

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

## Cabinet

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **16 September 2020**

**Due to government guidance on social distancing, members of the press and public will not be able to attend this meeting. The meeting will be available to watch live at**

**www.thurrock.gov.uk/webcast**[www.youtube.com/user/thurrockcouncil](https://www.youtube.com/user/thurrockcouncil)

### Venue (for Members only)

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

### Membership:

Councillors Robert Gledhill (Leader), Shane Hebb (Deputy Leader), Mark Coxshall, James Halden, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney, Allen Mayes and Aaron Watkins

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### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of Cabinet held on 22 July 2020.	
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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](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **8 September 2020**

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# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

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

## Helpful Reminders for Members

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

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

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



**Does the business to be transacted at the meeting**

- **relate to; or**
- **likely to affect**

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

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

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

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

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

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

### **Pecuniary**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Non- pecuniary**

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



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

## 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

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 22 July 2020 at 7.00 pm**

**The deadline for call-in is Monday 3 August 2020 at 5.00pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Robert Gledhill (Leader), Shane Hebb (Deputy Leader), Mark Coxshall, James Halden, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney, Allen Mayes and Aaron Watkins

**In attendance:** Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive  
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health  
Ian Hunt, Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer  
Lucy Tricker, Democratic Services Officer

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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed to YouTube.

## **11. Minutes**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17 June 2020 were approved as a correct record.

## **12. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

## **13. Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

## **14. Statements by the Leader**

The Leader began his statement by explaining that Thurrock had recently received independent verification from Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) that the borough was now cleaner than ever before. He stated that only 3.67% of sites that KBT visited had any evidence of litter, graffiti, dog fouling, fly-posting or fly-tipping. He described how this may have partly been due to COVID-19, but KBT had confirmed that they had not seen such a reduction in litter in other areas also affected by the pandemic. He outlined the percentages of the borough which had seen no evidence of issues, such as 96.33% of the borough had no littering, 94% had no graffiti, 99.8% of the borough had no fly-posting, 96.7% had no fly-tips, and 99.67% of the borough had no dog fouling. He added that there were still areas in which these problems occurred, but thanked the street cleaning teams for their hard work, particularly during such a difficult time, in keeping parks and other areas open and tidy. He also

thanked residents for their participation in keeping the borough tidy, by taking rubbish home with them.

The Leader moved onto discuss the developments made in COVID-19 since the last Cabinet meeting, as pubs and restaurants had now been opened, and a new track and trace system had been launched. He stated that locally, Thurrock had produced their Outbreak Control Plan, which would help prevent and monitor the spread of COVID-19 in the borough. He stated that contact tracing had also been established, which was particularly important for people in care homes and other vulnerable residents, to ensure their safety. The Leader felt proud of Thurrock as residents had risen to the challenge to prevent the spread of the virus, and asked them to continue to enjoy the new freedoms responsibly. The Leader outlined the current government guidance including staying 2m apart from other people, 1m apart from other people when wearing a mask, staying alert for symptoms, staying indoors when necessary, and visiting shops and other local establishments safely.

The Leader also commented on the new Highways England (HE) design refinement consultation, and asked residents to get involved to make sure Thurrock voices were heard. He stated that this would likely be the third and final consultation, so would potentially be the last chance for residents to change the scheme. The Leader felt that the scheme did not go far enough to mitigate the harm that the proposed route would cause, and urged residents to make their feelings known. He stated that the consultation would run until 12 August 2020, and due to COVID-19 would be mostly online. The Leader confirmed that he had asked HE to delay the consultation due to its limited online nature, but HE had continued with their scheduled dates. He added that the previous consultations had received more responses than any HE consultations before, and thanked residents for taking part in those. He again urged residents to take part and make their voices heard.

The Leader finished his statement by giving the Clean It, Cut It, Fill It Update since April 2020, and stated that 1347 potholes had been filled in (all within target time); 777 tonnes of litter had been cleared; 388 fly-tips had been cleared; 1163 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) had been issued; and 64 £400 fines had been issued for non-payment of FPNs. He added that 58 of these non-payment of fines had been issued to court, but as courts were currently closed due to COVID-19, it could take a while for these to be heard. He summarised and stated that Cabinet had recently agreed for photographs of people who gave false information to be published on the Council's website, which would help catch people for non-payment of FPNs.

## **15. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues**

Councillor Watkins thanked officers for their hard work regarding the KBT scores, and stated that he was proud of the team for their efforts. He also apologised to residents who had been affected by problems with the waste management and bin collection service. He thanked residents for their patience, and crews and the NHS for their hard work during the difficult time. He stated that although the borough was entering a period of 'new normal',



the pandemic had not yet gone away, and could still cause disruption. He stated that the level of demand and level of waste had increased during lockdown, and this had recently been compounded by staff not being able to attend work. He confirmed that the Council were working with unions and central government to increase the team's capacity. Councillor Watkins added that the collection of brown bins would remain bi-weekly, but would now be on the date of normal collections, and specific information relating to this could be found on the Council's website. He stated that this was due to resident's feedback and wish for continuity regarding their bin collection. He mentioned that food waste could go into both the grey and green bins, and the communications team would be highlighting this on social media, online, and would be sending out letters. Councillor Watkins summarised and stated that the Waste Management Working Group were currently finalising their plans regarding the Waste Strategy, which would go to the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October, before being signed off by Cabinet.

The Leader added that as more people were now working from home, and schools had been closed during the lockdown, more people were generating rubbish at home, rather than their places of work or education. He stated that the waste collection teams were now having to visit the depot in East London two or three times during their shift to dispose of waste. He stated that the bin collection teams were also having a problem accessing some areas due to poor parking, and asked residents to park responsibly to ensure that bin lorries could get through.

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

No petitions had been submitted by members of the public.

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

The Leader informed Members that one question had been received from Councillor Shane Ralph in relation to Item 11 of the agenda, but this would be heard during that item.

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

No matters had been referred to Cabinet for consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee.

**19. Thurrock Council Home to School Transport and Travel Policy Update**

Councillor Jefferies introduced the report and stated that it proposed a change to the home to school transport and travel policy, which was usually the responsibility of parents, but was also a statutory duty of the Council for children that were eligible. He stated that this proposal needed Cabinet approval as it affected people across the borough, and stakeholders and overview and scrutiny had been consulted on it. He stated that one of the

proposals was to implement a charging regime for transport to post-16 facilities for pupils with SEND aged 16-25, but this could improve physical health, open up opportunities for jobs, and ensure that they could access school clubs and activities. Councillor Jefferies explained that the new policy would not mean that free transport for all children would stop, and confirmed that each child would be assessed under the new policy, and would continue to receive support if they were suitable. He added that many children with SEND needs received PIP support, as well as a family mobility car which would help with their transport needs, but the new policy would also include an independent travel course to increase independence. Councillor Jefferies stated that due to the comments from overview and scrutiny, he was proposing the removal of recommendation 1.1.

Councillor Halden welcomed the report, and highlighted that discretion would still be applied to all applications, but felt it was healthy to encourage young adults to be independent, which included through transport. He commented that the new policy would be on a means-tested basis, but parents could still currently apply based on the existing policy. He concluded and hoped that he would see a reasonable response from the opposition. Councillor Coxshall added that it was good to see overview and scrutiny comments being taken into account, and changes being made based on their input. He stated that Cabinet listened to overview and scrutiny, and felt it was good to see the collaborative work between the two functions. The Leader stated that the role of overview and scrutiny should be that of a critical friend, and the majority of policies brought before Cabinet had been through the scrutiny process for their comment. He felt that the removal of recommendation was a good example, as he would have raised the recommendation as an issue if it had not been mentioned previously at scrutiny.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

**Considered the proposed policy refresh to the 2016 policy and agreed to adopt the proposed refresh of the policy, with specific reference to the two areas listed below:**

- 1. The implementation of a charging regime in respect of transport to post-16 facilities for pupils aged 16-25 with SEND. Pupils will be required to pay the full cost of make a contribution towards the cost of transport. This service is discretionary and the Council may charge for the delivery of such transport.**
- 2. That transport be delivered, in accordance with legislation, only when there is no suitable school with a place available within the maximum walking distance from the child's home (two miles for pupils under the age of 8 and 3 miles for pupils over the age of 8).**

*Reason for decision: as outlined in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in*

## **20. Hospital Discharge Bridging Service**

The Leader stated that one question had been received from Councillor Shane Ralph on this item, which was: *with the recent media publicity in regards to patients being released back into care homes without being tested; what procedures and risk assessments have been carried out by Thurrock Council to ensure the safety of returning residents back to care homes?* The Leader stated that the Portfolio Holder would reply to the question as part of his statement, and a written response would also be sent to Councillor Ralph.

Councillor Halden introduced his report and thanked Councillor Ralph for his question as the new Chair of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He stated that the report looked to extend the current contract, whilst the care market was in such a stressed position due to COVID-19, and whilst the Council looked for a more permanent option. He stated that the current arrangement was successful as even during the height of the pandemic, 95% of all hospital discharges to care homes had been achieved within target time. He commented that lots of work had already been done regarding the future of the care home market and domiciliary care, with the aim of closing the gap between what was being charged and what was being paid. He commented that Oak House had been recommissioned during the lockdown as a 'step up-step down' facility, to provide care to those people who were discharged from hospital, but not quite ready to return to their own homes, and for those that were due to go hospitals, but could not because of COVID-19.

Councillor Halden stated that no one had been discharged from hospital into a care home without a COVID-19 test, barring those in Oak House, which had been recommissioned for the purpose of COVID-19. He stated that this process would be stress tested when the infection control team met later this month, to discuss processes and procedures. The Leader added that Thurrock tried not to extend contracts, but this was necessary due to the current pandemic. He added that a written response would also be submitted to Councillor Ralph and thanked him for his question.

### **RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Agreed the extension of the Bridging Service until March 2021**
- 2. Agreed the procurement for a rapid discharge service and delegated the award of contract to the Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health in consultation**

*Reason for decision: as outlined the report  
This decision is subject to call in*

## **21. Grays South Regeneration Area: Underpass and Public Realm Option Selection**

Councillor Coxshall introduced the report and stated that all three options presented in the report would be a cost overrun of roughly £27m, but these

were only estimates and not exact figures. He commented that the Council were already looking at ways to bridge this funding gap, and had enough time to solve the problem. He described how the project had changed, as it was now much bigger and was counted as a major piece of infrastructure. He commented that this project would benefit the wider Grays area, which was seeing lots of investment, including £25m from the High Street fund; £25m from Grays Town Board; £11m in central government funding for the underpass and £2m for the shopping centre; £40m from Thurrock Council; and £150m from the private sector. He stated that lots of people were committed to improving Grays, and felt that option three listed in the report would help the wider regeneration plans to be delivered.

The Leader commented that lots of versions of the proposals had been developed by numerous previous administrations, but that this was the furthest the project had ever gotten. He commented that the third option was the most positive as it allowed for a large plaza area in Grays, and although the plans had been expanded and would cost more, he agreed that there was plenty of time to find funding. He asked Councillor Coxshall what would happen to the businesses situated near to the proposed development area, and asked if a compulsory purchase order could be avoided. Councillor Coxshall responded that the plaza option offered a different alignment and a better design, so would potentially change the need for the purchase of nearby businesses. He stated that he wanted to get businesses on board, and any shops that would have to be brought, would be relocated.

Councillor Maney felt that this was an important step in regeneration of Grays. He commented that the state of Grays town centre was an important issue for local residents, and welcomed the report both as a Cabinet Member and Ward Councillor for an area near Grays. Councillor Coxshall highlighted that the money given to the Grays Town Board from central government, had to be spent by 2025, and although this seemed like a long time, plans would have to be drawn up this year to ensure that building could start in 2-3 years' time and the money could be spent.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

**1. Approved option C as the selected concept to be designed in more detail through the current Development Services Agreement contract with Network Rail**

*Reason for decision: as outlined in the report  
This decision is subject to call-in*

**22. Multi Functional Device Contract Conversion**

Councillor Huelin introduced the report and stated that the contract for printers was due to end in March 2021, and although the current printers were only 4-5 years old, they were already out of date models that were reaching end of life. She stated that the cheapest option would be to extend the current

contract, but this would leave the Council with out of date equipment, which could be detrimental to different departments. She added that the contract for library equipment and council tax billing was currently with external companies, but was also due to come to an end. She commented that currently the best option was to amalgamate these three contracts, which would mean that all three systems could work together and benefit residents. She stated that this would increase flexibility, and introduce technology such as barcoding, ticketing, mail-merge, large documents being sent to the most efficient printer, paper folding and enveloping, as well as a fully automated GDPR trail. She added that if the three contracts were amalgamated residents would also be able to visit a library or hub to scan and send documents securely, rather than having to visit the Civic Offices. She added that caseworkers would also be able to print and collect documents securely from libraries and hubs, rather than travelling back to the offices. She added that the new printers would also reduce the carbon footprint of the offices, as they could produce 'green agendas' through a fully automated, robotic process. She stated that the current contract cost £190,000, and the new contract would increase this figure by £35,000 to £231,000. She stated that the contract for libraries and council tax billing currently cost £41,000. She stated that the new printers would also reduce ink costs, envelopes and paper usage, although the cost of printing per page would be higher. She stated that as the Council currently used nine million pages of paper per year, the Council would have to reduce printing by at least 10% over two years to come in on budget. She stated that a review into paper usage would be completed, and she hoped to see the paper reduction target changed to 35%.

Councillor Mayes commented that although he felt concerned over the increased cost of printing per page, he could see the benefit that the new printers would give to the Council. Councillor Huelin commented that the procurement of the new contract would follow Council rules, and she had also raised concerns with officers over the cost of printing per page, but had been reassured that the other printing savings would ensure a balanced budget. The Leader added that this was an important report, as the Council needed to bring control over council tax billing back in house, due to the problems seen in this service during the height of the pandemic. He agreed with Councillor Huelin that the paper reduction target should be increased, and felt it was good to see that residents could safely scan documents to the council from across the borough.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Recommended to grant ICT authority to procure a new MFD contract.**
- 2. Recommended to grant delegated authority to the Director Finance, Governance and Property to contract award, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.**

**23. 2019/20 Financial Outturn Report**

Councillor Hebb introduced the report and stated that this was a 'rear view' look at the Council's finances in 2019/20, which was mostly in a pre-COVID19 world. He stated that although the Council would be placed under financial pressure because of COVID-19, the balanced budget and reserves could help ease these pressures. He stated that during 2019/20 reserves had been increased by 131%, and the Council had received £4.7m in funding from central government to help tackle COVID-19 pressures. He moved onto looking at the different department's budgets during 2019/20 and started by congratulating the Adults, Housing and Health team for ensuring their service balanced their budget with in-year mitigation. He felt that this department experienced numerous pressures throughout the year and thanked the team for their hard work in balancing the budget. He stated that for the 2020/21 financial year, Adults, Housing and Health would experience very significant pressures due to COVID-19, particularly relating to the care market.

Councillor Hebb moved onto talk about the Housing General Fund, which also covered the homelessness budget. He stated that although the number of people presenting as homeless to the Council had increased last year, the team had still managed to deliver all aspects of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and had reviewed staff structures to ensure the budget had been balanced, with a one-off surplus injection.

Councillor Hebb congratulated the Children's Services team for also balancing their budget, as well as their 'good' OFSTED rating. He stated that cash from the surplus had been invested in the team, and they had continued to reform and make positive changes. He discussed the in-house foster care arrangements, and mentioned that lots of work was ongoing to bring the team back in-house. He felt that this would benefit looked after children by offering stability, as well as reducing the cost of the service. He stated that the team still had issues surrounding attracting and retaining staff members, but the team was working hard to find qualified people for vacant positions. Councillor Hebb then thanked Councillors Maney and Watkins for their hard work in balancing the budget for the Environment and Highways team, as well as their recent success on the good KBT scores. Councillor Hebb understood how variable the waste contracts could be, but felt happy to see the balanced budget. He also thanked the HR team for bringing their department in under budget, and the Finance, Governance and Property team for balancing their budget, even with significant spend on conditions surveys.

Councillor Hebb then discussed the Place directorate who had balanced their budget with in-year mitigation. He stated that the team had had to increase money spent on consultants due to the Local Plan, as well as the lack of pantomime ticket sales at the Thameside Theatre, which had meant they were unable to break even. Councillor Hebb then discussed the Dedicated Schools Grant, which had nationally been a problem regarding the High Needs Block, and had also seen a spend increase in 2018/19. He stated that the capital programme had spent roughly £101m on projects in 2019/20, such as the A13 widening scheme and the Stanford-le-Hope Interchange project. He stated that the 2019/20 financial year had only included two months of COVID-19 pressures, but that next year would be more financially difficult

because of the pandemic.

Councillor Halden stated that he had attended numerous overview and scrutiny meetings, and had received lots of questions regarding the reserves in social care. He confirmed that reserves would not be depleted, but the Council were unsure of how the market would change due to the pandemic, and the revenue position was always being analysed. He stated that reserves could only provide a one-off cash injection into a department, but felt that the administration should work with the opposition during the upcoming financial difficulties, so work could be scrutinised and options discussed.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

**1. Noted that the General Fund net expenditure has been met within the overall budget envelope and the General Fund Balance has been maintained at £11.000m**

**2. Noted that the balance on the Housing Revenue Account Reserve has been maintained at £2.175m**

**3. Noted that there was a total of £101.398m in capital expenditure and some of the key projects has been set out in section 5.**

**24. Report from Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)**

The Leader introduced the report and highlighted that even though he was the Chair of ASELA, he was presenting the report in his capacity as Leader of Thurrock Council. He explained that three years ago, local authorities across South Essex had joined together to form ASELA to be able to work together to provide better services and infrastructure for all residents. He described how all participatory authorities had signed a Memorandum of Understanding which set out their intentions and highlighted that each Council maintained their own sovereignty, particularly on issues such as planning and finances. He stated that all decisions made at ASELA had to be unanimous and they had already managed to bring forward good projects, such as the £400m central government grant for Local Full Fibre Networks. He commented that ASELA had also created an economic plan and identified their strategic priorities.

The Leader moved onto describing the report and outlined how it was a proposition to submit to central government, which would help increase prosperity for residents and business owners across South Essex, and would increase long term investment opportunities. He stated that by working together, the local authorities could complete projects that would benefit each other, such as three lanes along the length of the A13, and improvements on the A127. He stated that although the A127 did not run directly through Thurrock, the improvement on this road would have a knock-on effect for the A13 and local road networks. The Leader mentioned that ASELA also helped deliver national projects and objectives, such as the implementation of

nationwide 5G. He stated that the growth and recovery prospectus at Enclosure 2 outlined what ASELA wanted to achieve, including 100,000 new jobs by 2050, COVID-19 recovery, a carbon zero region by 2040, and 5000 new opportunities for 16-24 year olds. He stated that ASELA were not currently at the stage of presenting a report on governance, and had not decided on a particular model, but confirmed that each authority would maintain its sovereignty. He stated that the report would be agreed by each individual Council, before being presented to ministers and civil servants in Whitehall. He explained that the government was expected to announce the new devolution deal in autumn 2020, when ASELA's prospectus would also be announced, and the Leader hoped this would bring new opportunities to the region.

Councillor Coxshall stated that this report was in its early stages, but felt it was good to have a regional voice that central government would listen to. He commented that he was a part of an outside body tasked with looking at infrastructure across the East of England, from the Thames to Norfolk, and felt that these types of partnerships would mean they were taken seriously as sub-regional consultees. Councillor Johnson felt this was a positive report, but highlighted the five options that were being put forward for exploration on page 132 of the agenda. He stated that he did not like the option for a local development corporation, as one had been implemented in Thurrock between 2004 and 2012, and felt they had caused numerous problems, particularly in South Ockendon. The Leader stated that the report had to outline all options for consideration, and they were not at the decision phase yet, but he shared Councillor Johnson's concerns regarding a development corporation. Councillor Coxshall agreed that he was not supportive of a development corporation.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Noted ASELA's intention to immediately engage with central government ahead of the autumn Spending Review, regarding the economic agenda for the South Essex region, how it can deliver new jobs, new transport infrastructure, new homes, and the future governance arrangements to deliver better outcomes for its existing, and new, residents and businesses as set out in the 'Growth and Recovery Prospectus 2020' as Enclosure no. 2.**
- 2. Noted the work commenced by ASELA to begin to consider and explore the most appropriate and effective future governance arrangements to realise South Essex's full economic and social potential and shared ambitions as set out in the independent Review of Governance in South Essex at Enclosure No. 3. This report does not seek approval or endorsement of any specific governance proposals.**
- 3. Noted that a further report will be presented later in the calendar year to provide an update on the outcome of the discussions with central government and any proposals for more formal interim governance arrangements for ASELA to ensure transparency and accountability.**



The Leader ended the meeting and passed on his condolences to the family and friends of Barry Palmer, former Mayor of Thurrock. He stated that Mr Palmer had been a stalwart of Thurrock, and had felt sad when he had learned of his passing.

**The meeting finished at 8.42 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

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

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<b>16 September 2020</b>		<b>ITEM: 10</b> <b>Decision: 110527</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>		
<b>Stanford-le-Hope Station Redevelopment</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Stanford Le Hope West	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Mark Coxshall, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director - Lower Thames Crossing and Transport Infrastructure Projects		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Andy Millard, Director of Place		
<b>This report is:</b> public		

## Executive Summary

The Council has funding for a station and transport interchange improvement project at Stanford-le-Hope. The project will involve replacing the old outdated station with new passenger facilities including toilets and retail space more in keeping with modern traveller expectations. A new transport hub will be created on the opposite side of London Road allowing bus access, taxi rank, cycle parking and improved station car parking. This project is being delivered by the Council together with c2c, and working with key stakeholders such as Network Rail, SELEP and London Gateway.

The project has been through a pause and review process with a clear focus on deliverability and affordability within the budget envelope. This new strategy provides a high-level overview of our objectives and requests authority from Cabinet, given the likely contract value, to tender the works contracts and delegated authority to appoint a works contractor.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**That Cabinet:**

- 1.1 Agrees the strategy and approach to progress the scheme as set out in this report;**
- 1.2 Gives approval to commence a tendering process for a main works contractor for both Phase 1 and Phase 2; and**

**1.3 Delegates to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, authority to award the subsequent main works contract subject to compliance with the Council's procurement rules and terms and conditions being approved by the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

2.1 The Stanford Le Hope Station Phase 1 Redevelopment scheme involves the construction of new, light and modern station buildings with improved operational features and refreshment outlet to improve the passenger experience, a new footbridge and accessible lifts. The design will incorporate improved safety features, low maintenance materials and construction with anti-vandalism features, some platform widening for significantly improved passenger safety, and modern passenger information systems. Phase two includes a Transport Hub, incorporating a bus turnaround facility, passenger drop-off points and cycle parking and recharging points, improved car parking for all types of vehicles and a Taxi rank and drop off points.

2.2 The location of the station in Stanford Le Hope can be prone to congestion at peak times due to its location and the site being constrained by Mucking Creek, London Road, and the existing railway crossing. However, this new station and transport hub concept, based on the purchase of the additional land on the opposite side of London Road (former Daybreak Windows site), is designed to relieve much of this congestion. Developed as part of the travel plan for London Gateway DP World, the design will facilitate easy and convenient "park and ride" services for commuters and general travellers to and from London and the surrounding area. It is also hoped this facility will help satisfy the demand for parking in Stanford Le Hope generally.

2.3 Works were started in March 2019 to demolish the existing station building to provide access into the remainder of the site for the delivery of the works.

2.4 A new project team has been assembled and an innovative new and revised strategy has been produced based on the additional space provided by the procurement of the Daybreak Windows site. In addition, some creative design has enabled the team to maximise the use of existing foundations to mitigate the need for expensive ground works. The project will progress in two phases:

- **Phase 1** comprising the delivery of the platform widening, stations forecourt area without the bus turnaround facility (see Phase 2), footbridge and lifts and new high-quality station building.
- **Phase 2** following the acquisition of land (approved by Cabinet in January 2020) delivery of a transport hub.

- 2.5 The overall benefits of the new strategy will result in an improved public facility and high-quality modern design, incorporating improved safety and anti-vandalism features including modern, low maintenance materials. Improved parking facilities for residents of the locality as well as commuters will be delivered as part of Phase 2 and the resulting scheme will improve privacy for those residents whose properties adjoin the station. It will also enable the scheme to be delivered within the existing budget envelope by removing the expensive and complex elements of the earlier scheme design.
- 2.6 AECOM was appointed as designer in June 2020 to develop a single option concept design for Phase 1, with Phase 2 design to follow in quick succession.
- 2.7 The design work is being progressed to inform a revised planning application for Phase 1 and a new planning application will follow for Phase 2 works.
- 2.8 In order to maintain programme there is a need to commence the procurement process to bring on board a main works contractor.

### **3. Procurement & Delivery Strategy**

- 3.1 A procurement strategy has been developed by Thurrock Council's Project Management and Procurement Teams in collaboration with Browne Jacobson LLP with a specialism in procurement and construction related contract matters.
- 3.2 The objective of the procurement strategy is to appoint a Principal Contractor or Contractors best suited to the differing nature of the works with Phase 1 works being highly safety critical railway related works and, therefore, attract higher rates as opposed to Phase 2. Consideration is also being given to the advantages of appointing Design & Build Contractors for the detailed design phase, as the preferred option.
- 3.3 The procurement strategy will be in accordance with Government Procurement Regulations and define a form of contract to deliver certainty of cost, best value for money, programme certainty at an acceptable level of risk to the Council.
- 3.4 The Delivery Programme is under constant review and reflects the current position in terms of procurement, planning consent procedures and governmental process. Consideration is also given to statutory review and approval requirements of Network Rail and C2C all of which are built into the current programme as far as they are known.
- 3.5 The success of the project will be greatly influenced by the collaboration and positive contribution of the key stakeholders and in recognition of this impact

the Steering Group was reconvened in June 2020. The group comprises Network Rail, C2C, SELEP, DP World, Ward Councillors and LA representatives from procurement, legal and communications and local resident representatives

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

- 4.1 There is a need to progress the procurement process to move forward with the next stage of delivery of this project which will contribute to the regeneration and economic growth objectives of the Council.
- 4.2 The ability to deliver this project relies on an efficient programme and the expedient and effective development of the design and procurement of the scheme. The recommendations allow the scheme to be progressed in line with funding allocation.

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

- 5.1 Not Applicable

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

- 6.1 The Stanford-le-Hope project supports the corporate priorities and in particular:
- roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Strategic Lead, Corporate Finance**

The total secured budget for the project is £19.05M, of which £7.5M will be funded by South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP); £0.55M is expected to be contributed by DP World London Gateway; £3.05M NSIP; £0.737M C2C; £1.533M S106 Funding; £5.72M Thurrock Council.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam,**  
**Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer**

From a Property perspective, the Council has powers, including under the Localism Act 2011, section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Local Government Act 1972, in particular section 120, to acquire land by agreement for the purposes of any of its functions.

With regards contracts/procurement considerations, the Council will have to comply with the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 in the tender and award process of any contract in relation to the project. This will also sit and align with the procurement strategy, as developed by Browne Jacobson LLP for the Council, as stated in the report.

The works are to be carried out within the highway boundary and on land which falls under the 99 year lease which C2C has with Network Rail or on land which is already owned by Council.

There is a Development Agreement already in place between the Council and C2C formalising this relationship for the Phase 1 Station redevelopment and a further, similar Development Agreement is currently being drafted for the collaboration between C2C and the Council in the development of the Phase 2 Transport Hub.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer**

Specific attention has been paid in developing this concept to rendering all areas accessible for all and fully compliant with all relevant equality legislation. The proposed works will facilitate regeneration of the area, enhance the connectivity and access to jobs, improve public realm and reduce congestion.

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

The designs are developed to improve passenger and staff safety and convenience.

The new station will provide a much-improved working environment

Materials used will minimise maintenance and susceptibility to vandalism.  
The layout of the station has been conceived to maximise the privacy of local residents and eliminate as far as possible antisocial behaviour.

**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):

The project has been the subject of the following reports

- 9 March 2016 – Stanford le Hope, Scheme Development Report
- 7 March 2017, PTR O&S – Stanford Le Hope Transport Interchange, Scheme Update
- 15 January 2020, Cabinet – Acquisition of Land

**9. Appendices to the report**

None

**Report Author:**

Antonia Clarke / Philip Douglas

Project Manager

On behalf of Place



<b>16 September 2020</b>	<b>ITEM: 11</b> <b>Decision: 110528</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Proposed Consultation on Adult Social Care (Non-Residential) Fees and Charges 2021/22</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor James Halden - Portfolio Holder Children and Adult Social Care	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Les Billingham - Interim Director Adult Social Care and Community Development	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Roger Harris - Corporate Director Adults, Housing and Health	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## Executive Summary

This report outlines a very real issue where the gap between what we charge for domiciliary care and the actual cost we pay providers, has grown in recent years. This puts the stability of the service, certainly in the post COVID world, in doubt. Our preferred option – to phase an increase – brings us in far greater parity with Essex and Havering and allows residents to adapt to change over the three year period.

Providers are facing increased costs through the rises in the National Living Wage (NLW) and other cost pressures e.g. PPE requirements – in order for the Council to meet these very real increases in costs it is essential that we look at ways such as charging increases to maximise our ability to meet these pressures providers face.

Each year, as part of the budget setting process, the Council considers the level of fees and charges in those areas where there is local discretion. This is to ensure that we maximise resources to the Council but also that they are set fairly so as not to discourage service users from accessing services they need.

The strategic ambition for Thurrock is to adopt a policy on charging that aligns to the wider commercial strategy and ensures that all discretionary services will full cost recover. However, at the same time certain duties are placed on Local Authorities by the Department of Health and Social Care, the most important being the requirement to assess the individual’s ability to pay.

This report looks at different charging options for internally provided and externally commissioned domiciliary care.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 For Cabinet to review the three options for charging regarding the services in scope detailed in section 3.1**
- 1.2 For Cabinet to approve that the three options go out to public consultation.**
- 1.3 For Cabinet to approve that the consultation with providers can start as soon as possible regarding the rates the Council pays with the presumption of an above inflation increase to stabilise the market and reflect the increased costs arising from COVID.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The Adult Social Care market remains fragile and the COVID-19 Global Pandemic has accentuated this fragility. In 2016 Thurrock experienced significant market failure within Domiciliary Care taking back into the Council 3 external providers resulting in the development of Thurrock Care at Home our in house domiciliary provision. Charging for services allows income to be generated to support the delivery of those services. Charges for the services in scope have remained fixed for 4 years at the then unit cost price of £13 an hour. Adult Social Care has given an increase in rates to our domiciliary care providers each year however, we have not increased the maximum amount we charge those who access these services.

The current unit cost for domiciliary care is £17.06 an hour. We apply equity in our charging policy the charge per unit cannot exceed the cost of the provision of the cheapest unit cost price. For example, internal domiciliary care declares a rate of £18.80 per hour for single-handed care, whereas the same service purchased externally is as stated £17.06. We cannot therefore charge in excess of £17.06 per hour.

Regionally our contracted price of £17.06 compares well to our neighbouring Local Authorities and as an Adult Social Care service we want to ensure that we support the market to remain sustainable by paying providers a realistic rate to provide responsive and high quality service. The table below illustrates rates for domiciliary care across four Local Authorities these rates are comparable across the Country.

### Regional Comparison

Authority	Charge Per Hour
Essex	£17.96
Havering	£17.50
Kent	£14.65 up to £16.24
Hertfordshire	£20.64

It is important to note that charging for other non-residential services provided by and commissioned through adult social care are not currently being considered within this consultation and so charges will remain at current levels. Those services are:

- Day Care as this service is currently under review in light of COVID
- Careline as this was a Member decision for the service to remain free of charge
- Respite Care as this is an essential preventative service that supports some of our most complex service users and their families
- Transport to services
- Meals on Wheels recently brought in house

2.2 The projected income from charging for services is influenced by a number of factors, this forecast is dependent on the number of individuals and the current levels of contribution that they are making. This is guided by:

- The person's financial situation.
- The benefit systems as a whole.
- The person's current living arrangements and circle of support.

The estimate is subject to fluctuation on a daily basis. Based on figures from the end of June and beginning of July 2020 the following details the projected income and number of people contributing to their care costs.

The first table indicates that by increasing the maximum charge to the current £17.06 hourly rate Adult Social Care would receive an additional income of approximately £243,969 a year.

<b>Estimated Income Per Annum By Per Hour Charge</b>		
<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>£13.00</b>	<b>£17.06</b>
<b>Estimated Income</b>	<b>£1,772,808</b>	<b>£2,016,777</b>
<b>Additional Income Per Annum</b>		<b>£243,969</b>

The table below illustrates the number of service users receiving a service, detailing how many of those contribute in part or in full to their care costs.

<b>Charging Assessment Band</b>	<b>Service user numbers</b>	<b>Detail</b>
No charge	399	The person has a financial assessment and based on income and saving levels is assessed as not having to make a contribution to their care costs.
Opted out	109	The person does not have a financial assessment, as they do not want to disclose their income and savings. They therefore have to pay full cost for the service
Section 117	32	The person receives after care under Section 117 following a period of inpatient treatment for mental ill health, the care is free of charge under Mental Health legislation.
Override band	6	This is when exemptions are made under very special circumstances and individuals are not charged for services.
Manual no charge	11	The person has very high disability related expenditure (DRE) due to the complexity of their condition and so are not charged

Variable Charge	589	The person has had a financial assessment and is assessed as being required to contribute to their care costs. The amount of the contribution varies according to each individuals financial circumstances.
Full charge	160	The person has had a financial assessment and has been assessed to pay the full cost of their care

- 2.3 The process to ensure that charges are fair and equitable is as follows. When an individual is assessed under the Care Act 2014 and as a result of that assessment Adult Social Care provides care, a financial assessment takes place carried out by one of our Finance Assessment Officers. The assessment is to ascertain if the person will be required to make a financial contribution to the cost of their care and at what level that contribution will be. The financial assessment is usually undertaken through a visit to the person at home an assessment form is completed detailing the person's financial circumstances, level of income and savings together with any other assets. The Finance Assessment Officer will also detail any Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) this is anything that is required as a result of the person's condition or care needs that helps or supports them within their daily life. The DRE is deducted from outgoings before the calculation regarding any contribution is undertaken. All our Finance Assessment Officers have national benefit training once a year to ensure they are up to date with benefit changes.

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

- 3.1 There are three options to be considered for charging within Adult Social Care for the services in scope.

**The first** is that the charges remain the same and we charge only to a maximum of the £13 an hour rate

The advantage of remaining at the maximum level of £13 is that it would cause the least disruption and concern to people who use our services.

The disadvantage of remaining at a £13 maximum charge would be the loss of income to the Council an approximate £243,969 per year

**The second** option is to implement the maximum charge of £17.06 an hour in one step and re-establish that link between what we pay providers and what we charge users.

The advantage of doing this is that the maximum income is generated to offset the increasing costs of care to the Council, realising a potential additional £243,696 per year

The disadvantages of doing this in one step is that it is a significant increase as we have not raised the contribution for a number of years. The external hourly rate is now £4.06 more, for some people who receive services and pay full or almost full cost it would be a significant increase. People may feel they cannot afford such an increase and may reduce the amount of care they are receiving which longer term may have an impact on their wellbeing and may mean that adult social care has to fund additional input when a service user's circumstances and wellbeing deteriorate.

**The third** option which is recommended, is to introduce an increase in charging incrementally over 3 years to enable the charges to keep pace with increases given to providers; this would be proposed as follows:

- Year 1 – £14.50 per hour.
- Year 2 – £16.00 per hour.
- Year 3 - £17.06 per hour : or up to the maximum being paid to external providers (NB this re-establishes the link between what we pay and what we charge and is likely to be a higher figure depending on what increases are agreed for providers over the next two years)

The advantage of taking a staged approach is that it will be more manageable for service users and not such a significant change from £13 to £17.06 and will be more affordable. People will be less likely to withdraw from care and may be more willing to pay the increase.

The disadvantage is that the income realised will be incremental and will not off set as fully each year the increased cost of care.

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

- 4.1 The current maximum charge for the services in scope is £13 an hour which means that Adult Social care is losing potential income to off set the cost of care. It is important that we review our charging arrangements and we have increased the hourly rate that we pay to our external providers. To review this we want to ask those people who receive services now and the wider community their views through a consultation process. This consultation will help inform the final recommendations we would make to Cabinet regarding any potential increase in charge to our service users.

There are considerable financial pressures on adult social care now and increasingly likely so for the next few years. Care providers are facing increased costs through the rises in the National Living Wage, new infection control requirements and increased use of PPE. A separate consultation exercise with providers will be undertaken to confirm the rate we pay providers in future years but by increasing our income through this charge increase it will increase our ability to pay an appropriate increase to providers next year.

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

- 5.1 We will undertake a formal consultation process regarding the 3 options outlined above. This will be in the form of a questionnaire, which will be sent to everyone who receives one of the services in scope. The questionnaire will also be placed on the Consultation Portal. Usually we undertake consultation events across the Borough to enable as many people as possible to express their views. In the light of COVID 19, we will need to ensure that our consultation adheres to social distancing guidelines together with exploring the use of interactive forums using technology to ensure that people are able to give us their views.
- 5.2 The report will be presented to Health and well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 3 September 2020 and verbal feedback will be presented to Cabinet.
- 5.3 The period of Public Consultation will start once final agreement is given to move forward. The results and recommendations from the consultation will be presented to Health and Well-Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 14 January 2021 and then, including any recommendations, be presented to Cabinet on the 10 February 2021.

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

- 6.1 The consultation regarding proposed charging options for the services in scope effects the following priority:

***People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay*

## 7. Implications

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Strategic Lead – Corporate Finance**

The effect of any changes to fees and charges will be determined as part of the budget setting process in which Corporate Finance and service areas will review anticipated level of demand, fee increases, previous performance and potential associated costs.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**

## Principle Lawyer/Contracts Team Manager

The Care Act 2014 provides a legal framework for charging in respect of Care and Support under Clause 14 and 17 and enables a local authority to decide whether to charge a person when it is arranging to meet a person's care and support needs or a carer's support need. The charges are primarily to cover the costs incurred by the local authority in providing the service. In arriving at what charges to be paid, service users are means tested and financially assessed. Thurrock Council has a duty to consult on any proposed changes to charging. The process outlined within this report meets the duties under the Care Act 2014. A charging consultation must contain 4 elements as follows;

1. It must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage.
2. It must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit consideration and response from those to be affected.
3. Adequate time must be given for any consideration and response.
4. The result of the consultation must be taken into account in finalising any proposals.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project  
Monitoring Officer**

It is important to consider any potential impact to vulnerable people within Thurrock of any proposed changes to charging for services. Any approach to reviewing charges needs to be fair and equitable to ensure that people who really need services are able to access them and are not negatively impacted. A Community and Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken by the lead officers on this work and will be carefully monitored to ensure that the impact of any potential changes is minimised.

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

N/A

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

- None



**9. Appendices to the report**

- None

**Report Author:**

Catherine Wilson

Strategic Lead Commissioning and Procurement

Adults Housing and Health

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<b>16 September 2020</b>	ITEM: 12 Decision: 110529
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Procurement to Provide Autism Specialist Support – Medina Road</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor James Halden – Portfolio Holder Children and Adult Social Care	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Les Billingham – Interim Director, Adult Social Care and Community Development	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Roger Harris – Corporate Director, Adults, Housing and Health	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to request that Cabinet agree to the proposed service model of care at Medina Road development and agree the procurement of this new service.

As the development of the specialist autism unit progresses the report details options that have been explore before seeking approval from Cabinet for the care and support provision enabling adults with autism to remain in Thurrock and maximise their independence within the community.

- 1. Recommendation(s)**
  - 1.1 For Cabinet to agree the future design of the service model to support people living in Medina Road**
  - 1.2 For Cabinet to agree to commence the procurement of support for Medina Road and delegate authority to award the contract to the Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder**
- 2. Introduction and Background**
  - 2.1 Thurrock Council’s Adult Autism Strategy detailed the lack of long term residential or supported housing services for adults with autism within

Thurrock often resulting in people being supported outside of the borough away from their families and communities resulting in an increase in financial cost to the authority.

- 2.2 Due to the outstanding Ofsted reports for the local specialist schools attracting families to move to the area the numbers of young people with autism are increasing. Thurrock's Adult Social Care's Market Development Strategy demonstrated a growth in people living with moderate/severe Learning Disabilities compared with the national average. There is an expected 13% increase in the number of people aged 18-64 with autism in Thurrock over the next seventeen years with high numbers of younger people coming through the transition process from Children's Social Care
- 2.3 A "Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund (CASSH Fund)" bid to develop a specially designed housing scheme within borough for young people with autism was successful and in partnership with Peabody Trust (formally Family Mosaic) a site was identified at Medina Road, Grays.
- 2.4 The development of the scheme at Medina Road includes:
  - 6 self- contained units of autism friendly designed accommodation
  - Access to a private outdoor space (patio/garden) for each unit
  - Small lounge/common room for residents
  - 1 unit of accommodation for the on-site care and support team.
- 2.5 The scheme is nearing completion and the focus has turned to confirming those individuals who are suitable and wish to live within the scheme. To be eligible to live in the scheme the resident must be 18 years or older, have a diagnosis of Autism and have a local connection or live within the borough.
- 2.6 Adult Social Care are working alongside adults and young people approaching transition who meet the criteria and have shown an interest in moving into the scheme. This includes those currently living in residential or supported housing outside of the borough who would like to be repatriated to Thurrock.
- 2.7 The vision for the scheme is to support people with Autism to live a full and independent life. This will be achieved through a detailed assessment which will include specialist care and support service and where appropriate, education, vocational and employment opportunities. The assessment of need will result in an individualised care plan for each person; this will cover every aspect of the person's life. The services detailed below illustrate the range of options that will be available to meet those identifies needs. It will be expected that the person, their family and individual support will link together to ensure that the right service is accessed or bespoke services are developed. Bringing together different services such as Inspire, specialist day opportunities and the World of Work will encourage the development of life skills and support community presence for each individual.

Inspire is the integrated education and skills offer working to provide educational pathways for Thurrock residents. There are a range of learning opportunities available linked closely to the adult education offer. This supports local residents to gain employment and training opportunities and recognise that learners have a range of challenges that makes learning difficult. The individuals who will live at Medina Road will be able to access a person centred pathway, as appropriate, which addresses their individual learning needs. Everyone living at Medina Road will be offered access to Inspire will have the opportunity to be assigned a skills / life coach who will produce an Education and Health Care Plan specific to their needs to focus on independence with the right levels of support.

Specialist day opportunities support individuals to gain life skills which will complement the support delivered at Medina Road and provide opportunities to access the local community, participate in social activities and build relationships. Those who access this service will have individual 'All About Me' sessions to develop a response programme of support to enhance life skills and opportunities for independence.

The World of Work enables people, where appropriate, to become ready for work through individual learning, support with volunteering and work opportunities together with links to Jobcentre Plus. The courses and service offered enhance the person's confidence understanding of work and volunteering, support to write a CV together with individual job coaching.

Supporting people with Autism can be complex, the people living within Medina Road will require significant levels of support. It is important therefore to ensure that each person, through their individual assessment has every opportunity to develop life skills and independence as fully as possible with the right levels of support.

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

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 promotes individuals rights to choice and control over their day to day life including where and whom they live with. This autonomy allows those who require support from social care to maximise their own potential and achieve a good life by choosing what is important to them within a safe environment. This is reflected in the aim of Medina Road for people living with autism to live as independently as possible within their own home for life.
- 3.2 To ensure that the service is successful, there will be two elements to support those who live within the scheme, housing related support and care and support. The housing related support will assist the tenants with housing related matters such as rent, paying utility bills, upkeep of their homes and accessing their entitlements whilst the care and support will provide personal and emotional support where needed.
- 3.3 The vision for Medina Road is to support adults with Autism within the Thurrock Community. As Autism is a spectrum condition, this means that it

can affect people in different ways. Some people with Autism also have a dual diagnosis including Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. To maximise inclusion for those who meet the criteria a specialist care and support provider will be required.

- 3.4 The specialist team will be required to adapt and flex to the needs and wishes of those who will live within the scheme. As some of the nominated individuals might have previously lived within a residential care or never lived on their own the support required will need to adapt to complex and challenging behaviours which might include the requirement for 24 hours a day support whilst the individual builds confidence and life skills.
- 3.5 To support the vision for Medina Road, the design of the care and support will need to achieve the following:
- work alongside each individual to achieve pre-determined goals such as life skills
  - Increase independence for service users
  - Assistance to access the local community for those who are socially isolated
  - Become part of the community that they work in and are aware of the resources locally.
- 3.6 As the support required for Medina Road will be specialist, the cost of this service will depend on the needs and complexity of each individual who lives there. The care will be structured to include a model based on core care hours and individualised hours. The core care hours will be included as part of the tender process, while the individualised hours will be commissioned based on need. The model is as follows:

**Core tenancy support** costs, which are paid for through Housing Benefit, supporting each individual to maintain their tenancy and day to day living.

**Core care costs** which will provide care hours to each person, the people who will live at Medina Road will have high levels of care needs, the core care hours will be shared across all six service users and this will be procured for the whole service. The core care hour's model is based on 1 member of staff to support 2 Service Users will have an estimated cost for two units of £116,000 per year therefore the predicted annual cost of 3 x £ 116k i.e. £348,000. In addition to this, there will be a requirement for a sleep in night staff member at an estimated cost of £58,000. The total cost of the procured contract will be estimated at £406,000 per annum (approx. £65k per unit), **this is considerably less than the cost of residential care** there might also be a need to top up individual costs but these will be determined dependent on need.

**Individual care hours** will be based on the individual need of each service users where there is a specific requirement for high-level specialist support for example where people may require one to one support to support their

complexity of need. These hours will be individually commissioned either through a spot contract or Direct Payments.

This report is seeking authority to go out to tender to identify a provider to deliver the above care requirements. By commissioning the model of support in this way, we will be able to control the impact of voids within the scheme. The final cost for the support element of the service will be arrived at through a competitive tender process based on quality and price.

- 3.7 We know from previous years and future demands that the numbers of people with autism coming into adult social care are growing. The projected growth in the prevalence of Autism is anticipated to be 13% over the next 17 years. We have reflected this in our Market Development Strategy 2018-2023. The range across the Autistic spectrum is from low level needs that do not require intervention from Social Care to very complex needs, where individuals require high cost packages. Most people with a diagnose of Autism who access Social Care also have Learning Disabilities or Mental Health challenges as well. Over the past five years we have seen the number and complexity of the condition has increased. In developing Medina Road, we are establishing a cost effective alternative for out of borough residential support for people who have autism. Due to the success of local schools such as Treetops and Beacon Hill, it is important that Thurrock responds and ensures there is local provision to deal with this demand. We have undertaken some further modelling work regarding future placement costs and the expected growth. We would anticipate therefore that if we do not create Medina Road as a viable alternative the budget pressures will increase over the next 3 to 6 years approximately by £225,848 per annum.

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

- 4.1 For Cabinet to agree the future design of the service model to support people living within Medina Road.
- 4.2 Agree the procurement for 24 hour care and support for Medina Road.

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

- 5.1 The Autism Strategy was subject to extensive consultation with partners, users and carers.
- 5.2 The proposal will be presented to Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2020 and verbal feedback will be given to Cabinet.

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

- 6.1 The care and support provision of Medina Road impacts on the following priority:

***People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay*

- 6.2 The scheme will help deliver one of the objectives of the Autism Strategy, in particular;

Continue to encourage the development of a range of new and innovative housing options offering care and support.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**  
**Strategic Lead – Corporate Finance**

The funding for the project will be contained within the existing and future budget allocations as it forms part of the overall financial strategy for the departments.

This is part of the demographic growth requirements identified within the Councils medium term financial strategy, as the service should provide a more dynamic support model that focuses on improving independence, and therefore reducing costs overtime for individuals with very complex care needs.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**  
**Deputy Head of Law Social Care and Education**

The Care Act 2014 came into effect in April 2015 and replaced most previous law regarding carers and people being cared for. It outlines the way in which local authorities should carry out carer's assessments and needs assessments; how local authorities should determine who is eligible for support; how local authorities should charge for both residential care and community care; and places new obligations on local authorities. The Care Act 2014 imposes a duty on local authorities to undertake an assessment where there is an apparent need for care and support. The Care Act 2014 also required local authorities to undertake transition assessments if a child, young carer or adult caring for a child is likely to have needs when they , or the child in their care turns 18. This is regardless of whether the individual currently receives any support from Children's Services.

Procurement of the service model as stated in the body of this report requires compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015



### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project  
Monitoring Officer**

Medina Road enables some of our borough's most vulnerable residents to live as independent as possible. The specially designed scheme, and care and support will assist residents of Thurrock to remain local, supporting their dignity and respect by recognising their diverse needs and significantly increase the offer of choice

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

N/A

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

- Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Board Papers, 15 June 2015 item 16 – Bid to the Care and Supported Specialised Housing Fund for housing for young people with autism
- Thurrock Council's Adult Social Care Market Development Strategy

### 9. Appendices to the report

- None

### Report Author:

Michelle Taylor  
Commissioning Manager  
Adults, Housing and Health

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<b>16 September 2020</b>	ITEM: 13 Decision: 110530
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2019/20 - Serious Youth Violence and Vulnerability</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor James Halden, Portfolio Holder for Children and Adult Social Care and Councillor Allen Mayes, Portfolio Holder for Health and Air Quality	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> N/A	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Ian Wake, Director for Public Health	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## Executive Summary

It is a statutory duty of the Director of Public Health to prepare an independent report on the health and wellbeing of the local population each year. Annual Public Health Reports (APHRs) can comprise of a high level overview of the health of the population, but more usually considers and discusses a specific health issue or considers the health of a specific population group in greater depth. Last year's APHR focused on improving older people's health through housing. The 2019/20 report considers the issue of Violence and Vulnerability in young people and how a public health approach can be used to improve outcomes for our residents.

- 1. Recommendations:**
  - 1.1 That Cabinet notes and comments on the content and recommendations contained within the report.**
  - 1.2 That Cabinet considers how the findings and recommendations contained within the report can best be implemented and used to influence broader council strategy in this area.**
- 2. Introduction and Background**
  - 2.1 This report introduces the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2019/20.

- 2.2 The NHS Act 2006 places a statutory legal duty on the Director of Public Health of each top tier local authority to produce comprise of a high level overview of the health of the population, but more usually considers and discusses a specific health issue or considers the health of a specific population group in greater depth.
- 2.3 An Annual Public Health Report (APHR) can. APHRs have a wide audience including officers, elected members, local NHS partners, the third sector and members of the community, and the chosen topic should therefore be of value to multiple stakeholders.
- 2.4 Following discussion with a wide range stakeholders across and beyond the council, the Director of Public Health selected the topic of **Violence and Vulnerability** with a focus on the impact of urban street gangs for 2019/20 report.
- 2.5 Serious youth and gang violence including knife and gun crime and its links to the illegal drugs market and ‘county lines’ has regularly been featured in the news over the past 12 months. Whilst crime has fallen rapidly over the last 20 years, some types of serious violent crime including homicides, knife and gun crime recorded by the police have shown increases since late 2014 in virtually all police force areas in England. Street robbery has also risen sharply since 2016. These increases have been accompanied by a shift towards younger victims and perpetrators.
- 2.6 Although the consequences of violence have a serious and long-lasting negative impact on health, violence in itself is not inevitable and can be prevented. Interventions can not only prevent individuals from developing a propensity for violence but also can improve educational outcomes, employment prospects and long-term health outcomes.
- 2.7 However, the published evidence base suggests a number of issues are hampering an effective response including silo’d working between agencies, the targeting and exploitation of vulnerable young people by gangs and school exclusion. Conversely evidence also details a range of interventions and approaches that have been shown to be effective in preventing youth violence and addressing youth vulnerability.

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

- 3.1 The *Public Health Approach* to tackling serious violence and gang related activity has been reported in the media as an effective response, with the

intervention in Glasgow often cited as being successful in significantly reducing knife related violence. A public health approach can be characterised as containing the following:

- It adopts a whole population, whole systems approach involving multiple stakeholders and datasets.
- It conceptualises violence as a communicable disease that if not addressed 'infects' and spreads outwards within defined communities, but which also can be 'treated' through prevention, intervention and recovery.
- Through using data and intelligence, it defines and monitors the problem to understand the 'who', 'what', 'where' and 'how' associated with it.
- It identifies the risk and protective factors, seeking to minimise the former and strengthen the latter.
- It develops and tests prevention strategies and then ensures widespread adoption through coordinated multi-agency action.

3.2 The APHR 2019/20 uses this methodology as a framework through which to understand the issue of Violence and Vulnerability in Thurrock and to propose multi-agency action to address it.

3.3 The 2019/20 APHR considers the following issues in the detail in the context of a *public health approach to tackling youth violence and vulnerability*:

- Chapter 2 discusses the nature and trends of youth violence at Thurrock and Greater Essex level.
- Chapter 3 discusses the nature and impact of gangs and gang culture in Thurrock
- Chapter 4 discusses the nature and impact of County Lines activity
- Chapter 5 considers the issue of illicit drugs and their connection to youth and gang violence. It also examines the effectiveness of local addiction treatment services
- Chapter 6 considers the risk factors (or vulnerabilities) linked to youth violence and gang culture, both from the published evidence base and by undertaking analyses of Thurrock datasets
- Chapter 7 considers the factors shown to be protective against serious youth violence and gang membership
- Chapter 8 summarises the published evidence base on what has been shown to work in preventing serious youth violence and gang membership
- Chapter 9 critically analyses current service provision in Thurrock against the published evidence and undertakes a 'gap analysis' to identify areas where current provision could be improved

3.4 Chapter 10 draws conclusions from the findings of chapters 1-9 and makes 33 specific recommendations on strategic action to address the issue of serious youth violence and gang membership in Thurrock including proposing a high level new strategic integrated model.

3.5 The recommendations are grouped into four key areas of focus:

- Surveillance and improve data integration
- Primary prevention: 'inoculating' the population to protect them from violence
- Secondary prevention: intervening earlier to support young people most at risk of involvement in serious youth violence or gangs
- Tertiary prevention: intervention with perpetrators and victims of serious youth violence or gang membership to reduce further harm.

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

4.1 The report fulfils a statutory duty of the Director of Public Health. The specific recommendations contained within the report arise from a detailed analysis of local and national data and the published evidence base and seek to improve the lives and outcomes of some of our most vulnerable residents.

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

5.1 A wide range of stakeholders were consulted and contributed to the report. These are set out in the acknowledgements section of the main report. Additionally the findings of the report were discussed at the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Operations Group and Thurrock Violence and Vulnerability Board before the report was finalised, allowing further input of stakeholders into the recommendations.

5.2 Annual Public Health Reports are presented at a wide range of different stakeholder forums. This report will also be presented at CGS O&S Committee, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Board, NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group Board, Cabinet and Full Council.

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

6.1 The report makes clear recommendations on the four areas set out in 3.5. These have implications for services across the council including public health, children's and adults' social care, education and youth services, youth offending, community development, place and community safety. They also have implications for wider stakeholders including the NHS and police.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Strategic Lead, Corporate Finance**

Implementing the recommendations contained within the report in full are likely to result in additional costs. The report was written and finalised pre the COVID-19 epidemic and at time of completion, some financial resource had been earmarked to support implementation. Since March 2020, as a result of COVID-19 the council's financial situation has deteriorated and some of the recommendations may not be affordable in the short term.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**  
**Interim Deputy Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)**

There are no legal implications. The report has been prepared in accordance with the statutory duties of the Director of Public Health although publication has been delayed slightly due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**  
**Strategic Lead: Community Development and Equalities**

Violence and vulnerability is not equally distributed across the population of Thurrock and the report highlights a series of inequality faced by some communities and groups of residents due to violence and vulnerabilities. The recommendations set out within the report seek to address these inequalities, providing targeted and increased support to those most impacted. As such, the report seeks to address and narrow health inequalities caused by violence and vulnerability.

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

Detailed references are given in the main report

**9. Appendices to this report**

- Appendix 1 - Report of the Director of Public Health, 2019/20

**Report Author:**

Ian Wake

Director of Public Health



# Youth Violence and Vulnerability: *The Crime Paradox and a Public Health Response*

Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2019/20



Author: Ian Wake, Director of Public Health, Thurrock Council

Page 47

*"When a flower doesn't bloom, fix the  
environment in which the flower  
grows, not just the flower"*

Alexander den Heur

# Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank and acknowledge the following people who have assisted in developing this Annual Public Health Report

Harinder Bharna: Public Health Information Analyst, Thurrock Council

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Kev Malone, Public Health Programme Manager, Thurrock Council

Mandy Moore: Interim Strategic Lead - Business Intelligence, Thurrock Council

Jason Read: Youth Offending Service Manager, Thurrock Council

Wajid Shafiq: CEO, Xantura Ltd

Elozona Umeh: Senior Public Health Programme Manager: Thurrock Council

# Foreword



\*\*\* INSERT FORWARD

Ian Wake  
Director of Public Health



\*\*\* INSERT FORWARD

Cllr. James Halden  
Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Children's and Adults' Social Care



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Cllr. Allen Mayes  
Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Health and Air Quality

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

Violent crimes, such as murders and gun and knife crime, account for around one per cent of all crime; but the impact of them on society is huge in terms of lives and communities destroyed. Youth violence, particularly related to knife and gang crime has frequently been subject of media attention over the past five years. Whilst crime has fallen rapidly over the last 20 years, some types of serious violent crime including homicides, knife and gun crime recorded by the police have shown increases since late 2016. These increases have been accompanied by a shift towards younger victims and perpetrators.<sup>1</sup>

Knife and gun crime increases have been linked to street crime and the illegal drugs market; particularly crack cocaine and heroin. *County Lines* is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. The gangs exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store drugs and money using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons.<sup>1</sup>

Serious violent crime and Class A drug supply connected to street gangs has a devastating impact on the lives of the individuals, families and communities affected. Street and organised crime gangs operating the *County Lines* model target the most vulnerable young people and adults through a grooming process and then trap and exploit them through threats or actual experience of serious physical, psychological and sexual violence.<sup>2</sup>

Although the consequences of violence have a serious and long-lasting negative impact on health,<sup>3</sup> violence in itself is not inevitable and can be prevented.<sup>4 5</sup> Interventions can not only prevent individuals from developing a propensity for violence but also can improve educational outcomes, employment prospects and long-term health outcomes.<sup>6</sup>

However, the published evidence base suggests a number of issues are hampering an effective response: Silo'd working between agencies has been identified as an issue where Community Safety Partnerships and the police drive enforcement, but Local Community Safeguarding Boards take responsibility for safeguarding responses; young people and vulnerable adults exploited by gangs often straddle the responsibilities of both of these statutory responses in that they are both offenders and victims.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, local child safeguarding responses have historically focused on responding to abuse within families and may not be adequately geared to responding to the issue of exploitation of children and young people by gangs. The trafficking of young people by gangs within the UK means that young people arrested on suspicion of possession of drugs with intent to supply are usually released pending further investigation and sent back to their home area which is usually not the same location of their

arrest, hampering effective response from local children's social care teams.

The targeting and exploitation of young people who have been excluded from secondary school is a major feature in the profile of 'county lines' and gang exploitation. School exclusion, whether being placed on a reduced time table, putting in place home schooling arrangements or placing young people in a Pupil Referral Unit has been shown to increase their vulnerability to child criminal exploitation and gang involvement.

Published evidence also highlights the need for an increased focus on activities that prevent young people and vulnerable adults becoming involved in serious violence and gang culture. Whilst there is a reasonably strong evidence base relating to effective prevention, national evidence suggests that there is inadequate 'upstream' provision and that thresholds of intervention are set too high; in short, we are waiting until young people get arrested for serious crime before intervening.

## The Public Health Approach to tackling serious violence

In 2019, the then Home Secretary – Savid Javid announced a new legal duty on public bodies including the police, local authorities, the NHS, education and youth offending services to adopt a *Public Health Approach* to tackling serious youth violence. In addition, the government announced its intention to amend the Crime and Disorder Act to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships including a legal duty to have a strategy in place to tackle violent crime.

*An approach that seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or perpetrator of violence.*

*By definition, public health aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. Programmes for prevention of violence based on the public health approach are designed to expose a broad segment of a population to prevention measures and to reduce and prevent violence at population level*

The *Public Health Approach* has been recognised as an effective response to serious youth violence, with the interventions in Glasgow often cited in the media as being successful in significantly reducing knife related violence. Box A shows The World Health Organisation definition of a public health approach to reducing serious violence.<sup>8</sup>

The Public Health Approaches can recognised by the following characteristics:



- It adopts a whole population, whole systems approach involving multiple stakeholders and datasets.
- It conceptualises violence as a communicable disease that if not addressed 'infects' and spreads outwards within defined communities, but which also can be 'treated' through prevention, intervention and recovery.
- Through using data and intelligence, it defines and monitors the problem to understand the 'who', 'what', 'where' and 'how' associated with it.
- It identifies the risk and protective factors, seeking to minimise the former and strengthen the latter.
- It develops and tests prevention strategies and then ensures widespread adoption through coordinated multi-agency action.
- It implements at scale, effective and promising interventions whilst continuing to monitor their effects, impact and cost-effectiveness. (Figure X)

- Serious youth violence against the person including assault, serious assault, actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm, stabbing/knife crime and gun crime and street robbery.
- Urban street gangs including gang related violent crime and drug related crime
- Local drugs markets
- County Lines
- Child criminal exploitation through gangs

The following issues (although important) fall outside the scope of this report as they have been subject to other Joint Strategic Needs Assessments:

- Domestic and sexual violence where not associated with gang activity

In this report we aim to answer the following five key questions:

1. What is the nature, extent and trends in serious youth violence, gang related activity and drug related crime in Thurrock?
2. What is the nature, extent and trends in vulnerabilities within the population of young people involved in or at risk of involvement in serious violence and gang related activity?
3. What are the risk and protective factors relating to involvement in serious youth violence and gang involvement?
4. What has been shown to be effective in the published evidence base in preventing and reducing serious youth violence and gang related activity and the harms caused by both?
5. How effective is our current multi-agency response to the above three issues and what additional actions need to occur to further disrupt and prevent serious youth violence and gang related activity and the harms that they cause?

Figure 1.1: A Public Health Approach to Tackling Serious Violence



Source: WHO, 2017

## Scope of this report

This report focuses on the issue of serious youth violence and urban street gang activity using the *Public Health Approach* methodology to identify and address the vulnerabilities of the young people concerned. For the purposes of this report 'young people' generally refers to the population of Thurrock aged 10-24 unless otherwise specified as our intelligence suggests that it is this group of youth that are most likely to become involved in serious violence and gangs. However, prevention activity with younger children is also discussed. The following issues are considered by this report:

## How this report is structured

Chapter 2 discusses the nature and trends of youth violence at Thurrock and Greater Essex level.

Chapter 3 discusses the nature and impact of gangs and gang culture in Thurrock

Chapter 4 discusses the nature and impact of County Lines activity

Chapter 5 considers the issue of illicit drugs and their connection to youth and gang violence. It also examines the effectiveness of local addiction treatment services

Chapter 6 considers the risk factors (or vulnerabilities) linked to youth violence and gang culture, both from the published evidence base and by undertaking analyses of Thurrock datasets

Chapter 7 considers the factors shown to be protective against serious youth violence and gang membership

Chapter 8 summarises the published evidence base on what has been shown to work in preventing serious youth violence and gang membership

Chapter 9 critically analyses current service provision in Thurrock against the published evidence and undertakes a

'gap analysis' to identify areas where current provision could be improved

Chapter 10 draws conclusions from the findings of chapters 1-9 and makes recommendations on strategic action to address the issue of serious youth violence and gang membership in Thurrock including proposing a high level new strategic integrated model.

# Chapter 2: Youth Violence

## Key Findings

Whilst overall rates of crime have fallen over the last 25 years, rates of recorded crimes of violence in Thurrock, Southend and Essex have risen sharply since 2013. Rates of reported crimes of violence with injury and weapons offences where the victim was aged 10-24 in Thurrock rose from 2015/16, peaking in 2016/17 but have since dropped back slightly. Ambulance data suggests that call outs to young people aged 10-24 for assault and stabbing/gunshot wounds have fallen from 2014-15 to 2018-19 but call outs for assault with serious injury have risen. However, Youth Offending Service Records indicate that violence against the person offences and weapons offences committed by young people in Thurrock have risen sharply since 2013-14 to a peak in 2016-17 and fallen back only slightly.

Thurrock has the second highest rate of recorded violence with injury offences against young people aged 10-24 in Essex and the fourth highest rate of ambulance call outs to young people because of violence. Where the suspect was identified, just over half of all suspects were also aged 10-24. The majority of victims and suspects were the same sex, with just over 63% of recorded violent incidents being male on male and a further 23% being female on female.

Violence with injury offences are not uniformly distributed across either Essex or Thurrock. Only 35.6% of wards in Essex had one or more reported incidents of violence against young people recorded in the last two years with a small number of 16 wards (2.4%) having high (>14) numbers of reported incidents of violence. The most violent wards in terms of number of reported incidents against young people aged 10-24 in Thurrock over the last two years were Grays Riverside, Stanford-le-Hope West, West Thurrock and South Stifford, Aveley and Uplands, and Tilbury St. Chads with nine or more recorded incidents. Where the suspect was recorded as aged 10-24, the majority (80%) lived in Thurrock with 20% recorded as living in an area outside Essex.

All deprivation indices at ward level are a very poor predictor of violence and weapons crime. Conversely, previous history of violence at ward level is a very strong predictor of the likelihood of future violence. 100% of wards across Essex with six or more ambulance call outs in 2016-17 to 2017-18 for a stabbing/knife/weapons injury had at least one ambulance call out for the same injuries in 2018-19. Similarly, over 70% of wards with three to five ambulance call outs for these injuries in the previous two years had at least one ambulance call out in the subsequent year. These data could be used to predict the geographical location of future youth violence and better target enforcement and prevention activity and we predict that there is a 70% chance of at least one ambulance call out for a knife/stabbing or gunshot injury in 2019/20 in East Tilbury ward, Chadwell St. Mary Ward, Stanford East and Corringham Town ward and Tilbury St. Chads ward.

The majority (82.7%) of young people who access Thurrock Youth Offending Service because of violence against the person offences do not re-offend. This suggests YOS has a high degree of success in terms of preventing future offending. However there is a small cohort (18%) who commit two or more violence against the person or robbery offences and a very small cohort (3.3%) who commit three or more offences. Our data suggests that this small cohort of offenders committing multiple offences also commit offences relating to supply of class A drugs and could also be more likely to be involved in organised gang activity.

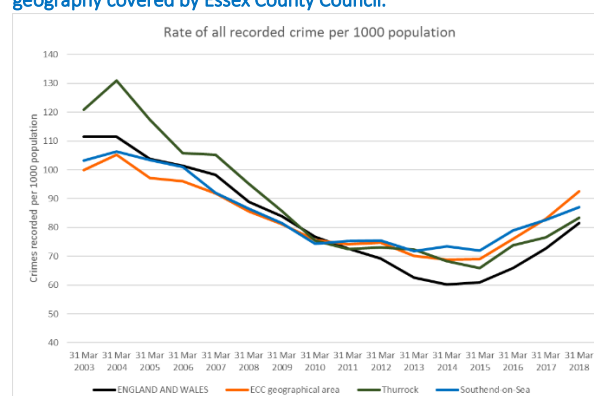
## Introduction

In this chapter, we examine the issue of serious youth violence and its public health impact on the perpetrator, victim and wider communities.

We discuss trends in serious youth violence using police reported crime datasets, ambulance service data and undertake detailed analyses of data held by the Thurrock Youth Offending Service (YOS).

Recorded crime in England and Wales and Essex fell significantly since 2003 to 2014, although in the last four years has seen this trend begin to reverse. (Figure 2.1).

