

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 **6.00 pm** on **13 January 2021**

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

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

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

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

Agenda published on: **5 January 2021**

Information for members of the public and councillors

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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 9 December 2020 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-ins is Monday 21 December 2020 at 5.00pm

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

Apologies: Councillor Andrew Jefferies

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Ian Hunt, Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Lucy Tricker, Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded, with the audio recording being made available on the Council's website.

62. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 11 November 2020 were approved as a true and correct record.

63. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

64. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

65. Statements by the Leader

The Leader began his statement and outlined the daily change in the levels of COVID-19 across the borough. He stated that he would not give a breakdown of cases by age, but that added that Thurrock currently had 224 positive cases per 100,000. He confirmed that although COVID levels were rising across the borough, the number of COVID cases amongst people over 60 had dropped. He added that neighbouring council's across Essex and London were also facing increased COVID levels. The Leader confirmed that the decision surrounding tiers was made by central government, and Thurrock's tier position would be updated next week. He hoped that Thurrock would remain in Tier 2, and urged residents to practice 'hands, face, space', as well as social distancing and wearing masks in all shops, regardless of how large they were. He added that the Council would be working with businesses to make sure they continued to be COVID-19 compliant.

The Leader moved on and discussed the annual Give a Gift scheme, which ensured disadvantaged children from across the borough received presents at Christmas. He stated that donations were currently being accepted online via an Amazon wish-list, which would close at midnight on Sunday. He stated that the project currently needed donations of gift cards, to make sure that older children could choose presents they really wanted. He stated that all information was on the Council's website, and urged Members to share the scheme on their social media pages. He added that an email from the Communications team was also being sent round, and outlined how easy it was to send a gift to a disadvantaged child. He thanked Thurrock Council staff for their help in organising the scheme, as well as Amazon, and the people who had already donated. He stated that donations had been received from people all around the UK, as well as from people overseas.

The Leader then discussed the free school meals scheme, which would ensure that eligible children received £15 per week over the two weeks' Christmas break. He stated that the scheme was grant funded from central government's Winter Grant Scheme, and would begin to be distributed on 14 December 2020 directly from the schools. He added that this would help ensure 6,200 Thurrock children had enough to eat over the Christmas period, and would be continued for the February half-term too. He stated that Thurrock Council were working with central government and volunteers to ensure the scheme would continue through later half-terms and school breaks. He thanked all charities and volunteers that were working with eligible families to ensure that no child went hungry.

The Leader then outlined the Transforming Homes scheme, which had continued to renovate and improve the homes of 205 families living in the borough's high rises and flats. He stated that new windows had been fitted, as well as communal areas being decorated and new external doors fitted. He gave the example of Derwent Parade, and the benefits that residents had already seen from the scheme in this area. The Leader moved on and stated that the Local Plan consultation had started today, which would create a direction for Thurrock's communities. He stated that the Council were working with the Prince's Foundation on the 'BIMBY Project', which stood for Beauty in my Back Yard. He encouraged all residents to take part in the consultation process, and highlighted how successful the charrette process had been in Aveley.

The Leader then outlined the Clean It, Cut It, Fill It update, and stated that 1938 potholes had been filled, all within target time; 260 tonnes of litter had been cleared; 814 fly-tips had been cleared; and 2342 Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued.

The Leader summarised and stated that the discretionary grant scheme was still running and offered help for businesses across Thurrock struggling with the impact of COVID. He urged those businesses that needed support to discuss this with the Council, as the team would work with businesses on an individual basis to make sure they had the support they needed. He added

that individuals struggling to pay their Council bills should also discuss this with the team, as the Council could help set up payment plans and offer support. The Leader then wished everyone across the borough a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, even though it would not be the same festive season as in previous years. He urged residents to follow government advice and help keep infection rates down over the Christmas period.

66. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues

Councillor Johnson stated that there had been recent reports of damp in high-rise accommodation in the borough. He stated that although there was no quick-fix solution, he would work with officers and residents to help tackle the problem. He added that he had asked for a paper to discuss potential options for the high-rises, including short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions. He stated that the team would look at all options, including refurbishing the buildings, rehousing those tenants affected by damp, and potentially pulling down the high-rises. Councillor Johnson commented that he was committed to improving the safety and security for those residents in high-rises. The Leader commented that it was good to see the Council were acting on those reports and moving forward by considering all options. He stated that not all high-rises suffered from damp, and not all flats in those high-rises that did contain damp were affected by the problem. The Leader added that people living in low-rises and other accommodation could also be affected by damp problems.

Councillor Mayes stated that Thurrock had recently been chosen as one of ten sites to benefit from mobile lung health checks. He commented that the project had begun today, with a mobile unit placed at the Grays Hospital site. He mentioned that if you were aged between 55 and 74 years old and were a smoker, you would be contacted by letter or text, asking you to come for a scan at the mobile centre. He stated that the scan would be COVID secure, and could help detect lung cancer early and improve outcomes for residents. Councillor Mayes also stated that the government had also approved the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, which would be rolled out this week. He stated that Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital had started the vaccination process, and felt pleased to see that the COVID-19 vaccination could help stop the spread of the pandemic. He added that the vaccine would not solve COVID-19 overnight, and people should continue to follow the government guidelines. The Leader added that it was good to see the vaccine being offered to Thurrock residents already, and stated that he would be liaising with those residents to discuss their experiences.

67. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

No petitions had been submitted by members of the public.

68. Questions from Non-Executive Members

No questions had been submitted from non-Executive Members.

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

Other than those items already contained within the agenda, no matters had been referred to Cabinet for consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee.

70. Overview and Scrutiny at Thurrock: A Review (Decision 110537)

Councillor Gerrish introduced the report, as Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Scrutiny Review. He began by thanking Democratic Services for their hard work on the project, and stated that it had been a lengthy project due to delays caused by COVID-19 and the need for genuine cross-party participation, particularly from scrutiny Chairs, members from scrutiny, and members of the Executive. He thanked all Members for their participation in the project, and stated that all suggestions raised at the Executive-Scrutiny Workshop had been incorporated within the recommendations. He stated that the aim of the review had been to improve scrutiny, and ensure that scrutiny recommendations resulted in action. He added that although the functions would remain separate, with the Executive making decisions, the wish of the review had been to ensure that scrutiny had a full role, including policy development. He highlighted page 22 of the agenda, which contained the recommendations for the review, which had been divided into structural recommendations that could be implemented now, and developmental recommendations that would take longer to implement. He stated that one of the most important recommendations was the adoption of the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol which would formalise operating guidelines and introduce new ways of working. He stated that the Protocol would provide more formal recognition of scrutiny's feedback at Cabinet and also ensure scrutiny powers, such as invitation of Portfolio Holder's to scrutiny meetings, were developed. He stated that the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol highlighted processes that already existed at Thurrock, such as the Chairs Letter to the Executive, but would ensure that scrutiny could have a larger role within the Council. He stated that due to limitations the review had not considered how members of the public could become more involved in scrutiny, but this could be looked into at a later date, as this report introduced a framework which could be built upon.

Councillor Halden thanked Councillor Gerrish for the report and stated that he felt good scrutiny and good opposition created good governance. He was pleased to see the report and felt that an improved scrutiny function would ensure that the Executive made good decisions, with all Members included in the process. He felt that the scrutiny function depended on individual Chairs working with the Executive, but welcomed the report and its recommendations. He asked if an additional recommendation could be added for the Monitoring Officer to convene a Constitution Working Group in 2021 to ensure the recommendations from the report were embedded within the Council.

Councillor Coxshall again thanked Councillor Gerrish and stated that scrutiny Chairs also needed to work with officers on reports that came before their committee, as well as working with the Portfolio Holder if political questions needed to be answered. He felt that it was a good idea for the scrutiny Chairs to invite the Portfolio Holder before the Committee once a year to undertake a deep dive regarding certain issues. He added that cross-party scrutiny Chairs should also work together to ensure scrutiny was working as a whole.

Councillor Hebb welcomed the report, and agreed with all recommendations. He stated that the Protocol and recommendations would improve clarity regarding the hand-over from the scrutiny function to the Executive. He added that each Chair had a different character and would lead their scrutiny committee differently, so this should be considered when implementing the report. He felt that although the report and recommendations were good, it was a shame that the process had to be formalised, as this would potentially lose some individual characteristics from each Chair and committee. He agreed that Portfolio Holders should attend scrutiny meetings, as he felt this would improve relationships between the Portfolio Holder and their shadow, and would lead to better working. He agreed with the additional recommendation from Councillor Halden regarding the Constitution Working Group looking at the recommendations.

Councillor Huelin thanked officers and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their hard work on the report, and felt that the conversation at the Executive-Scrutiny Workshop had been open and led to greater understanding and good recommendations. She felt pleased that recommendations 3 and 4 had been included in the report, and welcomed the conversation between Portfolio Holders and Shadow Portfolio Holders. She also welcomed recommendation 9 regarding the reduction of 'to note' reports at scrutiny, as this could free up time for proper scrutinising. Councillor Hebb questioned whether the 'to note' reports which were emailed to Members could come before public committee if necessary.

Councillor Gerrish stated that different scrutiny Chairs did have different styles, but felt that the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol would ensure Chairs had a clearer understanding of their powers and role, which would be beneficial for the wider Council. He stated that he was happy include the additional recommendation regarding the Constitution Working Group considering the implementation of the report in 2021, and felt this might improve the ongoing conversation. He replied to Councillor Hebb's question that the Chairs would receive specific guidance regarding 'to note' reports, and hoped that Chairs would understand when a report needed to come before Committee for public interest, compared to a report which had no real impact on scrutiny's work and could be separately emailed.

The Leader summarised and felt that it was good to see this report, and hoped it would have a continued impact. He felt that scrutiny should not be a 'talking shop' and should be a part of effective decision-making at the Council. He added that it was good to see a more formalised process for scrutiny comments to get to Cabinet, as well as a strengthening of the relationship

between Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder. He also felt it was a good recommendation for the scrutiny function to have oversight of the motions process, and ensure that each motion is taken seriously and actioned. The Leader supported the additional recommendation made by Councillor Halden regarding the Constitution Working Group, which would ensure all recommendations were enacted.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 as they relate to Cabinet functions, and noted those that pertain to the Overview and Scrutiny function.

2. Approved the draft Executive-Scrutiny Protocol, as attached at Appendix 1.

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

71. Financial Update Quarter 2 2020/21 (Decision: 110538)

Councillor Hebb introduced the report and stated that central government had recently made a top-level announcement regarding government funding for Council's, but Thurrock were currently waiting for the detail of this to fully understand the Council's position. He stated that Thurrock were currently in discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the outcome of these discussions would be known next week. He stated that central government's spending review would affect Thurrock's position in a positive way, but would not fix all financial problems currently being faced. He added that the 2% increase limit for Council tax was still in place, as well as the 3% increase limit for the social care precept, which was now more important than ever due to COVID. He highlighted that the Council's current calculations suggested financial pressures in the budget, and although the COVID vaccine was moving forward, financial pressures due to the pandemic would continue to be felt for years to come.

Councillor Hebb stated that since 2018, the Council had always had a balanced budget for four out the five years on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, but the Council were now in a deficit of £33.6million over the next four years due to COVID. He stated that the next financial year was when the Council would experience the most financial pressure, with a funding gap of £19million. He added that although some Council's around the country had had to bring an emergency in-year budget to their Full Council meetings, Thurrock were not in that position, although the Council would be setting its budget up until the eleventh hour, which was the case around the country. Councillor Hebb added that Thurrock were working with central government to find ideas to tackle the budget deficit, but highlighted that some ideas would not work. He commented that the Council wished to do whatever was in their control to reduce the deficit without affecting services to residents, or increasing council tax.

Councillor Hebb added that had the pandemic not occurred then Thurrock's budget would have broken even. Councillor Hebb then outlined current service pressures, such as Children's directorate which was currently experiencing a pressure of £0.9million, or 2% of their overall total budget. He stated that this was due to an increase in the number of children presenting to the service, and an increase in the number of complex cases. He mentioned that Thurrock were not currently planning any new investments, as there was currently no market for new investments and confidence had decreased. He stated that all Councillors had voted for the investment strategy which had helped maintain the delivery of non-statutory services and reduced the financial burden on residents. He added that for the sixth year running the Council's audit had been signed-off by external auditors as being within target, and this had also been agreed by the Standards and Audit Committee.

Councillor Hebb then added that the Council were currently experiencing £15m in-year pressure, although Thurrock were receiving SR20 support. He added that Thurrock were also experiencing £4.3m in adult social care pressure, which would increase post-COVID, as well as £2.2m spent on rough sleeping accommodation, which had ensured that those homeless residents in Thurrock had been kept safe during the pandemic.

Councillor Hebb commented that the capital programme had been paused, which would provide £13m in savings, and the capital budgets were also under review. He stated that as of 30 September 2020, Thurrock had borrowed £3bn, and investments had been agreed by all Councillors in 2017, 2018 and 2019. He stated that Thurrock had also recently had discussions with the Public Works Loan Board, but this was not to borrow for new investments. He summarised and stated that although there were ongoing financial pressures from COVID-19, the Council were in a good position due to increased reserves.

Councillor Halden commented and stated that he was proud of the social care team, and thanked the Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health; the Corporate Director of Children's Social Care; and all frontline staff for their hard work throughout the pandemic. He stated that even during this difficult time, the Council were still supporting those in need in the borough, such as through tax cuts for foster carers, the Resiliency Fund, and new housing for the Head Start Housing project. He added that the consultation regarding domiciliary care had ended today, which would help reduce market threats. Councillor Halden added that the social care teams had a difficult challenge ahead, as the economic impacts from COVID affected people's social situations, and increased the number of domestic violence and mental health incidents across the borough. He stated that although government grants would help with the COVID-19 pressures, and social care market would continue to see increased demand and more complex care cases to deal with.

The Leader stated that the Council had been in a good financial position before the pandemic had hit, and although government grants did help, they did not fully cover the financial pressures being experienced by the Council.

He added that the Council were being affected by the pandemic in numerous different ways, such as an increase in people claiming Local Council Tax Scheme support; a reduction in the number of houses being built, so no increase in council tax; and a reduction in car parking fees. He stated that the additional pressures had been unexpected and significant, and Thurrock would have to pay for 75% of its lost income, with 25% being paid by central government. He stated that Council expenditure would need to be rolled back, but projects that had already been started would continue.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Commented on the MTFs and the forecast outturn position for 2020/21

2. Agreed that Thurrock's 2021/22 schools funding formula be implemented as stated in section 16. This being consistent with Cabinet's decision made in February 2020.

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

72. Environmental Health Jurisdiction: DP World Distribution Park (Decision: 110539)

The Leader introduced the report and stated that the Corporation of London was the Council for London's square mile, and also had responsibility for port health matters along the Thames, which included environmental health at DP World. He stated that the jurisdiction of the Corporation of London was limited to the Port, and currently did not include the new distribution park. The Leader stated that this could cause numerous delays and multiple copies of paperwork as goods moved between the port and distribution park. He stated that this report would extend the Corporation of London's jurisdiction to include the distribution park, and would therefore ensure that paperwork was not multiplied and procedures were simplified.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Authorised the Director of Place, in conjunction with the Head of Legal and Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour, enter into an agreement, on behalf of Thurrock Council, with the Corporation of London to transfer jurisdiction for Environmental Health Matters pertaining to food law enforcement within the DP World Distribution Park from Thurrock Council to the Corporation of London.

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

73. Housing Development Delivery Approach (Decision: 110540)

Councillor Coxshall introduced the report and stated that in 2016 Thurrock had introduced a principle that allowed affordable homes to be built for local people. He added that this paper helped Thurrock deliver this principle and build more homes. He stated that the Local Plan was also moving into its next stage, as the Council considered how it could be delivered. He stated that this report advocated a mixed delivery approach, which would ensure that even if a project were delayed, the policy as a whole would not also be delayed. He mentioned that this report would also ensure more council homes were built, which would be low-cost or low-rent and a further commitment regarding this would be made in the future. He summarised and stated that 2021 would be the Year of the Local Plan, and urged residents and businesses to engage with the ongoing consultation.

Councillor Johnson thanked officers for their hard work on the report and felt that a mixed delivery approach would be the best way forward. He stated that the report had been through the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and progress had started on seven of the sites presented before them.

Councillor Hebb thanked Councillors Johnson and Coxshall for their work on the report, and felt it was good to see diversification of delivery which looked at the whole approach, and ensured an objective could still be delivered even if projects were delayed. He stated that it was also good to see a collaborative approach with different market partners. Councillor Coxshall highlighted that a single approach could cause delays, as seen with the development on Belmont Road. He felt it also showed the Council were being transparent with their plans and policy delivery objectives.

Councillor Halden felt that Thurrock were now going further than before regarding their commitment to building council houses, and added that Thurrock were also providing social value housing, such as through the Head Start Housing scheme and specialist housing for adults with autism. He felt that it was good to see more diverse options, which would help keep a child with special needs, or an older vulnerable person, in their community and receiving the right care.

The Leader summarised and encouraged residents and Members to get involved in the Local Plan consultation to ensure that 2021 was the Year of the Local Plan. He agreed that it was good to see various housing models, including affordable housing, being adopted across the borough. The Leader also highlighted that the Local Plan did not just focus on housing, but also included places of entertainment, shopping and schooling.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1. Agreed to adopt a mixed approach to Housing Development Delivery, in order to improve the Council's capacity to increase its delivery rate.**
- 2. Noted that potential schemes will be brought forward for approval in line with the Council's Constitution in due course.**

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

74. Sheltered Housing Decommissioning - Alexandra Road/Dunlop Road

Councillor Johnson introduced the report and stated that it presented a clear, forward approach. He highlighted that in March 2019 the communal entryways had been examined and the team had found that 40 properties in Alexandra Court did not meet current standards, and this had hampered remedial works due to take place. He stated that three options had been presented in the 2019 report, and had concluded that even with renovation works, some flats would still not have suitable access, and the need to move residents would still occur. He stated that the report had been to Housing Overview and Scrutiny who had been reassured that services would not be withdrawn until all residents had left the premises. Councillor Johnson stated that all residents would be part of the Local Lettings Plan, and would receive priority for the Beaconsfield Place development, which was only 400m away from their current properties. He stated that if residents did not wish to move to Beaconsfield Place then they would receive the highest priority on the Council's waiting list. He added that each resident would also receive a dedicated officer who would support them through all aspects of the moving process. He stated that the team had undertaken detailed consultation with the residents and Ward Councillors, and feedback had been included within the report. Councillor Johnson summarised and stated that once all the flats had been voided, the site would be considered for temporary accommodation or for redevelopment through the housing delivery approach.

Councillor Mayes stated that as local Ward Councillor for the area, he was pleased to see the report brought before Cabinet, and had provided his feedback on the report. He stated that he had visited the site and accessibility for residents had not been great, but highlighted that all residents he had spoken to were happy to move to the new development.

Councillor Hebb highlighted point 4.2 of the report and felt that it would be good if the site was considered for temporary accommodation, as Thurrock lacked this facility. He stated that the consultation appeared to be very detailed, and 36 out of 40 residents had been contacted in some way, even during the pandemic. He also felt it was good to see 71% of residents wished to move to the new development, and hoped all residents would feel supported during this transition.

The Leader summarised and thanked the housing team and Councillor Johnson for the report. He felt that Alexandra Court was an old building, and although it had been ahead of its time when built, it was now out-dated. He stated that the new development would include indoor communal spaces, outdoor gardens, and new innovations such as a mobility scooter storage area, which would benefit the residents.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the proposal to decommission the Sheltered Housing properties at Alexandra Road and Dunlop Road in Tilbury.

2. Noted and commented on the proposal to implement a local lettings plan for the new housing development for older people at Calcutta Road, which gives priority to tenants affected by the above proposed decommissioning.

75. Independent Review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP)

Councillor Halden introduced the report and stated that it committed the Council to transparent working practices to ensure child safeguarding across the borough. He commented that a full-scale, independent, external expert had been given carte blanche to review the service, and had been given the opportunity to speak with all partners and front-line staff. He stated that the full report and recommendations were included in the agenda, and no red-flags had been found, which was in-line with the Council's recent Ofsted rating of 'good'. He mentioned that some areas of learning had been outlined and the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had welcomed and agreed with the recommendations. He highlighted the recommendation regarding the appointment of an independent Chair, as previously the Chairmanship had rotated between the three partners. Councillor Halden felt this system did not provide the Council with the necessary 'critical friend' outlook, and highlighted that although this had never caused problems in the past, a new independent Chair would provide the Council with the ability to act and hold individuals to account better. He stated that at the proposed annual review, the capacity of the partnership would be assessed, which would allow the partnership to also review near-miss cases. He stated that this would mean the Council would not just focus on LPR's and SCR's, but also learning points from those cases that did not meet LPR criteria, but was classified as a near-miss.

Councillor Hebb commented that an independent Chair would have lots of benefits for the partnership, as it would allow the three partners who had previously been rotating chairs to focus on the content of the meeting, rather than simply managing the meeting. Councillor Halden stated that by having an independent Chair it would also help to allay public fears, as Thurrock would now be independently scrutinised. He added that this would also help improve the social care function and the service as a whole.

The Leader summarised and stated that he had worked closely with Councillor Halden on this report, and felt it was good to see an independent Chair being appointed, as this would improve transparency across the service. He added that it was also good to see the partnership expand to look at near-miss cases as well as fatalities, as the service could learn and improve from these near-tragedies.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Commented on the independent review of the LSCP and supported acting upon the recommendations of the independent review.

2. Supported the establishment of an Independent Chair to help further the partnerships work and provide a critical friend function to all partners.

3. Requested a year's review to ensure that the partnership has the capacity to proactively review relevant cases of concern, and not just formal SCR's/LPR's.

76. Purfleet Centre Regeneration (Decision: 110542)

The Leader stated that the report contained exempt appendices, and highlighted that if Members wished to discuss these, then a vote would be undertaken and the meeting would enter exempt session. All Members agreed to this, as well as keeping all necessary papers in the agenda confidential.

Councillor Coxshall introduced the report and stated that the regeneration of Purfleet had been long overdue, but was pleased to see that £150m of funding had been received for its regeneration, with £75m coming from the Council and the rest coming from central government. He added that PTRL would now begin the process of regenerating Purfleet, including new houses, new services, new entertainment facilities, new infrastructure, and a new High Street.

Councillor Halden endorsed the comments made by Councillor Coxshall and felt that it was PTRL's last chance, as lots of services were dependent on spades going into the ground now, such as the NHS waiting to deliver the new Purfleet Integrated Medical Centre. Councillor Hebb added that the contract had been awarded in October 2015 and now needed to be delivered. Councillor Coxshall shared the frustration of other Members, but felt that he was looking forward to seeing the regeneration of the area. He stated that this would include a new train station, new secondary and primary school, and new riverside area. He stated that residents had been included in the process and now wanted the regeneration to begin.

The Leader summarised and stated that Purfleet-on-Thames needed to be regenerated, including new infrastructure such as the new Integrated Medical Centre, new school and new shops. He stated that £150m had been invested in the project, and he now wanted to see PTRL deliver and put spades in the ground. He stated that progress reports would be sent to Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee who would monitor the ongoing developments.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Noted the progress of the scheme in recent months and, in particular, the positive Best Consideration sign off and the success of the HIF

application in securing £75.1m of Central Government investment into the borough.

2. Noted the key terms of the HIF Grant Determination Agreement and delegated authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the s.151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning to negotiate final terms and enter into the Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England.

3. Approved the proposed variations described in Appendix 2 and delegated authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the s.151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning to agree any final terms and document and enter into a Deed of Variation to formally amend the Development Agreement in line with these proposals.

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

77. Purchase and Development of Land in Tilbury (Decision: 110543)

Councillor Johnson introduced the report and stated that the new diverse housing delivery approach would help to deliver 27 new houses on the site, with the help of the private sector in planning and delivery. He stated that currently the land was vacant and in poor condition, but the report would help to bring high-quality, modern, energy-efficient, and sustainable homes to the area. He stated that council tenants would still have the opportunity to buy their homes under the right-to-buy scheme, but the cost floor rule would apply for the first 15 years after being built, meaning that the house price would not be less than the cost of construction. He added that this report would not impact on the general fund budget, as it would be funded through the HRA, and would help regenerate and re-develop the area.

Councillor Coxshall agreed that this would help deliver a mixed approach to housing, and would deliver high-quality housing in Tilbury, that would encourage private sector investment in the area. He stated that the development would be good quality and would last long-term. He commented that the Tilbury Town Board would also be working to regenerate the area around the Civic Square and town centre.

Councillor Hebb felt it was good to regenerate this site in Tilbury, especially as the development would be of good standard and would diversify the approach. The Leader agreed with the statements, and agreed that high quality housing was necessary in the area. He felt the approach was innovative, but had some questions that would require Cabinet to enter exempt session.

A vote was held and all Cabinet Members agreed to enter exempt session.

An exempt session of Cabinet began at 21.03

Cabinet reconvened in public session at 21.26

The Leader and all Members agreed with the recommendations, and added to recommendation 2 that delegated authority also be in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Cabinet Member for Housing, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, and the Leader.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the acquisition and development of land identified in Appendix A.

2. Delegated authority to the Director of Place and Director of Adults, Housing and Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning, Leader of the Council, and Section 151 Officer, to commence negotiations and seek to agree final terms for the acquisition of the site and construction of dwellings and to enter into any such agreements necessary to conclude the acquisition and terms of construction.

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

The meeting finished at 9.28 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

13 January 2021		ITEM: 10
		Decision: 110544
Cabinet		
Draft General Fund Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Shane Hebb, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation		
Accountable Assistant Director: Jonathan Wilson, AD Finance, Corporate Finance		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Finance, Governance & Property		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

This report presents the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and draft budget proposals for 2021/22.

This follows analysis of the support provided by the government from the Spending Review 2020.

The 2021/22 budget addresses both the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the wider cost pressures arising from demand pressures and the decision to pause the investment strategy.

Following HM Government's Spending Review 2020, the underlying budget pressure has now been mitigated through a combination of identified savings, the anticipated but partial use of reserves (built up from the investment approach) and capital flexibilities as well as additional Covid-19 funding from the government. This also assumes that the full level of council tax increase, including the Adult Social Care precept, is agreed by the Council.

Officers had previously reported that the approach for 2021/22 was through a series of savings and one off interventions. Members should note that this results in underlying base pressures being carried forward into 2022/23 and 2023/24. Whilst

significant savings have been identified for these latter two years, the deferment of pressures from 2021/22 means that the remaining gaps stand at £14.838m and £10.511m in 2022/23 and 2023/24 respectively.. This will require significant further action by Members to move the Council back to a financially sustainable position.

The council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget and the use of some of the council's reserves is required to achieve this for 2021/22, as has been expected since the outset of the COVID pandemic.

The key consideration is the proposed council tax increase of 4.99%, which reflects the guidance issued by Central Government as part of the Spending Review announcements made on 23 November 2020 that comprises the general element of 1.99% with a further 3% Adult Social Care precept to fund increasing cost pressures within the service.

1. Recommendations:

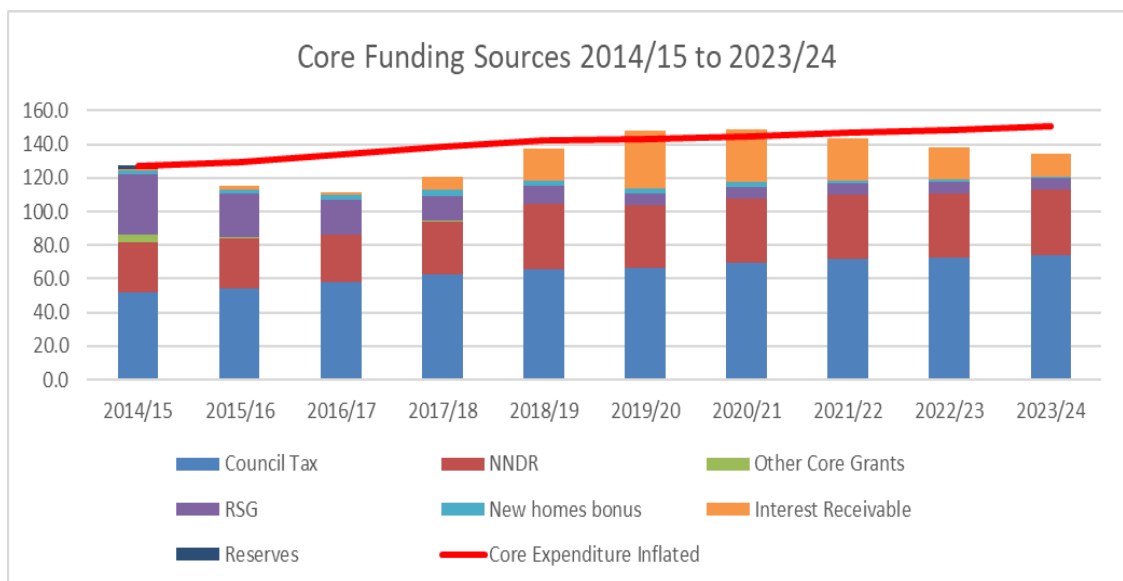
- 1.1 That Cabinet note the proposed updates to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the remaining deficits in future years;**
- 1.2 That Cabinet note the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy forms the basis of the 2021/22 Budget;**
- 1.3 That Cabinet supports the proposed council tax increase of 1.99%;**
- 1.4 That Cabinet supports a 3% Adult Social Care precept increase; and**
- 1.5 That Cabinet comment on the draft budget proposals within this report to inform the consultation with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the final budget proposals to be presented to Cabinet on 10 Feb 2021.**

2. Introduction & Background

- 2.1. Before considering future years, it is important to recognise any ongoing impacts from the current year 2020/21. In recent months, Cabinet have received two update reports, the most recent reporting a net in-year budget pressure of £2.672m. The main areas of risk continue to be within Adults' Social Care, Children's Services, Homelessness and the wider Treasury position caused by the pause to the Investment Strategy, specifically around new investment activity. The position continues to be assessed and further Covid-19 funding from MHCLG is expected to contribute to closing the remaining gap to deliver the budget in 2020/21.
- 2.2. Members have been presented with regular financial updates throughout the current financial year and the MTFs consistently showed a deficit of £33.673m over the three year period 2021/22 to 2023/24, with an initial £19.318m deficit in 2021/22. This was based on a number of assumptions

including the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and a pause to the investment strategy, notably new investment activity, and the start of phasing out of investment income as bonds mature.

- 2.3. For context, the graph below illustrates the position over several years, in regards to a reducing Revenue Support Grant position, and how the investment approach has been used to provide time to reform services at a pace far more considered than otherwise would have been the case. The approach undertaken in 2017, supported unanimously by council, sought to provide that headroom. The additional funding generated by the strategy enabled the council to go above and beyond that which is normally expected of a council. It has meant that the council has been in a position to: put £1m towards new police officers; allocate £670,000 to tackle anti-social behaviour; £500,000 to improve mental health support in local schools; spend an additional £1.5m on visible environmental improvements over and above the traditional level of services; and increase reserves to improve resilience – as well as reform services over a medium/long-term period. Members should note that whilst council tax and NNDR income has increased over the period set out in the table, spending requirements have also increased over the same time-period, notably owing to growth and inflationary pressures.
- 2.4. As the conditions for investments are not as they have been previously, the council has now paused entering into any new investments. As such, the MTFs in this report reflects a position where no new investments occur and show the need for an accelerated set of service reforms to reduce base line spending.



- 2.5. This report reflects the funding announced by the Chancellor as part of the one-year spending review in November 2020 with detailed allocations to Thurrock Council confirmed on 17 December 2020. The Spending Review

only provided clarity over funding for the 2021/22 financial year and consequently there remains uncertainty over the funding in the subsequent two years. After reflecting the announced changes and a wider assessment of the underlying budget pressures, the budget deficit across the future three years is now £42.461m. This follows the assumption that maturing investments will not be replaced and is pending a Council decision on the use of the announced Adult Social Care precept.

- 2.6. The 2021/22 underlying budget deficit position is now £19.288m. However, there is now certainty on balancing the 2021/22 position through a combination of £8.136m of sustainable funding changes and £11.152m of short term measures. The sustainable changes include the use of the full Adult Social Care precept and a further £5.656m identified from the savings review undertaken which reflect a combination of departmental efficiencies, a temporary suspension on recruitment to all non-essential vacant posts and a review of staff allowances. The balance will be met from the use of some reserves allocations, flexibilities relating to capital receipts, to support transformation and growth, and additional grant funding.
- 2.7. While this Covid-19 funding addresses the pressures arising in-year, growth is still required in future years within the MTFs where it is considered there is a need to meet ongoing demand, especially in both adults' and children's social care. Central Government have now announced further one-off support that has been included in the temporary funding measures addressing the budget gap in 2021/22.

3.0 Draft 2021/22 Budget and Future Forecasts

- 3.1 The full MTFs is included in Appendix 1. The overall financial position over the next 3 years shows a deficit of £42.461m. This has arisen primarily from the projected impact of Covid-19, a pause to the investment approach and wider demand-led and inflationary pressures. This is then translated from the MTFs to an indicative directorate budget level for 2021/22 in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The provisional Local Government Finance settlement for 2021/22 includes a calculation of Core Spending Power. Members should acknowledge that this includes an assumption that councils will maximise council tax receipts and this this spending power will form the base when government sets out the next Comprehensive Spending Review – financial support to local government – in 2021. The main points to note are:
- The central government assessment of Council spending power assumes a general Council tax increase of 1.99% is applied by all authorities;

- For upper tier and unitary authorities, the central government assessment of Council spending power assumes a further Adult Social Care precept of 3% is also agreed to meet the pressures in the sector in 2021/22;
- The settlement confirms that an inflationary uplift will not be applied to the Business Rates Multiplier in 2021/22. Local authorities will be compensated for this lost income by central government for the calculated amount;
- The Social Care grant has increased by £0.8m;
- The Revenue Support Grant has increased by £0.080m; and
- A Covid-19 general support grant totalling £4.853m will be available for 2021/22 only.

The MTFS in Appendix 1 differentiates between underlying budget pressures and those related to the ongoing impacts of Covid-19. This results in core deficits of £12.936m and £6.353m respectively for 2021/22, a total of £19.288m.

3.3 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 £2.242m. This includes assumptions on the brought forward collection fund deficits and increases in the number of properties eligible under the local council tax scheme from the current year. This remains subject to the wider economic impacts of the pandemic, and projections have been revised down through the year, mainly due to furlough schemes providing a degree of income security for residents affected by the pandemic; and
- Additional ongoing costs and loss of income – additional pressures and further income losses total £4.111m.

3.4 As previously reported, the Council's investment strategy has been paused with a projected impact of £18.927m over the life of the 3 year MTFS. This includes both cash and capital investments and hence the associated targets have been removed pending further consideration. No provision has been made to replace maturing investments. Also reflected is the increased cost of PWLB borrowing which has been used to replace short term funding in 2020/21 and includes an expectation that this will continue across the life of the MTFS, albeit that is a lesser figure when comparing the impact of pausing the approach.

