

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **5 March 2019**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Oliver Gerrish (Chair), Jack Duffin (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, Mike Fletcher, Garry Hague and Andrew Jefferies

Substitutes:

Councillors James Baker, Steve Liddiard, Sue MacPherson, Gerard Rice and Elizabeth Rigby

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 31 January 2019.	
3	Items of Urgent Business	
	To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4	Declaration of Interests	
5	Verbal Update: The Overview and Scrutiny Functions and Motions Process Update	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Lucy Tricker, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to
Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

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

Helpful Reminders for Members

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

When should you declare an interest at a meeting?

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



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

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

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

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

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

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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

Non- pecuniary

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

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

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- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
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Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Agenda Item 2

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 31 January 2019 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Oliver Gerrish (Chair), Jack Duffin (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, Mike Fletcher and Garry Hague

Apologies: Councillor Andrew Jefferies

In attendance: Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Tracie Heiser, Operational Services Lead
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Lucy Tricker, 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.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 November 2018 were approved as a correct record.

25. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

26. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

27. The Overview and Scrutiny Functions and Motions Process

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report and began by stating this had come to committee due to Councillor Spillman's motion which was outlined on page 15 of the agenda. He clarified that Councillor Spillman had been made aware the report was coming to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He outlined that the report was divided into two sections, with the first section relating to the overview and scrutiny function, and the second relating to the motions process. He commented that the report found Thurrock's overview and scrutiny function conformed with national guidelines, and asked what Members would like to see from the overview and scrutiny function. The Democratic Services Manager then drew Members attention to point 2.4.4, 3.10 and 3.11 and asked Members to undertake a project outside

of the Committee meetings regarding overview and scrutiny. He stated that he understood present limitations and felt this report could be the impetus to enhance overview and scrutiny. He moved on to discuss motions and felt that the report highlighted motions were working well and progressed once they had been agreed on at Council.

The Chair began by stating he welcomed the report, and the discussion around the role Members could play in the future regarding motions and overview and scrutiny. He added that consulting with other Members would be good, and from there overview and scrutiny could start making effective decisions and undertaking policy decisions. He felt that the overview and scrutiny process could improve and go further by allowing overview and scrutiny committees to have more decision-making power. He also felt that recommendations were part of the shortcomings in the process as often decisions made in overview and scrutiny committees were not relayed to Cabinet and Council, and felt that the executive branch should officially respond to recommendations made. The Chair then mentioned that he would like to see a more robust role for overview and scrutiny committees regarding the call-in function, as often decisions could not be called in as they had undergone a form of pre-scrutiny, even if changes had been made at the Cabinet meeting. He added that he understood overview and scrutiny was not part of the executive branch of government, but felt they could delay the implementation of proposals for further discussion and could involve a higher number of Councillors. He commented that as Chair he had lots of support from officers and reports were of high-quality and included feedback he had given. He finally stated that overview and scrutiny committees could be more active in requesting site visits, but that the capabilities they possessed was the most important aspect.

The Chair then opened the debate to other Members and Councillor Churchman began by drawing the Committee's attention to point 2.4.4 and stating that he would appreciate specific overview and scrutiny training sessions throughout the year as knowledge was important to make decisions on committee and he did not want Members to feel they were falling behind if they missed some meetings. Councillor Duffin continued and stated he felt frustrated as the Council was a Cabinet run body, and felt that overview and scrutiny committees were of less importance. He added that overview and scrutiny reports were of high quality, but felt that Cabinet could do more to take on board recommendations made at overview and scrutiny meetings. He stated that he was unhappy with the motions process as they were often reworded to ensure other bodies made decisions and felt this was frustrating as he felt overview and scrutiny should have decision making power.

Councillor Fletcher then discussed Appendix 1 of the report and agreed with other Members that recommendations made at overview and scrutiny were not discussed at Cabinet meetings, and Portfolio Holders rarely attended. He stated that as Portfolio Holders did not attend overview and scrutiny committees, it was hard to include decision-makers in discussions and processes. He then commented that he wanted relevant Portfolio Holders to be required to attend overview and scrutiny meetings to make them more

accountable.

Councillor Duffin then discussed a recent experience he had had where a press release about a project had been made before it had gone through the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, and mentioned that he had felt like decisions were already made without the support of overview and scrutiny. Councillor Hague echoed the sentiments made by other Members and drew the Committee's attention to 2.2 of the report and stated that more dialogue needed to take place between Cabinet and overview and scrutiny as officers spent a lot of time and effort producing reports for overview and scrutiny. He added that he would like to see more linked-up working between the executive and overview and scrutiny.

The Democratic Services Manager began by commenting on Councillor Churchman's point regarding on-going training sessions and mentioned that this had worked well in the past as previously the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had run workshops for Members before each meeting, which had ensured Members could talk knowledgeably on reports. He stated that the process could become more transparent and him and his team would undertake talks with Cabinet about what they wanted from the process, and would ensure that recommendations made at overview and scrutiny committees that went to Cabinet would be on the public record. He clarified for Members that due to law and governance limitations, overview and scrutiny committees were not a part of the executive, so could not have any decision making powers. He added that overview and scrutiny did have the power to do research, and felt it would be harder for Cabinet to refuse recommendations if these were supported with compelling evidence. The Democratic Services Manager added that one idea would be for overview and scrutiny committees to reflect on what they wanted to achieve at the beginning of the municipal year, so reports were not Cabinet led and could be community or resident focused. He then discussed Portfolio Holder's attending overview and scrutiny meetings and stated that Portfolio Holder reports had, in the past, come to overview and scrutiny rather than Full Council, but this had been changed as Members had wanted the Chambers to be able to comment on them, rather than specific overview and scrutiny Members. He felt that overview and scrutiny could be a good forum for them as they had more time to discuss them in detail, and all Members could be invited if they wished to attend. He added that overview and scrutiny could invite any Portfolio Holder to meetings, and Portfolio Holders could then give presentations or take questions. He summarised by stating that the Democratic Services team could support on any ideas, and would be happy to help.

