

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

Cabinet

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **9 September 2015**

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

Membership:

Councillors John Kent (Chair), Barbara Rice (Vice-Chair), Oliver Gerrish, Victoria Holloway, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, Gerard Rice, Richard Speight and Lynn Worrall

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of Cabinet held on 8 July 2015.	
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	
5 Statements by the Leader	
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8 Questions from Non-Executive Members

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

Thurrock Primary Care – referred by the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and scheduled on the Forward Plan for October Cabinet.

Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration – referred by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee and scheduled on the Forward Plan for October Cabinet.

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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Stephanie Cox, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **1 September 2015**

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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 Cabinet held on 8 July 2015 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-in is Friday 17 July 2015 at 5.00 pm

- Present:** Councillors John Kent (Chair), Barbara Rice (Vice-Chair), Terry Brookes, Oliver Gerrish, Victoria Holloway, Bukky Okunade, Gerard Rice and Richard Speight
- Apologies:** Councillor Lynn Worrall
- In attendance:** Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive
Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing
Roger Harris, Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance
Andrew Carter, Head of Children's Social Care
Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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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.

20. Minutes

The Minutes of Cabinet, held on 10 June 2015, were approved as a correct record.

21. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

22. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Speight declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 13, Asset Management Delivery Plan Update, as a family member was a secretary of East Thurrock Football Club.

Councillor Kent declared two non-pecuniary interests in respect of Agenda Item 13, Asset Management Delivery Plan Update, in relation to recommendation 1.4 as he was the honorary president of East Thurrock Football Club and recommendation 1.5 as one of the potential parties affected was a family friend.

23. Statements by the Leader

There were no statements made by the Leader.

24. End of Year Progress and Performance Report 2014/15

Councillor Holloway, Cabinet Member for Central Services, introduced the report which provided an update on the Council's progress and performance against the Corporate Scorecard with progress against the related deliverables outlined in the Corporate Year 2 Delivery Plan.

In introducing the report the Cabinet Member highlighted the following key points:

- The report showed that 92% of all performance indicators were either meeting or were met within tolerance of their target;
- 100% of deliverables progressed were in line with project timelines and;
- The Cabinet Member brought fellow Members attention to page 26 of the agenda that highlighted the many successes and achievements within the last year; she continued to inform members that these particular performance highlights were very pleasing given the impact on of stretched finances, reduced resources and national austerity measures.

Councillor Okunade commented that it was pleasing to note the improvements and green ratings especially within Children's Services for troubled families.

Councillor J. Kent agreed that the successes reflected on page 26, showed the significant success efforts made throughout the year. The leader then took the opportunity to congratulate all staff for their achievements.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the progress against the corporate priorities and level of performance achieved in respect of key performance indicators and outcomes for 2014/15 is noted.**
- 2. That where the progress or performance outturn has met or exceeded target that this is acknowledged and service staff are commended.**
- 3. That the corporate scorecard indicators and targets as detailed in Appendix 2 be noted.**

25. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

There were no petitions submitted. There were no petitions submitted. There were no petitions submitted.

26. Questions from Non-Executive Members

The Leader of the Council advised that one question had been submitted and that the question would be taken with the corresponding agenda item in the usual manner.

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

The Leader of the Council informed Members that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet by an overview and scrutiny committee.

28. Shaping the Council and Budget Update (Decision: 01104404)

Councillor J. Kent, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report which set out the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £26 million for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20.

In introducing the report the Leader of the Council made the following key observations:

- The growing population, pupils and homelessness within Thurrock;
- Future changes to the Care Act and;
- The strain on reserves

The Leader explained that there had been cross-party groups, including group leaders looking at the budget.

Councillor Gerrish enquired as to whether the emergency budget was an indication of the budget in following years. Councillor J. Kent explained there would be no in year cuts and that interesting information regarding business rates would result in the cost being neutral.

The Leader continued to explain that the potential 1% reduction in housing rates over the next 4 years was good news for housing tenants as it would mean a slight reduction in rent costs.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1. Note the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).**
- 2. Endorse the approach to Shaping the Council and budget planning for 2016/17 and beyond including the establishment of a cross-party Budget Review Panel.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

**29. Thurrock Local Plan Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
(Decision: 01104405)**

Councillor Speight, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, introduced the report which detailed how the community was to be involved in decisions on the preparation of Local Plans and planning applications in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which was adopted in 2007 and now required updating to reflect recent changes in Government planning policy and legislation.

He continued, by explaining it was important to find new ways to communicate with residents and to keep them informed of updates within the Local Development Plan.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Cabinet approve the Thurrock Local Plan: Draft Statement of Community Involvement for a 6 week consultation commencing on 27th July 2015.**
- 2. That a Report of Consultation be submitted alongside the final Statement of Community Involvement for approval by the Council prior to adoption.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

30. Adoption and Permanence Services Partnership (Decision: 01104406)

Councillor Okunade, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, introduced the report which proposed that Thurrock enter into a partnership with Coram for a 3 year period through a grant agreement to enable benefit realisation for Thurrock's children, timely delivery and responsiveness to the agenda for change/improvement and identified key performance indicators.

In introducing the report Councillor Okunade, continued to highlight the main points:

- That by entering into a partnership with Coram, would ensure the that the best interests of Thurrock's Children were taken into account;
- There had been an increase in adoption in 2014/2015 with the new Care Plan;
- Currently it took 507 days to complete an adoption, which the Cabinet Member stated was too long;
- The Coram Partnership had been given the rating 'outstanding' by a recent Ofsted inspection.

Councillor B. Rice enquired as to whether by entering the partnership, would reduce the amount of time it took to adopt a child. Councillor Okunade, confirm that by entering the Coram Partnership would benefit Thurrock children. It would enable officers to see a larger pool of adopters to match with children in Thurrock.

RESOLVED:

That members agree to the development of a partnership by way of a grant agreement to provide an integrated programme of activity to optimise adoption outcomes for children.

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

Councillors J. Kent and Speight left the room at 7.15 pm during the consideration of the next item.

31. Asset Management Delivery Plan Update (Decision: 01104407)

Councillor B. Rice, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report which provided an update on the progress of the Asset Management Delivery Plan since it was last referred to Cabinet in September 2014 and set out further property related decisions in pursuit of the Council's rationalisation of property use.

The Deputy Leader asked Democratic Services to read out the question which had been submitted by Councillor Hebb, in his absence. The response was as follows:

We can see from the present paper that officers are being asked to bring a further report to Cabinet in September if insufficient progress is considered to have been made. If this was the case cabinet will be asked to revisit the decision taken in April 2014.

Cabinet requested that officers give further consideration to recommendation 1.9 which is the disposal of the Warren Fishery.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- 1. Note that property disposals under the Asset Management Delivery Plan have to date resulted in capital receipts of £5,322,300.**
- 2. Note the disposals of two commercial properties in Bridge Road, part of Grays Beach Park, the former Graham James Infant School, and the transfer of 29 St Mary's Road to the HRA for use as Council accommodation since the last update report in September 2014.**

- 3. Note that the sales of the former Treetops School and the “corner site” at the junction of Dell Road and Orsett Road, Grays are progressing via a planning application being made by the potential purchaser.**
- 4. Request officers to review the progress of East Thurrock United Football Club’s proposed move to Billet Field over the Summer, and bring a further report to Cabinet in September 2015 if insufficient progress is considered to have been made.**
- 5. Authorise officers to negotiate a partial disposal of the Council’s ownership of the Hogg Lane sites to the neighbouring car dealership, at the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained as defined by professional valuation.**
- 6. Amend its previous decision to declare the former Knightsmead School site surplus to requirements, and to designate it for future educational use.**
- 7. (In relation to Lakeside Sports Ground):**
 - delegate to the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, authority to enter into a new 25 year lease of the Lakeside Sports Ground with Thurrock Association Sunday League, on terms to be agreed.**
 - authorise officers to, jointly with Thurrock Association Sunday League, enter into an agreement with the Football Foundation to adhere to the various grant conditions**
 - waive the Council’s usual specific procurement requirements by appointing contractors, identified by an OJEU compliant framework and mini competition run by the Football Foundation and FA, for the project management and development of a fourth generation synthetic pitch at Lakeside Sports Ground.**
- 8. Declare 30A Kings Walk, Grays surplus to the Council’s requirements and agree its disposal for £170,010.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

The meeting finished at 7.21pm.

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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9 September 2015	ITEM: 6.1
Cabinet	
Month 3 / Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2015-16	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Report of: Councillor Victoria Holloway, Cabinet Member for Central Services	
Accountable Head of Service: Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications	
Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

This report provides Cabinet with a summary of performance against the Corporate Scorecard 2015-16, a basket of key performance indicators, as at Month 3/Quarter 1 i.e. end of June 2015. These indicators are used to monitor the performance of key priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and enables Members, Directors and other leaders to form an opinion as to the delivery of these priorities.

At the end of Month 3, 72.5% of these indicators are either meeting or within an acceptable tolerance of their target.

- 1. Recommendation(s)**
 - 1.1 Comments and notes the performance at this early stage in the year and identifies, where it feels necessary, any further areas of concern on which to focus**
 - 1.2 Recommends the report to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
 - 1.3 Recommends the areas In Focus to be circulated as appropriate to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report provides Cabinet with a summary of performance against the Corporate Scorecard 2015-16, a basket of key performance indicators, as at Month 3/Quarter 1 i.e. end of June 2015.
- 2.2 These indicators are used to monitor the performance of key priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and enables Members, Directors and other leaders to form an opinion as to the delivery of these priorities.
- 2.3 This suite of indicators was refreshed for 2015-16 to ensure focus on key priorities and objectives is maintained and monitored.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

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

Performance Report Headlines

The headline messages for this report are:

- 3.1 **Performance against target** - of the 40 indicators that are comparable, at the end of June 2015 (*NB KPIs = Key Performance Indicators*)

	End of June 2015
GREEN - Met their target	45%
AMBER - Within tolerance	27.5%
RED - Did not meet target	27.5%

- 3.2 **Direction of Travel** (DOT) - of the 40 indicators that are comparable, at the end of June 2015 (based on the previous year's outturn or position the same time last year, depending on which is most appropriate for the indicator):

	DOT at end of June 2015
↑ IMPROVED	42.5%
→ STATIC	20%
↓ DECLINED	37.5%

72.5% of KPIs currently hitting or close to target is lower than is usual at this stage of the year. However, this needs to be considered against the backdrop of reduced resources, and in particular, how these constraints impact on the Council's finances and demands for services. Individual commentary for all those indicators which are below target is included in this report.

KPIs 'IN FOCUS'

- 3.3 As part of the council's performance management process, the Performance Board - a council wide group of performance leads – reviews the progress of the Corporate Scorecard on a monthly basis to provide assurance to the Directors' Board and Cabinet of delivery.

Where the Performance Board identifies issues that it considers to be of concern or indeed merits the highlighting of good performance it recommends these to the Directors' Board and Cabinet for their consideration.

This quarter the Performance Board have put IN FOCUS any indicator which is currently showing to be below target (i.e. RED)

3.4 Good Primary Schools

Definition	% of primary schools judged "good" or better		
	June Actual	YTD Target (June 2015)	Year End Target
	71.4	80%*	80%

**NB The target for this indicator is to be above national average. This figure is constantly changing and currently stands at 84.6%.*

Primary schools have been improving significantly across the borough over the last four years and this dip in the number of good and outstanding schools can be partially explained as a result of school closures and the transfer of status from maintained to academy status.

- Arthur Bugler converted from separate Infant and Junior schools, previously both rated as good by Ofsted, effectively losing a school rated as good.
- In addition, Quarry Hill Academy and Stanford le-Hope Primary had not been inspected as academies and were both judged as requiring improvement. Previous results at Quarry Hill clearly required improvement and the inspection unfortunately came too soon to take account of the significant improvement made this summer.
- Benyon Primary School had also not been inspected since converting to academy status – however, they were judged to be good.
- Bonnygate Primary school which was previously good was judged as requiring improvement in this quarter. The school had struggled to recruit and retain teaching staff and the headteacher was on maternity leave for the full academic year.

[Commentary agreed by Carmel Littleton]

3.5 Free 2 year old childcare places

Definition	Number of free places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough		
	June Actual	YTD Target (June 2015)	Year End Target
	679	796	796

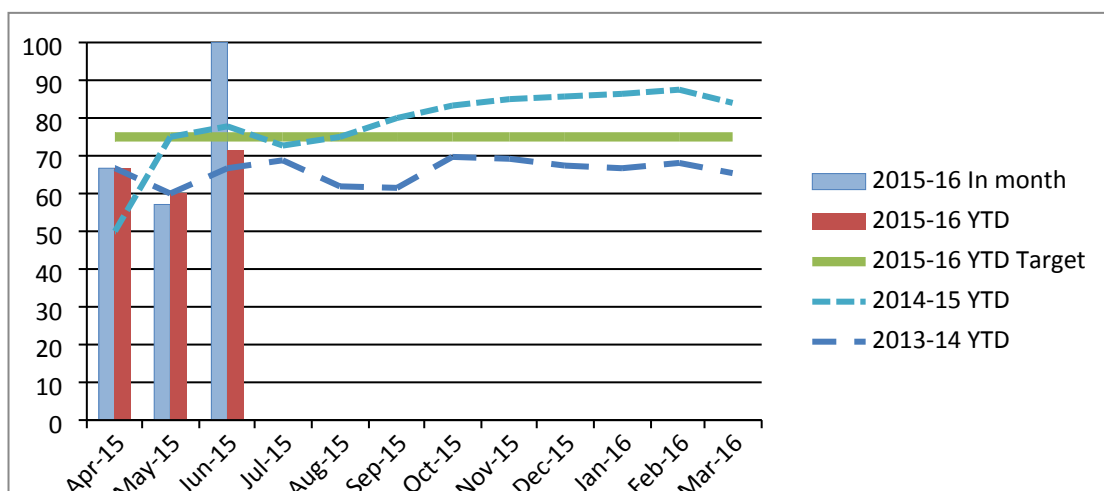
The Department for Education (DfE) voluntary return in June 2015 gave the Thurrock take-up as 66% (671 children) based on Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) eligibility lists for November 2014 and March 2015.

The average take-up by our statistical neighbours was 60%, placing Thurrock 4th out of 11. Within the East of England region, the average take-up was 65%, which again placed Thurrock 4th out of 11. Nationally, the average take up was 63%, placing Thurrock 70th out of 152.

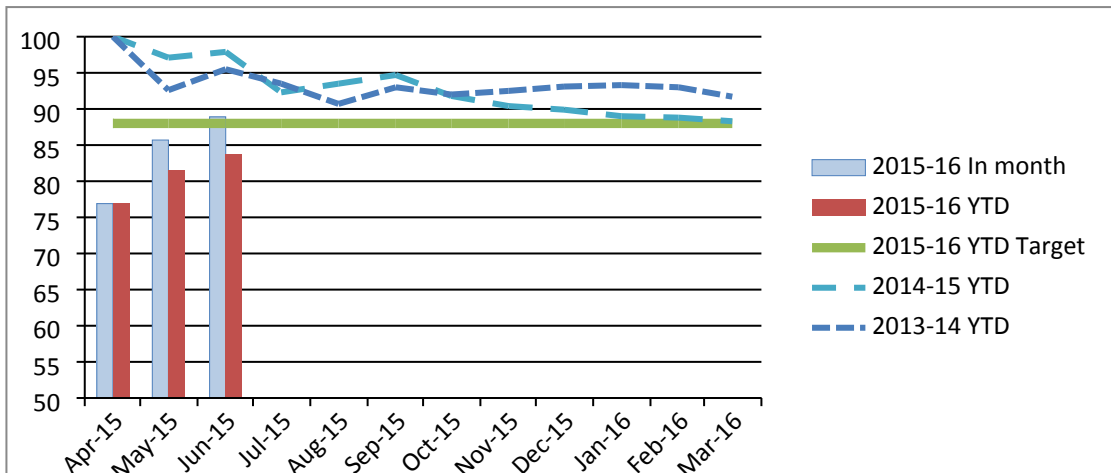
[Commentary agreed by Carmel Littleton]

3.6 Planning applications

Definition	a) % of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks b) % of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks			
	June Actual	June YTD	YTD Target (June)	Year End Target
a)	100%	71.4%	75%	75%
b)	88.9%	83.7%	88%	88%



Major Planning Applications



Minor Planning Applications

The bar for planning performance is set at the highest level. For 4 years, the council has been in the top 10% of authorities nationally and in the top 5% in 2014/15. This year's indicators are set at a level to maintain these exceptionally high standards.

Whilst current performance levels are presently below target, this is not unusual for the first quarter of the year when the base number of decisions is low and therefore variations have a statistically higher impact on the performance figures. In addition, recruitment issues have put additional strains on the team (the team is currently 25% down on capacity).