- 3.5 The impact in 2021/22 has been assessed and initial actions have been identified to reduce the projected financial gap from £19.288m to a balanced position as set out above.
- 3.6 Indicative service specific savings have been identified in the following key areas in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders:

Directorate	Proposal	2021/22 Saving £000's
Environment, Highways & Counter Fraud	Savings from initial service review.	287
Environment, Highways & Counter Fraud	New Counter Fraud income	450
Environment, Highways & Counter Fraud	Efficiencies	19
Council-wide	Suspension to recruitment for non-essential posts	4,000
Council-wide	Reduction in postage/printing/stationery	100
Council-wide	Review of staff allowances above baseline contract conditions (Phase 2 Pay Review)	800
	Total	5,656

- 3.7 Officers from relevant departments continue to work closely to ensure targets are achievable and within the required timescales. Proposed changes to staff allowances were part of the new collective agreement that supported the pay review and are subject to ongoing discussions with Trade Unions.
- 3.8 Proposed savings in relation to the recruitment freeze will be considered as part of the detailed budget setting process, with front line delivery and service impact being considered.
- 3.9 Spending Review updates: There remains uncertainty over the wider economic impacts of the pandemic and the level of further financial support available to local authorities via central government. This continues to be monitored and changes to the MTFs will be made to reflect the updated assessment of this position.

4.0 Council Tax and Future Funding

- 4.1 Members will be aware that Thurrock Council has the lowest council tax in Essex and one of the lowest of all unitary authorities throughout the country. For example, residents in Thurrock Band D properties pay circa £100 per annum less than residents in Band D properties in Southend-on-Sea and circa £265 less than residents in Band D properties in neighbouring Basildon.

Officers' advice is clear that council tax increases are essential in 2021/22 to ensure that the council can continue to fund the delivery of core services. Whilst this has always been the advice, maximising council tax increases is now even more important considering both the impact of Covid-19 and the pause to the Investment Strategy.

- 4.2 Whilst the Adult Social Care precept is required to provide much needed additional funding, the amount raised by Thurrock Council will be comparatively lower than the majority of top tier authorities as the Council has not maximised council tax increases up to the level indicated by Central Government in previous years.
- 4.3 It is now critical to provide this additional financial resilience in future years to mitigate the identified budget shortfalls currently identified. This recommendation will be reflected in the Corporate Director of Finance, Governance & Property's Section 25 statement and is a key consideration for Members at the council meeting on 24 February 2021.
- 4.4 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Local Council Tax Scheme (LCTS) at their meeting on 8 September 2020 that set out the council's intention of going out to consult on changes to the scheme for 2021. Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, made the decision not to consult on changes due to the challenges and uncertainty that Covid-19 has created, namely: the impact of any additional government support to both LCTS and Universal Credit claimants; the ability to carry out a meaningful consultation when responders cannot be clear of all contributing factors; and a wide-spread approach to not making changes at this time that would add to uncertainty for claimants. As such, the council will be asked to endorse the existing scheme.
- 4.5 The budget deficit for 2022/23 and 2023/24 total £25.349m. The interim measures taken have provided the additional time required to implement the further actions and reforms to services, so as to reduce the underlying base budget and create a sustainable MTFs.
- 4.6 The MTFs now reflects all known and confirmed funding from central government with regards to 2021/22. There is no certainty beyond the 2021/22 funding settlement and further action should only be based on the only realistic assumptions that can be made for the subsequent 2 years. This includes inflationary increases to core funding streams and the costs they fund as well as the removal of the Covid-19 specific grants. There is no indication of additional funding beyond this and the wider economic position suggests this will remain the position.

- 4.7 Officers will continue to develop the savings plans required to mitigate the budget gap in 2022/23 in the first instance. Members should not underestimate the difficulties the council now faces in delivering the required savings and the lead in time required – as such, decisions will be required early in the new year.
- 4.8 In the context of the impact of Covid-19 on public finances, Local Authorities will be required to contribute to the wider sustainability of public finances. It is clear that further significant decisions will be required early in 2021/22 to deliver a sustainable MTFs, Cabinet have provided direction to retain existing commitments on funding police services, and to preserve, as best as possible under constrained budget challenges, the award-winning successes of Clean-It, Cut-It, Fill-It.

Remaining Considerations

- 4.9 The methodology for the allocation of funding to local government bodies remains under review. The Fair Funding review is expected to progress in 2021/22 but there is no revised timeline to date. As part of this it remains an assumption that separately identified ring fenced grants, such as the Public Health Grant, will be absorbed into mainstream funding.
- 4.10 Similarly, the proposed changes to the current business rates system and the move to 75% retention are now likely to be delayed until 2022/23 at the earliest. As such, the council is only able to assume inflationary uplifts to the business rates precept in the MTFs. As previously noted the introduction of this system will potentially increase the underlying level of financial risk faced by the council.
- 4.11 Work is ongoing in support of the Thames Freeport bid, which may have an impact on NNDR levels into the future.
- 4.12 The Cabinet have allocated £1m from a specific reserve to fund the Stage 3 Local Plan effort and are due to receive a paper on TRL and a multiple-approach housing delivery strategy. All such work leads to permanent baseline increases.
- 4.13 The following table highlights the specific financial impact of a 1% increase on Council tax per annum/per household:

Band	Band Charge	Properties		Average Net Charge	Average 1% Increase p.a.
		No.	%		
A	£1,035.48	7,482	10.9	£630.68	£6.31
B	£1,208.06	13,703	19.	£937.75	£9.38
C	£1,380.64	27,240	39.6	£1,191.52	£11.92
D	£1,553.22	12,538	18.2	£1,428.09	£14.28
E	£1,898.38	4,760	6.9	£1,802.39	£18.02
F	£2,243.54	2,246	3.3	£2,182.16	£21.82
G	£2,588.70	830	1.2	£2,535.36	£25.35
H	£3,106.44	49	0.1	£2,178.66	£21.79
TOTALS		68,848	100.0	£1,186.96	£11.87

4.14 For over 70% of residents, each additional 1% increase in council tax equates to an average of 20 pence per week or £10.33 per annum. The additional funding raised will be applied to a wide range of services, including Children’s and Adults’ social care that work with the most vulnerable members of the community.

4.15 Having considered all of the above, Cabinet is asked to recommend a 1.99% general council tax increase and a 3% Adult Social Care increase.

5.0 Reserves Position

5.1 Members will be aware that, like many other authorities, the partial use of reserves was anticipated soon after the impacts (direct and indirect) of Covid-19 became clearer.

5.2 Members will be aware from previous reports that the council’s reserves position has become far more resilient since 2016, as a direct result of the investment approach. In 2016, the council’s General Fund Balance sat at £8m. Comparing that to now, the General Fund Balance sits at £11m, a Social Care Reserve of £1.5m has been created to help manage market volatility during the pandemic, a Financial Resilience Reserve of £6m has been built up and a General Reserve of £5.5m exists to support the council against pressures. Both of these latter reserves have been built to provide additional security from any financial fluctuations the council may experience and were built from investment income and deferred Member priorities, which were paused when the pandemic took hold, and allocated for use to manage the pressures which were forecast to come as a result of the pandemic.

- 5.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has led to direct and indirect pressures and fluctuations. As such, a partial use of reserves is forecast for the 2021/22 budget - an allocation of £3.3m is to be used from the General Reserve, thus maintaining levels within the General Fund Balance, Financial Resilience Reserve and Social Care Reserve.
- 5.4 Members should note that the use of reserves enables a one-off stimulus. They cannot be used for sustainable spending needs and, as such, Members are reminded of the need to reform services for a sustainable medium/long term cost base.

6.0 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 6.1 This report sets out the changes from the current 2020/21 budget that are proposed for 2021/22. The impact on service delivery, particularly as a result of the proposed recruitment freeze, will be closely monitored throughout the year to ensure essential front line services are provided to the required level.
- 6.2 A maximum council tax increase is recommended by officers as the Government's Core Spending Power calculations and Comprehensive Spending Review will assume that the council has maximised resources from its ability to raise funding locally. The Government will not subsidise any income foregone, thus any increase applied which is lower than the maximum level will continue to impact on the council's resources in all future years.
- 6.3 The report also sets out the identified deficits over the three-year period of the MTFS. Members and officers will continue to work to identify further mitigating actions and carry out service review processes across a number of areas.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 7.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually and to review the adequacy of its reserves. This report sets out a balanced budget for 2021/22.

8.0 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 8.1 The proposals set out within this report will be considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2021.

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

- 9.1 There are increases to frontline services where pressures have been identified in the current year that will help the council to deliver its statutory services to the most vulnerable members of the community.

10.0 Implications

10.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
**Corporate Director of Finance,
Governance & Property**

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report and the appendices. The report sets out a balanced budget for 2021/22 on the basis that proposed funding decisions and actions to deliver savings are supported by Members.

Members should note that the actions set out do not address the underlying budgets issues in subsequent years. Further savings will be required in addition to those identified to date. Given the significant funding gaps that remain it is essential the Council supports the further measures required to create a sustainable MTFS and in a timely fashion that recognises the lead in time that significant savings require.

10.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**
**Assistant Director of 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.

10.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**

Strategic Lead - Community Development and Equalities

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

10.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

The council's current investments continue to contribute towards the green agenda through supporting renewable energy schemes across the UK. Part of the budget surplus had previously been allocated to supporting climate change but, with the budget pressures the council now faces, this, along with other such allocations, has been centralised back into a general reserve to support the budget in this year and next.

11. **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.

12. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 - Medium Term Financial Strategy

Appendix 2 – Indicative Service Budget impact

Report Author

Sean Clark

Corporate Director of Finance, Governance and Property

Appendix 1 - Medium Term Financial Strategy

Narrative	2021/22			2022/23	2023/24
	£000's			£000's	£000's
	Non Covid	Covid	Total		
Council Tax Position	(1,301)	2,191	890	(1,081)	(1,500)
Business Rates Position	(395)	51	(345)	(51)	(665)
Government Resources Position	202	0	202	797	784
Net Additional (Reduction) in resources	(1,495)	2,242	746	(335)	(1,381)
Inflation and other increases	5,714	0	5,714	4,515	4,665
Treasury	6,758	0	6,758	7,221	4,948
Corporate Growth	1,959	3,022	4,981	2,314	2,314
Commercial Income	0	1,089	1,089	(1,089)	0
Internal Position	14,431	4,111	18,542	12,961	11,927
Core Budget Deficit before intervention	12,936	6,353	19,288	12,626	10,546
Savings Departmental	(756)	0	(756)	(3,341)	(1,635)
General Staffing	(4,800)	0	(4,800)	(100)	(2,000)
Cross Cutting	(100)	0	(100)	(1,250)	(200)
Wider Funding	0	0	0	(250)	(200)
Internal Core Budget Savings	(5,656)	0	(5,656)	(4,941)	(4,035)
Core Budget Deficit Position	7,280	6,353	13,632	7,685	6,511
Additional Core Budget Savings					
Adult Social Care Precept 3%	(980)	(1,500)	(2,480)	0	0
11. Other funding (not affecting baseline)					
Utilisation of Capital Receipts	(3,000)	0	(3,000)	3,000	0
Use of reserves 2021/22	(3,300)	0	(3,300)	3,300	0
Capital receipts 2022/23	0	0	0	(2,000)	2,000
Use of reserves 2022/23	0	0	0	(2,000)	2,000
Covid Grant	0	(4,853)	(4,853)	4,853	0
	(6,300)	(4,853)	(11,153)	7,153	4,000
Overall Budget Working Total	0	0	0	14,838	10,511

Directorate	2020/21 Revised budget	Council Tax charge 2%	Council Tax Social Care precept 3%	Business Rates Precept	Social Care Grant	Inflation	Treasury & Central Financing	Social Care Growth	Savings	Income loss contingency	Other Grants	Capital receipts	Use of reserves	Indicative Base Budget 2021/22
Adults, Housing and Health	43,513	0	0	0	0	2	0	2,500	-10	0	0	0	0	46,005
Central Financing	-118,030	-1,653	-2,480	-500	0	0	3,800	0	0	0	-200	0	0	-119,064
Children's Services	40,648	0	0	0	-800	2	0	1,814	-7	0	0	0	0	41,657
Commercial Services	988	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-250	0	0	0	0	738
Corporate Costs	-1,202	0	0	0	0	5,534	100	0	-4,550	1,320	-5,084	-3,000	-3,300	-10,184
Environment & Highways and Counter Fraud	30,714	0	0	0	0	759	0	0	-765	0	0	0	0	30,708
Finance, Governance and Property	17,672	0	0	0	0	65	0	0	-70	0	0	0	0	17,667
Housing General Fund	1,817	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,836
HR, OD and Transformation	5,145	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,145
Place	5,356	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-3	0	0	0	0	5,354
Strategy, Communications & Customer Services	3,175	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,175
Treasury	-29,794	0	0	0	0	0	6,758	0	0	0	0	0	0	-23,037
Grand Total	0	-1,653	-2,480	-500	-800	6,382	10,657	4,314	-5,656	1,320	-5,284	-3,000	-3,300	0

13 January 2021	ITEM: 11 Decision: 110545
Cabinet	
School Capital Programme Update 2020/21	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Andrew Jefferies, Portfolio Holder for Education	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education & Skills, Children’s Services	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The council’s school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess likely demand. The new programme aims to deliver sufficient pupil places for 2020 and 2021 academic years.

The new Pupil Place Plan 2020-2024 has now been published. The pupil place plan identifies sufficiency concerns in primary schools in the Tilbury planning area, Stanford and Corringham planning area and Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet Planning areas.

This report seeks cabinet approval to progress the school capital programme 20/21 to build capacity in the planning areas where there is a current and forecasted need to provide additional primary school places.

This report additionally provides an update highlighting projects managed by Thurrock Council which form part of the current school capital programme emphasising the considerable and continued progress that has been achieved since the last report to Cabinet in March 2019.

This report also provides an update of the provision of temporary accommodation to ensure sufficient pupil places were available for September 2020.

A report was presented to Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 12th November 2020, whereby committee approved the recommendations as set out in that report.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the School Capital Programme to deliver additional school places at Abbots Hall Primary, in the Tilbury Planning Area and Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet Planning area.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approves the commencement of the procurement process in accordance with Council & EU procurement procedures to appoint Architect led multi discipline designers and Project Teams, for the next School Capital Programme and appoint the Principal Contractors to take forward the proposed schemes.**
- 1.3 That, following a selection procedure compliant with the EU procurement regulations, the subsequent decision to enter into the contract be delegated to the Accountable Director reporting back to the Portfolio Holder, such report to detail the selection procedure results, and compliance with the EU procurement regulations.**
- 1.4 That Cabinet notes the updates on the current school capital programme.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.
- 2.2 The 2019/20 school capital programme has, despite the unique and challenging conditions progressed well and incorporated innovative partnership working, as well as utilising both traditional as well as modern methods of construction to deliver the identified additional pupil places required.
- 2.3 The provision of additional accommodation to meet the predicted increase in pupil numbers has generated positive feedback from schools, particularly in relation to the impact on learning through improvements to the built environment.
- 2.4 The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few months we have seen a large increase in 'in year' admissions from families moving into the Authority. Between September 2019 and August 2020 we received school applications and offered schools places for 190 children that moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and 1063 that moved to Thurrock from elsewhere within the UK. In order to deal with demand for this September we have created bulge reception classes of 30 children in our primary schools in both the Grays planning area and the Ockendon planning area. We are still seeing pressure in some planning areas and will need to

create additional school places following further in-year primary school applications.

- 2.5 Despite the relatively recent expansion of Graham James Primary School in 2015 which created an additional 210 places within the Corringham area of the borough, as well as 52 additional nursery places, following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is now educational need for further primary school and nursery places in the Corringham area.
- 2.6 At the time of writing, a feasibility study has commenced at Abbots Hall Primary School to identify the scope of works required in order to return the school to a 2 form entry school, with a view to addressing the predicted shortage of places from September 2022 onwards in the planning area.
- 2.7 Following completion of this scoping and feasibility study, the proposal upon Abbots Hall Primary will be to refurbish and possibly remodel some of the areas of the existing building to ensure it is fit for purpose and meeting Department for Education building guidelines, as well as repurpose the nursery area in order to provide 6 classrooms, and new nursery. The school is in the process of submitting a Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid in order to relocate the nursery to an alternative location within the school. The nursery that is already onsite is operating within the school building.
- 2.7.1 In addition to the works at Abbots Hall, further budget is required to provide additional school places in the Tilbury Planning area and the Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet planning area to meet existing and future demand. Options for additional provision is in the process of being identified.
- 2.8 JCT consultancy agreements and JCT Building contracts competitively procured and evaluated on both quality and price will provide opportunities for improving quality and value for money. It will give the Council the flexibility to award individual elements of construction projects on an individual basis without any guarantee of future work. This approach will result in a greater level of control being retained within the authority, and will not tie the council into any single provider.
- 2.8.1 In advance of these procurements, small value individual contracts are being utilised for the carrying out of topographical surveys, transport assessments, and environmental impact assessments.
- 2.9 *Update on the current school capital programme*

The 2018/19 & 2019/2020 school capital programme consisted of 6 projects in Thurrock primary schools. This extensive programme is now reaching its conclusion, with only works at Corringham Primary (new nursery and early years wrap around provision), St Clere's Secondary School (10 classroom expansion in addition to a 4 court sports hall), and Benyon Primary School (1FE 6 classroom expansion scheme) in progress at the time of writing

this report, all of which are due to complete before the end of this calendar year.

2.10 *Update on temporary accommodation*

Works to convert the former Thurrock Learning Campus building into a temporary secondary school on behalf of Thames Park were fast tracked with all works being undertaken during the period of National lockdown. Internally, the extensive remodelling was completed by early August 2020, with the external groundworks to provide an outdoor recreation space and sports ball court completed early September 2020. This building is anticipated to remain in use by Thames Park Academy for approximately two years while the permanent building is under construction.

2.11 Temporary accommodation was also completed at Orsett Heath Academy and opened to new pupils in September. The pupils will remain in this building for approximately two years whilst the permanent building is constructed.

2.12 In order to meet demand for places, from September 2019 Treetops school has had a double demountable classroom placed upon its site. This demountable is expected to remain for a further year while the new free school is under construction.

3. Issues Options and Analysis of Options

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

3.2 The contract, due to its potential value over the threshold.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 Agreement to take forward the expansion programme and deliver required pupil places from September 2021 and meet the council's statutory duty.

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

5.1. This report was approved by the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 12 November 2020.

5.2. The principle has been agreed with schools and any detailed build content will be agreed with the relevant schools. Consultation will continue with each school and key stakeholder, as each scheme and schedule of works evolves within the programme.

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

- 6.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the local authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.
- 6.2 The award of these JCT Construction and design contracts will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006.
- 6.3 The issues in this paper support the council's vision to be an ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future. It also supports the prosperity priority - a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

Additional accommodation required to meet the statutory requirement to provide places for the increasing pupil numbers will be funded from a combination of the DfE capital basic needs grant, Section 106 monies held for Education provision. Once in-depth feasibility studies have been completed, funding requirements will be quantified and confirmed.

There is sufficient funds available within the basic need grant.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

This report does not require a decision to be made. It requests that Sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996 impose duties on the Council to promote high standards of and fair access to education, to secure sufficient schools in its area and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEN.

Any procurement of building contracts using the JCT form of contract must comply with the provisions of the Public Contract Regulation 2015 including the Council's Contract procedure rules. Legal Services is on hand to advise on any specific issue relating to these. Works procurement as and when required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**

Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

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

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

8. Background papers used in preparing this report:

- Cabinet report - School Capital Programme Update 2019/20
- Children's Overview & Scrutiny Report 12th November 2020

9. Appendices to this report:

- Appendix 1 - Pupil Place Plan 2022 – 2024

Report Author

Sarah Williams

Service Manager, Education Support Service

Children's Services

PUPIL PLACE PLAN 2020-2024



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**For the purpose of this document, data has been extracted from the
Autumn 2019 Census**

INTRODUCTION

Thurrock has some very exciting regeneration programmes and we are committed to ensuring that we have high quality educational opportunities for our children and young people.

Our Pupil Place Planning (PPP) document has been widely used by stakeholders such as developers, and educational providers. The forecasts contained in this document are also used to inform the schools' capital programme and to date we have delivered a range of high quality projects that contributes to ensuring the delivery of good educational outcomes for the children and young people of Thurrock.

Two new Secondary Free Schools are opening in September 2020 in temporary sites with an initial Published Admissions Number of 120 pupils per school. This will affect the Secondary Year 7 forecast published in this booklet but will not be included in these figures until next year as this booklet is based on the Autumn 2019 census.

A new special free school, Treetops 2 will be delivered in Thurrock, and is due to open in September 2022.

There are plans for a new 2-form entry primary free school, located in Aveley planned to be delivered in the near future.

This data has allowed us to review trend data on pupil numbers which helps with future forecasting, we currently have 17,196 Primary Pupils and 10,173 Secondary Pupils. Thurrock continues to be a place of choice for families wishing to move into the area and this can be seen from the numbers of children and young people requiring a school place.

Thurrock has strong working relationships with our schools and academies and this allows us to work in partnership with them when identifying locations where we can build in additional capacity for additional places. The Council is committed to ensuring that we have clear processes in the decision making around meeting local demand for school places.

We hope that this document continues to be of interest to all stakeholders and that the content is both useful and clear.

Name: Michele Lucas.

Title: Assistant Director Education & Skills

June 2020.

PUPIL PLACE PLANNING (PPP)

Over the last 7 years we have continued to see an increase in the primary population. The 2015/16 birth data is still the highest Thurrock has had at 2,505 with the two years either side of that just fractionally below the 2,500 and the current Year 3 is the highest cohort we have had at 2,545. The last three years average of birth data is 2,470). After reaching a peak of 2,505 births in 2015/16 we are now seeing a slight decline. Our primary cohort average is now 2,456 per year group, 2 new Secondary Free Schools should ease the pressure on secondary places as the primary cohort moves through. Thurrock is also getting a new Special Free School. The PPP document covers education for children in the age range of 4 – 16. Post 16 provision information is contained in Annex 4.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) educational provision and Early Years and Childcare provision are undertaken by other specialist areas within Thurrock Council and are not covered in this document.

Thurrock Council has a statutory responsibility to provide a school place for every child of school age who live in Thurrock. PPP is very complicated to predict with many factors dictating the outcome. Planning for school places begins with the acquisition of birth data which identifies the number of children that are born and the post code they live in and it is assumed that 4 years later they will enter the school system in a local school. There are a number of factors that are forever changing and need to be considered. In-year admissions, where children come into Thurrock mid-year (outside the normal admission rounds) are very difficult to foresee and project. Numbers of children that have moved into Thurrock from elsewhere in the country and those that have moved in from other countries can be seen in Annex 1.

Thurrock's forecasting for school places to date has been robust and accurate. The difficulty with forecasting is that although forecasts are accurate we are not able to identify how old the children will be that move into Thurrock and to what year group they will be applying for. This takes close monitoring and we need to be in a position at times to take swift action in opening up classes within certain year groups. Every effort is made to seek and offer a school place within reasonable travelling distance from the pupil's home.

Thurrock calculates the pupil yield from housing developments and then adds this to the projected pupil numbers. Thurrock currently does not project any child yield from a one bedroomed flat but the current economic climate suggest that this is now not so. Families moving in with other families make projecting pupil numbers now more difficult to predict the demand at local school level.

We are committed to ensuring that parental choice and an environment built on strong partnership foundations provides healthy competition across both primary, secondary and post 16 provision.

CONTEXT

Under the banner **People, Place, Prosperity**, Thurrock Council is creating a place where people and businesses want to stay and thrive and developers and investors want to invest.

Investment in infrastructure for the benefit of residents and local businesses is key. Good roads, health services, schools and leisure facilities are all required to enable people to work and play, live and stay in the borough.

Situated on the north side of the River Thames bordering Essex, Kent and East London, Thurrock is an area of great contrast and unique opportunities and is a crucial strategic player in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, South Essex 2050 partnership and the Thames Estuary plans.

Thurrock has a well-balanced mix of beauty and business with £20 billion investment planned for homes, jobs and infrastructure, including £6 billion being invested in private sector jobs.

Rural villages and market towns are set into the 70% of the borough which is green belt. Nature reserves, heritage locations and sites of special scientific interest abound.

Three international ports punctuate 18 miles of riverfront with cranes and gigantic container ships, while industrial parks line the A13, all within driving distance of the major London airports. Indeed, Thurrock is probably more important strategically to London than the London boroughs themselves as through our ports the capital is fed, fuelled and clothed.

There has been a lot of talk about plans in the past but there is now a step-change to actual delivery – some master plans are agreed, with contractors on-site and work is beginning.

Thurrock has a growing population – predicted to rise by approximately 10% every decade. The ethnic profile of Thurrock has become increasingly diverse over the last decade. Both the age and ethnic profiles change significantly between the 20 wards.

Together with partners, Thurrock Council is investing more than £70 million to create over 350 new school places across the borough in the coming years.

We are working towards a future where every resident has a job – 24,500 new jobs are planned over 20 years - with better educated children and skilled residents who can access local and national employment opportunities.

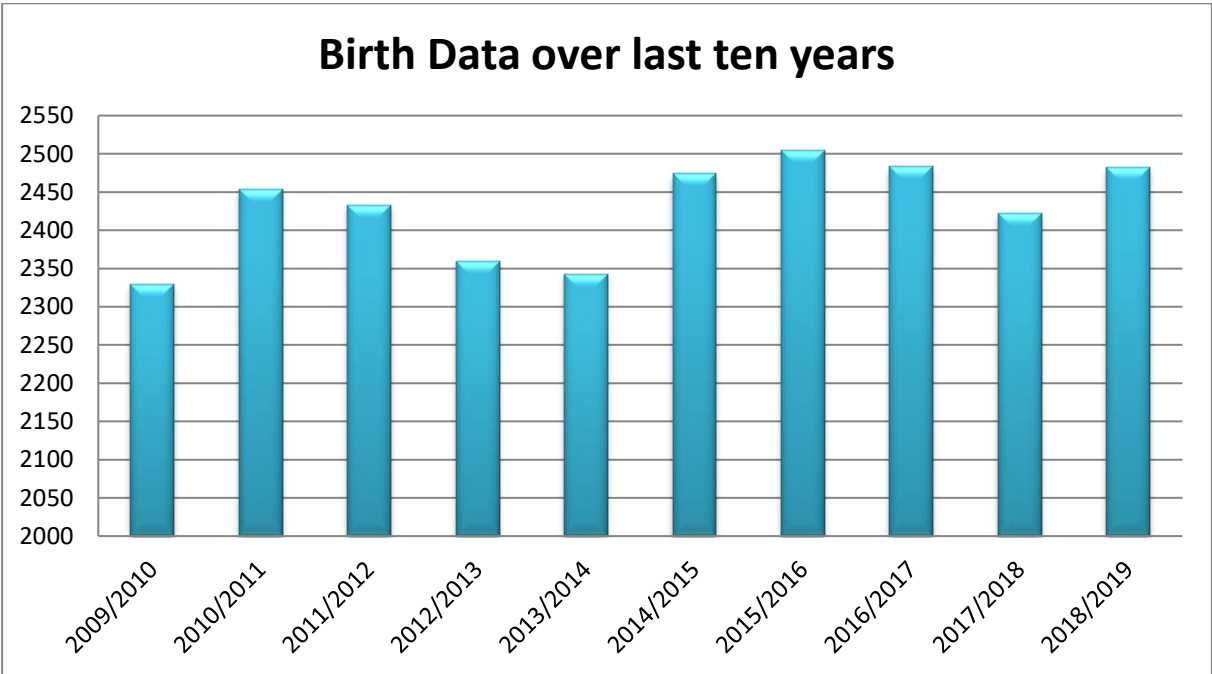
There are plans for four Integrated Medical Centres in the borough. This is just one of a series of game-changing initiatives being delivered with our health partners.

Thurrock is a place with a rich cultural heritage, which is often overlooked. With our cultural partners we are developing plans to enable all Thurrock residents to enjoy and benefit from high quality arts and heritage activity, creating a strong pride in place, better well-being and economic prosperity.

The table below demonstrates the conversion of live births in Thurrock to the actual take up of school places. This is showing a slight increase in reception numbers. This data enables Thurrock to project the place requirements for future years using the birth data available.

Year of Birth	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of live births in the authority	2,261	2,367	2,330	2,454	2,433	2,359	2,343	2,474
Year entering school at 4+	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of children admitted into reception	2,263	2,321	2,277	2,430	2,463	2,407	2,390	2,461
Historical uptake factor	100.09%	98.06%	97.73%	99.02%	101.23%	102.03%	102.01%	99.47%

The graph below highlights that Thurrock’s live births after reaching a peak of 2,505 in 2015/16 are now seeing a slight decrease.



SCHOOLS AND PLANNING AREAS

Schools

There are currently 39 Primary schools, 11 Secondary schools and 2 Special Schools in Thurrock.

	Academies	Community Schools	Voluntary Aided Schools	Voluntary Controlled	Foundation	Free School
Primary Schools	35	2	0	0	0	2
Secondary Schools	10	0	1	0	0	0
Special Schools	2	0	0	0	0	0

Full details of the schools and the oversubscription criteria applied to each one is available within the Council's School Admissions Primary and Secondary Booklets which can be found at <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/school-admissions>. These booklets contain information on how to make an application for a school place.

Each Academy, Free School and Voluntary Aided-School is its own Admissions Authority. The Council is the Admissions Authority for Community Schools and Voluntary Controlled Schools. In respect of Voluntary Aided Schools the governing body of the school determines admission arrangements. For Academies and Free Schools, the relevant Academy Trust is the Admission Authority. Each individual Admissions Authority applies its own oversubscription criteria to applications and determines which applicants to offer places to.

Applications for Thurrock Schools are made via the co-ordinated admissions process which is administered by the Council.

PUPIL PLACE PLANNING AREAS

Thurrock Council has 8 schools planning areas, 5 for Primary and 3 for Secondary.

The Primary planning areas are detailed in the table below:-

Primary Planning Areas

<p style="text-align: center;">Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aveley Primary • Benyon Primary • Bonnygate Primary • Dilkes Academy • Holy Cross Catholic Primary • Kenningtons Primary Academy • Purfleet Primary Academy • Shaw Primary Academy • Somers Heath Primary 	<p style="text-align: center;">Grays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belmont Castle Academy • Deneholm Primary • Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred • Harris Primary Academy Mayflower • Little Thurrock Primary • Quarry Hill Academy • St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary • Stifford Clays Primary • Thameside Primary • Tudor Court Primary • Warren Primary • West Thurrock Academy
<p style="text-align: center;">Tilbury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chadwell St Mary Primary • East Tilbury Primary & Nursery • The Gateway Primary Free • Herringham Primary Academy • Lansdowne Primary Academy • St Mary’s Catholic Primary • Tilbury Pioneer Academy • Woodside Academy 	<p style="text-align: center;">Corringham and Stanford-Le-Hope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbots Hall Primary Academy • Arthur Bugler Primary • ORTU Corringham Primary • Giffards Primary • Graham James Primary Academy • St Joseph’s Catholic Primary • Stanford-le-Hope Primary
<p style="text-align: center;">Rural areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulphan C of E Academy • Horndon on the Hill C of E Primary • Orsett C of E Primary Academy 	

The planning areas for the Primary phase are shown on the map in Annex 5. The Primary reception forecast summary is shown in Annex 7.

The Primary phase forecast whole school summary is shown in Annex 8.

The Secondary planning areas are detailed in the table below:-

Secondary Planning Areas

West	Central
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris Academy Ockendon • Ormiston Park Academy • Harris Academy Riverside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gateway Academy • Grays Convent High School • The Hathaway Academy • Harris Academy Chafford Hundred • William Edwards School
East	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORTU Gable Hall • ORTU Hassenbrook Academy • St Clere’s School 	

The planning areas for the Secondary phase are shown on the map in Annex 6.

The Secondary Year 7 summary forecast is shown in Annex 9.

The Secondary phase whole school summary forecast is shown in Annex 10.

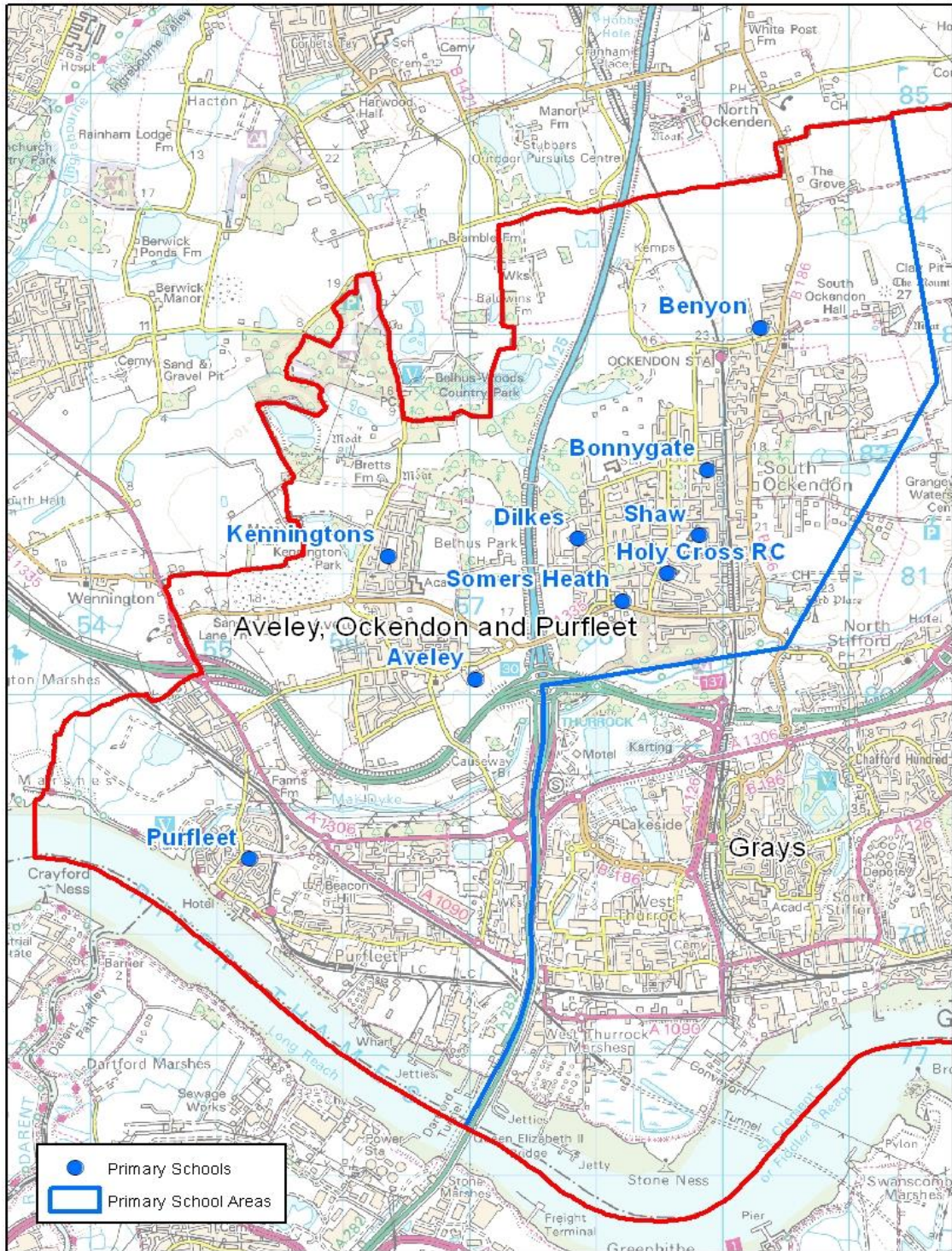
PRIMARY FORECASTS

Pupil place projections for each of the planning areas are set out in the following pages.