The Chair mentioned that a progress report should come back to Committee as it would be useful to see how other Councils across the country ran their overview and scrutiny meetings, to be able to see other forms of good practice. He added it would also be useful for Members to understand the legal and governance rules which outlined overview and scrutiny's powers. Councillor Duffin felt that it would be good to see Portfolio Holders coming to overview and scrutiny committees as they could bounce ideas around and

receive detailed answers to questions. He added that if Portfolio Holders attended and recommendations were rejected they could question why, and the Portfolio Holder could understand the discussions that had taken place. The Director of Finance and IT clarified that the numbering in the recommendations had now changed so recommendation 1.2 should read “as outlined in 3.10 and 3.11”, and recommendation 1.3 should read “on evidence as presented in 3.12 and onwards”. The Chair then summarised the discussion and stated a progress report would come back to the March meeting of the committee.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The Committee noted and commented on the overview and scrutiny function’s current performance in relation to the Centre for Public Scrutiny’s Evaluation Framework, and potential areas for service enhancement as outlined in 2.4.4.**
- 2. The Committee agreed to undertake a consultation with Councillors on the aspirations for future delivery of overview and scrutiny, as outlined in 3.10 and 3.11.**
- 3. The Committee commented on the current effectiveness and performance of motions based on evidence presented in 3.12 onwards.**

28. Customer Services Strategy Progress Update

The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Services opened the report and described how the Customer Services Strategy had been approved by Cabinet in 2017, and how Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been asked to feed into the process and comment on the action plan before it was agreed. She commented that the committee regularly asked questions regarding online services and how residents were being supported to access these, and this report provided a focused item on this issue. She mentioned that this was an opportune time for the report due to the significant changes to the reception area of the Civic Offices and face-to-face areas. The Assistant Director Customer Services stated that there was a focus in the report on the changes in the face-to-face areas, and described how prior to these changes, customers were seen by advisers at individual desks. She commented that there were now 11 self-service tablets, new seated computers, and floor-walkers that could determine the appropriate service for a person and help vulnerable individuals see an individual specialist if they required. She continued by stating there was a new DDA area with rise and fall desks for disabled users and a private waiting area for those seeking housing and homelessness advice. She stated that since the changes there was a 50% decrease in the volume of customers visiting the Civic Offices this month and average wait times had decreased from 8 minutes to 1 minute in January 2019. She added that the decreased wait times meant that more time could be spent with vulnerable users who needed it. She summarised by stating that only one complaint had been received regarding the changes, and some services were now online only such as Council Tax exemption and

bulky waste collection. Finally, she added that the customer services department were CCA accredited and had received no non-conformities in the independent review.

The Chair thanked officers for the detailed report and recognised the shift towards online, as computers were now a fact of life. He added that he had some concern in making sure good access to services was still available to all users, particularly those that were vulnerable or elderly as he did not want online to become a barrier. He questioned what the team were doing to help residents with online services, and what Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were evaluating these services. The Assistant Director Customer Services replied that floor-walkers were there to assess customer's vulnerability and support them with their needs. She commented that there had been a decrease in people visiting the Civic Offices for basic transactions, but there was still a good level of service to residents which had seen few complaints. The Chair clarified that although some services were online only, support was still available to those that needed it. The Assistant Director Customer Services confirmed this was the case and floor-walkers were always there to assist visitors, as they could help residents complete forms or answer questions. She stated there was also support over the phone as contact centre workers could talk residents through the processes they needed to follow. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Services added that customer services' training was focused on identifying and helping vulnerable people. She stated that the training was also given to other front-line services too, as well as to people working and volunteering in community hubs and libraries.

The Chair then asked what was being done in libraries and hubs to signpost residents to services. The Director of Strategy, Communication and Customer Services replied that library staff, volunteers and other partners had been offered training to help signpost residents, and were aware of the changes happening in the Civic Offices. She commented that services were also promoted through Thurrock communication channels and at hubs so there was a level of consistency. Councillor Fletcher mentioned that he held his surgeries at the South Ockendon hub and had seen first-hand the increased value of this service, as most residents did not visit the Civic Offices. He felt that it was good to see a decrease in the number of people visiting the Civic Offices, and asked if officers had therefore seen an increase in the number of people visiting the hubs. He then commented on the communications via social media, but how some people did not use computers, so it was good for them to see friendly faces at the hubs. The Assistant Director Customer Services explained the 'Right First Time' training offered to front-line services, of which 532 people had undertaken since April 2018. She stated that once all front-line services had undertaken the training, it would then be offered to hub employees and volunteers, as the training was a key part of providing the online service, so both were aligned with each other. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Services replied that she did not have an answer regarding the number of people visiting the hubs, but will look into the question further and come back to the Councillor with an answer. She added that the communications team had been focusing on the Council's social

media presence for the past 6-8 months, but still ensured that hard copies, such as consultation documents, were sent to hubs, so there was a mix of communications channels.

Councillor Churchman stated that in the past year and a half he had received two residents complimenting the system and its ease of use, and two residents complaining about the service they had received over the phone. He stated it would be good if members of the contact centre team could undergo training so they could be more sympathetic to resident's needs. The Assistant Director Customer Services replied that all contact centre calls were recorded and could be checked they met all criteria. She added that the contact centre received 25,000-30,000 calls per month, but that they tried their best to monitor the quality of calls, and generally received a satisfaction level of 97-98%. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service added that the team were currently developing a quality framework for all front-line services, so all calls, not just those through the contact centre, could be monitored. She stated that she felt it was a good opportunity to look at all front-line services that dealt with residents.

Councillor Fletcher commented that call centre advisers may have problems in helping residents as they might not understand the nature of the problem, if it was complex. He added that a 97-98% call satisfaction may not include people who had ended the call early, as they did not get a chance to complete the survey. Councillor Duffin asked where the £225,000 of savings stated in the report had come from, and the Assistant Director Customer Services replied that this had come from moving ground floor staff to the contact centre over the past two years and into vacant roles.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The Committee commented on the progress delivered against the Customer Services Strategy key actions.**
- 2. The Committee commented on strategy actions currently in progress and provided suggestions for any further development areas.**

29. Draft General Fund Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update

The Director of Finance and IT introduced the report and stated it had gone to Cabinet earlier in January 2019 and was coming back to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment, before being reconsidered by Cabinet and going onto Full Council in February. He commented that the old approach had used top-down cuts which risked creating false savings, and felt that the new approach outlined in the report increased income through investment and taxes, saved money through the 'Do More For Less' Scheme, and decreased demand through early intervention. He felt this was a successful approach, although overspends were still occurring. He commented there were three main points outlined the report, these being:

1. All savings outlined in the report for next year had already been achieved or

were a continuation of current savings.

2. Cabinet had recommended a freeze on council tax for the coming municipal year.

3. As outlined on page 49 of the report, the Council Spending Review (CSR) had introduced corporate wide savings targets, such as getting better contracts in the ICT digital sector, and decreasing the amount spent on people by reducing the number of agency workers sickness cover.

The Director of Finance and IT drew Members attention to the figures associated with the Children's Services budget and stated that £1million had been invested for early intervention and promoting in-house foster carers, rather than foster carers through an independent agency which were more expensive. He added that the savings from this investment would take time to come through. He then drew Members attention to the table on Page 53 and stated that the first column was the budget for this municipal year, the second column was extra changes that had been made this year due to various variances, and the fourth column was re-balanced and showed growth, such as the extra £1.78million in environment and highways to be able to meet, for example, waste disposal pressures. He summarised by stating that there had been some changes to the figures since it has been to Cabinet due to winter pressures and employee costs funding being allocated, and the position had changed again since this version had been published.

