

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

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **21 November 2017**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.

Membership:

Councillors Oliver Gerrish (Chair), Leslie Gamester (Vice-Chair), Jack Duffin, Martin Kerin, Ben Maney and Tunde Ojetola

Substitutes:

Councillors Graham Hamilton, Tom Kelly, Gerard Rice and Graham Snell

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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| 1 Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 Minutes | 5 - 12 |
| To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 September 2017. | |
| 3 Items of Urgent Business | |
| To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. | |
| 4 Declaration of Interests | |
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| 9 | Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme | 61 - 62 |

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna-Victoria Martin , Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **13 November 2017**

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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.

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

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspiration and attainment so that residents can take advantage of local job opportunities
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Promote Thurrock and encourage inward investment to enable and sustain growth
- Support business and develop the local skilled workforce they require
- Work with partners to secure improved infrastructure and built environment

3. Build pride, responsibility and respect

- Create welcoming, safe, and resilient communities which value fairness
- Work in partnership with communities to help them take responsibility for shaping their quality of life
- Empower residents through choice and independence to improve their health and well-being

4. Improve health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being and safeguard the most vulnerable people with timely intervention and care accessed closer to home
- Enhance quality of life through improved housing, employment and opportunity

5. Promote and protect our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock's river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock's natural environment and biodiversity
- Inspire high quality design and standards in our buildings and public space

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 September 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Oliver Gerrish (Chair), Leslie Gamester (Vice-Chair), Jack Duffin, Martin Kerin and Ben Maney

Apologies: Councillors Tunde Ojetola

In attendance: Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Matthew Boulter, Deputy Monitoring Officer
John Knight, Assistant Director of Housing
Julie Rogers, Assistant Director of Environment
Sarah Welton, Strategy & Performance Officer
Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

8. Minutes

The Minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 29 June 2017 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- The additional items listed in the agreed recommendations on page 12 be included within the Work Programme;
- The following sentence "Councillor Maney echoed his thoughts that sending the report to Full Council was unjust." Be reworded to:

Councillor Maney echoed his thoughts that sending the report to Full Council was unnecessary.

9. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business

10. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

11. Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2017/18

The Strategy & Performance Officer introduced the report which provided a progress update in relation to the performance of Key Performance Indicators (KPI), including a focus on some of the specific highlights and challenges. Members were advised that senior Officers were in attendance for any questions within particular directorates.

The Chair enquired as to the in focus item of street cleanliness and whether the reason the KPI was in focus was due to the change in methodology. Officers explained throughout the year the whole borough was inspected in tranches of three wards at a time. This year was the first year Keep Britain Tidy had undertaken the inspection, on behalf of the council. It was commented that a key difference was council officers had local knowledge when completing the tranches, and so knew when land was publicly or privately owned. Keep Britain Tidy did not necessarily realise which pieces of land are privately owned and therefore may score slightly higher.

It was sought as whether the change in direction of travel would be visible before next year. Officers commented that the direction of travel should be visible after each tranche visit. It was further commented that officers were hopeful the KPI would remain stable.

Members remarked the KPI for household waste which was refuse, recycled or composted was disappointing, especially following feedback from residents. The Assistant Director for Environment advised Members the impact of the new route optimisation had been successful. She continued by commenting the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be discussing any issues at their next meeting.

The Committee was advised it only required one household in a street to contaminate a whole recycling collection as when arriving at the refuse centre the waste would be refused. The Assistant Director for Environment further commented a lot of work was being done with the Communication Team to encourage residents to recycle more. Councillor Gerrish remarked he felt it would be helpful for residents if the reason, should their waste not be collected, were explained to them. Officers explained to Members if they knew of any bin collections which had not been collected to email the Assistant Director for Environment as officers were willing to make site visits and speak to residents.

Councillor Kerin congratulated Officers and Schools on the KPI on the percentage of schools being judged 'good' or 'better; with 37 out of 38 of Thurrock's schools being judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Councillor Duffin mentioned a graffiti case, where the resident reported the incident via the Report It app, only for it to be closed without any work to clean the graffiti being completed. The Assistant Director for Environment commented with the case in question there was confusion with the address, so the report was closed following an inspection of a different location.

It was raised by Councillor Maney whether a recycled rate per ward was available. Officers advised it was difficult to compile a Ward by Ward breakdown however they were able to provide a day by day detailed result including recyclable and garden waste.

Discussing refuse waste collections, it was remarked that missed collections in Aveley appeared to be increasing. The Assistant Director for Environment advised officers were looking into missed collections with the possibility of sweep collections being completed.

During discussions the Director of HR, OD & Transformation advised there was a comprehensive action plan for sickness management. She commented that the direction of travel over the last year was slightly below that of the last 12 months.

The Committee was further advised that just over one thousand members of staff, which was under 50%, had no sickness absence at all. For longer term sickness, which was over 20 days, there were 168 incidences for the last financial year which was under 8%.

Councillor Gerrish observed the high number of service charges for council tenants and asked whether it would have a positive or negative impact on satisfaction. The Assistant Director of Housing commented that other plans to improve with different projects within Social Housing and with the Council's contractor Mears were currently ongoing.

He continued to advise that although some of the changes being made were reasonably small changes, they could affect satisfaction scores from residents. The Assistant Director of Housing advised members that anti-social behaviour also affected satisfaction and this was something that officers were working on, including how to collect such data.

The Chair raised a question in relation to the overspend of the General Fund in that was there a plan to mitigate the situation. The Director of Finance & IT commented officers were working alongside Portfolio Holders and wider Directors Board.

He continued to state at this time of the year officers were looking at the pressures and any built in savings. Members were advised Officers were not looking at areas to affect front line services, however this was also not a guarantee.

The Director of Finance & IT commented that there had been improvement within the treasury position. It was mentioned that the Annual Election budget had been used as a built in saving, since there was no election this year. He further observed in his opinion of definition of forecast the councils position at end of year would be break even, however officers had shown what would happen if the council didn't take mitigating action.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To note and comment upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators in particular those areas which are IN FOCUS, and;**
- 2. To identify any areas which require additional consideration.**

12. Call-in to Cabinet Decision 01104421 Communication Strategy

The Chair of the Committee introduced the report to Members stating that at the last meeting Members had decided to refer the Call-In to Full Council, however following advice from the Monitoring Officer which was detailed within the report this was not completely possible.

He continued to highlight within the report the Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service had proposed a number of changes in that sections 3.23 and 3.25 of the covering report, which were also included within the Communication Strategy, be removed and replaced with the wording outlined within the report at 3.2 to 3.4.

Councillor Gerrish mentioned that he felt the amendments addressed the concerns raised by the Committee at the previous meeting. He advised Members that they were not to re-discuss the Call-In but to move the report forward. Councillor Gerrish then stated he thought the report should be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

Councillor Duffin remarked that he was still not happy with the amendments noted within the report, as he had seen press releases from the Communication Team which did not follow the strategy.

Councillor Kerin commented he was sympathetic to Councillor Duffin's comments, however following the advice from the Monitoring Officer, he felt the report should be referred back to Cabinet.

Councillor Maney stated the situation was embarrassing. He continued to comment that he remained of the thought that the report should be referred back to Cabinet and for them to take into consideration the Committee's concerns.

The Chair then proceeded to take a vote on referring the Call-In back to Cabinet for reconsideration:

Favour: Councillors Gerrish, Gamester, Kerin and Maney (4)

Against: Councillor Duffin (1)

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the procedural advice received from the Monitoring Officer at paragraphs 4 of the report.**
- 2. That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the potential revised wording of the relevant section of the Communications Strategy 2017-2020.**
- 3. That the Committee can, following the legal and procedural advice from the Monitoring Officer, either, refer the recommendation (decision: 01104421 Communication Strategy) to Cabinet for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns.**

13. Establishment of a Task and Finish Group in relation to Public Participation at Council Meetings

As Chair of the Committee, Councillor Gerrish presented the report to Members commenting he felt there was high scope for Members of the Public to be more involved in the meetings held by the Council. He stated he thought this was a good opportunity to improve public participation at Council meetings.

The Chair further commented that he would like to see the Task and Finish Group investigate early notice of agendas. Councillor Kerin agreed that he would like to see an increase in public participation at meetings.

During discussions, Councillor Duffin suggested that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be included within the membership of the Task and Finish Group. He mentioned that, as they chair Full Council meetings, he felt it was important they sit on the Group.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer informed the Committee the Task and Finish Group could invite the current Mayor and Deputy Mayor along with any past mayor still serving as a councillor to a question and answer sessions. Completing this would enable Members to receive advice from the people who chair Full Council meetings. It was explained that the Membership of the Task and Finish Group would be sought by Democratic Services emailing Group Leaders for their nominations. The Membership would have to be appointed in accordance with political proportionality.

It was enquired as to the potential timeframe of the Task and Finish Group and whether it was possible to speed up the process. It was stated by Officers that if a Task and Finish Group took 6 to 12 months then it would be taking too long. Members were advised, depending on the topic, a Task and Finish Group should take around 3 months.

Officers further explained the process of setting up a Task and Finish Group. Once agreed by the Parent Committee the clerk would seek nominations from Group Leaders and once confirmed the first meeting could be scheduled. It would be at the first meeting that Members could decide as to what research

or site visits they may wish to undertake. Members were advised throughout the whole process the Group would have continuous support from Democratic Services.

Members were notified that there were some actions that could be completed sooner, such as agenda items published on the forward plan. Officers were looking into whether that information was accessible enough to residents.

It was explained that Officers, including the Monitoring Officer, had met with Members of the public and Group Leaders to discuss the concerns held by the public when speaking at Council Meetings.

Councillor Maney enquired if the Task and Finish Group was a Sub-Committee of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was explained this was not the case, as the Task and Finish Group would have any three Elected Members not only Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

During discussions it was raised as to whether it would be better to call a meeting of the Constitution Working Group to complete the review into Public Participation as they were able to report directly to Full Council. It was explained that Overview and Scrutiny Committees could make recommendations to the relevant Executive committee; either General Services, Cabinet or Council. Officers advised that the Constitution Working Group was an ad-hoc committee in that one was organised as and when it was required.

Members observed the comments on the speed of the work to be undertaken; remarking that, if possible, the relevant group should aim to have the review completed within the next few months. It was mentioned that Committees and reviews took time. The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained that following the last meeting of Full Council, the General Services Committee had met and decided the natural route was to ask the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee to investigate.

It was commented Members of the Committee felt the suggested process of setting up a Task and Finish Group was a long and drawn out process, when there was a Group which could be set up and were able to report directly to Full Council.