Reception intake September 2019 was the first year of our highest birth rate, therefore it is predicted that the next three years will show an increase in a reception intake and subsequent year groups.

The whole school projections for each primary school planning area have been calculated using birth data which in recent years was showing an increase five years later when pupils reach school age. These are projected to calculate reception numbers along with the actual number of children on roll in the schools in the October 2019 census, adding the pupil yield from housing developments and then adding an additional element of places to cater for in-year admissions. This degree of additional places is required to enable schools to absorb the number of pupils we anticipate will arrive in Thurrock from elsewhere in the UK and abroad in the September 2020/21 academic year and beyond. The impact of inward migration will be closely monitored and forecasts adjusted accordingly.

Full details of the methodology used to determine the pupil place forecasts for the primary phase are set out in Annex 1.



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Scale 1:55,000

Aveley, Ockendon & Purfleet

Aveley, Ockendon & Purfleet		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Aveley	60	64	64	69	74	69
Benyon	60	24	27	28	47	33
Bonnygate	60	63	64	66	62	64
Dilkes	60	58	54	65	45	55
Holy Cross	30	30	30	30	30	30
Kenningtons	60	73	95	72	111	90
Purfleet	90	90	75	57	71	72
Shaw	60	69	58	44	55	54
Somers Heath	60	62	62	73	60	65
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	540	541	537	512	563	540

Aveley, Ockendon & Purfleet		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Aveley	420	459	479	481	477	488
Benyon	420	246	257	261	285	282
Bonnygate	420	438	456	468	478	486
Dilkes	420	419	413	416	401	398
Holy Cross	210	209	209	209	210	210
Kenningtons	420	441	461	459	519	549
Purfleet	630	579	585	571	596	607
Shaw	420	421	419	403	400	398
Somers Heath	420	389	421	436	436	441
In Year Admissions		54	55	56	57	58
	3,780	3,654	3,753	3,759	3,857	3,915

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

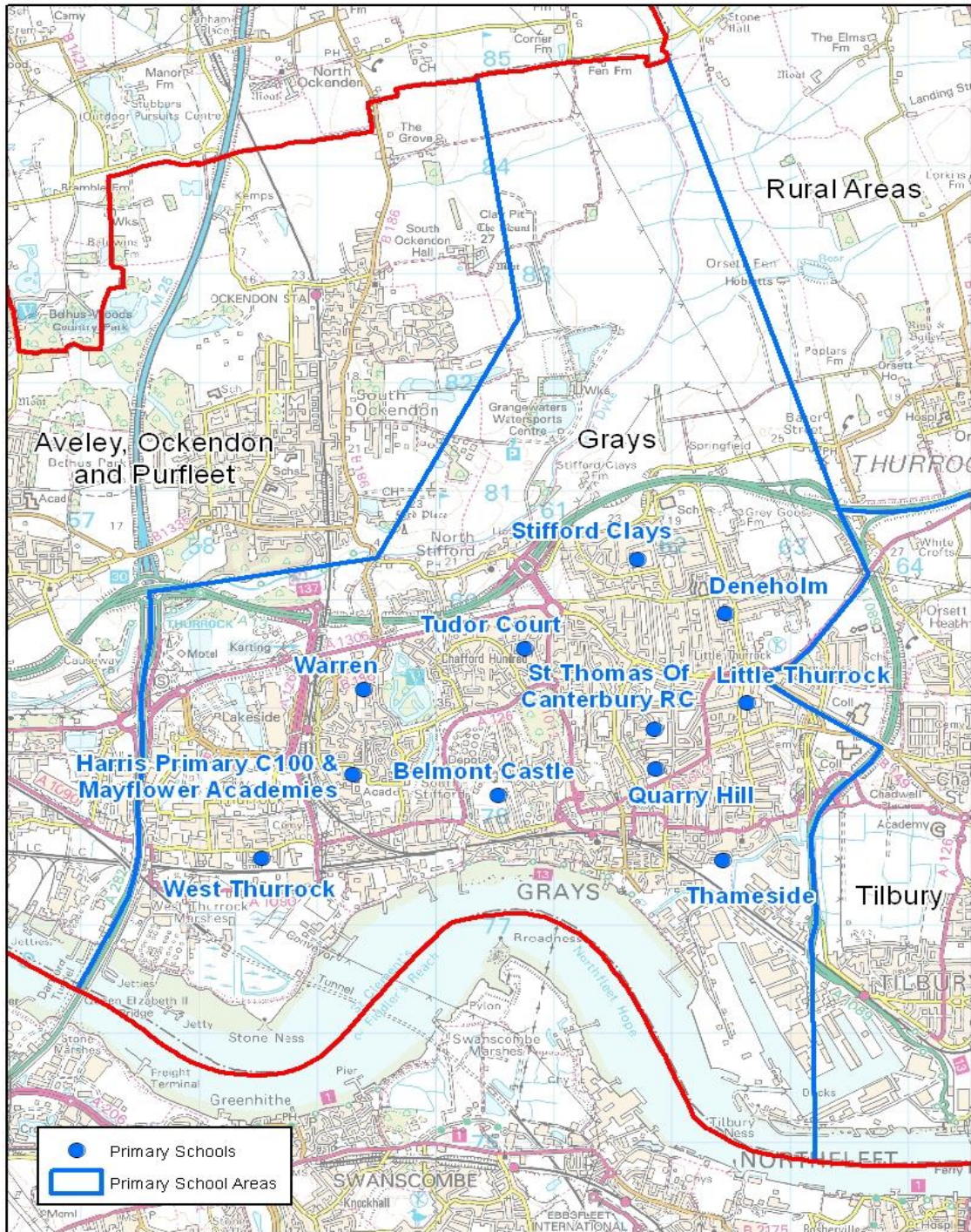
Benyon Primary has increased to a two form entry.

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

Aveley Primary Year 3 and Year 4, Benyon Primary Reception and Year 2, Kenningtons Primary Academy Year 4 and Year 5.

Please note that the bulge classes are not included in the Published Admission Number (PAN).

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the following developments at: Aveley Football Ground, Mill Road, Former Ford Factory Arisdale Avenue, Aveley village extension south of B1335 and the Purfleet Centre.



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Scale 1:60,000

Grays

Grays		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Belmont Castle	90	95	90	83	83	87
Deneholm	60	37	54	58	56	54
Harris Chafford Hundred	90	74	89	69	66	75
Harris Mayflower	150	111	130	103	102	112
Little Thurrock	90	90	98	121	83	99
Quarry Hill	60	61	60	73	73	68
St Thomas'	90	83	83	83	83	83
Stifford Clays	90	103	71	66	84	77
Thameside	120	116	96	102	95	100
Tudor Court	90	98	87	80	89	87
Warren	60	56	37	35	47	42
West Thurrock	60	58	59	54	52	55
In Year Admissions		15	14	14	14	14
	1050	997	968	941	927	953

Grays		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Belmont Castle	630	659	681	696	709	720
Deneholm	420	386	384	382	380	377
Harris Chafford Hundred	630	603	603	584	560	548
Harris Mayflower	1,050	823	863	876	836	828
Little Thurrock	630	618	627	660	655	669
Quarry Hill	420	413	417	436	458	469
St Thomas'	630	605	599	592	586	579
Stifford Clays	630	617	600	576	570	560
Thameside	840	772	785	779	763	760
Tudor Court	630	777	751	712	688	659
Warren	420	416	394	380	381	390
West Thurrock	420	415	434	448	468	484
In Year Admissions		107	107	107	106	106
	7,350	7,211	7,245	7,228	7,160	7,149

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

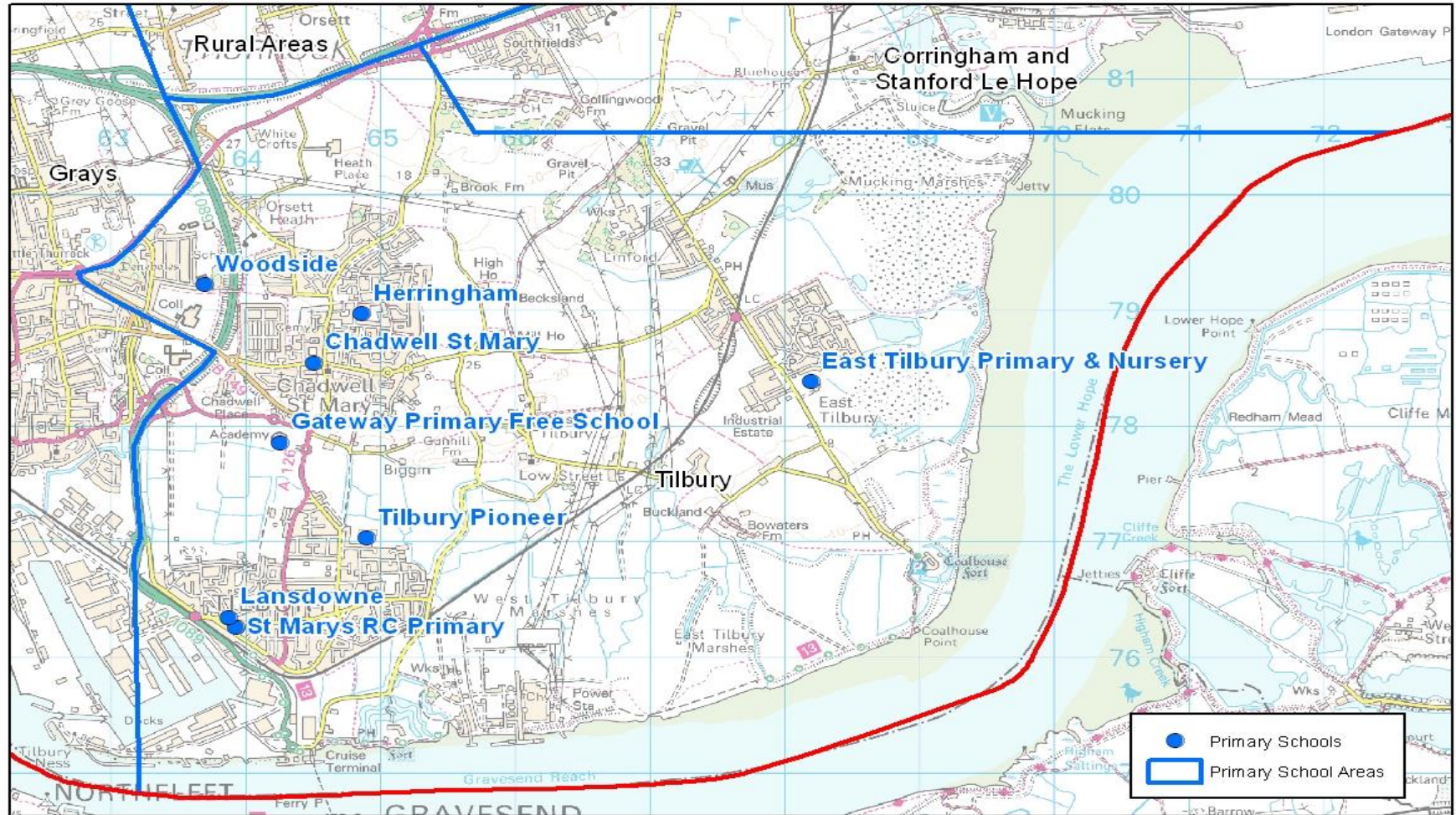
Tudor Court have reduced their intake to a three form entry.

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

Belmont Castle Year 5, Quarry Hill Academy Year 6, Stifford Clays Primary Year 6, and West Thurrock Year 6.

Please note that the bulge classes are not included in the Published Admission Number (PAN).

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the following developments at: William Ball Site Gumley Road, Grays Gas Holder site London Road, Land South of West Thurrock Way and proposed developments land north of Rosebery Road, Castle Road and Belmont Road, Arena Essex and Land Part of Little Thurrock Marshes, Thurrock Park Way



Tilbury

Tilbury		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Chadwell St Mary	30	37	28	30	25	29
East Tilbury	90	100	106	139	142	125
Gateway	60	69	48	59	55	56
Herringham	60	46	57	54	60	56
Lansdowne	90	81	77	73	72	75
St Mary's	30	30	30	30	30	30
Tilbury Pioneer	60	79	62	80	64	70
Woodside	90	115	112	100	116	110
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	510	565	528	573	572	559

Tilbury		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Chadwell St Mary	210	216	214	215	209	208
East Tilbury	630	684	714	765	800	837
Gateway	420	415	412	413	408	406
Herringham	420	401	410	416	440	458
Lansdowne	630	617	611	598	585	572
St Mary's	210	211	211	211	211	210
Tilbury Pioneer	420	460	475	497	475	479
Woodside	630	689	726	737	763	783
In Year Admissions		55	57	58	58	59
	3,570	3,747	3,829	3,909	3,948	4,011

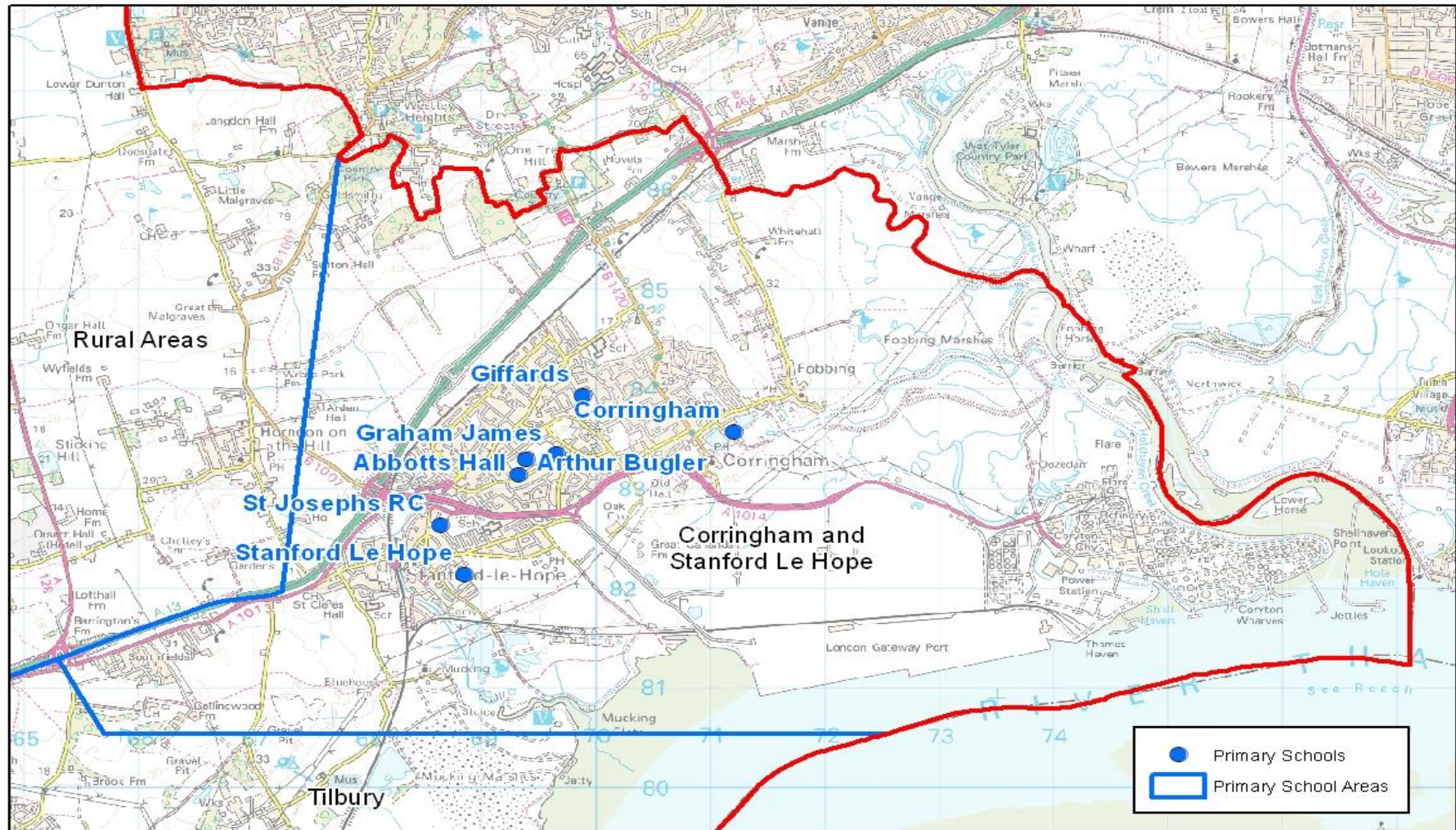
Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

East Tilbury Year 3, Year 4 and Year 6. Tilbury Pioneer Year 2 and Year 3.

Please note that the bulge classes are not included in the Published Admission Number (PAN).

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the following developments at: Bata Field land adjacent Bata Avenue and to Rear of 201-251 Princess Margaret Road, Thurrock Woodview Campus and Former St Chads School and the proposed development at Star Industrial Estate Linford Road.



Corringham and Stanford Le Hope

Corringham & Stanford le Hope		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Abbots Hall	30	47	34	34	29	34
Arthur Bugler	60	65	47	57	57	55
Corringham	60	43	72	56	81	66
Giffards	60	48	84	64	71	70
Graham James	60	64	55	94	59	69
St Joseph's	30	29	29	29	29	29
Stanford-le-Hope	60	52	75	63	68	67
In Year Admissions		5	6	6	6	6
	360	353	402	403	400	396

Corringham & Stanford le Hope		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Abbots Hall	210	265	270	275	254	258
Arthur Bugler	420	423	410	407	404	399
Corringham	420	411	424	419	437	448
Giffards	420	433	457	434	443	458
Graham James	420	422	419	454	453	463
St Joseph's	210	217	206	206	205	204
Stanford-le-Hope	420	412	447	467	503	535
In Year Admissions		39	39	40	40	41
	2,520	2,622	2,672	2,702	2,739	2,806

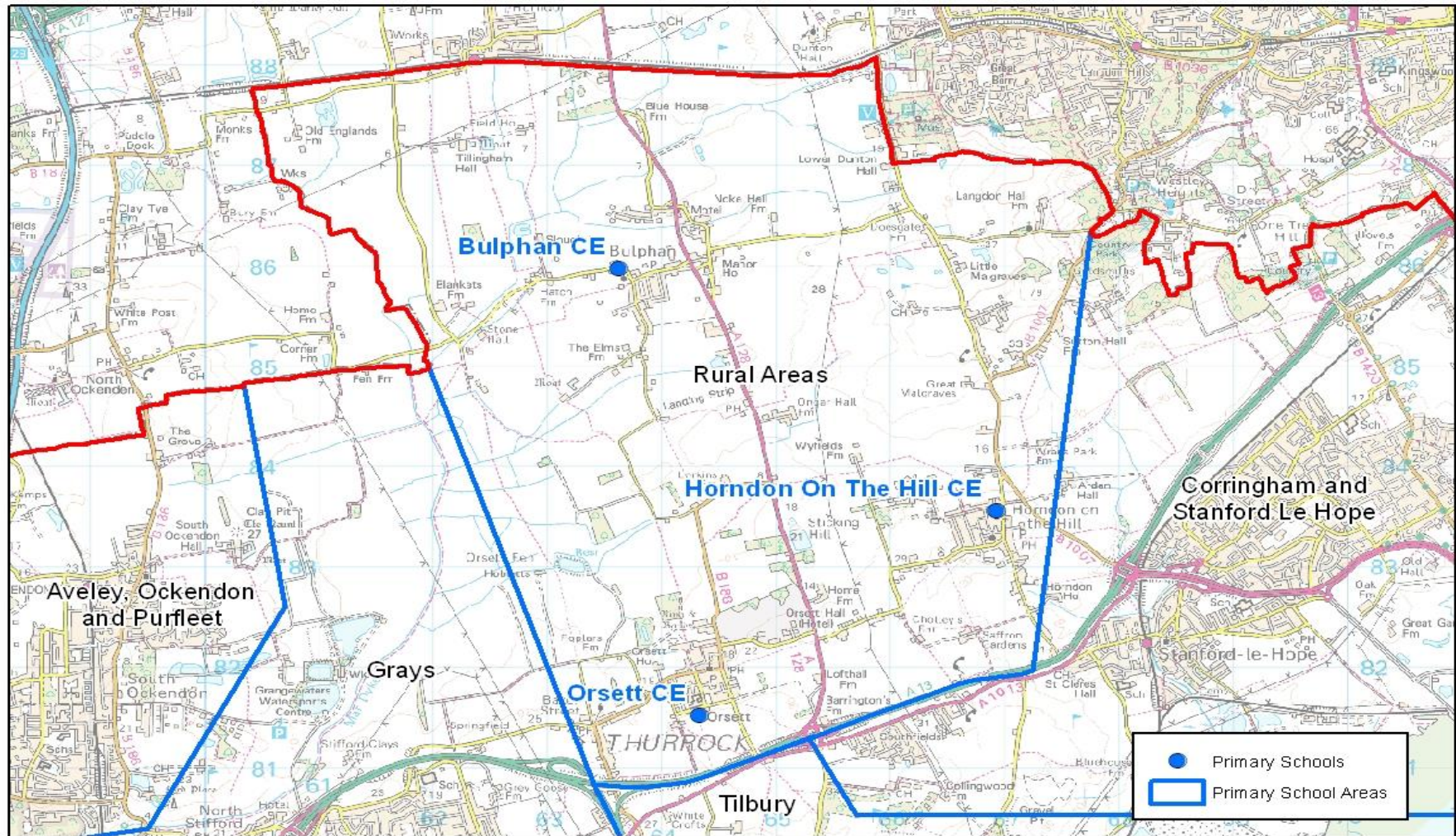
Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

Abbots Hall Primary Academy Reception and Year 3 and Giffards Primary Year 4.

Please note that the bulge classes are not included in the Published Admission Number (PAN).

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the development at: Land adjacent St Cleres School, railway line and Butts Lane and the proposed developments at: Land adjacent to railway line, Manorway and west of Victoria Road and Land Rear of Caldwell Road, Kingsman Road & Adj. to A1013.



Rural Area

Rural		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Bulphan	12	14	20	20	18	19
Horndon-on-the-Hill	30	20	23	26	15	21
Orsett	30	50	40	29	22	32
In Year Admissions		1	1	1	1	1
	72	85	84	76	56	73

Rural		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Bulphan	84	87	102	112	127	144
Horndon-on-the-Hill	210	184	178	175	162	161
Orsett	210	238	247	244	235	239
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	504	517	535	539	532	552

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

There are no class base increases in this planning area.

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the development at: Little Malgraves Farm, Lower Dunton Road.

Primary Forecast Summary

Reception intake September 2019 will be the first year of our highest birth rate, therefore it is predicted that the next 3 years will show an increase in a reception intake and subsequent year groups.

The pressure in the primary phase is being managed and will continue to be regularly monitored closely. The inward migration experienced in recent years had a more significant impact on primary places than secondary places. This may have been because we had capacity in our secondary schools which could absorb the newcomers or it may be that the families arriving in Thurrock had younger children.

Thurrock Primary whole school numbers have increased by 20% since Autumn 2012 which equates to a 2,908 pupil increase. However, the autumn school census for October 2018 and 2019 is showing a significant decrease in the amount of extra primary pupils when compared to the last five years.

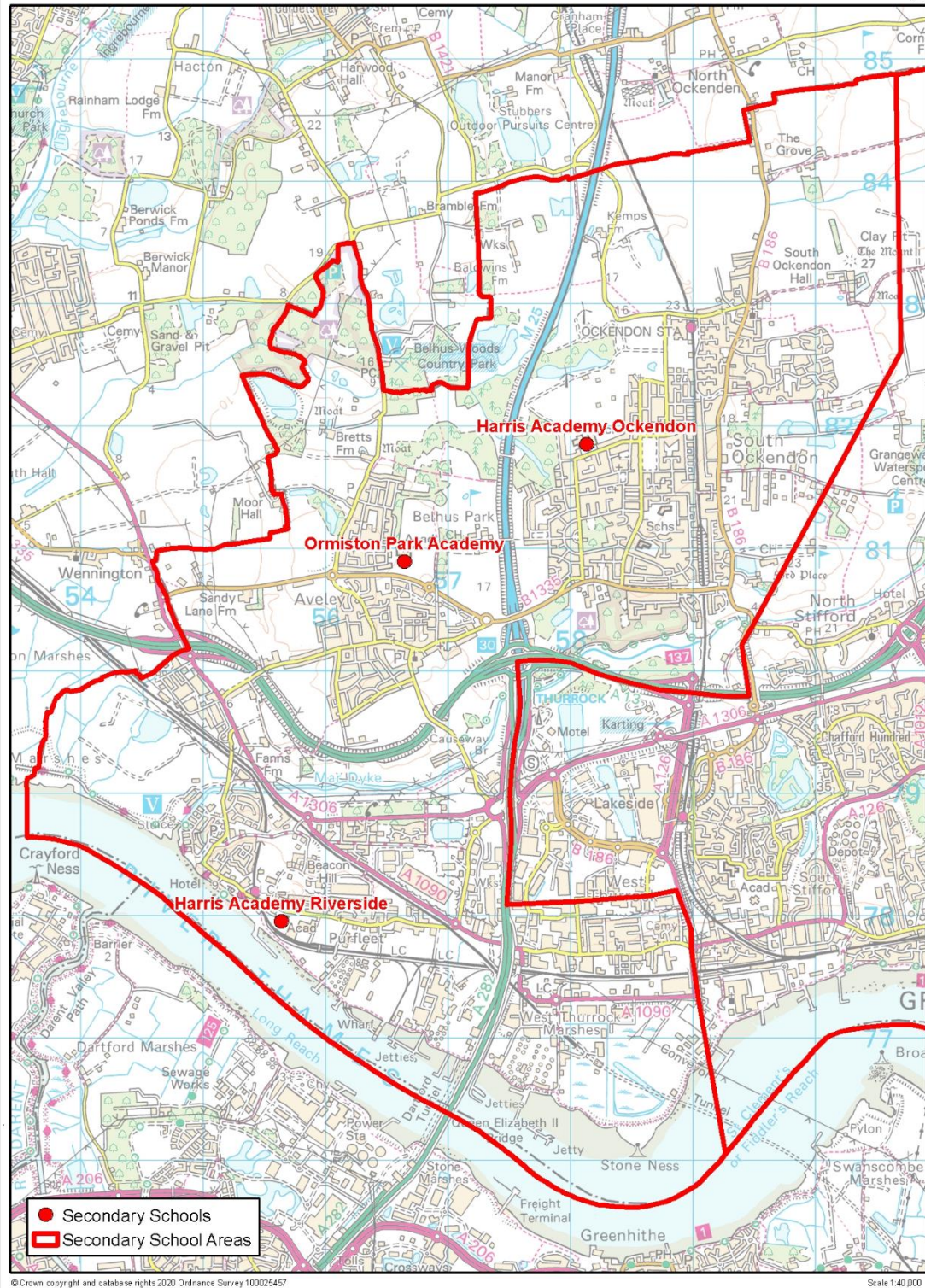
SECONDARY FORECASTS

The primary increase is becoming noticeable when pupils are moving into Year 7 and beyond.

Whole school forecasts for each secondary planning area has been calculated using formulae to calculate the transition rate from year 6 to year 7 and the current numbers on roll in schools on the census data from October 2019 and by also adding the pupil yield from any developments and then adding an additional element of places to cater for in-year admissions. This degree of additional places is required to enable schools to absorb the number of pupils we anticipate will arrive in Thurrock from elsewhere in the UK and abroad in the September 2020/21 academic year and beyond. The impact of inward migration will be closely monitored and forecasts adjusted accordingly.

Full details of the methodology used to determine the pupil place forecasts for the secondary phase are set out in Annex 1.

Thames Park Free School and Orsett Heath Free School will open in September 2020. Each school will open to 120 pupils at each site. These sites are temporary whilst their new permanent sites are under construction. This will affect the Secondary year 7 forecast and those pupil admission numbers will not be included until next year's Pupil Place Plan.



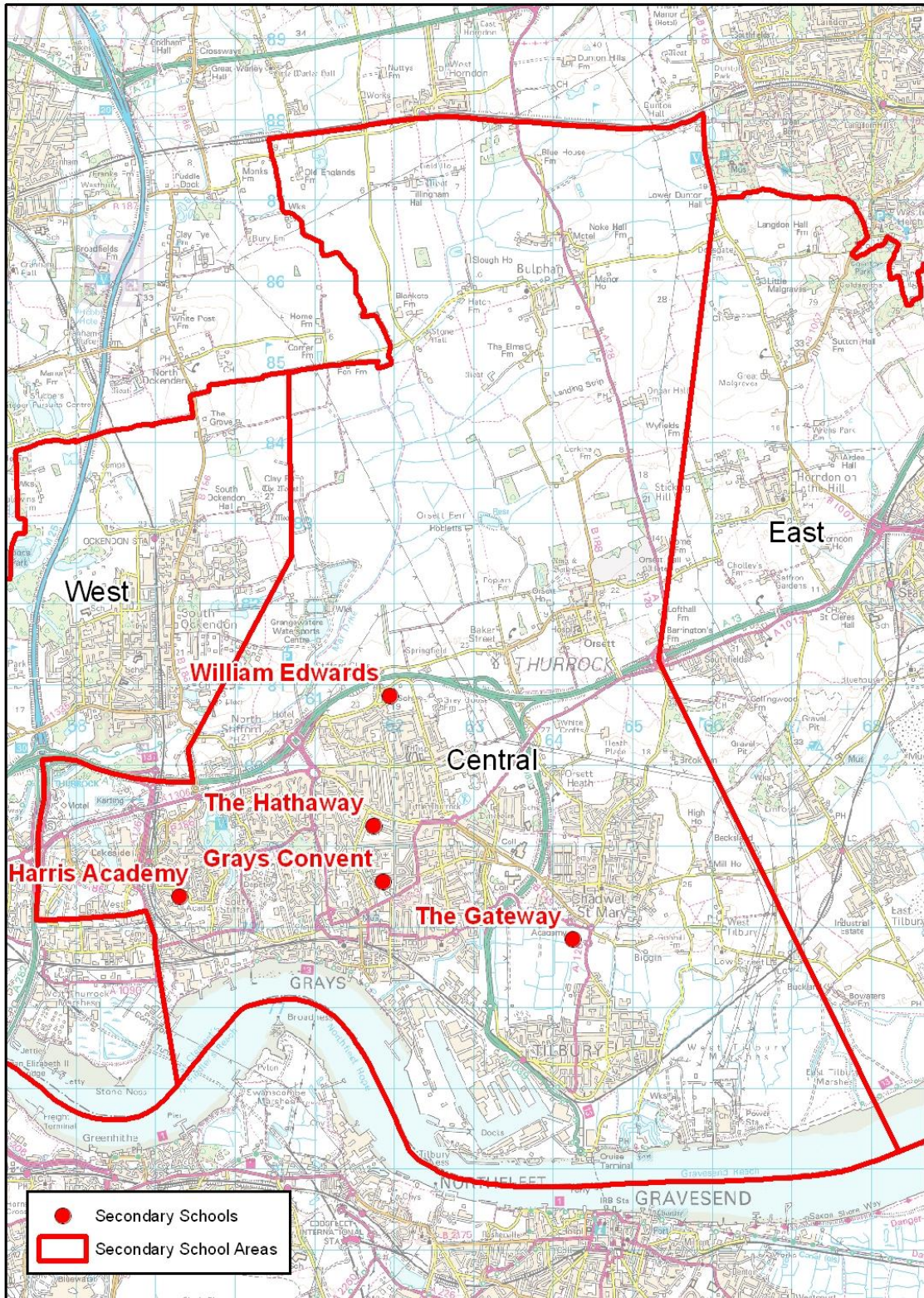
West Planning Area

West Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Harris Academy Riverside	180	189	185	195	198	190
Ormiston Park Academy	180	139	137	144	147	140
Harris Academy Ockendon	240	257	252	266	270	259
In Year Admissions		9	9	9	9	9
	600	594	583	614	624	598

West Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Harris Academy Riverside	900	638	828	904	987	999
Ormiston Park Academy	900	689	694	740	737	744
Harris Academy Ockendon	1,200	1,222	1,258	1,300	1,339	1,356
In Year Admissions		38	42	44	46	46
	3,000	2,587	2,822	2,988	3,109	3,145

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the developments at: Aveley Football Ground, Mill Road, Former Ford Factory Arisdale Avenue, Aveley village extension south of B1335, Land South of West Thurrock Way and the Purfleet Centre.