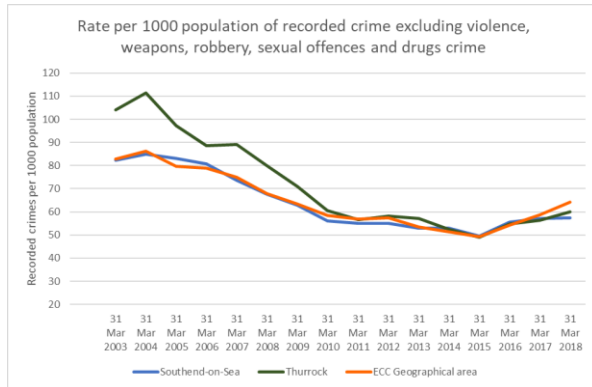
Figure 2.1: Rate of all recorded crime per 1000 population, England and Wales, Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea and the geography covered by Essex County Council.



Whilst the dramatic decrease in recorded crime is welcome, the more recent increase can be attributed to rises in certain

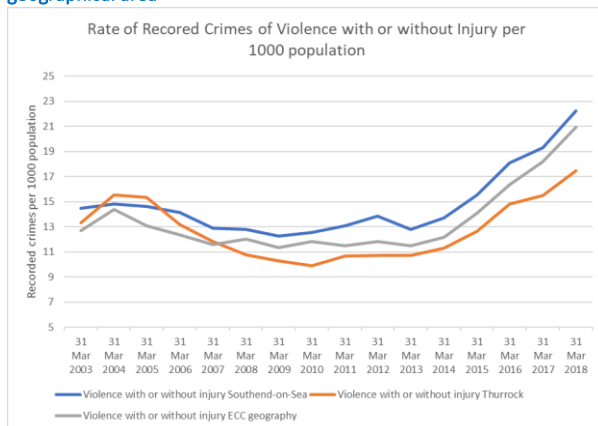
types of offences, particularly violence and sexual offences. Figure 2.2 shows the trend in recorded crime where violent crime, robbery against the person, weapons offences sexual offences and drugs offences are excluded.

**Figure 2.2: Rate of crime excluding violence, sexual offences, weapons offences, robbery against the person**



Conversely, figure 2.3 shows the trend in rate of recorded violent crime per 1000 population which has increased significantly from 2013 onwards.

**Figure 2.3: Rate of recorded crimes of violence with or without injury per 1000 population, Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea, ECC geographical area**



Estimating the absolute number of incidents of serious youth violence is difficult. There are three potential sources of data: police records on reported crime, ambulance service data on call outs for violent incidents and youth offending service for young people charged with violent assaults. Each has its advantages and limitations and will be discussed in turn.

## Police Data on Reported Crime

### Trends and Incidence of Reported Violence with Injury and Possession of Weapons Offences

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 (overleaf) show the trend in absolute numbers of Violence with Injury and Possession of Weapons offences in Thurrock and Greater Essex from 2015/16 to 2018/19

We analysed an anonymised dataset provided by Essex Police on reported crime. The dataset provided records of reported crimes recorded as *Violence with Injury, Possession of Weapons Offences, Rape, Other Sexual Offences, Trafficking of Drugs and Possession of Drugs* between the fiscal years of 2015-15 and 2018-19. The data set also provided details of location of reported offence down to ward level, sex and 'ethnic appearance' of the suspect and victim, whether or not the victim was aged between 10 and 24 and whether or not the suspect was aged under 25. Crucially, unlike the Ambulance Data Set (discussed later) a field was provided that allowed us to exclude crimes committed in a domestic setting (which although important, fall outside the agreed scope of this report).

We also excluded records of crimes relating to rape and sexual violence as it was not possible to determine whether or not they related to gangs and as such could largely fall outside the scope of this report. This provided a total number of records (crimes reported) of 11,446.

### Caveats on the dataset and analyses we have conducted:

As with all datasets that we analysed for this report, the police data also has limitations. We believe that the analyses undertaken using this dataset are likely to *underestimate significantly* the true incidence and prevalence of serious youth violence for two reasons:

Firstly not all incidents of youth violence will be reported to the police. Young people involved in gang related violence may be unwilling to report it both due to fear of reprisals from other gang members and because they may be involved in criminal activity themselves.

Secondly, the age of the victim is poorly recorded within the dataset with 4198 (36.7%) of the original 11,446 having no record. Because of this, we have had to also exclude all of these records from our analyses. This exclusion has meant that drugs offences recorded at Thurrock level are so low in number that we have not been able to undertake useful analysis on this type of crime using the police dataset. However we have analysed the remaining records for the crime categories of *Violence with Injury* and *Possessions of Weapons* offences.

Finally, for the majority of crimes recorded in the dataset, a suspect is not recorded, presumably because the police were unable to identify one. As such, analyses of data on suspects only represents a relatively small cohort of the offenders who perpetrated the crimes recorded. We are unable to say with certainty that this sample is representative of the overall population of perpetrators.

Figure 2.4

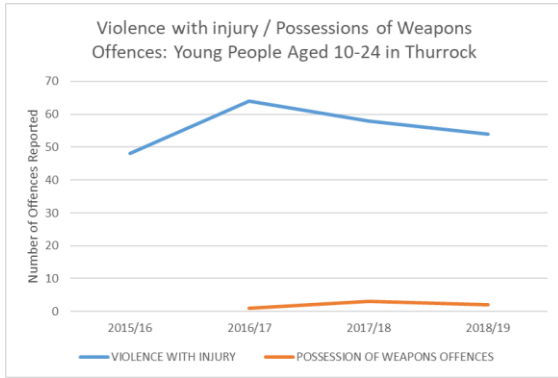
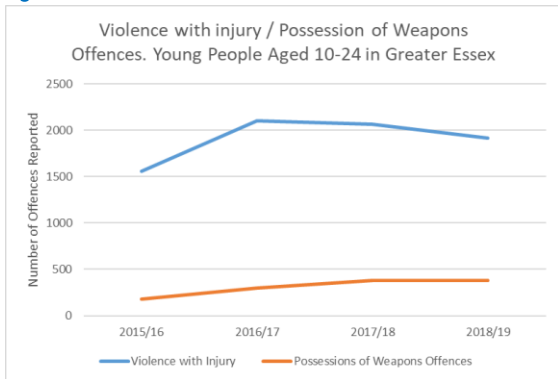


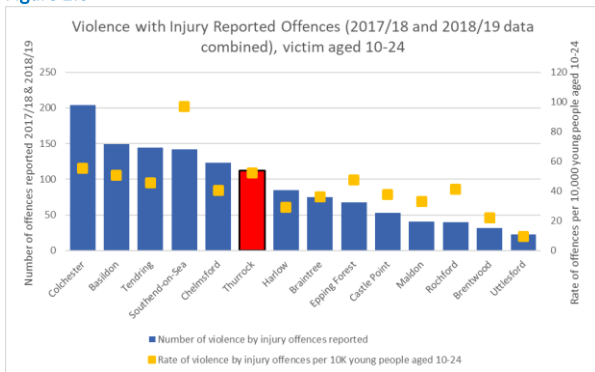
Figure 2.5



Although different in scale, both charts show a similar trend with a rise to a peak in 2016/17 of *Violence with Injury* followed by a slowly decreasing trend in subsequent years. The trend for *Possession of Weapons* offences in Thurrock shows a different trend to Greater Essex with numbers falling from 2017/18 whilst Essex remains static. However due to the numbers of records we have had to exclude because of lack of victim age data recorded, the absolute numbers of records analysed for Thurrock is very small.

Figure 2.6 compares the absolute numbers of *Violence with Injury* offences reported to Essex Police in each district, combining the last two fiscal years of data available where the victim was aged 10-24. As reported earlier, incidents that occurred in a domestic setting have been excluded. Because the population of young people aged 10-24 is not evenly distributed across Essex, we have also presented this data as a rate per 10,000 young people living in each district.

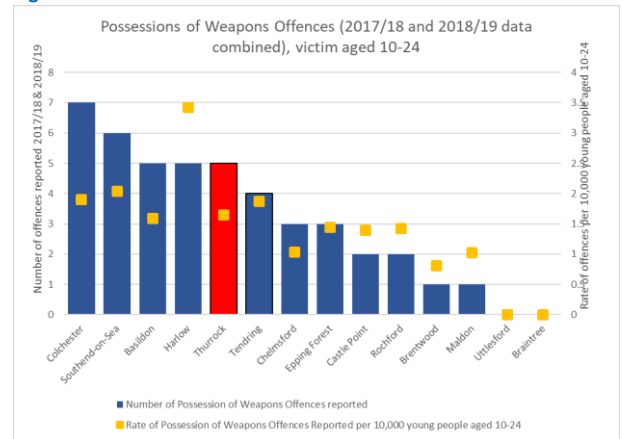
Figure 2.6



In terms of absolute numbers of *Violence with Injury* incidents reported by young people, Thurrock ranks sixth out of 14 districts in Essex. However when rate of reporting per 10,000 young people living in each district is considered, Thurrock has the second highest rate of reported incidents in Essex. It is unclear from the data the extent to which this is caused by a genuinely higher underlying incidence of violence against young people, or because of a greater willingness to report violence compared to young people in other districts.

Figure 2.7 shows similar absolute numbers and rates of reporting of *Possession of Weapons* offences.

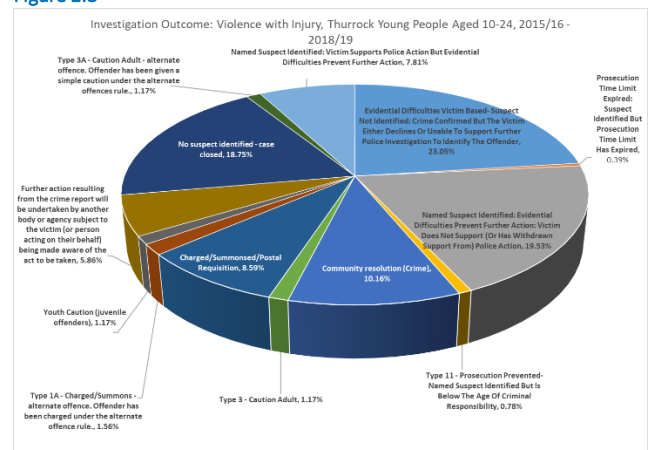
Figure 2.7



Thurrock is ranked the fifth highest district in Essex in terms of both absolute numbers and rate per 10,000 young people aged 10-24 for reported *Possession of Weapons* offences.

Figure 2.8 shows the recorded investigation outcome for reported offences for *Violence with Injury* against young people in Thurrock aged 10-24 between 2015/16 and 2018/19.

Figure 2.8



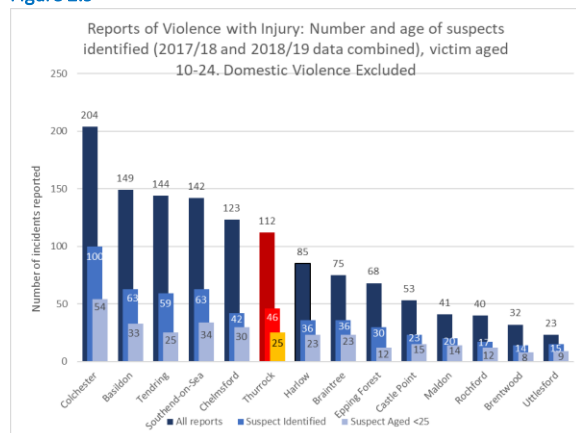
Only 8.59% of reported offences resulted in a formal charge/summons or postal requisition. The main reasons for this were an inability to identify a suspect, the victim withdrawing support for the police action, a community resolution, and further action being taken by another body or agency. Assuming all reports are genuine, this suggests

that the vast majority of offenders who commit violence with injury offences against young people in Thurrock will never face conviction.

### Individuals recorded as suspects for involvement in Violence with Injury Offences.

Figure 2.9 shows the number of incidents of *violence with injury* and number where the suspect's details appear in the dataset and where the suspect is also under 25 by district in Essex. These data are likely to be a combination of the underlying incidence of violence where both the suspect and victim is aged under 25, the willingness of victims to report violence incidents to the police and the police's ability to identify a suspect. Thurrock ranks seventh out of 16 district areas in Essex for number of suspects identified in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Figure 2.9



Of the 112 incidents of *Violence with Injury* reported to Essex police (excluding domestic incidents) in 2017/18 and 2018/19 where the victim was under 25, 46 records (41.1%) had details of an identified suspect and of these, 25 records (54.3%) show that the suspect was also aged under 25. This suggests that only just over half of incidents of violence against young people in the borough are committed by other young people under the age of 25.

### Sex of suspects and victims of violent crime with injury

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 show the recorded sex and ethnic appearance of victims and suspects recorded in the police records from 2015/16 to 2018/19 for Thurrock and Greater Essex. Records with no suspect recorded were excluded from this analysis.

Table 2.1: Sex of Suspects and Victims in Thurrock

		SUSPECTS ↓	
		Male	Female
VICTIMS →	Male	63.16%	3.51%
	Female	10.53%	22.81%

Table 2.2: Sex of Suspects and Victims in Greater Essex

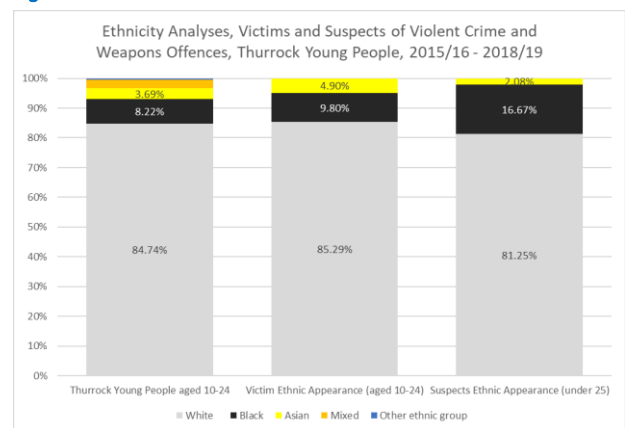
		SUSPECTS ↓	
		Male	Female
VICTIMS →	Male	58.70%	5.60%
	Female	11.65%	24.04%

The majority of reported incidents of *violence with injury* in both Thurrock and Greater Essex has the sex of both the victim and suspect as *male* but with a greater percentage in Thurrock than Essex. The next most common category is where both the victim suspect is female. Incidents of male violence against females makes up circa 11% of records in both Thurrock and Greater Essex and incidents of female suspects committing violence against male victims is rare.

### Ethnicity of suspects and victims of violent crime with injury

We analysed the recorded 'ethnic appearance' fields within the police data for victims aged 10-24 and suspects aged under 25 for incidents of *violence with injury* reported in Thurrock between 2015-16 and 2018/19. (Figure 2.10)

Figure 2.10



The ethnicity structure of the cohort of victims reporting crimes of *violence with injury* in Thurrock is broadly in line with ethnicity structure within the general population of young people aged 10-24 in the borough. However, within the cohort of suspects, black young people are over-represented with approximately double the proportion of black suspects compared to the general population. The reasons for this are unclear from the data and are likely to be complex. It is worth noting that 'mixed race' was not recorded in the police data which may over-inflate the numbers of young people recorded as having a black ethnic appearance.

### Location of suspects in relation to victims

The police dataset records the district in which the suspect resides. We analysed the dataset to determine whether suspects were likely to live in the same district as victims. This provides a sense of whether suspects are committing violence within their own district or travelling across or into Essex from other districts to commit violent acts against young people.

Table 2.3 (overleaf) shows this location analyses for records containing suspects aged 25+ and table 2.4 shows the same analyses for records containing suspects aged under 25.

Each row shows the percentage of incidents of violence with injury committed in that district in Essex committed by

suspects who live in every district in Essex and outside of the county. The last two full fiscal years of data that were provided (2017/18 and 2018/19 are combined). Boxes where

the location of the crime and the location of the suspect are the same are highlighted in red.

**Table 2.3: Location of Violence with Injury reported crimes and Address of Suspects (Victims aged 10-24, Suspects aged 25+) 2017-18 and 2018-19 Combined Data**

CRIME LOCATION (Victim aged 10-24)	SUSPECTS' (aged 25+) LOCATION ↓↓														CRIME TOTALS	
	Basildon	Braintree	Brentwood	Castle Point	Chelmsford	Colchester	Epping Forest	Harlow	Maldon	Rochford	Southend-on-Sea	Tendring	Thurrock	Uttlesford		Area outside Essex
Basildon	80.00%									3.33%			10.00%		6.67%	100%
Braintree		76.92%							7.69%						15.38%	100%
Brentwood			83.33%												16.67%	100%
Castle Point				87.50%							12.50%				0.00%	100%
Chelmsford					91.67%										8.33%	100%
Colchester				2.17%		91.30%						2.17%			4.35%	100%
Epping Forest							83.33%								16.67%	100%
Harlow								100.00%							0.00%	100%
Maldon		33.33%							50.00%						16.67%	100%
Rochford				20.00%	20.00%					60.00%					0.00%	100%
Southend-on-Sea											93.10%				6.90%	100%
Tendring		3.03%										87.88%			6.06%	100%
Thurrock													100.00%		0.00%	100%
Uttlesford		20.00%			20.00%									60.00%	0.00%	100%

**Table 2.4: Location of Violence with Injury reported crimes and Address of Suspects (Victims aged 10-24, Suspects aged under 25) 2017-18 and 2018-19 Combined Data**

CRIME LOCATION (Victim aged 10-24)	SUSPECTS' (aged under 25) LOCATION ↓↓														CRIME TOTALS	
	Basildon	Braintree	Brentwood	Castle Point	Chelmsford	Colchester	Epping Forest	Harlow	Maldon	Rochford	Southend-on-Sea	Tendring	Thurrock	Uttlesford		Area outside Essex
Basildon	96.97%				3.03%											100%
Braintree		91.30%				4.35%					4.35%					100%
Brentwood			62.50%												37.50%	100%
Castle Point	6.67%			93.33%												100%
Chelmsford		3.33%		3.33%	80.00%				6.67%				3.33%		3.33%	100%
Colchester		5.66%				81.13%						11.32%			1.89%	100%
Epping Forest							83.33%								16.67%	100%
Harlow							4.35%	78.26%							17.39%	100%
Maldon									92.86%						7.14%	100%
Rochford										66.67%	33.33%					100%
Southend-on-Sea				2.94%						2.94%	91.18%				2.94%	100%
Tendring						4.00%						84.00%			12.00%	100%
Thurrock													80.00%		20.00%	100%
Uttlesford														88.89%	11.11%	100%

Both tables show that the majority of records with a recorded suspect show that suspect also lived in the district that they were suspect of committing the crime in. This suggests a low level of mobility of suspects when committing violent incidents. Interestingly, unlike many other districts has a lower proportion of suspects aged under 25 (80%) who also live within the borough that they committed the crime, whilst conversely 100% of suspects aged 25+ lived within Thurrock. 20% of reported incidents of violence with injury where the suspect was aged under 25 had records of suspects living outside Essex. This may reflect anecdotal evidence that young people are travelling into the borough from the Metropolitan Police area to commit violence against other young people.

### Ward level analyses on police dataset

The police dataset contained details of the ward in which the reported incident occurred. We analysed this dataset using records from 2017-18 and 2018-19 across greater Essex, excluding domestic violence incidents.

Figures C shows the distribution of reported incidents for Violence with Injury at ward level, by local authority and with Thurrock wards highlighted. Figure D shows the same data but only highlighting wards with seven or more reported incidents of Violence with Injury.

Figure 2.11: Number of incidents reported for *Violence with Injury* by Ward across Greater Essex 2017-18 and 2018-19

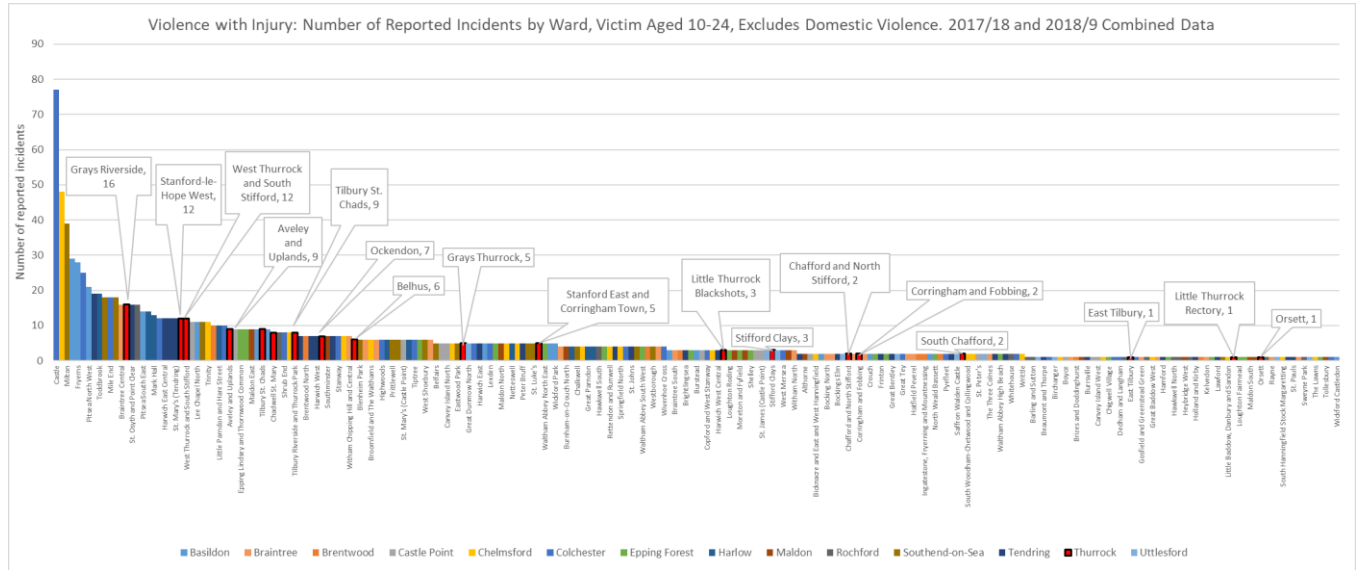
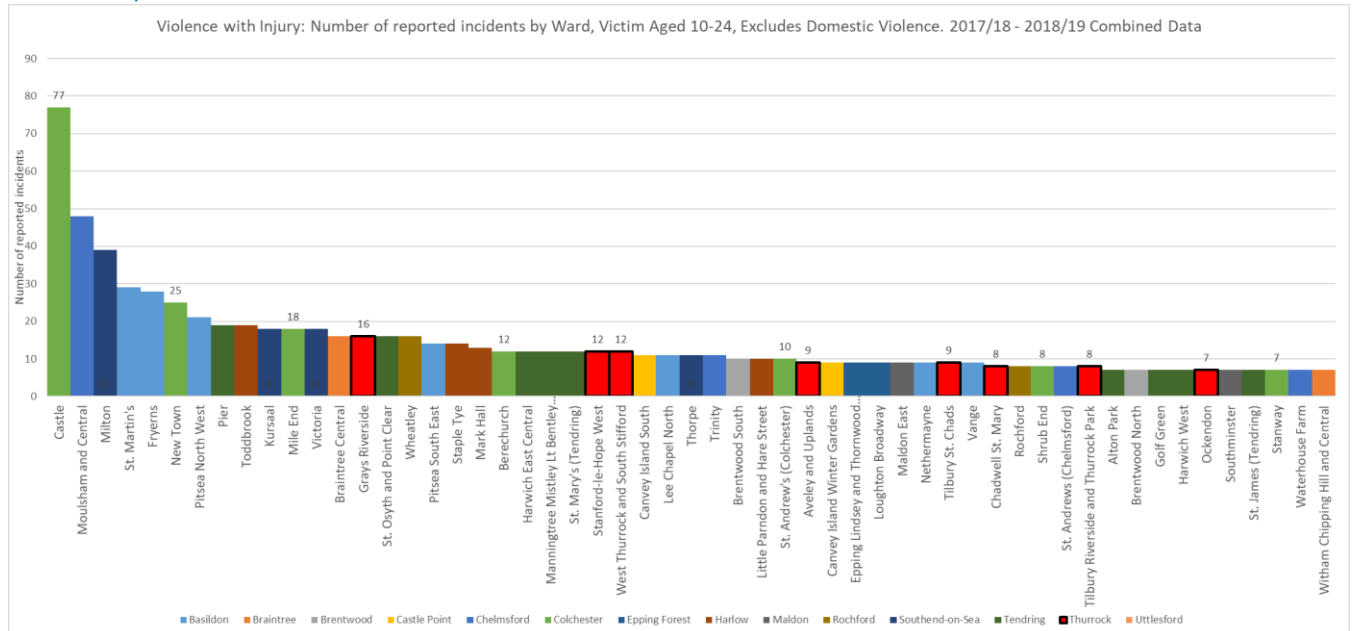


Figure 2.12: Number of incidents reported for *Violence with Injury* by Ward across Greater Essex 2017-18 and 2018-19 (Wards with seven or more incidents)



The ward with by far the highest number of reported incidents of *violence with injury* against young people aged 10-24 in the last two years in Greater Essex is *Castle Ward* in Colchester. *Grays Riverside* is the ward in Thurrock with the highest number of reported incidents with 16 in the last two years. It is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> highest out of 665 number of wards in Greater Essex. Thurrock has eight wards with seven or more reported incidents of *violence with injury*: *Grays Riverside*, *Stanford-le-Hope-West*; *West Thurrock and South Stifford*; *Aveley and Uplands*; *Tilbury St. Chads*; *Chadwell St. Mary*; *Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park*; and *Ockendon*.

Figures E and F show similar analyses but only with records where a suspect has been identified who was under 25. As such, these figures show confirmed incidents of youth-on-youth serious violence. Because many records have no suspect data figure E and F show analyses across the longer time period of 2015-16 to 2018-19. Figure F shows only wards where there were five or more reported incidents. All but one wards with five or more reported incidents of *violence with injury* where the suspect was also under 25 were in the Tilbury and Chadwell locality of the borough.

Figures C-E shows that reporting of *violence with injury* is concentrated to specific geographical locations in Essex. In total, 237 of 665 wards (35.6%) in Greater Essex had one or more reported incidents of *Violence with Injury* where the victim was aged 10-24 and only 103 (15.4%) had five or more incidents reported in the last full fiscal years for which we have data. This intelligence has implications for better targeting of both future enforcement and possibly prevention activity.



Figure 2.13

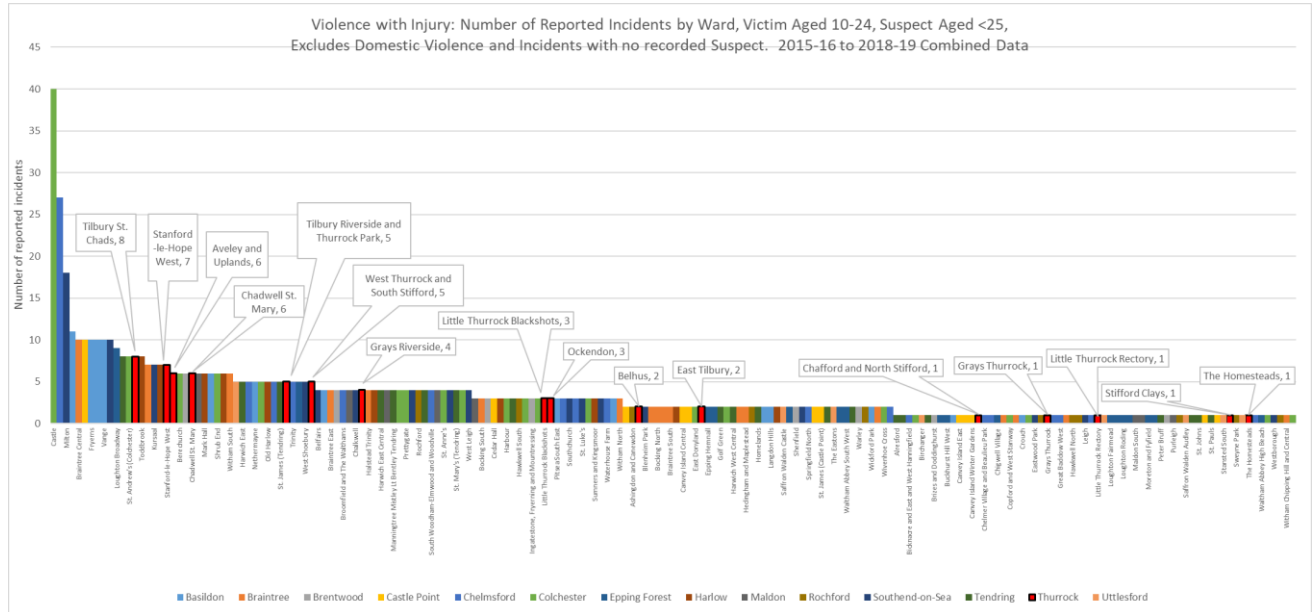
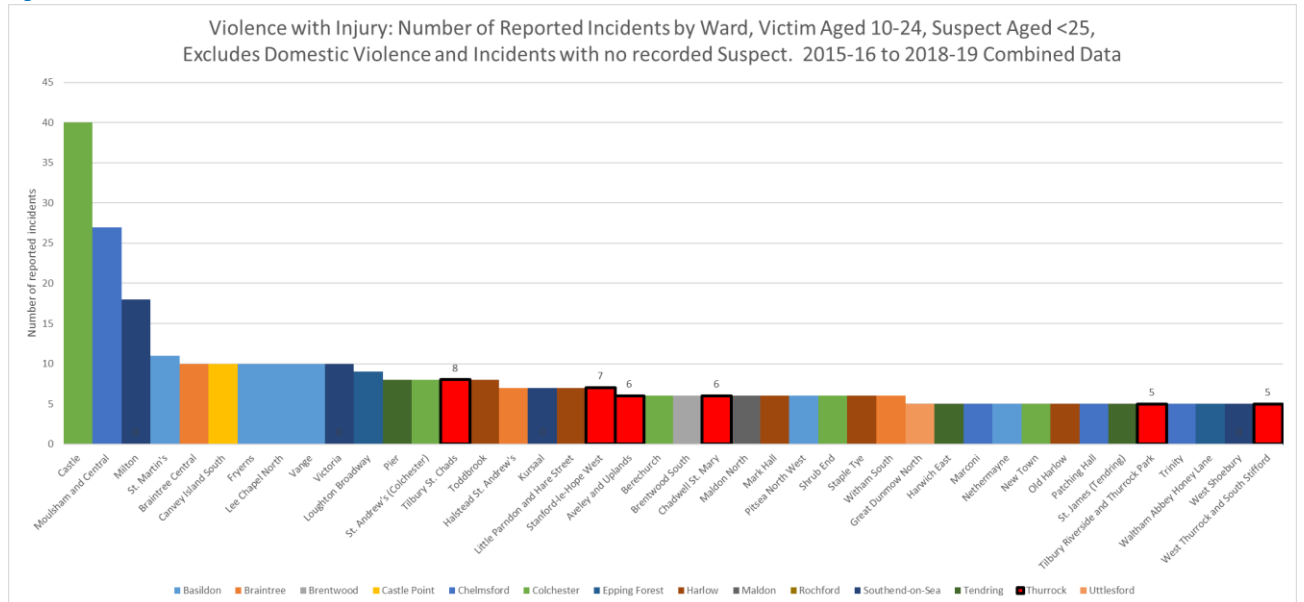


Figure 2.14



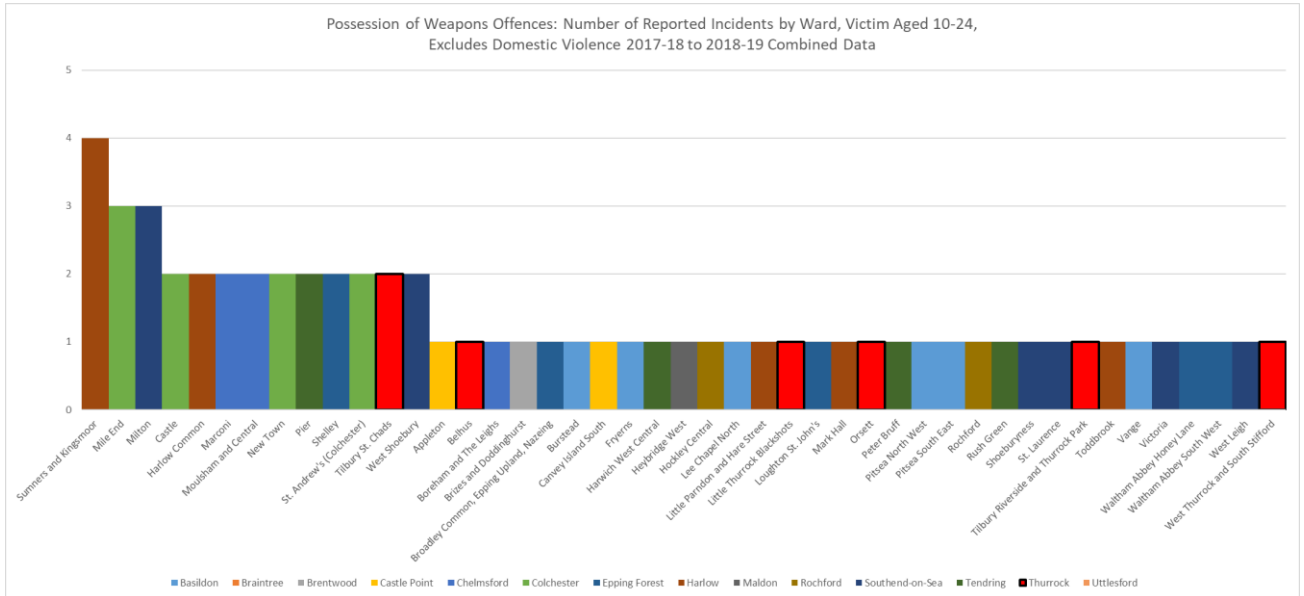
Distribution of Possession of Weapons Offences

If reporting of *violence with injury* offences can be said to be relatively localised to specific wards in the county, *possession of weapons offences* is extremely localised. Figure 2.15 shows the number of incidents of *possession of weapons offences* across Greater Essex in 2017-18 and 2018-19 where the victim was aged 10-24. In total, 63 separate reported incidents were recorded across only 33 of the 655 wards (4.96% of all wards). Again, this intelligence could be used to target enforcement and potentially secondary prevention activity.

Thurrock had six wards where *Possession of Weapons Offences* were reported in 2017/18 – 2018/19: *Tilbury St. Chads; Belhus; Little Thurrock and Blackshots; Orsett; Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park; and West Thurrock and South Stifford.*

Analyses of records where a suspect under 25 was recorded has not been included as the number of records were too small to make the analyses meaningful.

Figure 2.15



## Ambulance Data

The Essex Ambulance Service provided their dataset from 2014/15 to 2018/19 for ambulance call outs for patients experiencing injury due to violence. Ambulance data included the age of the patient and the location at ward level of the call out. The recording of ward provides a highest level of geographical granularity on where violent incidents may be occurring in Essex. We analysed the subset of this dataset relating to patients aged 10-24. Injuries caused by violence were categorised into those caused by assault, those caused by serious assault with injury and those caused by a gunshot/knife or other stabbing. We excluded all records relating to sexual assault, where the injury was self-inflicted or where we were not able to determine from the data whether or not the assault was sexual or the injury was self-inflicted. Unlike the police data, the Ambulance dataset is more likely to give an accurate picture of need, both because it will not suffer from an unwillingness to report the incident, and because the age of the patient is very well recorded, meaning that we have been able to identify accurately patients who were in the age group 10-24.

### Caveats on the dataset and analyses we have conducted

The ambulance dataset does however contains limitations when considering youth violence.

Firstly, the dataset is concerned only with victims of violence who sustain injuries serious enough for an ambulance to be called. As such it is likely to *under-estimate* the overall numbers of young people who are victims of violent attack in the population.

Secondly, the dataset does not record any information on the perpetrators of violence and as such we cannot determine whether or not the perpetrators were also young people. As such it is likely to also include many incidents relating to domestic violence which whilst important are

beyond the scope of this report. In that sense, it is highly likely to *over-estimate* the scale of youth violence that this report concerns itself with in its agreed scope.

### Trends in ambulance call outs for young people who have been victims of violence

Figures 2.16 and 2.17 show the trend in absolute numbers of ambulance call outs for assault, assault with serious injury and stabbing/knife/gunshot wounds in young people aged 10-24 between 2014/15 and 2018/19 in Greater Essex and Thurrock.

Figure 2.16

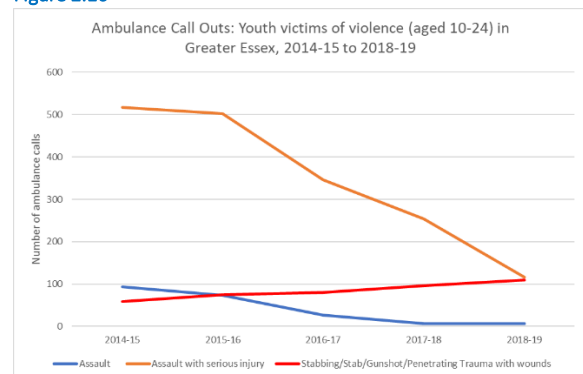
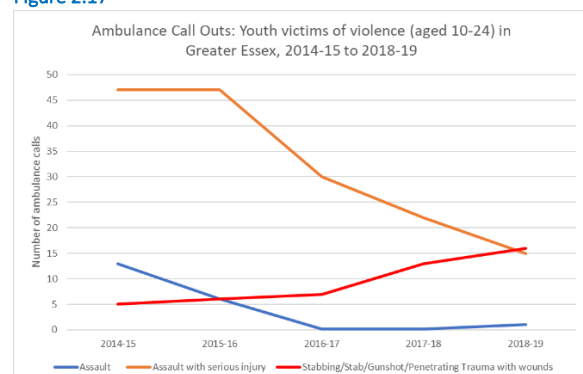


Figure 2.17



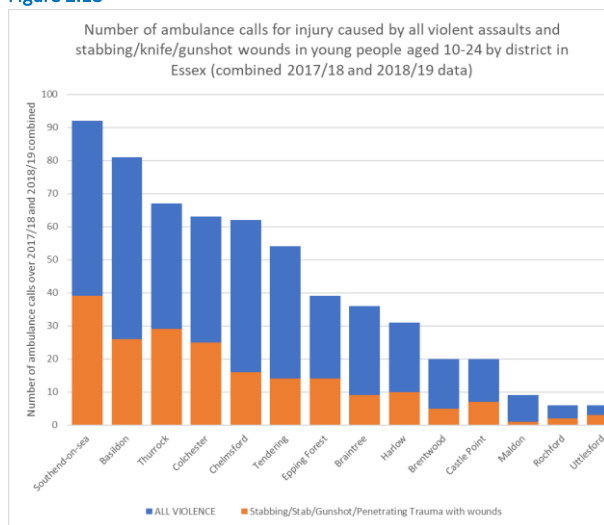
Both graphs show a similar pattern; ambulance call outs for assaults/assault with serious injury have a downward trend whilst ambulance call outs for knife/stabbing/gunshot wounds have risen sharply, particularly over the last three years in Thurrock.

### Ambulance Callouts by District

Figure 2.18 shows the total number of ambulance call outs for all violence (excluding self-inflicted/sexual violence) and knife/stabbing/gunshot wounds by district across greater Essex in 2017/18 and 2018/19 for patients aged 10-24.

Thurrock had the third highest numbers of ambulance call outs for violence and the second highest number of ambulance call outs for stabbing/knife/gunshot wounds in Essex over the last two years of recorded data.

Figure 2.18

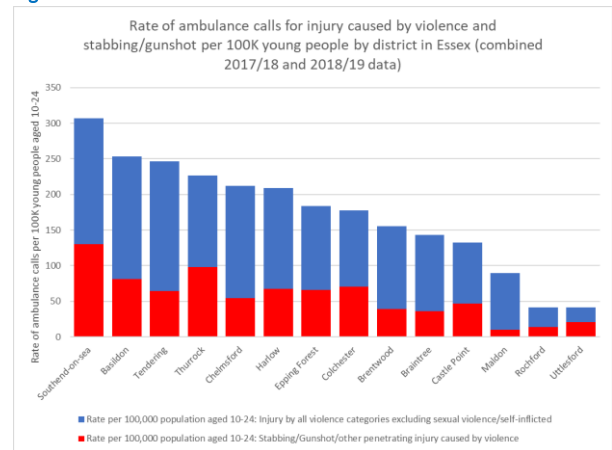


However, we know that the population of young people in Essex is not evenly distributed across the county. In order to control for this, we calculated the rates ambulance call outs for injuries caused by all violence (excluding sexual violence) and injuries caused by stabbing/knife/gunshot wounds per

100,000 young people aged 10 to 24 living in each district in Greater Essex. (Figure 2.19). These data give an indication of the risk that a young person aged 18-24 has of experiencing a violent attack requiring an ambulance in different geographies across Essex.

The rate of ambulance call outs for injuries caused by violence per 100K young people aged 10-24 in Thurrock is the fourth highest in Essex, and for ambulance conveyances for stab/knife/gunshot wounds, is the second highest in Essex.

Figure 2.19



### Ambulance Call-Outs for Violence by Ward

We analysed ambulance data at ward level for assault/assault with serious injury and stabbing/knife/gunshot wounds for young people, combining the five years of data between 2014/15 and 2018/19 both in absolute numbers and as a rate per 1000 population of young people aged 10-24 in each ward.

Figures 2.20 and 2.21 show absolute numbers of ambulance call outs for violence by ward for all wards in Essex and the wards with the highest numbers of call outs (8 or more calls). Thurrock wards are shown in red with a black border.

Figure 2.21

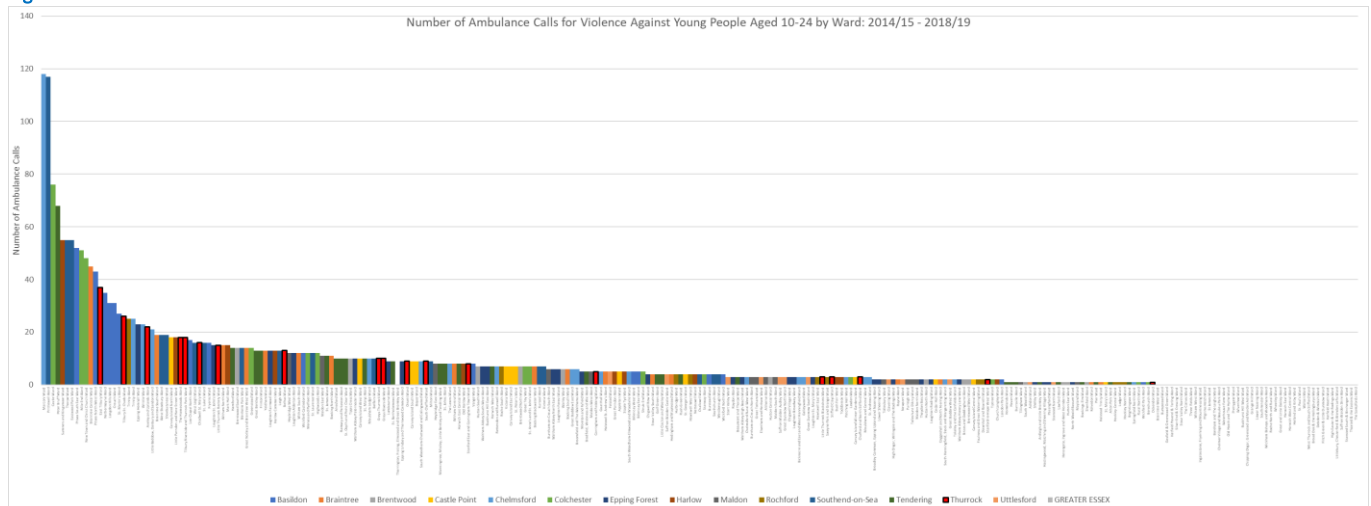
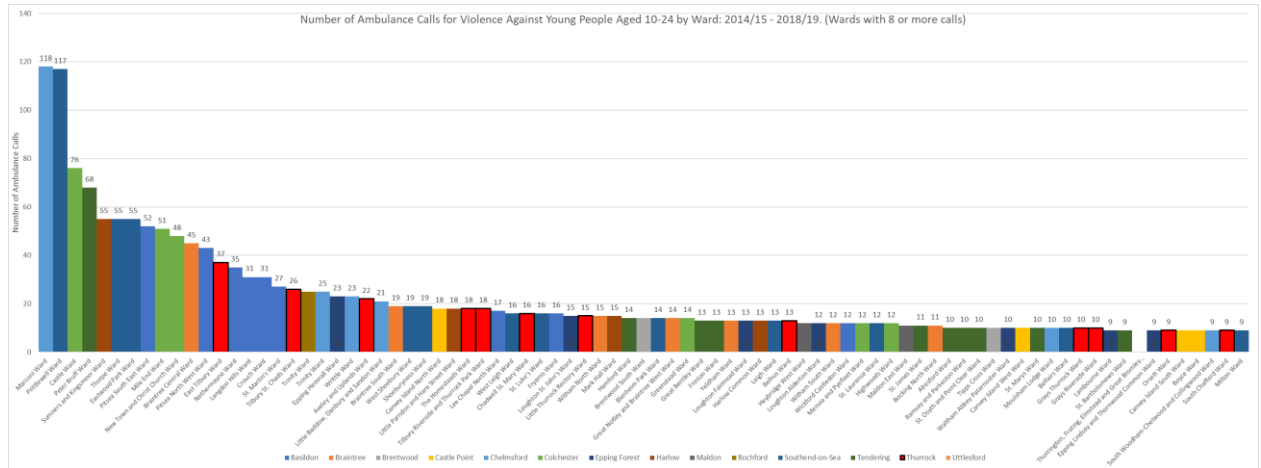


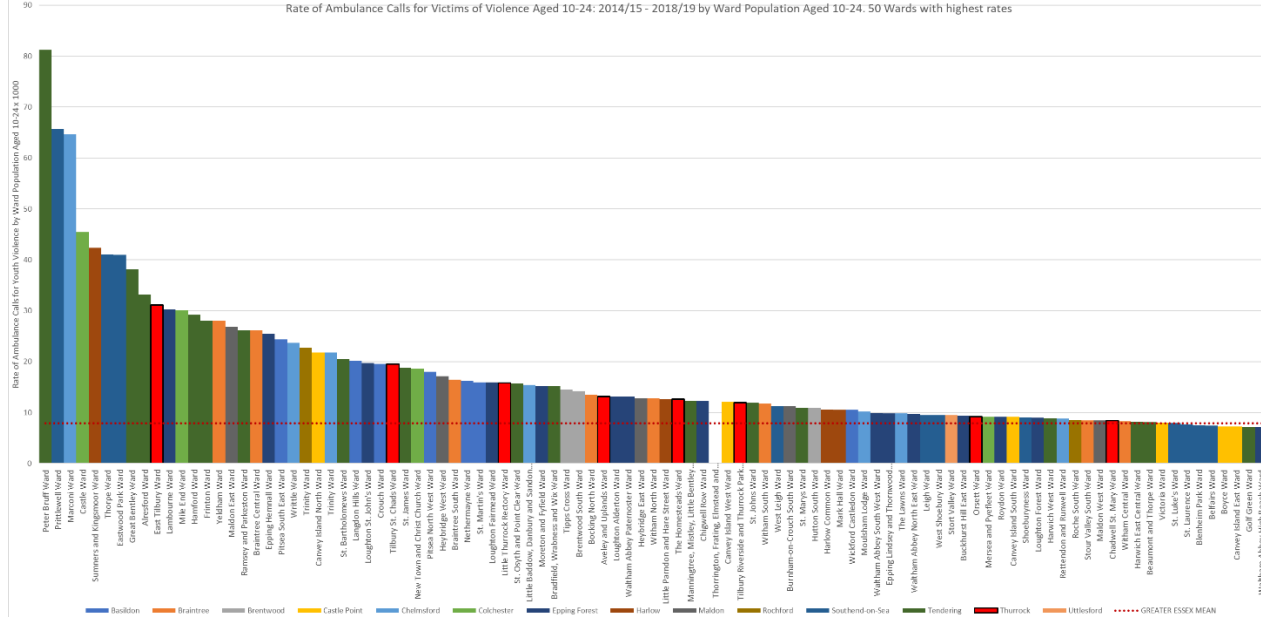
Figure 2.22



Ambulance call outs for injuries caused by violence in young people are not evenly distributed across wards in Essex. Of the 279 wards in Essex, 42 (15.1%) received no ambulance call outs for injuries caused by violence in young people in the last five years. Conversely, there were 118 ambulance call outs in the ward with the highest level of ambulance use (Marconi). In Thurrock, East Tilbury received the most ambulance call outs for injuries caused by violence in young people aged 10-24 over the last five years, followed by Tilbury St. Chads and Aveley and Uplands ranking them 13<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> respectively across Essex for ambulance call outs for victims of youth violence. These data have implications for targeting of both future enforcement and prevention activity.

We also calculated the rate of ambulance call outs for victims of violence aged 10-24 per 1000 young people resident in each ward. This analyses attempts to control for the fact the population of young people is not distributed evenly between wards, and aims to calculate the *risk* a young person aged 10-24 living in each ward has of requiring an ambulance due to injury caused by violence. However some caution needs to be attached to this analyses as young people may not be victims of violence in the ward that they live. Figure 2.23 shows this analyses for the 50 wards with the highest rate of ambulance call outs for violence in young people aged 10-24 per 1000 young people resident in that ward. Eight wards in Thurrock have rates of ambulance call outs for violence greater than the Essex mean: *East Tilbury, Tilbury St. Chads, Little Thurrock and Rectory, Aveley and Uplands, The Homesteads, Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Orsett, and Chadwell St. Mary's*.

Figure 2.23



Figures 2.24 and 2.25 (overleaf) show the rate of ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot injuries by ward in patients aged 10-24 per 1000 young people aged 10-24 living in each ward between 2014/15 and 2018/19. Figure A shows an even greater clustering of ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot wounds compared to all injuries caused by violence. Of the 279 wards in Essex, 139

(49.8%) received no ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot wounds in young people aged 10-24 between 2014/15 and 2018/19. Conversely, the ward with the highest rate of callouts (Peter Bruff ward in Tendering) had a rate 19 times that of the lowest.

Figure 2.24

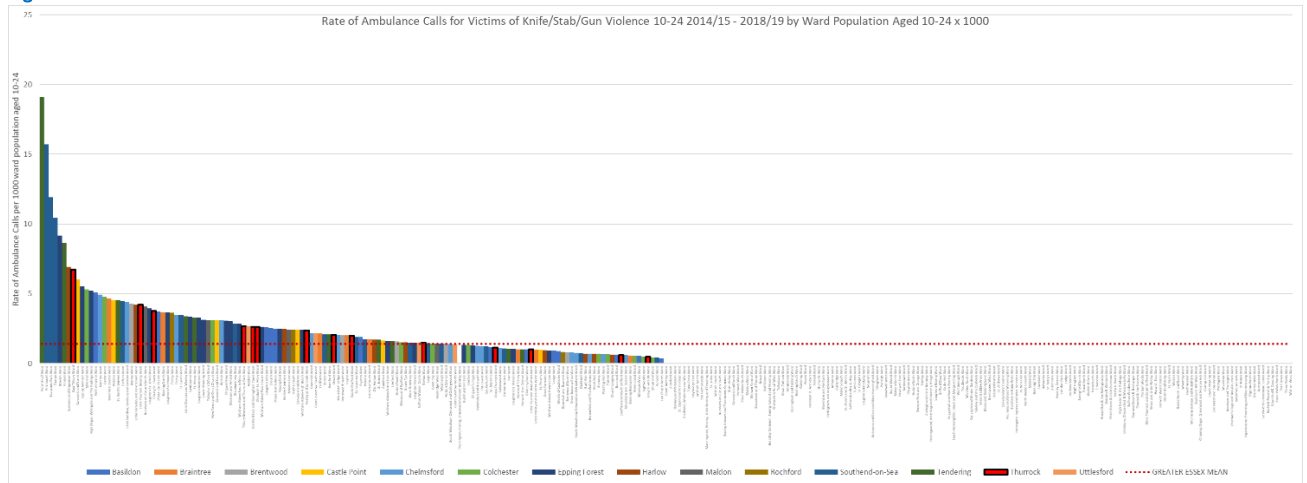
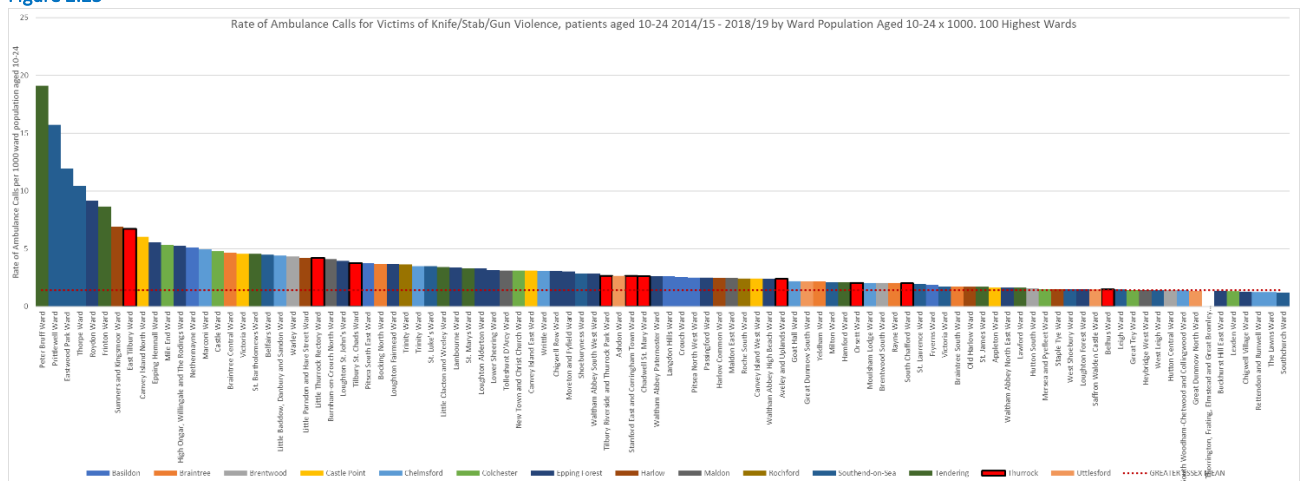


Figure 2.25



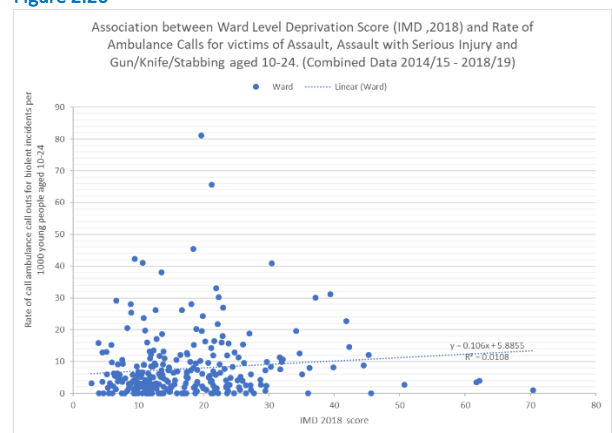
Thurrock had 10 wards with rates of ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot wound injuries in patients aged 10-24 above the Essex mean. These were: *East Tilbury, Little Thurrock and Rectory, Tilbury St. Chads, Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Stanford East and Corringham Town, Chadwell St. Mary, Aveley and Uplands, Orsett, South Chafford, and Belhus.*

found no significant association, suggesting the overall deprivation of the ward is a very poor predictor of levels of violence. (For example, figure 2.26)

### Predicting future incidents of youth violence that require an ambulance call out.

As the previous sections have demonstrated, ambulance call outs for youth violence are not evenly distributed but clustered in specific wards. We can use these patterns to predict future incidents of youth violence that require an ambulance.

Figure 2.26



We examined the association between rates and numbers of ambulance call outs for youth violence and deprivation at ward level using ward level Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2018) and Index of Childhood Deprivation (IDAC 2018) for all violent incidents and stab/knife/gunshot injuries but

However, we found that the number of ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot wound injuries in the previous two years in youth (aged 10-24) at ward level was a strong predictor of ambulance call outs for the same injuries in the

subsequent year. This is shown in figure X. The greater the number of ambulance call outs in the previous two years, the greater the risk of a call out in the subsequent year. For example, as figure 2.27 shows, 100% of wards with six or more ambulance call outs for stab/knife/gunshot wound injuries in the previous two years received two or more ambulance call outs for the same injuries in the subsequent year. Similarly 72% of wards that received three to five call outs in the previous two years received at least one call out in the subsequent year.

We can use these data to predict future ambulance call outs for knife/stab/gunshot injuries in the future. This prediction may be useful as a means of targeting future prevention and enforcement activity at ward level.

Figure 2.27

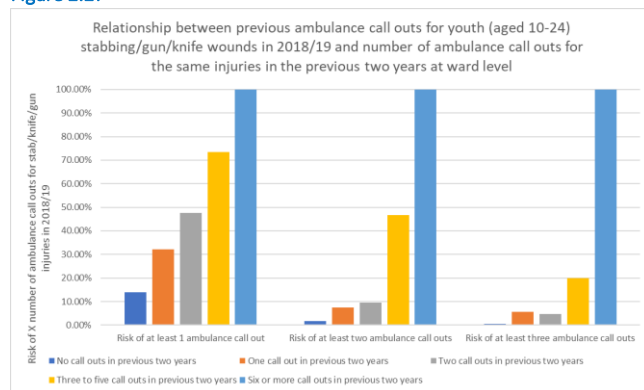
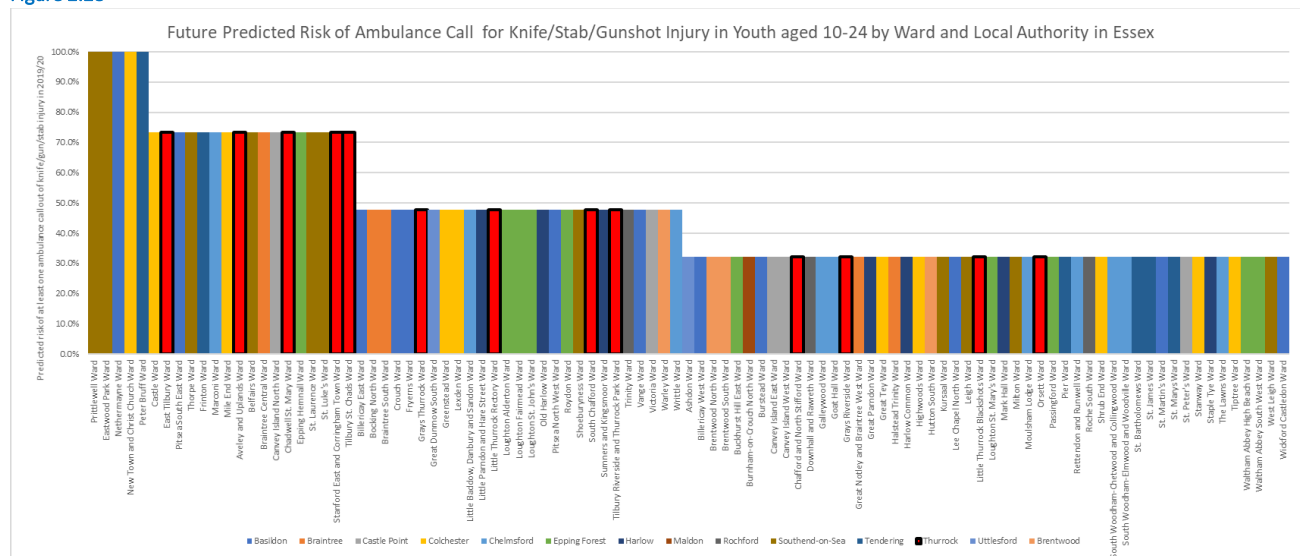


Figure 2.28 demonstrates this by using historical data to predict the risk of at least one ambulance call out for a young person aged 10-24 for a knife/stab/gunshot injury in 2019/20. Wards with a risk of 30% of greater are shown.

Thurrock wards are shown in red with a black boarder.

Figure 2.28



Thurrock has five wards with a predicted risk of 70% of at least one ambulance call out for a knife/stab/gunshot wound in 2019/20. These are *East Tilbury, Aveley and Uplands, Chadwell St. Mary, Tilbury St. Chads, and Stamford East and Corringham Town.*

A further four wards have almost a 50% predictive risk of at least one ambulance call out in 2019/20: *Grays Thurrock; Little Thurrock Rectory; South Chafford; and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park.*

This intelligence can be used to target prevention and enforcement activity more effectively.

## Youth Offending Service Data

We analysed the dataset held by the Thurrock Youth Offending Service for the years 2014/15 to 2018/19. We can be confident that the records contained within this dataset pertain to young people (aged <18) guilty of the offences

described. However the data is likely to under-estimate the total level of offending in Thurrock as it relates only to young people who have been caught and entered the criminal justice system.

In order to reduce the number of offence categories, we grouped offences recorded in categories shown in Table 2.5 overleaf.

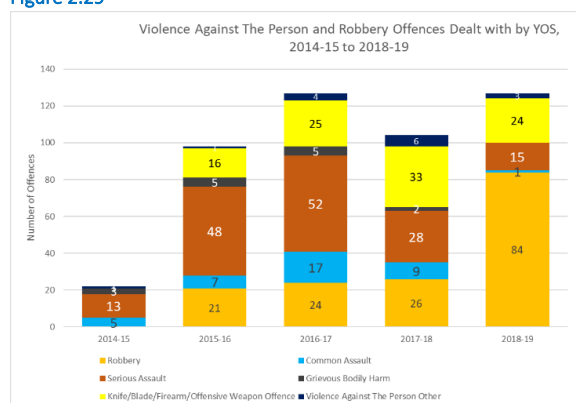
Figure 2.29 (overleaf) shows the number of each category of offence dealt with by the Thurrock YOS between 2014-15 and 2018-19. Total offending across all categories has risen considerably from 2014-15 to 2018-19 with a slight reduction in 2017-18. Robbery against the individual (likely to be largely street based robbery) shows the fastest increase, with no offences dealt with by the YOS in 2014-15 compared to 84 in 2018-19.

Knife/blade/firearm/offensive weapons offences have also risen sharply since 2013-14 although fell back slightly in 2018-19. (figure 2.30 overleaf)

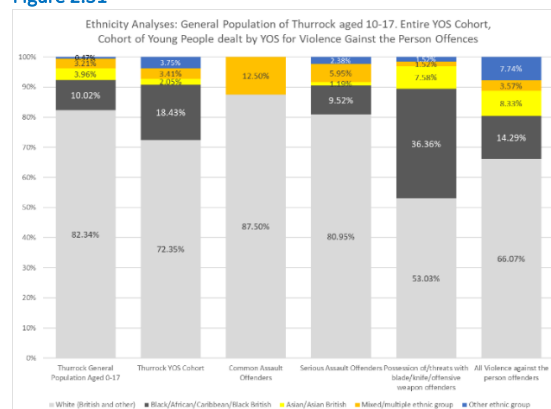
**Table 2.5**

APHR Category	Crimes included
<i>Robbery</i>	All robbery / attempted robbery/ conspiracy to commit robbery against the person. (Excluded all other types of theft including burglary, shoplifting, vehicle/cycle theft)
<i>Violence Against the Person – Common Assault</i>	All common assault categories including attempted assault
<i>Violence Against the Person – Serious Assault</i>	Assault / attempted assault by beating, battery, assault of a police officer, assault resulting in actual bodily harm.
<i>Violence Against the Person – GBH</i>	All actual or attempted acts of violence causing grievous bodily harm. Wounding with intent (section 18)
<i>Violence Against the Person – Knife/Blade/Firearm/Offensive Weapon</i>	All offences relating to possessing and/or threatening an individual with a knife, blade, offensive weapon or fire arm
<i>Violence Against the Person – Other</i>	Resisting Arrest and other offensive relating to obstructing a police officer. Using violence to gain entry to a premises. False imprisonment. Interfering with a motor vehicle with the intent of endangering life.

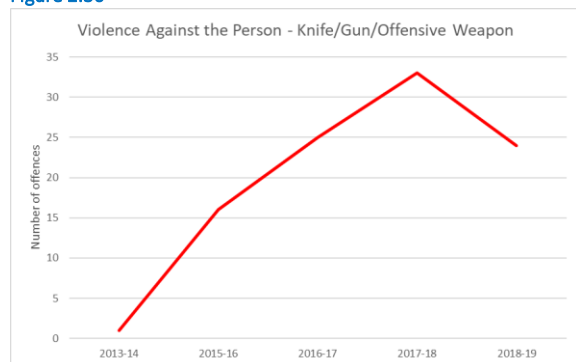
**Figure 2.29**



**Figure 2.31**



**Figure 2.30**



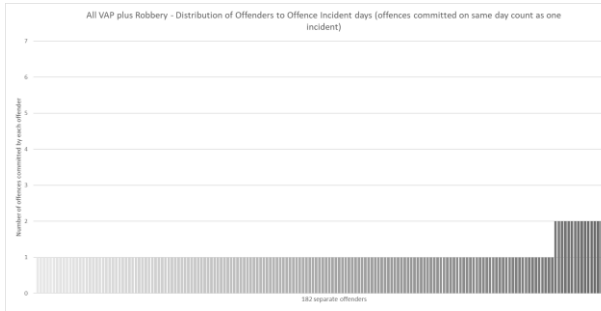
We conducted ethnicity analyses of the cohorts of young people accessing the Thurrock YOS because of different categories of violent offences in 2013-14 to 2018-19. This is shown in figure 2.31 and compares these cohorts to the entire cohort of young people the accessed YOS and the ethnicity breakdown of the Thurrock general population aged 10 to 17.

The ethnicity analyses highlights differences in the ethnic makeup of the different cohorts. Young people accessing YOS due to committing *Common Assault* offences are more likely that the entire YOS cohort of the general population of Thurrock to be white or mixed ethnic group. Conversely those accessing YOS because of *Offensive Weapons* offences are disproportionately Asian and particularly Black compared to both the entire YOS cohort and general population of Thurrock aged 10-17. Over all categories of violence against the person, non-white young people are disproportionately over-represented. The reasons behind this are unclear and likely to be complex but could include differences in arrest/conviction rates between different ethnic groups or an underlying difference in the proportions of young people from different ethnic groups committing different types of violent crime. An entire range of differing risk factors faced by different ethnic groups could in turn be driving this phenomenon and the data may have implications for how best to target prevention activity.

### Single vs Repeat Offenders

We wished to explore how many offences for youth violence and robbery were committed by the same offender. Figure 2.32 (overleaf) shows the distribution of offenders to offences for all violence against the person categories of offence plus robbery.

Figure 2.32



Over the five years analysed within the YOS dataset, 220 offences for all categories of *violence against the person* plus robbery were committed by 182 separate young people. As such, the majority of young people accessing the YOS (82.7%) committed only one violence against the person or robbery offence over five years. This would suggest that the YOS was successful in the majority of cases of offenders in preventing repeat offending behaviour for this type of crime, although this doesn't account for previous offenders who don't get caught for subsequent offences. 18% of young people were referred to YOS for two offences for violence against the person/robbery and 3.3% for three or more offences of this nature.

We conducted similar analyses for the sub categories of *Knife/Gun/Offensive weapon* and *Serious Assault* (figures 2.33 and 2.34)

Figure 2.33

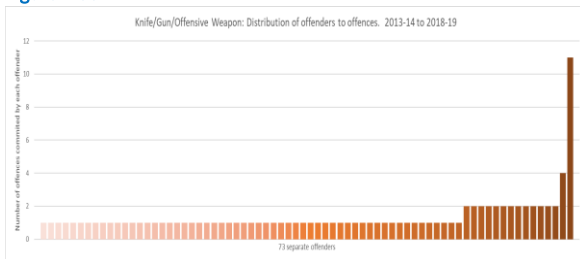
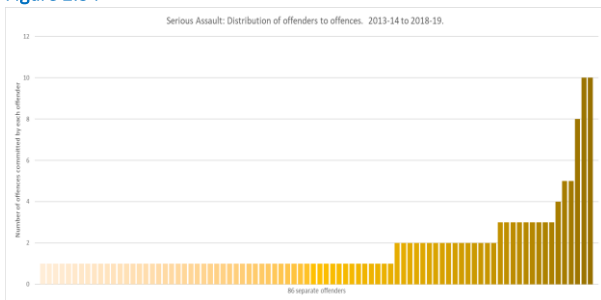


Figure 2.34



In both categories of *Knife/Gun/Offensive Weapon* and *Serious Assault*, once again the majority of offenders (79.4% and 65.1% respectively) committed only one offence. However for *serious assault* there is a larger cohort of young people committing multiple offences despite YOS intervention.