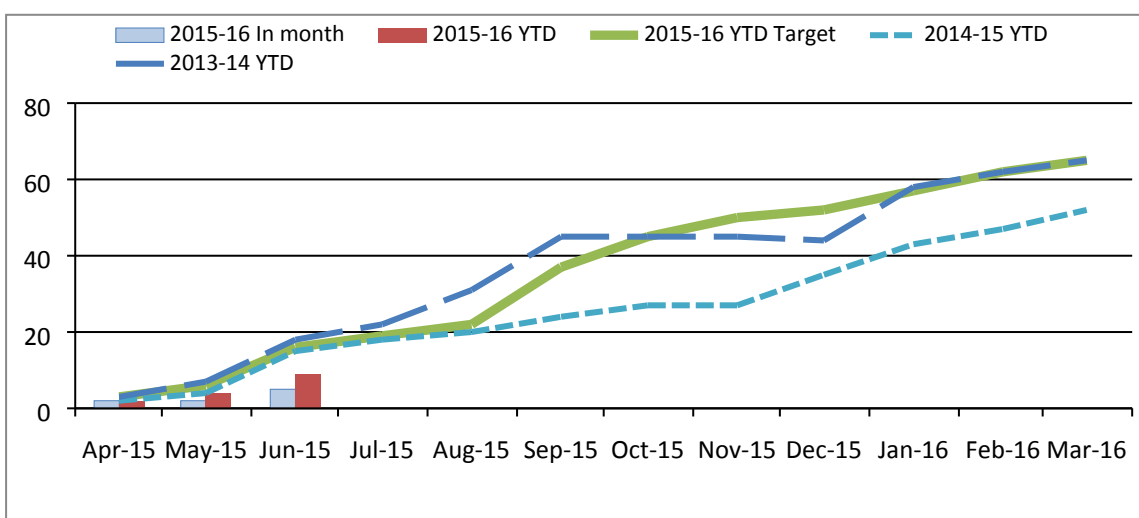
However, performance in two of the 3 areas (including "other applications") was above target for the month (100% in respect of majors).

The service monitors performance on a weekly basis and is satisfied that targets will be met by year end, provided that the recruitment issues are resolved swiftly.

[Commentary agreed by Andy Millard]

3.7 Apprentices

Definition	No of apprentices within the council. One of the key elements for the apprenticeships scheme is that it both directly and indirectly helps towards other priorities including NEETs and attainment at 19.		
	<i>Note: This includes all new apprentices since 1st April 2015 that are employed by Thurrock Council or Serco or apprentices specifically requested in contracts.</i>		
June Actual	June YTD	YTD Target (June)	Year End Target
5	9	16	65



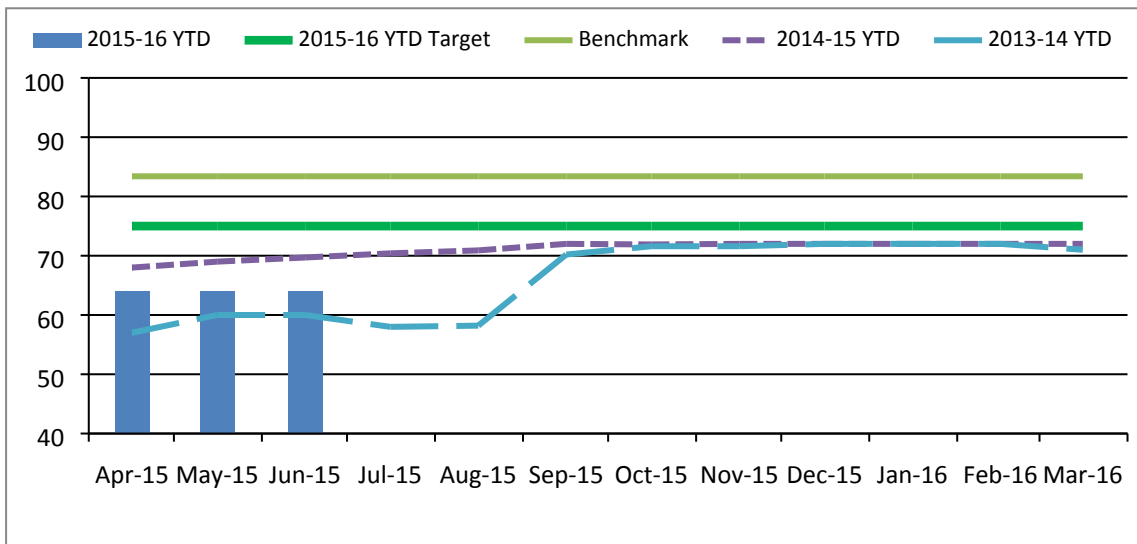
A total of 9 apprentices have been recruited in the first three months of 2015/16. This is lower than the target for Q1 due to delays in references and DBS checks, reduced internal resources from teams that may want to recruit to the issue of contracts.

The Employment and Skills team is continuing to provide support to colleagues to enable the recruitment of apprentices. As a result, numbers will increase over the next few months. 31 further apprentice appointments are currently in progress.

[Commentary agreed by Carmel Littleton]

3.8 Self Directed Support

Definition	This indicator measures the proportion of service users eligible for support who receive self-directed support through a personal budget or direct payment.	
June Actual	YTD Target (June 2015)	Year End Target
64%	75%	75%



Quarter 1 data for 2015/16 shows that Thurrock falls below both the provisional year-end target of 75% and the national average for 2014/15 of 83% (provisional national data). While we expect this performance to increase as one-off direct payments increase in the year, the service is reviewing the indicator and its strategy for personal budgets both in the context of this and also in terms of the Care Act 2014.

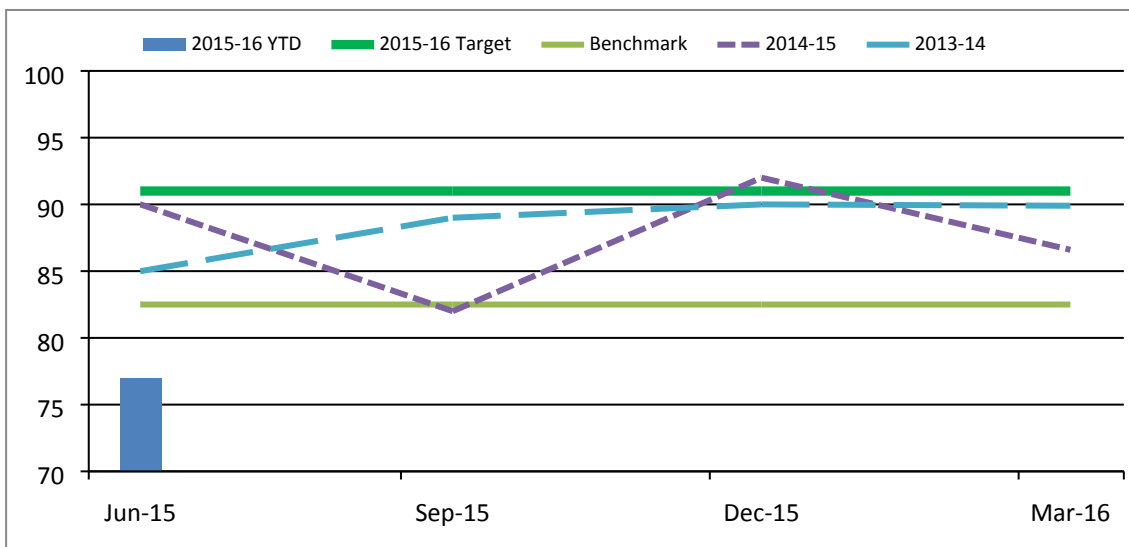
Options for further increasing the take up of direct payments will be considered alongside future review of the commissioning of homecare provision. Target areas include transport and adults with learning disabilities.

This performance should however be viewed alongside a second part of the indicator - Thurrock continues to be one of the best performers nationally on a sub-part of this indicator which is direct payments. 1 in 3 (32%) service users with self directed support gain their support through an actual direct payment, which compares to the national average of 27%.

[Commentary agreed by Roger Harris]

3.10 Older People still at home following discharge

Definition	This indicator measures the proportion of people who were discharged from hospital in a three month period with the intention of re-ablement /rehabilitation who remain independent after a 91 day period.		
	June Actual	YTD Target (June 2015)	Year End Target
	77	91	91



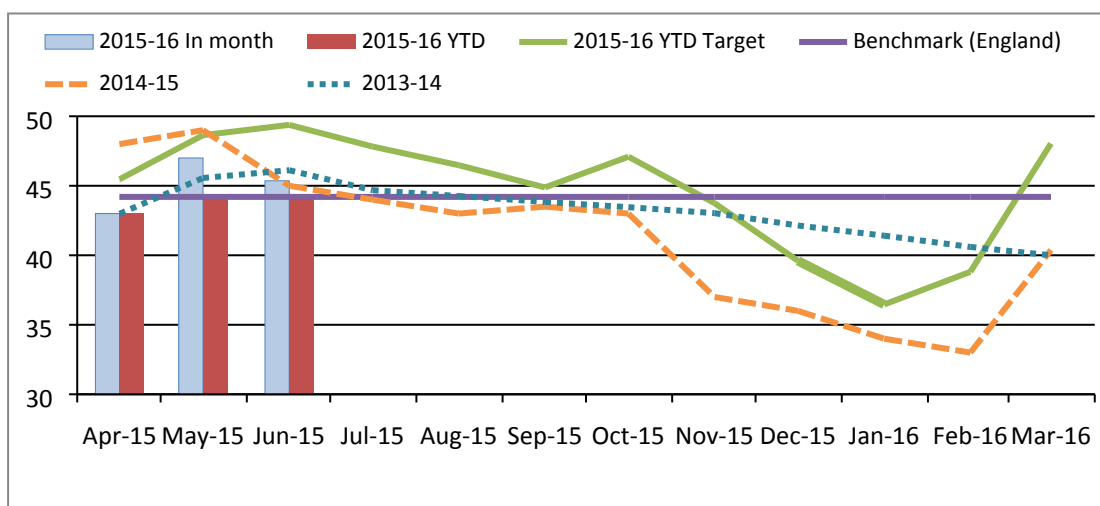
The indicator is a proxy measure of the effectiveness of hospital discharge planning and the effectiveness of rehabilitation and re-ablement services in keeping people independent and out of hospital or residential care.

Managing demand and reducing the need for more costly care such as residential placement is a key part of the service's focus on early intervention and prevention support. The Quarter 1 position of 77% is provisional and subject to change once data quality checks are complete. Performance appears to have dipped below the expected level and that of the previous year. The reasons for this will be further investigated through the service performance group.

[Commentary agreed by Roger Harris]

3.11 Recycling

Definition	The indicator measures percentage of household waste arisings, which have been sent by the Authority for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion. This is a key measure of local authorities' progress in moving management of household waste up the hierarchy, consistent with the Government's national strategy for waste management.		
June Actual	June YTD	YTD Target (June)	Year End Target
45.36	44.4	49.38	45



Recycling performance is currently running below targeted levels. Factors that are contributing to this are lack of engagement by residents in the recycling programme and also the levels of contamination of the dry recycling that has lead to a number of collection loads being rejected by the recycling disposal plant and diverted to landfill.

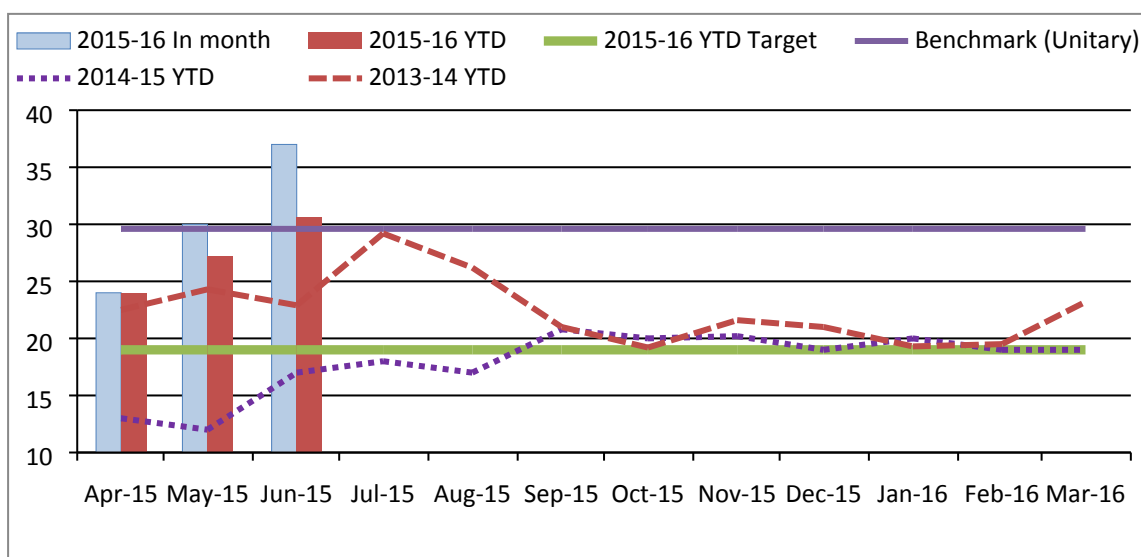
At the end of the last financial year, based on the intelligence gathered by a through waste audit, a communication strategy was commissioned to enable the Environment teams to encourage residents to engage in recycling glass, paper, card, plastics and tins. Before that programme is initiated the service has had to focus on ensuring that our recycling from the blue bins is not contaminated by general waste. The contamination programme is well underway with over 766 focused contacts with residents providing additional information about recycling in a two week period in July. The programme is having an impact with the number of reports of contamination of blue bins falling sharply over a three week period.

The positive impact from the various communication campaigns and strategies is anticipated to take effect in the second half of the year. These efforts may not be sufficient for this indicator to reach the target of 45% this year. However, it will lay a solid base for performance in future years.

[Commentary agreed by Mike Heath]

3.12 Landfill

Definition	This PI measures the percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill. The definition of municipal waste is as for the Landfill Allowance Trading scheme. "Sent to landfill" includes both collected residual waste sent directly to landfill, waste collected for recycling but subsequently rejected to landfill and residual waste sent to landfill after an intermediate treatment.		
June Actual	June YTD	YTD Target (June)	Year End Target
37%	30.6%	19%	19%

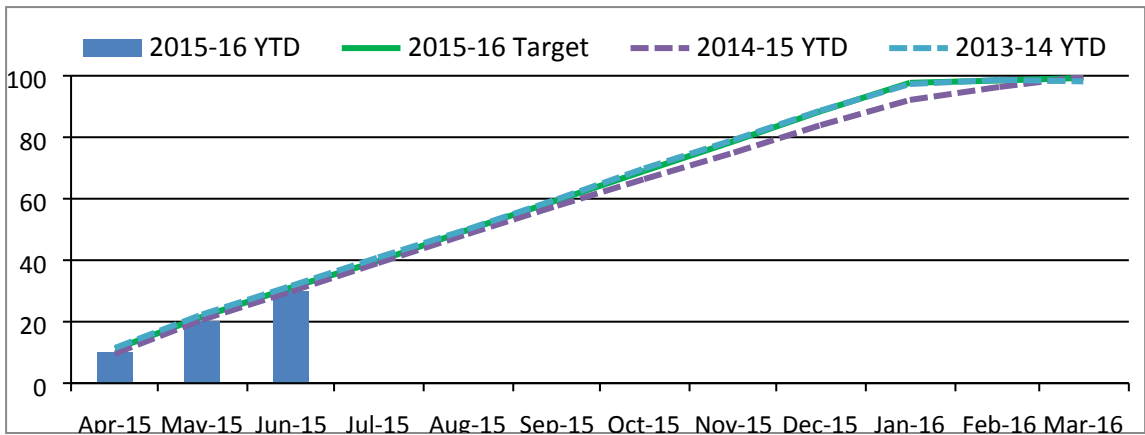


A new contract for the disposal of residual waste commences in September 2015. This ensures that all household residual waste collected in Thurrock will be diverted from landfill and processed to harvest energy from waste. Until the new contract is initiated, the diversion from landfill has been variable. This is partially due to capacity and maintenance at the current disposal site. This indicator will achieve the year-end target.

[Commentary agreed by Mike Heath]

3.13 NNDR (Business Rates) Collection

Definition	This PI measures the percentage of National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) sometimes referred to as "business rates" which have been collected by the Council. This indicator is a vital funding stream, particularly with recent national changes to business rates retention.		
June Actual	YTD Target (June 2015)	Year End Target	
29.76%	31.16%	99.3%	

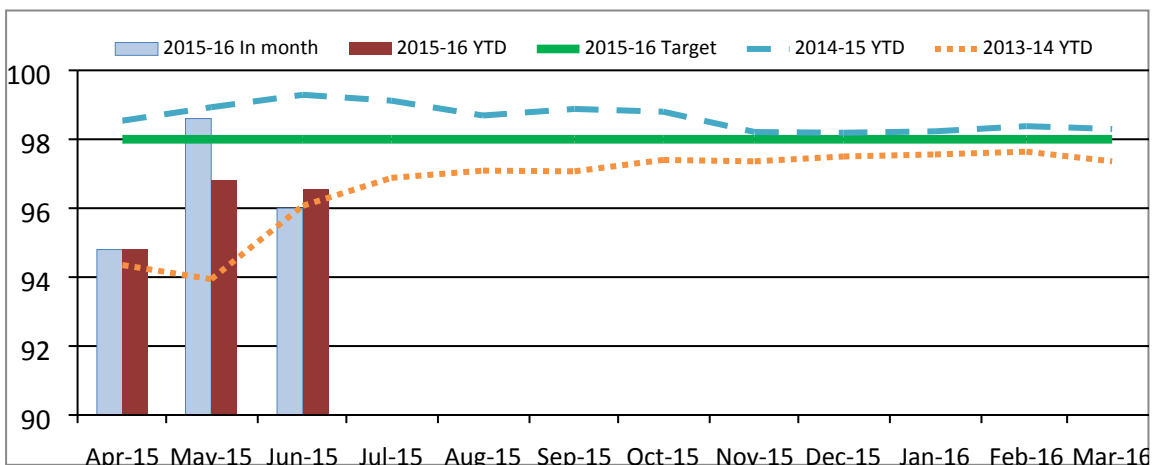


Although slightly below target, this could be as a result of more businesses moving to 12 monthly instalments and the service is confident that the target is still achievable by the end of the year.