The Chair sought confirmation from the Deputy Monitoring Officer that the Committee were able to call on the Constitution Working Group. It was advised that Members could do so, dependant on the agreement of Group Leaders.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to call on the Constitution Working Group to investigate into Public**

Participation at Council Meetings should this not be constitutionally allowed to:

- **Establish a Task and Finish Group into Public Participation at Council Meetings**

2. That the terms of reference (attached as appendix 1) be adopted for the Constitution Working Group or the Task and Finish Group.

14. Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/2018

Members discussed the Work Programme for the municipal year.

RESOLVED:

That the following items to be included on the Work Programme:

- **Update on the Communications Team and their decision making processes**
- **Key Performance updates throughout the municipal year**
- **Update on internal and external apprenticeships**

The meeting finished at 8.13pm

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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| | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| 21 November 2017 | | ITEM: 5 |
| Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee | | |
| Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Report 2017/18 | | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key | |
| Report of: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications & Customer Services | | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: n/a | | |
| Accountable Director: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications & Customer Services | | |
| This report is public | | |

Executive Summary

This is the mid-year corporate performance monitoring reports for 2017/18.

The Corporate Performance Framework 2017/18 details the statistical evidence the council will use to monitor the progress and performance against the priorities. This is the outcome of a full and thorough review of KPIs in line with recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16.

This report provides a progress update in relation to the performance of those KPIs, including a focus on some specific highlights and challenges. The data is included in Appendix 1 and the areas for focusing upon this quarter are detailed in section 3.3.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee note and comment upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators in particular those areas which are IN FOCUS
- 1.2 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee identify any areas which require additional consideration

2. Introduction and Background

2.1. The council has an agreed vision and set of corporate priorities:

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

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

2.2. The vision and priorities are currently under review by a cross-party working group of members, representatives of the community, business and tenants.

2.3. The performance of the key activities of the council in delivery the corporate priorities is monitored through the Corporate KPI (Key Performance Indicator) framework. This provides a mixture of strategic and operational indicators and is the outcome of a full and thorough review of KPIs and other performance tools in line with recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16.

2.4. The review took into account feedback and intelligence the council receives from residents. Results from the resident survey which took place in November/December 2016 also fed into this review.

2.5. The purpose of the review was to make the performance framework as clear and simple to understand as possible, whilst balancing the need to ensure the council is monitoring those things which are of most importance, both operationally and strategically.

2.6. This reflects the demand for council services increasing and being ever more complicated and the need for a holistic approach to monitoring data and intelligence. The increased analysis of internal processes at service level by Directors which has been embedded throughout 2016/17 will continue.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 This report is a monitoring report, therefore there is no options analysis.

3.2 Summary of Corporate KPI Performance

| Quarter 2 Performance against target | | Direction of Travel compared to 2016/17 | |
|---|----------------|--|-------------|
| Achieved | 69.44% (25) | ↑ BETTER | 46.43% (13) |
| | | → STATIC | 14.29% (4) |
| Failed | 30.56% (11) | ↓ WORSE | 39.28% (11) |

3.3 Focus Areas for Quarter 2 (Up to end of September 2017)

At this midway point in the year, this section is going to focus on all 11 (eleven) indicators which are currently failing to meet their target.

PORTFOLIO: Performance and Central Services

3.3.1 Focus 1

| KPI | Average sickness absence days per FTE (full time equivalent employee) | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Quarter 2 Performance | 4.72 days (YTD) | Performance | FAILED (smaller is better) |
| Quarter 2 Target | 4.5 days (YTD) | Direction of Travel since last year | BETTER ↑ |
| Year End Target | 9 days | | |

Performance at the end of Quarter 2 remains above target at 4.72 days against a target of 4.5 days. The trend over the quarter was, however, positive, with a month on month reduction from 0.84 in July to 0.75 (meeting the monthly target) in September.

Senior HR Advisors have attended directorate teams on a monthly basis during Quarter 2 providing analysis and advice on issues including return to work compliance, trigger points that have been reached and best practice in managing absence.

An Employee Health Check Day was held for staff at Oliver Close during October. Following this a range of programmes are being held including Power Wave Fitness Session, Nutrition Programme and Managing Your Wellbeing & Building Personal Resilience courses.

Analysis is currently underway to examine incidents of absence following Bank Holidays or other significant events to identify any patterns within the council's workforce that need to be addressed and a peer support scheme for managers dealing with challenging sickness cases is also being trialled during quarter 3.

3.3.2 Focus 2

| KPI | No of new apprenticeships started (including current members of staff undertaking new apprentice standards) | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Quarter 2 Performance | 18 (YTD) | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Quarter 2 Target | 25 | Direction of Travel since last year | n/a – new indicator definition for 2017/18 |
| Year End Target | 53 (equates to gov't target of 2.3% of the workforce) | | |

Ten new starts were achieved during Quarter 2, improving on the eight starts achieved in Quarter 1. Work is continuing with managers across the council to raise awareness of the opportunity presented by the apprenticeship levy.

As a result of work to date, a further 24 starts are expected during Quarter 3 which will move performance above target.

3.3.3 Focus 3

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| KPI | % timeliness of response to all complaints (all services except social care) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 77% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Target | 95% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |

Due to the dip in complaints turnaround, a number of actions have been undertaken to help improve performance.

These actions include senior officer escalation of complaints prior to deadline day, additional chase ups by the complaints team and regular reporting to senior management.

3.3.4 Focus 4

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| KPI | % of all complaints upheld (based on closed complaints including social care complaints) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 39% | Performance | FAILED (smaller is better) |
| Target | 35% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |

Further analysis is being undertaken as part of the Learning Action Plan process to determine why there has been an increase in upheld complaints.

PORTFOLIO: Education and Health

3.3.5 Focus 5

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| KPI | % NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) + Unknown 16-17 year olds (Age at start of academic year) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 4% | Performance | FAILED (smaller is better) |
| Target | 2% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |

The target of 2% is set to be achieved in our three month reporting period to Department for Education from December 2017 to February 2018. This is when our NEET (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training) is, historically, at its lowest.

The “Unknown” figure indicator, however, historically rises in September when the whole cohort is made Unknown. It will take the team until early December to bring the Unknown figure down to 0% (nearly 6,000 records will be updated on the system during this period).

The Unknown figure currently stands at 23.5% which is much lower than the 44.4% in the same period last year.

PORTFOLIO: Housing

| 3.3.6 Focus 6 | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| KPI | Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 36 days (YTD) | Performance | FAILED (smaller is better) |
| Target | 30 days | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |
| <p>A review of the voids process has been undertaken in which some performance efficiencies have been identified and implemented.</p> <p>The changes made to the voids process during Quarter 2 as well as a greater focus on voids performance reporting have improved in-month performance in August and in particular September, where the target of 30 days was achieved. The service anticipates a further improvement in performance for October based on provisional calculations.</p> <p>The key-to-key process is being further invigilated to drive out any inefficiencies.</p> | | | |

| 3.3.7 Focus 7 | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| KPI | % General Satisfaction of tenants with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing (good or excellent) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 70% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Target | 75% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |
| <p>85.5% of residents rated the service excellent, good or fair overall – treating ‘fair’ responses as ‘not satisfied’ leads to the indicator not being met. There has been a slight drop in satisfaction from Quarter 1 (71%) to Quarter 2 (70%) and this remains below the target of 75%, however, this was a stretch target from last year which was only 72%.</p> <p>A range of initiatives are in progress to improve satisfaction including a programme of works in general needs communal areas to be completed by Mears Ltd under social value and series of estate visits including the Portfolio Holder and senior managers.</p> | | | |

PORTFOLIO: Social Services

| 3.3.8 Focus 8 | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| KPI | % of 17-21 yr old Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET) | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 53.4% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Target | 70% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |
| <p>Summer is a point of transition for young people as they move into other educational opportunities.</p> <p>The service continues to support young people to make impartial choices around educational pathways. Two aftercare young people have recently been recruited into apprenticeship opportunities within Inspire and will continue to source other apprenticeship routes. The service is also working closely with colleagues from the virtual school to ensure that there is support for 16-18 year olds into EET.</p> | | | |

PORTFOLIO: Environment

3.3.9 Focus 9

| KPI | % Household waste which is reused, recycled or composted | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Quarter 2 Performance | 40.84% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Quarter 2 Target | 45.5% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |
| Year End Target | 41% | | |

The mid-year recycling performance remains below target despite improved in month rates in July (which was above target) and August. As previously documented, there are a number of factors contributing to the low recycling rates including contamination, in particular in communal shared bins, the drier weather earlier in the year resulting in lower tonnages of garden waste than anticipated and a lack of a targeted recycling education programmes and communication to residents over the last 3 years.

The Environment Department has set up a project team to look at ways of increasing recycling. Working with the Communications team, a range of options have been identified that will have both short term and long term benefits.

Recent activity includes waste and recycling awareness-raising to over 1,250 year 7 pupils as part of the Crucial Crew week. The service has committed to reintroducing bin tags/stickers which will notify residents that their bin is contaminated and will explore the possibility of having recycling messages. The service is also in the process of promoting the bulky waste collection and the household recycling waste centre.

3.3.10 Focus 10

| KPI | % of refuse bins emptied on correct day | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Quarter 2 Performance | 97.6% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Quarter 2 Target | 98.5% | Direction of Travel since last year | WORSE ↓ |
| Year End Target | 98.5% | | |

There are a number of operational factors that have combined to result in the increased level of missed bins. These include aging vehicles, vacant posts (including supervisory), staff absences, changes to working practices and blocked accesses. All these issues are being closely managed and monitored. To resolve the aging vehicle issue, 28 new bin lorries are on order and will arrive in early 2018.

The service has identified some additional contributory factors, including instances of inconsiderate parking of vehicles resulting in the refuse vehicles being unable to access the streets to carry out the collection. The team are working with the Communications team to raise awareness of this issue, an issue that is also a concern for emergency vehicles.

Where streets have been missed, the service has apologised and is working on simple messaging about what residents should do if their bin has been missed.

PORTFOLIO: Finance

| 3.3.11 Focus 11 | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| KPI | % overall spend to budget on Capital Programme | | |
| Quarter 2 Performance | 26% | Performance | FAILED (bigger is better) |
| Quarter 2 Target | 30% | Direction of Travel since last year | IN LINE |
| Year End Target | 90% | | |

This is a little less than the Quarter 2 target of 30%, but the programme includes a number of projects which are now underway (i.e. vehicle purchases of £7.5m) and is expected to achieve the 90% target by year end.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The corporate priorities and associated performance framework are fundamental to articulating what the council is aiming to achieve. It is best practice to report on the performance of the council. It shows effective levels of governance and transparency and showcases strong performance as well as an acknowledgement of where we need to improve.
- 4.2 This report highlights what the council is focussing on during 2017/18 and confirms the governance and monitoring mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that priorities are delivered.