The Chair stated that the suggested recommendations, proposed a council tax freeze and felt Members had to have 2 simultaneous ideas, as they wanted affordable council tax for residents, but also wanted to ensure the council could provide and deliver all services. He stated that over the course of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) the council would lose £2.1 million per annum income revenue if there was a council tax freeze, which equated to almost £11million over the course of the MTFS and commented that this would cause a deficit in the 5th year. He asked if the lost council tax revenue could be replaced with commercial income, so the council could remain in surplus. The Director of Finance and IT stated that the approach would always be to maximise income streams, so more money could be spent on services, which meant his recommendation was for an increase in council tax, but the decision could only be taken by Members. He listed his reasons for his view which included the uncertainties over the government comprehensive spending review which would determine business rates. He stated that the published government figure was currently £2.8million, which was higher than it should be, and as the government worked on a notional figure, and Thurrock was below average, it was classed as an 'underfunded' borough. He added that if there was not an increase in council tax, the gap between Thurrock's actual business rate figure, and the government's notional figure, would increase. He also stated that all investments were finite and although the council was constantly trying to renew and replace investments, it was not viewed as a stable and sustainable source of income, compared to council tax. He added that as Thurrock had a lower base for the adult social care precept, the amount they could raise through council tax was already lower than other surrounding councils. He stated that his position was fully outlined in his Section 25 Statement, and although Members did not have

to follow this, they are required to bear it in mind when making decisions.

The Director of Finance and IT then drew the Committee's attention to the table on pages 43 and 44 of the report, which outlined what the increase in council tax would mean for residents in the borough, and stated that in the typical Band A to C properties, which made up 70% of all houses in Thurrock, it would mean an increase of £9.06 per year, or 19p per week. He felt that if council tax were increased then residents would receive better quality services, for the price of 19p per week. He stated that Appendix 1 fully explained the points outlined on page 41 and stated that if years 5 and 6 were to be balanced then a significant amount of input would be needed going forward and would increase the pressure on finding investments. The Director of Finance and IT felt that he did not want to be chasing investments, although new investments could be found as there was a long lead time.

The Chair asked what the budget would look like if the MTFS was extended to include the next 8 or 9 years, and if the £1.8million deficit in year 5 would grow. The Director of Finance and IT replied that the deficit would grow if the MTFS was extended to include the next 10 years, but currently the team were expanding investments so they covered longer than a 10 year period, although they were still being negotiated. He added that this would have an impact on a 10 year MTFS. The Chair asked if Annual Council in February could see the 10 year MTFS to have a longer term view. The Director of Finance and IT replied that statutorily the MTFS only needed to be 3 years long, but it was right for Members to see the longer term picture. He answered the Chair's questions by stating he needed to consult with officers.

The Chair stated that it was good to see longer term investments and savings as outlined on page 49, and asked how deliverable those savings were, as the people sector was constantly targeted, and rental income was only a stretched target. He also asked for more detail regarding the £920,000 in savings to be identified. The Director of Finance and IT first answered the questions regarding people savings, as this target had been in place for 2 years, and had been successfully delivered. He added that a report on this was coming monthly to Directors Board meetings which focused on sickness rates and return to work processes. He commented that targets around agency workers were also going to Directors Board on a monthly basis which reported on the employee budget as a whole. He stated that the stretch target regarding rental income should also be seen in relation to fees and charges and was regularly challenged at Commercial Board and Directors Board. He clarified the savings regarding Children's Services and stated that savings of £3million had been signed up to by the Children's Services team, and had not been given to them as a target. However, as less than a £1million reduction was included within the proposed budget this effectively equated to growth of £2million.

The Chair then discussed Appendix 3 and stated it was a welcome change to see foster carer's being actively recruited, but sought reassurance that foster carers would still receive their allowances and benefits. The Director of Finance and IT replied that Thurrock wanted to promote and grow their

internal foster caring service, as although independent fostering agencies were good, they were more expensive than the in-house service. He stated that he had not heard of any changes to the foster caring allowance. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Services stated that the communications team were doing lots of work with the fostering recruitment team to promote the benefits related to being a foster carer, and was also not aware of any changes.

Councillor Duffin felt it was good to see a freeze in council tax, and asked if there was any investment growth to fund the freeze, or if it could come through savings. The Director of Finance and IT replied that he had not been asked to fund a council tax freeze, but the change to council tax had only been agreed in January's Cabinet meeting. He stated that a decrease in council tax would decrease surpluses for a five year period and meant the 5th year of the MTFS would be in deficit.

Councillor Hague thanked officers for their clear approach and felt pleased to see an aspirational council tax freeze. He commented that resident's wages often did not increase in line with inflation, and felt morally that council tax should be kept low. He felt that lots of work had been put into the budget and it was robust. He added it would be good to see a 10 year MTFS, but understood this would be hard to do as it was difficult to predict certain changes. Councillor Duffin thanked the Director of Finance and IT, as well as his team, for their good work, and asked how far the increase in investments could be pushed. The Director of Finance and IT responded that it was a difficult question to answer as it depended on the nature of investments that come forward. Councillor Duffin then asked for clarification regarding business rates, and if 100% business rates could happen, and if they did how much money the Council could lose. The Director of Finance and IT replied that 100% business rates would happen, but required primary legislation from central government, although they were too busy to discuss this at present. He stated that although business rates were currently 49%, the government could bill the council on top of this headline figure and remove grants.

The Chair then asked if council tax could be decreased for the next municipal year. The Director of Finance and IT replied that his duty was to ensure the council remained viable for the next 3 years, and if council tax was reduced then the budget would remain balanced for the next 3 years. He stated that he would feel concerned if this became a pattern as an increase in council tax could prove more beneficial for residents through improved services. He stated that if, during the next municipal year, another council tax freeze or reduction was introduced he would be in a difficult position, although he could only provide advice or a Section 114 Notice, as had been given in Northamptonshire Council, but this was a last resort and Thurrock was nowhere near that position.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The Committee commented on the proposed council tax freeze with mind to the comments set out in the report.**

2. The Committee commented on the draft budget as set out within this report to inform final budget proposals at Cabinet on 12 February 2019.

30. Capital Strategy 2019-20

The Director of Finance and IT introduced the report and stated this report was the new format for the treasury management report which set out the parameters for borrowing and investments. He stated it set out the capital financing requirements for the Council's capital programme, investments, and Thurrock Regeneration Ltd, and built up the notional indicator. He added that the figures would change based on proposals, but this was a statutory requirement.

The Chair began by thanking officers for the report and saying it was very clear. He drew the Committee's attention to page 78, point 2.17 and discussed the abolition of the housing debt cap. He felt there was much cross-party anticipation to build more council houses and asked when investment would begin. The Director of Finance and IT replied that the Council was looking at proposals and these would be in terms of months rather than years, but stated that the HRA budget was extremely tight as rent had decreased for 4 years, although this would be increasing as of 2020/21. He continued by stating the Council were looking to borrow to build houses as the HRA did not have to repay certain loans, just the interest on those loans. He added that this meant that some other costs such as maintenance could be absorbed, although some could not as the only income was from rent. He mentioned that at officer level, a paper was being developed to consider this issue.