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Scale 1:85,000

Central Planning Area

Central Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Grays Convent	124	130	128	134	137	131
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	180	189	185	195	198	190
The Gateway Academy	215	225	221	233	237	227
The Hathaway Academy	180	185	182	192	195	187
William Edwards	250	261	256	270	274	263
In Year Admissions		15	15	15	16	15
	949	1,005	987	1,039	1,057	1,013

Central Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Grays Convent	620	650	655	666	679	660
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	900	1,001	974	1,005	1,030	1,034
The Gateway Academy	1,075	1,110	1,143	1,178	1,217	1,213
The Hathaway Academy	900	890	912	956	994	1,016
William Edwards	1,250	1,296	1,301	1,325	1,324	1,340
In Year Admissions		74	75	77	79	79
	4,745	5,021	5,060	5,207	5,323	5,342

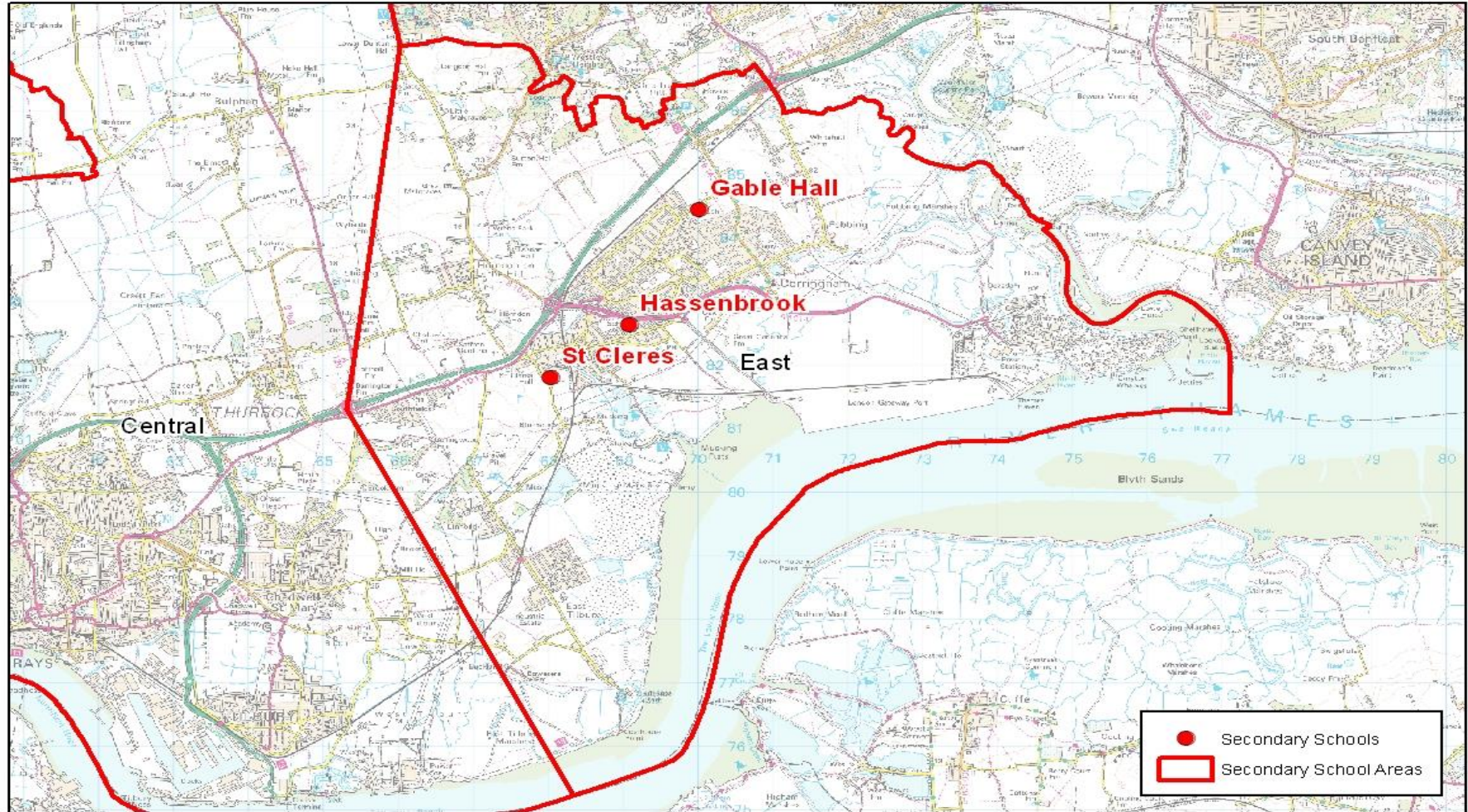
Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

Grays Convent Year 7, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred Year 7 and Year 10, William Edwards Year 8.

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the following developments at: Thurrock Woodview Campus, William Ball Site, Gumley Road, Grays Gas Holder Site, London Road, Former St Chads School and the proposed developments at Star Industrial Estate, Linford Road, Land Part of Little Thurrock Marshes, Thurrock Park and Arena Essex.

The forecast above does not include the two new free schools Orsett Heath Academy and Thames Park Academy. These schools cannot be part of the Local Authorities co-ordination in the first year of opening. They will be included in next year's pupil place plan. Therefore the tables above do not give an accurate forecast as these two schools are due to open in temporary accommodation, initially with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 120 spaces each starting in Year 7 Sept 2020.



East Planning Area

East Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Gable Hall	272	278	273	287	292	280
Hassenbrook Academy	150	123	120	127	129	124
St Clare's	261	275	271	285	290	278
In Year Admissions		10	10	10	11	10
	683	686	674	709	722	692

East Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Gable Hall	1,360	1,297	1,315	1,348	1,395	1,410
Hassenbrook Academy	750	521	529	578	618	625
St Clare's	1,305	1,391	1,454	1,519	1,450	1,474
In Year Admissions		48	49	52	52	53
	3,415	3,257	3,347	3,497	3,515	3,562

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The following schools have increased their class base by adding the following bulge classes to the year groups as detailed below:

Ortu Hassenbrook Year 7 and St Clare's Year 7 and Year 8 x 5 form entry.

The above forecasts include the child yield exceeding 20 pupils from the following developments at: Land adjacent St Clare's School, railway line and Butts Lane, and proposed developments at adjacent to railway line, Manorway and West of Victoria Road and Bata field land adjacent Bata Avenue and to rear of 201 to 251 Princess Margaret Road.

Secondary Forecast Summary

With the number of primary pupils moving into the secondary sector the demand for secondary places is increasing and will continue to do so over the next few years.

Two new Free Schools will open in temporary accommodation from September 2020 with initially a total of 240 places across both schools.

COUNCIL WIDE ISSUES

The two main factors for pupil increases in both the primary and secondary phases are the increase in birth rate and the amount of in-year applications. The table below details the increases of in-year applications outside the normal admission rounds.

Academic Year	No. of children applying for a primary/secondary school place outside of the normal admission round who arrived in Thurrock from abroad.	No. of children applying for a primary/secondary school place outside of the normal admission round who arrived in Thurrock from elsewhere in the UK.	Total
2013/14	310	751	1061
2014/15	382	949	1331
2015/16	311	990	1301
2016/17	250	1096	1346
2017/18	250	1035	1285
2018/19	191	1097	1288
2019/20	162	785	947
* NB. 2019/20 figures are for 5 months			

Planning for the children arriving in Thurrock is difficult as we do not know who they are, how old they are, and therefore, which year groups they will apply for until they make contact with School Admissions. Some may require Reception and Year 7 places, but many will require places in other year groups. This introduces the potential of bulge classes in year groups other than Reception and Year 7 as we have experienced in recent years.

With the unpredictable demand for places from outside of Thurrock an additional element of pupil places has been added to each planning area within Thurrock.

ANNEX 1: PUPIL PLACE FORECASTING METHODOLOGY

The statutory obligation for all local Councils is to provide sufficient school places. Thurrock Council regularly reviews all data, trends and builds a robust analysis of pupil planning to ensure a place for all pupils that live in Thurrock either at normal admission rounds or the unforeseen “in-year” admissions.

Thurrock experiences high levels of in-year applications which has put pressure on school places but with the excellent relationships we have with our Schools and Academies, Thurrock Council has been able to continue to meet this demand.

Primary Forecasts

Thurrock Council uses live birth data provided by the National Health Service which forms the basis of calculating the place requirements four years later. This data contains post codes where the child lives which are then allocated to the nearest school in that area to calculate places required in that schools planning area.

Whole school forecasts are based on pupil census data; this provides actual pupil numbers in each year group. The number of children calculated from any building development is added to this to then calculate the number of school places required. An element of additional places is then added to cater for in-year admissions.

The building developments which produce over 20 pupils are taken into consideration in this edition of the PPP document and are listed under each planning area.

There is a project team made up of officers from various departments within the Council that play a part in PPP that meet monthly to review forecasts and any emerging issues. This allows the Council to be proactive in taking any necessary action to meet growing pressures for school places.

Secondary Forecasts

With the high level of primary school places we have we know that these will feed through to our secondary schools. When calculating year 7 forecasts we use existing primary numbers. Using trend data we have used a transfer rate of 92%, meaning 8% of our children go outside of the Thurrock area. Thurrock has no secondary provision for Catholic boys who tend to move out of the area to attend a Catholic secondary school.

The Year 7 forecasts in this document were arrived at by examining the conversion rate from Year 6 to Year 7 for the last three years. This is the number of Thurrock Year 6 pupils who went on to become Year 7 students.

Having established the predicted number of Year 7 students for each school, we then address the child yield from housing developments.

We know the predicted number of children in each area that are likely to arise from developments but we cannot know how old they will be or which year group they will require. We therefore assume that some of the children generated by new developments will require primary places and some secondary places.

A number of places are therefore added to the whole school predictions for both primary and secondary at the schools in the areas where the development is due to take place. If a major development falls between two or more schools the child yield is divided between the schools.

Migration

Thurrock is still experiencing increases in the number of children applying for a school place “In Year”. These arrivals during the academic year are difficult to manage as we do not know how many of each age group will arrive. The extent of inward migration in recent years indicates that 5% of school places are required in the primary phase and 3% are required in the secondary phase to ensure that the new arrivals can be accommodated.

The forecasts are not constrained by the physical accommodation available in the schools in the planning area and therefore indicate where pressure on places is likely to arise.

Pupil Migration

Thurrock is a net exporter of pupils. The numbers both in and out of Thurrock for receptions and year 7 are listed below. The percentages listed are comparing these numbers against September 2019 actual on time applications numbers for reception and Year 7. These numbers only relate to the normal admission round.

Primary

17 children are expected to come in to the LA +.5% by September 2020

77 children expected to go outside of the LA -3% by September 2020

Secondary

51 children are expected to come in to the LA +2.3% by September 2020

251 children are expected to go outside of the LA – 10.2% by September 2020

ANNEX 2: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)

An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

More information about special educational needs support and EHC plans is available at <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/support-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-have-special-needs-at-school/education-health-and-care>

www.askthurrock.org.uk

Provision

The Council has two special schools in the borough

School	Status	Needs Met	Age Range	Number of Places
Beacon Hill Academy	Academy	Severe and profound learning difficulties	3 to 19	75
Treetops Academy	Academy	Moderate learning difficulties and Autism	3 to 19	309

Beacon Hill Academy is a special school in South Ockendon for pupils who have severe and complex learning difficulties. Beacon Hill Post 16 provision caters for students with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties from 16 to 19. This provision is located on the shared site with Treetops School in Grays. Students follow a personalised, accredited curriculum which promotes independence and transition to lifelong learning in the community.

Treetops School is a day special school academy in Grays for pupils between the ages of 3 and 19. The school caters for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties and Autism.

A new Special Free School has been agreed by the Education Funding Agency and is in development. The school will be located on a site adjacent to the existing Treetops School. The new Treetops Academy is planned to open in the academic year 2021/22.

The numbers of commissioned places in the Special Schools and Resource Bases are agreed between the Council and the schools on an annual basis. There is potential opportunity for additional places to be commissioned by the local authority as required and where possible during the academic year.

In addition to the special schools there are a number of mainstream schools with specialist provision in the Primary Sector:

School	Type of Provision	Age Range	Number of Places
Warren Primary	Resource base for pupils with hearing impairment	4-11	18
Stanford Le Hope Primary Academy	Resource nursery base for pupils with visual impairment	Nursery 3-5	3
Corringham Primary Academy	Resource base for pupils with speech and language difficulties	4-11	20
Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred	ICAN resource base for children with speech, language and communication needs	Nursery 3-5	5 *FTE
Dilkes Primary Academy	Resource base for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties	4-11	10
Lansdowne Primary Academy	Resource base for pupils with social communication /moderate learning difficulties	4-11	8
Quarry Hill Academy	Resource base for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties	4-11	10
East Tilbury Primary Academy	Inclusion Base	4-11	10
Thameside Primary Academy	Inclusion Base	4-11	10

*Full Time Equivalent

Secondary phase schools with specialist provision are:

School	Type of Provision	Age Range	Number of Places
Ormiston Park Academy (ASCEND)	Resource base for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties	11-19	30
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Resource Base for pupils with speech, language and communication needs and autism	11-19	20
St Clere's School	Resource Base for pupils with visual and hearing impairment.	11-19	17

Support is offered to students with special needs post 16 years at South Essex College, Palmers campus of USP College, and Thurrock Adult Community College.

ANNEX 3: PROVISION FOR PUPILS OUT OF SCHOOL

Thurrock has developed two new Primary Inclusion Bases for pupils who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion to provide direct support for these pupils and to support their re-integration into mainstream school. The two Inclusion Bases are at East Tilbury Primary School and Thameside Primary School, both of which are Primary Academies part of the Osborne Multi Academy Trust.

The Olive Alternative Provision Academy based in Tilbury provides a secondary offer for pupils because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive a suitable education. The service provides a range of different interventions to support young people to reengage with mainstream provision.

Admission to the service is by referral only. All referrals are made via the Council's Access and Inclusion Service.

Further information on the Olive AP Academy can be obtained from the Council's website.

ANNEX 4: POST 16 PROVISION

The 2008 Education Act raised the age of participation for young people in England. Those born on or after 1st September 1997 must remain in some form of education or training until their 18th birthday. This may be:

- full time education at school or college,
- an apprenticeship or traineeship,
- part-time education or training as well as being employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours per week or more.

Thurrock Council works closely in partnership with schools and colleges and other providers to plan provision for post 16 education and training. Young people can pursue a wide range of both academic and vocational courses in a range of settings.

Five secondary schools in Thurrock currently offer post 16 education; Gable Hall, Hassenbrook and St Clere's schools form the Stanford and Corringham 6th Form consortium and between them provide a range of academic and vocational courses.

Harris Academy Ockendon Studio School and 6th form is a 14 to 19 school offering a range of academic qualifications in addition to work based training. Applications for work based training places in the Studio School should be made via the Council's school admissions team. There are currently 75 places in the Studio School.

Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and Harris Riverside offers a 6th form provision which has a range of academic and vocational opportunities for young people, information on all the courses is available via the schools website.

The table below provides the number of students in Thurrock 6th forms at October 2019.

Gov	School	12	13	14	Post-16 Total
CA	Stanford & Corringham 6 th form	100	92		192
VA	Grays Convent				
CA	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	206	159		365
CA	Harris Academy Riverside	56	38		94
CA	Ormiston Park Academy				
CA	The Gateway Academy				
CA	The Hathaway Academy				
CA	Harris Academy Ockendon	50	42		92
CA	William Edwards School				
	TOTALS	412	331		743

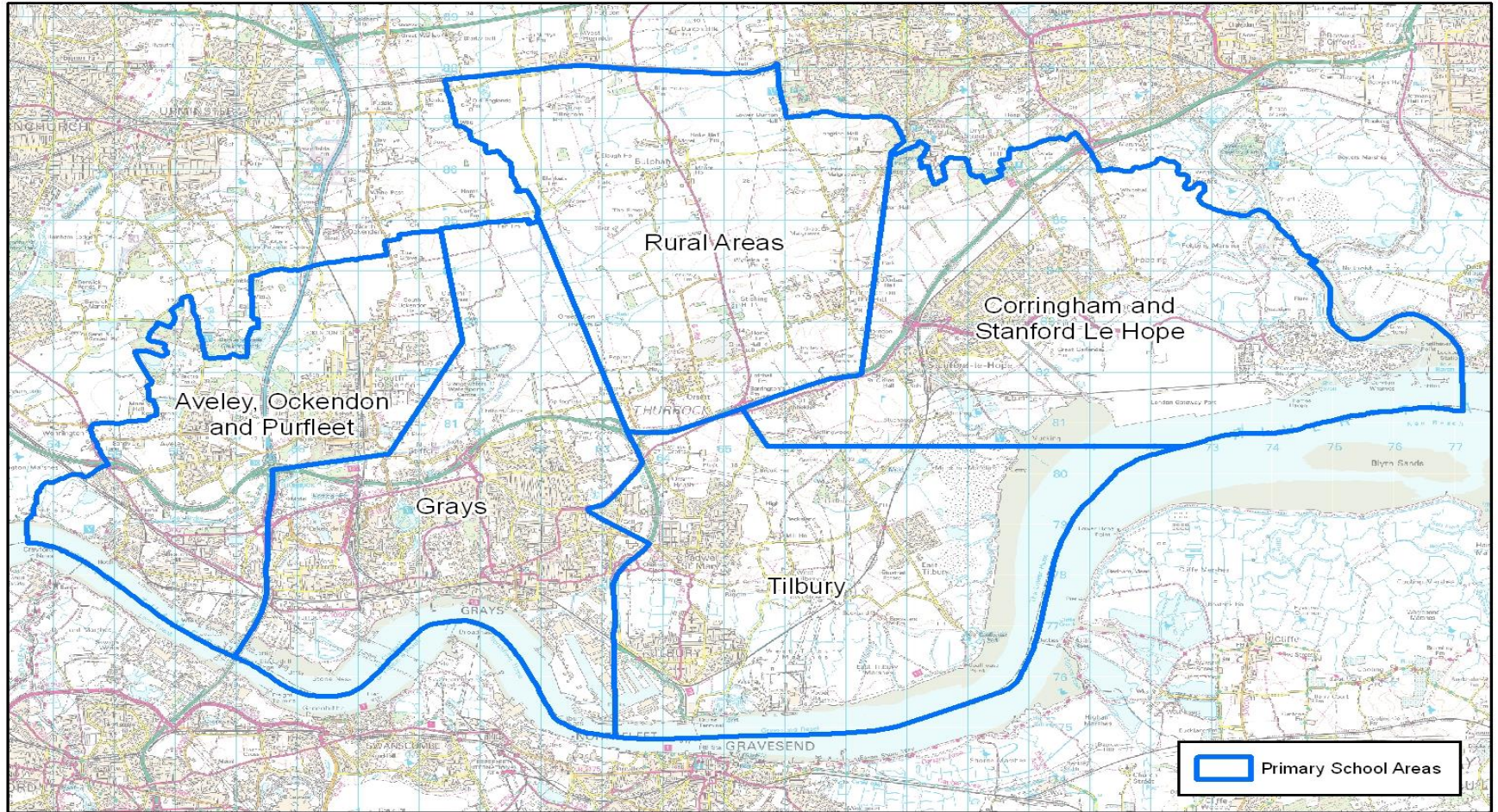
USP (A merger of Palmer's 6th form College in Grays and Seevic College in Benfleet) offer a range of A Level, BTEC and secretarial courses to over 5,000 students. Find out more about the courses on offer on the college website www.uspcollege.ac.uk

South Essex College of Further and Higher Education in Grays offers a wide range of training opportunities which lead to accredited qualifications. Young people can study anything from bricklaying to costume design, they also provide a small number of higher education programmes in partnership with University of East Anglia and University of Arts London.

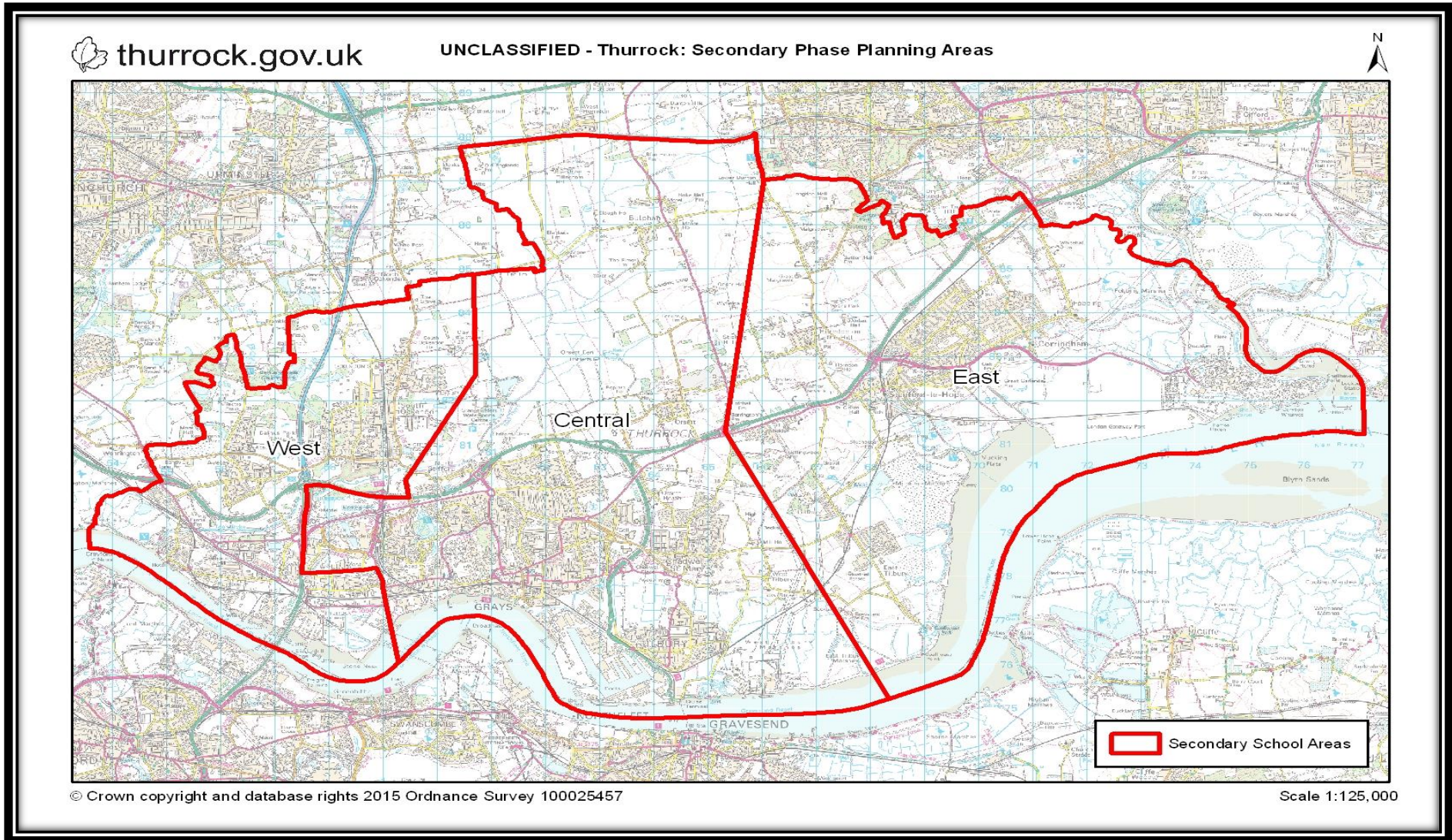
Thurrock has two special schools with a post 16 offer, Treetops and Beacon Hill, this information is available via the website.

ANNEX 5: MAP PRIMARY PHASE PLANNING AREAS

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ANNEX 6: MAP SECONDARY PHASE PLANNING AREAS



ANNEX 7: PRIMARY FORECAST RECEPTION

Aveley, Ockendon & Purfleet		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Aveley	60	64	64	69	74	69
Benyon	60	24	27	28	47	33
Bonnygate	60	63	64	66	62	64
Dilkes	60	58	54	65	45	55
Holy Cross	30	30	30	30	30	30
Kenningtons	60	73	95	72	111	90
Purfleet	90	90	75	57	71	72
Shaw	60	69	58	44	55	54
Somers Heath	60	62	62	73	60	65
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	540	541	537	512	563	540
Grays		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Belmont Castle	90	95	90	83	83	87
Deneholm	60	37	54	58	56	54
Harris Chafford Hundred	90	74	89	69	66	75
Harris Mayflower	150	111	130	103	102	112
Little Thurrock	90	90	98	121	83	99
Quarry Hill	60	61	60	73	73	68
St Thomas'	90	83	83	83	83	83
Stifford Clays	90	103	71	66	84	77
Thameside	120	116	96	102	95	100
Tudor Court	90	98	87	80	89	87
Warren	60	56	37	35	47	42
West Thurrock	60	58	59	54	52	55
In Year Admissions		15	14	14	14	14
	1050	997	968	941	927	953
Tilbury		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Chadwell St Mary	30	37	28	30	25	29
East Tilbury	90	100	106	139	142	125
Gateway	60	69	48	59	55	56
Herringham	60	46	57	54	60	56
Lansdowne	90	81	77	73	72	75
St Mary's	30	30	30	30	30	30
Tilbury Pioneer	60	79	62	80	64	70
Woodside	90	115	112	100	116	110
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	510	565	528	573	572	559

PRIMARY FORECAST RECEPTION CONTINUED

Corringham & Stanford le Hope		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Abbots Hall	30	47	34	34	29	34
Arthur Bugler	60	65	47	57	57	55
Corringham	60	43	72	56	81	66
Giffards	60	48	84	64	71	70
Graham James	60	64	55	94	59	69
St Joseph's	30	29	29	29	29	29
Stanford-le-Hope	60	52	75	63	68	67
In Year Admissions		5	6	6	6	6
	360	353	402	403	400	396
Rural		RECEPTION FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Bulphan	12	14	20	20	18	19
Horndon-on-the-Hill	30	20	23	26	15	21
Orsett	30	50	40	29	22	32
In Year Admissions		1	1	1	1	1
	72	85	84	76	56	73

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

ANNEX 8: PRIMARY FORECAST WHOLE SCHOOL

Aveley, Ockendon & Purfleet		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Aveley	420	459	479	481	477	488
Benyon	420	246	257	261	285	282
Bonnygate	420	438	456	468	478	486
Dilkes	420	419	413	416	401	398
Holy Cross	210	209	209	209	210	210
Kenningtons	420	441	461	459	519	549
Purfleet	630	579	585	571	596	607
Shaw	420	421	419	403	400	398
Somers Heath	420	389	421	436	436	441
In Year Admissions		54	55	56	57	58
	3,780	3,654	3,753	3,759	3,857	3,915
Grays		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Belmont Castle	630	659	681	696	709	720
Deneholm	420	386	384	382	380	377
Harris Chafford Hundred	630	603	603	584	560	548
Harris Mayflower	1,050	823	863	876	836	828
Little Thurrock	630	618	627	660	655	669
Quarry Hill	420	413	417	436	458	469
St Thomas'	630	605	599	592	586	579
Stifford Clays	630	617	600	576	570	560
Thameside	840	772	785	779	763	760
Tudor Court	630	777	751	712	688	659
Warren	420	416	394	380	381	390
West Thurrock	420	415	434	448	468	484
In Year Admissions		107	107	107	106	106
	7,350	7,211	7,245	7,228	7,160	7,149
Tilbury		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Chadwell St Mary	210	216	214	215	209	208
East Tilbury	630	684	714	765	800	837
Gateway	420	415	412	413	408	406
Herringham	420	401	410	416	440	458
Lansdowne	630	617	611	598	585	572
St Mary's	210	211	211	211	211	210
Tilbury Pioneer	420	460	475	497	475	479
Woodside	630	689	726	737	763	783
In Year Admissions		55	57	58	58	59
	3,570	3,747	3,829	3,909	3,948	4,011

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

PRIMARY FORECAST WHOLE SCHOOL CONTINUED

Corringham & Stanford le Hope		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Abbots Hall	210	265	270	275	254	258
Arthur Bugler	420	423	410	407	404	399
Corringham	420	411	424	419	437	448
Giffards	420	433	457	434	443	458
Graham James	420	422	419	454	453	463
St Joseph's	210	217	206	206	205	204
Stanford-le-Hope	420	412	447	467	503	535
In Year Admissions		39	39	40	40	41
	2,520	2,622	2,672	2,702	2,739	2,806
Rural		WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST				
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Bulphan	84	87	102	112	127	144
Horndon-on-the-Hill	210	184	178	175	162	161
Orsett	210	238	247	244	235	239
In Year Admissions		8	8	8	8	8
	504	517	535	539	532	552

School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
PRIMARY NUMBERS	17,724	17,488	17,768	17,868	17,967	18,161
In Year Admissions		263	266	269	269	272
	17,724	17,751	18,034	18,137	18,236	18,433

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

ANNEX 9: SECONDARY FORECAST YEAR 7

West Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Harris Academy Riverside	180	189	185	195	198	190
Ormiston Park Academy	180	139	137	144	147	140
Harris Academy Ockendon	240	257	252	266	270	259
In Year Admissions		9	9	9	9	9
	600	594	583	614	624	598
Central Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Grays Convent	124	130	128	134	137	131
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	180	189	185	195	198	190
The Gateway Academy	215	225	221	233	237	227
The Hathaway Academy	180	185	182	192	195	187
William Edwards	250	261	256	270	274	263
In Year Admissions		15	15	15	16	15
	949	1,005	987	1,039	1,057	1,013
East Planning Area	YEAR 7 FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Gable Hall	272	278	273	287	292	280
Hassenbrook Academy	150	123	120	127	129	124
St Clere's	261	275	271	285	290	278
In Year Admissions		10	10	10	11	10
	683	686	674	709	722	692

Red Cells indicate where projected numbers exceed the Published Admission Number (PAN)

The forecast above does not include the two new free schools Orsett Heath Academy and Thames Park Academy. These schools cannot be part of the Local Authorities co-ordination in the first year of opening. They will be included in next year's pupil place plan. Therefore the tables above do not give an accurate forecast as these two schools are due to open in temporary accommodation, initially with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 120 spaces each starting in Year 7 Sept 2020.

ANNEX 9: SECONDARY FORECAST WHOLE SCHOOL

West Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Harris Academy Riverside	900	638	828	904	987	999
Ormiston Park Academy	900	689	694	740	737	744
Harris Academy Ockendon	1,200	1,222	1,258	1,300	1,339	1,356
In Year Admissions		38	42	44	46	46
	3,000	2,587	2,822	2,988	3,109	3,145
Central Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Grays Convent	620	650	655	666	679	660
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	900	1,001	974	1,005	1,030	1,034
The Gateway Academy	1,075	1,110	1,143	1,178	1,217	1,213
The Hathaway Academy	900	890	912	956	994	1,016
William Edwards	1,250	1,296	1,301	1,325	1,324	1,340
In Year Admissions		74	75	77	79	79
	4,745	5,021	5,060	5,207	5,323	5,342
East Planning Area	WHOLE SCHOOL FORECAST					
School	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Gable Hall	1,360	1,297	1,315	1,348	1,395	1,410
Hassenbrook Academy	750	521	529	578	618	625
St Clere's	1,305	1,391	1,454	1,519	1,450	1,474
In Year Admissions		48	49	52	52	53
	3,415	3,257	3,347	3,497	3,515	3,562

TOTALS	PAN	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
SECONDARY NUMBERS	11,160	10,705	11,063	11,519	11,770	11,871
In Year Admissions		160	166	173	177	178
	11,160	10,865	11,229	11,692	11,947	12,049

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13 January 2021	ITEM: 12 Decision: 110546
Cabinet	
HRA Housing Development – 13 Loewen Road	
Wards and communities affected: Chadwell St Mary	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Barry Johnson, Portfolio Holder for Housing	
Accountable Assistant Director: David Moore, Interim Assistant Director of Place Delivery	
Accountable Director: Andrew Millard, Director of Place	
This report is: Public	

Executive Summary

In February 2020, Cabinet approved a report setting out a list of site options that were recommended to be considered for residential development by the Council. The paper identified housing development site options that had been assessed against the initial criteria agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. The list of site options was explored further to establish their suitability for development, subject to the appropriate levels of engagement and consultation with stakeholders and communities.

This report seeks approval to tender a construction contract for the redevelopment of one of the sites identified in that Cabinet paper (13 Loewen Road). The contract is to demolish the existing property and build 5 new council houses, funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) via a mix of borrowing and the use of Right to Buy Receipts.

1. Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Agree that delegated authority be given to the Director of Place and Director of Adults, Health and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to determine the procurement route for delivery of this project and to tender and award a contract for the construction of this project.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2017) sets out the objectively assessed need for housing in Thurrock between 2014 and 2037 as being between 1,074-1,381 new dwellings per annum, within which the affordable housing element is estimated at 472 dwellings per annum.
- 2.2 Consequently, the emerging Local Plan refers to the need for up to 32,000 new homes in Thurrock during the next Local Plan period to 2038.
- 2.3 As a contribution to this target, the Council has agreed its own ambitious targets for house-building through the HRA to build 500 affordable HRA homes between 2019 and 2029.
- 2.4 Reports to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee (on 11 February, 16 June, 9 September and 17 November 2020 respectively) established the process and criteria by which sites are to be identified as potential housing development sites and provided regular updates on scheme progression.
- 2.5 On 12 February 2020, Cabinet approved the Housing Development Options list which identified the delivery of a New Homes Delivery Programme through the HRA and TRL for the next 5 to 10 years.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Public consultation on the proposed design was closed on 16 November 2020 and a planning application was submitted on the 30 November 2020.
- 3.2 The site is proposed to incorporate five 3 bedroom family houses with associated parking. The scheme has been designed to a high quality meeting design standards set out in the Nationally-Described Space Standards and in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework. The design seeks to achieve targets for renewable and low carbon technologies by being a zero gas development.
- 3.3 As part of the development of this site, an adapted council property that is no longer fit for purpose (as various extensions and adaptations no longer meet current requirements) will be demolished.
- 3.4 The units proposed are five 3 bed houses. The Council's housing service has recently agreed an overall target mix for new build housing development as shown below and the proposed mix is considered suitable in that location and contributes towards meeting targets across the whole programme.

Units Size	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Target Mix	30%	48%	20%	2%

- 3.5 The dwellings will be let by the Council within the HRA at affordable rents, subject to a maximum cap of either 70% of open market rent or the Local Housing Allowance, whichever is the lower. They will be allocated in line with the Council's Housing Allocation policy.

3.6 The proposed timeline for delivery is:

- Planning Submission 30 November 2020
- Planning approval Spring 2021
- Contract award Summer 2021
- Start on Site Autumn 2021
- Completion Winter 2022/23

3.7 A pre-tender construction budget for the project has been developed by the Council's appointed specialist cost consultants who confirm that they are in line with similar projects tendered elsewhere within the private and public sector. The final submitted tender will be fully scrutinised to ensure it is 'value for money' before an appointment is recommended.

3.8 The funding for the project would seek to use capital receipts held by the Council under Section 11 (6) of the Local Government Act, known as the "Right to Buy" (RTB) retention agreement, together with prudential borrowing within the HRA. No general fund borrowing is required. This approach makes use of the receipts from sale of Council houses under the RTB legislation which would have to be paid to the Treasury together with interest if not used within three years of receipt. Sufficient RTB receipts are available to fund this project and the cost of the HRA prudential borrowing can be met from the rental income.

3.9 It should be noted that in the event that new Council tenants exercised their right to buy, the Council's investment is protected in that the 'cost floor' rule applies such that a resident's discount on purchase price is limited during the first 15 years after construction. In this way, the tenant's purchase price during that period cannot fall below the cost of construction, even after discount.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The key reasons for the recommendations are that the proposal:

- contributes to the demand for affordable housing and delivery of the Council's housing targets
- has the potential to quickly spend RTB receipts, avoiding the requirement to make interest payments to the Treasury
- can bring forward redevelopment at pace.

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

5.1 Resident Consultation was carried out from 19 October 2020 until the 16 November 2020 and was well received. There were 134 views on the consultation portal and 6 comments received. All comments received related to concerns about increased traffic during construction and parking. There were no calls or emails received in relation to the consultation. Management

of any increase in traffic volume during the construction period will be dealt with as part of the construction contract and the scheme design complies with planning policy in regards to parking provision. Formal consultation will be carried out during the planning process in line with planning legislation.

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

- 6.1 The proposed development of this un-used property for affordable housing aligns closely with the Council's Vision and Priorities adopted in 2018. In particular it resonates with the "Place" theme which focuses on houses, places and environments in which residents can take pride. It would also directly contribute to the Council's housing delivery targets.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Assistant Director, Corporate Finance

The delivery of housing through the HRA will contribute to the wider objectives of the Council.

Pre-tender estimated build costs have been considered with reference to similar Council schemes. This estimate takes account of local market housing prices, demolition costs and the required specification requirements.

The costs will be developed further should the project proceed and corporate finance will continue to assess the overall scheme costs in the context of the aims of the project to ensure it demonstrates value for money.

The costs associated with this proposal are proposed to be funded from Retained Right to Buy Receipts together with prudential borrowing. The funding and associated maintenance costs can be managed within the HRA offset against rental income at Local Housing Allowance levels over the lives of the properties.