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

- 5.1 Performance against the corporate priorities will continue to be monitored through Performance Board, a cross-council officer group of performance experts representing each service. Performance Board scrutinises the corporate KPIs on a monthly basis, highlighting areas of particular focus to Directors Board.
- 5.2 Each quarter a report is presented to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee for member-led scrutiny, and finally reported to Cabinet.

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

- 6.1 The vision and priorities cascade into every bit of the council and further to our partners, through key strategies, service plans, team plans and individual objectives.

6.2 This report will help decision makers and other interested parties, form a view of the success of the council's actions in meeting its political and community priority ambitions.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Yetsie Adeboye**

Management Accountant

The report provides an update on performance against corporate priorities. There are financial KPIs within the corporate scorecard, the performance of which are included in the appendix to the report.

The council continues to operate in a challenging financial environment, therefore, where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council may entail future financial implications, and will need to be considered as appropriate.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**

Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director, Legal and Democratic Services

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council or associated individual priority projects may have legal implications, and as such will need to be addressed separately as decisions relating to those specific activities are considered.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**

Community Development Officer

The Corporate Performance Framework for 2017/18 contain measures that help determine the level of progress with meeting wider diversity and equality ambitions, including youth employment and attainment, independent living, vulnerable adults, volunteering etc. Individual commentary is given throughout the year within the regular monitoring reports regarding progress and actions.

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

The Corporate Performance Framework includes areas which affect a wide variety of issues, including those noted above. Where applicable these are covered in the appendix.

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

N/A

- 9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Report 2017/18

Report Author:

Sarah Welton

Strategy Manager

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Appendix 1 Quarter 2 (Mid Year) 2017/18 Corporate Performance Indicators

| Indicator Definition | Portfolio Holder | 2016/17 Outturn | Qtr 1 YTD | Qtr 2 YTD | Qtr 2 Status | Direction of Travel since 2016/17 | In year profiled target (if applicable) | 2017/18 Target |
|---|------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65 and over) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population | Cllr S Little | 708 | 139 | 287 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 349 | 708 |
| Permanent admissions of younger adults (aged 18 to 64) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population | Cllr S Little | 5.8 | 0 | 4 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 6 | 10 |
| Proportion of carers who receive direct payments | Cllr S Little | 86.66 | 100 | 100 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 68 | 68 |
| Total No of homes transformed as part of Transforming Homes Programme (cumulative) | Cllr R Gledhill | 1115 | 297 | 580 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 500 | 1000 |
| % Rent collected | Cllr R Gledhill | 99 | 93 | 95.6 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 92 | 98 |
| Overall spend to budget on HRA (£K variance) | Cllr R Gledhill | -304 | 0 | 0 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | | 0 |
| % of primary schools judged "good" or better | Cllr J Halden | 91.9 | 97 | 97 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 94% | 94% |
| Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average) | Cllr S Little | 452 | 446 | 425 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 500 days | 500 days |
| Number of "exchanges" carried out through time-banking (in hours) (YTD) | Cllr S Little | 15250 | 9,649 | 12,908 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 6000 | 12000 |
| % of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe (Latest) | Cllr B Little | 97.7 | 100 | 100 | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 100 | 100% |
| Overall spend to budget on General Fund (£K variance) | Cllr S Hebb | 0 | 1,000 | 0 | ACHIEVED | → | 0 | 0 |
| Forecast Council Tax collection by year end | Cllr S Hebb | 98.9 | 98.9 | 98.9 | ACHIEVED | → | 98.9 | 98.9 |
| Forecast National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collection by year end | Cllr S Hebb | 99.7 | 99.30 | 99.30 | ACHIEVED | → | 99.30 | 99.30 |
| Number of additional hypertensive patients diagnosed following screening programmes (YTD) | Cllr J Halden | n/a | 299 | 526 | ACHIEVED | n/a | 200 | 400 |
| % of primary schools signed up to the Daily Mile to increase physical activity levels in children | Cllr J Halden | n/a | 46% | 46% | ACHIEVED | n/a | 40 | 50% |
| Successful completion of treatment in Young People's Drug & Alcohol service | Cllr J Halden | n/a | 81% | 91% | ACHIEVED | n/a | 60 | 60% |
| Number of volunteers within the council (YTD) | Cllr S Little | n/a | 200 | 232 | ACHIEVED | n/a | 220 | 270 |
| Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments/ Or Individual Service Funds | Cllr S Little | New | 33.24% | 35.06% | ACHIEVED | n/a | 32 | 32 |
| Average waiting time (in weeks) of Occupational Therapy assessments as at month end | Cllr S Little | n/a | 4 | 2 | ACHIEVED | n/a | 6 | 6 |
| Number of private tenants whose homes have been improved as a direct result of Housing intervention (cumulative) | Cllr R Gledhill | n/a | 170 | 409 | ACHIEVED | n/a | 265 | 530 |
| No of businesses engaged through Council programmes (Quarterly) | Cllr M Coxshall | 727 | 95 | 226 | ACHIEVED | n/a - different programmes | 90 | 180 |
| % of young people who reoffend after a previously recorded offence | Cllr J Halden | 28% | 10% | Quarter in Arrears | ACHIEVED | ↑ | 30% | 30% |
| Delayed Transfers of Care – Number of delayed days from hospital (attributable to NHS and ASC) | Cllr S Little | 4,255 | 960 | Month in Arrears | Month in Arrears | ↑ | TBC | TBC - await BCF approval by NHSE |
| Street Cleanliness - a) Litter | Cllr A Watkins | 4.45 | Tranche 1 8.5% | not due | | n/a | | 10% |
| Street Cleanliness - c) Graffiti | Cllr A Watkins | 1.15 | Tranche 1 3% | not due | | n/a | | 5% |
| % of housing repairs completed within target | Cllr R Gledhill | 98.3 | 98.1% | 97.9% | ACHIEVED | ↓ | 97 | 97 |
| % of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks | Cllr M Coxshall | 97.3 | 100 | 93 | ACHIEVED | ↓ | 77 | 77 |
| % of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks | Cllr M Coxshall | 100 | 98 | 99 | ACHIEVED | ↓ | 90 | 90 |

Appendix 1 Quarter 2 (Mid Year) 2017/18 Corporate Performance Indicators

| Indicator Definition | Portfolio Holder | 2016/17 Outturn | Qtr 1 YTD | Qtr 2 YTD | Qtr 2 Status | Direction of Travel since 2016/17 | In year profiled target (if applicable) | 2017/18 Target |
|---|------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Average sickness absence days per FTE | Cllr D Huelin | 10.43 | 2.32 | 4.72 | FAILED | ↑ | 4.5 days | 9 days |
| Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days) | Cllr R Gledhill | 34.7 | 36 | 36 | FAILED | ↓ | 30 | 30 |
| % Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted | Cllr A Watkins | 37.62 | 40.16 | 40.84 | FAILED | ↓ | 45.5 | 41% |
| % General Satisfaction of tenants with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing (good or excellent) | Cllr R Gledhill | 70.97 | 71% | 70% | FAILED | ↓ | 75 | 75 |
| % of 17-21 yr old Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training | Cllr S Little | 61.1 | 54.4 | 53.4 | FAILED | ↓ | 70% | 70% |
| % timeliness of response to all complaints (all services except social care) | Cllr D Huelin | 90 | 79 | 77 | FAILED | ↓ | 95 | 95 |
| % of all complaints upheld (based on closed complaints including social care complaints) | Cllr D Huelin | 38 | 37 | 39 | FAILED | ↓ | 35 | 35 |
| % of refuse bins emptied on correct day | Cllr A Watkins | 98.3 | 98.1 | 97.6 | FAILED | ↓ | 98.50% | 98.50% |
| % overall spend to budget on Capital Programme | Cllr S Hebb | 81 | 7.9 | 26 | FAILED | → | 30 | 90% |
| No of new apprenticeships started (including current members of staff undertaking new apprentice standards) | Cllr D Huelin | n/a | 8 | 18 | FAILED | n/a | 25 | 53 (ie 2.3% of the workforce) |
| % NEET + Unknown 16-17 year olds (Age at start of academic year) | Cllr J Halden | n/a | 3.6 | 4.0 | FAILED | n/a | 2% | 2% |
| Number of places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough | Cllr J Halden | 659 | 624 | Not Due (termly) | | ↓ | Not Due (termly) | 75% of DWP total |
| Total gross external income (based on sales forecast £K) - not incl Traded Income | Cllr S Hebb | n/a | n/a | TBC | TBC | n/a | 9842 | 9842 |

| Demand Indicator Definition | | 2016/17 Outturn | Qtr 1 YTD | Qtr 2 YTD | Qtr 2 Status | Direction of Travel since 2016/17 |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Number of statutory nuisance complaints made | Cllr R Gledhill | n/a | 930 | 1,459 (529) | n/a | n/a |
| Number of environmental (public) health interventions requested | Cllr R Gledhill | n/a | 77 | 146 (69) | n/a | n/a |
| No of incidents of Fly tipping reported | Cllr A Watkins | 2,896 | 529 | 995 | n/a | ↓ |
| No of incidents of Abandoned vehicles reported | Cllr A Watkins | 1,623 | 432 | 776 | n/a | ↓ |
| Number of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance | Cllr R Gledhill | 2,285 (Provisional) | 316 | 669 | n/a | ↓ |
| No of homeless cases accepted | Cllr R Gledhill | 287 | 94 | 153 | n/a | ↑ |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 21 November 2017 | ITEM: 6 |
| Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee | |
| Voluntary Sector Corporate Grants Programme | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Report of: Natalie Warren, Community Development and Equalities Manager | |
| Accountable Assistant Director: Les Billingham, Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Community Development | |
| Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director Adults, Housing and Health | |
| This report is Public | |

Executive Summary

Thurrock's Voluntary Sector Corporate Grants Programme is an established and recognised source of funding for key, strategic voluntary sector partners supporting communities in Thurrock. The current programme ends on 31st March 2018.

In 2016/17 this programme, totalling just over £ 300k, levered in a further £1.4m into Thurrock as a result of external and match funding.