Councillor Duffin asked if there was scope in the budget to upscale projects run by Thurrock Regeneration Ltd which did not have to go through Council. The Director of Finance and IT replied that only the parameters for 2019/20 had been set, but there was enough scope for capacity. He added it was often time consuming to get a business case for schemes, and then design and plan them.

RESOLVED: That:

1. The Committee commented on the 2019/20 Capital Strategy for consideration by Cabinet at their meeting on 12 February 2019.

31. Draft Capital Programme

The Director of Finance and IT introduced the report and stated there had been a change to approach in the past two years, such as the creation of the future and aspirational projects section. He outlined the changes as follows:

1. The addition of a £2million budget for projects that did not know their true cost or business case. The budget was for feasibility studies which would make the project more realistic and could then be presented to overview and

scrutiny committees and Members.

2. The creation of ‘pots’ such as property, ICT and digital, and service review, which were of a more operational nature to assist with issues such as replacing sprinklers or boilers, which allowed the Council to be reactive. This also meant that individual projects did not have to be agreed, but officers had to persuade the relevant board to release the money.
3. Appendix 3 which described ‘new projects’ of a strategic nature, such as east-facing slips at Lakeside and the upgrade to Stonehouse Lane. Page 102 of the report described schemes which needed additional funds such as the upgrades to Stanford-le-Hope and Thameside Theatre Complex, which was to be confirmed.

The Chair commented that there were many projects listed which Members would welcome, such as east-facing slip roads at Lakeside. He stated that the Committee were there to discuss the broader governance process, rather than details of the projects, and asked how individual capital projects had been scrutinised. The Director of Finance and IT replied that the projects still went to the relevant Boards, which were cross-departmental for scrutiny by senior directors, and then went to the relevant overview and scrutiny committee numerous times before tender. He described how before they were tendered, they had to be presented to Cabinet, and once tendered would be reported back to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

Councillor Hague then asked what role Corporate Overview and Scrutiny were being asked to play. The Director of Finance and IT replied that it was under Corporate’s constitutional remit to consider the capital budget and look at the budget as a whole, rather than individual projects. He commented that the committee were tasked with looking at deliverability and comment on the programme as whole, as well as the governance process. Councillor Hague commented that it would be good to see the report in the context of the council’s strategic plan and priorities. Councillor Fletcher agreed with this statement. The Chair asked if a report could come back to the committee to consider the process and make it more transparent, as well as detailing projects and programmes, before the next municipal year. The Director of Finance and IT replied that he would bring the programme back, including a piece of work on how to bring capital forward.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The Committee commented on the specific proposals set out within the report.**

32. Work Programme

After a brief discussion it was decided that a progress report on the Overview and Scrutiny Function and Motions Progress would come to the March meeting, and would be ongoing in the next municipal year. It was also decided

that a detailed report on the capital programme and a discussion on process would come to the March meeting. Councillor Duffin asked if a piece of work on commercialisation benchmarking and the council tax could come to committee, and it was decided a short piece would accompany the Work Programme at the March meeting, with more discussion in the new municipal year.

The meeting finished at 8.55 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

5 March 2019	ITEM: 7
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Quarter 3 Corporate Performance Report 2018/19	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Report of: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	
Accountable Assistant Director: n/a	
Accountable Director: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

This is the quarter 3 (up to December 2018) corporate performance monitoring report for 2018/19.

This report details the statistical evidence the council will use to monitor the progress and performance against the council's priorities.

This report provides a progress update in relation to the performance of those KPIs, including a focus on some specific highlights and challenges. 70% of the corporate key performance indicators met their target as at the end of December. This is very positive at this point in the year.

For 2018/19, these set of indicators were agreed by Cabinet in July 2018 and were reviewed in line with the new vision and priorities agreed by Council on 31 January 2018.

1. Recommendation(s):

- 1.1 To note and comment upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators in particular those areas which are off target.**
- 1.2 To identify any areas which require additional consideration.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The performance of the priority activities of the council is monitored through the Corporate KPI (Key Performance Indicator) framework. This provides a mixture of strategic and operational indicators and is the outcome of a full and**

thorough review of KPIs and other performance tools in line with recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16.

- 2.2. The purpose of the review was to make the performance framework as clear and simple to understand as possible, whilst balancing the need to ensure the council is monitoring those things which are of most importance, both operationally and strategically.
- 2.3. For 2018/19, the set of indicators has been reviewed in line with the new vision and priorities agreed by Council on 31 January 2018 and were presented to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2018 and Cabinet in July 2018 alongside the End of Year Corporate Performance Report 2017/18. They will be reported to both Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, then on to Cabinet, on a quarterly basis, throughout 2018/19.

3.1 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1.1 This report is a monitoring report, therefore there is no options analysis.

3.2 Summary of Corporate KPI Performance

Quarter 3 Performance against target		Direction of Travel compared to 2017/18	
Achieved	70% (30)	↑ BETTER	41% (12)
		→ STATIC	24% (7)
Failed	30% (13)	↓ WORSE	35% (10)

3.3 On target performance

70% of the corporate KPIs are currently achieving their targets.

PFH	Indicator Definition	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Cllr Little	Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65 and over) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population	649 per 100,000	175	328	481	↑	504	677 per 100,000
Cllr Halden	% NEET + Unknown 16-17 year olds (Age at start of academic year)	2.10%	2.0%	8.8%	1.6%	↑	2%	2%
Cllr Halden	Number of places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough	659 (73.4%)	Not Due (termly KPI)	620	716 (85.4%)	↑	75% of DWP total	75% of DWP total
Cllr Little	Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average)	527 days	403 days	374 days	401 days	↑	500 days	500 days
Cllr Watkins	% of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe	97.10%	99.4%	98.6%	99.5%	↑	98%	98%
Cllr Watkins	Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	9%	7.67 Tranche 1	n/a	6% (6.8% YTD) Tranche 2	↑	9%	9%
Cllr Hebb	Total gross external income (fees & charges) (based on sales forecast)	£8,000k	£8,724k	£8,604k	£9,218k	↑	£8,286k	£8,286k
Cllr Collins	No of new apprenticeships started (including current members of staff undertaking new apprentice standards)	40	6	43	53	↑	31	56 new starts (2.3% of workforce)
Cllr Huelin	Number of volunteers within the council (YTD)	247	153	225	242	↑	240	270
Cllr Coxshall	% of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks	97%	100%	100%	100%	↑	90%	90%
Cllr Coxshall	% of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	→	90%	90%
Cllr Little	Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments and individual service funds	37.14%	36.1%	37.2%	37.1%	→	35.4%	36%
Cllr Hebb	Overall spend to budget on General Fund (% variance)	-5%	0%	0%	0%	→	0%	0%
Cllr Hebb	Forecast National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected	99.81%	99.30%	99.30%	99.30%	→	99.30%	99.30%
Cllr Hebb	Forecast Council Tax collected	98.82%	98.90%	98.90%	98.90%	→	98.90%	98.90%
Cllr Halden	Successful completion of treatment in Young People's Drug & Alcohol service (YTD)	86%	86%	87.5%	89%	→	70%	70%
Cllr Johnson	Overall spend to budget on HRA (£K variance)	£0	£0	£0	£0	→	£0	£0
Cllr Johnson	% Rent collected	99%	90.9%	94.5%	97.0%	n/a	96.0%	98.0%
Cllr Coxshall	No of Thurrock businesses benefitting from ERDF programmes	<i>new KPI</i>	15	27	61	n/a	35	45
Cllr Johnson	No of HRA-funded homes (units) that have started to be built since 1 April 2018	<i>new KPI</i>	0	29	88	n/a	88	117