[Commentary agreed by Sean Clark]

3.14 Complaints turnaround

Definition	This PI measures the percentage of complaints resolved within timescale for the Council as a whole. This PI is a key barometer for customer service. Receiving complaints is a healthy part of providing good services, provided that the Council learns from these complaints.			
	June Actual	June YTD	YTD Target (June)	Year End Target
	96%	96.5%	98%	98%



A high volume of complaints have escalated to Stage 3 this quarter and this has resulted in significantly increased demand on the corporate team. It is fully anticipated that this normally high achieving KPI will return to normal once these complaints have been resolved. It will continue to be monitored closely in the meantime.

[Commentary agreed by Lee Henley]

3.15 The full summary of performance is set out below:

Corporate Priority	No. of PIs (not inc. Annual KPIs)	Performance against Target				Direction of Travel			
		No. of KPIs unavailable for comparison (n/a)	No. of KPIs at Green ✓	No. of KPIs at Amber ↔	No. of KPIs at Red ✗	No. of KPIs unavailable for comparison (n/a)	No. Improved since 2013-14 ↑	No. Unchanged since 2013-14 →	No. Decreased since 2013-14 ↓
Create a great place for learning and opportunity	15	3	4	6	2	1	8	4	2
Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity	6	2	0	1	3	2	1	0	3
Build pride, responsibility and respect	5	2	2	1	0	2	0	2	1
Improve health and well-being	10	6	2	0	2	6	1	0	3
Promote and protect our clean and green environment	8	3	2	1	2	4	1	0	3
Well run organisation	13	1	8	2	2	2	6	2	3
TOTAL	57	17	18	11	11	17	17	8	15
		PIs available = 40	45%	27.5%	27.5%	PIs available = 40	42.5%	20%	37.5%

*Please note it is possible to have a different number of indicators comparable against "Direction of Travel" than "Against Target" because for some indicators we only have one year's worth of data and therefore cannot compare Direction of Travel

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 This monitoring report is for noting, with a further recommendation to circulate any specific areas to relevant Overview and Scrutiny for further consideration. It is also considered at Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

- 5.1 This monitoring report is considered on a quarterly basis by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and where there are specific issues relevant to other committees these are further circulated as appropriate.

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

- 6.1 This monitoring 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: **Michael Jones**
Group Accountant, Corporate Finance

This is a monitoring report and there are no direct financial implications arising. Within the corporate scorecard there are some specific financial performance indicators, for which commentary is given within the report. With regard to other service performance areas, any recovery planning commissioned by the Council may well entail future financial implications, which will be considered as appropriate.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer

This is a monitoring report and there are no direct legal implications arising.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

This is a monitoring report and there are direct diversity implications arising. The Corporate Scorecard contains measures that help determine the level of progress with meeting wider diversity and equality ambitions, including sickness, youth employment and attainment, independent living, vulnerable adults and children, volunteering etc. Individual commentary is given within the report regarding progress and actions.

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

The Corporate Scorecard contains measures related to some staff, health, sustainability and crime and disorder issues. Individual commentary is given within the report regarding progress and actions.

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):

- **Corporate Priority Activities Plan 2015/16**
<https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=129&MIId=2548&Ver=4>

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Corporate Scorecard Summary 2015/16 Quarter 1

Report Author:

Sarah Welton

Strategy & Performance Officer

Strategy Team, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit

Appendix 1

Priority	Monthly KPI	Unit	Freq	Big/Small is better	Apr 14	May 14	Jun 14	Jul 14	Aug 14	Sep 14	Oct 14	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Latest Target	End of Year Target	DOT (since last year)	RAG Status
Create a great place for learning and opportunity	16-19 yr old Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	%	M	Small	6.2	6.5	6.3	6.7	7.2	6.2	5.6	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.8	5.7	5.5	5.8	5	Better	G
	% of 19-21 yr old care leavers in Education, Employment or Training	%	M	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			35			n/a			70	70	n/a	n/a
	Children subject to Child Protect Plan*	Rate	M	-	73	66	56	49	49	48	43.7	42.4	42	46	51	52	54	55	53	n/a	n/a	In line	n/a
	Rate of Looked After Children*	Rate	M	-	74	76	73	75	77	78	76.6	78	75	74	71	72	71	72	72	n/a	n/a	Better	n/a
	% of primary schools judged "good" or better	%	Q	Big	72.7			75.8			75.8			76.5			71.4			>80	>80	Worse	R
	KS2 Attainment – Achievement at Level 4+ in Reading, Writing & Maths	%	Q	Big	76.8			76.8			76.8			76.8			78.6			>79	>79	Better	A
	KS2 Attainment – Achievement at Level 5+ in Reading, Writing & Maths	%	Q	Big	20.1			20.1			20.2			20.2			20.3			>24	>24	Better	A
	Achievement of Level 2 qualification at 19	%	Q	Big	87.2			87.2			87.2			88			88			>85.6	>85.6	In line	G
	Achievement of Level 3 qualification at 19	%	Q	Big	52.8			52.8			52.8			53.2			53.2			57	57	In line	A
	Number of free places available for two year olds to access early years education in the borough	%	Q	Big	726			973			1024			1083			1191			936	936	Better	G
	Number of free places accessed for two year olds for early years education in the borough	%	Q	Big	455			657			748			720			679			796	796	Worse	R
	LAC KS2 Attainment – Achievement at Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths	%	Q	Big	50			53			53			53			66.7			64	64	Better	G
	LAC KS4 Attainment – 5+ A*-C (including English and Maths GCSEs)	%	Q	Big	5			7			9.5			9.5			9.5			15	15	In line	A
	Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average)	%	Q	Small	784			710			710			710			557			472	426	Better	A
Average time (in days) between placement order and placement for adoption (3 year average)	%	Q	Small	323			244			244			244			208			121	121	Better	A	
Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity	% of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks	%	M	Big	50	75	77.8	72.7	75	80	83.3	85	85.7	86.4	87.5	84	66.7	60	71.4	75	75	Worse	R
	% of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks	%	M	Big	100	97.1	97.9	92.3	93.5	94.7	91.8	90.4	89.9	89	88.8	88.3	76.9	81.5	83.7	88	88	Worse	R
	No of apprenticeships within the council	No	M	Big	2	4	15	18	20	24	27	27	35	43		52	2	4	9	16	65	Worse	R
	Unemployment Rate (up to 6 mths in arrears)	%	Q	Small	7.6 (March)			7.3 (June)			6.7 (Sept)			6.6 (Dec)			6.5 (March)			4.9	Same as Region	Better	A
	No of Thurrock people on cultural and creative industries related courses through HHPP/SEC	No	6	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			not due yet			n/a	tbc	n/a	n/a
	% of SELEP funding received by Thurrock	%	6	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			not due yet			n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities	No of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	No	M	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			2670			203	473	646	600	2400	n/a	n/a
	% General Satisfaction of tenants with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	%	M	Big	71	72	72	67	67	69	70	74	70	70	70	73	71	71	75	75	Worse	A	
	Number of volunteer opportunities in the council	No	Q	Big	252			247			251			250			251			250	250	In line	G
	% of properties transformed against planned programme (based on 2000 prop)	%	Q	Big	100			100			100			100			100	100	100	100	100	In line	G
	% of young people who reoffend after a previously recorded offence	%	Q	Small	27			20			24			24			n/a			25	25	n/a	n/a

Priority	Monthly KPI	Unit	Freq	Big/Small is better	Apr 14	May 14	Jun 14	Jul 14	Aug 14	Sep 14	Oct 14	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Latest Target	End of Year Target	DOT (since last year)	RAG Status
Improve health and well-being	Permanent admissions to residential / nursing homes per 100K pop. 18yrs+	Rate	M	Small	7	16	20	25	37	56	71	79 (85 revised)	88	100	126	132.6	10	20	30	30	121.1	Worse	G
	% adult social care users in receipt of Self Directed Support	%	M	Big	68	69	69.7	70.4	70.9	72	71.9	72	72	72	72	72	64	64	64	75	75	Worse	R
	No of households assisted to move to a smaller property (downsize)	No	M	Big	3	9	15	18	21	24	33	41	49	56	62	68	10	15	18	10	55	Better	G
	Tier 2 weight mgt services for adults: % of course attendees who achieve their goal by 12 wks	%	Q	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			Data lag			<40	<40	n/a	n/a
	% of children identified in Y6 as overweight/ obese followed up for ongoing support	%	Q	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			92.5			Data lag			>92	>92	n/a	n/a
	% of 4 week quitters from the 40% most deprived LSOAs in Thurrock	%	Q	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			36			Data lag			>35	>35	n/a	n/a
	Emergency admissions to hospital	Rate per 100k	Q	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			13846			Data lag			13361	13361	n/a	n/a
	Delayed transfers of care from hospital	Rate	Q	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			8			Data lag			TBC	TBC	n/a	n/a
	Delayed transfers of care attributable to adult social care only	Rate	Q	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			1.8			Data lag			TBC	TBC	n/a	n/a
% older people still at home 91 days after discharge	%	Q	Big	90			82			92			90			77			91	91	Worse	R	
Promote and protect our clean and green environment	% Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted (in month)	%	M	Big	48	49	45	44	43	43.5	43	37	36	34	33	40.38	43	44	44.4	49.38	47	Worse	R
	Municipal waste sent to landfill (cumulative)	%	M	Small	13	12	17	18	17	20.8	20	20.2	19	20	19	19	24.2	27.25	30.6	19	19	Worse	R
	Fly tipping		Q	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			TBC	TBC	n/a	n/a
	Abandoned vehicles		Q	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			TBC	TBC	n/a	n/a
	% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	%	M	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			98			98.8	97.8	97.6	98.5	99	n/a	A
	Tonnage of street waste (In month - not cumulative position)	Tonnes	M	Small	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			293.28	304.48	261.04	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	%	thrice a yr	Small	1.81			1.8			1.83			4.34			6			6	Worse	G	
	Street Cleanliness - c) Graffiti	%	thrice a yr	Small	0.33			0.3			0.5			0			2			2	Better	G	
Well - run organisation	Average sickness absence per employee	Days	M	Small	0.63	1.43	2.27	3.11	3.77	4.63	5.6	6.52	7.42	8.27	9.02	9.87	0.76	1.5	2.34	2.25	9	Worse	A
	% long term sickness	%	M	Small	50	47	49	49	50	50	51	51	50	48	48	46	49	46	43	43	34	Better	G
	% stress/stress related absence	%	M	Small	22.66	21.67	22.7	22.25	28.57	24.1	21.52	19	20.5	16.87	16.9	17.5	19.1	18.7	19.45	21	18	Better	G
	Overall variance on General Fund	%	M	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	/	/	0	0	0	In line	G
	Overall variance on HRA	£k	M	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	-617	-413	-600	-600	-2485	/	/	0	0	0	In line	G
	Overall spend to budget on Capital Programme	%	Q	Big	10.96			28			65			90			15			10	90	Better	G
	% invoices paid within timescale	%	M	Big	95.28	95.09	95.84	94.59	93.92	91.81	93.97	94.37	94.56	94.62	94.76	95.01	96.92	95.46	95.22	97	97	Better	A
	% Council Tax collected	%	M	Big	10.42	19.19	27.94	36.56	45.32	53.98	62.8	71.28	79.77	88.23	93.31	98.71	10.67	19.4	28.21	28.11	98.9	Better	G
	% National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected	%	M	Big	9.66	20.6	29.89	39.08	48.54	57.72	66.37	74.97	83.91	92.13	96.37	99.68	10.12	20.2	29.76	31.16	99.3	Worse	R
	% Rent collected	%	M	Big	77.63	84.48	90.88	92.22	92.84	94.9	95	95.5	97.1	97.1	97.1	99.4	78.8	85.45	91.48	91	99.5	Better	G
	No of people registered for My Account	No	Q	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			11000			19893			13000	25000	n/a	G
	% of procurement activity which utilises I-Proc	%	Q	Big	n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			n/a			TBC	TBC	n/a	n/a
	% timeliness of all Complaints	%	M	Big	98.54	98.93	99.29	99.12	98.69	98.88	98.8	98.21	98.19	98.23	98.38	98.3	94.8	96.8	96.5	98	98	Worse	R

9 September 2015	ITEM: 10 01104408
Cabinet	
Shaping the Council and Budget Update	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor John Kent, Leader of the Council	
Accountable Head of Service: Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer; Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications	
Accountable Director: David Bull, Interim Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Council set a balanced budget for 2015/16 having made some difficult decisions about where savings could be made. Pressures remain in the current financial year and will escalate in the following years. The cumulative effect of £83.2m savings over 6 years now visibly impacts on communities. It will also make the Council's ability to make further savings increasingly challenging.

This report sets out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28m for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. The latest MTFS includes the impact of the cessation of the Serco contract although this is significantly offset by changes to the Environment Services savings targets.

The cross-party Budget Review Panel endorsed by Cabinet in July 2015 started a series of meetings during August to inform the strategic approach to shaping the Council in this financial context with consideration of the complexity and scale of the challenge that lies ahead.

This report seeks Cabinet approval for the approach to dealing with the budget pressures in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

1. Recommendation(s):

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the current financial position and potential pressures in both 2015/16 and 2016/17 and to agree for officers to bring back**

options to address the pressures for member consideration in the Autumn.

- 1.2 That Cabinet support the governance arrangements for the Serco transition as set out in paragraph 3.12 with a further update report to be brought back to Cabinet in October.**

2 Introduction and background

- 2.1 The Council set a balanced budget for 2015/16 having made some difficult decisions about where savings could be made. There are still pressures in the current financial year and these will escalate in the following years. The cumulative effect of having to make £83.2m savings over the last 6 years is now visibly impacting upon communities. The Council's ability to make further savings has become increasingly challenging.
- 2.2 The ability to make further savings through efficiencies and 'top slicing' service budgets is increasingly difficult, pushing some services to statutory limits and unsustainable levels. A robust approach to considering the future shape of the Council and budget planning process was agreed by Cabinet in July 2015 including the establishment of a cross-party Budget Review Panel.
- 2.3 This report sets out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28m for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. The latest MTFS includes the impact of the cessation of the Serco contract and the additional pressures from the Environmental Services budget.

3 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 3.1 The MTFS is set out at Appendix 1 of this report, as presented to Cabinet in July 2015, but now assumes a number of the 2015/16 pressures are carried forward and includes the impact of the cessation of the Serco contract. If any mitigating action is taken this year that is of a permanent nature, this will reduce the impact in future years. Officers will review the 2015/16 pressures to minimise the impact on future years and include a detailed analysis in the report to Cabinet in the Autumn.

2015/16

- 3.2 There are already a number of pressures within the 2015/16 budget that need to be considered and, if not resolved, become an addition to the 2016/17 projected deficit reported elsewhere in this report. These were reported to Cabinet in July with the exception of the change to the disposal of recyclable waste through the Council's contract with Sita.
- 3.3 Nordic Recycling Ltd (owned by Sita) were responsible for the disposal of recyclable material collected by the Council but have gone into liquidation forcing a change and closure of the plant in Tilbury. This has resulted in

significantly increased disposal costs and longer transfer times to Bywaters in Canning Town. Officers continue to explore a more sustainable, cost-effective option for the future.

- 3.4 To summarise, the impact on 2015/16 to be met from either reserves or additional savings, is as follows:

	2015/16
	£m
Shortfall in Serco and Terms and Conditions targets	0.219
Shortfall in Shared Services Recharges	0.200
Environmental Services (part year)	0.650
Impact of Sita recycling arrangements (part year)	0.400
Shortfall in the ability to meet Public Health In-year Reduction	0.100
Uncommitted budget in transformation contingency	(0.300)
Totals	1.269

Note: this assumes that all but £0.1m of the Public Health Grant reduction of £0.654m will be met from within that budget.

- 3.5 In addition to the above, Members should be aware that there are a number of other service pressures, notably within social care, that are currently being managed within the budget envelope. These are being closely monitored and reported accordingly going forward.
- 3.6 The Council has maintained the General Fund balance (reserves) at £8m and, in addition, is forecast to have an additional £1.4m in a Budget Management Reserve. It is the Budget Management Reserve that has been earmarked to meet the Environmental Services cost pressures although discussions are continuing on whether any expenditure reductions can be met to mitigate this pressure.
- 3.7 The Environmental Services' related pressures have been added into the MTFs for 2016/17 as, unless permanent alternative savings are achieved, they will be a base budget pressure going forward.

