mayor

Ms Cunningham, do you wish to ask a supplementary question?

Ms Cunningham

Mr Gledhill, most of us pensioners have managed our money, albeit a small amount, through all sorts of hardships in our lives. We've brought up our families through some very tough times. Some of us need help through benefits and some of us don't, but let me tell you we all agree on one thing; this is one step too far. Are you going to reconsider putting this unfair tax on us?

Councillor Gledhill

Again, I will reiterate, this is not a tax on the elderly, this is not a tax on those in sheltered housing, this is simply people paying for the services which they get. Will I reconsider it? No. We are at consultation stage and I strongly suggest that all residents

Mayor

Can we let the Councillor finish his answer please, ladies and gentlemen?
Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill

Thank you, Madam Mayor. As I say, this is not a tax; this is you paying for the charges, for the services you currently receive. Yes you have paid in through the system, yes you have made savings throughout your life and yes you've got to the later part of your life where you have over the benefit threshold. So whatever services that will be provided, that are over and above what you would get state benefit for, you will have to pay. Unfortunately it's no different for anybody else, anywhere in the Country. Remember, Thurrock is one of the very few places that doesn't have a universal service charge for these kind of services that you receive. There is a system where some of you pay £8, many of you pay nothing; this will bring everybody in line. Thank you.

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions submitted from members of the public.

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Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 29 March 2017

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Portfolio Holder	Status Full copies of the responses may be obtained from Democratic Services
484	<p>There is insufficient parking for local residents living in Plaistow Close. The road is particularly small and with cars parked across the pavements there is still not enough space for everyone to park.</p> <p>We request the Council install free parking permits down the road which would mean that local residents could guarantee that there is space for them to park their vehicles.</p> <p>We request the Council also look to add additional parking on the grass verge at the end of the road.</p>	8 December 2016	Cllr B Little	Following investigation by the Council's Traffic Team, it has been identified that the provision of additional parking would require the use of land currently designated as 'open space'. Council officers are investigating the feasibility of this land being made available for parking.
485	<p>We the undersigned petition Thurrock Council to amend the proposed changes to Children's Public Health Services and Children's Centres to no longer include the closure of Stanford-le-Hope Children's Centre.</p> <p>While we accept Thurrock Council's desire to integrate and strengthen services for children and young people aged 0-19 and families in need of additional help, we ask that Stanford-le-Hope Children's Centre remains open and does not become an outreach service.</p>	21 December 2016	Cllr Halden	The Petition was received by Thurrock Council on 7 December 2016. However, the consultation around the changes to Children's Centres had closed on 4 December 2016. We informed the Lead petitioner that we would be unable to accept the comments attached to the petition as the deadline had passed and we had rejected three other late responses received prior to the petition. The Lead Petitioner was also advised that the format of the original petition did not meet the Council's criteria. The petition was regularised and resubmitted. We have been in ongoing communication with the Lead Petitioner.

* indicates petitions handed in at the Civic Offices or e-petitions - not presented at Council

Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 29 March 2017

	<p>Stanford-le-Hope Children’s Centre is a crucial part of the community and we think it is important for families in Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Horndon-on-the-Hill and Orsett to have access to a local dedicated facility that is open 5 days a week, with trained staff members on hand to offer support and advice.</p> <p>The flexible drop-in sessions and facilities, including a range of educational and age appropriate toys and access to a garden area, that would be lost if the Children’s Centre were to close, are vital for parents in need of extra support and for those who don’t have access to such facilities elsewhere.</p>			
486	<p>The parking facilities are of grave concern to the residence of Dalroy Close. This drop drive being proposed for number 23 will cause massive problems for the residence to Dalroy Close, when the person in question doesn’t even live at the property of number 23 and hasn’t lived there for more than 10years, this is so selfish, inconsiderate and thoughtless causing inconvenience to others, others that need that space if they have young children, if they are elderly or registered disabled, and most importantly the emergency services, which have used that space previously.</p>	6 January 2017	Cllr B Little	<p>The vehicle crossing meets all the conditions set out in Council policy and therefore there is no reason to refuse it and has approval to proceed. The Lead Petitioner has been informed.</p>

Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 29 March 2017

487	Objection to double yellow lines (no waiting at any time) Access Road 36-72 Lodge Lane, Grays	21 February 2017	Cllr B Little	Following receipt of all the comments and objections regarding the implementation of the double yellow lines in Lodge Lane a Delegated Decision Report will be submitted to the Portfolio holder to consider all the reasons for implementing the scheme including comments from those who have submitted the service request and all the objections to the scheme.
488	Serious concerns about the level of caretaking services on the Grays South Estate	22 February 2017	Cllr Gledhill	<p>Although some adjustments have been made by housing management to individual task allocations on the estate, this has not resulted in a reduction in service.</p> <p>In summary, three caretakers in Grays were identified as having smaller rounds than some of their colleagues elsewhere, and were allocated some additional duties elsewhere (less than two floors a day each). Staff 'downtime' has been reduced, but we are confident the level of service at Seabrooke Rise has been maintained. Cover arrangements are in place for staff absences and the Team Leader carries out a daily overall check in every block. No complaints from tenants have been received since the changes were made on January 16th</p> <p>Caretaking duties on the Echoes have been assigned to other staff in the service, and there is no impact on tenants in Seabrooke Rise.</p> <p>If tenants have particular concerns these can be raised with Estate Services staff on-site or</p>

* indicates petitions handed in at the Civic Offices or e-petitions - not presented at Council

Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 29 March 2017

				with the Tenancy Services team who will look at any perceived problems with the service.
489	Conservative's proposed £15 per week charge for all sheltered housing tenants in Thurrock	22 February 2017	Cllr Gledhill	The Council has just completed an extensive consultation exercise on the proposal to extend service charges. The results of the consultation and a final decision will be taken at the June Cabinet.

29 March 2017	ITEM: 10
Council	
Review of Budget Setting Procedure at Full Council on 22 February 2017	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key Decision
Report of: Councillor Rob Gledhill - Leader of the Council	
Accountable Head of Service: Not Applicable	
Accountable Director: Lyn Carpenter - Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report reviews the budget setting procedure adopted by Council this year, the budget decisions made at last month's Council meeting on 22 February 2017 and considers options for reviewing that process going forward.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Council note the advice of the Monitoring Officer set out in section 2 of the report.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1. The approach to setting the 2017/18 budget was based on a new, transformational approach and concentrated primarily on: income generation; more or the same for less; and reducing the impact of demand leading to less growth requirements.
- 2.2. This approach was reported to Cabinet and each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2016. Service specific proposals were also reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee with all generic proposals being taken to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The approach and proposals were also submitted to, and agreed by, the cross party Council Spending Review (CSR) panel.
- 2.3. Despite the CSR process, in which all Group Leaders and Deputy Leaders were invited to meet monthly to discuss options for the 2017/18 budget setting, and as well the public reports considered at Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the majority of Members were not able to agree the budget envelopes at the council meeting on 22 February 2017.

- 2.4. The process of reporting budget proposals through Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been the same for a number of years. Cabinet receives a draft budget in December/January that is then referred to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet then receives a further report in February, including comments from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and recommends a budget to the Council.
- 2.5. It is proposed that a peer Review is commissioned to review the budget setting process and to work with Members and officers to inform an approach over the coming months for 2018/19. The exact approach and scope will be proposed to the monthly Governance Group attended by Group Leaders. The review will consider the current approach in Thurrock, compare to nationally recognised best practice and make any recommendations back to the Governance Group in due course.

Monitoring Officer's Advice on General Fund Budget Resolutions

- 2.6. All resolutions on the General Fund Budget Report were passed by Full Council with the exception of Recommendation 1.4 which concerned the General Fund allocation to services.
- 2.7. During a short adjournment called by the Mayor the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Group Leaders all accepted that despite Recommendation 1.4 not passing the Council clearly had an Annual Budget and could proceed to bill.
- 2.8. By way of a further post meeting legal analysis the Monitoring Officer, with the agreement of the Director of Law & Governance and the Section 151 Officer, is of the opinion that:
- 2.9. All opposition groups had had an explicit opportunity to submit either alternative proposals and/or amendments to the Executive's budget proposals at or prior to this meeting - despite this only one amendment was submitted by the Labour Group, this was passed after acceptance of an alteration put forward by the Conservative Administration.
- 2.10. Therefore in default of any opposition amendments as to specific allocations, despite an opportunity to submit balanced alternative budget proposals, and noting the clear agreement that the annual budget had indeed been set it falls to the Executive to implement the agreed budget in line with the effect of Section 30 (6) and (7) of Local Government Finance Act 1992, Local Authorities (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and Section 9 D Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.11. To quote the High Court judgment in R - v - Oxfordshire County Council (2016):

“Though the setting of Council Tax to meet the budget which determines it is a function of the whole council, the Cabinet alone has the responsibility of determining the precise expenditure and allocation of

the sums thus raised. This is the effect of section 9 D of the Local Government Act 2000, in particular Section 9D (2)”

2.12. I note Section 32 of Local Government Finance Act 1992 which states;

“Calculation of budget requirement:

In relation to each financial year a billing authority shall make calculations required of this section.

The authority must calculate the aggregate of :-

The expenditure which the authority estimates it will incur in the year in performing its functions and will charge to a revenue account for the year.”

2.13. Whilst it may be expected that an Authority will seek to specify service allocations or “envelopes” it is clear that Council had been and was following its Constitution for some months pursuant to Chapter 3, Part 3 – Budget and Policy Framework Rules and as indicated neither prior to nor at the budget setting meeting itself were any revised budget proposals or budget amendments submitted or moved by opposition groups (beyond the above-mentioned alteration).

2.14. Neither were standing orders as to the termination of the meeting extended beyond a short period of 30 minutes, nor were any without notice motions to adjourn the meeting forthcoming.

2.15. Therefore in all the circumstances Full Council on setting the Council Tax and overall budget explicitly choose thereafter to reject the Administration’s specific service allocations without submitting any alternative proposals - leaving the Authority with an agreed Council Tax & Budget and an aggregate allocation to its whole functions at the termination of the meeting under Council Procedure Rule 19.

2.16. This position is also supported by the fact that the annual budget is intended to set before the financial year begins at a dedicated and scheduled budget meeting

2.17. Seeking to apply R – v – Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Full Council having set the Council Tax to meet the budget (albeit with an aggregate allocation to its functions) the function of the Full Council was complete and the Executive alone in these circumstances now has the responsibility of determining the precise expenditure and allocation of the sums thus raised. This is also the effect of section 9 D of the Local Government Act 2000, in particular Section 9D (2).

Monitoring Officer’s Advice on HRA Report

2.18. The single Recommendation 1.1 in this HRA likewise did not pass - by way of a further post meeting legal analysis the Monitoring Officer, with the

agreement of the Director of Law & Governance and the Section 151 Officer, is of the opinion that:

- 2.19. Rent setting and housing management are executive functions and pursuant to this Cabinet had agreed at its meeting on 8 February 2017 the HRA Business Plan and Budgets 2017/18.

“Resolving:

1. That the assumptions included in the HRA Business Plan be noted.
 2. That the budgets for 2017/18 be agreed.
 3. That the HRA New Build programme maximises the use of Right to Buy (RTB) Receipts in place of Homes and Communities Agency funding.
 4. That growth for revenue repairs and capital investment is agreed.
 5. That a 3% increase to all existing tenant charges is agreed in line with the Council’s increases to Fees and Charges.
 6. That tenants receiving certain housing management services be consulted on the phased introduction of service charges, which are currently only levied on leaseholders, with a final report back to Cabinet in April.
 7. That tenants are consulted on the phased extension of the inclusive Sheltered Support Charge to all tenants with a final report back to Cabinet in April.
- 2.20. The above decisions are all within executive functions and under section 9DA (3) Local Government Act 2000 as amended; an executive function cannot be exercised by the Authority (i.e. the Full Council).
- 2.21. However many Authorities, including Thurrock, in some form or other (perhaps in part as a hold over from pre 2000 LGA days) make some provision in their procedures, to bring, either within the main Council Tax report or a separate report a reference or information to Full Council on the HRA Accounts. This is to inform Full Council when it is setting its overall budget, as to the position and state of the ring fenced HRA Accounts to note or to agree the accounts.
- 2.22. This can be seen here, although it could be clearer, by the very different nature of the single high level recommendation of HRA Accounts report to Full Council of last week, “to agree the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2017/18 as outlined in Appendix 1”, consisting of single page spreadsheet account.
- 2.23. Therefore in the light of Section 9DA (3) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended this noting and rejection by Full Council of the accounts cannot

affect the detailed, specific and substantive executive HRA recommendations of Cabinet on the 8 February 2017.

- 2.24. I do however note that the General Fund / Council Tax Setting & Budget Report does state it had taken account of HRA budget - in particular the section 25 statement so it is arguable that the HRA position had been sufficiently referenced and approved to the overall budget setting without the need for a separate report and perhaps this should be looked at for next year.

3. Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 This report sets out the budget setting process, the roles of the Council and the Cabinet and identifies areas for consideration going forward.
- 3.2 It is also proposed that an independent review takes place of the budget planning process to inform actions and processes for the future.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To provide ongoing reassurance as to the robustness of the budget process this year, provide additional legal advice and to consider options for further improvements going forward.

5 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Group Leaders were consulted as to the Monitoring Officer Opinion at Governance Group on 7 March 2017 and agreed the legal position.

6 Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The proposal is intended to address potential and further incremental improvements in the Authority budget setting process going forward.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Director of Finance and IT

As this report is for noting, there are no direct financial implications. However, the proposed peer review will inform future budget setting and support the Council in meeting its statutory duty in setting a balanced budget.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Fiona Taylor**
Director of Law and Governance

All 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**

There are no direct Diversity or Equality Implications.

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

Not applicable.

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

None

Report Author:

David Lawson

Deputy Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

29 March 2017	ITEM: 11
Full Council	
Thurrock Design Guide – Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall – Cabinet Member for Regeneration	
Accountable Head of Service: Andy Millard – Head of Planning and Growth	
Accountable Director: Steve Cox – Corporate Director of Environment and Place	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is the first in a series of daughter documents being produced by the Council to supplement the newly adopted Thurrock Design Guide. The purpose of the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is to provide detailed guidance to planning officers, applicants and agents on how to appropriately alter and extend individual residential dwellings in Thurrock.

In developing the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD the Planning service has undertaken in-depth research, including an assessment of the Council’s existing guidance, a comparative study of national publications and best practice in the UK, and a series of internal and external workshops with both officers in Development Management and industry experts to ensure that the guidance is fit for purpose and future-proof.

In accordance with the relevant regulations, SPDs must be subject to a period of public consultation before they can be formally adopted by the Local Planning Authority.

1. Recommendation

1.1 To approve the Thurrock Design Guide: Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix A) for public consultation.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock’s character has formed and evolved over centuries as agriculture, industry and the river have shaped the landscape, the make-up of its people

and the quality of life. The Borough has one of, if not the largest and most ambitious, growth programmes in the country with over £6bn of investment driving the creation of 26,000 new jobs and 20,000 new homes adding to the existing 66,000 households over the next 20 years. With that, the need to strengthen the identity of Thurrock has never been greater.

- 2.2 The Council's Planning Service receives over 850 applications a year for residential alterations and extensions. Even though these residential alterations and extensions are relatively small in scale they form a cumulative force in shaping how our towns and landscapes look and feel. Therefore, careful management of these projects is as important in their own right as other larger new developments in the Borough.
- 2.3 The Design Guide for Residential Alterations and Extensions is a daughter document of Thurrock Design Guide (Adopted by Cabinet in March 2017). The document focuses on balancing the applicants' needs, rights of neighbours and what is best for the wider community and will play a critical role in reinforcing the importance of place and improving the design quality of all residential alterations and extensions that require Planning Permission. The proposed guide would also benefit homeowners wishing to alter and/or extend their property using permitted development rights as it provides clear and concise advice on how to make the best out of their alteration/extension.
- 2.4 The Design Guide for Residential Alterations and Extensions is being prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). SPDs provide additional detail and guidance to support policies and proposals in an adopted Local Plan. Although SPDs do not have the same weight or status as policies in a Local Plan, they can still form a material consideration' in determining planning applications.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The importance of achieving good design and the benefits this can bring in delivering sustainable communities, is clearly set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Although the adopted 'Core Strategy' Local Plan has policies relating to design, these need the technical and executive details to be able to inform development proposals in a meaningful way. The purpose of Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is to provide specific guidance to officers, applicants and agents on how to appropriately alter and extend individual residential dwellings in Thurrock. It is building on the broad principles and place-typologies set up in the adopted Thurrock Design Guide SPD with an intention to address local issues and context.
- 3.2 In developing the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD the Planning service has undertaken in-depth research including an assessment of the Council's existing guidance, a comparative study of national publications and best practice in the UK, and a series of internal and external workshops with both officers in Development Management and industry experts to ensure that the guidance is fit for purpose and future-proof.

- 3.3 Once adopted, the standards and guidance contained within this document will replace the content in the Thurrock Borough Local Plan Annex adopted in September 1997 that provided guidance on residential alterations and extensions.

Consultation on the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

- 3.4 It is proposed that a 6-week public consultation on the draft document will take place in April. During the consultation period the draft document will be made available to view in the Civic Offices and borough's libraries and to download on the Council's website. This approach is in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.5 In addition to the statutory requirements, the Council will also seek to publicise the consultation on the draft document by writing to members of the Local Plan Consultee Database and using local papers and social media to advertise the consultation.
- 3.6 The Council also intend to hold a series of workshops with key stakeholders and members of the community to advise them of the contents of the document and invite them to make comments. Other informal consultation activities with internal and external stakeholders may also take place during the consultation period.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

Thurrock Design Guide: Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

- 4.1 Thurrock Borough Local Plan Annex (adopted in September 1997) is currently used by officers when assessing planning applications for residential alterations and extensions. All relevant guidance in the September 1997 Annex have been carefully reviewed by the officers and the research team. This process concluded that a full update is needed to better comply with the current national policies, industry standards and design approaches.
- 4.2 Consultation on the draft document will enable key stakeholders and the local community with the opportunity to influence the document ahead of it being adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development Local Plan.

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

- 5.1 The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be subject to extensive public consultation.

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

6.1 The Design Guide SPD and subsequent daughter documents including the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will help the Council to substantially raise the quality of new developments coming forward in the borough and strengthen corporate policies and priorities particularly in place-making, health and well-being improvement, land promotion and environment protection.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Management Accountant

The costs associated with the consultation of the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be met from within the existing Local Plan budget.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Vivien Williams**
Planning & Regeneration Solicitor

The proposed consultation on the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is in accordance with the relevant regulations and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The guidance within the document supplements adopted policies within the Council's Core Strategy as such it has not been subject to a separate Sustainability Appraisal.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be subject to a Community and Equality Impact assessment to assess the borough-wide equality improvements through better design solutions. The CEIA will also allow for possible negative impacts to be assessed and mitigated.

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

The Design Guide SPD and subsequent daughter documents including the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD set out Council's requirements regarding assessing the context of a site and the key design principles and objectives for safe, healthy and sustainable developments.

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):

- Annexe of Thurrock Local Plan (1997) - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/borough-local-plan/thurrock-borough-local-plan>
- Thurrock Design Guide SPD - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents/supplementary-planning-documents>
- The adopted Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (2011) - https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/core_strategy_adopted_20111221_full.pdf

9. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix A – Thurrock Design Guide – Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

Report Author

Monica Qing

Senior Planning Officer

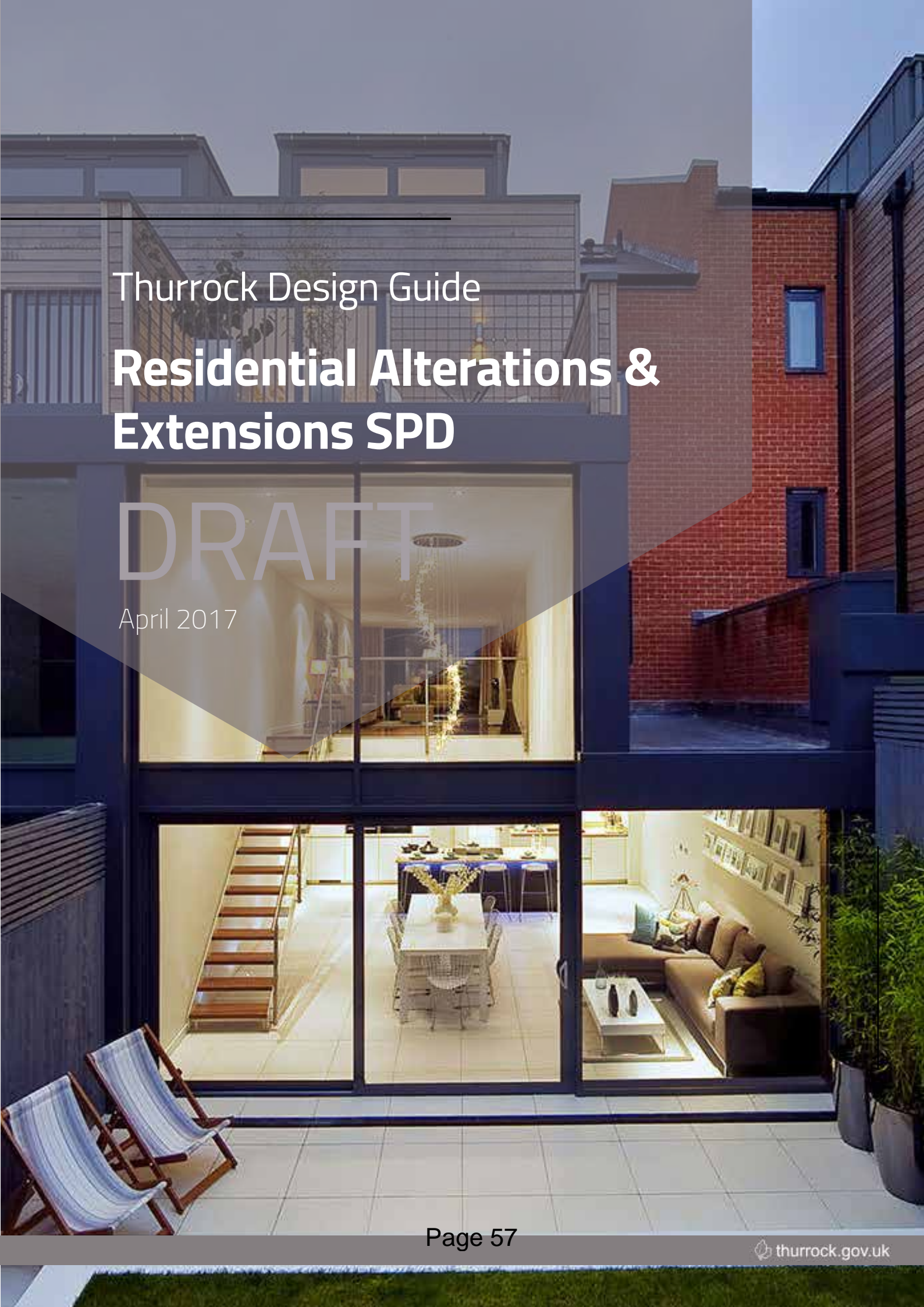
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Thurrock Design Guide

Residential Alterations & Extensions SPD

DRAFT

April 2017



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1. Introduction

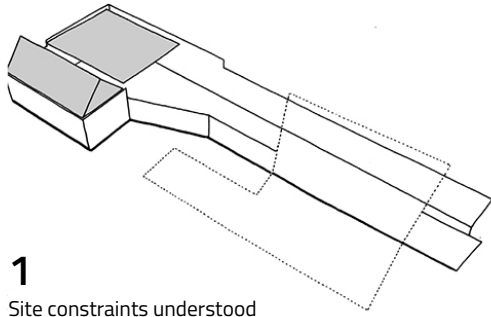
Our homes have a vital importance to our identity and quality of life, and cumulatively they have an equally important role in shaping how our towns and landscapes look, and feel. This Guide has been published by Thurrock Council to provide advice to residents who wish to expand or alter their home, or to convert other buildings into homes. Our intention is that, by offering clear guidance and design standards, we can help to protect and enhance the quality of Thurrock's built environment for all.

The council has planning policies that determine the kind of development it can support and wants to achieve. The policies are available via The council's website¹, and should be consulted if you wish to make a planning application for your extension, alteration or conversion. You can also look up your address using The council's on-line map² to see what area-specific constraints are relevant to your home.

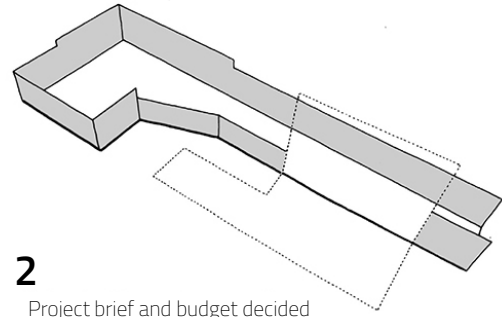
This publication offers guidance to both planning officers and applicants on how to comply with the policies and achieve the best possible residential environment.

