

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

Cabinet

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **13 October 2021**

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

Membership:

Councillors Robert Gledhill (Leader), Shane Hebb (Deputy Leader), Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney, Allen Mayes and Luke Spillman

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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| 4 Declaration of Interests | |
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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 October 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 8 September 2021 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-ins is Monday 20 September at 5.00pm

Present: Councillors Robert Gledhill (Leader), Shane Hebb (Deputy Leader), Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney and Luke Spillman

Apologies: Councillors Deborah Huelin and Allen Mayes
Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive

In attendance: Sean Clark, Corporate Director Resources and Place Delivery
Lucy Tricker, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, and live-streamed onto the Council's website.

33. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

34. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

35. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

36. Statements by the Leader

The Leader began his statement by stating that the UK had now completed the final step of the roadmap out of COVID lockdown, with the return of schools, colleges and universities; as well as the reopening of shops, pubs and restaurants. He thanked all Thurrock residents for their determination and sacrifice during lockdown which now allowed the reopening of the economy. He stated that although Thurrock was now beginning to return to normality, COVID still remained present and rates were increasing, although not as dramatically as previously seen. He urged residents to be cautious by washing their hands more regularly, considering wearing a face mask where appropriate, and by respecting people's wishes to socially distance. He also urged residents over the age of 16 to get the COVID vaccine either by booking an appointment over the phone or online, or by attending a walk-in centre. He explained that even though people who were double jabbed could still catch the virus, they were less likely to become seriously ill and be

hospitalised. He summarised and stated that Thurrock had now delivered 198,614 doses of the vaccine: 106,551 of which were first doses, and 92,063 of which were second doses. He explained that the current rate of infection in Thurrock was 248 per 100,000 which was lower than the national average of 370 cases per 100,000.

The Leader moved on and described a new initiative recently launched in Grays to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. He stated that this was because £625,000 of funding that had been received, £432,500 of which had been from to a joint bid with the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. He stated that this scheme would provide additional lighting, additional CCTV, a Shop Safe communications system and two new Grays Community Engagement Officers, who would work in conjunction with the Grays Town Police. He commented that Grays would be seeing lots of regeneration projects, due to the £20m Towns Fund investment from central government and additional private investment.

The Leader then described how he had recently attended the removal of vehicle involved in fly-tipping with the Environmental Enforcement team. He stated that the offender had driven further to fly-tip than they would have done if they had used the waste and recycling centre, and had had to pay a large fine. He mentioned that fly-tipping was not a victimless crime, as the landowner or Council had to pay for the fly-tip to be removed, but the Council would continue to work to catch fly-tipping offenders. He stated that so far the Council had caught 136 offenders by utilising the new fly-tipping cameras that had been installed. He added that the team had also recently found six motorbikes, two cars, and six quadbikes that had been illegally stored in Council owned garages. He explained that the vehicles had been disposed of and the offenders fined. He thanked the residents who had made the reports, and urged residents to continue to report offenders either online, or via 101, as it helped the police and the Council to build a pattern of evidence.

The Leader summarised and highlighted the work of Clean It, Cut It, Fill It since April last year. He stated that 1992 potholes had been filled; 99% within target time; 38 fly-tips had been cleared; 728 tonnes of waste had been disposed of; and 1581 Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued for offences such as littering and spitting.

37. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues

Councillor Coxshall stated that the LTC consultation was drawing to a close and urged all residents to complete the consultation. He explained that Thurrock Council were currently completing their consultation response, but had been granted an extension to ensure it could go through the necessary internal governance processes.

Councillor Spillman stated that the housing team were working on a new initiative to replace private out of borough temporary accommodation with new temporary accommodation within Thurrock. He stated that this had previously

been agreed by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, and would be funded through: purchasing stock through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA); using the Phi lease scheme; and repurposing a decommissioned sheltered housing building. He stated that currently providing temporary accommodation had to use £1.2million of general fund top-up, and also £100,000 per month out of the HRA to cover the difference between rent costs and housing benefit. He explained that by introducing new temporary accommodation within Thurrock this would reduce dependency on expensive nightly let accommodation and increase savings. He stated that this would allow the service to become cost neutral by 2022/23 and would ensure local residents remained in the borough. He mentioned that if people needed to be moved out of the borough for safeguarding reasons there would still remain a process in place for this to be achieved. He stated that he had set the housing team an ambitious target of ending out of borough temporary accommodation by the end of 2022, although this would be difficult due to the end of COVID support systems, such as furlough and the end of the ban on evictions, which could lead to an increase in homelessness. He summarised and thanked officers, Cabinet and the former Portfolio Holder for their hard work and commitment to this initiative and stated that there would be additional announcements and investments related to housing in the near future.

38. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

No petitions had been submitted by members of the public.

39. Questions from Non-Executive Members

There were no questions submitted by non-Executive Members.

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

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

41. Financial Update - Quarter 1 2021/22 and Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (Decision: 110580)

Councillor Hebb introduced the report and stated that it provided a rear view mirror look at the Council's finances during the first quarter of 2021/22. He stated that it projected a balanced budget for the 2021/22 financial year, but highlighted that some in-year budget pressures would need to be managed. He explained that a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report presented to Cabinet in July 2021 outlined a pressure of £3.7million over two years, but this had been reduced to a pressure of £1.8million in 2022/23, therefore improving the financial position by £1.75million since July. He stated that he had attended the meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny

Committee on 7 September and explained that the Council had seen an increase in the collection of council tax and business rates, which had helped to offset some financial pressures. He added that numerous directorates had also been able to save money, such as public realm; and HR, OD and transformation.

Councillor Hebb explained that the Children's Services directorate were currently experiencing pressure of £1million due to an increase in the number of high need, high complexity, and large sibling group placements, which would lead to an overspend of £2.87million. He added that this would be offset using non general fund reserves and reduced expenditure elsewhere in the directorate. He stated that the team were also continuing with the internal foster care recruitment campaign, and were undertaking an ongoing review of high cost annual placements. He added that there would also be budgetary pressures in the Adult Social Care directorate due to delayed referrals and reduced income because of COVID. He stated that although there was some way to go, the Council was currently in a fiscally sound position.

Councillor Hebb then explained that the service review was currently ongoing, and budget consultation reports were scheduled for Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny; Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny; and Children's Overview and Scrutiny in October. He added that budget and asset reports were also scheduled for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November, ahead of the Cabinet meeting in February which would discuss the budget. He added that Thurrock were also supporting the resettlement of Afghan refugees, and properties had been offered by the Thurrock community to support this process. He summarised and stated that Thurrock Council had recently met with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to discuss how the Council could support this process, and although there were currently no costs associated with this, reports would be brought back to Cabinet if this were to change.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Commented on the forecast outturn position for 2021/22 and the revised MTFS.

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

42. Communications Strategy 2021-24 (Decision: 110581)

Councillor Duffin introduced the report and stated that it outlined Thurrock's Communications Strategy for 2021-24, and although it headed in the right direction there was still some way to go until it was complete. He explained that Thurrock needed to improve the partnerships it had with some external bodies, and he had asked officers to engage more with local and national media before the agreement of the strategy by Cabinet. He stated that once

this work had been completed, the strategy would be brought back before Cabinet for their sign-off.

Councillor Hebb explained that he had attended the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee where this strategy had been discussed, and felt there had been good debate about how Thurrock should market itself and be more aspirational. He added that a conversation had also taken place regarding how the communications team should use digital channels and how engagement should be monitored. He stated that Members had also discussed how the team engaged with local media partners and felt that it would be worthwhile to take a pause before moving forward with the strategy. The Leader added that Thurrock needed to sell itself to the wider community and work with media colleagues on a local, national and international scale.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Would engage with media partners to finalise the Communications Strategy 2021-24, before returning to Cabinet for approval.

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

43. Parking Enforcement Vehicle Removal (Decision: 110582)

Councillor Maney introduced the report and stated that it would help bolster the powers of the enforcement team by giving them the power to: removing vehicles when parked in contravention of parking rules and caused an obstruction; and removing vehicles of persistent evaders who were classified as drivers that had three or more unpaid or unchallenged Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). He explained that these groups of motorists often did not register their vehicles with the DVLA, which made it difficult for the Council to chase the FPNs and recoup costs. He stated that not paying FPNs was not a victimless crime as it reduced the money available to the Council and therefore reduced the Council's ability to enforce against other anti-social behaviour. He added that those motorists who were persistent evaders were also usually engaged in other low level vehicle crime, such as unpaid tax or no insurance, which could also have an indirect impact on other road users. He stated that the enforcement team had estimated there were hundreds of persistent evaders currently in Thurrock and this report would help broaden their powers of enforcement and act as a deterrent.

The Leader questioned if the scheme would also be applied to HGV drivers and international drivers who were persistent evaders. Councillor Maney replied that it would cover all vehicle users who met the criteria for the new enforcement powers. He explained that those vehicle owners whose car was impounded under the new scheme would either have to pay the cost of the FPN and vehicle recovery, or would have their car sold to recover costs. Councillor Johnson asked if those persistent evaders who were Thurrock residents would have this vehicle debt linked to other debt within the borough,

such as non-payment of council tax. Councillor Maney felt that this was a good point and would look into the issue of linking the debt with other outstanding council debt owed.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Approved Thurrock Council's Parking Team to execute enforcement action against vehicles parked in contravention with priority vehicle removal of persistent evaders, as suggested by the Department of Transport within its statutory guidance.

2. Adopted the policy to remove vehicles which are parked in contravention of restrictions where a PCN may be issued if the vehicle is also parked in a manner that is obstructive or dangerous to other road users.

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

44. Quarter 1 (April-September) Corporate Performance Report 2021/22 and Corporate Performance Framework

Councillor Duffin introduced the report and stated that it was a positive report as 77% of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had achieved their target, which was an improvement from 65% of achieved targets in the same quarter last year. He stated that there was also a positive direction of travel as 50% of targets had improved and 18% had remained static. Councillor Duffin felt there was still room for improvement and the team were striving for 100% of KPIs meeting target. He explained that those KPIs which were currently red included a 'route to green' which provided transparent commentary on the work being undertaken to ensure the target was met. He added that he was pleased to see the KPI on apprenticeships had met target as 30 new candidates had been interviewed as part of a webinar in July. He felt that apprenticeships provided people with the opportunity to upskill and change their skillset.

The Leader highlighted page 85 of the report and the KPI related to the payment of FPNs, and stated that this fell under his remit rather than Councillor Jefferies. He stated that some KPIs had been affected by COVID, such as the payment of FPNs, but the collections team were working to ensure collections were compassionate and all residents could receive the help they needed to pay their debts. Councillor Jefferies echoed comments made by Councillor Duffin related to the apprenticeships KPI, and felt it was good to see people of all ages undertaking apprenticeships.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Noted and commented upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators, in particular those areas which are off target

and the impact of COVID-19.

2. Identified any areas which required additional consideration.

3. Commented on the areas of focus for 2021/22 that will support delivery of the overall vision and priorities.

45. SEND Education and Residential Placements (Decision: 110583)

Councillor Johnson introduced the report and stated that it would provide high quality education and residential placements for young people across the borough, in line with the Council's statutory duty. He explained that a recent needs analysis had indicated that within the next five years, the number of young people presenting with speech problems, communications problems, and Autism would increase, partly due to the lack of socialisation for young people during the pandemic. He stated that therefore the Council needed to provide additional specialist provision to meet the future need in Thurrock, and this report outlined the procurement plan to ensure the right places were available at the right times. He summarised and stated that this report would increase local capacity and make best use of resources as part of the overall SEND plan, which had been supported by the SEND Improvement Board.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Agreed to commence the procurement of SEND education and residential contract(s).

2. Agreed the option to block purchase places through the contract(s) where this represents best value for the Council to meet demand.

3. Agreed to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, to award contracts following completion of the procurement process.

4. In line with Rule 13 of the Contract Procedure Rules, agreed that the Corporate Director of Children's Services can seek to invoke the waiver provisions of the Contract Procedure Rules due to the nature of the services being purchased.

5. Agreed to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services and the Portfolio Holder where:

a. the placement cannot be made on the contract to be awarded under the procurement exercise;

b. the purchase is required in order that the Council may meet its statutory obligations.

6. As requested by the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee,

reviewed their decision to declare Grangewaters as a surplus to SEND provision and looked at further use of Grangewaters to meeting the objectives for SEND provision.

7. Noted the completion of the SEND Sufficiency Assessment and agreed the publication of the document.

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

46. Supported Accommodation for 18-24 Year Olds (Decision: 110584)

Councillor Johnson introduced the report and stated that Thurrock saw an increased number of Looked After Children compared to the national average due to the boroughs geographical location and the number of unaccompanied child asylum seekers, who were often 10-15 years old. He stated that this was a proactive report to ensure that all young care leavers could achieve, and were housed through the Head Start Housing project. He explained that this report would move away from spot purchasing housing options to block purchasing, which would reduce the high cost of emergency accommodation and support young people to live independently. He added that it would also reduce the numbers of young homeless people in Thurrock, and feedback from care leavers had been included in the report.

Councillor Spillman thanked Councillor Johnson and the team for their hard work on the report. He felt that it was good to see an integrated approach between Children's Services and Housing as this would ensure good outcomes for young people.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Agreed to commence the procurement of contract(s) for supported accommodation for 18-24 year olds.

2. Agreed the option to block purchase places through the contract(s) where this represents best value for the Council to meet demand.

3. Agreed to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, to award contracts following completion of the procurement process.

4. In line with Rule 13 of the Contract Procedure Rules, agreed that the Corporate Director of Children's Services can seek to invoke the waiver provisions of the Contract Procedure Rules due to the nature of the services being purchased.

5. Agreed to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services and the Portfolio Holder where:

A. the placement cannot be made on the contract to be awarded under this procurement exercise.

B. the purchase is required in order that the Council may meet its statutory obligations.

6. As recommended by the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, investigated opportunities to invest in housing to help meet the provision that Children's Services need to meet the supported accommodation requirements for care leavers.

7. Noted the joint work already in place and the statutory duties on the local authority, including to develop a jointly commissioned support offer for those aged 18+ who need additional support to be able to develop independence as an adult, and where possible this is extended to provide support for the 16-18 year olds.

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

The meeting finished at 7.51 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

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| 13 October 2021 | ITEM: 10 Decision: 110585 |
| Cabinet | |
| Procurement of Fuel Cards | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Report of: Councillor Ben Maney – Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: Julie Nelder – Assistant Director, Highways Fleet & Logistics | |
| Accountable Director: Julie Rogers – Director of Public Realm | |
| This report is Public | |

Executive Summary

The Council is required to purchase vehicle fuel, in order to operate our front line services. That includes Refuse, Highways Maintenance, Environment and Grounds Maintenance Services, Enforcement Services, Welfare and Youth Services, ICT and Facilities Management. The current fuel contract was procured in 2016 through the Crown Commercial Services Framework. This was a 4 year contract that was due to end on 1 March 2020, but with the option of extending for a further 2 years. We are now 17 months into this extension.

1. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet are requested to:

1.1 Note the content contained within the report and;

1.2 Agree to delegate the authority for the tender and subsequent award of a new contract for the purchase of fuel cards to the Director of Public Realm, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Our current fleet consists of 156 vehicles, supporting services such as, but not limited to, refuse collection, highways maintenance, street sweeping and grounds maintenance. In addition there are approximately 500 items of plant equipment, including tractors, ride on mowers and hand held power tools. All

vehicles and equipment run on standard diesel or petrol and where necessary, ad blue which is a fuel additive required by some vehicle types.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Fuel for all the above currently costs Thurrock Council approximately £900,000 per year.
- 3.2 There are a number of fuel card suppliers available, some of which are linked with different fuel suppliers and in some cases restricted to certain geographical regions. The Tender process will determine those that enable the most effective and efficient service for the day to day front line operations delivered by the Council.
- 3.3 Discounted rates for the fuel are not offered. The benefit of tendering a contract is to obtain the best price for the management of the card services, such as accurate purchase records and efficient weekly invoicing. The back office costs to the fuel card suppliers can vary which will make some suppliers more or less competitive than others.
- 3.4 There are no hidden or unexpected charges with using fuel cards. Each supplier will have an initial charge per card supplied and beyond that there are no charges payable other than for the fuel that is purchased. A contract length of 10 years is therefore preferable to avoid repetition with procurement.
- 3.5 An alternative method of procuring fuel for large fleets is to bulk buy the fuel and store within the operational depot. This option is not currently viable due to the limited space available in the current depot site. This option also incurs additional expenditure for purchasing / installing the necessary tanks and equipment. The purchase price of the fuel however, would be the same. Therefore, there are no benefits in adopting / moving towards this as a fuel procurement method.
- 3.6 Whilst there is a long term plan to move away from fossil fuels, this will take a number of years as this will involve numerous external factors along with funding and analyses of options of alternatively powered vehicles available that are fit for each operational use. Until the council is at the point of being able to support alternative fuels or powertrains, fossil fuels in the main, are currently the only option.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The services offered by fuel card suppliers enables the Council to efficiently manage and monitor the amount and cost of fuel purchased each year. There are no hidden or unexpected charges with using fuel cards and there is no minimum purchase amount set. There are no charges payable other than for the fuel that is purchased. There is no financial commitment on the total amount of fuel that would be purchased over the life of the contract and as such even though the Tender award would be for 10 years it is anticipated

that the use of fossil fuels will be reduced on a yearly basis as the council adopts further zero emission vehicles and infrastructure. Electric and hydrogen vehicles are currently being developed by most manufacturers as a replacement for the fossil fuel type vehicles currently used to deliver our services. This would be the next fuel type of vehicle that the Council would look to purchase, but we would have to ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to be able to run the vehicles affectively.

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

- 5.1 This report was presented to PTR O&S Committee on 15 September 2021. The committee had no observations on this proposed procurement.

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

- 6.1 This procurement supports the delivery of all Council front line services and therefore underpins all of the Council priorities.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The initial cost of the fuel cards will be met from the fleet budget and the cost of fuel will continue to be met from existing budgets within the relevant service areas

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**
Principal Lawyer/Manager, Contracts and Procurement Team

The Procurement of Fuel Cards by the Council must comply with the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Contract Procedure Rules of the Council. As the proposal is for a 10 years contract, the Council must consider value for money of such procurement given the long duration of the proposed contract including break clauses in any contract with the successful bidder. Legal Services will be on hand to advice on any issues relating to the proposed tender going forward.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

There are no Diversity and Equality implications associated with this report.

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

Not Applicable

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

- Not Applicable

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Matt Trott

Strategic Lead for Fleet and Logistics

Public Realm

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| 13 October 2021 | ITEM: 11 Decision: 110586 |
| Cabinet | |
| Thurrock Council Animal Welfare Review | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Report of: Councillor Rob Gledhill, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson – Assistant Director, Planning, Transport and Public Protection | |
| Accountable Director: Julie Rogers – Director Public Realm | |
| This report is Public | |

Executive Summary

During the political year ending in May 2021 the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on the work of Public Protection that related to animals.

As a result of this report the Committee determined that it should form a working group to review the Councils Animal Welfare Policy.

This work group was formed and comprised of Cllr E Rigby (Chair) and Cllrs Van Day and Fletcher. The work group met on several occasions to review the Council’s Animal Welfare Policy.

A revised Animal Welfare Policy for Thurrock Council is attached as appendix 1.

Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the revised Animal Welfare Policy at the meeting of 15 July 2021 and accepted the officer recommendation that the revised policy be reported to Cabinet at an upcoming meeting for Cabinet to adopt the policy for Thurrock Council.

1. Recommendation(s):

1.1 The Cabinet adopt the revised Animal Welfare Policy for Thurrock Council.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current Thurrock Council Animal Welfare Policy dates back to 2007. In the intervening period animal welfare issues around the keeping of pets and the public perception of animal welfare has evolved.
- 2.2 In light of the change in public perceptions around animal welfare issues and the passage of time since the last review of this policy the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided that a review of Thurrock's policy was due.
- 2.3 A working group was established and this review was undertaken over the period from late 2020 to early 2021 and a revised animal welfare policy was devised. The subsequent elections in May 2021 delayed the reporting of this work to the committee.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Cabinet can adopt the policy attached at appendix 1 as the Animal Welfare Policy for Thurrock Council. Alternatively Cabinet can reject the revised policy and determine that Thurrock should continue to apply the existing policy.
- 3.2 The preferred option of officers, the working party and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the adoption of the reviewed policy as it refreshes and updates the Councils policy on Animal Welfare.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To provide an up to date Animal Welfare Policy for Thurrock Council.

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

- 5.1 The policy review was undertaken under the direction of elected members on the working party formed by Overview and Scrutiny. The policy was considered at the meeting of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 July 2021. The committee discussed the policy and accepted the officer recommendation that it should be sent to Cabinet for adoption as Council Policy.

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

- 6.1 The provision of an up to date Animal Welfare Policy helps to support the Councils priorities around Place and People.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by:

Jonathan Wilson

Assistant Director Finance

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

7.2 Legal

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

There are no direct legal implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

There are no diversity and equality implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

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

- Thurrock Council Animal Welfare Policy 2007

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 - Proposed Reviewed Animal Welfare Policy

Report Author:

Gavin Dennett

Strategic Lead – Public Protection.

Planning, Transportation and Public Protection.

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THURROCK COUNCIL COUNCIL ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

PLACE DIRECTORATE DECEMBER 2020

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Introduction

The Council recognises the benefits of the application of good animal welfare practices in society. Animals play an important role in the lives of our residents both in a work and social context. The roles played by animals include providing companionship to pet owners, providing vital assistance to people to overcome sensory impairments in the case of guide dogs and hearing dogs, providing assistance with security and law enforcement in the case of sniffer dogs and those dogs used for security purposes and providing a number of leisure and sporting activities for example, zoo visits, horse riding and horse racing. Animals also form an integral part of our environment contributing to its diversity and its beneficial impacts on human physical and mental health.

Executive Summary

This policy aims to provide an overview of the Council's view on the local delivery of animal welfare. It seeks to distinguish the Council's legal responsibilities and the areas where the Council can use its influence to improve animal welfare from matters which whilst pertaining to animal welfare are best managed by others.

The policy does not cover all elements of animal welfare but focuses on those elements that the Council considers to be important and within its sphere of influence as a local authority. It does not cover wild animals in nature or those animals used for research.

The Council believes that where applicable people with control of/or responsibility for animals should follow nationally mandated standards or take equivalent steps to ensure the welfare of these animals. The Council itself undertakes to follow such guidelines in circumstances where it has direct dealings with animals, for example in the operation of its stray dog service.

Context

The Council is of the view that people who have control of animals or are responsible for them, either on a temporary basis or on a longer term basis, for example as the owners of an animal have a duty to ensure they are not subjected to cruel or inhumane treatment. They are also responsible for ensuring that their animals have their basic requirements with regard to food, water and accommodate suitable for their species provided for. The council expects that good welfare practices will be applied for the life time of animals under the control of a person or organisation.

This includes the start and end of an animal's life where welfare steps appropriate to the age of the animal and its state of health should be taken. This would include appropriate steps to ensure young animals are not separated from their mothers prematurely and the provision of appropriate veterinary treatment or humane euthanasia where required and in any event to prevent unnecessary suffering.

Companion Animals

This Council supports the Animal Rights/Welfare Organisations in their call for greater protection for dogs and cats and all other companion animals in the community and considers that such matters should be a duty of the Permanent Council for Animal Protection and in particular this Council is of the opinion that: -

That a national compulsory dog registration scheme be introduced.

That all dogs be required to have at all times a means of identification of its owner.

The Council will give support where possible to the police authorities in their enforcement of the dangerous dog legislation.

Puppy Farming

The Council strongly opposes the practice of puppy farming and seeks to encourage responsible dog breeding practices.

With regard to feral cats

The Council will support any investigation into the health and incidence of feral cat populations, which may exist within the Borough and will use its best endeavours to achieve:

the humane capture and re-homing of feral cats to any appropriate welfare agency; and

assistance being given to appropriate voluntary agencies by the owners of premises populated by feral cats for the spaying and neutering of feral cats and for the promotion of their welfare.

With regard to horses

The Council considers the practice within the Borough of the unlawful tethering of horses and other livestock on highway verges, play areas and other Council owned land to be unacceptable and DECLARES that such animals will be removed by the relevant council department or other agencies and sold or rehomed appropriately. The proceeds of any sale will be retained by the Council to offset against the cost of removal.

Performing Animals

Whilst this Council does not object to performing animals it is of the opinion that training methods should not involve suffering or fear by the animals nor should the performance by the animal be degrading in any way. This Council will, therefore, make every effort to ensure that: -

Circuses that include the use of animals (excluding domestic animals) will not be allowed on Council owned land.

Circuses visiting the Borough are inspected to ascertain, so far as is possible, that animals are well kept and cared for and that training methods are humane. Any suspected mistreatment or cruelty toward animals following such inspections will be dealt with robustly including using the resources of the RSPCA and the Council's Consultant Veterinary Service.

That animals are not put in fear.

Animals as Prizes

The Council will prohibit the use of animals as prizes at circuses, fairs and for any other activities of a similar nature that take place on its land and will discourage this on other land within Thurrock where it has powers or influence

Fishing

The council encourages anglers to abide by the current version of the Freshwater Rod Fishing Rules published by the Government. They encourage anglers to fish in accordance with relevant welfare standards that exist or are introduced subsequent to the adoption of this policy.

Factory Farming

This Council, whilst recognising that farming practice has an impact on the cost of food, supports the adoption of the best possible welfare standards for farmed animals. The Council believes that consumers should be encouraged to purchase food produced in accordance with farm welfare accreditation schemes where these are in place.

Exportation and Transportation of Animals

This Council supports the adoption and mandating of safe and humane practices in the transport and exportation of live animals.

Experiments on living animals

The Council opposes experiments carried out on living animals where an alternative method is available or where the purpose of the experimentation is not essential for the development of technology to treat human disease or promote human health.

Wildlife

The Council supports the protections for wildlife mandated by the Wildlife and Countryside Legislation currently in force. The Council will collaborate with the RSPCA and other interested parties to uphold standards of wildlife protection in the conduct of its own activities and to positively influence the conduct of others where this has an impact on the welfare of wild animals.

The role of Council Departments

A number of the Council's teams have a role to play that can influence standards of animal welfare in Thurrock. These include:

Licensing, who issue licences and registrations for a number of animal related undertakings and thereby have influence on the standards applied by businesses and individuals who have control

of animals. Examples of this include licences for pet shops, animal boarding establishments for cats and dogs, dog breeding, the keeping of dangerous wild animals, horse riding establishments, zoo licensing and the exhibition of animals. This last category includes circuses, use of animals in film and television productions and theatre work.

The various licensing regimes applicable to animal related activities provide an opportunity for the Council to exert influence over welfare standards, in some instances welfare standards are embodied in national model standards for example for species specific cage sizes in pet shops. In other cases the welfare of animals is promoted by the provision of specific advice on an animal welfare issue. In these instances the councils licensing officers will provide advice based on their experience or where necessary based on consultation with external experts either from interested organisations such as the dogs trust or RSPCA or Veterinary Surgeons with specialist knowledge of the species concerned.

Trading in Animals

This Council having statutory responsibility for the inspection of Pet Shops continues its policy of vigorous inspection so as to ensure that such animals as are kept in pet shops are maintained in proper and humane conditions and in particular the Council will have regard to such advice as may be given by the Council's Veterinary Consultant (and under any planning or other implications) before a licence is granted or refused.

FURTHER this Council deplores the use of animals as prizes of inducements and will not permit such activity on Council owned land and will encourage other land owners to do likewise.

Investigation of complaints of alleged breach of licence conditions

The Council's officers will promptly and thoroughly investigate and enforce any alleged breach of licence conditions as necessary seeking advice from its veterinary consultant.

NOTE: Whilst not prohibited by licence conditions, the Council discourages sales of exotic pets from pet shops.

The licensing team will, where advice fails to ensure compliance and welfare standards are not being upheld in the licensed keeping of animals, escalate action as per the Council's enforcement policy. Actions could include suspension or revocation of licences and/or legal action to secure compliance or prevent the activity.

Assets, who manage the Councils land and property, can influence the welfare of animals by the inclusion of appropriate conditions on hiring and lease agreements that they issue to permit the use of council land and premises by outside parties. These agreements are often bespoke and provide the opportunity for the Council to influence animal welfare by the exclusion of activities that are not conducive to animal welfare in the lease agreements lessees sign up to on taking over a council asset. For example grazing or the keeping of animals can be excluded from a lease if appropriate.

Trading Standards, operate the Councils stray dog service whereby a contractor accepts stray dogs reported within the Thurrock area and arranges for these to be kennelled and feed while attempts are made to identify an owner. Where this is not possible all reasonable steps are taken to rehome the dog with a suitable owner. Wherever possible the Council will avoid putting down healthy dogs.

Trading Standards are also delegated to work on the welfare of farmed animals. The service works with farmers to promote the responsible and humane treatment of farm animals on the farm and during transport.

Housing are responsible for the provision of a considerable proportion of rented residential accommodation within the borough. The department sets conditions on residential tenancies to promote the responsible keeping of pets and to ensure they are only kept in suitable accommodation and to prevent this activity disturbing other residents. The general stipulations regarding the keeping of animals in council accommodation is set out in section 4 of the Councils standard tenancy agreement.

Collaboration with Outside Agencies

The Council collaborates with other organisations that have an interest in animal welfare and health. These organisations include the Animal and Plant Health Agency and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Legal Provisions

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018

Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Provision of a stray dog service

Housing Act 1996

Approach to Enforcement

Thurrock Councils approach to achieving compliance with legislation protecting animal welfare will follow the Council's Enforcement Policy. A graduated approach will be taken to achieving compliance ranging from the provision of advice through to the service of notices detailing measures that must be taken to achieve compliance up to prosecution of alleged offenders who consistently fail to meet their responsibilities under the relevant legislation.

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| 13 October 2021 | ITEM: 12 Decision: 110587 |
| Cabinet | |
| Communications Strategy 2021-24 | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Report of: Councillor Jack Duffin, Cabinet Member for Central Services | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: N/A | |
| Accountable Director: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth | |
| This report is public | |

Executive Summary

The Communications Strategy 2021-24 sets out the approach the council will take over the next three years to ensure that communications activity aligns with and supports the vision and priorities of the council.

This strategy follows on from the previous Communications Strategy 2017-20, and builds on the work that has taken place over the past three years to introduce a more modern, direct and digitally focused approach to the way that we engage with our residents.

Thurrock is:

- a borough with a hugely ambitious regeneration agenda with billions of pounds of planned investment in new jobs, infrastructure and homes
- one of the largest growth areas in the UK
- the lead authority for the new Thames Freeport
- leading the implementation of over £40million from the government's Town Fund
- key to the delivery of projects such as South Essex Estuary (SEE) Park and the Technical University through the ASELA partnership
- involved in the Thames Estuary Growth Board and SELEP
- developing a Statement of Intent for 2030 which sets out the expected outcomes and deliverables for the council over the coming years

A consistent and strategic approach to communications which ensures that the good work of the council is shared with residents and that they are kept informed on how

to access essential services is critical, even more so following a sustained period of change and uncertainty through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The strategy has been developed to ensure that recent learning and successes are built upon, and that all communications activity reflects best practice, taking on board expert advice and recommendations as well as input from senior management and members.

The approach to communications will be built around:

- brand recognition – further developing and embedding the Thurrock Council narrative to support growth and regeneration
- a strategic approach – clearly planned activity which is aligned to the corporate objectives of People, Place and Prosperity
- direct digital communications – sharing engaging information and content with residents through their preferred channels

Working with partners and colleagues across the council and the wider community this approach which will result in a strong and recognisable Thurrock brand as well as national recognition of Thurrock as an excellent place to work and play, live and stay and to invest.

It will also increase trust in the council and its decision making processes and ensure that staff are fully engaged in the council's work and transformation agenda and can act as advocates for both the local authority and the borough.

1. Recommendation(s):

1.1 To agree the Communication Strategy 2021-24 as the principle policy document for communication with residents, businesses, stakeholders and staff.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This report sets out the Communications Strategy 2021-24, which outlines the approach the council will take over the next three years to effectively communicate and engage with residents, staff, partners, local businesses and other key stakeholders.

2.2 While led by the Communications Team, communications is a shared responsibility across the entire council to ensure that a clear and compelling story which articulates the council's aims and purpose is being told collectively.

2.3 This communications strategy follows on from the previous Communications Strategy 2017-20, and builds on the work that has taken place over the past three years to introduce a more modern and digitally focused approach to the way that the council engages with residents and to embed new ways of working.