As with all HRA properties these would fall within the Right to Buy scheme. The purchase price under the current regulations would be limited to a minimum of the build costs for the first 15 years after coming into use. From this point onwards a discount level will apply as set out within existing regulations up to a current maximum of £84,200.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**

Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer

This project will be developed as part of the Housing development programme and will be subject to a tendering process compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Council's constitution.

Legal Services, working with the Council's procurement officers will provide ongoing advice and assistance in relation to these legislative requirements.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

The service has completed a Community Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) in line with Equality Act 2010 requirements and to gather an understanding of the impact on protected groups through the implementation of the process set out in this report. The findings from the CEIA established that the implications for each protected group is currently considered neutral or positive.

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

None

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

- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 18 June 2019, New Council HRA Home Building Programme.
- Extraordinary Meeting, Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 29th October 2019, Housing Development Process
- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11th February 2020, Housing Development Options List
- Cabinet, 15 January 2020, Housing Development Process
- Cabinet, 12th February 2020, Housing Development Options List.
- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 16th June 2020, Housing Development Programme Update and Housing Development Consultation Process.
- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 9th September 2020, Housing Development Programme Update

9. Appendices to the report

- None

Report Author

David Moore

Interim Assistant Director Place Delivery

Place

13 January 2021		ITEM: 13 Decision: 110547
Cabinet		
Electric Vehicle Charging		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Ben Maney, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transportation and Public Protection		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

Thurrock has one of the most significant growth-led regeneration agendas in the country. It is vital to ensure future growth is supported by the right transport infrastructure, providing sustainable travel options for our communities and businesses whilst addressing climate change, reducing congestion and improving air quality.

This report sets out the proposals for the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facilities, both off-street and on-street provision within Council owned assets and on the adopted highway.

The report identifies the budget requirement and the procurement options for the Council and sets out a recommended approach to secure the installation and expansion of EV charging infrastructure up to 2035.

1.0 Recommendations:

That Cabinet approve the following recommendations:

- 1.1 Approve the procurement of a single contract over a maximum period 15 years. The initial contract period will be 10 years with an option to extend for one further period of 5 years (10+5);**
- 1.2 Approve the creation of a policy to inform the roll out of the charging infrastructure, based upon a demand led approach for on-street and off-street parking provision and the upgrade/expansion of existing Council assets and in town centre locations and transport hubs;**

- 1.3 Approve the budget and contract value for the full 15 year period to the value of up to £9m based on the following income areas:**
- a. Allocation of budget on the DfT Integrated Transport Block funding of minimum £75,000 per annum (total allocation over 15 year project life is estimated at being a minimum of £1.125m);**
 - b. Contributions secured pursuant to Section 106 of the T&CPA1990 (based on Local Plan projections for infrastructure improvements), and;**
 - c. Office for Low Emission Vehicle (OLEV) grant funding of up to 75% of the capital costs for installation of EV facilities.**
- 1.4 Approve the approach to delegated authority for awarding contract(s) to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport.**

2.0 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 At present there are only 3 EV charging points (which are located in Grays and South Ockendon) and the Council does not have an established provider of charging points. The existing facilities are in excess of 8 years old and currently provide facilities via a combination of 3Kw 3-pin “household” and a 7Kw 7-pin “Mennekes” socket systems.
- 2.2 EV technology has moved on over the last 10 years and is projected to continue into the future. This growth has resulted in the existing charging infrastructure becoming obsolete, with a requirement to provide alternative socket provision and increase Kw power outputs.
- 2.3 It is vitally important that new housing and commercial growth in the borough is supported by the right forms of transport infrastructure and residents and business are provided the opportunities to use cleaner and more sustainable modes of transport. EV’s will play a key role in Thurrock Council’s ambition to archive net zero for its own carbon emission and in supporting local businesses and residents to do the same. It is also necessary to expand and improve the charging infrastructure within the borough to promote the use of EVs on the network as a cleaner and sustainable mode of transport.
- 2.4 In order for Local Authorities to provide the necessary infrastructure to meet the Government’s aspirations on reducing CO2 emissions and banning Internal Combustion Engines by 2035, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) have provided a funding source to provide up to 75% of the costs for Local Authorities on a match-funding basis. This funding is limited on a first come, first served basis and it is unknown whether the funding will continue past its current allocation.
- 2.5 The Council receives a settlement each year from the DfT in the form of an Integrated Transport Block allocation (ITB). The ITB programme seeks to deliver an extensive range of transport improvements which reflect the vision and aims set out within the Council’s long term Transport Strategy (2013-26).

Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving air quality and making Thurrock's roads safer are core elements of the Transport Strategy which support sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.

- 2.6 The total Integrated Transport Block capital programme allocation for Thurrock for 2019/20 amounted to £971,000. It is proposed to redirect a minimum of £75,000 per annum from the ITB going forward towards the roll out of EV charging points. The ITB allocation must be supported by the OLEV grant to enable the proposed level of EV charging to be implemented. The ITB allocation alone will not deliver the required infrastructure and the 75% OLEV allocation must be secured to allow the proposed EV charging improvements to be implemented. The Council can also seek contributions from developers for electric vehicle infrastructure to supplement the ITB budget and aim to secure further match funding opportunities or direct infrastructure funding for facilities in these new development areas so that the costs can be reduced.
- 2.7 With the opportunity to use government funding to subsidise the installation of EV charging facilities it is important that the council establishes a contractual arrangement / partnership to ensure the expansion of charging points in the Borough and to ensure easy access for users.
- 2.8 Subject to government funding being secured, the current budget is estimated to be split as follows:

Contract Period	Projected Budget Allocation per annum	Potential OLEV Funding	Fixed Council funding (ITB)	Estimated Contributions from Developments per annum (\$106)	Maximum contract value over period
Fiscal years 1 – 5 (2021-2026)	£300,000	£225,000 75%	£75,000 25%	£0 0%	£1.5m
Fiscal years 6 to 10 (2026 - 2031)	£525,000	£975,000 75%	£75,000 11%	£100,000 14%	£2.65m
Fiscal years 11 -15 (2031–2035)	£575,000	£0 0%	£75,000 12.5%	£500,000 12.5%	£2.875m

Table 1.0 – Estimated funding provision per annum

- 2.9 The contract value is estimated to be circa. £7m in accordance with the above table. However, an upper threshold of £9m would be required, should additional funding sources be provided over the life of the project so to safeguard the integrity of the contract.
- 2.10 The EV Charging Point Contract should be seen within the emerging Thurrock Transport Strategy to promote sustainable travel and reduce vehicle emissions within Thurrock. It will also allow the borough to align with the OLEV strategy for 'unprecedented long-term commitment for the transition to ultra-low emission motoring in the UK.'

3.0 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

New partnership / contract outcomes and deliverables

3.1 The contract would need to include the following elements:

- Supply and installation of charging points for on street and off street parking areas throughout the borough;
- Ongoing maintenance;
- All back office services;
- Customer service;
- User interface and payment services

3.2 The contract will also be required to set out innovative approaches to tackle the lack of space and existing infrastructure / power supply associated with the local road network. EV Charging suppliers are leading the way in terms of innovative solutions, utilising renewable energy and optimising available space, and this will play a crucial role in delivering an improved EV charging programme within Thurrock.

3.3 A suite of Key Performance Indicators and data requirements would need to be developed to accurately measure both the performance of the contractor(s) and the overall success of the programme. Measures would need to be flexible as priorities change over the term of the contract. These KPIs should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Urgent repairs - x% of urgent installations completed within the required timescale;
- Non urgent repairs - x% of non-urgent installations completed within the required timescale;
- Complaints – Number of complaints;
- Contractual meetings - x% of contractual meetings attended;
- Social value - x% Social Value targets delivered;
- Installations per year

Service Model

3.4 A range of different options were considered for both the model and procurement route, including maintaining separate service output, single provider, or part supplier and part in-house operation.

3.5 It is considered that a Sole Provider option will likely be the best option to deliver the scheme over the course of a 15-year programme, which includes the supply, installation and maintenance of EV charging points across the whole of the borough (with the aim of delivering a minimum of 20 installations per year). However, through the tender process, if splitting the contract to supply and installation and then a separate contract for the management of the contract proves to be more cost effective, this will be explored.

- 3.6 The proposed service arrangement will bring forward a project that is to provide net zero cost to the Authority where the end user will be charged for using the facility. This is consistent with the existing commercial EV charging operations across the UK.

The 'Sole Provider' options has the following advantages:

- Minimal ongoing maintenance costs (dependant on tender outcome);
 - Continuity of service;
 - Only one organisation to manage;
 - Data returns from one source;
 - One procurement process;
 - Single point of contact, supporting appropriate service allocation, data sharing and monitoring;
 - Relatively scalable to meet future budget changes;
 - Flexibility with regards to future planning
- 3.7 It has been considered whether any element of the service could be brought in- house, however it would take a significant amount of time to undertake the insourcing exercise, carry out the additional procurement activity and set up an IT system to manage the back office systems. A large Private Sector provider would be more likely to be able to meet the Council's requirement to flex resources over the term of the contract as priorities and funding changes. In light of the above, it is considered that the desired outcome (expansion of EV charging infrastructure) would be less achievable through the 'in house' route.
- 3.8 It is therefore recommended to run the contract through an open market tender exercise to ensure the best chance of cost effectiveness and innovation.

Procurement Route

- 3.9 It is proposed to tender for a single contract over a maximum period 15 years. The initial contract period will be 10 years with an option to extend for one further period of 5 years (10+5). The contract value for the full 15 year period will be of the order of £9,000,000.
- 3.10 There are a number of benefits of a longer term contract as compared to a shorter term contract, which can be seen as follows:
- Potential for lower annual cost as start-up costs can be recovered over a longer period;
 - As both parties are in contract for an extended period of time, there is more room to build trust, allowing for stronger working partnerships;
 - The longer the contract period, the better the supplier understands the Council's business and business processes. This will allow greater integration of business, IT and financial processes alongside increased effective stakeholder involvement from both parties;

- Long-term relationships provide the opportunity for both parties to engage in a process of continual improvement of both products and services provided.

- 3.11 The final contract would need to include adequate break clauses and the Council's legal and procurement teams would oversee any such clauses to ensure suitability. A suite of robust key performance indicators and data requirements will also be developed to accurately measure both the performance of the contractor and the overall success of the programme. Measures would need to be flexible as priorities change over the term of the contract.
- 3.12 Due to the value of the service provision, the Council is required to procure these contracts in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and also to comply with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules. Officers have considered a number of options for re-procurement via either an Open Procurement Process advertised through 'Find a Tender' (which from 1st January 2021 replaces the Official Journal of the European Union), or by accessing purchasing consortium frameworks.
- 3.13 Whilst there are many benefits to using framework agreements, it is considered that in this case an Open Procurement Process is the most appropriate way forward. Principle reasons for an Open Process would be that the Council wishes to attract a larger number of bidders that would not necessarily be included on any framework agreement and that as framework agreements can last for up to four years, they may not include suppliers who have come to the market more recently. Whether the procurement route is a framework agreement or an Open Process, key criteria of price, quality and social value would be included as part of any final contract award decision.
- 3.14 Timetable for Procurement and Award

Action	Date
Issue Tender	8 th January 2021
End of Clarification Period	29 th January 2021
Tender Return	12 th February 2021
Evaluation Period Ends	12 th March 2021
Standstill Period Concludes	26 th March 2021
Award of Contract	29 th March 2021
Contract Commencement	29 th April 2021

4.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Approval is sought to proceed with a new budget allocation within the Integrated Transport Budget to provide EV charging facilities across the borough. The total estimated value of budget allocation within the DfT grant funding of up to £75,000 per annum for a 15 year period.
- 4.2 The report also seeks approval to undertake a new tender process to secure a strategic partnership agreement for the roll out of facilities with a contract value of up to £9m over the 15 year period of the contract. The tender processes will seek to provide a model for delivery whereby the Council can seek a partnership model for joint investment and provide a model of limited costs to the Authority in relation to maintenance and running costs. Provision of electricity will be net zero cost to the Authority as the end user will be charged for using the facility.
- 4.3 In addition, approval is sought to create a new policy to steer the rollout of the EV charging infrastructure on a demand led basis whereby facilities will only be provided from established data led approach and evidence of user demand, with an emphasis of providing facilities for all major town centres within Thurrock and in those areas where on plot and/or off-street parking provision is limited.
- 4.4 Approval of delegated authority to award will enable the award to take place with sufficient lead in time to begin upgrades of existing facilities and work on a new supplier/partnership with a dedicated budget provision and ability to then secure match funding from government initiatives.

5.0 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 This report was considered by Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny on 8 December 2020.

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

- 6.1 The contract aims to meet corporate priorities through the delivery of high-quality services in all elements.

The following three examples show how priorities will be delivered through the contract:

Priority	Delivered By
Improve existing EV charging infrastructure throughout the borough.	Clearly this is the fundamental scope of the Service. The service aims to increase the accessibility and capacity of EV charging points for residents.

Priority	Delivered By
Support climate change, encourage and promote sustainable travel.	The popularity of sustainable modes of travel is growing and with this the infrastructure to support this also needs to grow.
To meet government aspirations.	The government are aspiring to cease the sale of single fuel vehicles from 2035, therefore the demand for charging points will likely increase substantially.

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant, Corporate Finance

The budget requirement from the Council is identified as being £75,000 per annum and is to be provide from the Integrated Transport Block funding from the Department for Transport and will be included in the Parking Management area of the programme.

Additional funds will be secured via the bid process with OLEV on a case by case basis and is currently set at up to 75% of the costs per installation. This funding is currently available with no end date other than once the funds have been allocated to Authorities and committed. Once this funding source has ended, this will not prejudice the project delivery but will reduce the level of scheme per annum. Provision of electricity will be net zero cost to the Authority as the end user will be charged for using the facility.

Further funding has been identified via the contributions route of Section 106 of the T&CPA1991. This will be secured through the planning process and allocated to projects in specific areas and ring fenced accordingly.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**
Principal Lawyer / Manager – Contracts Team

This report is seeking approval from Cabinet for agreement to undertake a tender process for EV charging points within the Borough as noted in the report.

The proposed procurement routes for the Contract must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The open tender process mentioned in this report is provided for under

Regulation 27 of the Public Contract Regulation and referred to as the Open Procedure.

Legal Services should be fully involved at every stage of the proposed tender exercise and will be on hand and available to assist and advice on any legal issues that may arise.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

The contract would deliver EV charging infrastructure across the whole borough providing our communities with improved opportunities to more sustainable modes of travel. A Community and Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out to identify specific actions to include in the specification so to ensure the needs of target areas and groups of people with protected characteristics are met, as well as ensuring ease of access to services. Bidders' achievement of similar outcomes for a range of target groups and areas will be tested as part of the tender process.

9.0 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

10.0 **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

11.0 **Appendices to the report**

None

Report Authors:

Matthew Ford

Transport Development Manager | Transportation Services | Place

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13 January 2021		ITEM: 14
Decision: 110548		
Cabinet		
Thurrock Active Place Strategy		
Wards and communities affected: All wards	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Aaron Watkins, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sports and Leisure		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Interim Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection/Darren Spring, Assistant Director of Environment, Highways and Counter Fraud		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place/Julie Rogers, Director of Environment, Highways and Counter Fraud.		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

As part of the preparation of the new Local Plan the Council commissioned the 'Thurrock Active Place Strategy' (APS), a suite of studies to act as an up to date evidence base and to help inform future decision-making processes. The Local Plan, once adopted, will replace the currently adopted 'Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development' (Core Strategy) and will become the statutory planning document for Thurrock. The new Local Plan will identify where future development in Thurrock will be located and set out the policies which will be used to assess future planning applications. It will also identify specific sites for development for a wide range of uses, including open spaces and indoor and outdoor sports facilities, as well as the optimal sustainable routes from and between both existing sites and future development sites.

The APS consists of four discrete strands covering Open Space and Play areas; Indoor and Built Sports Facilities; Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport; and an Active Travel Strategy, each of which includes a separate assessment of current provision and a strategy (standards for open space) report setting out strategic recommendations and targeted specific actions for how each can be improved/increased/delivered over the Local Plan period (the Active Travel Strategy combines assessment and strategy into a single report). The documents will help inform the requirements for such forms of provision with regard to future housing need and consequent population growth.

The APS has not only been developed within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and vision for Health and Wellbeing, but also within the context of consultation with key partners who will share the responsibility for the delivery of the strategic outcomes.

In delivering each of the studies all relevant national guidance and methodology has been followed to ensure that Thurrock has a robust evidence base that informs future planning policy, the Council's wider investment decisions and how the Council can best position itself to attract inward investment into the Borough.

Having this APS in place and adopted as a robust evidence base to the Local Plan will also allow the Council to fulfil and deliver on its broader health and well-being objectives, deliver on its sports and recreation facility objectives over the Local Plan period, and also strongly position the Council in bidding for any government or organisational funding to support these objectives, as well as negotiating for funding through future development proposals.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the Thurrock Active Place Strategy, which consists of:

- **The Thurrock Indoor Built Facilities Assessment and Strategy**
- **The Thurrock Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy**
- **The Thurrock Active Travel Strategy**
- **The Thurrock Open Space Assessment and Standards Report**

be approved by Cabinet.

1.2 To instruct Officers to progress the recommendations arising from the Thurrock Active Place Strategy and update them within the context of feedback from committee stage discussions.

1.3 To incorporate inclusive consultation plans within each key project.

1.4 To report progress to Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in autumn of 2021.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England, detailing how these are expected to be applied to the planning system and providing a framework to produce distinct local plans reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and establishes that to do this the planning system needs to focus on three themes: economic, social and environmental.

2.2 Under paragraph 73 of the NPPF, it is set out that planning policies 'should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space,

sports and recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision'. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies, as well as surpluses in local areas, should also be identified to inform what provision is required in an area.

- 2.3 Paragraph 74 of NPPF further states that existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown the site to be surplus to requirements; or
 - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- 2.4 Responding primarily to the need to have a robust evidence base in place from which to develop sound and suitable policies for open space and sports provision in the emerging Local Plan, in November 2015 the Council commissioned consultants Knight, Kavanagh & Page (KKP) to prepare the APS. Working alongside KKP is a multi-disciplinary steering group including senior officers of key departments within the Council (Planning, Transport, Health, Environment and Education) as well as external agencies as and when relevant (Sport England, Public Health England).
- 2.5 Formal approval and adoption of the updated APS by Cabinet would signal endorsement of the strategy as the basis of robust and sound policy development as well as for providing the strategic direction of future open space and sports facilities provision for the Borough. Furthermore, a formally approved APS offers the robust basis from which to secure funding from Sport England, central Government and other relevant bodies for the improvement/provision of such facilities within the Borough.
- 2.6 All of these strategies were developed before the outbreak of COVID 19. However, the strategies retain the flexibility to address emerging issues and changing trends through the ongoing and further development of the strategic recommendations. Furthermore, the APS will be subject to regular and periodic review as the Local Plan progresses and as new development coming on stream may begin to offer opportunities for leisure, recreation and new open space through the more detailed place-making processes. Additionally, with specific reference to playing pitches and the strategy the Sport England guidelines requests a review every two years, which will also offer the opportunity for updated Facilities Planning Modelling (FPM) work to also be input into regular assessment of facility need, ensuring flexibility of the overall strategy as development and new facilities come on stream.
- 2.7 These strategic documents set out the longer term needs assessments and resulting recommendations for facilities and infrastructure. However, it is recognised that this will need to be underpinned with targeted and accessible

interventions and activities to encourage, support and promote physical activity to all sections of the community.

- 2.8 It must be remembered that the Active Place is a long term ambitious strategy and will not be delivered over night. The recommendations will take many years to deliver against and will evolve over time to take account of and respond to changing circumstances and opportunities.
- 2.9 The recommendations arising from these strategies offer an exciting opportunity to create an infrastructure to support active and healthy lifestyles by working collaboratively with wider interest partners such as; health, schools, clubs, funding partners and the commercial and voluntary.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 As set out in paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 above, in order to comply with NPPF it is incumbent upon a local authority to demonstrate that it has carried out an up to date assessment of its open space, sports and recreation facilities. In the absence of having such assessments and strategic steer in place as evidence to the Local Plan, the risk to the Council would be that at Examination in Public the plan would most likely be found unsound by an inspector as any policies on open space or sporting facilities would have no evidential base. This would have considerable financial implications to the Council by way of time and investment allocated to the plan making process.
- 3.2 A further considerable advantage in having an approved APS in place is that it will position Thurrock strongly when bidding for central government funding for open space and sports facilities improvements or any other funding opportunities that may become available from, for example, national governing bodies or sporting institutions, as well as when seeking Section 106 contributions from development towards open space and sports facilities provision.
- 3.3 Sport England, a member of the APS steering group, has recently been engaged in significant investment programmes throughout the nation and has indicated that a Council-endorsed strategy in place for sports facilities and playing pitches greatly increases the opportunities for funding. The FA has also been engaged on a large-scale investment programme and is seeking suitable locations with evidence bases in place for playing pitch strategies with identified need.
- 3.4 Working collaboratively with such a range of key partners and within the context of corporate priorities, the following common vision across the APS has been established:

To create a network of high quality, accessible and sustainable sport and leisure facilities, which offer inclusive services for all; enabling the inactive to become active and more residents to fulfil their potential by participating in

sport and physical activity, thus improving their long-term health and well-being

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The reasons for recommendation are:

- To give Council approval to the evidence base to be used for relevant sound policy development in the Local Plan;
- to set the strategic framework for the improvement/enhancement of open space, sports facilities, playing pitches and active travel routes in the Borough;
- to have a Council endorsed APS in place that can be used to assist funding bids from national and governmental bodies for open space and sports facility improvements in the Borough; and
- to have a robust evidence base in place when securing Section 106 contributions from developers for provision of/improvements to the local open space and sports facilities infrastructure.

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

5.1 Each of the strands making up the APS was subject to extensive consultation/engagement as part of their initial development (the Playing Pitch Strategy element being formally signed off by Sport England as well as all of the participating National Governing Bodies). In advance of this recommendation to Cabinet for approval of the APS the respective initial strategies (with assessment overview provided for information) were also subject to a more general six-week consultation via the Council website, for which the respective Reports of Consultation are included in Appendix 2.

5.2 An APS report and presentation was made to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 26 Nov 2020. In summary, the Board were supportive of the Strategies and would like to ensure that as work evolves, wider consultation takes place. This should specifically include those with disabilities and hard to reach community groups. For example, Officers should ensure that the works links to the recently approved Autism strategy.

5.3 An APS report and presentation was made to the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020. In summary, the Committee welcomed the work and were supportive of the Strategies. The Committee were keen to see the actions arising from the report implemented and progressed.

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

6.1 Approving the APS and engaging the suggestions in the strategy will have a direct positive influence on one of the Council's five key priorities and an indirect positive influence on two others. 'Improve health and well-being' will

be directly addressed by both improving and enhancing the open spaces and sports facilities throughout the Borough as well as by providing connections between key destinations in the Borough that can be connected and accessed via sustainable travel networks. There will also be the direct effect on this priority by working to encourage non-active people to become active and by providing a wider range of facilities and activities more suited to existing and future populations.

- 6.2 There will also be the indirect impact on two further Council priorities, those of to 'Create a great place for learning and opportunity' and 'Protect and promote our clean and green environment'. The consequence of both direct and indirect impacts of these Council priorities would be a broad overall positive impact on the present and future communities of Thurrock.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Senior Management Accountant

The APS work has been commissioned and funded as part of the Local Plan evidence base to meet the requirements of NPPF. There are no direct financial implications arising from the APS or any of its four strands. At a later stage there will be financial implications arising from the development of the respective recommendations included within them, but these will be subject to their own discrete financial assessments and respective business cases at that time.

The approval of the APS will position the Council strongly for providing the basis for policy development in the emerging Local Plan as well as providing a robust evidence base for sourcing external funding and investment and additionally for being able to negotiate Section 106 contributions arising from development within the Borough and with a direct bearing on the supply and/or need for provision for open space and/or sporting facilities.

7.2 Legal

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

This report sets out how the preparation of the APS is necessary to provide the requisite evidence for the development of the Local Plan as per the relevant requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

This report sets out how the preparation of the APS has been undertaken in a manner consistent with meeting wider corporate objectives as well as the Council's vision for health and well-being, all of which is underpinned by promoting equality of opportunity. General consultation exercises were undertaken on all of the final draft documents, details on responses are contained in appendix 2, they were open to all members of the community for feedback and comment though it is noted that response rate was low.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

Health – the strategy sets out recommendations that if pursued can help lead to a broad improvement to the health and wellbeing of residents of Thurrock.
Sustainability – the strategy sets out recommendations that if pursued can lead to a network of open spaces, sports facilities and active travel connections that can play a major part in the future sustainability of the Borough.

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

None.

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Executive Summary to APS
- Appendix 2 – Consultation undertaken on APS

Report Author:

Rob Cotter, Principal Planning Officer, Growth & Strategy
Grant Greatrex, Sports & Leisure Policy and Development Manager

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Appendix 1

THURROCK COUNCIL

ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUGUST 2020

Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration



Quality assurance	Name	Date
Report origination	Steve Wright, Christopher MacFarlane, Clare MacLeod	14.08.2020
Quality control	David McHendry	17.08.2020
Client comments	Rob Cotter, Grant Greatrex	21.08.2020
Final draft	David McHendry	24.08.2020
Quality control		
Final approval		

THURROCK COUNCIL ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Thurrock Council in its preparation of a new Local Plan for Thurrock commissioned a suite of studies to provide an up to date evidence base and to help inform future decision-making processes. The Local Plan, once adopted, will replace the currently adopted 'Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development' (Core Strategy) and will become the statutory planning document for Thurrock. The new Local Plan will identify where future development in Thurrock will be located and set out the policies, which will be used to assess future planning applications. It will also identify specific sites for development for a wide range of uses, including open spaces, indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Each study is intended to help inform and guide decision making processes relevant to that element and should help inform the requirements for such forms of provision with regard to future housing and population growth.

The documents developed include the following:

- ◀ Open Space and Play areas study
- ◀ Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Strategy
- ◀ Playing Pitch (and outdoor sport) Strategy
- ◀ Active Travel Strategy

The key focus for the documents is that the initial three studies (open spaces, indoor sports facilities and playing pitch strategies) provide the planning related evidence base across Thurrock and identify a clear strategy to develop improved facilities for residents. The Active Travel Strategy seeks to ensure that Thurrock is connected in such a way that residents can be active in their daily lives and to ensure that local communities are connected with key physical activity and cultural destinations.

In delivering each of the studies KKP has followed the relevant national guidance and methodology, which ensures that Thurrock has a robust evidence base that informs future planning policy and wider investment decisions.

The documents have been developed within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan vision and objectives: *'Thurrock: a place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish'*.

- ◀ Create a great place for learning and opportunity
- ◀ Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity
- ◀ Build pride, responsibility and respect
- ◀ Improve health and well-being
- ◀ Promote and protect our clean and green environment

A key consideration for the Council, its partners and stakeholders is to deliver on its vision for health and wellbeing: *'Add years to life and life to years'*. Improved infrastructure is required to enable residents to be physically active and to enable partners to achieve the following five goals:

- ◀ Opportunity for all
- ◀ Healthier environments
- ◀ Healthier for longer
- ◀ Quality care centred around the person
- ◀ Better emotional health and wellbeing

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ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Collaborative approach

Although Thurrock Council has taken the lead in developing the above strategic documents as part of its Local Plan evidence base, it is recognised that it alone is not responsible for delivering all of the recommendations and actions. The Council requires a collaborative approach with its national, regional and local stakeholders to deliver the key recommendations and health and wellbeing outcomes that the documents identify. For example, there are many models for building and managing a community sports hub including a variety of professional, commercial, voluntary, educational, health and statutory partners.

The strategies do not apportion direct responsibility for specific recommendations and actions to single organisations. In some instances, these will be Council led but supported by external stakeholders, whereas in others, they will be led by local clubs and organisations in partnership with their respective national governing bodies of sport and where the Council has no specific role to play.

A key aspect of the combined Active Place Strategy is to guide infrastructure developers in understanding the wider needs and opportunities across Thurrock when developing new housing and infrastructure projects. This seeks to ensure that as much as possible, a holistic approach to delivering health and wellbeing outcomes is achieved from new development in the Borough.

The strategic recommendations within this report are examples of the opportunities and areas where a collaborative approach can have greater impact for Thurrock residents.

There will be a steering group that will review the APS every six months to ensure this is a working document and can adapt to the changes required in line with new needs. The Steering Group will be comprised of a wide range of partners including Sport England, sports clubs via the NGB's, friends of parks groups, community & voluntary sector organisation as well as other key stakeholders.

This steering group will ensure there are regular links to emerging opportunities on an ongoing basis such as the Grays Town Fund, Tilbury Towns Fund programmes, Health and Wellbeing strategy, Lower Thames Crossing and other regional documents.

National strategic context

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2018

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development.

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making, the NPPF states that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs. It is clear about sport's role delivering sustainable

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communities through promoting health and well-being. Sport England, working within the provisions of the NPPF, wishes to see local planning policy protect, enhance and provide for sports facilities based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need, as well as helping to realise the wider benefits that participation in sport can bring.

The *promoting healthy communities* theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust, up-to-date assessment of need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs, quantitative/qualitative deficiencies and surpluses should be identified and used to inform provision requirements in an area.

Sporting Future: A new strategy for an active nation

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising the impact of Major Events.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

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Sport England: Towards an Active Nation

Sport England's response to the Government's strategy was to develop Towards an Active Nation. Sport England has identified that it will invest in:

- ◀ Tackling inactivity
- ◀ Children and young people
- ◀ Volunteering – a dual benefit
- ◀ Taking sport and activity into the mass market
- ◀ Supporting sport's core market
- ◀ Local delivery
- ◀ Facilities

It is clear that increasing participation in sport and physical activity and the health and wellbeing benefits that this delivers is the key driver for Thurrock Council and its partners. This is particularly important in the context of getting the inactive to become active and ensuring that interventions are targeted at under-represented groups.

Sport England is in the process of reviewing its Active Nation Strategy (2016-2021). It is undertaking an extensive consultation process to understand stakeholder views and to gain input into the strategy development. Initial engagement on the strategy indicates that a key focus will be to build on existing principles and to ensure that movement and physical activity in all their forms are key to future delivery.

The big issues that consultees suggest Sport England should play a role in are:

- ◀ Tackling inequalities – for a long time, it has been evident that the way sport and activity experiences are designed and delivered typically meets the needs of some people more than others. Partners are clear that some people need more support to get active and stay active than others, and that it will take a determined and co-ordinated effort to tackle inequalities in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ Climate emergency – partners have told us that this represents some tangible threats, as well as opportunities to be part of the solution.
- ◀ Connecting with health and wellbeing – a sense of unlocked potential, especially around social prescribing into sport and activity.
- ◀ Digital and data – concern that sport and leisure has fallen behind other sectors in terms of the digital experience and needs to catch up.
- ◀ Workforce – how we can sustain, grow, develop and diversify the professional workforce and volunteers.
- ◀ Active environments – creating the spaces and places for people to be more active and planning to make it more joined-up for people.
- ◀ Diminishing local resources and capacity – fears about ongoing reductions in local government spending on activity, sport and leisure. A sense that places are losing capacity and capability to make strategic long-term decisions.
- ◀ School experiences – often the first and most equal opportunities that children and young people have access to - which shape their relationship with movement for the rest of their lives – are felt to be low priority for many schools.

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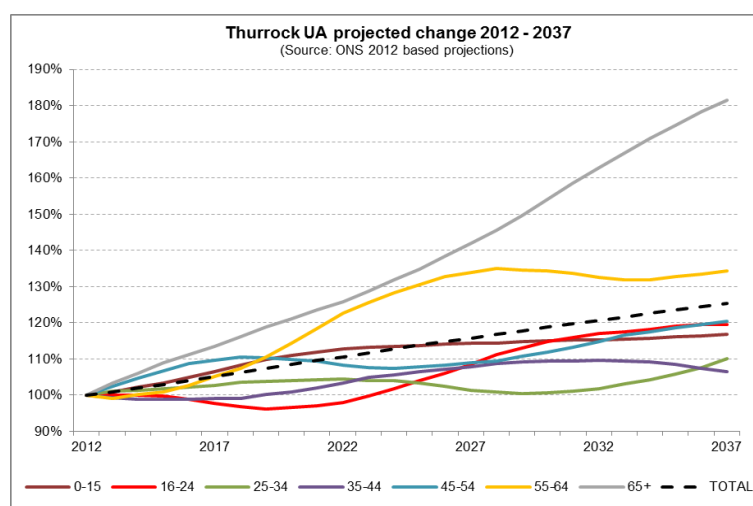
ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About Thurrock

Demographics and socio-economics

Thurrock has a population of 168,428 (2016 estimate) which is anticipated to increase by 22.9% (30,000) to 2037. The current population is younger than the East Region average; however, it is the change to the population profile in the future that is a key consideration.

Figure 1: Projected population change to 2037



Thurrock's changing population will have implications for the Council and partners in delivery of physical activity opportunities and health and wellbeing programmes. The key changes include 38% more 55-64 year olds, 55% more 65+ year olds and 27% more 16-24 year olds.

Thurrock's ethnic composition closely reflects that of England, with circa 14% of the population belonging to BME groups.

In addition to this, the Tilbury and South Ockendon areas are popular with traditional travelling and show communities.

Life expectancy in Thurrock is similar to the national figure (males 79.3 compared to 79.6 for England and females 82.6 compared to 83.2¹). However, for those living in the most deprived areas of the Authority, life expectancy is 9.3 years lower for men and 7.4 years lower for women, whilst 6,590 children live in absolute poverty. Source: PHE Thurrock Health Profile August 2019

Adult and child rates for the overweight or obese are above national and regional levels. The adult obesity rate is c.8% above the national average. In common with other areas, obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4 and 11. In Thurrock, 10.8% are obese in their Reception Year at school and 11.8% are overweight. By Year 6 this rises to one quarter (25.6%) obese and 13.9 overweight.

Sport England's Active People Survey consistently demonstrates that adults from higher socio-economic groups are more likely to take part in sport than the converse. Currently the most popular sports in Thurrock are walking (for leisure), structured programme classes, athletics, fitness and cycling. Athletics and fitness are the only activities, which perform better than national averages (and this is only slight). Walking for leisure, for example, is significantly below that of regional and national averages.

There is a strong relationship between physical inactivity and health and wellbeing challenges in Thurrock. Thurrock has high numbers of residents with long-term conditions,

¹ Office of National Statistics: Life Expectancy at Birth by local areas in the United Kingdom, 2013.

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ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

which could be prevented or managed more effectively by physical activity interventions. Therefore, it is important for residents to be able to access high quality local places and environments to play sport and be physically active and have a positive experience that will increase the likelihood that they participate regularly.

Housing and infrastructure

The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan that will set out the amount and spatial distribution of new development across the Borough. The Council's approach to growth is that it should be community-driven, infrastructure-led and make a key contribution to high quality place making. The need to plan for future housing and economic provision due to population growth and the impact of wider socio-economic and environmental factors means that Thurrock will change considerably over the next 20-30 years. Having an up-to-date Development Plan is a key component in ensuring that the borough grows in a sustainable way with the necessary supporting infrastructure in place.