Serco

- 3.8 Members have received various updates on the Council's contract negotiations with Serco and it is clear that there are significant financial opportunities open to the Council through the Shaping the Council programme.

Update and Governance

- 3.9 Following the announcement that the Strategic Services Partnership Agreement was to be terminated on 21 July 2015, the Council and Serco have been working together to undertake the necessary due diligence to prepare for the transfer of services back to the Council on 1 December 2015. The majority of this work has focussed on building the Council's understanding of the various services; the circa 400 staff that deliver them and the systems and processes which they use to ensure that the Council is able to effectively operate from day one.
- 3.10 Both the Council and Serco are keen to minimise disruption as far as possible to ensure a seamless transition in a range of critical areas including customer service, revenues and benefits and business administration. As a result, whilst Serco will no longer be managing the delivery of the services from 1 December they will, as far as possible, continue to be delivered by the same people, from the same place and using the same systems as now.
- 3.11 To date, the due diligence process has not identified any major issues which would preclude the return of services. There remains, however, a significant amount of work to complete between now and 1 December with TUPE consultation with affected staff (which commenced in late August) and more than 50 contracts with suppliers to transfer from Serco to Thurrock ranging from IT systems and licenses through to Facilities Management.
- 3.12 Recognising the importance of a successful transfer to the ongoing operation of the Council, a full report will come to Cabinet in October with the Member Governance Group continuing to provide strategic oversight of the transition programme.

Financials

- 3.13 As previously reported, the key financial drivers to terminating the contract centred on budget reductions throughout the Council but, in contrast, an inability to achieve material savings from the Serco contract.
- 3.14 The full year cost of the contract is in excess of £18m. Analysis has shown that the Council can make an immediate saving of £3.6m per annum and are confident that, the greater flexibility in terms of controlling the resources within the contract, will lead to significant opportunities for further efficiencies.
- 3.15 The impact of this saving on the General Fund is £3.1m with the balance benefitting the Housing Revenue Account.
- 3.16 The cost of termination has been previously announced and published at £9.9m and this can be met from reserves created in 2014/15, mainly through a new approach towards budgeting for the Minimum Revenue Provision and related ongoing savings.

- 3.17 There is a further financial liability that has been capped at £3.5m that relates to Serco's pension position within the Essex Pension Fund. The contract ties the Council into having to reimburse Serco the valuation of any pension fund 'surplus' at the time the contract ends. As such, this is not a new liability but one that has been brought forward due to the earlier termination of the contract.
- 3.18 There are two areas of uncertainty. An early valuation indicated that the fund was likely to be in surplus but any final amount will not be known until March 2016 as the contract requires the amount to be set as the average of three valuations – the termination date, three months earlier and three months later.
- 3.19 The second uncertainty relates to a decision pending from the Essex Pension Fund, due mid-September. The Council already makes annual contributions to the fund. As any surplus would be transferred into the Thurrock Council element of the Pension Fund, there is a debate as to whether this could replace the budgeted contribution that the Council is due to make on 1 April 2016.
- 3.20 This would set a precedent though and so is a decision of the Essex Pension Board. Should they agree the cost to the Council would be cost neutral but, if not agreed, this liability would need to be met from any reserves and the General Fund balance of £8m. If the latter, the MTFS would need to be amended to reflect a repayment plan to bring the balance back to the recommended level.

2016/17

- 3.21 The MTFS now shows a projected deficit for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 of £28.4m of which £3.4m relates to 2016/17. The projected deficit of £3.4m needs to be addressed for 2016/17 and Directors' Board will work with Cabinet Members to bring back proposals to a future meeting.
- 3.22 The aim is to achieve this largely through efficiencies and the use of the demographic growth provision within the MTFS if possible. If this can be achieved, this would allow officers and Members to concentrate on reshaping the Council and reaching agreement on proposals for implementation to impact the budget for 2017/18 and beyond.
- 3.23 To put all of the above in perspective, the Council's net published budget in 2010, increased for comparison purposes for Public Health, was calculated as £134m and, despite significant inflationary, service demand and new burden pressures, is estimated to be circa £93m by the end of this decade.

4 Shaping the Council

- 4.1 In July 2015, Cabinet endorsed the approach to shaping the Council and the budget planning process based on discussions in Strategy Week, held in June 2015, which focused on the financial challenge and wider context. The week brought together the Council's Leadership Group with other officers from

across services, partners and Members to consider the areas of priority and cross-cutting opportunities.

Budget Review Panel

4.2 As part of this agreed approach the cross-party Budget Review Panel started a series of meetings during August which will continue into this month.

4.3 The purpose of the Panel is to:

- Build and strengthen awareness and ownership of portfolio budgets and issues across Group Leaders, shadow portfolio holders and other opposition leads;
- Consider and comment on the Council's draft 2020 Vision, the four change programmes, and the on-going bottom up review of Council functions; and
- To explore options for budget savings in either 2015/16 or 2016/17 to be taken forward through the autumn scrutiny process, ensuring proposals are broadly consistent with the 2020 Vision and direction of travel.

4.4 The Panel is not decision making. Areas identified by the Panel will be considered alongside the outcomes from Strategy Week and drawn together to identify areas for public consultation and review by Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees. There is a role for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take an overview of the whole Shaping the Council programme.

4.5 Four Panel meetings have taken place to date covering Environment, Central Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and Children's Services and Education. Key themes discussed so far have included:

- complexity of options for waste and recycling collections;
- exploring alternative delivery models and income generation opportunities;
- maximising opportunities for joint commissioning and managing the market for services;
- benefits of early intervention and prevention on helping to manage the growing demand for adult, health and children's services; and
- the importance of communications to help educate residents and encourage behaviour change where it can improve the customer experience and reduce costs to the Council e.g. accessing services online.

4.6 Two further meetings and a wrap up session for this first stage will take place in September.

Let's Talk

4.7 The Council's approach to communication, consultation and engagement with residents, stakeholders, staff and Councillors through Overview and Scrutiny Committees is a fundamental part of the Shaping the Council programme.

- 4.8 Part of the approach agreed by Cabinet in July was to reintroduce Let's Talk - Cabinet and Directors Board question and answer sessions in the community. These sessions will start on 30 September and run throughout the Autumn across the borough providing an opportunity to raise awareness and start conversations with communities to seek their views on the potential strategic solutions in the longer-term and their ideas about what we could do differently and levels of services. It will also enable Cabinet and senior officers to engage with communities in thinking about how they can help, for example, through recycling effectively, reducing litter and volunteering.

5 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 5.1 The issues and options are set out in the body of this report in the context of the latest MTFS and informed by discussions with the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Directors Board.

6 Reasons for Recommendation

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually. This report sets out a proposed approach to dealing with budget pressures in 2015/16 and for 2016/17 and beyond in the context of needing to achieve over £28m of budget reductions over four years.

7 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 7.1 The approach to communication, consultation and engagement with residents, stakeholders, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and staff is set out above. This will include a wide awareness raising campaign and conversations with communities as well as consultation on specific savings proposals when identified.
- 7.2 This report has been developed in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holders and Group Leaders and Directors Board.

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

- 8.1 The implementation of savings proposals has already reduced service delivery levels and our ability to meet statutory requirements, impacting on the community and staff. Delivering further savings in addition to those previously agreed is particularly challenging in light of the cumulative impact of such a significant reduction in budget and in the context of a growing population and service demand pressures within children's and adult social care and housing, and legislative changes such as the Care Act. As such a new approach aims to establish sustainable and innovative ways of delivering services in the future to mitigate this impact.
- 8.2 There is a risk that some agreed savings may result in increased demand for more costly interventions if needs escalate particularly in social care. This will need to be closely monitored. 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.

9 Implications

9.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Head of Corporate Finance/S151 Officer

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

Council officers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the Council can contain spend within its available resources. Regular budget monitoring reports will continue to come 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. Austerity 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.

9.2 Legal

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

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.

9.3 Diversity and Equality

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

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 from the Panel's discussions and informed by consultation outcomes to feed into final

decision making. The cumulative impact will also be closely monitored and reported to Members.

9.4 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.

10 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):

- Budget working papers held in Corporate Finance
- Strategy Week papers held in Strategy and Communications

11 Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

Report Authors:

Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance/S151 Officer, Chief Executive's Office

Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy and Communications, CEDU

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Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Local Funding				
Council Tax / Council Tax Grant	(1,700)	(1,335)	(1,362)	(1,368)
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	208	382	390	0
Business Rate Growth	(651)	(475)	(1,500)	0
Business Rate - Collection Fund Deficit	(2,644)	(860)	(860)	0
	(4,787)	(2,288)	(3,333)	(1,368)
Total Government Resources				
Revenue Support Grant	9,500	9,000	6,500	1,665
New Homes Bonus	(665)	(529)	(253)	(253)
Other Central Grants	265	228	196	398
	9,100	8,698	6,443	1,810
Net Additional (Reduction) in resources	4,313	6,410	3,111	442
Inflation and other increases				
Pay	1,796	1,596	831	848
Contract Inflation	379	407	424	442
Non Contract Inflation	496	563	619	681
Fees and Charges	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
	2,571	2,466	1,775	1,871
Capital Financing				
Prudential Borrowing & Treasury Management	(971)	1,151	1,011	0
	(971)	1,151	1,011	0
Finance and Education	(480)	(232)	0	0
Housing	0	0	0	0
Adult Social Care & Health	(750)	(750)	0	0
Children's Social Care	(516)	0	0	0
Regeneration	(329)	(35)	0	0
Highways and Transportation	(240)	(510)	0	0
Central Services	(600)	(632)	0	0
Communities & Public Protection	(75)	(75)	0	0
Environment	(868)	0	0	0
Total Net Service Reduction	(3,858)	(2,234)	0	0
Impact of 2015/16 decisions				
Reversal of green bin charging	550			
Additional environmental services works	100			
Unachieved SERCO and terms and conditions savings	219			
Changes to recycling contracts	600			
Termination of SERCO Contract (net of HRA elements)	(3,100)			
	(1,631)			
Demographics	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total Savings to Identify	3,424	10,793	8,896	5,313

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9 September 2015	ITEM: 11 01104409
Cabinet	
Borrowing and Investment Performance and Policy Review 2014/15	
Wards and communities affected: None	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor John Kent, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Strategy	
Accountable Head of Service: Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance	
Accountable Director: David Bull, Interim Chief Executive	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

The Revised CIPFA Prudential Code requires that a Treasury Management Outturn report is produced as soon after the financial year end as is practicable.

In accordance with the Revised CIPFA Prudential Code, this report

- (a) reviews borrowing and investment activity for 2014/15; and
- (b) reports the treasury outturn position for 2014/15.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 In line with the Treasury Management Policy Statement approved by Council on 26 February 2014 and the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Cabinet is asked to comment on the borrowing and investment performance for 2014/15.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This Borrowing and Investment Performance and Policy Review 2014/15 report is prepared under the terms of the CIPFA Prudential Code.

2.2 The report presents details of borrowing and investment transactions that took place in 2014/15 and also reports the outturn position on treasury management transactions for 2014/15.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The Council's borrowing activity during 2014/15 is summarised in table 1 below:

Table 1	Outstanding Debt 1 April 2014	New loans Raised	Loans Repaid	Outstanding Debt 31 March 2015
Source of loan	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	160,889	0	0	160,889
Market Loans	29,003	750	0	29,753
Total long term	189,892	750	0	190,642
Temporary Market Loans	94,000	288,000	262,250	119,750
Total Debt	283,892	288,750	262,250	310,392

3.2 The Council was granted a loan from SELEP in 2014/15 of £0.75m to assist with the refurbishment of Grays Magistrates Court to be repaid by 2020 with no interest costs applicable. The Council continued to fund the £84.5 million of old PWLB debt by taking short term temporary loans at much lower rates.

3.3 The major events during the year are identified below:

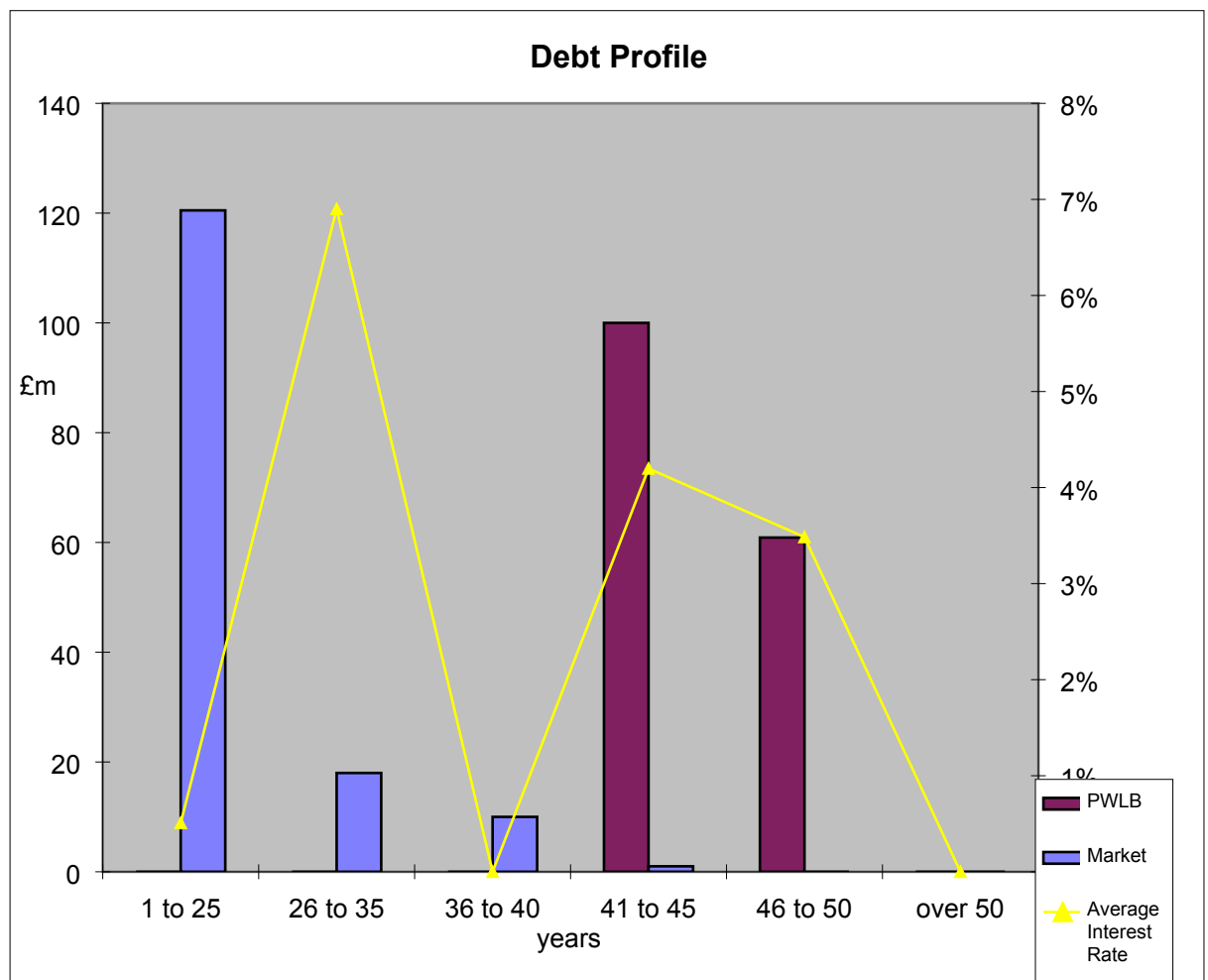
3.4 The Council had a Borrowing Requirement of £21.4m for 2014/15 (the amount that the Council would have been able to increase its debt by over the financial year). This requirement allows the Council to borrow from the PWLB (or money market) the amount that will keep the Council within its estimated Capital Financing Requirement. Known as the CFR, this reflects the Council's underlying need to borrow for Capital purposes at the end of the financial year. In general terms the Council's overall long term borrowing should not exceed its CFR. The Council did not breach either its Authorised or Operational Borrowing limits as defined under the CIPFA Prudential Code during 2014/15.

3.5 None of the Borrowing Requirement for 2014/15 has been taken up. In consultation with the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose, it was decided not to take any of the requirement before the end of the financial year.

3.6 After taking into account the levels of reserves and balances held by the Council and the fact that the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is estimated to increase in future years, it was deemed inappropriate to borrow long term funding at this point in time and to review the position during 2015/16.

3.7 The graph below (table 2) illustrates the maturity profile of the Council's debt portfolio. The £120.5 million maturing in 1-25 years is made up of £119.75 million temporary debt taken to cover cash flow and finance the PWLB restructuring that all mature in 2015/16 and the £0.75 million SELEP loan. All of the Council's remaining long term debt matures after 25 years, but, ranges from 26 to 50 years, with the HRA Financing Settlement loans maturing from 2056/57 onwards. This maturity profile occurs as a result of the continuing historical low in interest rates and the decision taken to borrow longer at the lowest rates available.