- 2.4 The development of the new strategy was delayed from 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact that this had on the work of the communications team.
- 2.5 During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the work of the team focused heavily on ensuring that frequently changing critical public health messaging was communicated clearly and directly to Thurrock residents and businesses.
- 2.6 The Local Government Association (LGA) was invited to carry out a virtual peer review in October 2020, referred to as a 'communications health check' in preparation for developing the communications strategy.
- 2.7 This was similar to the 'communications health check' undertaken in May 2017 which informed the 2017-21 strategy.
- 2.8 As part of the peer review, the LGA met with members, senior officers, partners and representatives of the local media to seek their views.
- 2.9 The LGA's report highlighted that the council had good crisis communications, strong stakeholder relations especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and a flexible team who were proactive, committed and responsive. It also reflected that internal communications had improved since 2017 and communications were now more campaign-led overall.
- 2.10 To further inform the strategy the LGA also facilitated a workshop session with members and officers.
- 2.11 One of the LGA recommendations was to commission a survey into how residents find out their news and information about the council. Independent market research was commissioned which consisted of a telephone survey with 200 residents. This ensured a response from a representative cross section of those in the borough who may not currently actively engage with the council on a regular basis. This was supplemented with an online survey which was promoted through the council's online channels.
- 2.12 At Cabinet on Wednesday 8 September, the Cabinet Member for Central Services requested that the local media be given a further opportunity to feed into the strategy and specifically comment on the draft document. The local media were invited to offer feedback on the council's overall strategic approach to communications as outlined within the strategy document.
- 2.13 No feedback was received from any local media outlet in response to this invitation within the deadline provided of 27 September, however, one response was received on 4 October. The feedback in this response is focused on operational aspects of communications including timescales, equipment and on-call arrangements. Feedback on the media briefings already included as part of the strategy will be taken into account as the approach is further developed. Consideration will be given to the operational

issues raised in the response but they do not impact on the overall strategic approach to the council's communications and the strategy itself.

Communications Update

Through the implementation of the previous Communications Strategy, there has been much more focus on digital communications, the use of consistent messaging, campaigns and work to raise the profile of the council and the borough.

Digital Communications

- 2.14 The council's reach on social media has grown substantially since the previous strategy, with the council's Facebook page going from 2,000 followers to almost 13,000 (we have 12,891 followers, 11,920 likes).
- 2.15 An Instagram account has been launched which has almost 1,800 followers, Twitter has grown to 13,400 and LinkedIn has increased to over 5,000.
- 2.16 Engagement rates of posts have increased across all channels, and there has been an improved focus on the use of eye-catching imagery and video content.
- 2.17 During the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of the Thurrock News e-newsletter and the council's social media channels were the primary tools for getting very rapidly changing information directly to residents.
- 2.18 There was very high engagement with these channels, with up to 65,000 residents either opening the e-newsletter or being reached by Facebook posts at times of key changes to guidance, such as the introduction of the government's Tier system.
- 2.19 Since the introduction of e-newsletters in 2016 they have continued to grow their audiences. There are specific e-newsletters for topics such as Careers, Weather Warnings and the A13 Road Widening Project, all of which have consistently high open rates.

Media

- 2.20 The media landscape has changed substantially in Thurrock since 2017. Where there were once three printed publications, there is now one, and this is no longer delivered to homes. This is in common with the national picture, where local news has moved primarily to news websites and other online offerings.
- 2.21 Regional and national coverage of Thurrock related stories has increased, and member participation in interviews, particularly radio interviews, has risen substantially.

Campaigns

- 2.22 There has been a much more campaign driven approach to communications, with large-scale behaviour change campaigns on the issues of fly-tipping, recycling and anti-social behaviour, as well as awareness campaigns on fostering, careers support and Transforming Thurrock which highlights regeneration and positive change in the borough. In addition to this, a long-term campaign called 'Discover Thurrock' highlighted the excellent amenities on offer in the borough including the many parks and open spaces.
- 2.23 All campaign activity is fully evaluated to measure impact and effectiveness.

Internal Communications

- 2.24 The approach to internal communications has been enhanced over the past three years through introducing a new Intranet and new email newsletters. These e-newsletters receive excellent engagement from staff, with over 65 per cent of staff with access to email opening each one – well above benchmarking against other public sector organisations. Digital communications to staff are also supplemented by printed materials and in-person/virtual briefings to ensure that office based and front-line staff are kept fully informed of key information.

Design and Brand

- 2.25 The council's graphic design has moved to a 'digital first' approach, where content is developed with an online audience in mind as the first stage. This includes increased use of animation and gifs. There will always be a need for some printed materials, particularly for residents who do not or cannot access the internet, and this forms part of the overall campaign approach to channel use. The council's brand played an integral part in the response to COVID-19, where a recognisable identity ensured residents knew what information was coming directly from Thurrock Council.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The issues set out above and the analysis of the resident research have informed the development of the approach set out in the Communication Strategy 2021-24 at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Through independent market research, it has been established that the majority of residents get their information from the council's website (65 per cent) and through e-newsletters (38 per cent).
- 3.3 This insight into resident preferences has guided the approach taken in the strategy to ensure that the council is communicating with residents through their preferred channels.

- 3.4 The research also outlined the content which is of most interest to residents, which means that a strategic and planned approach can be taken to ensure high engagement with key messages.
- 3.5 Working with partners and colleagues across the council the key outcomes that communications will be working to achieve are:
- Embedding a strong and recognisable Thurrock brand which positions the council as a leader in local government.
 - Achieving local and national recognition of Thurrock as an excellent place to work and play, live and stay; and encourages inward investment both regionally and nationally.
 - Ensuring the council is viewed by residents' as delivering excellent services and positive change and transformation for the benefit of all who live and work in Thurrock.
 - Building increased trust in the council and its decision making processes through clear and consistent dialogue with our target audiences.
 - Demonstrating improved wellbeing of residents and empowered communities which have been positively influenced in improve behaviours and life choices through collaborative working with the council.
 - Having informed, motivated and empowered staff who act as advocates of Thurrock Council and Thurrock the place.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Cabinet are asked to agree the approach to communications as set out in the strategy. The strategy will shape the work of the communications team and all communications activity carried out on behalf of the council.

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

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Communications Team, Strategy Engagement and Growth Directorate Management Team, Directors Board, Cabinet and the Leader as well as with partners and the local media through the LGA communications health check. In addition, a communications update report was provided to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2021 which outlined the feedback and recommendations of the LGA health check. The recommendations from that report and feedback from the committee meeting have been used to inform the development of the strategy. These included:

- commission a 'who reads what?' survey to establish how Thurrock residents consume news and prefer to

- consider commissioning an externally facilitated workshop involving members and officers to help develop the new strategy
- ensure the refreshed communications strategy includes measurable objectives and an annual campaign plan
- consider more productive ways of engaging the local media (e.g. briefings) rather than relying on press releases
- focus more on the council's own communications channels which are read by more people (e.g. e-newsletters)

5.2 Feedback from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Communications Strategy discussed on Tuesday 7 September 2021, included:

- Overall the committee recognised the good work and positive direction of travel for the council's communications
- The committee were keen to see the evaluation and outcomes from delivering the strategy overall and specific campaigns
- They supported targeted social media and more use of video/engaging content and wanted to see a more 'fun' tone where appropriate
- There was concern about the digitally excluded but the committee were reassured that the council uses a range of communications channels and the approach is reflected in the strategy
- The committee were keen to see an improved relationship with the local media and felt there was still work to do. Detail on the day to day processes with the local media are not included in the strategy as it is strategic and overarching and therefore does not include the operational information.

5.3 As set out at 2.12 above, the local media were given an opportunity to comment on the draft Communications Strategy 2021-24 and one response was received after the deadline covering operational issues only.

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

6.1 Communication of the priorities, policies and performance is key to the overall success and reputation of the council as well as the wellbeing of residents.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report. The Communications Strategy and corporate communication activity will be delivered within existing budgets.

7.2 Legal

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

There are no legal implications as a result of this report. The council follows the Recommended Code of Practice for Local Authority Publicity. The Code provides guidance on the content, style, distribution and cost of local authority publicity.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

There are no direct diversity and equality implications as a result of this report, however, the council must ensure that a range of channels are used to communicate with residents so as not to exclude any particular group. Research to inform this strategy was carried out with a demographically representative sample of the Thurrock population.

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

A strong communications strategy in relation to crime, disorder and ASB will encourage reporting by residents and improve their perceptions of crime and response thus supporting Thurrock Council in fulfilling its Duty towards S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

There are no other specific implications, however, the council regularly develops communications approaches and materials in partnership with other public sector organisations including health partners and Essex Police, the voluntary sector and businesses as appropriate.

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):

- LGA Communications health check: Thurrock Council
- Communication Strategy 2017-20

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Communications Strategy 2021-24

Report Author:

Mary Patricia Flynn
Strategic Lead Communications
Communications

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COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2021-24

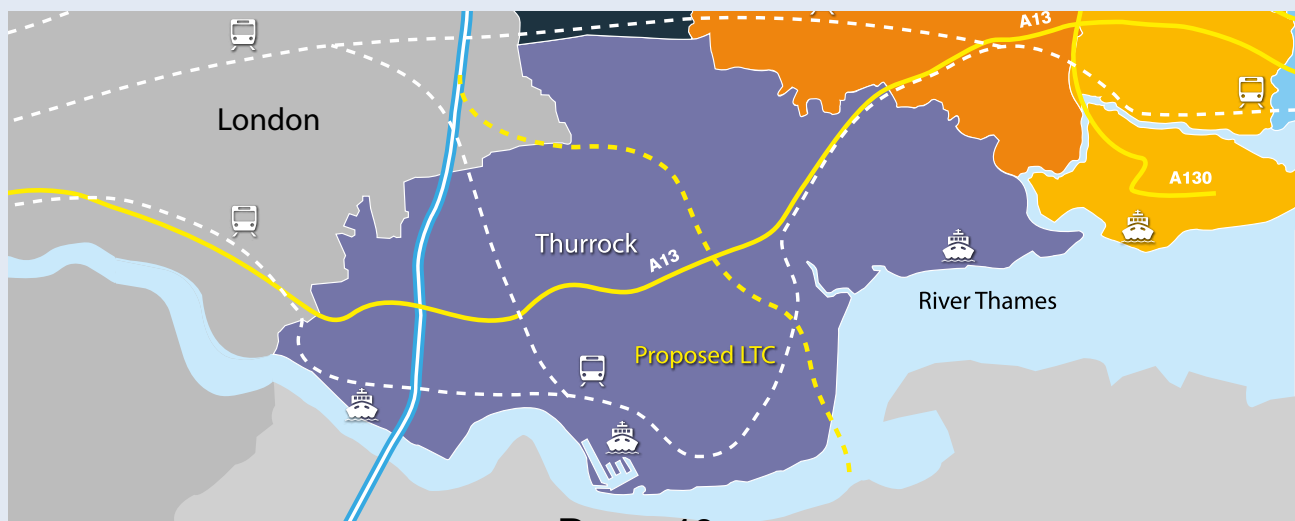
INTRODUCTION

Thurrock is a borough on the rise. Our motto of ‘By Thames to all the peoples of the world’ captures the essence of Thurrock and its unique location at the heart of the Thames Estuary and the rich opportunities on our doorstep.

Thurrock is:

- a borough with a hugely ambitious regeneration agenda with billions of pounds of planned investment in new jobs, infrastructure and homes
- one of the largest growth areas in the UK
- the lead authority for the new Thames Freeport
- leading the implementation of over £40million from the government’s Town Fund
- key to the delivery of projects such as South Essex Estuary (SEE) Park and the Technical University through the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) partnership
- involved in the Thames Estuary Growth Board and South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)
- developing a Statement of Intent for 2030 which sets out the expected outcomes and deliverables for the council over the coming years

Communications will be essential to help unlock the unrivalled opportunity presented by our position at the heart of economic growth in the region. We need to ensure that we are telling Thurrock’s story locally, nationally and internationally and through doing so that we gain recognition for the borough as being an excellent place for residents, businesses and investors to work and play, live and stay; and to invest.



PEOPLE, PLACE AND PROSPERITY

People

A borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay

Place

A heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future

Prosperity

A borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations

Under the corporate priority banner of People, Place, Prosperity, the council is creating a place where people want to live and are proud of, where businesses want to stay and thrive, and where investors and talent want to be located.

Effective communication and engagement will:

- tell a compelling story which articulates the council's aims and purpose and uses our unique position at the heart of the Thames Estuary to ground this
- use clear messaging to ensure that council priorities are easily understood by local residents, our staff, our partners, local businesses
- reinforce Thurrock's pivotal role and position as the heart of the South Essex region with key external stakeholders including regional bodies and government
- ensure Thurrock is first in the minds of opinion formers and decision makers in order to support us to achieve our vision for the borough

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Working with partners and colleagues across the council the key outcomes that communications will be working to achieve are:

- embedding a strong and recognisable Thurrock brand which positions the council as a leader in local government
- achieving local and national recognition of Thurrock as an excellent place to work and play, live and stay; and encourages inward investment both regionally and nationally
- ensuring the council is viewed by residents as delivering excellent services and positive change and transformation for the benefit of all who live and work in Thurrock
- building increased trust in the council and its decision making processes through clear and consistent dialogue with our target audiences
- demonstrating improved wellbeing of residents and empowered communities which have been positively influenced in improved behaviours and life choices through collaborative working with the council
- having informed, motivated and empowered staff who act as advocates of Thurrock Council and Thurrock the place

Communications activity will be built around:

- brand recognition – further developing and embedding the Thurrock Council narrative to support growth and regeneration
- a strategic approach – clearly planned activity which is aligned to the corporate objectives of People, Place and Prosperity
- direct digital communications – sharing engaging information and content with residents through their preferred channels

BRAND RECOGNITION

We will be working to develop the Thurrock brand as both a local authority and a place in order to support the council's economic growth and regeneration agenda and ensure Thurrock gets the national recognition it so richly warrants.

The council is at the heart of developing a better future for all those who live and work not only in Thurrock but the wider South Essex region and Thames Estuary.

Through the development of a new place brand and the implementation of a long-term new Economic Growth campaign, we will ensure that the borough is seen as an attractive option for potential further investment.

This will mean:

- using the council's narrative alongside a vivid and identifiable place brand to develop a strong external affairs approach
- supporting the council to articulate the deliverables and outcomes of the Statement of Intent for 2030
- having the right conversations at the right time with key partners and stakeholders, and working together on consistent and cohesive messaging
- clearly explaining the benefits that investment in our borough will bring to residents and local businesses through a large-scale campaign
- the campaign will run for three years and use audience segmentation to deliver targeted messaging to different stakeholders
- we will use all communications channels at our disposal and this campaign will be a key focus of the work of the communications team

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Communications is a strategic function of the council, and we have a collective responsibility to plan, prioritise and consider the potential impact of all communications activity, as well as ensure that all our output is focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for the council, residents, business and our partners.

By prioritising key campaign activity, we can align resources to ensure we are meeting our objectives. Annual priorities and the annual campaign plan must be agreed by Cabinet and Directors Board and clear planning is crucial to ensure that all output from the communications team is in step with these priorities. Anything which does not directly support key corporate objectives will receive communications support in the form of appropriate social media or media relations only.

Campaigns

Campaigns developed by the communications team will:

- be outcome focused
- have specific and measurable objectives
- work to directly assist the council in meeting its strategic aims
- link directly to the council priorities of People, Place and Prosperity
- focus on issues that we know are important to residents
- aim to create greater understanding between the council and the borough's residents
- support positive behaviour change

This will ensure that we:

- have a planned schedule of activity which clearly sets out the priorities of People, Place and Prosperity and how we are achieving them
- build trust and confidence in the council through increased and improved direct digital communication with residents
- strengthen relationships with residents, stakeholders and staff through improved opportunities for collaboration and engagement including through the Collaborative Communities Framework
- ensure residents are fully informed on how we are investing in infrastructure, housing and job creation, and kept up to date on the latest news on our roads, schools, leisure, culture and community facilities
- influence key external stakeholders' view of Thurrock as a council to do business with and as a place to invest



The communications landscape continues to change at pace.

- traditional media audiences have been in decline for a number of years, and this has been highlighted in our survey results
- since our previous communications strategy was implemented in 2017, Thurrock has gone from having three local print publications, including one which was delivered to households, to only having one print publication which is now 'pick up' only
- digital channels continue to increase in popularity with the majority of UK adults now using at least one social media network
- more traditional face-to-face and direct methods of communication with residents are still valuable especially for harder to reach communities

Digital Channels

A key element of implementing effective communication is ensuring that we are communicating with residents through the channels they are already using, and that all information provided on our council website information is clear, easy to understand and up to date.

Based on our research findings we can ensure that the content we are providing is in line with what that age group have said they are most interested in. This will help build trust with our audience and have the knock-on effect of enhancing the council's reputation through clear and consistent direct messaging. It will also help us to increase our audience and broaden our reach.

DIRECT DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS



Social Media

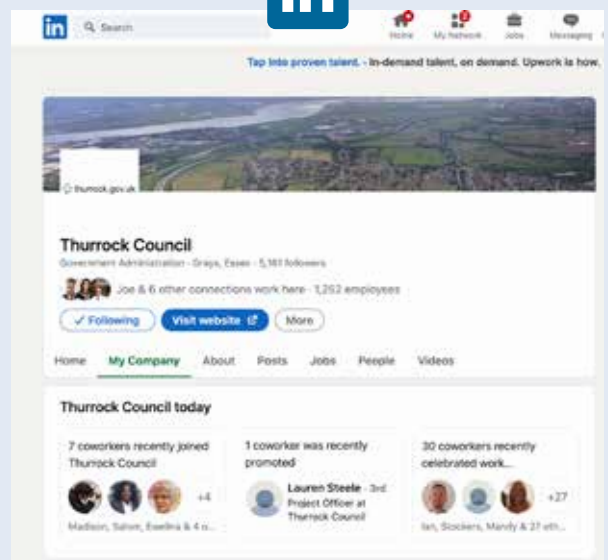
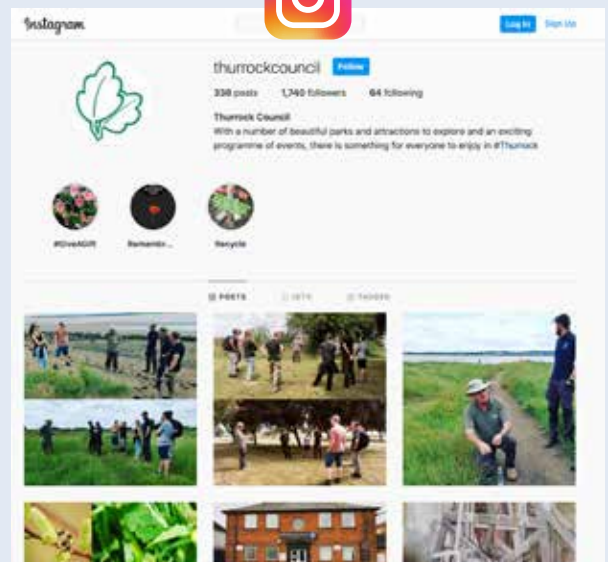
Our resident research has shown that:

- the council's Facebook page is used as a source of information by one in six residents in the borough
- this demonstrates that it is an excellent way of sharing good news directly with residents and helping to promote important services and initiatives
- during the COVID-19 pandemic some of our posts were being seen by over 65,000 people on a regular basis
- the age profile of those who use Facebook in Thurrock is primarily those aged 35 and above

We therefore want to build on this channel as a trusted source of information for local residents.

Twitter has fallen in popularity nationally, and as such is not as effective a method of directly communicating with residents.

- only 2% of survey respondents said that they use it to find news or information about the council
- this is in line with the national picture, where it comes below Facebook and Instagram in user numbers and popularity
- Twitter is still a useful channel for key updates and breaking news
- this is how we will be using it as part of our overall approach to social media



DIRECT DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Our LinkedIn continues to grow at pace.

- we have seen increased engagement during the past year
- its use ensures a visible presence for Thurrock with key stakeholders and partners
- this is a valuable channel for connecting with decision makers and professional influencers

The approach to social media will include:

- focusing our resource on the channels which have proven to have the most impact on our residents
- an increased emphasis on video content and the use of real life case studies, not only about the council but key community and business partners as well
- working with our residents to tell our story to build trust with our audience
- increased use of Instagram and its targeted ads function to engage residents aged between 16 to 34
- continually investigating new and emerging channels, such as TikTok
- introducing more specific and topic-led Facebook groups so that we can increase our two-way engagement with residents in a more meaningful way, and enhance links between individuals in our communities
- engaging with local community Facebook group admins to build relationships and ensure that important information and messages can be shared

Email newsletters

Email newsletters have proven to be exceptionally effective, especially for communicating crucial public health information about COVID-19 directly to residents over the past year and a half.

- 35% of residents say that this is the way they find out information about the council
- we will continue to grow and expand our newsletter offer including broadening our range of specific topic lead bulletins
- direct communication to resident and business inboxes will be used both to keep people informed and up to date on weekly updates and as a valuable channel for campaign materials
- we will investigate additional issue specific newsletters to supplement our existing offer



Media relations

As part of raising the profile of both the council and the borough, we will be taking a broader approach to media relations which will help to tell Thurrock's story on a wider stage.

The approach means that:

- more emphasis will be given to developing relationships with trade and specialist press as well as increasing links with regional and national media outlets
- resources will be managed in a way which enables the communications team to focus on producing high quality proactive and direct communications
- day-to-day proactive and reactive media relations will focus on key decisions and local issues which link to council priorities
- responsive work which does not work towards achieving strategic outcomes and goals will be dealt with on a case by case basis
- press briefings will be introduced, as well as more interactive discourse around key issues
- we will increase the use of video releases and photography

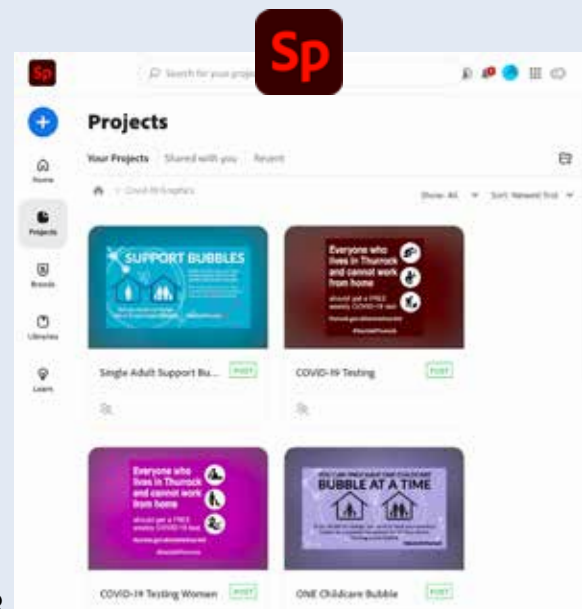


Design and Print

Our graphic design has moved to a 'digital first' approach, where content is developed with our online audience in mind as the first stage.

The approach means that we will:

- increase our use of animation and gifs across all digital channels
- only produce printed materials for specific projects and for groups of our population who do not or cannot access the internet
- provide additional options for getting important, locally targeted messages to residents in areas of high footfall through introducing more council owned outdoor advertising channels
- ensure that the council brand is applied in a consistent way across all materials and that the use of partner branding is applied in a consistent way
- ensure materials being displayed by or distributed on behalf of the council are of a high quality



Internal communications

Our council staff are our biggest asset as an organisation and as such it's crucial that we ensure that we have clear, open and honest communication with them. They are also an important audience for wider council messaging as over 70% of Thurrock Council staff also live in the borough.

We have enhanced our internal communications approach over the past three years, introducing a new intranet and new email newsletters. Over 65% of staff with access to email open each one – well above benchmarking against other public sector organisations.

As we enter a more challenging period in the post COVID-19 world, including the move to more remote and 'smarter' working, keeping our staff engaged and informed will be more important than ever.

Our approach will focus on:

- communicating key information in a very clear and easy to understand way which keeps staff involved in the decision making process
- building on the success of our email newsletters which receive excellent engagement from staff
- continuing to supplement digital communications with printed materials and in-person briefings to ensure that office based staff are kept fully informed of key information
- increasing the use of text messages to reach staff who either do not have access to email or are away from their devices
- investigating new channels to communicate with staff such as internal social networks and new functionality of Microsoft 365

Engaged and informed staff can be some of our best advocates for the work of the council. Feedback on internal communications is obtained through the annual Staff Survey which all staff are encouraged to complete. A full staff survey explores a large range of issues and topics relating to all aspects of working for the council which is followed by a 'Pulse Staff Survey' the following year, further exploring the six top themes and topics highlighted in the previous years' survey results.



Team Thurrock

Staff Notices | Training and Development | Health and Wellbeing | Staff Benefits | Corporate Boards

COVID-19 restrictions

We ask that #TeamThurrock continue to act cautiously to protect you and your colleagues. We ask that face coverings be worn in public facing buildings, such as libraries. As we continue to do our best to protect #TeamThurrock, the council will continue to follow the specific guidelines it has set out so far within existing risk assessments and there will be no immediate changes.

The majority of #TeamThurrock will continue to work from home until at least October 2021. Where staff travel together in vehicles, the requirements for wearing a face covering will continue to be based on current risk assessments. Existing guidance for care staff remains in place including the use of PPE.

The [COVID-19 working arrangements policy](#) and updated [Civic Offices risk assessments](#) documents are available to support staff and managers with working conditions to ensure everyone's safety. #TeamThurrock should still be [taking regular COVID-19 tests](#) to help

[Read more](#)



thurrock.gov.uk | Intranet

Staff directory | Downloads and forms | Services and initiatives | Committees and boards

Smarter Working

Smarter Working will enable us to embrace the positive changes we have made since March 2020 as we consider how we will work in whatever ways fit the future.

Find out the latest news, including information about the Civic Offices relocation, activity for all teams.

[Read more](#)

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Evaluation of our communications activity is critical to ensuring that we understand what works well and what doesn't in achieving our objectives. From this evidence base we can make sound judgements on what approach to take at any given time, and adapt our content and channel use accordingly.

- a monthly monitoring and evaluation report will be produced to give a snapshot of campaign activity and the outcomes achieved, audiences reached and key issues that needed to be managed
- through thoroughly evaluating all of our work and the impact it has had against measurable objectives, it will ensure that we are able to allocate our resources efficiently and in a way that ensures we are working cohesively to achieve the council's overall priority objectives
- the monthly evaluation report will be shared with Directors Board and Cabinet and published on our intranet where it will be available for all council staff and members to view

The evaluation will link directly back to the key outcomes communications will be working to achieve, and by 2024 will ensure that:

- the Thurrock brand is fully embedded and Thurrock is recognised as an excellent place to work and play, live and stay; and to invest
- residents believe that the council has and continues to deliver excellent services and positive change and transformation
- trust in the council and its decision making processes is substantially higher
- residents' wellbeing is significantly improved through working together to influence positive life choices and outcomes
- council staff consider themselves to be well informed and are motivated to be strong advocates for Thurrock Council and Thurrock the place

WHAT HAS INFORMED THIS STRATEGY?

This communications strategy has been developed to ensure we build on recent successes and reflect best practice, taking on board expert advice and recommendations as well as input from senior management and members.

As good practice, we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to carry out a peer led 'communications health check' in October 2020 which made recommendations to support the development of the communications strategy 2021-24. One of their recommendations was to commission a survey into how residents are finding their news and information about the council.

To do this we commissioned a market research agency to conduct an independent telephone survey with 200 residents. This ensured that we got a representative cross section of those in our borough who may not currently actively engage with the council on a regular basis. This was supplemented with an online survey which was promoted through the council's online channels. An externally facilitated workshop involving members and officers was also held to help develop the new strategy.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Where do residents get their news and information about the council?

A survey was administered by telephone by an independent market research company from 21 June to 5 July. Demographic quotas were set for gender and age in line with population statistics to ensure a representative sample of residents were interviewed.

The findings from this research shows that:

- Thurrock residents have a preference for online sources of information with the council's website being by far the most popular
- more than half of residents surveyed by telephone saying that thurrock.gov.uk is the main way they learn about the council
- next most popular were our council email newsletters, with 35% of residents saying this was their primary source of information, and 97% of those saying that its contents were useful to them

- in total just under half of those surveyed (46%) said that they receive the Thurrock Council email newsletter; the vast majority also said they always read it
- 92% of those who read the email newsletter believe it keeps them informed, with 47% saying that it keeps them very well informed

The next most popular ways to find news and information about the council were word of mouth (18%) and Thurrock Council's Facebook page (14%). Overall, a third of residents who access the internet follow Thurrock Council's social media channels, with the most common being Facebook. The print edition of the Thurrock Gazette was referenced as a source of information for 8% of respondents, with primarily over 55s referencing this publication. Online news outlets were referenced by 3% of respondents.

An additional online survey carried out through the council's consultation portal was promoted through our own digital channels and local online media outlets.

- this sample is not as representative as the telephone survey as the demographic profile of respondents is much older and has a higher proportion of retirees
- it provides useful insight into how the audience who already engage with digital channels, both council owned and community based, receive their information
- almost 60% of respondents said that they receive information from the council from our weekly email newsletter, with 81% finding it useful
- a higher proportion of residents who responded to the survey said that they get news about the council from local and regional media
- this is in common with the national picture (source: Ofcom news consumption 2020 report) with an average of 9% accessing information from these channels

What type of content are residents most interested in?

- community news and events and service updates, e.g. changes to household waste collections, on the council's social media channels
- around a third would like to see updates on key projects or work by the council and information about upcoming roadworks
- a significantly higher proportion of residents aged 35-54 are interested in seeing service updates, information updates on council work as well as road and traffic updates
- this content is of less interest to residents aged 16-34
- the vast majority of residents are most interested in receiving information about waste and recycling, community issues, leisure and culture, environment and safety and adult care and health across all of our communications channels
- there is less interest overall in news about travel and transport and planning and growth
- over 55s displayed more interest in these topics than the younger age group

- a significantly higher proportion of residents aged 16-34 would be interested in receiving information about housing, education and learning, children and families, jobs and careers and business and licensing
- a lower proportion of residents aged 55 and over would be interested in receiving this information

Respondents to the online survey indicated a wider interest across council topics, with the vast majority of respondents saying they would be interested in receiving information about waste and recycling, environment and safety, travel and transport, community and living, planning and growth and leisure and culture.

Over two thirds of this group indicated their interest in receiving information about council and democracy; far higher than observed amongst the random representative sample. Over half are interested in receiving information on housing and money, tax & benefits.

Priority 1 campaigns

These campaigns will be directly linked to high level corporate priorities that are of strategic importance to the council. These campaigns will have clear, measurable objectives linked directly to priorities and require significant research, planning and communications resource. The campaigns will be implemented across a wide range of channels over an extended period of time.

Economic recovery

This campaign will build on the success of the Transforming Thurrock campaign to harness the excitement and potential of the ambitious growth agenda. A key element will be focusing on real life case studies from individuals and businesses across the borough to highlight the work the council is doing to support everyone who lives and works in the borough to reacclimatise to the new post-pandemic world. This will be a cross-cutting campaign covering many different council services from jobs and skills and strategic planning to Children's Services, and compliment work with partners through the Towns Fund Boards, Thames Freeport and ASELA.

Neighbourhood pride

The proposal for this campaign is to work across the Environment and Housing services to encourage positive behaviour change relating to how residents treat their local areas. It will aim to encompass elements of tackling untidy front gardens, low level 'bad neighbourly' anti-social behaviour (ASB) such as noise disruption and encourage more residents to feel empowered that they can improve their local area with help from the council, rather than having the expectation that the council is responsible for every aspect of civic life. It will also promote neighbourliness and build on the community spirit seen throughout the pandemic.

Smarter working

This will be our main internal communications campaign and will support council staff to embrace the new technology we have available, the different places we can work from and how we view our work to deliver it in the best ways possible – work is what we do, not where we do it. This is linked to the council's approach to providing better services from fewer buildings and ensuring that staff have the tools that they need to work in a modern and flexible way.

Priority 2 campaigns

These campaigns will be shorter in duration with a more defined audience and specific, time bound deliverables. They will require research, planning and sustained communications input and support over an agreed time period and will be implemented across targeted channels.

Fostering

A refreshed fostering campaign will encourage potential foster parents to foster directly through the council rather than use agencies. The campaign emphasises both the financial advantages, such as the Council Tax discount, and the additional excellent support available from our dedicated team. The campaign uses design materials which have been newly created this year and tested on a panel of existing foster parents.



Recycling

Building on the previous campaign which ran from 2018 to 2021, a new recycling campaign is being developed which looks to use a mixture of factual information and emotional appeals to influence positive behaviour change and encourage residents to recycle more and create less general waste. It will work to prepare residents for expected forthcoming changes in waste collection by emphasising that the majority of household waste should go in the blue recycling bin which will be collected weekly.

Report it online

This campaign will encourage residents to report issues including crime, ASB, repairs, environmental issues including missed bins and other service requests through the appropriate direct online channels. It will explain that this is more convenient for them, rather than taking indirect routes such as posting on social media, and means that reports can be acted upon straight away by the relevant officers, partners or contractors.

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| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 13 October 2021 | ITEM: 13 |
| Cabinet | |
| Bus Service Improvement Plan | |
| Wards and communities affected: All Wards | Key Decision: Non Key |
| Report of: Councillor Ben Maney, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson – Assistant Director, Planning, Transport and Public Protection / Julie Nelder – Assistant Director, Highways, Fleet and Logistics | |
| Accountable Director: Julie Rogers – Director for Public Realm | |
| This report is Public | |

Executive Summary

In March 2021 the Department for Transport published a new National Bus Strategy. The strategy sets out a path for all Local Transport Authorities to develop either an Enhanced Partnership, or the franchising of all bus services. Thurrock Council intends to pursue an Enhanced Partnership.

As part of this process, the Council must develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan, which is to be published on the Council’s website, and submitted to the Department for Transport by the end of October 2021. The Bus Service Improvement Plan is a high level plan which identifies where the Council is to seek prioritisation of enhancements to bus service provision within the borough, to enable buses to become more attractive and easier to use by residents for local journeys. The measures within the Bus Service Improvement Plan will be used to seek funding from a pot of £3billion announced by the Government for bus service improvements. This money is comprised of both capital and revenue funding.