### Association with other crime

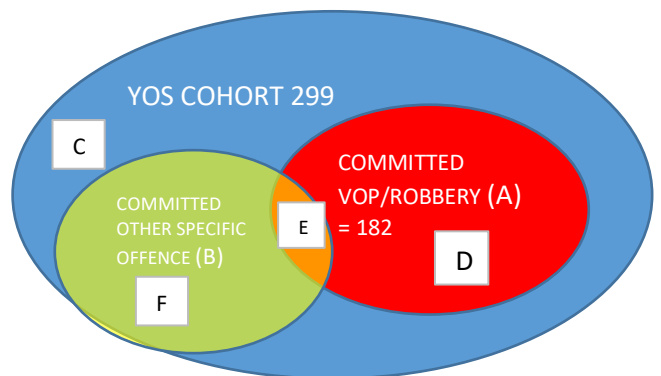
We wished to explore the relationship between committing all sub-categories of *Violence Against the Person/Robbery* and committing other types of crime amongst the YOS cohort. This can be represented by Venn Diagram 1. In total over the years 2013-14 to 2018-19, the YOS worked with 299 separate offenders (Large blue oval). Of those, 182 committed at least one *Violence against the Person/Robbery* category of offence (Red oval – A).

The section of the Red Oval (D) represents the number of young people in the cohort who committed a *Violence against the Person/Robbery* offence (any category) but not another type of offence. Similarly, the proportion of the green circle (F) represents the numbers of young people who committed other specific types of offences (given in table X) but not one in the *Violence Against The Person/Robbery* categories.

The Overlap between the Green and Red Ovals (E) represents the numbers of young people who committed both other categories of crime and *Violence Against the Person/Robbery*.

The section of the blue oval 'C' represents the YOS cohort who committed neither the specific offence represented by the green oval B nor *Violence Against The Person/Robbery*.

Venn diagram 1



We calculated Odds Ratios to show the level of increased likelihood that committing a range of other types of offence has on committing a *Violence Against the Person/Robbery Offence*. We did this using the remainder of the YOS cohort group (C) as a control. An Odds Ratio of 2 would signify that committing another type of offence means that the offender was twice as likely as the remainder of the YOS cohort to commit a *Violence Against the Person/Robbery* offence.

The results of this analyses are shown in table 2.6 (overleaf).



Table 2.6

Specific other offence committed (Green Oval B)	Total Number of YOS Offenders Committing this category of offence (Number Green Oval B)	Number of YOS offenders also committing VOP/Robbery (Overlap E)	Number of YOS Offenders Committing this offence who did not commit VOP/Robbery (Section F of green oval)	% of offenders committing this offence ALSO committing VOP ROBBERY	Number of Offenders committing VOP/Robbery but not this specific other offence (Section D of red oval)	Number of YOS Cohort who did not commit either VOP/Robbery nor this specific offence (Section of blue oval C)	Odds Ratio (Increased risk of committing VOP/Robbery if committed this offence)	95% Confidence Interval	p value
SUPPLY OF A CLASS B DRUG	9	8	1	88.90%	174	116	5.33	0.658 to 43.21	0.12
BREACH OF BAIL	10	8	2	80%	174	115	2.64	0.55 to 12.67	0.2241
POSSESSION OF A CLASS A DRUG	10	7	3	70%	175	114	1.52	0.3851 to 5.99	0.55
SUPPLY OF A CLASS A DRUG	10	7	3	70%	175	114	1.2	0.571 to 2.534	0.63
POSSESSION OF CLASS B DRUG	47	32	15	68.09%	150	102	1.45	0.75 to 2.82	0.27
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	63	41	22	65.08%	141	95	1.26	0.70 to 2.24	0.441
BREACH OF STATUTORY ORDER	34	22	12	64.70%	160	105	0.98	0.45 to 2.12	0.961
PUBLIC ORDER	30	18	12	60%	164	105	0.96	0.44 to 2.08	0.96
BREACH OF CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE	6	3	3	50%	179	114	0.66	0.13 to 3.30	0.61
BURGLARY	16	8	8	50%	174	109	0.63	0.23 to 1.72	0.365
THEFT AND HANDLING STOLEN GOODS	65	31	34	47.70%	151	83	0.501	0.288 to 0.873	0.0148
MOTURING OFFENCES	35	11	24	31.40%	171	93	0.2493	0.1169 to 0.53	0.0003

Table 2.6 shows a high degree of ‘overlap’ between some other types of offence category and committing *Violence Against The Person/Robbery* amongst the YOS cohort of young people. 88.9%, 80%, 70% and 70% of young people committed offences of Supplying Class B drugs, Breach of Bail, Possession of Class A drugs and Supplying Class A drugs respectively also committed VOP/Robbery offences. It is worth noting that which offence preceded the other cannot be determined from this analyses. The Odds Ratios signify that those young people who committed Possession and Supply of Class A and B drugs offences, those committing criminal damage and those who breached bail were all at greater risk than the rest of the YOS cohort of

committing *violence against the person/robbery* offences, although none of the Odds Ratios were statistically significant at 95% confidence, largely because the relatively small numbers of young people involved in both category of offence meant there was insufficient statistical power to the calculation.

Two statistically significant odds ratios were identified, shown in green. Young people committing theft/handling stolen goods and motoring offences were 50% and 24.9% less likely than the entire YOS cohort of also committing *Violence Against the Person/Robbery* offences.

We also calculated odds ratios using the entire population of young people aged 10-17 in Thurrock as the control group rather than the rest of the YOS cohort of young people. The results are shown in Table 2.7 and are striking and all statistically significant at 95% confidence.

Table 2.7

Specific other offence committed	Odds Ratio. (Increased risk of also committing VOP/Robbery compared to the Thurrock General Population aged 10-17)	95% Confidence Interval	p value
SUPPLY OF A CLASS B DRUG	1674.97	211.19 to 13300	<0.0001
BREACH OF BAIL	1489.75	185.33 to 11975	<0.0001
POSSESSION OF A CLASS A DRUG	432	110.8 to 1684.27	<0.0001
SUPPLY OF A CLASS A DRUG	432	110.8 to 1684.27	<0.0001
POSSESSION OF CLASS B DRUG	460.63	244.36 to 868.30	<0.0001
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	427.99	248.47 to 737.20	<0.0001
BREACH OF STATUTORY ORDER	371.15	180.60 to 762.75	<0.0001
PUBLIC ORDER	296.26	140.45 to 264.92	<0.0001
BREACH OF CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE	181.01	36.28 to 902.87	<0.0001
BURGLARY	186.18	69.09 to 501.68	<0.0001
THEFT AND HANDLING STOLEN GOODS	195.48	117.09 to 323.36	<0.0001
MOTURING OFFENCES	86.79	41.85 to 179.97	<0.001

Young people referred to YOS for the other specific offence categories listed in table 2.7 are between 86.8 and 1675 times more likely to also commit *Violence Against the Person/Robbery* offences suggesting that violence secondary prevention activity needs to be targeted at the entire YOS cohort.

### Desistence Analyses

YOS record whether each young person has any of 18 risk factors that make desisting from future offending less likely. We analysed the cohort of young people who had been referred to YOS for all categories of *Violence Against the Person* crimes plus robbery. Figure 2.35 shows the results of the analyses for the sub-categories of *Common Assault, Serious Assault and GBH*. Figure 3.36 shows the results for *Robbery and Knife/Blade/Firearm/Offensive Weapon Offences* showing the percentage of offenders in each crime category with each desistence risk factor.

What is striking in the spider diagrams in figure 2.35 and 3.36 is the shapes produced across all crime categories are very similar, suggesting the most common risk factors against desistence from future offending (present in >50% of offenders) for all *Violence Against the Person* and *Robbery* crime categories for the cohort of young people that the Thurrock YOS works with are:

- Emotional Development and Mental Health
- Features of Lifestyle
- Learning, Education, Training and Employment
- Parenting, Care and Supervision
- Substance Misuse
- Thinking and Behaviour

*Emotional Development and Mental Health* is also a risk in a lower proportion of young people who committed *Robbery* or *Knife/Blade/Firearm/offensive weapon* offences compared to common or serious assault.

The high proportion of young people in the cohort committing violence against the person/robbery offences with the above six risk factors suggests future prevention activity needs to be targeted at addressing these six issues. It is worth noting that the six risk factors relate to both individual, family and wider societal drivers of wellbeing, suggesting future prevention activity requires a multi-agency, multi-systemic and coordinated approach.

One additional risk factor doesn't follow the same pattern across all offence sub-categories; *Resilience and Goals*. 100% of young people who committed GBH had this risk factor whilst it was present only in very low numbers of young people who committed other types of violent crime/robbery.

Figure 2.36

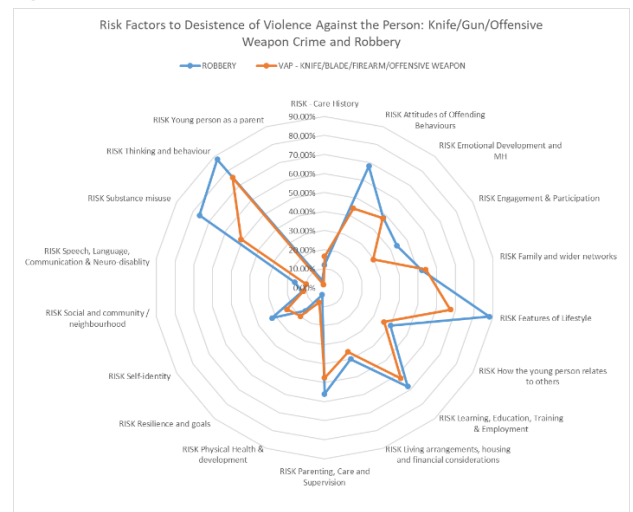
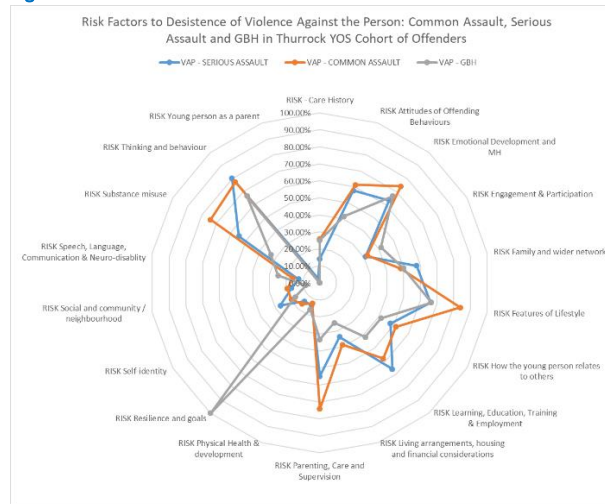


Figure 2.35



# Chapter 3: Gang Culture in Thurrock

## Key Findings

Evidence suggests serious consequences for both young people who join gangs and their wider communities. Gang membership is strongly associated with risk of both committing and being a victim of serious violence, school exclusion, difficulty gaining meaningful employment, criminal activity including drug dealing, robbery and sexual offences, drug/alcohol dependency and serious mental ill-health.

The numbers of young people becoming involved in gangs in Thurrock remains relatively small as a proportion of our population of the total population but has increased significantly year on year since 2016/17. Black young people are significantly over-represented in the cohort of young people known to be gang nominals in Thurrock. The reasons for this are likely to be complex and not entirely understood but may have implications for the targeting of future prevention activity. The age at which young people become involved in gangs is also reducing year on year over the past three years within the borough.

Gang related activity in Thurrock is centred around the geographical areas of Grays, Chafford Hundred and Purfleet, with three gangs known as C17 (Grays), C100 (Chafford) and P19 (Purfleet) operating. There is evidence of association between established London gangs and gang activity in Thurrock and this could be one explanation for the over-representation of black young people in Thurrock gangs.

## Introduction

This chapter examines the issue of youth gangs and gang culture in Thurrock.

Although there is no standard definition of what constitutes a gang, the Centre for Social Justice in 2009 offered a practical description which incorporates five key criteria<sup>9</sup> shown in box 3.1

### Box 3.1

#### Definition of a youth gang

Gangs are a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- See themselves and are seen by others as a discernible group.
- Engage in criminal activity and violence
- Identify with or lay claim over territory
- Have an identifying structural feature
- Are in conflict with other, similar gangs

Youth gangs are not a new social problem and have been reported in literature since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but the last 15 years British society has seen an increase in gang culture and its associated violence. Evidence suggests that up to 6% of 10-19 year olds in the UK self-report belonging to a gang.<sup>10</sup>

## Impact of Gang Membership

The consequences of joining a gang are potentially very serious, both for the youth involved and for their wider communities.

## Violence

The frequency with which someone commits serious and violent acts typically increases whilst they are gang members compared with periods before and after gang involvement. Adolescents who are in a gang commit many more serious and violent offences than non-gang affiliated young people.<sup>11 12</sup> One UK Study found that 90% of male gang members (aged 18 to 34) had been involved in violence in the past five years with 80% reporting at least three violent incidents. Compared with non-gang members, they were more likely to have perpetrated violence, been a victim of violence and fear future victimisation.<sup>13</sup>

Frequent association with other gang members encourages and reinforces violent responses to situations and retaliation against others. This in turn elevates the risk of violent victimisation in gangs.<sup>14 15</sup>

## Exclusion

The majority of gang members either self-exclude (truant) or have been officially excluded from school<sup>16</sup> and are likely to be spending large amounts of time unsupervised on the streets. Gang members subsequently have little, if any, qualifications and are unlikely to gain meaningful employment. This in turn makes criminal activities such as drug dealing appear an attractive alternative.

## Involvement in crime and delinquency

Gang involvement encourages more active participation in delinquency and criminal activity. Research suggests that gang members tend to be engaged in a wide range of criminal activities: drug dealing, robbery, assault and rape.<sup>17</sup> Drug use, drug trafficking and violence, and in turn increases the risk to gang members of violence, arrest, conviction and incarceration.<sup>18 19</sup> These effects of gang involvement also bring disorder to the life course in a cumulative pattern of negative outcomes including school dropout, teenage parenthood and unstable employment

which becomes particularly severe when the young person remains an active member of the gang for several years.<sup>12 18</sup>

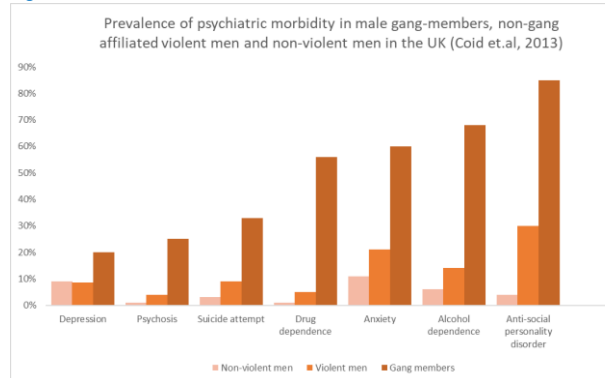
### Poor mental health

There is a bi-directional relationship between poor mental health and gang membership. Poor mental health makes young people more vulnerable to joining gangs<sup>20</sup>, whilst gang membership can have an adverse effect on mental wellbeing.<sup>13 21 22</sup> Exposure to violence and other trauma associated with gang membership damages mental health. Gang members may be under extreme pressure to suppress feelings of fear and anxiety to avoid being ostracised by the gang.<sup>23</sup> Similarly substance misuse often associated with gang membership can further damage mental health.<sup>24</sup>

Long-term exposure to violence associated with gangs has been linked to a range of psychological problems including depression, anxiety, behavioural problems and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>25 26 27</sup>

Analyses of health screening initiatives with young people (aged 10-18) found that at the point of arrest almost 40% of those who were gang members had signs of severe behavioural problems before the age of 12 compared with 13% of youth justice entrants.<sup>28</sup> Around a quarter had a suspected mental health diagnosis and over a quarter were suffering sleeping or eating problems (compared with less than 10% for general entrants). A study of older males (aged 18 to 34) found that those who were gang members had significantly higher levels of mental illness than both men in the general population and non-gang affiliated violent men. (Figure 3.1)<sup>13</sup>

Figure 3.1



### Community impact

Fear of crime and gangs are immediate, daily experiences for many people who live in neighbourhoods where gangs are most prevalent.<sup>29</sup> Negative impacts of gangs on communities include economic loss including loss of property values, neighbourhood businesses and tax revenue; weakened informal social-control mechanisms; and the exodus of families from gang-ridden neighbourhoods resulting in a downward spiral of neighbourhood decline.<sup>30</sup>

Gangs may also intimidate non-gang members of the community who witness gang related crime making it difficult for law enforcement to maintain order in gang-impacted areas.<sup>31</sup>

## Gang Activity in Thurrock

Thurrock's close proximity and good transport links to London and its comparatively cheaper rent has made it vulnerable to significant displacement of gang associated children and adults from the capital into the borough. Thurrock Council's Gang Related Violence Group monitors gang activity within the borough. Figure 3.2 shows the numbers of new referrals, gang nominal managed and gang nominal removed for the group's monitoring data for the years 2016/17 to 2018/19. It shows increasing numbers of new nominal referred and total nominal managed year on year and a decreasing number of gang nominal removed from the register suggesting that gang activity in the borough has increased. In total, there has been a 33% increase in nominals identified and monitored by the Gang Related Violence Operational Group in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18. This fits with previous trends of increasing knife crime and violence discussed in the previous chapter.

Figure 3.2

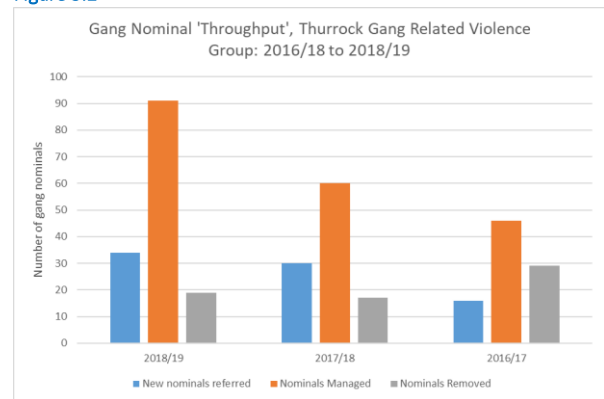
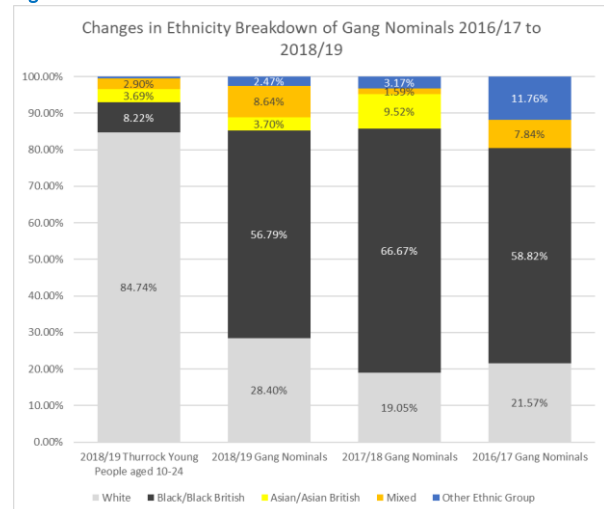


Figure 3.3 shows changes in the ethnicity of gang nominals managed through the Gang Related Violence Group between the years 2016/17 and 2018/19 together with the modelled ethnicity of the population of Thurrock young people aged 10-24.

Figure 3.3



Black/Black British young people are significantly over represented in the population of gang nominals in Thurrock

when compared to the general population of Thurrock young people aged 10-24. This mirrors previously presented data in Chapter 2 on ethnicity breakdown and violent offenders. The reasons for this are unclear but one possible explanation could include the migration of black gang involved young people into the borough from London. Overrepresentation of young black youth in Thurrock gangs also has implications for how future prevention work may need to be focused. However the data shows that the over-representation has become less pronounced when comparing 2018/19 data to 2016/17 data suggesting that greater numbers of white young people are becoming involved in gangs in Thurrock.

Figure 3.4

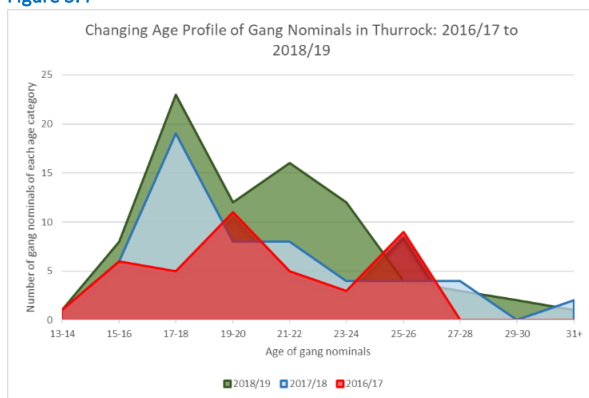


Figure 3.4 shows the age profile of gang nominals monitored through the Thurrock Gang Related Violence Group for the years 2016/17 to 2018/19.

Whilst the larger 'green' plot area of 2018/19 reflects the increasing number of gang nominals being monitored, it also suggests that the age of gang nominals is also getting younger with large increases in the 17-18 age category between 2016/17 and 2018/19 and reductions in gang members over 24. Numbers of gang nominals under the age of 15 is minimal suggesting that future prevention activity aimed dissuading young people from joining gangs, needs to be targeted at the age group under 16

Figures 3.5 and 3.6 show the approximate home area of each of the gang nominals identified and monitored by the Thurrock Council Gang Related Violence Group for 2016/17 and 2018/19. Figure B also shows the name of the gang that the nominal is believed to belong to.

The public health conceptualisation of violence as a communicable disease that 'spreads' from index cases is clearly demonstrated in these two maps. The number of gang nominals increases from a few index cases over three years, particularly in Purfleet, Chafford, Grays and South Ockendon which are the four areas where the majority gang nominals now reside.

Figure 3.5: Approximate Address of Gang Nominals 2016/17

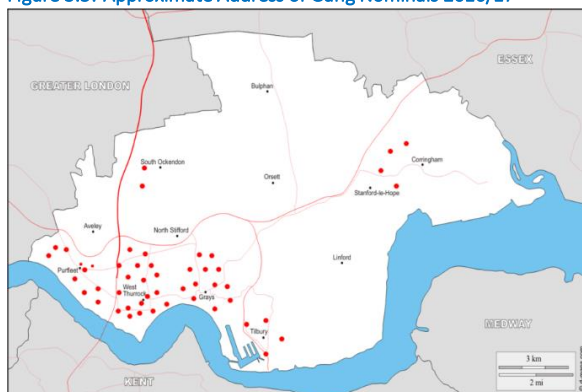


Figure 3.6: Approximate Address of Gang Nominals 2018/19

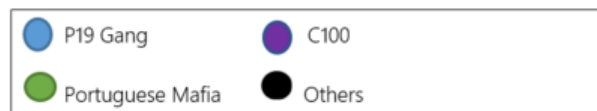
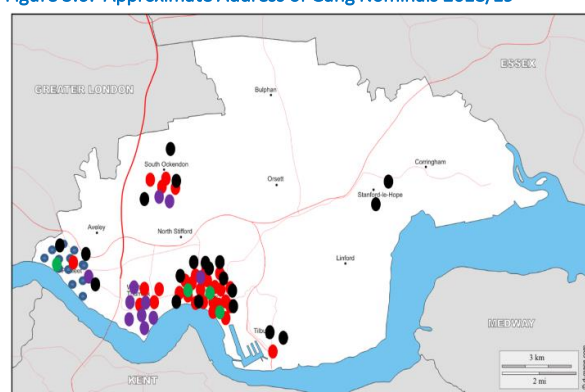
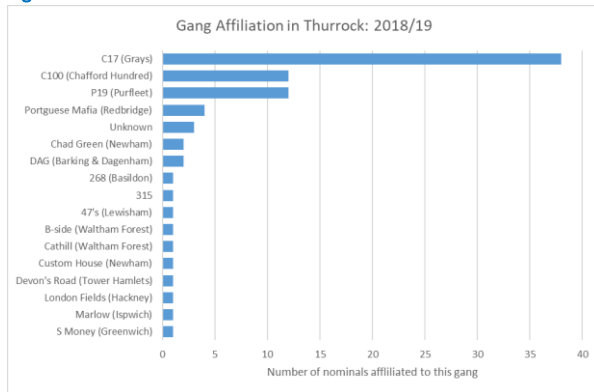


Figure 3.7 shows the affiliation of nominals to gangs in Thurrock.

Figure 3.7



Three main Thurrock gangs operate: C17/7 in Grays, C100 in Chafford Hundred and P19 in Purfleet. Figure C also shows ongoing location of gang affiliates linked to London gangs being located in Thurrock. These gang nominals then align

themselves with a Thurrock based gang. Consequently, gangs like C17/7 have members from various London gangs who would not normally associate with each other in their originating borough. It is believed that the purpose of this arrangement is to maximise earning potential from the existing drugs trade and to be associated with the emerging 'drill music' scene.

# Chapter 4: County Lines

## Key Findings

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks who export drugs into one or more locations within the UK using a dedicated mobile phone line. They systematically exploit children and vulnerable adults whom they use to move, store and sell class A drugs (largely crack-cocaine and heroin) using a threats of violence, making such exploitation a form of modern day slavery. County lines gangs recruit victims through a process of grooming that involves identifying young people with existing vulnerabilities and exploiting them. County Lines activity is associated with increasing availability and prevalence of cocaine and crack-cocaine use.

The grooming process typically follows a three stage process of *targeting*, *testing* and then *trapping* the young person, the final stage involving debt bondage, threats or experience of extreme physical, psychological or sexual violence. Victims may be transported hundreds of miles from their home borough and forced to work in trap houses dealing drugs.

Historical approaches to child safeguarding that are designed to protect against child abuse in domestic settings have been shown to be inadequate in the face of the County Lines threat which crosses multiple disciplines including the police, probation, youth offending teams, education and adults/children's social care, and because lines often cross multiple geographical agency boundaries. Young people exploited through County Lines activity are both perpetrators of serious crime and victims of exploitation, but strategic oversight of enforcement/community safety and wellbeing/vulnerability and safeguarding have historically sat in separate multiagency forums. As County Lines are a relatively new phenomenon, child criminal exploitation has not been historically assessed or recorded on local authority Children's Social Care systems.

Where prevention activity is undertaken, national research reports that it is often undertaken too far 'down-stream' once children and young people have been exploited; thresholds for accessing statutory children's social care and youth offending services are set too high. Children's Social Care practitioners report that historical interpretation of child protection policies did not allow them to accept cases on the sole basis of debt enslavement or entrapment and there was a tendency of statutory safeguarding agencies to view young people's behaviour when being criminally exploited, as a sign of criminality or lifestyle choice rather than as evidence of a vulnerable child in need of protection.

Accurately ascertaining the extent of County Lines activity in Essex and Thurrock is difficult due to their covert nature and recent emergence. Data from the National Referral Mechanism set up to monitor the extent of modern day slavery suggests a sharp increase in under 18 referrals from 2014 to 2018/19 although absolute numbers remain low. Intelligence from Essex police suggest that 20 County Lines are known to be operating in Essex of which three operate in the West Essex Local Police Area which encompasses Thurrock.

## Introduction

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. Error! Bookmark not defined.

The National Crime Agency<sup>32</sup> describe a typical *County Lines* methodology as having the following components shown in Box A.

### Box A: Components of County Lines

1. A group or gang (usually made up of young males) establishes a network between an urban hub and county location, into which drugs (primarily heroin and crack cocaine) are supplied.
2. A branded mobile phone line is established in the market, to which orders are placed by introduced customers. The line will commonly (but not exclusively) be controlled by a third party, remote from the market.
3. The gang exploits young or vulnerable persons, to achieve the storage and/or supply of drugs, movement of cash proceeds and to secure the use of dwellings from which drugs are supplied (commonly referred to as cuckooing).
4. The group or individuals exploited by the gang regularly travel between the urban hub and the county or coastal market to replenish stock and deliver cash.
5. The gang is inclined to use intimidation, violence and

County lines gangs recruit victims through a process of grooming that involves identifying young people with existing vulnerabilities and exploiting them. County Lines activity is associated with increasing availability and prevalence of cocaine and crack-cocaine use.

The grooming process typically follows a three stage process of *targeting*, *testing* and then *trapping* the young person, the final stage involving debt bondage, threats or experience of extreme physical, psychological or sexual violence. Victims may be transported hundreds of miles from their home borough and forced to work in trap houses dealing drugs.

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The National Crime Agency have published three reports that provide an insight into the nature and scale of county lines.<sup>32 33 34</sup> The latest suggests that there are over 2000 individual deal line numbers in the UK, linked to approximately 1000 branded county lines. The Children's Commissioner for England in 2018 warned that up to 50,000 young people could be affected based on the National Crime Agency's estimation that as many as 50 children can be involved in any single county line.<sup>35</sup> Although demand for and supply of drugs underpins county lines offending, exploitation remains integral to the business model. Offenders continue to recruit, transport and exploit individuals including children to carry out low-level criminal activity essential to their operation.

## Drugs supplied

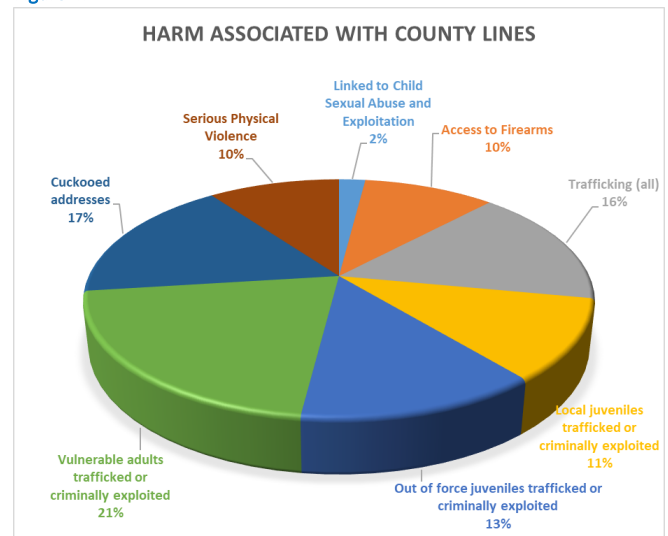
Heroin and crack cocaine remain the drugs most commonly supplied through county lines. Cannabis is generally not supplied through County Lines. Offenders use mass marketing text messages to advertise the supply and availability of drugs and offer free samples (particularly of crack cocaine) in exchange for the contact details of potential customers in order to expand their customer base and increase the number of addicts in the local population.<sup>34</sup>

The County Lines model has revolutionised the supply chain for Class A drugs in recent years. Establishment of a drugs supply business in a new year presents inherent risks for criminals, not least the threat of violence from rival suppliers, and enforcement by the police. By forcing exploited children and vulnerable adults to 'run' the substances for them free of charge, criminal gangs are able to both maximise profits and minimise risks to themselves. The model also allows a minimal number of 'middle men' between the international criminal cartels who import the drugs and the end user, meaning that the quality of the product is high allowing the gang to undercut existing drug suppliers and capture the market.<sup>2</sup>

## Vulnerabilities and Harm

The County Lines business model thrives on the exploitation of vulnerable adults and children to deliver drugs and money in what could be described as a type of modern day slavery. The National Crime Agency identified eight main areas of harm caused to children and vulnerable adults exploited through County Lines gangs (Figure 4.1)

Figure 4.1



Source: NCA, December 2018

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) was established by government to identify, monitor and refer potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. Data from the NRM on individuals exploited through the County Lines model suggest that the majority



of victims are aged between 15 and 17. Individuals within this age group are likely to be targeted as they provide the level of criminal capability required by the offending model, but remain easier to control, exploit and reward than adults. Adult victims of exploitation by county lines gangs are most frequently vulnerable due to an existing drug addiction and often have extensive criminal histories, generally in low-level offending such as shop lifting related to their drug addiction. Mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and psychosis, and learning and development disorders are often identified in adult victims of exploitation in county Lines activity.<sup>34</sup>

## Recruitment of victims

The recruitment of victims can be explained through a three stage process:

1. Targeting
2. Testing
3. Trapping

Figure 4.2 taken from the Children's Society Report into Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines<sup>35</sup> demonstrates the process

Figure 4.2



Source: Children's Society, 2018

The first two stages of recruiting victims exploited by county lines gangs is a process of *grooming*. In the first *targeting* phase, gang members build a relationship with the victim that they then go on to exploit. Children displaying vulnerabilities such as poverty, family breakdown, intervention by social care especially looked after children, being excluded from mainstream education or truancy are most frequently targeted by county lines offenders. In some areas middle class children have also been targeted where the gang can identify a vulnerability. The initial targeting phase typically involves the gang member making initial contact and providing something that the victim wants or needs. This can be material things such as phones or trainers that have perceived status, money, or a relationship/emotional support acting as a replacement "family" that is often absent.

Gangs also targeted young people through on-line grooming, opening advertising monetary benefit on social media to becoming involved. Gangs also produce *drill music* videos which are published on YouTube and portray a

glamorous lifestyle offered by gang membership as a mechanism to recruit victims.

In the second *testing* phase, the gang seeks to ascertain whether the victim is 'trustworthy' and does not pose a risk to the wider organisation. Victims are often asked to undertake 'minor tasks' which then escalate rapidly in terms of their demand and risk. In the testing phase, the victim is often asked to hold something of value for a period of time such as drugs, cash or weapons. Unbeknown to the victim, the gang then arranges for these to be robbed, placing the victim in 'debt bondage' to the gang.

In the final *trapped* phase, the victim is forced to work for the gang under threat or experience of extreme physical, sexual and psychological violence in return for being unable to pay the debt. Victims are required to traffic drugs/money around the county which may involve having to 'plug' or 'stuff' packages anally or vaginally within their own bodies. A major feature of the county lines model is the movement or trafficking of young people, often over hundreds of miles from urban hubs to rural locations to operate the line. Young people are forced to work in 'trap houses' controlled

by the gang for the purposes of selling drugs, either rented through sites like AirBnB or taken over from vulnerable adults (a process known as 'cuckooing'). The young person is left isolated and prevented from accessing education, family contacts and appointments. Threats may be made to the victims' families and victims may be compelled to groom younger siblings.

## Problems with current statutory agency responses to exploitation through county lines

The Violence and Vulnerability Unit which is funded jointly by the Home Office and Mayor of London's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) published a national summary and guide to emerging best practice on county lines in May 2018 based on extensive interviews with practitioners and managers and the findings of 70 locality reviews and local three strategic frameworks on county lines activity and the exploitation of young people through them.<sup>36</sup> It identified a range of commonly repeated issues and concerns in the context of partnership working, the criminal justice system, schools and colleges, early help and intervention, and financial exploitation.

### Partnership working

The issue of County Lines and gang activity does not fit neatly into historical partnership work programmes or structures that have been set up in local areas. It crosses multiple disciplines and agency accountabilities including the police, probation, youth offending teams, education, adults' and children's social care, adults and children's safeguarding boards, the NHS and public health. This allows gangs to exploit these differences and service gaps to target vulnerable populations with relatively ease and impunity, exacerbated by the fact that county lines run across large geographies not coterminous with the geographical footprints of individual statutory services.

### Criminal justice response: common issues

When young people exploited through county lines are arrested by the police for possession of drugs or possession of drugs with intent to supply, they are often released pending further investigation and returned to their home area which may be different to the geography that they were arrested in. Police reported struggling to get emergency children's social care duty teams to engage with the young person, resulting in them being returned home with a drug debt to the gang and inadequate engagement of services.

Nationally Youth Offending Team staff reported inadequate court sentences being given to young people arrested with large quantities of drugs, and young people being sentenced only for possession in cases where the drugs were clearly not for personal use, but held with intent to supply. This sends a message to young people that the consequences of drug dealing were minimal compared to

the severe potential consequences of being disloyal to their gang.

There was a persistent call from YOT practitioners that government should change the law to make the grooming of young people in this context illegal and for it to incur stiff penalties. Staff felt older gang members were operating in urban areas to recruit young people with little fear of the legal consequences.

A common concern was that young people were coming to the attention of YOTs at crisis point when their criminal behaviour was entrenched because service access thresholds were set too high and there is inadequate early intervention provision. This was underpinned by a common theme of reported increases in antisocial behaviour (ASB) which is not being challenged. This lack of ASB interventions was linked to a lack of proactive/early intervention youth services and outreach work.

### Schools and colleges: common issues

The targeting of pupils excluded from mainstream education is a major feature of county lines. The report suggested an increasing trend in exclusions for a wider range of behaviours and a lack of evidence for effective reintegration into education of pupils who had been excluded even when this is temporary. The exclusion of young people from full time education, whether by placing them on reduced time tables, placing them in home schooling arrangements or removing them to Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) exacerbates their vulnerability and increases the risk of them being targeted by gangs for exploitation. PRUs in particular were highlighted as recruiting grounds for county lines gangs.

### Early intervention and help: common issues

There was a common call for more outreach and positive activities for young people arising from the realisation that a reduction in these services has left a vacuum into which gangs are moving. The reviews also highlighted inadequate recording of and response to risks highlighted through conversations between front line youth staff and young people, for example being bought trainers or phones by gang members.

When young people become involved in 'county lines', offering diversion away from these activities will inevitably need to involve their entire family. This can be particularly complex when money from county lines activity is used for paying household bills in cases where families have few resources. The report identified that some parents were struggling to maintain boundaries at home, especially if substance users themselves and that some young people are being brought up in a home environment where crime is normalised. The need for parenting programmes that provide practical support to parents was highlighted.

### Adult and child safeguarding: common issues

Like YOT thresholds, the review highlighted that thresholds set by Adult and Children Safeguarding teams for a statutory intervention were often too high. 'Cuckooing' is a

common feature of county lines activity where the home of a vulnerable adult is taken over by the gang from which to sell drugs. However, if the adult is said to have capacity to make their own decisions (and is not suffering from a recognisable/diagnosed mental health condition or learning disability) services felt they could not or would not take further steps unless to move to eviction proceedings.

There was a growing view that this issue of capacity needed to be re-examined in cases of 'cuckooing' and that legislation covering 'coercive control' could be used when deciding what powers or tools could be employed to safeguard vulnerable adults.

Housing support services were felt to have been reduced and whilst in the past gangs would be deterred by professionals' regular visits to properties, it was reported that gangs now felt able to control properties with impunity.

The safeguarding of children and young people involved in county lines was felt to be challenging as statutory safeguarding systems were designed to protect children within a domestic setting not county lines context. Children's social care practitioners reported that the interpretation of current child protection policy does not allow workers to accept cases on the sole basis of debt enslavement and entrapment. In consequence, referrals to agencies where young people were showing signs of involvement in criminal exploitation are often not accepted and there was a need to re-examine what constitutes 'neglect' for this cohort of young people.

Furthermore the evidence review identified a tendency of statutory safeguarding agencies to view (particularly in the case of boys), young people's behaviour as a sign of criminality or lifestyle choice rather than as evidence of a vulnerable child who needs protection from exploitation.

There has been a call for a new type of power to manage/protect young people caught up in 'county lines': an urgent need to explore a type of *Child Criminal Exploitation Protection Order*.

### Financial Exploitation

There is evidence that there is a new dimension of financial exploitation where young people have their bank accounts controlled for the purpose of laundering money earned by the gang from drug dealing. The report identified reports from the reviews that large sums of money being deposited into children's bank accounts had alerted agencies to the presence of gangs in children's lives. This highlights the need to undertake prevention strategies that work with financial institutions and police fraud services.

## Local Intelligence on County Lines Activity

The emerging and covert nature of County Lines activity and the fact that recording of Child Criminal Exploitation is relatively recent makes accurately ascertaining the true

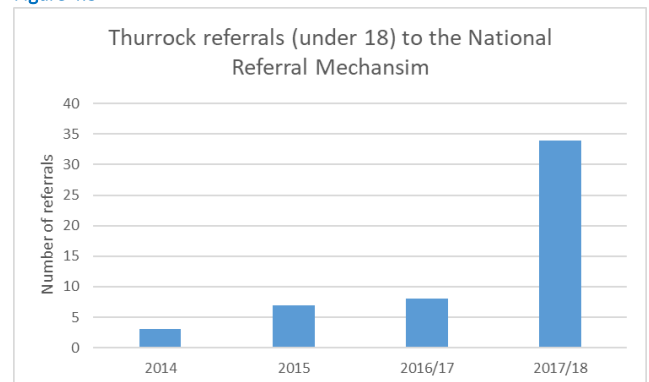
extent and impact of County Lines locally difficult. However, there are a couple of sources of intelligence:

### National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Data

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a process set up by the central government to identify and support victims of modern day slavery trafficking in the UK and also the mechanism through which the *Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU)* collects data about victims. As such, victims of child criminal exploitation through County Lines would be eligible for referral to the NRM, although referrals would also encompass other forms of modern day slavery (for example, domestic servitude). This information aims to help build a clearer picture about the scope of human trafficking in the UK. A range of 'first responder' agencies can refer both adults and children/young people aged under 18 to the NRM. These include UK Police forces, local authorities, Home Office Immigration enforcement and a number of third sector organisations specialist in safeguarding adults and children, e.g. Barnardo's and the Salvation Army.

Figure 4.3 shows a rapid increase in the number of under 18 referrals to the NRM from Thurrock between 2014 and 2017/18. In 2017/18, 11 of the 34 referrals were for criminal exploitation and nine of these related to exploitation for drug dealing, suggesting an increasing issue of child criminal exploitation due to County Lines activity in Thurrock.

Figure 4.3



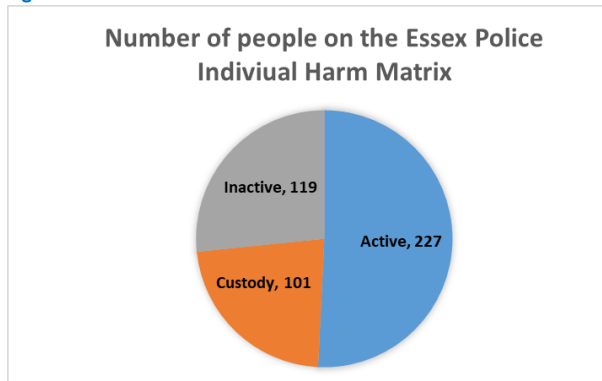
### Essex Police Gangs and County Lines Thematic Assessment

In 2018-19, Essex Police published a thematic assessment on Gangs and County Lines activity<sup>37</sup>. Essex Police maintain an *Individual Harm Matrix* that is a list of individuals who meet the following criteria:

- The person shows a level of loyalty to a gang or county line
- The person has links to Essex within the last six months.
- The person is not part of an Essex Organised Crime Group
- The person is a willing participant (not a victim or vulnerable person).

Figure 4.4 shows the number of people on the Individual Harm Matrix in 2018/19.

Figure 4.4



Police Intelligence suggests that the 227 active individuals represent 58 different gangs and 49 different County Lines. Their average age was 23. The Matrix scores gangs and county lines on drugs and violence to allow analysts to produce tables showing those groups potentially posing the

greatest risk in Essex. It is maintained by the Essex Police Gangs and County Lines Analysts and takes information from two key places:

- The Essex Individual Harm Matrix (scoring on violence and/or drugs)
- Athena Intelligence about gangs or county lines

The thematic assessment suggests that 20 county lines are operating Essex, three of which operate in the West Local Policing Area which encompasses Thurrock. These are ranked 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> in terms of overall harm of all county lines operating in Essex.

# Chapter 5: Illicit Drugs and their connection to youth and gang violence

## Key Findings

There is a rising trend in opiate and crack cocaine use in those aged between 15 and 64 in Thurrock between 2010/11 and 2016/17. The estimated number of crack cocaine users in Thurrock has more than doubled over the past five years and this increase and that for the estimated numbers of users of both crack cocaine and opiates is statistically significant. Estimated number of young people aged 15-24 in Thurrock using crack cocaine also rose sharply between 2010/11 and 2016/17 with estimated numbers in 2016/17 being more than twice those of 2010/11, however numbers of opiate users in this age group have fallen slightly and numbers of dual users remain similar to 2010/11 baseline. The reasons behind the increase in crack cocaine use are unclear but one explanation could be increased availability through County Lines activity.

There has been a significant drop in the number of service users accessing the service for drug treatment in the age group 18 to 29 since a peak in 2015/16. The reasons for this are unclear but do not relate to a lack of treatment places being available. A reduction in numbers of residents accessing treatment coupled with an increase in the prevalence of crack-cocaine use amongst the population has resulted in a significant drop in the proportion of both opiate and crack cocaine users in treatment. The public health consequences of a rising prevalence of crack cocaine use in Thurrock and a drop of the proportion of users in treatment are serious, both for the users themselves and more widely for the community. Crack cocaine use significantly increases the risk of serious physical and mental health conditions and is associated with increased crime. This drop in the 'reach' of drug and alcohol treatment services into the cohort of residents who are users warrants further investigation and action to reverse the trend.

The association between drug use and crime is complex and multi-directional. There is evidence that crime leads to drug use, drug use leads to crime and that both crime and drug use have other common causes including wider socio-familial factors. Thurrock Youth Offending Service (YOS) data suggests a rising trend in young people committing Class A drugs related offences in Thurrock both in terms of possession and supply although the absolute numbers remain small. Black young men are very significantly over-represented in the cohort of offenders dealt with by Thurrock YOS for offences relating to the supply of Class A drugs. The reasons for this are unclear and likely to be complex, but this cohort also tend to differ from the majority of young people who access YOS in the sense that they have multiple records of repeat offending. Further work is required to understand and implement a more effective approach with this cohort to assist and deter them from reoffending.

## Introduction

This chapter discusses illegal drug misuse in Thurrock and its connection to youth and gang violence. The previous chapter highlighted the intrinsic connection of County Lines activity with the illegal drug trade. This chapter includes analyses of the estimated prevalence of drug use and the success of our drug treatment services.

## Prevalence of drug users in Thurrock

The illicit nature of drug taking makes it difficult to estimate accurately the number of drug users in Thurrock particularly in young people. We do however have Public Health England commissioned synthetic estimates, produced by Liverpool John Moores University<sup>38</sup> for the estimated number of opiate, crack cocaine and dual opiate/crack cocaine users in our local population. The modelled prevalence of these two specific drugs are useful as they are the ones most associated with gangs, violence and County Lines activity.

The modelled estimates are derived by identifying from the published evidence base, the population factors linked to an increased risk of drug taking and local drug and alcohol service data and then applying them through statistical models to local populations. However the estimated numbers of users produced through the modelling have wide confidence intervals (the range of estimated values that the model is 95% confident that the true figure lies within).

Figures 5.1 to 5.3 show the estimated number of opiate, crack cocaine and dual crack cocaine and opiate users aged 15-64 in Thurrock from 2010/11 to 2016/17 respectively. Note that no modelled figures were produced for 2016/16.

Each graph shows an increasing trend in the prevalence of drug users in Thurrock. Whilst the increase is not statistically significant for opiate users, Figures Y and Z show statistically significantly greater prevalence of crack cocaine and crack cocaine/opiate users in 2016/17 compared to 2010/11 baselines.

Figure 5.1

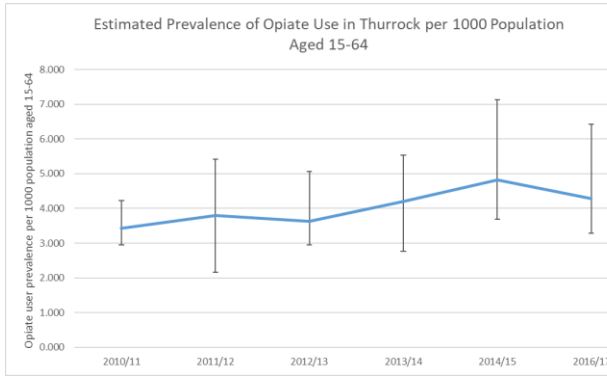


Figure 5.4

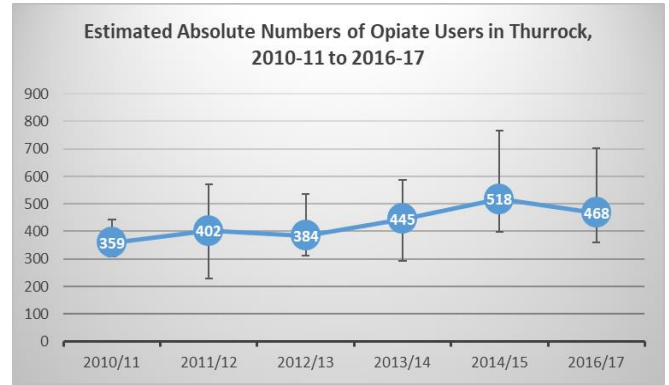


Figure 5.2

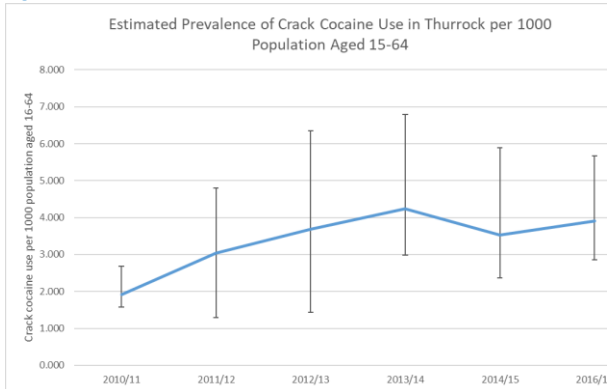


Figure 5.5

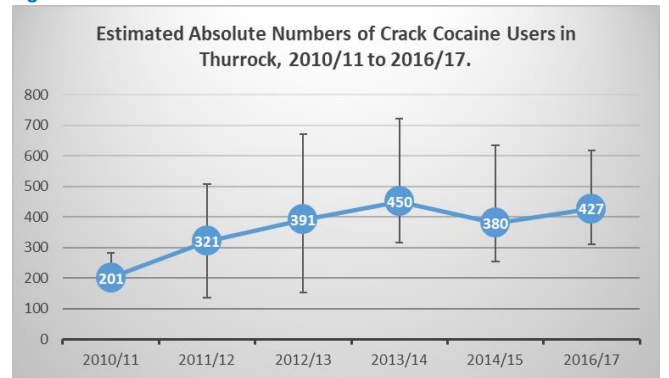


Figure 5.3

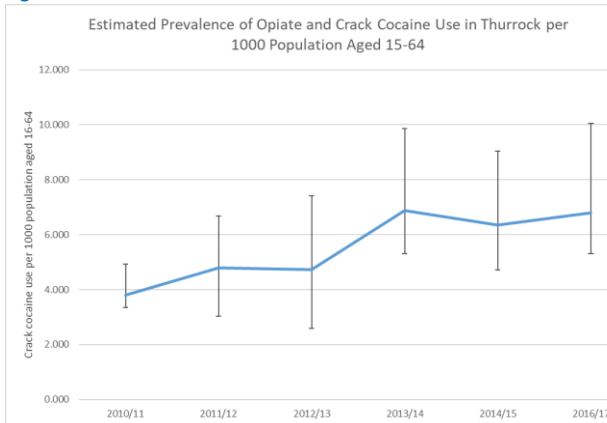
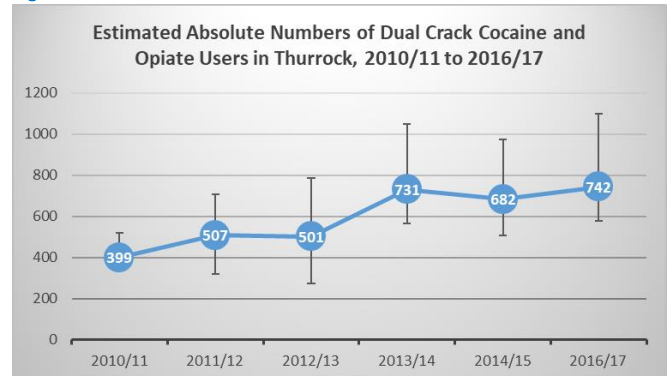


Figure 5.6



Figures 5.4 to 5.6 show the absolute estimated numbers of opiate, crack cocaine and dual Opiate/Crack Cocaine users in Thurrock respectively, from 2010/11 to 2016/17 (note no data was produced for 2015/16).

Figures 5.3 to 5.6 highlight the scale of the increase in users of opiates and crack cocaine in Thurrock over the last seven years. The absolute number of crack cocaine users is estimated to have more than doubled and the increase is statistically significant despite the wide confidence intervals of the modelling methodology. The number of residents using both crack cocaine and opiates has increased by 86%.

The local increase mirrors national trends. PHE found a statistically significant increase in the number of crack cocaine users in England between 2011/12 and 2016/17 and a 19% increase in the number of adults starting treatment for crack cocaine between 2015/16 and 2017/18.<sup>39</sup>

### Prevalence estimates by age

Figures 5.7 and 5.8 (overleaf) show the estimated prevalence and estimated absolute of opiate and crack cocaine users in

Thurrock aged 15-24 between 2010/11 and 2016/17. (No modelled data is available for 2015/16).

Figure 5.7

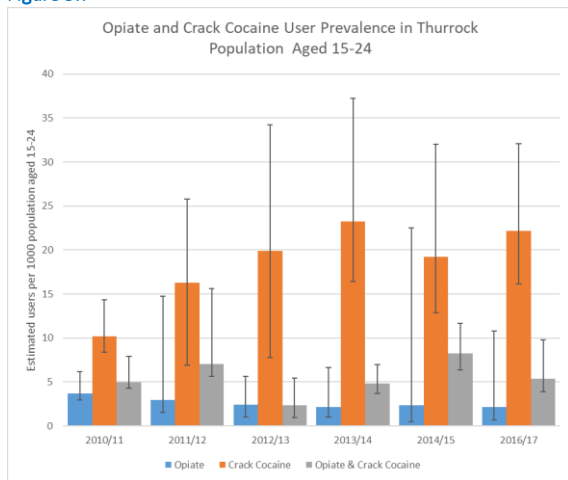
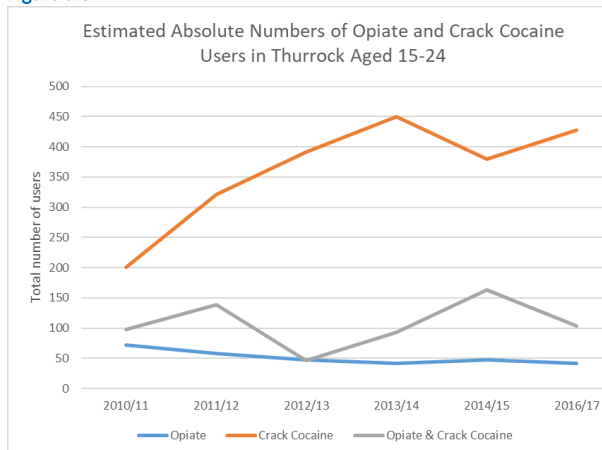


Figure 5.8



Whilst prevalence and overall numbers of young people have fallen, both prevalence and overall numbers of young people using crack cocaine has risen and the rate and numbers is statistically significantly greater in 2013/14 and 2016/17 compared to 2010/11 baseline. The drop in prevalence and numbers of crack cocaine users in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14 corresponds with an increase in use of both drugs in 2014/15 although this trend appears to have reversed again in 2016/17.

## Impacts of drug misuse

The reasons behind these increases are unclear, but one explanation could be an increased availability of crack cocaine in Thurrock through County Lines or other drug dealing activity, as discussed in Chapter 3. Qualitative research by PHE identified that crack sales in the UK were being increased through aggressive marketing of the drug by dealers, particularly to existing heroin users.<sup>39</sup>

The public health impacts increasing numbers of crack cocaine and opiate users are serious. Addiction to crack cocaine and heroin has a devastating impact on an individual, their family and the wider community and places

additional financial and operation burdens on public services.

## Crack cocaine

Crack cocaine is a strong stimulant and one of the most destructive drugs on the market and can cause dependence within the first few uses. One of the problems with crack cocaine is that the effects last a very short time whilst leaving the user with intense cravings for more of the drug. Within fifteen minutes the addict needs to smoke another rock of the drug.

The stimulant effects of crack cocaine places severe stresses on the heart, vascular system increasing the risk of arrhythmias, myocardial infarction (heart attack) and cardiomyopathy and strokes.<sup>40 41 42</sup> Smoking crack cocaine damages the lungs causing a range of pulmonary conditions and can cause pulmonary failure<sup>43</sup> and causes neurological damage to the brain including cerebral atrophy<sup>44</sup> and seizures<sup>45 46 47</sup>

Psychologically the crack user becomes paranoid, defensive, confused and depressed. Crack cocaine use is strongly associated with psychiatric comorbidities including personality disorders,<sup>48 49 50</sup> post-traumatic stress disorder<sup>51 52</sup> and depressive disorders.<sup>53 54</sup>

## Heroin

Heroin is the most commonly abused opiate. Repeated heroin use changes the physical structure (13) and physiology of the brain, creating long-term imbalances in neuronal and hormonal systems that are not easily reversed.<sup>55 56</sup> The brain's white matter deteriorates in heroin users negatively impacting on decision making abilities and responses to stress.<sup>57 58 59</sup> Heroin also produces profound degrees of tolerance and physical dependency meaning that the user needs to take more and more of the drug to achieve the same effect and experiences very unpleasant physical withdrawal symptoms if drug taking is stopped or reduced abruptly. Chronic heroin use results in *heroin use disorder*; a chronic, relapsing disease characterised by uncontrollable drug-seeking, no matter what the consequences.<sup>60</sup>

No matter how they ingest the drug, chronic heroin users experience a variety of medical complications including insomnia, constipation, lung complications including pneumonia and tuberculosis, depression and anti-social personality disorder. Medical consequences of chronic injection of the drug include scarred or collapsed veins, bacterial infection in the blood vessels. Sharing of needles increases the risk of blood-borne virus infection including hepatitis B and C and HIV.<sup>61</sup>

## The link between drugs and crime

There is undeniably a strong association between illicit drug use and criminal activity which is consistent across much of the empirical literature. However this association is also

complex and non-universal and various researchers have argued over its causal direction and association with other possible causal factors <sup>62</sup>

### Drug use leads to crime

A number of researchers have suggested that psychopharmacological, economic motivation and systemic theory may cause drug users to commit crime.

Psychopharmacological theory asserts that the intoxicating effect of drugs makes users more likely to commit crime.<sup>63</sup> For example, one study identified that 34% of police detainees were under the influence of an illegal drug whilst they committed the offence and other found that 52.8% of robberies were committed by offenders who were already intoxicated through drugs with a further 5.7% suffering withdrawal effects.<sup>64</sup>

The economic motivation theory asserts that drug users are compelled to commit crime in order to fund their drug habit, with many studies concluding this phenomenon particularly in relation to property crime, shoplifting and street robbery. <sup>65 66 67</sup>

Systemic theory suggests that the offender's engagement in the illegal drugs market exposes them to other offenders including organised crime gangs and these associations increase their risk of becoming involved in crime themselves.<sup>68</sup>

### Crime leads to drug use

Some researchers have suggested that offenders are more likely to become illegal drug users. Thus, individuals who are deviant are more likely to be involved or choose social situations where drug use condoned or encouraged. This theory may arise when deviant individuals use drugs to self-medicate or to provide an excuse to commit deviant or criminal acts or that income from criminal acts providing additional income enables the offender to purchase drugs. <sup>62</sup>

### Crime and drug use have another common cause

This third theory suggests that crime and drug use are not causally linked to each other but share another causal variable. Researchers have suggested that a range of both social and family circumstances appear to be influences on young people's risk of becoming involved in both crime and drug use. When risk factors for both outweigh protective factors, a young person is more likely to both become involved in crime and take illegal drugs. <sup>69 70</sup> (See Chapters 6 and 7 for further discussion on risk and protective factors).

In reality, all of the above theories may be correct or hold true for different sections of the population, although the economic motivation theory whereby the offender is motivated to commit crime to fund a drug addiction where other economic means are lacking probably has the strongest research base behind it.

### Youth Offending Service Data

As discussed in Chapter 2, Thurrock Council's Youth Offending Service (YOS) records data on all crimes committed by young people that they work with. All the

young people have had some form of statutory outcome, either pre-court or through the courts. As such we can assume that in every case, they have been convicted of the crime and/or admitted guilt.

We categorised all drugs related offences recorded by the youth service into four categories;

1. Supply (including attempt to supply or possession with intent to supply) of a Class A drug
2. Supply (including attempt to supply or possession with intent to supply) of a Class B drug
3. Possession of a Class A drug
4. Possession of Class B drug

Class A drugs are of interest because crack cocaine and heroin are most strongly associated with gang violence and county lines activity. Cannabis is also of interest as the evidence base and local analyses on risk factors (Chapter 6) identified availability of/exposure to cannabis as a risk factor for a young person becoming involved in serious youth violence and gangs.

Figures 5.9 and 5.10 show the number of recorded offences on the YOS database for possession and supply of Class A and Class B drugs between 2014/15 and 2018/19

Figure 5.9

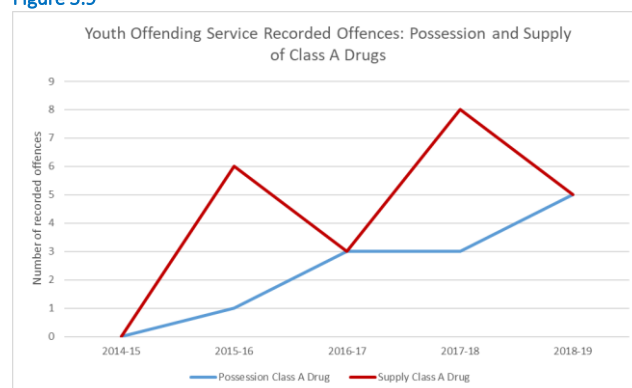
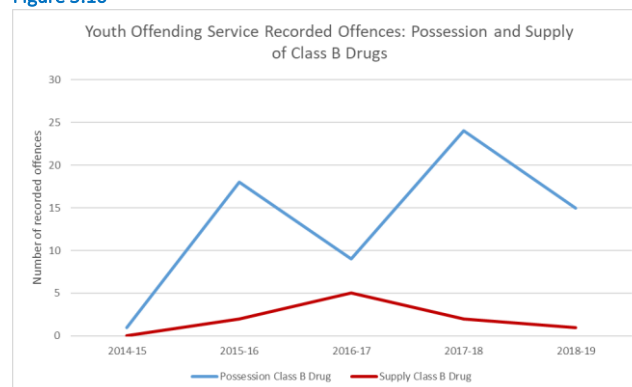


Figure 5.10



There has been an increasing trend in offences recorded on the YOS database for both possession and supply of class A drugs although the overall number of offences remains relatively small. This corresponds with the increasing trend in opiate and crack cocaine users aged 15-24 in Thurrock over the same period.



For class B drugs (likely to be overwhelmingly cannabis), there has also been an increasing trend in possession offences but offences for supply remain very low.

The vast majority of offenders were male with females only committing four drugs recorded offences over the past five years.

### Connection between youth violence, gangs and drugs.

Without a single linked data set between YOS, drug treatment services and police data it is difficult to analyse definitively the connection between drugs offences recorded by YOS and youth violence/gang involvement. However, given that supply of crack cocaine and heroin is strongly associated with gang involvement and violence we undertook a detailed analyses of youth offenders involved in the supply of class A drugs.

In total only 10 offenders were responsible for the 22 offences recorded on the YOS database which we categorised as 'Supply of Class A'. All were male with an mean age of 16.3 and a median age of 16 years old. We conducted a detailed analysis of the ethnicity of the cohort of offenders involved in the supply of class A drugs that the YOS worked with. (Figure A)

Black African/Caribbean and Black British males are heavily over represented in this cohort of offenders, with 80% belonging to this ethnic group compared with 18.4% in the entire cohort of young people that YOS has worked with over the last five years and just 10% of the Thurrock population of young people. The reasons behind this are unclear.

All ten offenders had committed multiple offences with the mean number of recorded offences being 6.8 and the median being 7. This offending pattern is greater than that of all recorded offenders on the YOS data base where the mean number offences committed was 3.55 and the median was 2. 70% of the cohort this cohort were also recorded as having committed one or more violence against the person offences.

In an attempt to better understand the offending behaviour and success of the response of the criminal justice system to it for these 10 offenders, we created ten offending histories which map each offence committed and the intervention made by the system in response in chronological order. The 'x' (horizontal) axis shows the numbers of days elapsed since the first offence was committed. These are shown in figures 5.12 to 5.21 overleaf. It is worth remembering that these histories represent only offences dealt with through YOS. Each offender may have committed other offences that we do not know about and are therefore not recorded.