When developing a proposal, you will need to balance your own needs and that of your family with the needs and rights of your neighbours and what is also best for the wider community. This Guide has been structured to help you achieve this balance.

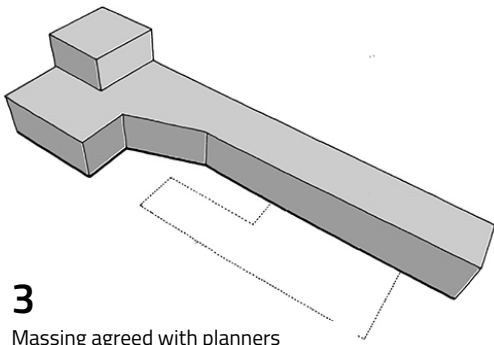
The Guide begins with advice about good design process and all the things that residents will need to consider when planning and building their extension or alteration (Section 2). It then explores the particular character of Thurrock and how alterations and extensions may differ depending on where they are (Section 3). Then, we outline some general design principles for all residential alteration, extension and conversion projects (Section 4), before giving more detailed, project-specific guidance and standards (Section 5). The Guide ends with advice about how to seek further information (Section 6) to assist your project, a glossary (Section 7) explaining the meaning of technical terms used in this Guide, and a standards chart (Section 8) containing all the crucial guidance and standards set out in this Guide.



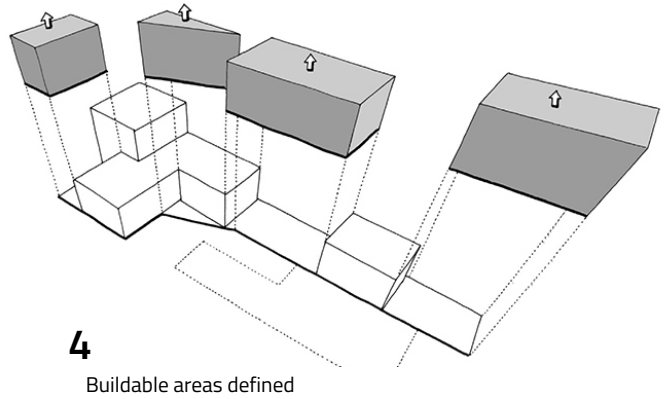
1
Site constraints understood



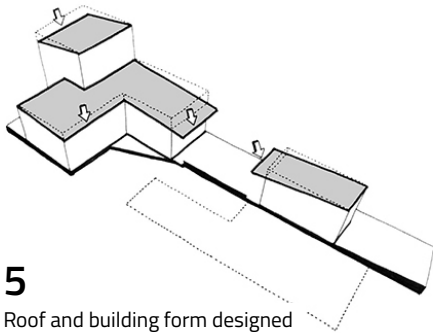
2
Project brief and budget decided



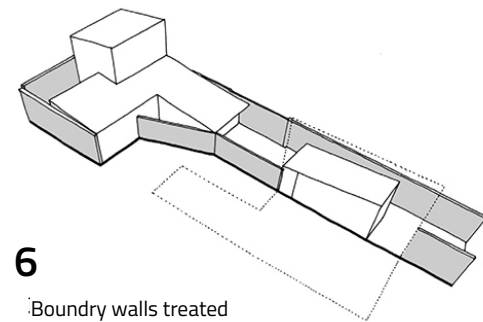
3
Massing agreed with planners



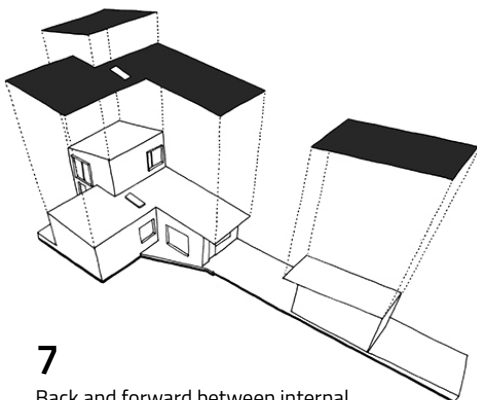
4
Buildable areas defined



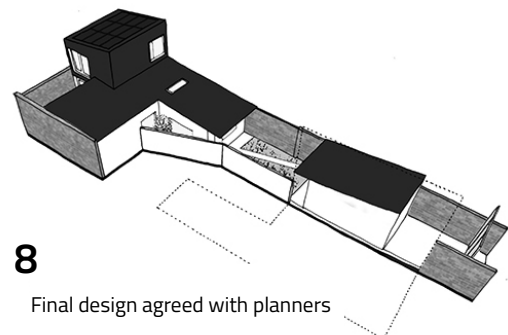
5
Roof and building form designed



6
Boundry walls treated



7
Back and forward between internal
and external design



8
Final design agreed with planners

2. Design Process

Design is a process, however large or small your project is. This section offers some principles for achieving a good design process and therefore a well-designed extension or alteration. It is not exhaustive – see Section 6 for advice on where to get further information or assistance.

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT OR PLANNING PERMISSION?

The first thing to think about is the best process for building your extension, alteration or conversion. In the UK, there are two main routes for this, Permitted Development¹² and Planning Permission, and your decision about which to choose may have a big impact on the size and character of your project. It is always advisable to contact The council's planning team for advice on which route to choose.

Permitted Development (PD) is a set of rules that allows the public to alter or create buildings without needing to seek permission from the local planning authority. The scale and complexity of what can be built under PD are limited, and the rules for this are set nationally.

If you choose to build under PD rules, you should make sure that the development complies with these national rules, but you do not need to seek formal approval before building your project.

Many people choose, for peace of mind or to resolve any potential disputes, to seek a Certificate of Lawful Development from The council that proves that their project is lawful.

Permitted development does **NOT** apply in all places and to all buildings, including:

- residential buildings that are not single houses, such as blocks of flats or houses converted into flats;
- where PD rights have been removed by Article 4 such as many Listed Buildings;
- buildings where there are 'conditions' in place relating to prior planning permissions.

In some places, such as in the Green Belt or in Conservation Areas, Permitted Development¹² may be different or suspended entirely, and you should check whether any of these situations apply to your home both to aid in choosing the best route and to establish any restrictions that may be in place that will impact upon your project. See Section 3 for more on this.

The rules for PD are set nationally and therefore change occasionally in ways that are outside

of The council's control. See Section 6 for advice on how to find and interpret current PD legislation.

If you think that your proposed extension or alteration is larger or more ambitious than PD allows, or if PD does not apply or is limited in your local area, you will need to seek planning permission from The council. This will involve producing a planning application, including drawings of the project³, for review by The council, from whom you need planning permission before work can commence on site. The council may also reject the application or propose conditions for how the project is built and how its impact on its surroundings can be managed.

Although the guidance and standards in this Guide are intended primarily for residents who choose to gain planning permission for their extension or alteration project, and will also be used by planning officers and their colleagues to assess individual applications, a lot of its contents will be equally applicable to residents who choose the PD route.

Whichever route you choose, please note that a separate Building Control approval may be needed for any project. Please contact The council's Building Control team to understand more about this process.

PROFESSIONAL HELP

Working with a good architect or designer can be invaluable in helping to make the best possible residential extension or alteration, and although the cost of paying design fees can be seen as an extra, the added value can, often offset this cost. For example, avoiding a refusal on design grounds saves you time and money. Higher design and built quality rewards you with styles that last and higher property value.

The council recommends that residents use a suitably qualified and experienced professional (such as a qualified architect) to prepare your planning application, but it is generally best to engage with them earlier than this so that they can help turn your requirements into a brief and advise on the best planning or construction process for your project.

The Royal Institute of British Architects offers a 'Find an Architect' service⁴ that allows residents to search for architects by location and by specialism, and the ARB Architects Register⁵ has a public database of all registered architects in the UK.

Whatever your intentions for your project, and whether you intend to develop a scheme using PD or planning permission, we also advise that you consult with the council's planning team as early as possible in your development of the project. There is a charge for pre-application services but the advice you receive can be vital in creating a better quality scheme and one that better relates to planning policy.

FUNDING

A clear budget is as important to achieving a good quality project as getting the design right. An extension can cost about 1500-3000 per square meter but unpredictable factors, such as the weather or availability of materials, can affect costs.

Employing professionals such as an architect or a qualified quantity surveyor can help ensure that a project stays in budget without compromising quality. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors offers a 'Find a Surveyor' service⁶ to help find a local qualified professional to help with your project.

3. Examples of drawings available at: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/householder-planning-applications/overview>

4. Find an Architect service available at: <https://www.architecture.com/FindAnArchitect>

5. ARB Architects Register available at <http://www.architects-register.org.uk>

6. Find a surveyor service available at: www.ricsfirms.com/search



An examples of innovative design proposal, MClaren Excel

DESIGN QUALITY

The council wishes to encourage the best quality design in all applications it receives. In general, The council will seek to ensure the standards of quality to be achieved in way that conforms to current planning policy, whilst also encouraging excellent design that exceeds minimum standards.

The council advocates good quality innovative design regardless of the scale of a project, and schemes will be considered on their merits in relation to both their immediate and wider context.

Existing alterations and extensions that were built under previous guidance will not necessarily be acceptable justification for poor design or projects that do not comply with the new standards.

The guidelines and examples offered in this document are not exhaustive and may not be relevant in every case. If you believe that your proposal differs from these guidelines but demonstrates an innovative, contemporary and sustainable design approach that is appropriate to the context of your proposal, you will be given opportunity to explain in detail with supporting drawings the reasons for departing from the guidelines. Each application will be considered on its own merits and tested against the planning policies outlined in the Local Plan.

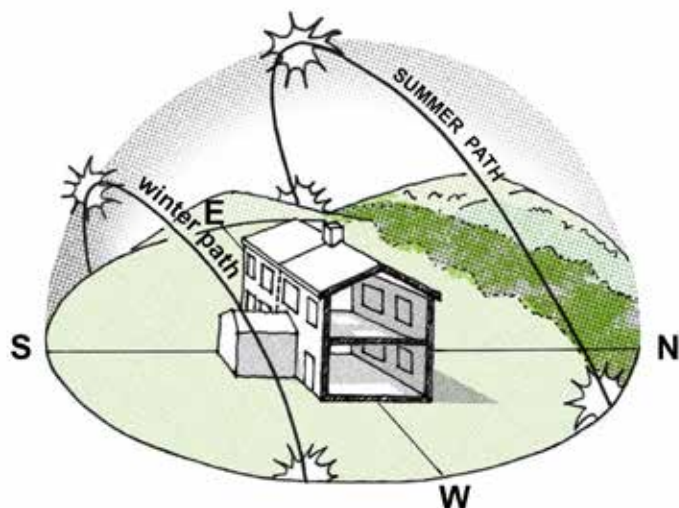
SITE & CONTEXT

When beginning to design your extension or alteration, or when talking to an architect or designer about what you need, the site and the existing building(s) are fundamental. Thinking about the particularities of your site will help to create extensions or alterations that preserve or enhance the positive qualities of your home as well as ensuring that the new or changed spaces are as good as they can possibly be. What is positive about the house and site that should be preserved or enhanced? What is negative that should be corrected or resolved as part of the works?

Daylight: Another aspect of 'site' to consider is sunlighting and daylighting, and the impact your project could have on the daylight received in your garden, home and within the extension itself, as well as any impacts on your neighbours' light. Observe how the different areas of the home are lit at different times of the day and year and how this might be impacted – for the better or for the worse – by the proposed development.

Ground Level: If there is a difference between your plot and external ground levels then this may increase the impact of your extension on the daylight and privacy of your neighbour. In cases where the level difference between properties is particularly significant you may be required to either: a) reduce the maximum height of your extension or b) set in your extension from the boundary c) alter or restrict external ground level.

Location: Another crucial consideration is where your home is located in Thurrock. The local context should play a key role in determining not only the scale or shape of what you build, but also its character and materials. In Section 3 of this Guide, we have provided a map of Thurrock that will help you locate your home and make decisions about how your location should shape your project. This will include practical considerations, such as which materials to build with, as well as any development restrictions that may be in place, such as Conservation Areas.



The relationship between sun, house orientation and daylight



Consider some common minimum dimensions for a comfortable home

INSIDE-OUT

Whilst the majority of standards and guidance in this Guide are concerned with the exterior of the home and the impact of extensions or alterations on its context, as a design process it is important to first consider the internal arrangement. Thinking about the whole home, including how existing rooms may be affected by any extensions, can result in a better layout. Think about how you use the spaces that you currently have, and what could be improved about their arrangement. For example, do you spend a lot of your time in the darkest part of the ground floor of your home? Could you reconfigure the home so that the best part of the house is where you spend the most time? You then need to go back and forth between the internal arrangement and external appearances to ensure they are balanced.

The nationally described space standard is a document provided by the Department for Communities that offers guidance on the minimum areas of new homes. Building Regulations 'Part M' offers guidance on how to achieve accessible new buildings.

TALKING TO THE NEIGHBOURS

If you apply for planning permission, your neighbours will be informed of the proposals and given the chance to view, comment on, object to or support them, and the planning documents you submit will be available to the public at The council offices or on-line. Whilst you are not obliged to discuss your proposals with your neighbours before this formal process begins, The council strongly advises that you do so as honest, clear communication from the start of a project has a better chance of achieving a good quality scheme. Explaining your ideas to neighbours in an informal way, and considering their comments, can help to create a smoother and more positive process for all in the long run.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

The council wishes to encourage energy efficiency and sustainable development in even the smallest of projects, from choosing local or ethically-sourced materials through to high-technology solutions to minimise energy consumption or generate heat. You may wish to include details of your intentions regarding sustainability and energy use in your planning application.

The notes below provide some quick tips for achieving more sustainable proposals, whilst Section 6 contains some useful contacts to find out more about achieving a sustainable, energy-efficient project:

- Bigger is not always better. If the extension is too deep for natural light to penetrate, the resulting spaces may become dark and uncomfortable, with an effect on wellbeing.
- Invest in good quality materials. good quality windows and high performance insulation can reduce your home's energy consumption. This may mean a higher initial outlay but long-term savings. New windows and doors will need to meet the current U-values required by the Building Regulations.
- The same design can work completely differently depending on your building orientation. Large south-facing glazing might result in overheating, for example, if no shading is provided.
- Careful planting of trees and shrubs can improve the visual appearance and environmental quality of a home, for example by protecting open space from a busy road. Well-landscaped houses tend to have a significantly higher market value too.
- Think about drainage and water run-offs. Green roofs can be an attractive solution whilst reducing rainwater run-off and wherever possible paving should be permeable. Hard-landscaped private gardens contribute to flash-flooding in local areas.
- Energy can be collected from naturally replenished resources, such as wind or sunlight. Systems which use renewable energy can increase the energy efficiency of a home and reduce energy bills.



This rear return extension by Sam Tisdall features strong environmental strategy: the glass box contributes by acting as a solar collector, with hot air distributed throughout the house by a heat recovery system; a green roof offers attractive view from upper level of the extension; solar water heating and photovoltaic panels were installed and a recycled water tank placed in the old cellar provides water for the garden.



2. Thurrock

However small or insignificant you consider your extension or alteration, it is important to understand its context in order to ensure good quality design and appropriate development. Amongst other considerations, proposals will be assessed in how well they respond to their context. The requirements for contextual considerations do not, however, suggest that designs that closely mimic past architectural languages are necessarily appropriate. The council will equally support good quality designs that respond positively to the context in a contemporary way .

THURROCK

Thurrock is closely associated with the Thames. Development, and Thurrock's larger settlements, have tended to occur near the river and adjacent to key industrial sites such as Tilbury Port.

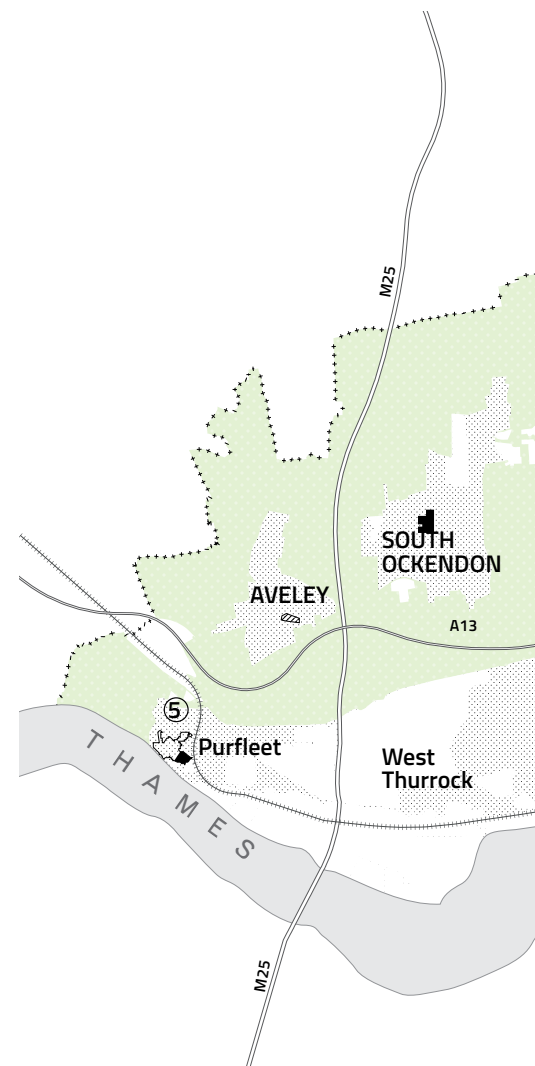
Many of Thurrock's settlements have their roots in ancient parishes and many survive as villages or hamlets. Others grew in the 19th and 20th centuries into more significant settlements, often in relation to Thames-side industry. At the start of this period, development included terraced houses for port workers and larger homes for wealthier families in areas such as 'the Avenues' in Grays.

Significant areas of residential estates have been built since then. They have a highly varied character, from low-density interwar bungalows to Modernist townhouses and tower blocks and late 20th century private houses such as at Chafford Hundred. Some of these estates and the housing on them are of local, national and international heritage value, such as the Bata Estate at East Tilbury.

65% of Thurrock is designated as 'Green Belt', which means that development, including residential extensions or alterations, is more tightly controlled in order to preserve the shape, scale and character of the area's established settlements.

Thurrock Council has set out a series of 'place typologies' in its Design Strategy SPD – this Guide refers to these types as a way of helping you understand the context of your project. Please also refer to the Design Strategy SPD, available via the council's website, for more on these place types.

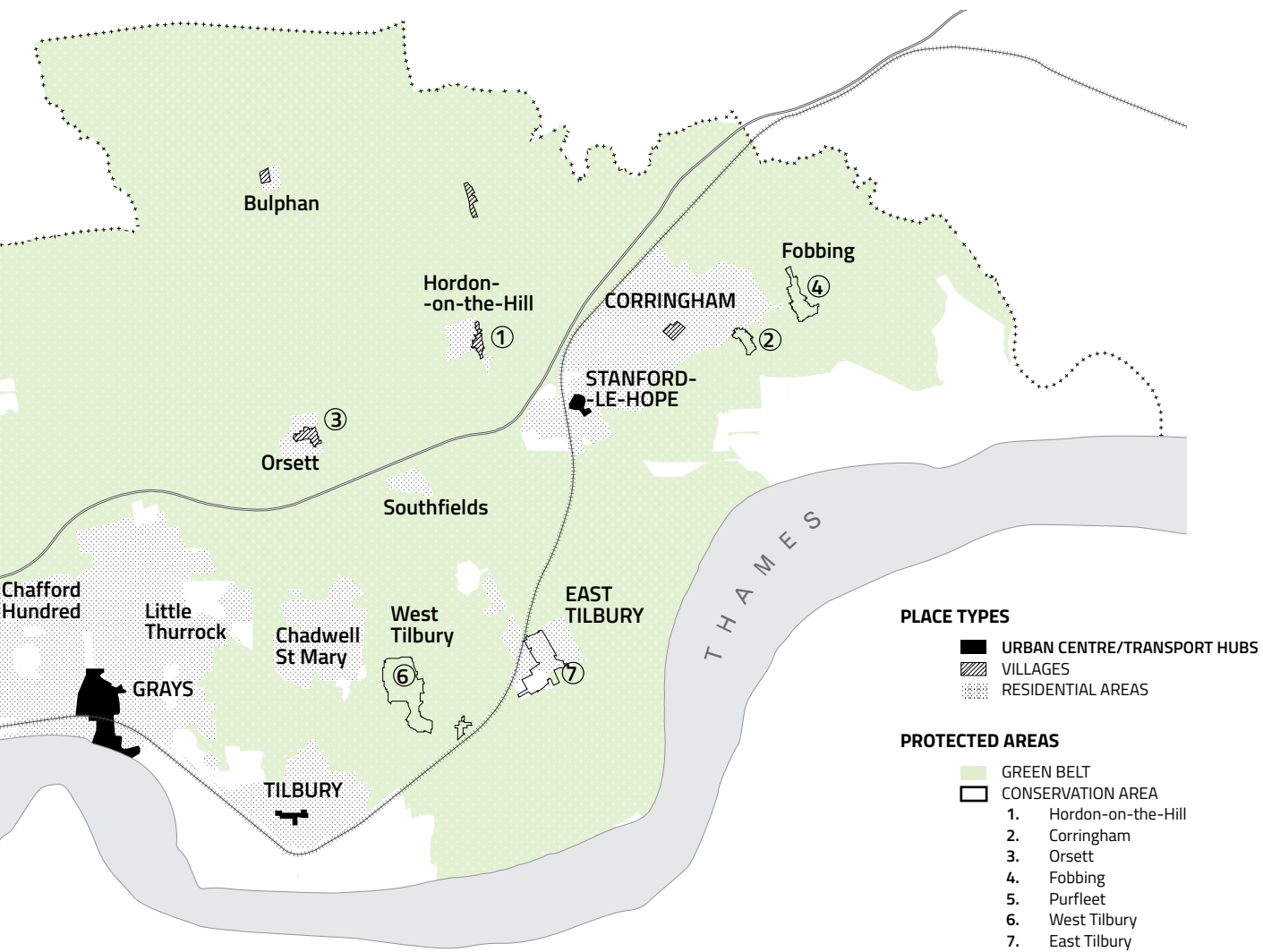
Your home is likely to be located in three of the five place typologies outlined in the Design Strategy: Urban Centres & Transport Hubs, Residential Areas and Rural Locations. The map and accompanying notes present a simplified version of Thurrock's setting and types of place, as well as showing Conservation Areas. The right design response to a project's context



will depend a great deal on where your project is in relation to the type of place in which it is situated as well as whether or not the project is in a Conservation Area or near Locally Listed Heritage Assets.

Urban Centres & Transport Hubs

Thurrock has five urban centres, the largest of which is Grays. Urban centres are mixed-use locations which serve as a focus for retail, commercial, community and education uses, with good accessibility particularly by foot, cycle and public transport. These are places where an increase in residential development, in principle, will generally be encouraged, particularly if close proximity to public transport can be demonstrated. Close attention should be paid to the established character of the urban centre in which your project is situated.



Rural Locations

Thurrock's Rural Locations contain several villages, Green Belt and Residential frontages. The Green Belt in Thurrock is protected and maintained through the principles set out in Government guidance. There are a number of localities within the Green Belt, identified by The council as Established Residential Frontages, where there can be some relaxation of normal Green Belt Policy. Each of Thurrock's villages has a particular rural character, reflected in the layout and appearance of its buildings and spaces, and this character should be considered if you are proposing a project there.

Residential Areas

Thurrock's residential areas vary from nineteenth century terraces on the fringes of urban centres through to early twentieth century detached villas (e.g. at Grays), post-war, low-density suburban estates (e.g. at Corringham) and more recent, higher-density housing estates such as at Chafford Hundred. The majority of Thurrock's residents live in these housing-dominated areas and each has a particular character.



An example of rear extension by Diseño Interior Bruto

4. Design Principles

If you are considering an alteration or extension to your home, you will need to balance your own needs and that of your family with the needs and rights of your neighbours and what is best for the wider community.

This section of the Guide includes a number of standards grouped into these three categories – home, neighbour and community – to help you find a way of balancing all of these needs and constraints in a way that makes the best possible alteration or extension project.

4.1 HOME

These standards are about ensuring that the quality of your home – for you and for any future residents – is maintained and improved by the proposed extension or alteration. They should be closely followed for all residential extension or alteration projects except in circumstances where the proposal breaches any design principles concerned with Neighbours (4.2) and with the wider Community (4.3).



A **subservient** approach

CONSIDERATIONS

The new extension or alteration should respect and respond positively to the character of the original dwelling such that its character is maintained or enhanced. There are different ways to achieve this.

Subservient: This would include making the addition smaller and lower than the existing house and setting back from the prominent outer wall so that it appears subordinate to the main house. If this approach is taken, the materials used should complement the materials used in the main house but need not match them.



A **seamless** approach

Seamless: Another approach is to make the addition look like part of the original house, matching the materials and continuing the form of the existing building. In projects adopting this approach, there is a particular need to ensure that factors like materials and window details and proportions have been carefully considered to ensure a seamless final development.

