

10 July 2013		ITEM: 12 01104224
Cabinet		
Grays Town Centre Regeneration Vision		
Report of: Councillor Andy Smith, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways & Transportation		
Wards and communities affected: Grays Thurrock and Grays Riverside		Key Decision: Key
Accountable Head of Service: Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration		
Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive		
This report is Public apart from Appendix C and Recommendation 5 which is exempt as information contained in the Report relates to financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)		
<i>If the report, or a part of the report, has been classified as being either confidential or exempt by reference to the descriptions in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is hereby marked as being not for publication. The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any confidential or exempt items of business to which the report relates.</i>		
Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report: 11 June 2013		
Purpose of Report: To provide an update on the work currently underway in Grays and to seek approval for a vision for the regeneration of Grays to serve as a basis for an action plan/strategy and to seek approval for further development of regeneration projects.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Regeneration Strategy and Local Development Framework Core Strategy identify Grays as a Growth Hub where regeneration activity is to be focussed. In February 2013 Cabinet considered a report that reviewed projects underway in Grays and set out the need to develop a clear, shared vision to provide the framework for the activities of the Council and its partners in Grays.

A range of surveys and workshops have taken place from February to mid May. This public engagement activity combined with current adopted strategy provide a clear context for the vision based on developing a role for the town centre that builds on the strengths of Grays as an accessible market town, that meets the needs of Thurrock's communities, that is complimentary to Lakeside and not in competition with it and that recognises wider social and

technological changes that are changing the way in which people use town centres.

In addition to the development of a vision for the town centre, the previously identified projects have continued to develop and are creating a tangible momentum for change in Grays. The progress of those projects, including the new College campus and the reuse of the Magistrates Court, is reviewed in this report. Through the consultation and visioning exercises further projects have already been identified which would continue to build upon this momentum. These range from developing the Grays market offer to taking advantage of development opportunities to improve the public realm in Grays south and the rail crossing.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 Cabinet approve the draft vision for Grays set out at paragraph 4.4 of this report and delegate authority for finalising the vision, following a final round of consultation with stakeholders, to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways and Transportation;**
- 1.2 Cabinet acknowledge the work completed to date considering the potential to enhance the public realm in Grays South and support the continued discussions with Network Rail and others to secure the implementation of measures to upgrade the rail station and rail crossing as detailed within the report;**
- 1.3 Cabinet acknowledge the outcome of the enquiries made into the use of the Hogg Lane South site and support the development of proposals for its reuse which support the vision for Grays. These will be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet for further consideration;**
- 1.4 Cabinet approve the Heads of Terms in appendix E for a £1.4m loan from Local Enterprise Partnership's Growing Places Fund to support the costs of refurbishing the Magistrates Court to provide business units.**
- 1.5 Cabinet approve the recommendations contained within exempt Appendix C.**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1** In February 2013 Cabinet considered a report that set out the broad policy context for Grays. The Community Regeneration Strategy (CRS), adopted February 2012, identifies Grays as one of five Growth Hubs (alongside Purfleet, Lakeside, Tilbury and London Gateway). The Strategy and the Council's Local Development Framework propose that the Council and its partners seek to build upon the existing presence of civic functions and cultural services to support Grays' development as the cultural, business and civic/administrative centre of the Borough, together with a convenience retail offer which supports a growing residential population.

- 2.2 The February 2013 report proposed the development of a shared vision for Grays. The vision would provide the basis for developing a coordinated approach to regeneration for the Council with its partners in Grays. The Local Development Framework core strategy provides for significant growth in housing and employment in the Grays urban area, much of it close to Grays town centre, and for growth in retail floorspace within the town centre. The LDF Sites DPD Issues and Options consultation (January 2013) contained the following draft vision for the future of Grays:
- Grays will continue to be the main district town centre serving the whole of Thurrock. It will build on its strengths as an established and accessible market town at the centre of Thurrock.
 - Grays will develop its complimentary role to Lakeside to meet the needs of Thurrock's communities and the students attending Thurrock Learning Campus.
 - Grays will enhance its role as a place for successful businesses to grow and for communities to meet and socialise; as a centre for convenience retail, culture, administrative and civic functions and as a centre for business and business support services.
 - The development of the Thurrock Learning Campus will provide a catalyst for major redevelopment of the southern end of the High Street linking the town centre back to the River Thames.
 - Development sites and Council land holdings surrounding the town centre provide opportunities for high density residential development to support the growth of the town
- 2.3 The draft vision within the LDF consultation was developed in the expectation that the consultation and visioning work described below would provide a shared vision which could form the basis of all future activities. The consultation exercises accordingly sought to engage with businesses, residents and other stakeholders to develop an inspiring, shared vision that would galvanise all relevant agencies to take action to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre

3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 The first stage in developing the vision sought to properly understand what businesses, residents and other stakeholders thought about Grays as it is now and what they thought Grays should be like in the future. During February and March 2013 the Council carried out a range of surveys with residents and businesses. A key aim of the surveys was to include as broad a cross section of people as possible and, critically, to include those individuals who currently don't use Grays and don't consider that it offers them anything of value.
- 3.2 The broad survey mechanisms included:
- Telephone surveys of residents in the 5 wards of Grays and 2 wards of Chafford Hundred;
 - Face to face interviews with passengers passing through Grays rail station;
 - An online survey for people not included in the other surveys;
 - A survey of students of the Grays School Arts Media College; and

- A survey of the 270 businesses and other organisations based in and around the town centre.
- 3.3 The survey results provided a wide range of opinion from over 1,500 respondents which was large enough to give a statistically representative sample of opinion by age, gender and ethnicity. Summary extracts from the reports of findings are attached at appendix A. The response to the surveys provided a great deal of data, but it was considered essential for developing a vision to understand the detail in some key areas.
- 3.4 Respondents to the surveys were invited to volunteer to attend a series of workshops in April and May to discuss the survey findings and to develop a detailed understanding of what they say about the future of Grays. The workshops were augmented by attendance at a number of meetings and presentations to interested groups including:
- a) A workshop with the Grays town Partnership attended by people from businesses based in the town centre, community and voluntary organisations, representatives of community forums, police and others interested in Grays town centre;
 - b) Four workshops with respondents to the resident and rail users surveys;
 - c) A workshop with students from Grays School Arts Media College;
 - d) Two workshops with students of South Essex College;
 - e) A presentation to the Council's Youth Cabinet;
 - f) A discussions with the Seabrooke Rise Residents Association;
 - g) A presentation to the Thurrock Over Fifties Forum; and
 - h) A discussion with Ward Members.
- 3.5 The final report of findings from the workshops incorporates, with the consent of the Big Local Representative, the output from the Grays Riverside Big Local Community Event held on the 29th April 2013. The report of findings is at appendix B.

4 A REGENERATION VISION FOR GRAYS

- 4.1 The output from the surveys and the workshops together with local statistics are key inputs to developing the vision for Grays. However, the Council and its partners must also acknowledge external pressures and challenges including;
- a) The importance of Lakeside to the local economy and provision in planning and regeneration policy for substantial expansion of retail, leisure and business activity in the Lakeside Basin. Grays will not be able to compete with Lakeside and so the regeneration of Grays must be based on developing a role for the town centre that is either different or complimentary to Lakeside;
 - b) Town Centres throughout the country have seen widespread closures of well known High Street based businesses as a consequence of economic change and recession. This trend has also been affected by social and technological changes, reflected in the choices people make to travel to large out of town centres and in the growth of online and mobile shopping;
 - c) The Mary Portas review of the High Street and the Government's response to this report point to the need to focus on developing a unique town centre

offer that responds to local needs and that recognises that town centres have always been multi functional places where people live, work, meet, socialise, shop and use services etc. These reports emphasise the need to 're-imagine' the role of High Streets to respond to wider economic, social and technological change.

- d) The future of Grays depends on partnership working. The Council has an important role to play - not least as a land owner, service provider and a regulatory body. However, a wide range of other stakeholders also have important roles including businesses and landowners, community and voluntary groups, residents and other agencies.

4.2 The surveys and workshops identify a range of detailed issues, observations and suggestions that are appropriate for consideration when developing a strategy/action plan for the town centre, including:

- A desire to maintain/enhance the role of Grays as the main town centre for the Borough based on a mix of uses, a place to live/work/shop etc. Respondents recognised the need to continue to increase residential density around the town centre and ensure that the offer was suitable to support the demands of the population;
- Key projects need to be supported as a basis for regeneration: Respond positively to the opening of the SEC Thurrock Campus, regeneration opportunities around the rail station area including improvements to the pedestrian crossing of the rail line and development of Council land to act as a catalyst for physical regeneration;
- Small businesses/new businesses; businesses supported the need for additional business floorspace in the town centre;
- Recognition of the lack of an established cultural offer and a strong desire to see culture/entertainment/night time economy/leisure uses supported. Nationally the night time economy contributes 27% on average to the economy of town centres. Currently Grays has a limited offer and there is support for developing a good quality night economy;
- Support for developing arts and events: Events can generate footfall and thereby support local businesses. Events can also involve and support communities in the town centre and encourage community empowerments and ownership;
- A strong desire for existing, vacant buildings to be put to effective use – particularly where they occupy high profile locations. Specific, repeated mention was made of 76 High Street (former Dominoes Gym), the State Cinema and the Magistrates Court;
- A continually expressed demand for a food and drink/cafe culture: To provide attractive places for people to eat and drink during the day and in the evening;
- A call for better quality retail: Develop a retail offer based around convenience retail and specialist retail that would not locate at Lakeside;
- Support for extending and enhancing Grays market to provide more frequent markets and a variety of specialist markets. Markets can encourage footfall and activity in the town centre;
- Make more of the River Thames: the river has the potential to be a major asset for the town and Council assets may be used to enhance the connection between the town centre and the river;

- Improving access in to and around the town centre;
- Enhance the appearance/environment of the town centre to create an inviting place for people to spend time. Ensure that the quality of the environment in key arrival/interchange points is significantly enhanced and that there are attractive and safe routes to and through the town centre;
- Addressing issues of safety and crime and the perceptions of crime levels: Crime and the perception of crime will influence people's decisions about whether to use town centre facilities;
- Recognise different needs of different groups of people;
- Community uses/activities (Pop up uses); and
- Involving and informing people and businesses.

4.3 The results of the surveys and workshops show strong support for the idea that Grays should develop its role as a multifunctional town centre where people live, work, shop, meet and socialise which meets the needs of local communities. Within this context the themes listed above can be summarised as;

- a) Place and environment (Appearance/look/feel, safety, River Thames, access and transport);
- b) Growing Communities (seeking to increase the population of Grays and using this as a mechanism to meet the needs of all communities and all age groups, including community uses, activities and facilities);
- c) Place for Businesses to thrive (including supported business space and business start up opportunities);
- d) Retail and the nature of retail (Convenience, specialist-complimentary to Lakeside and not in competition with it, Grays market);
- e) Culture, entertainment, night life, leisure (Appropriate to the town centre location); and
- f) Events (linked with town centre management).

4.4 The draft vision has been developed on the basis of all of the above information. The workshops evidenced a high level of support and agreement for the broad themes which has allowed the opportunity to test the emerging vision as the workshops have progressed. The draft vision and supporting outcomes are set out below:

“Building on its strengths as a Chartered Market Town, Grays will be an exciting, high quality destination for people to live, work, learn, shop and socialise. Reconnected to the River Thames, Grays will support growing resident, student and business communities throughout the day and entertain a diverse and vibrant population through the evening.

Cafés, bars, restaurants, shops and markets will combine with culture, entertainment and events in unique venues to provide a safe and attractive place for communities to meet and businesses to thrive.”

The strategy will revitalise the town centre by;

1. Building a local economy based on:
 - Markets, convenience and specialist retail, cafes, leisure and events during the day;
 - Entertainment, culture and places to eat and drink during the evening;
 - Maximising the benefit to the town centre from opportunities to develop high quality housing and commercial buildings; and
 - Creating space for businesses to grow.
2. Make it easier to travel in to and move around the town centre by:
 - Enhancing the rail crossing-providing a high quality underpass;
 - Re-establishing the connection between the town centre and the River Thames;
 - Improving road, bus, cycle and pedestrian links in to and around the town centre; and
 - Enhancing the transport interchange around the rail station.
3. Enhancing the quality of the public realm by:
 - Creating public squares and greener spaces;
 - Creating active spaces for markets, street cafes, and events; and
 - Taking advantage of the river frontage
4. Supporting Thurrock's communities by:
 - Creating opportunities for Community activities and Pop up uses; and
 - By ensuring that regeneration activity meets the needs of local communities.

4.5 Officers have committed to testing the vision and outcomes with the workshop attendees and, at the time of writing, this is expected to be completed throughout June 2013. This has been pitched as a high level sense check and, given the very high levels of agreement during the workshops, it is not expected that the final consultation will result in any significant changes to the draft. Once the final consultation has been completed the Council can adopt the vision as the basis on which future activity in Grays will be directed. The Cabinet are requested to approve the draft vision and delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways and Transportation to finalise the vision following the outcome of the final consultation.