Figure 5.11

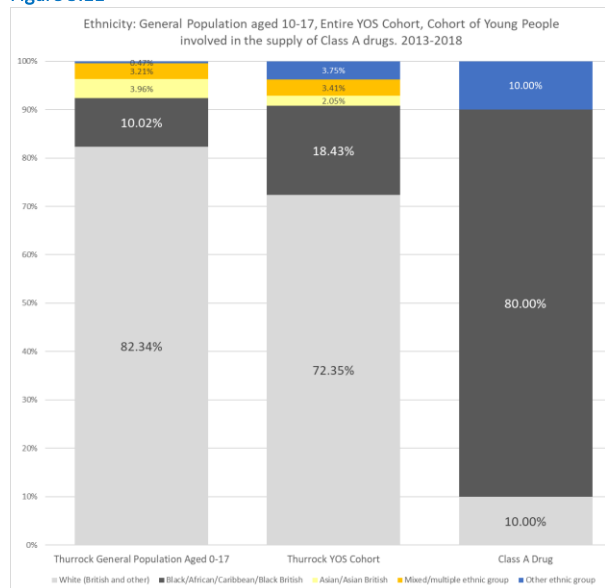


Figure 5.12

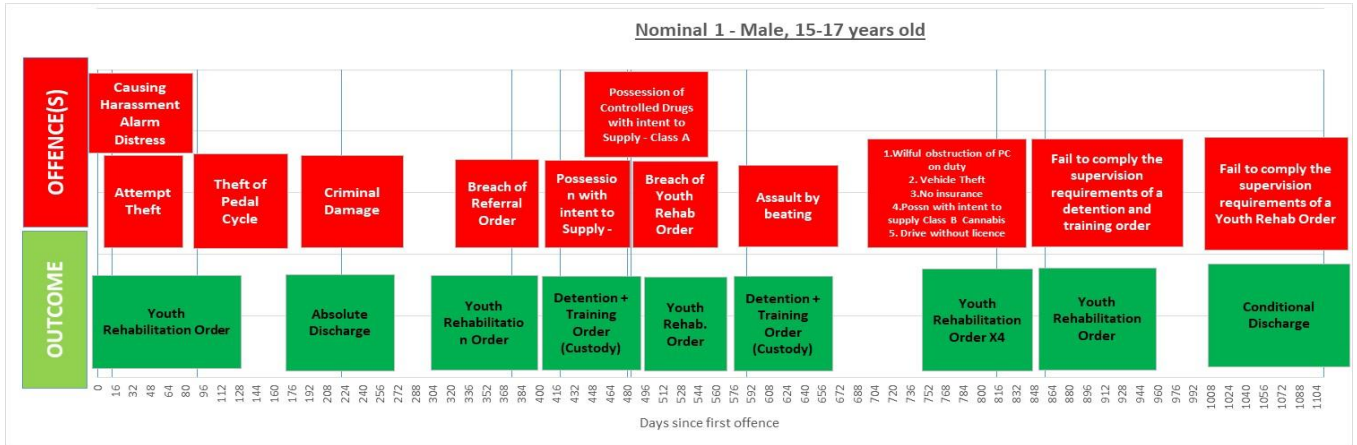


Figure 5.13

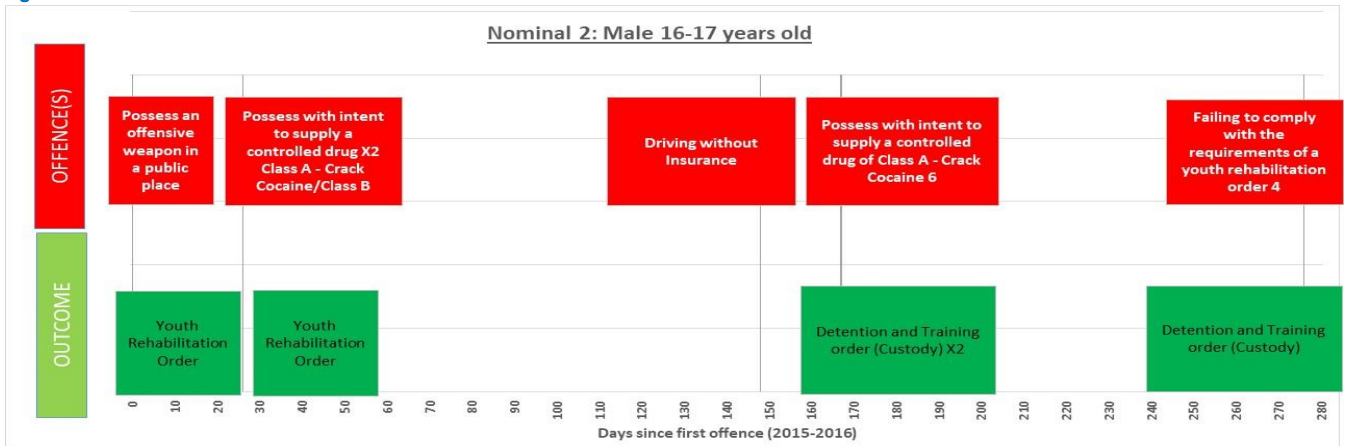


Figure 5.14

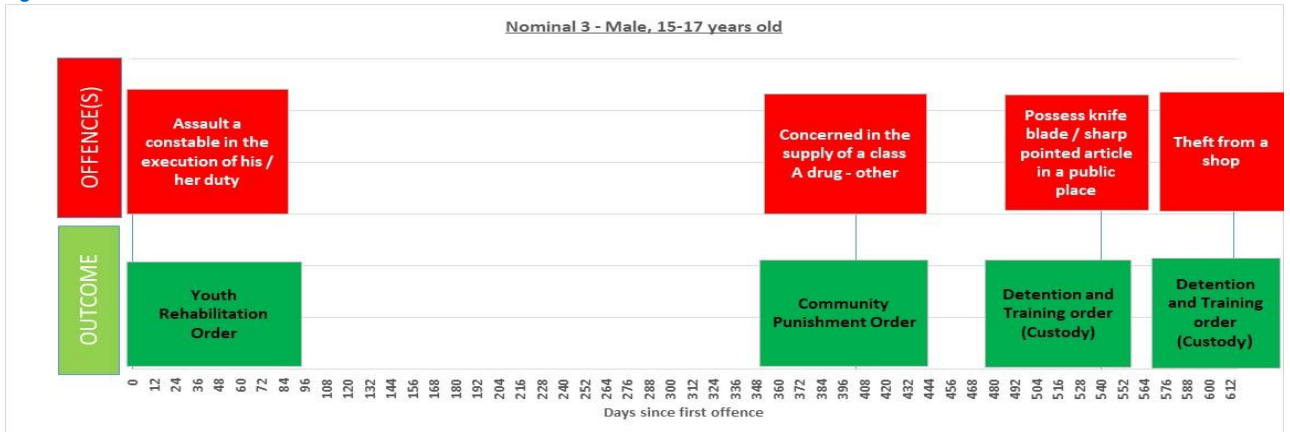


Figure 5.15

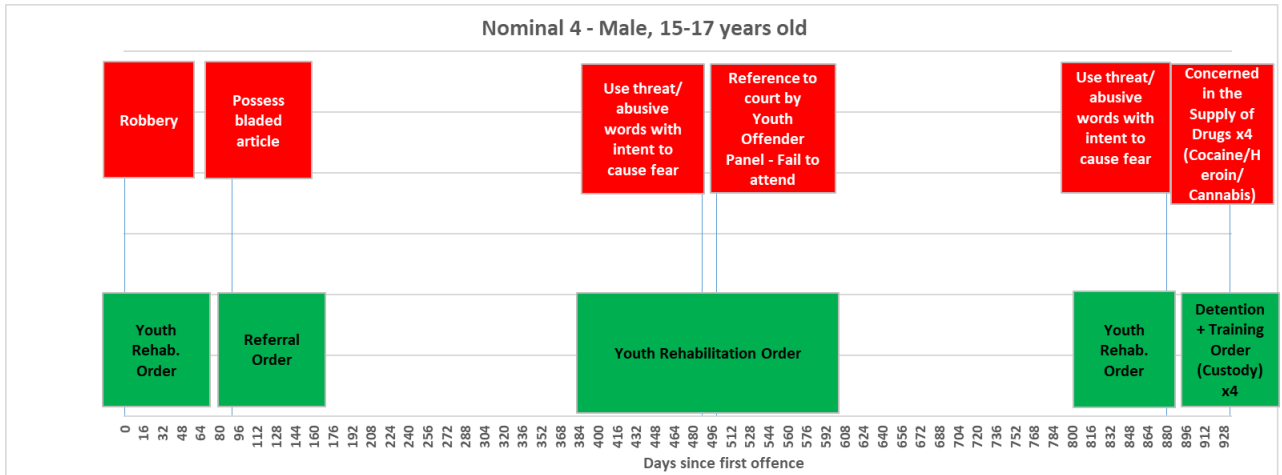


Figure 5.16

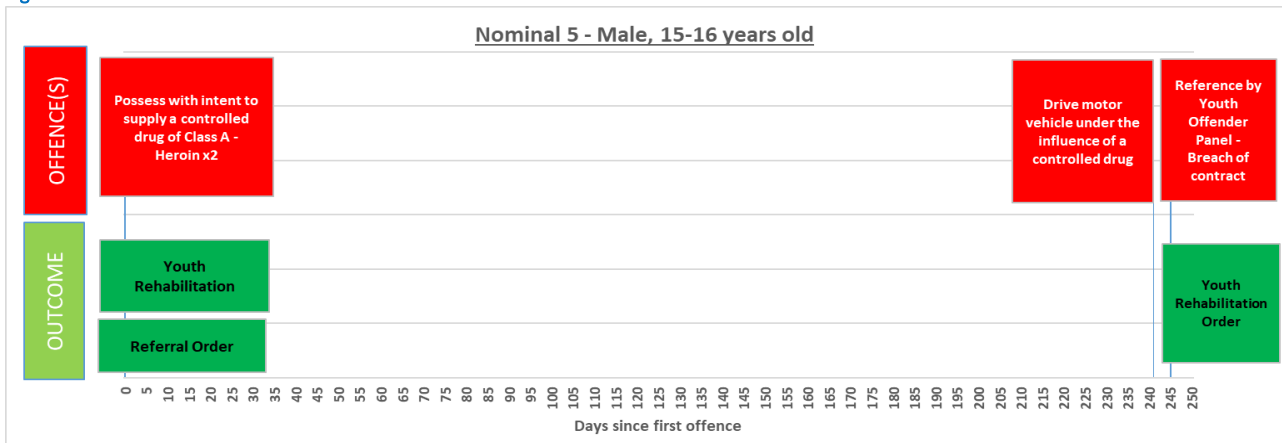


Figure 5.17

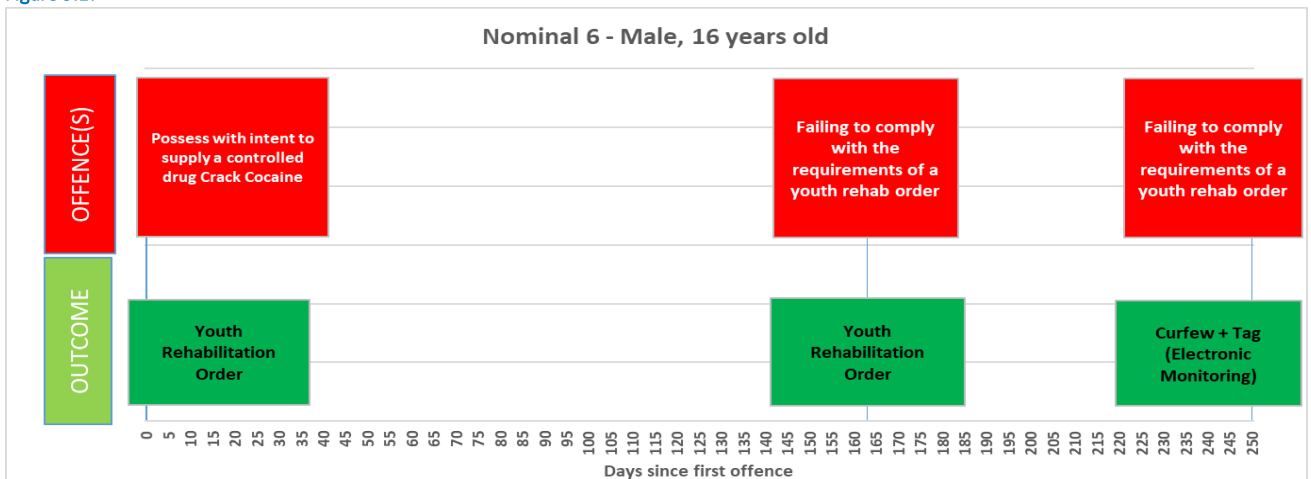


Figure 5.18

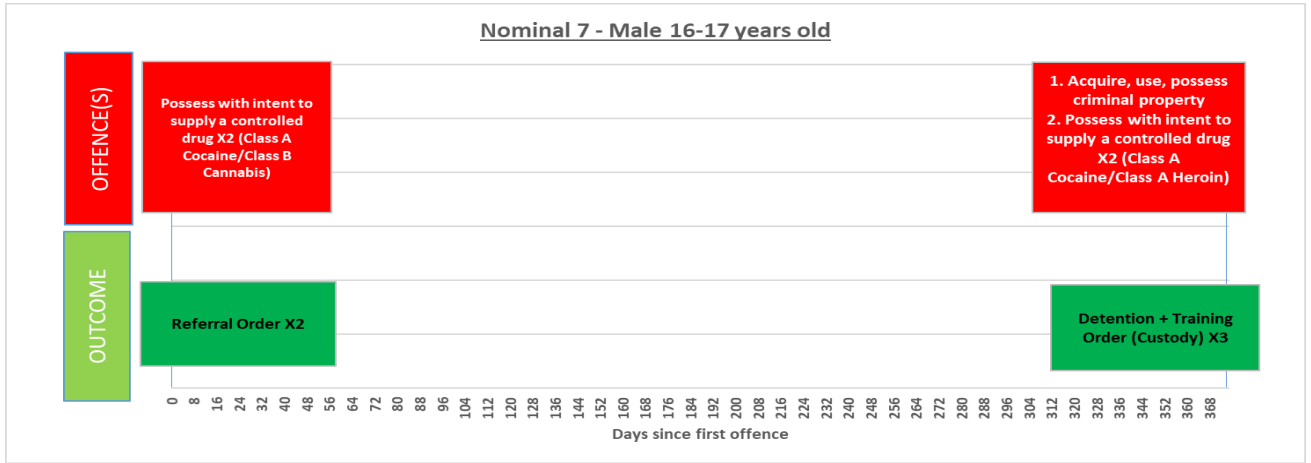


Figure 5.19

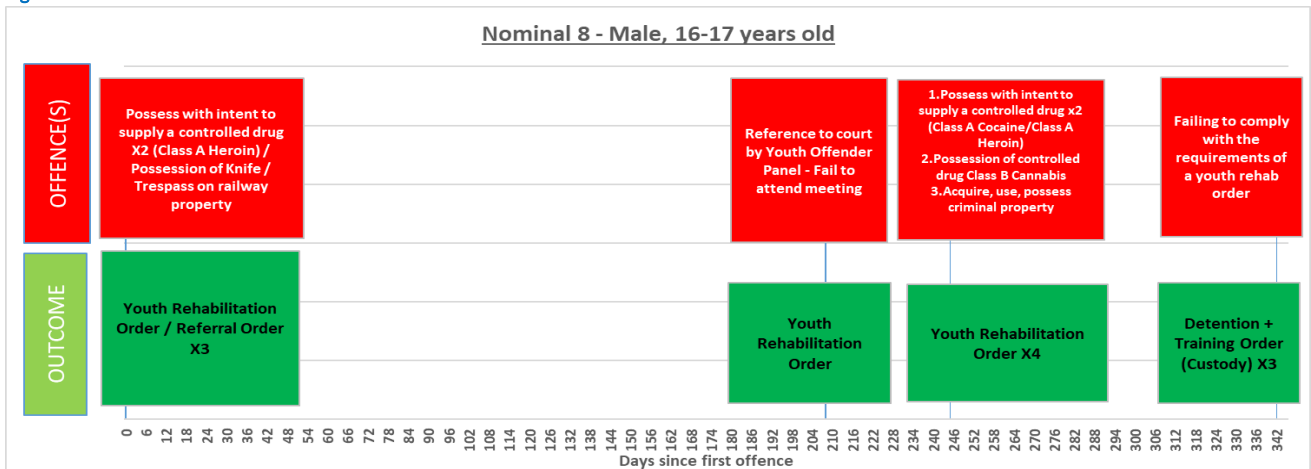


Figure 5.20

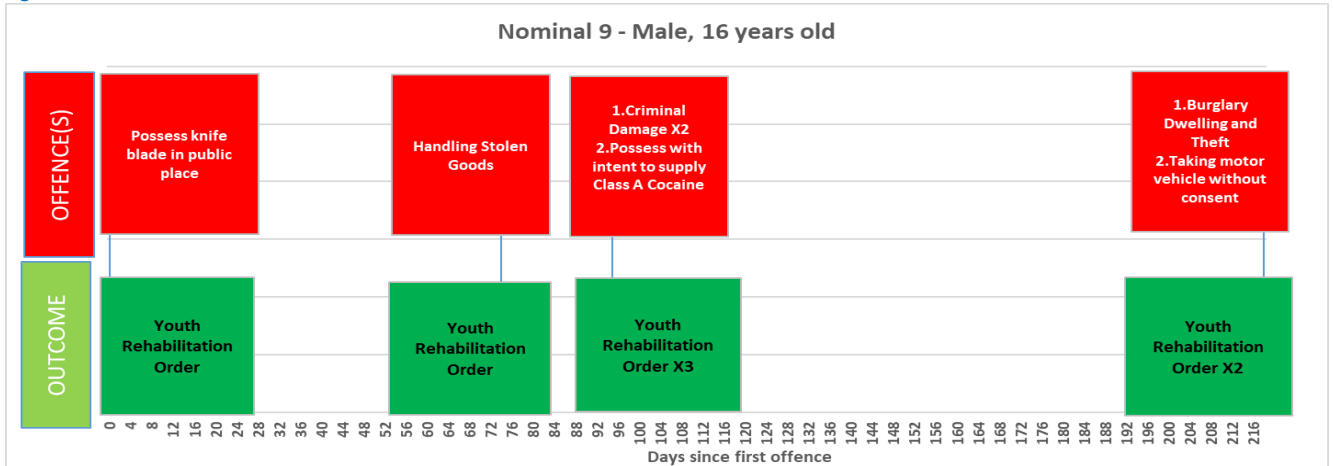


Figure 5.21



What is striking when reading these ten offending histories is that the system interventions have largely been unsuccessful in changing offending behaviour. Youth rehabilitation orders are the most common outcome listed and yet repeatedly this cohort of offenders go on to commit other offences, often serious and also including failure to comply with the original rehabilitation order.

The persistent offending behaviour differentiates them from most young people who commit offences in Thurrock and are dealt with by the Thurrock YOS. Over the entirety of the cohort that YOS has worked with in the past five years; 59.2% of young people did not reoffend and another 4.3% only offended one more time.

## Drug Addiction Treatment Services in Thurrock

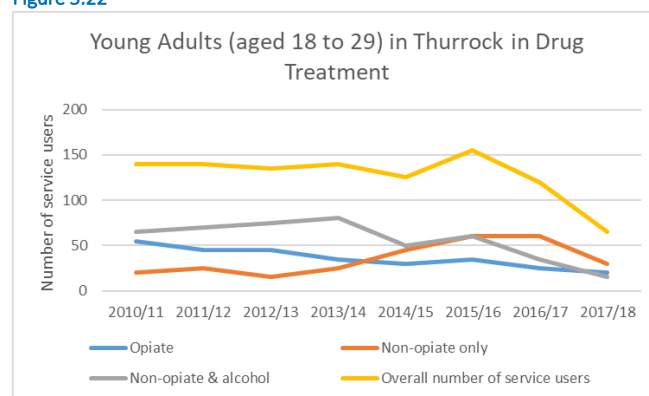
Drug treatment services in Thurrock are commissioned by Thurrock Council from the Public Health Grant and provided by *Inclusion Thurrock* for adults (aged 18+) and *CGL Wise Up* for Children and Young People. As such, the cohort residents that this report discussed (young people aged 11 to 25) are seen by both providers.

Data for adults in drug treatment in Thurrock was analysed from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS). This categories adults into three age bands; 18-29, 30-39 and 40-64.

### Young adults in treatment

Figure 5.22 shows the numbers of young adults (aged 18-29) in treatment for drug problems in Thurrock from 2010/11 to 2017-18, for opiates, non-opiates only, no opiates and alcohol and overall.

Figure 5.22



There has been a significant drop in the number of service users accessing the service for drug treatment in the age group 18 to 29 since a peak in 2015/16. The reasons for this are unclear as treatment places are available for any young adult that wishes to access the service. Regrettably the 18-29 age banding used by NTDMS does not correspond with the 15-25 age band used by Liverpool John Moores University to produce drug user prevalence estimates and so a direct comparison between trends in drug use prevalence and treatment is not possible for different age groups in Thurrock. However, it is worth noting that the rise in estimated prevalence of crack cocaine use in the 15-25 year old age group does not correspond with the trend in treatment access for non-opiate drugs in the 18-29 year old age group. This could mean that there are more young adults that remain untreated for non-opiate addiction than in previous years.

Figure 5.23 demonstrates the 'reach' of drug treatment services into the drug using population by showing the percentage of estimated of drug users in treatment. All ages between 15 and 64 are shown due to restrictions that differing age bands between prevalence estimates and treatment services place on more granular analyses.

For the all age cohort of residents, it can be seen that there a downward trend in the estimated percentage of drug users in treatment for opiate, crack cocaine and dual use

opiate/crack cocaine between 2011/12 and 2016/17. This mirrors a trend nationally and in Essex, the East of England although figures for the percentage of drug users in Thurrock are lower than national and regional figures and similar to Essex (data not shown on graph). The drop in crack cocaine users in treatment is particularly large (from just under 55% in 2010/11 to just under 25% in 2016/17). Again, the reasons for this drop are unclear and do not reflect any change in commissioning practice suggesting a genuine drop in demand. This could reflect a change in demographic profile or other factors in the lives of crack cocaine users. It is however worrying from a public health point of view, meaning that there are a greater proportion of untreated drug users risking their own health and possibly harming their families and wider society.

Figure 5.23

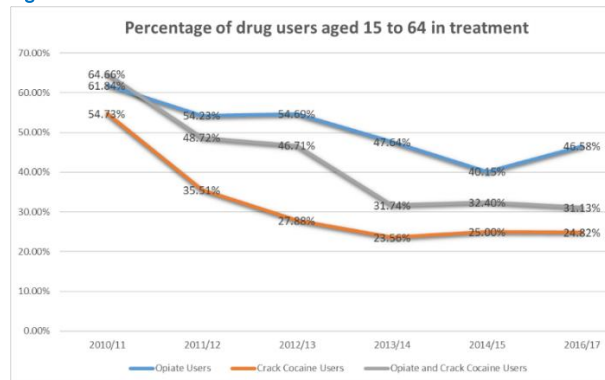
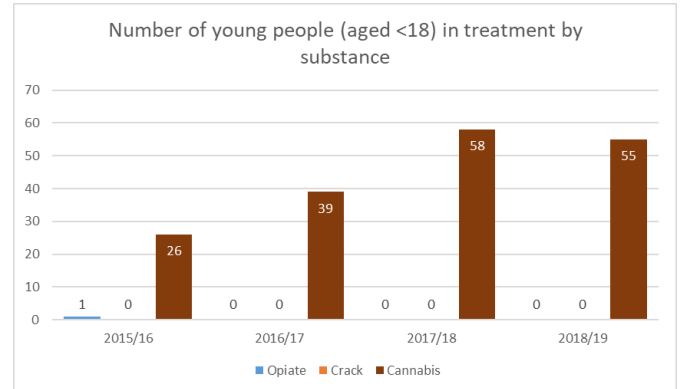


Figure 5.24 shows the numbers of young people (aged under 18) accessing the Thurrock Young People's drug treatment service from 2015/16 to 2018/19

Figure 5.24



Unlike young adults (aged 18-29) the trend in access of young people under the age of 18 is increasing (albeit with a slight reduction from 2017/18 to 2018/19). With the exception of a single opiate user in 2015/16 all drug treatment for those aged under 18 was for cannabis. This would suggest either that the estimated prevalence and absolute numbers of opiate and crack cocaine users in the 15-25 age group relate mainly to young people over the age of 18 and/or that they are not accessing treatment.

We do not have estimated prevalence models for cannabis use so we are unable to ascertain the 'reach' of commissioned young people's drug treatment services into the population of young people using cannabis. The rising trend in treatment access could suggest a rising underlying prevalence in cannabis use, and/or are greater willingness of young people using cannabis to seek help.

Although sometimes portrayed by some in the media as a less 'innocuous' drug, cannabis use in young people remains highly concerning in public health terms, particularly as there is national evidence base that the strength of street cannabis has increased significantly over the past decade and is now often the highly potent 'skunk' form.

# Chapter 6: Risk Factors (Vulnerabilities) for Violence and Gang Involvement in Young People

## Key Findings

The published evidence base suggests a range of risk factors that are associated with youth violence and gang membership. These can be grouped under five categories of Individual, Family, School, Peer Group and Community. Different risk factors are important at different ages. The largest group of risk factors most strongly associated with youth violence fall in the 'individual category' and include cognitive-behavioural issues such as aggression, conduct disorder, running away and truancy, anti-social behaviour, low self-esteem and high psychopathic features. Disrupted family and poor family supervision, low commitment to school/school exclusion and poor relationships with peers/delinquent peers were also identified as strong risk factors for youth violence. Highly associated risk factors for gang membership include anger/aggression traits, low academic achievement, learning disability, association with delinquent/gang involved peers, living in a neighbourhood with many troubled use and cannabis availability within the neighbourhood. There is increasing evidence that social media is associated with youth violence and gang membership including the use of 'drill music' videos to glamorise gang lifestyle/drug dealing and violence, live broadcasting of violence and anti-police messages. Evidence suggests that the issue is largely hidden from adults who are often unaware what their children are viewing.

An associated risk factor cannot be claimed to be 'causal'. Despite often being cited by the media and politicians as a risk, poverty and deprivation are very poor predictors of crime in general and youth violence in particular both from national and local data. Whilst the majority of criminals come from deprived backgrounds, the vast majority of the population who live in deprived communities do not commit crime or violent crime. This is known as 'the crime paradox'. Longitudinal research demonstrated two causal variables for serious youth offending:

1. Exposure to a criminogenic environment which encompassed unsupervised time in city centre or other locations with low levels of social cohesion, and exposure to peers already involved in crime.
2. Developing an individual crime personality which encompassed low scores on standardised morality inventories and low scores on standardised self-control inventories.

Youth that scored highly on these two variables from both deprived and affluent backgrounds are much more likely to become prolific youth offenders whilst those who did not from both deprived and affluent backgrounds were not. The risk factors identified from the published evidence base can be mapped onto these two causal variables to explain the crime paradox.

Analyses using Thurrock's linked dataset provided by Xantura identified the following five risk factors as being the most significant associated and predictive factors for serious youth violence:

1. Previous Criminality or exposure to family/peers who commit crime
2. Substance Misuse, particularly availability of / use of drugs by others within the neighbourhood
3. Family dysfunction
4. Individual behavioural/cognitive factors including conduct disorder, aggression and troublesome behaviour
5. Being expelled or excluded from school or mainstream education.

Thurrock has high rates of fixed term Primary School exclusions compared to England but very low rates of fixed term secondary school exclusions. Rates of permanent primary and secondary school exclusions are generally in-line with England. There is a high variability of exclusion rates between different schools, with fixed term exclusion rates at the Pupil Referral Unit being exceptionally high. Further work to understand and address this variation is required. There may be opportunities to share best practice between schools to reduce exclusion rates.

## Introduction

This chapter discusses the published evidence base on factors that increase the risk of young people committing violence and/or becoming involved in gangs. It is based on an evidence review commissioned by the Home Office<sup>70</sup> together with other published evidence. The Chapter also contains analyses on specific risk factors faced by Thurrock young people and their impact on increasing the risk of youth violence and gang membership.

A risk factor is defined as a variable that can usefully predict an increase in the likelihood that a young person will become involved in serious youth violence or gangs. It is important to remember that a predictive factor does not necessarily mean that the factor is *causal* in the development of violent behaviour or gang membership; simply that it is a reliable predictor of increased risk. For example, it cannot be said that low academic attainment *causes* a young person to become violent, simply that young people with low academic attainment are more likely to be

represented in the cohort of young people who participate in serious youth violence. Risk factors are grouped into five categories:

- 1) Individual
- 2) Family
- 3) School
- 4) Peer Group
- 5) Community/Society

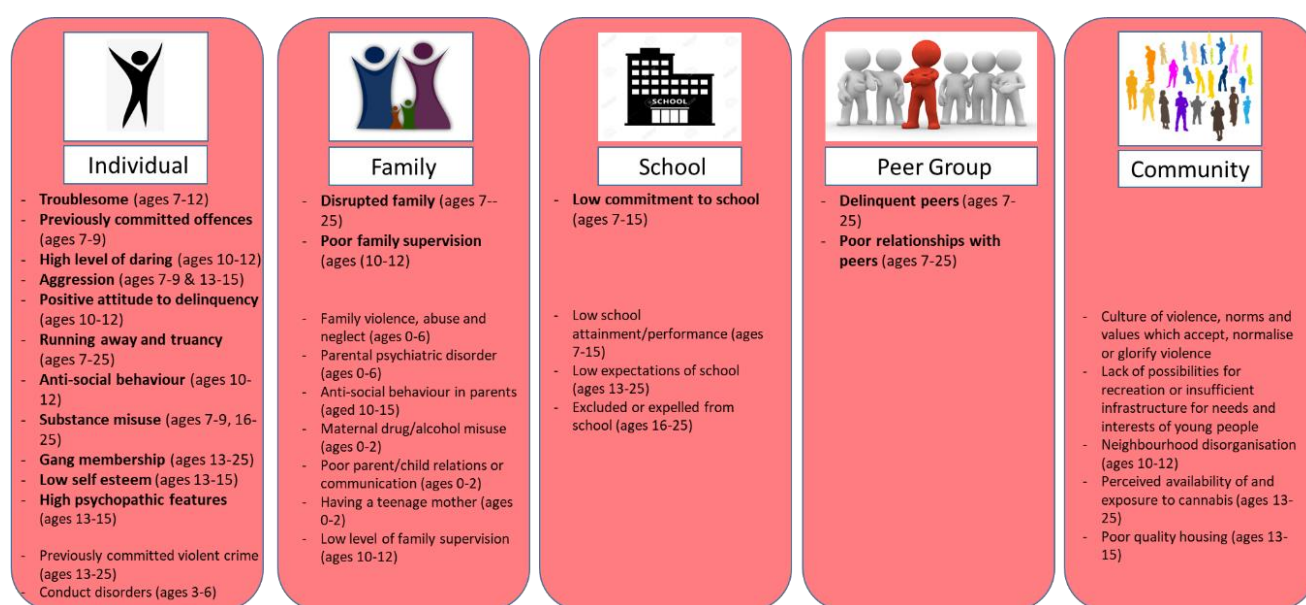
Risk factors have a cumulative effect; that is, the greater the number of risk factors experienced by the youth, the greater the likelihood of involvement in youth violence or gang membership. For example, one study found that youth in

Seattle possessing seven or more risk factors were 13 times more likely to join a gang compared to youth with one risk factor.<sup>71</sup>

## Youth Violence

Figure 6.1 summarises the evidence base<sup>72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85</sup> on risk factors for youth violence. Youth violence was defined as violence committed in a community or public space by a young person aged 25 or under. The factors with the strongest predictive value (a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and/or odds ratio greater than 2.5) are shown in bold.

Figure 6.1: Risk Factors for Serious Youth Violence



Across the majority of age categories, individual factors consistently represent the best predictors of youth violence. In particular, attributes such as aggression, risk taking and high psychopathic features such as a lack of guilt and high level of daring are strongly associated with risk of violent behaviour. Running away from home/truancy, misuse of drugs and committing previous criminal acts are also strongly correlated with serious violence.

Family related risk factors tend to be important in younger age groups but generally have a lower predictive value of serious violence, particularly as children age. The exception is 'living in a disrupted family' which was usually defined as the frequency with which children's primary care giver changes, which was an important risk factor up to age 25.

Peer related factors amongst young people aged 7 and above are also consistently found to be a strong predictor of youth violence. Factors predominantly relate to levels of peer delinquency, commitment to delinquent peers and poor relationships with peers.

School based factors also tended to have a lower positive predictive value than individual and peer based factors but included exclusion from school and low academic attainment.

Community and society factors generally have a lower level of predictive value for serious youth violence, however neighbourhood disorganisation, poor quality housing provision and available of/exposure to cannabis have been found to be associated.

## Gang Involvement

A gang was defined in the evidence search as 'a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- See themselves (and are seen by others as a discernible group)
- Engage in criminal activity and violence and may;

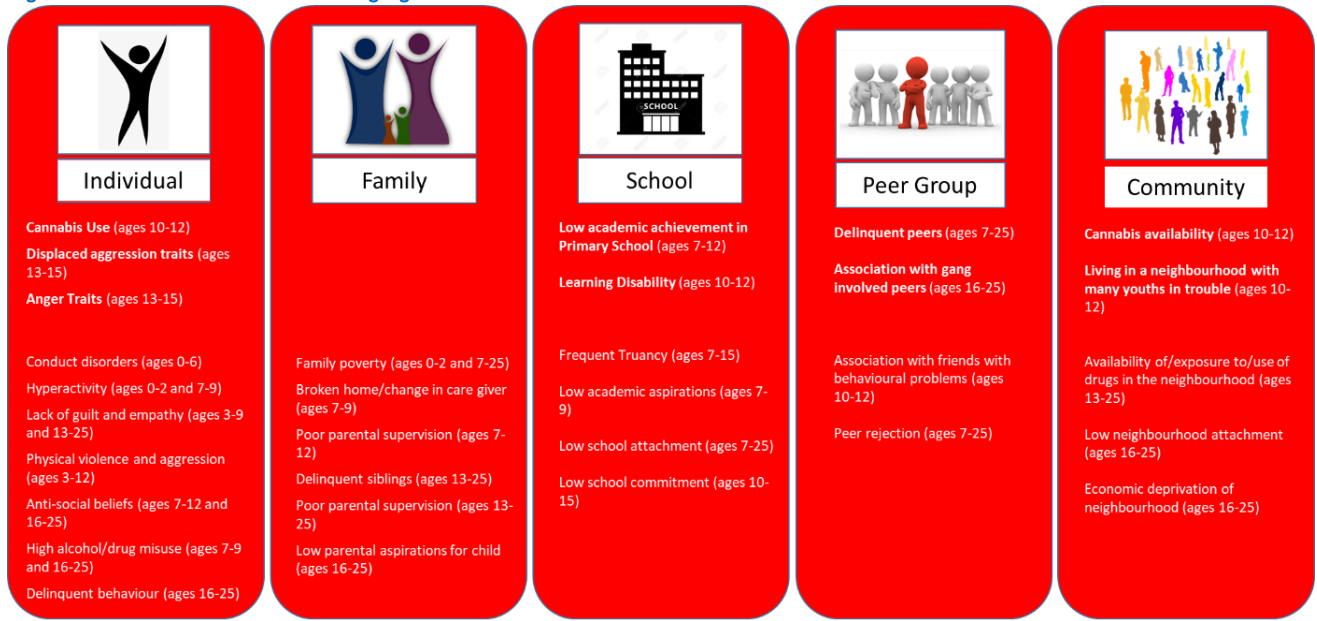


- Lay claim over territory (this is not necessarily geographical territory but can include an illegal economy territory);
- Have some form of identifying structural feature;
- Be in conflict with other, similar gangs'

Far fewer studies have investigated risk factors associated with gang involvement compared to those that have

investigated serious youth violence. Figure 6.2 summarises the evidence base<sup>77 81 83 86 87 88 89 90</sup> on risk factors of gang involvement by young people aged 25 and under. The strongest predictive factors (a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and/or odds ratio greater than 2.5) are again shown first in bold.

Figure 6.2: Risk Factors for involvement in gangs



As with studies investigating risk factors for serious youth violence, *individual factors* are often cited as the best predictors of gang membership. Attitudinal factors (particularly) aggression and anger traits are strong predictors together with anti-social beliefs and lack of guilt and empathy. Cannabis use at age 10-12 is the strongest behavioural predictive factor, although other behaviours including conduct disorder, physical violence and aggression and delinquent behaviour have also shown to be associated.

Family factors have been found to have a lower predictive value on gang involvement compared to individual factors but include family poverty, attitudes of parents including pro-violent attitudes and low aspiration for children, delinquent siblings, and changes in care givers.

Much like youth violence, school-based factors are generally associated with poor academic attainment, low commitment to school and truancy. One study identified that children with learning disabilities were particularly vulnerable to gang involvement.<sup>77</sup>

Peer relations have been found to be strongly correlated with gang membership. Both a connection with peers

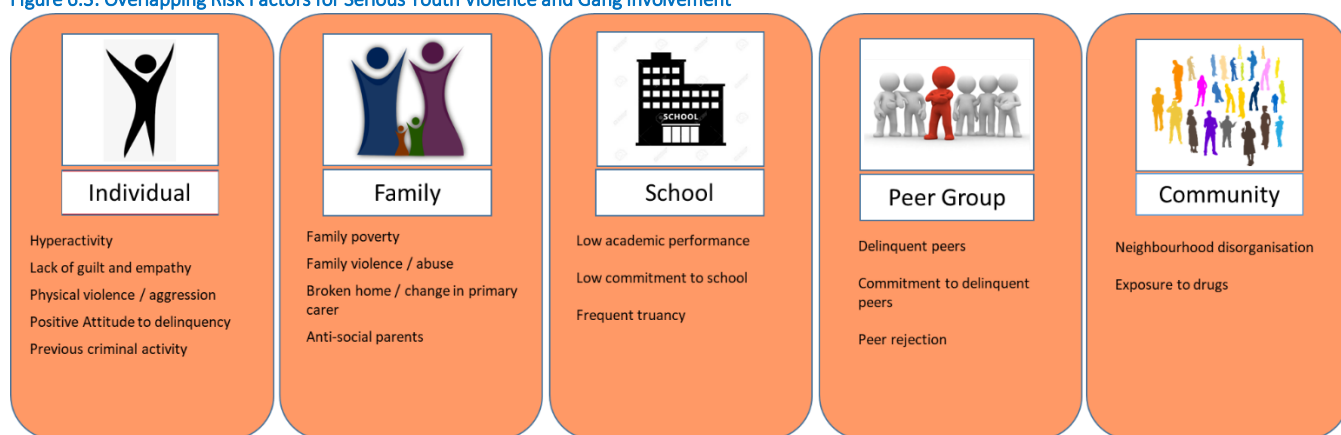
associated with problem behaviours and a commitment to delinquent peers are found to predict gang involvement.

While community/society factors are often included in studies of gang involvement, the majority of studies found a relatively weak association. Availability of cannabis and living in a neighbourhood where many other youths are in trouble were the only two risk factors with strong associations.

## Overlapping risk factors

Figure 6.3 (overleaf) shows risk factors that have been identified for both serious youth violence and gang involvement. It is worth noting that not all risk factors shown were identified as strong predictors (i.e. a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and/or odds ratio greater than 2.5) for both gang involvement and serious youth violence

Figure 6.3: Overlapping Risk Factors for Serious Youth Violence and Gang Involvement



## Social Media

Much has been written in the press about the link between social media and youth violence and gangs.<sup>91 92</sup>

There is significant anecdotal evidence from law enforcement and youth offending professionals in the UK and US that disputes on social media can fuel and escalate youth violence, and of the link between 'Drill' music videos being used to glamorise gang membership, gang violence and material gain from drug dealing through gangs. However, the relatively recent emergence of this phenomenon means that robust published evidence on the topic is minimal. Dame Glenys Stacey, HM Chief Inspector of Probation in her 2017 report on UK Youth Offending Services concluded that in 25% of cases examined in her thematic inspection, there was a social-media component to the main offence, although the form varied widely. She reported gangs' use of social media to appeal to new members, stake their territory, and issue challenges and engage in provocation with other gangs.<sup>93</sup>

Researchers at University College London conducted a six-month analysis of the social media platforms *Twitter*, *YouTube*, *SnapChat*, *Instagram* and *Periscope*, together with focus groups and interviews with 20 front line professionals and an international review of the literature.<sup>94</sup> They made a number of concerning discoveries about the negative impact of social media on young people's risk for violence and gang membership including:

**Anti-police.** Social media content frequently depicted police officers in a negative and derogatory light which could lead to anger and resentment, and increased likelihood to commit crime and an increased difficulty for the police to be seen as legitimate

**Music videos raising tension.** 'Drill music' videos (a genre of rap music that originated in Chicago) were popular and often depicted displays of young people holding weapons,

remarks about recent incidents of violence, explicit threats to stab or shoot specific individuals or groups and acted as a call to violence. Many examples were also identified of young people using social media to video and post themselves 'trespassing' onto other gang territory, stealing property associated with rival groups or taunting individuals or rival gangs.

**Live broadcasting of violence.** Numerous episodes of acts of serious violence being uploaded to social media were identified that led to further reprisals in real life and enhanced the fear and status of individual gangs and gang members.

A growing issue that is hidden from adults. Because social media is commonly perceived to be hidden from adults, a virtual 'free-for-all' space has emerged in which a minority of young people share various forms of material that both displays and incites serious violence in real life unchecked. The explosion in smart phone use and social media and the reported little oversight that parents and teachers have of children's use of it make this an unregulated and harmful space which can be accessed by millions of young people. Many professionals described current e-safety training as either non-existent or narrowly focused on online chat rooms and as such out of date.

## School Exclusion

Much has been written in the media about the connection between being excluded from school and youth violence/gang membership.

There is significant evidence of an association between both fixed term or permanent exclusion and becoming either a victim or perpetrator of crime. One study found that 63% and 42% of prisoners stated that they had been temporarily or permanently excluded from school respectively.<sup>95</sup> Of 16 and 17 year old young offenders receiving a custodial

sentence in 2014, 39% had been permanently excluded from school prior to sentence.<sup>96</sup>

The 2019 Timpson Review on School Exclusion in the UK, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Education<sup>97</sup> found that parents, schools and other front line professionals highlighted that exclusion increased other risk factors a child may have of being drawn into crime and suggested that children who have been excluded may face additional vulnerability for exploitation by gangs, with gang membership temporarily fulfilling a sense of belonging that they crave after being asked to leave their school community. Ofsted has also highlighted in its research into how London schools are dealing with knife crime that *"gangs know that once children have been excluded, they are much more vulnerable and easier to groom. Gangs are taking advantage of this by, for example, getting children to take a knife into school or break another rule which gets them permanently excluded."*<sup>98</sup>

However, evidence on a *causal link* between school exclusion and crime is minimal and complex. A study by the Ministry of Justice, which found that 85% of young knife possession offenders who had offended prior to the end of Key Stage 4 had received at least one fixed period exclusion from school at some point, and that 20% had received a permanent school exclusion. However it also reported that there was an approximate 50/50 split between those whose first exclusion was prior to the offence, and those who were excluded at some point after the offence. As such, existing criminal behaviour could be the cause not the result of school exclusion for some young people.<sup>98</sup>

Other risk factors already highlighted in this chapter may also be the underlying cause of both school exclusion and serious youth violence or gang membership. The Ofsted report into knife crime amongst pupils in London found that the common denominator of pupils found carrying bladed objects into school was their vulnerability, whether that is poverty, abuse neglect, troubled families, or other factors that may lead to exclusion.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the lack of hard evidence that school exclusion is a *causal* factor leading children into serious crime or gang membership, the risk factors associated with exclusion need to be minimised. Being in education, whatever form that takes is likely to be a protective factor for children against violence and gang membership. One study found that 83% of young knife crime offenders were persistently absent from education in at least one of the five years prior to the offence they had committed.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, the prevalence of special educational needs (SEN) among the young offender population is striking; almost half of those young people sentenced to less than 12 months in custody in 2014 were recorded as having SEN without a statement and 28% were recorded as having SEN with a statement.<sup>99</sup> The Timpson Review highlights the need for schools to adopt a *public health approach* to crime by working with other agencies in partnership to minimise exclusion and the impacts of exclusion where it is unavoidable, minimising other risk factors and strengthening protective factors.

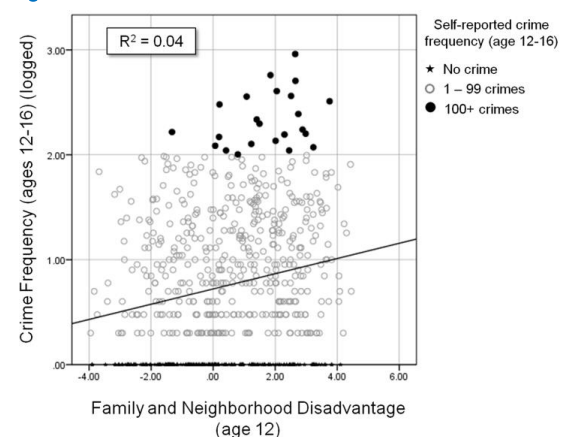
## Causal Factors

As stated at the start of this chapter, whilst the risk factors identified can act as *predictors* for involvement in youth violence or gang involvement, it can not necessarily be claimed that they are *causal factors*. For example, whilst we may observe that young people who commit serious violent crime may be more likely to have experienced a disrupted family and misused drugs, we also observe that many young people with substance misuse problems or who come from broken homes do not commit youth violence.

The difference between association and causality in this context can perhaps be best demonstrated by the link between poverty and crime. Poverty and coming from a disadvantaged background is often cited by politicians and in the media as being causal to youth offending because without question, the vast the majority of young people who are persistent offenders and enter the youth criminal justice system come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. However, it is equally true that the vast majority of young people who come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds never commit criminal offences and that social disadvantage in and of itself is a poor predictor of future criminality leading some researchers to question whether a causal relationship exists at all. This has been labelled by criminologists as *the crime paradox*.<sup>100 101 102 103 104</sup>

A study by researchers at Cambridge University<sup>105</sup> aimed to investigate this paradox using the Peterborough Adolescent and Young Adult Development (PADS+) Study, a longitudinal study that followed a random sample of 716 young people who were living in Peterborough since they were 12 in 2002, through adolescence into young adulthood in 2015. Across the entire cohort, their research identified only a very weak link ( $R^2 = 0.04$ ) between members of this cohort of young people who went on to be prolific offenders (committing more than 100 crimes) and family/neighbourhood disadvantage. (Figure 6.4).

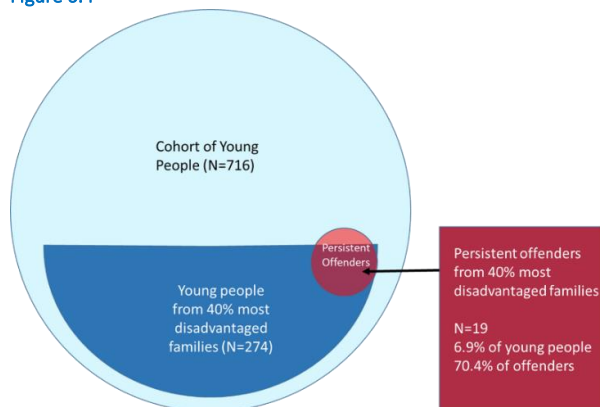
Figure 6.4



The vast majority (93%) of the 274 young people in the 40% most disadvantaged didn't go on to become persistent offenders however, the PADS+ study equally identified that 19 of the 27 (70.4%) of young people who became

persistent offenders were from the 40% most disadvantaged in the cohort. The *crime paradox* is demonstrated in figure B.

Figure 6.4



From detailed analyses of the cohort, the researchers identified two variables that seem to be causal factors in persistent and prolific offending:

1. Being exposed to a criminogenic environment which was a composite measure of two factors:
  - Exposure time spent in unstructured and unsupervised peer-oriented activities in local city centres or other locations with poor collective efficacy, i.e. without strong social norms around community cohesion and positive social values
  - Having peers who had an existing propensity to involvement in crime
2. Developing an individual crime propensity. This was defined as scoring highly on an index made up of

standardised scores on personal morality and levels of personal self-control.

The study found a strong relationship between scoring highly on these two measures and persistent offending behaviour in young people and also demonstrated that the relationship between these two measures and persistent criminal offending was strong in young people from all levels of family disadvantage within the overall cohort.

They therefore concluded it is being exposed to a criminogenic environment (unstructured peer activity in locations with low social cohesion/contact with peers with existing crime involvement) and individual crime propensity (morality/self-control) that were the causal factors in persistent youth crime involvement and not social disadvantage per se. They also concluded that the reason that most persistent offenders come from disadvantaged backgrounds could be explained by the fact that they have a higher likelihood of developing a high crime propensity and/or being exposed to criminogenic environments.

It is worth remembering that the Cambridge study had as its outcome variable all persistent offending as opposed to serious youth violence or gang involvement. However applying its findings to the risk factors identified previously, figure 6,5 attempts to show how the previously identified risk factors for serious youth violence may contribute to being exposed to the two causal factors identified in the research of *Being Exposed to a Criminogenic Environment* and *Developing an Individual Crime Propensity* and their composite measures. The risk factors identified as the strongest (a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and/or odds ratio greater than 2.5) are shown in bold.

Figure 6.5: Relationship between Risk Factors for Serious Youth Violence and Causal Factors for persistent youth offending.

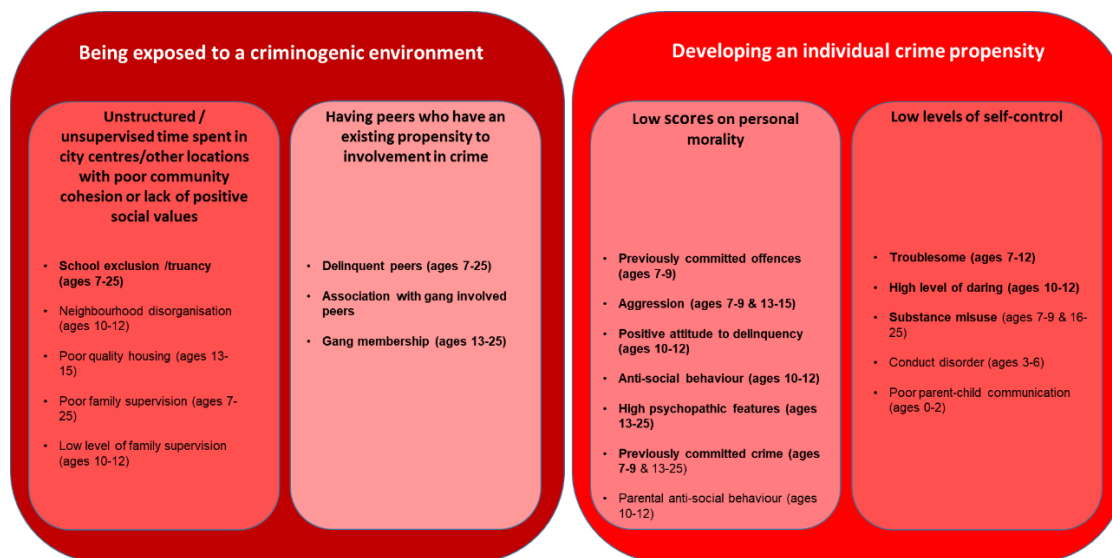
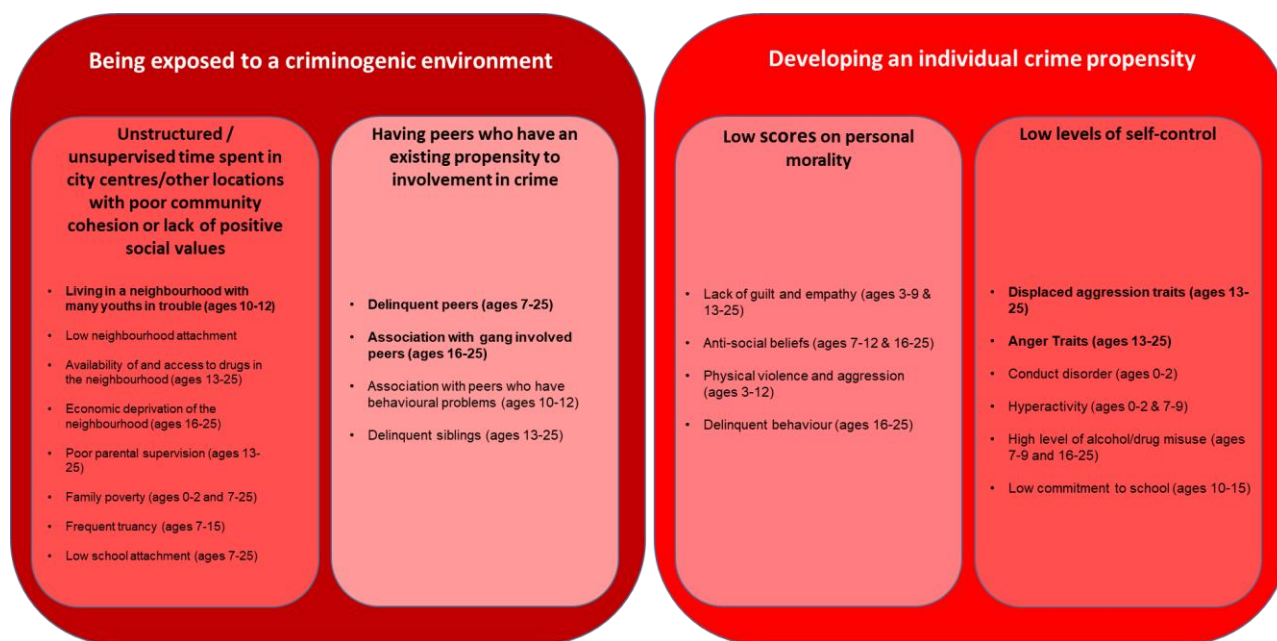


Figure 6.6 (overleaf) suggests how the previously identified risk factors for gang involvement may be linked to the two identified causal factors and their composite measures for persistent youth offending. The strongest risk factors (a correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and/or odds ratio greater than 2.5) are shown in bold.

Figure 6.6: Association of risk factors for gang involvement with causal factors for persistent youth offending.



## Analysis of Risk Factors faced by Thurrock Young People and their impact on prevalence of violence and gang membership.

Xantura has been commissioned by Thurrock Council to create and maintain a linked dataset of different data held on young people and their families. The linked dataset currently joins the following datasets at resident level:

- Youth Offending
- Chronology
- Children's Social Care case notes
- Anti-social behaviour victims data
- Missing persons
- School attendance and exclusions
- Domestic Violence
- Child Safeguarding datasets including Children In Need, Child Protection, CLA, EH
- EDUPRU
- Child missing education
- Benefits data
- Debt including tenancy, council tax, housing benefits over payment.

To date, the main use of the Xantura linked data is to provide a *single view* of an individual child and their parents that displays information from multiple datasets for front line children's social care professionals. However, the system that Xantura has created also provides opportunities to use linked data to ascertain the impact that the risk factors identified in this chapter have had on the likelihood

that a young person will commit violent crime or become involved in gangs (the *Outcome Variables* we seek to prevent in the future).

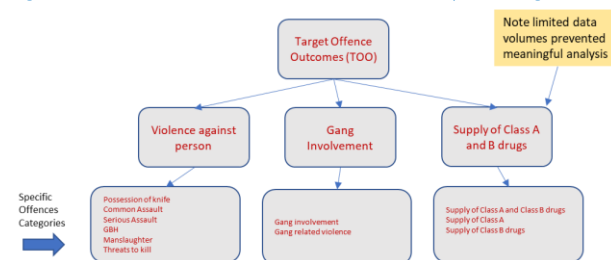
Ascertaining and quantifying the impact that various different risk factors (vulnerabilities) in our own population have on likelihood of involvement in the outcome variables of future violence or gangs creates allows us to identify the most significant vulnerabilities in young people at Thurrock level associated with youth violence and gang involvement.

This in turn opens up the exciting possibility of building a predictive model that could identify the cohorts of young people most at risk of future gang memberships or violent behaviour and provide the opportunity to target tailored prevention interventions at specific young people to reduce their risk. We have therefore worked closely with Xantura to analyse the impact that specific vulnerabilities have had on violent behaviour and gang membership within the population of young people living in Thurrock.

Unfortunately because police data is not currently included within the Xantura linked dataset we have been unable to use arrest/police caution/charge as an outcome variable within these analyses. We have therefore defined the outcome variables that we are interested in preventing from the YOS dataset using the crime categories discussed in Chapter 2 (table 2.5) and shown in figure 6.7. We have considered four outcomes over two levels: All Target Offence Outcomes (TOO); Violence Against The Person Offences; Gang Involvement; and Supply of Class A and B drugs. The limitation of using YOS data is that we are only able to define the outcome in terms of a young person's involvement in YOS and may miss young people who have

been involved in serious youth violence or gangs who have not come to the attention of our YOS service.

Figure 6.7 – Outcome Variables we are interested in preventing



In undertaking this analyses, Xantura considered both category data (values recorded in specific fields in each dataset) and undertook *contextual text* analyses to identify risk factors that appeared in 'free text' notes within each dataset.

### Violence Against the Person Risk Factors

Xantura undertook three types of analyses against the outcome variable of *Violence Against the Person* offences dealt with by YOS:

- Risk factors present in young people before committing *Violence Against the Person*
- Correlation of risk factors with *Violence Against the Person* over time
- Predictive factors for *Violence Against the person*

Each will be discussed in turn.

### Risk Factors Present Prior to Thurrock Young People Committing Violence Against the Person offences.

Figures 6.8 and 6.9 show the risk factors (vulnerabilities) already present in young people aged 15-18 and 10-14 respectively who have been dealt with by YOS for offences in the *Violence Against The Person* category.

Figure 6.8

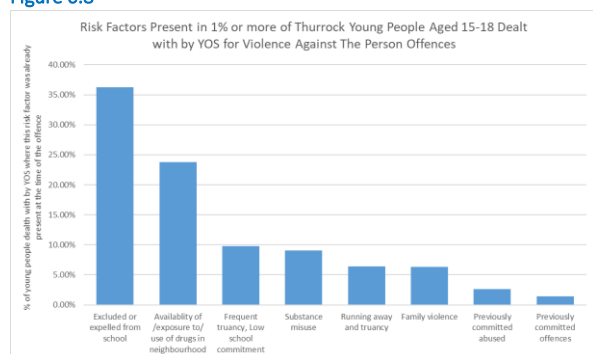
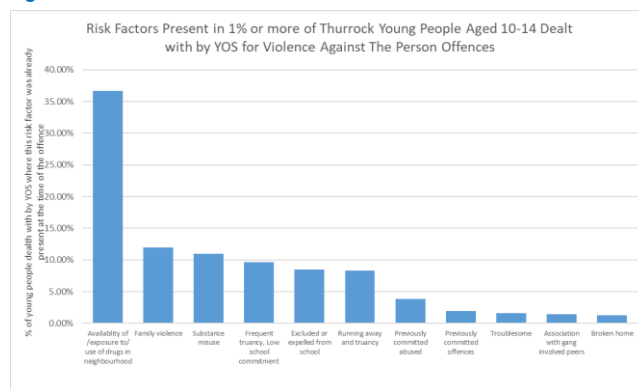


Figure 6.9



For 15-18 year olds, the most common vulnerabilities present at the time of committing violence against the person offences related to school absence: *Being Excluded or expelled from school; Frequent Truancy, low school commitment*, and drugs: *Availability of, exposure to drugs in the neighbourhood; and Substance Misuse*.

For 10-14 year olds, the most common vulnerability present at time of committing violence against the person offences was *Availability of/exposure to drug use in the neighbourhood*. *Family Violence, Substance Misuse, Frequent Truancy/Low school commitment, Being Expelled or excluded from school, running away and truancy* were also present in a significant minority of young people committing violence against the person.

Individual risk factors such as conduct disorders and hyperactivity were recorded in very low numbers of young people dealt with by YOS for violence against the person offences despite the fact they were identified as strong risk factors in the evidence base. However, this may simply reflect that the datasets used in the Xantura analyses were not likely to record conduct disorders or hyperactivity comprehensively.

### Correlation between risk factors and Violence Against the Person offences over time.

Xantura correlated the numbers of *Violence Against the Person* offences dealt with by YOS with the numbers of young people recorded as having the different risk factors (vulnerabilities) identified within this report at quarterly time periods. Pearson R<sup>2</sup> co-efficients were calculated for each risk factor against the outcome variable of *Violence Against the Person* offences.

Pearson R<sup>2</sup> coefficients calculate how strongly the risk factor (vulnerability) is associated with *Violence Against the Person* offences over time, i.e. to what extent do numbers of violence against the person incidents increase when numbers of young people with a specific risk factor increases. A Pearson R<sup>2</sup> coefficient can range from -1 to +1. The larger the number, the more strongly the risk factor is associated with *Violence Against the Person* offences. A R<sup>2</sup> of >0.5 signifies a strong association. A negative R<sup>2</sup> would suggest that the risk factor is *protective* against *Violence Against the Person* offences.

Table 6.1 shows the results of these analyses.

**Table 6.1**

APHR category	Aged 5 to 9	Aged 10 to 14	Aged 15-18	Max Correlation
Frequent truancy, Low school commitment	0.37	0.75	0.84	0.84
Previous criminal activity	0.45	0.84	0.79	0.84
Availability of /exposure to/ use of drugs in neighbourhood	0.55	0.8	0.77	0.8
Running away and truancy	0.33	0.74	0.77	0.77
Previously committed violent crime	0.47	0.77	0.76	0.77
Excluded or expelled from school	0.54	0.75	0.69	0.75
Previously committed offences	0.52	0.72	0.65	0.72
Conduct disorders	0.43	0.55	0.61	0.61
Family violence	0.45	0.5	0.61	0.61
Association with gang involved peers	0.26	0.63	0.54	0.63
Poor parental supervision	0.63	0.58	0.58	0.63
Troublesome	0.4	0.5	0.59	0.59
Family poverty	0.19	0.33	0.59	0.59
Disrupted family	0.54	0.52	0.58	0.58
Substance misuse	0.49	0.46	0.55	0.55
Drug-alcohol misuse	0.35	0.19	0.29	0.35
Hyperactivity	0.27	0.26	0.43	0.43
Peer rejection	0.14	0.19	0.46	0.46
Broken home	0.33	0.19	0.24	0.33

Risk factors (vulnerabilities) related to lack of school attendance (frequent truancy, running away, excluded or expelled from school); previous criminal activity (previously committed violent crime, previously committed other offences, association with gang related peers); and availability of/exposure to drugs in the neighbourhood are most strongly associated with *Violence Against the Person* offences over time. Family issues including family violence, family poverty and poor parental supervision is also strongly associated in older age groups. These factors all link with the causal factors identified earlier in this Chapter of *being exposed to a criminogenic environment*.

#### Predictive Risk Factors in Thurrock

Examining the risk factors already present in young people known to YOS due to *violence against the person* offences or correlations between vulnerabilities and *violence against the person* offences over time does not on its own allow us to predict risk. For example, although figure 6.8 demonstrates that 36% of young people known to YOS for *violence against the person* offences had been excluded from school

we cannot confidently state that being excluded from school predicts violence unless we also consider the sizes of the population of young people in Thurrock who have been excluded from school who do not go on to commit violence and the population of Thurrock who commit violence who have not been excluded from school.

In order to calculate the risk that an individual risk factor or vulnerability has on future violence we calculated Odds ratios for the risk factors identified from the Xantura dataset and evidence base. By examining the numbers of young people with a specific risk factor (vulnerability) who do and do not commit *violence against the person* offences and comparing these cohorts with the numbers of young people without the same risk factor who do and do not commit violence, the Odds ratio allows us calculate how much more likely a young person is to commit a *violence against the person* offence if they have an existing risk factor or vulnerability. As such an Odds Ratio of 2 for a given risk factor X means that young people who have experienced risk factor X are twice as likely as young people without risk factor X to commit *violence against the person* offences.

Table 6.2

RISK FACTOR (Vulnerability)	Odds Ratio (CI)	p-value
Previously committed violent crime	326.33 (262.42, 405.80)	0.00
Availability of / exposure to / use of drugs in neighbourhood	203.50 (166.98, 248.02)	0.00
Committing theft or handling stolen goods	95.44 (75.92, 119.98)	0.00
Conduct Disorders	41.98 (34.46, 51.13)	0.00
Previous criminal activity	29.83 (24.96, 35.67)	0.00
Association with gang involved peers	13.08 (10.99, 15.55)	0.00
Troublesome	9.64 (7.72, 12.02)	0.00
Previously committed offences	7.75 (6.55, 9.16)	0.00
Family Stress	7.70 (4.00, 14.82)	0.00
Substance misuse	6.40 (5.08, 8.05)	0.00
Family dysfunction	5.10 (3.10, 8.38)	0.00
Excluded or expelled from school	4.57 (3.87, 5.41)	0.00
Abuse or Neglect	2.01 (1.17, 3.43)	0.01

The odds ratios in table 6.2 suggest four sets of risk factors are highly predictive of future serious youth violence.

Firstly *previous criminality* significantly increases risk of a young person accessing YOS for *violence against the person* offences. Previously committing violent crime; theft or handling stolen goods; previous criminal activity; and previously committed offences, makes a young person 326, 95, 30 and 7.8 times respectively more likely to commit future violent crime compared to young people who did not have a recorded history of criminality. Association with gang involved peers makes a Thurrock young person over 13 times more likely to access YOS for *violence against the person* offences compared to young people not associated with gangs. These four variables are closely associated with the suggested *causal* variables suggested earlier in this chapter of both '*being exposed to a criminogenic environment*' and '*developing an individual crime propensity*'.

Secondly substance misuse, *particularly the availability of / exposure to / use of drugs* in the neighbourhood, and to a lesser extent a history of *substance misuse* increased the risk of youth violence by 203.5 and 4.16 times respectively compared to Thurrock young people who did not have these risk factors. The difference in risk between drugs in the neighbourhood and individual substance misuse is interesting as it could suggest that there is something else about neighbourhoods with drug use, rather than simply drug use itself that is substantially increasing risk of youth violence. Living in a neighbourhood with high levels of drug use could be associated with the suggested causal variable of *being exposed to a criminogenic environment* and its two sub-variables of '*unstructured time spent in city centre or other locations with poor levels of social cohesion*' and '*having peers who have an existing propensity to crime*'. As discussed in Chapter 5, drug misuse itself may increase risk of crime by lowering inhibitions, linking this risk factor to one of the other two sub-variables – *low levels of self-control* in the second suggested causal variable of *developing an individual crime propensity*.

Thirdly, *family dysfunction* and *family stress* increase the risk of involvement in youth violence by 5.1 and 7.7 times that of Thurrock young people without this vulnerability. This again could be said to increase risk of both suggested causal variables: *being exposed to a criminogenic environment* through lack of supervision or other family members' involvement in crime, and *developing an individual crime propensity* through poorer quality of parenting.

Fourthly *individual cognitive and behavioural* factors including a record of *conduct disorders* and being *troublesome* makes a Thurrock young person 42 and almost 10 times respectively more likely to commit *serious youth violence* offences. Both of these risk factors could be said to be associated with one of the suggested causal variables: *developing an individual crime propensity* and its two sub-variables: *low levels of self-control*, and *low levels of personal-morality*.

A final fifth factor of *being expelled or excluded from school* was identified. Young people who have been subject to temporary or permanent school exclusion in Thurrock are 4.6 times more likely than those who have not, to access YOS for *violence against the person* offences. Whilst school exclusion itself has a lower predictive value than some of the other vulnerabilities, it is worth noting that analyses presented earlier in this chapter found it to be both the most highly correlated vulnerability with youth violence over time, and the most common existing vulnerability in those young people who access YOS because they had committed *violence against the person* offences. It is also highly correlated with youth violence. School exclusion is likely to substantially increase the risk of a Thurrock young person encountering the suggested causal variable of *being exposed to a criminogenic environment* both because they may be more likely to spend time in unstructured environments, and because they may be at increased risk of being groomed by gangs, exposing them to peers with an existing propensity to crime involvement.



Some care should be taken when interpreting odds ratios of single risk factors. Many young people are likely to have multiple risk factors and what is not clear at this stage is how these risk factors or vulnerabilities may interact. The next stage of analyses would be to build a logical regression model that calculates how each individual risk factor interacts with the others in order to develop an over-all risk score of a young person with multiple risks.

### Risk factors (vulnerabilities) for Gang Membership

We asked Xantura to similar analyses on their Thurrock linked dataset for the outcome variable of *Accessing YOS*

*due to Gang Membership* as we did for *violence against the person offences*. However analyses was hampered by low data volumes and a lack of recording of date of first involvement in gangs, meaning it was not possible to calculate predictive odds ratios or ascertain percentages of young people who had existing risk factors prior to gang membership.

We were able to correlate both risk factors identified in the evidence base and general risk factors identified by Xantura over time with gang membership. The results of these analyses are shown in tables 6.3 and 6.4

**Table 6.3: Correlation of numbers vulnerabilities from the evidence base in Thurrock young people with gang membership over time**

APHR category	Aged 10 to 14	Aged 15 to 18	Aged 19 and above	Maximum Correlation
Excluded or expelled from school	0.97	0.28	0.38	0.97
Frequent truancy & low school commitment	0.96	0.3	0.4	0.96
Poor parental supervision	0.96	0.26	0.36	0.96
Running away and truancy	0.96	0.3	0.41	0.96
Disrupted family	0.95	0.31	0.42	0.95
Availability of / exposure to / use of drugs in the neighbourhood	0.72	0.78	0.93	0.93
Troublesome	0.29	0.54	0.88	0.88
Previously committed offences	0.86	0.59	0.67	0.86
Previously committed violent crime	0.74	0.68	0.77	0.77
Previous criminal activity	0.45	0.61	0.7	0.7
Substance misuse	0.54	0.36	0.68	0.68
Association with gang involved peers	0.14	0.6	0.1	0.6
Broken home	0.14	0.6	0.1	0.6
Conduct disorders	0.03	0.43	0.52	0.52
Family violence	0.15	0.33	0.37	0.37

**Table 6.4: Correlation of numbers of general vulnerabilities in Xantura with Thurrock gang membership over time.**

APHR category	Aged 10 to 14	Aged 15 to 18	Aged 19 and above	Maximum Correlation
School exclusion	0.97	0.28	0.39	0.97
Missing. Education.	0.97	0.3	0.41	0.97
Theft and handling stolen goods	0.97	0.48	0.61	0.97
Missing person.	0.96	0.31	0.42	0.96
Neglect	0.96	0.26	0.36	0.96
Family dysfunction	0.95	0.32	0.42	0.95
Public Order offence	0.94	0.63	0.63	0.94
Vehicle theft	0.91	0.26	0.36	0.91
Possession of a class B drug	0.87	0.37	0.59	0.87
Criminal damage	0.46	0.62	0.72	0.72
Previous abuse	0.14	0.6	0.1	0.6
Robbery	0.24	0.52	0.59	0.59
Prison history	0.18	0.54	0.05	0.54
Domestic violence	0.15	0.37	0.42	0.42
Knife/blade/firearm/offensive weapons offence	0.3	0.26	0.15	0.52
Emotional abuse	0.1	0.14	0.16	0.37

Correlations above 0.5 could be said to be the most significant. The same predictive risk variables identified in the analyses on *violence against the person offences* feature in above analyses on risk of gang membership:

- *Exclusion from education* including permanent or temporary school exclusion and frequent truancy;
- *Criminality* including previous criminal activity, association with gang related peers, robbery, vehicle theft;
- *Substance misuse*, particularly exposure to drugs in the neighbourhood;
- *Family dysfunction* including poor parental supervision, broken home, neglect, emotional abuse and
- *Individual Behaviour or Cognitive issues* including *troublesome, conduct disorders*

## Further exploration of vulnerabilities identified

### Thurrock School Exclusion Data

Our analyses have shown that being excluded from school is a predictive risk factor for future youth violence. The Department for Education and Skills publishes data on rate of fixed term and permanent exclusion per 100 pupils on the school role for primary and secondary schools in each local authority in England on an annual basis.

