

11 October 2011		ITEM 7
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
BUDGET		
Report of: Janet Clark, Strategic Resources Manager		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Accountable Head of Service: Jo Olsson, Director of People Services		
Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Director of People Services		
This report Public		
Purpose of Report: To advise members of growth proposals for children's, agreed through the 2011 Star Chamber process		

Comment [s]: PLEASE CLICK THIS BOX ONCE and enter the date of the meeting (in font 16, not capitals)

Comment [s]: Please leave this for completion by Democratic Services

Comment [sj]: PLEASE CLICK THIS BOX ONCE and enter the title of your report (in font 16 and in capitals) – a Cabinet Report should be consistent with the wording on the Forward Plan – see Guidelines 2.3

Comment [a j]: Please enter the name and job title of the person who will be presenting the report

Comment [s]: Please enter details of any Wards and Communities affected by the report. If this section is not applicable, you should enter "none".

Comment [s]: Yes/No/Not Applicable – a 'Key Decision' is generally one affecting more than 2 wards or above £50,000 expenditure – see Guideline 2.7

Comment [sj]: Please state the Head of Service's name and job title

Comment [sj]: Please state Director's name and job title

Comment [sj]: Briefly set out the purpose of your report

Comment [sj]: Please provide a summary of the key points in your report

Comment [s]: The recommendations should be set out in bold in the form of the decision that the decision-

Comment [s]: You should briefly explain why the report is on the agenda - See para. 5.3 and 5.4 of the report writing guidelines.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children's growth proposals have been identified that are required either to meet a statutory obligation at the required level of to support delivery of a council priority.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.1 That members explore the proposals, test the underlying assumptions and make recommendations to portfolio holders and cabinet.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

2.1 The star chamber is a joint officer/member process; designed to rigorously examine the allocation of the whole council's resources. It is led by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, supported by the Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Governance. Directors and Heads of Service present a pack that includes an analysis of performance/spend in previous years and proposals for growth and savings required to deliver the council's plans in the forthcoming period. The star chamber shapes, and is shaped by, the council's MTFS. The children's service pack is included as appendix one.

3. [ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:]

3.1 The 4 growth proposals are attached as appendix two. Two of them are to meet statutory functions (CEF 2G/CATO and CEF 4G/LUO). The requirement to spend on these two is non-negotiable; the scale of the spend is non-negotiable for the YOS proposal (2G) and minimally negotiable for the Alternative Education Provision (4G).

CEF 1G/CATO is partly optional. The government’s implementation of Munro requires us to appoint an additional senior officer who retains frontline delivery responsibilities and is responsible for advising members and senior officers of the reality on the frontline of the council’s child protection functions. The council is also required by government to enhance its early offer of help to families in need. Growth is required to supplement what we already have in place. The growth bid is judged by officers to be the minimum compliant with the intentions in Munro and the government’s implementation plan.

CEF 3G/CATO is optional. The council’s top priority is to improve the education and skills of local people. Our secondary schools are good but our primaries historically were among the worst in the country. There are many reasons for this weak performance. Government stopped funding Local Authorities to deliver school improvement from April 2011. The council recognised that without resource, primary schools were unlikely to make the step change in performance needed. In 2011/12 the council allocated performance reward grant of £330k to school improvement. O&S will receive a separate and detailed analysis of performance that will show at a headline level that this year, as a result of that investment, and significantly strengthened leadership in school improvement, Thurrock halved the gap between local and national performance. The data will show how targeted intervention led to accelerated improvement in almost every single area targeted for intervention.

Officer advice is that, without investment over the next two years, we will not be able to close the gap between local and national performance nor develop the self sustaining system of school improvement that government intends.

4. [CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)]

4.1 Portfolios and star chamber have endorsed the growth proposals presented here.

5. [IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT]

5.1 Much of the growth is designed to ensure statutory compliance. The growth will have a positive impact on delivering the council’s statutory duties and top priorities

6. [IMPLICATIONS]

Comment [s]: Other headings may be appropriate. The report should outline the reasoning that leads to its recommendations and **must** include:

1. a brief summary of options considered;
2. consultation outcomes
3. a risk assessment.
4. Whether the responsible cabinet members have been consulted/contributed to the report (NB professional and political advice must be clearly distinguished)

- See para.5.5 of the report writing guidelines.

Comment [jj]: This should include any consultation with Ward Members and Shadow Portfolio Holders, as well as any public or statutory consultation

Comment [aj]: Please refer to Section 5.7 of the Report Writing Guidelines

Comment [sj]: This section should always be completed – if they are dealt with fully in another part of the report, they also need a brief cross reference here. The names and job titles of the officers providing the implications should be provided in full – see Guideline 6.1 and please note Democratic Services Deadlines and ensure that officers providing implications are given 5 clear working days to work on the report. Authors can write implications but they must be signed off by the appropriate officers

6.1 **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652772**
mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

The report details the growth items to be considered as part of the 2012/13 base budget following discussion during the star chamber process.

This is part of the Council budget setting strategy, and forms part of the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

The total value of the growth items contained within the body of the report equate to £0.752m.

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.2

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.3

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.4

Comment [sj]: This should inform the recommendations in the report

6.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652087**
dlawson@thurrock.gov.uk

The statutory frame work is referred to in the body of the report but to reiterate where a statutory obligation to perform a function is imposed upon an authority this must be complied with by the authority - where the matter is optional then the authority's policy priorities may, with any other reasonably relevant factors, inform it's decisions.

6.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652472**
sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

Investment will have positive impact on all services in Children's and improve all equality strands so that resources can be targeted as necessary.

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

None

7. **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The exploration and testing of the underlying assumptions and professional judgements will strengthen democratic accountability in the allocation of resources

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Service Profile
- Proposals

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Comment [sj]: See Guideline 8. If any Papers are to be placed in the Members room that relate to this report, you should also list them here

Comment [sj]: List the Appendices referred to in the Report

Comment [sj]: Insert the full contact details of the author of the report