5 CURRENT PROJECTS

5.1 In February 2013 Cabinet considered existing projects and the potential for further projects in Grays town centre. The broad locations of the projects listed are shown on the plan included as Appendix F. Progress on the projects identified in February 2013 is summarised below.

5.2 South Essex College's Thurrock Campus

- 5.3 Construction of the Thurrock Campus is on target for completion in summer 2014 to support the planned opening of the College in September 2014. The £45m investment, which the Council supported through land assembly, will bring more than 2000 students and staff in to Grays town centre when it opens with the potential for this number to increase to nearer 3,000 in the medium term. The College is the single largest capital investment in the town centre in the past 20 years and is expected to be a major catalyst for change. The development has provided a tangible impetus behind the regeneration programme and the challenge for all stakeholders will be to ensure that the town centre capitalises on the anticipated benefits.

5.4 Grays Magistrates Court

- 5.5 In February 2013 Cabinet approved the recommendation that the Magistrates Court building be refurbished for use as small business accommodation. Experience at the existing business centres in the area, including the Council owned Old Post Office, is that there is significant unmet demand for accommodation from local businesses. These proposals also gained strong support during the recent consultation work with 23% of businesses identifying a need for additional business accommodation in the town centre.
- 5.6 Following the February meeting of Cabinet the Council has now secured £1.4m from the Local Enterprise Partnership's Growing Places Fund to support the costs of refurbishing the Magistrates Court building. The funding will be provided in the form of an interest free loan, the Heads of Terms for the eventual loan agreement are attached at appendix E and Cabinet is invited to consider and approve these.
- 5.7 Members will be aware that the works will require the relocation of the Youth Offending Service and arrangements are being finalised for the team to move to alternative accommodation.
- 5.8 Alongside these discussions, two tender processes have now started to procure a professional team to oversee the refurbishment works required and appoint a partner to operate the site as a business centre with a view to the building becoming operational by March 2015.

5.9 Hogg Lane South

- 5.10 The February 2013 Cabinet report outlined the history of the Hogg Lane South site and the proposals for the development of a Community Hospital. The report noted that in December 2012 the Primary Care Trust's Chief Executive had confirmed to the Council's Chief Executive that the Community Hospital was no longer operationally required and, in any event, was not affordable within the existing financial environment. The report went on to review alternative options for the reuse of the site.

- 5.11 Conscious that the development of the site would remove the opportunity to bring the site forward for a significant health use for the foreseeable future, Members asked officers to revert to the former Primary Care Trust and emerging Clinical Commissioning Group to establish whether their views had been driven by their expected service delivery model or primarily by funding constraints. Officers have made these enquiries and both the Primary Care Trust and Clinical Commissioning Group have confirmed that there is no longer an operational requirement for a Community Hospital in this location. Whilst there are acknowledged to be shortcomings in primary care provision across Thurrock it is not considered that the Community Hospital proposal addresses these.
- 5.12 The visioning work has identified a number of potential uses for the site which would support the Council's overall regeneration programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy. Given the confirmation of the position from the various health bodies, it is proposed that these uses be worked up in detail with a view to being brought back to Cabinet in the future. Any consideration is expected to take some time to complete. In the meantime, officers have taken steps to secure the site and generate an income by leasing it to neighbouring local businesses.

6 NEW PROJECTS

- 6.1 Through the recent consultation work, particularly the workshops which followed the surveys, a series of projects have been identified and discussed which have the potential to continue to build upon the momentum which the College development has generated. Where these were existing projects (such as the Grays South work), Officers took the opportunity to test the levels of support for the measures currently identified. There was strong support for any proposals which could be seen to reinforce the role of Grays, improve the visitor experience of the High Street or maximise the benefit of the town centre's existing strengths. The key workstreams are reviewed below, broad locations for the projects identified are shown on the plan included at Appendix F.
- 6.2 **Grays South public realm and Grays Rail station**
- 6.3 Enhancing and improving Grays rail station and the area surrounding it is a vital element of the regeneration of the town centre. The station is a major arrival point for people visiting the town centre which currently hosts 2.8m passenger movements a year. Its importance will increase with the opening of the College in 2014 and it is clear that it currently does little to create a positive first impression. The situation is complicated by the level crossing which serves to divide the town centre and presents a real barrier to north-south movements.
- 6.4 Recognising these challenges, the momentum created by the £45m investment in the College and the need to resolve the future of the level crossing, the Council commissioned Ramboll consulting engineers and Coe Design in December 2012 to develop options for;

- a) Improving the appearance of the arrival point in to the town centre around the rail station;
- b) Improving the appearance of the area between the rail station and the new college; and
- c) Improving/replacing the current arrangements for crossing the rail line.