Table 2



3.8 During 2010/11 the Council undertook a rescheduling exercise whereby the entire PWLB portfolio was repaid and replaced by short term temporary

borrowing. To the end of 2014/15 this has saved the Council approximately £15.5m of interest owing to the difference in interest rates between the old fixed rate PWLB debt and the available short term interest rates. It is forecast that in future years the savings attainable will reduce as short term rates increase, however, it is anticipated that any rate rises will be made via small increments over several years so savings will continue for the next few years. Officers continue to monitor the economic projections relating to interest rates and will take action to fix rates as necessary.

- 3.9 During the year the Council operated within the treasury limits set out in the Council's Treasury Policy Statement which was as follows:
- (a) To obtain any long term borrowing requirement from the sources of finance mentioned in paragraph 2.5 of the Borrowing and Investment Annual Strategy.
 - (b) To continue to fund the ex-PWLB debt via short term funds from the money markets unless circumstances dictate moving back into long term fixed rate debt. The borrowing sources mentioned in paragraph 2.5 of the Borrowing and Investment Annual Strategy will then be assessed as to their suitability for use.
 - (c) Repay market loans that come up for renewal by realising equivalent amounts of investments. If it is not possible to realise investments then the borrowing sources in paragraph 2.5 of the Borrowing and Investment Annual Strategy will be assessed as to their suitability for use as replacements.
 - (d) To undertake short term temporary borrowing when necessary in order to manage cash flow to the Council's advantage.
 - (e) Reschedule market and PWLB loans, if practicable, to achieve interest rate reductions, balance the volatility profile or amend the debt profile, dependent on the level of premiums payable or discounts receivable.
 - (f) Ensure security and liquidity of the Council's investments and to then optimise investment returns commensurate to those ideals.
 - (g) Contain the type, size and duration of investments with individual institutions within the limits specified in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of the Borrowing and Investment Annual Strategy.
 - (h) Move a further £5 million into Investec's Short Dated Bond Fund and Target return Fund if it is felt prudent to do so.
 - (i) In accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 the Council's policy for the calculation of MRP in 2014/15 shall be the regulatory method for supported borrowing and the asset life (equal instalment)

method for Prudential borrowing. This policy was amended at Council on 25 February 2015 to say 'The Council will set aside an amount each year that it deems to be prudent and appropriate, having regard to statutory requirements and relevant guidance issued by DCLG'

2014/15 Investment Transactions

- 3.10 The movements in the Council's investments may be summarised in a similar manner as follows:

	Fund Managers £'000s	In House £'000s	Total £'000s
1 Total at 1April 2014	20,000	21,050	41,050
2 New Investments	20,000	2,420,930	2,440,930
3 Investments Redeemed	20,000	2,403,980	2,423,980
4 Total at 31March 2015	20,000	38,000	58,000

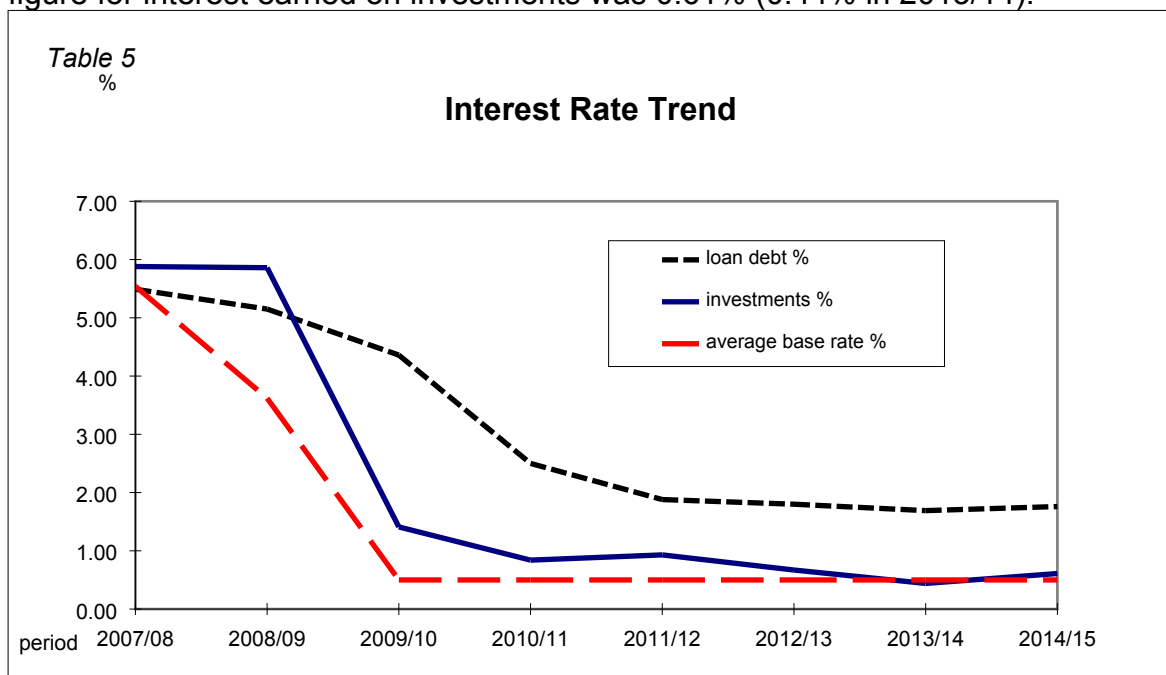
- 3.11 The very large figures in the In-house column relates in the main to investments held on an overnight basis. The continuing effect of the financial crisis has led to the Council reducing its investment counterparty list and it has often been difficult to find counterparties to invest with for any length of time. This has therefore led to more funds being placed on an overnight basis increasing the turnover of the In-House investments in lines 2 and 3 in the above table.
- 3.12 During 2014/15 the Council redeemed its £20m fund manager investments with Investec and invested the funds in money market investments for 364 days pending a decision on whether to invest with other managers. In November 2014 it was decided to invest the £20m in the CCLA Property Fund due to the returns available but, having already invested the £20m received back from Investec it was necessary to borrow the funds on a short term basis until the money market investments matured in June 2015, hence the increase in total investments held at March 2015 from March 2014.

3.13 At 31 March 2015 the money was invested with the following types of institutions:

	£ 000's
Banks	19,000
Building Societies	17,000
CCLA Property Fund	20,000
UK Local Authority	2,000
Total	58,000

3.14 All investments made in 2014/15 have been with organisations listed in the Borrowing and Investment Annual Strategy, which was presented to Council on 12 February 2014, and the total sums invested with individual institutions have been contained within the limits specified therein.

3.15 The average interest rate paid on the Council's general fund external borrowings in 2014/15 was 1.77% (1.69% in 2014/15) while the corresponding figure for interest earned on investments was 0.61% (0.44% in 2013/14).



The graph (table 5) above shows the trend in interest rate movements over the last eight years. The dotted line represents the average rate payable by the Council on its' borrowings. The continuous line represents the interest earned on the Council's investments. The movement in the Bank of England's base rate is shown by the dashes. This illustrates

- the success in reducing the Council's average borrowing rate from 5.49% in 2007/08 to 1.77% in 2014/15.
- that investment returns have returned slightly above the Base Rate in 2014/15.

Investment Returns

- 3.16 The net dividend (after the deduction of fees) achieved by the CCLA property fund in the 4 months after inception to March 31 2015 was 4.80%. Over the year 2014/15 the total return performance of the fund was 17.9% as compared with the benchmark of the IPD other balanced property funds index of 16.8%.
- 3.17 The average rate achieved on the Council's directly managed investments in 2014/15 was 0.61% despite the need to finance day to day cash requirements, with the consequent variations in amounts available for investment.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The overall impact to the General Fund of treasury management activities in 2014/15 is £2.64 million which represents a favourable position of £4.76 million to the General Fund as per table 6 below.

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

- 5.1 The Council's Treasury Advisors, Arlingclose, have been consulted.

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

- 6.1 The financial implications of the above treasury management activities on the Council's revenue budget are illustrated in the table below. The outturn position is compared against both the original and revised forecast.

Table 6			
	2014/15 Revised Budget £000's	2014/15 Actual outturn £000's	2014/15 Variance £000's
Interest payable on external debt			
1 Debt Interest		2,253.7	
2 Total Internal Interest		72.5	
3 Net Interest charged to GF	2,196.1	2,326.2	130.0
Income			
4 Interest on Investments	-593.3	-755.1	-161.8

5	Net Interest charged to GF	1,602.8	1,571.1	-31.7
6	MRP	5,800.0	1,075.0	-4,725.0
7	Overall total	7,402.8	2,646.1	-4,756.7

6.2 The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is the amount set aside from the general fund to repay borrowing taken out by the Council to fund capital expenditure. There are a number of methods which can be used to calculate the MRP which are in accordance with statutory requirements and the Department of Communities and Local Government guidance. The Council has reviewed these options in 2014/15 as well as undertaking a detailed review of the amounts put aside in previous years. As a result, there is a net £3.54m increase to the general fund balance to correct the cumulative impact identified from prior year calculations. Going forward the policy for MRP has been amended to ensure all outstanding debt is paid off fully over the next 50 years.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Chris Buckley**
Treasury Management Officer

The financial implications can be found in the main body of the report.

7.2 Legal

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

In determining its affordable borrowing limits under section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council must have regard to the "Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities" (revised Edition 2007) published by CIPFA. In carrying out its functions under Chapter 1, Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council must have regard to the code of practice contained in the document "Treasury Management in the Public Sector : Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes" (Revised Edition 2009) published by CIPFA.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

There are no specific implications from this report.

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):

- Revised CIPFA Prudential Code
- Revised draft ODPM's Guidance on Local Government Investments
- Revised CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes
- Treasury Management Policy Statement
- 2014/15 Annual Investment Strategy
- Arlingclose's Investment Review.

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None.

Report Author:

Chris Buckley
Treasury Management Officer
Corporate Finance

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9 September 2015	ITEM: 12 01104410
Cabinet	
Grays Town Centre Traffic Management	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Oliver Gerrish, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation	
Accountable Head of Service: Ann Osola, Head of Transportation and Highways	
Accountable Director: David Bull, Director of Planning and Transportation	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

Following the Cabinet decision in December 2014, Thurrock Council undertook a consultation on Grays Town Centre Traffic Management Changes between February and April 2015. The changes to the Town Centre traffic management included a range of options that would improve access and the viability of the Town Centre; these included changing Orsett Road to two-way traffic and opening Crown Road to through traffic.

This report sets out the results of the public consultation and appraises the proposed changes to the Town Centre. Following the consultation, further options were also developed to address the issues raised; this report also considers these alternative options. The report recommendations propose implementing phase 1 of the changes to the Town Centre traffic management. This would route through traffic away from the Town Centre and include changes to allow multi-storey car park traffic to enter and leave in both directions on Crown Road. The report recommends these changes would be monitored prior to proceeding with phase 2, which would change Orsett Road to two-way traffic.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 It is recommended that Phase 1 is implemented; including the design and construction of:

- **Signalising the existing width restriction Bridge Road, to encourage Grays south traffic to avoid Orsett Road. Reviewing the capacity of the bridge to accommodate buses.**

- **Allowing all turning movement at the Stanley Road/Clarence Road junction.**
- **A 12 month suspension of the east bound bus lane on Crown Road to allow the multi-storey traffic to legally turn left and leave in an easterly direction.**
- **Better cycle links**
- **Banning HGV's from turning left from Derby Road to London Road at the Theatre**
- **“Kiss and Ride” facility to drop off at the Rail Station**
- **Additional cycle parking**
- **Improvements to the public realm at the northern end of the High Street**
- **Gateway/Welcome schemes at the main entry points**

1.2 It is also recommended that as part of the Phase 1 works the following options are developed and implemented, subject to further discussions with stakeholders:

- **Providing a Bus gate at Argent Street/Wouldham Road to allow bus services to pass from Bridge Road, along Argent Street and onto London Road.**
- **Exploring an alternative access to Town Centre car parking via Hogg Lane and Titan Quarry**
- **Closing the Morrison's Hogg Lane egress in favour of a roundabout at Seally Road/Eastern Way junction. (Subject to further consultation with Morrisons supermarket).**

1.3 It is recommended that the phase 2 works are designed and implemented following monitoring of the impact of the phase 1 works, to determine whether the new traffic flows can be successfully managed. The phase 2 works will include changing Orsett Road to two-way between Derby Road and Stanley Road. The monitoring of the phase 1 works will be reviewed and phase 2 will proceed in consultation with the leader of the Council and portfolio holder.

1.4 It is recommended that the proposed removal of the Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane does not proceed at this stage and that there are further discussions with businesses to agree a cycling scheme that does not prejudice parking as part of the phase 2 works.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Grays is one of 6 growth hubs where the Council's regeneration activity is to be concentrated. In July 2013 Cabinet agreed a vision for Grays that was based on the issues raised during the public engagement. A key element of the vision was to make it easier to travel in to and move around the town centre by:

- Enhancing the rail crossing-providing a high quality underpass;
- Re-establishing the connection between the town centre and the River Thames;
- Improving road, bus, cycle and pedestrian links in to and around the town centre; and
- Enhancing the transport interchange around the rail station

Implementation of the Grays projects included South Essex College, refurbishments at the Magistrates Court and the Market, all of which contribute to the viability of the area, but also encourage traffic movements.

In December 2014 Cabinet approved a public consultation on highways and transportation proposals as a first stage in addressing concerns raised by residents and businesses about accessibility into and around the town centre. Cabinet also agreed the next steps for the Underpass project including a Memorandum of Understanding which set out the terms of a partnership to deliver the underpass.

2.2 The December 2014 Cabinet voted in favour of recommendations concerning the Grays Town Centre Transport Study. These recommendations were

- That the package of measures which have been developed through the Grays Town Centre Transport Study and additional supporting documents be endorsed.
- That the development and implementation of the focused package of experimental measures that will address key access issues in Grays while enabling the Council to test proposals and discuss them with relevant users and stakeholders, be approved.
- That authority be delegated to the Director for Planning & Transportation in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to initiate a consultation and review process that will be reported to Planning & Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny and make local changes to the proposed measures taking into account local views and priorities.

2.3 This report sets out the proposed alterations to the Grays Town Centre transport network, the results of the recent public consultation and some recommended actions. The report does not deal expressly with proposals to change the rail level crossing to an underpass, which is dealt with in a separate report.

2.4 In 2001/2002 the road layout in Grays was significantly changed. The main driver behind these changes was the regeneration of the George Street site with the new Morrison's supermarket and additionally a desire to discourage the traffic that was simply passing through Grays. At the time surveys showed that 40% of traffic on Orsett Road and Crown Road passed through Grays and a strategy was developed to make less traffic travel through Grays in favour of using Lodge Lane and the A1306.

- 2.5 Firstly, in conjunction with the Morrison's supermarket development, George Street was closed to through traffic, London Road was severed to join two parts of the Morrison's car park and Eastern Way became two-way, which made a more circuitous route for through traffic. The Bus Station was moved on-street at the junction of Crown Road and Maidstone Road. Following this the Council implemented further changes to London Road/Orsett Road one-way system, making a section of it two-way and diverting west bound traffic via Stanley Road, Clarence Road and Derby Road. The latter was again designed to make a more circuitous loop to discourage through traffic; this has resulted in ongoing problems with queues on Derby Road. Additionally in conjunction with these changes Crown Road was closed to through traffic, (except for buses and taxis). This arrangement has a rather complicated traffic management arrangement, which allows traffic to enter the multi-storey from the east and west, but only leave to the east.
- 2.6 To some extent the 2001/2002 changes were successful; in particular Morrison's car park provides a convenient and easily accessible western car park for the Town Centre. Similarly the closure of Crown Road, (except for buses) has significantly improved bus reliability, with easy access to the bus station from the east and west. However there have been ongoing issues with queues on the Clarence Road/Derby Road loop, problems with accessing the multi-storey, difficulty for non-car users getting to the Rail Station/College and general confusion for drivers accessing key locations. Additionally there is the very severe constraint of the High Street Level crossing, which is has featured highly in the press recently concerning safety issues, but which is also a significant barrier to sustainable movement and access to the regeneration opportunities to the south of the rail line.
- 2.7 Detailed studies have been undertaken with the objective to deliver an overall sustainable transport vision for Grays, that supports regeneration plans as well as access to, and permeability of, the High Street and surrounding town centre areas, with a specific focus on movements from the new South Essex College Campus, the Rail / Bus Station Interchange and the proposed new underpass and public squares.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 There are two main issues of principle, firstly whether opening Orsett Road up to two-way traffic will result in an increase in traffic through the town and consequently impact on air quality, congestion and safety. Secondly, whether to open Crown Road to through traffic and weighing that against the potential impacts on bus reliability and safety in the Bus Station. Prior to the 2001/2002 network changes when the road network was effectively working as a one-way loop, surveys at the time showed that approximately 40% of traffic in the Town Centre was passing through.