Special: Finally, there are cases in which the extension or alteration deliberately differs from the existing dwelling, whether by using the most up-to-date materials, method of construction or design ideas in the technical and aesthetic sense. The council welcomes such proposals if a positive relationship with the existing dwelling and its context is achieved (see the rest of the chapter and Section 5 for more details).



A **special** approach



An extension which transforms the organisation of the ground floor of the dwelling,
Emily Greeves Architects

Extensions or alterations should be designed so that new rooms benefit from adequate daylighting and existing rooms do not have their amount or quality of daylighting reduced. This may influence the shape, size, proportion and location of windows. Rooflights can help to bring light into the middle of a dwelling and provide light to rooms with reduced light as a result of extensions or alterations.

Extensions or alterations should ensure that they provide an environment which is usable, accessible and welcoming to people of all abilities. Building Regulations requires that new construction should not be less accessible than the existing building [<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/approved-documents>].

Extensions or alterations should be secure. Design advice is provided by the Police Secured by Design website [www.securedbydesign.com]. In general, it is advisable that windows and doors should meet British Standard BS7950 and any ironmongery should meet PAS23/24.

Extensions or alterations should be designed so that internal floor to ceiling heights are adequate for a good quality internal environment. Residents should take into account internal surfaces and floor finishes when working out the final floor to ceiling height.

It is worth noting that simply 'adding a room' to the existing dwelling is not always the best solution. Thinking about the whole home, including how existing rooms may be affected by any extensions, can result in a better layout.

It is important to think not only about the extension or alteration in relation to the home, but also in terms of its impact on your external amenity, i.e. any gardens, yards or other open space associated with your home. Whilst some extension or alteration projects will inevitably result in a reduced amount of this amenity space, The council will expect proposals to demonstrate that an acceptable amount and quality of amenity space is preserved, with adequate daylight and access to the home.

4.1.1 The extension or alteration should respect and respond positively to the character of the original dwelling such that its character is maintained or enhanced.

Area of curtilage (m²)	Proportion buildable
up to 100	40%
100 — 500	30%
500 — 1000	20%
>1000	10%

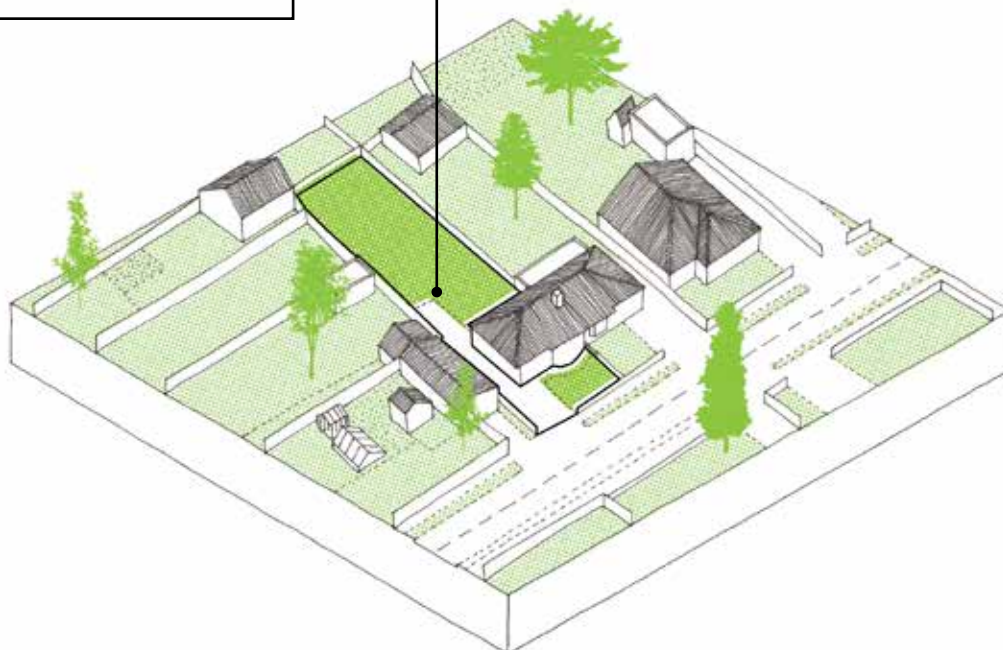
4.1.2 An alteration, extension or outbuilding should function well for its intended use, and adequate daylight and natural ventilation should be maintained to the new construction and to the existing building where the addition is attached.

To calculate the curtilage, subtract the footprint of the original house and any original outbuildings from the total land area of the plot (see Case Study 1 & 2). This standard must be applied in conjunction with other standards in the the Guide., Those standards may further reduce the buildable areas.

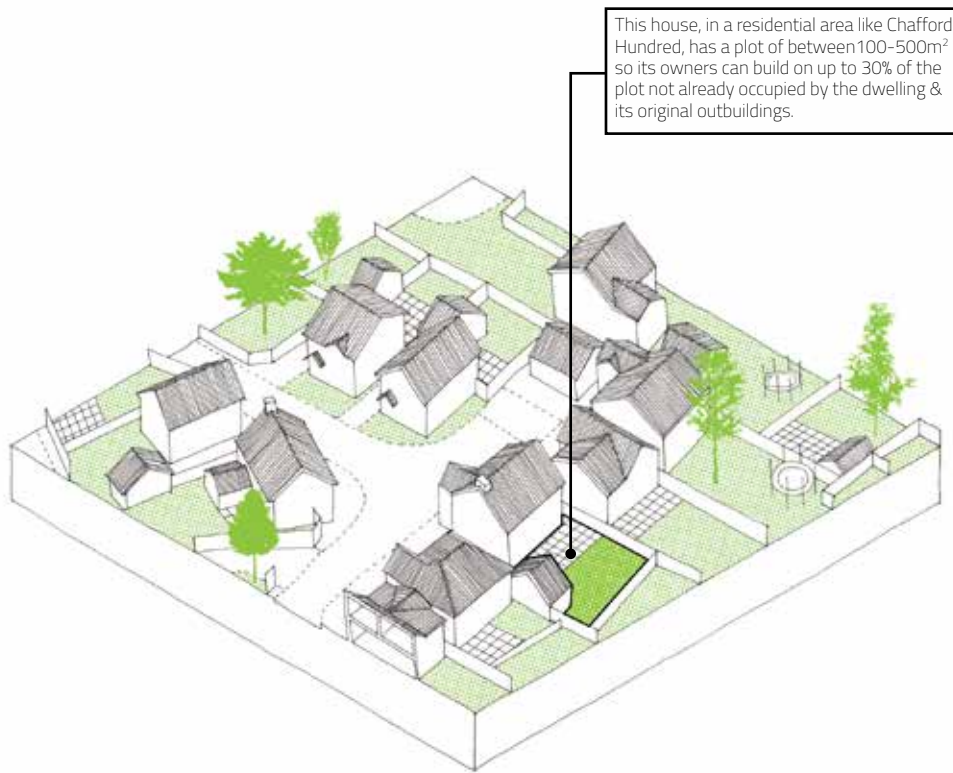
4.1.3 As a result of the proposed extension or outbuilding, the total area of the curtilage covered by buildings should not exceed the following proportions, and the remaining garden should be usable and fit for purpose.

4.1.4 Extensions and alterations should comply with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, including ensuring that extensions and alterations are no less accessible than the existing building.

This bungalow, in a residential area like Corringham, has a plot of 500-1000m² so its owners can build on up to 20% of the plot which is not already occupied by the dwelling (Standard 4.1.3)

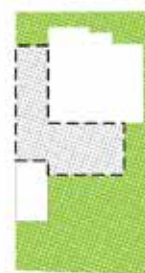
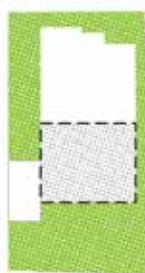


Case Study 1
Interpreting Standard 4.1.3 to extend a property with a large plot



Case Study 2

Interpreting Standard 4.1.3 to extend a property with a medium-sized plot



Project

This is a plan of the example above. Minus the original dwelling and its original garage, the plot is 211m², meaning that an area of 63m² (30%) can be added, subject to other planning policies and standards. Here are three possible approaches.

Approach 1 - Rear Extension

You could propose a single rear extension of up to 62m². This example connects the dwelling to its garage.

Approach 2 - Outbuilding associated with existing garage

You could propose a single outbuilding of up to 62m², in this case expanding the existing garage. This approach might be particularly suitable for creating space for a hobby or start-up business.

Approach 3 - Combined rear and side extensions

You could propose to extend to the side and rear of the property, with a total combined area of 62m². Such an approach would lead to a larger retained rear garden.

4.2 NEIGHBOUR

These standards are intended to ensure that changes to your property do not adversely affect your neighbours' enjoyment of their own properties.

CONSIDERATIONS

The rooms of a dwelling can be divided into 'habitable rooms' (which are occupied for long periods of time, such as bedrooms, living rooms or kitchen-diners) and 'non-habitable rooms' (such as bathrooms or separate kitchens). Habitable rooms are more sensitive to overlooking and overshadowing than non-habitable ones. Extensions or alterations should be careful not to have an overbearing impact on adjacent properties, with particular attention to habitable rooms and their windows.

Two-storey extensions and outbuildings typically have a larger impact on neighbours; particular care should be taken to minimise their impact on neighbours' amenity, daylight, and overlooking.

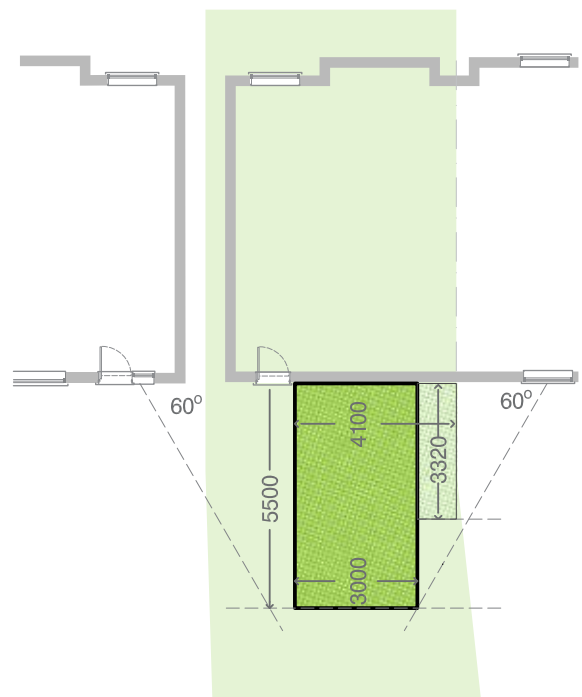
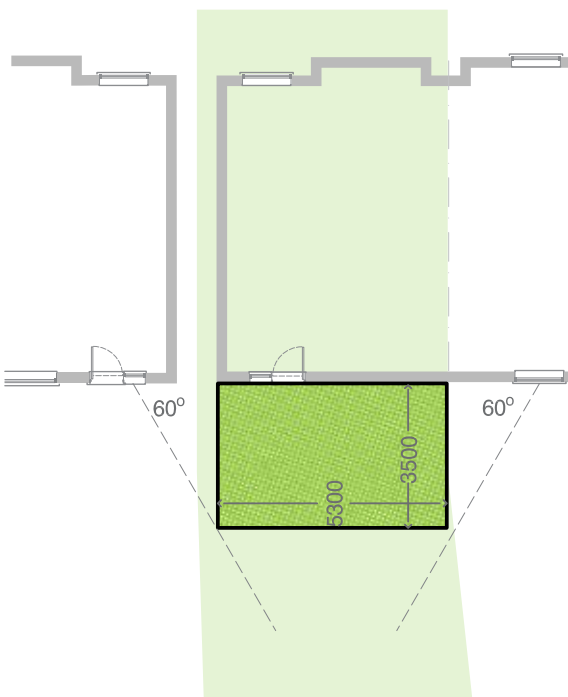
It is essential that privacy is maintained between dwellings. Designs should ensure that privacy (which works both ways) is not compromised by new developments, for example windows overlooking a neighbour's garden.

In fulfilling guidance about overlooking and overbearing impact, you should also avoid creating awkward roof in an effort to comply with the standards, for example small pitches on the edge of extensions to comply with standard 4.2.2.

If you and your neighbour decide that you would both like to build an extension on the same side of the house, you may consider submitting a 'joint application'. This will remove the mutual impact of the extension. A planning permission on a joint application will normally be subject to certain conditions such as both extensions being constructed at the same time.



A joint application removes the impact of the extension on each other



Case Study 3

Interpreting 4.22 (a) and 4.2.3

Option 1 - 1 Storey Extension
45 degree from 2m at boundary

Option 2 - 2 Storey Extension
45 degree from middle of the closest window

4.2.1 Extensions and outbuildings should not have an overbearing impact on adjacent properties or cause them to be excessively enclosed or overshadowed.

4.2.2 The height of an extension or outbuilding should not normally exceed the following limits:

(a) a vertical plane inclined at 45 degrees from the boundary, starting at a level 2m above the

ground on the neighbour's side, or from the middle of closest ground floor window of a neighbouring property.

(b) a vertical plane inclined at 45 degrees from the top of a neighbouring building, where it is located on or next to the boundary.

(c) Taller buildings and extensions may be acceptable where two adjoining properties are being extended at the same time.

4.2.3 The depth and width of an extension or outbuilding should not normally exceed a horizontal plane inclined at 60 degrees from the middle of a closest ground floor window of neighbouring property.

4.2.4 Two-storey extensions and outbuildings will normally be required to meet the following criteria:

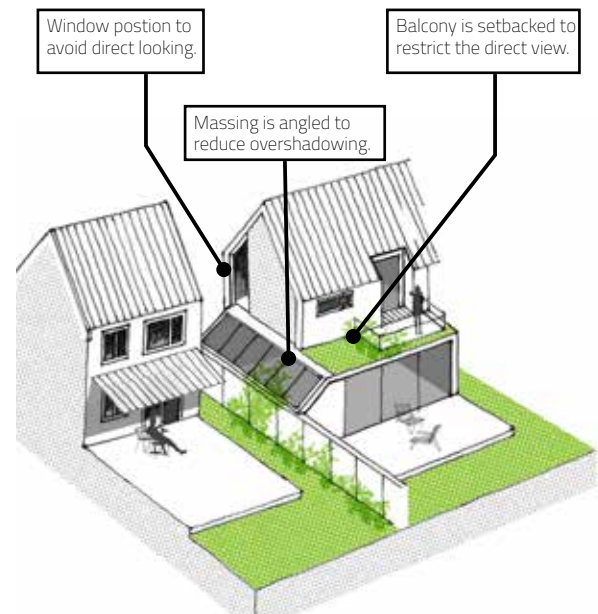
- (a) The dimensions comply with standard 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.
- (b) The proposal demonstrates high quality design.
- (c) The roof form, if visible from a public realm, should be the sympathetic to the host building.

4.2.5 Windows in elevations that directly face a neighbouring property that would lead to overlooking should be avoided unless obscure glazed, and either fixed shut or restricted to an opening width of 100mm. Windows and glazed doors that are set back from the property boundary and well screened by boundary structures will normally be considered acceptable.

4.2.5 Where an extension or outbuilding is constructed on or up to a property boundary, no part of the construction should overhang or intrude into the adjacent property, including eaves and rain gutters.

4.2.6 Proposals which exceed the dimensional standards 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 will be required to provide the extra design and technical information where it can be shown that they are acceptable in terms of design, amenity, daylighting, overlooking, and avoiding over-dominance in relation to neighbouring properties. The extra information required will be based on each site condition but it will normally include professional shadow analysis, outlook and daylight analysis and

realistic façade rendering(s).



A proposal featuring a variety of solutions to reduce the impacts on neighbor's privacy and daylight.

4.3 COMMUNITY

These standards are about ensuring that changes to your property do not adversely affect the community at large and the character of the built environment surrounding your home.

CONSIDERATIONS

The extension or alteration should respect and respond positively to the surrounding setting, so that its character is maintained or enhanced. A first step towards achieving this would be to locate your home using The council's Planning Constraints map and to see what special policy designations, such as the Green Belt or a Conservation Area, may apply. Each of these will have an impact on what you can propose.

The map in Section 3 also illustrates a number of 'place types' that make up Thurrock's built environment. Consider what 'place type' your proposals sits within to help consider what kind of extension, alteration or conversion will be appropriate in that context. These place types will be taken into consideration by planners evaluating applications.

It is also important to consider the more immediate context of your proposal – the surrounding street, public space, square, close or landscape. What is the predominant character and organisation of the place and how might your proposal positively respond to this character? For instance, in most cases where there is a strong, repetitive architectural character to the homes in your area, proposals which damage this repetition will not be appropriate. In other locations where there is a great variety of architectural characters, a more varied approach is likely to be appropriate.

Extensions which address or are situated on street corners have a particular prominence in the street scene and may be more suitable for 'seamless' or 'special' design approaches than those within blocks or streets, in order to positively address the surrounding public spaces.

Satellite dishes and aerials tend to create visual clutter and can detract from the character of the street if located in a prominent position. In these situations, cable services and ground-level dishes in the back garden may be suitable alternatives.

Trees in close proximity to a proposed extension may be specially protected by Tree Preservation Orders or protected from felling and heavy pruning by virtue of being in a Conservation Area. It is advisable to check with The council first if you intend to remove or undertake works to a tree to accommodate an extension.

The majority of land within Thurrock is designated as 'Green Belt', which means that development is more tightly controlled. If your home is within the Green Belt this is likely to have a significant impact on what will be appropriate, as identified in the standards below.

You should also consider the impact of your proposal on parking in the area. The extra accommodation may be refused if the required additional parking cannot be accommodated in an area where there're insufficient parking spaces. New parking spaces within your property are likely to need 'drop-kerbs' onto the property and this can have an impact on on-street parking. Conversely, a loss of space within your property, for instance to make way for an extension, can increase pressure on existing on-street parking. The impact of these questions on the acceptability of proposals will be considered in relation to parking demand in the local area, and you may wish to discuss this in your application, with reference to the 'place type' in which your proposal sits.

4.3.1 The form and scale of the extension or outbuilding should be appropriate to the original dwelling and the surrounding development pattern.



An example of corner plot side extension with design features respect its surrounding environment.

4.3.2 Corner plots require a distinct design approach that responds positively not only to the dwelling but also to the neighbouring houses and the street scenes.

4.3.3 The extra parking requirements and the impact of the proposal on on-street parking will be taken into account according to the council's current policy.

4.3.4 If your project is in the Green Belt, the following restrictions apply:

(a) Where an extension is considered acceptable, it should be proportionate in size to the original dwelling. Extensions will be limited in size to the floor area of two reasonably sized rooms of the original dwelling. Any extension should be of a scale, size, siting and design, and of materials of construction, such that it does not harm the appearance of the original dwelling, the immediate locality and the countryside in general.

(b) There will be a presumption against extensions to dwellings that are not in permanent residential use, to temporary dwellings, and to dwellings nearing the end of their lives on sites where replacement would not be permitted.

(c) Extending the curtilage of a residential property in a way that involves an incursion into the Green Belt will not be permitted.

4.3.5 Satellite dishes and aerials should be sited in an unobtrusive position and should not be located on walls, chimneys or roofs that are visible from the street. Multiple dishes and aerials should be avoided. Cables should be run internally or up the rear wall in discrete positions and be coloured or painted to match the background wall.



NOTE ABOUT SEEKING PERMISSION

If you live in a flat, or a house converted into flats, you will need to seek planning permission for front extensions, porches, rear extensions, side extensions, roof alterations & extensions, additional storeys and outbuildings.

If you live in a house, planning permission may not be necessary for a small porch, rear extensions, side extensions, roof alterations & extensions and outbuildings, if your proposal complies with Permitted Development¹² rules (see Section 2), but it is always advisable to check with The council's Planning team before starting work. Additional restrictions apply to extensions to homes which are located in the Green Belt or in Conservation Areas.

5. Common Projects

In this section we explore ten common extension, alteration or conversion projects. Whatever your plans for your home, it is likely that they will be one of these common projects, or a combination of them.

Different kinds of projects have different kinds of impact: on your home, on your neighbours, and on your community. Accordingly, the guidelines and standards in this section are grouped, like the general design principles, into three categories: home, neighbour, community. Getting the balance right between these three considerations is the key to achieving a great extension, alteration or conversion.

The guidelines and standards for these common projects should be read (and used) in conjunction with the general design principles that apply to all projects in Section 4.

5.1 FRONT EXTENSIONS AND PORCHES

Porches and front extensions can have a big impact on the quality of life of a home and its market value because they not only fulfil multiple functions but also set the tone for your entire house.

Being located at the front means that they are subject to more restrictions under neighbour and community design principle than other forms of extension.

HOME

A front extension or porch should be carefully designed so as to create a sense of arrival while remaining a cohesive part of the exterior scheme.

A front extension or porch should function well for its intended use and maintain adequate daylight and natural ventilation to the interior of the existing house.

A porch should provide a welcoming and direct entrance route and sufficient circulation space, taking into account any coat storage and door swings. Porches and front extensions should complement the appearance of the existing building and should not normally merge with existing projections such as bay windows.

NEIGHBOUR

An insensitively designed or excessively large front extension or porch could have an overbearing or overshadowing effect on a neighbour's front garden and the interior of their home, or spoil the appearance of a semi-detached pair or terrace of houses.

COMMUNITY

Porches and front extensions are generally highly visible alterations that can change the character of a building and the street. They can have a particular impact where front gardens are an important characteristic of the area, and where the street has a regular pattern of buildings and a clearly defined building line (as in many streets of terraced and semi-detached houses).

5.1.1 Front extensions and porches should complement the character of the street, including any existing pattern of front extensions, and respect existing building lines, particularly where a strongly defined building line forms an important characteristic of the street.

5.1.2 Front extensions that are larger than porches will generally only be acceptable where the front garden is unusually deep and the extension does not break clear of existing building lines along the street. In areas where there is an irregular building line and properties are well set back with large front gardens, front extensions may be more acceptable.

5.1.3 In areas where entrance canopies or open porches form a particular feature of the original dwelling, these should generally not be enclosed as porches.



What a case officer would consider for front alterations and extensions on this street in Thurrock

5.2 REAR EXTENSIONS

Being located at the rear means they are less visible from public domain, and for this reason, the requirements for rear extensions, particularly single-storey, will be more relaxed in matching the design, fenestration or roof type of the existing building. A well-designed rear extension can radically improve the quality of life within the home with relatively little impact on your neighbours or wider community.

HOME

A rear extension is an opportunity to improve the quality of your living space, better connect the house with the garden, and bring more light to the centre of the main house. Think about orientation and daylighting in relation to the activities that the extension should provide and the times of day it will be occupied.

It is often desirable to have larger openings than are present within the existing house. Bear in mind the larger the openings, the more heat exchange. So it is important you invest in quality windows, doors and overall construction method to make your extension energy efficient.

A full rear extension offers a more integrated and comfortable space than a conservatory. The common problems with conservatories is their tendency to be too cold to use in winter and too hot at the height of summer. Making a conservatory into a full extension can integrate an otherwise isolated space as part of the house by opening up the exterior wall between them, although you may need planning permission for doing so. Most importantly it offers opportunity to make your house more comfortable and more energy efficient to use.



Best practice photograph
An angled glazing providing daylight to the extension without overshadowing the neighbor

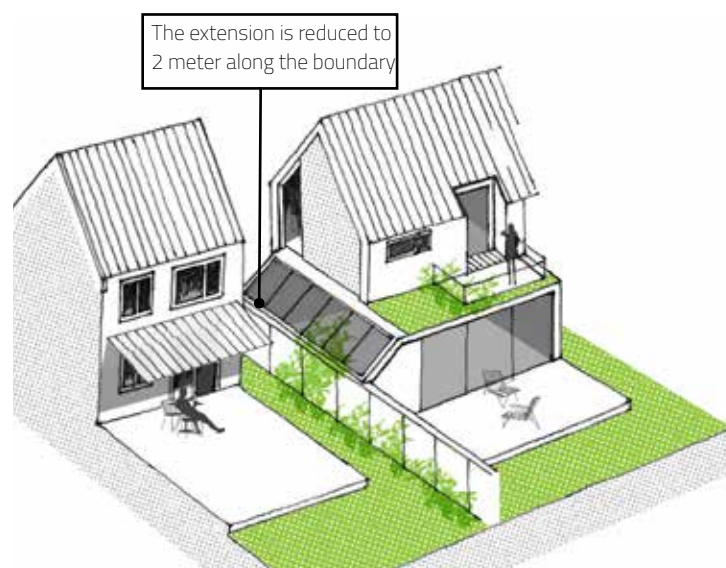


Best practice photograph
A contemporary rear extension following the historical extension pattern

NEIGHBOUR

The design should create comfortable living spaces within the home while avoiding overshadowing and overlooking neighbouring properties or creating an overbearing impact.