Following a successful bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for support, the Council were chosen as one of two Local Authorities to pilot the potential use of Design Charrettes as a means helping local communities influence the future planning and development of their area and to ensure the delivery of better standards of design and quality of place. Funded by MHCLG, the Princes Foundation was commissioned to assist the Council in facilitating a stakeholder engagement process and masterplan visioning exercise for Aveley to explore how any new growth could potentially act as the catalyst for the regeneration of the village centre and its surrounding communities.

Following the Aveley Design Charrette, the Council is now set to roll out a series of Design Charrettes across the Borough. The outcome of the Charrettes process will include a vision and set of principles for each location that will guide the future development of the area and, in doing so, help inform the preparation of more formal place-making planning policy documents, including the Local Plan and any associated Inset Plans, Master Plans or Development Frameworks.

This process will also help identify the necessary infrastructure improvements (including leisure facilities) required to support the delivery of the place-making strategy, and by involving key stakeholders and the community in the planning and design of their community, the charrettes approach can help to build confidence and collective enthusiasm for the vision and its delivery and implementation. It should be noted that the Council sees facilities brought about largely by the private sector as part of new development proposals via the Local Plan.

It is also important to recognise that strategic growth takes time but if done properly and in a considered way, it can bring about significant benefits to local communities. This strategy will help inform and shape the future of the borough in terms of the built environment and also improve lifestyle choices, helping to reduce obesity and associated health issues in the borough.

APPROACH

Open space study

Methodology

The methodology used in the open space assessment is based on that originally set out in Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) Companion Guide; Assessing Needs and Opportunities published in September 2002. Whilst PPG17 has been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is still recognised as best practice providing a sound methodology.

This study is intended to assist in the Council in preparing a new 'Local Plan'. Given the potential scale of growth, and the implications this may have on existing provision, it is important for the Council to have clarity about existing levels of open space and what types of provision should be delivered via the strategic growth proposed (whether through onsite or offsite contributions).

All open space sites (including provision for children and young people) have been identified, mapped and assessed to evaluate their value and quality. Only sites publicly accessible are included (i.e. private sites or land, which people cannot access, are not included). Each site is classified based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of space is counted only once. The audit, and the report, utilise the following typologies in accordance with best practice:

1. Parks and gardens
2. Natural and semi-natural greenspace
3. Amenity greenspace
4. Provision for children and young people
5. Allotments
6. Cemeteries/churchyards
7. Civic space

The provision of formal outdoor sports is contained within the associated PPS. The amount and quality of such provision is not included in the total figures for open space (as a different methodology is prescribed).

Consultation

The results of the consultation undertaken as part of the previous open space review in 2016 are utilised. An on-line and paper survey was conducted as a key element of the assessment. The survey ran for a 9-week period and was publicised through the Council website, in public buildings and through contacts of the project's steering group. It invited members of the public to:

'Tell us about the open spaces that you visit and outdoor recreational facilities you use in Thurrock; what you think of their quality and accessibility, how often you use them and what improvements could be made'.

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The survey secured the views of 207 respondents, with a general interest in the provision of open spaces in Thurrock. In addition to the survey, face-to-face meetings were undertaken with key council officers and community groups (e.g. Friends of groups, community forums) as well as external stakeholders to help inform opinions towards open space provision. This ensures a robust approach to the assessment of need in the area.

Playing pitch strategy

Sport England's guidance details a stepped approach to developing a PPS. These steps were followed throughout the process and are separated into five distinct stages:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date

The following outdoor sports facilities were included within the PPS:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Hockey pitches
- ◀ Bowling greens
- ◀ Cricket squares
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Netball courts
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Third generation turf (3G)
- ◀ Athletics tracks

NB. Golf was not included within the scope of the study. Four courses in Thurrock are privately operated with the only public course being Belhus.

The quality of provision was determined via a combination of non-technical assessments (determined by NGBs) and consultation with stakeholders. This not only relates to the pitch itself but also to the ancillary facilities.

In addition, a variety of consultation methods were used to collate demand information about leagues, clubs, county associations and national/regional governing bodies of sport. Response rates exceeded Sport England's guidance and ensures that Thurrock has a robust evidence base:

Sport	Total number	Number responding	Response rate	Methods of consultation
Football clubs	69	41	59%	Face to face, Online Survey
Football teams	262	214	82%	
Cricket clubs	4	4	100%	Face to face
Rugby union clubs	4	4	100%	Online survey
Hockey clubs	1	1	100%	Telephone consultation
Tennis clubs	2	2	100%	Online survey
Bowls clubs	12	8	67%	Online survey, postal survey
Athletics clubs	1	1	100%	Telephone consultation
Colleges	1	1	100%	Face to face
Secondary schools	11	11	100%	Face to face
Primary schools	39	22	56%	Online survey

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Indoor and built sports facilities

Sport England's ANOG guidance (Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities) details a stepped approach to developing this study. These steps were followed throughout the process and are separated into four distinct stages:

- ◀ Stage A - Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B - Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision
- ◀ Stage C - Assessment, bringing the information together
- ◀ Stage D - Application of the assessment and development of the Strategy

The following indoor and built sports facilities were included within the study:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| ◀ Sports halls | ◀ Swimming pools | ◀ Health and fitness |
| ◀ Squash courts | ◀ Indoor bowls | ◀ Indoor tennis |
| ◀ Gymnastics | ◀ Sports arenas (Athletics) | ◀ Cycling |
| ◀ Ice sports | ◀ Community halls | |

The approach to delivering the study included an assessment of the following key elements:

- ◀ Quantity of individual sports facilities across Thurrock.
- ◀ Quality assessment of each facility and activity area.
- ◀ Accessibility of each facility to the local community (e.g. how far they need to travel).
- ◀ Availability of facilities for community use.

In addition to the above KKP also undertook face-to-face consultation with a range of local and regional stakeholders including health partners, operators, NGBs, clubs and a wide range of Council officers. Sport England was a key partner in the delivery of all elements of the study and contributed significantly to the overall scrutiny of the approach.

Active Travel

An Active Travel Strategy is a strategic document focusing on the supply and use of an active travel network, in specific relation to walking and cycling. The active travel network refers to a system of on-road and off-road cycle routes, footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. The Active Travel Strategy can therefore also act as a bridge linking the Active Places documents together in order to help provide a strategic and connected network of appropriate leisure and recreational facilities across Thurrock.

It is widely recognised that walking and cycling are beneficial in terms of our physical and mental health. Therefore, encouraging more journeys through active travel (e.g. commutes to work, school etc) will help to improve health, quality of life and the environment. It will also benefit economically, helping to support local economies and reduce public expenditure surrounding issues of poor health.

It will also ensure the Council is well placed to maximise any opportunities for funding in relation to active travel as funding opportunities are often with short notice. It will therefore help to identify clear priorities for the future ensuring the Council can capitalise on any forthcoming opportunities.

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In 2017, the Government published its first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, which sets out the Government’s ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys or as part of longer journeys.

The Department for Transport offers guidance on the recommended approach to be taken when planning for cycling and walking as part of its technical guidance for local authorities set out in its *Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)*. A range of tools and supporting guidance is provided to ensure robust plans and schemes are in place. The LCWIP recommends a six-step process as set out in the table below.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Process

Step	Name	Description
1	Determining Scope	Establish the geographical extent of the LCWIP, and arrangements for governing and preparing the plan.
2	Gathering Information	Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking. Review related transport and land use policies and programmes
3	Network Planning for Cycling	Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required
4	Network Planning for Walking	Identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determine the type of improvements required
5	Prioritising Improvements	Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment
6	Integration & Application	Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans

The focus for Thurrock is on active travel to growth areas and key ‘destinations’. This is undertaken in context of the links to key destinations, anticipated growth areas and ability to increase walking and cycling to develop a set of priorities for active travel.

A number of nationally recognised methods and tools are used to do this including:

- ◀ Mesh density
- ◀ Propensity to Cycle Toolkit
- ◀ Key destinations/ trip generators

Active travel is relatively new and Thurrock is somewhat ahead of the curve in this respect, but in considering this approach, specific reference is made to the Active Design principles that Sport England has identified. Therefore, it is not sufficient just to have destinations connected, those connections need to be of high quality and well designed to ensure that residents feel safe and secure using them throughout the full year.

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ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

Open space study

There is a total of over 1,387 hectares of open space in Thurrock. The largest contributors to provision are natural and semi-natural greenspace (1,064 hectares) and amenity greenspace (194 hectares); accounting for 77% and 14% respectively.

Open space typology	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares) ²	Hectares per 1,000 population
Allotments	26	29	0.17
Amenity greenspace	104	194	1.13
Cemeteries/churchyards	11	20	n/a
Civic space	5	3	n/a
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	38	1,064	2.23
Park and gardens	24	68	0.40
Provision for children & young people	96	8	0.05
TOTAL	304	1,387	-

For open spaces, provision standards are established and used to determine deficiencies and surpluses. These are set in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

Of assessed open space sites, the quality of over half of provision (56%) rates above the thresholds set for quality. However, 44% of sites are of a lower quality, which is significant and slightly higher than in comparison to other similar studies undertaken by KKP.

It is understandable for amenity greenspace to have fewer sites scoring above the quality threshold due to the wider range and forms of provision of this type, often with no features, poor appearance or maintenance.

However, Thurrock also has significantly mixed results for play and parks and gardens, which are more relevant to local residents. In most instances, this is due to the low quality maintenance, general appearance, poor pathways and a lack of ancillary facilities. In relation to play facilities over 40% of facilities in some analysis areas are below the threshold for quality that tends to reflect the poorer condition or limited range of equipment available at a site

However, the majority of all open spaces (91%) are assessed as being above the threshold for value. This reflects the importance of open space provision and its role offering social, environmental and health benefits.

The public consultation reinforced these findings with key deterrents to using open spaces being the standard of the facility, personal safety, toilets and car parking and lack of information. Furthermore, the key site characteristics most important to respondents of a good quality site were maintenance and cleanliness.

² Rounded to the nearest whole number

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ACTIVE PLACE STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In summary, 26% of respondents are very satisfied with the amount of space for local parks yet only 12% are very satisfied with the quality of that space. Similarly, only 7% of people are very dissatisfied with the amount and availability of outdoor networks but 15% are very dissatisfied with the quality of them.

Therefore, Thurrock has a key challenge in relation to the amount and quality of open space across the area and the application of the provision standards identifies that there are deficiencies and shortfalls in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. In some cases, owing to the limited value the open space will provide, there will clearly be merit in exploring options for development. However, the key focus for the Council is to maintain current open space standards wherever possible and on improving existing open space for more multi-purpose outcomes.

Playing pitch strategy

The key findings from the assessment of playing pitches across Thurrock is summarised as follows:

Football

- ◀ There is a total of 143 football pitches across 47 sites, 113 pitches available, at some level, for community use across 33 sites.
- ◀ Of the pitches available for community use, 10 are assessed as good quality, 52 as standard quality and 51 as poor quality.
- ◀ Basic maintenance regimes are a key factor for pitches assessed as poor or standard quality, particularly at council and school sites.
- ◀ The overall assessment of changing facilities rated 32% as good quality, 32% as standard quality and 36% as poor quality.
- ◀ The demolition of the changing facilities at Blackshots Recreation Ground is a significant problem as it means the site can no longer be used for adult matches.
- ◀ A total of 262 teams consisting of 67 men's, four women's, 106 youth boys', 13 youth girls' and 72 mini teams are recognised as playing within Thurrock across 69 clubs.
- ◀ Security of tenure is a key issue for many clubs
- ◀ Current shortfalls are evident across the majority pitch types, except for mini 5v5 pitches, and are particularly significant for adult pitches (32.5 match sessions).
- ◀ Future demand results in a shortfall of mini 5v5 pitches and increased shortfalls of all other pitch types.

3G pitches

- ◀ There are three full size 3G pitches (at Aveley Football Club, St Clere's School and Lakeside Sports Ground) within Thurrock, all of which are available to the community, floodlit and approved for competitive matches.
- ◀ In addition, there are four smaller sized 3G pitches, with a pitch at Harris Academy Riverside particularly important given its larger size.
- ◀ All full size 3G pitches are rated as good quality as all three have been provided or refurbished fairly recently.
- ◀ All of the 3G pitches are used at or close to capacity, not only for affiliated activity but also for recreational football and small-sided commercial leagues.
- ◀ For football, there is a current shortfall of four full size 3G pitches and a future shortfall of five.

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- ◀ In addition, given the shortfalls identified on grass rugby pitches, evidence suggests that World Rugby compliant provision would be of benefit.

Cricket

- ◀ There are 11 grass wicket squares in Thurrock, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ There are non-turf pitches (NTPs) accompanying grass wicket squares at four sites and five standalone NTPs.
- ◀ There are disused or lapsed wickets at Blackshots Recreation Ground, June Ridgewell Ground, Pegasus Club, Billet Recreation Ground, Orsett Heath, Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park), Daisyfield and Thurrock Rugby Club.
- ◀ The audit of cricket pitches found three squares to be good quality, six to be standard quality and two to be poor quality.
- ◀ Changing facility issues are highlighted at North Stifford Recreation Ground, Corringham Recreation Ground and Orsett Cricket Club.
- ◀ In total, there are four clubs in Thurrock generating 24 senior men's, one senior women's, 21 junior boys' and four junior girls' teams.
- ◀ There is a substantial current shortfall of grass wicket squares for senior cricket amounting to 105 match sessions and 159 match sessions when accounting for future demand.
- ◀ The picture is similar when analysing junior demand, with a current overall shortfall amounting to 115 match sessions and a future shortfall amounting to 127 match sessions.

Rugby union

- ◀ There are eight sites containing a total of 16 senior, one junior and two mini rugby union pitches, with 12 senior and both mini pitches are available for community use.
- ◀ Of the pitches available to the community, there are 12 pitches assessed as standard quality and two assessed as poor quality; no pitches are assessed as good quality.
- ◀ The Council pitches servicing Thurrock RUFC are at risk due to the proposed development of Orsett Heath Academy; these pitches require protection or replacement on an equivalent/improved basis as part of any mitigation proposals.
- ◀ In addition, latest consultation proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing may have at least a temporary impact on two of the club-owned pitches at the site; Sport England and the RFU want to resist any impact on the pitches, or, if this cannot be achieved, secure appropriate mitigation.
- ◀ The clubhouse facilities at Thames Rugby Club are assessed as poor quality
- ◀ Four rugby union clubs play within Thurrock, consisting of 10 senior men's, four senior women's, 11 junior boys', three junior girls' and 11 (mixed) mini teams.
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of pitches amounting to six match sessions currently and 12 match sessions when accounting for future demand.

Hockey

- ◀ There are three full size (sand based/dressed) AGPs in Thurrock (at the Gateway Academy, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and Palmers College, all of which are fully available to the community and floodlit).
- ◀ Only Palmers College is used for hockey, by Thurrock HC (the only club playing in Thurrock).

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- ◀ Thurrock HC expresses demand to have its own clubhouse at Palmers College or access to a more suitable space; a draft lease agreement is in place for the Club to redevelop and occupy existing hall space within the School.
- ◀ Neither Palmers College nor Harris Academy Chafford Hundred have been resurfaced since they were first provided in 2002 and 2005 respectively, with quality issues prominent.
- ◀ Both current and future demand can be met on the current stock of pitches, providing quality improvements take place at Palmers College.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 39 tennis courts identified in Thurrock located across 16 sites, with 33 courts categorised as being community available across 14 sites.
- ◀ Of provision that is currently available for community use, 12 courts are assessed as good quality, seven are rated as standard and 14 are rated as poor.
- ◀ All courts have a macadam surface, although Thurrock TC is looking to resurface its courts to an artificial surface within the next five years.
- ◀ The courts servicing Thurrock TC are not floodlit, which limits participation at the Club.
- ◀ Storm Fitness TC is the only other club in Thurrock; it uses Palmers College and has demand for dedicated clubhouse space.
- ◀ Both current and future demand can be met on the current stock of courts.

Bowls

- ◀ There are 10 flat green bowling greens in Thurrock provided across eight sites.
- ◀ In addition, there are disused greens at the Billet Recreation Ground and Aveyley Sports & Social Club, as well as a lapsed green at Pegasus Club following its decommission in 2014.
- ◀ Concerns have also been raised over the future of the green at The Springhouse as all other elements of the site are unusable.
- ◀ Of the 10 bowling greens, eight are assessed as good quality and two are assessed as standard quality.
- ◀ Corringham Recreation Ground is adjudged to have poor quality ancillary facilities due to a dated clubhouse.
- ◀ There are 12 clubs using bowling greens in Thurrock; where membership is known, there are 268 senior male, 138 senior female and two junior members.
- ◀ Both current and future demand can be met on the current stock of greens.

Athletics

- ◀ There is one track in Thurrock, located at Thurrock Athletics Stadium.
- ◀ There is one athletics club, Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club, which has just over 200 members.
- ◀ The Club assesses its facility as good quality overall, but states that the track is coming to the end of its lifespan.
- ◀ There is one Run Together Group, with Chafford Hundred Running Group gathering three nights a week.
- ◀ A Park Run event is held every Saturday at Pyramid Centre.
- ◀ Both current and future demand can be met on the existing supply of provision.

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Netball

- ◀ There are 42 netball courts in Thurrock across 15 sites, of which 35 courts are available for community use across 13 sites.
- ◀ Only 14 courts are serviced by floodlighting, which limits availability during winter months for those that are not.
- ◀ Of the courts, two are assessed as good quality, 25 are assessed as standard quality and 15 are assessed as poor quality; all have a macadam surface.
- ◀ The South Essex Thurrock Netball Association accesses the courts at Hassenbrook Academy as a central venue for all of its league matches; the Association caters for 80 senior teams and 54 junior teams.
- ◀ Back to Netball sessions are also delivered at Hassenbrook Academy, making it a key venue for netball in the region.
- ◀ Both current and future demand can be met on the current stock of courts.

The existing position for all sports is either demand is being met or there is a shortfall, whereas the future position shows the exacerbation of current shortfalls and the creation of some shortfalls where demand is currently being met. Where demand is being met, this does not equate to a surplus of provision, with any spare capacity instead considered as a solution to overcoming shortfalls. As such, there is a clear need to protect all existing outdoor sports provision, including pitches/sites that are no longer in use, until all demand is met, or there is a requirement to replace provision to an equal or better quantity and quality before it is lost.

For the most part, shortfalls can be alleviated by better utilising current provision, such as through improving quality, installing additional floodlighting, improving ancillary facilities and enabling access to existing unused provision, such as at unavailable school sites or at disused sites.

Notwithstanding the above, where there are significant shortfalls e.g. for football and cricket, additional provision may be required, such as in the example of 3G pitches. With resources to improve the quality of grass pitches being limited, an increase in 3G provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play, which in turn can aid pitch quality improvements.

Indoor and built sports facilities

Strategic decision-making and long-term investment in indoor facilities for sport and recreation throughout Thurrock has been limited for a number of years. External influences such as the recession, cancellation of the Building Schools for the Future programme, the disbandment of the Gateway Development Corporation and budget restrictions have impacted upon internal priorities for Council investment. The result is dated and aging community sports facilities that residents accept and 'make do' with. This has also resulted in Thurrock having a modest sports club infrastructure and performing below the national and regional averages within all aspects of sports participation. As such, there is a need to transform the existing leisure portfolio and create inspiring, modern and fit for purpose venues that can stimulate participation.

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School sports facilities play a key role in providing venues in which Thurrock's residents can participate in indoor sports. The education sector supplies the full sports hall stock for the area. Since 2016, there has been investment in new schools which has seen an improvement in the quality of sports halls with three out of 12 sports halls requiring investment to bring them up to an acceptable standard for both school and community use (down from six).

Given the location of sports halls, none are available during the school day, which is when the increasing older population would wish to access facilities. Additional sports hall provision will be required to accommodate the 20% increase in population and the opportunity exists to develop some of this supply through the provision of new secondary schools or through new stand-alone sports facilities. Two facilities (William Edward School and South Ockendon Academy) have 'community use agreements' (aligned to funding); therefore, continued access to (other) schools for community use is a risk that will need to be addressed.

The analysis identifies that the projected increase in demand from population growth in Thurrock will result in a shortfall in supply of sports halls to meet demand in 2037 so there is a need to increase supply.

Thurrock's swimming provision is insufficient to meet current and future demand with existing pools fully programmed and operating at capacity during peak periods. The age of the Thurrock swimming pool stock is a major concern and, unless addressed, will impact on the viability, sustainability and net cost of operating these facilities.

Thurrock is in urgent need of new swimming pool provision to replace the existing stock and to meet the needs of a growing population. Without investment in new facilities, there is a danger that Thurrock could be left with no public pools, as the existing pool buildings are already beyond their anticipated life expectancy and are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain and keep open.

In order to accommodate the increased demand for swimming pools generated by the projected increase in population, it is anticipated that Thurrock will require additional pool water space to accommodate this. Ideally, this should be delivered by replacing existing pools with larger provision prior to identifying additional provision in the area.

Analysis indicated that Purfleet, Tilbury and East Tilbury are very poorly resourced with regards to sport and physical activity facilities. All three areas have potential opportunities to address this as a result of either housing growth or the development of integrated healthy living centres.

Thurrock also has a number of specialist sports facilities and a small selection of strong clubs that contribute to the overall network of provision in the area. The main challenge for clubs is gaining access to facilities at the right price and the general poor quality of those facilities. There will be a need to protect and enhance these resources in order that they continue to thrive.

Thurrock has a limited commercial health and fitness sector (e.g. with swimming pools and equivalent sports hall space), which means that there is an important role on the public sector to provide access to facilities. There are two other key facilities in the borough that do provide limited capacity for residents in the area.

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Within any new sports facility developments the Council will also need to design in financial viability through the development of high quality health and fitness provision and other key income generating activities in order to offset the cost of operating facilities such as swimming pools and sports halls.

Emerging opportunities

In relation to its indoor provision, Thurrock has a number of emerging opportunities from which to facilitate the development of new and improved sport and physical activity facilities.

New housing developments: Thurrock is a strategic housing growth area and its objectively assessed need sets out that it is expected to deliver c.30,000 new homes to 2037. However, there is significant competition for land within the area, primarily from distribution centres and warehousing. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Council will have limited options to deliver these homes unless it seeks to expand the urban area into the green belt.

As part of any such urban extensions and the linked increases in population, there will be an expectation placed upon the development industry to provide necessary supporting infrastructure as part of any development proposal and there would also be the scope to use planning gain funding (i.e. Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy) to develop additional and improved sport and physical activity facilities. The scale of the increase in population will determine the demand for facilities. This process presents an opportunity to address current deficiencies in facility size and quality.

New schools: Alongside new housing growth and increased population comes the requirement to deliver new schools, especially secondary schools. The research findings have identified that there is considerable community use of the majority of schools in Thurrock. Therefore, the opportunity exists to design new schools in such a way that community use is easily delivered or alternatively to expand the offering and develop community sport and leisure facilities alongside school sports facilities.

Integrated medical centres: Thurrock's Health and Well-Being Strategy (2016-2021), identifies the need to develop four integrated medical centres in the key areas of Tilbury, Purfleet, Corringham and Grays. The relationship between poor quality health and physical inactivity is clear and the development of these facilities presents a clear opportunity to integrate physical activity alongside health facilities. This approach also reflects the wider aspirations of strategic funding agencies such as Sport England.

Wider service integration: Thurrock Council continues to face the same financial challenges as most other local authorities throughout the UK and will be seeking to minimise the number of buildings that it owns and manages. There is, thus, an opportunity to integrate or co-locate services within a single venue. Services such as libraries, community police offices and community contact centres have successfully been integrated into/with leisure facilities throughout the country.

Active Travel

The Active Travel Strategy utilises a variety of techniques.

Mesh density

In a properly joined-up cycle network, cyclists should not have to travel more than 400 metres to get to a parallel route of similar quality. This attribute of a cycle network is known as 'mesh density'. It describes whether the grid of cycle routes is tighter (with more route choice) or looser (less extensive)³.

There are some noticeable areas with higher population densities, which do not meet the recommendation. The two significant 'gap' areas are Purfleet/West Thurrock and South Ockendon. Potential gaps are also noted to Stanford-le-Hope, East Tilbury, Aveley and Chadwell St Mary. These gaps can be considered as strategic priorities.

Propensity to Cycle Toolkit

The national Propensity to Cycle Toolkit (PCT) is used to identify desire lines of commuter cycle flows. The PCT is a Department for Transport funded project designed to show the flow of cycle users. It is also important to note that the PCT data is only based on the commuting results of the census. It does not take into consideration other trip generators such as leisure or schools. Consequently, it is possible that other routes may exist outside of those highlighted.

It also allows various potential future scenarios to be explored. It enables comparison between current known cycling patterns to scenarios such as the Government's draft Cycling Delivery Plan target (to double cycling in a decade), Gender Equality (if the same amount of women were to cycle as men) and the more ambitious 'Go Dutch' scenario (whereby Dutch cycling levels are reached in England). Consequently, changes in driver numbers, CO² emissions and deaths per year can be estimated to demonstrate the impact such target scenarios could produce.

The desire lines identified through the scenario modelling demonstrate that noticeable changes can be experienced as a result of increased cycling. Both the Government Target and Go Dutch scenarios represent significant changes if they were to be met.

The following desire lines/routes are identified as offering the greatest impact due to being highlighted against multiple scenarios.

³ London Cycling Design Standards

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Desire lines highlighted from scenario modelling

Line ID	Start/end areas	Identified as part of scenario modelling		
		Government target	Gender equality	Go Dutch
2	South Ockendon - Purfleet	✓		✓
5	Aveley – Purfleet	✓	✓	✓
6	Stifford Clays – Grays		✓	
9	Purfleet/West Thurrock – Grays	✓		✓
12	Purfleet – Stifford Clays	✓	✓	✓
13	Purfleet – Grays/Little Thurrock	✓		✓
14	Purfleet - Tilbury	✓	✓	✓

Key destination/trip generators

A focus of the work is on the linkages between key destinations and how individuals may journey to such places via active travel methods. For the purposes of the Active Travel Strategy, key destinations are considered to be:

- ◀ Strategic leisure, sports and open spaces (as identified in Active Place Strategies)
- ◀ Retail centres, key workplaces and transport hubs
- ◀ Education facilities (e.g. colleges and secondary schools)
- ◀ Community hubs

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Open space study

A number of recommendations are provided that seek to address the shortfalls and deficiencies identified as part of the study. These are:

Recommendation 1

<i>Explore low quality sites and their potential for enhancement or development</i>

The policy approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality to the applied standards (i.e. high quality) where possible. This is especially the case if the site is deemed to be of high value to the local community. Therefore, they should initially be protected, if they are not already so, in order for their quality to be improved. Where the site is not deemed to be of high value to the local community and does not serve any beneficial purpose as open space (in line with the other recommendations), such sites should also be considered for development.

The policy and implications summary of the quality and value matrix set out in the Standards Paper identifies those sites that should be given consideration for enhancement if possible. Priority sites should be those highlighted as helping or with the potential to serve gaps in provision

Recommendation 2

<i>Sites helping or with the potential to serve areas identified as having gaps in catchment mapping should be recognised through opportunities for enhancement</i>

These sites currently help to meet the identified catchment gaps for other open space typologies. Often this is related to parks, amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural greenspace. The Council should explore the potential/possibility to adapt these sites through formalisation and/or greater provision of features linked to other types of open space. This is to provide a stronger secondary role as well as opportunities associated with other open space types. This may also help to minimise the need for creation of new provision to address any gaps in catchment mapping.

Such sites should be viewed as being key forms of open space provision. It is important that the Council looks to maintain sites of this classification to as high a standard as possible.

Recommendation 3

<i>Ensure low quality/value sites helping to serve potential gaps in accessibility catchments are prioritised for enhancement</i>

The approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality/value to the applied standards (i.e. high quality and/or value). It should be considered whether the site may be of benefit being recognised and changed to a different type of open space (See Recommendation 4).

Recommendation 4

<i>Sites in areas with sufficient provision of open space may be able to meet the need for other types of open space or could potentially be considered surplus</i>

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If no improvements can be made to sites identified as lower quality and value, then a change of primary typology should be considered (i.e. a change of role).

If no shortfall in other open space types is noted, or it is not feasible to change the primary typology of the site, then the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

Recommendation 5

Keeping data, report and supporting evidence base up to date in order to reflect changes over time

The Open Space Standards and Assessment Report are a snapshot in time. Whilst significant changes are not as common for open space provision, inevitably over time changes in provision occurs through creation of new provision, loss of provision and/or alterations to site boundaries and management. Population change and housing growth are also another consideration to review when undertaking any form of update as this may impact on quantity provision levels and standards.

Playing pitch strategy

The following overarching, strategic recommendations have been identified from the PPS analysis. These are based on Sport England's key themes of protect, enhance and provide:

OBJECTIVE 1

To **promote** and **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed for meeting current and future needs

Recommendations:

- ◀ Ensure, through the use of the PPS, that playing fields and pitches are protected through the implementation of local planning policy.
- ◀ Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- ◀ Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.

OBJECTIVE 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports facilities and accompanying ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.

Recommendations:

- ◀ Improve quality
- ◀ Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites.
- ◀ Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding
- ◀ Secure developer contributions.

OBJECTIVE 3

To **provide** new outdoor sports facilities where there is current or future demand to do so

Recommendations:

- ◀ Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.
- ◀ Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current stock.

Linked to the strategic recommendations, the following recommendations are made for each sport:

Football

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of pitches, including pitches/sites that are no longer in use (unless replacement provision of equivalent or better replacement provision in terms of quantity and quality is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality.
- ◀ Use the LFFP as a guide to further determine suitable sites for grass pitch investment.
- ◀ Following discussions with Essex FA and the Council, consider the feasibility of bringing Blackshots Recreation Ground back into use to act as a hub site for football in the Borough.
- ◀ Transfer play from sites which remain overplayed to alternative sites with spare capacity, sites which are not currently available for community use, or to 3G provision.
- ◀ Work to accommodate future demand as well as expressed exported, unmet and latent demand at sites that are not operating at capacity or at sites not currently available for community use that could be moving forward.
- ◀ Secure tenure for clubs using unsecure school sites through community use agreements.
- ◀ For unsecure, non-education sites, seek to gain access and ensure appropriate mitigation should the provision fall out of permanent use.
- ◀ Work to bring disused sites back into use or, if this is not possible, ensure appropriate mitigation should the provision fall out of permanent use via the creation of hub sites.
- ◀ Ensure all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes and explore reconfiguration of pitches to better accommodate youth 11v11 demand, where possible.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities where there is a demand to do so and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer, using the LFFP as a guide.
- ◀ Consider rationalisation of low value sites if contributions can go towards creating larger, better quality multi-pitch sites (providing there is no net loss of playing pitch space).
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, focus on the creation of multi-pitch sites that reduce existing shortfalls, with accompanying clubhouse provision included given that single pitch sites without appropriate ancillary facilities can be unsustainable.

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- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality, using the PPS as a guide to inform suitable sites.
- ◀ If required, explore ground sharing possibilities across Thurrock and the wider South Essex region that can provide a more sustainable long-term future for the senior club network, particularly in the case of clubs that currently wish to relocate.

3G pitches

- ◀ Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- ◀ Ensure the pitch at Lakeside Sports Ground is appropriately mitigated if it is lost as a result of development.
- ◀ Using the LFFP as a guide, develop additional 3G pitches to alleviate identified football training shortfalls.
- ◀ Consider an addition to the LFFP project list based on increased demand in the West Analysis Area and also consider amends to the list given new aspirations held by Tilbury FC and at Thurrock Football Club.
- ◀ Support creation of additional 3G pitches above and beyond football training shortfalls if it can satisfy rugby demand as well as football demand; or explore creation of 3G pitches that are both football and rugby appropriate when alleviating shortfalls.
- ◀ Ensure South Essex sub-regional needs are considered when developing new 3G pitches to reduce deficiencies across all the local authorities via a partnership approach; for example, a potential new 3G pitch in the new Dunton Hills settlement bordering Thurrock could cater for some of the Borough's demand.
- ◀ Carry out consultation with EH when deciding upon the location of new 3G pitches to ensure the sustainability of existing sand based AGPs.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches are constructed to meet FA/RFU recommended dimensions and quality performance standards to meet performance testing criteria.
- ◀ Ensure all 3G providers have a sinking fund in place for long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Encourage more match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches, where possible.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches have community use agreements in place.
- ◀ Where a housing development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider the potential for 3G provision on multi-pitch sites and as a minimum requirement, design new sites so that they could accommodate 3G provision at a later date, if required.

Cricket

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of cricket squares, including squares/sites that are no longer in use.
- ◀ Following discussions with the ECB and the Council, consider the feasibility of bringing squares at Blackshots Recreation Ground back into use to reduce shortfalls as part of master-planning for the site. This will require a square/s being reinstated, ancillary provision being re-provided and security being improved.
- ◀ Support the Council to provide a new cricket square at Hall Road in Aveley if, following consultation with the ECB, there is a need for additional provision to meet local demand.
- ◀ Work with clubs and groundsmen to review quality issues on squares assessed as poor and standard to ensure appropriate quality is achieved and to alleviate overplay.
- ◀ Improve communication between clubs and the Council to determine best practice in relation to maintenance and to develop playing opportunities in the right areas that will target the right audience.
- ◀ Work to eradicate overplay at sites assessed as good quality via the transfer of demand to NTPs.

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- ◀ Ensure future demand can be accommodated either outside of the peak period or via access to alternative (and potentially new) provision.
- ◀ Improve ancillary provision and outdoor practice facilities where it is required.
- ◀ In line with the Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy, improve the stock of indoor cricket provision and ensure continued, protected access to the facility at Harris Ockendon Academy.
- ◀ Explore potential sites for non-traditional cricket offerings and seek to develop cricket within communities that more commonly play informal formats of the game.
- ◀ Support the growth of cricket through programmes such as All Stars and Dynamo's as well as via women's and girls' softball cricket.
- ◀ Ensure tenure remains secure for all clubs and seek community use agreements for clubs that use education sites.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, ensure that any proposals for new squares will attract adequate demand.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

Rugby union

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of rugby union pitches, including pitches/sites that are no longer in use.
- ◀ Improve quality of pitches, prioritising those at sites with identified overplay.
- ◀ Ensure any loss of pitches at Thurrock Rugby Club is appropriately mitigated in accordance with NPPF; the Club requires continued provision of five senior pitches (with two floodlit), or a full size World Rugby compliant AGP and three senior pitches (providing that the 3G pitch is also accessible for all midweek rugby demand).
- ◀ Ensure a strategic approach is taken regarding the developments affecting Thurrock Rugby Club (i.e. Orsett Heath Academy and Lower Thames Crossing) rather than the impacts being considered in isolation.
- ◀ Support Pegasus Palmerians RUFC in its proposed transfer to Palmers College (Storm Fitness) and ensure the level and quality of provision is sufficient to meet its needs.
- ◀ Secure tenure for the Pegasus Palmerians RUFC via a community use agreement at St Clere's School or Palmers College if the Club is to move sites.
- ◀ Explore installation of permanent floodlighting to service Thames, Stanford-le-Hope and Pegasus Palmerians rugby clubs.
- ◀ Improve quality of ancillary provision where it is required i.e. at Thames Rugby Club.
- ◀ Ensure ancillary facilities for Thurrock RUFC provided at Orsett Heath Academy are made available to the Club, with a secure agreement in place for access.
- ◀ Seek to increase the length of Thames RUFC's lease to improve its security of tenure and to assist with any future funding bids.
- ◀ Retain supply of rugby pitches at all school sites for curricular and extra-curricular purposes and encourage secure community availability should demand exist in the future.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, ensure that any proposals for new pitches will attract adequate demand.