Failure to submit the Bus Service Improvement Plan to the DfT by the identified date could result in the loss of bus related grants and subsidies to both bus operators and the Council, potentially affecting bus service provision across the borough. The Council is also unable to seek additional funding for bus services without a Bus Service Improvement Plan.

1. Recommendation(s):

- 1.1 **To approve and endorse the Bus Service Improvement Plan for adoption by Thurrock Council.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In March 2021, the Department for Transport (DfT), via the Prime Minister's Office, issued a new National Bus Strategy for England. The strategy sets out a desire for local authorities to take a greater role in coordinating bus service provision, with an emphasis on partnership and stakeholder working to implement a full range of measures to grow patronage by making it more attractive to all residents, workers and visitors. Councils are asked to establish an "Enhanced Partnership" – collaborating with bus operators and other stakeholders, or should it wish, to progress with franchising – delivering buses in a similar way to those in London.
- 2.2 To deliver an Enhanced Partnership (EP), the DfT has set out a programme for Local Authorities to follow, with a series of hard deadlines. The Primary deadline was 30 June 2021, where Local Transport Authorities (LTA) had to indicatively inform the DfT whether they were to implement an EP or to pursue franchising and publish this on the Council's website. Thurrock Council is progressing with an Enhanced Partnership, as approved by the Portfolio Holder for Transport.
- 2.3 The next deadline is October 31 2021, where LTA's are required to submit to the DfT a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The BSIP is a high level evidence base with identification of key measures to help identify where the Council would like to prioritise improvements for bus service improvements, and use this document to bid for funding from Government. This is for both infrastructure funding, and service enhancements.
- 2.4 Following the submission of the BSIP to DfT, the Council must prepare its Enhanced Partnership documentation, which will also include a passenger charter. An EP is an arrangement for all partners with an interest in the delivery of bus services within an LTA area to sign up to, backed up by legislation. The LTA has the co-ordinating responsibility, and is required to engage with no less than all service operators which serve the authority area, even if the route runs across the boundary. Within Thurrock, this means Transport for London services into the west of the Borough, First Bus Services into Basildon (and beyond), Thurrock Council contracted services operated by NIBS, and all Ensign bus services. The Council must complete and publish its Enhanced Partnership by 31 March 2022.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Following the publication of the intent to develop an Enhanced Partnership in June 21, the Council is required to develop and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan by 31 October 2021.
- 3.2 This document will set out at a high level the range of measures the LTA is looking to implement as part of its Enhanced Partnership, and will act as the central reference point for submissions to the DfT for a share of £3billion funding in relation to bus service improvements, both revenue and capital.

This will include an understanding of service enhancements which are required, as well as any physical infrastructure improvements which are necessary. The document will also set out an understanding of the existing situation and challenges in bus service delivery within Thurrock, and proposals for a fare charging approach, and targets for service delivery within the borough. Alongside this, a commitment to a Bus Passenger Charter should also be included. The BSIP should be developed in partnership with other key stakeholders, including bus service operators, and key user groups. Bus Service Implementation Plans should have a strong link to an authorities Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP), and measures should go hand in hand.

- 3.3 The Thurrock BSIP has been produced through engagement with Local Bus Operators to identify where bus services require infrastructure enhancements to help improve the reliability of services, and through analysis of data and identification of key themes within the National Bus Strategy to provide service enhancements and measures which make bus use more attractive. Additionally, officers have undertaken public engagement to seek the views of residents regarding their experiences and perceptions of bus services within the borough, to help evidence enhancements.
- 3.4 The BSIP acts as a high level bidding document to help the Council seek funding from the DfT. The measures identified within the document, backed up by evidence to show a need, can be eligible for funding from the Department. The Thurrock BSIP has prioritised enhancements to existing services to enable more frequent services, developing taxi based services to support rural communities, integration of bus services with rail, improving the reliability of buses along their route, fare capping and integration, enhancing bus information, and researching new power technologies for buses.
- 3.5 The vast majority of buses within Thurrock are commercially run services, with the exception of three routes funded by the Council. The past decade has seen funding and subsidies for buses cut in half, which has impacted on provision for smaller and more rural communities. Therefore there is a focus on increasing provision of services through enhanced frequencies and additional buses, to make using the bus a realistic and viable choice. Where demand is not projected to make running additional buses a viable endeavour, the Council will explore new solutions to deliver demand responsive transport, using smaller and more cost effective vehicles. Some service enhancement is also being considered for commercial services, either to bring them in line with frequencies of other services, or to provide additional services during evenings and weekends.
- 3.6 Officers are also proposing to seek funds from the Government to investigate how bus services can operate more reliable journeys through the boroughs most high-frequency bus corridor – Lancaster Roundabout to Sockets Heath via Grays Bus Station. Engagement with operators has determined this corridor provides the greatest challenge to maintaining bus services which run to timetable and provide a reliable service to residents. Additionally, the

Council will seek to investigate how fares can be simplified, reduced, and integrated between operators and modes, and also investigate changes in technologies which can power buses in a zero-carbon environment, helping the Council to determine where and how investment is made to best suit the needs of the borough and operators.

- 3.7 These high level measures provide the authority a broad opportunity to seek funding from the new bus services pot of £3bn being made available by the Government. The priorities within the Thurrock BSIP align with the themes within the national bus strategy, with the ultimate aim to make buses more attractive to residents and communities, helping them to become the primary choice for local journeys.
- 3.8 The Thurrock BSIP has been developed in consideration of the emerging local plan and supporting transport strategy.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The recommendation is put forward for Cabinet is to approve and endorse, so that the Council can meet its obligation to the Department for Transport for the submission of a Bus Service Improvement Plan by the end of October 2021.
- 4.2 Failure by the Council to adopt the BSIP and submit this document to the DfT by the stated date will have potential financial implications for both the authority and bus operators and services within the borough. Funds and subsidies provided by central government to the authority and bus operators for bus services may be stopped with immediate effect. This could result in the reduction or loss of some services within the borough, especially those being supporting due to reduced passenger trips resulting from the pandemic. For the Council, this could see the loss of funds supporting the subsidised services, and may potentially impact on funding for Home to School Transport.
- 4.3 Failure to submit the BSIP on time would subsequently have a knock on effect on the Council's opportunity to bid for funding from government, and also would impact on the ability for the Council to develop and finalise its Enhanced Partnership by March 2022.

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

- 5.1 To support the development of the BSIP, the Council launched a public engagement exercise in early August 2021 to understand more about the views towards bus services by residents. This public engagement is made up of two parts. The first is a survey, developed to identify how residents perceive bus service provision in Thurrock, and their experiences, as well as what seeking to understand what improvements residents would like to see. This survey allows the Council to build a baseline evidence base of views about buses, and can allow future comparisons to take place.

- 5.2 The second part is a map based tool which allows participants to log where physical improvements may be required, or where there may be issues which need attention. This can include showing where additional bus stops or bus routes are required, where buses become delayed, or where they may experience issues with accessing the bus stop itself. This tool will be utilised as an ongoing log for recoding the need for investment, helping officers to understand where proposals can be put forward should funding opportunities arise. The spatial element of this tool also allows officers to quickly identify where in the borough clusters of issues may exist.
- 5.3 The Public Engagement has been publicised through a number of channels. Posters have been developed which will help to promote the engagement by being posted within buses and on bus stops. Posters include a web link to the survey, or a QR code to easily find the survey, or interested parties could write directly to the Council with their views via email or through the post. The Council has also sought to utilise its Real Time Passenger Information display screens across the borough to promote the survey. Lastly, the public engagement has been promoted through the Council's social media channels. All members were also written to, to inform of the Public Engagement and to make their local communities and residents aware of the survey. The Bus User Group were also written to seek their views.
- 5.4 Due to the time constraints involved in developing a BSIP and its submission to the DfT, there has not been the opportunity to publically consult on the document, however the survey presented an opportunity to inform residents who participated that the document has been completed and published on the website. As a result, the democratic process within the Council is being used to act as the consultation on the BSIP, by submission to Cabinet for adoption. The BSIP is intended to be a live document which is updated as required, and this will present an ongoing opportunity to seek feedback for the need to amend details within the document including the consideration for additional measures.
- 5.5 The report was also presented to Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 5th October 2021.

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

- 6.1 The Thurrock Bus Service Improvement Plan will have an impact on communities and individuals within Thurrock. An EQIA will be undertaken to identify the impacts and any mitigating measures that should be considered to manage and guide bus service enhancements to enable more people across the borough to access bus services.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

An operational and staffing budget is required to deliver the BSIP. This is to be funded through the Council's Capability Fund allocation from DfT.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**
Assistant Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer

The legal implications for the production of a Bus Service Improvement Plan and Bus Strategy are set out within the body of this report. The Council has identified the decision to establish an "Enhanced Partnership" which was published on the Council's website. Thurrock Council is progressing with an Enhanced Partnership, as approved by the Portfolio Holder for Transport.

The deadline to submit the BSIP to the DfT is 31st October 2021 and the Council is on track to meet this.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

Consultation and engagement exercises have taken place with residents and user groups to inform the development of this BSIP. Results from this feedback will be used to progress a Community Equality Impact Assessment and guide bus service enhancements to enable more people across the borough to access bus services.

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

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: Thurrock Bus Service Improvement Plan

Report Author:

Navtej Tung

Strategic Transport Manager

Transport Development

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BSIP Guidance Assistance - Thurrock Council

BSIP Guidance Assistance - Thurrock Council

Prepared for:

Thurrock Council
Civic Offices, New Rd, Grays RM17 6SL

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Executive Summary

Overview

This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), represents the opportunity to make a step-change in connectivity for those who live in, work in and visit Thurrock. For many local residents, Thurrock has an efficient bus service, which provides a good level of connectivity. Fares are largely affordable, and the infrastructure is of a high quality. – Every bus stop has a timetable case provided and information therein maintained by the Council, as informed by the local operators. Most important bus stops have shelters and a contract to renew these is in place.

Despite this, there remains the potential and necessity for improvement. Commuting in Thurrock is largely undertaken by private car – only 4% of such journeys are made by bus. The range of negative externalities this causes is broad: worsened air quality, congestion, and greater volumes of carbon dioxide emissions. Increasing the proportion of motorised trips made by bus is the ultimate aim of this BSIP; the interventions described here have all been designed with this aim in mind.

Many of these interventions focus upon the frequency of these services, at all times of day, every day in the week. Providing a regular service is critical for ensuring that bus use increases. If people feel like they can ‘turn up and go’, with a very low risk of being stranded by bus services not running in the evening, or at the weekend, they are more likely to consider it a credible mode of transport. As volumes of passengers increase, fare revenues will increase, allowing operators to further improve services – a virtuous cycle, which has been observed elsewhere.

The interventions identified here could not be delivered by the private sector alone; neither can the council realistically solely subsidise them. As such, central government funding will be critical for their delivery. Over the past decade, Thurrock has seen its budget become increasingly stretched, with a commensurate drop in bus ridership on reducing supported services. Should the interventions in this BSIP be delivered – and the funding to do so be provided – the trend in reducing ridership should be reversed.

Growth within the borough provides this opportunity to increase patronage on sustainable modes of transport. Increasing levels of investment in new employment sites in the past ten years, and further expected growth in jobs and housing provide opportunities to encourage sustainable travel behaviours. New emerging policies such as the Local Plan and Transport Strategy will support Thurrock in promoting and making available buses through infrastructure and service enhancements. The new Local Plan projects upwards of 30,000 new home and 18,000 new jobs by 2050 in Thurrock.

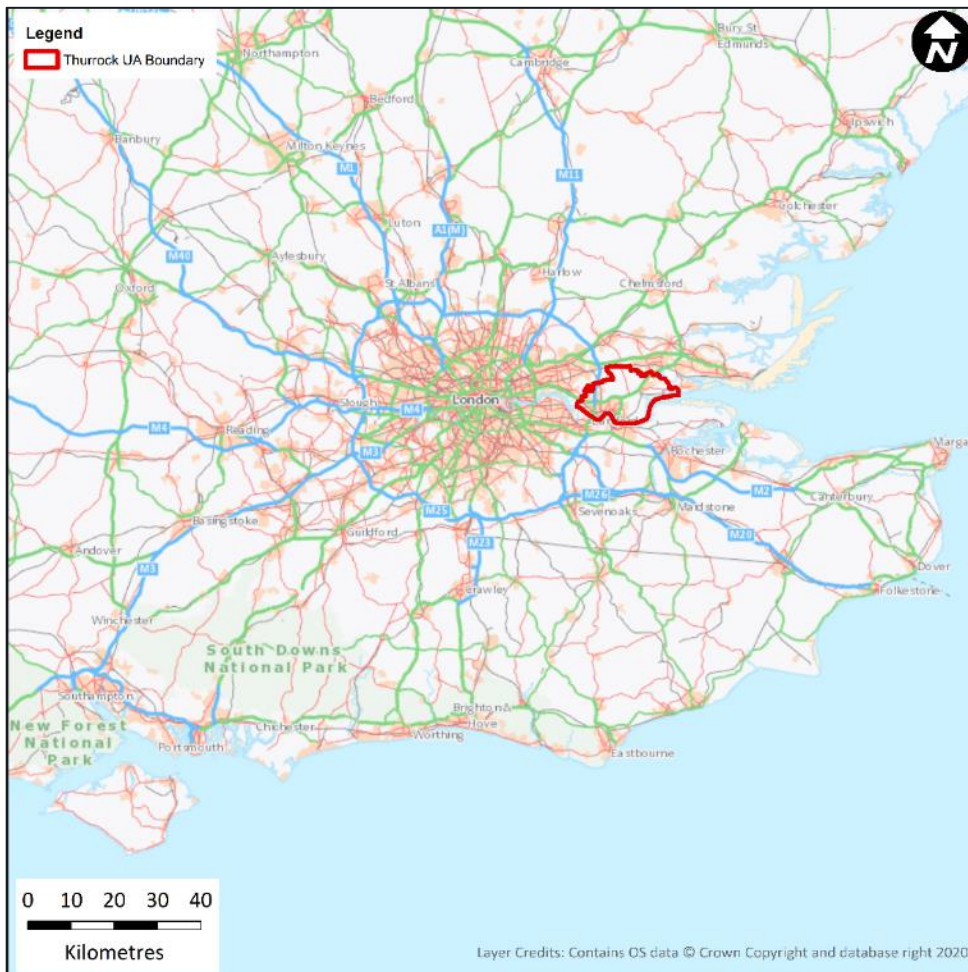
In many ways, Thurrock’s geography lends itself perfectly to the delivery of a networked bus service with its numerous settlements conurbations. This means that a well-designed network should provide good connectivity for residents to travel across the borough from one area to another. This BSIP is designed to help the area reach this potential, making the bus network a key part of the area’s transport infrastructure, one which local communities can rely upon.

1 Overview

General Context

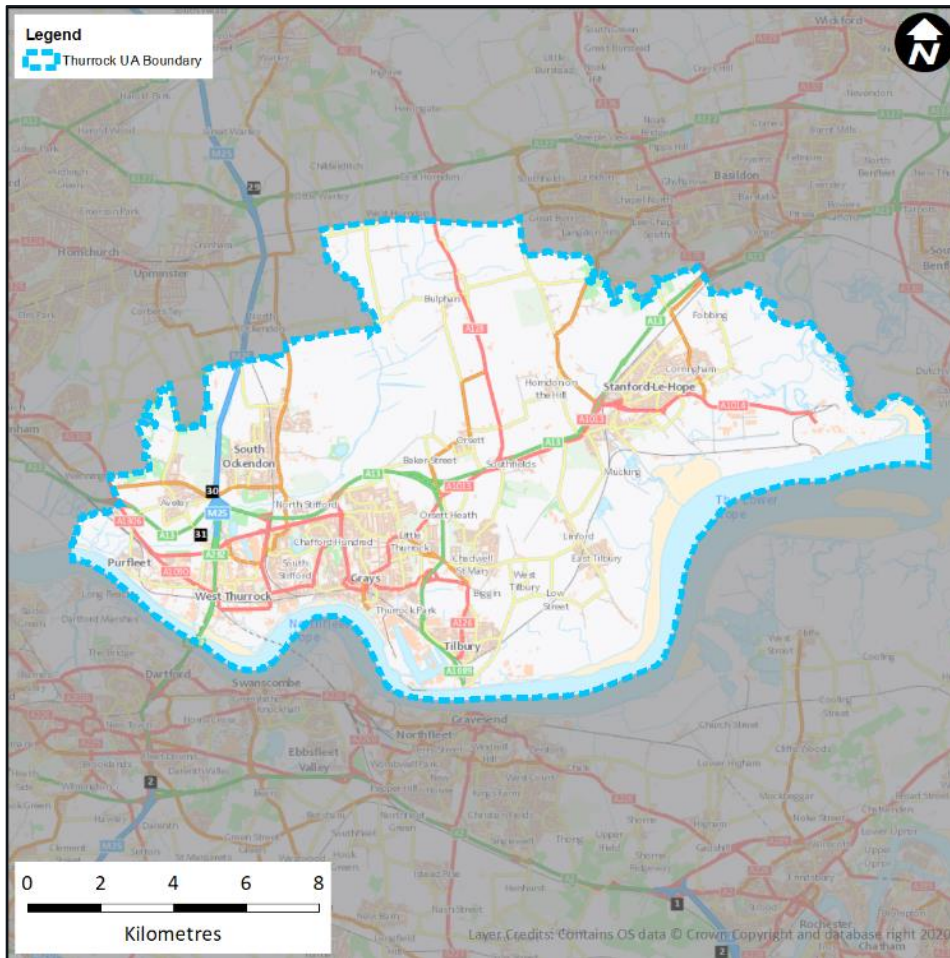
- 1.1 Thurrock is a Unitary Authority of approximately 174,000 people, located on the Northern side of the Thames Estuary, on the outskirts of London (context map in Figure 1.1 with more detail in Figure 1.2). Thurrock’s strong road transport connections with the rest of the country form a key part of its economic offer. It is home to three nationally strategic ports, lies at one end of the Dartford Crossing, is served by the M25, and has regular rail connections to London and Essex. This good connectivity has made the area an attractive site for freight and distribution centres. For example, in 2017, Amazon situated one of its largest ‘fulfilment centres’ in the area and the popular Lakeside Shopping centre is home to more than 300 shops.¹

Figure 1.1: Context Map for Thurrock



¹ <https://www.amazon.jobs/en/locations/tilbury-uk>

Figure 1.2: Location map of Thurrock Unitary Area



- 1.2 Thurrock’s average household income – £37,116 before housing costs – is relatively high in comparison to the UK national average of £34,489. However, the cost of living in south-eastern England is higher than most places meaning that the average net household income after housing costs falls to £27,937, lower than the national average of £28,105.
- 1.3 Table 1.1 provides a summary breakdown of the top 10 employment categories in the Thurrock area. This breakdown highlights the fact that Education, Construction, and Transport and Storage make up a significantly higher proportion of Thurrock’s economic background than is common across England. Jobs in these sectors may not be as high paying as jobs in other professional categories common the South East of England, such as financial services, business and administration, and information and communications technologies. This may go some way toward explaining why the net income after housing is lower in Thurrock than the English average.

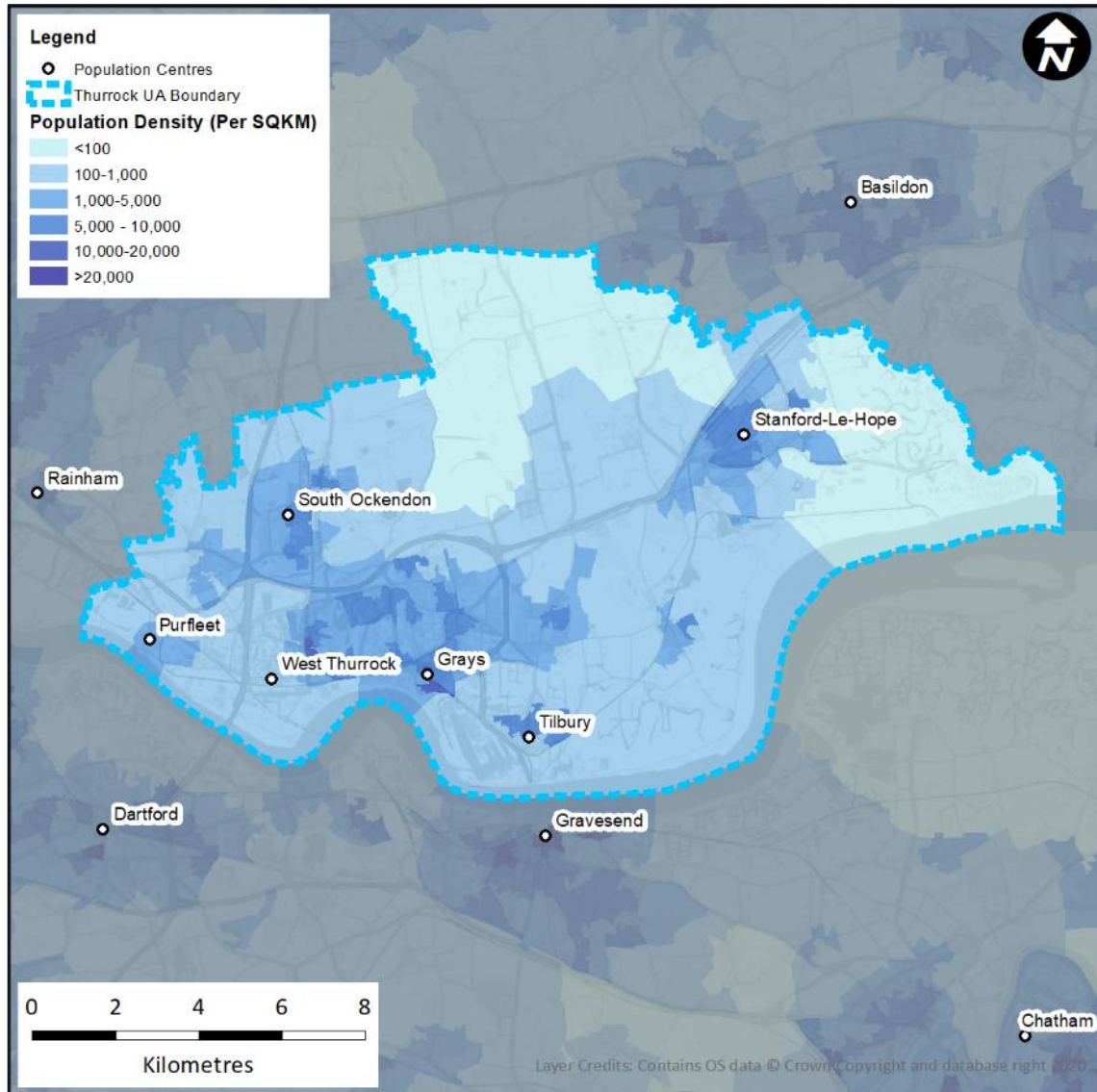
Table 1.1: Employment Breakdown: Residents of Thurrock Area

| Employment Category | Percentage | England Average |
|--|------------|-----------------|
| Education | 17.9% | 8.4% |
| Health | 11.3% | 12.4% |
| Construction | 11.0% | 5.0% |
| Transport & storage (inc postal) | 10.5% | 5.0% |
| Retail | 8.3% | 9.2% |
| Accommodation & food services | 6.6% | 7.5% |
| Business administration & support services | 6.4% | 8.9% |
| Professional, scientific & technical | 5.5% | 9.2% |
| Manufacturing | 4.5% | 7.8% |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services | 4.2% | 4.6% |

Source: Steer Analysis of BRES Data

1.4 Currently, Thurrock’s population is concentrated into three major conurbations - South Ockendon, Grays, and Stanford-Le-Hope. The northern and eastern portions of the area are more rural in nature, with significant areas of farmland and some smaller hamlets. The distribution of resident population density for Thurrock is shown in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Population Density

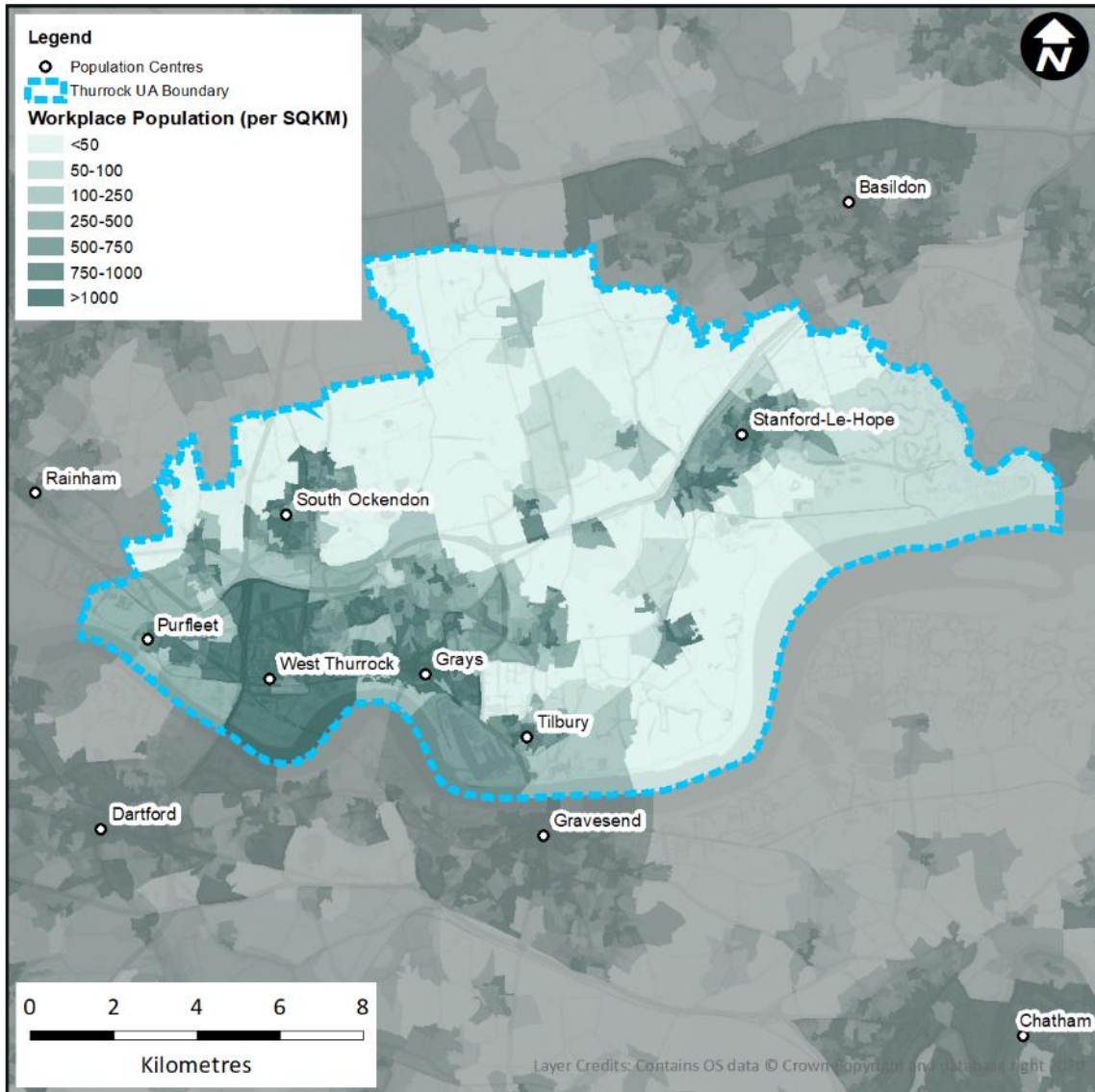


Source: Census 2011

1.5 Employment density follows a similar, albeit more pronounced, trend to population density. This is illustrated in Figure 1.4. Particularly high employment densities are found along the River Thames – these are traditional employment centres, historically dependent upon the docks, but now refocused towards transportation, freight, construction and retail jobs.

1.6 Future development in the area is expected to be significant. As part of the Thames Gateway national growth area – an area which has become a priority area for urban regeneration – it is expected that between 2001 and 2026 there will be a need to provide an additional 23,250 new homes and 26,000 new jobs.²

Figure 1.4: Employment Density

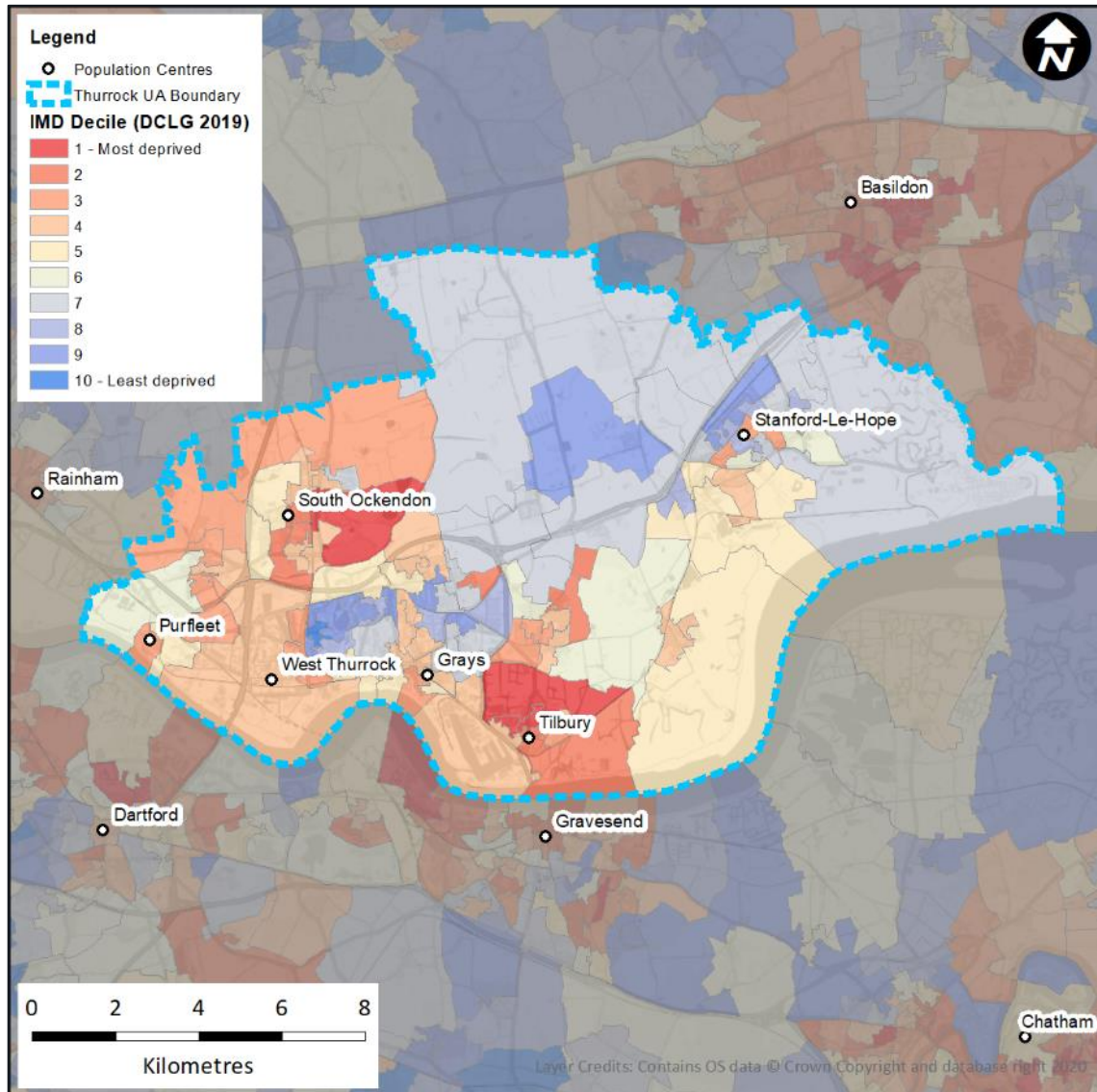


Source: Census 2011

² https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/strategy_transport_2013.pdf

1.7 Thurrock has relatively high levels of deprivation, with several areas falling within the most deprived 10% of all areas in the country. This is illustrated by Figure 1.5. The main areas of deprivation are concentrated in the South and West of Thurrock, around Tilbury and South Ockendon. However, it is important to note that this is partially the nature of the way that the Index of Multiple Deprivation is calculated – rural areas tend to fare better when appraised using this metric, due to the lower concentrations of any single social group.