Two-storey extensions are more visible and have a greater impact on neighbouring properties, therefore more restrictions apply. Two-storey rear extensions are often unsuitable at the rear of terraced and semi-detached properties because of the visual intrusion and overshadowing that would be caused to neighbouring properties. However, each case will be considered on its merits, and two-storey extensions may be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that there is no harm, subject to compliance with Standard 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.



An example of rear infill extension employs a variety of solutions to reduce the impacts on neighbour's privacy and daylight.

Flat roofs and monopitch (lean-to) roofs are considered acceptable in most circumstances for single storey rear extensions. Where a pitched roof is proposed, the ridge height should normally be lower than the cill of the first floor windows. To protect the privacy of adjoining owners, flat roofs should not normally be used as terraces or balconies.

A rear infill extension is a single-storey extension to a terraced house that has an existing two-storey rear projection, where the proposed extension fills the gap between the rear projection and the side boundary wall. Care needs to be taken with the height of the extension on the boundary where the neighbour has a small external space adjacent to the boundary wall.

5.2.1 Where a rear extension extends beyond a side wall of the building, standards associated with side extensions apply. (See Section 5.3).

5.2.2 Rear infill extensions should be as close to 2m in height along the boundary as reasonably

possible, where the boundary is an existing garden fence or wall of up to 2m in height.

COMMUNITY

Single storey rear extensions often have little or no impact on the street and are less visible from neighbouring properties. In some circumstances, rear extensions are visible from a public domain such as on a bend of a street or a corner plot, rear garden overlooking a park or raised highway. In these scenarios, more restrictions apply because they can have similar impacts to the character of the community as side or even front extensions.

5.2.3 Where rear extensions can be seen from a public realm, more restrictions apply including how well they complement historical pattern of the neighboring rear extensions, the treatment of the façade visible and roof form.

5.3 SIDE EXTENSIONS

HOME

A side extension can be an opportunity to alter the circulation and organisation of a home's ground storey, or in the case of unusually-shaped plots can have the same transformative impact on the home as a rear extension.

NEIGHBOUR

The design should create comfortable living spaces within the home while avoiding overshadowing or overlooking neighbouring properties or having an overbearing impact on them (see Section 4.2).

COMMUNITY

Side extensions can have a significant impact on the character of the street. The design should respect the architectural rhythm of the houses and the gaps between them. Side extensions should not visually join together semi-detached or detached houses in a way that gives the appearance of a terrace. Two-storey side extensions may be more acceptable at the end of a terrace, or for detached houses, where the context is more irregular and houses are spaced well apart.

If a side extension will be positioned on a corner plot, for instance at the junction of two roads, particular attention should be paid to how the extension will make a positive contribution to the corner, including considering landscaping and side façade.



Home & Neighbour: Best practice photograph
A proposal by Robert Dye feature an unconventional opening avoiding overlooking while providing a desired natural light

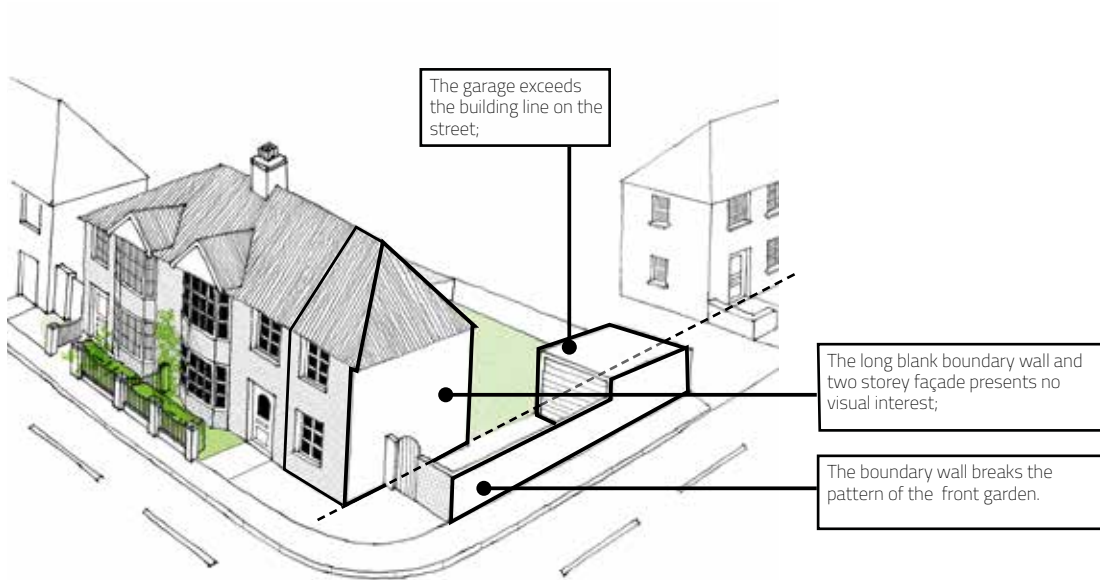


Community: Best practice photograph
A similar architectural approach is continued in this side extension by Sam Causer

The appearance of the extension from the street should be considered, with choosing between subservient, seamless or special depending on the particular context of the project (see Section 4.1).

'False pitched roofs', or tiled fascias applied to the façade of flat-roofed buildings to give the appearance of a pitched roof, tend to look awkward when viewed from the side and should generally be avoided.

5.3.1 A side extension should respect the context of the street, preserving gaps between buildings and rhythm of roof profile where these are characteristic of the area.



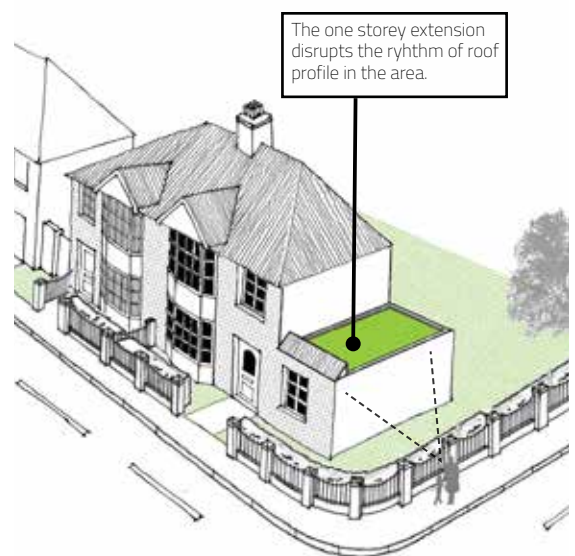
An example to avoid:

A corner plot side extension with negative impacts to its community. Compare this one with the positive example on page 29.

5.3.2 Two-storey side extensions are generally not considered acceptable where the existing layout of detached or semi-detached housing is protected townscape. They may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- a) they are set back from the side boundary, if the impression of 'terracing' is avoided;
- b) they are on a corner plot and not further than the building lines of both streets;
- c) they are located in the areas where the council encourages incremental changes or higher density.

5.3.3 Adding 'false pitched roofs' to the face of flat roofs should be avoided.



An example to avoid:

one storey flat roof side extension with a false pitched roof.

5.4 ROOF ALTERATIONS

HOME

A roof extension can be a cost-effective way of increasing space in the home. However, not all houses are suitable for conversion at roof level, due to limited headroom, insufficient area, modern trussed rafters, or lack of suitable supporting structure. In these cases, alteration may be expensive or technically difficult.

The main purpose of adding dormer windows is to bring daylight into the roof space. If an extra floor is created through raising the roof height or adding large box dormers on multiple sides of the roof, different guidance and rules (see 5.5 Additional Storeys) apply.

The layout of the storey below roof level requires careful consideration, as the addition of a stair and any necessary fire partitions tends to encroach on space, typically the bedroom area. Fire escape, structural supports and thermal insulation are important technical considerations that need to be considered early. All roof alterations will need to meet Building Regulations requirements for stairs and fire safety.

When applying for planning permission for roof extension projects, typical section drawings should be prepared and presented along with plans. These can help both you and the planners to understand the actual usable space within the dwelling.

NEIGHBOUR

Roof additions can cause problems of overlooking. Where dormer windows are

orientated towards a dwelling's own private garden, overlooking is usually indirect and is therefore acceptable. However, privacy can be an issue in high-density residential areas where overlooking has otherwise been minimized. Side-facing dormer windows will not normally be acceptable where they are orientated directly towards the private garden or window of an adjoining dwelling.

Larger roof alterations such as large 'box' dormers can appear overbearing from neighbouring properties, particularly when they occupy the full width or height of the roof slope, and tend to give a greater perception of overlooking than modest, traditional dormers.

Roof terraces and balconies can provide small but useful amenity spaces, but they can also cause overlooking or noise disturbance to neighbouring properties. Roof terraces and balconies are most suitable where dwellings are well-separated, and in high density areas where amenity space is limited at ground level and neighbouring gardens are already overlooked. Solid or obscure glazed balconies can help to provide privacy but tall screens can have an overbearing or overshadowing effect and should generally be avoided.

5.4.1 Large 'box' dormer windows occupying the full width or height of the roof slope will NOT normally be acceptable.



Avoid: an overbearing full-width box dormer to the rear slope of the house.



Best practice photograph

A successful roof alteration in a high-density urban context by Robert Dye Architects

5.4.2 Dormer windows should normally face the street or the property's own private garden so that any overlooking of adjoining gardens is indirect. Dormer windows should normally be avoided on side elevations facing neighbouring gardens or windows.

5.4.3 Roof terraces and balconies that would lead to a substantial increase in overlooking of other residential properties should be avoided.

COMMUNITY

Due to their prominent position on the building, roof alterations can have a significant effect on the appearance of a property and the wider street environment. The size of the proposed alteration, the prominence of the roof slope and the character of the surrounding area will be taken into account when considering whether a proposed roof alteration is acceptable.

Alterations that provide additional headroom tend to be more dominant and are generally unsuitable on prominent roof slopes, while alterations to provide daylight (for example, small dormer windows and roof-lights), are suitable in a wider variety of circumstances.

For corner plots, carefully designed dormer windows can create extra interest from streets but in certain contexts, dormer windows would not be appropriate on the street-facing elevation of a property, regardless of design. Some areas of semi-detached or terraced houses are characterised by long runs of unbroken roofs, and the introduction of front dormers would be uncharacteristic and visually disrupting. Semi-detached pairs of houses can also be harmed when the roof of one house is enlarged by a dormer window or hip-to-gable conversion in a way that makes the pair appear unbalanced.

Solar panels are encouraged in principle. Unobtrusive models such as integrated solar panels (panels that do not project above the roof tiles) and photovoltaic roof tiles are recommended. Solar panels should preferably be located away from street-facing roof slopes.

5.4.4 Roof conversions and additions will only be acceptable where high quality design is employed, where additions are in scale with the existing roof, and where the addition does not spoil the existing roof form.

5.4.5 On street-facing roof slopes and on side and rear roof slopes that are visible from the street, rooflights and small dormer windows may be acceptable, but large 'box' dormers and hip-to-gable conversions will generally not be acceptable. The design should follow design guidelines set out in the table 1 below. On rear roof slopes that are not visible from the street, 'box' dormers may be acceptable where they meet the guidelines in the table below and do not cause unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact.

5.4.6 Where the house forms part of the semi-detached pair or the house is at the end of a terrace, it is not normally acceptable to change the overall form of a roof, for example from a hipped to a gabled roof. In some circumstances, such changes may be acceptable where they restore the symmetry of the pair or the terrace.

5.4.7 Solar panels are encouraged in principle. Where they are visible from the street, solar panels mounted at an angle on supporting frames on flat roofs should generally not be visible above the height of any surrounding parapet walls.



A hip-to gable extension with no regards to the existing hipped roof profile of its streets.



Best practice photograph
An award winning project by Robert Dye Architects

Dormer Windows and Roof Lights

Dormer windows often look best if they are no wider than the windows in the façade below and located in line with them. Dormer windows should not normally be wider than their heights unless it can be demonstrated that this approach is appropriate to the original building. Dormers should be set away from hips, verges and below the original ridge lines.

The fascia to either side of the dormer window should generally be kept as thin as possible and there should not be areas of cladding around or below the window unless it can be demonstrated that this approach is appropriate to the original building. The glazing proportions, detailing and frame colour should generally reflect those of the main house.

Roof-lights can be less obtrusive than dormer windows and are generally suitable in more circumstances, although it is important to carefully consider the size and layout of the roof-lights in relation to the scale of the roof and the arrangement of windows in the façade below. Roof lights that lie in the same plane as the roof tiles tend to be the least obtrusive but are not the only acceptable type. Balcony convertible roof-lights should pay attention to overlooking.

Street-facing roof slope

The proposed dormers should follow the guidance in the first column of table 1.

Two proposals, a single dormer and multiple dormers in this example, are within the dimensional limits, align with the existing window of the dwelling and borrows from the form and character of the dwellings' existing openings.

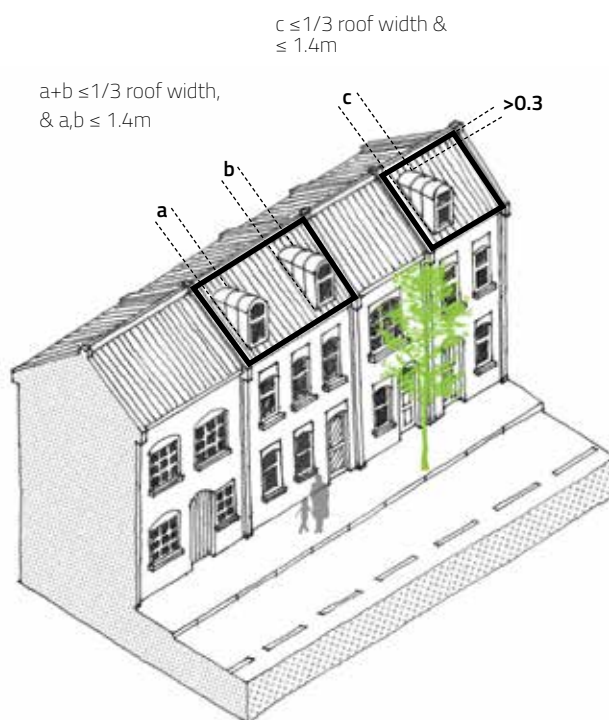


Table 1: Dormer Windows and Roof-Lights

Street-facing roof slope prominent side roof slope	Visible but less prominent side or rear roof slope	Rear roof slope that is not visible from a public space
<p>Dormer window may not be acceptable regardless of design.</p> <p>Box dormer unacceptable except where this is characteristic of the original architecture of the area.</p>	<p>Dormer window acceptable where the proposal avoids overlooking.</p> <p>Modest box dormer may be acceptable subject to size restrictions.</p>	<p>Dormer window acceptable in principle where the proposal avoids overlooking, subject to size restrictions.</p>
<p>Dormers should not occupy more than one third of the width of the roof.</p> <p>Maximum width of individual dormer 1.4m.</p>	<p>Dormers should not occupy more than one half of the width of the roof.</p> <p>Maximum width of individual dormer 2m.</p>	<p>Dormers should not occupy more than three-fifths of the roof width if the height exceeds three-fifths of ridge-to-eave distance; or not occupy more than three-fifths of the ridge-to-eave distance if the total width exceeds three-fifths of the roof width.</p>
<p>Top of dormer window to be at least 0.3m below the roof ridge.</p> <p>No plane of a dormer should be within 0.6m of a hip line or verge.</p>		
<p>Roof-lights may not be acceptable in sensitive settings.</p>	<p>Roof-lights generally acceptable in principle, where design and layout are considered acceptable.</p>	<p>Roof-lights generally acceptable in principle, where design and layout are considered acceptable.</p>

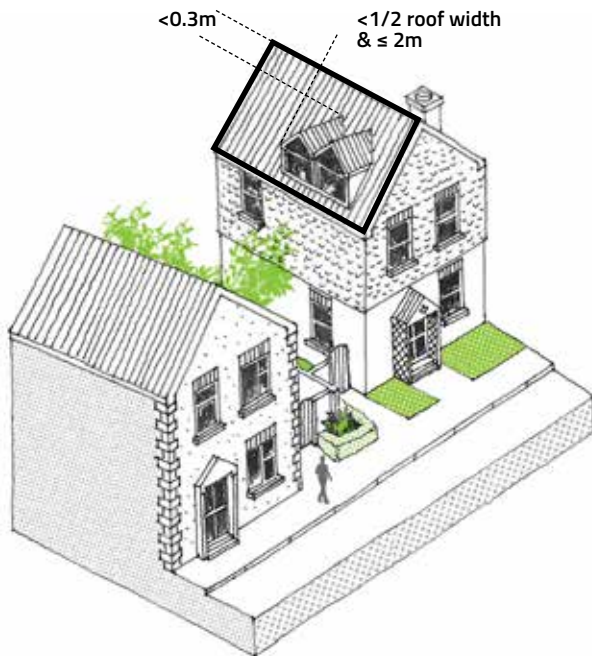
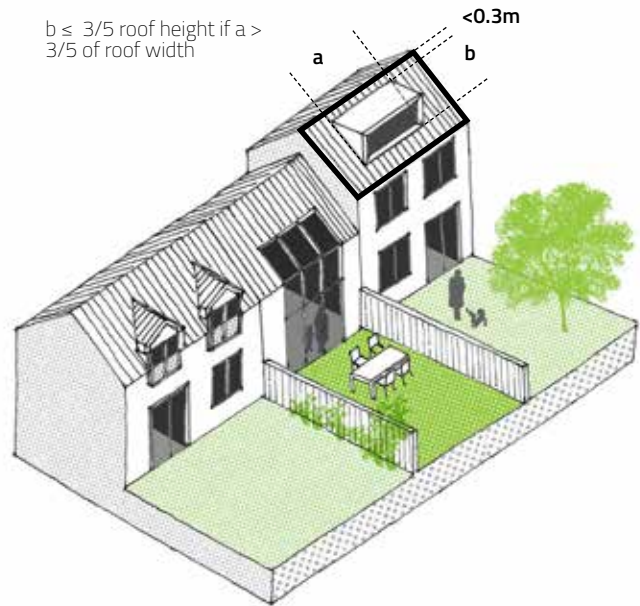
Rear roof slopes (invisible from the public realm):

The proposed dormers should follow the guidance in the third column of table 1.

This example shows three types of roof alterations to the rear slopes and among which a box dormer is subject to more dimensional limits.

$a \leq 3/5$ roof width if $b > 3/5$ of roof height OR

$b \leq 3/5$ roof height if $a > 3/5$ of roof width



A visible but less prominent side roof

The proposed dormers should follow the guidance in the second column of table 1.

A double dormer design is proposed so each dormer has a similar width to that of the original windows. The total width of two dormers is less than 2m wide, up to 1/2 of the width of the roof. The design also has a pitch similar to that of the dwelling's roof.

5.5 ADDITIONAL STOREYS

Extending a building upwards by adding an extra storey can sometimes be preferable, both visually and functionally, to retrofitting multiple dormer windows to the roof.

In the case of a detached bungalow, adding large dormer windows on multiple sides of the roof can spoil the appearance of the house, while the sensitive conversion of the building into a two-storey house can be visually more cohesive, as well as creating better rooms internally.

HOME

Bear in mind that this method of adding space can be one of the most costly and complex, where the building's existing structure is not capable of taking an extra storey, and the new construction will be required to meet Building Regulations requirements for new-build dwellings even if the rest of the property currently does not comply.

The options presented in Section 4.1 (**subservient, seamless or special**) are very relevant for additional storeys. Any of these approaches may be appropriate for additional storeys, but with a particular focus on how the 'whole' building will feel once the development is complete, considering proportion, scale and character. Continuing the character and materials of the floor below and extending the external walls in the same plane is often an appropriate approach for a well designed building. When an existing building is of a low quality, The council encourages other innovative design solutions that can enhance the existing appearance.

For the wellbeing of the future tenants, the council does not encourage the approach of adding more storeys with low ceiling height.

5.5.1 Where an additional storey is proposed, the dwelling as a whole will be expected to meet the nationally described space standard and council's other planning policies for new-build dwellings.

NEIGHBOUR

Increasing the height of a building can have an overbearing impact on neighbouring gardens or cause overshadowing or overlooking. There will generally be more scope to add an extra storey where neighbouring properties are higher, and where the property is well separated from neighbouring houses.

The appearance of a terrace or semi-detached pair of houses can be damaged when a storey is added to one property without a careful design.

Additional storeys will only be acceptable where they do not disrupt the unity of a series of dwellings or buildings, for example within a terrace or sequence of semi-detached homes.

5.5.2 Where an additional storey is proposed, design features that would result in excessive overlooking, overshadowing or noise disturbance should be avoided.

COMMUNITY

In general the taller a building becomes, the greater the visual impact it has to the community. Therefore the level of weight The council will give to design increases depending on the impacts of the additional storeys.



Best practice photograph

An innovative example for an additional storey by Studio Webb Architects

Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but some areas may be better suited than others to additional storeys. These include areas within or immediately around town centre locations (see the council's Planning Constraints map and the summary map in Section 3) where The council's planning policies encourage higher density.

In an area where there is no detectable unity in building height and profile, The council welcomes high quality innovative design in additional storeys to bring out place identity.

5.5.3 The roof of the new storey should complement the roof form of the surrounding houses.

5.5.4 Additional storeys will not be acceptable where the unity of a series of dwellings or buildings represent local distinctiveness, for example within a terrace or sequence of semi-detached homes.

5.6 OUTBUILDINGS

Outbuildings are the annexes to the existing dwellings. In another words, the houses and annexe will share services, access and parking, and gardens. If you wish to create a new dwelling which will be occupied independently, sold separately, or used for paying guests, you will need to apply for permission for subdivision (see section 5.7) in addition to construction of the outbuilding.

Where planning permission is required, only one outbuilding will normally be permitted in each garden, though officers will evaluate proposals on their merits.

HOME

New outbuildings should be carefully designed so that they form a positive relationship with the amenity or garden in which they are situated, and enhance or preserve its use for all residents. The maximum size of the outbuilding will usually be determined by its location and the size of the garden.

The location of the outbuilding should be considered in relation to its intended use. For example, it is more convenient to have easy access from the front door to the bicycle storage for frequent bikers.

If submitting a planning application for an outbuilding or outbuildings, it is a good idea to show the landscaping proposals on your drawings in order to demonstrate a positive relationship with adjacent open areas and gardens, and to show likely access arrangements.

The internal layout of an outbuilding is as important in its own right as that of the main house, particularly if it will be inhabited for long periods of time, such as for hobbies or for home working.

If the outbuilding is less than 15sqm in area and does not contain sleeping accommodation, it is not normally necessary to apply for Building

Regulations approval. However, you should ensure that any outbuilding that is intended to be used as incidental habitable space (for example as a home office or family room) has a suitable structural design and provides an appropriate level of thermal insulation, damp proofing, daylighting, ventilation and fire proofing.

5.6.1 A new garage should provide enough space to store a car, get in and out, and for garage doors to open outwards onto a private driveway. Garage doors should not open outwards over the public highway. Garage spaces, car ports and under-croft parking will only be considered as suitable for parking if they meet the minimum internal dimensions:

Garage Space	3m width x 7m depth per space
Car Port/Under-croft parking	3m width x 5m depth per space

NEIGHBOUR

The location and scale of outbuildings should be carefully considered so that they have minimal impact on neighbouring properties. This might mean setting the building back from the main building line, aligning the outbuilding with existing outbuildings in the neighbour's property, or using the end part of the garden.

5.6.2 New outbuildings should be situated to minimise the impact on neighbouring dwellings.



Best practice photograph:
A garden pavilion containing a small office alongside garden storage space by
Platform 5 Architects

COMMUNITY

Outbuildings can improve the appearance of a neighbourhood, by concealing parked cars, bins or garden equipment, or through their quality of design, but sheds and outbuildings that are excessively large or sited unsympathetically can also have a cluttering and visually harmful effect.

If you want to create an independent dwelling such as 'granny annexe', you must apply for planning permission because outbuildings that are used as independent dwellings can fall below the standards required for new-build homes or are otherwise unfit for purpose. They may also lead to an increase in traffic and parking, disturbance of neighbours.

To avoid your proposed outbuildings later becoming used as independent dwellings without going through the application process, you will be required to demonstrate that they are dependent on the main dwelling. This may be demonstrated through the clear sharing of facilities with the main building, including garden space, kitchen and bathroom facilities, and site access. You may also be asked to

demonstrate that the occupant of the annexe is a dependent relative, domestic employee, or non-paying guests.

5.6.3 The use of outbuildings is restricted to ancillary residential functions, including use as a home office, private garage or storage. Outbuildings should not be designed in a way that would facilitate their use as independent dwellings or commercial premises. A clear dependency should be retained at all times with the existing dwelling.

5.6.4 Outbuildings and annexes will only be acceptable where the area and height of the building is modest in proportion to the site, and where the plot is a sufficient size to accommodate a separate building without restricting the usefulness or quality of the open space or garden.

5.6.5 Detached garages will not generally be acceptable in front gardens unless the site is large and exceptional design solutions are proposed.