- 3.2 The most recent 2014 survey showed that on a Saturday between 11:00-12:00 was the busiest time, with nearly 2800 vehicles recorded in the peak hour. Of these vehicles, 31% were using the town centre as a through route, rather than a destination. The percentage of through traffic increased significantly during the weekday peak period with 58% of 2400 survey vehicles in the town centre being through traffic during the period 17:00-18:00 on the Thursday surveyed. Whilst it does not provide a thorough quantitative analysis, it does appear reasonable to assume that the circuitous route via Stanley Road, Clarence Road, Derby Road that was implemented in 2002 has not been particularly effective in discouraging traffic passing through the Town.
- 3.3 Therefore it would be reasonable to assume that switching Orsett Road to two-way could be implemented without attracting more traffic to use the town centre as a through route, especially if there is no increase in traffic capacity at the signalised junctions. Though there would still be significant queuing problems at the replacement signalised junction at Stanley Road/Orsett Road, unless Crown Road is available as an alternative for west bound traffic.
- 3.4 Turning to the issue of opening Crown Road to through traffic. Allowing traffic to circulate west bound via Crown Road would be a key requirement in managing those Orsett Road west bound queues past the Mazda Garage at a reasonably level. This additional Crown Road traffic will have an impact on the Bus Station and on queues at the Maidstone Road/London Road junction. Similarly allowing traffic to circulate east bound along Crown Road will impact on the Bus Station and queues at Stanley Road/Clarence Road and Stanley Road/Orsett Road junctions. The removal of the bus lane will also allow traffic leaving the multi-storey to travel east along Crown Road which will increase traffic queues at Stanley Road/Clarence Road and Stanley Road/Orsett Road junction, which further interfere with scheduled bus services in this area. Conversely this new multi storey access arrangement may reduce the level of multi-storey traffic that currently exits west through the bus station.
- 3.5 The proposed traffic distribution suggests that on a Saturday peak hour, (11:00hrs – 12:00hrs) there would be an increase of 366 two way vehicle movements through the Bus Station and on a weekday afternoon peak hour (17:00 – 18:00) there would be an increase of 254 two-way vehicle movements. So there will undoubtedly be significant impacts in this area, however the detailed traffic modelling undertaken to date has focussed on the signalised junctions at Orsett Road/Stanley Road, Stanley Road/Clarence Road and Derby Road/Orsett Road junctions. The modelling does not provide a detailed assessment of the impacts along Crown Road and does not quantify delays to bus services.
- 3.6 The Town Centre proposals added a further option of altering the Morrison's access on Maidstone Road to allow vehicles to exit as well as enter. This is likely to increase the traffic leaving Morrison via Maidstone Road to head east on Crown Road, thus potentially reducing traffic on Orsett Road. However this

may result in traffic cutting through Morrison's car park to access Crown Road and therefore is unlikely to be supported.

- 3.7 The other remaining contentious issue is the removal of Orsett Road layby in favour of constructing a cycleway. This layby provides up to 8 parking spaces and a loading area for the commercial uses between Derby Road and Stanley Road and is very well used. It is possible the proposals can be reviewed to determine whether the private forecourt of the commercial units could be used to allow formation of a cycleway without affecting the layby, however given the number of commercial units, it is ambitious to expect that all of them will agree.

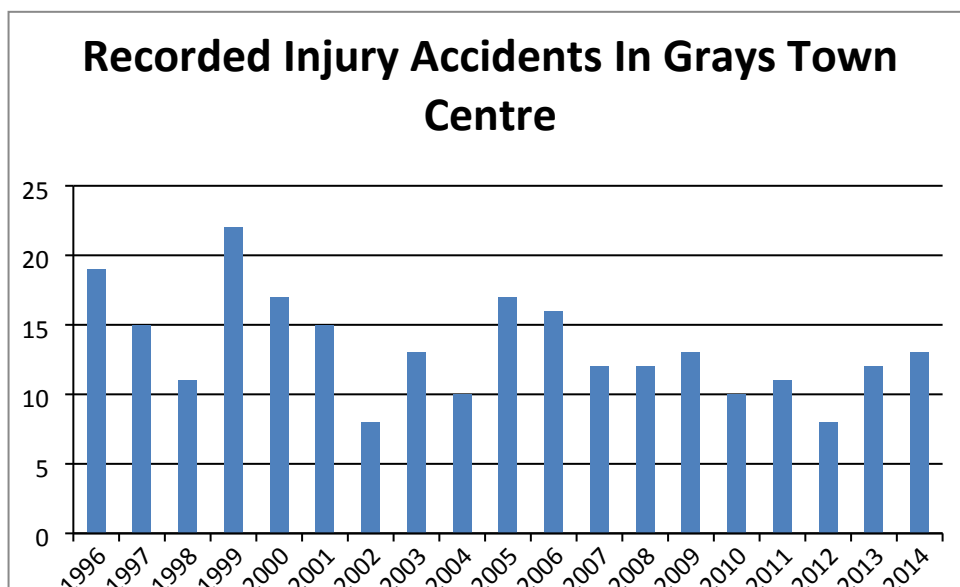
Alternative Options

- 3.7 Alternative options to fully opening Crown Road have been considered. It should be noted that these options have not been subject to public consultation and would require further stakeholder engagement. The multi-storey exit could be modified to allow movements in all directions, but a bus-only lane could be maintained westbound, which would reduce some of the projected traffic through the Bus Station. However this is unlikely to redirect enough traffic to allow the replacement Orsett Road signals to operate without significant queuing.
- 3.8 Improving vehicle access to Grays south by replacing the width restriction arrangement on Bridge Road rail bridge with a contemporary two-way bridge could allow a significant proportion of Grays south traffic to travel to and from the east without entering the Town Centre. This would significantly reduce traffic pressure in the Town Centre and enable two-way traffic on Orsett Road without opening Crown Road to through traffic. However a replacement bridge facility is likely to be prohibitively expensive, especially if any available capital funding is likely to be directed at the underpass replacement of the High Street level crossing. However signalling the Bridge Road width restriction would provide a safe and manageable solution that would encourage some drivers to use that route to and from Grays south, rather than using the Town Centre roads. Additionally, subject to Network Rail agreeing the bridge is adequate for this purpose, it is conceivable that this signalised arrangement may allow bus operators to pass through Argent Street to a bus only access at the Wouldham Road/Argent Street junction. The existing HGV ban could be enforced using a camera. A consultation would be required concerning changes to the traffic regulation order, but otherwise there are unlikely to be implications for local residents and businesses arising from this scheme.
- 3.9 Consideration could be given to closing the Morrison's egress onto Hogg Lane and reconfiguring the Seally Road/Eastern Way access to a roundabout to allow all vehicle movements. This may discourage eastbound traffic leaving Morrison's along Orsett Road in favour of travelling north to the Treacle Mine roundabout and then eastward via Lodge Lane. This would be subject to further consultation with Morrisons.

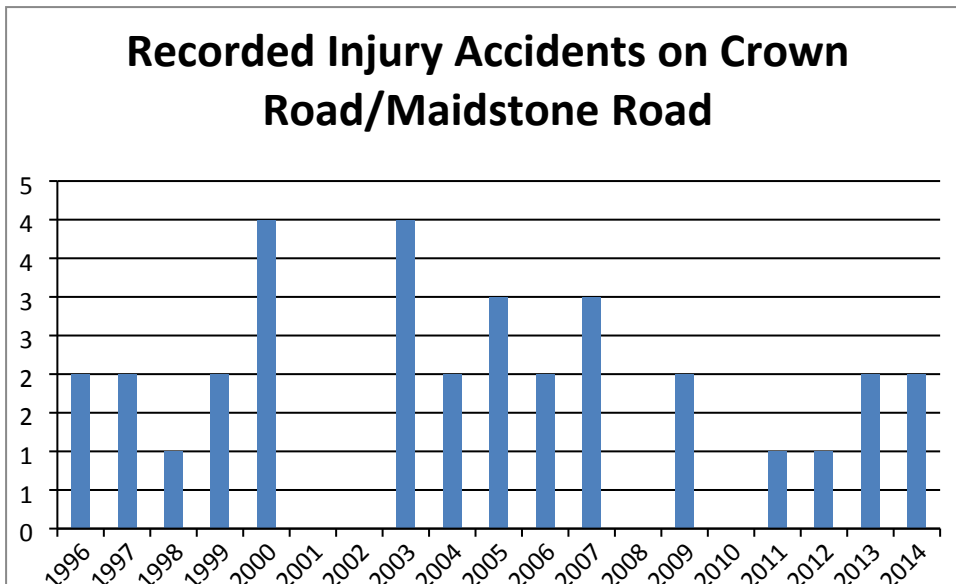
3.10 Lastly the development of the Titan Quarry is likely to afford an opportunity for an alternative to vehicle access between Hogg Lane and the rear of the Theatre. Subject to negotiation with the developer, this could provide access to Brooke Road Surgery, the Library, Cromwell Road car park and possibly other mixed uses and additional Town Centre car parking. This could allow a significant amount of Town Centre traffic to access the Town Centre from Hogg Lane, without travelling through the Town Centre. The development of a masterplan for this site is currently proceeding and further public consultation will be undertaken as part of the planning process.

Road Safety

3.11 The recorded injury accident pattern in Grays Town was reviewed to determine whether the historic changes to the road network had a significant impact on road safety, in particular whether the 2002 closure of Crown Road to through traffic had improved safety.



3.12 It can be seen that there is a slight trend of reduction in overall accidents and in particular a significant reduction in 2002 at the time of the implementation of the changes to the network. However there is no clear indication that the 2002 changes significantly improved road safety by removing through traffic on Crown Road. Turning to the Crown Road/Maidstone Road link itself, the recorded injury accident profile is reproduced below. Again there was a reduction in accidents at the time of the changes to road network, however otherwise there is no clear reduction in accidents, despite this link being closed to through traffic.

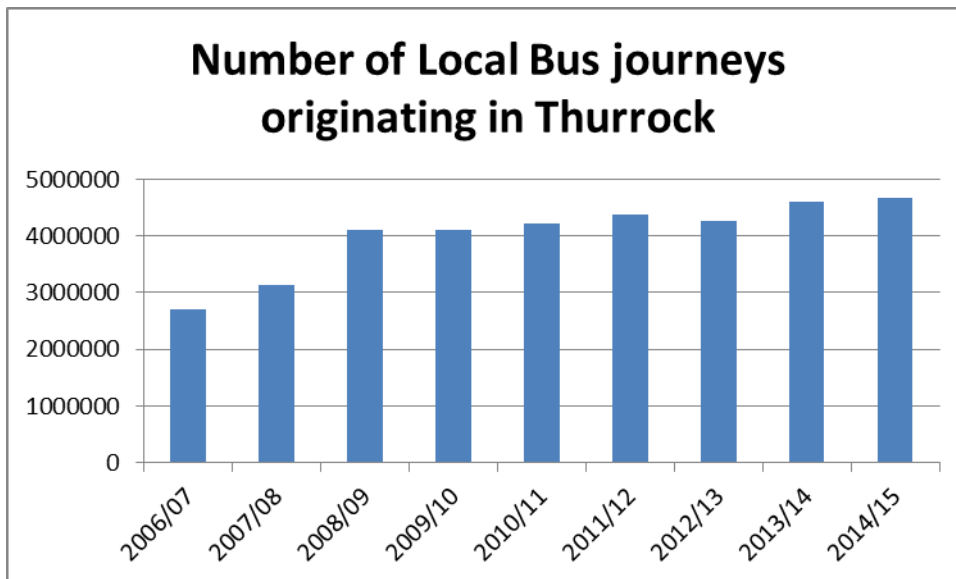


3.13 A closer analysis of the Crown Road and Maidstone Road data highlights that there have only been 4 recorded injury accidents in the Bus Station since it opened in 2001. Three of these being rear end shunts and 1 being a pedestrian falling in front of a bus. Therefore it is clear that the Bus Station is relatively safe, but there is a risk that the increase in through traffic could directly result in an increase in accidents. The accident pattern does highlight a very significant problem at the signalised pedestrian crossing of Crown Road adjacent to the rail level crossing, this shows that since 2002 there have been 8 recorded pedestrian injury accidents. This is a very high rate of pedestrian injury accidents; which has worsened since Crown Road has been closed to general through traffic. The cause of this is unclear, however it is likely to be due to the relatively low levels of traffic and that consequently pedestrian have a lack of expectation of encountering traffic at this crossing and that is contributing to high level of accidents.

Traffic Capacity

- 3.14 The Grays study included a LINSIG traffic model of the proposed changes to Orsett Road. In particular it modelled 4 traffic signals installations:
- 1) Orsett Road/Stanley Road signal controlled junction (with Orsett Road two-way)
 - 2) Clarence Road/Stanley Road junction (allowing all vehicle movements)
 - 3) Clarence Road/Derby Road pelican crossing
 - 4) Orsett Road/Derby Road signal controlled junction (with Orsett Road two-way)

- 3.15 The overall network results indicate that the proposals will result in improved network capacity and reduced total delay during the Thursday p.m. peak period. However, although total delay will reduce, they will be slightly detrimental to the network capacity during the Saturday a.m. peak period. The traffic study finds that on a weekday evening peak hour, with Crown Road open to two-way traffic, all the above signals works relatively well, except for the Orsett Road/Stanley Road junction. This junction will operate with significant queues in an easterly direction, predominantly due to the need to accommodate vehicles turning right into Stanley Road.
- 3.15 Orsett Road eastbound approach is over capacity with an estimated queue of 49 vehicles (approximately 294m) which will extend back through the Orsett Road / Derby Road junction and as far as the Quarry Hill junction. Orsett Road westbound approach is over capacity to a lesser degree with estimated queues of 30 vehicles (approximately 180m) which will extend back beyond the Dell Road junction. Stanley Road is over capacity with an estimated queue of 23 vehicles (approximately 156m) which will extend back to the exit from the Clarence Road / Stanley Road junction.
- 3.16 These queues are undesirable, but they are not dissimilar to the delays that occur as a result of the current arrangement, with west bound vehicles queuing around Stanley Road, Clarence Road and Derby Road, or indeed east bound vehicles queuing from the Theatre back past Morrison's. The proposed arrangement does provide a more obvious route for traffic through the Town Centre, but that would be at the expense of an adverse impact on the Bus Station and additional queuing at the Maidstone Road/London Road and Stanley Road/Clarence Road junction.
- 3.17 Bus patronage figures for local bus services originating in Thurrock have shown very positive trends as can be seen below. Delays on bus services are likely to reduce these levels of patronage, particularly if the delays impact on services between Grays and Lakeside. Whilst there is significant pressure to make Orsett Road two-way and to resolve the constraints on the multi-storey car park access, the increase in traffic on Crown Road may impact on bus patronage. As referenced above in the Ensign consultation response, this could lead to an increase in car travel, adding to the problems already experienced.



4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The public consultation highlights the local communities' general support for changing Orsett Road to two-way traffic and opening Crown Road to through traffic. The recommendations in this report include a step change towards meeting these community objectives, whilst managing the less obvious potential impacts on bus services.

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

- 5.1 The proposed changes are relatively extensive and potentially be implemented in a phase manner; the following are the key elements:
- Changing Orsett Road to two-way between the Theatre and Stanley Road
 - Removing the Bus Lane from Crown Road and allowing all vehicle movements
 - Better cycle links
 - Banning HGV's from turning left from Derby Road to London Road at the Theatre
 - Allowing all turning movements at Clarence Road/Stanley Road junction
 - "Kiss and Drop" facility to drop off at the Rail Station
 - Additional cycle parking
 - Improvements to the public realm at the northern end of the High Street
 - Gateway/Welcome schemes at the main entry points
 - Removing Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane
- 5.2 Thurrock Council undertook the consultation on the Grays Town Centre proposals in December 2014. As part of the consultation, a letter was sent out to all addresses in Grays Town centre and the riverside area, with the consultation leaflet and an invitation to our open events. An online

consultation was available for 21 days. A one day open event was held in Grays shopping centre and an evening event was held at the Civic Offices. There was a press release and notification with the Enquirer newspaper. Hard copies of the consultation were available the Civic Offices reception.

Additionally consultations were sent to:

- The Road haulage Association
- All emergency services
- Thurrock disability network
- Freight Transport Association
- All Bus operators
- All elected members
- Grays Board members

5.3 Responses were received through the online consultation, face-to-face interviews, letter responses and from a petition objecting to the removal of Orsett Road layby in favour of a cycleway. The comments received have been summarised from each channel and detailed below.

5.4 The online comments gave rise to 78 responses. Of these comments, 30 were generally in favour of the principle of opening Crown Road and making Orsett Road two-way, nine were against the proposals the remainder were unclear or made other observations. A full summary of the online responses is shown below.