This report considers the process for administering the grants programme from March 2018 and seeks comments on the proposal to continue the agreement for Thurrock CVS to administer the programme and maintain the existing split of funding - 80% for existing groups and 20% for new groups.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposal to continue the administration of the Voluntary Sector Corporate Grants Programme with Thurrock CVS from April 2018 – March 2021 with the option to extend by one year if required.**
- 1.2 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposed process and criteria set out in Section 3.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Thurrock Council has supported a Voluntary Sector Grants Programme for many years. Criteria for the programme has reflected Council priorities, and funds have provided core support to a number of organisations whose work supports a diverse range of communities across Thurrock. Whilst some organisations work across a wider geographical area, funds awarded are solely to support work carried out in Thurrock.
- 2.2 In April 2013, the Joint Strategic Forum between Thurrock Council and the voluntary sector considered a number of options to modernise how the grants programme operated. A number of options were considered, and Cabinet agreed to pass administration of the fund to Thurrock CVS. This required CVS to ring fence 80% of the fund to those currently in receipt of funding and to open the remaining 20% to pump prime an annual programme to both Thurrock wide organisations and neighbourhood based organisations. A grants panel was established which included representation from Thurrock CVS, Thurrock Council including Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder for communities, and an independent member without knowledge or experience of the applicant organisations. This role has been fulfilled by the Chief Officer of Chelmsford CVS.
- 2.3 In 2017/18, the budget provided by Council is £332,600. The budget has been subject to savings over recent years. Savings proposals in July 2014 included a £75,000 saving to 2016/17 and £75,000 saving in 2017/18. Reaction from the sector, including an alternative budget, resulted in a specially convened meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Chairs to consider the proposals. Cabinet subsequently agreed to reduce the saving in 2017/18 to £25,000.
- 2.4 Thurrock Council is a signatory to the Thurrock Joint Compact which sets out agreed principles for working with the voluntary, community and faith sector. We recognise that strong partnerships with the sector will benefit Thurrock residents as the sector delivers a range of activities, services, support mechanisms and engagement opportunities that compliment Council priorities, and very often, support people to remain independent of Council services therefore managing demand. The term 'voluntary sector' comes from the recognition that community services emerge when people choose to take local action. Whilst unpaid volunteers are very often a large resource within the sector, many organisations do require a paid staff team and some enter into contracts to support service delivery. The sector is committed to democratic principles of engagement and activity is underpinned by a commitment to equality of opportunity.
- 2.5 Nationally, the activities and services provided within the voluntary, community and faith sector are increasingly recognised as effective support services for local communities. This has resulted in an increase on the pressure on services within the voluntary sector, with increased expectations and referrals to local community based organisations which often have limited resources or infrastructure to meet the need presented locally. The Voluntary

Sector Grants Programme has therefore sought to build capacity and develop a strong and thriving sector in Thurrock.

- 2.6 As grant funding opportunities have decreased, the Council and sector have sought to encourage new initiatives to grow local funding and resource opportunities. There are several good examples such as the 'Small Sparks Scheme' - which helps support community ideas to make a small improvement by match funding volunteer time with up to £250. Another example is GiFT - Give it for Thurrock - a partnership between local business, charities and the statutory sector to encourage giving in Thurrock – be this funds, time, resources, equipment etc. GiFT was launched in September 2017 and aims to provide a framework whereby local businesses can work aside communities and public agencies to benefit agreed priorities. Small donations or gifts of time or products can be used to help fundraising activities as well as events that bring people together to meet social outcomes. By creating a call to action with specific requests, it is envisaged that companies and communities will be better able to contribute to making a difference across Thurrock.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 A public consultation was held June 14th – July 25th 2017 to seek views on the future administration of the fund. A copy of the consultation report is attached as Appendix 1. The consultation suggested three options regarding future administration:

Option 1 – Continue to administer via CVS with recommendations made by a grants panel, including Thurrock Council representatives. 91.84% of responses to the consultation supported this option.

Option 2 – Return administration to Thurrock Council – 2.04% of responses supported this option

Option 3 – Other, for example, use an external fund manager – ideas were requested through the consultation. 6.12% supported this option.

- 3.2 This report supports continuing the administration of the grants programme through Thurrock CVS. There are two direct benefits related to administering grants through CVS. The first is that CVS is the established infrastructure organisation supporting the voluntary, community and faith sector to develop in Thurrock. It has an extensive data base and can promote grant opportunities across the borough to a wide range of organisations. Secondly, as an infrastructure organisation, CVS is well placed to offer developmental support to organisations based on their applications. Often, the confidence gained by securing a small grant can help an organisation apply for larger, external grants or develop income streams.
- 3.3 A further benefit is that CVS does not charge a management fee for this function. CVS sees this role as a function which helps to deliver its core

objectives as an infrastructure support organisation. Council has previously explored using a third party grant provider to manage funding applications. This arrangement would result in a cost, reducing the amount available to organisations. Taking the funds out of the borough could also impact on the confidence of organisations to apply.

- 3.4 In supporting the administration of the grants programme, CVS is required to convene a grants panel. Currently, invitations to the grants panel include:
- 2 x Thurrock CVS (Chair and Chief Executive Officer)
 - Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder
 - Shadow Public Protection and Communities Portfolio Holder
 - Community Development and Equalities Manager, Thurrock Council
 - Independent member from outside Thurrock with experience of grant funding – this role has up to now been supported by the Chief Officer of Chelmsford CVS.
- 3.5 In addition, where there is an opportunity for funders to invest into the programme and use the process to invite bids, the relevant fund holder is invited to join the panel. An example of this is in 2017/18 when Public Health invested £20,000 to support applications which helped to support weight management.
- 3.6 As part of the administration of grants, CVS issues Grant Funding Agreements to confirm the amount and performance expectations of the grant. This enables monitoring against spend. Poor performance is initially supported by CVS with any decisions about changes to funding agreements made in agreement with the panel. Overall performance is very good, and monitoring data to date from the main three year grants programme in 2016/17 shows:
- £1.4m was levered into Thurrock through funding sources external to the Borough as a result of the Council's investment into three year grants. Sources for external funding include the Big Lottery, Esme Fairbairn Foundation, Essex County Council and the Home Office.
 - A further £1m was earned through these organisations either through charges, contracts or direct fundraising - including funds raised in Borough.
 - The overall funds raised result in a return on investment of £10.01 for every £1 invested by the Council.
 - Over 2,000 volunteers were involved, contributing almost 43,000 hours equivalent to £482,445 in kind support.
- 3.7 Future monitoring will aim to reflect the impact of the investment to Thurrock residents by quantifying the equivalent service outcome to local residents – for example, the number of young people supported or the number of counselling sessions supported, depending on the type of grant.
- 3.8 If the proposal for CVS to support administration of the fund is supported, the CVS would not want to be in a position where it had to compete against the wider sector to secure its own grant. In addition, security for CVS in this

period would need to be assured so that CVS could agree to the administration of the grants panel including the required resources. It is recommended that the grant to CVS is frozen for the three year period at the current value - £70,693.

- 3.9 It is proposed to continue to ring-fence 80% of the fund (£266,080) to existing organisations in receipt of a three year grant. This is to ensure core capacity and sustainability of key organisations providing bespoke services in Thurrock. Existing grant values, as well as key functions, are displayed in the table below.
- 3.10 20% (£66,520) will be available for small grants made in year. The value of each grant will be capped at £4000 with a requirement for each applicant to raise 10% of the value through fundraising means (e.g. Community Chest ticket sales).
- 3.11 All grants must reflect council priorities. Additional criteria may be included if more specific funding is available to award through the adopted process. In addition, all grant recipients will be expected to recognise the funds awarded by Thurrock Council through any promotion or activities supported in the local community.
- 3.12 Council issues grants through various programmes, and to support a range of initiatives in the voluntary sector. The Community Environmental Development Fund and Adult Social Care Grants are two examples of grant programmes with defined criteria and an application process. Some grants are issued to support specific strands of work. For example, the Citizens Advice Thurrock currently receives £50,000 to support its core work in Thurrock. We propose to move this particular budget into the voluntary sector grants budget and invite Citizens Advice Thurrock as one of the named organisations to bid into the ring-fenced amount. Citizens Advice Thurrock would need to apply for a grant within this ring-fenced budget which may increase or decrease depending on the applications and decisions made. Citizens Advice Thurrock would receive a secure amount for three years following the process, providing some security for their business planning and fundraising strategy.
- 3.13 If the above proposals are carried, the overall grants budget would therefore increase from £332,600 to £382,600 with £316,080 (80% of the original grant plus £50,000 CAB grant) ring fenced to organisations in receipt of three year grants. The grant to CVS would be frozen at £70,693, making £245,387 available for ring fenced applications.

| Organisation | Current term | Current core grant P/A £ | Proposal |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|--|
| Thurrock CVS – Community Voluntary Service supporting the development of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations that serve Thurrock residents via voluntary services, activities, clubs, events etc. The grant is used towards the core costs of providing a resource centre, infrastructure support such as training and advice, and strategic leadership across the sector. | 3 year | 70,693 | Freeze amount with GFA agreed direct with Council |
| South Essex Rape & Incest Crisis Centre – Specialist, free services to any individual who has or is experiencing any form of sexual violence. The grant is used to support the core costs of running the organisation including accommodation, staff and administration, and supporting strategic work to tackle sexual violence in Thurrock. | 3 year | 63,443 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Ngage – now part of Thurrock CVS, ngage runs a Volunteer Centre, supporting people to find suitable volunteer roles, and helping charities to recruit. This includes Time Banking and employee volunteering. The grant covers core costs including administration, rent, communication costs, as well as promoting volunteering across Thurrock. | 3 year | 52,566 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Citizens Advice Thurrock – offers up-to-date and independent information and advice on many topics, including: debt, benefits, housing, discrimination, employment, immigration and other problems. | 1 year | 50,000 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget and extend grant term to three years. |
| Thurrock Open Door – Open Door works with young and vulnerable people, helping them overcome their barriers and achieve their potential through a number of services including schools outreach, housing support, counselling services, mentoring and missing children. The grant supports the core costs of the charity including staff, administration and accommodation. | 3 year | 38,066 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |

| Organisation | Current term | Current core grant P/A £ | Proposal |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Thurrock Play Network – TPN provides advice, support and resources for play and recreation in the community. They operate a recycling scheme, diverting waste for play, and a toy library as well as advice and support for play workers, child minders, pre-schools etc. The grant supports the core cost of the charity including accommodation, staff and administration. | 3 year | 33,171 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Thurrock District Scout Council –Supporting 1700 members across 20 scout groups in Thurrock including Explorer Scouts, a scout network and active Support Units. The grant supports units across the borough via an application process which sets out local need. | 3 year | 16,722 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Thurrock Arts Council – an umbrella organisation supporting arts in Thurrock. The grant is used to support members across the borough via an application process which sets out the requirement for grant support which may include offsetting the cost of productions, including those at the Thameside Theatre. | 3 year | 10,876 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Thurrock Sports Council – Supporting the development of sports and local clubs and individuals in Thurrock. The grant is used to assist members across the borough via an application process which sets out the requirement for specific grant support. | 3 year | 6,888 | Ask to apply to ring fenced budget |
| Total currently funded to organisations that can apply for a three year grant | | £342,425 | |
| Amount ring fenced for three year grants | | £316,080 | |
| Amount ring fenced for applications to the three year grants budget (minus direct CVS grant amount £70,693) | | £245,387 | |

| Organisation | Current term | Current core grant P/A £ | Proposal |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Small grants in year (2018/19) Up to £4000 with a minimum 10% contribution | 1 year | £66,520 | Panel will assess 2018/19. |