5.7 FRONT GARDENS

Some types of changes to front garden will require planning permission, for instance if you are making a new access into the garden across the footpath or pavement.

If you are not in a Conservation Area or subject to a Tree Preservation order, paving over a front garden does not require planning permission in some circumstances. As ever, please check with the Planning team before starting work.

HOME

The front garden forms the first impression of your home. In many areas, front gardens contribute significantly to the characters of properties and subsequently property values.

Whereas providing parking spaces might be a practical need, paving the entire front garden can have a devaluing effect on your house, and creating extra parking spaces should be balanced against preserving landscape. Royal Horticultural Society offers some simple design solutions for getting a parking space into the gardens large or small on their website⁷.

If there's no direct access to the side or rear of the house, a bin storage area should be considered when you alter your front garden. You should maintain convenient access to your bins while making them as unobtrusive as the area possibly allows.

NEIGHBOUR

Some property types have historically joint garden without fences in between the property boundaries. Making changes to your garden in such circumstances can harm the value of your neighbour's property. There may be a covenant from the original developer that limits changes. If your neighbour makes objections to your proposal, it may require the intervention of the planning service.

You may have to notify all affected neighbours if you intend to carry out building work that involves one of the following:

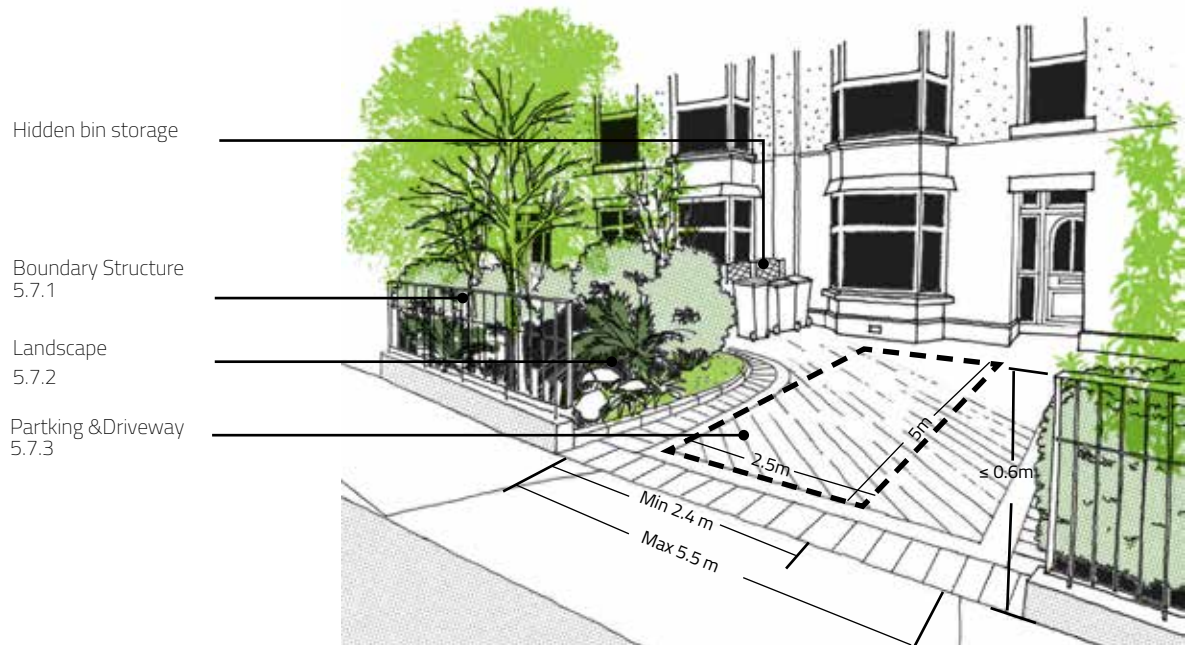
- **building a free standing wall, or a wall of a building, up to or astride the boundary with a neighbouring property**
- **work on an existing wall or structure shared with another property**
- **excavating near a neighbouring building**

COMMUNITY

Front gardens and boundary structures (walls, fences, hedges and railings) are important elements that define the character of the street environment. Streets where the design of boundary structures changes frequently, often have a disorderly, cluttered appearance. New boundary structures should generally respect the dominant boundary style along the street and protect original boundary structures, hedges and trees.

Paving over a front garden to create a car parking space can harm the character of the street and contribute to problems with surface water run-off, while access to the new space

7. RHS <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=738>



An example implementing the guidelines for creating a new drive way in front garden

can remove street parking for others. Hard surfacing, particularly non-porous surfaces, should be kept to a minimum in front gardens, to allow for the maximum area of porous surfaces and planting. The council's car and cycle parking standards indicate what is considered to be a suitable level of off-street parking in different contexts.

5.7.1 Alterations to boundary structures and gardens at the front of a property (including the introduction of a parking space) should respect and enhance the character of the street and disturb the least original walls, fences, railings, hedges and trees.

5.7.2 Front gardens should generally provide the maximum area of soft landscaping and sustainable urban drainage and the minimum of hard surfacing (particularly non-porous surfaces).

5.7.3 The minimum size for a single parking space within a front garden is 5m x 2.5m excluding the area needed to open garage doors and gates or access bins. The car should fit entirely within the front garden. The height of walls, hedges and fences should be 0.6m or below near the pavement for visibility. The length of the dropped kerb should be kept to a minimum. A 2.5m width is generally sufficient. When a site is restricted, a minimum 2.4m width will be accepted. For creating more than one parking space, a maximum 5.5m dropped kerb will be accepted by the council.

5.8 SUBDIVISION

Subdividing existing residential properties to create two or more self-contained dwellings can broaden the range of housing types in areas dominated by family housing.

In designing conversion projects, size and layout are vital considerations. It is also important to consider a wide range of design issues affecting the quality of the home, including daylight and ventilation, access, soundproofing, privacy, amenity space, and arrangements for parking, refuse and recycling. Further advice on these issues may be found in Thurrock's guidance for new-build housing.

Subdividing a dwelling into multiple dwellings will always require a planning application. All of the dwellings that result from the subdivision will be expected to comply with Thurrock's design standards for new residential. This is the case even where the existing building does not currently comply with new-build housing standards. Bear in mind that Building Regulations for new-build dwellings will also apply to all new dwellings that are created as a result of the subdivision of a residential property.

HOME

All new dwellings created as a result of subdivision should meet the same minimum space standards as new homes. The nationally described space standard provides a clear indication what is considered appropriate and fit for purpose for the internal area of new homes. Not all houses are large enough to be subdivided, and The council wishes to avoid conversion projects that result in flats that are so small that they are compromised in terms of use or well-being.

When planning the dwelling layout, it is important to make sure that all habitable rooms have a good outlook and good levels of daylight and ventilation. Direct overlooking between

neighbours within the proposed development should be avoided ,

Privacy from noise is as important as visual privacy. Wherever possible, rooms of the same use should be placed above one another to help reduce noise transmission from living rooms to bedrooms. Approved Document E of the Building Regulations sets out the technical requirements that will need to be met for soundproofing in separating walls and floors. Acoustic tests will normally be required on completion of the work.

Access and internal circulation are important design considerations. Each new dwelling should have its own separate entrance, which may either be external or from a shared hall, and internal circulation spaces should not be cramped. External staircases and additional entrance doors in the front elevation can harm the appearance of a property, where it forms part of a regular pattern of houses. Refuse and recycling containers should be located in a place that is convenient and accessible both from the dwellings and from the collection point.

5.8.1 Planning permission for the subdivision of a residential property into two or more self-contained dwellings will only be granted where all of the following requirements are met:

- a) all of the proposed dwellings meet Thurrock's most up to date design standards for new-build housing.**
- b) each new dwelling has a gross internal area of at least 50 sqm and a bedroom separate from the main living room with a minimum area of 11.5 sqm.**
- c) the new accommodation is self-contained, all habitable rooms are provided with a good outlook and good levels of daylight and ventilation, and the design makes suitable provision for privacy, acoustic separation, access, circulation, and refuse and recycling.**

NEIGHBOUR

Subdividing a house can increase the potential for overlooking or noise disturbance to neighbouring homes, as well as neighbours living above or below each other within the subdivided house. The design considerations to minimise these impacts are demonstrated in section 4.2. Bear in mind that the existing house would then be treated as a neighbouring property when assessing impact.

The restrictions on overlooking or noise is generally more relaxed if a project is above, below, next to the uses insensitive to such disturbance(such as commercial buildings), and in a high density area.

COMMUNITY

A large number of residential conversions concentrated in a small area can change the character and appearance of a street, and lead to pressure on local amenity including, but not restricted to, car parking. This pressure will be more acceptable in some areas than others, so you should always check the location of the project and the most current planning policy in relation to this type of place (see Section 3).

5.8.2 Planning permission for the subdivision of a residential property into two or more self-contained dwellings will normally only be granted where not more than 20% of the houses on the street have already been subdivided into multiple dwellings. This standard may not apply in particular places where the council wishes to encourage incremental changes.

5.8.3 The parking requirements for the additional dwellings created through subdivision are the same as the council's most current parking

standards for new built (see table 3).

5.8.4 Proposals in the Green Belt for the subdivision of a dwelling into two or more self-contained dwellings will be required to show that the work can be accomplished without the need for any further extensions or additions to the building or its curtilage, and that any alterations are appropriate to the character of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Table 3: Minimum Parking Requirements

	Studio/1 bedroom		2 or 3 bedroom		4 or more bedroom	
Accessibility	M	L	M	L	M	L
Vehicle	1	1.25	1.5	2	2	3
Bicycle	1	1	1	1	1	1
Visitor	0.25					

Medium accessibility (M)

Within 400m walking distance of a bus stop facility that has a bus service with a frequency of at least 30mins; within 1km walking distance of a main line train station; within 1km walking distance of a designated Town Centre.

Low accessibility (L)

All areas outside the walking distances of the medium accessibility criteria

5.9 CHANGE OF USE

Converting a non-residential building such as an agricultural barn, shop or church to a residential dwelling can offer the opportunity to create generously-sized rooms and a unique or unconventional home. However, they can also present particular design challenges. Buildings that were not originally intended for domestic use typically have deeper plans and taller spaces that can be hard to subdivide into domestic-scaled rooms, without sacrificing daylight or natural ventilation to parts of the building.

The change of use of a building or part of a building to residential use will normally require a planning application. In coming to a decision on the application, The council will consult their local planning policies and consider the value of the existing use to the surrounding area, including any loss of employment. In Conservation Areas, the use of the building may also have particular historical significance that may restrict its conversion.

The current regulations governing Permitted Development allow the conversion of offices, some shops and sui generis uses to residential use in some areas without the need for planning permission. If you wish to pursue this form of conversion, it will be necessary to inform The council first through a 'prior notification' application. Permitted Development rights may have been removed by 'Article 4 Directions', or by conditions attached to previous planning consents at some locations – you should use the planning constraints map [thurrock.maps.arcgis.com] to check whether constraints may affect your development plans.

HOME

The design should respond positively to the character and layout of the existing building and its original use. This may entail a 'subservient', 'seamless' or 'special' approach to the character of the alterations (see Section 4). Choosing which will depend a lot on the character of the existing building.

Thinking of alternative ways that the new domestic uses of the building might be arranged within existing rooms can help to unlock new possibilities for the design. Introducing new windows in an existing façade, for example where an additional storey is created within a tall room, can be one of the most difficult design challenges of conversion projects.

NEIGHBOUR

Conversion projects may be surrounded by other non-residential buildings. Care should be taken to ensure that the new residential use does not constrain the operation of neighbouring businesses and community facilities, such as through sensitivity to noise.



Best practice photograph:

A pub is re-purposed into a retail space with new flats added above by McLaren Excell

COMMUNITY

Proposals for change of use will not be permitted unless the council is satisfied that any consequential loss or impact on utility, community facilities, infrastructure or emergency services is fully mitigated.

5.9.1 Proposals for change of use of a building to residential will only be considered acceptable where all of the following requirements are met:

- a) the proposal is consistent with Thurrock planning policy**
- b) the design responds positively to the character and layout of the existing building and streetscene**
- c) the proposal will not constrain the operation of neighbouring community or businesses uses.**

5.10 HOME BUSINESS

Home businesses make an important contribution to the economy, and working from home can be a flexible way to start a new business or combine work and family life. Many more people are now able to combine working from home for part of the time with commuting to their place of employment, and indeed the growth of internet sales has allowed small businesses to thrive in locations not traditionally thought of as places of commercial activity.

You are not likely to need planning permission to use part of your home for a business if your answers to the following questions are 'NO', but you should check with the planning team before starting work.

- Will your home no longer be used mainly as a private residence?
- Will your business result in a marked rise in traffic or people calling?
- Will your business involve any activities unusual in a residential area?
- Will your business disturb your neighbours at unreasonable hours or create other forms of nuisance such as noise or smells?

HOME

If you plan to extend your home, convert a garage or add an outbuilding to accommodate work space, the standards in the other sections of this document will apply and a planning application may be necessary.

NEIGHBOUR

Restrictions on home businesses will generally only apply where the business causes nuisance to other people. This can happen when starting

customers or goods movements generate additional traffic and parking, and when work gives rise to noise that causes disturbance to others. In these cases, The council will investigate any complaints and may bring enforcement action.

COMMUNITY

Where the home business employs other people, serves customers from the home or requires the frequent delivery or collection of goods, this can give rise to additional traffic and parking demand, that can cause problems in some circumstances. For instance:

- Restrictions on having a shop, café or takeaway business (use class A1, A3, A4, A5).
- Restrictions on running a hotel or B&B or letting through Airbnb.

Some types of businesses are less well suited than others to residential areas. For example, using an outbuilding as a vehicle repair garage or for commercial storage or light industrial activities can involve storing flammable, toxic or hazardous materials, give rise to fumes or excessive noise, or detract from the appearance and residential character of the street.

5.10.1 Businesses run from residential properties should not cause nuisance to neighbours through additional vehicle movements, additional on-street parking, noise disturbance, the storage of flammable or hazardous materials, or by detracting from the appearance of the street environment.

6. Find Out More

Thurrock Council's local planning policies relate to national planning policies. These national policies can be found at the gov.uk website, and guidance on their interpretation is also available here.

The **Planning Portal** offers guidance on 'Permitted Development' which may help you choose whether this is the right route for your project or not. Thurrock Council's Development Management team is available to discuss your project, whatever route you propose to follow to develop it, and are contactable via dm@thurrock.gov.uk.

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) offers a '**Find an Architect**' service that allows residents to search for architects by location and by specialism, and the Architects Registration Board (ARB) maintains a public database of all registered architects in the UK.

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors offers a '**Find a Surveyor**' service (www.ricsfirms.com/search) to help find a local qualified professional to help with your project.

The Department for Communities and Local Government publishes guidance on ways to meet the statutory **Building Regulations** here:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/approved-documents

For queries regarding **Building Control** applications, please contact the Thurrock Building Control team via Building.Control@thurrock.gov.uk

For advice on **sustainability**, the following websites are useful sources of information:

www.cen.org.uk
www.bre.co.uk/greenguide
www.livingroofs.co.uk
www.saveenergy.co.uk
www.greenenergycentre.org.uk
www.fsc-uk.org

For further advice on improving **energy efficiency** in your home and the availability of grants, contact your local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 512512.

Location Plans for planning applications [provide link to Ordnance Survey or council website]

Advice on designing for **building security** is provided by the official Police website, Secure by Design [www.securebydesign.com]. Secure by Design focuses on crime prevention at the design, layout and construction stages of homes and commercial premises and promotes the use of security standards for a wide range of applications and products.

Advice on the **Party Wall Act** and Party Wall procedures may be found at www.gov.uk in the section 'Party Walls and Building Work'. The Party Wall Act regulates work carried out on or near to a boundary, whether or not the work needs planning permission. It is always advisable to check before you start work.

7. Glossary

Article 4 Directions These are put in place by The council in certain areas to remove normal Permitted Development rights, meaning that planning permission will be required.

Building Regulations Nationally-set regulations intended to ensure the health and safety of people in and around all types of building.

Curtilage A legal term describing the area of land associated with a dwelling within the property boundaries. This area excludes the dwelling but may include garages and other non-habitable outbuildings.

False-pitched Roofs Roofs designed to appear pitched from the front of the dwelling or from the street, but which actually conceal a flat or shallow-pitched roof.

Green Belt A land-use designation designed to restrict development within certain areas, usually in order to control where development happens and to preserve the form and organisation of settlements. Around 13% of England is Green Belt, and around 60% of Thurrock is.

Ground Level The surface of the ground immediately adjacent to the dwelling in question. Where ground level is not uniform (eg if the ground is sloping), then the ground level is the highest part of the surface of the ground next to the dwelling.

Habitable Room Any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, cooking, living or eating purposes; not including spaces such as hallways, utility rooms, bathrooms and similar spaces which are not typically occupied for extended periods of time.

Listed Building A building or structure that has been judged to be of national historical or architectural interest. Listed buildings are subject to stringent legislation regarding their transformation. See Listed Building Consent.

Listed Building Consent Permission required from The council for the demolition of, or material alterations, both internal and external, to a listed building or within the curtilage or setting of a listed building.

Original Dwelling This term means the house as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948 (if it was

built before that date).

Party Walls You must tell your neighbours if you want to carry out any building work on or near your shared property boundary, or 'party wall'. The Party Wall Act (1996) gives you and your neighbours rights and responsibilities in relation to work on or near to party walls and other party structures, such as separating floors within a block of flats.

Permitted Development (PD) The set of rules that allows the public to alter or create buildings without needing to seek permission from the local planning authority. The scale and complexity of what can be built under PD are limited, and the rules for this are set nationally.

Rear infill A particular kind of extension that 'fills-in' a space to the rear of a terraced dwelling, in cases where the original dwelling has, as part of its original design, a room or rooms extending out into the garden, which is known as an 'outrigger'. This design is typical to Victorian terraced houses.

Roof Pitch The angle of a roof, measured from 0 (flat).

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by The council, giving legal protection to trees or woodland. A TPO prevents cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, willful damage or destruction of trees (including cutting roots) without The council's permission.

Two reasonably sized rooms This figure is expressed as floorspace [sqm] and is calculated from the dwelling as originally constructed. Take the average internal floorspace of the habitable rooms in the original dwelling [excluding bathrooms and circulation areas] and multiply that figure by two.

U-values U-value is used to measure how effective elements of a building's fabric are as insulators. It is a rating of how much heat that can pass through the structure such as windows and doors.

8. Standards Chart

4.1 DESIGN PRINCIPLES – HOME												
4.1.1	The extension or alteration should respect and respond positively to the character of the original dwelling such that its character is maintained or enhanced.											
4.1.2	An alteration, extension or outbuilding should function well for its intended use, and adequate daylight and natural ventilation should be maintained to the new construction and to the existing building, where the addition is attached.											
4.1.3	<p>As a result of the proposed extension or outbuilding, the total area of the curtilage covered by buildings should not exceed the following proportions, and the remaining garden should be usable and fit for purpose.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area of curtilage buildings</th> <th>Maximum proportion of curtilage covered by (sq m)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>up to 100</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100 — 500</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>500 — 1000</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>1000</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Area of curtilage buildings	Maximum proportion of curtilage covered by (sq m)	up to 100	40%	100 — 500	30%	500 — 1000	20%	>1000	10%	To calculate the curtilage, subtract the footprint of the original house and any original outbuildings from the total land area of the plot.
Area of curtilage buildings	Maximum proportion of curtilage covered by (sq m)											
up to 100	40%											
100 — 500	30%											
500 — 1000	20%											
>1000	10%											
4.1.4	Extensions and alterations should comply with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, including ensuring that extensions and alterations are no less accessible than the existing building.											
4.2 DESIGN PRINCIPLES – NEIGHBOUR												
4.2.1	Extensions and outbuildings should not have an overbearing impact on adjacent properties or cause them to be excessively enclosed or overshadowed.											
4.2.2	<p>The height of an extension or outbuilding should not normally exceed the following limits:</p> <p>a) a vertical plane inclined at 45 degrees from the boundary, starting at a level 2m above the ground on the neighbour's side, or from the middle of closest groundfloor window of a neighbouring property.</p> <p>b) a plane inclined at 45 degrees from the top of a neighbouring building, where it is located on or next to the boundary.</p> <p>c) Taller buildings and extensions may be acceptable where two adjoining properties are being extended at the same time.</p>	The curtilage calculated from the dimensions of standard 4.2.2 & 4.2.3 cannot exceed the limits set in 4.1.3. Other standards in the guide may also further deduct the buildable area/height.										
4.2.3	The depth and width of an extension or outbuilding should not normally exceed the limits formed by a horizontal plane inclined at 60 degrees from the middle of a closest groundfloor window of neighbouring property.											

4.2.4	<p>Proposals for two-storey extensions and outbuildings will only be approved where it can be shown that they are acceptable in terms of design, amenity, daylighting, overlooking, and avoiding over-dominance in relation to neighbouring properties. Two-storey extensions and outbuildings will normally be required to meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The height of the extension complies with standard 4.2.2 and 4.2.3. b) The proposal demonstrates high quality design c) The roof form, if visible from a public realm, should be sympathetic to the host building. 	
4.2.5	<p>Windows in elevations that directly face a neighbouring property that would lead to overlooking should be avoided or obscure glazed, and either fixed shut or restricted to an opening width of 100mm. Windows and glazed doors that are set back from the property boundary and well screened by boundary structures will normally be considered acceptable.</p>	
4.2.6	<p>Where an extension or outbuilding is constructed on or up to a property boundary, no part of the construction should overhang or intrude into the adjacent property, including eaves and rain gutters.</p>	
4.2.7	<p>Proposals which exceed the dimensional standards 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 will be required to provide the extra design and technical information where it can be shown that they are acceptable in terms of design, amenity, daylighting, overlooking, and avoiding over-dominance in relation to neighbouring properties. The extra information required will be based on each site condition but it will normally include professional shadow analysis, outlook and daylight analysis and realistic façade rendering(s).</p>	

4.3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES – COMMUNITY

4.3.1	<p>The form and scale of the extension or outbuilding should be appropriate to the original dwelling and the surrounding development pattern.</p>	
4.3.2	<p>Corner plots require a distinct design approach that responds positively not only to the dwelling but also to the neighbouring houses and the street scene.</p>	
4.3.3	<p>The extra parking requirements and the impact of proposal on on-street parking will be taken into account in areas of high demand.</p>	
4.3.4	<p>If your project is in the Green Belt, the following restrictions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Where an extension is considered acceptable, it should be proportionate in size to the original dwelling. Extensions will be limited in size to the floor area of two reasonably sized rooms of the original dwelling. Any extension should be of a scale, size, siting and design, and of materials of construction, such that it does not harm the appearance of the original dwelling, the immediate locality and the countryside in general. The reasonable size of an extension will be judged on whether it is adequate in relation to the internal space of the dwelling, rather than the requirements of a particular existing or prospective occupier. b) There will be a presumption against extensions to dwellings that are not in permanent residential use, to temporary dwellings, and to dwellings nearing the end of their lives on sites where replacement would not be permitted. c) Extending the curtilage of a residential property in a way that involves an incursion into the Green Belt will not be permitted. 	

4.3.5	Satellite dishes and aerals should be sited in an unobtrusive position and should not be located on walls, chimneys or roofs that are visible from the street. Multiple dishes and aerals should be avoided. Cables should be run internally or up the rear wall in discrete positions and be coloured or painted to match the background wall.	
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5.1 FRONT EXTENSIONS AND PORCHES

5.1.1	Front extensions and porches should complement the character of the street, including any existing pattern of front extensions, and respect existing building lines, particularly where a strongly defined building line forms an important characteristic of the street.	
5.1.2	Front extensions that are larger than porches will generally only be acceptable where the front garden is unusually deep and the extension does not break clear of existing building lines along the street. In areas where there is an irregular building line and properties are well set back with large front gardens, front extensions may be more acceptable.	
5.1.3	In areas where entrance canopies or open porches form a particular feature of the original dwelling, these should generally not be enclosed as porches.	

5.2 REAR EXTENSIONS

5.2.1	Where a rear extension extends beyond a side wall of the building, standards associated with side extensions apply. (See Section 5.3).	
5.2.2	Rear infill extensions should be as close to 2m in height along the boundary as reasonably possible, where the boundary is an existing garden fence or wall of up to 2m in height.	
5.2.3	Where rear extensions can be seen from a public realm, more restrictions apply including how well they complement historical pattern of the neighboring rear extensions, the treatment of the façade visible and roof form.	

5.3 SIDE EXTENSIONS

5.3.1	A side extension should respect the context of the street, preserving gaps between buildings where these are characteristic of the area.	
5.3.2	Two-storey side extensions are generally not considered acceptable where the existing layout of detached or semi-detached housing is protected townscape. They may be appropriate in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) they are set back from the side boundary, if the impression of 'terracing' is avoided; b) they are on a corner plot and not further than the building lines of both streets; c) they located in the areas that The council encourages changes or higher density. 	
5.3.3	Adding 'false pitched roofs' to the face of flat roofs should be avoided.	