PFH	Indicator Definition	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Cllr Huelin	Number of "exchanges" carried out through time-banking (in hours)	<i>new method</i>	5,158	6,627	9,487	n/a	9,000	12,000
Cllr Halden	Number of additional hypertensive patients diagnosed following screening programmes	949	148	254	467	n/a	300	400
Cllr Johnson	Number of health hazards removed as a direct result of Private Sector Housing Team intervention	<i>new KPI</i>	210	441	617	n/a	600	800
Cllr Johnson	Tenant satisfaction with Transforming Homes	<i>new KPI</i>	90.5%	89%	88%	n/a	85%	85%
Cllr Johnson	Number of "family connection" homeless households in B&Bs for six weeks or more	<i>new KPI</i>	1	0	0	n/a	0	0
Cllr Halden	Number of GP practices with a profile card and agreed joint priorities within the preceding 12 months (as a %)	<i>new KPI</i>	55%	86%	93%	n/a	90%	93%
Cllr Watkins	% of Abandoned Vehicles removed within 21 days of notification	<i>new KPI</i>	n/a	100%	100%	n/a	n/a	Baseline year
Cllr Johnson	% of repairs completed within target	97.5%	96.40%	96.00%	96.80%	▼	95%	95%
Cllr Little	% of young people who reoffend after a previously recorded offence	30%	30%	10%	Quarter in arrears	n/a	10%	30%
Cllr Little	Number of delayed transfers of care days from hospital (attrib. to NHS, ASC & Joint)	3451	385	821	Month in Arrears	n/a	257	3,288
Cllr Collins	% of media enquiries responded to within 24 hours	<i>new KPI</i>	40.2%	41.5%	46.9%	n/a	n/a	Baseline year

3.4 In focus indicators

PFH	Indicator Definition	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Cllr Coxshall	% of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks	97%	100%	100%	100%	↑	90%	90%
Cllr Coxshall	% of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	→	90%	90%

The council's planning service has consistently, throughout the year, processed 100% of major and minor planning applications within the nationally set timescales of 13 weeks and 8 weeks respectively, putting Thurrock Council at the top of planning performance across the country. This has further been acknowledged by the service being shortlisted as Planning Service of the Year in the RTPI Awards 2019. This level of service is so important with a growth agenda the scale of Thurrock's.

PFH	Indicator Definition	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Cllr Halden	% of primary schools judged "good" or better	97%	95%	92%	90%	▼	94%	94%

The schools are expected to improve this academic year because of measures in place to support those schools that "Require Improvement" or are "Inadequate". These schools are receiving support brokered by the School Improvement Team from other high supporting schools / trusts and teaching schools. A comprehensive range of high quality professional development courses have also been developed in partnership by the School Improvement Team and the borough's three teaching schools.

3.5 Off target indicators

At the end of quarter 3, 13 indicators failed to meet their target.

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days)	Cllr Johnson	30.6 days	26.9 days	27.4 days	28.5 days	↑	28 days	28 days

Voids in December 2018 took an average of 26.74 days to let, 1.26 days better than the target of 28 days and represents an improvement of 2.5 days between November and December. However between the end of Q2 and the end of Q3 year to date performance has declined by 1.16 days on average to 28.58 days, 0.58 days over target.

At the end of Q3 during 2017/18, the year to date performance for this indicator was 33 days. Therefore performance to date during 2018/19 represents an improvement of 4.42 days in comparison with the same period last year.

The average time taken to re-let voids is continually monitored by all teams involved in the process. A dedicated voids meeting takes place on a monthly basis and monitors the length of time each stage of the voids process takes for each specific void in order to identify bottlenecks in the process and to ensure voids are re-let within target times.

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% timeliness of response to all complaints	Cllr Collins	83%	86%	87%	87%	↑	95%	95%

There has been a positive improvement during the year on December's performance, although target is still not being reached. However, the target set for this indicator is high. Performance is regularly monitored with monthly reporting produced for senior management. The complaints team also meet with services who receive a high volume of complaints to review their processes with a view to improving performance going forward.

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Proportion of older people (65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation	Cllr Little	new KPI	91.8%	88.1%	88.6%	n/a	91.3%	91.3%

Although performance is 2.73% under the target, Thurrock is performing better compared to the latest national average (82.9%), regional average (81.8%) and CIPFA comparator group (79.0%).

Of the 70 individuals who were discharged from hospital into the Joint Reablement Service in the period, 62 were still at home 91 days later. Of the 8 individuals who were not at home, 5 had passed away, 2 were in hospital and 1 had moved to extra care.

Due to the fragility of the home care market, the Joint Reablement Team has been required to provide mainstream home care, which has impacted on their ability to deliver reablement and may have affected performance. Work continues to stabilise the market with three providers now established under the new locality based Domiciliary Care Contract together with our in house domiciliary care provision. This ensures that the Joint Reablement Team has capacity to deliver reablement services more effectively as service users can move on to the wider market freeing capacity for reablement.

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Payment rate of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) - littering	Cllr Gledhill	new KPI	57.7%	63.6%	58.7%	n/a	70%	70%

Payment rate has fallen since last quarter, largely due to the festive period. Non-payment is unacceptable and the service is in the process of court action for those that have not paid.