- 3.14 Grants are managed separately through Grant Funding Agreements. Grant Funding Agreements set out the expectations and constraints of the use of the grant, and the timeframes in which the grant can be used. Grant Funding Agreements also set out the performance expectations of the grant including quantifiable data (number and profile of users, nature of enquiries, etc.) as well as qualitative data (how people feel as a result of an intervention for example).
- 3.15 Grant Funding Agreements from the voluntary sector grants programme are considered by the Legal Department and signed by the relevant Head of Service and organisation in receipt of a grant prior to funds being released. If the proposal in this paper proceeds, two Grant Funding Agreements will be issued by the Council to Thurrock CVS. The first will inform the grant expectations of the direct grant to CVS of £70,693. The second will cover the remaining budget (£311,907 assuming the inclusion of the Citizens Advice Thurrock budget is agreed) – this will confirm the expectations of the Council in administering the grants process including individual performance management of grants, with regular management meetings with Thurrock Council and Thurrock CVS.
- 3.16 The final paper to Cabinet will seek delegated authority for new funding agreements from 2018 – 2021 to be agreed by the Corporate Director for Adults, Housing and Health in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods who will be a member of the Grants Panel convened by Thurrock CVS.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The recommendations are considered to offer Council best value, stability for key organisations in Thurrock and investment opportunities for new initiatives.

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

- 5.1 A consultation has been carried out to consider the recommendation and future process. The consultation results and overarching principles set out in this paper have been shared with the Joint Strategic Forum between the Council and Voluntary Sector. Further comment is welcomed from Overview and Scrutiny.

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

6.1 Supporting a strong third sector has the potential to support all priorities, in particular 'To Build Pride, Responsibility and Respect'.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jo Freeman**
Management Accountant

This report sets out the approach towards the allocation of grant funding, the level of which is set as part of the annual budget setting process.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Principal Solicitor Safeguarding

Whilst the Council does not have any legal obligation or statutory duty to provide funding to the voluntary sector, Local Authorities do have the powers to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

Voluntary, community and faith sector organisations play a vital role in community engagement and meeting local need. This is especially so with respect to underrepresented and vulnerable communities, but the sector also has a positive impact across sports, arts, heritage and environment. Positive engagement with the sector supports our equality duties with respect to building cohesive communities. A Community Equality Impact Assessment will be completed against the final criteria.

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

None.

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

- Cabinet Report Voluntary Sector Grants Programme 5 June 2013 Item 14 01104211

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Consultation report.

Report Author:

Natalie Warren

Community Development and Equalities Manager

Community Development and Equalities, Adult Social Care, Adults, Housing and Health.

A public consultation was held between 14th June 2017- 25th July 2017 seeking views on the future administration of the Voluntary Sector Grants Programme.

Feedback from the consultation was designed to inform options relating to the administration of the fund including the grant split for funds assigned to cover core infrastructure organisation grants (currently 80%) and grants available to smaller organisations (currently 20%).

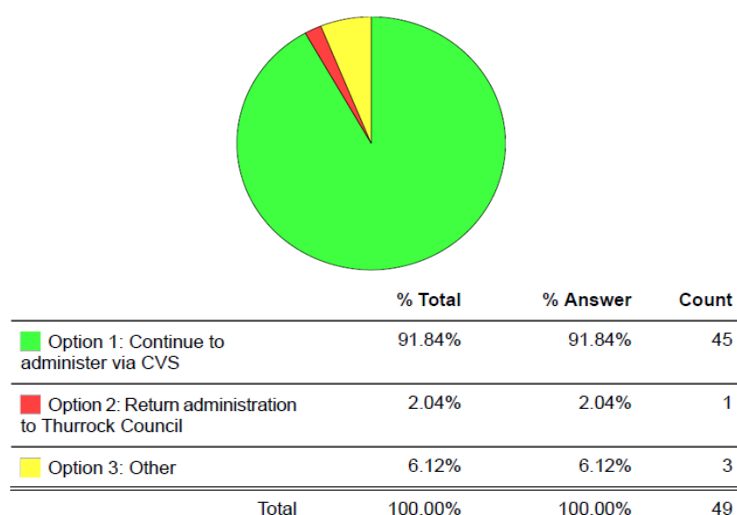
The following report provides an overview of consultees feedback to the Council in relation to these points specifically culminating in the recommended option set out in the main report (to which this document is an appendice). Additional feedback in relation to the Giving for Thurrock (GiFT) initiative, Thurrock Joint Compact, Social Values Framework and Commissioning, Procurement and Grant Funding Strategy with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector is also summarised.

Consultees

Of the **49** respondents to the survey, **44** noted their response either as a local resident, partner agency or representative from the voluntary sector.

15 noted they had received a Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) grant, whilst **28** hadn't and **6** were uncertain.

Grant administration options



14 provided feedback in relation to ongoing administration by Thurrock CVS their comments included:

- ❖ *'The voluntary sector is well placed to evaluate grant bids'*
- ❖ *'Option 2 and 3 would most likely involve more administration'*
- ❖ *'I think CVS is the best fit for the administration of these grants because of their understanding of the Vol and com sector'*
- ❖ *'Needs to be arms-length from the Council'*
- ❖ *'Provides ideal focus for the voluntary sector'*

- ❖ *'Thurrock CVS is more aware of Thurrock Voluntary sector organisations than the council or any other external organisation. Thurrock cvs have managed the development fund well'*
- ❖ *'It is important to assess the value of the volunteers in an objective manner and be able to assess the varying value of different kinds of volunteers in the community'*
- ❖ *'CVS work endlessly in the voluntary sector'*
- ❖ *'The CVS are in touch with local charities and have a good idea of the support available locally'*

Of the 3 that suggested 'other' means for administering the grant, their feedback was as follows:

- ❖ *'Help set up an independent organisation that does not have a vested interest in using the money for its own or subsidiary or members projects'*
- ❖ *'Voluntary sector organisations'*
- ❖ *'Some other neutral organisation, which has a wide range of community groups' interests at heart'*

13 additional responses were received relating to the rationale for the option they selected regardless of whether it was Option A, B or C, suggesting:

- ❖ *'These grants should be open to all voluntary sector groups, including Christian charities'*
- ❖ *'There should be a range of levels to apply for'*
- ❖ *'It has been very helpful to have an agreement to receive grant over a three year period to enable advance planning'*
- ❖ *'The forms were easy to complete and a quick response was given on both occasions'*
- ❖ *'Application a bit long and complicated'*
- ❖ *'Support needed for new groups in understanding data returns process, etc'*
- ❖ *'Gathering an expert opinion in the relevant field of the grant would be useful in assessing its value'*

Promotion of grants programme

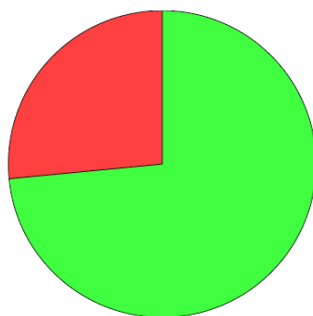
11 comments were received in relation to the promotion of the Voluntary Sector Development Fund, highlighting:

- ❖ *'Opportunities should be promoted as widely as possible within the Borough – they should be sent out to all voluntary sector organisations'*
- ❖ *'Good publicity from the CVS'*

- ❖ *'They do not always get publicised in advance, that would be helpful in financial planning for the years ahead'*
- ❖ *'I feel the advertising and advice is focussed for members of CVS'*
- ❖ *'More should be done to promote it – the kind of things it can support'*

Preferred option for grant split

36 consultees were keen to maintain the 80/20 split in grants whilst 13 preferred to consider an alternative option.



| | % Total | % Answer | Count |
|---|---------|----------|-------|
| Option 1: Retain the existing 80/20 split in grants | 73.47% | 73.47% | 36 |
| Option 2: Consider an alternative ratio | 26.53% | 26.53% | 13 |
| Total | 100.00% | 100.00% | 49 |

A sample of the comments received to inform the consultees selected choice is as follows:

- *'50/50. The current ratio penalises smaller organisations in the area which need funding to start and grow'*
- *'60/40'*
- *'I think an alternative ratio should be explored which may mean offering grants of three years to support smaller organisations which would help with their sustainability'*
- *'Some of the larger bodies mentioned can get funding from national sources denied to small(er) local bodies'*
- *'This all sounds like doing the same thing'*
- *'Why ringfence those that are existing takers – not the most meritorious'*

Additional suggestions included:

- *'Maybe consider a further year role over option for some of the smaller groups if they achieve outcomes so that there is an incentive to achieve and continuity for the community, also maybe a separate category for new innovative ideas'*

- *'If 80/20 has worked, then to keep it simple it would probably be best to continue'*
- *'Core funding needs to be recognised for organisations that run services within Thurrock'*
- *'Grants are vital to the voluntary sector, providing grants in this way is good practice and should be retained. Core grants should be ring-fenced under the development fund'*

Additional feedback

Additional survey questions sought consultees thoughts in relation to:

- ❖ awareness of the Giving for Thurrock (GiFT) campaign
- ❖ additional ideas to encourage local giving
- ❖ ideas for raising unrestricted funds for the community and voluntary sector or community projects
- ❖ the principles of the Thurrock Joint Compact, and,
- ❖ the implementation of the Council's Social Values Framework and Commissioning Procurement and Grant Funding Strategy with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS).

This final section of this appendice provides an overview of responses including a sample of comments where they have been received.