Table 1

Theme	No. of Responses	Selection of Comments
Support to bring back the one way system	7	<p>“Bring back old system;it worked and was easier”</p> <p>“Have a proper one-way system in Grays”</p> <p>“Revert back to the pre Morrison’s days when the traffic flowed significantly better”</p>
Two-way access(Orsett Road)	<p>14 in favour of two way traffic</p> <p>3 against two way traffic</p> <p>3 unclear or mixed views</p>	<p>“They should never have stopped two way flow along Orsett Road”</p> <p>“The proposals to open up Orsett Road and Crown Road to two way traffic are particularly welcome”</p> <p>“Change Orsett Road back to 2-way traffic”</p> <p>“Do not agree with making Orsett Road two way”</p>
Two-way access (Crown Road)	<p>10 in favour of two way traffic</p> <p>1 against two way traffic</p> <p>3 unclear or mixed views</p>	<p>“I think this is a great idea to re-introduce a two way system at Crown Road”</p> <p>“Open up Crown Road”</p> <p>“A return to two way traffic is just common sense and long overdue”</p> <p>“It might be nice to drive along Crown Road both ways but what are the forecast advantages on doing this?”</p>
Access to Argent Street	3 in favour of opening up the end of Argent Street	<p>“Consideration should be given to opening Argent Street to ease the flow of traffic coming into the town centre.”</p>

Access for Cyclists	11	<p>"Cycle routes should be physically segregated to ensure that they will be used"</p> <p>"I don't think cycle lanes are extensive enough"</p> <p>"Totally against shared use of pavements for pedestrians and bicycles"</p> <p>"The pedestrian and cycle routes in town are another very good idea"</p>
Underpass at train station	4 against and 4 in favour of underpass	<p>"Underpass at level crossing seems unnecessary"</p> <p>"I would really like to see an underpass built!"</p> <p>"Totally against the idea of an underpass."</p>
Turning out of the multi-storey car park	7 against plans for just a right turn when exiting car park	<p>"Having the option to turn left as you exit out of Gray's multi storey car park would reduce the amount of traffic"</p> <p>"Seems logical to allow cars to turn both left and right out of the multi-storey car park"</p> <p>"Being able to turn left from the multi storey car park would improve journey times"</p>
Traffic Lights	7 comments for reconfigure lights to include a left turn filter at Derby Road/Orsett Road 3 comments stating there are too many traffic lights	<p>"The traffic lights at the library should have a left turn filter. Ridiculous queuing for no reason"</p> <p>"Stop the constant gridlocks caused by the traffic lights outside the theatre"</p> <p>"Why can't the left hand lane that goes from derby road into Orsett road be continuous flow, which only stop for the pedestrian crossing"</p>
Poor road conditions	6	<p>"Have never seen the roads in such a sorry state"</p> <p>"Serious potholes putting vehicle safety at risk"</p>
Generally in favour of proposals	30	<p>"Can't wait for it to happen"</p>
Change unnecessary	6	<p>"I see nothing wrong with the current system"</p>
Other	23	Various

5.5 Additional face to face surveys were undertaken in Grays Town Centre which generated 38 responses. The majority (79%) of these were from residents including 8% who also work in the area. The remaining 21% of responses were from workers. The dominant modes of travel into Grays on the survey day were car (37%) and walking (42%). A further 3% drove and walked. 16% of respondents travelled by bus and 3% by other modes. Of those who drove to Grays, 40% parked at Morrison's Car park. A further 27% parked at the Multi Storey.

5.6 The vast majority of respondents (81%) supported the proposal for two way traffic in Crown Road. 8% didn't support the proposal. 5% were unaffected by the proposal therefore didn't provide a response. 3% were undecided and 3% provided no response. Similarly the vast majority (84%) of respondents supported proposals for two way traffic in Orsett Road, 8% did not support the proposal and 8% were undecided. Again, the vast majority (82%) agreed that improvements to the existing network and one way system is needed. 5%

think improvements are not needed. 3% are undecided and 11% provided no comment. Finally, the majority (68%) think Grays needs more and improved cycle links. 18% disagree and 13% provided no comment.

- 5.7 Further comments were provided by 22 respondents; including letters. The nature of these comments were varied. Six stated support and positivity towards the proposals. Five comments had concerns relating to traffic including the loss of parking and congestion. Three comments received emphasised the need for greater enforcement for both vehicles and cyclists. Four comments stated more support was needed for pedestrians, for example keeping cyclists off pavements and a further two indicated more should be done for cyclists (e.g. more cycle links). Nine other comments were received. A full summary of the responses is shown below.

Table 2

Theme	No. of Response	Selection of Comments
Positive comments about proposals	6	<p>"I think it is a good idea for [the] town"</p> <p>"Generally proposed changes would seem to be a definite improvement"</p> <p>"Cycle links and cycle hub great idea for students"</p>
Traffic Concerns	5	<p>"Concerns with vehicle parking in Cromwell side streets due to no parking on Orsett Road"</p> <p>"Concerns with traffic build up on Orsett Road"</p>
More support pedestrians	4	<p>"We need to take cyclists and vehicles off the pavements and out of pedestrian areas"</p> <p>"More needs to be done to make it easier for pedestrians to cross"</p>
More support for cyclists	3	<p>"More cycle links"</p>
Greater Enforcement Required	3	<p>"Bluebell Court banned turn needs enforcement"</p>
Other	9	<p>"Concerns regarding the new underpass"</p> <p>"An integrated bus/train/cycle would be a good move"</p> <p>"Would be useful to have toilets and café at bus station"</p>

		"Waste of my tax payers money"
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5.7 A further 40 individual responses were received from the petition in opposition to the removal of the Orsett Road layby in favour of a cycleway. In addition, comments were collated from discussions between Council officers and members of the public. Therefore this section comprises a total of 49 responses. The two most prominent themes within these responses were related to parking. 84% of respondents (41 out of 49) indicated either a need for more parking within the proposals and/or that insufficient parking/loading spaces within the proposals would lead to a disruption and/or loss of businesses. A full summary of the responses is shown below.

Table 3

Theme	No. of Responses	Selection of Comments
Insufficient parking within proposals	29	"Parking is needed" "Parking Essential" "Keep the parking"
Insufficient parking/loading spaces within proposals will cause a disruption and/or loss of business	29	"We would reiterate that to remove this parking area would be a disaster for all the shops within the vicinity" "Parking is needed or local businesses will suffer" "Many of my disabled patients need parking close to the practice – I will lose business"
Insufficient cyclist to warrant the proposals	2	"There are hardly any cyclists in Grays"
Bridge Road is not included within the study area and suffers from long queues and motorist not obeying the priority route	2	"There are long queues and impatient people ignoring the fact that they don't have priority on Bridge Road"
Crown Road/High Street crossing is currently dangerous for pedestrians	3	"The crossing on Crown Road that links the High Street is dangerous"
Existing speeding/rat running issues not addressed by proposals	2	"Existing speeding issues and rat runs are not being addressed in the proposals"
Positive comments regarding improvement to cycle routes within proposals	2	"Very much liked the proposal of improved cycle routes"
Positive comments regarding cycle hub within proposals	2	"The introduction of a cycle hub...would certainly be an asset"
Proposals will cause disruption and congestion around the bus station	1	"Opening Crown Road to two way traffic for the full length will encourage a lot more traffic trying to bypass any congestion along Orsett Road even though this means

		a diversion in distance, the potential to save time and emerge in London Road will be tempting and thus impact on the bus station.
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- 5.8 The public transport operators were also consulted concerning the changes. It should be noted that Ensign Bus are opposed to opening of Crown Road to through traffic and given Ensign Bus play a key role in the delivery of Thurrock's public transport services, these views have been given significant weight in this report. Ensign commented that current layout prevents vehicles travelling east to west along Crown Road through the bus station and only allows west to east traffic as far as the multi storey car park. Ensign is of the view that opening Crown Road to two-way traffic for the full length will encourage a lot more traffic trying to bypass any congestion along Orsett Road.
- 5.9 Ensign are concerned that even though using Crown Road means a diversion, the potential to save time and emerge in London Road will be tempting and thus impact on the bus station. It is Ensign's view that the road at the moment is lightly used apart from service vehicles and buses allowing passengers to cross freely between bays on either side of the road. An increase in traffic levels could jeopardise pedestrians attempting to cross the road. Ensign have noticed a greater increase in vehicle numbers around the bus station since the college opened, as students are being dropped off near to the level crossing rather than drive round to the College entrance.
- 5.10 Ensign also have concern about the provision of dropping off bays for the Rail Station located at the access road by Morrison's car park. They feel this will encourage a lot more cars into the area, which having found the spaces taken will attempt to stop anywhere whilst waiting and in the absence of robust parking enforcement this will lead to severe congestion.
- 5.11 Ensign explained that problems that on-street bus stations such as Grays have is the interaction with other vehicles when entering and exiting the stop. Given that there are traffic signals located at the Maidstone Road junction with London Road; buses may well be stuck at the stop trying to pull out while a stream of traffic passes. Any loss of service reliability could impact passenger numbers and lead to an increase in car travel, adding to the problems already experienced.
- 5.12 Ensign suggested that other options be considered before allowing this section to be implemented. Since the original consultation, Ensign and confirmed they have no objections to temporarily revoking the east bound bus lane to allow for a 12 month monitoring, to determine whether it has an adverse effect on their services. This revocation would allow multi-storey traffic to enter and leave in both directions on Crown Road.

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

6.1 This report supports Thurrock's Corporate Priorities, which includes encouraging and promoting job creation and economic prosperity.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Finance Officer (Capital)

The funding required for delivering the Grays Town Centre access improvements was agreed by Cabinet in December 2014 and is included within a number of budgets in the current capital programme.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Vivien Williams**
Planning Lawyer

Public feedback on the monitoring of any implemented changes to Town Centre traffic management should be targeted to affected groups and future consultation on further options which have arisen since the original consultation should satisfy the Public Sector Equality Duty within s149 of the Equality Act 2012 and comply with the Government's consultation principles

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

An initial public consultation exercise was completed between February-March 2015 gathering the views of local residents and visitors to Grays Town Centre when presented with a plan containing options to modify roads and transport infrastructure in Grays.

Data concerning the impact of these proposals on protected groups is not presently available therefore the recommendations contained in this report will be the subject of a Community Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) before implementation with the involvement of relevant community and voluntary sector groups and individuals to ensure adequate provision is made for such protected groups.

Any contractor appointed to complete the works outlined in this report (or as amended subject to CEIA) will provide evidence of their standards and adherence to the Equality Act 2010 through the administration and implementation of works and practices.

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

Not applicable.

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

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Nathan Drover

Principal Engineer

Strategic Transportation

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9 September 2015	ITEM: 13 01104411
Cabinet	
Annual Parking Report 2015	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Jane Potheary, Portfolio Holder for Public Protection	
Accountable Head of Service: Ann Osola – Head of Transportation and Highways	
Accountable Director: David Bull – Director of Planning and Transportation	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to note and approve the publication of the Annual Parking Report for 2015 on the performance of the Parking Services, in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the publication of the Annual Parking Report for 2015, in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approve that Senior Officers continue to review the service and enforcement with a view to improve efficiency.**
- 1.3 That the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the possible impact of any proposed car parking charges for 2016/17 on parking in Grays prior to any changes being agreed.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Thurrock Council has operated Decriminalised Parking Enforcement since 1st April 2005 and enforces waiting and loading restrictions within the Borough, both on-street and within the car parks under its management.
- 2.2 Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 came into force on 31st March 2008, and replaced Decriminalised Parking Enforcement with Civil Parking Enforcement.

2.3 It requires the Council to produce and publish an annual report providing financial and statistical information on its Civil Parking Enforcement activities.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 It is a requirement of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) to publish an Annual Parking Report on the performance of its Civil Parking Enforcement activities.

3.2 The appended report sets out the policies that drive the delivery of the Service and provides data on the activities undertaken in 2014/2015.

3.3 It also provides financial information relating to the parking account, and explains that 2014/15 was an improved year for parking income, which resulted in there being a budget surplus with penalty charge notices income increasing, compared to the previous year, despite fewer PCN's being issued.

3.4 The main areas of increases in income which influenced this budget outturn were:

- The removal of the CCTV enforcement vehicle trial;
- An increase in the recovery of costs for Penalty Charge Notices including successful tribunal cases;
- New management in place from January 2015 resulting in productivity rise.
- Increased recovery rate from the Debt Management Team including foreign drivers.

3.5 The report concludes by highlighting some of the Services' key priorities for 2015/16.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires the Council to publish an Annual Parking Report on the performance of its Civil Parking Enforcement activities.

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

5.1 The Annual Parking Report for 2015 will be sent to various stakeholders, including the Secretary of State for Transport, The Traffic Penalty Tribunal, Essex Police, Essex Fire Brigade and the Thurrock Chamber of Trade and Commerce, and will be published on the Council's website.

5.2 In the context of the proposed car parking charges review planned for 2016/17 when the next budget review is being considered, the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be consulted. They will be requested, prior to the budget being set, to review the possible impact that any increases may have on parking in Grays prior to any changes being agreed.

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

6.1 Civil Parking Enforcement relates directly to the corporate priority of providing a safe, clean and green environment.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The full cost of preparing the Annual Parking Report for 2015 and consulting stakeholders has been met from existing revenue budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Solicitor/Monitoring Officer

Under Section 87 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, the appropriate national authority may publish guidance to local authorities about any matter relating to their functions in connection with the civil enforcement of traffic contraventions. In exercising those functions, the Local Authority must have regard to any such guidance.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

Hard copies of the Annual Parking Report for 2015 will be made available at the Civic Offices, where staff will be able to provide assistance, where required. It will also be published on the Council's website.

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):

- None

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Annual Parking Report 2015

Report Author:

Tracey Ashwell

Highways & Transportation Services Manager

Transportation & Highways

Annual Parking Report 2015

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Introduction

Thurrock Council provides parking services and has operated decriminalised parking enforcement since 1 April 2005. It enforces waiting and loading restrictions in the borough, both on-street and in the car parks under its management.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires the council to publish an annual parking report explaining how it operates and the uses of any surplus income on transportation-related schemes.

The provision and enforcement of parking supports the delivery of the objectives of the Thurrock Transport Strategy 2008-2021 - accessibility; tackling congestion; improving air quality; safer roads; and facilitating regeneration.

Parking Objectives

The Thurrock Parking Strategy is due to be thoroughly reviewed as the last document produced was in April 2007.

The main objectives of the parking policies are to maintain the safety of users of the public highway and council-managed car parks; provide the efficient movement of traffic; increase compliance; maintain access to services and amenities as well as for essential services; and encourage the use of non-car methods of transport.

Parking Services

During 2014/15, Thurrock Council employed seven full-time Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) who patrol fixed beats to ensure enforcement is undertaken on a regular basis.

CEOs are also deployed in a vehicle to locations that are not on existing CEO beats, or unsuitable for the foot patrols. This includes morning and afternoon visits to enforce restrictions in the local surrounding areas of primary schools in the Borough on a rota basis, and on occasions, evening visits to enforce commercial vehicle restrictions.

They use hand-held computers to issue penalty charge notices (PCNs) and to make detailed notes of the circumstances, and use digital cameras.

The notes and evidence gathered by the CEOs is also used to assess challenges against the issue of PCNs objectively and consistently.

A statutory independent review process for PCNs is available through the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. Details of the grounds for appeal can be found at www.patrol-uk.info.

The parking services team also deals with changes to parking policy, responding to enquiries and complaints, and provide parking information on the council's website.

It is also responsible for ensuring parking signs, markings and pay-and-display machines are maintained; for temporarily suspending parking places for building or road works, or for removals and public safety; and for granting dispensations to contravene restrictions as necessary.

Back office functions are procured through the council's strategic partner Serco which also deals with the administration of all parking permits.

Performance

Thurrock Council's parking service covers three controlled parking zones (CPZs), one in Grays, one in South Ockendon and one in Stanford-le-Hope and two permit parking area (PPA) in Badgers Dene and Seabrooke Rise both in Grays as well as 10 off-street car parks throughout the borough.

There are in the region of 1,161 marked bays for off street parking, and 1,255 for on street parking. There are also approximately 78 and 195 off street and on street parking spaces respectively that are not marked out as individual bays.

The Council also enforces car park at the Morrison's supermarket in Grays by agreement. An annual charge from Morrison's to enforce and revenue from all Penalty Charge Notices are paid to the Council for this responsibility.

The following table provides the numbers of penalty charge notices issued for contraventions on Thurrock Council's road network, and in the car parks under its management in 2013/14 and 2014/15. It also provides details of the numbers of residents, business and visitor permits issued for its controlled parking zones, and the numbers of blue badges on issue for these two years.

Thurrock Council's Civil Parking Enforcement Statistical Information	2013/14	2014/15
On-street penalty charge notices issued	12,721	7559
Off-street penalty charge notices issued	1,451	1529
Residents permits issued	2,424	2731
Business permits issued	60	60
Visitor permits issued (valid for 20 visits up to 5 hours)	2,992	3251
Blue badges on issue	2,491	2939

The number of penalty charge notices issued on-street decreased from 12721 in 2013/14 to 7559 in 2014/15 causing a reduction of 5162. The withdrawal of the CCTV Vehicle saw a reduction in PCN's being issued in restricted areas outside of primary schools.

Whilst the number of penalty charge notices dropped significantly, the PCN income rose, reflecting a more efficient issuing and follow up procedure. It could also be suggested that residents acknowledge the parking contraventions and have become more considerate drivers thus avoiding the need of receiving a penalty charge notice.

The number of penalty charge notices issued in off-street parking places increased slightly from 1,451 in 2013/14 to 1,529 in 2014/15.

The number of residents' and visitors' parking permits issued increased significantly from 2424 and 2992 respectively in 2013/14 to 2731 and 3251 respectively in 2014/15.