Figure 1.5: Index of Multiple Deprivation

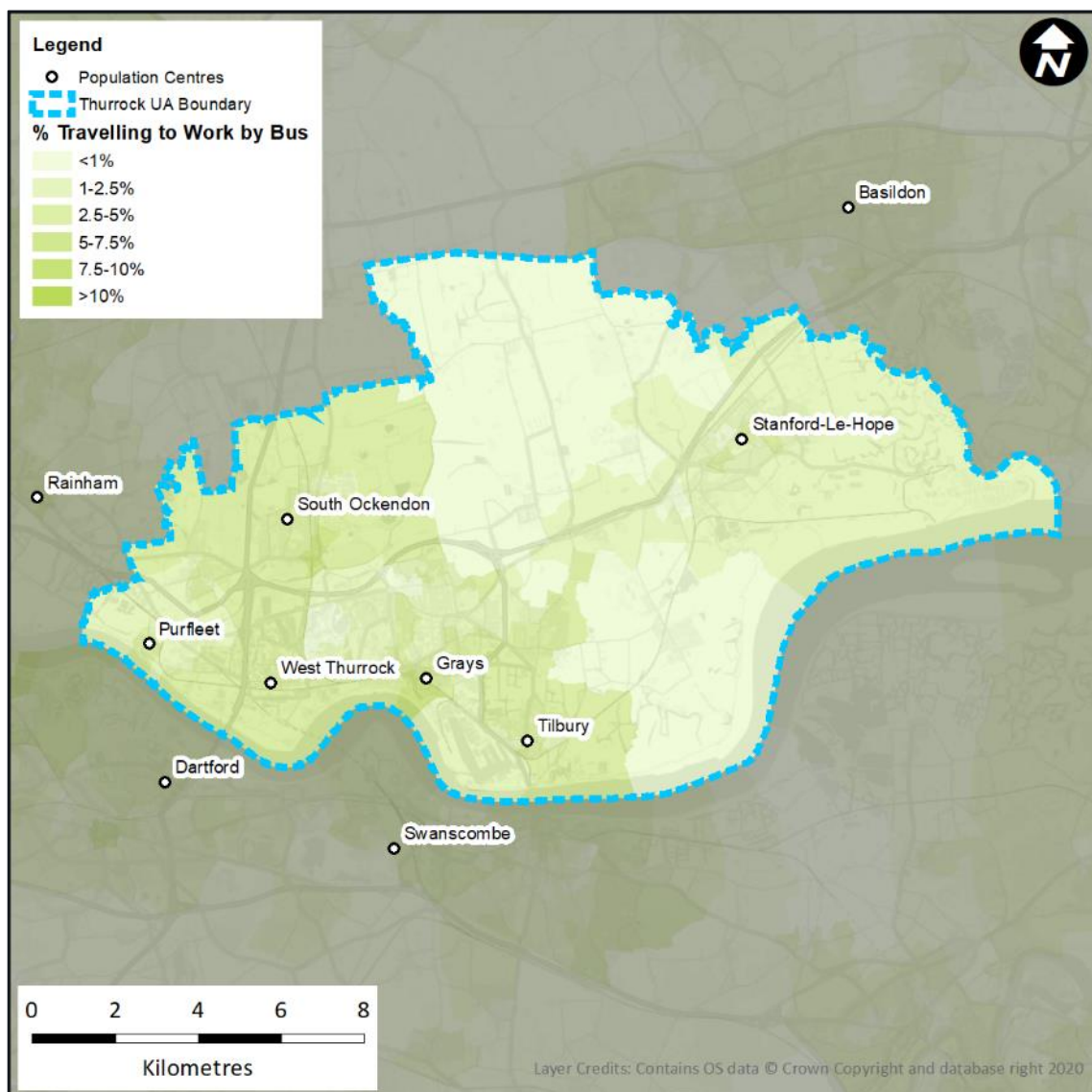


Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, DCLG 2019

General Transport Context

1.8 Here a broad overview of Transport within Thurrock is provided. Detail about the bus network is available in Chapter 2. As mentioned above, Thurrock has relatively good connections to the rest of the country; it lies on the M25, the River Thames, and has rail links to London and south Essex. However, public transport connectivity within Thurrock is variable, leading to low public transport mode shares, and relatively high private car use. This is illustrated by Figure 1.6 and Figure 1.7. Figure 1.6 illustrates that the proportion of people using Bus to travel to work is relatively low in Thurrock, with the majority of areas below 5% mode share. In general, mode shares are higher in areas with higher population and employment densities (as shown in Figure 1.3 and Figure 1.4), and lower in more rural areas. Within Thurrock, in 2018/19 there were approximately 28 journeys per head, as compared to the England average of 77, and the London average of 247.³

Figure 1.6: Proportion of Commuters using Bus

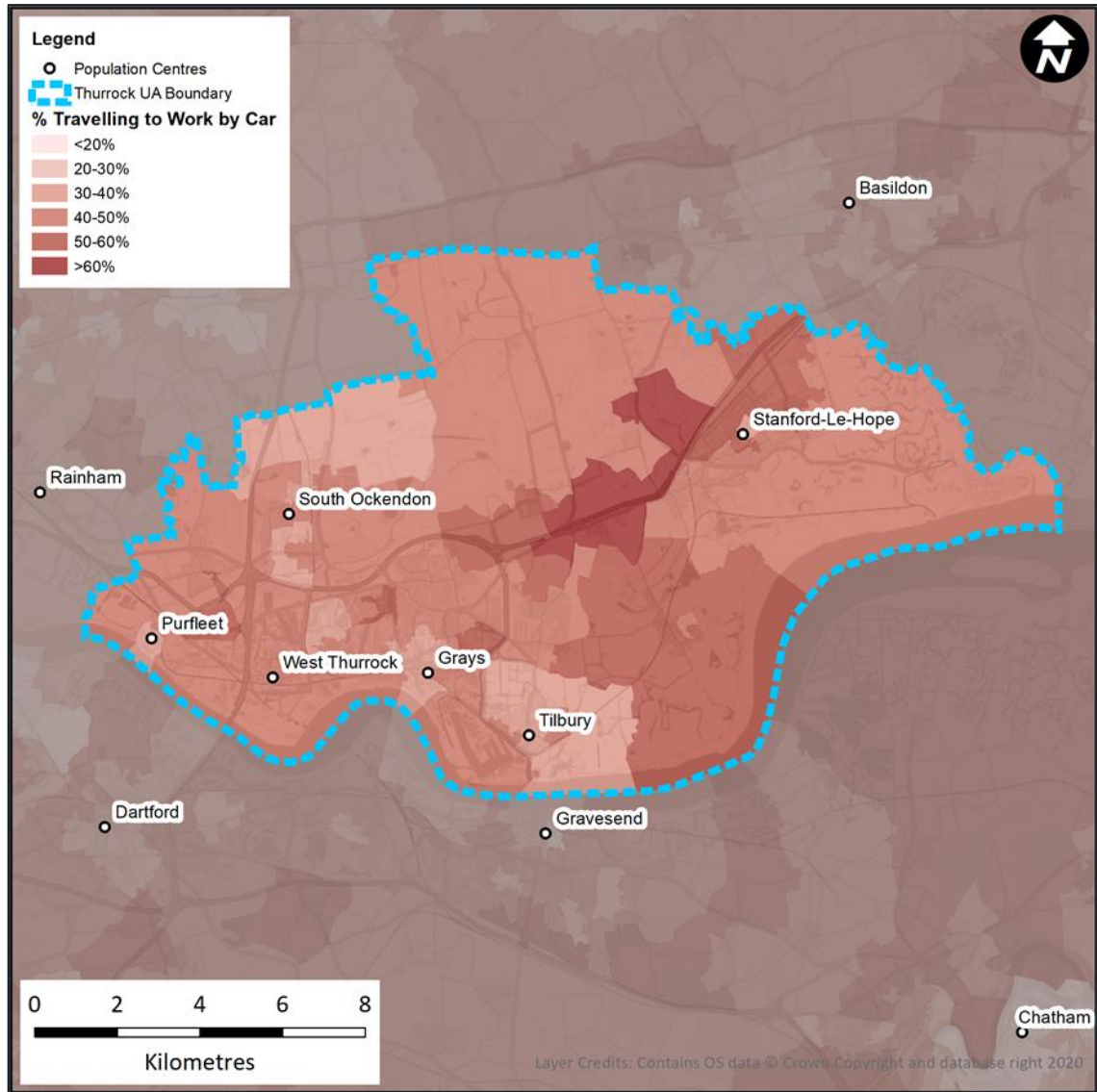


Source: Census 2011

³ Passenger journeys on local bus services per head by local authority: BUS 0110: England, from 2009/10

1.9 The low bus patronage is reflected by relatively high car usage for commuting journeys. This is illustrated by Figure 1.7. In many areas, the car is the dominant mode of transport for travelling to work, with some areas seeing a mode share greater than 60%. Unsurprisingly, Car mode share is particularly high in areas outside the main urban conurbations.

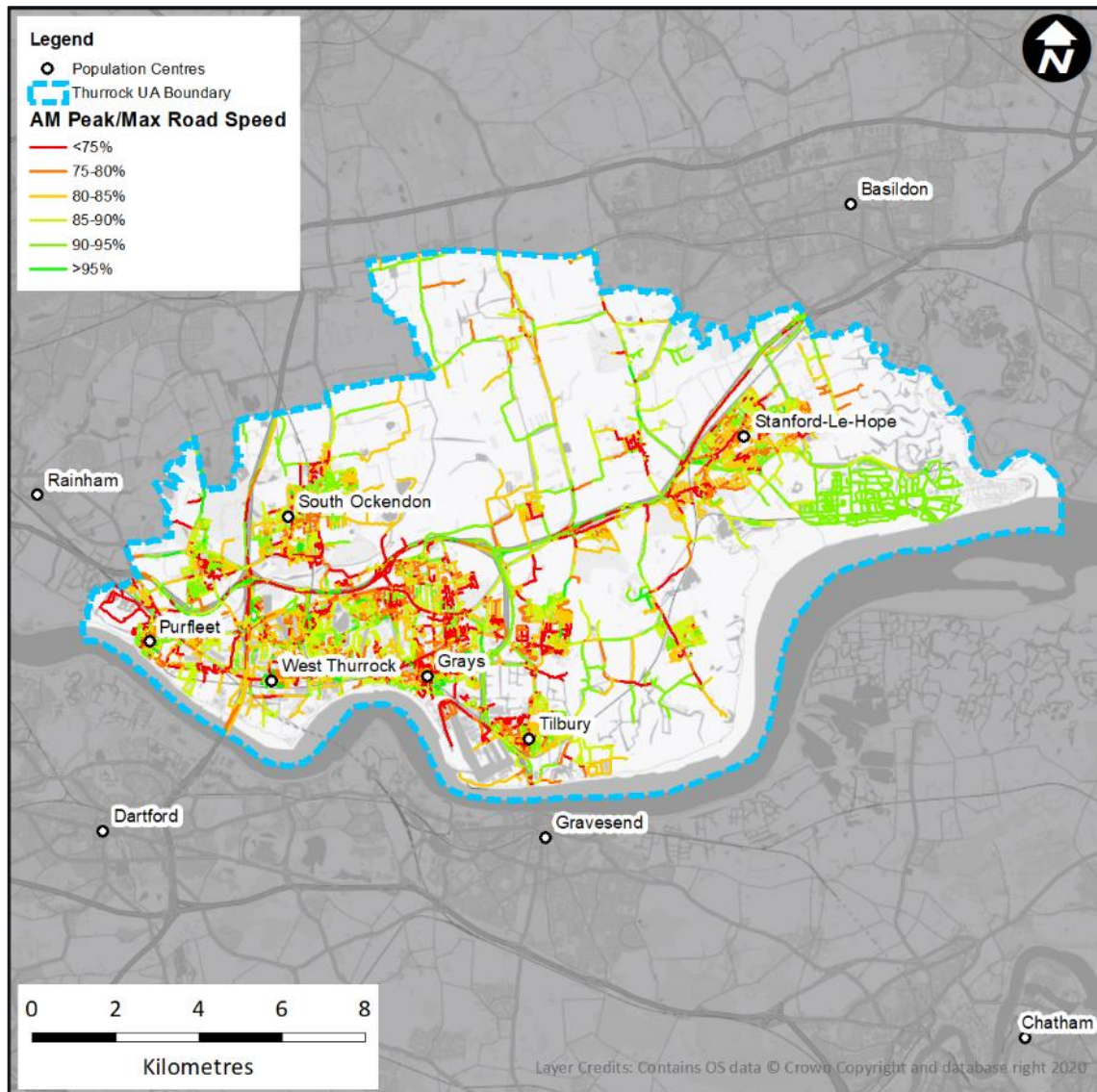
Figure 1.7: Proportion of Commuters using Car



Source: Census 2011

1.10 Congestion on the road network is illustrated in Figure 1.8, which maps the free flow speed (speed during the night when road usage is low), against congested road speeds. Congestion is a significant issue in Grays, and also causes problems in Stanford-Le-Hope. However, this fails to fully represent congestion experienced in the area. This is because congestion tends to become a major issue when the M25 and/or A13 are affected by incidents. When this happens, traffic across the area is impacted, with major spill-over congestion into the surrounding local areas.

Figure 1.8: Indicative Congestion



Source: Pitney Bowes Drivetime Data (2018)

Strategic Context

Existing Policies

Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) (2015)

- 1.11 The strategic framework governing transport interventions and planning within Thurrock are supported by land use policy and transport policy documents. The overarching policy is the existing Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management and Development. This provides the planning policy framework for land use and new development within the borough. Adopted in 2015, this proposed the development of approximately 18,000 new homes by 2026 supported by 26,000 new jobs.
- 1.12 Policies within the Core Strategy support enhancements to bus networks, to help make existing communities and new developments to become more sustainable. Policy CSSP3 identifies bus service infrastructure improvements and rail station enhancements as key infrastructure needs to deliver the plan. Transport specific policies also seek to enhance the bus network. Policy CSTP 14 sought to reduce car traffic by 10% by 2026 using a broad range of measures. Policy CSTP 15 proposed to increase accessibility to places of work, education and healthcare, while Policy CSTP 16 states improvements to transport networks to minimise capacity constraints with high quality inter-urban public transport routes running on a 30-min frequency.
- 1.13 A new Local Plan is currently in development.

Thurrock Transport Strategy

- 1.14 The Thurrock Transport Strategy, adopted in 2013 sets out the strategic framework for transport provision across the borough and to support the overarching goals of the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework. The strategy recognises the wider need for transport to help deliver sustainable growth and regeneration in the borough.
- 1.15 The Transport Strategy provides a supportive local policy environment, which aligns closely with the objectives in the government's Bus Back Better documentation, and the BSIP guidance, with a number of elements within the strategy overlapping with the proposed BSIP. The most pertinent of these are summarised in Table 1.2.

Emerging Strategies

New Local Plan and Transport Strategy and Vision

- 1.16 Thurrock Council is in the process of developing a new planning policy strategy which will help support land use planning and new development within the borough until 2040. The Local Plan is indicatively looking to propose up to 32,000 new homes and up to 18,500 jobs across Thurrock over the life of the strategy. This will see new housing sites be developed, allowing new opportunities to develop sustainable communities with active and sustainable transport opportunities at the heart of their development, including bus. The new Local Plan is due to be adopted in 2023.
- 1.17 Developed alongside the Local Plan is a new Transport Strategy. Still in early development, a Vision for Transport is being developed, identifying how sustainable transport opportunities are core to the sustainability of communities within and beyond the borough. Extensive work is being undertaken to review existing provision, and those enhancements which are required to link the borough with its neighbouring communities. Both the Local Plan and Transport

Strategy will be supported by a Multi-Modal transport model. The Transport Strategy should be completed and adopted in 2022.

Table 1.2: Relevance of Thurrock Transport Strategy to the BSIP

| Relevant Elements | Detail relevant to BSIP |
|--|--|
| Delivering Accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrating with other service providers and planners to influence where and how they deliver their services as a non-transport way of improving accessibility, especially the location of new education or hospital facilities - Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector in developing Demand Responsive and Community Transport - Improving connections between modes and enhancing the public realm at transport interchanges / rail stations in Tilbury, Grays, Chafford Hundred, Purfleet-on-Thames and Stanford le Hope (London Gateway) to aid access to Thurrock's key strategic economic hubs in particular - Improving information and ticketing arrangements - Ensuring equality of opportunity by incorporating the needs of people with mobility impairments or disabilities in the design and delivery of improvements |
| Tackling Congestion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using an intensive programme of smarter choices to deliver a modal shift, especially in urban areas, in particular workplace and school travel plans. This will support the delivery of better sustainable transport infrastructure, such as cycle routes and public transport priority - Promoting modal shift on interurban journeys through high quality public transport between growth areas, key strategic economic hubs and to other Regional Transport Nodes - Promoting capacity improvements on the Strategic Road Network, with priority for freight routes to key strategic economic hubs and interurban bus routes, where modal shift and network management are insufficient. Improvements have been identified on M25, A13 and A1014 |
| Improving Air Quality and Addressing Climate Change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritising actions that both improve local air quality and reduce CO₂ emissions. These will include working with partners and transport operators to increase the use of low emission vehicles or using retrofitting, better operating practices such as switching off engines or eco-driving, and beneficial car parking for low emission cars |
| Safer Roads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give priority to improving road safety in disadvantaged communities, integrating with wider programmes such as neighbourhood renewal, as well around schools and major workplaces. Again, the focus will be on reducing the adverse impact of traffic, such as traffic speed and volume, and helping support modal shift programmes |

Climate Policies

- 1.23 Thurrock has a number of climate policies, which are broadly supportive of modal shift towards public transportation. For example, the Climate Local Thurrock plan recognises the urgency and importance of cutting carbon dioxide emissions. It provides evidence that although Thurrock cut its emissions by 37% from 2005 to 2011, transport emissions have remained essentially constant (and therefore the transport percentage has increased). To help accelerate reduction in emissions, this plan recommends following the suggestions of the Transport Strategy (as set out above), in addition to converting current bus vehicles to hybrid and/or hydrogen fuel.⁴

Overall Summary

- 1.24 Thurrock is an area with a mixed socioeconomic geography. Despite high employment, economic outcomes are not as strong as other areas with similar proximity to London. The transportation network is both one of the area's strengths and weaknesses. It provides good connectivity for freight, but is not well designed for public transportation. Moreover, the polycentric and dispersed geography mean that clear options for the development of an effective transport network are not obvious.
- 1.25 Overall, this means that public transport mode share is relatively low across the area; Bus patronage in particular is very low. As will be explored in subsequent chapters, this means that it is difficult to commercially justify the type of service provision necessary to cater for all communities effectively. This, of course, means that bus services are less attractive to potential passengers, leading to a downward spiral as regards patronage, revenues, and provision.
- 1.26 Ultimately then, there is high potential for a transformative change in the way that transportation – and buses in particular – are delivered across the area. The subsequent chapters outline the steps necessary to achieve this.

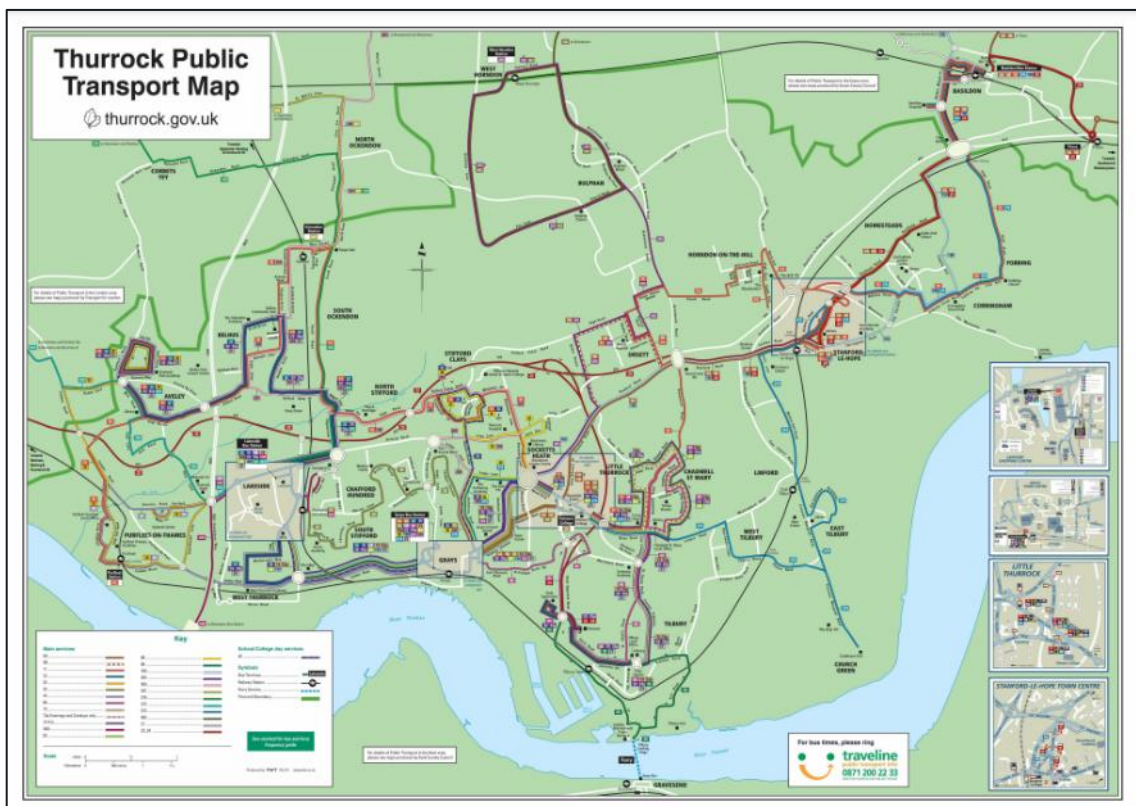
⁴ Thurrock Climate Local Action Plan: Thurrock Council, 2015

2 Current Bus Offer to Passengers

Overview

- 2.1 In this chapter, an overview of Thurrock’s current bus network is provided. This information, along with input from local stakeholders, has been used to develop the recommendations which are set out in Chapter 4. In particular, areas where there are significant gaps in the network, or where it is clear that improved network provision would help to alleviate underlying socioeconomic issues, have been taken forward into the recommendations for enhancement. An overall map of the Thurrock Bus network is provided in Figure 2.1.
- 2.2 At the outset, it is important to note that the network of services that operators provide is based upon achieving a commercially viable service, but does not explicitly acknowledge need. A number of the current commercial services are marginal, and over recent years, changes to the network have resulted in greater concentration on the core network. Although the council financially supports a number of services, it is not able to support all of the services it would like, to provide a high-quality service to all communities.

Figure 2.1: Map of Thurrock Bus Network

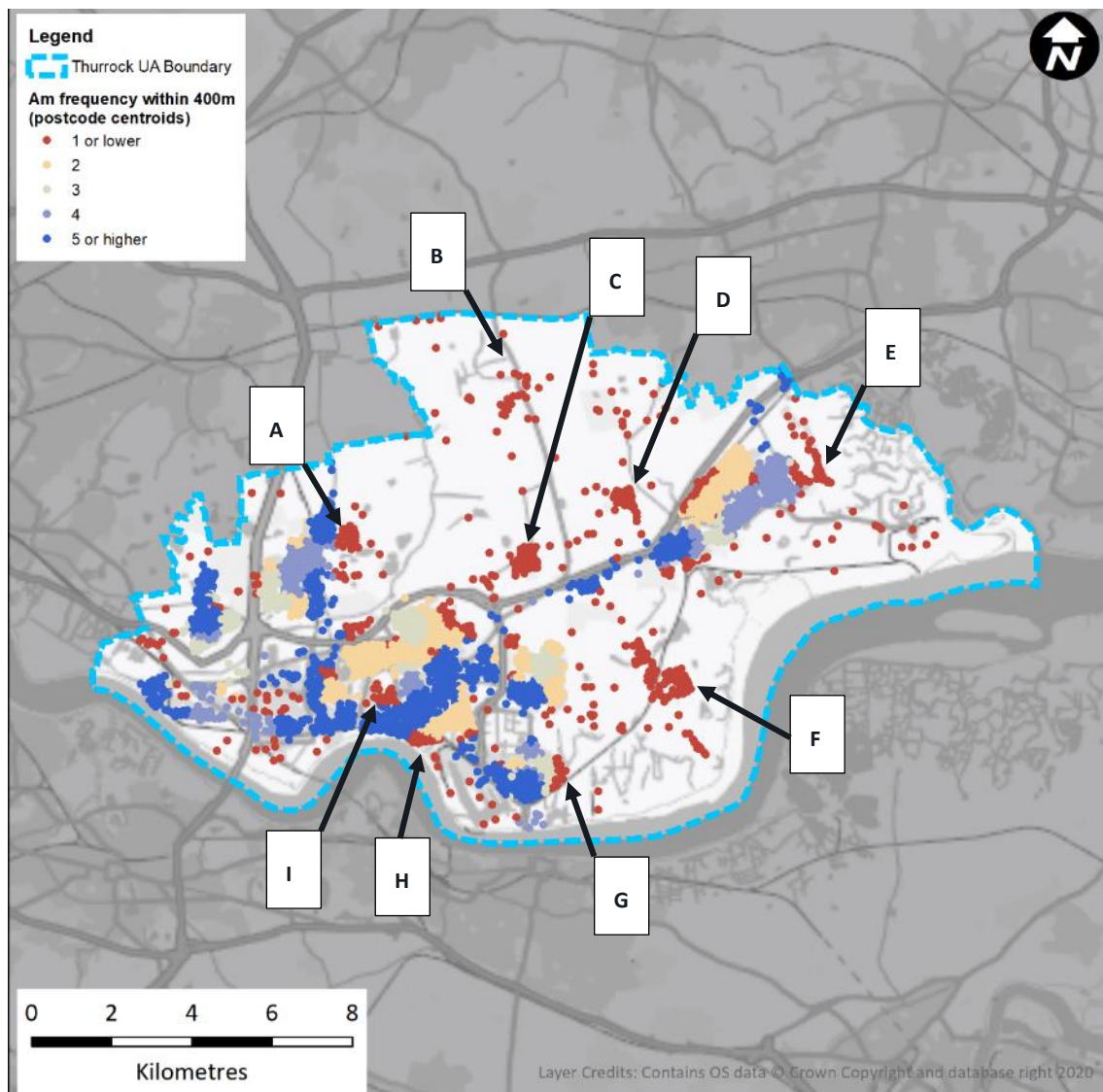


Source: Thurrock Council

Accessibility

- 2.3 Analysis examining the frequency of bus services by proportion and spatial location across Thurrock has been conducted to highlight locations where there is currently poor or no service provision in the AM peak period (08:00-08:59). This analysis is limited by the input data⁵ and should not be considered in terms of the absolute numbers presented below, however, it is a good indication of the relative level of service across the borough and is a useful indication of potential gaps in the service.
- 2.4 Figure 2.2 shows postcodes within 400 m of Bus Stops. They are coloured by service frequency, revealing concentrations population served by a low level of frequency.

Figure 2.2: Population (Postcodes) by access to their highest bus service Frequency within 400m



- 2.5 The figure reveals:
- Significant parts of urban Thurrock are well served with at least three buses per hour.

⁵ The data records services at each bus stop in the hour between 08:00 and 08:59. Therefore a location with its only service at 07:55 (even though it might arrive at Grays or Basildon between 08:00 and 08:59) will show as having “no service”

- Low levels of service are concentrated at the locations shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Poorly Served Communities in Thurrock

| Figure 2.2 | Location | Notes on Bus Service |
|------------|------------------------|--|
| A | Part of South Ockendon | No service east of main road |
| B | Bulphan | Infrequent Monday to Saturday service to Brentwood (565). Three days a week service to Grays (265) |
| C | Orsett | Hourly service Monday to Saturday daytimes (5B) |
| D | Horndon-on-the-Hill | 6 services per day (11), Monday to Friday |
| E | Fobbing | 14 services per day, Monday to Fridays; 4 services per Saturday (11, 374) |
| F | East Tilbury | 8 services per day, Monday to Fridays; 4 services per Saturday (374) |
| G | Fort Road | Just over 400m from regular service. Little housing |
| H | Grays Beach | No bus service. Approx. 600m from transport interchange and 800m from Grays shopping centre |
| I | Badgers Dene | No bus service. Approx. 800m from transport interchange and 600m from Grays shopping centre |

2.6 Other areas indicating a low level of service frequency are largely trading estates and warehouses.

Operational Structure

2.7 There are four operators running services in the area. These are:

- Ensignbus
- First Essex
- NIBS Buses/Stephensons⁶
- Transport for London (TfL)

2.8 The TfL services are provided by other operators under contract to TfL and link Thurrock with parts of Greater London.

2.9 Some services, particularly those operated by First, operate into Essex.

2.10 The high frequency services are shown in Table 2.2 (A full list of all bus services in Thurrock is provided in Appendix A).

2.11 This shows that while the Monday to Saturday daytime services are comprehensive, evening and Sunday services have less coverage.

⁶ Part of the same owning group

Table 2.2: Frequent Bus Services in Thurrock Area (Approximate Buses per Hour)

| Route | Links | Operator | Mon-Fri Daytime | Mon-Fri Evening | Sat Daytime | Sat Evening | Sun Daytime | Sun Evening |
|--------|--|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 5A/5B | Pitsea – Basildon – Stanford-le-Hope – Grays | First Essex | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | Aveley – Lakeside – Grays | Ensignbus | 3 | 0 ⁷ | 2 | 0 ⁷ | 1 | 1 ⁸ |
| 33 | Chafford Hundred – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 44 | Lakeside – Purfleet-on-Thames – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 66 | Chadwell – Tilbury – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 2 ⁸ | 0 | 1 ⁸ | 0 |
| 73/73A | Lakeside – Grays – Tilbury | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 ⁷ | 2 | 0 ⁷ | 2 | 0.5 |
| 77/77A | Aveley – Lakeside – Grays – Tilbury | Ensignbus | 0 ⁹ | 2 | 0 ⁹ | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 83 | Lakeside – Grays – Chadwell St. Mary | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 88 | Stifford Clays – Grays | Ensignbus | 1 ¹⁰ | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 99 | Tilbury Ferry – Tilbury Station | Ensignbus ¹¹ | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 100 | Basildon – Grays – Lakeside | First Essex | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 370 | Lakeside – Romford | TfL ¹² | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 372 | Lakeside – Hornchurch | TfL ¹³ | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| X80 | Chafford Hundred – Bluewater | Ensignbus | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

⁷ Evening service provided by service 77/77A

⁸ Part route only

⁹ Daytime service provided by services 22 and 73

¹⁰ Two buses per hour at peak times

¹¹ Supported by c2c as required by the Essex Thameside rail franchise

¹² Currently contracted to Arriva

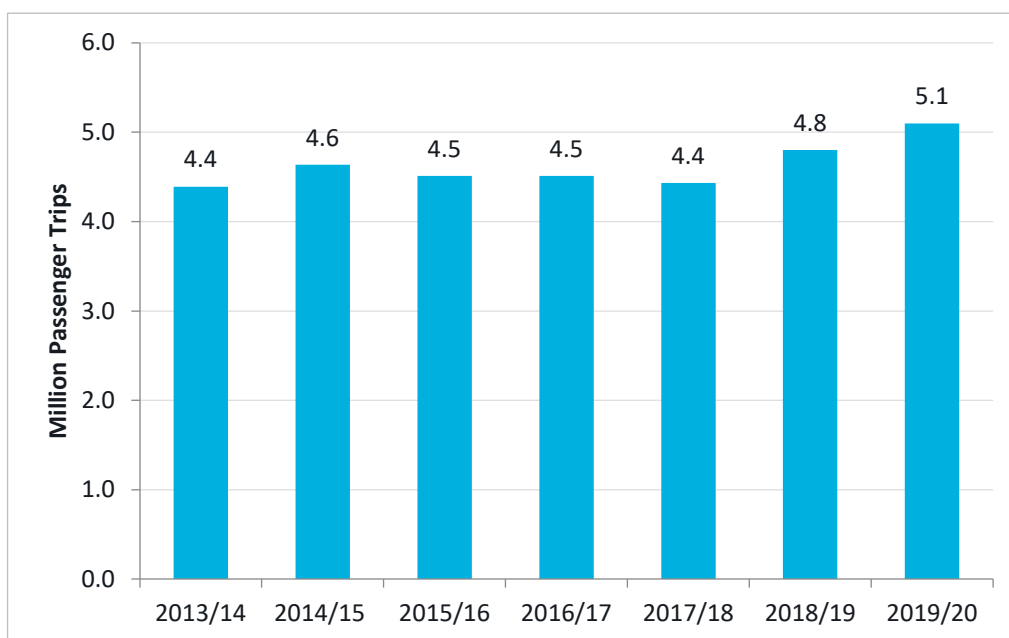
¹³ Currently contracted to Stagecoach

- 2.12 The network is generally comprehensive, but in some areas, complex. The complexity is primarily seen where the provision of Ensignbus services to particular areas at different times of day is by different service numbers.
- 2.13 For example, Monday to Saturday early mornings routes 22 and 73 are merged to form route 77, but Monday to Saturday evenings routes 22 and 73A are merged to form route 77A. On Sundays, route 73 becomes route 73A to serve part of Chadwell served during the week by route 83.
- 2.14 This has been forced on Ensignbus to achieve reliability. Both passenger demand and the operator’s preference would be to run the 77 service at all times, but the periodic instances of delay caused by traffic congestion has forced it to split the service in Grays during the daytime. This is inconvenient for passengers and costs Ensignbus resources.