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	Cllr Watkins	98.23%	96.9%	96.6%	97.5%	⬇️	98.5	98.5%
Performance has been stronger and above target consecutively in the last three months - October to December (99%). Year to date performance is still below target due to performance earlier in the year but January data is also showing the continued good trend. Where previous performance was below standards expected, the service has been working to rebalance routes (growth) and address driver cover shortages. The service is confident that performance between now and year end will continue to be on or above target.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% General tenant satisfaction with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	Cllr Johnson	70%	65.3%	66.6%	66.3%	⬇️	75%	75%
Resident satisfaction with services provided by Housing has decreased slightly from 66.6% at the end of Q2 to 66.3% at the end of Q3. Analysis has shown that the key drivers for dissatisfaction are around communication and specific repairs issues e.g. windows and front doors.								
The Housing Service has recently introduced a number of measures to address dissatisfaction surrounding tenant engagement and the perceived lack of communication with tenants. Letters have recently been posted to all Council tenants from the Tenants Excellence Panel with a view to raising awareness of panel's involvement in the Housing Service as well as inviting tenants to the Annual Tenants Conference which will take place in March 2019. The conference has been arranged for the purpose of information sharing, raising service awareness, raising resident engagement profile and to increase the number of residents actively engaging.								
A communication plan was also discussed at the Housing Management Team away day with a view to developing a consistent approach to communicating with tenants using a number of communication mediums in order to address this issue.								
In addition to this we have enhanced the way we engage with our residents by inviting members of the Tenants Excellence Panel to become more involved in service delivery by setting up several sub groups. We are also commissioning a broader and more wide ranging tenant satisfaction survey which will be carried out during 2019 in order to further improve our understanding of tenants' views on the Housing service.								
The focus of the Transforming Homes programme will move onto external elements in 2019/20 with the replacement of single glazed windows being the first priority identified from the stock condition survey.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% of all complaints upheld (based on closed complaints)	Cllr Collins	40%	47%	46%	43%	⬇️	35%	35%
This indicator is still worse than target although Q3 has seen an improvement compared to previous quarters. This continues to be closely monitored by services and the corporate complaints team through the Learning Action Plan process.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Average sickness absence days per FTE	Cllr Collins	9.95 days	2.33 days	5.14 days	7.88 days	⬇️	6.75 days	9 days
Despite a reduction in average sickness between November and December the cumulative figure is high and is higher than Q3 last year. A significant reduction in sickness in Q4 would be required to meet the 9 day target by year end.								
Sickness levels are significantly influenced by two key sickness drivers; mental health (MH) and musculoskeletal (MSK) issues. The wellbeing offer has been supplemented with the introduction of MH first aiders who are to be trained imminently. Attendance has been weighted to directorates where MH issues are prevalent. The MSK support through OH is being supplemented with support through an external provider who will assist in the development of earlier return to work plans bespoke to the particular demands of any job role.								

Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Permanent admissions of younger adults (aged 18 to 64) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population	Cllr Little	7 per 100,000	4	6	10	↓	6	9 per 100,000
Although performance is 1 over the profiled target, Thurrock is performing better compared to the latest national average (14.0), regional average (14.1) and CIPFA comparator group average (13.3). Plus the number of younger people being admitted to residential care is still very low.								
There have been 10 admissions to residential care for people aged 18-64 in the year-to-date. Of these:								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three were people coming through transition and so are considered 'new' to Adult Social Care even though the placements into residential care are not new. Five are older individuals aged between 52 and 64 years and so appear in the 18-64 residential admissions indicator rather than the 65+ indicator. These individuals required residential care due to early onset dementia and/or physical health/long term conditions. The other 2 individuals have significant physical impairments/long term conditions. 								
Alternative suitable services in the community are always considered before residential care is agreed. Residential care is only agreed if this is in the best interests of the individual.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% of 17-21 yr old Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training	Cllr Little	72.40%	69.5%	68.3%	66.9%	↓	n/a	70%
Although this figure is considerably higher than statistical neighbours and our own performance last year, this figure would be on target had we had no missing unaccompanied asylum seekers in this period. Their missing data has a negative effect on the overall figure as it is a relatively small cohort of young people.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
% Household waste reused/recycled/composted	Cllr Watkins	36.97%	41.7%	40.3%	33.7%	↓	33.7%	41%
The total tonnage of household waste increased in December, whilst the tonnage recycled decreased. This follows a similar pattern to the same time period for the previous year, and is usual due to the festive season. The cumulative figure is currently 38.7% which is on par with the previous year at this stage (38.89%). A refreshed communication plan has been developed and proactive communication in relation to quality recycling is underway.								
Indicator Definition	PFH	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	Qtr 3 YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18	Q3 Target	2018/19 Target
Street Cleanliness - c) Graffiti	Cllr Watkins	2.18%	2.33 Tranche 1	n/a	4.67% (3.5% YTD) Tranche 2	↓	3%	3%
Whilst the year to date figure is near target, the score for graffiti in the second tranche of inspections was below the level expected. The focus for the teams in removing graffiti has previously been on public land. Much of graffiti identified during the inspection was on private land. Over the next few months, the service is intending to trial an approach where private landowners are acknowledged as victims of the crime, but gently reminded of their obligations to remove graffiti on their property. A series of letters and communications for land owners are proposed culminating in Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices.								

3.6 Other key indicators

Throughout the year the council also monitors some other indicators as part of the corporate scorecard which, whilst not performance related, are important to keep under review.

PFH	Corporate Scorecard Indicator Definition	2017/18 Outturn	Qtr 1 Cumulative YTD	Qtr 2 Cumulative YTD	Qtr 3 Cumulative YTD	Direction of Travel since 2017/18
Cllr Johnson	Number of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	<i>new KPI</i>	385	761	1,132	n/a
Cllr Johnson	No of homeless cases accepted	<i>new KPI</i>	50	93	104	n/a
Cllr Collins	No of media enquiries received	<i>new KPI</i>	97	188	247	n/a
Cllr Gledhill	Number of statutory nuisance complaints made	2367	718	1,552	2,126	↑
Cllr Gledhill	Number of environmental (public) health interventions requested	250	103	185	238	↑
Cllr Gledhill	No of incidents of Fly tipping reported	1829	670	1,232	1,791	↑
Cllr Gledhill	No of incidents of Abandoned vehicles reported	1369	310	628	930	↑

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The corporate priorities and associated performance framework are fundamental to articulating what the council is aiming to achieve. It is best practice to report on the performance of the council. It shows effective levels of governance and transparency and showcases strong performance as well as an acknowledgement of where we need to improve.
- 4.2 This report highlights what the council is focussing on during 2018/19 and confirms the governance and monitoring mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that priorities are delivered.

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

- 5.1 Performance against the corporate priorities will continue to be monitored through Performance Board, a cross-council officer group of performance experts representing each service. Performance Board will continue to scrutinise the corporate KPIs on a monthly basis, highlighting areas of particular focus to Directors Board.
- 5.2 Each quarter a report will continue to be presented to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee for member-led scrutiny, and finally reported to Cabinet.

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

- 6.1 The vision and priorities cascade into every bit of the council and further to our partners, through key strategies, service plans, team plans and individual objectives.
- 6.2 This report will help decision makers and other interested parties, form a view of the success of the council's actions in meeting its political and community priority ambitions.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Dammy Adewole**

Management Accountant

The report provides an update on performance against corporate priorities. There are financial KPIs within the corporate scorecard, the performance of which are included in the report.