❖ Awareness of the Giving for Thurrock (GiFT) campaign

Over half (**29**) of those that responded to this question had either not heard about giving for Thurrock or were uncertain, whereas **20** had heard of the initiative.



| | % Total | % Answer | Count |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Yes | 40.82% | 40.82% | 20 |
| No | 55.10% | 55.10% | 27 |
| Unsure | 4.08% | 4.08% | 2 |
| Total | 100.00% | 100.00% | 49 |

❖ Additional ideas to encourage local giving

9 suggestions were received for the purpose of increasing local giving. These incorporated the use of the Council's website for the purpose of direct donations through to reward systems for volunteers. Specific comments received are now set out:

- *'Add a 'Donate Now' button to Thurrock.gov pages with reference to giving to specific voluntary sector groups'*
- *'Expos promoting ALL voluntary sector organisations operating in the borough'*
- *'Bartering time or resources with the Council itself, so that the community gets a payback direct for the time and money it saves the Council; this could take the form of public works at weekends, support with local events'*
- *'Better reward system where volunteers can work towards achievements or like blood donor scheme bronze, silver, gold and get seeds such as pin badge or rose bowl'*
- *'Time credits are a good way to encourage people as they get access to tickets, freebies, etc'*
- *'Perhaps going into schools to encourage volunteering from a younger age. More events like the supper evenings'*
- *'I think there are volunteers out there, it's just making it known what opportunities are available'*
- *'We would be interested in a sharing scheme of ways to raise funds for our group. What are the successes of other groups for instance?'*
- *Events such as, quiz nights, dances and fun community get togethers work better than sponsorships. Crowd funding for a particular piece of equipment can generate large sums'*

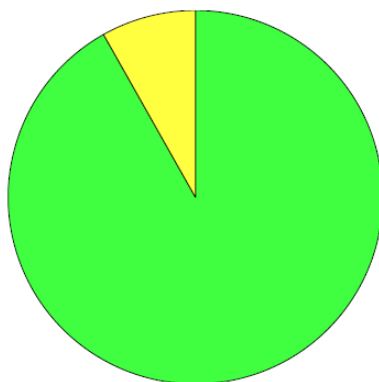
❖ **Ideas for raising unrestricted funds for the community and voluntary sector or community projects**

7 consultees had ideas relating to the creation of an unrestricted fund as follows:

- *'Add a 'Donate Now' button to Thurrock.gov pages with reference to giving to specific voluntary sector groups'*
- *'"Private sector" events such as the Orsett Show could provide a source of funding out of surplus funds. S106/CIL monies should be put into a central Trust Fund which is available to the voluntary sector'*
- *'More advocacy from Thurrock to trusts and foundations – support companies to set up local grant funds administered by CVS, use influence to develop major donors to give to projects in the borough. Tell Thurrock's story better'*
- *'I think it is very important to encourage the anti-obesity program as this is an investment in the future which takes the burden off of other nationally funded organisations (NHS)'*
- *'Entertainment fundraising events, using the college, Opera House and Thameside Theatre'*
- *'Some projects need to be unrestricted, due to the need of facilitation among certain groups of people'*

❖ **The principles of the Thurrock Joint Compact**

Most individuals agreed with the principles set out in the Thurrock Joint Compact.



| | % Total | % Answer | Count |
|--|---------|----------|-------|
| ■ Yes | 91.84% | 91.84% | 45 |
| ■ No | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0 |
| ■ Unsure | 8.16% | 8.16% | 4 |
| Total | 100.00% | 100.00% | 49 |

5 consultees felt that new principles should be considered with 4 sharing their comments as follows:

- *'Grant funding of the voluntary (sector) should not eclipse the statutory duties of local and central government and should not seek to replace it'*
- *'These principles are just waffle. Try to find something meaningful'*
- *'I think 'accountability' should be an integral part of any agreement on funding otherwise the money could just be wasted'*
- *'Whether or not a grant is an investment in the future or not'*

Other reflections included:

- *'Should be updated and revised to encompass and accommodate all groups not now included specifically'*
- *'More emphasis should be placed on the impact of faith in the process'*
- *'I wonder if number 3 should be changed to reflect the community involvement rather than for?'*
- *'How are funds made available to the Faith Sector?'*
- *'Ineffective and not upheld by Thurrock Council, but when challenged through CVS, people are told not to challenge or criticise it'*
- *'This document seems to only be in effect between council and larger voluntary organisations. Smaller independent groups struggle to challenge it'*
- *'All Thurrock statutory organisations need to adhere to the Thurrock Compact, this should also apply to Essex wide statutory organisations who have involvement in Thurrock e.g. Police and Crime Commissioners Office, Mental Health Trusts, etc.'*
- *'Not sure what is behind the principles in practice'*

❖ **Implementation of the Council's Social Values Framework and Commissioning Procurement and Grant Funding Strategy with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS).**

16 individuals shared their thoughts on the implementation of the Social Values Framework and strategy. Comments were wide ranging though tended to focus on the need to ensure fair competition for smaller local organisations to compete in a clear and proportionate commissioning process with training and information relating to social value an essential for the community, voluntary and faith sector. A sample of the comments received is now detailed:

- *‘Good emphasis on local knowledge, networks. Benchmarking/market research against other organisations to understand what they offer and at what price to understand the competition. Presentation/training’*
- *‘This sounds like you are just trying to save money’*
- *‘More support is needed for local community sector organisations to apply for commissions’*
- *‘Simplify the tender process’*
- *‘Clearer guidelines on the tendering process and support pre-interview stage would help smaller organisations who seem to lose out to larger organisations usually on price. Perhaps smaller pots of commissioning lots rather than awarding large contracts to one organisation’*
- *‘A conference that organisations can attend to discover more information’*
- *‘Local training and workshops held at convenient times other than 8:30am’*
- *‘Full cost recovery is a vital component of grants and tenders; Thurrock Council does not uniformly adhere to this principle. The need for Proportionate monitoring to enable organisations to bid’*
- *‘Onerous monitoring’*
- *‘Issuing tenders when the funding amounts are so low that a grant process could be used’*

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| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 21 November 2017 | ITEM: 7 |
| Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee | |
| Local Council Tax Scheme 2018/19 | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Accountable Assistant Director: N/A | |
| Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT | |
| This report is Public | |

Executive Summary

Since 1 April 2013, the Council has maintained a local Council Tax Reduction scheme. This replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme, which ended on 31 March 2013. Council Tax Reduction helps provide support to council taxpayers who have a low income. It supports the taxpayers by providing a reduction in the actual amount in Council Tax payable.

The current Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme was implemented on 1 April 2017. Thurrock Council agreed its current scheme through a public consultation exercise informed by cross party Members working groups. The resulting scheme was agreed by both Cabinet and the Council.

The proposal for 2018/19 is to continue with the current Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme. We have considered this in light of no planned changes to Housing Benefit legislation for April 2018/19 and that the current scheme is reasonable and fit for purpose.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee note and comment on the proposal that there are no changes to the Local Council Tax Scheme for 2018/19.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The design of each LCTS scheme must be finalised by 31 January ahead of the relevant year to which it relates. Failure to provide a scheme by this date will trigger the implementation of a default government scheme. The default scheme would require the council to revert back to the level of support that would have been provided under the national Council Tax Benefit arrangements.

2.2 Local authorities take on the risk that liabilities under LCTS exceed the amount projected for at the start of the relevant financial year. This risk is shared between billing and major precepting authorities with circa 15% of the council tax collected by the council being paid over to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police.

2.3 The existing Scheme contains the following elements:

- The first £25 per week of earned income will be disregarded when calculating levels of council tax support;
- The maximum capital limit is to be set at £6,000. This means anyone who has savings over £6,000 may not receive support with their council tax;
- For working age claimants, the maximum support that will be allowed will be 75% of their full council tax bill;
- Child benefit and child maintenance received will not be included as income in the calculation of council tax support;
- The maximum period a claim can be backdated under the scheme is 1 calendar month. A good reason for not claiming earlier has to be provided;
- There is a full disregard of military compensation payments, including War Disablement Pensions, War Widow's Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments;
- The number of dependants assessed in the calculation of claimants needs is a maximum of two; and
- The maximum period of an award when temporarily absent outside the United Kingdom is 4 weeks.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 From 2014/15, any specific funding for the LCTS scheme was rolled up into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) as provided to local authorities by the government. It is entirely for local authorities to decide how much they are prepared to spend on their LCTS scheme. Officers have also reviewed the structure of the scheme and noted the cost of the scheme has reduced from £8.5m to approximately £8.0m since 1 April 2013. This has increased the Council Tax Base and reduced the cost of the scheme since inception. Given these findings officers recommend continuing the scheme based on the same principles.

3.2 The roll out of Universal Credit has slowed nationally with the completion date of the project now extended to 2023. New Housing Benefit legislation is now forming part of the Welfare Reform agenda with this benefit continuing until at

least 2023. When Local Council Tax Support began in 2013 it was expected the Universal Credit would be rolled out by 2017 replacing Housing Benefit for Working Age customers. Universal Credit in Thurrock advanced to 'full service' on 25 October 2017. This will extend the range of customers who can make a new claim for Universal Credit from single non-working households to couples and families with less than 3 children. Officers will monitor the effects of this change over the next 12 months and this will inform the design of the 2019/20 LCTS scheme.

3.3 Some components of the LCTS scheme have been directed by Government such as:

- All low income pensioners will be protected under the national framework as defined by DCLG;
- Consideration for protection for vulnerable working age groups will be allowed for; and
- Each authority's scheme will maintain work incentives wherever possible. The Government continues to stress the importance of this principle given the current economic climate and their welfare reform agenda.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The scheme remains affordable and easy to administer. The collection rate for 2016/17 for council tax from those in the scheme was 96.64 percent. The design of the scheme, which builds in various protections and incentives, supports a high collection rate.

4.2 The LCTS expenditure for 2016/17 was £7.8m. The expenditure for 2017/18 is estimated to be circa £8m of which circa £3.7m relates to claimants of pensionable age. The expected cost of the scheme for 2018/19 is proposed at £8.3m to allow for any potential additional cost to the scheme.

4.3 The council has benefited in past years from an improving economy, with the movement of customers into work.

4.4 The introduction of Universal Credit in the Authority for single unemployed people has not made any significant change to the amount of LCTS awarded to claimants.

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

5.1 The Council is required to have an LCTS scheme and the proposed scheme meets this requirement. The scheme supports claimants in the community and ensures the revenue raised is collectible supporting the medium-term financial strategy.