Patronage

- 2.15 The number of passenger trips recorded in the borough by DfT bus statistics has shown a rise in the last two years (pre-COVID-19). The numbers are shown in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Annual Bus Passenger Trips (2013-2020)

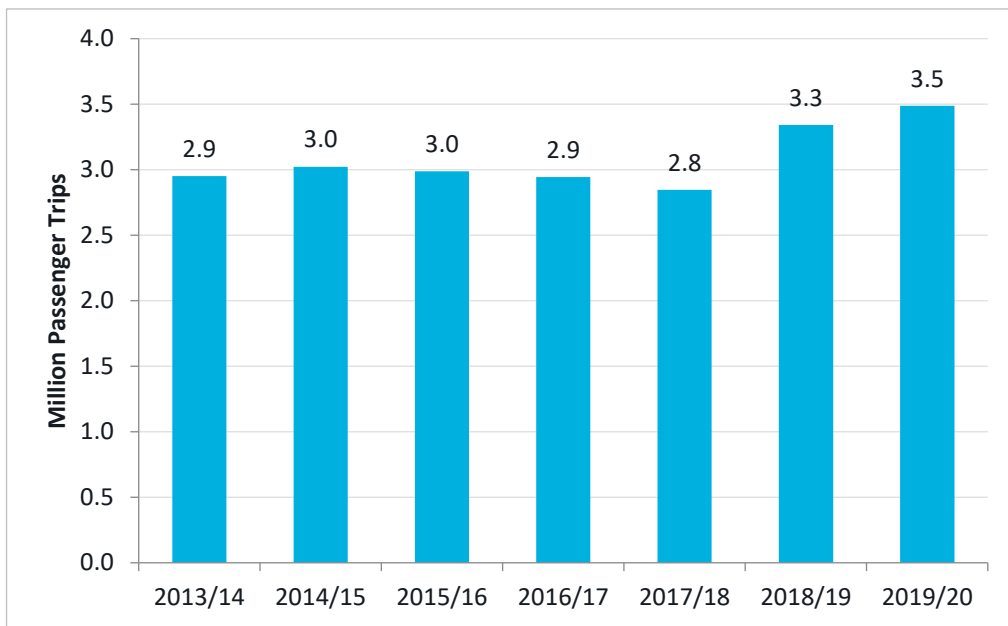


DfT Bus Statistics Bus0109.ods

- 2.16 Breaking this down by operator, the corresponding graph for Ensignbus is shown in Figure 2.4. This shows that Ensignbus has driven the growth in passengers, which is largely associated with additional services for the Amazon Distribution Centre¹⁴.

¹⁴ Source – Thurrock Transport Officer

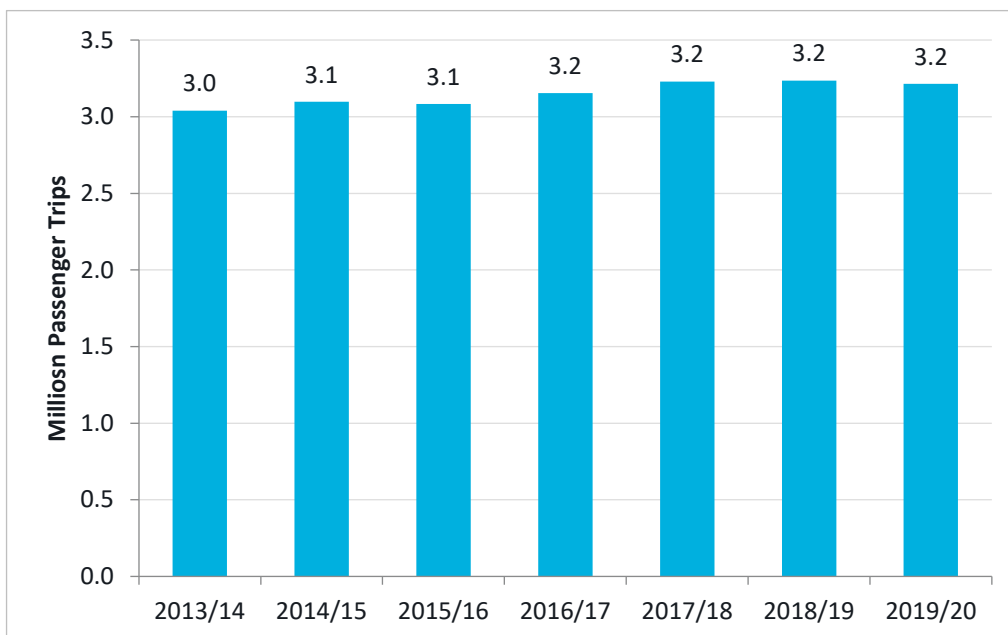
Figure 2.4: Annual Ensignbus Bus Passenger Trips (2013-2020)



2.17 Passenger trips on the Thurrock tendered services operated by NIBS and Stephenson's are of the order of 90k per annum.

2.18 Data from TfL shows that the passenger numbers on its three routes into Thurrock have remained largely constant. The results for the **whole** routes are shown in Figure 2.5.

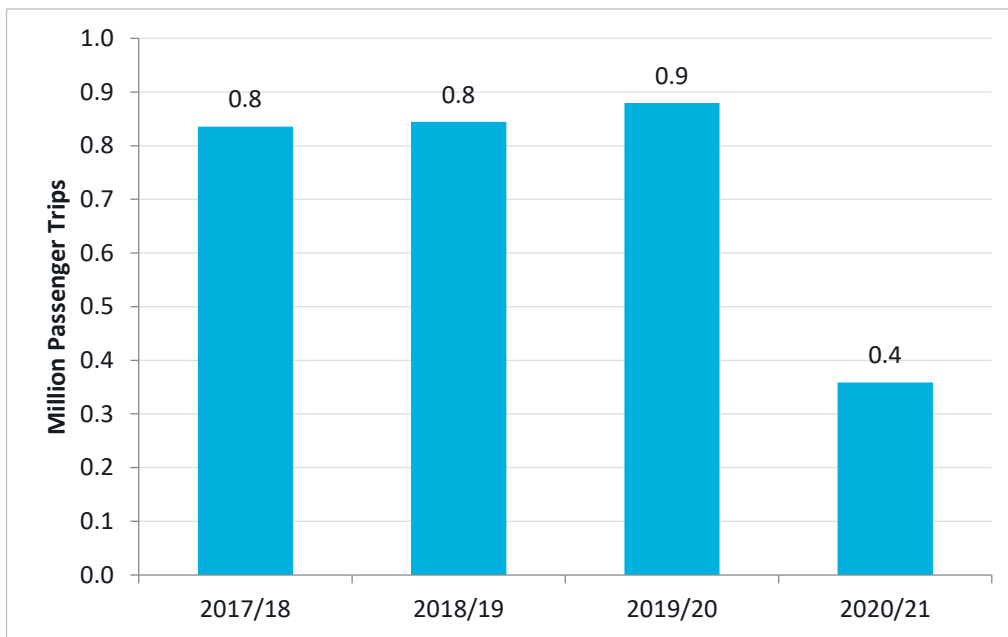
Figure 2.5: Annual TfL Bus Passenger Trips on routes 347, 370 and 372 (2013-2020)



<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/buses-performance-data>

2.19 TfL have provided access to Oyster/contactless "touch in" records for the bus stops they serve in Thurrock for the last four years. These are shown in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6: Annual TfL “touch in” Trips on routes 347, 370 and 372 within Thurrock (2017-2021)

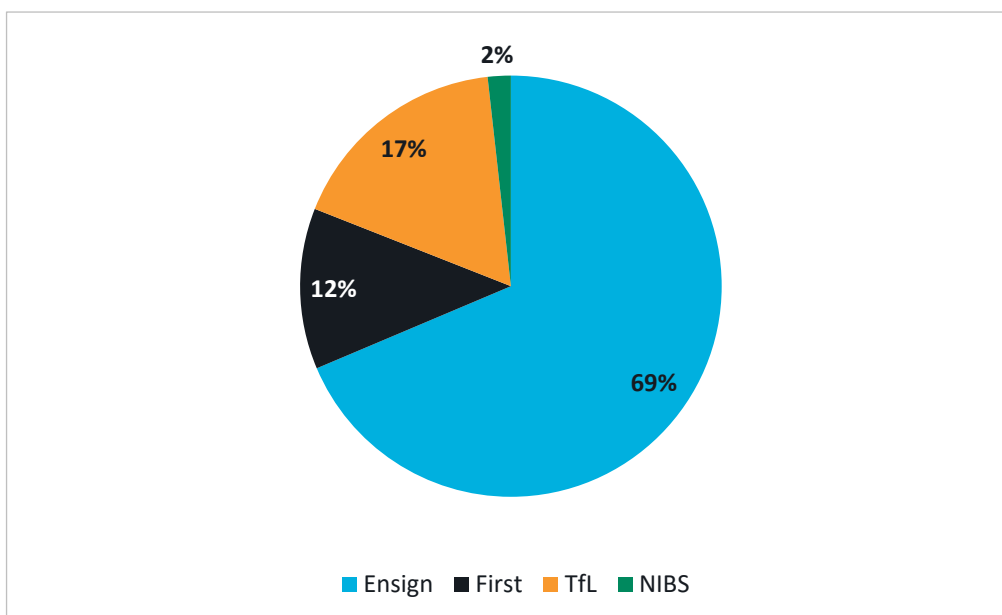


2.20 This data will capture all passenger trips wholly within Thurrock together with passengers boarding in Thurrock for destinations within Greater London. It does not include passengers travelling to Thurrock from origins within Greater London.

2.21 First Essex have provided Covid data (Figure 3.3) which show that the average weekly Thurrock demand was approximately 12,000 per week. This suggests that First was carrying around 630,000 Thurrock passengers a year.

2.22 Based on the passenger numbers above, we can estimate the market share in Thurrock between the operators as shown in Figure 2.7. This shows that Ensignbus have around 70% of the market measured this way.

Figure 2.7: Estimated Operators market share by trips passenger within the Thurrock area (2019/20)

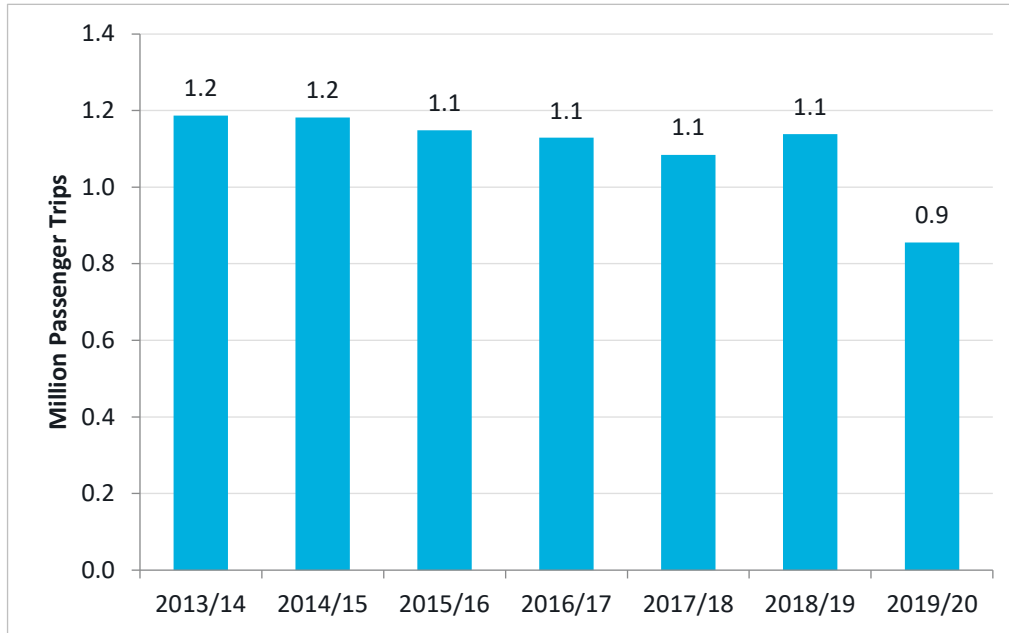


Source: Steer Analysis

Concessions

2.23 Trips made by concessionary pass holders have remained broadly constant until 2019/20 when a 10% dip was observed. The numbers travelling are shown in Figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8: Annual Concessionary Pass Holder Bus Passenger Trips (2013-2020)



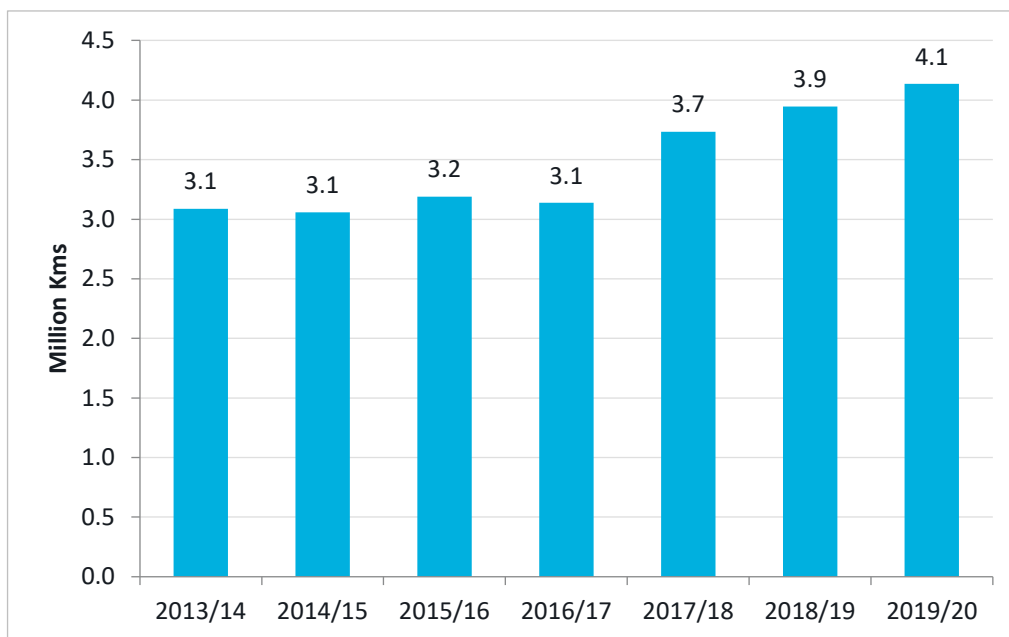
2.24 The fall may be due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of that year. Up to then no discernible effect from the rise in the female retirement age (and therefore the qualification for a bus pass) was visible.

2.25 There are currently 20,808 concessionary pass holders in Thurrock of which 19,137 are older persons. The remainder are those with a registered disability, 632 of whom have a Companion pass.

Mileage

2.26 The mileage operated has also risen over recent years. The changes are shown in Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9: Annual Bus Kilometres (2013-2020)



Analysis of DfT Bus Statistics Bus0208.ods

Supported Services

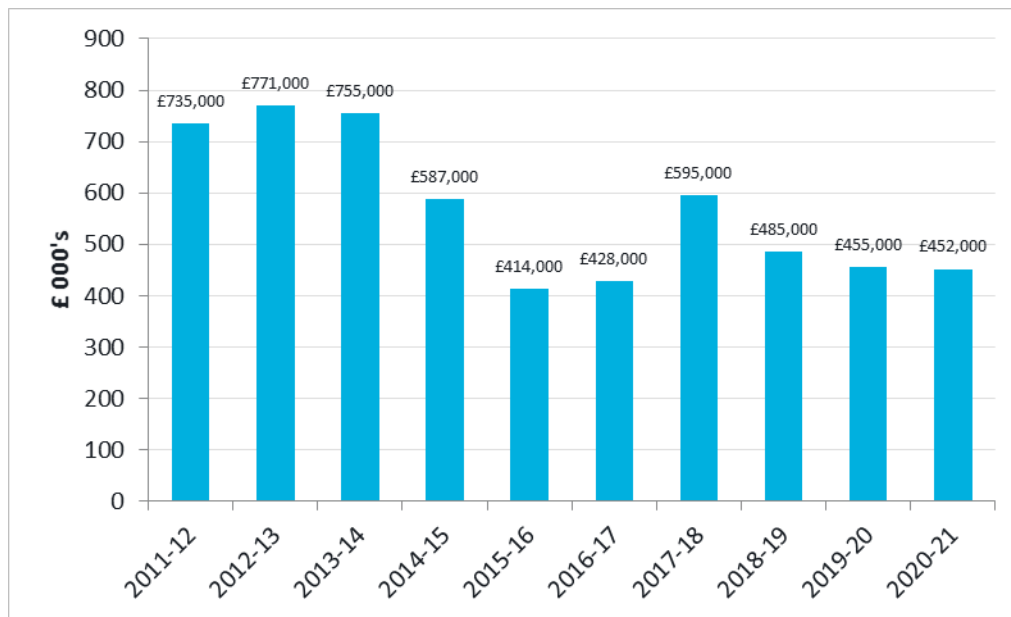
- 2.27 A total of eight services are not commercial, supported by public authorities.
- 2.28 Three services are supported by Thurrock Council and awarded through a tender process. These are:
- 11 linking Purfleet-on-Thames with Basildon
 - 265 linking Bulphan with Grays
 - 374 linking Grays with Basildon
- 2.29 TfL services are also not commercially operated, but are funded by TfL (with no financial support from Thurrock Council). These are:
- 347 linking Romford with Ockendon
 - 370 linking Romford with Lakeside
 - 372 linking Hornchurch with Lakeside
- 2.30 Two services are fully supported by Essex County Council. These are
- 269 linking Grays with Brentwood
 - 565 linking Bulphan with Brentwood
- 2.31 These services represent approximately 22% of bus mileage in the area.¹⁵ The services supported by Thurrock represent 7% of bus mileage.
- 2.32 The Thurrock supported services are described in Table 2.3.

¹⁵ [DfT Bus Statistics Bus0208.ods 2019/20](#)

Table 2.3: Subsidised Bus Services (2020/21)

| Service | Operator | Gross Financial Support | Mileage | £/Mile |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 11 | NIBS Buses | £232,815 | 92,484 | £2.52 |
| 265 | Stephensons ¹⁶ | £22,200 | 7,748 | £2.87 |
| 374 | NIBS Buses | £197,128 | 84,512 | £2.33 |
| Total/Average | | £452,143 | 184,744 | £2.45 |

2.33 The funding spent on supported services within Thurrock has declined significantly over the past 10 years, as illustrated in Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: Funding for Supported Bus Services: 2011 – 2021

Source: Thurrock Council

2.34 This has resulted in a service being provided for every community unserved by a commercial service but has not allowed the provision of any evening or Sunday services. One community only has a service to Grays three days a week offering two return trips, one has no Saturday service and the level of service offered to all communities is unattractive. This has created isolated and increasingly inaccessible communities.

Reliability

2.35 The Traffic Commissioners set a reliability target that 95% of services should be within a window of tolerance of one minute early and five minutes late. The majority of services in Thurrock achieve this standard; across 2019/20, more than 91% of services ran on time, while in 2020/21 (when services were impacted by the pandemic), more than 97% of services ran on time.

2.36 The general characteristic of bus service time keeping in Thurrock is that most services run punctually much of the time; but that any significant disruption the adjoining trunk roads

¹⁶ While NIBS have the contract for this service, the registered service is operated by Stephensons, part of the same group.

(M25 and A13) has a disproportionate effect on congestion on the conventional street network in Thurrock. In extremis this can result in buses running many hours late. Much of the good timekeeping is delivered by the operators adding contingency time in their timetables and terminus buffer times. This “padding” slows down journey times, making the bus less attractive to passengers and adds to the operators’ costs.

- 2.37 In addition, service X80 – linking Lakeside and Bluewater shopping centre in Kent – is particularly prone to disruption as it uses the Dartford Crossing to cross the River Thames.
- 2.38 In 2019/20, the only bus services with less than 80% of trips running on time were services 5A, 5B, and 100.¹⁷ These services are longer than most in Thurrock as they provide interurban connections with Basildon, Chelmsford and Pitsea in Essex. This increased length means that there is more opportunity for delays to accrue during service operation.
- 2.39 In recognition of this, from 1st September 2021, First Essex split the 100 service into two separate routes either side of Basildon. This introduces additional turn round time at Basildon and journey times have been lengthened between Basildon and Lakeside. To keep costs under control, the frequency has been reduced from four to three buses per hour.
- 2.40 Ensignbus states that they have “never cancelled a journey due to there not being a bus or driver available – that’s not to say we don’t cancel journeys, but it is always caused by problems outside our control, like the Dartford Crossing being closed or delayed, heavy traffic, road works etc.”¹⁸ This is achieved by having spare buses and drivers available at all times. This no doubt adds to Ensignbus’ operating costs which, in turn, may be reflected in its fare levels.

Bus Stops

- 2.41 There are a total of 612 bus stops in Thurrock. 160 of these are equipped with a passenger waiting shelter.

Bus Priority

- 2.42 Bus Priority infrastructure provision is limited in Thurrock. Currently there are only three areas with significant bus priority measures;
- Askey Farm Land/London Road, South Stifford. Eastbound, close to the junction for Askeys Farm Lane:
 - Section 1: 35 m (Figure 2.11)
 - Section 2: 35 m (Figure 2.12 **Error! Reference source not found.**)
 - High Road, North Stifford (next to the North Stifford interchange):
 - Eastbound: 24 m (Figure 2.13)
 - Westbound: 21 m (Figure 2.14)
 - Stifford road, entering Aveley: 44 m (Figure 2.15)
- 2.43 These are generally in place to allow full size buses to use roads that have physical 6’6” width restrictions. Illustrations of these sections are provided in the figures below.

¹⁷ Thurrock Bus Statistics

¹⁸ E-mail Correspondence with Ensignbus

Figure 2.11: Askey Farm Land/London Road, South Stifford, Section 1



Source: Thurrock Council

Figure 2.12: Askey Farm Land/London Road, South Stifford, Section 2



Source: Thurrock Council

Figure 2.13: High Road, North Stifford (next to the North Stifford interchange); Eastbound



Source: Thurrock Council

Figure 2.14: High Road, North Stifford (next to the North Stifford interchange); Westbound



Source: Thurrock Council

Figure 2.15: Stifford road, entering Aveley



Source: Thurrock Council

Journey Time Changes

2.44 As a consequence of the limited bus priority provision and the general rise in traffic congestion, planned bus journey times have had to be lengthened in recent years to maintain punctuality and provide some resilience from delays. For example;

- Service 44 08:30 from Lakeside to Grays: In 2010, morning peak services took 29 minutes; today these services take 33 minutes (a 14% worsening).
- Service 73 Lakeside to Grays: in 2010, morning peak services took 10 minutes; today these services take 14 minutes (a 40% worsening).
- Service 100 Basildon to Lakeside: In 2010, morning peak services took 57 minutes; today these services take 63 minutes (a 7% worsening).
- Service 370 from Romford to Lakeside at 09:04: in 2010, morning peak services took 58 minutes; today these services take 62 minutes (a 7% worsening).

Parking

2.45 Thurrock Council is in the process of preparing a parking strategy considering the scope of parking across the unitary authority. The three tables presented below show the current number of parking spaces across the borough and their distribution.

Table 2.4: Total On-Street and Off-Street Spaces (2018)

| Location | Number of Spaces |
|---|------------------|
| Marked bays for off-street parking | 1,161 |
| Marked bays for on-street parking | 1,255 |
| Off-street parking spaces not marked out as individual bays | 78 |
| On-street parking spaces not marked out as individual bays | 195 |

Source: Parking Policy and Strategy, Thurrock Council (2020)

Table 2.5: Car Parks in Grays (2018)

| Location | Number of Spaces |
|---|------------------|
| Darnley Road (off-street short stay) | 30 |
| Argent Street (off-street long stay) | 42 |
| Cromwell Road (off-street long stay) | 60 |
| Crown Road (off-street long stay) | 96 |
| Station House, opposite rail station main entrance (off-street long stay) | 10 |
| Grays Beach, Thames Road (off-street long stay) | 48 |
| Multi-storey car park | 740 |
| Morrison's supermarket | 540 |
| Grays Station | 168 |

Source: Parking Policy and Strategy, Thurrock Council (2020)

Table 2.6: Car Parks Outside Grays (2018)

| Location | Number of Spaces | Charges |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Gordon Road (Grover Walk), Corringham | 112 | Free |
| Gordon Road (Police station), Corringham | 53 | Free |
| Giffords Cross, Corringham | 78 | Free |
| Defoe Parade, Chadwell St Mary | 56 | Free |
| Lodge Lane, Grays (Socketts Heath) | 56 | Free |
| Cornwell House, Purfleet-on-Thames | 100 | Pay |
| Canterbury Parade, South Ockendon | 100 | Pay ¹⁹ |

Source: Parking Policy and Strategy, Thurrock Council (2020)

- 2.52 The total direct cost of parking enforcement in Thurrock in 2018/19 was £579,201. Adding in the administration, infrastructure and capital costs, this figure comes to £701,401. However, parking enforcement remains a net generator of income for the area – in 2018/19 once the income from charges is considered, the net income from parking is £406,951.²⁰

Current Staffing

- 2.53 Thurrock has five key staff members working on buses in the Thurrock Passenger Transport Unit (PTU). Their job titles and roles are explained in Table 2.7Table 2.4.

¹⁹ Free up to 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours – 60p, over 2 hours £2.10

²⁰ https://www.patrol-uk.info/annual_reports/Thurrock/Thurrock-Council-Figure 2.parking_annualreport_2019.pdf

Table 2.7: Staff working on Public Transportation

| Title | Task | Time per week spent on public transport |
|---|---|---|
| Passenger Transport Manager (Team Leader) | Passenger transport, school transport procurement | 10% |
| Transport Officer | School transport procurement | 0% |
| Transport Officer | Public transport | 100% |
| Information and Monitoring Assistant | Public transport, other | 95% |
| Senior Project Manager | Public Transport | 20% |

- 2.54 The PTU provides daily customer service on a variety of issues ranging from requests for new bus stops through to quality of service and safety of passengers, and provision of concessionary passes.
- 2.55 The PTU also works in connection with the Procurement team for the tendering and deployment of contracts for local supported bus services. These are invariably large-scale projects which can take some months to complete.
- 2.56 PTU has a dedicated Monitoring and Information Officer that regularly inspects and checks local bus services at certain areas/points within the borough. A total of 23 local bus routes are monitored at 11 sites at least twice every month. Monitoring sites include (but are not limited to) passenger interchanges at Grays and Lakeside Bus Stations, Socketts Heath Parade, Purfleet and Ockendon Rail stations. The team monitors most bus shelters and stops within the borough and carries out condition checks to ensure these are functioning sufficiently (sample images of the types of shelters which can be found in the Thurrock area are in Appendix C). Any vandalism or substantial damage is reported to a maintenance contractor for remedial action. Any small-scale maintenance required is usually completed by the team themselves in-house.
- 2.57 Bus services are monitored for their punctuality and to ensure their timetable remains reliable. Additionally, operational issues are checked and reported if necessary. Home to School transport routes are monitored periodically, and when necessary, specific route checks are undertaken. This is usually as a result of a customer enquiry/concern.

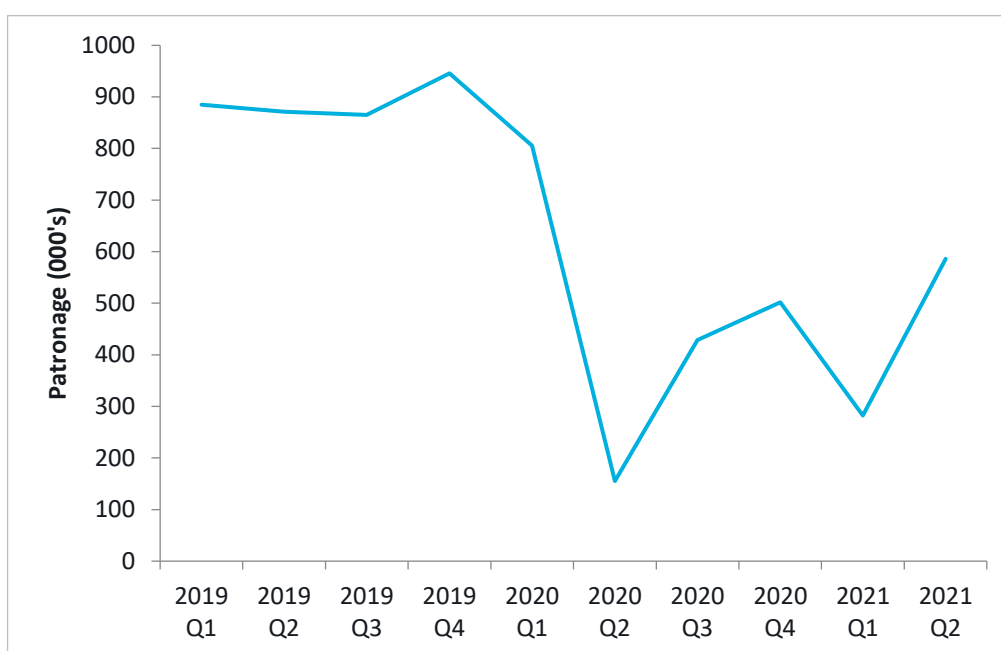
3 Covid – 19

Patronage

3.1 From March 2020, passenger numbers were significantly hit by the onset of the Covid – 19 pandemic.

3.2 Ensignbus has provided quarterly patronage data which is shown in Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: Quarterly Ensignbus Patronage during the Pandemic

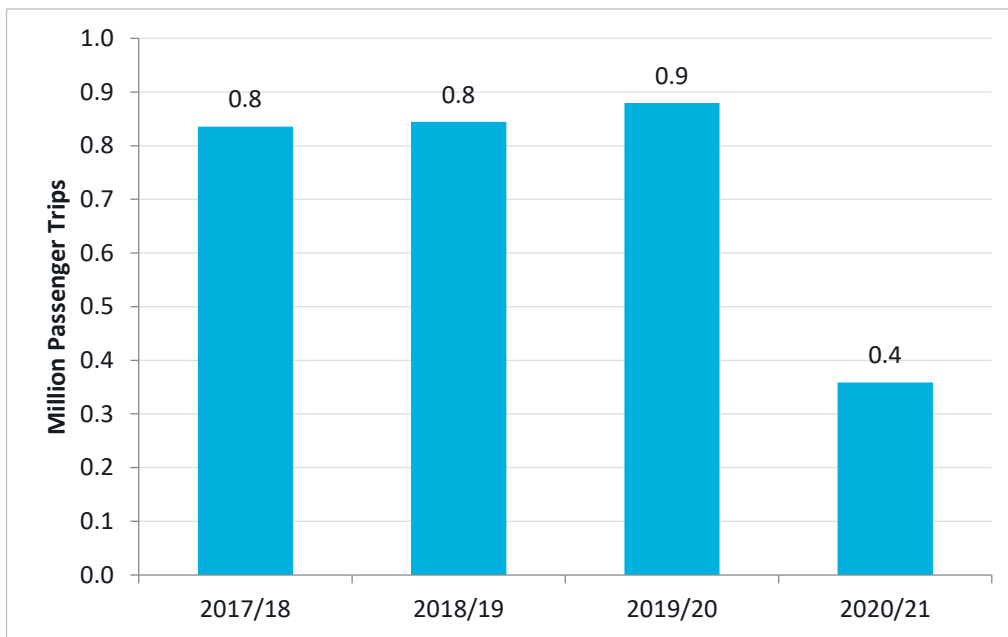


3.3 This shows that patronage dropped to around 20% of pre-Covid levels in 2020 Q2 and has recovered to just under 70% in 2021 Q2. Over the 2020/21 financial year patronage was at 38% of 2019/20 levels.

3.4 The reduction in commuter traffic, particularly into London will have had a significant knock-on effect on Ensignbus patronage feeding into Grays station.

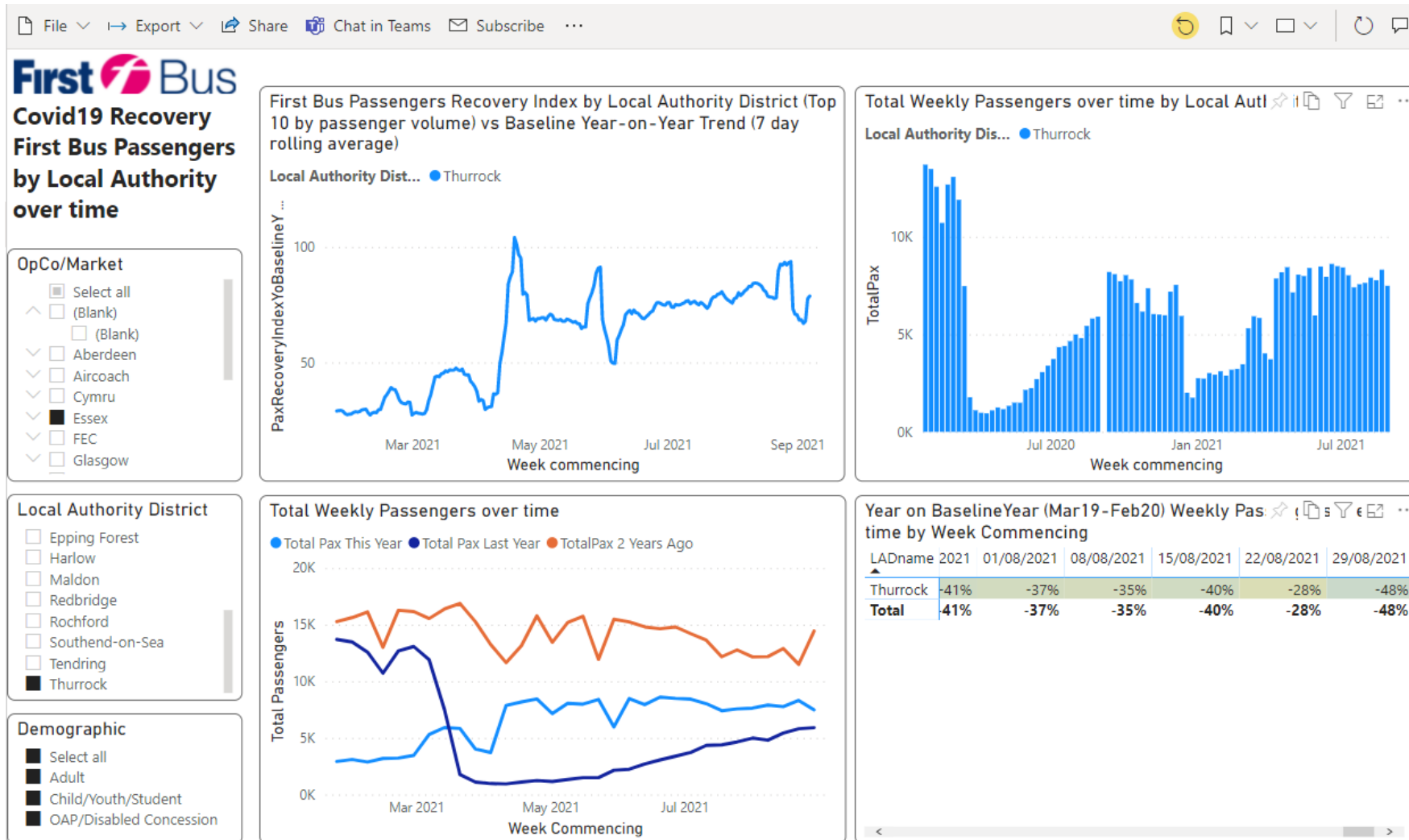
3.5 TfL figures (Figure 3.2) show that the 2020/21 patronage on their three routes in Thurrock was 41% of that in 2019/20.

