

<b>28 January 2015</b>		<b>ITEM: 16</b>
<b>Council</b>		
<b>Refresh of Community Priorities</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor John Kent, Leader of the Council		
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive		
<b>This report is public</b>		

## **Executive Summary**

The current Community vision and priorities were agreed unanimously by Council in September 2012. The recent unprecedented budgetary and savings challenges means that councils need to change the way communities are supported and services are delivered.

To reflect this shift in relationship between the Council and the community and the council's important role in place shaping and enabling community leadership, the community priorities and objectives have been reviewed and refreshed.

### **1. Recommendation(s)**

#### **1.1 Council agrees to adopt the new community priorities and objectives as set out in Appendix 1**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

2.1 Thurrock Council, along with every local authority in the country, is facing significant financial pressure and savings targets, which means the way services are delivered in the future needs to change drastically.

2.2 Key strengths in the borough include the unique growth opportunities and ambitious regeneration projects creating additional employment and bringing communities together. The budget challenge therefore provides an opportunity to reflect on the community priorities set out in the Community Strategy and look at how the Council will work with partners to meet these

head on and proactively, ensuring that the Council continues to shape the place and enable community leadership.

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

3.1 In light of the financial position, and as part of Strategy Week, Directors Board and the Cabinet have been reflecting with partners on the community priorities as set out in the Community Strategy. The current vision and priorities, agreed unanimously by Council in September 2012, are set out below:

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

- Create a great place for learning and opportunity;
- Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity;
- Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities;
- Improve health and well-being; and
- Protect and promote our clean and green environment

3.3 Due to the unprecedented challenges and the consequential changes that are needed in the shape of public services, the priorities need to be refreshed to better reflect the ambition and focus for the borough as well as the changing relationship between the Council and the community, and our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership.

3.4 The proposed community priorities are set out at Appendix 1. The five overarching priorities have not changed significantly, however the objectives underneath them have been reframed.

3.5 The Council wants to drive growth in our role as champions for the place and as local system leaders to maximise opportunities and attract inward investment. This will be evidenced through developing the local workforce with the right skills to get local jobs, high quality urban environment, community facilities including hubs supporting the public health interface, and quality existing and new housing underpinned by a supportive and enabling planning framework. The Council will work with partners to provide and facilitate this, but will no longer be able to afford to provide the direct services that it has previously provided.

3.6 Our relationship with partners and the community is changing and the Council wants to enable increased community leadership across the borough for groups and individuals. This can be achieved by working with the voluntary, community and faith sectors to build pride, respect and cohesion and also by building resilience in local communities; supporting active citizens, local assets and neighbourhood networks including community led development and management of community hubs. This will create a place that better supports community well-being and healthy lifestyles.

3.7 If agreed by Council tonight these will take immediate effect.

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

4.1 As outlined above, due to the unprecedented challenges and the consequential changes that are needed in the shape of public services, the priorities need to be refreshed to better reflect the ambition and focus for the borough as well as the changing relationship between the Council and the community, and our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership.

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

5.1 This refresh has been agreed in principle by Cabinet in July, and endorsed again by Cabinet in November recommending the changes to Council. Consultation with partners has taken place including with the community and voluntary sector and other partners, through the Joint Strategic Forum and with local business representatives, through the Business Board. Both groups supported the proposed refresh.

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

6.1 The priorities need to be refreshed to better reflect the ambition and focus for the borough as well as the changing relationship between the Council and the community, and our role in place shaping and enabling community leadership.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**  
**Management Accountant**

This report does not in itself have any financial implications, however any actions or initiatives which are undertaken to deliver the refreshed priorities and objectives may have financial implications. These will need to be considered on a project by project basis.

##### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
**Deputy Head of Legal & Governance, Deputy Monitoring Officer**

According to the council's constitution, any change to the community priorities requires Council approval.

Any actions or initiatives which are undertaken to deliver the refreshed priorities and objectives may have legal implications. These will need to be considered on a project by project basis.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**  
**Community Development Officer**

The refreshed priorities and objectives still have as their building blocks the aim to have a fair, safe and welcoming borough. This is directly referenced within the priorities to build pride, responsibility and respect, and improve health and well being, but is also implicit in the other three priorities.

Any actions or initiatives which are undertaken to deliver the refreshed priorities and objectives may have diversity and equality implications. These will need to be considered on a project by project basis.

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

Not applicable

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

### 9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: Refresh of Community Priorities

### **Report Author:**

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