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- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

Hockey

- ◀ Retain the AGP at Palmers College (Storm Fitness) as hockey suitable and resurface the pitch as soon as possible.
- ◀ Consider creation of a business plan for the pitch (and wider site) and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Seek to provide Thurrock HC with better quality and more appropriate ancillary facilities i.e. changing rooms and social space.
- ◀ Explore if there is a need for pitches at Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and The Gateway Academy to satisfy hockey-based demand in neighbouring local authorities.
- ◀ Should the provision at Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and The Gateway Academy continue to not be needed for hockey purposes, consider for potential 3G conversion (via agreement with EH).

Tennis

- ◀ Protect courts used for competitive play and sustain quality through appropriate maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Support Thurrock TC to ensure it can continue to accommodate its demand and further explore access to St Clere's School.
- ◀ Provide Storm Fitness TC with better quality clubhouse facilities in order to drive an increase in demand.
- ◀ Improve court quality and potentially quantity at non-club sites assessed as poor and standard quality to increase informal demand, focusing on strategic provision.
- ◀ Seek to improve wider tennis offering at sites through improved ancillary provision.
- ◀ Utilise technology to better manage community tennis bookings.

Bowls

- ◀ Improve green quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good.
- ◀ To aid quality improvements and sustainability, support clubs with self-management.
- ◀ Seek to improve ancillary facility quality where it is necessary.
- ◀ Support users of the greens at Blackshots Recreation Ground to ensure demand continues to be met, given high levels of membership.
- ◀ Mitigate any permanent loss of greens at disused and lapsed sites through equivalent/better replacement provision or through appropriate enhancements to other facilities.
- ◀ Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.

Athletics

- ◀ Protect Thurrock Athletics Stadium and consider providing new, improved facility within the wider development of Blackshots Recreation Ground.
- ◀ If retained in its current form, explore funding options to resurface the track to ensure long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Support running groups, events and England Athletics initiatives such as Park Run and pursue increased participation.

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- ◀ Look to provide recreational athletics facilities in new developments through circular running routes, ensuring new parks can accommodate Park Run type events or connecting to/enhancing existing running routes.

Netball

- ◀ Improve court quality at Hassenbrook Academy given the importance of the site and the level of netball usage received.
- ◀ Explore improving court quality at school sites where sufficient demand exists for curricular and extra-curricular activity.
- ◀ Support and look to develop England Netball initiatives such as Back to Netball and Walking Netball.

Indoor and built sports facilities

The following vision and strategic recommendations have been identified for Thurrock's indoor and built sports facilities:

To create a network of high quality, accessible and sustainable sport and leisure facilities, which offer inclusive services for all; enabling the inactive to become active and more residents to fulfil their potential by participating in sport and physical activity, thus improving their long-term health and well-being.

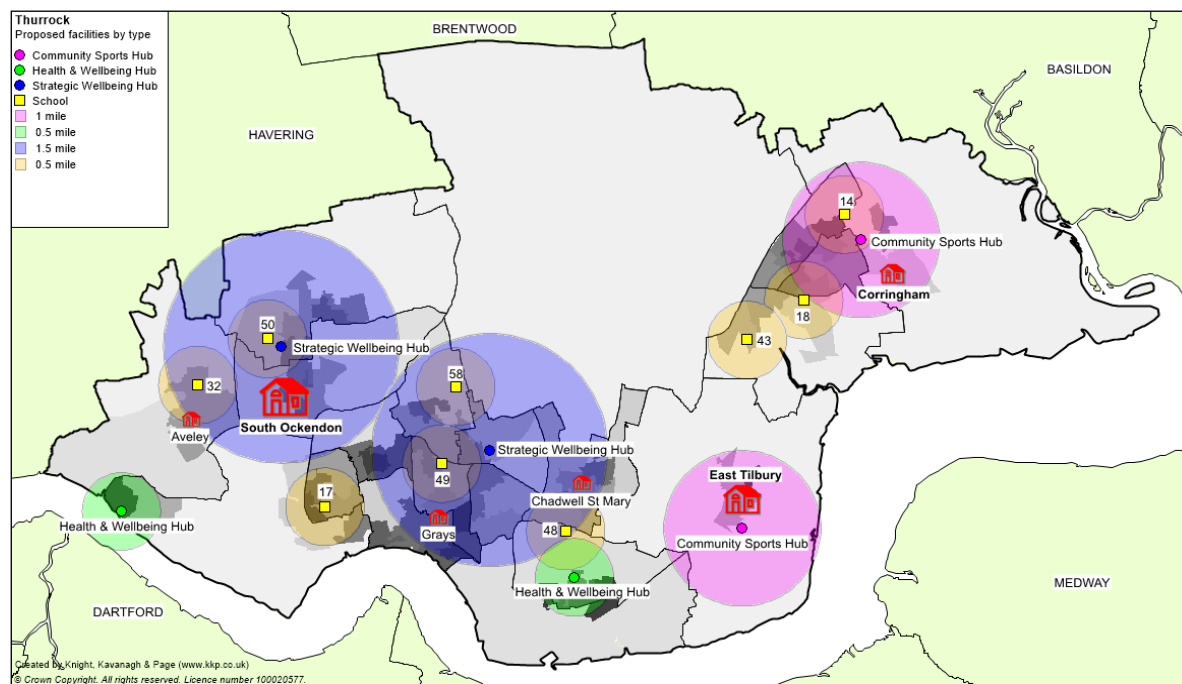
The following strategic recommendations have been identified to deliver the above vision over the period 2020 – 2037. They provide strategic direction for Thurrock Council, its partners and stakeholders which provide facilities and opportunities for residents to pursue sport and recreation as a means to engage in physical activity.

- ◀ **Strategic recommendation 1:** *To develop a fit for purpose network of better quality (indoor and outdoor) facilities in strategic locations in order to meet the sport and physical activity needs of existing communities and new residents in Thurrock; maximising opportunities in respect of:*
 - ◀ *Potential sports facility development as part of Thurrock's investment in new school stock.*
 - ◀ *The development of sport and physical activity facilities aligned to planned integrated medical centres.*
 - ◀ *Engagement with other services and where possible the creation of multi-agency hubs via the co-location of services*

This objective builds on a range of strategic drivers such as the need for Thurrock's existing sports facilities to be replaced, the substantial growth in population, the need for facilities to contribute to addressing health inequalities, new schools and integrated medical centres and major areas of housing growth.

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The visual presentation of the new indoor facility network is detailed below.



The key infrastructure projects required in order to deliver a network of facilities which are fit for the future can be summarised as follows:

*Aligned to the development of a new integrated medical centre in **Tilbury**, investigate the option to deliver a community health and fitness facility.*

Tilbury will see development of the first integrated medical centre. The Council and health partners have an opportunity to develop a community health and fitness facility aligned to the hub within a key area of deprivation. This facility could fill an identified local gap in provision. Ideally this should be a smaller scale development consisting of the following, but with a shared reception and entrance point for the integrated medical centre:

- ◀ 50 to 60 station fitness suite
- ◀ Group fitness studio
- ◀ Changing rooms

*Aligned to the anticipated housing growth in **East Tilbury** and the likely requirement for a new primary school, investigate the potential to develop a community sport and wellbeing hub aligned to the new school development.*

It is anticipated that a significant number of new homes will be developed in East Tilbury – sufficient to justify an additional secondary school. This could incorporate additional community use facilities available not only at evenings and weekends, but also during the school day. It is proposed that adding the following be considered (to complement the school’s requirement to develop a 4 court sports hall and drama facility):

- ◀ 40 to 50 station fitness suite
- ◀ Group fitness studio

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- ◀ Changing rooms
- ◀ Floodlit full size 3G pitch (dependent on the outcome of the PPS and needs of the school)

*In line with the potential requirement for a significant number of new homes in **South Ockendon**, investigate the potential to develop a strategically significant community sport and wellbeing hub to serve the Aveley and South Ockendon community.*

The South Ockendon area, which is currently served by Ockendon Academy and Belhus Park Golf and Country Club, is likely to see a requirement for a significant number of new homes and probably require a new school. The Ockendon Academy 6-court sports hall is primarily geared to provision for cricket so a sports hall facility is needed to serve the wider sporting needs of this significantly growing community.

The Council should commit to investigating the opportunity for Leisure to work with health and other partners to create a new facility on an appropriate site. Ideally, from both community servicing and viability perspectives consideration should be given to this including the following mix of school and community facilities:

- ◀ 8 lane 25-metre swimming pool
- ◀ Teaching pool (with a moveable floor)
- ◀ 100 – 120 station fitness suite.
- ◀ 2 x group fitness studios
- ◀ 1 x full-sized floodlit 3G football turf pitch
- ◀ 2 x meeting rooms
- ◀ Tennis/netball court area.
- ◀ Ancillary facilities for school and community
- ◀ Explore the possibility of developing a gymnastics centre as part of the facility mix.

If the location is appropriate, consideration should also be given to the inclusion of other civic services, such as library within this new development.

If and when this is developed, the Council should rationalise the swimming and fitness facilities at Belhus Park Golf and Country Club. The decision on the future of Ockendon Academy swimming pool will need to be determined by the location of the new facility.

*Replace **Blackshots** Leisure Centre with a strategically significant community sport and wellbeing hub (Blackshots Sports Village) investigating how a replacement facility should be located and operate in the context of the existing park facilities.*

Blackshots Leisure Centre is beyond its anticipated life span and needs to be replaced. There is an opportunity to develop a larger scale, strategically important sports facility to serve the needs of the Grays community and, concurrently, consider development of the wider adjacent park. Orsett Heath Academy is due to open in 2022 on the same site. In addition, an interim academy is being built adjacent to Thurrock Rugby Football Club, also on King George's Field.

This combination of options provides a 'window of opportunity' for a full master planning exercise; taking account of education, leisure, physical activity, wellbeing and cultural needs. It should encompass consideration of a new indoor facility, refurbishment of the athletics stadium, outdoor pitches and general access to the park facilities. It should consider formal and informal sport and physical activity opportunity within any feasibility and master planning.

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The Council also needs to consider potential replacement of the Civic Hall, whether this can be included within the proposed facility mix, or if it needs to have a wider town centre regeneration role. A point to note is that there are clear examples of where the combined programming of sport and arts within a single main indoor sports hall space can impact negatively on participation and user experience (e.g. Sands Centre, Carlisle).

The key challenge is, thus, the juxtaposition of sports facilities and the management of the overall site for the benefit of local residents. Consideration should, therefore, be given to the following facility mix:

- ◀ 8 lane 25-metre swimming pool as a minimum
- ◀ Teaching pool (with a moveable floor)
- ◀ 150 – 200 station fitness suite.
- ◀ 2 x group fitness studios
- ◀ Dedicated spin studio
- ◀ 8 court sports hall
- ◀ 1 or 2 x floodlit 3G pitches
- ◀ Grass pitches
- ◀ 2 x meeting rooms
- ◀ Athletics track
- ◀ Outdoor changing facilities
- ◀ Children's play facilities and skate park
- ◀ Walking and running routes around the park.
- ◀ (Civic hall functions).
- ◀ Explore the possibility of developing a gymnastics centre as part of the facility mix.

Replacement of Blackshots Leisure Centre and the master planning of the recreation ground should be Thurrock's priority project and the catalyst for other developments to follow. It has the potential to combine provision for indoor and outdoor sports facilities plus informal physical activity, open space and play, making it a significant and highly contemporary strategic facility.

*Aligned to any potential housing growth in **Corringham**, investigate the potential of developing a community sport and wellbeing hub aligned to any new school development that might be required to support growth.*

Corringham is another location in the Borough that could accommodate new homes. It is relatively close to Basildon Sporting Village, although (at six kilometres away) this is perceived to be too distant to fully serve the town. The Corringham area still needs a community sports facility, but potentially not one as large as those proposed for the larger population centres of Grays and South Ockendon

It is possible, depending on the scale of development, that a new school and health facilities would be required and there is an opportunity to develop a strategically important community sport and wellbeing hub, potentially on a school site.

As part of the local plan the Council should, thus, commit to investigating the opportunity for Education, Health, Leisure and other community stakeholders to work together to create a new facility on an appropriate site with the following facility mix:

- ◀ 6 lane 25-metre swimming pool
- ◀ Teaching pool (with a moveable floor)

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- ◀ 150 station fitness suite.
- ◀ 2 x group fitness studios
- ◀ 4-6 court sports hall
- ◀ 1 x floodlit 3G pitch (dependent on the outcome of the PPS)
- ◀ 2 x meeting rooms
- ◀ Tennis/netball court area.
- ◀ Ancillary facilities for school and community
- ◀ Integrated medical centre.
- ◀ Explore the possibility of developing a gymnastics centre as part of the facility mix.

If the location is appropriate, consideration should be given to including other civic services, such as a library. A new facility (if and when developed) could replace Corringham Leisure Centre.

*Aligned to the development of a new integrated medical centre in **Purfleet**, investigate the opportunity to deliver a community health and fitness facility.*

There is a (medium term) aspiration to develop an integrated medical centre in Purfleet. The Council and health partners have an opportunity to develop a community health and fitness facility aligned to the hub to strategically align health and physical activity - in a key area of deprivation. This facility will fill an identified provision gap.

The focus will be wider development of physical activity opportunity directly aligned to specific local health improvement ambitions, specific interventions for targeted groups and for improved links and transition between health and community programmes. It would enable the operator and health partners to target employers in the area to deliver workplace health improvement initiatives; a key focus for targeting specific types of employee who might be a higher health risk. This should be a smaller scale development consisting of the following, but within a shared reception and entrance point for the integrated medical centre:

- ◀ 50 to 60 station fitness suite
- ◀ Group fitness studio
- ◀ Changing rooms

Work with the local gymnastics clubs to develop appropriate opportunities for a permanently set out gymnastics facility for the area.

The Thurrock Gymnastic Academy (TGA) aspires to develop a permanently laid out gymnastics facility in the area. TGA has in excess of 660 members with a waiting list of c.500 and is in real need of a dedicated facility, either standalone or part of a larger leisure facility.

British Gymnastics (BG) is keen to work to support the club and to work in partnership with the Council to tackle the current situation. Development of a new facility will need to proceed hand in glove with work to increase the available qualified coach workforce and volunteer base to underpin existing provision and enable future expansion.

The BG strategy for increasing participation in the sport has seen a drive to develop more permanently set out gymnastics facilities at industrial units. However, it is also worth noting that this has the potential to conflict with local planning policy in relation to the protection of higher tier industrial units for employment use. It is, therefore, not as simple as identifying

potential industrial units, as the demand for these types of facilities is outstripping supply in Thurrock.

Within the above context there is a need for the Council to consider how it could work with the NGB and club to identify facilities where equipment could be permanently set out, thus enabling the TGA to meet unmet demand and grow opportunity in the sport. It is conceivable that development of a permanent gymnastics facility could be aligned to one of the new sports/leisure facilities in the area or one of the academies; however, this will require input from key partners including the club and BG.

Strategic recommendation 2: To work with colleagues in Education to ensure that any new schools or improvements to sports facilities in existing schools are accompanied by a community use agreement.

William Edwards, Ockendon Academy and Harris Riverside Academy have clear community use agreements. William Edwards has received funding from Badminton England, whilst Ockendon Academy has received funding from the ECB. These agreements will require the schools to be available for community use and the delivery of badminton and cricket development opportunities and club sessions throughout the full year.

It is expected that St Clere's School will have such an agreement with its new 4-court sports hall but no other schools have such agreements and their availability cannot be guaranteed. They are, therefore, more susceptible to being altered based on the needs of the school or the personal perspective of the head teacher or school governors. There is, as a consequence, a need for Leisure and Education to work in partnership to get as many schools as possible to sign up to a comprehensive, binding and effective community use agreement and work with them to achieve maximum possible availability and use.

Strategic recommendation 3: To work with selected schools to increase their availability for community use.

In general, those schools that provide community access to their facilities do so for between 30 to 40 hours per week. This presents a reasonably good level of access to school sports facilities and includes weekend as well as weekday evening access. Schools are extensively used throughout these hours by a range of sports clubs and activity groups.

Two specific schools (Gateway Academy and St Clere's) have been identified as having significant capacity to provide additional community use; although this may have changed following the development of a new 4-court sports hall at St Clere's. Newer schools also need to be targeted to ensure their availability to the community and the capacity at a number of older schools also needs to be fully utilised.

Strategic recommendation 4: Use the development of new facilities as a catalyst for requiring the Council's leisure management contractor to have a wider focus on health inequalities.

The development of new facilities in Thurrock, either as replacements or additional facilities, presents the opportunity for the Council to review its current leisure management arrangements. The Council created the trust in 2000 and awarded it a 30-year buildings lease to manage its facilities. However, in the intervening 20 years, local government has changed dramatically with significant cuts in public service funding and the expansion of responsibility to deliver health and wellbeing services for communities.

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There will be a need for the leisure operator to develop wider relationships and networks beyond the walls of its facilities in order that it is fully engaged with the appropriate partners and communities. This will also require it and the Council to develop a business model which recognises that high income generating activity should cross subsidise other physical activity interventions with targeted groups, which enable the Council and its partners to address health inequalities.

Strategic recommendation 5: To plan additional new provision to accommodate continued increases in population beyond the life of this current strategy.

The above recommendations regarding sports halls and swimming pools are only sufficient to accommodate the resident population of Thurrock through until 2037, linked to the Local Plan. Therefore, the Council needs to consider its longer-term planning beyond the life of this strategy and the Local Plan period. This is specifically in relation to swimming pools where there will be a need to plan for the provision of smaller scale community pools beyond this date.

Active Travel

The strategic vision for active travel in Thurrock is:

To create a high quality, accessible and sustainable network which positively contributes to the economy and quality of environment, enabling the inactive to become active and more people to realise their potential by participating in walking and cycling activity, thus improving their long-term health and well-being.

The following goals are identified to work towards the strategic vision:

- ◀ Improve environments
- ◀ Enable people to be healthier for longer
- ◀ Opportunity for all

To achieve the vision and goals a series of priorities are identified. The priorities are based on their suitability, links to growth areas and key destinations as well as the potential to increase levels of active travel.

Priorities are categorised into two types:

- ◀ **Physical** - improvement and connection of routes
- ◀ **Addressing mental barriers** - measures to tackle the common mental barriers.

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Physical priorities

Priority 1: West / East Connections

Analysis of desire lines from the Propensity to Cycle Toolkit (PCT) identifies that many start and end of journeys run west / east across the Borough. This can predominantly be attributed to the number of destination and trip generators able to be accessed via travelling in these directions. Promoting greater levels of active travel along these directions of travel would also help to challenge the busy road networks (i.e. London Road and Arterial Road) as well as associated congestion and air quality levels.

The scenario modelling also highlights that a number of these desire lines/routes can offer the greatest impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year. Furthermore, mesh density analysis highlights a significant gap in the Purfleet/West Thurrock area, which is a key contributor to the west/east directions of travel.

Priority 2: South Ockendon

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies that several start and end of journeys run to and from South Ockendon.

The scenario modelling also highlights that a key desire line/route can offer the greatest impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year. Furthermore, mesh density analysis highlights a significant gap in South Ockendon.

Priority 3: Purfleet – Aveley

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies that several start and end of journeys run to and from Purfleet. Many of these desire lines and routes are covered as part of Priority 1: West / East Connections. This priority is specific to the north / south connection between Purfleet and Aveley (with the connection able to further link to South Ockendon).

The scenario modelling highlights that key desire lines/routes can offer the greatest impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year. Furthermore, mesh density analysis highlights a significant gap in the Purfleet/West Thurrock area, which is also a key contributor to Priority 1: West / East Connections.

Priority 4: Stanford-le-Hope

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies that a noticeable start and end journey runs between Stanford-le-Hope and Corringham.

The scenario modelling highlights the desire line/route has the ability to offer some impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year. However, the area has a number of other key trip generators outside of the PCT data. Furthermore, mesh density analysis highlights a gap in the Stanford-le-Hope area.

Priority 5: Chadwell St Mary

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies a start and end journey running between Chadwell St Mary and Tilbury.

It may therefore offer some impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year; as evidenced from the scenario modelling. The area also has a number of other key trip generators outside of the PCT data. Furthermore, mesh density analysis highlights a gap in the Chadwell St Mary area.

Priority 6: Blackshots

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies a number of start and end journeys running to and from the Blackshots area.

Routes may therefore offer some impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year; as evidenced from the scenario modelling. The area also has a number of other key trip generators outside of the PCT data.

Priority 7: Coastal route

Analysis of desire lines from the PCT identifies a number of key start and end journeys running along sections of the coastal network.

The scenario modelling also highlights that these desire lines/routes have the ability to offer the greatest impact in terms of change in driver numbers, CO² levels and deaths per year. The area also has a number of other key trip generators outside of the PCT data.

Addressing mental barriers

In addition to the physical improvements to the network, it is important to challenge the mental barriers facing active travel. Initiatives and programmes should follow the three core principles of tackling mental barriers and look to:

- ◀ Promote
- ◀ Educate
- ◀ Incentivise participation and awareness.

The approach to tackling mental barriers facing active travel needs to be multifaceted and delivered strategically and locally. Active travel improvements and initiatives will need to be undertaken in partnership with a variety of Local Authority departments and external partners (e.g. England Health, Transport for London, local groups) and should help to inform other strategic documents and programmes.

A number of design principles, best practice examples and initiatives are given as methods to tackle the mental barriers of active travel. Other best practices and initiatives may exist which can contribute to challenging the mental barriers of active travel; consequently, a flexible approach will also be needed.

Several initiatives challenging the mental barriers of active travel already exist locally. The majority of these intend to promote and encourage more active travel participation. These cost-effective and fun ways of learning about active travel, including bike and walking safety should be regarded as practical solutions for reaching out to people of different ages, abilities and backgrounds. A summary of some of the more prominent and successful initiatives already in place and/or planned across Thurrock are set out in the Active Travel Strategy.

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Appendix 2: Consultation undertaken on APS

Open Space Assessment – an online and paper survey with general public as consultees (more than 200 responses received).

Open Space Standards – *not* an independent strategy document, therefore no consultation/consultees.

Playing Pitch Assessment – Chairman - Aveley FC; Chairman - Corringham Athletic FC; Chairman - Corringham Cosmos FC; Chairman - East Thurrock United FC; Club Secretary - Essex Comets YFC; Club Secretary - Lakeside YFC; Chairman - Linford Wanderers FC; Chairman - Stanford Wanderers FC; Club Secretary - Thurrock FC; Chairman - Orsett & Thurrock CC; Chairman - Stanford-le-Hope CC; Fixture Secretary - Horndon on the Hill CC; Chairman - Belhus CC; Chairman - Thurrock HC; Club Secretary - Thurrock Tennis Club; Chairman - Thames RUFC; Director - Pegasus Palmerians RUFC; Club Secretary - Thurrock RUFC; Club Secretary - Stanford-le-Hope RUFC; Chairman - Thurrock Association Sunday League; League Secretary - Shepherd Neame Essex League; League Secretary - T Rippon Mid Essex League; General Secretary - Thurrock & District Bowls Association; Development Officer - Essex Country Cricket Board; Head of PE - William Edwards School; Head Teacher - The Ockendon Academy; Acting Principal - Ormiston Park Academy; Head of PE - St Clere's School; Academy Manager – Hassenbrook Academy; Head Teacher - Grays Convent High School; Assistant Principal - Harris Academy Chafford Hundred; Head of Faculty - Gable Hall School; Assistant Principal - Palmers College; Business Manager - Gateway Academy; Business Manager - Hathaway Academy; Site Manager - Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park); Site Manager - South Ockendon Recreation Ground.

Playing Pitch Strategy – signed off by all NGBs and clubs/organisations involved in the assessment, as well as by Sport England.

Both documents also subject to a general public consultation on the Council website from 30 June to 11 August 2017 – 16 responses received.

Indoor and Built Facilities Assessment – Sport England – Planning and Relationship Manager; Active Essex – CEO; Active Essex – Strategic Lead Business Operations; Active Essex – Club Link Maker; England Athletics – South Area Manager; Archery Development Manager (Participation); Basketball England – Facilities Manager; Badminton England; British Gymnastics – Business Support Officer; Tennis Services Assistant East Region; Goalball UK Development Officer; Boccia Development Officer (Clubs & Safeguarding); Indoor Bowls Association; ASA Head of Facilities; Head Coach of Thurrock Swimming Club; Move It Dance School; Teddy Toes; MD New Horizons Childcare Services Ltd; Athletics Coach/U3A; Thurrock Swimming Club; W.A.D.E.R.S.; Thurrock Gymnastics Academy; Alfa Shotokan Karate Club; Belhus Park Boxing Club; East Thurrock Badminton Club; Essex Kickboxing Academy; HGD Wadokai Karate Association; Jay's Gymnastics; J.S.C. Judo Club; Mayes Martial Arts Club; Seitou Ryu Karate (West Thurrock); Thurrock Volleyball Club.

Indoor and Built Facilities Strategy – was subject to a general public consultation (alongside the assessment report) on the Council website from 10 November to 22 December 2017 – 2 responses received.

Active Travel Strategy – multi-disciplinary steering group included representation from Public Health England. Ramblers Association were consulted through presentation to the Local Access Forum as strategy was being developed. Public consultation on the Council website from 10 November to 22 December 2017 – 4 responses received.

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13 January 2021	ITEM: 15 Decision: 110549
Cabinet	
Collaborative Communities Framework 2021-2025	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Deborah Huelin, Portfolio Holder for Central Services and Communities	
Accountable Assistant Director: Les Billingham, Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Community Development	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director, Adults, Housing and Health	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This paper sets out proposals to embed a pan council approach to how we work with communities. The council is committed to supporting communities and encouraging residents to drive and contribute to local improvements and has recently agreed a new priority project to consider community level transformation. The Collaborative Communities framework covers three key distinct areas – Engagement, Equalities and Empowerment. All three areas are interdependent and gain strength and momentum by coming together into one Framework to support a pan council approach to collaboration.

Under the umbrella term “Collaborative Communities”, the scope includes co-design and influencing decisions as well as working together to address societal challenges. The Framework includes our Corporate Equality Objectives.

The vision for the Collaborative Communities (CC) Framework is:

‘We are committed to creating a fair, accessible and inclusive borough where everyone has a voice and an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive, and where community led ambitions are supported and actively encouraged’.

The principles of the CC framework can be summarised as:

- A) Engagement – Involving residents in the decisions that affect their lives, using co-design and co-production methods to address the issues facing residents, as well as the solutions.

- B) Empowerment - Supporting resilience within communities and voluntary sector networks through asset based community development, supporting communities to champion change. The council aims to enable communities to make a difference and to flourish.
- C) Equality - Ensuring services are free of prejudice and that council services enable all to have equal opportunities to prosper and contribute to building a diverse and inclusive borough.

Achieving the ambition of the CC Framework will require all council services to consider how they can enable communities to achieve local ambitions including devolving power, reducing bureaucracy and enabling different ways of working. Our ambition is to reduce the red tape that communities often experience when taking community led action so they are more enabled to achieve local outcomes.

The Framework is intended to support new ways of working within existing resources. Given the financial climate facing councils and communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, implementation will be phased with individual projects identified with both services and communities over the next four years 2021 – 2025. Any financial impact of new proposals will be considered as they are developed. However, the ambition is to redirect resources to help ensure the values of this Framework are embedded across all council services.

1. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet approves the draft Collaborative Communities Framework at Appendix 1.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report and Framework builds on the successful transformation experience of Adult Social Care to working differently with communities. In order to effectively manage increasing demands, innovative approaches have been developed and implemented to address how health and social care is redesigned in Thurrock. Fundamental to the programme has been a commitment to a shift in thinking from a deficit model (a focus on ‘what is wrong?’) which creates dependency, to a strength based model (a focus on ‘what is strong’) which can open opportunities for collaboration, placing the citizen at the centre of opportunity for change. This transformational programme has included testing new ways of working including Local Area Co-ordinators, Thurrock First, community led support in Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary and challenging funding-silos to create new opportunities. It builds on the principles of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). Evaluation of projects to date demonstrate the added value and investment potential that can be realised by diverting funds into prevention rather than costly, statutory services.
- 2.2 Using ABCD effectively can help to change our relationship with communities, encouraging a less paternalistic approach to work and helping to empower

community led solutions that are often better for communities and more sustainable than public sector organisations providing a local service.

- 2.3 Many services across the council are already committed to working differently with residents to enable community led action, and to collaborate on ideas for improvements posed by residents. The CC Framework looks to embed collaboration as a key value across all services and future strategies. It highlights certain actions that will help us to be a strong partner alongside communities, working for shared aspirations.
- 2.4 A draft approach was shared with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in September 2019. This was well received and subsequent engagement with stakeholders has helped to shape the CC Framework. A key event that helped to shape the Framework was a joint conference with CVS in October 2019, attended by over 150 people. Internal meetings with services have developed further thinking about the Framework and its ambition. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny considered the Framework again November 2020; the Committee welcomed the development of the Framework as an opportunity to actively engage a broad section of residents in the decisions that affect them, as well as building bonds with services through conversation and collaboration.
- 2.5 Development of the Framework was delayed in March 2020 with the need to prioritise our response to COVID-19. The strong partnership and relationships already in place and the ability to trust and collaborate across sectors allowed Thurrock Council and Thurrock Community and Voluntary Services (CVS) to quickly and successfully establish a highly effective community response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thurrock Coronavirus Community Action (TCCA). TCCA has ensured that thousands of residents in Thurrock are getting the help and support they need, and this help continues for those without friends and family who need to self-isolate. Our experience of mobilising as we did to respond to COVID-19 is a practical example of all we aim to achieve through this Framework into our day to day encounters with communities.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Community engagement is an essential component of any policy development and underpins all council work. Good community engagement tends to increase how positively people feel about where they live as a place and whether they are valued as active citizens. All services are required to demonstrate they have considered, and where necessary, consulted upon the impact of changes before taking decisions. This Framework seeks to explore and use digital engagement opportunities as well to support co-design and co-production, exploring ideas and solutions through inclusive dialogue.
- 3.2 The term 'citizen' demonstrates the commitment to ensuring council processes and procedures work to enable communities to achieve their ambitions to improve quality of life. Often, council processes can create unintended barriers that prevent, or deter, communities from taking control of

parts of their lives or social issues where the state, or council, should have a limited role. The inclusion of empowerment in this Framework seeks to drive change so that we can reduce red tape and enable more collaborative processes that support communities achieve the change they seek.

- 3.3 The Framework includes the council's Equality and Diversity Statement and four corporate equality objectives. By including the objectives within this Framework, we are able to recognise the interconnection of community engagement and empowerment while setting out our ambition to create a fair, accessible and inclusive borough where everyone has a voice and an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive.
- 3.4 The four corporate equality objectives seek to address the issues where dialogue around equality has focused most consistently across numerous consultation and engagement outcomes and surveys to understand the needs of those with protected characteristics. They are:
- Access to services
 - Supporting community integration and cohesion
 - Improving resilience
 - Workforce development

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Community engagement is an essential component of any policy development and underpins all council work. At a time of financial pressures, effective engagement helps to make the best use of our widest range of resources, supporting decisions that are sustainable and build on community resource.

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

- 5.1 This Framework has developed following a number of meetings and conversations with key stakeholders including Thurrock Community Forums, and Thurrock CVS and the Voluntary Sector. As covered at 2.4, the Framework has been positively received and commented on by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny.

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

- 6.1 The proposal to review our approach to engagement reflects the council's vision 'An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future'. The Framework supports the delivery of the corporate priority project of Community Level Transformation – designing out demand, redefining role of council and achieving better outcomes for our residents and local communities through collaboration and co-design.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, implementation of the proposed Framework may generate financial implications. These will be considered as the Framework and implementation plan is developed alongside options for using existing resources more efficiently to meet any new costs.

7.2 Legal

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

Whilst there aren't any direct legal implications arising from this report, the proposed Framework, amongst other things, addresses the legal requirements and principles in relation to consultation and engagement including the (common law) doctrine of legitimate expectation and Gunning Principles (1985). Certain functions of the Council, including planning, have statutory requirements to consult. Failure to consult or inadequate consultation could leave the Council in breach of its legal requirements and open to challenge through a judicial review application.

Other specific legislation, including the Local Government Acts (including the 1972, 1999 and 2000 Acts), the Localism Act 2011 and the Equality Act (2010) must or can be taken into account when appropriate and relevant. The Framework sets out the council's corporate equality objectives for the next four years.

The proposed strategy will be reviewed every four years or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice or as otherwise required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development and Equalities

In recent years, the council's approach to engaging and empowering local communities to design and deliver community-led solutions has evolved significantly with the introduction of Asset Based Community Development. This practice has been successful in a number of areas although only through close joint working with the voluntary, community and faith sector to enable

and facilitate the involvement and participation of residents and specifically protected groups who may also be users or beneficiaries of the sector.

The proposal for a 'Collaborative Communities Framework' will consolidate learning and best practice associated with consultation and engagement including those associated with ABCD and Your Place Your Voice.

A community equality impact assessment (CEIA) will be completed for this Framework which sets out the council's equality objectives for the next four years. This CEIA will not however alleviate the responsibility of individual services to understand and respond to the specific needs of communities and individuals with protected characteristics by actively seeking them at the outset of designing and then implementing policies, programmes and services at a borough and neighbourhood level.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

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

- The proposed Framework will seek to refresh Thurrock's Joint Compact between the statutory sector and the council. The current compact can be viewed here <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/strategies/thurrock-joint-compact>

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: Draft Collaborative Communities Framework 2021 - 2025

Report Author:

Natalie Smith

Strategic Lead: Community Development and Equalities

Adult Social Care and Community Development

Thurrock Collaborative Communities Framework

"Alone, we can do so little; together we can do so much" – Helen Keller

Overview

Thurrock is distinctive in so many ways. Undiscoverable on a road map – but within its numerous towns and villages is a wealth of local history, community assets and resident networks galvanised by the pride they hold for their area.

Place is of huge significance to Thurrock, as is the commitment to supporting **People** to lead the way in making the borough a great place to live while having the power to influence issues that affect them the most. As a council, we often hold the resource and responsibility to make a huge difference to our communities, working towards **Prosperity** for all. Doing this well, ensuring that all we do enables our residents to thrive, requires a different relationship with residents as citizens.

The aims of this framework reflect the issues that have evolved in consultation with a wide range of residents, voluntary and public sector organisations active in Thurrock. Setting out our ambition will help to further develop new ideas, and new relationships, for the future.

Progress on developing this framework has been delayed due to the unprecedented need to respond to COVID-19. Since March 2020, our plans for co-producing the framework were replaced with developing and mobilising Thurrock Coronavirus Community Action (TCCA), providing support to people self-isolating or shielding at home. The speed by which we were able to implement an effective response with the voluntary sector evidences the commitment that exists across the borough to collaborate in order to achieve the best local solutions for local residents.