Figures 6.10 and 6.11 show rate of Primary School Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions per 100 pupils on the school roll for each top tier local authority area in England for the last year of data available (2017/18). Figures 6.12 and 6.13 show the same rates for secondary schools in 2017/18.

Thurrock's performance is shown by the 'red' bar on each graph Thurrock has a rate of both fixed-term and permanent Primary School exclusions at that is greater than England's and in the fourth and worst quintile of performance nationally. Conversely, Thurrock had one of the lowest rates of secondary fixed-term exclusions in England in 2017/18 and rates of secondary permanent exclusions largely in-line with the England me

Figure 6.10

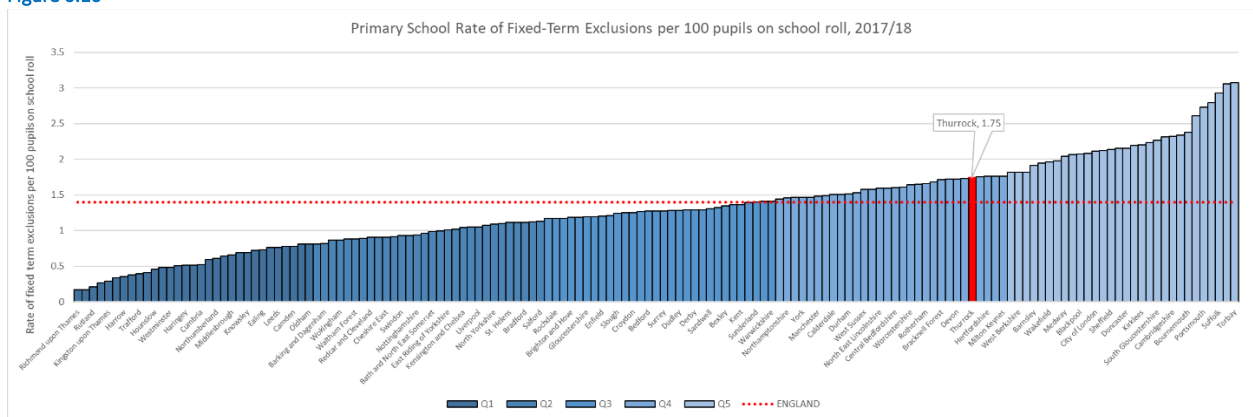


Figure 6.11

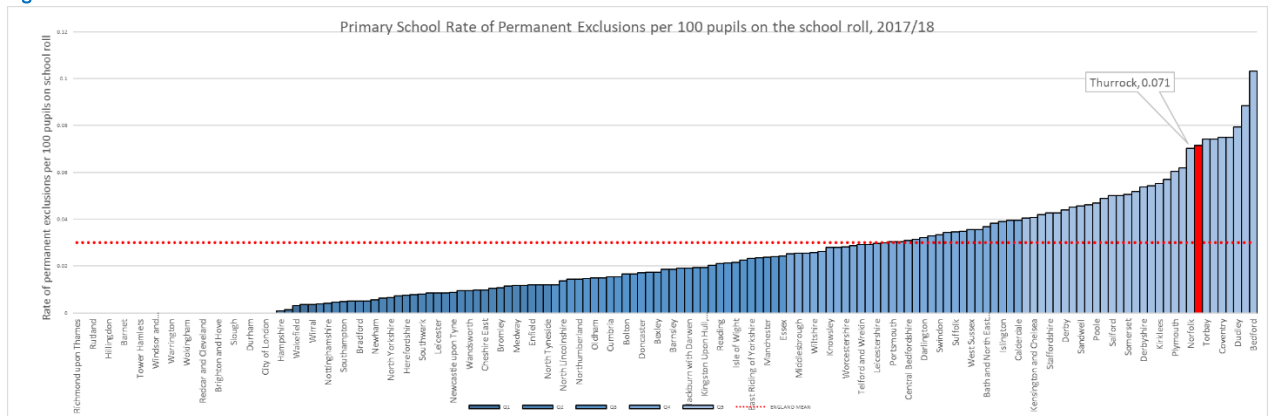


Figure 6.12

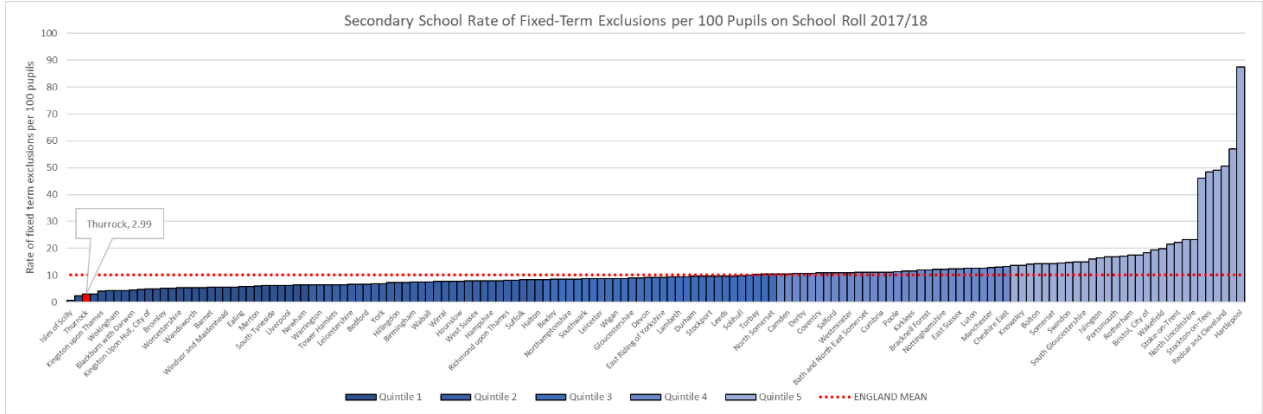
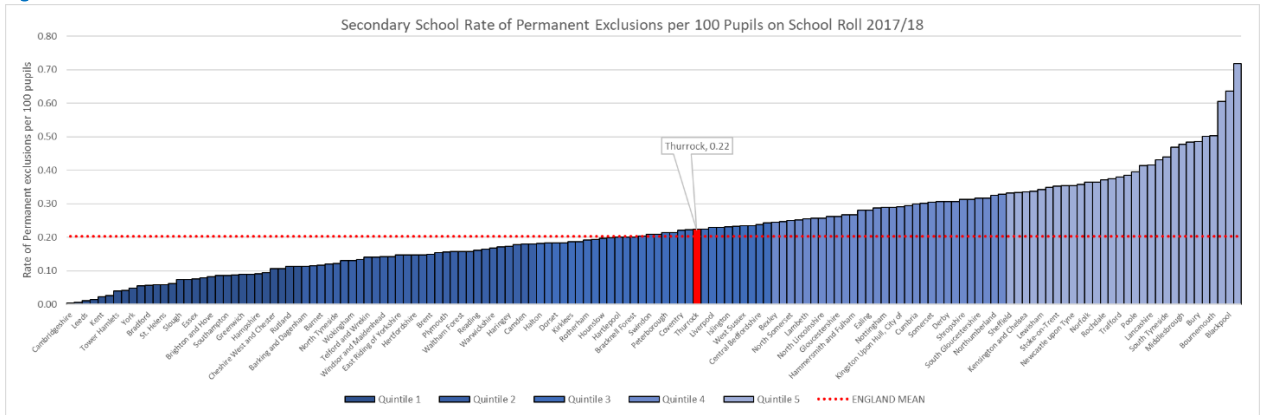


Figure 6.13



Exclusion Rates at School Level within Thurrock.

In order to drill down further into the data we calculated the rates of fixed-term and permanent exclusions per 100 pupils at individual school level for Thurrock Primary and Secondary schools. Because total numbers of school exclusions at school level are low and vary between individual years we used calculated a mean rate over the last three fiscal years (2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18). Figures 6.14-6.16 show these analyses. A Thurrock 3-year mean rate and the England mean rate for 2017/18 is also shown.

Figure 6.14

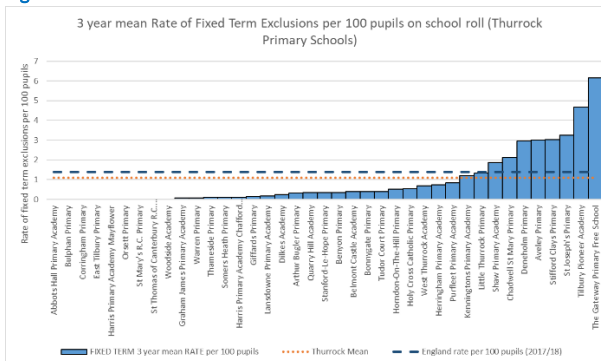


Figure 6.15

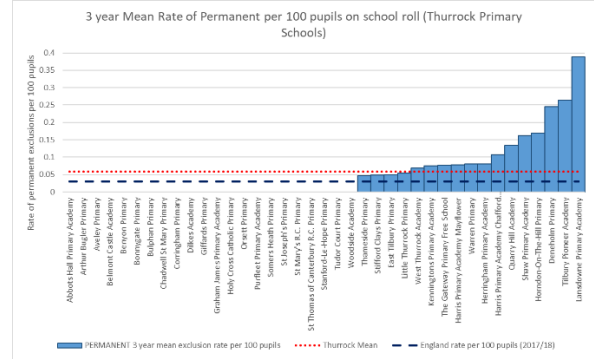


Figure 6.16

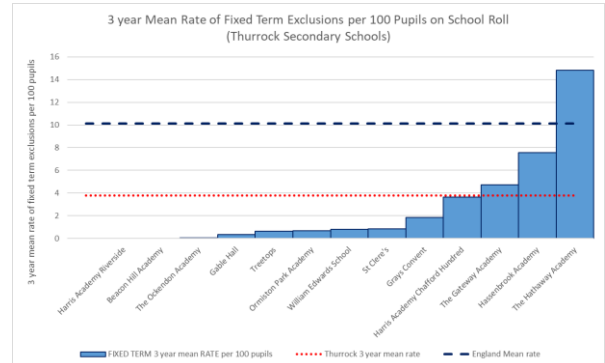
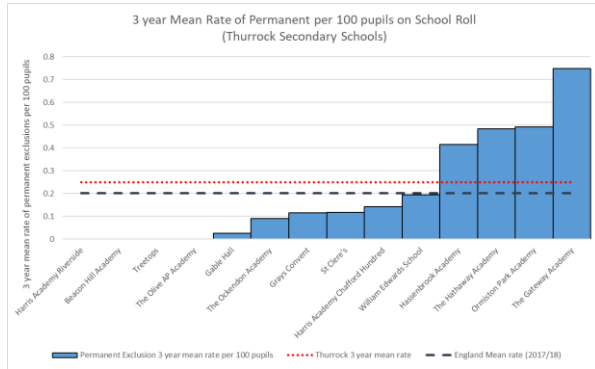


Figure 6.17



All four graphs show a significant variation in school exclusion rates between schools in Thurrock. For primary schools there over a six-fold variation in fixed term exclusions and almost a four-fold variation in permanent exclusion rates, with a significant minority of schools having a rate of exclusion significantly greater than the England mean. For secondary schools there is a fifteen-fold variation in fixed-term exclusion rates between schools and over a seven-fold variation in rates of permanent exclusions.

The Olive Academy is a Pupil Referral Unit in Thurrock that is likely to receive pupils who have been permanently excluded from Thurrock secondary schools. Its rates of exclusion are not shown on figures C and D but have been calculated. Whilst no pupils were permanently excluded from The Olive Academy in the three years ending 2017/18, its rate of temporary exclusion was 194 exclusions per 100 pupils. This is 48.5 times greater than the Thurrock mean and is cause for concern.

Given the strong link between exclusion and serious youth violence, further work to understand and address the high rates of fixed term exclusion at Primary school level and at the Olive Academy is required. The high level of variation between exclusion rates of different schools within Thurrock also warrants further investigation. One explanation could be differences in the level of other behavioural risk factors between school populations, however there may also be an opportunity to spread best practice between different schools.

# Chapter 7: Protective factors against serious youth violence and gang involvement

## Key Findings

The published evidence base identifies a series of protective factors that may act as a 'buffer' between the prevalence of a risk factor and the onset of youth violence. A preventative factor is a predictor of reduced risk but may not be causal in preventing youth violence. The evidence base on preventative factors is less comprehensive than that on risk factors for youth violence. Evidence on prevention of gang membership is particularly sparse.

Factors that have been shown to be associated with reduced risk of youth violence include positive/prosocial attitudes, low levels of impulsivity, belief in 'the moral order', being female, family factors including good family management, stable family structure and infrequent parent-child conflict, academic attainment and low levels of economic deprivation.

There is some evidence that high social skills, personal moral beliefs, high levels of empathy, moderate levels of parental monitoring, a sense of belonging at school and a perception of fairness from teachers, interaction with pro-social peers, and neighbourhood support including neighbourhood safety and participation in/availability of community groups/assets and clubs could be protective against gang membership.

## Introduction

This chapter explores the protective factors against serious youth violence and gang involvement that have been identified from the published evidence base.

Research on risk factors for youth violence and gang involvement has promoted discussion and investigation into factors that may provide a 'buffer' between the presence of risk factors and the onset of and involvement in youth violence and gang involvement. A protective factor is defined as "*attributes, characteristics or elements that decrease the likelihood that violence will be perpetrated*".

<sup>106</sup>They are variables that can usefully predict a decrease in the likelihood that a young person will become involved in serious youth violence or gangs. It is important to remember that a predictive factor does not necessarily mean that the factor is *causal* in the protection against violent behaviour or gang membership; simply that it is a reliable predictor of decreased risk (although it is possible that they could be). For example, it cannot be said that

infrequent parent-child conflict is the *cause* a young person avoiding violence; simply that young people with less frequent conflicts with their parents are less likely to be represented in the cohort of young people who are convicted for violent offences.

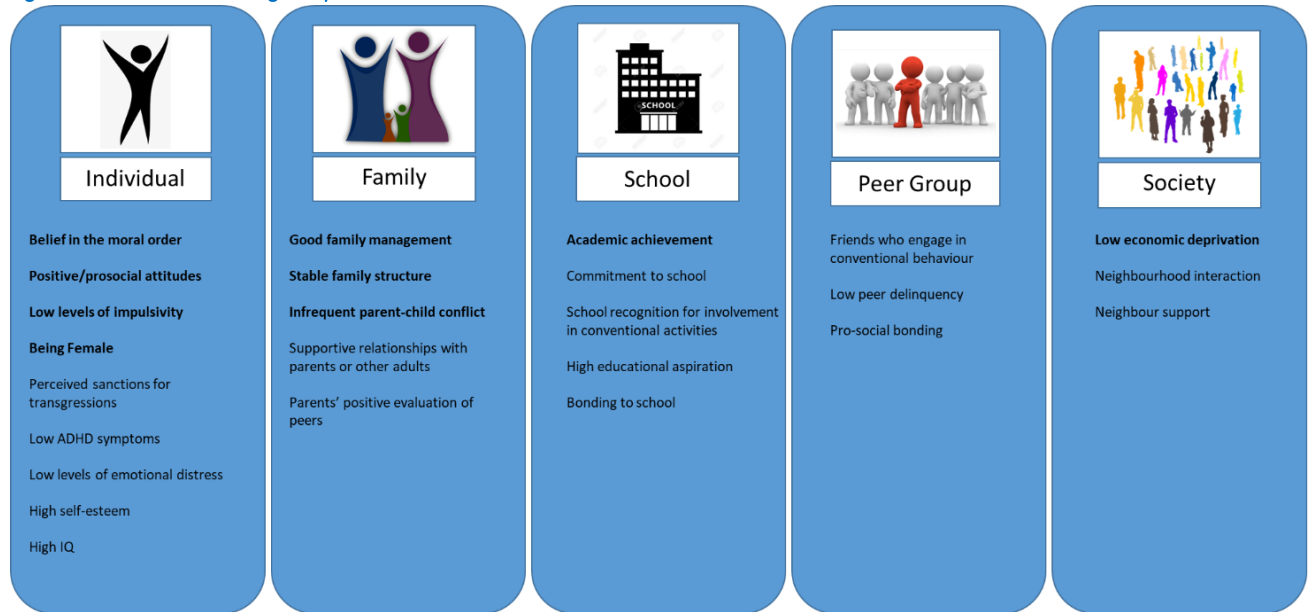
Like risk factors, preventative factors can be grouped into five categories:

- 1) Individual
- 2) Family
- 3) School
- 4) Peer Group
- 5) Community/Society

## Youth Violence

Figure 7.1 summarises the evidence base on protective factors against perpetrating youth violence. <sup>74 75 107 108 109 110 111</sup>  
<sup>112</sup>. The strongest protective factors an odds ratio less than 0.3) are shown in bold

Figure 7.1: Protective factors against youth violence

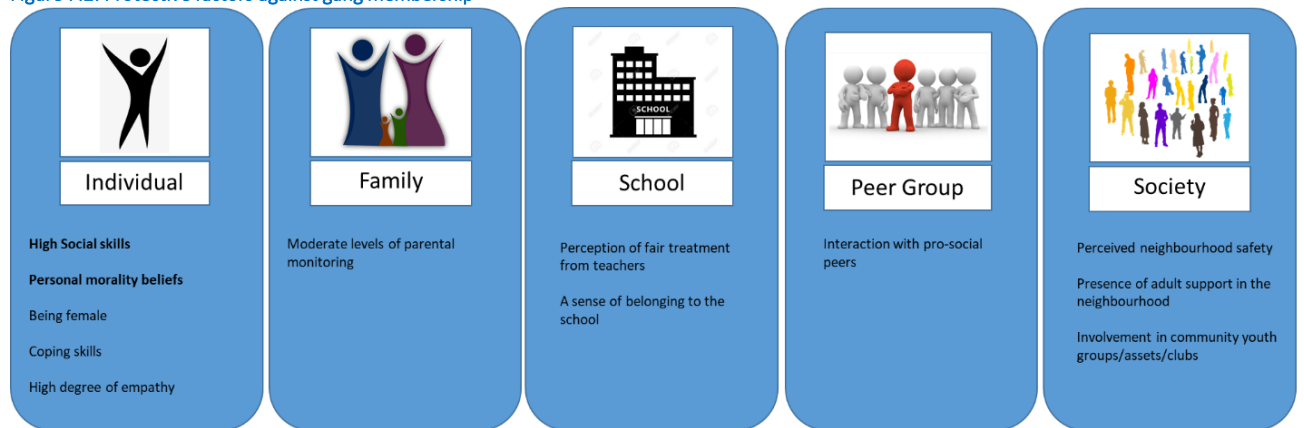


## Gang membership

There is a paucity of published evidence base exists on factors shown to be associated with a reduced risk of gang

membership. In general, the factors that prevent young people from joining gangs are less well-understood.<sup>113</sup> The results of the evidence base<sup>114 115 116 117 118</sup> The protective factors against gang membership identified from the literature available are summarised in figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2: Protective factors against gang membership



# Chapter 8: Prevention and Early Intervention Evidence Base

## Key Findings

Youth violence is not inevitable and can be prevented. Although the emerging issue of youth violence has meant that the evidence base in some areas is stronger than others, there are a wide range of evidence based strategies and interventions that have shown have a positive effect, both on strengthening preventative factors and reducing risk factors, and on violence as an outcome itself. The strongest evidence base relates to addressing individual and familial risk factors.

The evidence base can be grouped into interventions that support eight strategic actions.

- Promoting family environments that support healthy family development:** Promoting supportive family environments has some of the most promising evidence base. The family environment plays a key role in shaping youth's physical emotional, social and behavioural health and if unstable, stressful, without structure or supervision, will contribute to risk factors for violent behaviour and aggression. There is good evidence that early childhood visiting programmes and parenting skill and family relationship programmes can be highly effective.
- Providing quality education early in life** improves children's cognitive and socio-emotional development, increases the probability that children will experiencing a safe, nurturing environment, improves academic success and reduces the likelihood of behavioural problems linked to violence such as aggression and crime. The *Healthy Child Programme* in England has a strong evidence base in terms of early year education for 0 to 5s. Additional educational support programmes for children aged 5 to 7 targeted at those with developmental needs have shown positive outcomes in terms of reducing risk factors for violence in later life.
- Strengthening youth's communication, empathy, problem solving and emotional intelligence skills** has a strong evidence base and programmes that support skills development have been shown to be effective in improving emotional regulation and impulse control and reducing youth violence perpetration and victimisation. Universal classroom behaviour management programmes such as *Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management*, *PATHS Elementary Curriculum* and *The Good Behaviour Game* have RCT level evidence that demonstrates improved pro-social behaviour, improved emotional self-regulation, improved social competency and reduced aggression. Some selective skills based programmes aimed at children with additional needs show similar impact.
- Connecting youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour** is a strategic action with emerging and promising evidence base particularly when targeted at individuals with an increased number of existing risk factors. Relationships to caring adults over and above parents or primary care givers can influence young people's behavioural choices and reduce their risk in involvement in crime and violence. Mentoring programmes show positive outcomes in systematic reviews and meta-analyses for improvement in behavioural, social, emotional and academic domains. After-school programmes show mixed evidence of effectiveness, probably because of the high variability between the programme models, duration, structure and participants but some specific after-school programmes evaluate positively.
- Addressing the wider determinants of serious youth violence and gang membership** including *modifying the built and social environment* to 'design out crime', reducing the concentration of retail outlets selling alcohol in high crime areas, street outreach and community development and strategic action to address the harm caused by social media and its impact of glamorising violence and violent behaviours have some evidence base of effectiveness. Similarly, there is emerging evidence of the effectiveness of reducing and preventing school exclusions which was highlighted a strongly associated risk factor for youth violence in Thurrock.
- Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours.** Many young people who engage in violence as teens and young adults have histories of childhood conduct problems, aggression, violence, delinquency and criminal behaviour and a range of known risk factors for violence including substance misuse, academic problems, association with deviant peers and dysfunctional home environments. *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)* has been shown to be highly effective at treating post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, improving behaviour for victims of serious violence. *Level 5 Pathways Triple P* parenting programme has strong evidence in reducing risk of future parental abuse and improving their children's lives. 'Whole system' family-peer-environmental therapeutic approaches such as *Multi-Systemic therapy* and *Functional Family Therapy* have strong evidence of effectiveness in improving the behaviour and life-chances of young people who have already committed serious youth violence and preventing future violence.
- Preventing Gang Membership and Crime Caused by Gangs** is perhaps the strategic action with the weakest evidence base with little that demonstrates conclusive effectiveness on reducing the likelihood of gang membership as an outcome. Approaches aimed at helping gang involved youth exit gangs have centred on *opportunities provision*. *Pulling Levers* approaches including *Gang Injunctions* that seek to actively disrupt gang activity through coordinated law enforcement and community action have been shown to be effective in reducing gang related crime.
- Law enforcement** whilst largely a 'downstream' response to violence has been shown to be effective in some areas of prevention. There is some evidence that highly targeted stop and search activity which focuses on suspects with the highest probability of criminal behaviour has a small but positive impact on the prevalence of violent crime and weapons offences. Law enforcement is also an important component of the *Pulling Levers* approach including gang injunctions discussed in strategic action 7.

## Introduction

This chapter discusses and summarises the published evidence base on approaches that have been shown to be effective in preventing young people from engaging in serious violence and gang membership.

Programmes that seek to prevent serious youth violence and gang membership can be thought of using different categories:

*Primary Prevention* programmes aim to prevent violence or gang membership before they occur by reducing risk factors promote protective factors discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

*Secondary/Tertiary Prevention* programmes take place after violence or gang membership occurs and aim to reduce

prevent the short/long term harms caused by violence or gang membership including helping young people exit gangs.

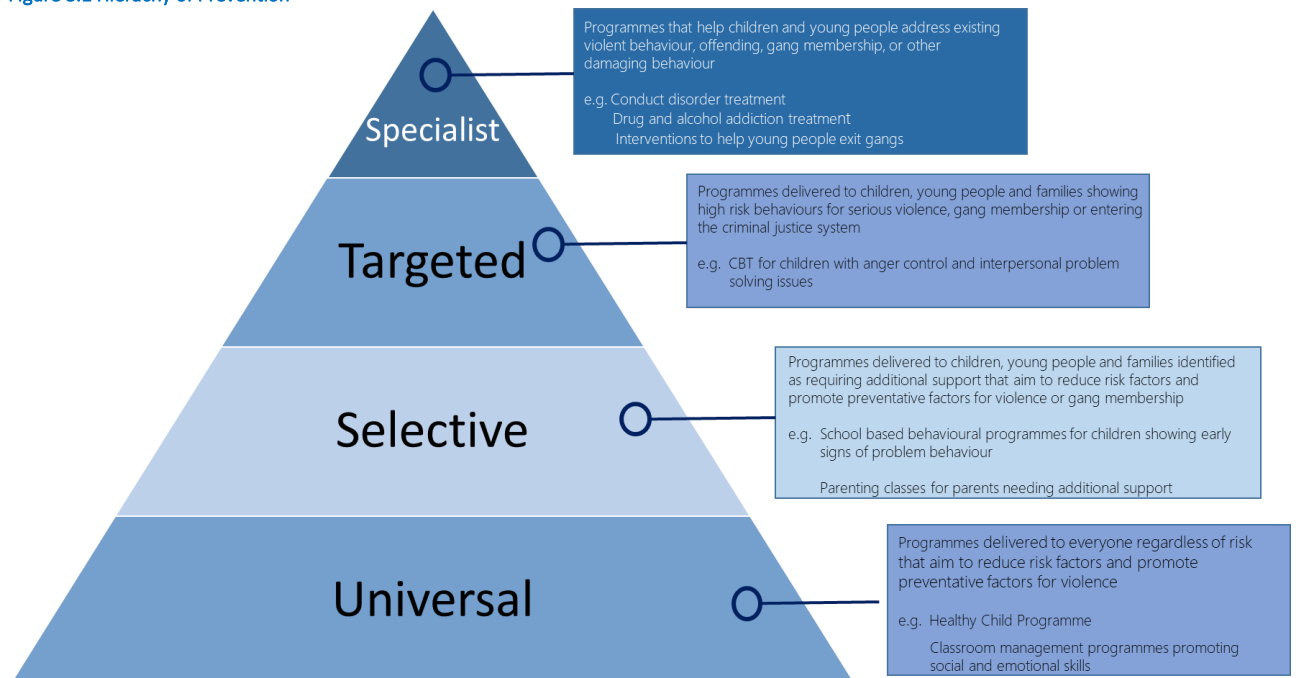
*Universal* prevention programmes are administered to an entire defined population regardless of risk of violence and aim to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors linked to violence or gang membership.

*Targeted prevention programmes* are administered only to populations already identified at high risk of or already involved with violence/gang membership.

### Hierarchy of prevention

Prevention programmes can be thought of as a hierarchy as shown in figure 8.1

Figure 8.1 Hierarchy of Prevention



## What works in the prevention of youth violence?

Youth violence can be prevented. Overall, there is good evidence that early intervention programmes can work to prevent violence. There are a wide range of strategies that can be employed to the reduce risk factors and promote protective factors discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. 11 different systematic reviews have found that early interventions were effective in reducing violent behaviour<sup>119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129</sup> with the most recent review by Cambridge University demonstrated that prevention initiatives can reduce aggression by around 25%<sup>121</sup> and a review by Vries et.al. (2015) found an average decrease of 13% in criminal behaviour amongst high-risk young people.<sup>129</sup>

Most of the evidence base comes from interventions at the individual and relationship level, which aim to prevent behavioural problems which mirrors the fact that the majority of risk factors discussed in Chapter 5 operate at an individual level.

The following five strategic actions (adapted from the US Center for Disease Control's comprehensive technical packing on preventing youth violence and associated risk behaviours)<sup>134</sup> have good evidence on prevention:

1. Promote family environments that support healthy development
2. Provide quality education early in life
3. Strengthen Youth's communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence skills



4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour
5. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours

Each will be discussed in turn.

## 1. Promote family environments that support healthy development.

Across all of the major reviews of global evidence, promoting supportive family environments was identified to be one of the key approaches with the most promising evidence base. The family environment plays a key role in shaping youth's physical, emotional, social and behavioural health and this influence extends from early childhood through late adolescence and beyond.<sup>130</sup> Family environments that are unstable, stressful, lack structure and supervision, have poor relationships and communication or use either too harsh or too limited discipline contribute to risk factors for violent behaviour including poor problem skills and aggression.<sup>131 132 133</sup>

There are a number of approaches that can help families create and sustain supportive, nurturing and structured environments at every stage of a young person's development.

**1a. Early Childhood Home visiting programmes** provide information, support to care givers, training in child development and wider wellbeing support to parents. They are generally targeted at populations identified as having additional needs, making them *selective* in the hierarchy of prevention. *The Family Nurse Partnership* is a home-visiting programme for young mothers expecting their first child delivered by highly trained nurses or midwives. It aims to improve pregnancy health and behaviours, improve child development and improve economic self-sufficiency of parents by helping them plan for their own and baby's future. Mothers enrol on the programme early in their pregnancy and receive weekly visits before and for the first six weeks after the birth of their baby, during which they learn about their child's health and development and receive support on their own well-being.

Evidence from the USA demonstrated fewer behavioural problems and by the age of 15, fewer arrests and convictions in children who had participated in the programme compared to those who did not<sup>134</sup>. However robust UK evaluation found no significant benefit of the Family Nurse Partnership over the first two years' of the child's life compared with usual provision through the *Healthy Child Programme* (see next section).<sup>135</sup> Further longer term evaluative studies for the UK programme are awaited.

### 1b. Parenting skill and family relationship programmes

These programmes teach communication, problem-solving and behaviour monitoring and management skills to parents. They can be delivered either to individual families or through groups.

The quality of inter-parental relationships, particularly how parents communicate and relate to each other has a primary

influence on children's mental health and future life chances including a wide range of key risk factors for violence including poor academic achievement, aggression towards peers, behaviour/conduct problems, anti-social behaviour, low self-esteem and greater child-parent conflict<sup>136</sup>

Psycho-educative/skills based group programmes from the US such as *Happy Families, Happy Kids* and *Couples Enhancement Training* that aim to reduce couple/parental relationship stress in intact parental relationships have been found to be effective in improving inter-parental relationships and hence reduce risk factors highlighted above.<sup>137 138</sup> Similarly skills based training for separated couples that aims to reduce conflict such as *The Collaborative Project and Children in the Middle* have shown a similar effect.<sup>139 140</sup>

*Family Foundations* is a group-based programme for couples expecting their first child, delivered any time during the mother's pregnancy. It is delivered by male and female co-facilitators with a QCF-level 6 qualification in a helping profession. Parents attend five weekly sessions where they learn strategies for enhancing their communication, conflict resolution and sharing of child care duties, and return for four more weekly sessions two to six months after the baby is born. The programme has been found to have evidence of a long-term positive impact on pro-social behaviour and reduced parent/parent and parent/child psychological and physical violence, and reduced externalising of problems in children.<sup>141 142</sup>

Multiple systematic reviews have demonstrated the benefit of improving parenting skills on reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors for youth violence.<sup>131 143 144</sup>

Evaluation of *The Incredible Years Preschool Programme* showed a reduction in both the frequency and particularly the severity of disruptive behaviour in children.<sup>145</sup> The programme comprised of 20 weekly group sessions for parents aimed at emphasising positive rather than negative interactions between parents and children aged 3 to 6 years old, hence addressing the risk factors of conduct disorder aged (3-6), troublesome (aged 7-12), aggression (aged 7-15) and poor parent/child communication (ages 0-2).

*Triple P – Positive Parenting Programme (Levels 3 and 4)* combines a mass-media campaign with both consultations with primary carers to improve parenting practices and intensive support to parents with children at risk of behaviour problems aged 0 to 12. Groups of parents attend one to four small group sessions delivered by a trained facilitator (level 3) or sessions delivered over 8 weeks delivered by a trained clinical psychologist (level 4) where they learn strategies for improving their child's competencies and discouraging unwanted behaviour such as aggression.. The programme has been shown to be cost effective at reducing violence and improving child behaviour, parenting skills and increased self-efficacy.<sup>146 147</sup>

*Strengthening Families Programme 10-14* is a parenting and family strengthening programme for families with children aged between 10 and 14. It can be implemented as a

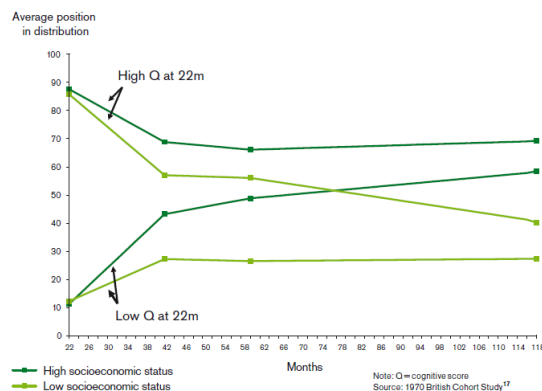
universal or selective programme targeted at high-risk adolescence. The programme consists of seven weekly sessions lasting two hours. During the sessions, families learn how to communicate effectively as well as specific skills such as parental limit setting and child resistance to peer pressure. RCT evidence demonstrates that on four year follow up young people who were involved in the programme had lower levels of aggression and hostility, reduced aggressive and destructive conduct and lower rates of polysubstance use.<sup>148 149</sup>

## 2. Provide Quality Education Early in Life

High quality early years education improves children's cognitive and socio-emotional development and increases the probability that children will experience an environment that is safe and nurturing. It improves the likelihood of long term academic success and reduces the rate of behavioural problems, aggression and crime.<sup>150 151</sup> Early childhood education that includes parental engagement can strengthen youth outcomes, family involvement in children's future education and parenting practices and attitudes.<sup>152 153</sup>

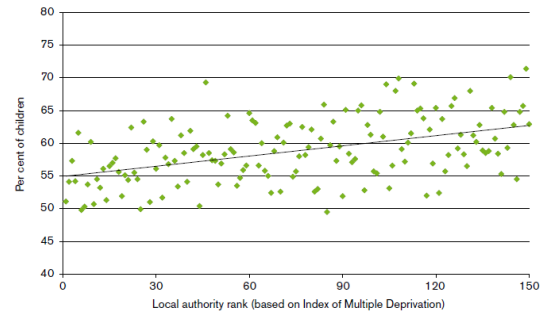
We know that need for early childhood education is not distributed evenly across society and is often positively associated with deprivation. Professor Michael Marmot in his report *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*<sup>154</sup> demonstrated in figure 8.2 that children within initial high cognitive ability relative to their peers at 22 months but who grow up in low socio-economic environments saw their relative position worsen year on year, whilst children with low cognitive ability at the age of 22 months but who grew up on high socio-economic environments saw their relative position improve year on year. By the age of 10, the former group had relatively lower cognitive ability than the latter group.

Figure 8.2: Inequality in early cognitive development in the 1970s British Cohort Study, ages 22 months to 10 years.



Similarly we know that across the UK, the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at age five is negatively associated with the rank of deprivation of the population served by their local authority. (Figure Y)

Figure Y: Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at age five by local authority



As such, high quality education early in life needs to be delivered with universal proportionalism; both a level of universal support and additional support to higher need communities. Pre-school enrichment programmes which improve educational achievement and self-esteem are associated with less violence in later life. Social development programmes to reduce aggressive and anti-social behaviour try to improve social skills with peers and promote cooperative behaviour by teaching young people to manage anger, resolve conflict and solve social problems. These are most effective if delivered in a pre-school or school setting to populations most likely to benefit.<sup>155 156</sup> Evidence from the US on early-years education programmes such as *Child Parent Centres* and *Early Head Start* found that children/young people who participated in them had significantly lower rates of juvenile arrest and arrests for violence and lower rates of conviction and prison incarceration for violent offences.<sup>157 158</sup>

*The Perry Preschool Programme* from the US is one of the universal early years' programme that has shown a direct impact on reducing youth violence as a long-term outcome measure. The programme provided high quality preschool education and home visits to 3 and 4 year old African American children living in poverty and assessed as at high risk of school failure. A preschool was provided each week day morning for 2.5 hour sessions by qualified teaching staff who also undertook 1.5 hour weekly home visits. On follow up of participants up to the age of 40, the programme found decreases in all types of violence including murder and robbery.<sup>159</sup>

In England, the *Healthy Child Programme* is a universal programme that commences during pregnancy and supports children until the age of 18. The first five years are led by Health Visitors with support from midwives and wider health professionals. Although the programme is universal, it provides a greater intensity of support to those with greater need.

*Doodle Den* is a literacy support after-school programme for children between the ages of 5 and 7. It is delivered in primary school, community centres or libraries and aims to support children to participate fully in education, address delays, and to improve educational outcomes. Each programme provides 15 places to children who would benefit from additional literacy support and encompasses a combination of modalities of literacy instruction including

phonics, sight vocabulary, shared and independent reading, writing and comprehension. An RCT showed a statistically significant positive impact on a number of child development outcomes including improved behaviour and concentration in class and improved reading and literacy skills.<sup>160</sup>

*Let's Play in Tandem* is a school readiness programme for children aged three living in socially disadvantaged communities. It aims to improve children's cognitive development and self-regulation. The programme runs for 12 months and is typically delivered through children's centres. Each family is assigned a project worker who visits the family in their home each week for 90-120 minutes to deliver a programme to develop pre-reading and numerical skills and promote vocabulary and general knowledge. The project worker also teaches the parents how to prompt and provide instructions to their child. One of the key aims of the programme is to focus on school readiness, and to improve the child's numeracy and communication skills. An RCT concluded that the programme was successful at improving early years' education in pre-reading, numeracy, writing, vocabulary and personal/social skills and that it improved inhibitory control of the children.<sup>161</sup>

### 3. Strengthen Youth's communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence skills

Chapter 5 highlighted that children and young people with low levels of self-control, high levels of aggression or conduct disorder and low levels of empathy are at increased risk of violence. Programmes that seek to develop skills in effective communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution, impulse control and emotional regulation and management can help reduce both youth violence perpetration and victimisation.<sup>162 163 164</sup>

Programmes can either be *universal* and incorporated into the school curriculum, or *selective / targeted* depending on the level of skills deficiency identified or severity of the delinquent behaviour that the programme seeks to address.

#### 3a. Universal Skills Based Programmes

Multiple systematic reviews of various universal school based programmes have demonstrated beneficial impact on youth's skills and behaviours including delinquency, aggression, bullying perpetration and violence.<sup>163 165</sup>

*Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management* programme is a universal classroom management programme for teachers of children between the ages of four and eight. It improves teacher competencies in supporting children in the classroom and developing children's social, emotional and problem solving skills together with specific strategies on behaviour management. RCT evidence shows that it improved child negative behaviour, improved child compliance, improved prosocial behaviour, improved emotional self-regulation and improved social competency in children.<sup>166 167 168</sup>

*PATHS Elementary Curriculum* is a comprehensive programme for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and behaviour problems in junior school children whilst simultaneously enhancing the educational process in the classroom. The curriculum is designed to be used by teachers and provides systematic, developmentally based lessons, materials and instructions for teaching their pupils emotional literacy, self-control, social competence, positive peer relations and interpersonal problem solving skills. A key objective of promoting these developmental skills is to prevent or reduce behavioural and emotional problems. A cluster RCT study of 1,675 pupils in 56 junior schools found reduced aggressive behaviour and reduced impulsivity/ADHD in children who had received the intervention.<sup>169</sup> A further five year follow up RCT found that children who had benefited from the intervention had statistically significantly lower prevalence of contacts with the police compared to those who had not.<sup>170</sup>

*Positive Action* is a universal, school-based social and emotional learning programme delivered to children between the ages of 4 and 15. Sessions are taught through the curriculum, covering six core topics of self-concept, positive actions for the body and mind, positive actions for getting along with others, positive actions for managing yourself, positive actions for self-improvement and positive actions for being honest with yourself and others. Sessions are direct instruction from lesson plans in teachers' manuals which include activities such as role-play, discussion, poems, music, puppets, games, radio plays and journaling. Two separate RCT trials concluded a range of statistically significant benefits in violence risk reduction including reduced serious violence-related behaviours and reduced prevalence of substance misuse.<sup>171 172</sup>

*The Good Behaviour Game (GBG)* is a universal preventative programme delivered by a teacher to a class of primary school students, normally between 15 and 30 children and normally lasts between 10 and 45 minutes. It is a behaviour management strategy that is designed to encourage prosocial behaviour and reduce disruptive behaviour. Teachers initiate GBG by dividing children into small teams that are balanced for gender and child temperament. Teams are awarded points for good behaviour, according to basic classroom rules which are reviewed in class. Short games are played weekly. The programme is underpinned by life course and social field theory which states that improving the way teachers socialise children in classrooms will result in improved social adaptation of the children in the classroom social field. The theory predicts that this early-improved social adaptation will lead to better adaptation in other social fields over the life course. Two RCTs have concluded positive outcomes for violence risk reduction including reduced aggressive and anti-social behaviour in class, reduced anti-social behaviour at 14 year follow up and reduced alcohol abuse and dependence at 3,6 and 14 year follow up.<sup>173 174</sup>

### 3b. Selective Skills Based Programmes

Selective skills based programmes target additional support at young people and their families with greater or specific needs.

*Helping the Non-Compliant Child* is a programme of up to 12 sessions delivered by a psychologist or social worker for parents who are having difficulty managing the behaviour of a child between the ages of three and eight. The practitioner works individually with the parents and their child. The programme teaches a range of effective strategies for managing noncompliant child behaviour and seeks to improve the child's ability to regulate his or her behaviour, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve relationships with other children. An RCT concluded that children treated through the programme reduced symptoms of ADHD and improved conduct, whilst parents improved parenting practice and gained parenting satisfaction.<sup>175</sup>

*Incredible Years Dinosaur School Child Training* is a group-based programme for children with behaviour difficulties aged between four and eight. The programme teaches children self-regulation and problem solving skills in small groups. Children are taught to identify and recognise emotions in self and others and helped to develop emotional literacy, to problem solve and respond appropriately to social interactions with peers and adults. Parents and teachers are updated on session goals and asked to help reinforce target behaviours. Three separate RCT studies concluded positive effects including improved behaviour in both home and school and improved social competence with peers.<sup>176 177</sup>

*Treatment Foster Care Oregon Adolescent (TFCO)* is a team based intervention available in the UK that works with young people in foster care, their foster carer, birth family, school, and move-on placement. It usually lasts for 9-12 months. The programme aims to increase a young person's social, emotional and relational skills and therefore reduce the need for more challenging and anti-social behaviours. Trained foster carers deliver the TFCO model directly to young people in their everyday interactions. All young people also follow an age appropriate behavioural incentive programme and receive weekly skills coaching sessions. A Birth Family Coach works with the young person's birth family to help them learn and implement the TFCO parenting programme. This helps to improve their own skills as parents and improve the quality of the contact that they have with their child, increasing the likelihood of the young person being returned home. A number of studies have concluded reduction in risk factors for violence including a reduction in the number of days running away from placements, reduced rates of criminal referrals and reduced rates of delinquent behaviour.<sup>178 179</sup>

### 4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour

Young people's risk for violence can be buffered through strong connections to caring adults other than parents and involvement that help them develop and apply new skills. Relationships to caring adults over and above parents or

primary care givers can influence young people's behavioural choices and reduce their risk in involvement in crime and violence.<sup>180 181</sup> Within the prevention hierarchy they are most often *selective* (aimed at populations at risk) or *targeted* (aimed at individuals with high risk behaviour) although could be delivered universally.

*Mentoring programmes* show positive outcomes in systematic reviews and meta-analyses for improvement in behavioural, social, emotional and academic domains. *The Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS)* is the oldest and best known example of a one-to-one mentoring programme implemented in community and school settings in the US. An evaluation found positive impacts in a number of risk behaviours including mentees being 46% less likely to have initiated illegal drugs and 32% less likely to have engaged in a physical fight. Other benefits included stronger academic competence and improvement in parental trust.<sup>182 183</sup>

*After-school programmes* show mixed evidence of effectiveness, probably because of the high variability between the programme models, duration, structure and participants.<sup>184</sup> One of the most effective is the *Los Angeles' Better Educated Students for Tomorrow (LA BEST)* programme. A rigorous longitudinal evaluation of LA-BEST found significant positive outcomes on academic achievement and reduction in arrests for youth crime and violence, especially among those students who attended for at least 10 days per month.<sup>185</sup>

Another good example of best practice is the *After School Matters (ASM)* programme which offers apprenticeship experiences in technology, science, communication, the arts and sports to high-school students in Chicago Public Schools. A rigorous RCT of the programme across 10 schools in predominately lower income areas found that participating young people missed fewer days of school, had higher self-regulation, a more positive attitudes and were less likely to sell drugs or participate in gang activity than youths in the control group.<sup>186</sup>

### 5. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours

Many young people who engage in violence as teens and young adults have histories of childhood conduct problems, aggression, violence, delinquency and criminal behaviour.<sup>187 188 189</sup> These youths often have other known risk factors for violence including substance misuse, academic problems, association with deviant peers and home environments characterised by disruption, conflict, violence and other family problems.<sup>190 191</sup> Justice responses made in isolation such as incarceration have limited effect on youths' future criminal behaviour. The Children's Society in their 2019 report on Child Criminal Exploitation<sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup> noted that:

*"Responses are almost always reactive not preventative. Professionals report that many children come to attention of statutory agencies when exploitation is already present and*

*criminal groups are controlling them to deliver drugs. Typically law enforcement takes precedence over safeguarding responses."*

and further concluded that thresholds for intervention by Youth Offending Services were generally set too high noting that typically Council Children Services Departments wait until a young person offends before providing an intervention.

Approaches that seek to address high risk behaviours such as violence, delinquency and early offending have the potential to interrupt the continuation and escalation to more serious violent offending.<sup>192 193</sup>

Approaches in this area can be categorised into those that lessen the harms caused by exposure to violence, and those that aim to intervene to treat problem behaviour to prevent future violence or further involvement in violence. Within the prevention hierarchy, they are be categorised as either *targeted or specialist prevention*.

Treatment to lessen the harms caused by exposure to violence.

Therapeutic treatment can mitigate the behavioural and health consequences of witnessing or experiencing violence in the home and community and other adverse childhood experiences.<sup>194 195</sup> Treatment aims to help youth process traumatic exposures, manage trauma-related distress and develop effective coping strategies and skills.

*Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)* is a therapeutic intervention for children and families who have been exposed to a traumatic event. Children and their parents attend between 12 and 18 sessions where they learn cognitive strategies for managing negative emotions and beliefs stemming from highly distressing and/or abusive experiences. It is delivered by a mental health professional with a QCF7/8 level qualification. Rigorous RCT evidence suggests that it is highly effective at treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and depression, improving behaviour, improving parenting practices and improving psychological functioning.<sup>196 197 198</sup>

Treatment to prevent problem behaviour and further involvement in violence

Interventions that seek to address problem behaviour and its causes and prevent future violence or escalation in violent behaviour have been shown to be effective. These approaches develop youths' social and problem-solving skills, provide therapeutic services to address behavioural and emotional issues, offer families therapeutic services to reduce conflict, improvement communication and enhance parental or school ability to supervise and manage problem behaviour in young people or in the case of parents, to address their own violent behaviour.<sup>192 193</sup>

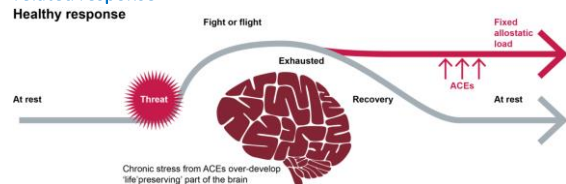
Early identification and support for neuro-disability including Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Evidence from a range of international studies have demonstrated a consistently high incidence of

neurodevelopmental impairment (including TBI) among young people in contact with the Youth Justice System.<sup>199</sup> Research suggests that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) such as physical and emotional abuse or neglect, sexual or domestic violence, or parental drug/alcohol abuse, mental illness or loss/bereavement can have long term psychological and neuro-biological negative impacts.

Learning how to cope with adversity is an important part of healthy child development. When there is a threat, the body responds by activating a variety of physiological responses, including increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and stress hormones such as cortisol producing what is called collectively as *allostatic load*. Protective relationships and a supportive environment protect the child from the impact of this biologically and psychologically. However when strong, frequent, or prolonged adverse experiences such as extreme poverty or repeated abuse are experienced without adult support, stress becomes toxic, as excessive cortisol disrupts developing brain circuits and the *allostatic load* remains fixed at a higher level than baseline (19) as shown in figure 8.3

**Figure 8.3: Biological Impact of ACE-related stressors and trauma related response**



There is clear evidence that a prolonged increase in allostatic load caused by ACEs neurodevelopmental impairment, neuro-disability as the brain of the child develops. Neurodevelopmental impairments are expressed through a wide range of symptoms including deficits in reasoning, thinking and perception, lack of impulse control, expression of emotion, formation of positive relationships, and expression of challenging behaviour (all identified as individual risk factors for violence in Chapter 5).

Research suggests the 'tipping point' for this process is experience of four or more ACEs with young people in this cohort being 14 times more likely to become a victim of violence, 15 time more likely to become a perpetrator of violence and 20 times more likely to be incarcerated at some time in their lives<sup>200</sup>.

Young people at risk of perpetrating anti-social and violent behaviour could be identified earlier if assessed for underlying cognitive and emotional needs and support and intervention to address these and their underlying causes could be provided.

*Level 5 Pathways Triple P* is a targeted programme for parents who have difficulty regulating their emotions and as a result are considered at risk of physically or emotionally harming their children (aged 16 or younger). It is delivered over five 1-2 hour sessions in a variety of settings including the home, clinic or community centre. It aims to improve

children's mental health and wellbeing, prevent maltreatment and prevent crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. Three RCTs concluded a reduction in potential for parental child abuse, improved parental confidence and involvement, reduced parental over reactivity and blame and improved child quality of life.<sup>201 202 203</sup>

*Multi-systemic therapy involves* trained therapists working with high risk adolescents who have a history of anti-social behaviour and experience of the criminal justice system. Unlike traditional approaches which concentrate purely on the thoughts and feelings of the individual, MST directly both interpersonal (e.g. cognitive) and systemic (i.e. family, peer and school) factors known to be associated with adolescent anti-social behaviour. Moreover, because different combinations of these factors are relevant for different adolescents, MST interventions are individualised and highly flexible. MST has been shown to be highly effective in reducing violent offending. Evidence suggests that approach can reduce offending by a third compared to standard psychological therapy.<sup>204</sup>

*Functional Family Therapy (FFT)* is targeted at young people between the aged of 10 and 18 involved in serious anti-social behaviour and/or substance misuse. The young person is typically referred into FFT through the youth justice system at the time of a conviction. The young person and his or her parents then attend between eight to 30 weekly sessions to learn strategies for improving family functioning and addressing the young person's behaviour. Two RCTs have identified positive outcomes in risk factors for violence; reduced recidivism and reduced cannabis use.<sup>205 206</sup>

*Hospital Based Programmes* access young people attending A&E or who are admitted to hospital due to violence related injury. They comprise of brief psychological interventions, referral to specialist services including mentoring and youth services and are based on the premise that interaction in A&E with a young person attending because of violence presents a unique 'teachable moment' where youth involved in violence or gang culture may be amenable to receive other interventions that may deliver desistance. The programmes also provide a valuable source of intelligence for law enforcement. There is some evidence of positive results of these programmes where trialled on a reduction in hospital attendances and admissions for violence where there are strong arrangements between acute trusts, crime reduction partnerships and the police for sharing anonymised data on ED attendances for violent crime.<sup>207 208</sup>

## Preventing Gang Membership and Crime caused by Gangs

There is little robust published evidence base (randomised control trials) of interventions that can definitively conclude effectiveness at preventing gang membership and further research is urgently needed in this area of practice.

A systematic review into provision for preventing youth gang involvement for children and young people aged 7-16

in the UK in 2008 concluded that there were *no randomised control trials or quasi-randomised controlled trials of the effectiveness of opportunities for gang prevention*.<sup>209</sup>

### Upstream prevention

Upstream prevention activity aims to reduce the risk factors that may lead to young people becoming involved in gangs or intervene to actively dissuade gang membership in youth people. They can be delivered either universally (i.e. to all young people) or in a selective way (targeted at cohorts of young people at increased risk of gang membership).

A systematic review conducted on upstream prevention programmes that focused on dissuading young people from joining gangs found only six robust studies out of an initial search of 3,850 that could be included. Studies included two universal and four targeted approaches. It concluded a small positive impact across the pooled data of a statistically significant odds ratio of 1.26 (i.e. young people receiving the interventions were 26% less likely to join a gang). However, four of the six studies individually failed to conclude a statistically significant positive impact and the authors concluded that the evidence on gang prevention programmes was too weak to claim whether or not the programmes were effective<sup>210</sup>.

Despite the lack of robust studies where gang membership prevention was a specific outcome, it is worth noting that many of the risk factors identified from the evidence for youth gang involvement in Chapter 6 mirror those for serious youth violence. As such, it could be argued that many of the evidence based prevention programmes discussed in section 1 to 5 previously in this chapter may also have a positive impact in reducing the risk of gang membership.

### Downstream prevention

Downstream prevention activity aims to assist young people to exit gangs and disrupt gang related activity, harm and violence.

*Opportunities Provision* is a gang prevention strategy derived from research that concluded that young people join gangs as a means of fulfilling economic needs due to exclusion from the labour market and lack of socio-economic opportunity and mobility.<sup>211 212</sup> *Opportunities Provision* provides tutoring, supplementary education, job training and preparation, job development and other programmes designed to increase economic or educational opportunities available to gang involved youth. Some studies have indicated the potential effectiveness of *opportunities provision*. One 1996 survey of past and current gang members found that 49.1% felt job training and employment programmes were effective in preventing gang membership.<sup>213</sup> Other studies have concluded that *opportunities provision* is most effective when administered within late childhood and early adolescence as this corresponds to a time when parental supervision decreases, youth typically begin involvement in gangs and are most receptive to prevention programmes.<sup>214 215</sup>

*The Pulling Levers Strategy for gang disruption* has been experimented by a number of American police departments. Pioneered in Boston to halt serious gang violence, it can be summarised by selecting a specific crime problem such as gang related homicide; convening an inter-agency working group of law enforcement, health and care practitioners and community representatives; framing a response to offenders that uses a varying menu of law enforcement sanctions to dissuade offenders from continuing to offend; focusing health/care/community resources on targeted offenders to match law enforcement activity; and directly communicating to the target group of offenders why they are receiving this special attention.

A meta-analysis of 10 studies relating to the *pulling levers* approach concluded that nine of the 10 reported statistically significant drops in offending although none of the studies were of high quality in that they included a control group.<sup>216</sup> As such, the effect they report could simply be regression towards the mean (the research bias that shows that often situations improve/resolve on their own without or despite intervention).

The *Comprehensive Gang Model* featuring targeted and group-based social interventions offering support and help alongside enhanced enforcement activity against gangs and individuals, provision of social opportunities for at risk youth, and community mobilisation involving agencies and citizens is an example of the *Pulling Levers Strategy*<sup>217</sup>. It is currently the favoured intervention in the US and more recently the UK. This model was a key point of reference in the development of *Operation Ceasefire* developed in Boston and has been described as a 'focused deterrence strategy, harnessing a multitude of different agencies plus resources from within the community itself.'<sup>218</sup> A modified version of the model has been adopted in Glasgow and Manchester. However a systematic review of 17 such *comprehensive gang model* programmes found that whilst eight showed positive results on crime reduction, none of the effects achieved statistical significance.<sup>219</sup>

*Gang Injunctions* are a specific example of the *Pulling Levers* intervention. The Police and Crime Act (2009) authorises law enforcement agencies to apply to a County Court for an injunction if they can demonstrate that on the balance a probability:

- An individual is involved in or has encouraged gang-related violence or drug dealing activity, and
- A gang injunction is necessary to prevent such activity or protect the individual from harm.

Gang injunctions give a range of statutory powers to authorities including to disrupt the movement of gang members, limit association and communication between gang individuals and compel gang members to participate in rehabilitative activities on threat of further arrest and more serious sanction.

A 2017 study examining four Merseyside gangs over a 36 month period found a drop of 70% in individual offending

amongst gang members and a 60% drop in victimisation of gang members compared to the pre-injunction period. Comparison between gangs with and without injunctions found a downward trend in gang offending in the injunction served gangs that was not observed in the comparator gangs over the same time period.<sup>220</sup>

## Addressing the wider-determinants of serious youth violence and gang membership

Serious youth violence and gang membership does not occur in a vacuum. Chapter 5 highlighted a range of socio-economic, community and environmental risk factors including poverty, adverse childhood experiences such as neglect and abuse, neighbourhood disorganisation, lack of community infrastructure, school exclusion, poor quality housing and access to/perceived availability of cannabis. Chapter 5 also proposed causal factors for prolific youth offending that included unstructured time spent in locations with poor community cohesion or lack of positive social values.

In section \*\*\* we highlighted research that demonstrated how experience of adverse childhood experiences can permanently alter the allostatic load on the developing brains of children and young people causing permanent neuro-disability that in turn increases the risk of many of the individual risk factors identified in Chapter 5 such as aggression, high level of daring, low self-esteem and poor impulse control.

Some of the interventions discussed earlier in this chapter can help to address the wider determinants of serious youth violence, for example early years education and parenting support will improve educational outcomes and life chances. Similarly action to improve family dynamics and relationships may reduce the likelihood of adverse childhood experience like neglect and violence.

In the remainder of this chapter we examine the evidence base for addressing other wider determinants of violence and creating systemic change to improve the environment that young people grow up in.

### Modifying the physical and social environment

Approaches to prevent youth violence and crime by enhancing and maintaining the built environment could include increasing lighting, improving accessibility to social spaces, increasing security, creating green space and developing meaningful community activity for young people. Evidence suggests that areas in which these approaches are trialled see a reduction in reduced arrests and an overall reduction in violent crime compared to areas that remain undeveloped.<sup>221 222</sup>

A systematic review of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* standards in the US that promoted design of the built environment based on increased positive personal interactions, enhanced visibility, access to green

spaces and improved housing quality found decreases in gun assault, violent crime, youth homicide, and disorderly conduct as well as beneficial impacts on residents' perception of crime, stress, community pride and physical health.<sup>223 224 225 226 227 228</sup>

#### Reduce the concentration of outlets selling alcohol

Systematic review and meta-analyses show that alcohol control policies including restrictions on the concentration of outlets selling alcohol, licencing regulations and hours and days of sale can reduce risk factors associated with youth violence and other health conditions.<sup>229 230</sup> One US study found a significant reduction in ambulance pickups of youth for violent injuries compared to a control community following alcohol control policies being implemented.<sup>231</sup>

Other international research studies demonstrate the efficacy of alcohol sale restriction on murder, physical assault and violent crime.<sup>232 233 234</sup>

#### Street outreach and community development

Interventions in this category use outreach or community development workers to connect with residents, youth and gang members to mediate conflict, promote norms of non-violence and connect violent offenders or gang members with support that may prevent further offending. There is some evidence from the US of its efficacy. Evaluation of Chicago's *Cure Violence* outreach programme implemented in seven communities found significant reductions in aggravated batteries and assaults and shootings in half of the implementation communities. Evaluation of Baltimore's *Safe Streets* programme in four neighbourhoods found significant reductions in nonfatal shootings in all areas and significant reductions in murder in two implementation areas compared to comparator communities without the intervention.<sup>235 236</sup>

#### Intervention to address the harm caused by social media

In Chapter 5 we discussed the emerging evidence on the link between social media and youth violence and gang membership. The evidence base on how to address this effectively is extremely limited. Researchers from University College Birmingham in their *Catch 22* research report on social media and youth violence<sup>94</sup> suggest three approaches:

*Prevention:* Providing resources and training on social media to parents and front line professionals that will enable them to better engage with young people and understand the risks posed by the largely unregulated social media space

*Intervention.* Recent research in Chicago has provided some evidence on how effective use of social media proactively by youth outreach workers is pre-empting and preventing serious incidents of face-to-face youth violence. Youth workers use social media platforms to monitor increased tension between high-risk individuals and groups and then intervene proactively to reduce tension.<sup>237</sup>

*Suppression.* Active monitoring of social media content by law enforcement authorities with a view to requiring social media platforms to take down damaging content.

#### Reducing school exclusions and minimising impact when they occur

In Chapter 5 we explored the association between school exclusion and violent crime and gang membership in young people and highlighted evidence that being excluded from school can increase other risk factors.

The 2019 Timpson Review commissioned by the Department for Education set out a range of evidence based recommendations to prevent unnecessary exclusion and the harms that can be caused by them. It highlighted four key drivers:

- Differences in leadership at school level which leads to an unacceptable level of variation in exclusion policy and practice
- Variation in systems, capability and capacity between schools to manage poor behaviour
- Perverse incentives at system level that can discourage schools from taking responsibility for the needs of children they wish to exclude
- Lack of safeguards that protect children against informal exclusion and off-rolling together with inadequate safeguarding responses to the wellbeing of children receiving multiple periods of exclusion.

The review makes a number of recommendations to reduce avoidable exclusions and the harm caused by excluding children including:

- Consistent guidelines to address variation in practice between schools
- Strengthened partnership working and data sharing between all schools, local authorities, local health partners to take collective responsibility for collecting and reviewing data on excluded pupil needs and for planning and funding local alternative provision and services that intervene early for children at risk of exclusion
- Additional support to the school workforce to ensure that have the knowledge and skills needed to better manage behaviour and meet wider pupil needs and address risk factors including dedicated senior leads for mental health
- Strengthening Alternative Provision and additional support for at risk children including creation of school 'internal inclusion units; nurture programmes; approaches to strengthen the engagement and advocacy skills of parents; creating inclusive environments for BME children who are at higher risk of exclusion including mentoring and role models; proactive use of AP as an early intervention delivered in mainstream schools and through off-site placements including comprehensive holistic six week assessment of the educational, behavioural and social needs of young people who are excludedRi



## Enforcement – Stop and Search

Police stop and search practice either to deter or detect remains a controversial and political topic. The statutory power to stop and search is an investigative tool used to allay or confirm a police officer's suspicions, short of arrest. It requires reasonable suspicion on the part of the officer conducting the search that a crime may have been committed. Non-statutory stop and search allows officers to search individuals on a voluntary basis.

One distinction that can be drawn is between reactive and proactive stop and search. Put simply, reactive stop and

search responds to suspicious circumstances either reported or witnessed, whilst proactive stop and search actively seeks out potential suspects in situations where an offence is likely to occur. Evidence suggests that these two approaches to stop and search are underpinned by different policing aims. Reactive stop and search aims to detect incriminating evidence, and therefore makes greater use of statutory search powers which require reasonable suspicion. In contrast, proactive stop and search aims to deter people from offending and involves carrying out a large number of searches in order to communicate the likelihood of detection.<sup>238</sup>

Table 8.1 taken from an evaluation of police practice in Scotland describes the two approaches based on force data.<sup>238</sup>

**Table 8.1: Reactive and proactive stop and search: Key Indicators**

Indicator	Reactive (Detection)	Proactive (Deterrence)
Search rates	Lower search rates, due to greater use of reasonable suspicion.	Higher search rates in order to communicate the likelihood of detection and strength of the deterrent effect
Search power	Greater use of statutory powers and reasonable suspicion, in order to detect	Greater use of non-statutory stop and search. Allows officers to increase search rates without reasonable suspicion.
Reason for search	Higher proportion of drugs searches, due to the prevalence of drugs and reasonably clear grounds for suspicion.	Searches target crimes associated with younger populations. High proportion of offensive weapons and alcohol searches.
Age-profile	Searches follow the standard age-distribution of offending	Searches directed towards young people over and above the standard age-distribution of offending
Detection rate	Higher detection rates, due to use of reasonable suspicion (19%) <sup>1</sup>	Lower detection rates, due to limited use or lack of reasonable suspicion. (9%) <sup>1</sup>

### Does stop and search reduce crime and deter people from offending?

Evidence on the efficacy of stop and search in deterring violent crime is equivocal. Proponents draw on existing literature that concludes that 'the perceived likelihood or certainty of being caught must be reasonably strong to deter crime'.<sup>239 240</sup> It is also worth noting that widespread use of stop and search as a deterrent has featured in successful approaches to reducing knife crime in the UK, for example in Glasgow.<sup>241</sup>

Whilst there is limited robust evidence to suggest a *direct* association between the use of stop and search and offending levels, it should be noted that deterrent effects of individual interventions are notoriously difficult to untangle, as stop and search almost always employed as one in a range of different interventions to deter crime.<sup>238</sup> Some researchers point to 'highly consistent evidence' to suggest that stop and search '*causes reductions in weapons violence*

*and homicide*'<sup>242</sup> whilst others point to the methodological difficulties of the evidence base that typically applies causal reasoning after the event<sup>243</sup> and highlight the dangers of the approach in damaging relationships between communities targeted and the police.<sup>244</sup>

Some recent research from the US has suggested a small but significant effect of stop and search of suspects with the highest probability of criminal behaviour on the prevalence of violent crime, drugs offences and weapons offences, with an approximate two month time lag.<sup>245 246</sup> An analysis of the impact of stop and search over a ten-year period between 2004 and 2014 in London quantified a small but statistically significant impact of increased stop and search on all susceptible crime and drugs offences (-0.32% and -1.85% respectively) for each 10% increase in stop and search activity, and a weak statistically significant impact on week-on-week but not month-on-month violent crime. However no statistically significant impact was found on robbery, theft, criminal damage or non-domestic violent crime).<sup>247</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Data taken from study<sup>238</sup> on stop and search across Scottish Police forces in 2010.



## Chapter 9: A Gap Analysis of Current Provision in Thurrock against the Published Evidence Base

### Key Findings

We conducted a gap analysis to critically analyse our current provision on preventing youth violence against the eight strategic actions identified in the evidence base and discussed the previous chapter. Our findings were as follows.

- Promoting family environments that support healthy family development:** Thurrock has a comprehensive and evidence based offer on Promoting Family Environments that support healthy development and Thurrock's offer in this category is almost entirely supported by high quality evidenced based studies. Thurrock provision goes over and above the current evidence base, providing a range of targeted provision for families with significant additional needs particularly around parenting. Provision is delivered in an integrated way through Brighter Futures programme with selective and targeted provision directed at families identified as having additional needs either through Brighter Futures universal work for example, health visitor checks or as a result of direct referral from Children's Social Care. There is evidence of effectiveness of the programme in terms of improved outcomes for families, reduced levels of risk factors and reduced demand on children's social care services.
- Providing quality education early in life:** Thurrock has invested heavily into early years education through Brighter Futures funding provided through the Education and Skills and Children's Social Care Divisions of the council and from the Public Health Grant. Current provision is comprehensive and in line of published evidence of best practice both for the universal offer and selective support given to children with additional needs. Our current services are likely to be reducing risk factors and vulnerabilities for future youth violence including aggression, development and education attachment. The programme is delivered in an integrated way through Brighter Futures. Outcomes data show the programme is having a positive effect. Despite having levels of child deprivation and hence need significantly worse than England's, Thurrock's outcomes are statistically significantly better than England's on all major indicators; the only local authority within our CIPFA comparator group to achieve this.
- Strengthening youth's communication, empathy, problem solving and emotional intelligence skills:** Thurrock's current provision on skills development does not currently mirror recommendations in evidence base which recommends universal classroom based programmes to help young people to develop skills and additional selective skills development programmes with children who need additional support. The new *Schools' Wellbeing Service* has great potential to fill this gap and help individual schools in the borough develop curriculum activity that supports young people to improve skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence but the service is at an early stage. The school nursing element of the Healthy Families service is also well placed to support this programme but is believed that most of its focus is with individual children rather than wider universal programmes. A new OfStEd framework that focusses on a more rounded curriculum should also support both services to develop skills based classroom and selective provision. A more comprehensive universal and targeted skills based offer in schools would improve classroom behaviour, reduce risk factors for violence and could support a reduction in the need for fixed term exclusions, which have been identified as having a strong association with youth violence in Thurrock young people.