5.4 ROOF ALTERATIONS

5.4.1	Large 'box' dormer windows occupying the full width or height of the roof slope will not normally be acceptable.	
5.4.2	Dormer windows should normally face the street or the property's own private garden so that any overlooking of adjoining gardens is indirect. Dormer windows should normally be avoided on side elevations facing neighbouring gardens or windows.	
5.4.3	Roof terraces, balconies and 'Juliet' balconies that would lead to a substantial increase in overlooking of other residential properties should be avoided.	
5.4.4	Roof conversions and additions will only be acceptable where high quality design is employed, where additions are in scale with the existing roof, and where the addition does not spoil the existing roof form.	
5.4.5	On street-facing roof slopes and on side and rear roof slopes that are visible from the street, rooflights and small dormer windows may be acceptable, but large 'box' dormers and hip-to-gable conversions will generally not be acceptable. The design should follow design guidelines set out in the table 1 provided within the design guidance. On rear roof slopes that are not visible from the street, 'box' dormers may be acceptable where they meet the guidelines in table 1 of this Guide and do not cause unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact.	
5.4.6	Where the house forms part of the semi-detached pair or the house is at the end of a terrace, it is not normally acceptable to change the overall form of a roof, for example from a hipped to a gabled roof. In some circumstances, such changes may be acceptable where they restore the symmetry of the pair or the terrace.	
5.4.7	Solar panels are encouraged in principle. Where they are visible from the street, solar panels mounted at an angle on supporting frames on flat roofs should generally not be visible above the height of any surrounding parapet walls.	

5.5 ADDITIONAL STOREYS

5.5.1	Where an additional storey is proposed, the dwelling as a whole will be expected to meet the nationally described space standard and council's other planning policies for new-build dwellings.	
5.5.2	Where an additional storey is proposed, design features that would result in excessive overlooking, overshadowing or noise disturbance should be avoided.	
5.5.3	The roof of the new storey should complement the roof form of the surrounding houses.	
5.5.4	Additional storeys will not be acceptable where the unity of a series of dwellings or buildings forms an important characteristic of the street, for example within a terrace or sequence of semi-detached homes.	

5.6 OUTBUILDINGS

5.6.1	<p>A new garage should provide enough space to store a car, get in and out, and for garage doors to open outwards onto a private driveway. Garage doors should not open outwards over the public highway. Garage spaces, car ports and under-croft parking will only be considered as suitable for parking if they meet the minimum internal dimensions:</p> <p>Garage Space 3m width x 7m depth per space</p> <p>Car Port/ under-croft parking 3m width x 5m depth per space</p>	
5.6.2	New outbuildings should be situated to minimise the impact on neighbouring dwellings.	
5.6.3	The use of outbuildings is restricted to ancillary residential functions, including use as a home office, private garage or storage. Outbuildings should not be designed in a way that would facilitate their use as independent dwellings or commercial premises. A clear dependency should be retained at all times with the existing dwelling.	
5.6.4	Outbuildings and annexes will only be acceptable where the area and height of the building is modest in proportion to the site, and where the plot is a sufficient size to accommodate a separate building without restricting the usefulness or quality of the open space or garden.	
5.6.5	Detached garages will not generally be acceptable in front gardens unless the site is large and exceptional design solutions are proposed.	

5.7 FRONT GARDENS

5.7.1	Alterations to boundary structures and gardens at the front of a property (including the introduction of a parking space) should respect and enhance the character of the street and retain original walls, fences, railings, hedges and trees as much as possible.	
5.7.2	Front gardens should generally provide the maximum area of soft landscaping and sustainable urban drainage and the minimum of hard surfacing (particularly non-porous surfaces).	
5.7.3	The minimum size for a single parking space within a front garden is 5m x 2.5m excluding the area needed to open garage doors and gates or access bins. The car should fit entirely within the front garden. The height of walls, hedges and fences should be 0.6m or below near the pavement for visibility. The length of the dropped kerb should be kept to a minimum. A 2.4m width is generally sufficient. For creating more than one parking space, maximum 5.5m of the dropped kerb will be accepted by The council.	

5.8 SUBDIVISION

5.8.1	<p>Planning permission for the subdivision of a residential property into two or more self-contained dwellings will only be granted where all of the following requirements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) all of the proposed dwellings meet Thurrock’s design standards for new-build housing. b) each new dwelling has a gross internal area of at least 50 sqm and a bedroom separate from the main living room with a minimum area of 11.5 sqm. c) the new accommodation is self-contained, all habitable rooms⁷ are provided with a good outlook and good levels of daylight and ventilation, and the design makes suitable provision for privacy, acoustic separation, access, circulation, and refuse and recycling. 	
5.8.2	<p>Planning permission for the subdivision of a property into two or more self-contained dwellings will normally only be granted where not more than 20% of the houses on the street have already been subdivided into multiple dwellings. <i>This standard may not apply in particular places where The council wishes to encourage subdivision.</i></p>	
5.8.3	<p>The parking requirements for the additional dwellings created through subdivision are the same as the council's most current parking standards for new built.</p>	
5.8.4	<p>Proposals in the Green Belt for the subdivision of a dwelling into two or more self-contained dwellings will be required to show that the work can be accomplished without the need for any further extensions or additions to the building or its curtilage, and that any alterations are appropriate to the character of the existing building and the surrounding area.</p>	

5.9 CHANGE OF USE

5.9.1	<p>Proposals for change of use of a building to residential will only be considered acceptable where all of the following requirements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the proposal is consistent with Thurrock planning policy b) the design responds positively to the character and layout of the existing building c) the proposal will not constrain the operation of neighbouring community or businesses uses. 	
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5.10 HOME BUSINESSES

5.10.1	<p>Businesses run from residential properties should not cause nuisance to neighbours through additional vehicle movements, additional on-street parking, noise disturbance, the storage of flammable or hazardous materials, or by detracting from the appearance of the street environment.</p>	
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Credits

Preparation of this design guide has been led by the Planning Service on behalf of Thurock council with strong support from the following Agencies and individuals:

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29 March 2017	ITEM: 12
Council	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation	
Report of: Councillor Brian Little – Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation	
This report is Public	

I am pleased to be able to introduce my first report as portfolio holder for Highways and Transportation, as these services lie at the heart of shaping the quality of residents' lives and facilitate a vital growth and regeneration of Thurrock as well as of South East of England. Rising congestion trends have been, as in the previous years, a major concern and I have placed real effort to develop strategies for highways infrastructure and traffic management, and to progress schemes to ensure delivery of the outcomes necessary to enable transformation.

The Congestion Task Force was established in April 2016 to mitigate the impact of incidents on the M25 and Dartford Crossing on local traffic in Thurrock. Since then, the council, together with Highways England, Connect Plus Services, Essex County Council, Essex Police and the Thurrock Business Board have worked to improve the ways that partners and the travelling public are kept informed whenever there are incidents on the Dartford Crossing and to keep traffic moving. Specific outcomes include the introduction of yellow box junctions and improved traffic diversions to reduce gridlock.

Earlier this month, Cabinet approved plans for the council to increase its level of control over road works by switching from a highways noticing regime to a highways permitting scheme. This means that utility companies will have to apply for a permit to work on the highways, and will have to meet the conditions which the council sets, for example, traffic management arrangements and hours of working. They will also face financial penalties if the works over-run. As for our highways infrastructure management, we filled a record of 9,000 potholes thanks to the use of a new quick-fill method (jet patching) and we have procured a £40 million Highways Maintenance Term Contract to serve us in the next 4 – 6 years. We have also worked to introduce digital working, allowing our Highways Inspectors to spend more time inspecting roads and less time in the office. I am pleased that, in the Department for Transport incentive funding initiative, Thurrock has achieved Band 2 level, indicating that the council has successfully adopted all recommended practices for the cost-effective maintenance of highways and thus maintained the annual funding allocation from central government. Additionally, the new highways asset management system enables the service to operate in a more transparent manner and, with residents able to use smart phones to report defects and track service requests.

With regard to strategic projects, a number of schemes have been progressed. The council's £6 million investment in LED retrofit of street lighting is on target to be completed by mid-April 2017. The £5 million cycling infrastructure project has

advanced to the construction phase. Following funding approvals of £7.5 million from South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and of £3 million from the National Station Improvement Programme (NSIP), the £12.05 million Stanford-le-Hope Transport Package has progressed to the design and build phase. The business case for £75 million A13 widening scheme was submitted to Department for Transport for funding approval and a positive outcome is expected. Finally, Thurrock was successful in the South Essex Active Travel £3.3 million bid which will help deliver sustainable access to jobs at the ports and within the Lakeside basin.

This report is essentially split into two parts. The first part outlines the responsibilities of the key areas of the Portfolio and some of the key successes. The second part focuses on the main challenges in the months ahead.

1. THE KEY SERVICE AREAS – RESPONSIBILITIES, PERFORMANCE AND PRIORITIES

The main service delivery units within Highways and Transportation Portfolio are:

- Transport Development Management;
- Major Projects;
- Highways Infrastructure Management; and
- Highways and Transportation Services.

Transport Development Management

The Transport Development Management team co-ordinates, funds and delivers transport improvements to make Thurrock a safe, accessible and attractive place to live, work and visit.

The team deals with day to day transportation- related enquiries from the public, businesses and Members. It also provides advice and support to other Council services and other local authorities. It provides the highways and transportation interface with Thurrock's Planning Teams and external stakeholders with an interest in development to help deliver acceptable new development projects; ensuring that they are properly integrated within the highway and transportation network without risk to safety, efficiency or the environment, in accordance with the council's and government's policies and guidelines.

Through development proposals, the team promotes sustainable transport and optimises opportunities for the funding of transport infrastructure. The team commissions and project-manages capital transport schemes secured through developer funding. The team also checks engineering drawings and supervises adoptable highway works to ensure that new transport infrastructure is designed and constructed to appropriate standards. The team advises and assists in the preparation of highways and transportation policies, including the Local Development Framework and Thurrock's transport policies.

With regard to strategy, the Transport Act 2008 places the duty for each Local Highway Authority to produce, develop and implement a Local Transport Plan

(LTP). The latest LTP was produced in 2011 and is a vital tool to help Thurrock Council work with its stakeholders to strengthen its place-shaping role and its delivery of transport services to the community.

The Thurrock Transport Strategy (which sits above the LTP) has been developed to ensure that the key strategic objectives for transport are addressed. The strategy document was refreshed for the period 2013 – 2026 and was approved by Cabinet in February 2013 to ensure that the council's key priorities are appropriately emphasised, i.e. improvements to J30/31 of the M25 and A13 widening.

Air Quality and Health Strategy

In 2015, a decision was taken by Thurrock Council to develop an integrated Health and Air Quality Strategy through which to tackle the health problems associated with and exacerbated by air pollution within the borough.

Thurrock's Air Quality & Health Strategy has framed the authority's approach to improving air quality and reducing air pollution exposure to safe levels for human health across the borough. The strategy provides the context for the council to manage air quality through a suite of borough-wide policies to prevent new Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) from arising as well as outlining a number of actions and measures to improve air quality in each AQMA with a view to moving towards advisory limits and future revocation.

The overall strategic aim of this Thurrock Air Quality & Health Strategy, as approved by December 2016 Cabinet, is to improve air quality in the borough to reduce the health impacts of air pollution.

The strategy will be delivered through three main approaches:

- a) By implementing measures for managing air quality throughout the borough to prevent new AQMAs from arising; and
- b) By implementing measures contained within the action plans for existing AQMAs; and
- c) By working with external bodies to reduce background pollution from inside and outside the borough.

Lower Thames Crossing Consultation

The results of the Highways England Lower Thames Crossing Consultation are yet to be announced. I have ensured at every opportunity that the council's cross party oppositions for any new crossings in Thurrock has been clearly communicated.

South Essex Active Travel (SEAT) Bid

Along with Southend-on-Sea and Essex County Council, Thurrock Council submitted a joint bid for £3.3m to support walking and cycling across the borough. This bid was successful and the amount of funding equates to roughly one-third (1/3) for each the three partner authorities.

The South Essex Active Travel (SEAT) bid will support key groups across the borough, including jobseekers and young people, so that they can use active travel to access work, training and educational opportunities.

This was a very competitive process, with many local authorities missing out on the funding. This programme builds on the borough's aim to improve connectivity and reduce congestion. The programme is expected to kick off in April 2017.

The SEAT programme brings together the transport authorities of South Essex (Thurrock Council, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Essex County Council) and key delivery partners (including London Gateway, Port of Tilbury, Intu Lakeside and Southend Business Park).

A key aspect of the SEAT programme is the Targeted Travel Engagement initiative. This initiative seeks to provide access to the employee target audience, particularly for new jobs and recruits. The SEAT partners will help to facilitate engagement with prospective and new employees through the provision of travel advice and support during the recruitment and induction processes. Whilst much of the work will be delivered by a trained team of volunteers, the programme will offer the opportunity to train and build the capacity of staff across our partner organisations. This targeted travel engagement will be supported by a package of travel interventions and services such as cycle provision, adult cycle training, cycle maintenance, public transport promotion and route planning.

Measures to Manage HGVs

The freight and logistics sector is a key part of Thurrock's economy, making a significant contribution to the wealth of the borough, and providing thousands of jobs. However, inappropriate HGV routing and parking can create significant problems for local residents. The 2016/17 financial year saw a review of HGV routing across the borough and the development of proposals for a number of locations to deter HGVs from residential streets.

Major Projects

Street Lighting

This £6 million project involves the replacement of approximately 17,500 expensive and inefficient street lights with light emitting diodes (LEDs) and is funded through prudential borrowing. LEDs provide a better quality of light and are more energy efficient and more durable than the sodium lights that they replace. At the start of this programme, all street lighting columns in the borough were tested for electrical and structural integrity. This programme is on target to be completed by mid-April 2017. Arrangements are being made to replace the street lights on the A13, not covered within the original order. Taking account of the interest charges and the reduction in energy bills and maintenance costs, the LED retrofit programme will result in a net saving of £250,000 per year from 2017/18 onwards.

A13 Widening

In November 2014, the Cabinet authorised the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Leader to enter an agreement with The London Gateway Port Limited (D P World) allowing the Council to act as agent for DP World (“the Harbour Authority” under the Harbour Empowerment Order 2008) in carrying out works required for the widening of the A13. Cabinet also approved the carrying out of tender processes for contractors required in order to deliver the A13 widening scheme, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Transportation to award tendered contracts. In addition to Local Growth Funding, DP World will contribute £10m under s106 agreement to the A13 widening.

The A13 Widening scheme has reached the point where the preliminary design is complete, engineering and environmental surveys have been undertaken, contracts for a detailed designer and contractor have been procured, a full business case was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) and land acquisition notices have been served. Subject to confirmation of DfT funding, we plan to appoint a detail designer and a contractor in April 2017. The A13 Widening works are due to start later in 2017 and last approximately two years.

We have held consultation and awareness events for local businesses and remain committed to ensuring residents and businesses are kept fully informed with the progress of the scheme.

Stanford-le-Hope Transport Interchange

The £12.05 million Stanford-le-Hope transport package comprises £7.5 million of LGF funding, £3 million of c2c/Network Rail contribution, £300k of the Council’s Capital Works Programme and £550k of London Gateway (DP World) contribution. Moreover, c2c provided £130k for the feasibility work and initial design of the station/bus interchange works.

The Stanford-le-Hope project comprises of a multi-modal transport interchange with bus turn-around, enhanced cycling facilities, new footbridge and lifts, enhanced station building with improved accessibility and passenger handling capability and customer information system. This will greatly enhance the arrival experience for people visiting Stanford-le-Hope and/or travelling onward to the Port.

In November 2016, Morgan Sindall was appointed to design and build the Stanford-le-Hope scheme under the Eastern Highways Alliance (EHA) Framework 2 Contract which allowed for early contractor involvement and phased approach to ensure funding is guaranteed. In January 2017, officers submitted a business case to SELEP’s independent technical evaluator (ITE). The ITE has undertaken a Gate 2 review and recommended the approval of £7.5M of funding which was confirmed by the SELEP’s Accountability Board on 24 February 2017. The next steps are to draft a legal agreement between the council and c2c to formalise the funding commitments of both parties before

instructing Morgan Sindall to proceed to the phase 2 of the design and build contract.

Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan

In July 2014 Thurrock was awarded £5 million towards cycle route improvements to be delivered across the borough by 2019. The cycle infrastructure enhancements support active lifestyles and therefore improve health and wellbeing of residents and reduce obesity. The council is committed to enhancing Thurrock's cycle network; making it easier and safer to get around the borough by bike, connecting routes, providing access to key employment and residential centres; offering an attractive alternative to using the car. In the long term, sustainable transport modes such as cycling will have positive impact on reduction of congestion and improved air quality.

The cycle plan has been developed in collaboration with the Local Access Forum and cycle groups. Following representation horse riders, we have also sought to maximise opportunities for sections of route to be designated as bridleways, allowing them to be used by horse riders as well as cyclists. The programme was approved by the Cabinet in January 2016 and public engagement was undertaken on the emerging feasibility designs in June 2016 through an online consultation to seek feedback on the proposals. A detailed design of the first batch of schemes was then commissioned for delivery by summer 2017.

Highways Infrastructure Management

Highways Assets

The Council, as Local Highways Authority, is responsible for maintaining highways infrastructure assets used by vast majority of Thurrock residents and visitors. This includes:

- 560km of carriageway;
- 1000km of footway;
- 133 structures;
- 168 roundabouts;
- 50 traffic signals;
- 17,500 lighting columns;
- 3,500 illuminated signs;
- 1,500 illuminated bollards;
- 30,000 signs; and
- 20,000 gullies.

To maintain our assets, in 2016-17 we have procured a £40 million Highways Maintenance Term Contract and the contract is currently undergoing the formal award process.

In the past year, we have worked hard to improve the appearance of highways across and be more responsive to the residents' needs and requests. We filled a

record of 9,000 potholes thanks to jet patching technology. The high number of potholes reflects the limited investment in the maintenance of roads over recent years, and the large number of locations where road surfaces are at or close to the end of their design life. Therefore, we have taken steps to increase capital investment and move towards proactive and preventive operations.

Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme

The Highways Infrastructure Team is currently undergoing a modernisation programme as part of the wider agenda supporting Thurrock becoming a digital council. This is also necessary for compliance with a number of quality issues principally related to the Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) ensuring eligibility for DfT's incentive funding.

From 2016/17 to 2020/21 an increasing share of the funding (incentive funding) will be allocated on the basis of compliance with the HMEP. This means that by 2020/21 low performing authorities lose 20% of their maintenance funding. Authorities in the highest band would receive 100% of incentive funding. I am pleased to announce that our endeavours to date allowed us to achieve Band 2 and thus maintained the annual funding allocation from central government for 2017-18. The highways improvement plan will continue next year to enable us to reach Band 3 (the highest band) by the end of 2017.

Highways Inspectors

The council has a statutory duty to maintain its highway network. This involves having clear policies in place and a regular highway inspection regime.

With the implementation of a Highways Asset Management system, this service has moved from using a paper based process to digital mobile working representing a major change in our processes and improved efficiency. Additionally, in mid-December 2016 a 'Report It' platform was implemented which allows residents to report defects on Thurrock's highways network from their mobile phones. This represents a major step towards providing a resident focused customer service. However, it has highlighted some shortcomings with our back office processes, which we are now working to address.

Network Management

In April 2016, following growing concerns about the impacts of congestion in Thurrock, a Congestion Task Force was established to bring together Thurrock Council representatives, Highways England, Connect Plus Services (who hold the contract for managing traffic incidents on the M25), Essex Highways, Essex Police, Essex County Council and local business representatives. The initial focus of the group was to introduce measures to mitigate the impact on local traffic on the Thurrock network when there are incidents on the M25 and Dartford Crossing. This work programme subsequently expanded to encompass joint initiatives to improve the free flow of traffic across local and strategic networks and work to ensure the future-proofing of the network to accommodate future growth.

In June 2016, in recognition of the growing challenges in relation to this obligation, Thurrock Council established a dedicated Highways Network Management Team within the Transportation & Highways Service. A Highways Network Manager was appointed and tasked with developing measures to give Thurrock more proactive control of traffic movements across its networks. A key recommendation arising from this work was that Thurrock change the mechanism by which it controls the activities of statutory undertakers when carrying out works on the highway, from a 'Noticing' to a 'Permitting' system. The key difference between the two methods is that with 'Noticing', the Statutory Undertakers inform us as Highway Authority where they are working under New Road and Street Works Act 1991(NRSWA) legislation, whereas with 'Permitting', the Traffic Management Act 2004 allows the Authority to implement a Permit Scheme where the statutory undertaker's have to apply for permission to work on the network.

Thurrock Council has, to date, coordinated works under the NRSWA legislation through Notices submitted by the Statutory Undertakers. However, due to growing demand on Thurrock's network and necessity to relieve the congestion, steps have been taken to introduce a Permit Scheme in Thurrock with effect from June 2017.

Highways Objectives

Investment and modernisation of our infrastructure is important to Thurrock's growth agenda, safety of the travelling public and promoting healthier lifestyles:

- Growth agenda - well-maintained infrastructure, in a sustainable funding environment, is pivotal in achieving the council's growth agenda. Housing growth, for example, cannot be achieved without sufficient infrastructure to attract development and sustain it once complete.
- Safety - a network of roads in poor condition has a direct correlation to highway safety. As the local highway authority, the council has a legal duty to maintain the network to a reasonable standard. Furthermore, an asset in poor condition is likely to promote a lack of pride in the community, and can be a precursor to crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. Clearly, the Authority and relevant senior managers have a duty of care where any part of the asset is life expired and is prone to failure, which could result in members of the public being seriously injured.
- Promoting Healthier lifestyles - an asset in poor condition, particularly footways and cycleways, curtails promotion of sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling. Conversely, assets in good condition increase the safety and attractiveness of these modes, with the resultant health benefits and the reducing need to access healthcare.

Highways and Transportation Services

The highways and transportation services include the Passenger Transport Unit, Road Safety and Parking Services.

Passenger Transport

The Passenger Transport Unit is responsible for procuring and managing the Education Transport responsible for the safe travel of 2,160 students, including more than 420 with complex needs to many and varied education establishments both in and out of the borough. The Unit is required to respond to changing demands due to the increased number of residents moving into the borough and the nearest school unable to offer places for the students who are then required to be transported to the nearest establishment with spaces.

Thameside Rail Franchise - c2c continue to implement the requirements of the 15 year franchise awarded in 2014. Timetable changes were introduced in January and May 2016 and January 2017 to further improve the service and address issues at peak times. There were significant benefits for some stations, for example, Chafford Hundred and South Ockendon now have 12 journeys to London arriving before 09:00 instead of 7 previously (pre Dec 15). Smart ticketing is progressively being introduced which give automatic delay repay and more flexibility for customers who travel regularly but not daily. New additional rolling stock has entered service so all trains are now 8 cars, increasing capacity to Thurrock stations.

Buses and Community Transport - in 2016/17, within the limited resources available, the council has continued to support bus services to more rural parts of the borough, notably bus routes 11, 265 and 374.

Ensign and First Essex Buses have made no network changes; Ensign has introduced additional evening journeys on some routes. First Essex has revised timetables to improve reliability due to increasing problems with traffic congestion. Transport for London services are unchanged and service 372 is now operated with double deck buses to provide increased capacity. Six communities would not receive a bus service without council support- Bulphan, Fobbing, Horndon on the Hill, Linford East and West Tilbury. The Council contracted Amber Coaches to provide services 11,14 and 374 along with Transvol Community Transport to provide service 265. Following representations and discussions with the operator the service to Fobbing was increased from the 28th December 2016.

The Bus Users' Group has met bi-monthly, enabling residents to raise bus issues directly with elected members relating to services timetables and infrastructure. The council continues to manage the concessionary cessionary fares scheme with 23,340 passes on issue.

Tilbury Ferry - the council continues to financially support the ferry which operates under contract to Kent County Council. A number of meetings have been held with the operator to discuss performance issues and alternative options have been investigated.

Road Safety

The council's Road Safety Team continued to work with partners within the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP), most notably with Essex Police which facilitates delivery of road safety schemes such as Surround A Town (SAT), Roadster or Theatre & Education road shows raising awareness amongst the young people and minimise child fatalities.

The Road Safety Team delivers road safety and 'bikeability' training to all schools in the borough, supporting 25,000 students up to age 19. The team also provides road safety training to parents and children of reception age. Additionally, 'balance training' is being piloted to reception classes and young driver training is being offered to year 10 students.

Parking Services

The last year has seen the establishment of a dedicated heavy goods vehicle (HGV) enforcement team. Since its establishment in June 2016, the three member team has issued a total of 6,753 penalty charge notices.

In November 2016, the processing of penalty charge notices was brought back in-house, following the termination of the council's contract with Serco.

The council continues to monitor growing parking pressures around rail stations, as numbers of rail commuters increase. Plans have been developed for the Controlled Parking Zone in Tilbury, which will be delivered in the 2017/18 financial year.