Figure 3.2: Annual TfL “touch in” Trips on routes 347, 370 and 372 within Thurrock (2017-2021)



- 3.6 First have provided a display of graphs for demand in Thurrock over the pandemic period. This is shown in Figure 3.3. The graphs show a similar story of slow recovery from 2019 levels, with patronage approximately half of that from pre-Covid.
- 3.7 Early advice from the Government following the easing of national lockdown measures encouraged active or personal modes of travel such as the car, rather than passenger transport modes such as buses and trains. The subsequent response by the population has resulted in significant reductions in bus travel across the country since early 2020, with patronage levels failing to recover to 2019 levels.
- 3.8 The opportunities provided by enforced lockdown for more people to work from home has also meant a new way of working away from the office, negating the traditional commute. The reduction in rail commuter travel has therefore had a knock on effect on commuters using the bus to access railway stations. If, as projected, there is not a return to office working on a full-time basis by workers, this will inevitably result in a long-term reduction in patronage and therefore income for bus operators.
- 3.9 There is still a nervousness amongst some sections of the community to return to pre-pandemic travel levels, and for some the need to make a journey by bus has changed, and in some cases eliminated. Taken with the evidence provided by Ensign, TfL and First Essex, there are real concerns regarding the opportunity for patronage levels to recover in the short- to medium-term, impacting on the profitability of operators, and the viability of their routes. At present, the Thurrock network relies entirely on Government and Local Authority funding to survive, and is likely to be the case for the foreseeable future.

Figure 3.3: First Bus Passenger Demand in Thurrock during the Covid-19 Pandemic



4 Improvement Plans

Overview

- 4.1 This section of the plan provides an overview of the Improvement Plans and the areas they will focus on. These plans have been developed through collaboration with bus operators in Thurrock and through public engagement with residents and other stakeholders, and examination of the information in the preceding chapters. Ultimately this means that the plans for improvement here are based upon a detailed understanding of the local geography, developed through experience, and quantitative analysis.
- 4.2 In particular, stakeholders identified a need for more comprehensive timetabling on existing routes. A primary objective of BSIP's is to offer bus services over a larger part of the day and during more days of the week; as we have seen from the table of frequent services (Table 2.2). While there is some need to provide additional routes, this was not seen as a particularly key priority.
- 4.3 This BSIP is therefore focussed on providing higher levels of service, thus providing a more attractive service, ultimately generating additional patronage, to ensure that service improvements can be maintained without public financial support. This aligns with the BSIP guidance, which that BSIPs should "describe in outline how LTAs and operators in an area can achieve the overarching goal of the National Bus Strategy – **to grow bus patronage: both to build it back after the pandemic and then to increase it and raise buses' mode share.**"²¹ This can be considered the ultimate aim of this BSIP, and all elements of it build in this direction.
- 4.4 This chapter is built around 'Proposals for Improvement' section of Chapter 2 of the UK National Bus Strategy: Bus Service Improvement Plans Guidance.²²

Proposals for Improvement

- 4.5 Each section below describes a category which must be fulfilled as part of the BSIP's movement towards achieving the goal above. Presented here are high level ideas and ambitions, more specific interventions and objectives have been outlined in Chapter 5.

Bus Promotion

- 4.6 Alongside the various detailed improvements described below, Thurrock proposes to work collaboratively with operators and other stakeholders to develop an effectively funded, comprehensive bus promotion scheme.
- 4.7 This is intended to promote the use of buses as an effective means of undertaking other activities: leisure, going to work, visiting friends & family, education, shopping, sports activities, etc.

²¹ pp. 12 (Emphasis Added); [National Bus Strategy: Bus Service Improvement Plans Guidance to local authorities and bus operators](#), Department for Transport, May 2021

²² *Ibid.*

4.8 It will make merit of the fact that bus travel is a means to achieving other things.

More Frequent and Comprehensive

4.9 The BSIP guidance states that there should be “turn-up-and-go services on major routes and feeder or demand-responsive services to lower-density places.”

4.10 Based on the evidence presented in previous chapters, we propose that specific services are targeted to provide a more frequent and comprehensive service across Thurrock. These improvements will target areas with poor provision or with demand that is in excess of the current offer.

4.11 Those proposed are ones that are considered to have a reasonable chance of commercial success after a period of “kickstart” support.

4.12 The proposals contain a mixture of:

- frequency enhancements on major routes;
- improvements to the current Thurrock supported network;
- enhancements to Sunday services

Better Integrated

4.13 This includes both with other modes and between bus services. The BSIP guidance states that this should be “including more bus-rail interchange and integration and inter-bus transfers”. Within Thurrock, this issue is particularly pertinent around Ockendon station. Proposed interventions will target this location and attempt to ensure a higher level of bus-rail compatibility.

Bus Speed and Reliability

4.14 The BSIP guidance states that there should be “bus priority wherever necessary and where there is room”; ultimately this is to help make buses faster and more reliable.

4.15 It has been shown in Chapter 2, that bus reliability is generally good across the area. However, bus priority measures are presently limited. As part of the improvements to the overall network, we propose several key areas (detailed in Chapter 5) where it would be useful to think about putting key infrastructural elements in place to help improve bus speed and reliability.

Cheaper, simpler fares

4.16 The BSIP guidance states that there should be “more low, flat fares in towns and cities, lower point-to-point fares elsewhere, and more daily price capping everywhere”.

4.17 Simplifying fares in Thurrock is complex, reflective of the multi-operator network in the area:

- Ensignbus and First offer their own commercially based fares
- NIBS/Stephenson’s charge fares in accordance with their Thurrock and Essex contracts
- TfL services charge standard Oyster fares in line with the rest of Greater London

4.18 Thurrock Council proposes to work closely with the bus operators on this matter through the Enhanced Partnership process. It is hoped to be possible to, ultimately, deliver cheaper, simpler fares across the area. First steps could involve introducing flat fares in the evenings and at the weekend – this is something which will need to be carefully investigated and consulted upon before introducing.

- 4.19 Thurrock would like to commission research on the impact on both passengers and operators as any changes must be sustainable in the medium to long term.
- 4.20 This BSIP includes a proposal to fit separate tap-off smartcard/contactless readers on all buses which will put in place the technology to support touch-on/touch-off charging with capping.
- 4.21 In the medium term the aim is to deliver multi-modal fares which stretch across Bus, Ferry and Rail services, connecting these together to deliver a truly integrated system. However, it is acknowledged that this is unlikely to be a straightforward issue to deliver given the need to involve both TfL and the rail industry.

Easier to understand

- 4.22 The BSIP guidance states that there should be “simpler routes, common numbering, co-ordinated timetable change dates, good publicity, and comprehensive information online.”
- 4.23 The numbering of routes already avoids any duplication, so already meets the need for basic numbering clarity.
- 4.24 Much of the network is straightforward and clear, but some elements of Ensignbus’ services exhibit variations in route number between daytimes, evenings and Sundays. Most of these variations are a direct consequence of variable levels of traffic congestion at different times of day.
- 4.25 Through the Thurrock Enhanced Partnership, the co-ordination of service change dates will be sought, including agreement with Essex and TfL.
- 4.26 At present, marketing, publicity and service information is largely decentralised with each operator producing their own materials. Thurrock Council provide some systematic information by producing a comprehensive map (Figure 2.1) and brochures for its tendered services (Appendix B). TfL service timetables are included on its website to fill the gap that these are not available from TfL. As noted above, Thurrock proposes to introduce a collaborative bus marketing scheme.
- 4.27 As with fares, establishing a unified branding and market image for Thurrock will be challenging due to cross-border services.
- 4.28 Providing more real-time signage would significantly help people to understand service provision and frequency. Real-time service signage is expected to help increase patronage. Real-time information costs around £8,000 per site to provide and maintain for five years. In addition, improved audio-visual announcements on buses would improve the quality of the service for users, particularly those with visual impairments.

Easier to use

- 4.29 Delivering the above improvements should result in a transport network that is easier to understand.

Quality of Fleet

- 4.30 As described in Chapter 2, the quality of Thurrock’s bus fleet is high. All the commercial operators have invested significantly in their fleets.
- 4.31 By the end of the year (2021), all of the Ensign commercially run services will be Euro VI with the exception of six Euro V double decker vehicles, while First Essex are currently upgrading their Enviro 400s to Euro VI. Both operators have hybrid buses in their fleets. TfL services are

all Euro VI or better. Crucially, this means that the only buses in the area which are not Euro VI are those which are provided on routes financially supported by Essex and Thurrock.

- 4.32 In the light of this current investment in Euro VI fleets, it is not considered appropriate to consider zero emission buses in this funding round. Rather it should be deferred until the Euro VI fleet is due for replacement, or sooner should the comparative cost become more positive. It is expected that the change to zero emission will become market led as the maturity of the technology improves. Co-ordination with the planning of the supporting infrastructure will be needed.

Monitoring

- 4.33 Where implementation of the above measures takes place, there is a requirement to ensure these have had a positive impact for bus users.
- 4.34 Re-establishing bus user satisfaction surveys will enable the council to identify whether there is awareness of enhancements implemented and if these are increasing opportunity, as well recording further enhancements into the BSIP.

Public Engagement

- 4.35 To ensure that there is support for the BSIP, and allow local residents to propose opportunities and considerations, public engagement has been undertaken to identify the priorities for improvement. The online form for this engagement can be found here: <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/bus-service>. This portal explains what the BSIP is for and offers an open format ability for contributors to respond with ideas and comments. Two hundred and fifty posters have been produced to help enable awareness of residents to the public engagement, with 130 displayed on buses. The remainder are being displayed at bus stops in each community and at community centres.
- 4.36 Community Liaison Officers are informing their contacts to make them aware of the engagement. All elected members have been contacted by email and 60 members of the Bus Users Group have been invited to respond. A meeting has been held with the Department for Work and Pensions to seek information from them about where people find access to work difficult because of the bus service. A direct approach has been made to seven stakeholders such as Chamber of Commerce, and Lakeside Shopping Centre. It is envisaged that these invitations to the community will continue indefinitely.
- 4.37 The engagement process will continue beyond the Bus Service Improvement Plan into the development of the Enhanced Partnership.
- 4.38 The Public Engagement Portal went live on 3 August 2021. After 35 days, a total of 84 respondents had participated via the online portal, with a further 16 responses submitted to the Council via email and via post. The large volume of data collected through this Public Engagement will help the Council to better understand the perception of buses by residents. A full summary of all responses has not been compiled, but the following key themes support the proposed measures listed in this chapter.
- 4.39 Initial responses received by the Council via email and post highlight the following:
- a higher level of service frequency is the key requirement,
 - concerns raised about the effect of a probable health service reorganisation (a network of four GP “superhubs” is proposed) on accessing healthcare,
 - concerns on the effect of changes in educational opportunities, and
 - space issues at Grays Bus Station.

4.40 Information received into the Council via the engagement portal allowed for the collection of a richer database of responses. High level responses showed:

- 70% of respondents use the bus at least monthly, however only 60% of respondents perceived themselves to be regular bus users.
- Two thirds of respondents had used the bus within the previous month, and the majority of these respondents had used the bus in the past week.
- Of the 30% of respondents who hadn't used the bus in the last six months, all had not used the bus prior to the first national lockdown in March 2020.
- The primary purpose for using the bus by respondents was to undertake journeys for utility, recreation and leisure, with shopping, for leisure, and meeting friends and family as the three most popular answers. Travelling for work was the next most popular answer.
- Bus users were most likely to purchase their ticket via contactless means (52%), with concessionary fare travel the next popular (35%). Only 20% of respondents used cash to purchase their tickets.
- Return journey tickets were the most likely purchase (37%) followed by single journey (17%) and Day and Monthly passes (15% each).
- There was a mixed response towards ticket pricing. While some responses identified that prices were reasonable (28%), especially those as part of a multi-day pass, there was a perception that prices were too high or expensive by nearly half of respondents (47%).
- Safety on buses was of minimal concern to respondents, with 100% of bus users expressing that they felt safe using the bus (84% always, 16% sometimes). Only one respondents from non-users stated they did not feel safe using the bus, with 97% perceiving buses to be safe or somewhat safe. Concerns raised were related to mask wearing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, behaviour of school children following the end of the school day or anti-social behaviour. Two comments related to physical safety – specific to trips and falls. Security was a greater concern for non-users.
- When asked about punctuality of buses, 80% of respondents had a favourable view, with 4% stating always and 76% stating usually. A similar response was seen amongst non-users, though 33% viewed services as punctual and reliable and 46% stating somewhat.
- Service frequency saw 45% of bus users state that services did not run frequently enough in Thurrock. Amongst non-users this increased to 53% stating no, and 38% stating somewhat.
- Nearly two thirds of bus users felt comfortable being able to access bus information. Over 50% of non-users also stated they would feel comfortable accessing information to enable them to use the bus for their next journey.
- Over 75% of bus users did feel there was either insufficient infrastructure to help them use the bus.
- Almost all respondents (98%) were residents of the borough, and only two (2%) stated they lived outside Thurrock but worked or studied in the borough.

4.41 Within the public engagement portal, sought to identify what improvements would bus users like to see. This was split into two questions, the first regarding improvements to the bus itself, and the second in regard to the whole journey including the travel at either end of bus travel.

4.42 Of the 49 responses to the first question, 38 were related to either increasing frequency of services (21 responses) or increasing the number of routes (17 responses). Nine responses related to payment options and the cost of ticket prices and ten responses related to bus information and on-board vehicle features. The second question provided similar answers to the first and the same themes.

- 4.43 Through this public engagement exercise, the Council has identified an opportunity to remain engaged with respondents. Two thirds of respondents were happy to engage in the future with the Council to get further views about buses in particular, and over 70% wished to be engaged with the new upcoming Transport Strategy, though only 40% wanted to contribute to focus groups to discuss other transport related issues within the borough.
- 4.44 Specific to the BSIP, 88% of participants in the online public engagement portal wished to be informed of the publication of the Thurrock Bus Service Improvement Plan.

5 Delivery

Overview

5.1 This chapter expands on the areas highlighted in Chapter 4 and provides more specific interventions relating to each of the targeted areas:

- Bus Promotion;
- More Frequent and Comprehensive services;
- Better Integrated services;
- Bus Speed and Reliability;
- Cheaper, simpler fares;
- Easier to understand services;
- Quality of Fleet; and
- Monitoring

5.2 Under each, the proposals which Thurrock Council will bring forwards as part of the BSIP are outlined and specific objectives identified.

Bus Promotion

5.3 £100,000 funding is sought to develop a comprehensive bus promotion scheme working collaboratively with operators and stakeholders.

Objective:

To provide an effective bus promotion scheme for all bus services in Thurrock.

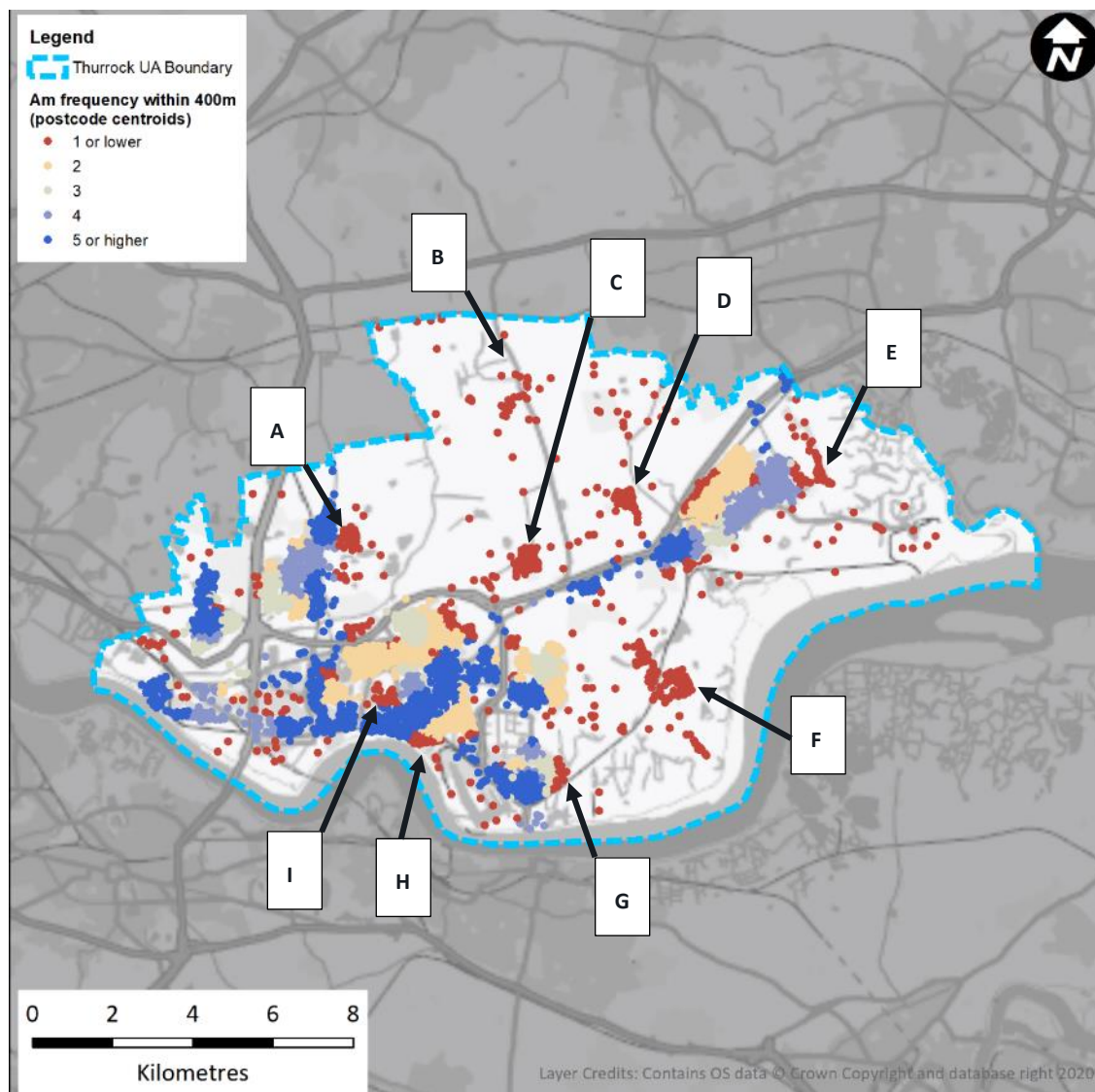
:

More Frequent and Comprehensive

5.4 To increase the offer of more frequent and comprehensive services, the following specific interventions are proposed.

5.5 For clarity in reading this section, Figure 2.2 is repeated below as Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Population (Postcodes) by access to their highest bus service Frequency within 400m

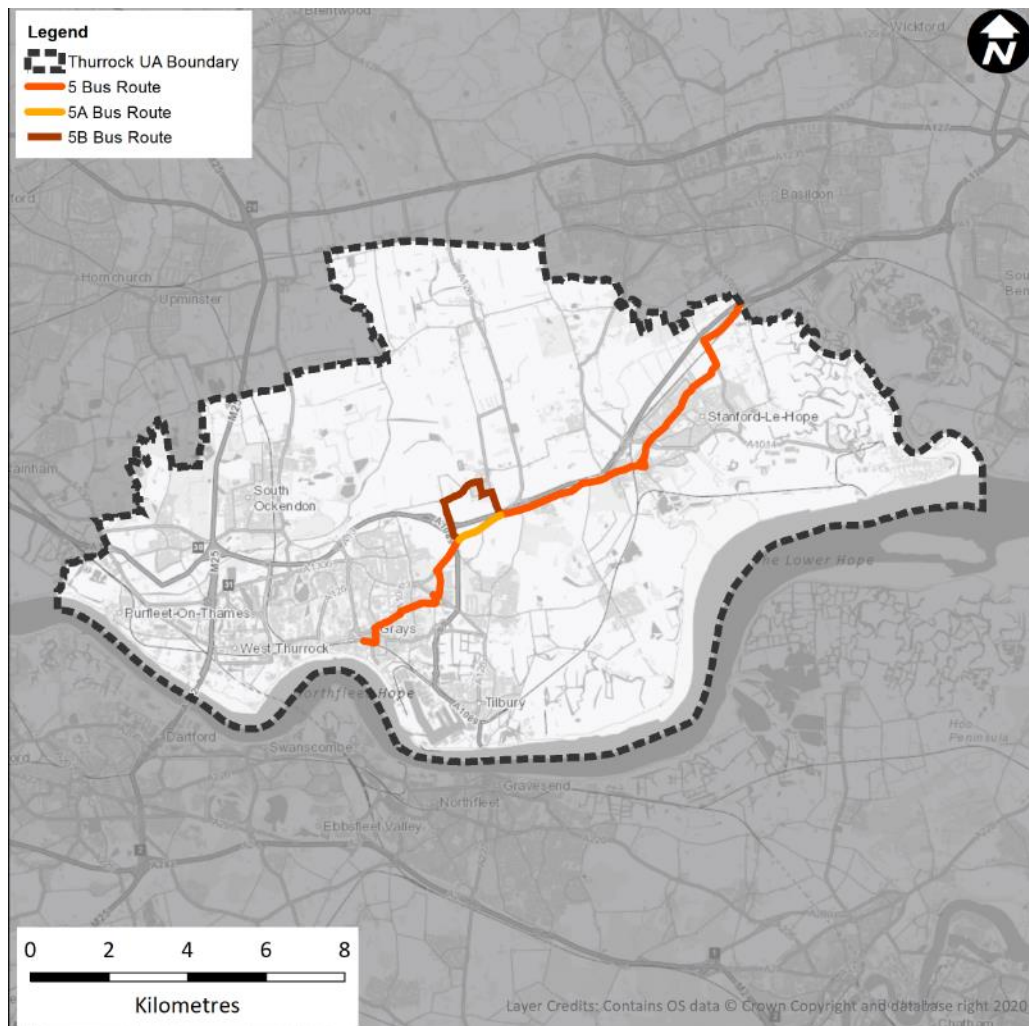


Services 5A and 5B

- 5.6 Services 5A and 5B (Figure 5.2) combine to provide a half-hourly service between Grays, Stanford-le-Hope, Basildon and Pitsea²³. The only difference between services 5A and 5B is that 5B takes a slightly longer route to serve the village of Orsett, including Orsett Hospital. Thus, Orsett only has an hourly service. In the past Orsett was served half-hourly, but as traffic congestion slowed the service down over time, the operator was able to avoid the cost of an additional bus by the rerouting of half the service.
- 5.7 Orsett has been highlighted in the analysis (Community C in Figure 5.1) as an area with poor connectivity to the bus service.
- 5.8 Services 5A and 5B are provided commercially by First.
- 5.9 There is no evening or Sunday service.

²³ Outside Thurrock, these services are joined by service 5 to provide four buses per hour between Basildon and Pitsea.

Figure 5.2: 5 Bus Route



- 5.10 By converting 5A services to 5B services, this would help to effectively fill a gap in the service provision for the area. To do so will require one extra vehicle. It is noted that this will then provide a generous layover time at Grays – this may provide the opportunity to enhance other services. First will need some pump priming financial assistance to fund the additional bus and associated operating costs.
- 5.11 The projected gross cost for running all weekday journeys using the 5B route and providing a daytime hourly 5B service on Sundays is approximately £200,000 per annum.

Objective:

To provide a minimum half-hourly Monday to Saturday and hourly Sunday service to Orsett.

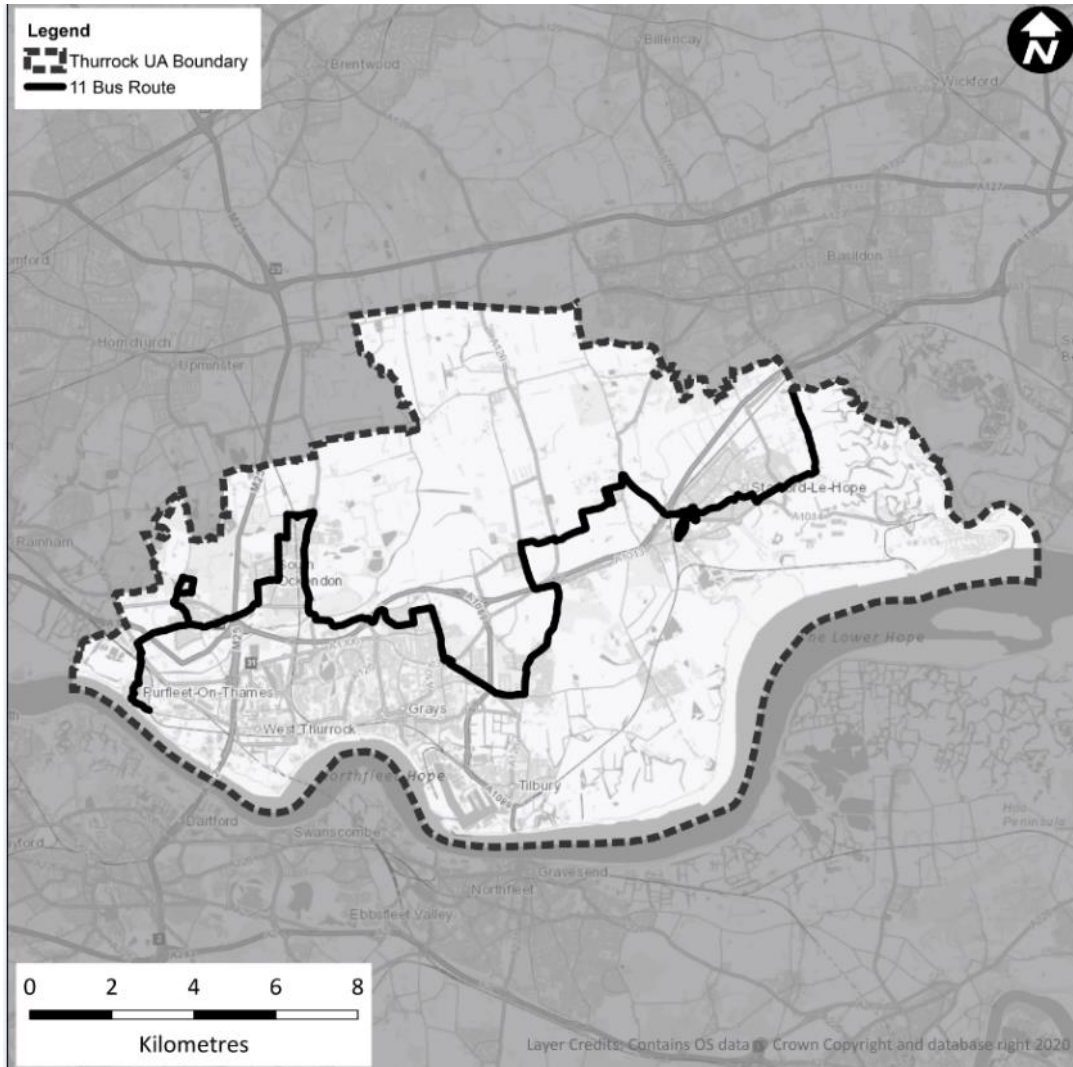
Service 11

- 5.12 Service 11 (Figure 5.3) links Purfleet-on-Thames, Aveley, Ockendon, Chadwell St Mary, Stanford-le-Hope, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and Basildon with a Monday to Friday two hourly service frequency. There is no Saturday or Sunday service.
- 5.13 It is a socially necessary service funded by Thurrock Council linking a number of isolated locations with local centres at Purfleet-on-Thames, Stanford-le-Hope and Basildon. Improving the frequency will provide major benefits to isolated and deprived communities within the

Borough. Parts of the service serve areas of future housing and employment development and it is important to have a basic usable bus service in place which can be improved as these developments come on stream.

5.14 It serves communities A, C, D and E in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.3: 11 Bus Route



5.15 We propose that the route is also operated on a Saturday. To do this will require funding for approximately two to three years. After this it is expected that the enhanced service will have seen sufficient additional patronage that the subsidy required will be no greater than that currently in place from Thurrock Council.

5.16 Estimates suggest that this will cost about £80,000 per annum.

Objective:

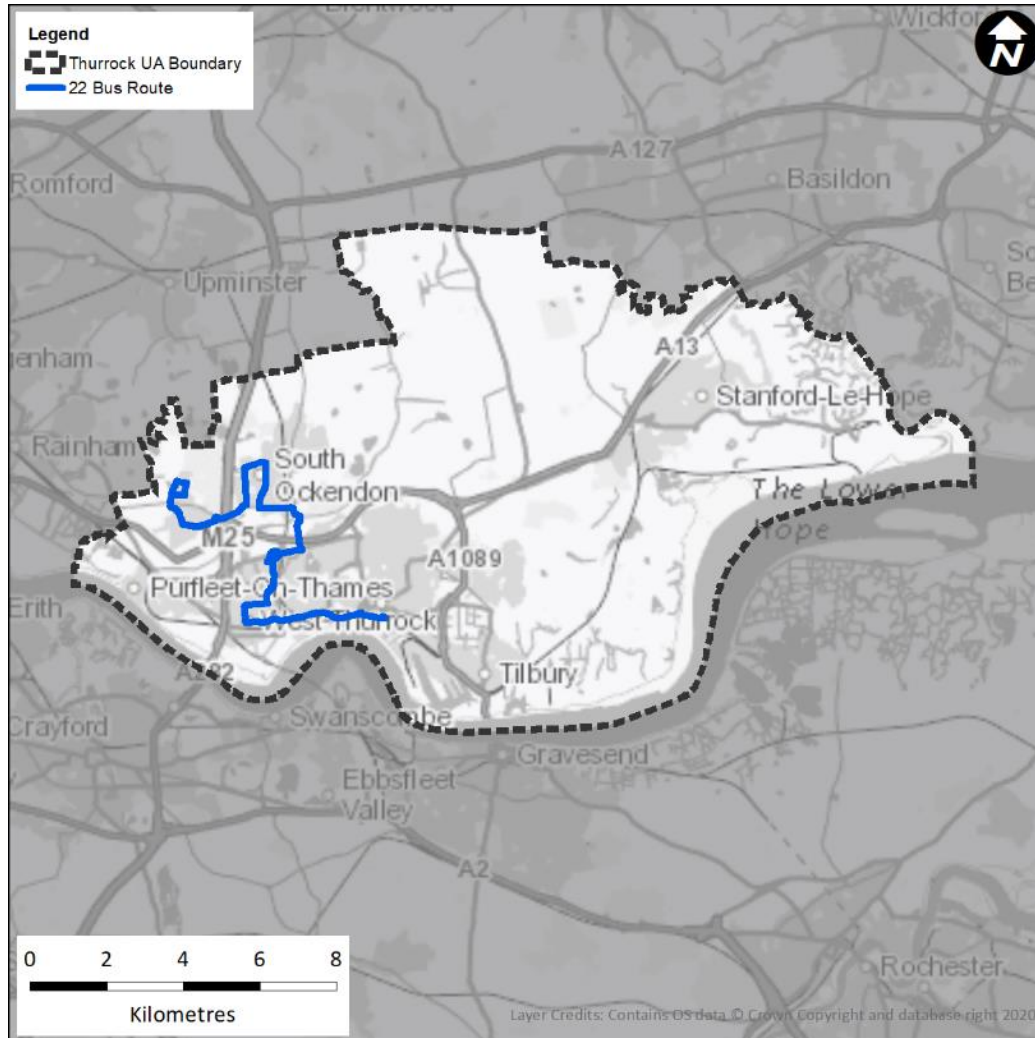
To provide a Saturday service comparable to the Monday to Friday service for route 11.

Service 22

5.17 Service 22 (Figure 5.4) links Aveley, Lakeside and Grays. It runs every 20 minutes, Mondays to Fridays, every 30 minutes on Saturdays and hourly on Sundays. It is part of Ensignbus' core

commercial network. However, the bulk of the Thurrock core network runs at 15-minute intervals, leaving service 22 (and the 100, see below) as an inconsistent outlier. Improving to a 15-minute service frequency would provide a consistency in service levels into Grays, the main urban centre in the South of Thurrock.