A range of additional skills based development programmes are on offer through INSPIRE Although of high quality, they are generally highly selective for example TCHC only works with NEETS and careers advice is only available to a relatively small number of children that each school who purchases the service selects. As such, their reach into the general population of Thurrock young people is limited and their primary focus is also often based around employment and careers. INSPIRE front line staff report that the effectiveness of their work is often compromised by underlying unmet mental ill-health need in the young people whom they work with. Access to EWMHS for 1:1 therapy is not adequate for underlying need both in terms of waiting times and minimum threshold requirements. Better integration of adolescent mental health provision as part of an integrated youth offer is required to maximise the effectiveness of INSPIRE's offer.

- Connecting youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour:** The evidence base suggests that universal youth work provision to create meaningful out of school activity, and mentoring programmes for young people show promise in reducing risk factors for serious youth violence and gang membership. Thurrock's current provision is of high quality but inadequate in its scope and coverage. There is no youth provision whatsoever in Grays and limited provision in other parts of the borough operating only one evening a week. New mentoring programmes are available but are highly targeted and will only be accessible by a small proportion of young people who could benefit. The council needs to prioritise new or future investment to expand the provision of universal youth services across the borough, particularly in Grays and to expand the provision of mentoring programmes so that significantly more young people could benefit.

## Key Findings (continued)

5. Addressing the wider determinants of serious youth violence and gang membership: There are currently some gaps in local provision against this strategic action. Whilst universal provision on improving the built environment is operating effectively at a strategic level for major future planning/regeneration programmes such as the Purfleet Regeneration Programme and Grays Town Centre redevelopment, there is less evidence of a strong connection on how local intelligence on serious violent crime feeds into a drives regeneration action. The evidence base highlights the success of action to limit the concentration of retail outlets selling alcohol in geographical areas with a high prevalence of violent crime but there is little evidence that this is happening locally or that crime intelligence is being considered as part of licensing decisions. The council needs to use its intelligence in a more proactive way to inform services that address wider determinants of health.

Drug and alcohol treatment services for both young people aged under 18 and adults are considered high quality and waiting times for treatment remain short. However the proportion of drug users in treatment has fallen year on year from 2014/15 driven largely by a steady increase in prevalence of crack-cocaine use as discussed in Chapter 5. This is a worrying trend meaning an increase in the numbers of residents in Thurrock with untreated crack-cocaine use. This in turn may reflect an increase in County Lines activity within the borough. The Council's new Addictions Strategy should undertake further analyses to understand issue and action to increase the proportion of users in treatment

The relationship between social and youth violence is discussed in Chapter 6 but there is little evidence of a comprehensive strategy in Thurrock to addressing harm caused to young people by social media in the context of violence, either at a universal level in terms of education of parents or a more targeted level in terms of monitoring social media platforms to gain intelligence or action to disrupt harmful social media content and targeted outreach interventions based on intelligence gained. A more strategic local approach to addressing the harms caused by social media needs to be developed.

6. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours: Thurrock has a wide range of selective/targeted provision aimed at addressing violent behaviour in young people and reducing the likelihood of future violence. The Prevention and Support Service (PASS) and youth work service in A&E are in line with published evidence base although the latter is currently only funded as a pilot from the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and requires mainstream funding to become sustainable. A range of additional innovative programmes including Holiday Activity Programmes, the Goodman Project and Power undertake targeted work with high risk young people. These programmes need to be evaluated to assess impact and success. Thurrock YOS is evidence based, high quality and achieves good outcomes in general for young people who have committed crime with the majority of young people who access the service prevented from re-offending. However Chapter 2 identified a small cohort of young people who access YOS multiple times for violence against the person offences and robbery. This cohort often also commit drugs offences and current YOS interventions appear unsuccessful at delivering crime desistance for this group. Further work is required to understand the reasons behind this and develop new approaches.

The current mental health offer provided to Thurrock via the EWMHS service is commissioned separately and is not well integrated with other programmes. Front line professionals highlighted that thresholds to access EWMHS services are set too high and waiting times are too long. Current EWMHS mental health provision when provided focuses largely on the individual and does not offer the more holistic specialist support recommended in the evidence base such as multi-systemic therapy or family functional therapy that seeks to address wider problems in the family and environment of the young person. Trauma focused CBT also recommended in the evidence base for victims of serious youth violence is also offered. As such, current provision in this area is too individually focused and fragmented. A new single integrated model for treatment of young people involved violence is required that treats children in young people in the wider context of issues within their family and environment.

A new single integrated and more holistic offer for treating youth violence is required that works further 'upstream' with youth at high risk of committing violent offences, integrates mental health and the other range of interventions and treats the individual in the context of their environment.

7. Preventing Gang Membership and Crime Caused by Gangs: The published evidence base is weak in this area. The SoS+ programme is funded as a pilot and only operates within the Olive Academy. The Knife Crime Awareness programme operates through YOS and as such is only available to those young people who have been arrested for weapons offences. Current provision is therefore largely re-active when targeted at young people who are members of gangs. A wider *Opportunities Provision* approach is required to increase the likelihood of young people exiting gangs together with increased reach of programmes aimed to dissuading and diverting young people from gang involvement.
8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs: Thurrock is making use of targeted stop and search activity based on intelligence led policing activity. Gang Injunctions are in place and have been shown to be successful. Current enforcement activity is in-line with the published evidence base.

## Introduction

This Chapter examines the current provision in Thurrock to prevent and reduce serious youth violence and gang membership. It critiques the likely effectiveness against the evidence base discussed in Chapter 7 and makes recommendations for future provision moving forward. It also describes current governance arrangements relating to the Violence and Vulnerability agenda.

## Eight strategic actions to prevent serious youth violence and gang membership.

The evidence base in Chapter 7 can be grouped into eight strategic actions shown to be effective in preventing and reducing serious youth violence and gang membership:

1. Promote family environments that support healthy development
2. Provide quality education early in life

3. Strengthen Youth's communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence skills
4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour
5. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours
6. Address the wider determinants of violence and gangs
7. Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs
8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs.

A summary of the evidence base against these eight strategic actions is shown in figure 9.1, which also highlights whether the evidence based activity is *universal* (aimed at the entire population); *selective* (provided only populations with additional need or increased risk); *targeted* (aimed only at individuals with additional needs or risk); or *specialist* (programmes that seek to address existing violent or other damaging behaviour in young people).

Figure 9.1

	1. Promote family environments that support healthy development	2. Provide quality education early in life	3. Strengthen youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and Emotional Intelligence	4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour	5. Address the wider determinants of serious youth violence and gang membership	6. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours	7. Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs	8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs	
UNIVERSAL		High quality early years education for children and families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perry Pre-school Programme</li> <li>• Healthy Child Programme</li> </ul>	Universal based classroom programmes to develop skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incredible years Teacher Classroom Management</li> <li>• PATHS Elementary Curriculum</li> <li>• Positive Action emotional learning programme</li> <li>• The Good Behaviour Game (classroom management)</li> </ul>	Development of universal access meaningful activity for young people out of school hours	Enhance and maintain the built environment including increased lighting, improved accessibility to social spaces, increased security, creation of green space  Upskill professionals and parents to better engage young people on the dangers of social media				
SELECTIVE	Early childhood home visiting programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Nurse Partnership</li> </ul> Parenting skill and family relationship programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Foundations</li> <li>• Incredible School Years</li> <li>• Triple P (level 3-4)</li> <li>• Strengthening Families Programme 10-14</li> </ul>	Support for children with additional identified development needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doodle Den</li> <li>• Let's Play in Tandem</li> </ul>	Skills development programmes targeted at children and young people with additional identified needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping the non-compliant child</li> <li>• Incredible Years Dinosaur School Child Training</li> <li>• Treatment Foster Care Oregon Adolescent (TFCO)</li> </ul>	After-school activity programmes aimed at young people with additional needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LA BEST Programme</li> <li>• After School Matters (ASM)</li> </ul>	Reduce the concentration of retail outlets selling alcohol in geographical areas with a high prevalence of violent crime				
				Mentoring Programmes for youth at risk of / engaged in violence/gang related activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BBBB</li> </ul>	Community development and street outreach activity with high risk youth, gang members and wider communities affected.  Monitoring social media platforms to gain intelligence on youth violence, together with intervention through outreach	Intervention to address high risk abusive behaviour in parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 5 Pathways Triple P</li> </ul> A&E based assessment and onward referral for young people admitted for injury linked to youth violence/gang activity	Opportunities Provision including tutoring, supplementary education, job training and preparation, job development and other programmes designed to increase economic or educational opportunities available to gang involved youth.	Highly targeted stop and search activity with the purpose of detecting crime	TARGETED
					Action to disrupt or take down harmful social media content including that which promotes or glamorises violence, drug dealing or gangs.  Drug Addiction/treatment	Clinical intervention to reduce harms from violence exposure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trauma focused CBT</li> </ul> Screening/support for neuro-disability including traumatic brain injury  Specialist support for adolescent violent offenders/those at risk of offending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-systemic therapy</li> <li>• Family functional therapy</li> </ul>	Pulling Levers whole system approach to gang disruption. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gang Injunctions</li> </ul>	Gang Injunctions.	SPECIALIST

Figure 9.2 highlights the risk and protective factors that each strategic action aims to reduce or strengthen.

Figure 9.2

	1. Provide quality education early in life	2. Strengthen youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and EI	3. Promote family environments that support healthy development	4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour	5. Address the wider determinants of serious youth violence and gang membership	6. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours	7. Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs	8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs
RISK FACTORS MITIGATED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low school attainment</li> <li>Troublesome</li> <li>Positive attitude to delinquency</li> <li>Conduct disorder</li> <li>Poor parent/child relationships or communication</li> <li>Violence</li> <li>Developing an individual crime propensity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delinquency</li> <li>Being exposed to delinquent peers</li> <li>Aggression</li> <li>Conduct disorder</li> <li>Violence</li> <li>Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>Substance misuse</li> <li>Truancy</li> <li>Developing an individual crime propensity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct disorder</li> <li>Disrupted family</li> <li>Poor family supervision</li> <li>Poor parent/child relationships or communication</li> <li>environment</li> <li>Family violence</li> <li>Aggression towards peers</li> <li>Low school attainment/performance</li> <li>Substance misuse</li> <li>Developing an individual crime propensity.</li> <li>Being exposed to a criminogenic environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substance misuse</li> <li>Gang membership</li> <li>Truancy</li> <li>Positive attitude to delinquency</li> <li>Having peers with an existing propensity for crime</li> <li>Being exposed to a criminogenic environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living in a neighbourhood with many youths in trouble</li> <li>Neighbourhood disorganisation</li> <li>Violent community norms/culture</li> <li>Positive attitude to delinquency</li> <li>Unstructured or unsupervised time spent in locations with low community cohesion or lack of positive social values</li> <li>Exposure to a criminogenic environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low self-esteem</li> <li>High psychopathic features</li> <li>Family violence, abuse and neglect</li> <li>Poor parent/child relationships or communication</li> <li>Poor family supervision</li> <li>Having peers with a propensity for crime</li> <li>Being exposed to a criminogenic environment</li> <li>Cannabis use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low school attainment</li> <li>Low educational aspirations</li> <li>Exposure to violence</li> <li>Previously committed violent crime</li> <li>Access to/use of cannabis</li> <li>Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>Living in a neighbourhood with many youths in trouble</li> <li>Delinquent peers</li> <li>Having peers with an existing propensity for crime</li> <li>Exposure to criminogenic environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>Violence/exposure to violence</li> <li>Availability of / use of cannabis</li> <li>Being exposed to a criminogenic environment</li> </ul>
PROTECTIVE FACTORS ENHANCED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low levels of impulsivity</li> <li>High IQ/cognitive functioning</li> <li>High academic achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pro-social behaviour</li> <li>Pro-social bonding</li> <li>Supportive relationships with parents and other adults</li> <li>Low levels of impulsivity</li> <li>Academic achievement</li> <li>School bonding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low levels of emotional distress</li> <li>Stable family structure</li> <li>Infrequent parent/child conflict</li> <li>Supportive relationships with parents/adults</li> <li>Academic achievement</li> <li>Pro-social behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low levels of impulsivity</li> <li>High educational aspiration</li> <li>Commitment to school</li> <li>Academic achievement</li> <li>Involvement in community youth groups/ community assets and clubs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood interaction</li> <li>Neighbourhood support</li> <li>Positive / pro-social attitudes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrequent parent/child conflict</li> <li>Good family management</li> <li>Supportive relationships with parents or others</li> <li>Low levels of emotional distress</li> <li>High self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived neighbourhood safety</li> <li>Involvement in community youth groups/community assets/clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived neighbourhood safety</li> </ul>

### Current provision against strategic actions 1-3:

Figure 9.3 gives a summary of current provision for the first three strategic actions:

- Promote family environments that support healthy development
- Provide quality education early in life
- Strengthen youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence.

Interventions that mirror evidence of best practice set out in the previous chapter are shown in green. Interventions not supported by published evidence base are shown in black. It is important to remember that serious youth violence is an emerging issue and as such, the published evidence base is not that well developed. As such, it should not be inferred that because an approach is not supported by a published paper, it does not have value or is not effective; simply that it is important to ensure that it is well evaluated. A public health approach to tackling serious violence should be about testing new and innovative ways of working and scaling up those that show a positive effect.

Figure 9.3: Current Provision in Thurrock.

	1. Promote family environments that support healthy development	2. Provide quality education early in life	3. Strengthen youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence
UNIVERSAL	<p><b>Family Sessions at Grangewaters</b> Grangewaters offer family focused activities outdoors that aim to increase positive mental health and wellbeing, increase physical activity, reduce obesity and strengthen family connections.</p> <p><b>Reducing parental conflict programme</b> – universal training for frontline practitioners to identify problematic parental conflict and refer parents for interventions where needed.</p>	<p><b>Thurrock Healthy Child Programme</b> operating through <i>Brighter Futures</i> known as the <i>Healthy Families</i> service delivers support at five mandated contact points from antenatal to five years, known as health visiting and from 5 – 19 years known as school nursing. Assessment at developmental stages using ASQ – Ages and Stages questionnaire to highlight any needs to ensure children reach an expected level of development and are ready for school at 4 years. Collaborative work with children’s centres</p> <p><b>Universal Early Education</b> – ages 3-4 years Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) within childcare and nursery providers between 15 and 30 hours per week provided for Ofsted registered settings.</p>	<p><b>Schools’ Wellbeing Service</b> – works to provide skill required to manage behaviour within the classroom, an element of this is a drama workshop provided by Innact funded by the CSP</p> <p><b>Healthy Families Service</b> – Offer support to students through school/college at transition points and in particular working to ensure children and ready for adulthood and receive support with exam stress and managing emotions.</p> <p><b>INSPIRE service</b> – provide drop-in sessions for career advice and to enhance young people’s understanding of the world of work and assessment/development</p> <p><b>Youth Cabinet</b> – designed to support young people to be involved and have their say on issues and services that affect them.</p> <p><b>Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme</b> – Support to schools to deliver a programme including learning new skills, volunteering, physical challenge</p> <p><b>Drawn Out</b> – short film/teaching resource on risky behaviours, exploitation and grooming.</p>
SELECTIVE	<p><b>The Healthy Families Programme</b> focuses extra support to teenage parents and families with wider vulnerabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universal Plus (UP) Offer to families requiring additional support</li> </ul> <p><b>Parenting skill and family relationship programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Triple P (level 3 and 4 and online)</li> <li>Triple P (level 4 online), new pilot for 1 year across Essex</li> <li>Incredible Years (0-3), (3-6), (6-12)</li> <li>Mellow Mums and Dads</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support for Children with Additional Developmental Needs</b> <i>Incredible Years 0-3, 3-6 and 6-12 years programmes outcomes include:</i> Enhancing school achievement &amp; employment -improved reading. Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour – improved behaviour on all measures, less defiant behaviour</p> <p><b>Early Education</b> – age 2 years provision of 15 hours childcare for parents in receipt of certain benefits where settings are registered with Ofsted delivering EYFS.</p>	<p>Skills development programmes targeted at populations of children and young people with additional identified needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TCHC (through Inspire):</b> a 24 week course of level 1&amp;2 employability and functional skills employability/functional skills</li> <li><b>Prince’s Trust (through INSPIRE):</b> 12 week programme to build skills and confidence in young people who are NEET</li> <li><b>INSPIRE careers advice offer to schools</b></li> <li><b>Employability and Skills Team Offer</b> to schools.</li> </ul>
TARGETED	<p><b>Universal Partnership Plus (UPP) Offer</b> – for families with identified high needs plus additional concerns e.g. safeguarding, DV, alcohol/substance misuse, mental health.</p> <p><b>Together with Baby</b> – Infant MH service offering therapeutic intensive support to families with attachment disorder</p> <p><b>STOP Programme:</b> Step-by-step course for teenagers displaying challenging behaviours and their parents aimed at improving family communication</p> <p><b>Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC)</b> – a 13 week programme available to parents of children 3 – 18</p> <p><b>Reducing Parental Conflict Programme</b> – sessions with parents.</p>		

## 1. Promote family environments that support healthy development

### Universal Provision

*Grangewaters* offer a range of family focussed activities outdoors that aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, increase physical activity, reduce obesity and strengthen family connections.

A *universal training programme* is available for all frontline practitioners to help identify problematic parental conflict and refer parents for interventions where needed.

### Selective Provision

The council commissions or delivers provision in line with published evidence of best practice.

*The Healthy Families Programme* is delivered through the Brighter Futures Healthy families Service delivered by North East Foundation Trust (NELFT). It is an early intervention and prevention public health programme for children and families. The Universal plus element of provision identifies vulnerable families, provides, delivers and co-ordinates evidence based packages of additional care, including maternal mental health & wellbeing, parenting issues, families at risk of poor outcomes and children with additional health needs in a targeted way. Additional contact points and support are put in place. Universal Plus includes intensive parenting support and interventions for vulnerable parents that have been shown to improve their outcomes and that of their children.

*Parenting Programmes in Thurrock* are commissioned by Children's Services and offered on to families identified as needing additional support. A range of accredited and evidence-based parenting programmes are available and in addition a limited number of one-to-one interventions. Current capacity meets demand.

Programmes include:

*Incredible Years Programme* is delivered in Children's Centres. The model used focuses on strengthening parenting competencies and fostering parent involvement in children's school experiences, to promote children's academic, social and emotional skills and reduce conduct problems. This is available to parents of children and young people between the ages of 0 and 12 with specific programmes aimed at different age groups including a baby and toddler programme, pre-school programme and school age children (aged 6-12). Each programme consists of two-hour weekly group sessions over 12-13 weeks, where parents learn strategies for interacting positively with their child and discouraging unwanted behaviour.

National published evidence for this programme's impact specifies it achieves positive outcomes for families including: enhancing school achievement and enjoyment; improved reading; preventing anti-social behaviour, crime and violence; and improved child behaviour.

*Triple P (level 3)* – Triple P is an evidence based tool for frontline staff to use in their everyday practice. This is not a commissioned offer however, the provider is expected to have staff trained in this programme. Upon assessment, a decision is made on whether this programme is the most suitable for the family at the time. When used the teenage programme (aimed at parents of children aged 12 – 16) is delivered focussing on addressing behavioural difficulties within this age group and improving family communication problems receives specified intensive sessions to improve their parenting practices.

Outcomes measured using the Outcome star and de-escalation of cases model as above.

*Mellow Mums or mellow Dad* is a programme designed to support families with children aged 0 to 5 who are experiencing complex relational and attachment issues. It is delivered over 14 weekly 4.5 hour sessions. It works to create and understanding how previous experiences may impact on parenting relationships. The programme consists of using a mixture of reflective and practical techniques to allow parents to address their personal challenges and the challenges they face with their children.

Outcomes measured using the Outcome star and de-escalation of cases model as above. Other outcomes measured include improvement in parental mental health and child behaviour.

An emerging offer of *Triple P (Level 4)* known as the Triple P online parenting programme has been commissioned by Essex CCGs and Essex County Council for a 12 month pilot across Southend, Essex and Thurrock and delivered by Triple P as a digital offer. It is a stand-alone web-based intervention (equivalent to Level 4 Triple P) designed to promote positive parenting practices and teach parents the application of principles to specific situations. There are three elements to this offer;

- i) 0 – 12 year - It is a broad-based parenting intervention delivered online for parents of children up to 12 years. It involves eight (1-hour) online modules that parents complete independently.
- ii) Teen Triple P – 10 – 16 - It is a broad-based parenting intervention delivered online for parents of teens aged up to 16 years. It comprises six (1-hour) online modules that parents complete independently.
- iii) Triple P - Stepping Stones- this is a service is specifically for families with CYP with ASD and on the autistic spectrum. The service also provides mentoring support through e learning.

The *Triple P Online* programme focuses on families with pre-adolescent children, children who present with diagnosed (or undiagnosed) developmental challenges. The stepping stone element works to manage and prevent mild to moderate behavioural challenges for families already within the care of specialists to address developmental needs.

The *Step-by-Step* course is available for parents with pre-teen or teenagers (10-16 year olds). The course aims to improve family communication through learning how to really listen and de-code what your pre-teen/teenager is really saying or needing. As your pre-teen/teenager is developing and changing, this course aims to increase knowledge on effective behaviour management skills which will increase parental knowledge and confidence.

#### Targeted Provision

The following programmes are only available to families referred through Children's Services – PASS and Social care. This includes those children that have a plan as a Child In Need (CIN), a Child Protection (CP) plan or in some rare cases at the point of care proceedings. Outcome measures follow requirements of the programme licence:

*Universal Partnership Plus (UPP)* offer from Healthy Families Service is available where there are identified health needs plus additional concerns, such as safeguarding, domestic abuse, alcohol/substance misuse, mental health problems, or poor physical health. The UPP offer provides ongoing support from health visiting team plus a range of local services within the Brighter Futures offer, working together to deal with more complex issues over a period of time. These include services from the children's centres and other community services including charities

*Together with Baby-Infant Mental Health Service* commissioned by the CCG pan Essex, provided by EPUT and supported by the Parent Infant Foundation (PIP UK) offering highly therapeutic intensive support to families with attachment disorders to support healthy parent infant attachment. It supports families where parent mental health problems or substance abuse has prevented them from forming a secure parent infant attachment.

*Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC)* is targeted at parents, step-parents, grandparents and other family members (who may be under a Special Guardianship Order) of children and young people aged 3 to 18. The Thurrock SFSC forms part of a government programme of evaluation in 2012 (The Parenting Early Intervention Programme – PEIP) which are evidenced as programmes to deliver successful outcomes. The aims are carefully assessed and aligned to the local needs and correlated to the success of existing and previous parenting programmes in Thurrock. The offer includes an initial visit with parents prior to attending any of the group sessions to assess family needs. About half of sessions are delivered as a group at Children's Centres which is the primary location for service delivery.

The broader outcomes measured follow the fidelity of the programmes which are termed *outcome stars* assessed at the beginning and end of the programme. *Outcome stars* include measures on: physical health; wellbeing; meeting emotional needs; keeping children safe; social networks; education and learning; boundaries and behaviours; family routine; home and money; and progress to work. Evaluation shows a positive shift on *outcome stars* between the beginning and end of the programme. In addition, across all of the programmes there have been 23% of cases that have

de-escalated or closed to social care following intervention during the last 12 months suggesting the programme is effective in reducing demand on children's social care services.

*STOP programme* – This is a 10 week programme, is aimed at parents of teenagers displaying challenging behaviours. Referral is through open cases within social care or PASS and presenting issues include school attendance, relationships with parents and gang affiliation or vulnerability to this. More referrals are being received where there is gang involvement or vulnerability with incidences of young people aged just 12 reported as 'running' drugs. The STOP Programme also gives information on key parental concerns for this age group such as drugs, drink, sexual health and aggression in young people. This course is mindful of parents/carers needs and emotions as well as the teenagers. This course also offers a session on Exploitation and County Lines/ Gangs delivered by YOS.

Outcomes measured using the Outcome star and de-escalation of cases model as above.

The *Reducing Parental conflict (RPC)* programme is focussed on persistent unresolved conflict which affects the health and wellbeing of the child. Funding has been awarded from DWP to develop a strategic response and facilitate the training of professionals across the Brighter Futures partnership to be able to recognise parental conflict and support families with this. The second component to this is joining up with Essex in a regional agreement to offer 100 places on the RPC programme for parents over next 2 years. This programme is delivered by the Tavistock and Portman NHS trust.

#### Analysis of current provision and gaps

Thurrock has a comprehensive and evidence based offer on *Promoting Family Environments that support healthy development*. The published evidence base only contains interventions that are *selective* and Thurrock's offer in this category is almost entirely supported by high quality evidenced based studies.

Thurrock provision goes over and above the current evidence base, providing a range of targeted provision for families with significant additional needs particularly around parenting.

Provision is delivered in an integrated way through *Brighter Futures* programme with selective and targeted provision directed at families identified as having additional needs either through Brighter Futures universal work for example, health visitor checks or as a result of direct referral from Children's Social Care. There is evidence of effectiveness of the programme in terms of improved outcomes for families, reduced levels of risk factors and reduced demand on children's social care services. However, we identified a need to strengthen integrated commissioning arrangements, and evidence that



## 2. Provide quality education early in life

### Universal Provision

The *Thurrock Healthy Child Programme* is delivered through the *Brighter Futures Healthy Families Service* and is an early intervention and prevention public health programme for children and families that follows published evidence of best practice. The Healthy Child Programme's universal reach provides an invaluable opportunity to identify and provide evidence-based interventions for families that are in need of additional support and children that are at risk of poor outcomes including those families with varying levels of vulnerability.

The universal offer within the service is offered to all families. There are currently five mandated contact points, with a health visitor led service for the 0-5 pathway and within the school nurse led service for the 5-19 part of the pathway. Delivery takes place in a variety of locations including the home, health clinics, Children's Centres, community venues, schools and colleges. Evidence suggests that universal prevention such as health visiting; school nursing and childcare have a significant impact on reducing demand for early intervention services. They place a crucial role in identifying children and supporting families that are struggling and need early intervention support and they prevent early issues from turning into more serious problems.

*Universal Early Education* provides free childcare for parents or carers of children aged 3-4 in/from Ofsted registered nurseries/childminders. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is delivered.

### Selective Provision

*Support for Children who with additional developmental needs* is available through the *Brighter Futures Healthy Families* service. Health visitors assess expected development through the 2½ year check to highlight children who have areas of development below what is expected. Appropriate additional support and interventions are put in place ahead of the child starting school at four years to improve development.

*Early Education and aged 2* scheme offers free childcare for parents of two year olds whose parents or carers are on low income and can include nurseries, childminders and other providers who are Ofsted registered and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS).

### Analysis of current provision and gaps

Thurrock has invested heavily into early years education through *Brighter Futures* funding provided through the Education and Skills and Children's Social Care Divisions of the council and from the Public Health Grant. Current provision is comprehensive and in line of published evidence of best practice both for the universal offer and selective support given to children with additional needs. Our current services are likely to be reducing risk factors and vulnerabilities for future youth violence including aggression, development and education attachment. The

programme is delivered in an integrated way through *Brighter Futures*.

Outcomes data show the programme is having a positive effect. Despite having levels of child deprivation and hence need significantly worse than England's, Thurrock is the only local authority in its CIPFA comparator group of local authorities with the most similar demographic populations to have performance scores on all major Early Years' Key Performance Indicators statistically significantly better the England's. (Table 9.1) Furthermore, Thurrock's Early Years' performance ranks within the top five local authorities in every indicator, the top three in four the eight indicators and first in two of the indicators.

Table 9.1

LOCAL AUTHORITY CIPFA COMPARATOR GROUP	Proportion of New Birth Visits completed within 14 days	Proportion of infants receiving 6 to 8 week review	Proportion of children receiving 12 week review	Proportion of children receiving 2-2.5 year review	Proportion of children aged 2-5 years receiving ASO3 as part of health review	Good level of development achieved at 2-2.5 years	Good level of development achieved at end of year R	% children achieving expected level in communication and language skills at the end of year R
<b>Thurrock</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>97.4%</b>	<b>94.0%</b>	<b>87.3%</b>	<b>98.8%</b>	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>73.7%</b>	<b>82.6%</b>
<b>Thurrock RANK</b>	5th out of 16	2nd out of 16	1st out of 16	5th out of 16	5th out of 16	3rd out of 16	1st out of 16	5th out of 16
Bedford	79.7%	76.2%	90.7%	77.5%	100.0%	83.6%	69.1%	81.0%
Bolton	92.2%	94.1%	92.6%	95.5%	96.5%	66.4%	67.3%	76.1%
Calderdale	84.3%	82.2%	90.6%	84.5%	94.8%	No data	70.5%	83.6%
Coventry	89.1%	97.2%	92.5%	86.7%	88.9%	78.4%	69.0%	77.5%
Derby UA	85.7%	98.9%	93.7%	89.8%	93.5%	86.6%	70.7%	79.2%
Midway UA	84.6%	88.0%	87.8%	75.9%	100.0%	No data	73.5%	83.4%
Milton Keynes	86.1%	91.3%	85.0%	79.7%	98.5%	82.2%	73.3%	82.2%
Peterborough	88.7%	82.3%	93.4%	78.1%	No data	71.5%	67.0%	78.2%
Reading	93.3%	89.4%	84.0%	75.3%	92.8%	91.0%	69.2%	79.1%
Rochdale	98.2%	94.8%	83.0%	64.8%	No data	66.4%	66.0%	75.4%
Stockton on Tees	82.6%	88.0%	93.1%	85.7%	86.6%	No data	73.7%	84.4%
Swindon	72.7%	87.2%	71.6%	71.2%	97.4%	88.2%	71.2%	81.8%
Telford and Wrekin	89.4%	91.6%	82.5%	72.1%	97.6%	67.1%	71.3%	81.6%
Trafford	96.5%	95.2%	90.7%	92.0%	100.0%	No data	74.7%	85.5%
Warrington	89.1%	95.1%	91.5%	88.6%	99.6%	89.6%	73.6%	81.7%

Statistically significantly better performance than the England mean  
 Performance statistically similar to the England mean  
 Performance is statistically significantly worse than the England mean

## 3. Strengthen youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence

### Universal Provision

*Thurrock School Mental Wellbeing Service* – is a new programme of support offered to all schools to help them improve mental resilience and reduce risk factors to mental ill-health amongst their pupils. Dedicated workers aligned to clusters of schools undertake an individual school assessment and develops and delivers a joint action plan. Support can include curriculum development, policy development and direct delivery of programmes within the classroom. An element of this universal offer to schools works to provide skill required to manage their behaviour in class. Innact delivers assembly, video and drama sessions for children in schools. This is aimed at working with pupil at risk of being excluded using drama to communicate how to manage their behaviour and self-awareness.

*The Healthy Families Service* employ school nursing staff who offer support to students through school/college at transition points and in particular working to ensure children and ready for adulthood and receive support with exam stress and managing emotions

*Thurrock Youth Cabinet* – is designed to support young people to be fully involved in having their say about the issues that affect young people and the services that are provided for them. The programme provides consultation opportunities for services to gain feedback from young people and for the views of young people to be heard. Elected members are part of the British youth council attending conventions throughout the year in addition to the annual youth sitting. The Youth Cabinet deliver an annual youth conference which all schools in the borough attend offering the opportunity to debate issues that have arisen via the national Make your Mark campaign.

*Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme* is a youth award programme supporting schools and colleges to deliver all sections of the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards including learning a new skill, volunteering, physical challenge and an expedition, in addition to operating open centres that encourage those who wish to enrol outside of their school.

*INSPIRE Service* Careers advice drop in sessions at Inspire Youth Hub are offered on an open access basis and provide sessions to enhance young people's understanding of the world of work focusing on identification of strengths and self-assessment, career learning, psychometric testing; understanding emotional intelligence and skills needed to excel in the modern workplace.

*Drawn Out*. A short film available to schools that provides a message of hope to those caught up or stuck in negative situations that have the potential to place them in very risky situations to be exploited, groomed etc. it looks at the reality of street life, gang life and associated violence and how easy it is to get drawn in.

### Selective Provision

Thurrock Council's *INSPIRE* service run a number of programmes available to some young people in the Borough:

*Schools based careers advice offer* is available for individual schools to purchase, which provides one to one assessment and individual careers advice to secondary school pupils, usually to year 9 pupils. The offer varies between schools and is dependent on what each school decides to purchase but includes sessions on aspirations, finances, apprentices and routes to university and other higher education. Generally the level of provision purchased means only a few pupils from each school receive the offer. The council's *Employability and Skills Team* link closely with *INSPIRE* to work with schools to arrange work experience for young people and to organise employment skills development programmes like *Thurrock's Next Top Boss*.

*TCHC (Level 1 and 2) employability and functional skills programme* is commissioned by *INSPIRE* and run from their Grays hub offering a 24 week course programme in maths, literacy and confidence building linked to careers advice and development of a careers plan. The programme is open to young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training).

*The Prince's Trust* programme is also offered through *INSPIRE* and aims to build confidence in young people who are NEET. Evaluation suggests positive outcomes include increased confidence, improved relationships with parents, improved mental health and a reduction in homelessness risk.

### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

The published evidence base recommends universal classroom based programmes to help young people to develop skills and additional selective skills development programmes with children who need additional support. This perhaps the strategic action with the strongest level of published evidence based of effectiveness.

Thurrock's current provision on skills development does not currently mirror recommendations in evidence base. The Schools' Wellbeing Service has great potential to fill this gap and help individual schools in the borough develop curriculum activity that supports young people to improve skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence but the service is at an early stage.

The school nursing element of the *Healthy Families* service is also well placed to support this programme but is believed that most of its focus is with individual children rather than wider universal programmes.

A new Ofsted framework that focusses on a more rounded curriculum should also support both services to develop skills based classroom and selective provision.

A range of additional skills based development programmes are on offer through *INSPIRE* including the traded careers advice service to schools and the Duke of Edinburgh, Princes Trust, TCHC and Youth Cabinet. Although of high quality, they are generally highly selective for example TCHC only works with NEETS and careers advice is only available to a relatively small number of children that each school who purchases the service selects. As such, their reach into the general population of Thurrock young people is limited. Their primary focus is also often based around employment and careers.

*INSPIRE* front line staff report that the effectiveness of their work is often compromised by underlying unmet mental ill-health need in the young people whom they work with. Access to EWMHS for 1:1 therapy is not adequate for underlying need both in terms of waiting times and minimum threshold requirements. Better integration of adolescent mental health provision as part of an integrated youth offer is required to maximise the effectiveness of *INSPIRE*'s offer.

A more comprehensive universal and targeted skills based offer in schools would improve classroom behaviour, reduce risk factors for violence and could support a reduction in the need for fixed term exclusions, which have been identified as having a strong association with youth violence in Thurrock young people.

## Summary of Gaps Identified

- A lack of a comprehensive universal and targeted skills based offer in schools that builds youth skills in communication, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence. The new Schools Based Wellbeing Service provides a strong opportunity to be the delivery mechanism to achieve this but needs to concentrate on ensuring curriculum development and targeted programmes based on the evidence base for example:
  - Incredible years Teacher Classroom Management
  - PATHS Elementary Curriculum
  - Positive Action emotional learning programme
  - The Good Behaviour Game (classroom management)
- Thurrock Council Education and Public Health divisions should identify and share models of best practice across all schools using mechanisms like *The Head Teachers' Forum*
- The current EWMHS clinical care pathways and commissioning model are not sufficiently integrated into other skills based assets. Issues of access and treatment thresholds into EWMHS are limiting the efficacy of other programmes due to untreated underlying mental health problems in young people.

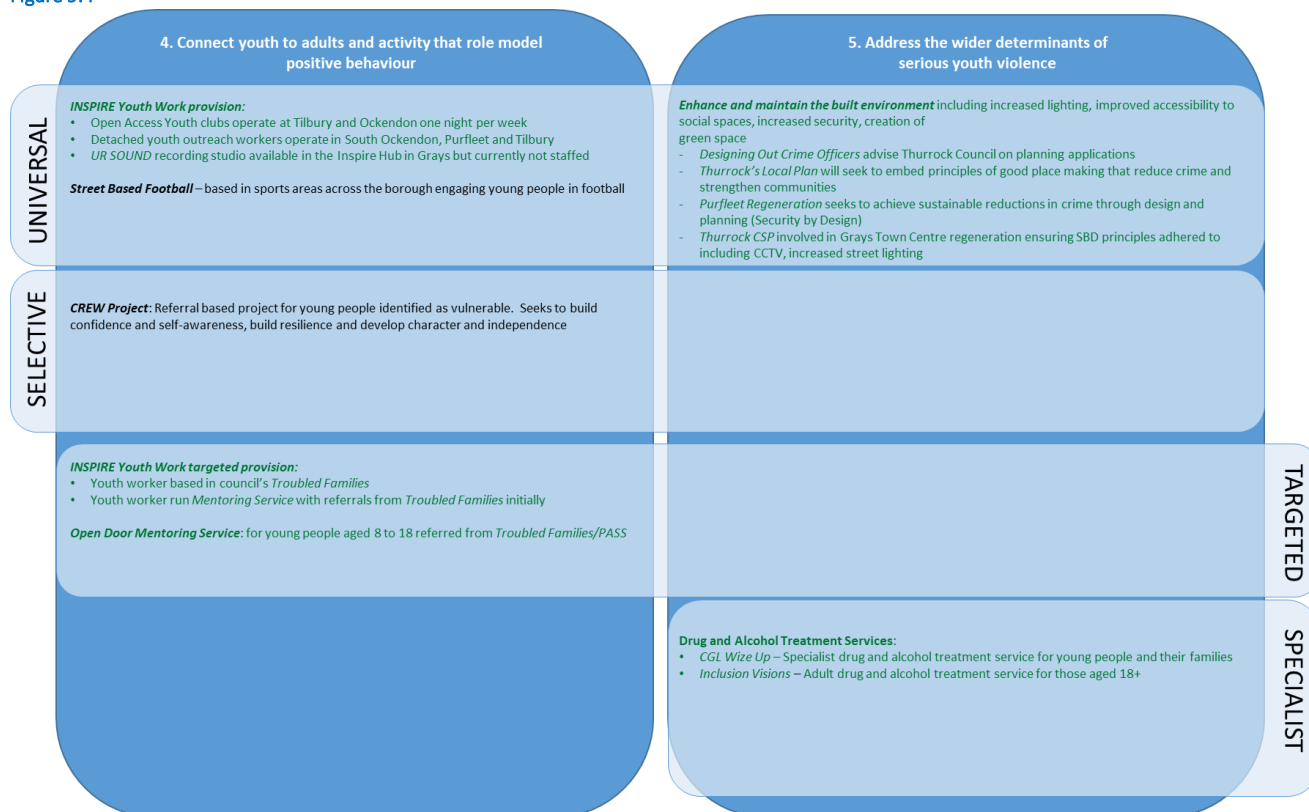
## Current provision against strategic actions 4-5:

Figure 9.4 gives a summary of current provision against strategic actions four and five:

4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour
5. Address the wider determinants of serious youth violence

Activity supported by the published evidence base is shown in green.

Figure 9.4



## 4. Connect youth to adults and activity that role model positive behaviour

The evidence base highlights the importance of universal youth work provision to create meaningful activity for young people out of school hours. Mentoring approaches for young people requiring additional support are also highlighted as showing promise in reducing risk factors for youth violence.

### Universal Provision

Youth work provision forms part of the council's INSPIRE service and offers open access youth centres and detached youth workers in parts of the borough, providing informal educational opportunities that:

- Explore issues that affect young people
- Support them to build effective networks within the wider community
- Provide opportunities to develop skills
- Build positive relationships
- Explore issues and concerns

The youth work team consists of 12 posts comprising of qualified youth workers, youth support workers and apprentices. Provision includes *youth groups* operating one night a week in Tilbury and South Ockendon for 9-14 year olds and 14-18 year olds. In addition, *detached youth workers* operate in parts of South Ockendon, Tilbury and Purfleet with the aim of engaging and supporting young people within the community and connecting them to other community assets and groups.

There is currently no universal youth work provision in Grays although there are plans to deliver this when vacant posts

### Summary of Gaps Identified

- Lack of provision of universal and targeted youth service provision across the borough, prioritising Grays where there is currently no provision
  - Lack of adequate provision of mentoring programmes for young people so that they are available to significantly greater numbers with a broader focus rather than simply on careers advice.

### Selective Provision

*CREW project* is a referral based project for vulnerable young people to raise confidence and self-awareness, builds resilience and character and supports the development of independence.

### Targeted Provision

*Mentoring*: All youth workers are trained in mentoring skills and a mentoring programme is due to commence imminently. Referrals to the programme will be from the Troubled Families (PASS) programme initially and referral criteria will be reviewed based on demand.

Mentoring is also commissioned by Thurrock Children's Services and delivered by Open Door, aimed at children and young people aged 8-18 years. Mentoring is delivered by professionally qualified staff. The majority of referrals are from social care and schools with some from PASS. Referral reasons include young people identified at risk of exposure to gang criminality, exploitation or online grooming.

The provider (Open Door) also delivers an intensive mentoring programme funded outside of the scope of this for young people who are frequently missing, many of whom will likely have been drawn into gangs. This adds value as the project is externally funded through and independently sourced grant.

The *Employability and Skills Team* offer mentoring to four schools: Gable Hall, St. Clairs, Harris Academy and Ockendon for year 8 students. Schools typically select their most disengaged students.

### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

The evidence base suggests that universal youth work provision to create meaningful out of school activity, and mentoring programmes for young people show promise in reducing risk factors for serious youth violence and gang membership.

Thurrock's current provision is of high quality but inadequate in its scope and coverage. There is no youth provision whatsoever in Grays and limited provision in other parts of the borough operating only one evening a week.

New mentoring programmes are available but are highly targeted and will only be accessible by a small proportion of young people who could benefit.

## 5. Address the wider determinants of youth violence

The evidence base highlights approaches that maintain and enhance the built environment including increased lighting, improved accessibility to social spaces, increased security and the creation of green space. It also highlights action to upskill professionals and young people on the dangers of social media and proactive monitoring of social media platforms to gain intelligence from/action to take down or disrupt harmful social media content. Programmes to treat drug addiction in young people are also highlighted.

### Universal provision

Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) have training and experience of advising on safety and security, are independent in their advice and have further access to more specialist resources where required (ref – NPPF). Essex Police have DOCOs in place and are actively involved in advising Thurrock on planning applications as members of the Health and Planning Advisory Group, a sub-group of the Thurrock Health and Well-being Board.

Building considerations for crime and safety into the Local Plan and regeneration schemes is key. This should use relevant guidance materials and best practice (such as Secured by Design and the National Design Guide).

In Thurrock, the emerging local plan is in development and will seek to embed principles of good place-making that encourage active frontages, natural surveillance and reasons to utilise public spaces. It will also seek to protect and improve community facilities to strengthen support networks within communities, ensure a high quality natural and built environment to give a sense of pride and ownership, and design the public realm to encourage positive social behaviour such as play, relaxation, and leisure.

The Thurrock design guide (a part of local plan policy) is used as a starting point for regeneration schemes.

The Grays Town Centre Framework requires public safety to be addressed in new schemes recognising that perceptions of crime are a key reason why people do not use the town centre. The Community Safety Partnership has been involved in consultations to inform the approach for the town centre and they will be further consulted, as well as SBD (Secure by Design), as schemes develop. In schemes such as the underpass, crime and safety have been written in to the specifications including requirements for lighting, CCTV, views in and out of the spaces, designing out hiding places and shadow areas, and creating informal surveillance.

In the Purfleet Regeneration Centre Programme, part of the pre-development process will be to consult with SBD. This will seek to achieve sustainable reductions in crime through design and other approaches to reduce the demand on Police authorities and help people live in a safer society."

#### Selective and Targeted Provision

There is no evidence on work in these areas.

#### Specialist Provision

*Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services for young people (aged up to 18)* are commissioned from the Public Health Grant and provided by *CGL Wise Up*. The service offers specialist support to children and young people in Thurrock under the age of 18 and their families to help young people cut down or stop using alcohol or drugs, including new psychoactive substances. The offer includes; specialist one-to-one sessions, support for young people affected by the hidden harm of parental substance misuses, access to counselling, advice and information for parents and carers and support to access other health and lifestyle support alcohol and drug preventative messages and brief advice delivered in schools and community settings by the young person's substance misuse service.

*Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services for young people aged 18+* are provided by *Inclusion Visions*. The service supports people to facilitate change in their lives through motivation and providing evidence-based interventions. Support may include; one-to-one and/or group work, psychological support, substitute prescribing, community or residential

detoxification and/or rehabilitation, needle exchange services and health and lifestyle support.

#### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

There are currently some gaps in local provision against this strategic action. Whilst universal provision on improving the built environment is operating effectively at a strategic level for major future planning/regeneration programmes such as the Purfleet Regeneration Programme and Grays Town Centre redevelopment, there is less evidence of a strong connection on how local intelligence on serious violent crime feeds into a drives regeneration action.

The evidence base highlights the success of action to limit the concentration of retail outlets selling alcohol in geographical areas with a high prevalence of violent crime but there we are unclear as to the extent to which is happening locally or that crime intelligence is being routinely considered as part of licencing decisions.

The role that social media plays in relationship to youth violence is discussed in Chapter 5 but there is little evidence of a comprehensive strategy in Thurrock to addressing harm caused to young people by social media in the context of violence, either at a universal level in terms of education of parents or a more targeted level in terms of monitoring social media platforms to gain intelligence or action to disrupt harmful social media content and targeted outreach interventions based on intelligence gained.

Drug and alcohol treatment services for both young people aged under 18 and adults are considered high quality and waiting times for treatment remain short. However the proportion of drug users in treatment has fallen year on year from 2014/15 driven largely by a steady increase in prevalence of crack-cocaine use. (See Chapter 5). This is a worrying trend meaning an increase in the numbers of residents in Thurrock with untreated crack-cocaine use. This is turn may reflect an increase in County Lines activity within the borough.

#### Summary of gaps identified

- A need for Thurrock Community Safety Partnership to improve links with the Planning and Regeneration Teams to ensure that live crime data shapes the work programme of regeneration activity. A single mechanism based around Contextual Safeguarding should be developed where data from all agencies is shared which shapes planning and regeneration activity.
- A need to limit the concentration of licenced premises in geographical areas with a high incidence of violent crime
- Further analysis and action to understand and address the falling proportion of crack-cocaine users in treatment. This should be included in the development of a new council Addictions Strategy.

## Current provision against strategic actions 6 to 8:

Figure 9.5 gives a summary of current provision against strategic actions six, seven and eight:

- Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours

- Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs
- Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs

Activity supported by the published evidence base is shown in green.

Figure 9.5

	6. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours	7. Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs	8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs
SELECTIVE	<p><b>Prevention and Support Service (PASS)</b> – early help services within social care work with based on a strength based approach (Signs of Safety/Signs of Wellbeing) that identifies risk factors whilst also highlighting family strengths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Youth @ Risk:</b> A six week school based programme that addresses violence risk behaviours including internet safety, drugs and alcohol, anti-social behaviour. Schools identify and select young people who would benefit most including those already engaging in anti-social behaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>Youth Work Service in Basildon Hospital A&amp;E</b> – Trained youth workers work with young people accessing A&amp;E in crisis including those accessing due to serious youth violence and the range of connected vulnerabilities.</p> <p><b>Goodman Project:</b> Five week mentoring programme for boys/young men identified as in or at risk of entering an abusive relationship</p> <p><b>POWER</b> – an early intervention programme targeted at 8–13 years olds struggling to engage at school, attending irregularly or truanting internally and will have had contact with or be known to the police (perhaps as victims).</p>	<p><b>Gang Awareness</b> - Delivered by Essex Fire and Rescue. This programme is universal in its offer to all year 9 pupils through their school and involves a one-hour session exploring gangs and consequences of gang involvement.</p> <p><b>So5+ Programme</b> - offers interactive sessions in schools that aim to prevent disadvantaged YP become involved in gang crime and serious youth violence.</p>	
TARGETED	<p><b>Emotional Health and Wellbeing Offer (EWMHS service)</b> – offers Tier 2 and 3 mental health services following screening and assessment with a range of therapeutic interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screening/testing and work on neuro-disability/development undertaken only on presentation of concerns</li> <li>CPM and speech and language therapist embedded within YOS</li> <li>Family therapy offered when families are experiencing mental health problems.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adult (18+) Mental Health offer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core IAPT / IAPT analgesic pilot</li> <li>Trauma focussed treatment</li> </ul> <p><b>Thurrock Youth Offending Service (YOS)</b> – a statutory service following court or pre-court proceedings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Deal or no deal drug intervention</b> (also fits within priority 7 preventing gang membership) a 6 weeks programme on consequences of drug dealing</li> <li><b>ASSET plus</b> - a tool within YOS which works to identify specific factors that drive young people to becoming susceptible to exploitation and gang involvement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gang Worker within Children's Social Care</b> – a professional employed within children's social care for a fixed term contract with a remit to include upskilling, supporting and enhancing knowledge around gang membership, grooming for this type of criminality with social workers and other children's professionals. Supports social workers with young people awaiting trial for gang related behaviour that don't meet YOS threshold.</p> <p><b>Youth Offending Service</b> – a statutory service following court or pre-court proceedings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Street Wise:</b> A 6 week intervention for young people accessing YOS due to serious youth violence, weapons offences and gang membership. The programme aims to increase knowledge of dangerous weapons and the intentions behind possession, identify the social, economic and health implications of possessing weapons for young people accessing YOS.</li> <li><b>Community Resolution Plus</b> – an informal solution to lower level criminality that prevents a criminal record. Voluntary referred from police to YOS</li> </ul> <p><b>Gang Injunctions</b> – nine gang injunctions are in place in Thurrock currently, one of which involves a child and links to the C7 and C17 gangs. The model used in the implementation of injunctions is the prevent, disrupt and enforce model.</p>	<p><b>SURGE activity:</b> Coordinated police activity targeting knife crime hotspots across the county identified through intelligence led policing and analytics. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the number of uniformed officers in each area to undertake stop checks</li> <li>Stop and Search knife arches placed in visible locations including ones, areas outside colleges and town centres.</li> <li>Use of CCTV and plain clothes officers to identify and search individuals acting suspiciously.</li> <li>'Knife sweeps' in high knife crime areas</li> <li>Community led policing approaches to increase public knowledge and gather additional intelligence</li> </ul>
SPECIALIST			<p><b>Gang Injunctions</b></p> <p><b>Crack House Closures</b> – Closure orders on premises where police have a reasonable belief that the premises is being used for the unlawful consumption, production or supply of Class A drugs and is associated with disorder or serious nuisance</p> <p><b>Operation RAPTOR:</b> intelligence led policing activity that obtains and executes warrants to search addresses linked to drug dealing/taking, and investigate/detect/prosecute offenders involved in violence against the person, child criminal exploitation, modern day slavery and sexual offences.</p>

### 6. Intervene early to reduce harms of exposure to violence and violence risk behaviours

The evidence base references action in the targeted category including A&E based assessment and onward referral of young people linked to youth violence/gang activity, and the Level 5 Triple P parenting programme for parents at high risk of abusive behaviour towards their children.

In the specialist category, the evidence base highlights clinical programmes that help young people who have experienced violence deal with trauma, screening and support for neurodisability/development problems and specialist support for youths who are violent offenders including multi-systemic therapy and family functional therapy.

#### Selective Provision / Targeted Provision

*Holiday Activity Programme* is selective and targeted for different participants with the intention of preventing escalation and diverting young people from criminality. This referral based project service forms part of the Thurrock youth offer. Referrals come from the Youth Offending Team (YOT), Prevention and Support Service (PASS), Social Care, and Schools. It offers diversionary activities to those deemed vulnerable or at risk in terms of engaging in violent

behaviours or have been exposed to violence, antisocial behaviours or behavioural difficulties highlighted at school. There are varying referral reasons, not all attendees are there for the same reasons or behaviours. The sessions are delivered in a group every school holiday and give participants the opportunity to engage with a team of professional youth workers who are able to constructively challenge behaviours, emotions and reactions.

*Prevention and Support Service (PASS)*. Thurrock's PASS is a tier two service which supports CYP and families with additional needs that do not meet the criteria for a statutory service. Staff groups include Social Work, Youth Offending, Mental Health, Youth Service, and a wide range of Children Centre staff.

The PASS service initiates work with young people by completing a comprehensive assessment, based on a strength based approach (Signs of Safety/Signs of Wellbeing), this allows for a holistic assessment which will identify any risk factors whilst also highlighting the strengths within a family/child. In relation to children exposed to serious youth violence and vulnerability, a child exploitation risk assessment is completed to ensure appropriate interventions are actioned.

PASS work on an evidence based approach to preventing child criminal and sexual exploitation. The team work collaboratively with a focus on partner agency working with a *Team Around the Family Approach*. This promotes a contextual safeguarding/support to the children and family to ensure support is proportionate, appropriate and relevant, meeting the requirements and needs of the family/child.

*Youth @ Risk* is a programme run by the PASS Team and youth workers within schools and funded through the community safety partnership. Schools select young people to attend, most often young people showing signs of anti-social behaviour or already engaging in these behaviours. The programme is delivered over a six week period and works to address risky behaviours. The programme also works to support children at risk of CSE and addresses topics such as internet safety and substance misuse. The aim is to prevent young people from engaging in these risky behaviours and leading to involvement in youth violence and criminality.

*Youth Work Service in Basildon Hospital A&E*. Trained youth workers work with young people accessing A&E in crisis including those accessing due to serious youth violence and the range of connected vulnerabilities. The service is based on the premise that when a young person accesses A&E they are usually in crisis and this provides a unique 'teachable moment' when they are most likely to be receptive to help. The service has been funded as a pilot by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner as part of the countywide pilot and is provided by Essex County Council. Youth workers develop a shared action plan with the young people involved. Work can continue over a period of weeks or months and includes onward referral to statutory services and community organisations.

*The Goodman Project* is a five week male mentoring programme for boys and young men (aged 13 – 18 years) who are at risk of entering into abusive relationships in the future and/or are at current risk within an abusive relationship. It can be delivered on either a group work or 1:1 basis, depending on need. The areas covered include:

- Making relationships work
- Relationships in a digital world
- Confidence
- Manners and respect
- Consequences
- Healthy relationships

The project looks to educate young people about the value of respect and the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Equipping them with the necessary skills to develop and maintain healthy relationships, recognise how to break up in an appropriate way when necessary and maintaining appropriate open lines of communication.

*POWER* is an early intervention project working across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. POWER practitioners offer direct support to children and young people aged 8-13 struggling to engage at school, attending irregularly or

truanting internally and will have had contact with or be known to the police (perhaps as victims). They also work to support children, young people and their parents towards developing ways of coping with challenging situations at home, at school and in their local communities. POWER also seeks to support schools to develop effective methods to enable children and young people to be successful in school.

A referral is needed and can be from the following,

- Police (through a multi-agency panel) panel
- Education services
- Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) Primary
- Secondary and special schools
- Others by consultation

Once a referral is assessed and accepted, an allocated case worker will develop and agree a plan with parent and young person and a minimum of six (6) sessions are required administered.

#### Specialist Provision

##### *Emotional Health and Wellbeing Offer (EWMHS Service)*

The EWMHS service delivered by NELFT is an integrated Tier 2 and 3 mental health service that delivers mental health services for children and young people aged 5-18 years with a mental health need across Essex including Thurrock.

There are two referral pathways – Single Point of Access (triage of need happens here) and A & E Crisis Response - crisis assessment is completed. Referral can be from professionals (medical, educational, community etc), young people, parents/carers, schools. The EWMHS is a selective and specialist service for young people aged 5-18 years.

Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing practitioners are trained in different interventions across the work streams, children are assigned a practitioner depending on need. A team is based in Thurrock at the Grays hub. Where there is a requirement for group or individual sessions is to be delivered off site, these happen across locations including family/carers homes, school, coffee shop or where most convenient for the young person.

Intervention timelines vary, group interventions lasts between 6 – 8 weeks and individual interventions following the length identified within the care package provided.

Single point of access –. once a referral is made, a triage and assessment process occur.

- Routine Assessment – referral with concerns for emotional and mental wellbeing and need for interventions. Following triage, assessment is offered within 12 weeks of referral.
- Urgent Assessment – Referrals where an underlying risk of harm has been, arrangements are made for the referral to be attended to within 10 working days

- Emergency Response – referrals with an imminent threat to life is referred to the crisis team. Assessment happens within 4 hours

As children are waiting for assessment, other services can be offered e.g. Universal or community (voluntary sector, parenting support, early help, etc.) The single point of access also provide clinical advice to referrers as needed.

Following triage and identification of need, treatment is offered. There are four core workstreams/pathway to treatment;

- Behavioural Conduct
- Complex Cases
- Anxiety and Mood
- Neurodevelopmental (children with morbidity)

Once a case is assigned to a workstream, the following is expected:

- Care plan development and identified interventions – these commence within 18 weeks of referral. This is also a national target. If cases get worse there is an avenue to fast track where the need presents.
- Interventions administered (a range of this exists)– This may be brief or long term depending on need
- Outcomes are tracked based on the intervention administered as well as individual achievements
- Link to other services where appropriate.

A EWHMS Community Psychiatric Nurse and speech and language therapist is embedded within the Youth Offending Service (YOS) to work with young offenders with mental health issues and/or neuro-development problems.

EWHMS also offers family therapy where families are experiencing mental health problems, although the evidence based multi-systemic therapy and family functional family is not currently provided.

#### *Adult (18+) mental health offer relating to youth violence*

IAPT provides a core offer of provision of therapies to patients with a common mental health problem. This is mandated by NHS England and has a number of targets around waiting times, access and recovery rates. An innovative pilot aiming to provide specialist IAPT treatment to those addicted to legal opioid medications is currently underway. A pharmacist has been recruited to review and treat patients referred through the pathway; IAPT therapists are providing psychological support where needed.

Trauma-focussed treatment is commissioned by NHS Thurrock CCG for victims/survivors aged 18+ who have experienced violence and subsequent trauma at any time in their lives.

*Thurrock Youth Offending Service (YOS)* is a multi-agency partnership that sits within the Children and Family Services department of Thurrock Council. The partnership comprises of statutory partners; the Local Authority, Essex Police, the

National Probation Service, the local CRC providers and Health, each of whom (apart from the CRC) have a duty placed upon them by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to secure youth justice services appropriate for their area. The partnership maintains strong links with education at a strategic level through senior level engagement. Most services and interventions are delivered by the youth workers and officers with the YOS 'in house', substance misuse and mental health support is provided by specialist services.

To be eligible for the YOS a young person has been arrested and sentenced by the courts, programmes are also available via an 'out of court disposal' route. This is an arrangement between YOS and police where minor offences are committed and liaison happens to determine consequences – this enables young people become diverted from the court system. An example of where this route may be used in the instance of preventing gang membership could be where the circumstances of the arrest are in relation to young people arrested at a 'trap house' for drug dealing where it becomes evident they are being exploited by gangs. This most often occurs in a 'County Lines' scenario where young people are exploited by gangs to transport or deal drugs between counties out of bigger towns and cities to more rural locations.

Most of the interventions are delivered in house at the YOS based in Corringham. Where a need for drug and alcohol or other specialist services are identified, appropriate referrals are made. The length of the programme is determined by the nature of the court order and length of sentence and can range from 1 month to approximately 3 years.

The overarching outcome within the YOS is to prevent re-offending, the service have core KPIs to measure success;

- Reduce first time entrance to youth justice system
- Prevent reoffending
- Reduce use of custody

The YOS uses a management tool recommended by the Youth Justice Board called Asset Plus intervention. Asset Plus has been designed to provide a holistic end-to-end assessment and intervention plan, allowing one record to follow a young person throughout their time in youth justice system. The tools within the assessment framework look to identify specific factors that drive young people to becoming susceptible to exploitation and gang involvement. In this way the tool acts a targeted prevention intervention in itself. The tool is not exclusively to prevent gang membership and criminality but this is a component. It can be used for all youth offenders to manage their time with the YOS. Subsequently a multi-agency approach is used to address these factors. The YOS works towards a trauma informed model with all YOS staff being trauma trained.

- Thurrock Asset Plus contains a range of elements:
- Offending behaviour
- Drug and alcohol use
- Sexual health
- Career guidance, education and employment



- Gang and knife crime
- Family restoration

*Deal or no deal drug intervention* is a six week programme delivered by YOS that explores the young offender's attitudes towards drug dealing, the consequences of dealing and how the skills required to deal drugs could be effectively and positively channelled to better use. The young people accessing this intervention have usually been arrested for 'possession with intent to supply' and are often victims of being groomed for criminality by gangs. The sessions are delivered on a one-to-one basis; group work is identified to be very challenging for young people at risk of or being groomed for gang membership as tensions exist between groups and so this is generally avoided to safeguard young people and the facilitators. The intervention aims to prevent young people from becoming further involved with drug dealing, gang membership and criminality.

#### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

Thurrock has a wide range of selective/targeted provision aimed at addressing violent behaviour in young people and reducing the likelihood of future violence. The Prevention and Support Service (PASS) and youth work service in A&E are in line with published evidence base although the latter is currently only funded as a pilot from the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and requires mainstream funding to become sustainable.

A range of additional innovative programmes including Holiday Activity Programmes, the Goodman Project and Power undertake targeted work with high risk young people. These programmes need to be evaluated to assess impact and success.

Thurrock YOS is evidence based, high quality and achieves good outcomes in general for young people who have committed crime with the majority of young people who access the service prevented from re-offending. However Chapter 2 identified a small cohort of young people who access YOS multiple times for violence against the person offences and robbery. This cohort often also commit drugs offences and current YOS interventions appear unsuccessful at delivering crime desistance for this group. Further work is required to understand the reasons behind this and develop new approaches.

The current mental health offer provided to Thurrock via the EWMHS service is commissioned separately and is not well integrated with other programmes. In the development of this report, many front line professionals highlighted that thresholds to access EWMHS services are set too high and waiting times are too long. Current EWMHS mental health provision when provided focuses largely on the individual and does not offer the more holistic specialist support recommended in the evidence base such as multi-systemic therapy or family functional therapy that seeks to address wider problems in the family and environment of the young person. Trauma focused CBT also recommended in the evidence base for victims of serious youth violence is also offered.

As such, current provision in this area is too individually focused and fragmented. A new single integrated model for treatment of young people involved violence is required that treats children in young people in the wider context of issues within their family and environment.

Many professionals consulted in the course of developing this report believe the current offer in this area is too far down stream with thresholds set too high and largely only a 'statutory' response available once young people have committed serious offences. A new strengths based integrated offer to work with young people at risk of serious violence before they offend is required.

#### Summary of gaps identified

- Mainstream funding to allow the Youth Work Service in A&E to continue
- Trauma based CBT to support young people who have experienced serious violence
- A single integrated and more holistic model for treating youth violence that:
  - Brings together the current range of distinct interventions
  - Has a threshold of access below that required by YOS, i.e. before young people have committed serious violent offences.
  - Integrates EWMHS
  - Provides a more holistic and less individually focussed approach adopting evidence based interventions such as Multi-Systemic Therapy and Family Focussed Therapy
- Further analyses and work to develop interventions to address offending behaviour in cohort of young people who repeatedly commit violence against the person/drugs offences

## 7. Prevent gang membership and crime caused by gangs

The published evidence base on this strategic action is relatively weak, with few robust studies showing positive evaluation of interventions that reduce risk of gang membership. *Opportunities Provision* where education, job training and other programmes designed to increase economic opportunity as seen as the most promising approaches. The *Pulling Levers* approach discussed in Chapter 7 where a whole system multi-agency approach is used to disrupt gangs has the best evidence base on curtailing harm caused by gang activity, with gang injunctions being one evidence based example of this approach.

### Selective Provision

*Gang Awareness* - Delivered by Essex Fire and Rescue. This programme is universal in its offer to all year 9 pupils through their school and involves a one-hour session exploring gangs and consequences of gang involvement. It has also been offered to South Essex College for older pupils.

*SoS+ Programme* is an intervention that has been delivered by the St. Giles' Trust as a pilot using funding from the Violence and Vulnerability Programme established by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and partners across Essex. The programme funds projects to reduce the risk of young and vulnerable people being groomed into a life of crime and help those affected by gangs to take the steps to leave. Funding is not yet secured for this to continue.

This programme includes one-to-one mentoring sessions alongside group sessions looking at the psychological impact of prison; it has been delivered to 20 young people at the Olive Academy, Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Interactive sessions are offered in the school with practical tools for the young people attending to benefit from. The programme also includes an element of intervention with parents and significant adults for the young person to equip them with skills to initiate difficult conversations. It is a selective prevention programme delivered to those within the PRU only at this stage although it is intended to be a targeted programme if it were to continue with individuals identified as being at risk through social care involvement, disclosure from the young person and intelligence gathered from the professional involved in their care and education, they may be children with a Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need Plan.

### Targeted Provision

*Gang Worker within Children's Social Care* is a professional employed within Children's Social Care for a fixed term 12 month contract with a remit to include upskilling, supporting and enhancing knowledge around gang membership, grooming for this type of criminality with social workers and other children's professionals. This role is not a front line professional with children and young people but supports those who do have this role. Children who may have been arrested can wait up to a year for the case to reach court dependent upon the complexity. In nearly all cases these children would be subject to statutory intervention from children's social care and would not be eligible for youth offending services until a court orders this. The Gang Lead can support social care with interventions and approaches to support young people with the aim of preventing further criminality and gang involvement.

*Youth Offending Service* (see also previous section)

*Streetwise Knife Crime Awareness interventions* is a 6 week in-house programme that case workers within YOS complete directly with young people on a 1-2-1 basis. It is works with young people who have been involved with weapons in any way and this includes through gang membership and for young people identified as being

groomed by gangs for criminal exploitation. They will be young people in the criminal justice system with the aim to prevent further gang activity and criminality, to disrupt gang activity and divert the young person away from the gang. The sessions aim to create awareness of dangerous weapons and the intentions behind possession, identify the social, economic and health implications of possessing weapons, develop skills in conflict resolution, self-control and positive decision making and identify strategies and ways to highlight and reduce weapon crime. Each weekly session has specified aims and outcomes expected to be met or delivered on.

### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

The published evidence base is weak in this area. The SoS+ programme is funded as a pilot and only operates within the Olive Academy. The Knife Crime Awareness programme operates through YOS and as such is only available to those young people who have been arrested for weapons offences. Current provision is therefore largely re-active when targeted at young people who are members of gangs.

#### Summary of gaps identified

- Wider provision of programmes aimed at dissuading young people from gang membership
- A more proactive *Opportunities Provision* approach to assist young people exit gangs

## 8. Enforce the law to disrupt and deter violent offenders and crime connected with gangs

### Targeted Provision

*Increased Police Activity in SURGE areas:* Essex Police have a programme of targeted stop and search, and enforcement in identified 'hotspot' locations led by a dedicated Chief Inspector. A dedicated team of intelligence officers and analysts identify geographical areas of high knife crime and individuals of interest who are known knife carriers/offenders. Funding has been made available to increase the number of officers to undertake targeted enforcement work including stop and search checks. Knife arches have been located at visible locations in including train stations, areas outside colleges and in town centres where there is an existing high prevalence of knife crime. CCTV is also used in SURGE operations and alongside plain clothed officers, is used to identify people who appear to avoid the highly visible police presence or knife arch. These individuals are spoken to, and if suspicion is raised, may be subject to a search.

The SURGE teams also undertake 'knife sweeps' to locate 'stash weapons and drugs' placed regularly in certain locations, often frequently used public spaces such as in bushes in parks and near to leisure centres. Officers also engage with members of the public, discussing the issue of knives and serious violent crime and visit locations where children and young people congregate including fast food

restaurants and cinemas in order to educate them about knife crime, child criminal exploitation and serious violence, gaining further intelligence in through these discussions.