Thurrock's voluntary, community and faith sector supported communities throughout lockdown, either via TCCA or their immediate community. Nationally, the sector suffered disproportionately from the economic impact of COVID-19.

In Thurrock, we recognise the value of a strong voluntary sector and will be working closely with our partners through the development of a Recovery, Resilience and Return to Growth Strategy for Thurrock, as well as supporting sustainability through the implementation of this framework.

Vision

Core to the success of this framework is a commitment from the council to achieve an organisational shift to the culture of how we work and enable communities to co-design and influence decisions, address challenges and realise ambitions.

Our vision for this framework is:

We are committed to creating a fair, accessible and inclusive borough where everyone has a voice and an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive, and where community led ambitions are supported and actively encouraged.

Working towards this vision will require aligning our policy and practice accordingly by reducing the red tape that hinders community led action, devolving power and enabling different ways of working so communities are better enabled to achieve local outcomes.

The business case for the council to lead change at this time is clear. Co-design and co-production not only makes the best of our widest range of resources, but it leads to decisions that are sustainable and work for communities. Prevention in itself saves money.

Embedding a commitment to social value, and commissioning with economic, social and environmental outcomes in mind, favours local spend. Joint budgets for shared outcomes helps to break silos and enables integration – in short, better outcomes for local people.

Our priorities

To achieve the vision set out in this framework, our priorities are set out within three key themes:

Engagement

Involving residents in the decisions that affect their lives, using **co-design and co-production** methods in the issues facing Thurrock as well as the solutions.

Empowerment

Supporting resilience within communities and voluntary sector networks through **Asset-Based Community Development**, supporting communities to champion change. The council aims to enable communities to make a difference and to flourish, being clear about the role of public services.

Equality

Ensuring services are free of prejudice and that council services enable all to have equal opportunities to prosper and contribute to building a diverse and inclusive borough, underpinned by 4 core equality outcomes:

- access to services
- supporting community integration and cohesion
- improving resilience
- workforce development

Our approach

Our approach depends on place based, **co-design and co-production**. This recognises the resources that citizens already have and the benefits of delivering services **with** rather than for people. It is an equal and reciprocal relationship between citizens and agencies with an inherent respect between all parties based on the skills, knowledge, experience and creativity they each bring forward.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) has already informed much of the transformation in the council's Adult Social Care team and is a principle we will carry over into our everyday engagement with residents and communities. All council services will embed ABCD to improve and inform their approach to service planning and delivery. This requires a commitment to a shift in thinking from a deficit model (a focus on 'what is wrong?'), which creates dependency, to a strength based model (a focus on 'what is strong').

Enabling people from different backgrounds to come together to share their ideas and channel how they feel about life in Thurrock builds strong, cohesive communities. We will work together with a diverse network of residents and community organisations to drive forward our commitments to achieve equality, diversity and inclusion implementing a strengths-based approach.

Delivering our priorities

The following section sets out how we will work collaboratively to deliver our priorities in alignment with the 3 themes of:

- engagement
- empowerment
- equality

Engagement

Dialogue

Involving residents in the decisions that affect their lives, using **co-design and co-production** methods in the issues facing residents, as well as the solutions. We will:

- explore an integrated approach to place based engagement, increasing the number and diversity of residents who contribute their ideas, building synergy with primary care networks, community forums and Your Place Your Voice to shape the Local Plan
- develop the use of our Consultation Portal alongside direct engagement with communities when formal consultation is required, building on what is known from previous engagement – Participatory Budgeting is an example of where the portal can improve how local budgets are spent by ensuring communities influence decisions – this will improve decision-making and the impact for those affected
- build on existing partnerships to maximise the opportunity for collaboration – we will work with the Stronger Together Partnership to promote opportunities for engagement, recognising that dialogue with partners engenders trust and collaboration, placing citizens at the centre of opportunity for change

Recent achievements:

- dialogue arising from Black Lives Matters, and a new BAME community forum facilitated by Thurrock CVS
- environment and waste management projects with community forums – and work to support Friends Of Parks groups who play a key role in creating safe spaces for recreation and connecting communities
- joint conference held in October 2019 with Thurrock CVS to explore how we improve working together to build stronger communities – *"A fantastic event showcasing Thurrock as a community and how we all have a part to play to ensure we continue to keep Thurrock great"* – participant quote

Transformation and organisational change

Around 62% of Thurrock Council staff live in the borough. We will build on this to embed the commitments in this framework, and encourage staff to support community priorities through service planning and delivery

We will:

- implement a learning and development plan underpinned by the enablement of cultural change supporting services review how they operate to deliver this agenda
- support elected members to play an effective community leadership role, helping to ensure that varying local needs and aspirations are considered and understood within the context of council policies

- review our policy framework to embed our commitments and to challenge unnecessary bureaucracy, empowering staff to support communities to make quick progress when there is a shared ambition to deliver

Recent achievements:

- staff and councillors played a key role in supporting communities through TCCA with a variety of roles including collecting prescriptions, shopping and delivering essential food parcels
- staff networks have led on a number of events and initiatives to champion equalities across our workforce, the most recent examples include International Women's Day and flying the Rainbow Flag to mark Essex Pride to recognise and support LGBT+ staff and residents
- we have recruited change leads across the council to work with Directorate Workforce Groups to support new ways of working and to help embed the cultural change that underpins success

Empowerment

Resourcing social action

We value the impact of community assets and associations to Thurrock and recognise the need to target investment to achieve the greatest social value.

We will:

- complete a review of our Social Value Framework and increase the opportunity for maximising social, economic and environmental outcomes from how we spend all local budgets by exploring place-based commissioning and community asset transfer
- take an asset-based approach to resources by celebrating what we have available at our disposal as a borough, ensuring value for money, local investment and the best use of resources when spending so that community assets are sustainable and have the capacity and freedom to do what they do best – supporting communities
- explore new ways to use our resources fairly across partners, repurposing where appropriate and valuing the collective resources we share – for example mapping how and where money is spent, and considering the opportunity of our buildings, knowledge, time, skills, commitment and data
- maximise local investment through collaboration, and recognise the need to support communities to engage fairly by having adequate time and capacity to participate – we will seek to reward and recognise active citizens supporting the development of our borough

Supporting a sustainable Third Sector

Voluntary sector organisations evolve as people come together and choose to make a difference to their community, be it area-based or a community of interest. Many charities and voluntary organisations perform essential work that contribute to the fabric of our society. Often, they act as a vital referral resource for public services.

COVID-19 has severely impacted the third sector. Losing their services in either the short term or after the country emerges from the crisis will cause untold damage to individuals and communities. Now more than ever, it is imperative that we support a sustainable third sector in Thurrock.

We will:

- ensure officers understand what is meant by the voluntary sector, how to engage effectively, ensuring timely communications – this will include championing the voluntary sector, ensuring understanding of the independence of charities, and respecting as equal to enable fair and effective partnership working
- review the processes that communities use when they want to lead improvements, so the voluntary sector can actively influence outcomes – this will also extend to a review of application processes related to permissions, funding, procurement, monitoring and grants protocols so we enable sustainability and are proportionate in the bureaucracy required
- recognise and actively encourage organisations to strive to be sustainable where possible, and to be able to plan for their delivery – organisations need capacity to operate and infrastructure support to be effective, including volunteer recruitment and management, so

we will seek to embed this commitment into processes relating to joint work with the sector, for example, funding agreements

- strive to ensure Thurrock gets its fair share of external funding by supporting bids and strengthening proposals – we will support the development of community fundraising through Giving for Thurrock (GiFT) as a place based focus to benefit social action and continue to promote Small Sparks as a quick and easy way to support community ideas that make a difference

Recent achievements:

- development of an action plan in response to the Fair Debt Summit held with partners from the voluntary sector – key aspects included investment in new technology and education of our younger generations
- key performance indicators within contracts were relaxed in response to COVID-19, and we will uphold the principle of at least three months' notice prior to any changes to terms and conditions impacting on the sector
- in the last year, housing contractors resourced at least 50% of their teams from local residents and were purchasing at least 60% of their supplies locally – also nine different apprenticeship opportunities were provided
- the repurposing of the Voluntary Sector Development Fund and Community Environmental Development Fund to support the sustainability and resilience of community organisations through COVID-19
- Encouraging applications to the Community Environmental Development Fund – over £1.25m has been allocated to date supporting over 50 improvements to community assets, enabling local activities to benefit residents.

Equality

We are committed to ensuring services are free of prejudice and that council services enable all to have equal opportunities to prosper and contribute to building a diverse and inclusive borough

Our Equality Statement

We believe that the diversity of Thurrock's communities is a positive asset, reflecting our motto '**By Thames to all people of the world**'.

The people who live, work and visit Thurrock come from diverse backgrounds and circumstances. However, the disadvantage and discrimination that some communities experience has a negative effect on the quality of their lives.

Thurrock Council is committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity
- celebrating and valuing diversity
- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in all forms
- promoting good relations and integration

We want Thurrock to be a place where all citizens feel they are listened to and have a stake in their community – and which supports and values individual and community initiatives that bring people together.

As a community leader we will work together with our partners to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, and that our neighbourhoods are places where people come together to prosper.

How is this achieved?

One of the ways we do this is by ensuring that equalities is a 'real' consideration during the formulation and development of our policies and functions. This is demonstrated through the completion of a Community Equality Impact Assessment process that takes consideration of protected characteristics in line with the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 has extended the protection of individuals to nine different groups. These are referred to as protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- sex
- disability
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender re-assignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity

We go beyond the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 to include socio-economic status, as we recognise that there are disparities across our communities. Our Community Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) process therefore takes consideration of both socio-economics and protected characteristics.

We are currently working together with our workforce, partners and the community to drive growth in our role as champions for equality, diversity, inclusion and cohesion in Thurrock and have the four equality objectives to underpin the delivery of this framework. The following section highlights those objectives including our plans to deliver them.

Access to services

We are committed to ensuring that all council services are accessible and free from prejudice and discrimination.

We will:

- improve the use of the data and intelligence we collect and hold concerning the diversity profile and experience of Thurrock residents using our services – we will use this information to address the differences in outcomes and opportunities experienced by people in key areas of life such as health, education, community safety and housing
- we will continue to undertake comprehensive CEIAs to understand which communities experience barriers and involve them in agreeing how to resolve issues adequately – improving access to services, information, treatments and support interventions helps to reduce inequalities
- learn from new ways of remaining connected through the COVID-19 lockdown, and work with our partners to reduce the digital divide, maximising resident's skills, confidence and access to technology

Supporting community integration and cohesion

Communities may define themselves by neighbourhood, ethnicity or culture, age group, faith, sexual orientation, language, sex or other characteristics or by common interests. Community integration and cohesion describes the ability of all communities to function and grow in harmony together rather than in conflict. Thurrock Council welcomes and celebrates the diversity of everyone living, working and visiting Thurrock.

We will:

- work with the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership to tackle hate crime and prevent extremism – we will work with communities to prevent hate incidents and crimes, encourage reporting, and improve the quality and transparency of communications in relation to the Prevent agenda to raise public awareness of, and exposure to, Prevent
- prepare an annual calendar of events and work with residents and wider partners such as schools to demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and pursue education, conversation and discussion to tackle perceptions of discrimination
- embed the opportunity for shared experience and connecting communities using a strengths-based approach in all we do for new and established communities – social

interaction and meaningful contact with different communities builds cohesion, and we will support face to face engagement within guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- provide support to community and workforce focus groups that identify key issues and barriers to equality, inclusion and cohesion in Thurrock – this will build a picture of the priority challenges for each protected characteristic and wider disadvantaged groups, such as veterans and those facing economic disadvantage, and in doing so we recognise and value the diversity amongst groups, as well as between groups

Improving resilience

At a time of great economic instability as a consequence of COVID-19, it is imperative that we understand the impact it has placed on different communities in Thurrock and projected outcomes. Pooled data derived from our work with partners and comprehensive Community Equality Impact Assessments will be continually reviewed to ensure that we are able to determine what COVID-19 means for different communities in Thurrock.

We will:

- develop targeted interventions to enable joined up prevention measures that respond to evidence of need
- develop communities of practice to ensure timely information and communication regarding support programmes and emerging needs are understood and supported
- gather data in consultation with residents and partners to gain a collective understanding and develop means to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and what this means for different communities in Thurrock – we will focus on maximising potential job creation and supporting people into employment through the delivery of our Economic Growth Strategy
- adopt a preventative strength based approach to available support and getting behind community led approaches to build resilience

Workforce development

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to maximising the engagement and performance of our people and we strive to create a positive environment through education and awareness raising of equality and diversity both within the organisation and the wider borough. The People Strategy 2020/23 sets our ambition for our workforce based on six key values:

- proud
- ambitious
- compassionate
- inclusive
- empowered
- collaborative

We will:

- live the standards and values we set out in our People Strategy, provide a customer first approach

- deliver a comprehensive workforce development plan for equality, diversity and inclusion put in place plans to achieve the capacity and skills to deliver what is required to support all of our communities and harness the diversity of our working environments
- create a trusted and inclusive environment where our staff are confident to disclose protected characteristics
- use data provided by our workforce to develop plans that address barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion, strive towards employing a workforce that is representative of the borough's demographic profile and publish an Annual Equality Report that highlights our progress

Recent achievements:

- 7 active staff networks, creating links with community networks
- Hate Crime Ambassador Programme and establishing Hate Incident Reporting Centres (HIRCS) in Thurrock
- challenge to Highways England to carry out a Health Equality Impact Assessment on the Lower Thames Crossing proposal
- in January 2020 council adopted the Definition of Antisemitism as set out by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
- we listened to the needs of Thurrock's Muslim community and worked with community leaders to identify a suitable piece of land to enable future burials

Next steps

A Pact for Thurrock

The Collaborative Communities Framework seeks to influence the ways we work for the benefit of communities. In taking this approach we recognise that different organisations will have varying degrees of resource, influence and power at their disposal, creating an unequal base for starting a new conversation to assist change.

Services can achieve so much more through collaboration rather than working in silos. Our experience of working together to support communities through COVID-19 has demonstrated the level of trust that already exists between Thurrock Council and the voluntary sector.

We recognise the vision and priorities set out in this framework are dynamic and will evolve with expanded engagement and experience.

Success is dependent on a collective agreement to deliver the priorities set out in this framework by all of our partners. Embedding these priorities into policy and action will help transform our borough so that delivery is informed by, and co-produced with local communities.

We will refresh the Thurrock Joint Compact as a Pact for Thurrock, and develop these principles so they are fit for purpose in these unprecedented times. See Annex 1 – 'Principles informing the development of a pact for Thurrock'.

Conclusion

The vision, principles and aims of this framework highlight the overarching plans for building on the foundations of strength based working to create better outcomes for local communities.

An implementation plan will be developed alongside this framework establishing the role of the council and its partners to ensure the most efficient, high impact delivery of the vision and priorities that have been outlined.

Annex 1 – Principles informing the development of a Pact for Thurrock

Success is dependent on a collective agreement to deliver the priorities set out in this framework by all of our partners. Embedding these priorities into policy and action will help transform our borough so that delivery is informed by, and co-produced with local communities. We will refresh the Thurrock Joint Compact as a Pact for Thurrock, and develop these principles so they are fit for purpose in these unprecedented times,

Through the development of a Pact for Thurrock, we will:

- **be outcome-focused** – by agreeing a coherent and shared vision of the difference we intend to make, each organisation can use its strengths and resources more effectively to achieve a collective impact
- **create trust-based partnership arrangements** – working within existing relationships, creating agile and reactive solutions without the need for unnecessary time consuming governance and bureaucracy. The local system is able to respond as one, not as a series of independent entities inhibited by organisational structures. We need to capture and value this approach into protocols for the future.
- **provide strong consistent leadership, enabling distributed leadership** – empowerment and proactive leadership is needed to foster the confidence of staff teams and communities to take responsibility and to use innovative and creative capacities to find solutions, free from risk of feeling unsupported.
- **implement asset-based and strength-based approaches** – the concept of doing with rather than to sits at the heart of every aspect of our change journey. This has enabled communities to take action rather than having a service type solution imposed on them. The TCCA response which mobilised volunteers to help those self-isolating and shielding in our communities quickly and effectively, is a strong example of the asset based approach in action
- **value the importance of technology** – the scale of the coronavirus revealed the importance of technology. It also highlighted the challenges faced by many in gaining access to equipment and Wi-Fi, as well as having the skills and confidence to use technology
- **value the importance of human connections** – loneliness is a blight on society that risks increasing as lockdown restrictions ease, leaving some unable to enjoy their previous networks and excluded from new opportunities. Community networks play a fundamental role in combating loneliness and enabling community connections (e.g. through neighbourhoods, faith groups, clubs and societies). Shared experience breeds cohesion and we will value the assets in our Borough that contribute to the quality of life of so many through their networks
- **use evidence and local intelligence** – the use of data and evidence based practice, coupled with local intelligence and the passion of communities will help to create a shared objective and the effective use of resources
- **provide a focus on prevention** – experience within adult social care transformation to move the system away from a clinical treatment model and toward a population health

approach with greater emphasis on treatment of the causal nature of poor health and well-being outcomes, can be expanded to all areas of public life. Street cleaning, anti-social behaviour and tackling obesity are just some examples

- **value the importance of place** – the importance of locality working cannot be underestimated in terms of building pride, enhancing identity and galvanising community passion to drive local improvements. Whilst some things need to be done at scale, the organising principle driving local transformation is that of subsidiarity; that the centre should only be responsible for those things that cannot be delivered at a more local level. Neighbourhoods enjoy strong networks, able to respond with agility and pace to issues as they emerge. We need to value and nurture locality based partnerships that can help bring capacity and focus to local issues, ensuring there is an equality of engagement, building consensus where difference exists
- **propose means to achieve a rebalancing of power** – away from officials and organisations and towards citizens and communities

13 January 2021		ITEM: 16
Cabinet		
Thames Freeport Bid to Government		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning		
Accountable Assistant Director: N/A		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

Freeports are a flagship government initiative to support local communities through post-COVID economic recovery. They offer a wide range of incentives for businesses to invest in areas, creating new jobs and prosperity for communities as part of government's levelling up agenda.

Thurrock, at the heart of the UK ports industry, is uniquely suited to deliver the benefits Freeport status would bring to local communities, as well as regional and national economies. Taken together with other regeneration initiatives, including Towns Funds and the adoption of a new Economic Development Strategy, this offers significant and additional benefit to Thurrock and the wider region.

As members of the governance body for the proposed Freeport, Thurrock Council would play a key role in its delivery and governance, particularly how public sector investment is directed and managed. The Council is working to help produce a compelling bid to government as well as understanding what investment this could bring for additional projects and initiatives.

The bid for a Thames Freeport is led by the operators of Thurrock's most significant ports: Forth Ports' Port of Tilbury and DP World's London Gateway. The bidders are requesting the Council's support in their application to UK Government to approval of a Freeport in Thurrock. Supporting the Thames Freeport bid would be an exceptional opportunity for Thurrock businesses and residents to benefit from additional employment, investment, economic activity, trade, innovation and productivity.

1. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Support in principle the submission of the Thames Freeport bid to government.**
- 1.2 Endorse the continued engagement of officers with partners to bring forward a compelling bid to government which supports the policy objectives and benefits the borough and delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Director of Finance, Governance and Property, Monitoring Officer, Leader, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation, to support the final bid prior to submission.**
- 1.3 Subject to the approval in 1.2, delegate authority to the Leader to sign a letter of commitment of the Council's support and agreement to the proposed Freeport for those areas for which Thurrock Borough Council has statutory responsibility. Not all of the proposed tax sites are currently supported for development within the Local Plan including sections of Green Belt, the letter will give the Council's support for the Freeport bid in this context, whilst not fettering its discretion and statutory duties as the local planning authority.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In February 2020, the government announced a consultation into a new Freeports policy for the United Kingdom. It focussed on a number of policy areas linked to Freeports including customs freedoms, tax reliefs, additional regeneration investment, innovation, skills and productivity a Freeport could bring to an area. Up to 10 Freeports would be identified following a competitive bidding process, including 1 in each of the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Current expectations are that there is unlikely to be more than 1 or 2 successful Freeports bids in the South of England and we understand that there are 4 or 5 credible bidders from other major maritime and air freight locations.
- 2.2 This was followed by the government's Response to the Consultation published in October 2020, and gave further information on the government's thinking for the emerging Freeports policy, but with more detailed information reserved for a future document (a Bidding Prospectus).
- 2.3 The Bidding Prospectus was published by government on 16 November, where further details of the policy was set out, along with the role of the Local Authorities in the bidding process and the operation of successful Freeports. It also started a 12-week period for bids to be developed and submitted by the deadline of 5 February 2021.
- 2.4 Forth Ports and DP World are bringing forward a bid (the Thames Freeport) to government for Freeport status at their Port of Tilbury and London Gateway sites, and have engaged Vivid Economics as consultants to develop the

economic case. Forth Ports and DP World are working in partnership with Ford and therefore the proposed Freeport also includes a site at the Ford plant in Dagenham. Many key aspects of the bid such as innovation, skills and the decarbonisation agenda are significantly strengthened through the addition of Ford as a bid partner.

- 2.5 The Council continues to engage as a key member of the bid coalition and future governance body to develop the bid for Freeport status in order to secure the benefits it would bring to businesses and residents in the borough.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

The case for Thames Freeport

- 3.1 There is huge potential in Thurrock and throughout the Thames Estuary to address pockets of deprivation as part of the levelling-up agenda.
- 3.2 DP World and Forth Ports have already invested more than GBP 2.5 billion into infrastructure along the Thames Corridor, creating independently nationally significant operations moving over 30 million tonnes through Thurrock ports and together supporting the provision of over 20,000 jobs.
- 3.3 There is opportunity for further growth, with additional private and public investment in infrastructure, land ready for investors, and regional clusters in advanced manufacturing, transport and logistics and clean energy and circular economy.
- 3.4 A Thames Freeport has the scale, connectivity and potential to compete on a global scale for international investment.
- 3.5 The Thames Freeport also promotes investment in modern, productive, clean technologies to support local regeneration, skills development, workforce attraction and retention, employment opportunities and a net zero transition.

Freeport Policy Objectives and Outcomes

- 3.6 In the bidding prospectus, government has set out the objectives and outcomes a successful Freeport should deliver:
- Objective 1 - establish Freeports as national hubs for global trade and investment across the UK
 - Trade: increase in trade throughput through the designated Freeport area
 - Investment: increase in investment within Freeport boundary area, surrounding area and nationally
 - Objective 2 – promote regeneration and job creation
 - Employment: increased number of jobs and average wages in deprived areas in and around the Freeport

- Economic activity: increase in economic specialisation in activities high in GVA relative to the current makeup of the local economy
- Objective 3 – create a hotbed of innovation
 - Innovation: Increased local involvement and funding in R&D and innovation
 - Productivity: Increased productivity in each target region, through increased capacity to absorb innovation

Freeport Geography and Economic Incentives

- 3.7 A key pillar of Freeports is providing businesses with incentives to create additional economic activity in areas, encouraging them to invest, innovate and create good and high-paying jobs in the communities.
- 3.8 As part of that system, a number of tax reliefs have been designed to support businesses operating within the Tax Sites of a Freeport to achieve those goals:
- Business Rates relief
 - Stamp Duty Land Tax
 - Enhance Structures and Buildings Allowance
 - Enhance Capital Allowances
 - Employer National Insurance Contributions
- 3.9 The local retention of business rates growth in a Freeport Tax Site provides a potential source of income to fund additional projects and initiatives to support the Freeport and therefore Thurrock's communities as a whole. The Freeport policy suggests that local authorities could borrow against these retained business rates to bring forward supporting projects. Decisions on support for specific projects and initiatives would be subject to the business case process and considered in future reports to Cabinet.
- 3.10 The Prospectus states that Tax Sites are limited to a total area of 600 hectares (which can be a single site of up to that size, or up to 3 between 20-200 hectares) and should be located in under-developed areas in order to attract additional economic activity.
- 3.11 There must be at least one Customs Site within a Freeport, which requires authorisation from bodies such as HMRC and Border Force. Businesses permitted to operate in those area would benefit from tariff and other benefits including:
- Duty deferral while the goods remain on site
 - Duty inversion if the finished goods exiting the Freeport attract a lower tariff than their component parts
 - Customs duty exemption on goods that are imported into a Freeport, processed into finished goods and subsequently re-exported (subject to the UK's trade agreements)
 - Suspension import VAT on goods entering the Freeport.

- Simplified import procedures.
- 3.12 Both Tax Sites and Customs Sites operate within a Freeport Outer Boundary, where planning, regeneration and innovation measures (detailed below) will also be applied. This outer boundary can be up to 45km between the furthest two points of the proposed Freeport.
- 3.13 The locations of the Tax and Customs sites are currently under consideration, but are expected to include land around the Port of Tilbury, areas of DP World London Gateway and a section of the Ford site in Dagenham. We understand that over 75% of the land designated to be a tax site will be in Thurrock. Relevant parties are engaging to ensure that the sites which are eventually included in the bid meet the characteristics set out in the policy, including the economic case for their inclusion in the bid, and that they are deliverable. The Freeport Outer Boundary includes the whole borough of Thurrock, allowing for sites and investment to come forward as well as future growth potential. The Outer Boundary is also includes the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (due to the location of the proposed tax site at the Ford plant) and the London Borough of Havering (by virtue of it being situated between Thurrock and LBBB).

Planning

- 3.14 Freeports will be able to benefit from a simpler planning process through expected reforms to permitted development rights and area-based planning mechanisms such as Local Development Orders (LDOs). An LDO is already in place at London Gateway and has led to delivery of planning permission for investment in a much quicker timeframe than would otherwise be possible.
- 3.15 This approach to planning is aligned to the government's consultation of the future of the planning system, which the Council is actively engaging on in order to shape the outcome.
- 3.16 Government has required bids to include statements of support for LDOs or similar mechanisms from local authorities. This will be done so as not to predetermine the statutory planning process, or pre-judge the outcome of the development of the Local Plan.
- 3.17 The process of identifying the Tax and Customs sites is ongoing. Should sites be identified which are not currently allocated for economic use or be impacted by other planning policy constraints such as Green Belt, the letter accompanying the bid will give the Council's support for the Freeport in that context where appropriate, while not undermining the Council's obligations as the Local Planning Authority.

Regeneration and Infrastructure

- 3.18 In order to help support the creation of Freeports, successful bid will have the opportunity to access a share of £175m of seed capital funding which will be made available by the government, for use in such areas as:
- Land assembly
 - Site remediation
 - Small-scale transport infrastructure to connect sites within Freeport
- 3.19 While the bid requires outline proposals for how this seed funding will be spent within the Outer Boundary, these proposals are currently being developed and will be subject to an outline and full business case process, as well as future reports to Cabinet where appropriate. The Local Authority will also be accountable to MHCLG for how the public funding is managed.
- 3.20 It is likely that private sector funding from successful bidders will supplement this seed capital for relevant infrastructure projects in the vicinity of the ports.

Transport, Skills and Innovation

- 3.21 In addition to those elements of the policy which will directly benefit the Freeport areas and the businesses which operate in them, bids are also expected to identify a number of broader benefits to local communities, including:
- Wider community and societal benefits derived from increasing the number of jobs and average wages in areas in need of levelling-up
 - Alignment of bids to local transport plans and existing/planned infrastructure improvements to tackle adverse effects on local transport networks
 - Alignment of skills available in the local labour market to the needs of the firms and sectors being targeted by the Freeport, including support for upskilling in line with local skills strategies
 - Innovation ambitions focussed around the policy objectives and outcomes
 - Private sector-led innovation within Freeports, and innovation ambitions that contribute to the decarbonisation agenda or Net Zero.
 - Plans to establish new facilities, or link with existing facilities that apply new technologies and research
 - Plans to work with local academic institutions to facilitate skills development by providing qualification services, training workers and facilitating apprenticeships
 - Plans to promote Freeport-specific research programmes
 - Plans to generate secure and standardised data for monitoring and evaluation, promote data-sharing among businesses and with researchers, and enhance digital connectivity
- 3.22 The Council and other local and regional stakeholders are actively engaging with the bid team to develop these areas to the benefit of Thurrock, its businesses and residents.

- 3.23 We understand that the bid will contain a mechanism to raise additional private sector funding for training and skills that can be re-invested in relevant manufacturing, maritime and logistics skills in the local area.

Governance

- 3.24 The bid prospectus sets out the expectations for Freeport governance should a bid be successful. There is no requirement to use a specific mechanism, nor to have it in place prior to bid submission or award.
- 3.25 The expectation from government is that a Freeport Governance Body is established to govern and oversee the operations of the Freeport in line with the following core standards as set out in the prospectus:
- Effective Structure
 - Effective Personnel
 - Effective Functions
- 3.26 As stated above, the Local Authority would be responsible to MHCLG on the management of public money, including the seed capital funding, and therefore is included in the list of essential organisations which would make up the Freeport Governance Body. The structures and functions will also be designed as such to allow the Council to be meaningfully accountable for that spending and to appropriately manage and mitigate the associated risks.

Next Steps

- 3.27 Officers will continue to work with all partners to help develop a compelling case to government for Thames Freeport to be one of the successful bids for Freeport status. This will include working through a number of areas identified above including the proposed location of Tax and Customs sites, investment of retained business rates, projects to be funded through seed capital and governance arrangements.
- 3.28 Should Thames Freeport be successful in its bid, there may be the necessity to bring further reports through Cabinet for decision as and when required, including the formal governance arrangements which will oversee the Freeport. The Council will have the ability to either accept or reject these detailed reports, however it should be recognised that if they are not approved this will have significant consequences for the bid.
- 3.29 In relation to delivery risks and opportunities, these have and will continue to be incorporated into discussions in the following ways:
- 1) the bid to government includes a minimum viable and preferred option to demonstrate the impact of delayed development or less than expected investor interest in the Freeport, and the robustness of proposed development

2) the environmental and social risks from e.g. increased transport of goods or travel related to commuting from outside the borough have been directly addressed through the proposed Freeport offer, which includes specific measures to develop local workforce skills for employment onsite and promote investments aligned with the net zero agenda and expanding the capacity and sustainability of the regional transport system

3) additional due diligence will be conducted with support from central government for the development of outline and full business cases following announcement of the successful Freeport bids

4) the Bidding Prospectus requires a monitoring and evaluation plan, along with a commitment to annually review and submit to government the pace of development within the Freeport and associated impacts on the surrounding community, which DP World and Forth Ports are developing for submission in the bid

5) extensive engagement with other relevant local partners in the region, including ASELA, OSE, SELEP, the Port of London Authority and the Thames Estuary Growth Board has led to a broad level of support for the Freeport in the region and helped to ensure that the bid reflects the key elements of local strategies and plans that the council has contributed to and helped to align with development priorities within the borough

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 As the awarding of Freeport status is a decision for central government and not for the Council, this report enables the support of the bid and endorses the continued efforts and engagement of officers to align the bid to local priorities, as expected by government.
- 4.2 Government requires the written confirmation of support from the host Local Authority. Specifically:
- The letter must be signed by the Leader of each local authority that is responsible for planning, transport and business rates collection in whose area any of the proposed Freeport sites will sit. The letter should commit their full support and agreement to the proposed bid specifically those areas for which they have statutory responsibility including planning and business rates to ensure the delivery of the proposal.
- 4.3 This is an emerging policy area offering the potential for significant opportunities where details are in development. However, there are a number of currently unquantifiable opportunities and risks which the Council could potentially face, as referred to in the implications below, details of which will be identified and mitigated where possible through the development of the policy.

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

- 5.1 On behalf of the bid, partners (Forth Ports, DP World, Ford, LB Barking and Dagenham) have engaged with a wide range of stakeholder groups including businesses and regional bodies such as SELEP, OSE, ASELA and the Thames Estuary Growth Board.
- 5.2 There have also been engagement sessions with Councillors and local MPs to discuss the plans as they are evolving.

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

- 6.1 The delivery of the Freeports policy has the ability to support a number of the Council's prosperity priorities:
- 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
- 6.2 It also relates to the development of the Local Plan and the revised Economic Development Strategy, Backing Thurrock. Freeports include a wide range of policy levers which, if Thames Freeport is successful, will be factored into the development on those policies and priorities.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Assistant Director, Finance

The development of a Freeport in the borough enables access to additional funding sources including grants and the retention of business rates relating to new business that locate within the Freeport Tax Sites. This funding can then be utilised to support the wider development of the Freeport.

The Council continues to consider the potential funding streams to therefore understand the level of investment available to support the process. Subsequent investment decisions for which the Council will be responsible will be subject to a business case process and will follow the Council reporting and decision making processes.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**

Assistant Director Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer

Freeport status, if successfully granted to Thames Freeport, will require the Council to enter into a formal governance structure with partners to oversee and manage the operations of the Freeport. As part of this structure and subject to a business case provide, the Council will also be accountable to government on the management of public funds.

The legal structures under consideration are not required to be in place ahead of bid submission or award and have yet to be agreed between the partners, the prospectus from government highlights that initial proposals may be subject to change to ensure all Freeport's around the country are governed by the same (or broadly similar) arrangements. In the event of a successful bid, further reports will consider the legal and governance framework for the Freeport Governance Body.

Whilst formally supporting the bid does not create a legal obligation it does commit the Council to working in good faith to develop and implement the proposals. The Freeport concept whilst bringing forward the potential for significant benefits does carry risk for the Borough, and the Council. In considering this report Members must be mindful that there are significant areas of developing policy and detail within the proposals. Whilst there are areas where this is clear there are some significant areas of uncertainty as to how the Freeports arrangements will operate and the impact that this may have on the Borough and the Council itself in both economic and place terms.

The Council is being asked to be the accountable body for significant public funds from government, the use of which will be managed by partner organisations, the majority of which are private sector. Whilst risk can be mitigated through the use of appropriate contracts the ultimate risk will remain with the Council if deliverables are not met. There is scope for the Council to have to repay funds or ensure delivery of projects with the resultant implications. This type of arrangement exists in a number of settings, and can be managed effectively.

The Council has the necessary general statutory powers to engage in these arrangements at this point. However it must be recognised that in doing so it is not making determinations under specific statutory frameworks particularly around matters such as planning policy where future decision making will be necessary. It is clear that to deliver some of the prospectuses elements there will need to be regulatory change and we will need to monitor the ongoing process to ensure that the Council remains within its powers.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

Bid submissions are required to outline the expected impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics, using statistics where possible.

The bid prospectus states: “When formulating a policy proposal, the government is required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as laid out in the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics when carrying out their activities. The government has considered equalities impacts in line with its responsibilities. However, the decision about where Freeports are allocated could have equalities implications. The government is committed to the location of Freeports advancing the equality of opportunity and fostering of good relations for people of protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation). Bidders should make any relevant representations on impacts on people with different protected characteristics to assist the government’s ongoing assessment.”

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

Freeports policy is also a significant part of the government’s goal of net-zero carbon emissions, and could be used to develop new technologies and advanced manufacturing to bring forward decarbonisation.

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:

Luke Tyson
Delivery and Strategy Manager
Place

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