5.2 The Council also has a fair debt policy and this is reflected in the collection of council tax from claimants in the scheme.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Chief Accountant

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Law and Governance

The Council Tax Benefit system was abolished by Section 33 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The Local Government finance bill prescribed certain steps in the design of a local scheme, such as consultation and publication, and enables the Secretary of State to introduce both regulations and guidance relating to local schemes. The Government has included regulations to ensure that pensioners will not lose or gain relative to the previous system.

The LCTS scheme must be ratified by full Council by the 31 January 2018 at the latest to enable the authority to implement the scheme from 1 April 2019.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development and Equalities Officer

The Council has a duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 to consider the equality impact of its policies and decisions. The LCTS can be claimed by anyone in the Borough meeting the eligibility criteria.

It is also noted a consultation on the proposed scheme has been available for all residents to respond to and these comments have been considered within the body of this report.

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

N/A

7. **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):

- Working Papers held by Corporate Finance

8. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Sean Clark

Director of Finance and IT

Corporate Finance

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| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 21 November 2017 | ITEM: 8 |
| Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee | |
| Council Spending Review (CSR) - 2018/19 Budget Setting Update | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key |
| Accountable Assistant Director: Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT | |
| Accountable Directors: Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT | |
| This report is public | |

Executive Summary

This report summarises the main changes to the MTFS for the period 2018/19 through to 2020/21 and the proposals being considered to close the current budget gap.

Where growth and cross cutting proposals have provisionally been allocated to services, these have been set out in Appendix 3 so as to inform Members of overall changes to Directorate budgets. These are draft and will be updated as allocations are refined.

1 Recommendations:

1.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the revised MTFS position; and

1.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposals currently being considered to close the budget gap.

2 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

2.1 The MTFS presented to Full Council on 22 February 2017 showed pressures of £20.2m between 2018/19 and 2020/21 that, after Council Spending Review (CSR) identified savings, reduced to a net three year pressure of £16.6m. The assumptions have now been updated to reflect current information and these figures are now revised to £20.8m and £14.9m respectively, of which, £6.6m is in 2018/19. Appendix 1 sets out the three year MTFS. Key changes include:

- a) Improved forecasts for council tax and business rates totalling £1.8m;
- b) An improved position on inflation and other increases of £1.4m;

- c) Additional growth included to meet Children's and Environmental Services pressures; and
 - d) The inclusion of service review savings of £2.3m over the three years.
- 2.2 Council tax assumptions included within the MTFS include:
- a) A 3% Adult Social Care precept in 2018/19 that is fully passed onto the service; and
 - b) A 1.99% general council tax increase in each of the three years.
- 2.3 The council adopted the CSR approach last year that concentrated on meeting the budget pressures through:
- a) Increased income – this can be through the trading of core services through to investments from the treasury or property function;
 - b) More or same for less – focussing on better value from contracts and wider procurement, reducing spend on agency staff and more efficient processes; and
 - c) Reducing the growth pressures in demand led services – such as concentrating on early intervention.
- 2.4 This is underpinned by a detailed review of all services and is delivered through a number of officer Boards that ultimately bring proposals through the CSR to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet.

3 Saving and Income Proposals from Boards 2018/19 – 2020/21

- 3.1 The full list of saving and income proposals as identified through the Strategic Boards is in Appendix 2. They are categorised as being 'management action' ie, are operational matters under the responsibility of officers to implement without the requirement for member approval.
- 3.2 In addition to service specific savings, the People Board saving proposals are targeted at reducing council wide spend on agency staff and overtime. They have been allocated to services based on an assessment of historic spend and future plans to manage use and spend.
- 3.3 Service Review savings will be allocated to specific services as part of the review process. In addition to the service reviews currently being undertaken, the Service Review Board will focus on cross-cutting reviews to deliver the savings target. As the reviews develop, the saving will be allocated to the relevant service area. The allocation of ICT/Digital savings is currently being evaluated by the Board.
- 3.4 The overall impact of proposals and any growth allocations on service areas is shown in Appendix 3. This is still indicative as final allocations are being agreed by the relevant Strategic Boards. The position reflects a budget gap of

£6.6m and hence is subject to change dependant on the approach taken to close the gap.

4 Investment Approach

- 4.1 There is a statutory duty on Members and Officers to balance the budget. There are two approaches available to close the gap - either by following an investment approach or by reducing service budgets further through reductions in expenditure and increases in income.
- 4.2 The CSR and Cabinet have agreed to follow an investment approach where possible to close the gap and protect front line services. Officers are currently considering opportunities to achieve this. It is believed that opportunities will go a considerable way in bridging the budget gap for 2018/19 but will depend on both due diligence gateways and Member approvals.
- 4.3 The alternative to an investment approach would involve further reductions to service budgets. When considering Thurrock has the third lowest Unitary budget in the country, it is clear that whilst some efficiency savings can be made, difficult decisions would need to be made that would impact service delivery. Given the size of the remaining budget gap, the services with the largest budgets would need to be reviewed: Adults'; Children's; and Environment.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually and to review the adequacy of reserves. The report outlines the budget gap over the next three years as per the MTFS and the approach and timetable to manage the position.

6 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 6.1 The budget planning governance structure includes involvement and consultation with Officers, Portfolio Holders and Members. The timetable allocates November for Overview and Scrutiny to consider proposals and public consultation where required. The process also includes the Council Spending Review Panel, made up of cross-party Group Leaders and Deputies who will meet regularly during the budget planning period and ahead of key decision points.

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

- 7.1 The implementation of previous savings proposals has already reduced service delivery levels and our ability to meet statutory requirements, impacting on the community and staff. There is a risk that some agreed savings may result in increased demand for more costly interventions if needs escalate particularly in social care. The potential impact on the Council's ability to safeguard children and adults will be kept carefully under review and mitigating actions taken where required.

7.2 The scale of future budget reductions as set out in this report are such that work is underway to follow a transformational approach to tackle the challenge.

8 Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Carl Tomlinson**
Finance Manager

The financial implications are set out in the body of this report.

Council officers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the Council can contain spend within its available resources. Regular budget monitoring reports continue to be presented to Cabinet and be considered by the Directors Board and management teams in order to maintain effective controls on expenditure during this period of enhanced risk. Measures in place are continually reinforced across the Council in order to reduce ancillary spend and to ensure that everyone is aware of the importance and value of every pound of the taxpayers money that is spent by the Council.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Law & Governance

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

There are statutory requirements of the Council's Section 151 Officer in relation to setting a balanced budget. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Section 114) prescribes that the responsible financial officer "must make a report if he considers that a decision has been made or is about to be made involving expenditure which is unlawful or which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency to the authority". This includes an unbalanced budget.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Price**
Community Development and Equalities

There are no specific diversity and equalities implications as part of this report.

A comprehensive Community and Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) will be completed for any specific savings proposals developed to address future

savings requirements and informed by consultation outcomes to feed into final decision making. The cumulative impact will also be monitored.

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

Any other significant implications will be identified in any individual savings proposal business case to inform the consultation process where applicable and final decision making.

9 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.

10 Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Saving and Income Proposals
- Appendix 3 – Indicative Service Budget Impact 2018/19

Report Author:

Carl Tomlinson
Finance Manager
Finance and IT

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Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

| Narrative | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Local Funding | | | |
| Council Tax | (3,042) | (1,841) | (1,894) |
| Business Rate Growth | (2,706) | (378) | (658) |
| | (5,748) | (2,219) | (2,552) |
| Total Government Resources | | | |
| Revenue Support Grant | 3,962 | 4,000 | 658 |
| New Homes Bonus | 674 | 122 | (180) |
| Other Central Grants - ESG & HB and Ctax Admin Subsidy | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| | 4,936 | 4,422 | 778 |
| Net Additional (Reduction) in resources | (812) | 2,204 | (1,774) |
| Growth, Inflation and other increases | | | |
| Prudential Borrowing & Treasury Management | 2,976 | 1,240 | 1,664 |
| Demographic and Economic Pressures | 4,360 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Inflation and other | 2,729 | 2,623 | 2,587 |
| | 10,065 | 5,363 | 5,751 |
| Service Design Principals and Strategic Boards | | | |
| Procurement Total | (160) | (205) | 0 |
| Commercial Total | (592) | (391) | (100) |
| Customer & Demand Management Total | (100) | 0 | 0 |
| Digital Total | (280) | (190) | 0 |
| People Total | (500) | (500) | 0 |
| Property Total | (275) | (200) | 0 |
| Service Reviews | (760) | (800) | (800) |
| | (2,667) | (2,286) | (900) |
| Total Savings to Identify | 6,586 | 5,281 | 3,077 |

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Appendix 2 – Saving and Income Proposals

| Reference | Board | Proposal | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | Total |
|--------------|-------------|---|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| PROC-2017-01 | Procurement | Adult Care Placements (18-65 age group) – Review of placement costs against care plans. | 100 | 100 | - | 200 |
| PROC-2017-03 | Procurement | Home to School transport – savings from rationalising demand and sharing vehicles | 55 | - | - | 55 |
| PROC-2017-05 | Procurement | ICT Category – Achievable savings on main contracts and rationalisation of smaller ones | 90 | 100 | - | 190 |
| PROC-2017-07 | Procurement | Creative use of Purchase Cards - rebate from RBS | 5 | - | - | 5 |
| PROC-2017-08 | Procurement | Overpayment Review – use of specialist no win, no fee consultants to identify overpayments to contracts. Reversal of 17/18 one off saving | (100) | - | - | (100) |
| PROC-2017-09 | Procurement | Review of Translation and Interpretation Services | 10 | 5 | - | 15 |
| COMM-2017-02 | Commercial | Counter Fraud & Investigation – expansion of traded services | 190 | 23 | - | 213 |
| COMM-2017-03 | Commercial | Trade Waste year on year Growth. Development of traded service | 72 | 138 | - | 210 |
| COMM-2017-04 | Commercial | Traded Services to Schools - further develop offer | 20 | 20 | - | 40 |
| COMM-2017-05 | Commercial | Maximise use of external funding opportunities | - | 50 | - | 50 |
| COMM-2017-06 | Commercial | Further income from growth in filming opportunities in the borough | 20 | 20 | - | 40 |
| COMM-2017-07 | Commercial | Trading grounds maintenance services - further develop offer | - | 20 | - | 20 |
| COMM-2017-08 | Commercial | IT - expansion of traded services - exploring market to identify non-school prospects for broadband | 20 | 20 | - | 40 |
| COMM-2017-09 | Commercial | Fees & Charges - additional income through annual review of fees & charges | - | 100 | 100 | 200 |
| COMM-2018-01 | Commercial | Theatre growth in net income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 95 | - | - | 95 |
| COMM-2018-02 | Commercial | Burials growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 34 | - | - | 34 |
| COMM-2018-03 | Commercial | Registrars growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 10 | - | - | 10 |