#### Specialist Provision

*Operation RAPTOR*: Dedicated police officers in 'Operation Raptor' teams use a number of methods to combat serious violence. Led by intelligence they will patrol areas in plain clothes which have a high incidence of violence, drug dealing and where intelligence tells them high harm is likely or anticipated. During the patrols they will use Stop and Search powers against known drug suppliers and those suspected to be engaging in drug supply. They will also stop and speak to children and young people whom they believe may be being coerced or exploited by Gangs and County Lines.

Raptor teams organise intelligence led operations in which they obtain and execute warrants to search premises in hotspot areas, or where intelligence suggests drug dealing is taking place. Searches of these premises and any persons on the premises believed to be involved in the supply of drugs (or possibly possession) are undertaken. The team also investigate the offences of *Possession with intent to Supply, Human Trafficking and Modern day Slavery, and Child Criminal Exploitation*. They might also encounter *Violence against the Person* offences and sometimes sexual offences have been perpetrated against some of the people involved.

Some of this work will involve repatriating High Risk Missing Persons (generally children and young people) to their host local authority and ensuring safeguarding arrangements are in place. The team also attempts to safeguard individuals whose properties have been 'cuckoo'ed', working with them over the medium term to attempt to ensure this does not occur again and offering support.

*'Crack House Closures'*: Essex Police look to impose closure orders on any premises where there is a reasonable belief that the premises is involved in the production or supply of Class A drugs ('Crack House Closures') and is associated with disorder or serious nuisance. The closure order can be extended to a maximum of six months.

#### Analysis of Current Provision and Gaps, and Recommendations

Thurrock is making use of targeted stop and search activity based on intelligence led policing activity. Gang Injunctions are in place and have been shown to be successful. Current enforcement activity is in-line with the published evidence base.

# Chapter 10 Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Action

## Introduction

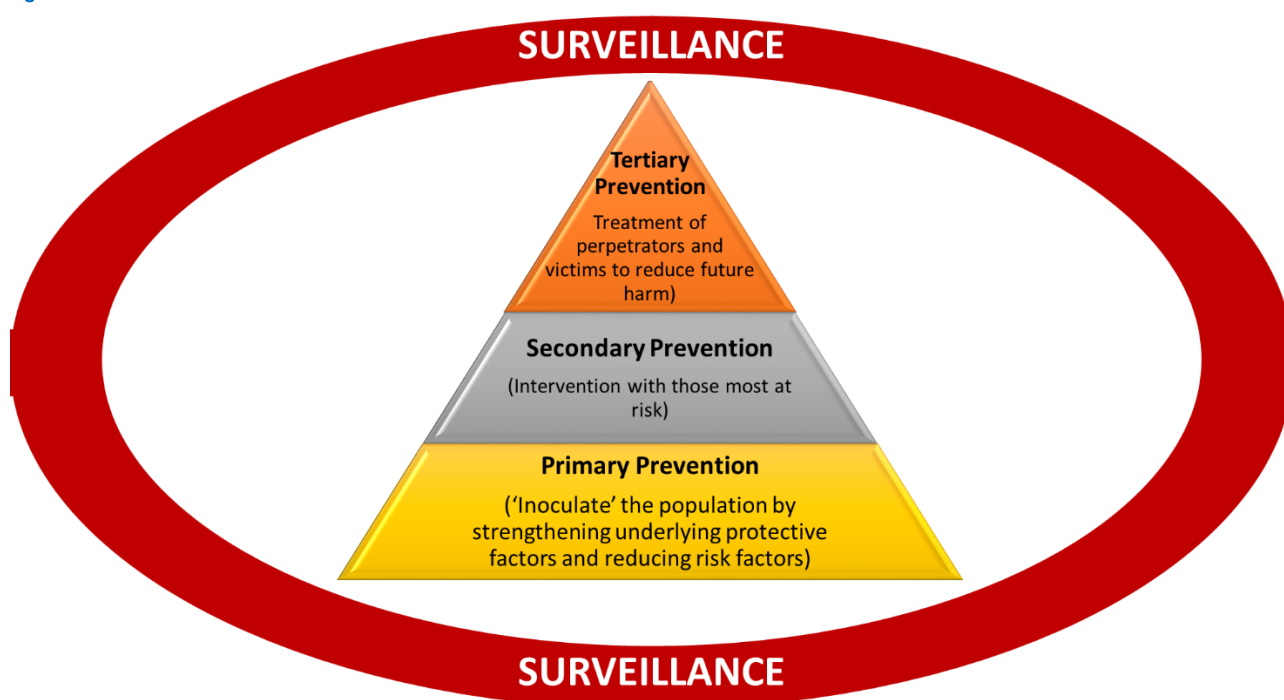
In this chapter we bring together all of the analyses of the previous nine chapters and propose recommendations to address the issue of serious youth violence and vulnerability in Thurrock.

In Chapter 1 we introduced the concept of the *Public Health Approach* to serious youth violence and vulnerability and the idea that it can be conceptualised as a communicable disease that if not addressed 'infects' and spreads outwards within defined communities, but which also can be diagnosed through screening, studied using epidemiological surveillance techniques, treated through early intervention and recovery and against which communities can be 'immunised' by reducing their risk factors and strengthening protective factors.

We return to this conceptualisation in this final chapter. Recommendations using a *public health approach* to address the issue of serious youth violence and vulnerability can be segmented into four categories shown in figure 10.1:

1. Surveillance: Action to understand and monitor the problem at a population level including the effectiveness of a whole system approach.
2. Primary Prevention: Action to 'inoculate' the wider communication against the risk of becoming either a victim or perpetrator of serious violence.
3. Secondary Prevention: Intervention with those with existing risk factors to mitigate risk
4. Tertiary Prevention: 'Treatment' of perpetrators and victims of violence to reduce further harm.

Figure 10.1



## 1. Surveillance

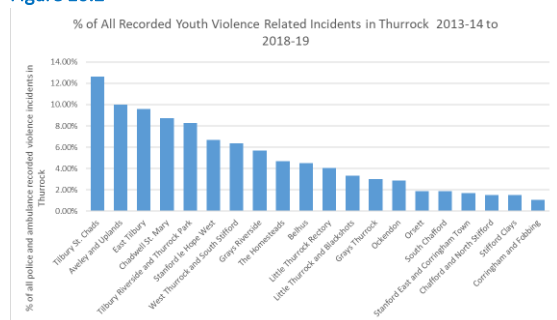
When police, ambulance and youth offending service datasets are analysed, serious youth violence and gang membership have risen significantly in Thurrock since 2013 although the limitations of each dataset on estimating the true extent of youth violence and gang membership mean that the estimated numbers vary.

Violence, injury caused by violence and gang membership is not distributed evenly across either the borough or more widely across the county and remains concentrated within specific wards. Thurrock has the second highest rate of recorded violence with injury offences in Essex with the majority of suspected perpetrators also living in the borough.

Indices of ward deprivation are a very poor predictor of violence both at Thurrock and Essex level and it is too simplistic to say that poverty is the underlying cause of violence. Whilst the majority of offenders are likely to come from deprived backgrounds, the vast majority of deprived populations never commit violent offences.

Conversely, the historical prevalence of violence at ward level is a very strong predictor of the likelihood of future violence. Violence begets violence and geographical patterns of violence and gang membership can be shown to repeat and spread outwards between years as increasing numbers of young people within a locality become 'infected'. Combining police data on reported violent crime against young people where the perpetrator was also under 25 with ambulance call outs for violent incidents where the victim was aged 10-24 for the last five years, we can see a wide variation in youth related violence between wards in the borough. This analyses should be used to prioritise targeted prevention activity (see section 3).

Figure 10.2



Datasets relating to youth violence and vulnerability are dispersed between a number of different agencies including Essex Police, Essex Ambulance Service, NHS Providers and Thurrock Council. A children's linked data set operating through the Xantura system integrates a range of different individual council service data but is currently used largely as an operational tool to provide a 'single view' of data to front line children's social care professionals. It does not however include police or ambulance datasets and only has limited health data within it. We have demonstrated through work undertaken in producing this report that the power this system has the ability to also be harnessed to provide predictive risk modelling capabilities that could allow us to identify the most at risk children and families and intervene earlier with tailored prevention packages.

As such it remains an untapped asset that could be use to join up a wider range of relevant crime and health datasets with those held by the council, to offer more proactive and holistic response, particularly to young people at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violent crime and/or of gang involvement.

### Recommendations: Surveillance

Rec #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
1.1	Inadequate commissioning of strategic surveillance capability	Thurrock Council Transformation Corporate Programme should work with all key stakeholders to commission Xantura to deliver a single programme of strategic analyses that answers key corporate questions/responds to corporate strategic needs, rather than the current 'piecemeal' approach of commissioning of different pieces of individual analyses by different council services.
1.2	Inadequate linking of datasets and intelligence between crime, health and local authority	Thurrock Council Public Health and Transformation Corporate Programme Team should work with Xantura, Essex Police, Essex Ambulance Service and MSE Hospital to facilitate a regular flow of Police, Ambulance and A&E data into the Xantura system
1.3	Need to develop analyses in this report into a predictive risk model	Thurrock Council's Public Health Team should work with Xantura to develop the analyses on initial risk factors contained within this report into a predictive risk model for youth violence and (if possible) gang involvement
1.4	Need to use predictive analytics to deliver more proactive, tailored multi-agency preventative response	Following development of a predictive risk model, Xantura should work with other relevant council services to provide relevant risk profiling information to allow tailored preventative packages and more effective multi-agency response to young people at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violent crime and/or of gang membership
1.5	Need for effective multi-agency strategic oversight of trends in youth violence and vulnerability and effectiveness of response	Thurrock Council's Violence and Vulnerability Board should receive and review quarterly monitoring information from Xantura on trends in youth violence and gang involvement and impact of future prevention activity in order to receive assurance on effectiveness of prevention, and to inform future strategic action on prevention of serious youth violence and gang related activity. Public Health should work with other key stakeholders to design and agree a <i>surveillance monitoring dashboard</i> .
1.6	Current prevention activity inadequately targeted at geographies of greatest need	Analyses contained within this report on variation of youth violence at ward level should be used to target and prioritise prevention activity (where appropriate) at ward and school level (see next sections) including any immediate investment

## 2. Primary Prevention ('inoculate the population against violence')

Analyses in this report demonstrates a comprehensive, integrated and high performing *Early Years* and *Family/Parenting Support* offer through our Brighter Futures Programme that is both evidence based and delivering some of the best outcomes for children and families in the country. This is perhaps one of the most important programmes of preventative activity that the local authority and health partners can undertake to deliver long-term protection against violence and vulnerability and it should be celebrated and continued to be resourced. Over time, as the cohort of children and families accessing this offer age, protective factors will be strengthened and risk factors reduced in a large cohort of Thurrock young people.

Although the over-all programme outcomes are positive, there is a complex range of parenting programmes available and in general there is scope to strengthen and integrate commissioning arrangements of *Brighter Futures* and evaluation of individual elements. The AD Public Health is leading a process with all stakeholders to develop a single Children's Services Strategy to drive the next phase of transformation. A stakeholder workshop has already been undertaken and a shared vision developed. This work needs to explicit reference and reflect the findings and recommendations within this report. We also identified evidence that a strategic commissioning approach to Brighter Futures parenting programmes is not replicated across all tiers of need resulting in lower tier provision being used to meet higher need along with a lack of provision to meet specialist needs. The planned recommissioning of parenting provision should be expanded to provide a strategic multi agency review of the parenting support required and the resource available across all tiers. This should be used to ensure that an evidenced based offer is available across the spectrum of need. This will bring

together the existing range of provision and support targeted planning, building on existing good practice

There is a strong evidence base that skills based training that addresses cognitive and behavioural risks including aggression, conduct disorder and lack of empathy prevents future youth violence. Our analyses also highlighted these risks as one of the five key risk factors within Thurrock young people driving violent behaviour. Whilst the skills based offer provided by INSPIRE is of high quality, once again its reach is limited to a small number of Thurrock young people and its traded school offer is generally limited to careers advice rather than wider skills based training.

There is a need to develop a more comprehensive classroom based skills offer on improving behaviour, reducing aggression and strengthening emotional intelligence in our young people. A new more holistic Ofsted framework should support this and there is probably best practice within some schools within the borough that could be shared more widely. The new Schools Based Wellbeing Service are ideally placed to build this capacity within the Thurrock school curriculum and should ensure that what is developed is based on programmes that have already been shown to be the most effective.

For teenagers in Thurrock, the INSPIRE service offer is undoubtedly of high quality but has insufficient reach and scope. Whilst there is a growing evidence base on the positive impact that both generic and targeted youth service out of school provision can have on diverting young people away from violence, provision is currently limited to Tilbury, Ockendon and Purfleet and is inadequate in terms of its reach. After school meaningful youth activity directly positively impacts one of the four causal risk factors suggested in this report that explain *the crime paradox; being exposed to a criminogenic environment through unstructured time spent unsupervised in neighbourhoods with poor community cohesion*. However some wards with higher prevalence of youth violence such as Aveley and Uplands, Stanford-le-hope West, West Thurrock and South Stifford, and Grays Riverside have limited or no youth clubs or detached youth work

### Recommendations: Primary Prevention

REC #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
2.1	Continued success of Early Years offer, with selective provision better targeted and tailored to populations with greater need	Thurrock Council should continue to commission the current model of Early Years and Family/Parenting Support through Brighter Futures. The new Brighter Futures strategy being developed by Public Health should explicitly reference youth violence and vulnerability prevention and the role that the suite of services play in universal and selective prevention.
2.2		The Xantura predictive model (when developed) should be used to better target tailored prevention packages (particularly selective prevention) available through Brighter Futures at children and families most at risk

## Recommendations: Primary Prevention (continued)

REC #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
2.3	Continued success of Early Years offer, with selective provision better targeted and tailored to populations with greater need	Brighter Futures commissioners should strengthen commissioning arrangements into a single integrated function that includes a review of parenting programmes and robust evaluation of the impact of individual interventions
2.4	Inadequate comprehensive schools based skills offer despite strong evidence base.	The School Based Wellbeing Service in conjunction with the <i>Brighter Futures Healthy Schools Service</i> and Thurrock schools/academy groups should seek to develop a comprehensive curriculum skills based offer focusing on improving communication, improving classroom behaviour, problem solving, strengthening emotional intelligence, reducing aggression and strengthening impulse control in conjunction with Thurrock schools based on evidence based programmes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management</i></li> <li>- <i>PATHS Elementary Curriculum</i></li> <li>- <i>Positive Action Emotional Learning Programme</i></li> <li>- <i>The Good Behaviour Game</i></li> </ul>
2.5		Thurrock Council Education Division in conjunction with Thurrock Schools/Academy Groups should seek to share best practice on skills based learning between all schools through existing mechanisms such as the Head Teachers' Forums.
2.6	Inadequate reach of generic youth services to provide meaningful after-school activity for young people, despite emerging evidence base and link to locally determined risk factor	Thurrock Council should prioritise future new investment in expanding the reach of the generic youth service offer, prioritising areas where there is currently no or inadequate levels of provision and higher prevalence of youth violence for example: Aveley and Uplands, Grays, Chafford
2.7	INSPIRE skills based offer, although of high quality, is too funded at a supply level to meet need/demand and could be broadened from careers focus	Thurrock Council and Thurrock Schools/Academy Trusts should prioritise future new investment in expanding the reach and breadth of INSPIRE generic skills based offer to allow a greater number of young people to benefit. INSPIRE should consider broadening the scope of the traded offer to schools from careers advice to include skills development on improving communication, problem solving, strengthening emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and impulse control.
2.8	Efficacy of INSPIRE skills based offer is compromised through young people being unable to access timely 1:1 talking therapy to address mental health problems	NHS Thurrock CCG/MSE CCGs Joint Committee in partnership with Thurrock Children's Services Commissioners and Public Health should seek to re-design and recommission the EWMHS care pathways to better integrate 1:1 talking therapies into other community assets providing Primary Prevention activity, for example INSPIRE

## Secondary Prevention (Intervene earlier with those most at risk)

It is perhaps in the area of earlier intervention with those who have significant numbers of vulnerabilities that in- turn lead to serious youth violence and/or gang membership where there is most scope for an improved local strategic response.

In short, and in line with many other areas of the UK as highlighted in earlier chapters of this report, in Thurrock

current thresholds for intervention with those at serious risk of becoming perpetrators (and perhaps to a lesser extent) victims of violent crime are set too high. Our focus is too heavily skewed downstream to tertiary prevention with inadequate secondary prevention activity. There is insufficient secondary prevention activity and we wait until young people get arrested for a violent offence before intervening. This is a huge missed opportunity.

In line with many other areas of the country, when we do intervene, there is too great a disconnect between different agencies; a weighting towards criminal justice and a

complex array of discrete interventions but a lack of a single holistic assessment and tailored, coordinated multi-agency response. Furthermore provision currently consists of a series of interventions which, whilst may be of merit, are insufficiently coordinated, have multiple referral pathways for access, may be delivered in parallel and are often focused on individual cognitive or behavioural factors. Neighbourhood disorganisation, and particularly living in a neighbourhood with access to drugs/drug dealing was highlighted in both the published evidence base and in analyses undertaken through the Xantura dataset as a key driver of youth violence in Thurrock. Conversely, our current response perhaps focuses too much on individual risk factor and behaviour without adequately considering the context in which the young person lives.

In line with findings by Ofsted, there is a need to strengthen the operational coordination of information and alignment of systems to monitor the needs and impact of work with vulnerable adolescents and children including alignment of wider support such as employment, training, education, homelessness advice, drug and alcohol addiction and mental health treatment services. Young people at high risk of or beginning their journey of violent offending are likely to have experienced a range of adverse childhood experiences and will likely have a number of vulnerabilities that need addressing in parallel.

That is not to say that nothing is being done in Thurrock or that what is currently being delivered lacks value. Children's Services have commissioned a consultant in contextual safeguarding to review existing provision and make recommendations and we have worked closely with her in producing this report. There are also some models of good practice such as basing a gangs lead within social care, that go some way to joining up provision, however more needs to be done particularly in 'joining the dots' to create a coordinated and holistic response.

There is a need to share intelligence from multiple agencies on young people that they have individual concerns about, regularly in multi-disciplinary panels to build up a comprehensive picture of need/risk. Where risk was assessed to meet statutory thresholds for intervention, a referral could be made to Children's Social Care. Where a young person was identified as having a series of significant risk factors that were under the threshold for statutory intervention but where a coordinated response from multiple agencies could assist in reducing risk, referral to a new integrated support team would be made.

A Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Panel currently exists in Thurrock and this could be expanded in scope and potentially number to be locality based and focussed on evidenced and data based information sharing that will support all agencies to understand in-depth risk and community based threats. In time, these multi-agency panels could in time be supported by Xantura predictive risk analyses modelling work referenced in recommendations 1.3 and 1.4.

Locality based shared intelligence on 'place based' environmental risks e.g. drug dealing, bullying, anti-social behaviour could also be used to direct rapid operational interventions from a range of stakeholders to reduce place based environmental risks, e.g. police enforcement activity, action within schools or estates management. In addition it could be used more strategically to inform commissioning of future services, community development/asset building work or the work of planning and regeneration and environment functions to improve the built environment.

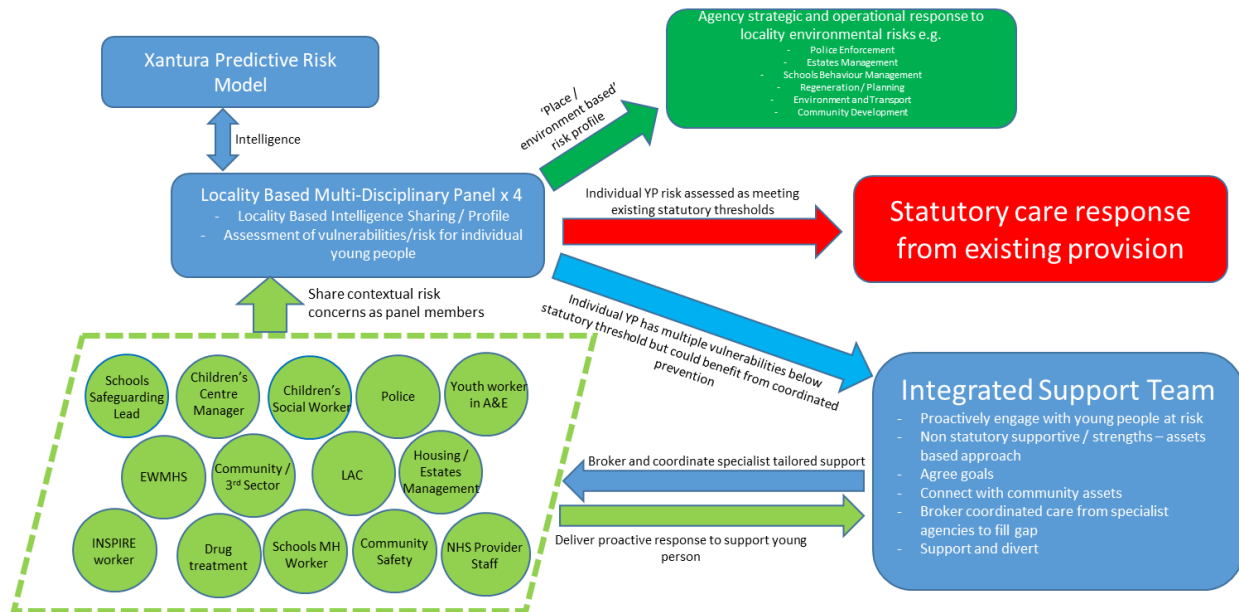
We recommend the creation of a new integrated support team to receive referrals of each multi-agency panel of young people with risk below the statutory threshold for intervention but where proactive multi-agency support would assist in reducing vulnerabilities and risk. They would act upon shared intelligence from each multiagency panel and seek to engage directly and proactively with vulnerable young people and their families to divert them away from exploitation and youth violence. This service should work on the 'strengths/asset' based approach successfully employed by Thurrock Adult Social Care through the *Better Care Together Thurrock* transformation programme; a Local Area Coordination/Community Led Solutions approach to vulnerable young people / families. The team would also be responsible for care coordination of a tailored package of support where required to enhance the strengths based approach and to connect young people with more meaningful community activity.

Key to this multi-agency model of working is the responsiveness to education issues, ensuring that there are appropriate activities to provide alternatives for young people who are not able to attend or are excluded from school. Mental health support could be available through either a funded dedicated specialist post within the team and/or through a more integrated care pathway with EWMHS.

Figure 10.3 shows a high level graphical representation of what an improved service offer may look like:



Figure 10.3



### Other Secondary Prevention Conclusions

In line with recommendations made in the report of the Contextual Safeguarding Consultant, there is a need to implement a programme of training for front line health and care staff in the emerging issue of contextual safeguarding, child criminal exploitation and county lines.

There is also a need to address variation in school exclusions across the borough. Whilst Thurrock has one of the lowest rates of secondary school fixed-term exclusions in England and a permanent exclusion rate in line with the national mean, the borough's primary schools have a fixed-term and permanent exclusion rates are in the second worst and worst quintiles of national performance respectively. Moreover, there is a four and six fold variation in primary school fixed and permanent exclusion rates and a 14 and seven fold variation in secondary fixed term and permanent exclusion rates at school level respectively. This will undoubtedly reflect in part differences in demographic intake and need between school populations, but may also suggest variation in exclusion practice and policy at school level. Exclusion from education was highlighted both in the national evidence base as a risk factor, and could be a driver for the suggested causal factor of time spent in unsupervised locations. It was also one of the five risk factors linked to youth violence and gang membership identified from the Xantura analyses.

Fixed and permanent exclusions are not the only mechanism by which children and young people detach from education; poor attendance and truancy could also be underlying programmes. The *Power programme offers direct support to children and young people struggling to engage at school, attending irregularly or truanting internally and will have had contact with or be known to the police (perhaps as victims). They also work to support children, young people and their parents towards developing ways of coping with*

challenging situations at home, at school and in their local communities. POWER also seeks to support schools to develop effective methods to enable children and young people to be successful in school. We have been unable to access robust evaluation of the impact of this programme, and if not completed, this would be worth undertaking. The proposed model above could be one mechanism to intervene more proactively with repeated school absence, and monitoring could take place within the Locality Based Multi-disciplinary panels with proactive engagement with parents and young people undertaken by the Integrated Support Team or existing resources within schools. During the development of this report, one head teacher suggested that any child with an attendance below 75% needed to be flagged and followed up as a risk.

Drug and alcohol treatment services, whilst high performing in terms of access and treatment success indicators have shown a decrease in 'population reach' corresponding to an increase in crack-cocaine use at population level. This is concerning as it suggests that fewer residents with class A drug addiction are coming forward for treatment. There is a clear association between drugs and violent crime/gang membership in both the evidence base and in local analyses from Xantura. Further analyses is needed to understand and address the issue.

There is an emerging evidence base on the positive impact of mentoring approaches with young people with existing risk factors for violence. Thurrock has a low level of provision in this area which is highly targeted suggesting that supply is inadequate for need. Future investment should be prioritised at expanding the reach of these services.

Finally social media has been linked to both youth violence and gang membership both in the national evidence base and through local intelligence but there is little strategic or coordinated action to address this risk.

## Recommendations: Secondary Prevention

REC #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
3.1	Intelligence on young people with multiple vulnerabilities that make them at high risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence not shared in a timely fashion between partner agencies in a single forum and risk assessed on the basis of concerns from all stakeholders	Create locality based multi-disciplinary panels that meet regularly where all intelligence can be shared across stakeholders from children's social care, health providers, Brighter Futures, drug and alcohol treatment, education, schools, community safety, housing, the police, local area coordinators and relevant third sector organisations
3.2		Public Health to ensure Xantura Predictive Risk Model (when developed) is used to support the work of the multi-disciplinary panels
3.3	Inadequate place (locality) based understanding of environmental and organisational risk e.g. school based bullying, drug dealing, anti-social behaviour and coordinated timely action to address	Locality based multi-disciplinary panels should collate environmental risks to create a locality based risk profile and relevant agencies should undertake rapid operational action to reduce and mitigate risks for example enforcement activity, community development, estates management. Action to swiftly address identified drug availability/dealing within neighbourhoods should be prioritised as this was identified in Xantura analyses as a local risk factor strongly associated with youth violence.
3.4	Inadequate link between place (locality) based identified environmental risk and strategic action to improve the built environment to reduce existing risk factors such as crime	Locality risk profiles should be used to inform the priorities of the planning and regeneration functions of the local authority and the work of the Violence and Vulnerability Board and ultimately the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and its subgroups,
3.5	Risk assessment of young people who may be above thresholds for statutory social care service is not informed by intelligence from a sufficient number of agencies	Multi-disciplinary panels to assess risk of individual young people using intelligence from all panel members and refer young people above the threshold for a statutory service to Children's Social Care
3.6	Inadequate and uncoordinated service provision for young people with multiple risk factors who do not meet threshold for statutory service	Thurrock Council should prioritise future investment to create a new Integrated Support team to receive referrals from multi-disciplinary panel from young people with multiple risk factors but below threshold for statutory service.
		New Integrated Support Team should be based on the strengths/assets approach successfully used by Adult Social Care and will be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively engaging with young people at risk and (where appropriate) their family/peers</li> <li>Agree goals with young people</li> <li>Connect young people with community assets that help them achieve their goals</li> <li>Support and divert young people away from crime and gang membership</li> <li>Broker coordinated care from specialist agencies where necessary to address unmet needs</li> </ul>
3.7	An inadequate provision of mentoring for young people with existing vulnerabilities and risk factors for violence is very highly targeted and not meeting need, despite emerging evidence base of effectiveness in violence prevention	Thurrock Council should prioritise new investment in developing and expanding reach of current mentoring provision so that an increased number of young people at risk of violence can benefit. Effectiveness of current and future mentoring should be evaluated robustly using Xantura

## Recommendations: Secondary Prevention (continued)

REC #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
3.8	High variation in fixed-term and permanent exclusion rates between primary and secondary schools, and high overall rate of primary fixed-term and permanent exclusions are likely to be increasing risk of youth violence and gang involvement. Very high rates of fixed term exclusions in the PRU are of particular concern. This was identified as a key risk factor in the Xantura analyses.	The AD Education and Skills with support from Public Health should undertake further analyses to understand variation, particularly very high rates at the PRU and develop a strategy to address these.
3.9	High rates of fixed term exclusions in the PRU are of particular concern. This was identified as a key risk factor in the Xantura analyses.	Education and Skills Division in association with Head Teachers and Academy Trusts should facilitate sharing of best practice on reducing exclusions between schools.
3.10	Lack of systematic mechanism to provide assurance that children and young people who are absent from education are monitored and followed up.	Education and Skills Division in association with Public Health should undertake a robust evaluation of the <i>Power Programme</i> to ascertain impact and effectiveness (if not already completed)  Children and young people with school attendance below 75% should be flagged at the Locality Based Multi-Disciplinary panel with proactive follow up initiated where appropriate
3.10	Adult drug treatment services are treating a decreasing proportion of crack-cocaine users at a time when prevalence is increasing meaning more residents are living with untreated crack-cocaine addiction	The Director of Public Health should undertake further analyses of the issue and develop strategic action plans to improve the situation through the new Thurrock Addictions Strategy in 2020/21
3.11	The national evidence base and local intelligence suggests a link between harmful social media content and use and the glamorisation of youth violence and gang membership. There is a lack of coordinated strategic action to address this.	The Violence and Vulnerability Board should commission further work to develop a Thurrock multi-agency strategic response to addressing harms caused by social media

### 3. Tertiary Prevention: 'Treatment' of perpetrators and victims of violence to reduce further harm

Tertiary prevention seeks to deliver interventions that 'treat' victims and perpetrators of serious youth violence with a view to minimising harm caused by the violence and preventing future violence and the harm caused by it. Thurrock has a range of provision in this terms of this strategic action including the Prevention and support Service (PASS) that run a *Youth @ Risk* programme, *Goodman* mentoring programme for boys/young men who are abusive in relationships.

The Youth Offending Service is of high quality with low rates of reoffending amongst the overall cohort that it works with. The service offer a range of tertiary prevention programmes including a *Deal or no Deal drug intervention* for young people involved in drug related crime, *Street Wise* six week intervention for young people arrested for serious youth violence including weapons offences and gang involvement, and uses an ASSET plus tool which seeks to identify specific factors that drive young people into becoming susceptible to exploitation and gang involvement. A children's social care worker is embedded within YOS.

We have been unable to identify robust evaluation on the impact of each of the specific interventions delivered by PASS and YOS and further work to evaluate this is desirable. We also identified a small cohort of young people within YOS who are repeat offenders and for whom the current service is less successful at achieving desistance from crime. This group is characterised by violence, drug supply and weapons offences, and is over-represented by black young men. The reasons why YOS are less successful at diverting this cohort away from future serious offending is unclear and beyond the scope of this work but warrants further investigation and the piloting of new approaches.

The EWMHS service sits largely separately to other tertiary prevention activity although there has been recent moves to integrate a CPN and speech and language therapist within the YOS service. The service offers a range of CBT but we were unable to ascertain whether this included NICE recommended Trauma focussed CBT for victims of serious

youth violence, gang involvement in line with NICE guidelines.

The *Level 5 Triple P* parenting programme is the only evidenced based initiative shown to address and reduce abusive behaviour in parents, but this is not available in Thurrock. Brighter Futures should consider commissioning/delivering this.

For young people who are perpetrators of serious youth violence or involved in gangs, the service is currently not offering multi-systemic therapy of family functional therapy that seeks to treat individuals in the context of environmental, peer group and familial risk, although this is best practice from the published evidence base. As such, there is a risk that the current service offer is too individually focussed and efficacy of treatment will be compromised.

There is a need to develop a much more holistic an integrated tertiary prevention offer between YOS and PASS, with EWMHS fully integrated within it and delivering evidence based programmes that seek to treat the individual in the context of their wider environment. The current threshold for prevention remains too high, as YOS programmes are only available to young people who have been arrested for violent offences

A youth service offer, delivered by Essex County Council and funded by the Essex V&V Board has been operating in Basildon Hospital A&E in line with evidence of best practice, although at time of writing, on-going funding for this service in 2020/21 has not been secured. Early outcome data from the service has been positive but there is a need to continue funding this service in 2020/21 to allow a full evaluation to be undertaken.

Enforcement activity in Thurrock and more widely in Essex is in line with evidence of best practice, being highly intelligence led with focussed stop and search activity. Nine gang injunctions are place in Thurrock, and again this approach is well supported by published evidence. The Violence and Vulnerability Board may wish to consider piloting an *Opportunities Provision* approach which provides education, skills, employment and other support to gang involved youth as a mechanism to persuade them from exiting gangs, although robust evidence of the effectiveness of this is not currently available. As such, any future programme would need to be well evaluated.

## Recommendations: Tertiary Prevention

REC #	Issue to be addressed	Recommendation
4.1	Trauma focussed CBT is not currently available for young people aged under 18 in EWHMS who are victims of serious violence, despite this being evidence of best practice	NHS CCG / Brighter Futures / MSE Joint CCG Committee should ensure that Trauma-focussed CBT is available within the service offer of a re-commissioned EWMHS
4.2	A range of individual initiatives are available through PASS and YOS that may well have considerable merit, but robust evaluation is not currently available	Thurrock Violence and Vulnerability Board in conjunction with the relevant service managers and support from Public Health and Xantura, should seek to evaluate all current tertiary prevention programmes including <i>Deal or No Deal</i> , <i>Goodman</i> , <i>Holiday Activity</i> and <i>Youth @ Risk</i> to determine effectiveness of impact
4.3	Lack of integrated tertiary prevention model with EWMHS provision largely provided separately, programmes focused too narrowly on individual/behavioural factors and threshold for intervention currently set at a level that requires a young person to be arrested for an offence before some interventions are available	NHS CCG / Brighter Futures / MSE Joint CCG Committee should recommission EMHWS to ensure integrated provision with other tertiary prevention programmes. New commissioning model should seek to ensure service offer is in line with evidence of best practice, for and includes for example:  - Multi-systemic Therapy/ Family Focussed Therapy
4.4		Thurrock Violence and Vulnerability Board in conjunction with Brighter Futures should future evaluation of current offer, and develop a more integrated an holistic model with a greater focus on addressing familial, school, environment risk.
4.6	Current service offer lacks evidence based parenting intervention for parents at high risk of abusive relationships with their children	Brighter Futures should review current service offer and commission an appropriate intervention such as <i>Level 5 – Triple P</i>
4.7	There is a cohort of young people accessing YOS who are committing multiple violence / drugs offences and for whom current interventions appear to be unsuccessful in terms of future desistance.	YOS should undertake further work to understand this issue and pilot and evaluate new approaches where appropriate
4.8	A&E based youth service in line with evidence of best practice but lacks evaluation data or on-going funding.	Essex V&V unit and/or Essex County, Thurrock and Southend Councils should seek to continue funding for this service in 2020/21 to allow an evaluation of impact to be undertaken

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<b>16 September 2020</b>	<b>ITEM: 14</b> <b>Decision: 110531</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy Update &amp; Revenue Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 2020/21</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Shane Hebb, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Jonathan Wilson, AD Finance, Corporate Finance	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Finance, Governance & Property	
<b>This report is</b> public	

## Executive Summary

### Medium Term Financial Strategy

In February 2020 the MTFS projected surpluses for the period 2021/22 to 2022/23, with a total £5.595m deficit over the full four year period; at the end of the modelling.

This has now deteriorated to a £33.673m deficit over the same period, including a projected deficit in 2021/22 of £19.3m. This represents a combination of projected reductions in locally raised taxes, increased costs – especially around social care resilience - and expected reductions in fees and charges arising from Covid-19. This continues to be assessed and remains subject to significant uncertainty.

The MTFS also reflects a pause to elements of the Capital Strategy approach. That equates to £11.973m of the total movement across the four years. Note that existing investments have continued to perform as anticipated (despite Covid-19), and have helped deliver services above the statutory minimum for residents of the borough since 2017. Some of the reasons behind the pause relate to new investment market opportunities reducing, along with the commitment to develop an enhanced scrutiny arrangement for Members. The pause also encompasses the pause of providing Thurrock Regeneration Limited more funding to develop new schemes whilst a review is completed of best delivery models.

A further report on how to close these budget gaps will be considered by Cabinet in October and then by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### General Fund Revenue Monitoring

The position forecast at the end of June 2020 is a net pressure of £6.295m against the General Fund budget. This excludes the budgeted surplus of £4.074m which, if applied to the net pressure, would reduce this to £2.221m. This funding would address Covid-19 issues and the reduced income resulting from the pause of new investment activity.

Thurrock has received funding from Central Government to the value of £10.757m to mitigate costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic which has been reflected in this report. Further guidance is expected with regards to additional support to offset income losses and this will be presented in future reports. Any balance will be met from reserves.

The position presented is still subject to significant uncertainty in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of this has been identified and separated from the core budget monitoring and on this basis the overall forecast position of £6.169m breaks down to:

- Forecast pressure the on delivery of core services - £4.088m; and
- Forecast Covid-19 related pressures (net of government funding) - £2.207m

There are two significant pressures in core services:

- A projected reduction of new investment income This pressure is projected to be £3.480m; and
- Projected increased costs in Children's Social Care relating to an increase in high costs placements. This pressure is projected to be £0.906m.

The Covid-19 pressures are split between:

- 1) Increased spend as a result of Covid-19 emergency response; and
- 2) Income losses as a direct result of Covid-19.

There remains ongoing uncertainty on the full impact that Covid-19 will have on existing services and while some financial risk has been projected this could increase significantly in these areas:

- Adult Social Care – there is concern over the future financial stability of the residential care market;
- Housing General Fund – there is the potential for significant increases in homelessness applications once landlord eviction actions can resume;
- Children's Services - Home to School Transport costs may be significantly impacted by social distancing requirements; and

- Theatre income – There may be further projected income losses should the pantomime season not progress.

The current estimate of this additional risk is estimated at circa £1.5m and this is not yet included in the reported position. There is also further funding from MHCLG to address income losses which will be applied once the guidance has been issued and then included in the forecast position.

The wider impact on Council Tax and Business Rates remain under consideration with the potential for losses linked to the wider economic impacts of the pandemic.

### Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account is projecting a breakeven position. There has been a limited impact from Covid-19 to date but this continues to be monitored and there remains concern over the stability of rents as the year progresses.

### Dedicated Schools Grant

The DSG position is indicating pressures of £0.705m. This reflects the increased pressure in the high needs block and additional demand for school places in Thurrock. In common with the wider sector a three year recovery plan is being developed in consultation with the Education Funding Authority to address the deficit.

## **1. Recommendations:**

### **1.1 That Cabinet comment on the MTFs and the forecast outturn position for 2020/21.**

## **2. Medium Term Financial Strategy**

2.1. The MTFs is included at Appendix 1. The overall financial position over the next four years has deteriorated by £27.485m since February 2020. This reduction has arisen from the projected impact of COVID-19 and a pause to elements of the Capital Strategy.

2.2. The impact of COVID-19 has resulted in the following key movements:

- Local Funding – the projected movement in the financial funding from Council Tax and Business Rates equates to £3.293m. This includes assumptions on the collection fund deficits and increases in the use of the local council tax scheme from the current year which remain subject to the wider economic impacts of the pandemic;
- Budget surpluses are now not projected across the life of the MTFs as the costs of the pandemic absorb these. This equates to a deterioration in resources of £5.531m; and

- Additional ongoing costs and loss of income – additional pressures and further income losses total £3.320m.
- 2.3. As noted earlier in the report, the council’s investment and capital strategy has been paused for new activity, with a projected impact of £11.973m over the life of the MTFS. This includes both cash investments and capital investments and hence the associated targets have been removed pending further consideration. (Note: there has been no significant impact on existing investments). In addition savings targets for subsequent years have been removed totalling £2m and revisions to wider projections total £3.368m.
- 2.4. There remains uncertainty over the wider economic impacts on the pandemic and the level of further financial support available to local authorities from central government. This continues to be monitored and updates to the MTFS will be made to reflect updated assessments of this position.
- 2.5. Cabinet will receive a further report on recommended actions to close these projected deficits in October 2020 with further reports to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committees as required.

### **General Fund – Quarter 1 Revenue Monitoring**

#### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1. In February 2020 Council agreed the 2020/21 budget in line with the balanced MTFS. This was supported by an investment approach and the delivery of savings targets. The investment approach has been paused and savings targets have been delayed by the urgent response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.2. The financial reporting includes the impact of the pandemic which has required a wider range of responses from the Council and continues to be a significant source of uncertainty. This report sets out the latest assessment of the financial impact on 2020/21 and incorporates the associated MHCLG funding announced to date. The longer term economic impacts continue to be monitored to enable accurate estimates to be made for the 2021/22 council tax and business rate bases. There remains significant risk in this area.
- 3.3. There also remains uncertainty linked to the EU Exit process and, whilst we are mindful of this, we have not yet reflected this financial risk within this report.
- 3.4. The report sets out the latest forecast position for 2020/21 across the main revenue accounts – the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant and Public Health grant.

4. The General Fund position is set out in detail in the table below:

Row Labels	Budget £'000	Month 3 forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Less Income losses related to Covid-19 £'000	Month 3 Adjusted Directorate forecast £'000	Reported Month 3 forecast £'000
Adults, Housing and Health	42,950	43,441	491	(543)	42,898	(52)
Children's Services	40,234	42,059	1,825	(919)	41,353	906
Commercial Services	1,027	840	(187)	0	840	(187)
Environment & Highways and Counter Fraud	30,664	31,232	568	(568)	30,664	0
Finance, Governance and Property	17,521	18,363	842	(870)	17,493	(28)
Housing General Fund	1,766	1,788	22	(22)	1,766	0
HR, OD and Transformation	5,145	5,145	0	0	5,145	0
Place	5,306	6,369	1,063	(859)	5,510	204
Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	3,175	3,031	(144)	(91)	2,940	(235)
Corporate Costs	3,862	3,862	0	0	3,862	0
Unachievable savings	(1,027)	0	1,027	(1,027)	(1,027)	0
Central Financing	(117,600)	(117,600)	0	0	(117,600)	0
Treasury	(33,024)	(29,544)	3,480	0	(29,544)	3,480
COVID-19 Costs	10,757	8,065	(2,692)	4,899	12,964	2,207
COVID-19 Funding	(10,757)	(10,757)	0	0	(10,757)	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>6,295</b>
Budgeted surplus						(4,074)
<b>Total</b>						<b>2,221</b>

Corporate Covid-19 impact by directorate:

- 4.1. Expenditure and income losses attributable to the Covid-19 emergency response for each directorate are broken down in the table below with further detail provided in the directorate commentary.

Directorate	Additional costs	Income losses	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care	4,262	543	4,805
Children's Services	1,154	919	2,073
Environment and Highways	562	568	1,130
Finance, Governance and Property	372	870	1,242
Housing General Fund	1,096	22	1,118
Place	279	859	1,138
Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	0	91	91
Corporate	340	1,027	1,367
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,065</b>	<b>4,899</b>	<b>12,964</b>

**Analysis by Service Area:**

**5. Adult Social Care**

Service	Revised budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Directorate Outturn Variance £'000	Income adjustment £'000	Adjusted forecast £'000	Reported month 3 variance £'000
Assistive Equipment & Technology	599	587	(12)	0	587	(12)
Commissioning & Service Delivery	2,344	2,532	188	0	2,532	188
Community Development	2,088	2,117	29	(97)	2,020	(68)
External Placements	27,343	27,229	(114)	(52)	27,177	(166)
Fieldwork Services	3,654	3,874	220	0	3,874	220
Provider Services	6,863	7,043	180	(394)	6,649	(214)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>42,890</b>	<b>43,381</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>(543)</b>	<b>42,838</b>	<b>(52)</b>

Directorate Outturn Position

- 5.1. The directorate outturn position is currently projecting a forecast underspend of £0.052m. The department is able to finance the budget pressures, which are not as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, within the overall service budget allocation. These are costs that occur during the running of front line operations of social care and safeguarding activities.



- 5.2. Premises and maintenance costs continue to be incurred within Collins House until longer term capital projects are undertaken, which form part of the capital programme budget, at the right point in time
- 5.3. There has been demand on the provider bank budget to cover additional staffing costs in the delivery of homecare and residential services.

Corporate Covid-19 Position – Adult Social Care

- 5.4. The following costs have been included in the position to support the financial resilience of providers, facilitate hospital discharges and support internal care provision and are all as a direct consequence of the pandemic:

<b>Covid-19 Direct Response</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>External Market Support</b>	
10% resilience Payments across ASC providers	2,856
Increase Home Care rates to 5% uplift	136
	<b>2,992</b>
<b>Hospital Discharge</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>Internal Care provision</b>	<b>833</b>
	<b>4,262</b>

- 5.5. The ongoing impact continues to be monitored closely to ensure that any adverse variance is reported as part of the Council corporate forecast.
- 5.6. Adult Social care departments nationally received a further allocation of grant funding – the Infection control grant in order address specific issues within the sector. This is ring-fenced for these purposes and reported outside of the position detailed above.

Direct Service intervention to the external market

- 5.7. Financial resilience payments. The Council has provided a temporary financial resilience payment of 10%. This was agreed to be paid for the first 16 weeks of the year and is based on the budgeted level of spend for each provider. This is available to all service providers and is in response to higher levels of dependency, staff sickness rates and absenteeism and overall volatility.
- 5.8. The Service has increased the uplift on domiciliary care providers from £16.25 to £17.06.
- 5.9. Although not agreed at this stage, it is possible that further resilience and support packages will be required by Local Authorities throughout the financial year to address the issues being faced by external providers and this has

been assumed in the above figures. The emerging situation with regards to residential care is of particular concern; with an increase in the number of voids resulting in higher unit costs for providers in an already fragile market. The current estimates in the forecast assume a continuation of the measures in place for the first sixteen weeks of the year but there remains the potential for additional financial risk.

#### Hospital Discharge process

- 5.10. In response to the Covid-19 Crisis and to ensure timely discharge the NHS and Local Authorities are required to work together to:
- provide free out of hospital care and support to people discharged from hospital;
  - provide free care and support to people requiring additional care to avoid hospital admission (in line with national guidance at the time and during the COVID-19 crisis);
  - remove barriers to discharge and transfers between health and social care to get people out of hospital and either home or into an alternative care setting quickly;
  - work together to maximize the funding available including putting relevant funds into a pooled budget to cover costs of discharge support and removing room for debate at this time; and
  - Provide support to the care market through the Covid-19 emergency period.
- 5.11. The Council is working closely with Thurrock CCG in order to deal with people who are being discharged from hospital during the pandemic.
- 5.12. The cost of care packages for people receiving a care package following discharge from hospital are currently being funded from the NHS. The Council is recharging the cost incurred to the CCG. The value of this at period 3 is £0.642m, which has been invoiced to the CCG, but the funds have not yet been received, and nationally are subject to closer scrutiny by NHS England.
- 5.13. A new hospital discharge process is in place from 1 September with the CCG required to fund cases for the first 6 weeks. This remains under assessment and the financial forecast will be adjusted to reflect this in due course.
- 5.14. A prudent forecast of £0.400m remains, taking into account an assumption around the number of clients who will not need continuing social care support, or will be eligible for some form of continuous contribution of health care support. This is however difficult to project accurately at this stage until the full Social Care and health assessments can be undertaken, which are subject to government legislation as to when this process can be reinstated. The hospital discharge process will see an increase in the level of adult social care service being provided that have not been commissioned through the assessment process detailed in the Care Act, and will require a significant level of retrospective review.

### Internally managed care provision (Provider Services)

- 5.15. Internally managed care provision, namely through Collins house residential home and Thurrock Care at Home domiciliary care has faced significant additional costs during the pandemic. This largely equates to the following:
- Increased level of overtime and usage of provider bank staff to cover staff sickness and absenteeism;
  - Increase demand for PPE in order to undertake duties safely; and
  - Specialist domiciliary care teams implemented to provide care for clients who have tested positive for Covid-19.
- 5.16. The Covid-19 pandemic is starting to change the way in which Adult Social Care services are delivered. A legacy of the recent events could see a permanent reduction in the demand for residential care services, with a greater emphasis on domiciliary care and people being looked after in their own homes. This represents a significant ongoing economic and financial risk to this sector of the market. An increased number of voids, and reduction in demand will require a different financial strategy in future years.
- 5.17. There will also be a requirement to undertake a high level of both care and financial assessments when previous legislation is reinstated. This could result in additional costs in order to secure the required level of care resources.

### Income adjustments

- 5.18. There has been a reduction in the forecast level of income that will be achieved in the financial year.
- 5.19. This is as a direct result of the Covid-19 situation, and relates to the following areas:

Service area	£'000
Closure of Day Care centres, libraries and community hubs	161
Temporary suspensions to charging and review processes	107
Internal residential care facilities operating on a reduced occupancy level	275
<b>Total</b>	<b>543</b>

- 5.20. The total impact of this has seen a reduction in the income forecast of £0.543m across the directorate.

## 6. Children's Services

### Directorate outturn position

Service	Revised budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Directorate Outturn Variance £'000	Income adjustment £'000	Adjusted forecast £'000	Reported month 3 variance £'000
Central Administration Support and Other	1,478	1,369	(109)	0	1,369	(109)
Children and Family Services	30,288	31,715	1,427	0	31,715	1,427
Head Start Housing Service	716	716	0	0	716	0
Learning & Universal Outcomes	5,197	5,606	409	(919)	4,687	(510)
School Transport	2,555	2,652	97	0	2,865	97
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40,234</b>	<b>42,058</b>	<b>1,824</b>	<b>(919)</b>	<b>41,139</b>	<b>906</b>

6.1. The overall Children's Services forecast outturn position is £0.906m overspent.

### Children and Family Services

6.2. Placements costs - The key area of risk remains placement support for looked after children and young people subject to child protection plans. Included in the forecast are 10 high cost placements totalling £2.251m.

6.3. The service recently identified £0.728m of savings by moving high cost placements to a lower cost option. However the saving has been reduced by a number of new placements and adjustments totalling £0.623m resulting in a net reduction of £0.105m. Hence there still remains a significant pressure in this area.

6.4. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of sibling groups being looked after by the Authority. There is currently 7 sibling groups of 3 and 4 siblings with 4 in External Fostering. This change has resulted in an increase in the use of Independent Foster Agencies. However 1 sibling group of 2 has recently been adopted reducing the associated costs.

6.5. The budget was based on 288 looked after children. Late in 2019/20 placements increased to 297 and have not decreased since then. Covid-19 is restricting the market with limited placements available and movement of placements limited.

6.6. The below table shows the looked after children across the various placement types and associated estimated cost for the year:

Placement Type	Budgeted number of placements	Jun-20 Actual number of placements	Variance	20/21 Revised Budget	Forecast Jun-20	Variance
				£000	£000	£000
Placed with Parent/Prison	5	7	2	0	0	0
Internal Fostering	134	117	(17)	2,485	2,418	(67)
Supported Accommodation	31	29	(2)	820	668	(152)
External Fostering	94	116	22	3,908	5,149	1,241
External Residential	24	29	5	4,167	4,680	513
Secure Placement	0	1	1	0	126	126
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11,380</b>	<b>13,041</b>	<b>1,661</b>

6.7. The Directorate is planning a number of actions to address the projected deficit. These need to be considered in the context of Covid-19 which has restricted the range of actions available. This will include:

- An immediate review of all high cost placements with an annual cost of £0.130m
- A review of the engagement of the Families Together Team in respect of children who have become looked after in February/March to consider the level of engagement at this time with the families and identify further actions to address as Covid-19 restrictions lift.

6.8. It is felt prudent at this time to not reflect this in the forecast as lockdown may lead to further issues for a number of families perhaps not yet known to social care. This could lead to them requiring even a short term spell within a care setting to enable stabilisation of the family unit and this increase in referrals is expected to coincide with the new academic year.

6.9. The Brighter Futures - Prevention Service are reporting an underspend of £0.153m primarily as a result of additional Troubled Families grant and a reduction in costs across the service.

6.10. The number of agency staff continue to decrease with 27 FTE agency workers engaged as at 30<sup>th</sup> June. The remaining agency costs can be contained within budget.

#### Learning and Universal Outcomes

6.11. The service are reporting a projected underspend of £0.585m; through delays in filling vacant posts, the non-recruitment to vacant posts, reduction in FTE's and non-enrolment in the Superannuation scheme.

#### Home to School Transport

- 6.12. A significant risk is Home to School Transport due to Covid-19 and the continued increase in demand for service. Initial projections, based on invoices paid to date, show a potential overspend of £0.097m. This forecast reflects the impact of Covid-19 and delays in the achievement of proposed savings from September in 2020/21.
- 6.13. Discussions are ongoing to validate the summer term costs and to understand the likely financial implications arising from COVID-19 from September when all children return to school.

Corporate Covid-19 Position – Children’s Services

- 6.14. Income shortfall attributable to Covid-19:

Service area	£'000
Education Services	(351)
Nursery Income	(169)
Music Service Income	(175)
Adult College Income	(108)
Grangewaters Income	(117)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(919)</b>

- 6.15. Thurrock Adult College are reporting an overspend of £0.108m as a result of a shortfall in income from student fees due to Covid-19.
- 6.16. Both of the day nurseries, Neptune and Little Pirates are reporting a combined overspend of £0.169m due to costs that have exceeded the income. The impact of Covid-19 and reduced take up that has only allowed provision for children of key workers has placed a significant impact on fee earning income.
- 6.17. The Music Service are reporting an overspend of £0.060m, the overspend is due to a shortfall in income as a result of Covid-19.
- 6.18. Costs incurred by the directorate which are attributable to the Covid-19 grant allocation are detailed below:

Covid-19 Direct Response	£'000
Increase in Child Protection referrals	250
Delayed Care Proceedings	242
Head Start Housing	341
Schools Transport	293
Other	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,129</b>

- 6.19. The position continues to be monitored and there remains potential for additional financial risk arising from further increases in placements and

schools transport (depending on application of the regulations in forthcoming school year).

- 6.20. Increased Head Start Housing costs have resulted from the increased use of properties required for young adults who required Shielding.

## 7. Environment, Highways & Counter Fraud

### Directorate Outturn position

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Highways, Fleet & Logistics	9,091	9,173	82	(130)	9,043	(48)
Environment & Highways	1,434	1,221	(213)	0	1,221	(213)
Street Scene & Leisure	19,619	19,953	334	(69)	19,884	265
Emergency Planning & Resilience	430	426	(4)	0	426	(4)
Counter Fraud	90	459	369	(369)	90	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,664</b>	<b>31,232</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>(568)</b>	<b>30,664</b>	<b>0</b>

- 7.1. After adjustment is made to account for the income losses anticipated as a result of the lockdown period, the directorate is forecasting a breakeven position.

### Counter Fraud & Enforcement

- 7.2. The Fraud team are forecasting an online position. The Traded Services income for the team has been forecast to budget based on external work that has been agreed with MHCLG to review the financial support that has been awarded to local businesses during the lockdown period. This income is currently forecast to support delivery of the budgeted position but continues to be monitored regularly with the team.
- 7.3. The Enforcement and Public Protection subservice forecast income losses of £0.369m which has been allocated against the Covid-19 funding leaving the service projecting a breakeven position against their base budget. This arises as the service managed vacant posts for the first quarter of the year.

### Highways, Fleet & Logistics

- 7.4. The forecast lost income for Highways Permits, MOT fees and Records Management fees is £0.130m and this has been offset by the Covid-19 funding.
- 7.5. The overall remaining position is a net underspend. The service continues to manage vacant posts to offset pressures arising.

### Street, Scene & Leisure

- 7.6. There is a risk linked to Impulse Leisure and their ability to continue to deliver their leisure services as a result of the social distancing measures and current government guidance. Although no formal decision has been made regarding this area and what the full financial impact will be on the authority, the outstanding water bills are likely to cause an issue to the value of £0.190m and these are reflected in the directorate position.
- 7.7. Waste services are forecasting risk against their allocated budget as there remains a variable cost per tonne element within the contract and also an increase in demand in the first quarter of approximately 500 tonnes per month. This will need to be closely monitored when new rates are released on a quarterly basis.

### Corporate Covid-19 position – Environment & Highways

- 7.8. The loss of income is based on the experience to date and has then been projected in conjunction with the service to reflect the expectations in light of the easing of lockdown restrictions and the wider economic impacts.

<b>Income shortfall</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Highways permits	100
Parking related income	348
Trade Waste	69
Other	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>568</b>

- 7.9. Additional costs as a result of Covid-19 emergency response:

<b>Covid-19 Direct Response</b>	<b>£'000</b>
HWRC - Traffic Management	192
PPE	298
Other	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>562</b>



## 8. Place

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Delivery & Strategy	580	740	160	(160)	580	0
Economic Development	524	723	199	(199)	524	0
Lower Thames Crossing & Transport Infrastructure	141	141	0	0	141	0
Place Delivery	341	379	38	0	379	38
Planning Delivery Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	3,719	4,385	666	(500)	3,885	166
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,305</b>	<b>6,368</b>	<b>1,063</b>	<b>(859)</b>	<b>5,509</b>	<b>204</b>

8.1. The Place directorate forecast variance at period 3 is £0.204m overspent.

### Delivery & Strategy

8.2. The service is forecasting contain costs within their existing budget allocation excluding the impact of Covid-19 on incomes streams as set out below.

### Economic Development

8.3. The key impact in term of lost income has been the closure of the Thameside theatre due to the pandemic. They are currently forecasting a loss of £0.199m of this year's income based on the assumption that the Theatre will not be reopening for the pantomime season. This continues to be monitored and there is potential further risk. The income losses are currently being logged against the Covid-19 funding and excluding this the service is forecasting a breakeven position for the year.

### Place Delivery

8.4. The Regeneration team is forecasting to overspend by £0.038m. This is due to the difference in cost between agency staff and the budget for the Regeneration Managers posts. The service intend to explore the option of capitalising appropriate staffing costs against capital schemes but these schemes need to progress further before any adjustment can be made.

### Planning, Transportation & Public Protection

8.5. Development Management income losses are considered to be a Covid-19 related pressure and are set out in the table below. Once these are excluded the service is forecasting an overspend position of £0.166m which is largely due to the agency staffing provision within Environment Protection.

### Planning Delivery Fund

- 8.6. The Planning Delivery Fund is money that is being held as part of a partnership arrangement across seven local authorities. The seven local authorities are Basildon, Brentwood, Castlepoint, Essex, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. The money is due to be spent across these local authority areas.
- 8.7. This funding was carried forward from 2019/20 to be spent in 2020/21.

Corporate Covid-19 position – Place

- 8.8. Income shortfall:

<b>Income Shortfall</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Land Search Fees	161
Theatre	199
Licencing	67
Public Protection	10
Planning Fees	423
<b>Total</b>	<b>860</b>

- 8.9. Development Management are projecting reduced planning income of £0.423m, i.e. approximately 42% based on decreased demand due to the current market uncertainty. Both Licencing and Environmental Protection have forecast a 25% reduction income i.e. £67k & £10k respectively based on decreased demand to date.
- 8.10. The additional costs incurred as a result of the Covid-19 response is £0.279m to support the amended timetables for local bus routes and other transport services.

## 9. Finance, Governance & Property

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Cashiers	65	65	0		65	0
Chief Executive	363	400	37		400	37
Corporate Finance	2,415	2,493	78		2,493	78
Democratic Services	234	207	(27)		207	(27)
Electoral Services	506	331	(175)		331	(175)
ICT	3,553	3,623	70		3,623	70
Legal Services	1,899	1,864	(35)		1,864	(35)
Members Services	753	799	46		799	46
Revenue and Benefits	2,295	2,274	(21)		2,274	(21)
Property	5,416	6,286	870	(870)	5,416	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,500</b>	<b>18,342</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>(870)</b>	<b>17,472</b>	<b>(28)</b>

### ICT

- 9.1. Due to the acceleration to the agile working programme a number of ICT expenses have been incurred sooner than anticipated and these have been treated as a Covid-19 related expense and detailed further in the below sections.
- 9.2. Archiving costs related to Oracle R12 have been appropriately capitalised and the use of capital receipts has supported the ongoing transformation of the finance and HR systems, reducing the impact on the revenue position.
- 9.3. There remains a £0.050m traded services income pressure that will need to be revisited as part of the wider commercial income targets following the pandemic.

### Electoral & Members services

- 9.4. This is a non-election year so the under spend is expected, this underspend will be utilised to offset the over spend in the members budget related to the rebasing of members allowances. This will need to be addressed as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22.

### Property Services

- 9.5. Services and staff managed by Apleona came back under local authority management from 1 April and this has produced a saving of £0.130m. There are some additional staff allowances as part of the TUPE transfer and security staff overtime which means the full £0.157m saving target will not be achieved.

- 9.6. The Asset Management team are forecasting to underspend by £0.094m this is a result of the Assistant Director post being vacant from June. It is assumed no permanent replacement will be appointed this financial year utilisation of the wider management team will continue until the end of the year.
- 9.7. The Corporate Landlord is forecasting to overspend by £0.077m. This is due to the expected loss of income from Thameside, Community Halls and Children's Centres.
- 9.8. A number of buildings have transferred to the Corporate Landlord area with limited budgets in comparison to the expected support from services; examples include Collins House, Meals on Wheels, Oaktree Resource Centre, Aveley Hub and Centurion House. Any costs in these buildings will potentially further increase the pressure on the budget but there may be opportunity to utilise capital funding to offset these pressures.

Corporate Covid-19 position – Finance, Governance & Property

- 9.9. Land and Buildings are currently forecasting income losses of £0.870m based on the assumption that General Fund & Commercial properties will generate 65% and 70% respectively of the budgeted income based on an expectation of reopening by September 2020. The commercial property in Purfleet is currently forecast to generate 85% of their income as the impact of the pandemic has had less impact on their commercial operations.
- 9.10. Costs incurred against Covid-19 fund:

<b>Covid-19 Direct Response</b>	<b>£000</b>
Additional IT equipment	340
Other	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>

**10. Housing General Fund**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Revised budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Directorate Outturn Variance</b>	<b>Income adjustment</b>	<b>Adjusted forecast</b>	<b>Reported month 3 variance</b>
	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>
Homelessness	1,387	1,387			1,387	0
Private Sector Housing	212	305	93	(93)	212	0
Travellers	53	53	0		53	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>1,745</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>(93)</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>0</b>

- 10.1. The Housing General Fund financial outturn is projected to be delivered within the agreed budget level.
- 10.2. In light of the current climate, it is anticipated that the second half of the financial year will be vastly different to the first two quarters as activity in areas that have been prohibited as a result of government intervention return to normal levels.

#### Homelessness

- 10.3. Whilst the first two periods of the financial year has seen some stability in the number of people presenting themselves as homeless, this trend is unlikely to continue throughout the remainder of the financial year.
- 10.4. One of the major routes into homelessness is as a result of landlords imposing eviction measures. These measures are currently on hold until the 23 August 2020. The concern is that once these actions can commence there will be an increase the number of households presenting as homeless. In addition as the wider economic impacts of the pandemic are felt this may further increase pressure on the service and hence there is a forecast pressure in this area.

#### Private Sector Housing

- 10.5. The private sector housing service has an income requirement to achieve circa 50% of its overall net costs built into the base budget. One of the key income streams is arises via inspections of privately let accommodation. Social distancing measure have meant a restriction in the level of work permitted, which will have a directly detrimental effect on the overall budget position.

#### Traveller's sites

- 10.6. Following a detailed review and realignment of the 2020/21 budget it is forecast that the service will break even at the end of the financial year.

#### Corporate Covid-19 position – Housing General Fund

- 10.7. With regards to the Covid-19 impact, there were 32 people identified as rough sleepers who have been housed in short term emergency accommodation since the onset of the pandemic. The average cost of this is in the region of £70 per day, per person, for this level of short term temporary accommodation. The full year effect of this is reflected in the level of anticipated spend in the corporate forecast at £0.818m, but the service are reviewing this cohort of people to find alternative, longer term housing

solutions. There is a varying degree of need, vulnerability and suitable accommodation provision across the demographic, ranging from the ability to place people in HMO's through to supported accommodation placements.

- 10.8. There is a further expectation that an increase in the caseload of the homelessness service is likely to arise later in the year as the wider economic impacts of the pandemic are felt and protections against eviction are removed for tenants. An estimated increase in associated costs of £0.100m is forecast currently but there is additional risk currently estimated of up to a further £0.400m.

## 11. Strategy, Communications & Customer Service

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Corporate Communications	514	515	1		515	1
Customer Services	1,132	1,036	(96)	(91)	945	(187)
Social Care Performance	1,209	1,165	(44)		1,165	(44)
Strategy Team	320	315	(4)		315	(4)
	<b>3,175</b>	<b>3,031</b>	<b>(144)</b>	<b>(91)</b>	<b>2,940</b>	<b>(235)</b>

- 11.1. The overall Strategy, Communications and PQBS directorate forecast variance at period 2 is £0.235m underspend.
- 11.2. Customer Services is forecast to be underspent by £0.187m once the loss of income anticipated for the Registrars service is adjusted for.
- 11.3. The wider underspend is due to vacant posts across a number of the services and the tight management of resources overall. Any decisions regarding the reinstatement of face-to-face services may result in changes to the financial position but the option to redeploy staff will be reviewed.

### Corporate Covid-19 position – Strategy, Communications & Customer Service

- 11.4. There is anticipated loss of income to the value of £0.091m the registrars service due to the impact of Covid-19 on marriage ceremonies, this has led to a total loss of income for the first quarter and an 80% forecast of expected income for the rest of the year.
- 11.5. The methodology for the registrars forecast will continue to be reviewed and revised in line with government advice on Covid-19/Lockdown easing and customer behaviour.

## 12. HR, OD & Transformation

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
HR OD Team	4,251	4,232	(19)		4,232	(19)
Occupational Health & Counselling	132	120	(12)		120	(12)
Corporate Training & Development Budget	180	180	0		180	0
Information Management	581	613	32		613	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,145</b>	<b>5,145</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>5,145</b>	<b>0</b>

12.1. The Directorate continue to manage their staffing levels to contain any pressures within their base budget allocation. As in previous years capitalisation of staff will be made where appropriate capital projects and resources are identified.

## 13. Treasury & Financing

13.1. The position is set out below:

Service	Revised budget	Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Income adjustment	Adjusted forecast	Reported month 3 variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Interest Payable	16,394	16,394	0	0	0	0
Interest Receivable	(47,847)	(44,367)	3,480	0	3,480	3,480
Minimum Revenue Provision	8,858	8,858	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>(22,595)</b>	<b>(19,564)</b>	<b>3,480</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,480</b>	<b>3,480</b>

13.2. The reported position reflects a pause to the investment strategy while members consider to reflect on the corporate priorities in response to Covid-19. Consequently there is a projected income deficit of £3.480m.

13.3. The Council has taken action to stabilise cash-flow in light of increased demands arising from the response to the pandemic. The Council projects to utilise increased PWLB funding in 2020/21 which has a higher associate interest rate than borrowing in the local authority market – this source of funding has become less available as the pandemic has evolved. This is projected to be £0.625m in 2020/21 and has been reflected in the Covid-19 costs.

Housing Revenue Account

13.4. Overall, the HRA is forecasting a balanced position at the end of financial year. Expenditure within this service is more manageable in certain respects as activity levels can be adjusted accordingly, to remain within financial constraints. However, as the full impact of Covid-19 starts to become identified action is likely to be required to contain adverse financial impacts within its allocated level of resources.

13.5. The overall forecast position on the HRA is shown below:

Service	Revised budget	Budgeted Forecast Outturn	Directorate Outturn Variance	Covid-19 Impact	Overall Forecast Outturn	Overall Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Development	217	217	0	0	217	0
Financing and Recharges	24,813	24,813	0	0	24,813	0
Rent and Income	(50,254)	(49,534)	720	720	(49,534)	720
Repairs and Maintenance	12,021	11,866	(155)	0	11,866	(155)
Operations and Management	13,203	12,638	(565)	0	12,638	(565)
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

13.6. The economic impact of the pandemic is being seen to have a direct adverse financial impact on the HRA. There have been documented reports of significant increases to levels of unemployment within the borough, which will affect both existing tenants and the number of people requiring social housing. This is reflected in the table above to demonstrate a forecast loss related to expected increases in the level of bad debts relating to existing rents.