Figure 5.4: 22 Bus Route



- 5.18 To achieve this improvement, an additional two vehicles will be required.
- 5.19 A gross cost estimate of approximately £350,000 per annum has been projected.

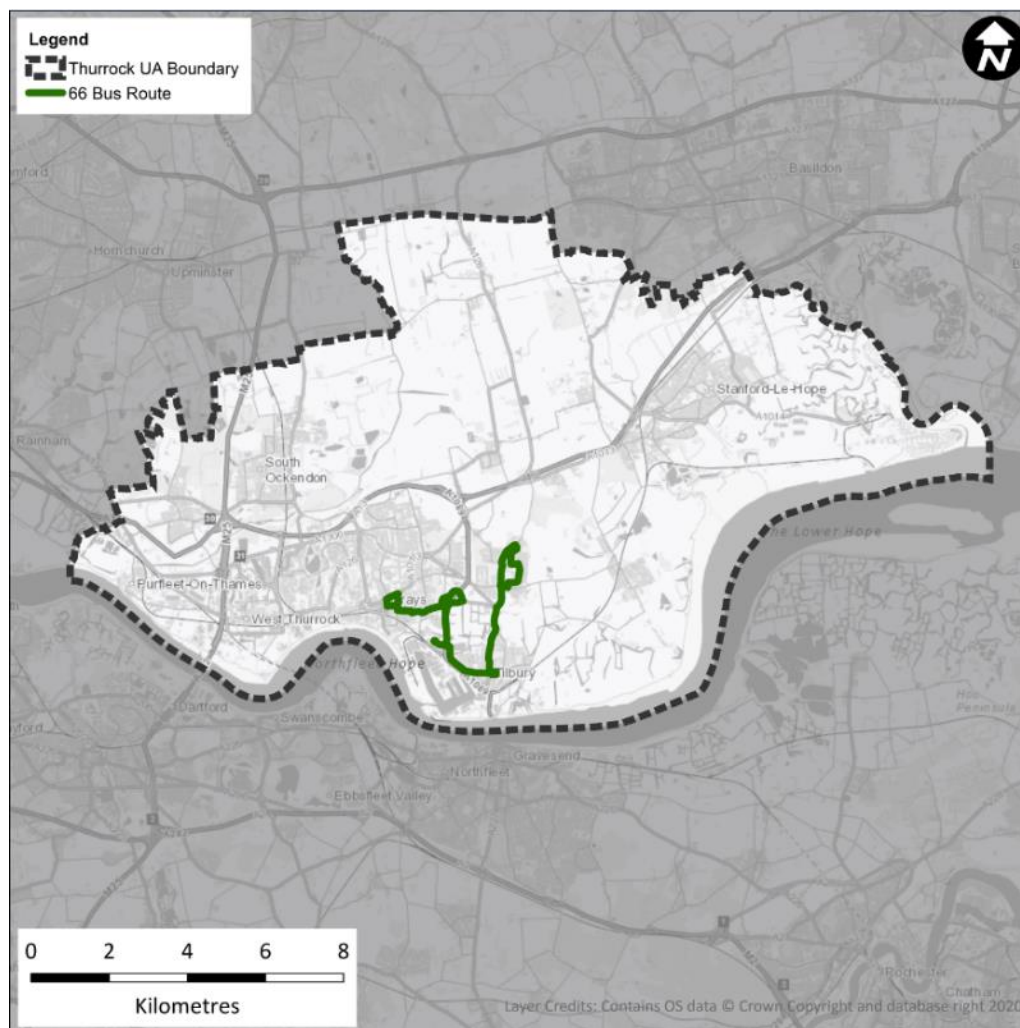
Objective:
 To improve the Service 22’s frequency to 15-minute intervals, Mondays to Fridays, and from every 30 minutes to every 20 minutes on Saturdays.

Service 66

- 5.20 Service 66 (Figure 5.5) links Grays, Tilbury and Chadwell St Marys. It runs every half hour Mondays to Saturdays and hourly on Sundays. However, there is no evening service after 19:00 and on Saturdays and Sundays there is no service after 17:30. The section of route between Tilbury and Chadwell St Marys is not served on Saturdays and Sundays. It provides vital connectivity for the Tilbury area, including the Amazon warehouse located there. Many of

the employees in the Tilbury area do not work 'normal' office hours but work shifts with varying start times and lengths. It is operated commercially by Ensignbus.

Figure 5.5: 66 Bus Route



- 5.21 It is proposed that an hourly Monday to Saturday evening service is provided and that Saturday service is enhanced to include the section between Tilbury and Chadwell St Marys. This will improve connectivity to Tilbury and ensure that a wide range of workers have access to the transport network at most times of day.
- 5.22 In consultation with the service provider, the Council has projected an annual gross cost estimate of approximately £150,000.

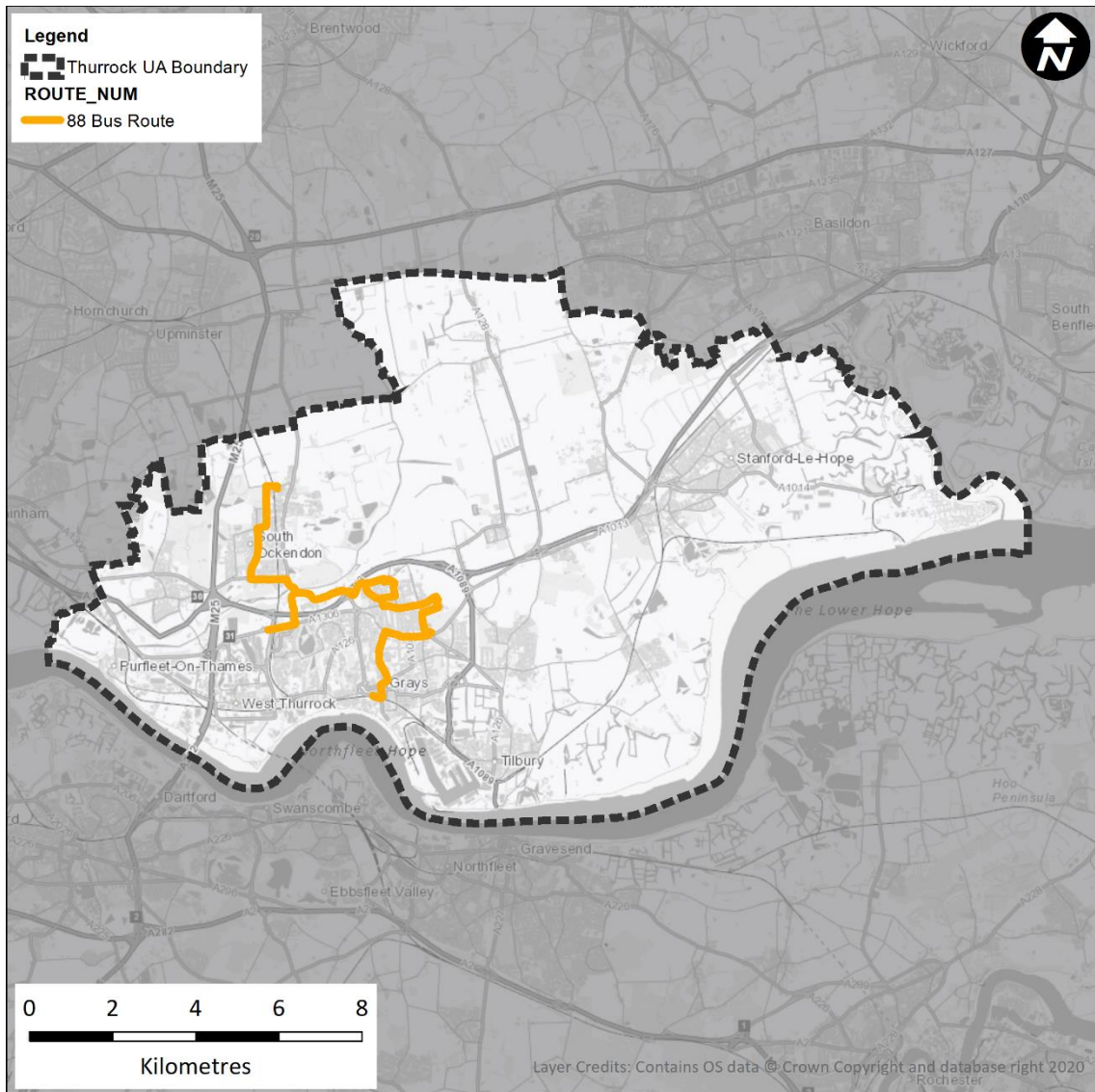
Objective:
 To enhance Service 66 so as to provide an evening service and a Saturday link between Tilbury and Chadwell St Marys.

Service 88

- 5.23 Service 88 links Stifford Clays with Grays and runs hourly Monday to Saturdays with additional peak buses during the week. As noted below (5.38), Ockendon station is poorly served by bus, so it is proposed to extend service 88 to link Stifford Clays with Lakeside and Ockendon station. The service will operate between 06:00 and 22:00, Monday to Saturday.

5.24 In consultation with the service provider, the Council has projected an annual gross cost estimate of approximately £900,000.

Figure 5.6: 88 Bus Route



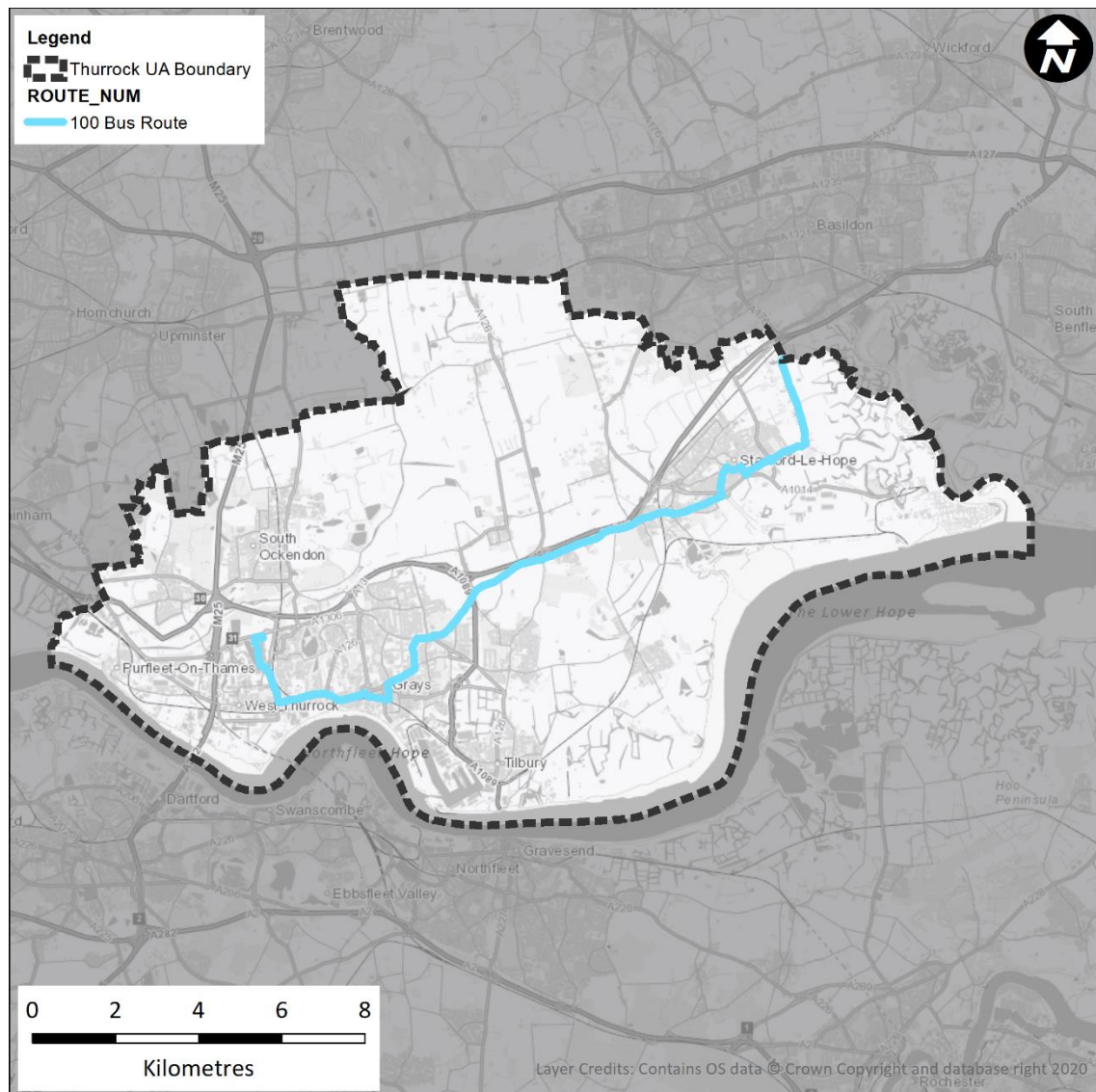
Objective:

To extend service 88 to link Stifford Clays with Lakeside and Ockendon; thereby significantly improving bus access to Ockendon station.

Service 100

5.25 Service 100 links Basildon, Basildon Hospital, Stanford-le-Hope, Grays and Lakeside with at a Monday to Saturday service frequency of approximately 20 minutes. On Sundays it operates every 30 minutes, but there is no Sunday evening service.

Figure 5.7: 100 Bus Route



- 5.26 It is operated commercially by First.
- 5.27 It is proposed that the Monday to Saturday service is enhanced to every 15 minutes to provide a “turn up and go” service and that a Sunday evening service is added.
- 5.28 In consultation with the service provider, the Council has projected gross cost estimates for this change at approximately £200,000 per annum.

Objective:

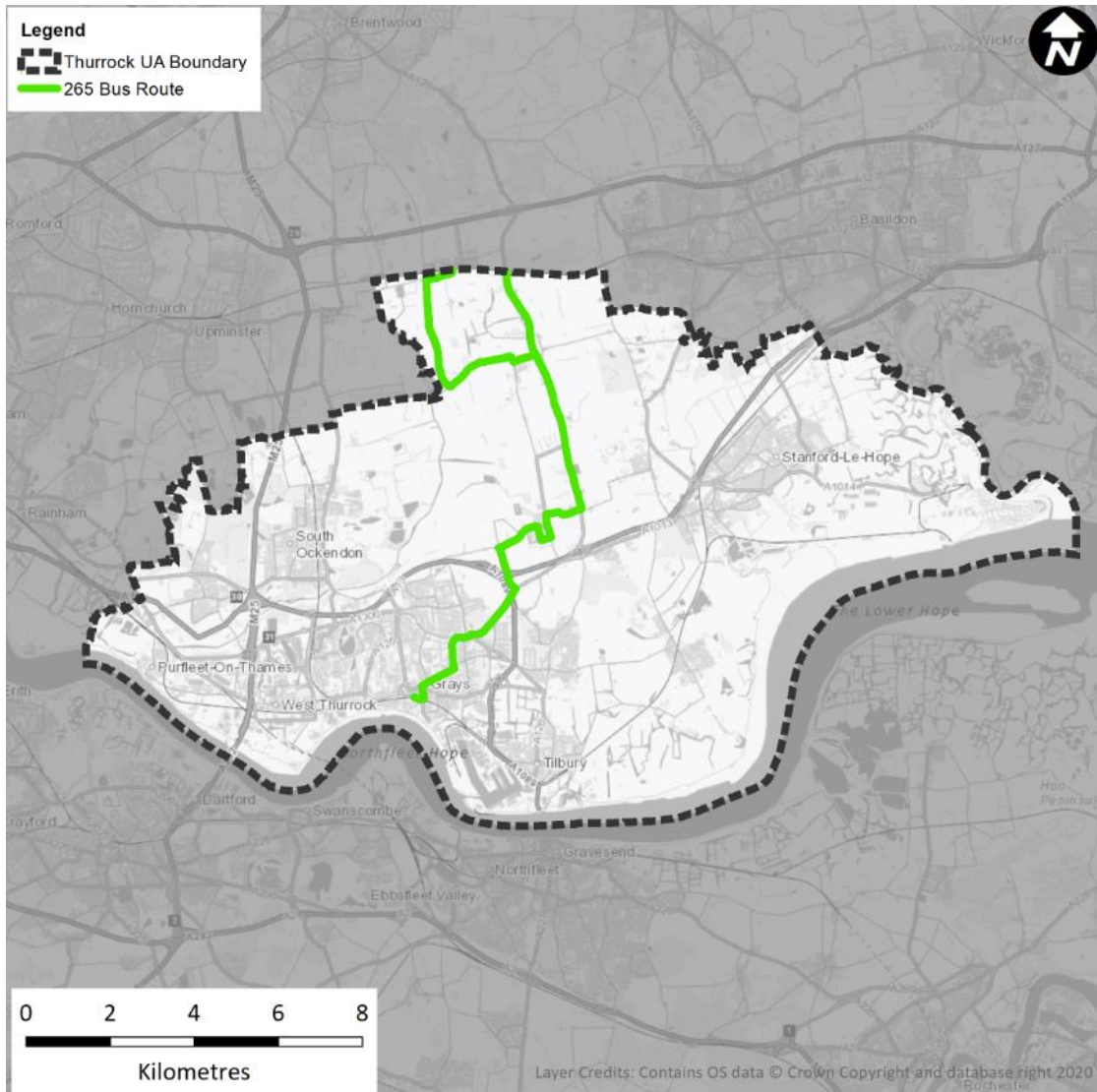
To provide a Monday to Saturday “turn up and go” service and Sunday evening service on route 100.

Service 265

- 5.29 The 265 service (Figure 5.8) connects West Horndon to Grays. Currently the service only runs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We propose that the current service provision is replicated on Tuesdays and Thursdays, providing access to the Grays to residents throughout the working week.

5.30 It serves communities B and C in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.8: 265 Bus Route



5.31 This improvement could be implemented at the cost of around £20,000 per annum. It is unlikely that this cost would ever be recovered through fare revenue so an ongoing subsidy will be required

Objective:

To provide a Monday to Friday service on 265.

Service 374

5.32 Service 374 (Figure 5.9) links Basildon, Basildon Hospital, Fobbing, Stanford-le-Hope, East Tilbury, Chadwell St Mary and Grays at a Monday to Friday service frequency of approximately 90 minutes and a Saturday frequency of around 3 hours.

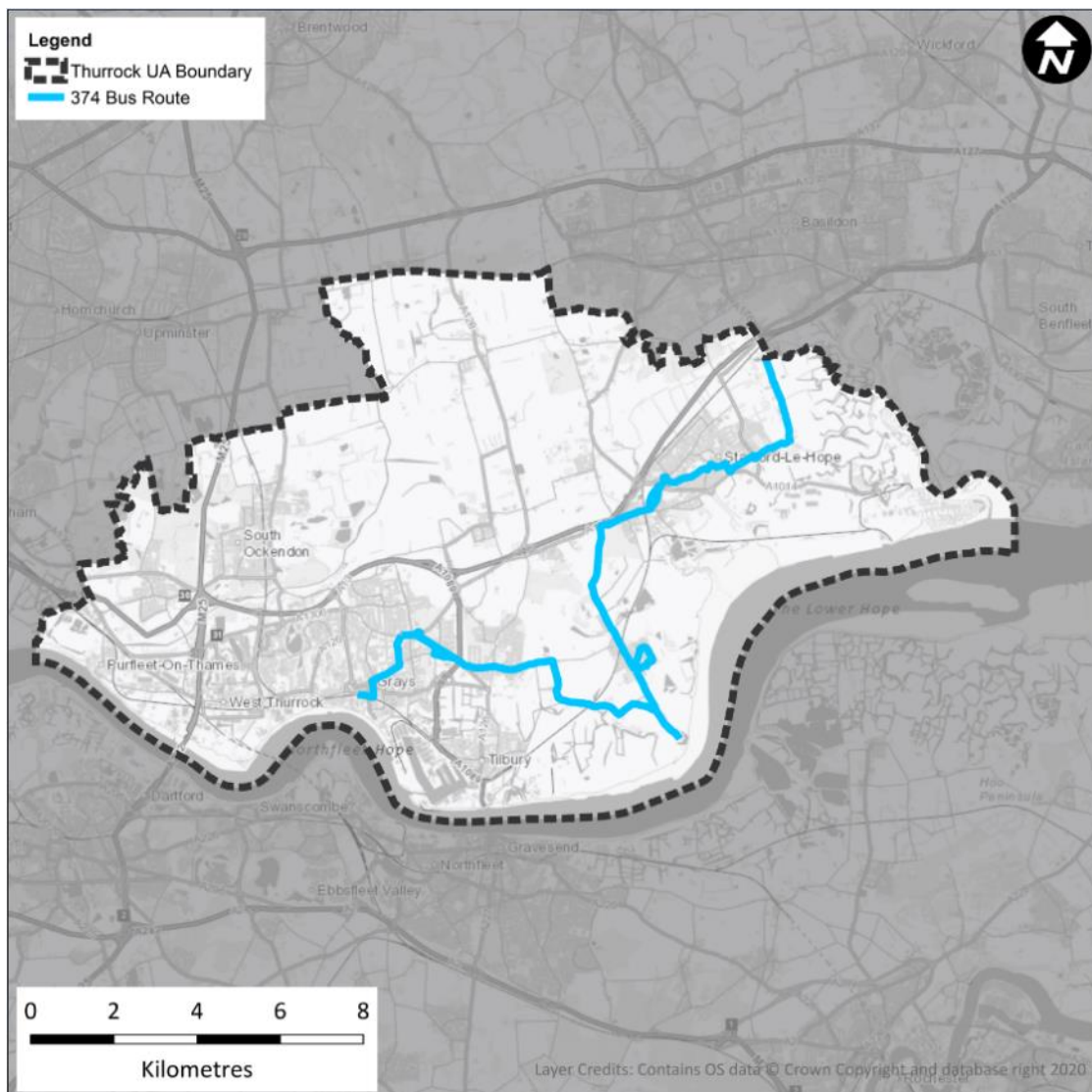
5.33 It is a socially necessary service funded by Thurrock Council linking a number of isolated locations with local centres at Grays, Stanford-le-Hope and Basildon. Improving the frequency will provide major benefits to isolated and deprived communities within the Borough. Parts of

the service serve areas of future housing and employment development and it is important to have a basic usable bus service in place which can be improved as these developments come on stream.

5.34 It serves communities E and F in Figure 5.1.

5.35 It is proposed that the service frequency should be improved to hourly, Monday to Saturday. To do this will likely require additional funding for approximately two to three years, to pay for an additional vehicle on the route, and deliver a marketing campaign to make the route widely known around the area. After the growth period, it is expected that the enhanced service will have seen sufficient additional patronage that the subsidy required will be no greater than that currently in place from Thurrock Council.

Figure 5.9: 374 Bus Service Route



5.36 Estimates for the gross cost of this enhancement is approximately £200,000 per annum.

Objective:

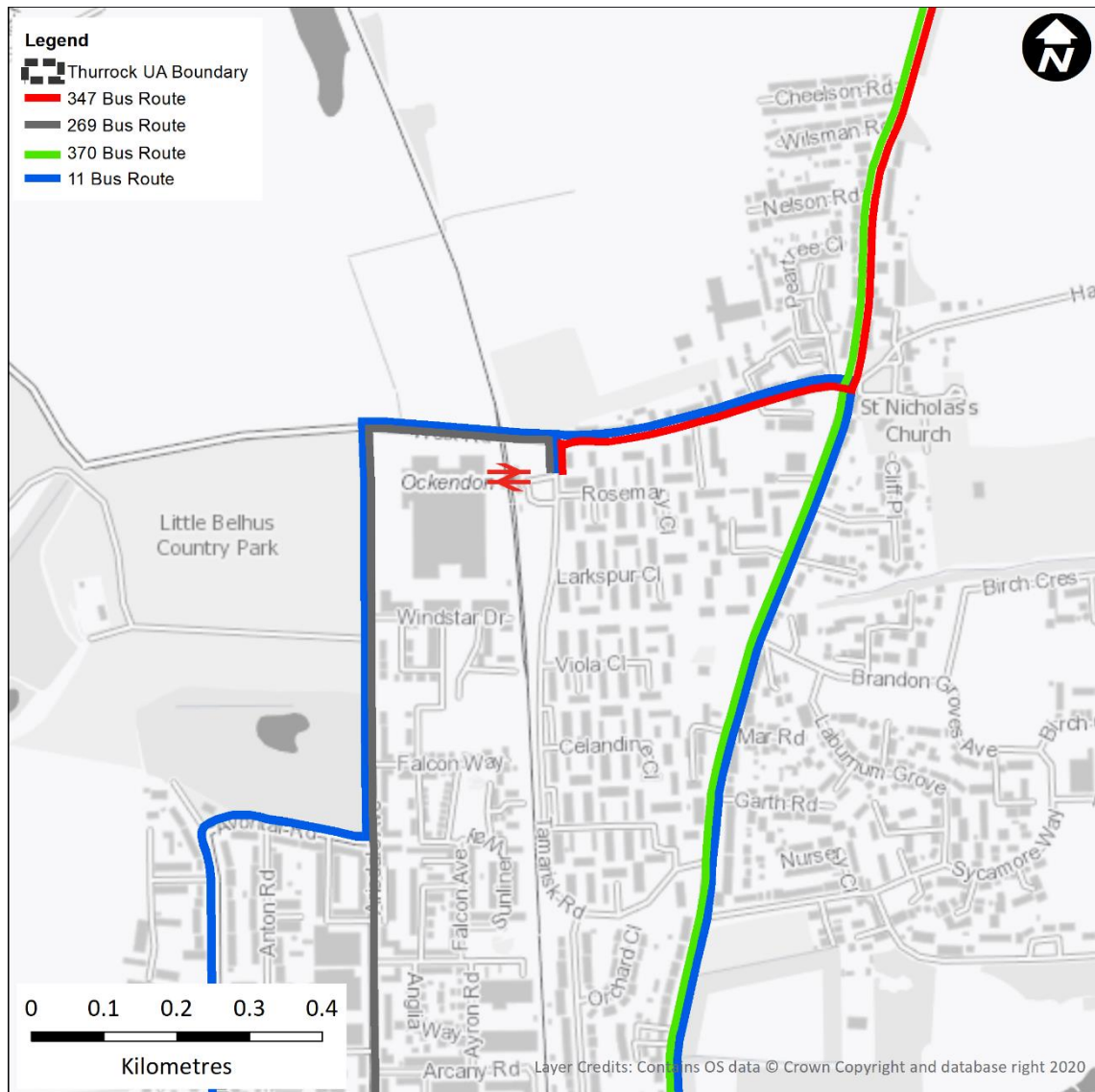
To provide a minimum of one bus per hour along route 374, Monday to Saturday daytimes.

Better Integrated

Ockendon Station

- 5.37 Ockendon station, on the c2c route between Upminster and Grays has frequent²⁴ train services to London and Southend. The station has no car parking provision. Whilst the station is served by routes, 11, 269 and 347 (Figure 5.10), all of these routes are infrequent and uncoordinated. TfL route 370 (which runs every 15 minutes) passes near the station, but the nearest stops are 500 m away. To provide a reliable all day interchange, a better bus service level to the station is desirable.

Figure 5.10: 11, 269, 347 and 370 Bus Routes



- 5.38 Diverting the frequent TfL service 370 was rejected as having a too poor effect on existing 370 customers. After discussion with Ensignbus, it is proposed to extend service 88 to terminate at Ockendon station every 30 minutes connecting with trains to and from London (Figure 5.6).
- 5.39 The cost is provided in paragraph 5.24.

²⁴ Half hourly all day with additional peak services to/from London

Objective:

To better improve bus service levels at Ockendon station

Superbus Services

- 5.40 First has recently divided service 100 into two sections removing a direct link between Chelmsford and Thurrock.
- 5.41 After discussions with First, Thurrock proposes to reinstate and improve this connection by extending the existing X10 service. Currently this links Stansted and Basildon hourly seven days a week.
- 5.42 It is proposed to extend this to serve Grays and Lakeside on a limited stop basis using main roads without serving other communities off the A13. All trips would be extended, seven days a week.
- 5.43 In consultation with the service provider, the Council has projected an annual gross cost estimate of approximately £650,000

Objective:

To extend service X10 to provide a fast link between Lakeside, Grays, Basildon, Chelmsford and Stansted Airport.

Demand Responsive Services

- 5.44 A number of rural communities within Thurrock – East and West Tilbury, Linford, Horndon on the Hill, and Fobbing have no evening services. These largely rural or brownfield areas are unlikely to generate enough demand for a regular bus service to these areas. Provision of demand responsive transport (DRT) at these times would be a logical solution.
- 5.45 Thurrock Council has engaged with DRT application provider Tandem, who has experience setting up services in areas with similar geographies to this. This service will require subsidy, but on a per-trip basis, rather than paying for the fixed costs of a standard bus service or the use of larger DRT vehicles.
- 5.46 In addition, along with no fixed costs, there are no ongoing subscription fees – just a small fee per passenger journey – lowering the cost of trialling new services. There are small initial set up costs and there will be an ongoing need for promotional expenditure. There are also options for blended models, using a combination of buses during peak hours and demand responsive taxis off-peak.
- 5.47 Indicative pricing for the Tandem services is shown in Table 5.1 **Error! Reference source not found..** The locations are cross referred back to Figure 5.1.

Table 5.1: Approximate Gross Cost per taxi trip for Tandem Services

| Location Served | Figure 5.1 map reference | To/from Basildon | To/from Lakeside |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Horndon on the Hill | D | £14.50 | £23.00 |
| Fobbing | E | £8.50 | £29.00 |
| East Tilbury | F | £23.00 | £17.50 |

- 5.48 Tandem states that they would aim to secure better prices after formal negotiation with local partners.
- 5.49 Ultimately this means that this form of service has potential to offer better value for money than attempting to develop a conventional bus service to these areas for evenings and Sundays. If successful, it will make the case to provide fixed route services at these times to some areas.
- 5.50 The intended concept is for the user to pay the daytime bus fare and Thurrock Council would pay the difference to Tandem. This is likely to result in an average subsidy of around £20 per passenger trip. 30 customers per day, 350 days a year would result in an average annual cost of £200,000.

Objective:

To seek funding to support a DRT trial for evening and Sunday provision to smaller communities unserved by conventional buses

Bus Speed and Journey Time Reliability

Bus Speed and Journey Time Reliability Improvement Measures on Lakeside - London Road - Grays - Socketts Heath corridor

- 5.51 Currently London Road is a key route along which significant numbers of Thurrock's buses run. It is also one of the areas of Grays with the highest levels of air pollution multiple designated Air Quality Management Areas, largely generated by the high levels of road traffic along this corridor. Measures to remove through car use, reduce local car use and improve bus speeds would be beneficial to the provision of cost-effective bus services in Thurrock and help improve air quality. Details of the optimum scheme are still to be worked through, but this is route a high priority for intervention and supported by bus operators whose services travel along this route.

Objective:

To seek funding to investigate Bus Speed and Journey Time Reliability Improvement on the London Road – Grays – Socketts Heath corridor

Traffic Light Priority

- 5.52 Traffic Signals in Thurrock are managed through a central system, however they are not optimised to support bus movements. Enhancing the traffic signal systems to cooperate with oncoming buses would help to support bus services in Thurrock, and minimise delays.

Objective:

To seek funding to investigate and implement Traffic Signal Optimisation to support Bus Movements across Thurrock.

- 5.53 Through our consultation with operators, Ensignbus have identified key locations within their network where their services experience regular delays. These require further investigation to determine what opportunities could be provided and are shown in Appendix D.

Cheaper, simpler fares

- 5.54 Paragraph 4.16 above refers to BSIP guidance requiring a greater emphasis on enhancing fare structures to help reduce the costs for users. Early engagement has been undertaken with operators within the borough, and the challenges that need to be explored further to enable measures such as simplification of fares, price capping and integrated tickets to be implemented have been identified.
- 5.55 However, it has been noted that investing in “tap-off” smart/contactless card readers mounted at appropriate locations²⁵ at bus exits would permit the introduction of “tap-on, tap-off” (in effect post) purchase of tickets which could then subsequently be used to facilitate capping. Thurrock Council will continue to work with our operators to move towards this goal.
- 5.56 Outcomes from the public engagement demonstrated a clear desire by communities and bus users for enhancements to bus ticketing so that payments for journeys are easier, and that ticketing and fares across different bus operators can be simplified and reduced and integrated with other modes such as rail.
- 5.57 The Council wishes to commission the following research projects as intermediate steps towards cheaper simpler fares:

Objective:

Research a flat fare structure for Thurrock in the evenings and at the Weekend.

Objective:

Procure “tap off” card readers for all buses used on local services in Thurrock, together with full sets of card readers for the Tilbury – Gravesend ferry.

Objective:

Provide an integrated multi-modal and multi-operator ticket in Thurrock.

Easier to understand

- 5.58 The National Bus Strategy and BSIP guidance puts an emphasis on demystifying buses and making them easier to use and understand by all users. To support this aim, Thurrock Council will look to expand its provision of information for all users to help make it easier to understand when are where the bus goes, and making this information more accessible to more users through audio and visual mediums.
- 5.59 The Council already has invested in Real Time Passenger information displays, however some of these have reached the end of their design life, and the technologies have been surpassed. A programme of renewal is funded to replace the legacy estate of older dot-matrix displays,

²⁵ i.e. away from the boarding flow where passengers use the tap-on reader on the driver’s ticket machine

but there remains a large number of stops which could benefit from the provision of RTPi. Each display costs £8,500 with an annual maintenance cost of approximately £200.