2. THE MAIN CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD

Since taking responsibility for this Portfolio, I have consistently promoted my view that the services within my Portfolio should now concentrate on making the good intentions in all our strategies actually happen. I have emphasised that projects supporting job creation for local residents, growth for local businesses and inward investment must be priorities for the months, and indeed years, ahead.

However, highways and transportation provide services enjoyed by all residents of the borough, and can make a major contribution to the quality of place enjoyed by today's residents and businesses. Key challenges are to improve the condition of roads and streets, including the delivery of our ongoing 'fill it' campaign, and mitigate the environmental impacts caused by vehicle emissions, especially around schools.

I will continue to work with partners to improve routing for lorries in the borough, and seek to ensure that the success of our freight and logistics sector does not undermine quality of life for local residents.

In this way, I am seeking to ensure that Thurrock is well placed to maximise the opportunities available to it, that we will compete to be an attractive location for investment and that local residents will directly benefit from our successes.

In the coming months, the significant areas of work will be:

a) Securing maximum benefit through the Local Enterprise Partnership

With almost all transport funding now contained within the devolved Local Growth Fund it is vital that Thurrock, together with the rest of Thames Gateway South Essex, articulates a compelling case to secure the necessary investment in local roads and infrastructure to support the delivery of our ambitious growth agenda.

b) Progressing the Transportation Agenda

The provision of an effective, free-flowing transportation network is an essential requirement if the council's regeneration ambitions are going to be achieved. In this regard, there are four key priorities that will be pursued with vigour; tackling congestion through the work of the Congestion Task Force, delivering the capacity enhancement schemes already secured in the Local Growth Fund, improving modal choice in the borough by supporting increased capacity for public transport, and encouraging Highways England to re-think their plans for a Lower Thames Crossing in Thurrock.

c) Refreshing Thurrock's Transport Strategy in the context of the Emerging Local Plan

Having a clear and positive policy framework in place is critical in ensuring that future land uses in Thurrock are supported by adequate and sustainable transport provision. This analysis will also give us the evidence base to bid for government funding for any future infrastructure which may be required.

d) Continue to tackle congestion through the Congestion Task Force

The Congestion Task Force made good progress in 2016, but much more needs to be done. Our challenges will be to continue to improve incident response, to improve highways network management in the borough, and to progress plans to meet future transport needs.

e) Improve road maintenance

In addition to working towards our target of meeting HMEP Band 3 by December 2017, we will also work to improve our response to residents' concerns and the general level of maintenance of roads in the borough.

f) Improve the management of lorry movements in Thurrock

We will work with partners to develop a Freight and Logistic Strategy and progress schemes to reduce adverse impacts from HGV movements.

3. CONCLUSION

I hope that from the contents of my report, Members will acknowledge the scale and breadth of the activities contained within this Portfolio. I am very aware of the importance of each of those services in contributing to the improvement of the quality of life for the residents of Thurrock.

There are particularly difficult challenges to my ambitions to ensure that those improvements are made, but no one should be in any doubt about my determination to deliver this important agenda, whatever the circumstance.

Financial Information:

Revenue

Category	Last yr outturn	Revised budget	2016/17 Forecast (excluding 'Fill it')	Variance (excluding 'Fill it')	2016/17 Forecast (including 'Fill it')	Variance (including 'Fill it')
Employees	2,137,560	2,480,076	2,400,237	(79,839)	2,400,237	(79,839)
Premises	1,151,156	1,069,984	1,069,500	(6,676)	1,069,500	(6,676)
Supplies and Services	354,555	163,096	178,932	15,836	178,932	15,836
Third Party Payments	3,841,569	4,987,718	4,987,718	0	5,097,718	110,000
Transport	61,373	18,944	20,244	1,300	20,244	1,300
Direct Costs	7,546,213	8,719,818	8,656,631	(69,379)	8,766,631	40,621
Income	(1,309,169)	(2,630,997)	(2,545,782)	69,379	(2,545,782)	69,379
Recharges In (Direct)	4,183	0	0	0	0	0
Net Direct Costs	6,241,227	6,088,821	6,110,849	0	6,220,849	110,000

Capital

Capital Projects	Revised budget
Mardyke Bridge Works	112,834
Highways works to Purfleet Bypass	43,297
Highways Improvements in Oliver Road	633,867
Bus Link between Tesco's Lakeside and Intu Lakeside	15,000
Traffic Improvements Whitehall Lane	25,006
East Tilbury 1st payment (CCTV / Anti-Skid / VAS / Bus Stop upgrade)	11,097
East Tilbury - Walsh development contribution	10,000
Butts Lane improvement works	400
Mayflower Road parking management and capacity improvements	15,000
Total - s106 funding	866,501
Tank Lane	22,947
Congestion	334,143
Traffic Management	303,790
Safety Management Schemes	485,318
Safer Routes to Schools	92,254
Walking and Cycle Facilities	170,312
Public Transport Infrastructure	96,901
Highways Improvements	59,760
Rights of Way	105,000
Parking Restrictions	321,436
Air Quality Monitoring Equipment and Initiatives	75,000
Total Integrated Transport	2,066,861
Structural Maintenance A Class Roads	776,288
Structural Maintenance B and C Class Roads	720,662
Bridge Repair and Strengthening	460,457
Safety Fencing	109,967
White Lining	111,699
Traffic Signals	650,000
Road Signs	100,000
Pot Holes	110,000
Structural Maintenance Unclassified Roads	324,717
Footway Maintenance	392,043
Street Lighting	16,349
Other Infrastructure	250,000
Street Lighting LED Replacement	4,541,861
A13 Widening	5,000,000
Local Growth Fund Measures	2,131,169
Stanford Le Hope Interchange	550,000
Total - Highways Maintenance	16,245,212
Grand Total	19,178,574

29 March 2017	ITEM: 13
Council	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing	
Report of: Councillor Rob Gledhill - Portfolio Holder for Housing	
This report is Public	

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Housing service and sets out the main challenges and opportunities facing the Council in its diverse housing roles as a) social landlord and asset-holder, b) provider of statutory homelessness, housing advice and private sector housing services, c) strategic housing provider/enabler, and d) 'place-shaper' with regard to housing supply and regeneration.

The report summarises the performance of the service in the financial year just ending, describes the organisational and cultural change in progress within the service, and sets out the full context of the housing review which is now underway,

The review aims to capture Thurrock's housing ambitions for the next five years, and to set clear strategic goals for delivery. It will also use both the Council's seven established design principles and a special focus on identifying community-based solutions wherever possible to arrive at a revised service structure which can deliver the vision while achieving efficiencies and value-for-money for both the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund.

Service Overview

The Housing service provides a wide range of statutory and landlord services, and utilises the majority of Housing Revenue Account resources as well as some smaller General Fund budgets. The service has a key role in directly delivering nine of the Council's Key Performance Indicators, and accounts for a high proportion of the Council's interactions with residents, especially in relation to the very long-term and intensive relationship with customers bound up with the Council's role as a landlord.

The service also works very closely with colleagues in the Council's Environment and Place Directorate, which includes the Regeneration and Planning teams. In order to ensure clear strategic oversight and effective joint working a new Housing Investment and Regeneration Group has been established, comprising senior managers from both Directorates along with senior Finance staff. The next section of this report focuses on the teams within the Housing Service.

As a service Housing is responsible for the following key functions;

- Caretaking and Estate services (a range of caretaking services are currently in place, with differential charges reflecting the level of service provided – there are also a large number of blocks where no service is currently provided)
- Tenancy services – housing management for our 9,000 tenants including tenancy audits, low-level Anti-Social Behaviour cases, succession, recharges, etc.
- Void re-servicing – arranging viewings, inspecting works, ensuring properties are fit to re-let,
- Rent collection / financial inclusion (assistance with debt and personal budgeting)
- Repairs and planned maintenance across the Council's residential assets
- CCTV – monitoring and maintaining 350 cameras across the borough and dealing with 650 reported incidents p.a.
- Domestic abuse and hate crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour – cases escalated to Level 2 where statutory enforcement is appropriate
- Private sector housing service – mediation and enforcement between private landlords and their tenants
- Capital programmes – including Transforming Homes (see below)
- Reactive repairs – 34,000 repairs carried out p.a. through Mears Ltd.
- Leaseholder services (shared service with LB Barking and Dagenham for 830 leaseholders in Right to Buy properties)
- Resident engagement – consultation events, capacity-building for Tenants and Residents Associations, etc.
- Housing register and allocations (currently 8,000 households on the housing register)
- Housing options and homelessness prevention
- Homelessness assessment and reviews
- Temporary accommodation for homeless households (also tenants displaced by emergencies/disrepair, and placements for other services including Adult Social Care)
- Quality Assurance and Resident Liaison for tenants
- Management / community liaison for official travellers' sites

The service also includes a Business Improvement team contributing to special projects such as 'Housing First' – a scheme providing intensive support to a cohort of tenants with severe mental and/or physical health issues, and the new proposed Keyworker scheme to assist crucial professionals in Education, Social Services and the NHS to live and work in the borough

The current staffing structure is an interim construct following a number of prior re-organisations at senior level in particular. The housing review will incorporate a thorough review of the current structure to achieve efficiencies wherever possible and to group staff in the most effective way to deliver the service's objectives, with the customer at the centre of the service model.

Housing New Build and Regeneration

In addition to the housing management service the Council's housing development and new-build functions are carried out as part of the Property and Development

function in the Environment and Place Directorate. This enables a close link to be made between housing development and the Council's wider work on regeneration, place shaping and strategic planning.

Progress and performance in 2016/17

The current year has been one of significant change in the Housing Service. A senior management re-organisation was carried out to build on the incorporation of the Housing service into the Adults, Housing and Health Directorate, and the new permanent Head of Service took up his post in November 2016 after a period of interim leadership at that level. The number of changes in recent years has had predictable effects on the cohesion of the staff group and contributed to some cultural issues which are being addressed to create a more cohesive service.

Performance in some key areas has remained strong. As shown in Appendix A targets have been met for the key housing management measures of rent collection at 99%, and void turnaround times, which are on target at an average of 33 days. There are currently 105 void properties in the process of being re-let, a void rate of just over 1%, with 2 further properties classed as long-term voids due to the level of works needed to make them lettable, one of which is in use as a decant property. As a result of tight management in this area, estimated void loss is at £29,000, or approximately 0.008% of the gross debit figure, and the high level of rent collection has helped to continue to balance the operational budget.

The Rents team has also worked effectively with 600 tenants to help them sustain their tenancies through budgeting support, brokering repayment agreements to reduce arrears, etc. Where tenants do not bring their rent accounts in line despite our efforts, we reserve the right to evict – a total of 46 secure tenants have been evicted for rent arrears. Another 12 secure tenants were evicted for other tenancy breaches (anti-social behavior, etc.) In 12 further cases introductory tenancies have not been converted into secure tenancies, due to arrears and/or other tenancy breaches during the introductory period.

Contract management of the major repairs and refurbishment contracts has been continuing throughout the year, and has had a strong focus in recent months. The projected overspend on the reactive repairs contract with Mears Ltd. has reduced considerably following a tight focus on repairs classified as 'exclusions' (and therefore paid at an individuated rate rather than through the standard 'price per property' which is the basis of the property. There is now a projected deficit for this budget line of £600k reduced from £900k forecast in the middle of the financial year (as shown below mitigation elsewhere in the HRA means that a balanced outturn is forecast overall).

Of particular note is the increase in reported customer satisfaction with Mears, which shows a year-on-year improvement of 15%, from 78% in January 2016 to 93% in January 2017. Detailed analysis of the satisfaction data provided through an independent survey shows that in most specific areas there have been significant improvements in customers' feedback, especially in relation to communications and keeping appointments.

The Transforming Homes programme has progressed well throughout the year, with one of the two partner companies now working on properties formerly planned for 2017/18. A total of 1,200 homes will have been completed in the year under the Programme, bringing the overall total to 6,800 which is 67% of the total stock. Customer satisfaction ratings for the programme are also high with an anticipated final figure for the year of 85% against a target of 80%. There are some variations between the two contractors for the programme, and work is in hand to improve the performance of the lower-performing company.

While the mainstream spend on kitchens and bathrooms for the programme is being managed within the annual budget of £10m, there have been a high number of voids arising outside the programme time frames which require significant extra capital investment to bring them to a lettable standard. There have also been a number of exceptional properties which require structural interventions over and above the Transforming Homes specification. For these reasons a forecast overspend position was reported earlier in the year, but this has been addressed through efficiencies elsewhere, closer budget monitoring and some accounting adjustments to bring the budget into balance at year end.

In other areas of the service the current year's performance figures give some cause for concern. The number of households in temporary accommodation has risen significantly, from 87 in March 2016 to an estimated 135 at year end. Homelessness prevention is running below target, with a clear impact on the number of cases accepted as homeless and the temporary accommodation numbers. The number of garages not in use is also of concern.

Appendix A shows the full scorecard of performance indicators across the service, divided into a) Council Key Performance Indicators and b) Local Performance Indicators monitored within the Adults, Housing and Health Directorate. Actual figures are shown up to January, with anticipated final outturns for the year shown under 'Projection'.

All of the 9 Council Key Performance Indicators are either green, or are 'tracker' indicators only (where no target is set). Of the 35 Local Performance Indicators, 8 (22%) are expected to be red at the end of the year – the table below provides some commentary for each of these, including one (resident engagement) where it is expected the target will actually be met by the end of the year when all such events have been centrally collated.

'Red' performance indicators as at February 2017

Local Performance Indicator	Target	Feb. 2017 figure	Commentary
Number of resident engagement events	60	29	Expected to meet target in 3/17 (missing items)
Properties recovered through investigations	60	10	Referral process under review
Complaints received	650	723	'Concerns' category no longer in use – estimated level without this change would be 573 for whole year
Customer slips received/closed	95%	93%	Increase in demand inc. repeat visits
Households in temporary accommodation	70	124	Increased demand due to private evictions (quarterly 'loss of assured shorthold tenancy' figure increased from 22 to 49 between Sept. 2015 and Sept. 2016)
Private rented properties sourced	70	37	Challenging local market, limited access
Downsize moves achieved	70	40	Reduced movement in stock – impact of removal of spare room subsidy minimal
Garages made void/available to let	750	498	Full review to commence shortly

The current suite of local indicators is being reviewed to ensure that in 2017/18 a robust set of trackers and 'stretch' targets is in place, and that all the teams within the service are represented in the performance framework.

During 2016/17 the service has also moved further towards full use of the Northgate housing database – the modules included in Phase One are fully operational (Rents, Repairs, Customer Services/Anti-Social Behaviour, Homelessness) and the Asset Management module (known sometimes as 'Codeman') is currently being installed. There has been some slippage in the delivery of the fully integrated system, and negotiations will take place with Northgate to ensure that project costs are contained. It is planned that the Phase Two modules, including Allocations and Temporary Accommodation, will be going live in the first half of 2017/18.

The system incorporates Business Objects, a management information tool which will be used to improve the quality and timeliness of performance data across the service, and drive improvements both in the quality of the data and in the responsiveness of the service to our customers.

Housing New Build and Regeneration

New build programme

The Housing Revenue Account new build programme will deliver in total 118 new Council homes for rent. The properties will be a mix of houses, low rise flats and bungalows. The total budget for the programme including design and survey fees, project management costs and construction costs is £30.7m. Rents are being set at 70% of local market rents under the Affordable Rent regime.

In order to reduce annual costs on the HRA for the new schemes it is proposed to utilise Right to Buy Receipts which would otherwise potentially need to be paid to the government along with interest at 4% above the base rate. Sufficient unallocated receipts of £9.8 million have been identified to make this adjustment and ensure the financial and reputational risks of returning unspent RTB proceeds are avoided. As a result of this the Council has also been able to return to the Homes and Communities Agency a grant of £0.5m for new development which would have made only a small contribution to the schemes.

Individual schemes are listed below. In every case the units will be let through the HRA. Each scheme has also been subject to a full review by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, and re-designed as appropriate to fulfill the Commission's recommendations.

Echoes, Seabrooke Rise, Grays

This development of 53 flats adjacent to the Seabrooke Rise estate was completed and let in 2016-17 following a delay of 3 months – the total cost of the development was £13.6m, a gross average unit cost of £250k for each property.

Tops Club, Argent Street, Grays

The Tops Club scheme will provide 29 units of 1, 2, 3 bed flats and maisonettes together with an enhanced playground for residents. The scheme gained planning permission in January 2017 and preparations are well underway to commence procurement of a building contractor.

Claudian Way, Chadwell

This is a 53-unit scheme consisting of a mix of bungalows, houses and low rise flats. The scheme has been the subject of extensive local consultation. A planning application has now been submitted and is awaiting a committee date. Procurement of a building contractor will commence immediately post planning approval if obtained.

Calcutta Road, Tilbury (HRA)

Final design requirements are being addressed following a recent CABE review for this development of 35 flats for people approaching retirement and beyond. The scheme accords with the 'HAPPI' principles ('Housing our Ageing Population – Panel for Innovation') which will ensure good design appropriate to the age group. A planning application will be submitted soon and the programme anticipates start on site in October 2017, subject to planning approval, with first completions expected in March 2019.

Local Housing Company - overview

The principle focus of the local housing company Gloriana Thurrock Ltd (GTL) is to support the achievement of the Council's wider regeneration goals through the delivery of specific housing schemes which support the economic development of the Borough. The company is continuing to look at development opportunities and options with a view to bringing forward a pipeline of developments for consideration. The Board meets bi-monthly, with general meetings for shareholders also being held twice a year. The next shareholders' meeting will be in April 2017.

St Chads, Tilbury

This development will deliver 128 new homes a mix of 2, 3, and 4 bed houses. Construction has continued through 2016/17. The first 37 units are due to be handed over on 31st March 2017. The remainder of the site will be completed through a phased approach until August 2017. The scheme will include at least 20% affordable housing (26 units). The St Chads' development supports the regeneration of Tilbury and has recently been recognised in the industry by winning a design award and a 'considerate contractor' award.

The Council will continue to appraise sites that it wishes to bring forward for development and consider the local housing company as one its potential delivery channels for each scheme.

Gloriana - Council Motion

GTL welcomes the recent Council motion and the continued scrutiny of its activities, business planning and funding requirements by Council, including producing an annual report and quarterly reports to its shareholders forming part of the General Services Committee. GTL is working with the Council to formalise how this will be implemented at the next Gloriana Board meeting and ahead of a report to the next general meeting of GTL Shareholders planned for May 2017. GTL also welcomes the reassurance provided in the motion with regard to Members of the Council which also form part of the Planning Committee.

External developments in 2017/18 and beyond

The service will be impacted by a number of ongoing trends in future years, not least the changes to Thurrock's demographic profile and changes in the housing market which reflect the borough's growing attractiveness to current residents of

London in particular. The recent South Essex Housing Market Trends survey showed house prices and private rents in Thurrock both rising above the average for the sub-region, and Thurrock with the second-highest gap (after Rochford) between average market rent levels and Local Housing Allowance rates. This creates a challenging context in which to prevent homelessness and source affordable properties for residents in housing need.

In terms of national housing policy two major developments should also be noted. The recent Housing White Paper set out the government's analysis of the current 'broken' housing market, and includes extensive consultation on changes to the planning framework to unlock the potential for more homes, including 'family friendly tenancies' at lower rents and with longer minimum terms than the standard private lets into which increasing numbers of families are moving. The paper also re-states the principle that Green Belt development should be considered only as a 'last resort', and expresses support for a range of emerging initiatives from local housing companies (such as Gloriana Ltd. In Thurrock) and modular housing schemes.

The White Paper also confirms the government's enthusiasm for the Homelessness Reduction Bill, a private member's bill in the name of Mr. Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow, which is currently proceeding through Parliament. Although extra funding for councils has also been announced for the first 2 years from enactment, this legislation will present real challenges in providing a better service to single homeless people in particular, and strengthening the statutory position of all households threatened with homelessness, turning homelessness prevention from a good practice principle into a legal requirement.

Housing review – achievements and findings to date

The housing review began during 2016, following a commitment by the administration to address some issues which were clearly a major concern of residents.

In the early months of the year special attention was paid to repairs performance, homelessness and housing options, and the operation of introductory tenancies. Concerns about the responsiveness of both the Council and its contractors to reactive repairs have clearly abated in recent months, although are still issues to be addressed around both the quality of repairs and - to a reducing degree as outlined – the customer experience of tenants reporting repairs.

A new interim management structure was introduced in Housing Solutions to address both concerns around under-performance and the perception of an overly strict 'gatekeeping' approach to homelessness. Progress has been made under both headings, but more progress is needed to instil a true prevention ethos and to improve the timeliness and quality of decisions. This will be an area of early focus in the housing review and proposals will be formulated by the end of July 2017 to implement the required actions.

In relation to introductory tenancies, changes have been made to vest key decisions in the Rents team to ensure consistent and sensitive practice in this area, and as with the other two 'burning issues' above there has been a definite improvement in the perception of the service on this issue.

Another area of urgent focus has been complaints about damp and mould, which are the biggest single cause of concern among tenants and their representatives. A new approach to tackling these concerns has already begun through the appointment of a specialist Damp and Mould Surveyor, working alongside a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer, to arrive at the right balance, property by property, between treatments, structural works, and recommendations to tenants on how certain housekeeping choices can mitigate the problem.

This balance will vary from case to case, but this focused project will provide us with some clear principles which can be used in conjunction with the survey data (and other data now being collated) to inform a consistent and effective approach to this remaining `burning issue'. The project's findings will be mainstreamed into both the surveyors' team and the RLO function. Management recognises the urgency of this issue as there are damaging perceptions about the Council's approach to this issue which must be confronted and changed as soon as possible.

Stock Condition Survey

In the context of reviewing both the financial position of the HRA and the intelligence available to inform future repairs and maintenance programmes, a decision was also taken to undertake a Stock Condition Survey. This exercise is now well advanced, with a contractor appointed after an efficient procurement (which included a tenant as part of the evaluation panel), and pilot surveys due to start in April.

The survey will run until the summer, involving 30% overall of the stock broken down into categories (house, flat, garage, etc.) and by property type. The surveys will involve a comprehensive inspection of every rooms inside each selected property, including all bedrooms and loft areas. Information will be collected on heating and electrical systems, elements related to damp and mould, adaptations, and other property attributes forming part of an overall assessment of the stock. Externally, the surveys will cover such items as roofs (including communal roofs), brickwork, guttering and windows. The comprehensive paper survey will be complemented by measurements and photograph, all of which can now be uploaded onto the Asset Management module in the Northgate system (including through interfaces with the document management system Objective) to form a permanent record of the condition of the properties at the time of the survey.

Once completed this will provide a critical mass of accurate current data (and valid extrapolations therefrom) which will be of great value in informing decisions about the priorities for future repairs and maintenance programmes.

Housing review – early priorities

Further analysis of the service's current culture and performance has identified a number of other areas where a `quick win' approach could be applied. The quality of response to members' enquiries and complaints has been an area of strong focus, and performance has improved in both respects, with positive feedback recently given by one tenant in particular who had raised major concerns on behalf of other residents. Budget monitoring has also improved, as shown in positive changes to financial forecasts, and the management team has started to collaborate more effectively and to drive an ethos of continuous improvement down to their individual teams.

Notwithstanding the above, a more thorough-going review of the housing service in the context of the Council's housing ambitions is appropriate, especially in light of the continuing challenge to financial resources through the rent reduction in particular, and the movements in national policy outlined in section above.

The overarching purpose of the review is to establish a fresh housing 'vision' for Thurrock, expressed through both a refreshed 'mission statement' and a series of discrete service offers for the range of customers relying on the service, and to move to a re-configured service that is designed to meet these objectives while realising maximum value from both the HRA and GF allocations to the service.

In the context of the above local and national changes, it is clear that Thurrock's housing services need to change to keep pace with developments and to make best use of all our housing resources.

Supply-and-demand modelling is essential to arrive at a robust and flexible data-set showing the likely needs of Thurrock's residents for the next five years against the expected pipeline of properties of all types. A small working group will be convened for this purpose at a very early stage of the formal review.

The contribution of Gloriana Ltd. to meeting housing need in the borough can be assessed in the round as part of this exercise. The White Paper's endorsement of local delivery models of this kind is clearly welcome in the Thurrock context, although the comments in the paper around the Right to Buy being included in such models will also need careful evaluation.

The relatively low level of Housing Association presence in Thurrock Council is of concern when considering the limited number of newly built Council homes which can realistically be delivered in the short to medium term. Work is underway to strengthen the Council's dialogue with the Registered Provider community and to involve them in the solutions to Thurrock's housing challenges, whether as developers per se, through leasing/management arrangements for Gloriana, or even as temporary accommodation providers (as recommended in Professor Julie Rugg's report on the cost of temporary accommodation commissioned by the government in 2015)

The Council's regeneration ambitions are also clearly relevant to the vision for housing which will emerge from the review, and meetings are scheduled to revisit the assumptions and choices already made and to confirm the direction of travel for the coming years. The Housing and Investment group is well-placed to pull together the various strands needed to work in concert to deliver viable regeneration schemes on key estates in the borough.