13.7. In addition, there has been a delay in hand over time of the new build properties at Topps Club and Claudian way. Therefore the anticipated reduction in the level of rent and service charge has been reflected.

13.8. There are currently a number of vacant posts across the directorate which will mitigate the in-year impact of reduced income levels and the requirement to increase the bad debt provision (as more tenants move across to universal credit).

#### Dedicated Schools Grant

13.9. The 2019/20 outturn position along with the latest sector information available has been considered to support the forecast outturn position. This information will be subject to changes at the start of the academic year once the movement in school places is confirmed.



13.10. The table below reflects the updated DSG allocation for 2020/21. Current projections indicate pressures of £0.705m which are broken down below.

DSG 2020/21	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Academy</u>	<u>Final</u>	<u>Outturn</u>	<u>Variance</u>
	<u>Settlement</u>	<u>Recoupment</u>	<u>DSG</u>		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools	126,839	(118,734)	8,105	7,327	(778)
Central Services	1,850	0	1,850	1,814	(36)
High Needs	26,118	(5,334)	20,784	22,303	1,519
Early Years	12,463	0	12,463	12,463	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>167,270</b>	<b>(124,068)</b>	<b>43,202</b>	<b>43,907</b>	<b>705</b>

### Schools Block

13.11. The growth fund allows officers to ensure sufficiency of places within Thurrock schools for all children of school age. Based on current commitments and historic level of spend there is a forecast underspend of £0.778m.

### High Needs Block

13.12. This is the significant area of financial risk and the areas of concern are:

- The number of EHCPs continues to increase incurring projected additional costs of £0.250m to maintain pupils in mainstream schools and academies.
- There are increased pupil numbers forecast for post-16 provision which creates additional costs of £0.369m.
- Residential non-Maintained and Independent placements. There is a forecast overspend of £0.873m against a budget of £2.2m for residential non maintained and independent placements. This arises from a lack of local capacity meaning high costs placements are sought outside the borough. This will start to be addressed as additional places become available at Treetops.
- Pupils not in School – data is now available to enable forecasting for the year ahead and there is a projected overspend of £0.159m. This is subject to a review of contract arrangements and seeking more cost effective options.

13.13. A review of the local offer and commissioned places available in Thurrock continues. The need to challenge schools on the use of the Notional SEN budget and the requirement to progress to an EHCP remains.

### DSG Reserve

13.14. The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £1.978m into 2020/21. A 3 year deficit recovery plan will be agreed with the Education Funding Authority (this has been delayed until September as a result of Covid-19). While the DSG reserve is not currently forecast to reduce in the current year (given the position on the high needs block outlined above, this will increase to £2.683m) further actions will be taken to mitigate costs where possible.

### Public Health

13.15. The Public Health Grant increased by £0.735m in 2020/21 with the full allocation for the year being £11.485m. The increase has been allocated to inflationary increases against existing contracts with external health providers in line with the national Agenda for Change (AFC) and consequently the grant is allocated in full.

13.16. The Public Health Grant distribution focuses on key areas of delivery including drug and alcohol, sexual health and Healthy Families. Within these contracts there is no demand exceeding the budget allocation at this stage, each contract is continuously monitored and reviewed by the service in line with GP practices and health care providers as the service continues to operate within the ring fenced grant conditions.

13.17. There are no adverse financial implications at present as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which is being dealt with as part of the track and trace programme detailed below:

#### **13.18. Test and Trace**

On 22 May 2020, the UK Government announced its expectation that every top tier local authority would create a Local Outbreak Control Plan by the end of June 2020.

The seven key themes are as follows:

1. Planning for local outbreaks in care homes;
2. Identifying and managing outbreaks in high risk places, locations and communities;
3. Identifying methods for local testing capacity;
4. Contact tracing in complex settings;
5. National and local data integration including local surveillance and monitoring of outbreaks;

6. Supporting vulnerable local people to self-isolate; and

7. Establishing governance structures including a local DPH led Health Protection Board and elected member led Engagement Board.

13.19. Thurrock Council has been awarded a central government grant to the value of £1.052m to develop and implement its plan, including local testing and contact tracing arrangements.

#### **14. Reasons for Recommendation**

14.1. The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually. This report sets out the budget pressures in 2020/21 along with actions to mitigate these pressures and deliver a breakeven position.

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

15.1. This report is based on consultation with the services, Directors' Board and portfolio holders.

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

16.1. The implementation of previous savings proposals has already reduced service delivery levels and the council's ability to meet statutory requirements, impacting on the community and staff. There is a risk that some agreed savings and mitigation may result in increased demand for more costly interventions if needs escalate particularly in social care. The potential impact on the council's ability to safeguard children and adults will be kept carefully under review and mitigating actions taken where required.

#### **17. Implications**

##### **17.1. Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Assistant Director Corporate Finance**

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

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

##### **17.2. Legal**

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**

**Assistant Director Law and Governance, and  
Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal implications set out in the report.

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

### **17.3. Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**

**Community Development and Equalities  
Manager**

The Equality Act 2010 places a public duty on authorities to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics so that positive or negative impacts can be understood and enhanced or mitigated as appropriate. Services will be required to consider the impact on any proposals to reduce service levels through a community equality impact assessment which should seek to involve those directly affected.

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

There are no other implications arising directly from this update report.

### **18. 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):

There are various working papers retained within the finance and service sections.

### **19. Appendices to the report**

- Medium Term Financial Strategy

### **Report Author**

Sean Clark

Director of Finance, Governance and Property

## Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

Narrative	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's	£ 000's
<b>1. Local Funding</b>				
Council Tax Base / Charge	(1,740)	(1,500)	(1,500)	(1,500)
Adjustment for Increase in LCTS	1,541	(250)	(250)	(250)
Council Tax - Collection Fund Deficit b/f	1,403	0	0	(1,403)
	<u>1,204</u>	<u>(1,750)</u>	<u>(1,750)</u>	<u>(3,153)</u>
Business Rates Precept	(500)	(665)	(665)	(665)
Business Rates - collection fund deficit	275	0	0	(275)
	<u>(225)</u>	<u>(665)</u>	<u>(665)</u>	<u>(940)</u>
<b>2. Total Government Resources</b>				
Revenue Support Grant	6,806	0	0	0
Transfer to funding formula under 75% retention	(6,806)	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	527	491	289	0
HB Admin	283	0	0	0
	<u>810</u>	<u>491</u>	<u>289</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Net Additional (Reduction) in resources</b>	<b>1,789</b>	<b>(1,924)</b>	<b>(2,126)</b>	<b>(4,093)</b>
<b>3. Inflation and other increases</b>				
	<u>5,714</u>	<u>4,515</u>	<u>4,665</u>	<u>4,762</u>
<b>4. Treasury</b>				
Existing Treasury Inflation Costs	5,223	2,500	2,065	0
MRP	308	32		
2020/21 ongoing borrowing rate change	650			
<b>Treasury and Capital Financing</b>	<u>6,181</u>	<u>2,532</u>	<u>2,065</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>6. Corporate Growth</b>				
Adults	2,500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Children's	1,814	1,314	1,314	1,314
	<u>4,314</u>	<u>2,314</u>	<u>2,314</u>	<u>2,314</u>
8. Commercial - Reduction in Fees and charges @ 20%	<u>1,320</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>500</u>
<b>C/f Position</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Working Total</b>	<b>19,318</b>	<b>7,437</b>	<b>6,918</b>	<b>3,483</b>

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<b>16 September 2020</b>	<b>ITEM: 15</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Backing Thurrock: A Five Year Strategy for Economic Recovery, Resilience and a Return to Growth</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Not applicable
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Mark Coxshall, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Stephen Taylor, Strategic Lead – Economic Development	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Andy Millard, Director of Place	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

Backing Thurrock is a five year strategy for economic recovery, resilience and a return to growth. The strategy aims to support economic recovery and, alongside a new Local Plan, drive the Council’s ambition that growth should be infrastructure led, community driven and of high quality. The strategy is being developed in two parts.

This first part of the strategy recognises the underlying strengths in the Thurrock economy and the devastating economic impact that the COVID pandemic is now having in Thurrock and elsewhere. The strategy suggests a pro-active approach where the Council uses the levers it has to support a market led recovery. It proposes a number of immediate actions that are being delivered or can be implemented in the next six months to support the response.

In the medium and longer term the strategy needs to continue to support the recovery but also to take advantage of the huge opportunities arising from underlying changes in the economy. It outlines the foundations of any work to support economic growth and some of the themes that need to be explored to develop a more resilient, growing economy.

Stakeholders in Thurrock have a proud tradition of working together and the strategy proposes a framework within which businesses and other stakeholders will be invited to work with the Council to develop an Implementation Plan for the medium and longer term. The Implementation Plan will capture the work that each partner is taking to support the Thurrock economy and will be written by January 2021.

## **1. Recommendations**

**Cabinet are asked to:**

- 1.1 To approve the draft Backing Thurrock strategy for consultation**
- 1.2 To agree to co-design the related Implementation Plan with anchor institutions, key businesses, the voluntary and community sector and other stakeholders and to return to Cabinet with a further report seeking approval of the final Strategy and Implementation Plan.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 Thurrock's level of ambition and determination to drive growth that benefits local people remains as strong as ever, despite the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 crisis. The Council intends to build on strong foundations already established through the existing growth programme and develop a revised strategic approach that will bring further, considerable benefits to people and communities within Thurrock and the wider region.
- 2.2 The Council is determined that growth will be infrastructure led, community driven and of high quality. To deliver on that ambition the Council needs to work with residents, the business community and with stakeholders including the voluntary and community sector to put the right strategic framework in place. A new Local Plan and a revised approach to Economic Development will form the focus of that approach.
- 2.3 While the Local Plan has to be developed in line with a legal framework and will take time to complete, the development of a new strategy for economic development (the Backing Thurrock Strategy) and associated Implementation Plan can be delivered at pace, securing benefits for the local economy, residents and the business community.

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

- 3.1 Work on a revised approach to economic development began with an assessment of the local economy – its characteristics, strengths, issues and opportunities.
- 3.2 The strategy sets out some key findings from the assessment of the economy and concludes that in recent years the economy has performed relatively well. The local economy has grown, jobs and new businesses have been created and wage levels have improved. Confidence in the economic potential of Thurrock can be seen in the large private sector led investments, particularly in relation to development and expansion of the Ports.
- 3.3 The assessment identified some underlying issues to be addressed including challenges around productivity and a rise in the claimant count (albeit still at a relatively low level). The economy also faces major changes as a result of



technological change and automation, the increasing importance of sustainable green growth and changing patterns of world trade. These changes present challenges and also huge opportunities reflected in the strategy.

- 3.4 The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on the economy. It is still too early to understand the full impact however it is clear that there has been a severe contraction in the economy, that the numbers of people looking for work have increased significantly and that certain more vulnerable groups – like care leavers – are at higher risk, that some businesses – particularly those in the hardest hit sectors – are closing or struggling to survive. The pandemic has also had an impact on commuting patterns and on consumer spending habits that could last beyond the pandemic recovery itself.

### **Immediate actions**

- 3.5 In the short term the strategy outlines immediate actions that the Council has already taken to help shore up the local economy. These actions have included timely distribution of funding from the Government support schemes, grant funding for resilience within the voluntary sector, engagement and sharing information with local businesses and supporting the reopening of the economy.
- 3.6 Building on the strength of partnerships in Thurrock. The strategy proposes some new initiatives that the Council can work with partners to deliver – helping local people find work (including particularly vulnerable groups such as care leavers), supporting the local economy by working with Thurrock's major partners across both the public, private sector and Thurrock residents to develop a Back Thurrock Economic Partnership that aims to procure significantly more goods and services from local businesses, recruit locally and work together to ensure that the Thurrock economy is resilient. The strategy will ensure the Council is planning for and managing new local outbreaks of COVID so they are contained and controlled quickly and efficiently to minimise impact on Thurrock businesses and residents.

### **The Vision and Approach**

- 3.7 The strategy recognises the huge opportunities that there are in Thurrock to deliver resilient growth over the next five years. It sets out a vision based on the underlying strengths of Thurrock as a dynamic, entrepreneurial trading economy. Setting out the opportunities that arise from longer term changes to Thurrock's economic activity - including green growth, changing trade patterns and technological change. There are two further themes to the strategy that sit alongside recovery from the pandemic as the basis for the medium and longer term actions – building resilience and a return to growth.
- 3.8 The strategy recognises the proud tradition of working together to design and deliver shared approaches in Thurrock and proposes a collaborative approach to delivering market led growth. The approach focuses on working with other

anchor institutions – who have invested in Thurrock, are committed for the long term and have a real interest in growing a successful and vibrant economy. Working with the other anchor institutions the Council can facilitate a discussion around the five different areas of potential collaboration set out in the strategy that we want to explore.

- 3.9 In parallel the Council will work with other stakeholders including Thurrock Business Board, business representatives, the voluntary and community sectors and public institutions to develop actions based around the foundations of economic growth set out in the report.

### **The Implementation Plan**

- 3.10 The second part of the strategy – the Implementation Plan – will be developed through the autumn. It will include the short term actions already underway and the medium and longer term priorities identified through the co-design process.
- 3.11 The Implementation Plan will be prepared by January 2021 and delivery will begin straight away. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as opportunities arise.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The strategic framework to drive Thurrock’s growth ambitions needs refreshing in light of the significant changes in recent years. While the development of a new Local Plan takes time, a fresh approach to Economic Development can be delivered and implemented at pace.
- 4.2 The impact the COVID pandemic means that there is a need to deliver urgent short term actions that will help counter the impact and will help businesses recover. The strategy sets out a number of short term actions that can be delivered straight away to support economic recovery.
- 4.3 There are also opportunities for Thurrock in the medium and long term; to develop a more resilient economy able to overcome the impact of COVID; to address any underlying issues; to take advantage of the huge opportunities to come. The report sets out a framework within which the Council can collaborate with other stakeholders to develop a clear shared Implementation Plan which will form the second part of the Strategy and will be produced by January 2021.

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

- 5.1 Initial discussions have taken place with Thurrock Business Board and with other key stakeholders including potential anchor institutions. The draft strategy reflects those discussions and sets out a framework for consultation and collaboration to ensure that the final strategy and Implementation Plan

are community driven.

- 5.2 This report and the draft strategy was presented to Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> September for comment. A verbal update on comments made by the Committee will be presented to Cabinet.

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

- 6.1 The Backing Thurrock Strategy will support the Council's vision and priorities. Notably the priority relating to prosperity – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.
- 6.2 There will be an impact on other policies and priorities across the Council. Appropriate links will be made through the consultation on the first part of the strategy and the collaborative approach to developing the Implementation Plan.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

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

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**  
**Deputy Head of Law and Regeneration, and**  
**Deputy Monitoring Officer**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**  
**Team Manager – Community Development and**  
**Equalities**

The strategy and supporting implementation plan will be informed by a Community Equality Impact Assessment that will seek to remove barriers to participation impacting individuals and communities with protected characteristics, as well as those affected by health and/or socio-economic conditions.

This report sets out an intention to support the whole community - including those hardest to reach – to help improve skills and access to good jobs. The implementation plan will need to consider how best to work with stakeholders to ensure that actions address deprivation and help residents benefit from work.

The focus on a collaborative approach to market led growth – working with the anchor institutions and wider voluntary and community sector- is to be welcomed as a way of generating and retaining wealth within Thurrock. Through the co-design of the implementation plan all views will be considered to ensure that challenges facing individuals and communities are overcome or minimised, before moving to the medium and long term delivery phase.

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

The Backing Thurrock strategy should have positive implications for many other priorities - health and wellbeing, education and skills, community development and civic pride. The approach to the design of the Implementation Plan set out in this report will help ensure appropriate links between different priorities are made.

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):

- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/>
- [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
- [www.obr.uk](http://www.obr.uk)
- [www.bankofengland.co.uk/](http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/)

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: Backing Thurrock: A Five Year Strategy for Economic Recovery, Resilience and a Return to Growth

**Report Author:**

Stephen Taylor

Strategic Lead

Economic Development

# Backing Thurrock

A five year strategy for economic recovery, resilience and a return to growth.

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# Introduction

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Thurrock is a place of opportunity and entrepreneurship.

Our motto translates as 'By Thames to all peoples of the world' and it tells our story. At the heart of the Thames Estuary to the east of London Thurrock makes the most of its natural advantages as a dynamic trading economy, utilising its 18 miles of riverfront and proximity to the big UK markets in the capital and wider south-east.

Given our location it is unsurprising that sectors such as wholesale and retail, transportation and storage, construction and administrative and support services are particularly important to the local economy. It is these sectors, alongside education, health and social work that generate a significant number of our jobs. We continue to attract private sector investors who are looking for a place with potential to grow. We have a 'can do' attitude and an entrepreneurial spirit with more than 6,000 micro and small businesses. We have seen high numbers of people who can work in work – either as employees or setting up their own businesses.

In recent years Thurrock's economic prospects have been looking up:

- The economy has been growing: In 2013 the Thurrock economy was worth around £2.8billion. This has increased to around £4.1billion in 2019.
- The number of businesses in Thurrock has been rising: The number of enterprises has grown from around 5,000 in 2015 to nearly 6,500 in 2019
- There have been growing numbers of people who are working and more jobs created in Thurrock: Over the last five years the number of residents who are working has increased from just under 80,000 to nearly 85,000 (an increase of 4% as a proportion of working age people). The number of jobs in Thurrock has increased from 72,000 to 78,000 over the same period and the number of workless households has declined from 7,800 in 2015 to 5,900 in 2019.
- Pay has been improving. Gross weekly pay for full time workers in Thurrock has increased by nearly £100 per week over the past 5 years to £587.60 and is now higher than the East of England and Great Britain. Residents have also been earning more wherever they work. Residents working full time have increased earnings from £563 to £632 per week over the same period
- There has been huge investment in Thurrock: Thurrock is benefitting from around £20billion of investment in homes, jobs and infrastructure. This includes some high profile private sector schemes including the expansion of the Port of Tilbury, development at DP World, expansion at Lakeside and at Thames Enterprise Park.

Like many other local economies there are areas of concern. For example the claimant count has increased - from 2.1% in Jan 2015 to 3% in Jan 2020. Thurrock has some areas that are among the most deprived in the country and that should benefit from the levelling up agenda. Our local economy has also faced some productivity challenges.

Our economy was also facing major change as a result of technological change and automation, the importance of sustainable green growth and changing patterns of trade arising from leaving the EU. These significant changes present challenges but also huge opportunities.

The Thurrock economy was strong and growing. There was significant interest in Thurrock as a place of opportunity and a determination to create a business friendly environment ready for continued investment and growth.

Then the COVID-19 Pandemic hit. It is still early days to measure and understand the impact of the Pandemic and there are many different forecasts about the severity of the downturn, the impact it is having on the claimant count, the number of businesses that will struggle to survive and, most crucially, how long the impacts will last. However certain points are clear:

- There has been a significant contraction in the economy. The estimates for downturn in the April to June quarter vary but we know the UK economy shrank 5.8% in March and more than 20% in April. The Bank of England estimates a 25% drop in GDP in Quarter 2 triggering a deep recession. While most forecasts expect a bounce back as the economy reopens improvements in the latter part of 2020 are not expected to offset reduction in the first part of the year.
- The claimant count has increased significantly. In March 2020 Thurrock had a claimant count of 3.3% or approximately 3,500 people. By June the figure had increased to 7.6% or more than 7,600 people. Even more concerning is that certain groups such as young people are particularly badly hit and that the gap between performance in Thurrock versus the rest of the UK has grown (the national claimant count rate is 6.3%). This suggests that the jobs people in Thurrock do are less resilient to economic shock
- Certain sectors have been particularly badly hit. Different sectors of the economy have been impacted in different ways. Accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail, transport and storage, education and arts, entertainment and recreation have all seen a significant decline in activity. The most resilient parts of the economy are those where workers are most able to work from home;
- Many businesses and workers are dependent on Government schemes designed to keep the economy afloat. There has been unprecedented action to support businesses and the workforce through the lockdown and it is clear that a significant proportion of the economy has been badly hit
- There are a number of economic vulnerability assessments and indexes that have been produced to show the impact of COVID on particular areas. Oxford Economics have developed a coronavirus vulnerability index which assesses each local authority area against three measures:
  - economic diversity – the prevalence of particularly vulnerable sectors in the economy
  - characteristics of businesses – including size and number of self-employed people
  - connectivity – given the increasing reliance on home working

While Thurrock is about average in terms of economic diversity and characteristics of business, its connectivity is a particular concern with some parts of Thurrock having poor broadband connectivity. In addition there are relatively low rates of home working;

- Fear of a second spike in infections and local, national or international lockdowns will continue to impact on consumer behaviour and on the economy more generally. While many forecasts expect there to be a strong economic recovery in 2021 it is not expected to completely offset the downturn this year.

Such a shock to the economy requires a different approach to economic development. A proactive and collaborative approach where decisive action is taken to make best use of resources available to help shore up the economy, protect business, key sectors and jobs in the short term.

It won't be possible to save every job and every business and the economy is likely to work differently in the long term. So alongside short term action there needs to be a longer term approach that helps build on the inherent strengths in the Thurrock economy and the opportunities that technology, green growth and EU exit offer.

The Council has a vital role to play in leading work to support recovery, improve resilience and help the economy return to growth. The Council can:

- act as an analyser, understanding the underlying state of the local economy and sharing information with others;
- use its own clout as a major employer and business to help drive economic recovery and growth, diversify the economy, built resilience and economic growth
- act as an agent of change, helping to link the approach to interconnected priorities such as addressing poverty, ill health, social isolation, resilience in the voluntary and community sector among others.

This isn't something that the Council can or should do alone. As a key anchor institution with a responsibility for Thurrock as a whole the Council has a role as a leading organisation to encourage and facilitate a wider approach with stakeholders to support and grow the economy.

In recent years Thurrock has developed a proud tradition of co-designing services with stakeholders. From the 'your place your voice' consultation informing the Local Plan to the Stronger Together Thurrock partnership the value of developing shared vision and acting together is well recognised. We need to take a similar approach and harness the power of collaboration to shape and deliver this plan.

We have to recognise that there are no easy answers, that resources will be tight and that intervention may need to be long term but the fundamentals haven't changed – Thurrock is a fantastic location, has good access to markets for goods and services, boasts an entrepreneurial culture and a large number of people who are committed to working life.

There are opportunities out there and we need to be brave, work together and grab them with both hands. In short this plan is a call to work together and back Thurrock.



## Recovery: Our immediate actions

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In the short term in the next six months we need to focus on rescue and recovery.

The Council has been working hard throughout the pandemic to support the borough and its residents, from help for the most vulnerable in the community to making use of Council resources and Government initiatives to support businesses in Thurrock.

The immediate actions that the Council has taken include:

- Delivered financial support
  - Implementation of Government grant schemes – the Small Business Grants Scheme and the Grants for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Businesses. So far the Council has paid out £21.7m to more than 1700 eligible businesses.
  - Developed and implemented a discretionary grants scheme aimed at helping those businesses hardest hit but unable to access the other schemes on offer. The schemes has distributed £900,000 to 134 businesses so far.
  - Implemented business rate reliefs for eligible businesses and deferred payment of business rates until new bills could be sent.
  - Implemented its own initiatives including deferral of rental payments on commercial property owned by the Council for three months.
- Gathered data to understand impact and to raise issues with Government. Working closely with local businesses including Thurrock Business Board to understand the impact on the local economy and to inform discussions with Government.
- Provided easy to access advice and guidance on responding to COVID to local businesses. Sending regular updates to more than 2000 local businesses who have signed up for the business newsletter, promoted new guidance and opportunities via social media and tried to help respond to calls from businesses asking for help
- Supported the reopening of the High Street – introducing signage, reviewing queueing systems and talking to local business contacts to find out if they plan to reopen and to help them find answers to questions they may have
- Protected the public , businesses and their employees by:
  - employing staff to help maintain social distancing measures at particular pinch points
  - helping businesses understand and comply with guidance on reopening
  - taking action to encourage and enforce the rules when required

### **Working together to back Thurrock**

This is a positive start, but there is more we can do and will do to help. We need to work with our residents, our business community and our voluntary and community sector to:

- Invest in gathering economic intelligence and insight so it can identify and respond to developing issues

- Plan for local outbreaks. The Council's public health team have developed a Local Outbreak Control Plan working with partners to ensure there are effective systems in place to identify the source of an outbreak, to track and trace people who may be affected, to shut down the problem and protect local residents and the rest of the local economy. The plan will be developed and strengthened as we understand more about the virus
- Help people find work. Connect residents to new job opportunities and to gain the skills they need to find work. Promoting and expanding initiatives like Thurrock Opportunities – [www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk](http://www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk) – to help people find local jobs, apprenticeship opportunities and training courses. There needs to be a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as young people, care leavers, SEND and those with learning disabilities
- Support our local economy. We need to work together to develop new systems that help us all to buy locally, recruit locally, supply locally and to train locally.

We will continue to explore other opportunities including funding, new Government initiatives or home grown ideas to help our economy recover from the pandemic.

This is something that everyone can help with.

We all want to see our local businesses recover and new business emerge. We all want to see our family, friends, neighbours and colleagues in good quality jobs. We all want to see the wealth created in Thurrock spent in Thurrock, levelling up to benefit us all.

We have seen the community in Thurrock pull together and support each other through the lockdown, from the volunteers who have helped their vulnerable friends and neighbours to the fantastic key workers who have kept everything running.

Now everyone needs to do their bit to help the local economy recover.

# Our Vision and Approach

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In the medium to longer term we need to reframe our approach to economic development and growth. In these unprecedented times we need to realise the potential of local Government to act as an agent of change and a leader of place and collaborate with others to reshape our local economy, address the challenges we face and realise the fantastic growth potential we have.

## Our Vision for Growth

Thurrock's motto – 'By Thames to all peoples of the world' reflects our comparative strengths and unique selling points.

Our prime position next to London and the markets of the south east, our great transport links, our scope to export and import through our ports, our employment land availability all point to Thurrock having a fantastic opportunity to grow in a way that benefits everyone.

We need to recognise that we are part of the system that is already delivering for the UK economy and point to our strengths as a place to do business.

Thurrock's level of ambition and determination to drive growth that benefits local people is stronger than ever. However we do not want to see growth for the sake of it. We are determined that growth in Thurrock is infrastructure led, community driven and of high quality. It must deliver real benefits for our residents and for our business community who have shown a commitment to Thurrock by investing in the area.

Physical change in the borough will be guided by development of the new Local Plan, policy changes and the regeneration projects led by the council and other organisations across the borough.

This plan is about people, place and prosperity. It focuses on how the Council and its partners can help residents find good jobs with opportunities to progress, how we help our businesses adapt to new technology and to changes in demand, how we help our economy to become more productive and resilient, greener and wealthier. Most of all we need to work with our businesses to help them take advantage of the opportunities that are out there.

These are laudable aims in themselves but we also want to drive growth because of the positive impact on other priorities we all share: Improving the health and wellbeing of residents, helping to reduce poverty, tackle debt and to level up our communities, supporting investment not only in roads and rail but also in homes, schools, health and green spaces. Most importantly we want to support proud, vibrant communities.

Alongside our immediate work to recover from COVID we need to focus on:

- **Resilience:** Building an inclusive economy, helping people and businesses to plan for and adapt to changes in the economy, providing tailored support for vulnerable groups, support the levelling up agenda and take advantage of opportunities as they arise
- **Returning to growth:** Strengthening our key sectors and taking advantage of new opportunities created by long term changes in the economy such as green growth

What we do and how we do it will need to be defined with our partners. We want to collaborate with our businesses, our partners and stakeholders to develop our plans for driving resilience and growth

Most of all we want to work with the other anchor institutions in the borough to understand market needs and to facilitate growth and wealth creation that will benefit local people.

In short, we want to work together to be Back Thurrock.

### **Collaborating to facilitate market led growth**

We want to collaborate with other public sector institutions, private businesses and key voluntary sector groups that are established in Thurrock – Thurrock's Anchor Institutions that are rooted in our Borough, unlikely to move and are committed to Thurrock. Our Thurrock Anchor Institutions have a vested interest in Thurrock and we can work collectively to facilitate growth and benefit the whole economy.

Our call to action highlights five areas that we particularly want to explore:

- **Recruitment** - good quality jobs with prospects: by working together with key anchor institutions in Thurrock can have a defining impact on the prospects for local people – recruiting from local areas, particularly more deprived communities and building progression routes in work. We also want to explore how we can best help the most vulnerable and those hardest by the pandemic.
- **Collaborative procurement:** working together we can explore developing local supply chains that will support local businesses, the voluntary and community sector, social and micro-enterprises and employment, helping local people benefit more from the local economy. Many organisations, including the Council are looking at their procurement policies to see how much they can do to support the local economy and secure wider benefits through social value frameworks. For example in Preston spend by anchor institutions retained in Preston reached £112m – a rise of £74m compared with 2012/13. Manchester increased the proportion of spend with organisations based in or with a branch in Manchester from around half in 2008/9 to around 75% in 2015/16 – an additional boost of £350m.
- **Nurturing and supporting local businesses.** We can focus on nurturing locally owned businesses including social and micro enterprises that are more likely to employ, buy and invest locally.
- **Investing in Thurrock.** Active promotion of Thurrock as an area for investment - focused on key sectors and the responsible businesses we want to attract to contribute to the local economy. .
- **Using assets to enable the economic recovery:** whilst recognising the importance of return on assets considering how land and property assets held by anchor institutions can be best used to enable economic recovery and growth.

By collaborating we can achieve more than the sum of the parts. Through our intervention we can facilitate the market and generate jobs and growth that creates wealth within Thurrock and that stays invested in the area and increases the sustainability of key sectors. There are other wider benefits as well. We can collaborate to help address skills shortages, we can build local supply chains that are greener and more resilient, we can reduce demand for public services through positive early intervention before needs become acute.

Through collaboration we want to identify needs and develop actions around the foundations of economic growth

## The Foundations of Growth

We have identified five foundations for economic growth.

- **Business Advice and Support**

We want to work with the business community and business service providers to disseminate information and advice, address gaps in provision, strengthen networks between businesses and support collaboration in areas of shared interest such as developing supply chains.

Through our business advice and support we need to promote and improve productivity. The UK is less productive than comparator economies and as a result the country is poorer than it might otherwise be. Before COVID addressing the productivity gap was the key thrust of the Government's industrial policy.

We also need to make sure we help businesses understand the changes there will be as a result of leaving the EU and help gear up to take advantage of opportunities to generate export-led growth that arise.

- **Skills Training and Employment**

We want to develop opportunities for lifelong learning, addressing skills gaps and encouraging ongoing learning and development to develop an adaptable resilient business community and workforce

We also want to help local people find good jobs. We need to work together to promote local employment opportunities and to help drive local recruitment. We need to understand and overcome the barriers to employment and to work with particularly vulnerable groups such as care leavers and those with health conditions to help them realise their potential.

- **Sectors and supply chains**

As the economy moves from recovery and returns to growth key sectors that have growth potential, high value, are resilient and offer clean growth should be targeted with public intervention to facilitate market led growth and to attract inward investment. We have data on our most important and key growth sectors already but exploring potential with people already working in these sectors and understanding how we can best support them to grow is key.

Alongside a targeted approach to key sectors developing strong local supply chains to service those businesses will further encourage and support their growth.

- **A cleaner, greener economy**

Responding to climate change and reducing carbon emissions will be of continued importance to individuals, businesses and to Government. It is likely that national initiative will drive responding to climate change but locally we can focus on the opportunities this creates for green growth.

However addressing climate change is a real opportunity for the local economy – to innovate, adapt and to develop new businesses and markets.

- **Civic Pride and Community Engagement**

Civic Pride in our growth story and support from the local community will be essential to deliver on our growth ambitions and create the vibrant, dynamic society that helps everyone to realise their potential. If we want businesses and residents to feel ownership and to support the local economy we need to review and build upon our ways of engaging to bring people in to influence our work.

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# Resilience and a Return to Growth

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## Resilience

Resilience is key to ensuring that individuals and organisations in Thurrock are in a position to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Thurrock's location and the significant investment there is in the local economy.

It is also key to ensuring we have an inclusive economy, that people left behind have the opportunity to benefit from work – financially and through the many other benefits associated with participating in the economy such as better health and wellbeing outcomes; that helps businesses embrace new technology and improve productivity; that helps 'level up' areas of deprivation and creates new opportunities for everyone.

Some of the themes we would like to explore with our stakeholders include:

### *Resilience among individuals:*

- Helping to address the skills shortages in the economy and prepare local people for the new jobs that will be created in the coming years
- How we can better link local people to local employment opportunities and help career progression
- How we link skills and employment opportunities with other services to overcome multiple barriers to employment – such as debt management, housing opportunities, health and wellbeing services, childcare provision
- How we can help our most vulnerable residents such as care leavers and those with health issues to realise their potential and find rewarding work

### *Resilient businesses:*

- How we can help businesses to network and trade with each other
- How we can work together to improve productivity, embrace new technology and prepare for changes to the way we work such as automation
- How we can work together to help make sure that the wealth generated in Thurrock benefits the people and businesses of Thurrock

### *Resilient economy:*

- What we can do to improve the infrastructure in the economy - transport links, digital connectivity
- How we can help improve links between local people, skills providers and businesses to give residents the skills that employers need
- As a trading economy we need to explore what we can do to take advantage of opportunities arising from leaving the EU or changes to Government Policy such as the creation of Freeports - to support our local economy
- Can we take advantage of opportunities created by the drive for green growth
- Can we support the levelling up agenda so everyone has the opportunity to benefit from growth?
- Can we take steps to build pride in what Thurrock has to offer – to recognise what we're good at and to focus on the sectors with most potential

## Rebuilding Growth

Thurrock is a dynamic trading economy with an ambitious growth programme. The significant investment in the economy in recent years shows the confidence of private investors and public institutions in the potential of the area.

While the pandemic has resulted in a marked downturn Thurrock is well placed to weather the storm and to rebuild growth in the economy. Some of the themes we want to explore around the return to growth include:

- Building the case for investment in public infrastructure to help the economy to grow
- How we make best use of our position on the river and the opportunities afforded by the Ports to drive growth
- How we can support businesses in our key sectors and those with the most potential to grow
- What we can do to promote green growth
- How do we address the productivity gap, adapt to new technology and automation while ensuring our workers have the transferable skills to find new jobs
- How we can promote Thurrock and sell ourselves as a location for businesses that will support the local economy and create good jobs.
- How we can best exploit public and private investment in our key growth hubs to help businesses to grow

Exploring these themes and the foundations of economic growth with our anchor institutions and with stakeholders we will develop an Implementation Plan that will form part 2 of this report. The implementation plan will be prepared by January 2021 and implementation will begin immediately.



## A call to action

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We need your help.

There are things we can all do to help rebuild our economy and to support the recovery from the pandemic in the short term:

- We can buy from local businesses, we can try to recruit locally, and we can look for local suppliers of goods and services. All these things will help local businesses and jobs and ensure that wealth created in Thurrock stays in Thurrock.
- We can make sure we comply with social distancing rules and guidance, we can quarantine ourselves if we have COVID symptoms and we can support local track and trace services to help minimise the risk of a second wave and local lockdown
- We can start using our most vulnerable local facilities and businesses again as they reopen. We can begin to eat out, enjoy a drink, watch a film, get a haircut and see a show. Guidance needs to be followed but as the economy starts to reopen we can support it.

We also want to hear your thoughts on this plan, what you think makes sense and what you would change. If there are gaps we should address or opportunities we have missed. There will be a consultation on this report and it will be an opportunity for you to have your say and help shape our plans.

In parallel we want to work with our anchor institutions, with Thurrock Business Board and with other stakeholders including the voluntary and community sector to explore the issues and opportunities identified to build resilience and return to growth.

We will be arranging a series of roundtable discussions through the autumn and developing an implementation plan full of initiatives and actions that we want to collaborate on and implement in the medium and longer term.

We aim to have an implementation plan in place by January 2021. Delivery will begin straight away and the plan will be refreshed on a regular basis as opportunities arise.

Let's back Thurrock together.

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<b>16 September 2020</b>	<b>ITEM: 16</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	
<b>Quarter 1 (April to June 2020) Corporate Performance Report 2020/21 and End of Year Corporate Performance Summary 2019/20</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Deborah Huelin, Cabinet Member for Central Services and Communities	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> n/a	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

This is the first corporate performance monitoring report for 2020/21 covering April to June 2020.

This report provides a progress update in relation to the performance of those KPIs, including a focus on some specific highlights and challenges. It details the statistical evidence the council will use to monitor the progress and performance against the council's priorities.

At this unique and unprecedented time, this report shows that two thirds of indicators are currently achieving target and 40% are better than the previous year. Many indicators have been directly or indirectly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and the enforced changes to council services in line with government guidance at the height of 'lockdown' during this period. The report also highlights how Covid-19 has disrupted or changed performance and/or priorities and demand levels across a number of services.

The summary of the outturns for 2019/20 is included as Appendix 1. This shows very positive performance last year with 74% of measures achieving their end of year target, which is better than both 2018/19 and 2017/18.

This report was presented to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 September 2020, feedback from which will be raised at this meeting.

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 and the impact of Covid-19**
  - 1.2 **To identify any areas which require additional consideration**
  - 1.3 **To note the End of Year outturns 2019/20**

**2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1. The performance of the priority activities of the council is monitored through the Corporate Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework. This provides a mixture of strategic and operational indicators.
- 2.2. The indicators have been chosen to be 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. This reflects the demand for council services increasing and being ever more complex, not least due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, and the need for a holistic approach to monitoring data and intelligence. Analysis of performance and internal processes at service level by Directors continued monthly throughout 2019/20 and will continue throughout 2020/21.
- 2.4. These indicators will continue to be reported to both Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis, throughout 2020/21.
- 2.5. In line with the recommendation from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2019, throughout 2020/21, where performance is below target, commentary will be included to show the intended improvement plan. This is included in Section 3.6 as the “Route to Green”.

**3.1 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

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

**3.2 Summary of Corporate KPI Performance**

Quarter 1 2020/21 Performance against target		Direction of Travel compared to 2019/20	
Achieved	65.6% (21)	↑ BETTER	40% (8)
Failed	34.4% (11)	→ STATIC	20% (4)
		↓ WORSE	40% (8)

### **3.3 Impact of Covid-19**

- 3.3.1 Whilst the Quarter 1 (April to June 2020) overall outturn is lower than the 74% overall percentage achieving target at the end of 2019/20 and last year's Quarter 1 position (73.8%), at this stage the two figures are not comparable given the number of indicators currently unavailable and the unique and unprecedented impact on service delivery caused by Covid-19 disruption.
- 3.3.2 The majority of the indicators which are currently missing their target have been negatively impacted by Covid-19 disruption/restrictions. The narrative in section 3.6 highlights where performance has been affected during the first 3 months of 2020/21 at the height of the 'lockdown' changes.
- 3.3.3 In some cases, data is not available either because the data is not currently being recorded due to other priorities e.g. for Public Health or because that service/activity is not currently operating in line with government guidance.
- 3.3.4 In most cases the targets for 2020/21 have been set based on "normal" circumstances. This is likely to mean that more indicators will not "perform" as well as they did in 2019/20, and/or the rate of improvement will not be as great. The decision to keep targets comparable with last year is to more clearly analyse the impact of the disruption caused by the pandemic. Where an indicator has failed to reach its target during the year, the commentary provided will identify clearly whether this is related to Covid-19 impacts.
- 3.3.5 It is impossible to predict accurately how long and to what extent service delivery in some areas will continue to be impacted. This will be kept under close monitoring and in some cases, targets for 2020/21 will need to be reviewed.
- 3.3.6 Any targets for health and social care indicators which are part of the Better Care Fund are yet to be confirmed as these conversations with NHS partners and the Department of Health have been delayed due to Covid-19 priorities.

### 3.4 On target performance

Two thirds of available corporate KPIs achieved their targets.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65+) to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 population ( <i>population figure 24,063 published May 2020</i> )	Cllr Halden	739.7 per 100,000	20.8 (5)	66.5 (16)	87.3 (21)	87.3 (21)	ACHIEVED	BETTER	187.0 (45) (prov)	739.7 (178) (prov)
Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments	Cllr Halden	35.4%	36.1%	36.8%	36.6%	36.6%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	34%	34%
Number of applicants with family commitments in Bed & Breakfast for six weeks or more (ie those presenting as homeless who have dependent child(ren) or are pregnant)	Cllr Johnson	3	0	0	0	0	ACHIEVED	BETTER	0	0
% of repairs completed within target	Cllr Johnson	98.3%	98.7%	99.8%	99.7%	99.5%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	95%	95%
% General tenant satisfaction with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	Cllr Johnson	74.9%	76.7%	71.2%	78.4%	75.5%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	75%	75%
Proportion of older people (65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation	Cllr Halden	87.40%				93.1%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	86.3% (prov)	86.3% (prov)
% of volunteer placements filled within council	Cllr Huelin	96%				100%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	90%	96%
Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	Cllr Watkins	6.56%				3.67%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	9%	9%
Overall spend to budget on HRA (£K variance)	Cllr Johnson	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	ACHIEVED	STATIC	£0	£0
% of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks	Cllr Coxshall	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	ACHIEVED	STATIC	90%	90%
% of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe	Cllr Maney	99.33%	100%	100%	100%	100%	ACHIEVED	STATIC	98%	98%
% of primary schools judged "good" or better	Cllr Jefferies	92.0%				92.3%	ACHIEVED	STATIC	92% (prov)	92% (prov)

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
No of new apprenticeships started (inc. staff undertaking apprenticeship)(exc. LA maintained schools)	Cllr Huelin	69	1	0	1	2	ACHIEVED	WORSE	1	67
% Rent collected	Cllr Johnson	98.5%	74.9%	81.3%	88.9%	88.9%	ACHIEVED	WORSE	85%	98%
No of placements available within council for volunteers	Cllr Huelin	225				205	ACHIEVED	WORSE	190	210
% occupancy of council-owned business centres	Cllr Coxshall	91%				90%	ACHIEVED	WORSE	80%	80%
% occupancy of commercial properties	Cllr Coxshall	92%				88%	ACHIEVED	WORSE	88%	88%
Successful completion of treatment in Young People's Drug & Alcohol service (YTD)	Cllr Mayes	88%				78%	ACHIEVED	WORSE	70%	70%
Number of new Micro Enterprises started since 1 April 2020	Cllr Huelin	44				5	ACHIEVED	WORSE	0	20
Number of events and activities that support engagement in a range of cultural, social and learning opportunities to support well-being and strengthen community connections (total sessions provided in quarter)	Cllr Huelin	<i>new KPI</i>				0	ACHIEVED	N/A	0	600 (prov)
% of secondary schools judged "good" or better	Cllr Jefferies	<i>new KPI</i>				63.0%	ACHIEVED	N/A	63% (prov)	63% (prov)
Value (£) of council owned property disposals	Cllr Coxshall	£470k				£350K	n/a	WORSE	No target	No target

### 3.5 In focus highlight for Quarter 1

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	Tranche 1 Inspection	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	Cllr Watkins	6.56%	3.67%	ACHIEVED	BETTER	9%	9%

In their latest inspection, Keep Britain Tidy has found that all areas of the borough, including parks, town centres and streets are cleaner and clearer than ever with inspectors finding only 3.67% of sites they visited in the borough had litter on them. It shows the additional money the council has invested in street cleaning is really paying off.

Keep Britain Tidy inspectors specifically found:

- 96.33% of sites they visited in the borough had better than acceptable litter level against a target of 91% and up from 93.5% last year
- 94% had better than acceptable levels of graffiti
- 99% had better than acceptable levels of fly-posters
- 98.67% had better than acceptable levels of fly-tipping
- 99.67% had better than acceptable levels of dog fouling

This is a great result, and is testament to the hard work of the Environmental Enforcement team who, in February, were named Team of the Year at the prestigious Keep Britain Tidy Awards 2020.



### 3.6 Off target indicators

At the end of quarter 1, 11 of the available indicators failed to meet their target.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days)	Cllr Johnson	25.6 days	19.25	49.00	65.98	61.17	FAILED	WORSE	28	28
<p>Due to the impact of Covid-19 and in line with government guidance, choice based lettings were suspended for a period of time which meant the properties which were void during the period of suspension remained void for a much longer period of time than usual with only a small number of lettings through direct offers taking place in May. As these affected voids are let, re-let times will be much higher than usual.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>When all affected voids have been let, average re-let times are expected to return to usual levels and we have seen evidence of this already. Voids which have been let that became void since the bidding cycle was re-instated have been re-let in an average of 25.6 days. Choice based lettings were reinstated on 11 June 2020.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
% of places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough	Cllr Jefferies	73.0%				72.6% (Latest)	FAILED	WORSE	73% (prov)	73% (prov)
<p>This equates to a total of 573 children accessed their Two Year Entitlement funding. Many of the borough's childcare providers are closed so it has not been possible to confirm if there are outstanding claims to be made, nor can the impact of families not starting their placement due to Covid-19 related health concerns be ascertained. Although there has been a fall in numbers, it should be noted that we are still in line with the last known national figure for 2YE take up.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>The provisional data for Qtr 1 is only very slightly below target. It is anticipated that once childcare providers have reopened fully, this figure is likely to be revised upwards and will therefore be on or above target.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
% of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks	Cllr Coxshall	100%	100%	67%	100%	89%	FAILED	WORSE	90%	90%

Due to the relatively small numbers of major applications that the council receives one application that goes over the deadline makes a huge impact on the data, which is not representative of the levels of performance of the team. In this case, the applicant was required to submit additional supporting documents. Rather than refuse the application, which would be more disruptive to the applicant, the council took the pragmatic view to extend the timescale for determination. Unfortunately, the agent working on behalf of the application was unwilling to enter into that arrangement. This is highly unusual as in most cases planning agents are willing to enter into extension of time agreements because it avoids refusals and gives their client more time to resolve matters.

**Route to GREEN**

We will continue to work constructively with applicants and their agents to encourage the use of extension of time agreements to allow applications to continue through the usual process.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Number of health hazards removed as a direct result of private sector housing team intervention	Cllr Johnson	1,000	0	4	4	8	FAILED	WORSE	250	1,000

Covid-19 has prevented officers carrying out property inspections during the pandemic. The government recommended inspections in resident's homes did not take place unless it was an emergency, prior to July 2020.

**Route to GREEN**

The government has now allowed inspections to be carried out with guidance for professionals working safely in people's homes. As a result, the private housing service has updated its risk assessment to carry out home visits when safe to do so during this period. Routine inspections will commence in August 2020 and will be reviewed to reflect the changing situation during the coronavirus pandemic.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Payment rate of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)	Cllr Gledhill	55.97%	53.93%	49.26%	53.50%	52.19%	FAILED	WORSE	70%	70%
<p>The payment rate for Fixed Penalty Notices in the first quarter has been impacted by the pandemic. During the period of lockdown, the service has received a significant number of appeals and requests to either cancel the FPNs or to extend the payment period for reasons linked to Covid-19. The most common being, the recipient is either on furlough or not working at this time. Cases are being considered on an individual basis.</p> <p>Parking charges were suspended for NHS workers and other visiting staff carrying out vital work in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak. Penalties were not issued – nor enforced, if issued inadvertently – to anyone who parked safely without causing obstruction on crossings and zig-zags or restricted areas, if they can show they work for the NHS.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>The current situation is being reviewed on a regular basis and closely managed. There is an expectation that as the lockdown eases, the payment rate will increase.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
% Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted	Cllr Watkins	33.23%	25.97%	32.11%	36.48%	31.80%	FAILED	WORSE	47.39	41%
<p>This indicator is running below target. Some core contributors to the lower than expected recycling rate include the closure of the Household Waste and Recycling Centre for a period of time. The site has a significant impact on recycling levels. In order to ensure that core residual waste collections were maintained during lockdown, the garden waste collections were suspended for a period and then re-introduced on a monthly then fortnightly basis. At this time of the year, garden waste makes up a sizeable proportion of the recycling tonnage. The disruption to collections has impacted performance.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>Fortnightly garden waste collections with allocated days have commenced from 27 July. It is anticipated that this will both stabilise the collections as well as recovering composting tonnage. Although with slightly reduced levels of access, the Household Waste and Recycling Centre re-opened on Monday 18 May and is being well used. The Flats Recycling Project is due to commence rollout to housing flats in mid-September. This is a new source of recycling collections that will help to boost figures. The Cross Party Waste Working Group is currently working on the refresh of the Waste Strategy with a particular focus on actions and changes that can help to boost the recycling rate in the borough. The draft strategy is scheduled to be shared in October 2020.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Street Cleanliness - c) Graffiti	Cllr Watkins	4.67%				6.00%	FAILED	WORSE	3%	3%

Keep Britain Tidy, who are responsible for the cleanliness assessments, have commented that across all boroughs assessed to date this financial year, graffiti levels have increased. This pattern coincides with lockdown restrictions. The level of graffiti in the borough can also be linked to numerous prolific graffiti artists.

#### Route to GREEN

Recently a major graffiti clearing programme was undertaken in Tilbury accompanied by targeted and successful enforcement action. In order for graffiti to be cleared from private property, which is where the majority is appearing, a clear process of engagement needs to be followed with the landowner prior to the graffiti being removed. This process is currently under review with the intent of shortening the time between graffiti appearing and being cleaned.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	Cllr Watkins	98.91%	98.66%	98.61%	97.12%	98.13%	FAILED	WORSE	98.5%	98.5%

One of the impacts of the lockdown was a delay in the Waste Service being able to recruit and induct collection staff, whilst ensuring that all were able to work safely. The impact of resource availability was managed through adjustments to the frequency of garden waste collections and the collection target was met for the first two months of the year. In June however, the burden of annual leave and delays in recruitment resulted in some rounds not being collected on schedule although weekend work was undertaken to reduce the impact on residents.

#### Route to GREEN

Agency staff have now been recruited and inducted. Additionally a structured fortnightly collection cycle for garden waste bins has been introduced and the service is confident that these measures will see an improvement in the collection rate.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
% Initial Health Assessment (IHA) completed within 28 days (20 working days) of child becoming Looked After	Cllr Halden	69.2%				66.7%	FAILED	WORSE	80%	80%
<p>In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, performance was impacted due to Covid-19. NELFT have advised that none of their paediatricians have been redeployed, however one paediatrician was shielding. A number of Local Authorities (LA) Providers have had their paediatricians redeployed or have had to isolate due to Covid-19. Subsequently, this has put an extra pressure on a number of Providers to deliver a service that was already depleted before Covid-19 started. One of the main problems with HAs are the children placed out of area (OOA). A number of surrounding areas have stated they do not have capacity to undertake Initial Health Assessments (IHA) for our OOA children.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>Due to the above, the CCG has spot purchased their IHAs to minimise the waiting time and potential risks that could be associated with delayed IHAs. Further work and discussion is taking place to consider longer term solutions. This indicator is also reported one month in arrears (due to data availability) – as of mid-August 20 the figure for June 20 stands at 75% so an improvement is already being realised.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Overall spend to budget on General Fund (% variance against forecast)	Cllr Hebb	0	n/a	(£2.2m)	(£2.2m)	(£2.2m)	FAILED	WORSE	0	0
<p>The Quarter 1 position is that the council is forecasting an overspend. This relates to a number of factors including a forecast reduction in new investment income, additional costs and incomes losses arising from Covid-19 and pressures in Children's Services.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>Mitigating actions are currently being considered across all council service areas and will be reported to DB and members on a regular basis as part of the usual finance reporting process.</p>										

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	Quarter 1 Target	2020/21 Target
Total gross external income (fees & charges) (based on sales forecast)	Cllr Hebb	£8m	n/a	£5.2m	£5.2m	£5.2m	FAILED	WORSE	£7.3m	£7.3m
<p>This gross external income is below the Commercial Board target and is a direct result of lost fees and charges for the first three months of the year during lockdown. Work is ongoing to forecast the overall impact while there are still restrictions in place. It is unlikely that the original target will be achieved by the end of the year but it is noted that central government support will mitigate some of the reduction in income. This will be built into subsequent forecasts once there is clarity on the funding available.</p>										
<b>Route to GREEN</b>										
<p>This is being monitored and reported to DB and members on a regular basis as part of the COVID-19 impacts. The central government funding of income losses will improve the position by the end of 2020/21.</p>										

### 3.7 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

Demand Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder	2019/20 Outturn	In month April	In month May	In month June	Qtr 1	Direction of Travel since 2019/20
Number of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	Cllr Johnson	1,934	119	97	132	348	LOWER
No of homeless cases accepted	Cllr Johnson	107	22	22	28	72	HIGHER
<p>Whilst the number of at risk approaches is lower than the equivalent period last year, the number of homeless cases accepted is three times higher than in quarter 1 2019/20. This is a direct impact of a general decrease in demand during this period meaning officers were in a position to work through the backlog of cases and issue more decisions, including acceptances, when required.</p>							

### Performance indicators for which data is not currently available due to Covid-19 disruption

Number of delayed transfers of care (DToC) - days from hospital (attrib. to NHS, ASC & Joint)	The collection and publication of official DToC figures are currently suspended by NHS England.
Number of GP practices with automated screening protocol in place for depression and anxiety amongst LTC (long-term conditions) patients	Data not currently available
Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average) (ie time between entering care and moving in with adoptive family)	Due to Covid-19 disruption, Q1 return is delayed. Anticipate data in October.
Tenant satisfaction with Transforming Homes	Transforming Homes activity was suspended during lockdown.
Forecast Council Tax collected	Covid-19 impact is ongoing and is still being assessed. This is being regularly reported to members alongside separate financial reporting.
Forecast National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected	
Contact Centre - Face to Face average waiting times (minutes)	Face to Face has not been operating since 23 March due to Covid-19 lockdown.
Contact Centre - Face to Face - no of visitors	

### **3.8 End of Year Corporate Performance Summary**

- 3.8.1 The data in relation to the final outturns for 2019/20 are included in Appendix 1. Overall 74% of corporate indicators achieved their target by year end. That is higher than both 2017/18 (68%) and 2018/19 (66%). 73% of measures improved or stayed the same from the previous year.
- 3.8.2 In most cases, the 2019/20 data has not been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as the year was nearly over by the time service delivery was affected.
- 3.8.3 In some cases however, it has not been possible to undertake the necessary data quality checks due to other COVID-19 response related priorities and/or staff availability. Some of these outturns are still provisional therefore and may be subject to change.
- 3.8.4 A very specific example of the council ACHIEVING is in the number of national awards Thurrock services have won or were shortlisted for during 2019/20. A full list of these can be found at [www.thurrock.gov.uk/how-we-are-doing/awards](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/how-we-are-doing/awards). The pinnacle of this is the council having been shortlisted – for the second year running – as Local Authority of the Year 2019/20 in the Municipal Journal Awards. In shortlisting Thurrock Council the MJ says: "Thurrock Council is a previous finalist and has consistently demonstrated its ability to adapt, prosper and grasp socioeconomic opportunities. Its leadership of the place agenda is impressive and the council unapologetically aspires to delivering for both businesses and residents." The winner will be announced via an online awards ceremony in October.

### **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 will focus on during 2020/21 and confirms the governance and monitoring mechanisms which were in place to ensure that priorities are delivered.

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

- 5.1 Performance against the corporate priorities was monitored through Performance Board, a cross-council officer group of performance experts representing each service. Performance Board will continue to consider 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 and Scrutiny Committee, and finally reported to Cabinet.



5.3 This report was presented to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 September 2020, feedback from which will be raised at this meeting.

## **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 working towards achieving the vision and priority ambitions.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Joanne Freeman**  
**Finance Manager**

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.

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.

The council is still assessing the full financial impact of Covid-19 and this is being regularly reported to members.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**  
**Deputy Head of Law and Regeneration, and**  
**Deputy Monitoring Officer**

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: **Rebecca Lee**

## **Team Leader – Community Development and Equalities**

The Corporate Performance Framework for 2020/21 contains 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 in the body of the report. Where applicable these are covered in the appendix.

### **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**

- End of Year Corporate Performance Summary 2019/20

### **Report Author:**

Sarah Welton  
Strategy Manager

Including Annual Indicators				Not including Annual Indicators			
End of Year 2019/20 Outturn Performance against target		Direction of Travel compared to End of Year Outturn 2018/19		End of Year 2019/20 Outturn Performance against target		Direction of Travel compared to End of Year Outturn 2018/19	
<b>Achieved</b>	74% (37)	<b>↑</b> <b>BETTER</b>	60% (27)	<b>Achieved</b>	76.7% (33)	<b>↑</b> <b>BETTER</b>	55% (22)
<b>Failed</b>	26% (13)	<b>→</b> <b>STATIC</b>	13.3% (6)	<b>Failed</b>	23.3% (10)	<b>→</b> <b>STATIC</b>	15% (6)
		<b>↓</b> <b>WORSE</b>	26.7% (12)			<b>↓</b> <b>WORSE</b>	30% (12)

This compares with 68% of KPIs that achieved the End of Year target in 2018/19, and 66% that achieved it in 2017/18.

PFH	Corporate Scorecard Indicator Definition	2016/17 Outturn	2017/18 Outturn	2018/19 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	QTR 3 YTD	2019/20 End of Year Outturn	Direction of Travel since 2018/19	2019/20 End of Year Target
Cllr Halden	Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments	n/a	37.14%	33.1%	36.5%	36.6%	34.9%	35.4%	BETTER	32%
Cllr Huelin	No of placements available within council for volunteers	n/a	n/a	180	191	240	211	225	BETTER	210
Cllr Mayes	Number of additional hypertensive patients diagnosed following screening programmes	n/a	949	694	255	477	835	1,155	BETTER	600
Cllr Mayes	Number of GP practices with a profile card and agreed joint priorities within the preceding 12 months	n/a	n/a	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%	BETTER	93%
Cllr Johnson	% of repairs completed within target	98.30%	97.5%	97.70%	97.4%	97.3%	97.9%	98.3%	BETTER	95%
Cllr Johnson	% Rent collected	99%	99%	98.80%	89.6%	93.7%	97.3%	98.5%	BETTER	98%
Cllr Jeffries	% of 17-21 yr old Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training	61.10%	72.40%	62%	61%	66%	67%	63%	BETTER	Above national average (51%)
Cllr Watkins	% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	98.30%	98.23%	97.85%	99.40%	99.49%	99.55%	98.91%	BETTER	98.50%
Cllr Maney	% of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe	97.70%	97.10%	99.10%	100%	99%	100%	99.33%	BETTER	98%
Cllr Hebb	Forecast National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) collected	99.7%	99.8%	98.9%	99.3%	99.3%	99.3%	99.3%	BETTER	99.3%
Cllr Huelin	No of new apprenticeships started (incl current staff undertaking new apprentice standards) as % of workforce	n/a	40	60	7	39	51	69	BETTER	59 (2.3%)
Cllr Huelin	Contact Centre - Face to Face average waiting times (minutes)	06:52	06:53	03:56	01:02	00:59	00:50	00:59	BETTER	3 mins
Cllr Halden	Number of delayed transfers of care - days from hospital (attrib. to NHS, ASC & Joint)	4255	3451	2,459	414	819	1206	1623 (Apr-Feb Official) 1812YE Est (Provisional)	BETTER	3,036
Cllr Coxshall	% occupancy of commercial properties	new KPI	new KPI	89%	91%	91%	92%	92%	BETTER	88%
Cllr Coxshall	Value of business rate base (ANNUAL)	new KPI	new KPI	£277.5m				£282.8m	BETTER	£277.5m
Cllr Jeffries	KS2 Attainment - % Achieving the National Standard in Reading, Writing & Maths (ANNUAL)	51%	62%	66%				70%	BETTER	Above national average (61%)
Cllr Jeffries	Children Looked After KS2 - % Achieving the National Standard in Reading, Writing & Maths (ANNUAL)	33.30%	55%	50%				58%	BETTER	Above national average (32%)
Cllr Jeffries	Children Looked After KS4 - Progress 8 score (ANNUAL)	-0.81	-0.64	-1.39				-0.97	BETTER	Above national average (-1.18)
Cllr Coxshall	Total number of homes permitted through Planning (ANNUAL)	new KPI	new KPI	409				3323	BETTER	950
Cllr Watkins	Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	n/a	9%	10.06%	Tranche 1 8%	Tranche 2 5.83%	Tranche 3 5.83%	6.56%	BETTER	9%
Cllr Jeffries	% NEET + Unknown 16-17 year olds (Age at start of academic year)	n/a	2.10%	1.9%	2.5%	1.50%	1.70%	1.70%	BETTER	1.7%
Cllr Johnson	Number of health hazards removed as a direct result of private sector housing team intervention	n/a	n/a	896	201	579	822	1,000	BETTER	900
Cllr Huelin	% of volunteer placements filled within council	n/a	n/a	85%	90%	90%	95%	96%	BETTER	96%
Cllr Halden	Proportion of older people (65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation	n/a	n/a	82.50%	86.9%	86.2%	90.6%	87.4%	BETTER	86.3%
Cllr Coxshall	No of Thurrock businesses benefitting from ERDF programmes	new KPI	new KPI	68	13	(4) 17	(19) 36	(11) 47	n/a as different programmes	40
Cllr Huelin	Number of new Micro Enterprises started since 1 April 2019	new KPI	new KPI	new KPI	14	27	33	44	N/A	20
Cllr Halden	% of young people who reoffend after a previously recorded	28%	30%	18%	18% (Q4)	11% (Q1)	9% (Q2)	11% (Q3)	quarter in arrears	National average (39.6% 17/18)
Cllr Mayes	Successful completion of treatment in Young People's Drug & Alcohol service (YTD)	n/a	86%	89%	100%	95%	88%	88%	STATIC	70%
Cllr Johnson	Overall spend to budget on HRA (£K variance)	-£304	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	STATIC	£0
Cllr Coxshall	% of Major planning applications processed in deadline	97.30%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	STATIC	90%
Cllr Coxshall	% of Minor planning applications processed in deadline	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	STATIC	90%
Cllr Hebb	Forecast Council Tax collected	98.9%	98.8%	98.9%	98.9%	98.9%	98.9%	98.9%	STATIC	98.9%
Cllr Hebb	Overall spend to budget on General Fund (% variance against forecast)	0	-5%	0	0	0	0	0	STATIC	0
Cllr Johnson	Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days)	34.7 days	30.6 days	26.64 days	26.5	26.8	25.4	25.6	WORSE	28 days
Cllr Johnson	Tenant satisfaction with Transforming Homes	n/a	n/a	87.50%	86.20%	88.00%	87.00%	86.9%	WORSE	85%
Cllr Halden	Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average) (ie time between entering care and moving in with adoptive family)	565 days	527 days	343 days	366 days	381 days	393 days	426 days	WORSE	National average (486 2015-18)
Cllr Hebb	Total gross external income (fees & charges) (based on sales forecast)	n/a	£8,000k	£9318k	£7.34m	£7.73m	£8.1m	£8m	WORSE	£7.7m
Cllr Johnson	Number of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	n/a	n/a	1,605	418	988	1477	1934	HIGHER	N/A - demand
Cllr Johnson	No of homeless cases accepted	n/a	n/a	97	27	42	75	107	HIGHER	N/A - demand
Cllr Coxshall	Average weekly household earnings (Gross weekly pay for full time workers by place of residence) (Thurrock resident) (data from ONS/NOMIS) (ANNUAL)	£574	£556.10	£579.30				£632.40*	HIGHER	Regional average
Cllr Coxshall	Total number of employee jobs in Thurrock (data from ONS/NOMIS) (ANNUAL)	n/a	63,000 (2016)	64,000 (2017)				67,000 (2018)	HIGHER	64,000
Cllr Huelin	Contact Centre - Face to Face - no of visitors	100,913	100,494	68,822	14,489	29,964	44,122	58,504	LOWER	n/a
Cllr Coxshall	Value (£) of council owned property disposals	new KPI	new KPI	n/a	£320k	£470k	£470k	£470k	n/a	Baseline year
Cllr Jeffries	% of primary schools judged "good" or better	91%	97%	90%	92%	92%	92%	92%	BETTER	94%
Cllr Jeffries	KS4 Attainment - Progress 8 score (ANNUAL)	-0.01	0.03	-0.19				-0.07	BETTER	National average (-0.03)
Cllr Jeffries	Achievement of Level 2 qualification at 19 years old (ANNUAL)	86%	81.80%	82.40%				82.4%	NEXT DATA DUE SEPTEMBER - however may not be complete nor comparable	Above national average (83.6%)
Cllr Jeffries	Achievement of Level 3 qualification at 19 years old (ANNUAL)	51%	54.40%	51.90%				51.9%		Above national average (57.6%)
Cllr Halden	Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65+) to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 population	708 per 100,000	649 per 100,000	669 per 100,000	139 (33)	345 (82)	542 (129)	739.7 (178)	WORSE	656
Cllr Huelin	Number of library members (signed up and active within 12 months for loans and PC use)	n/a	n/a	25,756	25,383	25,865	25,652	25,561	WORSE	26,785
Cllr Johnson	Number of applicants with family commitments in Bed & Breakfast for six weeks or more (ie those presenting as homeless who have dependent child(ren) or are pregnant)	n/a	n/a	1	0	0	3	3	WORSE	0
Cllr Jeffries	% of all schools judged "good" or better	new KPI	new KPI	88%	88%	88%	85%	84%	WORSE	National average (85.6%)
Cllr Gledhill	Payment rate of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)	new KPI	new KPI	61.60%	53.05%	54.40%	59.32%	55.97%	WORSE	70%
Cllr Watkins	% Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted	37.1%	37.2%	37.2%	38.71%	37.57%	35.77%	34.58% Provisional	WORSE	41%
Cllr Watkins	Street Cleanliness - c) Graffiti	n/a	2.18%	4.28%	Tranche 1 3.67%	Tranche 2 4%	Tranche 3 6.33%	4.67%	WORSE	3%

Indicators that changed status in the last quarter

PFH	Corporate Scorecard Indicator Definition	2016/17 Outturn	2017/18 Outturn	2018/19 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 2 YTD	QTR 3 YTD	2019/20 End of Year Outturn	Direction of Travel since 2018/19	2019/20 End of Year Target
Clr Johnson	% General tenant satisfaction with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	70.97%	70%	68%	73.9%	75.5%	75.1%	74.9%	BETTER	75%
	This dropped slightly in quarter 4 and therefore missed the target by just 0.1%. This is not considered as having been as a result of COVID19 as was too early. Impact may be seen in early 2020/21 figures as service delivery was disrupted.									
Clr Jeffries	Number of places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough	659	659 (73.4%)	79.6%	N/A (Termly)	73.49% (Summer)	88.06% (Autumn)	73% (Provisional and subject to data quality checking)	WORSE	75%
	A total of 573 children accessed their Two Year Entitlement funding during the spring 2020 term. This equates to 72.62% take up when measured against 789 families on the November 2019 DWP list. This is a significant decrease on take up over the past five years, and in all probability is linked to COVID-19. Many of our childcare providers are closed so we are unable to confirm if there are outstanding claims to be made, nor can we ascertain the impact of families not starting their placement due to Coronavirus related health concerns. This overall figure therefore is still provisional and subject to change. Although there has been a fall in numbers, it should be noted that we are still in line with the last known national figure for 2YE take up. Included in the above numbers are 6 children on a child protection plan, 9 children in need and 5 children looked after (CLA) Thurrock plus 2 CLA from another authority. An additional 11 children accessed a placement allocated by social care under our local criteria (these children are not added to our DFE returns so are not included in the total number of children accessing 2YE). Please note that these figures may not reflect actual take up during the period when access to childcare provision was restricted.									

Overview: In most cases, the 2019/20 data has not been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as the year was nearly over by the time service delivery was affected. In some cases however, it has not been possible to undertake the necessary data quality checks due to other COVID-19 response related priorities and/or staff availability. Some of these outturns therefore may be subject to change. It has already been seen that the performance shown in a number of the indicators for the first few months of 2020/21 has been affected. This will be kept under close monitoring and in some cases, targets for 2020/21 will need to be reviewed.