- 5.60 To support Real Time information, the Council also wishes to support all users, particularly those with visual impairments and users who are unfamiliar with the bus route. The provision of audio-visual announcements on buses will enable this measure to be undertaken. The Council is aware of at least 60 buses within fleets in the borough which will require retrofitting with audio-visual announcements. Costs are identified at being approximately £8,000 per vehicle, though there is a reduction in price for single decker vehicles. This approximates to a minimum sum of £480,000 to retrofit the remaining fleet, but additional vehicles may also be identified.
- 5.61 The Council would also like to further enhance the information available about bus service provision in the borough. The development of high quality information and timetables, with a more accessible and attractive website with higher awareness will help to achieve this. A sum of £100,000 will help to support this measure, involving specialist creative content and design support to help deliver information to the intended audience. Collaborative working with other Essex Authorities could enhance this outcome and be supported by the ForwardMotion brand that was developed by Thurrock, Southend and Essex Councils through the DfT Access Fund.
- 5.62 The Council wishes to implement the following three objectives linked to this theme.

Objective:

Add a series of real-time information stands to bus stops.

Objective:

Retrofit audio-visual announcements to buses.

Objective:

Provide high quality printed timetable and map information. Provide one -stop website providing all maps, timetables and fares for all operators in Thurrock

Quality of Fleet

- 5.63 Within a few months, the only non-Euro VI buses running in Thurrock will be those used on Council subsidised services and six Euro V buses operated by Ensignbus. NIBS/Stephensons has informed the council that to convert these services to Euro VI would cost £23,000 per annum, per bus, for Ensignbus the cost is £20,000 per vehicle. Indicative pricing for converting the services to Euro VI for three years is provided in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Indicative cost to convert Thurrock fleet to Euro VI

| | Service Number | | | Ensignbus |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 11 | 374 | 265 | |
| Number of vehicles | 2 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| Cost per vehicle | £23,000 | £23,000 | £23,000 | £20,000 |
| Cost per annum | £46,000 | £69,000 | £23,000 | - |
| Cost for three years | £138,000 | £207,000 | £69,000 | £120,000 |
| Total | | | £414,000 | £120,000 |

Source: Thurrock Council

5.64 The two objectives relating to this theme are set out below:

Objective:

To convert the subsidised fleet to Euro VI technology.

5.65 Thurrock, and the operators within the area, also recognise that there will be a need to keep moving towards new technologies, particularly those which reduce emissions from buses. As such, Thurrock would like to undertake a study to optimise the introduction of zero-carbon buses, to make sure that their fleet remains at the forefront of bus technology.

Objective:

To undertake research and studies to help understand new Bus technologies.

5.66 Thurrock, and the operators within the area, would like to consider the retrofitting of USB charging points to the fleet so that all buses offer this provision. Indicative costs established through engagement with operators is approximately £2000 for a single decker bus, and £4000 for a double decker bus.

Objective:

Fund the installation of USB chargers on existing buses.

Monitoring

- 5.67 Ongoing monitoring of bus services is crucial, in particular where investment has been made to enhance the service through a range of measures. In addition, understanding the level of satisfaction by users is also critical. Thurrock Council would like to undertake annual monitoring of Bus Passenger Satisfaction as well as monitoring and evaluation of schemes implemented through the BSIP.
- 5.68 The Council has determined a sum of £30,000 per year is required to complete and report on Bus Passenger Satisfaction within the borough and provide monitoring and evaluation of measures.

Objective:

Fund annual Bus Passenger Satisfaction surveys and undertake monitoring and evaluation.

6 Reporting

Summary

- 6.1 Thurrock Council will publish six-monthly performance figures against the targets set down in this BSIP. These are given in Table 7.2.
- 6.2 These will be made available on the Thurrock Council website and local bus operators will be encouraged to include them on their websites too.
- 6.3 Thurrock Council will seek to engage with key stakeholders, such as the Thurrock Bus User Group, to discuss the outcomes of targets and where further enhancements can be made. This will also provide an opportunity to review measures listed within the BSIP.
- 6.4 Hard copies will be made available on request.

7 Overview Table

Introduction

- 7.1 This section summarises the key outputs of the BSIP and how it meets requirements set out in the Strategy. The purpose of this section is to give readers, including passengers and the Department, an overview of the commitments in the BSIP which Thurrock and bus operators will work towards to improve local bus services.

Table 7.1: BSIP Overview Table Template

| BSIP Overview Table Template | |
|--|---|
| Name of authority or authorities: | Thurrock Council |
| Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both): | Enhanced Partnership |
| Date of publication: | 29 October 2021 |
| Date of next annual update: | 31 October 2022 |
| URL of the published report: | https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/travel-strategies/strategy-documents |

Table 7.2: BSIP Targets

| Targets | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | Target for 2024/25 | Description of how each will be measured (max 50 words) |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|---|
| Journey Time: | N/A | N/A | >1.0 | This will be measured as a Bus Passenger Satisfaction Index against a baseline undertaken through annual monitoring. Year 1 survey will be given a score of 1.0, and annual scores will be rated against this index |
| Reliability: | 91.2% | 91.2% | 95% | Based on reliability data compiled by Thurrock Council for the Traffic Commissioner |
| Passenger Numbers: | 4.8 million | 5.1 million | 5.5 million | Based on combined annual |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----|---|
| | | | | passenger numbers recorded from all bus operators within Thurrock |
| Average passenger satisfaction: | 89% ²⁶ | 83% ²⁷ | 90% | Determined through annual Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey |

Table 7.3: Delivery Details

| Delivery – Does your BSIP detail policies to: | Yes/No | Explanation (max 50 words) |
|--|--------|---|
| Make improvements to bus services and planning | | |
| <i>More frequent and reliable services</i> | | |
| Review service frequency | Yes | |
| Increase demand responsive services | Yes | To help rural communities in Thurrock gain better connectivity, subsidised, 'Tandem' services will be provided. This will provide value-for-money, demand-responsive services. |
| Consideration of bus rapid transport networks | No. | The polycentric geography of Thurrock means that there are limited options for a singular infrastructure intervention (such as a BRT) network. As such, attention has been focussed on improving the existing bus network, rather than developing a high-profile, but low-benefit rapid transit system. |
| <i>Improvements to planning/integration with other modes</i> | | |
| Integrate services with other modes | Yes. | The BSIP will develop better connections between C2C train services stopping at Ockendon and routes 11, 269, and 374. This will involve rerouting some services, in order to provide closer connections between the bus stops and the rail station. |
| Simplify services | Yes. | Implementation of Bus Speed and Reliability measures will enable simplification of the network due to the need to |

²⁶ Bus Passenger Survey Autumn 2019, Passenger Focus – England-wide score

²⁷ The route ahead: getting passengers back on buses, June 2021, Passenger Focus – England-wide score

| | | |
|--|------|--|
| | | remove congestion contingency currently built in at busy times of day. |
| Review socially necessary services | Yes. | This document is founded on accessibility analysis, which cross-checked service frequencies against population density. This has ensured that all of the suggested changes put in place will benefit communities which are presently underserved by the network. |
| Invest in Superbus networks | Yes | Provision of fast service linking Thurrock with Stansted Airport |
| <i>Improvements to fares and ticketing</i> | | |
| Lower fares | Yes | A longer term study to review and negotiate fares and integrate fares and ticketing between bus operators ,the ferry and rail operator c2c who provide links between 7 stations in Thurrock with a more direct journey than by bus |
| Simplify fares | Yes | See above. |
| Integrate ticketing between operators and transport | Yes | See above. |
| Make improvements to bus passenger experience | | |
| <i>Higher spec. buses</i> | | |
| Invest in improved bus specifications | Yes. | Currently the majority of the bus network in Thurrock is relatively modern – almost all vehicles are Euro VI. This funding will be used to convert the remaining buses to Euro VI standards. |
| Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services | Yes. | Enhanced audio and visual information for bus users both at stops and on services |
| Protect personal safety of bus passengers | No | Not perceived to be a major issue in Thurrock |
| Improve buses for tourists | No | Not relevant to Thurrock |
| Invest in decarbonisation | Yes. | This document sets out a desire for research funding, which should help bus operators to make informed decisions about how best to move towards decarbonisation, as the technology becomes available. |
| <i>Improvements to passenger engagement</i> | | |

| | | |
|--|------|--|
| Passenger charter | Yes. | All operators have existing passenger charters in operation. |
| Strengthen network identity | Yes | Plans include focus on greater levels of passenger information. |
| Improve bus information | Yes. | New shelters will be delivered, with real-time information. Additionally, a marketing campaign will be undertaken, which will allow help to improve awareness of the Thurrock bus brand. |
| Other | | |
| Public Engagement – existing users, stakeholders and non-users | Yes | Public engagement strategy will continue to assess priorities for action. |
| Monitoring | Yes | Undertaking Bus Passenger Satisfaction surveys to monitor performance and perceptions of performance |

A Thurrock Bus Services

A.1 Table A-1 shows the frequent bus services in Thurrock, while table A-2 shows those that only operate occasionally.

Table A.1: Frequent Bus Services in Thurrock Area

| Route | Links | Operator | Approximate Buses per hour | | | | | |
|--------|--|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Monday – Friday | | Saturday | | Sunday | |
| | | | Daytime | Evening | Daytime | Evening | Daytime | Evening |
| 5A/5B | Pitsea – Basildon – Stanford-le-Hope – Grays | First Essex | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | Aveley – Lakeside – Grays | Ensignbus | 3 | 0 ²⁸ | 2 | 0 ²⁸ | 1 | 1 ²⁹ |
| 33 | Chafford Hundred – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 44 | Lakeside – Purfleet-on-Thames – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 66 | Chadwell – Tilbury – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 2 ²⁹ | 0 | 1 ²⁹ | 0 |
| 73/73A | Lakeside – Grays – Chadwell – Tilbury | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 ²⁸ | 2 | 0 ²⁸ | 2 | 0.5 |

²⁸ Evening service provided by service 77/77A

²⁹ Part route only

| Route | Links | Operator | Approximate Buses per hour | | | | | |
|--------|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | | Monday – Friday | | Saturday | | Sunday | |
| | | | Daytime | Evening | Daytime | Evening | Daytime | Evening |
| 77/77A | Aveley – Lakeside – Grays – Chadwell – Tilbury | Ensignbus | 0 ³⁰ | 2 | 0 ³¹ | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 83 | Lakeside – Grays – Chadwell St. Mary | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 88 | Stifford Clays – Grays | Ensignbus | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 99 | Tilbury Ferry – Tilbury Station | Ensignbus ³¹ | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 100 | Chelmsford – Basildon – Grays – Lakeside | First Essex | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 370 | Lakeside – Romford | TfL ³² | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 372 | Lakeside – Hornchurch | TfL ³³ | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| X80 | Chafford Hundred – Bluewater | Ensignbus | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Table A.2: Occasional Bus Services in Thurrock Area

| Route | Links | Operator | Monday – Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Note |
|-------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------|------------|------------|------|
| 5X | Wickford – Basildon – Grays | First | College service | No service | No service | |

³⁰ Daytime service provided by services 22 and 73

³¹ Supported by c2c as required by the Essex Thameside rail franchise

³² Currently contracted to Arriva

³³ Currently contracted to Stagecoach

| Route | Links | Operator | Monday – Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Note |
|-------|--|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 11 | Purfleet-on-Thames – Aveley – South Ockendon – Stanford-le-Hope – Fobbing – Basildon | NIBS Buses | 6 services per day | No service | No service | Supported by Thurrock |
| 25 | Purfleet-on-Thames – William Edwards School | Ensignbus | School Service | No service | No service | |
| 27 | Socketts Heath – Hassenbrook Academy | Ensignbus | School Service | No service | No service | |
| 32 | Aveley – Grays | Ensignbus | School Service | No service | No service | |
| 265 | West Horndon – Bulphan - Grays | Stephensons | 2 full services Mon, Wed and Fri Only. | No service | No service | Supported by Thurrock |
| 269 | Grays – South Ockendon – Brentwood | NIBS Buses | 4/5 services per day | 4/5 services per day | No service | Supported by Essex County Council |
| 347 | Ockendon – Romford | TfL ³⁴ | 4 services per day | 4 services per day | No service | Supported by TfL |
| 374 | Grays – Chadwell – East Tilbury – Stanford-le-Hope – Fobbing – Basildon | NIBS Buses | 8 services per day | 4 services per day | No service | Supported by Thurrock |
| 51 | Chafford Hundred – Grays – Tilbury – Orsett – Pitsea | NIBS Buses | School Service | No service | No service | |
| 565 | Bulphan – West Horndon – Brentwood | First Essex | 7 services per day | 4 services per day | No service | Supported by Essex County Council |
| Z1 | Aveley – Lakeside – Grays – Chadwell – Tilbury – Amazon Tilbury | Ensignbus | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | |
| Z2 | Canning Town – Barking – Dagenham – Rainham – Amazon Tilbury | Ensignbus | 19 services per day at peak hours | 19 services per day at peak hours | 19 services per day at peak hours | |
| Z4 | Pitsea – Basildon – Corringham – Stanford-le-Hope – Amazon Tilbury | Ensignbus | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | 4/5 services per day at peak hours | |

³⁴ Currently contracted to Blue Triangle

B Publicity Material

B.1 Below, samples of the material currently used to advertise bus services in Thurrock are presented.

Figure B.1: Service 11 & 374 Leaflet

Service 11 & 374 timetable

Purfleet and Grays to Basildon

Monday to Friday

| Destination | 07:15 | 07:30 | 07:45 | 08:00 | 08:15 | 08:30 | 08:45 | 09:00 | 09:15 | 09:30 | 09:45 | 10:00 | 10:15 | 10:30 | 10:45 | 11:00 | 11:15 | 11:30 | 11:45 | 12:00 | 12:15 | 12:30 | 12:45 | 13:00 | 13:15 | 13:30 | 13:45 | 14:00 | 14:15 | 14:30 | 14:45 | 15:00 | 15:15 | 15:30 | 15:45 | 16:00 | 16:15 | 16:30 | 16:45 | 17:00 | 17:15 | 17:30 | 17:45 | 18:00 | 18:15 | 18:30 | 18:45 | 19:00 | 19:15 | 19:30 | 19:45 | 20:00 | 20:15 | 20:30 | 20:45 | 21:00 | 21:15 | 21:30 | 21:45 | 22:00 | 22:15 | 22:30 | 22:45 | 23:00 | 23:15 | 23:30 | 23:45 | 24:00 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Purfleet, South Drive | 07:15 | 07:30 | 07:45 | 08:00 | 08:15 | 08:30 | 08:45 | 09:00 | 09:15 | 09:30 | 09:45 | 10:00 | 10:15 | 10:30 | 10:45 | 11:00 | 11:15 | 11:30 | 11:45 | 12:00 | 12:15 | 12:30 | 12:45 | 13:00 | 13:15 | 13:30 | 13:45 | 14:00 | 14:15 | 14:30 | 14:45 | 15:00 | 15:15 | 15:30 | 15:45 | 16:00 | 16:15 | 16:30 | 16:45 | 17:00 | 17:15 | 17:30 | 17:45 | 18:00 | 18:15 | 18:30 | 18:45 | 19:00 | 19:15 | 19:30 | 19:45 | 20:00 | 20:15 | 20:30 | 20:45 | 21:00 | 21:15 | 21:30 | 21:45 | 22:00 | 22:15 | 22:30 | 22:45 | 23:00 | 23:15 | 23:30 | 23:45 | 24:00 |

Basildon to Purfleet and Grays

Monday to Friday

| Destination | 07:15 | 07:30 | 07:45 | 08:00 | 08:15 | 08:30 | 08:45 | 09:00 | 09:15 | 09:30 | 09:45 | 10:00 | 10:15 | 10:30 | 10:45 | 11:00 | 11:15 | 11:30 | 11:45 | 12:00 | 12:15 | 12:30 | 12:45 | 13:00 | 13:15 | 13:30 | 13:45 | 14:00 | 14:15 | 14:30 | 14:45 | 15:00 | 15:15 | 15:30 | 15:45 | 16:00 | 16:15 | 16:30 | 16:45 | 17:00 | 17:15 | 17:30 | 17:45 | 18:00 | 18:15 | 18:30 | 18:45 | 19:00 | 19:15 | 19:30 | 19:45 | 20:00 | 20:15 | 20:30 | 20:45 | 21:00 | 21:15 | 21:30 | 21:45 | 22:00 | 22:15 | 22:30 | 22:45 | 23:00 | 23:15 | 23:30 | 23:45 | 24:00 |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Basildon Bus Station | 07:15 | 07:30 | 07:45 | 08:00 | 08:15 | 08:30 | 08:45 | 09:00 | 09:15 | 09:30 | 09:45 | 10:00 | 10:15 | 10:30 | 10:45 | 11:00 | 11:15 | 11:30 | 11:45 | 12:00 | 12:15 | 12:30 | 12:45 | 13:00 | 13:15 | 13:30 | 13:45 | 14:00 | 14:15 | 14:30 | 14:45 | 15:00 | 15:15 | 15:30 | 15:45 | 16:00 | 16:15 | 16:30 | 16:45 | 17:00 | 17:15 | 17:30 | 17:45 | 18:00 | 18:15 | 18:30 | 18:45 | 19:00 | 19:15 | 19:30 | 19:45 | 20:00 | 20:15 | 20:30 | 20:45 | 21:00 | 21:15 | 21:30 | 21:45 | 22:00 | 22:15 | 22:30 | 22:45 | 23:00 | 23:15 | 23:30 | 23:45 | 24:00 |

Fare Information

Selected adult fares

| Service | From | To | Fare |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|------|
| Service 11 | Basildon Bus Station | Basildon to Hope | 1.60 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | Crest Hospital | 3.00 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | Thorndon Hospital | 3.40 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | Downham Parade | 4.20 |
| Service 374 | Basildon Bus Station | Fobbing | 1.20 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | Stanford le Hope | 2.40 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | East Tilbury | 3.70 |
| | Basildon Bus Station | Grays | 5.00 |

11 Purfleet and Basildon
(Serving Aveley, Ockendon, Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, Horndon on the Hill, Stanford le Hope, Corringham and Fobbing)

374 Grays and Basildon
(Serving Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Stanford le Hope, Corringham and Fobbing)

Legend:
 - Route 11 (Red line)
 - Route 374 (Yellow line)
 - Terminus Points (Red and Yellow dots)
 - Main bus stops (Red and Yellow circles)
 - Railway Station (Red and Yellow square)
 - Hospital (Red and Yellow cross)

Main Bus Stops:
 - Purfleet, South Drive
 - Purfleet, North Drive
 - Aveley, High St
 - South Ockendon, Downham Parade
 - Ockendon Railway Station
 - North Ockendon, High Road
 - Chadwell Claydon, Thorndon Hospital
 - Basildon, Lakeside Centre
 - Crest Hospital
 - Horndon on the Hill, South Hill Crescent
 - Stanford le Hope, Kings Hill
 - Corringham, Gordon Rd
 - Fobbing, Church
 - Basildon, Hospital
 - Basildon, Bus Station

Map Labels:
 - Purfleet, South Drive
 - Purfleet, North Drive
 - Aveley, High St
 - South Ockendon, Downham Parade
 - Ockendon Railway Station
 - North Ockendon, High Road
 - Chadwell Claydon, Thorndon Hospital
 - Basildon, Lakeside Centre
 - Crest Hospital
 - Horndon on the Hill, South Hill Crescent
 - Stanford le Hope, Kings Hill
 - Corringham, Gordon Rd
 - Fobbing, Church
 - Basildon, Hospital
 - Basildon, Bus Station

Figure B.2: Service 265 Leaflet

265 Grays and West Horndon

Bus service leaflet

STEPHENSONS

1st April 2019
Operated by: Stephenson of Essex
Route: 265

thurnock.gov.uk

265 - Grays and West Horndon

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays

| | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Grays Bus Station | 1200 | 1400 | |
| Sockets Heath, The Oak | 1209 | 1409 | |
| Thurnock Hospital | 1212 | 1412 | |
| West Horndon Station | 1222 | 1422 | |
| Bulphan Village Hall | 1009 | 1241 | 1441 |
| Orsett Hospital | 1019 | 1281 | |
| Thurnock Hoskote | 1305 | 1315 | |
| Sockets Heath, The Oak | 1034 | 1306 | |
| Grays Bus Station | 1043 | 1315 | |

* Journey starts at Clavering Gardens, West Horndon at 10:00

Fare Information

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-----|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| West Horndon | 100 | Bulphan Church / Village Hall | | | |
| 140 | 100 | Orsett Hospital | | | |
| 200 | 200 | 160 | Sockets Heath | | |
| 240 | 240 | 200 | 100 | Turps Corner | |
| 270 | 270 | 200 | 120 | 100 | Grays Bus Station |

Riverside Industrial Estate
South Street, RoCHFORD
SS4 1BS

customerservices@stephensonsex.com

01376 502059

| Adult | | Child Fare | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Single fare | Return | No return fare available | Half adult fare rounded up to nearest 10p |
| £1.00 | £1.30 | No return fare available | Maximum Return fare £3.00 |
| £1.80 | £2.00 | | |
| £2.40 | £4.00 | | |
| £4.50 | £5.50 (Day Ticket) | | |

STEPHENSONS your A&J route from Sun to Sunday and beyond

265

Grays and West Horndon
(Serving Sockets Heath, Stifford Clays, Orsett and Bulphan)

Service 265 will be provided by Stephenson from 1st April 2019 serving towns and villages between West Horndon and Grays via Orsett and Stifford Clays. For further information about this bus service please contact Stephenson buses via the details below.

Route of 265

Terminus Points 265

Main bus stops

Hospital H

Please note - this bus service uses all bus stops on route.

Route

- 1. Bulphan Village Hall
- 2. Bulphan Church
- 3. Bulphan Village Hall
- 4. Bulphan Church
- 5. Bulphan Village Hall
- 6. Bulphan Church
- 7. Bulphan Village Hall
- 8. Bulphan Church
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- 99. Bulphan Village Hall
- 100. Bulphan Church

STEPHENSONS

Stephenson of Essex
Riverside Industrial Estate
South Street
The Hill of
SS4 1BS

01376 502059
customerservices@stephensonsex.com

your A&J route from Sun to Sunday and beyond

C Bus Shelter Design

Figure C.1: Sample Bus Shelter



- C.1 There are 160 sheltered bus stops within Thurrock, with a combination of those funded directly by the local authority, and some funded through an arrangement with Clear Channel, on which advertising was sold. The contract with the supplier came to an end in 2019, and the Council has implemented a new refresh programme. A sum of £1.26m has been allocated to replace 90 of the 160 shelters, and a decision will be made in the future whether to fund or remove those shelters not initially prioritised. An example of a new shelter as part of the renewal programme is shown in Figure C-1. In addition, shelters which had a legacy Real Time Passenger Information display, will be replaced as part of the programme. These Real Time displays have become obsolete, with parts being sourced from other live or damaged units. They will be replaced by modern LED display with sizing and form factor appropriate to the location. Digital advertising is also being led in-house on shelters and Real Time displays, allowing the Council to generate a revenue to ensure the ongoing maintenance of real time displays and shelters.

Figure D.2: Ensignbus Plan 2

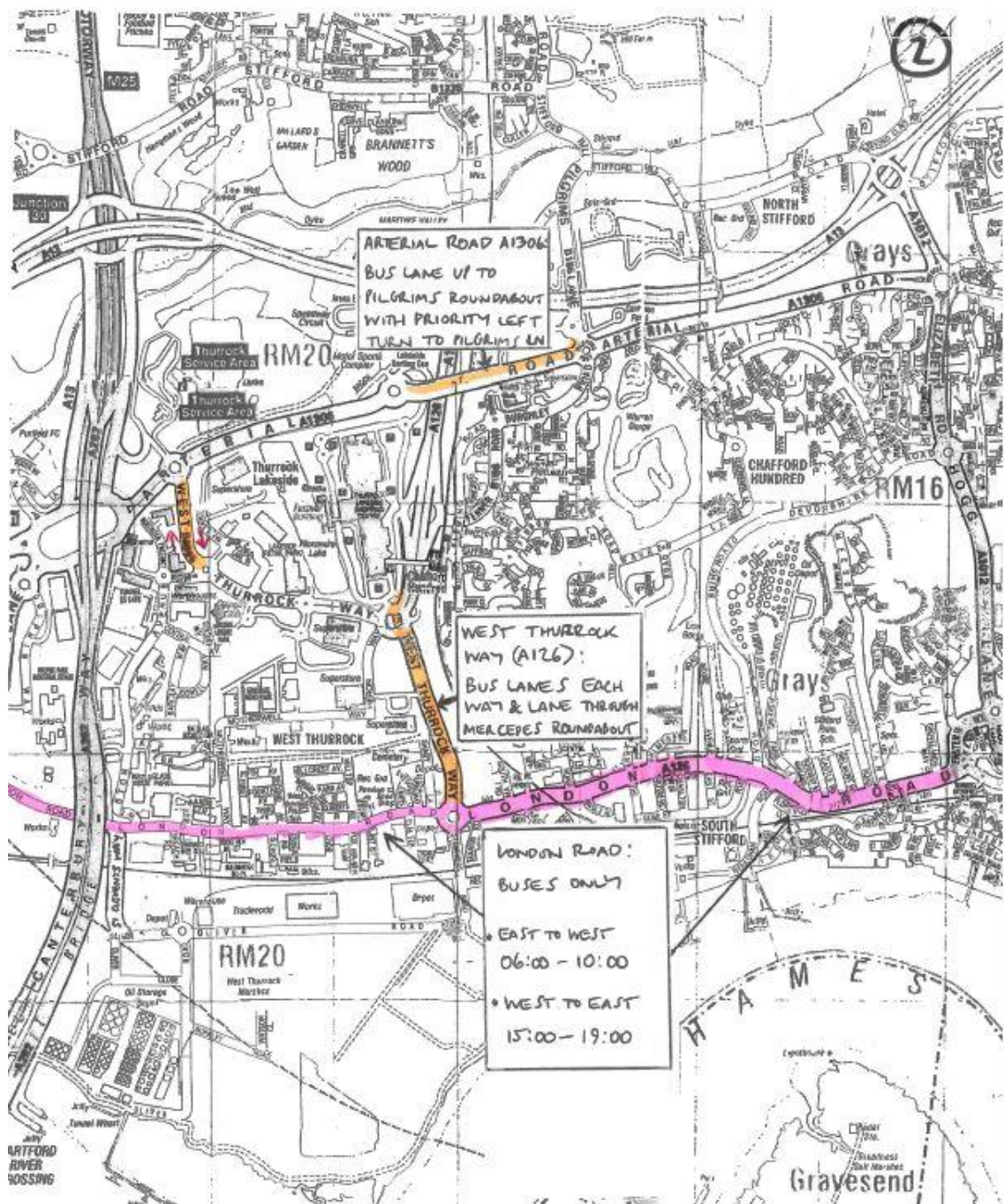


Figure D.3: Ensignbus Plan 3

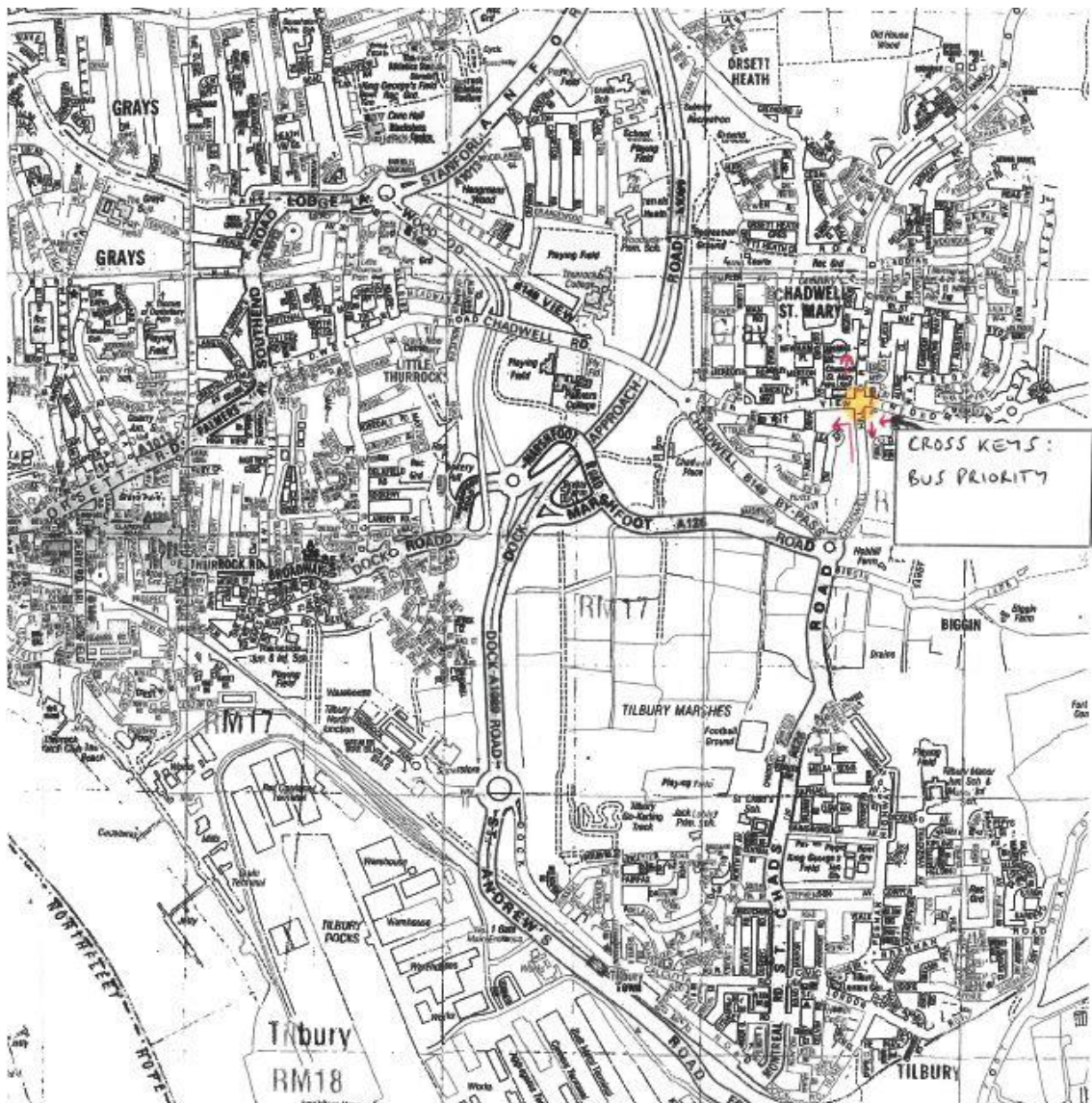
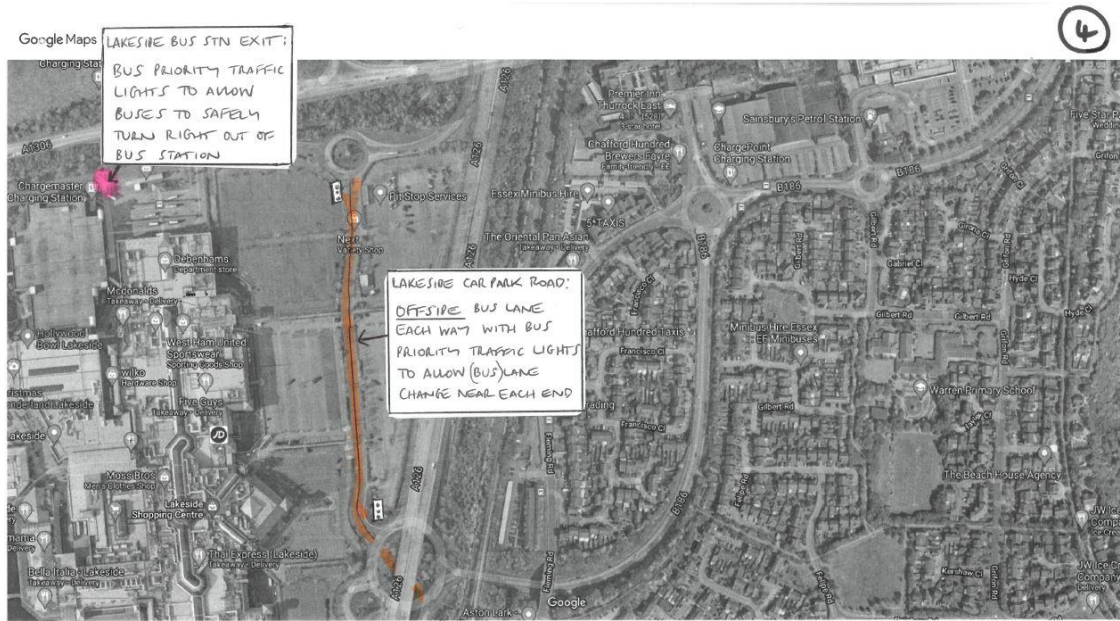


Figure D.4: Ensignbus Plan 4



Control Information

Prepared by

Prepared for

Thurrock Council
Civic Offices, New Rd, Grays RM17 6SL

Project/proposal number

Client contract/project number

Author/originator

RGG

Reviewer/approver

Other contributors

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