The council continues to operate in a challenging financial environment, therefore, where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council may entail future financial implications, and will need to be considered as appropriate.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**

Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director, Law and Governance

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council or associated individual priority projects may have legal implications, and as such will need to be addressed separately as decisions relating to those specific activities are considered.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**

Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

The Corporate Performance Framework for 2018/19 contain measures that help determine the level of progress with meeting wider diversity and equality ambitions, including youth employment and attainment, independent living, vulnerable adults, volunteering etc. Individual commentary is given throughout the year within the regular monitoring reports regarding progress and actions.

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

The Corporate Performance Framework includes areas which affect a wide variety of issues, including those noted above. Where applicable these are covered in the report.

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):

N/A

9. Appendices to the report

N/A

Report Author:

Sarah Welton

Strategy Manager

5 March 2019	ITEM: 8
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
School Capital Programme Update 2019/20	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Sarah Williams, Education Specialist Service Manager, Children's Services	
Accountable Assistant Director : Michelle Lucas, Interim Assistant Director – Learning, Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director, Children's Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The council's school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess likely demand. The current programme aims to deliver sufficient pupil places for the 2019 and 2020 academic years in both Primary and Secondary.

This report seeks Cabinet approval to approve a £2.2M budget for the expansion of Benyon Primary School from a 1 form entry to a 2 form entry Primary school which would provide an additional 180 school places which will be delivered through an Architect led Design Team and Principal Contractor. Design feasibility studies are already completed at the time of writing this report, with initial indications showing that this project will have an estimated provisional total value of £2.2M inclusive of Architects fees and disbursements.

1. Recommendations

That Members agree that the following recommendations be made to Cabinet in March 2019:

- 1.1 **To approve a £2.2M budget for the expansion of Benyon Primary School to be funded from the School' Basic Need capital funding 2019/20.**
- 1.2 **To approve a budget of up to £1M for works to be undertaken to enable construction of additional classrooms in current secondary schools.**
- 1.3 **To progress the procurement process to secure design and construction for the expansion of Benyon Primary School to take forward the proposed schemes.**

- 1.4 To delegate authority of the approval of the construction contract for the Benyon School scheme to the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1** The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.

The 2018/19 school capital programme has progressed well and incorporated innovative partnership working, as well as utilising modern methods of construction to deliver the identified additional pupil places required.

- 2.2** The provision of additional accommodation to meet the predicted increase in pupil numbers has generated positive feedback from schools, particularly in relation to the impact on learning through improvements to the built environment.
- 2.3** The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few months we have seen a large increase in 'in year' admissions from families moving into the Authority. In 2017/18, 143 primary and 107 secondary children moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and 797 primary and 238 secondary from elsewhere within the UK. For the first 5 months of this year, 83 primary and 54 secondary more children have moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and there have been 619 primary and 164 secondary new arrivals from within the UK. The demand does not appear to be slowing, and this level of demand is unprecedented.

3. Projects

Benyon Primary School

- 3.1** Despite the recent expansion of Somers Heath Primary School in 2016 which created an additional 210 places within the Aveley and Ockendon areas of the borough, following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is now educational need for further primary school places in the Ockendon area.
- 3.2** The report presented to Cabinet on 14th November 2018 stated that a feasibility study had commenced at Benyon Primary School to identify whether an expansion of the school would be possible, with a view to addressing the shortage of places from September 2018 onwards in the planning area.
- 3.3** Following completion of this scoping and feasibility study, the proposal upon Benyon Primary is to extend the existing building to the rear in order to provide 6 new classrooms each in excess of 60 m², a school hall extension,

new WC's, a remodelled entrance including open plan reception and offices, and externally, an additional 17 car parking spaces for staff and visitors. Upon completion, Benyon Primary will have capacity to increase from a 1FE to 2 FE primary school.

- 3.4 An estimated budget of £2.2M is required to cover both an architect led multi-disciplinary design team responsible for providing specialist services needed to oversee the detailed and technical design for the expansion project, and a Principal Building Contractor for its construction phase.
- 3.5 JCT consultancy agreements and JCT Building contracts competitively procured and evaluated on both quality and price will provide opportunities for improving quality and value for money. It will give the council the flexibility to award individual elements of construction projects on an individual basis without any guarantee of future work. This approach will result in a greater level of control being retained within the authority, and will not tie the council into any single provider.
- 3.6 In advance of these procurements, small value individual contracts have been utilised for the carrying out of topographical surveys, transport assessments, and environmental impact assessments.
- 3.7 At the time of writing, a pre-planning application has also already been submitted.

Additional Secondary School Classes

- 3.8 Due to a shortfall in pupil places for September 2019, senior managers within Children Services are working in partnership with secondary schools to create much needed bulge classes. The local authority is creating permanent classrooms in some of its secondary schools in order to create the space required to enable those schools to take additional pupils. This will enable the local authority to meet its statutory duty and ensure that every children who has applied for a school place will have one on 1 March 2019 – National Offer day for secondary schools.

4. Issues and/or Options

- 4.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, it will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.
- 4.2 All procurement exercises will be managed through the Council's Procurement Team and will be compliant with the Contract Procedure Rules and EU and UK Legislation.

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

- 5.1 The principle has been agreed with schools and any detailed build content will be agreed with the relevant schools. Consultation will continue with

each school and key stakeholder, as each scheme and schedule of works evolves within the programme.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the local authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.

7. Impact on Corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance and Community Impact

- 7.1 The award of these JCT Construction and design contracts will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006.
- 7.2 The improvement of the educational assets is linked to key corporate priorities:

Priority	Delivered by
Creating a great place for learning and opportunity	By improving the education assets within the borough
Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity	Through the provision of local employment and training opportunities
Building pride, responsibility, and respect	Through improvements in the quality of the school assets and places provided
Improve health and wellbeing	Through improvements in the quality of the learning environment and opportunities provided

8. Implications

- 8.1 **Financial:** **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant
- The additional accommodation required for increased pupil numbers at Beynon Primary and the construction of additional classrooms at secondary schools, will be funded from the 2019/20 capital basic need budget. Following the announcement of the 2019/20 funding allocation, there is sufficient budget for both of these schemes to proceed.

- 8.2 **Legal** **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head Legal (Social Care and Education)

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8.3 Diversity and Equality	Roxanne Scanlon Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer
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Whilst there are no direct diversity and equality implications, the provision of these services will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion. The procurement process will follow responsibilities as set out within The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, with due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The procurement approach set out in this report will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006, to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one, whilst ensuring value for money.

9. Background Papers used in Preparing this Report:

- Cabinet report 14 November 2018 – Approval to increase scope of the Schools Capital Programme

10. Appendices to this report

- Appendix 1 - Huggins Brommage Ferguson Feasibility Study for Benyon Primary

Report Author

Sarah Williams

Education Specialist Service Manager

Children's Services

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HUGGINS BROMAGE FERGUSON LTD

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND CDM COORDINATORS



EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO CREATE A TWO FORM ENTRY PRIMARY SCHOOL , BENYON PRIMARY SCHOOL, TYSSEN PLACE, SOUTH OCKENDON, RM156PG

APPROXIMATE COSTING – EXTENSION ONLY

Approximate costing calculation based on extension floor area based on SPONS Price book rates.