- 6.5 The study followed three broad stages; baseline, development of options and the development of a preferred option and concluded in early June 2013. The proposals, which were discussed with Ward Members at the options stage, identify a range of public realm improvements between the College and the rail station and associated development opportunities to define the public realm that would be created coupled with options for significant enhancement to the rail crossing.
- 6.6 The favoured option arising from the study is for an underpass as a practical solution to providing free flowing access across the rail line combined with new public squares on both sides of the rail line. Plans from the study at appendix D illustrate the form this might take. It is considered that a broad 'boulevard underpass' would provide the greatest opportunity to create a continual flow for pedestrians within a very high quality landscaped public realm which could be integrated with a redeveloped rail station that enhances the arrival point in the town centre. Initial cost estimates show that (excluding land costs) constructing the underpass would cost in the region of £5m.
- 6.7 The study did consider bridging options; these would require substantial above ground structures incorporating steps and lifts. Consequently these are not considered to offer the same benefits as an underpass. However these should not be discounted at this stage and may provide an alternative if an underpass can not be progressed.
- 6.8 The study identifies potential for redevelopment of the rail station site and adjoining land owned by Network Rail and the Council as a means of enhancing the public realm and improving the relationship of the rail station with the town centre. These developments could also contribute to the costs of constructing the underpass. The rail station site is identified in the LDF sites DPD issues and options consultation as a potential mixed commercial development site. Combined with adjoining land owned by the Council this could include a redeveloped rail station possibly relocated closer to the High Street, commercial and residential development. Redevelopment would create the space required for the underpass and public squares that would significantly improve the appearance of the areas. These options have been the subject of initial positive officer discussions with Network Rail.
- 6.9 The study also identifies the potential for development around Mulberry Square. The sites DPD issues and options consultation identifies the square for redevelopment as a mixed commercial development. The site has potential for ground floor commercial with residential units on upper floors. The development of this land could be taken forward by the Council as landowner, possibly as an early development through the proposed Council owned

development company. The Council would also need to discuss these options with adjoining land owners.

- 6.10 The Grays Town Partnership and local land owners have been consulted during the study and Ramboll Consultants provided a presentation to the partnership as part of the consultation process. There was strong support for improving the quality of the rail crossing, the station and the public realm within the area.
- 6.11 The study has identified the potential for wider improvements to the public realm, development opportunities to define the public realm, and an approach to enhancing the quality of access across the rail line which would need to be developed in detail. Cabinet is invited to acknowledge the work completed to date and support the development of the preferred option through discussions with Network Rail and others. It is anticipated that further reports will be provided as these discussions progress.
- 6.12 **State Cinema**
- 6.13 Members will be aware of the importance of the State Cinema to Grays. The scale and location of the building, together with its existing condition, serve to ensure that it continues to have a very high profile. Whilst the Council is seeking to progress exciting proposals to the north and south of the High Street, the continued deterioration of the State Cinema has a severe impact on the reputation of the town. Disappointment with its condition and a strong desire to see the building returned to use was raised in all of the workshops together with significant support for cultural and leisure facilities and for developing a night time economy offer in Grays. The level of public opinion is further illustrated by two recent petitions that were posted on the Council's web site promoting use of the building for live music.
- 6.14 The State Cinema opened in 1938 and is typical of the super-cinemas of that time; it was designed to accommodate 2200 cinema-goers with associated facilities and retail units opening onto George Street. The State has art deco detailing and features throughout, most of which remain largely undamaged and unaltered, which have contributed to the buildings' grade II* listing. The building closed as a cinema in 1989 and has had several different owners who have tried to keep it open since then. In 1993 it was re-opened as "Charleston's" bar/nightclub. This was short-lived and the building closed once again and has remained closed since then. In 2001 Morrison acquired the building as part of the site needed to build a car park to service the supermarket. They placed a restrictive covenant on the building's title preventing it being used for ecclesiastical purposes and sold the site to the current owners in 2006.
- 6.15 As a result, the State has been vacant for nearly 20 years. Whilst it has suffered from incidences of vandalism and theft over this period, the current owners have made efforts to secure the building and undertake repair works to make the building water-tight and prevent further damage to the structure.