The council also needs to urgently consider the viability for the borough of some alternative housing products which have emerged in recent years. Modular housing in particular has a role to play in delivering more housing within shorter timescales and with a degree of flexibility not available through traditional on-site construction. Once again a clear endorsement in the White Paper provides a useful confirmation that such initiatives are seen nationally as part of the solution to some of the seemingly intractable issues around increasing the supply of housing.

There is also a need to assess the potential of alternative models including Community Land Trust and Self-Build schemes in order to promote a more mixed economy of housing in the borough.

Given the increased demand likely to be generated by the Homelessness Reduction Bill when enacted, it is also prudent as part of this strategic exercise to map actual and potential trends for homelessness and temporary accommodation, and carry out a 'first principles' review of the current approach, which is based on using relatively high numbers of units in our own stock, these numbers now proving insufficient to meet the newly increased demand for temporary accommodation.

A further objective of the review is to establish a constructive relationship with the private rented sector. It could be argued that the service currently is too focused on enforcement at the expense of working with as many landlords and agents as possible as partners in meeting housing need. A number of companies not currently working on a large scale in the region have expressed interest in meeting Thurrock managers to explore options for the future, and the ideas in the White Paper around 'family-friendly tenancies' may play directly into this dialogue.

The Housing service has played a key role in developing the 'hub' model as a way of delivering services differently and, more ambitiously, moving towards a model of collaboration between the council and the community which reduces the delivery of services as a perceived solution to a particular issue. Between July and October 2016 volunteers in 4 of the 6 current hubs dealt with a total of 847 housing/homelessness enquiries. To the extent that this already diverts demand away from the 'front line' of the Civic Offices it is welcome, but the potential for tenants and other residents to be further empowered in relation to housing is something the review will explore as a central theme alongside the seven design principles already in scope.

As an early outcome of the review the service will establish a new 'mission statement' for housing to capture our ambitions for the next five years. Based on the challenges and opportunities summarised above a vision resembling the following might be seen as fit for purpose;

'Meeting Thurrock's housing challenges.

We will increase the range of housing options and products available to our residents.

We will work with our communities to help them find their own housing solutions wherever possible

We will deliver excellent responsive services to all our tenants and leaseholders and to all residents with a housing need'

Housing review – timeline

The housing review is being carried out as part of the corporate service review programme, and is the most ambitious of the current set of reviews in terms of scope.

Appendix B - 'Meeting Thurrock's Housing Challenges' – summarises the objectives

of the review and indicates in broad terms the approach being taken. A review team has been established which includes a balance of managers and specialist staff from within the service itself and staff from the corporate reviews team, including a 'critical friend' from the Strategy, Communications and Customer Services team.

The review process will create the organisational focus needed to address the various and complex issues summarised above.

All staff in Housing will be able to contribute directly to the review. A staff awayday is planned for June, to be attended by the portfolio holder, which will focus on the contribution individuals and teams can make to achieve our objectives. We will also seek to revive the Housing Workforce Group so that it can contribute meaningfully to the review and the development of the service.

The breadth of the review and the complexity of some of the areas it will cover mean that the full timeline – including implementing all recommendations - runs until the end of 2017-18.

Within that overall period certain elements can be completed as early priorities, including;

- the supply and demand modelling which will inform many of the other strands of the review
- refreshing the approach to homelessness prevention and statutory homelessness
- reviewing the allocations policy to arrive at the right policy for the future, and
- using the findings of the Stock Condition Survey to set the right priorities for planned maintenance and refurbishment programmes

Financial summary – General fund

The Housing service has a General Fund allocation totaling £661 and divided into 3 components; Homelessness, Private Sector Housing and Travellers. The individual allocations and current forecast expenditure are shown below – with rent receipts from travellers’ sites off-setting homelessness and private sector housing expenditure, a balanced outturn is forecast for the overall GF budget;

	Full Year Budget	Forecast		Variance from Budget	
	£000	£000		£000	%
Homelessness	484	484	0	0	
Private Sector Housing	297	297	0	0	
Travellers	(120)	(120)	0	0	
Total	661	661	0	0	

It should be noted that homelessness and temporary accommodation is potentially an area of financial volatility, as supplier rates for privately owned temporary accommodation can be difficult to control, This is increasingly true in Thurrock,

where London boroughs have increased their 'out-of-borough' placements – the actual number of these placements is known to be higher than the 33 which have been formally notified to us during this year, and work is needed to improve the compliance of London authorities with the statutory requirement to provide information to 'receiving' boroughs. Where placements are identified which have not been the subject of a formal notification as required, the portfolio holder will be writing to his counterparts as Leader and Housing portfolio holder in the boroughs concerned to remind them of their statutory obligations. As noted above changes to homelessness legislation are likely to increase the pressure on the Homelessness budget, at least in the short term.

Financial summary – Housing Revenue Account

Revenue budgets controlled by the service are summarised below. A potential overspend position forecast in earlier months has been addressed, in particular the growth of spend on repairs and maintenance (Mears contract) – as the cost of 'exception' repairs in particular has been reduced, the monthly spend on this budget line has moderated significantly. As a result the bottom-line position has been adjusted so that with rents offsetting operational and repairs costs, a balanced outturn is now projected for the year end.

	Full Year Budget	Forecast	Variance from Budget	
	£000	£000	£000	%
Repairs and Maintenance	12,602	13,217	615	4.9%
Housing Operations	11,263	11,076	(187)	(1.7%)
Financing and Recharges	24,018	24,093	75	0.3%
Rent and Income	(48,426)	(48,586)	(160)	0.3%
Development	543	200	(343)	(63.2%)
Total	0	0	0	

The table below shows the capital budget for the Transforming Homes programme. Pressures on this budget have arisen due to the average cost of bringing void properties up to standard, as well as some 'outlier' properties which have required exceptional levels of capital spend under the Programme. Effective budget management in the later quarters has mitigated the position so that as at end of February the forecast overspend has reduced to £100k (having been set at £500,000 as recently as December). Further re-profiling of expenditure in the final months, and some limited and closely targeted deferment of expenditure if necessary, are expected to yield the further reductions need to achieve a balanced outturn at the end of March.

The HRA budget for new-build development is held in the Environment and Place Directorate – there is currently a forecast net underspend for the current year of *circa* £3 million due to delays in commencement, funding which will be carried over into next year so that schemes are funded as they are delivered.

The figures below summarise significant movements in the HRA for 2017/18.

HRA 2017/18 - budget movement summary

Loss of income - 1% rent reduction	710
Budget Savings/Increased Income	
Service Charges	(67)
Garage Rents	(34)
Heating	(1)
Leaseholder Service Charges	(221)
Total Budget Savings/Increased Income	(323)
Budget Pressures/Inflation	
Salaries and Pay Award	80
Contractual Uplift on Repairs	170
Increased Recharges to the GF	180
Total Budget Pressures/Inflation	430
Net Rental Loss	817
Interest Charge	100
Revenue Movement	917
Movement In Capital Resources	(2,067)
Contribution to Reserves	1,150
Net HRA Position 2017/18	0

Summary

The Housing service has a key role to play in delivering for Thurrock residents the borough they wish to see.

Building on improvements already made, and linking them to a wider strategic analysis of the future of housing in the borough, the housing review will look, both for further early improvements, and to establish a broad strategic 'mission' for housing which enables services and residents, working together, to meet Thurrock's housing challenges.

Housing Performance Scorecard 2016-17

Key Performance Indicators	Target	2015-16	Periodic	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	YTD	Projection	Commentary	
General Satisfaction Among Tenants	72%	70%	72%	74%	73%	76%	70%	71%	66%	72%	75%	75%	71%	72%	G		
Number of homes transformed	65% of stock by	58% (5838)	60	192	132	111	114	106	108	68	111	31	13	986	G	1200	
Average time to turn around/re-let voids	33 Days	36	39.9	23	32	40	40	34	31	31	34	34	TBC	34	G	33	
Number of private residents whose homes have been improved as a result of direct enforcement action (Hazards Removed)	450	442	40	32	24	57	17	30	20	21	99	44	97	441	G	529	
Rent Collection	99.00%	99.64%	95.00%	77.90%	90.39%	93.30%	93.60%	95.30%	95.00%	95.76%	96.80%	97.10%	97.80%	97.80%	G	99.00%	A proportion of rent owed in 2016-17 will be collected early in 2017-18
% of repairs completed within target	85%	95% (March)	85%	98%	98%	97%	98%	98%	98%	98%	95%	98%	98%		G	97%	
Number of homeless cases accepted	Monitor	222 (19 avg p/m)	-	18	7	20	23	15	29	22	30	36	14	214		257	Expected 15-20% increase from last year (tracker only)
Households at risk of homelessness approaching the Monitor	Monitor	2944 (245 avg p/m)	-	238	243	244	186	217	236	170	118	216	95	1963		2356	Demand has not hugely increased but the number of cases where homelessness could not be prevented - as nationally, the increase in homelessness is mainly driven by private sector evictions
Number of Homeless Preventions	Monitor	741	-	37	59	81	44	31	42	55	39	TBC	43	431		517	
Local Performance Indicators																	
Satisfaction with ASB service	67%	62%		64%	63%	65%	57%	63%	56%	62%	57%	70%	68%	64%	G	64%	
Healthier & Safer homes (Well homes)*	85%	Not collected		Not Due (q)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Not Due (q)	Not Due (q)	94%	Not Due (q)	-	G	98%	
Satisfaction - New Residents	75%	71%		58%	80%	77%	73%	94%	72%	60%	73%	77%	80%	76%	G	78%	
Complaints upheld	Monitor	590 (59%)	25	25	27	23	16	31	28	43	52	18	26	289	G	347	
% Complaints upheld	Monitor	59%		50%	52%	41%	47%	32%	51%	43%	37%	29%	29%	38%	G	35%	
Satisfaction with Transforming Homes	80%	84%		95%	85%	76%	76%	75%	78%	94%	96%	88%	N/A*		G	88%	* very small cohort of homes improved in January, no satisfaction data.
Satisfaction with Repairs	80%	86%	85%	88%	89%	89%	89%	90%	89%	93%	90%	94%	93%		G	90%	
Level of void loss - Dwellings	As per Finance			£27,475	£27,940	£81,999	£37,288	£29,627	£18,346	£25,010	£63,250	£27,942	£29,031	£367,908	G	£441,490	
Gas servicing	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	G	100%	
Average turn around for Council Homes adaptation (requests)	75	80		Not Due (q)	Not Due (q)	46	Not Due (q)	Not Due (q)	81	Not Due (q)	Not Due (q)	71.0	Not Due (q)	71.0	G	£75,00	
Average time taken to complete an emergency repair	Monitor			0.19 Days	0.19 Days	0.14 Days	0.15 Days	0.14 Days	0.08 Days	0.13 Days	0.08 Days	0.44 Days	0.2 Days	0.16 Days	G	0.15 Days	
Average time taken to complete a non-urgent repair	TBC			10.12	10.19	14.4	14	9.53	9.58	9.22	7.8	8.25	9.5		G	9	
Average time taken to complete a technical survey	Under 5	6.8 in March 16	5	5.0	5.2	4.5	5.2	4.7	4.2	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.1		G	4.9	
% of Customer Slips addressed within target (QA team)	95% by year end			93%	84%	84%	85%	92%	83%	82%	90%	95%	96%		G	95%	
Number of tenants at risk of eviction (including evictions)	Under 50	271 (59)	4	198(12)	191 (4)	174 (9)	191 (1)	211(7)	199(3)	215(3)	152(5)	157 (0)	123 (6)	123(50)	G	60	
Customer Profiling/ Tenancy Audit	33%	14%	160	245	333	355	195	116	84	34	34	57	62	1515	G	35%	
Number of residents engagement events	60	New	5	4	6	4	7	3	0	3	2	0	TBC	29	R	75	Under estimate / more events planned - likely to reach target
Properties recovered	60	45		0	5	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	10	R	12	Partnership with Fraud team / referral protocols under review
Complaints received (All)	650	816	55	49	47	50	38	106	85	94	114	55	85	723	R	868	'Concerns' category removed during year leading to increase in recorded number
Access to services [Customer Slips received and closed]	95%			96%	94%	93%	92%	93%	93%	94%	92%	93%	94%	93% Avg	R		Slightly under target, volumes higher than anticipated (included repeat contacts)
Number of households in TA	70	87		89	80	80	77	81	89	99	106	120	124	124	R	130	Current placements under review - changes to eviction process introduced
Properties sourced in the private sector	70	53	6	2	5	4	3	5	4	4	6	1	3	37	R	44	London boroughs / 'professional' renters taking properties in larger numbers
Number of households assisted to downsize	70	75	6	8	9	3	4	6	0	0	5	0	5	40	R	48	Reduced movement in stock - impact of removal of spare room subsidy limited
Garages available for letting (and voids)	750	699	63	68	20	51	57	69	33	58	70	43	29	498	R	598	Review of all garage in progress to address under-utilisation
Number of New ASB Cases				47	26	\	25	32	44	41	TBC	76					
Level of void loss- Garages	£200,000			£19,881	£15,668	£30,282	£20,064	£25,074	£19,325	£15,621	£20,388	TBC	TBC	£166,302		£249,454	
MP & Members enquires	Monitor	1956		197	172	155	131	106	126	125	141	73	177	1403		1684	
No applicants on Housing Register	Monitor	-		7032	7225	7356	7527	7516	7680	7802	7862	7880	8015	8135		8400	
No of homelessness applications		389 (32 avg p/m)	-	36	26	44	35	39	62	43	53	43	22	403		484	
Reported Households placed in TBC by other LA's	Monitor	67		2	2	1	1	1	6	3	6	1	10	33		40	Known to be under-counted - placing boroughs not notifying
Level of sickness	8	8.71	0.66	0.75	0.58	0.51	0.35	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC		6.61	
No of repairs undertaken	Monitor	3190 in March 16	-	3119	2836	3176	2815	2690	2879	2816	2993	2439	2877	28640		34368	
Number of RTB Applications		224		27	20	13	11	47	33	17	18	6	18	210		250	

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QUESTION TIME

Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There are 3 questions to the Leader and 10 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

1. From Councillor Jones to Councillor Gledhill

Does the Leader agree that this Council would not have been able to set a balanced budget without the recent 4.98% rise in council tax?

2. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Gledhill

The car park in South Stifford, North of London Road between Palmerston Road and Moore Avenue is badly in need of repair. It has been identified as Housing land but vital resurfacing has still not been carried out. Can the Portfolio Holder advice when repairs to the car park will be undertaken?

3. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

I am of the understanding that families with dependent children who Thurrock Council does not have a duty to house under homelessness legislation are referred to children's social services. Can the Leader explain what action is then taken to house these families and prevent children being taken into care?

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Coxshall

Is the Portfolio Holder satisfied with the progress being made in delivering our plans for the regeneration of Purfleet?

2. From Councillor Sammons to Councillor Halden

Could the Portfolio Holder clarify what are the proposals to replacing the Children's Services that have been withdrawn in East Tilbury, Linford and West Tilbury?

3. From Councillor Pothecary to Councillor MacPherson

In recent months I have been contacted by a number of residents expressing their concerns about safety in Church Path, Grays. On behalf of my residents, I made a request for CCTV to be installed. This was turned down. Will the Portfolio Holder please explain the reasoning for her department's decision and whether there is any option to review the previous position?

4. From Councillor Duffin to Councillor Hebb

So far how many people have responded to the £3,000 consultation on how often we hold local elections in Thurrock?

5. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Hebb

Over the last few weeks your administration has brought forward and supported a budget that has increased council tax, changed tax support schemes and could potentially increase other housing service charges. Would you agree that your administration is now the party of high taxation in Thurrock?

6. From Councillor Pothecary to Councillor B Little

Residents and local businesses have raised concerns with me about safety on the zebra crossing outside the Old Courthouse in Grays. Will the Portfolio Holder explain the reasons for his department's decision not to upgrade the crossing and whether there is any option to review the previous position?

7. From Councillor James Baker to Councillor MacPherson

Can the Portfolio Holder please give an update on the Bata Heritage Centre in East Tilbury?

8. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder update the chamber on the likely future for Orsett Hospital?

9. From Councillor Cherry to Councillor Tolson

During the Great British Spring Clean I was told by all residents I met that there was a lack of strategically placed bins across the borough. I understand the Council only have 400 bins currently in use. Can the Portfolio Holder inform me if this is true and whether there are plans to introduce more bins into Thurrock?

10. From Councillor Collins to Councillor S Little

Could the Cabinet Member for Children and Adult Social Care explain the positive effect of the latest national budget on her department please?

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 29 March 2017

Date	From	Motion	Status	Accountable Director
23/3/16	Cllr Halden	Thurrock Council calls on the Home Office to expedite work to release money from police management costs in order to provide more funding to the front line, such as the ongoing work to bring the blue light services together.	Letter sent by Steve Cox to the Home Secretary.	Steve Cox
23/3/16	Cllr Snell	This Chamber agrees that excessive bureaucracy and costs emanating from the EU have a detrimental effect on the efficiency and cost of Thurrock Council meaning that Thurrock Council would be better off if Britain was to vote to leave the European Union.	This motion does not require officer action.	
27/7/2016	Cllr Hebb	Thurrock Council calls upon the government to introduce legislation to provide for a right of "Recall" of local government councillors, alongside Thurrock Council also exploring the possibilities to introduce its own local recall scheme.	The methodology and detail of the public consultation to be discussed at Governance Group and reviewed and agreed by General Services Committee on behalf of Full Council.	David Lawson
28/09/2016	Cllr Aker	Thurrock Council calls on the government to make unauthorised traveller pitches and unauthorised events a criminal offence	Officers are consulting with Legal on the wording of a letter to government calling for a specific offence of pulling caravans on to land without the owner's prior permission.	Steve Cox
28/09/2016	Cllr Jones	We call on Thurrock Council to write to the Secretary of State to express many residents' views that in its present state the police service contact number 101 is not fit for purpose.	A letter has been sent to the Secretary of State advising of the motion of Thurrock Council and inviting a response. No response has been received yet.	Gavin Dennett
28/09/2016	Cllr Duffin	That Thurrock Council support the inclusion in the annual Council Tax mail out of details of changes to Council funding by government in the last 5 years and an indication of planned changes in the next 3 years, including in graph format. This would be an	This is complete.	Sean Clark

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 29 March 2017

		effective way to let residents of Thurrock understand the financial pressures the Council has faced over this period and those due to be addressed.		
28/09/2016	Cllr J Kent	Thurrock Council is extremely concerned that much of Grays Beach Park was not open for residents to enjoy for so much of the summer. Council requests that the Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or / and the relevant director) investigate these issues including inviting evidence from Anglian Water, relevant council officers and members before reporting back to the Full Council as soon as reasonably practical about the reasons and responsibilities for so much of Grays Beach Park not being open to residents over the summer period.	Cleaner, Greener, Safer, Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this at its meeting of 11 October 2016 and set out the terms for an investigation. The outcome of the investigation was considered by Cleaner, Greener, Safer, Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 December 2016.	Steve Cox
26/10/2016	Cllr Collins	This Council condemns in the strongest possible terms, the horrific practice of Female Genital Mutilation and will support all health, welfare, civil and criminal enforcements to eradicate it from our Thurrock and the rest of the World.	Thurrock Council and its partners continue to robustly tackle Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and provide support for its victims. There are clear pathways in place across health agencies, Children's Services and the Community Safety Partnership to identify and support those suspected to be at risk. The Council are working in partnership with the Barnardo's, National FGM Centre for Excellence to provide training, support and interventions to assist communities in eradicating FGM. Staff from the National FGM Centre is part of the Thurrock Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). In partnership with the Police, Thurrock Council will continue to pursue prosecutions for perpetrators of this abuse; supporting national and international efforts to eliminate FGM.	Rory Patterson/ Andrew Carter
30/11/2016	Cllr Duffin	This Council supports the need to reduce and eliminate fuel poverty for Thurrock residents who struggle to heat their homes. Council requests that Cabinet investigate what options, including creating a fuel poverty grant that may exist for the Council to	Officers are considering the various opportunities and approaches and will bring a report to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the first instance.	Sean Clark

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 29 March 2017

		support the community by working with residents and providers.		
25/1/2017	Cllr Watkins	That Thurrock Council supports the government's position on introducing an oath to British Values, and will look into the options for creating a local one for Thurrock.	A number of potential options have been drafted and we are currently seeking an independent opinion on those options as well as consulting with governance group and other authorities to seek the best option for a potential template that may obtain wide approval.	David Lawson
22/02/17	Cllr J Kent	The Thameside Theatre is held in great affection by residents across Thurrock. Therefore the sudden announcement that the theatre is likely to close by April 2019 is causing real concern in many quarters. Council is of the collective view that the Thameside Theatre should remain open until a new civic theatre for Thurrock, situated in Grays, has opened.	Work is ongoing to review what is currently provided at the theatre and what can be done to improve its future financial viability. In parallel, work is continuing to look at options for new theatre provision in Grays in the context of work on the wider Grays masterplan. The commitment remains to theatre provision continuing in Grays to support an evening economy. The theatre will not be closed until there is a replacement.	Steve Cox
22/02/17	Cllr Snell	In order to demonstrate transparency on its policies, implementation of its policies and overall performance and further to Gloriana Limited willingness to co-operate with such scrutiny from Members Thurrock Council believes that Gloriana Limited should: provide an Annual Report to the Council; provide regular quarterly updates to our General Services Committee, voluntarily submit to the full democratic scrutiny of Full Council and General Services Committee on the thoroughness of its Business Plan and funding requirements. This is not to seek to inappropriately discuss the specific merits of any material planning considerations or predetermine the quasi-judicial decision properly within the remit of our Planning Committee on the current part heard planning application.	The motion agreed by Council has been raised and discussed with Gloriana Thurrock Ltd (GTL). GTL welcomes the continued scrutiny of its activities, business planning and funding requirements by Council, including producing an annual report and quarterly reports to its shareholders forming part of the General Services Committee. GTL is working with the Council to formalise how this will be implemented at the next Gloriana Board meeting and ahead of a report to the next general meeting of GTL Shareholders planned for May 2017. GTL welcomes the reassurance provided in the motion with regard to Members of the Council which also form part of the Planning Committee.	Steve Cox

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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor Duffin

Council requests that Standards and Audit Committee investigate bringing in guidance to Group Leaders, that once a Group Member has served one year on the Planning Committee, they only consider re-nominating the same Group Member to Planning Committee after a period of three years has expired, as this will bring a circulation of expertise, skills and objectivity from other Members of the Council that may contribute to the work of the Committee.

At the same time Council also write to the government requesting they introduce legislation so that such a circulation of Members can be made mandatory.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

Currently any mandatory scheme would conflict with Group Leaders legal powers under section 15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to choose who to appoint from their Group up to their political balance entitlement and therefore require parliamentary legislation to allow.

It may also be noted that Planning Committee is a highly technical committee that can take some time for Members to become fully trained and familiar with given its complex procedures and law.

It could be argued that such an approach may make it harder for the committee to discharge its responsibilities, appears to depart from general local government practice and has the potential to undermine the good governance by limiting continuity of experience.

Minority Groups may also struggle to fill the committee places allotted to them under (section 15 LGA&H Act 1989) political balance calculations - which may in turn distort the legal requirement for political balance on the committee. Therefore any such discretionary guidance would have to address these legal requirements in the absence of new enabling legislation or a vote by Full Council to disapply the political balance arrangements.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this motion. If there was to be a more frequent change in Members on the committee, there may be additional training costs that would have to be met from existing budgets.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 2

Submitted by Councillor Hebb

Thurrock Council resolves to thank HM The Queen, for her selflessness and grace as monarch of the United Kingdom for 65 years, and it thanks her for her years of dedicated public service and advocacy of our great nation.

In the spirit in which HM The Queen has herself taken with the Sapphire Jubilee, this council also seeks to recognise the memory of our former monarch George VI, for his unwavering patriotism during our nation's darkest hours. This council therefore resolves to rename a suitable park within the borough to be identified after public consultation - to the George VI Memorial Park in honour of the former King and his years of service to our country.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The notice of Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority' or the Authority' area and relates to a matter in respect of which the Authority has a relevant function.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

Associated costs will include signage, advertising and consultation. These will differ depending on the park and whether there are any covenants.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 3

Submitted by Councillor B Rice

Council note consultation has begun on a £15 per week service charge on sheltered homes. This Council believes this is an unfair charge against some of our most vulnerable residents. Council calls on Cabinet to scrap this unfair proposal.

Deputy Monitoring Officer Comments:

The notice of Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority's area and relates to a matter in respect of which the Authority has a relevant function.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

The charge is currently out to consultation and so does not represent any of the current Housing Revenue Account budget. As such, there are no direct financial implications from this budget but, should income not be achieved through these means post consultation, the ability for the service to increase budgets in the areas of repairs, maintenance and new development will be constrained.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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