Excluding external works (front and rear), Canopy, Kitchen, fitted furniture allowance per classroom, Internal alterations to existing building and Contingency/ Provisional Sums.

Gross floor area = 731 m²

SPONS rate £1600 per m²

731 x 1600 = £1,169,600.00;

Say £1,200,000.00 (plus vat if applicable)

As a cross-check on the 'Approximate' costs of the extension, we have also calculated the building cost for building elements.

ELEMENTAL COSTING – EXTENSION ONLY

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
1.	Strip/ Clear the site	£30,000.00
2.	Foundation.	£80,000.00
3.	Site set up and management	£100,000.00
4.	Brickwork/ Blockwork	£90,000.00
5.	Windows and Doors.	£40,000.00
6.	Milbank ground Floor (complete)	£43,800.00
7.	Steelwork/ steel frame	£80,000.00
8.	Floor Plank Roof	£58,480.00
9.	Flat Roof (complete)	£73,100.00
0.	Internal Walls	£20,000.00
1.	Internal Doors	£22,000.00
2.	Plastering	£50,000.00

Appendix 1

13.	Toilets & Cubicles	£40,000.00
14.	Ceiling	£50,000.00
15.	Floor	£60,000.00
16.	Decorations	£30,000.00
17.	Mechanical and electrical Installations	£200,000.00
SUB-TOTAL		£1,067,380.00

Elemental cost; £1,067,380.00

Contractors profit and overhead 12% of £1,067,380.00 = £128,085.60

£1,067,380.00 + £128,085.60 = **£1,195,465.60**

Say £1,200,000.00 (plus vat if applicable)

OTHER COSTS (NOT INCLUDED IN EXTENSION COST)

Including contractors profit and overhead

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
1.	Rear Playground, fire tender road, paving , fencing and drainage	£120,000.00
2.	Front car park, fencing paving and service upgrades	£160,000.00
3.	Entrance canopy and foundations	£40,000.00
4.	Kitchen upgrade/ fitted furniture	£100,000.00
5.	Internal alterations (existing building)	£100,000.00
SUB TOTAL		£520,000.00

PROVISIONAL SUMS/ CONTINGENCY (NOT INCLUDED IN EXTENSION

COST) Including contractors profit and overhead

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
1.	Contingency	£80,000.00
2.	Building regulation amendments	£10,000.00
3.	Service Upgrades	£20,000.00
4.	Consequential upgrades	£30,000.00

Appendix 1

5.	Asbestos removal	£20,000.00
6..	Additional groundworks	£20,000.00
7.	IT wiring	£10,000.00
SUB TOTAL		£190,000.00

COST SUMMARY

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
1.	Extension costs	£1,200,000.00
2.	Other costs	£520,000.00
3.	Provisional Sums/ Contingency	£190,00.00
GRAND TOTAL		£1,910,000.00

APPROXIMATE PROJECT COST

£1,910,000.00 (plus vat if applicable)

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OUTLINE PROJECT PROGRAMME

5584

EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO CREATE A TWO FORM ENTRY PRIMARY SCHOOL , BENYON PRIMARY SCHOOL, TYSSEN PLACE, SOUTH OCKENDON, RM15 6PG

STAGE	COMPLETED BY
First draft of proposal drawings	Friday 7 th December 2018
Revised layout and budget costing	Tuesday 18 th December 2018
Pre-planning application based on floor plan ?	Monday 31 st January 2019
Consultant tender invitation	Friday 11 th January 2019
Consultant tender returns	Friday 8 th of February 2019
Consultant tender evaluation and consultant appointment.	Friday 1st of March 2019
Plan and elevation drawings finalised	Friday 29 th March 2019
Survey existing building, check existing plans	Friday 12 th April 2019
Prepare Planning application documents and submit a planning application (Including sub-consultant reports/ surveys etc.	Friday 12 th April 2019
Planning application decision (10 weeks application period) delegated powers decision assumed.	Friday 21st June 2019
Discharge of planning conditions – prior to start of works	Monday 18th November 2019
Prepare building regulation drawings and submit a building regulation application	Friday 19 th July 2019
Preparation of Pre-contract H&S plan and specification ready to invite tenders	Friday 2 nd August 2019
PQQ process and contractor selection (3 weeks)	Friday 23 rd August 2019
Building contractor Tenders invited	Friday 6th September 2019
4 week tender period, tender returned	Friday 4 th October 2019
Tender Report/Value engineering/Contractor selection/ contractor appointment.	Friday 18 th October 2019
Pre-contract meeting	Friday 18 th October 2019
Contractor lead-in/ H&S documents prepared and approved.	1 st November 2019
Contractor start on Site 9 month Contract period	Monday 18th November 2019
Completion Date	Friday 14 th August 2020
School mobilisation of new areas (2 weeks)	Friday 4 th September 2020
Defects Liability period (12 months)	
End of defects Liability period	Friday 3rd September 2021

Programme is subject to contractor availability, tender invitation processes and planning approval.

Work Programme

Committee: Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Year: 2018/2019

Dates of Meetings: 5 June 2018, 4 September 2018, 20 November 2018, 31 January 2019 and 5 March 2019

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
5 June 2018		
Business Rates Relief	Sean Clark/ Andrew Brittain	Officer
End of Year Corporate Performance Report 2017/18	Sarah Welton	Officer
Delivering Our Free School Programme – Land Disposal	Rory Patterson	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
4 September 2018		
Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2018/19	Sarah Welton	Officer
Communications Strategy Update	Karen Wheeler	Member (requested by Cllr Jack Duffin)
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
20 November 2018		
Mid-Year / Quarter 2 Corporate Performance	Sarah Welton	Officer

Work Programme

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
Report 2018/19		
Long Term Investment Strategy	Sean Clark	Member (requested by Cllr Jack Duffin)
Grays South Regeneration: Civic Offices Update	Steve Cox	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
31 January 2019		
Draft Budget	Sean Clark	Officer
Capital Strategy 2019/2020	Sean Clark	Officer
Capital Programme 2019/2020	Sean Clark	Officer
Customer Services Update	Karen Wheeler	Officer
The Overview & Scrutiny Functions and Motions Process	Democratic Services	Member (Cllr Spillman)
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
5 March 2019		
Quarter 3 Corporate Performance Report 2018/19	Sarah Welton	Officer
The Overview and Scrutiny Functions and Motions Process Update (Verbal)	Democratic Services	Member

Work Programme

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
Capital Programme and Process Report	Sean Clark	Member
School Capital Programme Update	Rory Patterson	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
Next Municipal Year		
Local Council Tax Scheme	Sean Clark	Member
Commercialisation Benchmarking	Sean Clark	Member

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