- 6.16 A number of attempts have been made to bring the building back into use. The Council had engaged in dialogue with both Morrison's and the current owners looking at alternative uses. Thurrock Development Corporation commissioned consultants in 2009 to undertake an extensive architectural and demand study which the current owners used as a basis to submit a planning application, which was granted consent, to convert the building into a mixed-use leisure venue which included conference and entertainment facilities, restaurants, shops and bars. No commercial operator was forthcoming due to the extensive costs to bring the building back into use and this planning decision remains unimplemented. In June 2012 the owners put the building on the open market for sale. From thereon Officers have continued dialogue with the owners to ascertain their aspirations for the building and to support them in their efforts to bring the building back into use.
- 6.17 Progress in these discussions and proposals for next steps are reviewed within the restricted Appendix C to this report. Cabinet are requested to approve continuing dialogue as set out in the restricted appendix C.
- 6.18 **Transport Study**
- 6.19 A concern raised by the business community in particular is the current transport system in Grays, with a principal focus on the road network. The Council has commissioned a Transport Study for Grays Town Centre, to identify and address existing and future transport issues which need to be considered and managed within the wider regeneration agenda for Grays Town Centre. Key issues supporting the regeneration, vibrancy and development of the Town Centre have been identified and assessed and will be set out as packaged options for the Council to consider. The Strategic Transport Team has submitted a bid to the South East Local Transport Board in order for funding to be considered and a response on potential funding is expected in due course.
- 6.20 **Grays Market**
- 6.21 The public and business surveys show wide support for increasing the market offer in Grays to include a range of specialist markets on additional days to the current general market held on Friday and Saturday. Recognising the overwhelming support for these proposals and the pride residents had in Grays' Charter Market status, Officers are already developing a planning application for additional specialist markets in the town centre and investigating opportunities for this to include start up stalls for new businesses.
- 6.22 Discussions are ongoing with the current market operator to determine how best to take the proposal forward once the permissions have been granted. It is clear that the Council will have a significant role to play in future to ensure that the market offer is sufficiently broad to attract new shoppers but also of sufficient quality to ensure that it enhances the reputation of the town centre.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 7.1 Grays has been identified in Council policy as a Growth Hub where regeneration activity is to be focussed. The vision is based on current policy and extensive engagement with residents and businesses and the community and voluntary sector. It will provide a framework for developing a clear set of actions for delivering lasting change in Grays.
- 7.2 A range of projects discussed in the report are underway that will make a significant contribution towards regeneration in Grays town centre and it is vital that the Council maintain the momentum that these have generated and continue to develop further interventions off the back of these.

8. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 8.1 On the 4th June Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny considered the outputs and issues for the vision discussed in section 4 of this report and strongly supported the progress towards establishing a vision for Grays.

9. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 The vision and projects set out in this report directly support the priorities set out in the Community Strategy, the Community Regeneration Strategy and the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development.
- 9.2 The vision will provide a clear framework for developing with partners a regeneration strategy for Grays that builds on the momentum generated by current projects, which responds to the outputs from the stakeholder engagement and explains in detail how the regeneration priorities set out in policy will apply to Grays.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Financial

Implications verified by: Sean Clark
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With regards to the Magistrates Court proposal and the loan from the LEP, as the offer is only a loan the Council would still have to finance the expenditure through its own resources or prudential borrowing with the loan providing benefit through cash flow terms. The benefit of using prudential is that there is more flexibility over the repayment liability to the general fund's bottom line although the loan itself would have to be paid back within a five year period.

All other schemes as set out in the public report are in development stages and a further report would need to come back setting out funding options and requirements.

Financial implications for the exempt report are set out within the exempt report.

10.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: Philip Cunliffe-Jones
Telephone and email: Extension 2822. Email: pcunliffe-jones@thurrock.gov.uk

The recommendations in this report fall within the broad powers of the Council in the Local Government Act 2000 to do anything that they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area.

10.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: Samson De'Alyn
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The vision set out in this report has been based on extensive consultation with representative sampling and workshops. It recognises the importance of developing a strategy and projects that address the needs of all sections of the community.

10.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Grays Town Centre Public Consultation report of findings March 2013
- Grays Town Centre Consultation with businesses and organisations based in Grays Report of Findings March 2013
- Thurrock Community Strategy
- Thurrock Community Regeneration Strategy, February 2012
- Regeneration Strategy Implementation Plan, December 2012
- Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2011
- Paper to Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee June 2013

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- A. Extracts of survey reports: Summary of main findings
- B. Extracts from Grays Workshops report of findings
- C. Exempt Appendix

- D. Extracts from Grays Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Module 3
Report by Ramboll Consulting
- E. Magistrates Court Heads of Terms for Growing Places Fund loan
- F. Location plan for identified projects

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