| Reference | Board | Proposal | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | Total |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| COMM-2018-04 | Commercial | Sunshine Centre growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 17 | - | - | 17 |
| COMM-2018-05 | Commercial | Travellers growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 46 | - | - | 46 |
| COMM-2018-06 | Commercial | Nurseries growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 58 | - | - | 58 |
| COMM-2018-07 | Commercial | Adults services growth in income - reflecting 17/18 forecasts and review of fees and charges | 10 | - | - | 10 |
| CUST-2017-01 | Customer/ Demand Management | Customer Services Strategy - channel migration | 100 | - | - | 100 |
| DIGI-2017-01 | ICT / Digital | Smarter Working - Equipping our staff with the skills and technologies to deliver services more efficiently and effectively | 140 | 40 | - | 180 |
| DIGI-2017-02 | ICT / Digital | Citizen Journeys - Enable citizens and customers to do business with the council digitally | 100 | 100 | - | 200 |
| DIGI-2017-03 | ICT / Digital | Legacy Digital Programmes - Ongoing benefits realisation from completed projects | 40 | 50 | - | 90 |
| PEOP-2017-01 | People | Agency staff – reduce use of high cost agency staff through recruitment and retention initiatives and service/workforce re-engineering | 200 | 200 | - | 400 |
| PEOP-2017-02 | People | Sickness Absence – reduce overtime and agency costs through effective attendance management | 100 | 100 | - | 200 |
| PEOP-2017-04 | People | Review of Overtime spend | 200 | 200 | - | 400 |
| PROP-2018-01 | Property | Rental income stretch target - annual increase in rent roll through lease reviews and renewals | 200 | 200 | - | 400 |
| PROP-2018-02 | Property | Corporate Landlord model - reduction in running costs through economies of scale | 75 | - | - | 75 |
| TBC | Service Review | Service Review savings to be identified through ongoing review process | 760 | 800 | 800 | 2,360 |
| | | TOTAL | 2,667 | 2,286 | 900 | 5,853 |

Appendix 3 – Indicative Service Budget Impact 2018/19

| Directorate | Service | 2017/18 Net Current Budget (July 2017) £000 | MTFS Change in Resources 2018/19 £000 | MTFS Growth, Inflation & Other Increases 2018/19 | Baseline Budget 2018/19 £000 | Commercial Savings £000 | Customer & Demand Management Savings £000 | ICT/Digital Savings £000 | People Savings £000 | Procurement Savings £000 | Property Savings £000 | Service Review Savings £000 | Total Savings £000 | Indicative Budget 2018/19 £000 |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Environment and Place | Environment | 16,960 | | 441 | 17,401 | (106) | | | (98) | | | | (202) | 17,199 |
| | Planning & Growth | 2,611 | | | 2,611 | (10) | | | (22) | | | | (32) | 2,579 |
| | Transportation & Highways | 6,134 | | 19 | 6,153 | | | | (7) | | | | (7) | 6,146 |
| | Regeneration | 689 | | | 689 | (95) | | | (4) | | | | (99) | 590 |
| | Assets | 1,652 | | 25 | 1,677 | | | | (8) | | (275) | | (283) | 1,396 |
| | Environment and Place Total | 28,046 | 0 | 485 | 28,531 | (211) | 0 | 0 | (135) | 0 | (275) | 0 | (621) | 27,910 |
| Children's Services | Care & Targeted Outcomes | 26,342 | | 1 | 26,343 | (17) | | | (178) | (10) | | | (205) | 26,138 |
| | Central Administration Support and Other | 1,142 | | | 1,142 | | | | (9) | | | | (9) | 1,133 |
| | Learning & Universal Outcomes | 6,456 | | 4 | 6,460 | (58) | | | (19) | | | | (77) | 6,383 |
| | School Transport | 805 | | | 805 | | | | | (55) | | | (55) | 750 |
| | Children's Services Total | 34,745 | 0 | 5 | 34,750 | (75) | 0 | 0 | (206) | (65) | 0 | 0 | (346) | 34,404 |
| Adults; Housing and Health | External Placements | 22,319 | | 1,860 | 24,179 | (7) | | | | (100) | | | (107) | 24,072 |
| | Provider Services | 8,802 | | 3 | 8,805 | (1) | | | (94) | | | | (95) | 8,710 |
| | External Commissioning | 1,906 | | | 1,906 | (2) | | | (2) | | | | (4) | 1,902 |
| | Public Health | 0 | | | 0 | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| | Community Development | 617 | | | 617 | | | | | | | | 0 | 617 |
| | Adults; Housing and Health Total | 33,644 | 0 | 1,863 | 35,507 | (10) | 0 | 0 | (96) | (100) | 0 | 0 | (206) | 35,301 |
| Housing General Fund | Homelessness | 471 | | | 471 | | | | (5) | | | | (5) | 466 |
| | Private Sector Housing | 1,773 | | | 1,773 | | | | (2) | | | | (2) | 1,771 |
| | Travellers | (78) | | 4 | (74) | (46) | | | | | | | (46) | (120) |
| | | Housing General Fund Total | 2,166 | 0 | 4 | 2,170 | (46) | 0 | 0 | (7) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (53) |
| Finance and Information Technology | Corporate Finance | 1,897 | | | 1,897 | (190) | | | (9) | | | | (199) | 1,698 |
| | Cashiers | 70 | | | 70 | | | | | | | | 0 | 70 |
| | Chief Executive | 197 | | | 197 | | | | (1) | | | | (1) | 196 |
| | ICT | 3,841 | | | 3,841 | (20) | | | (11) | (90) | | | (121) | 3,720 |
| | Revenue and Benefits | 1,656 | | | 1,656 | | | | (5) | (5) | | | (10) | 1,646 |
| | Finance and Information Technology Total | 7,661 | 0 | 0 | 7,661 | (210) | 0 | 0 | (26) | (95) | 0 | 0 | (331) | 7,330 |
| HR; OD and Transformation | HR & OD | 4,387 | | | 4,387 | | | | (6) | | | | (6) | 4,381 |
| | | HR; OD and Transformation Total | 4,387 | 0 | 0 | 4,387 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (6) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (6) |
| Strategy, Communications and Customer Services | Corporate Strategy & Communications | 1,659 | | | 1,659 | (20) | (100) | | (6) | | | | (126) | 1,533 |
| | Social Care Performance | 882 | | | 882 | (20) | | | (2) | | | | (22) | 860 |
| | Strategy, Communications and Customer | 2,541 | 0 | 0 | 2,541 | (40) | (100) | 0 | (8) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (148) | 2,393 |
| Legal | Legal Services | 845 | | | 845 | | | | (11) | | | | (11) | 834 |
| | Democratic Services | 186 | | | 186 | | | | (1) | | | | (1) | 185 |
| | Members Services | 721 | | | 721 | | | | | | | | 0 | 721 |
| | Electoral Services | 435 | | | 435 | | | | | | | | 0 | 435 |
| | | Legal Total | 2,187 | 0 | 0 | 2,187 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (12) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (12) |
| Commercial Services | Commercial Services | 549 | | | 549 | | | | (3) | 100 | | | 97 | 646 |
| | | Commercial Services Total | 549 | 0 | 0 | 549 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (3) | 100 | 0 | 0 | 97 |
| Central Expenses | Corporate Finance | (2,215) | | 7,708 | 5,493 | | | | | | | | 0 | 5,493 |
| | Savings to be Allocated | 0 | | | 0 | | | (280) | | | | (760) | (1,040) | (1,040) |
| | Central Expenses Total | (2,215) | 0 | 7,708 | 5,493 | 0 | 0 | (280) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (760) | (1,040) | 4,453 |
| Revenue Funding | Council Tax Income | (62,240) | (3,042) | | (65,282) | | | | | | | | 0 | (65,282) |
| | Grant Income | (4,103) | 974 | | (3,129) | | | | | | | | 0 | (3,129) |
| | NNDR Income | (32,708) | (2,706) | | (35,414) | | | | | | | | 0 | (35,414) |
| | Revenue Support Grant | (14,660) | 3,962 | | (10,698) | | | | | | | | 0 | (10,698) |
| | Revenue Funding Total | (113,711) | (812) | 0 | (114,523) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (114,523) |
| | Grand Total | 0 | (812) | 10,065 | 9,253 | (592) | (100) | (280) | (500) | (160) | (275) | (760) | (2,667) | 6,586 |

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Work Programme

Committee: Corporate Overview and Scrutiny

Year: 2017/2018

Dates of Meetings: 29 June 2017, 19 September 2017, 21 November 2017, 23 January 2018 (Budget) & 20 March 2018

| Topic | Lead Officer | Requested by Officer/Member |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| 29 June 2017 | | |
| Terms of Reference | Democratic Services Officer | |
| Call-In: Communications Strategy | Democratic Services Officer | Cllr J Kent |
| End of Year Corporate Performance and Progress Report 2016/17 | Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler | |
| Work Programme | Democratic Services Officer | |
| 19 September 2017 | | |
| Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2017/18 | Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler | Officer |
| Call-In: Communications Strategy | Democratic Services Officer /Karen Wheeler | |
| Establish a Task & Finish Group - Public Participation at Council Meetings | Democratic Services Officer | |
| Work Programme | Democratic Services Officer | |
| 21 November 2017 | | |
| 2017/18 Local Council Tax Scheme | Sean Clark & Jonathan Wilson | |
| 2018/19 Budget Setting Update | Carl Tomlinson | Officer |
| Voluntary Sector Grants | Natalie Warren | Officer |

Work Programme

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Mid Year Corporate Performance Report | Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler | |
| Work Programme | Democratic Services Officer | |
| 23 January 2018 | | |
| Treasury Management | Sean Clark | |
| Capital Programme | Sean Clark | |
| Fees and Charges 2017/18 | Laura Last | |
| 2017/18 Draft Budget | Sean Clark | |
| Capital Bids 2018/19 | Sean Clark & Jonathan Wilson | |
| Work Programme | Democratic Services Officer | |
| 20 March 2018 | | |
| Update on the Communications Team and their decision making processes | Karen Wheeler | |
| Update on internal and external apprenticeships | Rory Patterson | |
| Budget Update | Sean Clark | |