The tables on the next page provide details of the most common parking contraventions for which penalty charge notices were issued both on-street and off-street in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

This parking action has helped the council support local retailers by ensuring that there is a regular turnover of parking spaces in the town centres.

ON-STREET Most Common Contraventions Based on PCNs	2013/14	2014/15
Parked in restricted street during prescribed hours	1,305	2016
Parked or loading/unloading in restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	1,067	397
Parked after expiry of paid for time in pay and display bay	441	494
Parked without clearly displaying valid pay and display ticket	117	128
Parked in residents' or shared use parking place without displaying either a permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issue for that place	280	426
Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	806	1006
Parked in residents' or shared use parking place displaying an invalid permit, an invalid voucher or an invalid pay and display ticket	117	167
Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	595	567
Parked adjacent to a dropped footway	178	55
Parked for longer than permitted	132	144
Parked in a designated disabled person' parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	106	152
Parked on a taxi rank	202	0
Stopped where prohibited (on a clearway)	1,183	491
Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	341	22
A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of the overnight waiting ban	39	6
Parked in contravention of a commercial vehicle waiting restriction	3,319	1062
A heavy commercial vehicle wholly or partly parked on a footway, verge or land between two carriageways	2,024	0
Other on-street contraventions	469	426
TOTAL ON-STREET PCNs	12,721	7559

OFF-STREET Most Common Contraventions Based on PCNs	2013/14	2014/15
Parked after the expiry of time paid for in pay and display car park	393	561
Parked in a pay and display car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket or voucher or parking clock	912	812
Parked with additional payment made to extend the stay beyond the first time purchased	7	10
Parked in a permit bay without clearly displaying a valid permit	15	0
Parked beyond the bay markings	110	128
Other off-street contraventions	14	18
TOTAL OFF-STREET PCNs	1,451	1529

Finance

Civil parking enforcement income is from pay-and-display parking, permit fees and penalty charge notices, and an agreement to undertake civil enforcement in the Morrison's supermarket car park in Grays Town Centre. The main areas of expenditure are on enforcement administration, parking infrastructure maintenance and debt recovery.

The following tables provide comparative figures for the parking income by source and the direct costs of civil parking enforcement in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

On and off-street parking income by source	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
On-street/Off-street parking charges	(295,957)	(356,480)
Permit income	(24,164)	(29,164)
Penalty charge notices	(259,572)	(297,439)
Other income	(21,514)	(38,876)
Total	(601,207)	(721,958)

Direct costs of Civil Parking Enforcement	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
Enforcement	407,987	348,640
Admin., appeals, debt recovery	203,197	184,037
Infrastructure maintenance	24,803	6,577
Capital charges	0	0
Total	635,987	539,253

CCTV enforcement vehicle trial	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
SSP set up and operational costs	106,683	NA
Fuel	1,865	NA
Highway infrastructure	9,000	NA
Other expenditure	318	NA
Total	117,866	NA

Summary	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
Total parking income	(601,207)	(721,958)
Total direct costs of CPE	635,987	539,253
CCTV enforcement vehicle trial	117,866	N/A
Outturn	152,646	(182,705)

Note: The bracketed figures represent income. The final figure for 2013/14 is 152,646 as opposed to the printed version in the Annual Parking report 2013/14 which was 152,545.

The parking budget aims to at least break even each year, and in a year of standard expenditure, an income of over £550,000 should produce a surplus.

The use of any surplus income from Civil Parking Enforcement is restricted to transport-related issues like the operation of public passenger transport services, highway or traffic improvement projects, and certain types of environmental improvement.

Analysis and Issues 2014/15

2014/15 was a year of significant change for the Parking Services Team. Income overall increased by £120,751 compared to 2013/14 and direct costs reduced by £96,734. This on top of the saving from the use of the CCTV vehicle of £117,866 indicates massive improvements to the overall out-turn.

Temporary (agency) staff were employed to cover unforeseen staff absences in parking services in 2014/15, the same as 2013/14 including for long term sickness and maternity leave. New management has been in place since January 2015 and service efficiency has improved. .

CCTV Enforcement Vehicle Trial

A 12-month CCTV enforcement vehicle trial was undertaken from June 2013 for one year, to gauge its effectiveness.

Thurrock does not have many of the necessary parking restrictions compared to some other authorities operating mobile CCTV enforcement. This limited its usage outside of school times, and limited its use at schools for only 39 weeks of the year.

The number of PCNs issued by the vehicle did not cover the operational costs and put pressure on the budget. This led to the parking account being in deficit in 2013/14.

The decision was therefore taken to discontinue mobile enforcement. Since the discontinuation of the trial the team has been restructured, PCN's have increased and the Debt Recovery Team has had a higher success rate in collecting money owed to the Council.

Support for Businesses

Support was given to local businesses and shops experiencing difficult times in the current financial downturn through free weekend parking during December 2014 in all on and off-street pay-and-display parking places controlled by the Council, to encourage people to shop locally.

The lost revenue from this initiative was estimated to be in the region of £5,000 the same as the previous year.

Controlled Parking Zone & Residents' Parking

In 2013/14 a new permit parking area was introduced in part of the Flowers Estate in South Ockendon to reduce the impact of commuter parking in the locality of the station. There has been an improvement in parking in this area as well as revenue from PCNs produced.

Two new Residents Parking Areas have been introduced in Badgers Dene and Seabrooke Rise in Grays. This was to ensure that commuter parking was reduced

after various complaints from residents. An improvement is expected and initial feedback has been positive.

Penalty Charge Debt Recovery

The council took steps to increase its recovery rate for parking penalties in 2014/15, by registering more outstanding charges with the courts as debts and by appointing bailiffs to recover these debts, particularly in the cases of unpaid parking penalties issued to repeat offenders. The debt recovery process is being managed by the Council's debt management team and is being conducted in accordance with the fair debt policy.

The council's debt management team has also started working with partners throughout Europe to trace the keepers of foreign-registered vehicles. This enables those individuals who have received a PCN to be pursued for their outstanding parking penalties. Feedback from the Debt Recovery Team is positive, with some fines being recovered from foreign drivers and companies. However this process is still at an early stage.

Plans for Year Ahead

Parking Tariff Review

Parking charges in Thurrock are relatively low. Limited increases to tariffs for on and off street car parking areas were introduced in January 2015.

Lorry Parks

There will be the introduction of a new lorry park opening in Tilbury in November 2015. There is already a temporary park in West Thurrock until August 2015 and there is a resolution to expand and approve this as a permanent park in the near future. In addition to this, DP World are in early discussions with the Development Management Team at the Council to provide this type of facility in the vicinity of the port. This will see the need to increase the enforcement in Thurrock especially if as expected Highway England, (formerly Highways Agency) choose to close their laybys once the lorry park is established. The Council is in dialogue with Essex Police and the Port of Tilbury Police to monitor the situation and plan possible interventions. Reducing the impact of vehicle emissions in Thurrock is a high priority and therefore we are working to reduce on street lorry parking across the borough and encourage the use of these new lorry parks.

Freight Action Plan

The Thurrock Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) has ongoing work to develop an action plan in relation to HGV movements within the borough. The Group will link in with the Parking Team to look at ways to minimise the negative impact that freight movements have in the borough recognising that they are essential for local businesses.

Residents Parking Area

The Council may look at introducing a new parking permit area in Purfleet which will benefit residents and reduce commuter traffic. A full consultation is taking place in July 2015.

Cashless Parking

The Council will explore options for enabling users of some of its paid for parking areas to make cashless payments for their parking fees.

Staff Changes

The Parking team came under new management in January 2015. Management is working with the staff to introduce refresher training, new uniforms and updated equipment technology which will ease pressure on the Civil Enforcement Officers day to day duties. The team's efforts have been enhanced with support and encouragement and this has led to them generating new ideas and thoughts to improve the service.

School Pilot Scheme

A trial has begun whereby schools were offered the opportunity to be trained to enforce outside of their own establishments in order to not only assist the small number of Civil Enforcement Officers but also to educate the parents of the legality of where they can park. To date there has been limited take up. However, Pioneer School in Tilbury is expected to commence operation in September 2015. The trial will last for the Autumn Term until December 2015 when it will be reviewed.

Glossary

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs)

Formerly known under the Road Traffic Act 1991 as Parking Attendants, the Traffic Management Act 2004 re-classified those responsible for taking civil enforcement action in relation to civil parking and traffic control contraventions as Civil Enforcement Officers

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

Refers to the enforcement of parking controls under regulations set down in the Traffic Management Act 2004

Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)

The Notice served directly (as set down in the Traffic Management Act 2004) by Civil Enforcement Officers to motorists for allegedly contravening civil parking controls within a Civil Enforcement Area.

Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)/Permit Parking Area (PPA)

A zone or area where parking is controlled through the provision of permits and other on street controls in order to manage kerb space and ensure that residents are not unduly inconvenienced by parking behaviour

9 September 2015	ITEM: 14 01104412
Cabinet	
Transfer of Commissioning Responsibility for 0-5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to Local Authority, 1 October 2015	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Barbara Rice, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health and Councillor Bukky Okunade, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services	
Accountable Head of Service: N/A	
Accountable Director: Ian Wake, Director of Public Health and Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s services.	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

As part of the reforms detailed within the Health and Social Care Act 2012, commissioning responsibility for most public health functions transferred to local authorities in April 2013. Commissioning responsibility for the Healthy Child Programme age 5-19 was included within this, whilst commissioning of the Healthy Child Programme ages 0 – 5 was retained by NHS England to deliver the new service vision set out in the Health Visitor Implementation Plan by April 2015. The transfer of commissioning responsibility s for the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to local authorities will be from 1 October 2015.

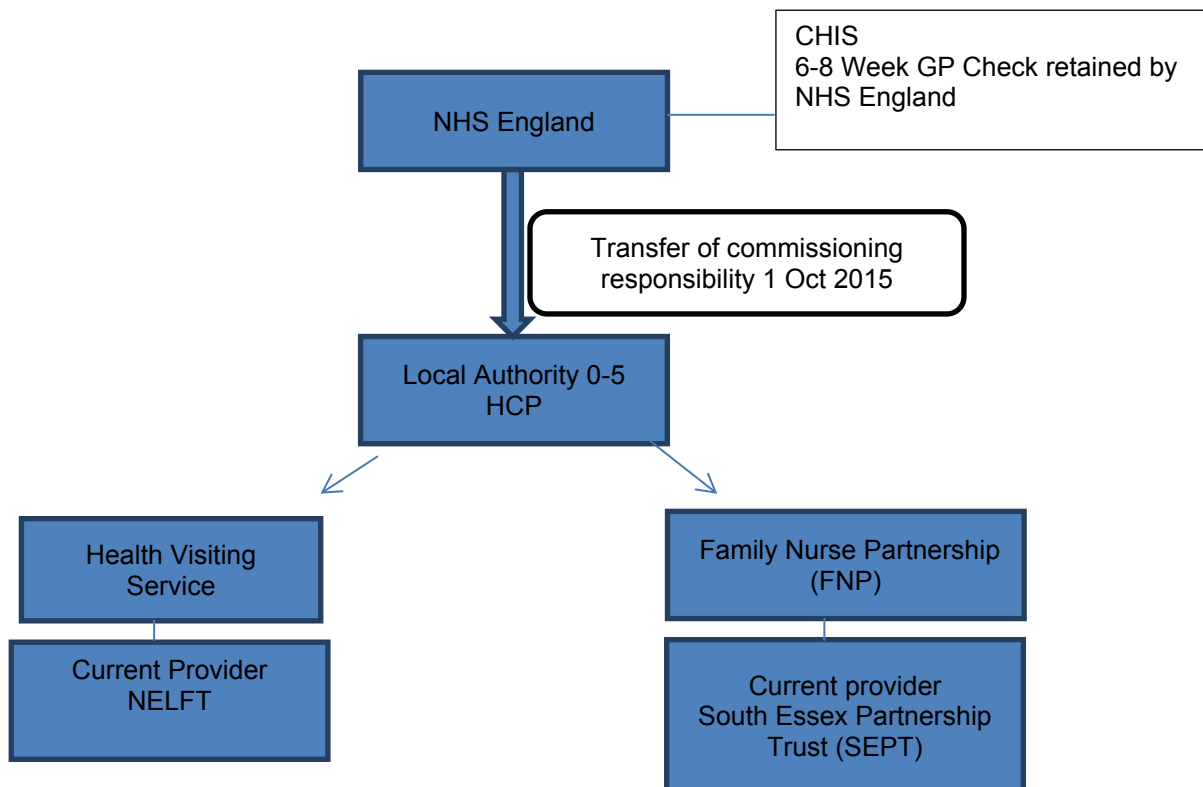
1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Cabinet approves the variation of the contract Thurrock CCG (clinical commissioning group) hold with NELFT (North East London Foundation Trust) for the provision of community services within Thurrock, including Public Health services, to include commissioning responsibility for the 0-5 HCP.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Healthy Child Programme (HCP) which was published in 2009 sets out the recommended framework of universal and targeted services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing.

- 2.2 The HCP aims to provide an opportunity to identify families in need of additional support and those children and young people who are at risk of poor health and wellbeing.
- 2.3 Local Authorities became responsible for commissioning the Healthy Child Programme 5 – 19 (School Nursing) from April 2013 with the transfer of public health under the Health and Social Care Act, 2012. Services have been funded through the ring-fenced public health grant allocation to the Council.
- 2.4 Responsibility for commissioning the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme, including Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership, will transfer to local authorities on 1 October 2015. This represents the final phase of the transfer of public health responsibilities from the NHS as set out in the Health and Social Care Act, 2012.
- 2.5 The transfer timescale corresponds with the completion of the Health Visitor Implementation Plan ‘A Call to Action’ which sets out a plan for families and health visitors within a local health visiting services which sets increased investment and numbers of health visitors.
- 2.6 The below diagram summarises the transfer of the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme;



3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) is currently contracted by NHS England to provide the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme. Thurrock Council will assume full commissioning responsibility on 1 October, 2015.
- 3.2 Current contracting arrangements for HCP 0-5 are between NELFT and NHS England, the contract end date is 31 March 2017. A contract variation will occur to the contract between the CCG and NELFT (to which Thurrock council are an associate) to allow 0-5 HCP to be commissioned by the council.
- 3.3 Funding has been allocated for the provision of the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme of £3,882,000 for 2015/2016 to Thurrock. The funding allocation from 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2016 is £1,956, 000.
- 3.4 The funding covers the following
- £3.7 million for the NELFT Contract value (0-5 Health Visiting)
 - £138,000 for the FNP contract
 - £ 30,000 provided for Commissioning resource
- 3.5 This will allow the local authority to deliver the full scope of NHS England existing commissioning obligation from 1 October 2015 for the population of Thurrock.
- 3.6 This funding will be ring-fenced and the service will be a mandated service until March 2017. **The mandated services will be reviewed on transfer from October-December 2015**

The services that will transfer to Thurrock Council are:

- 0-5 Healthy Child Programme - Health Visiting
- Family Nurse Partnership Programme

Responsibilities to remain with NHS England:

- Child Health Information Systems
- 6-8 week GP check (child health surveillance service)

- 3.7 The review will consider opportunities to link the whole 0 – 19 public health children’s services and the wider health and social care such as Early Offer of Help, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Health Visiting (MESCH).
- 3.8 The Health Visitor Implementation Plan has set out targets around the number of health visitors providers have to recruit to ensure full and safe delivery of the 0 – 5 children’s public health service.
- 3.9 NHS England (Essex Team) has been monitoring the increase in Health Visitors within South West Essex of which Thurrock is a part. As of March

2015, NELFT was expected to achieve recruitment of 117 Health Visitors as part of the trajectory.

- 3.10 The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme has been commissioned collaboratively in preparation for transfer with Essex as lead commissioner and a robust collaborative commissioning agreement between Southend, Essex and Thurrock Councils. The FNP contract term is January 2014 to January 2017.
- 3.11 Family Nurse Partnership is a home visiting programme for first time young mums (and dads), who are aged 19 and below. The family is regularly visited by a trained specialist nurse from early in pregnancy until the child is two years old.
- 3.12 Family Nurse Partnership programme is underpinned by an internationally recognised strong evidence base, which shows it can improve health, social and educational outcomes in the short, medium and long term while also providing cost benefit.
- 3.13 The 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme Transition work stream, which is a multi-disciplinary team, established to ensure that commissioning approach, transfer processes and integration are in line with Local Authority processes as well as ensure effective receipt of commissioning responsibilities and contracts from NHS England (Essex Team). It includes representation from the following;
 - Public Health
 - Legal
 - Corporate Finance
 - Procurement
 - Performance
 - Children’s Commissioning and Contracting
 - Communication
 - North East London Foundation Trust
- 3.14 A Project Initiation Document (PID) was developed to guide the activities of the work stream which was agreed and signed off by the Children and Young People’s Partnership Board. Through this the following key objectives have been agreed;
- 3.15 Following transfer a benchmarking group will be set up to guide and scrutinise the service review to link in areas within the council to ensure appropriate integration of 0 – 5 services. This group will report to the Children and Young People’s Partnership Board.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The recommendation to agree transfer of 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme to Local Authority achieves the plans set out by the government contained in the

Health and Care act 2012 and in line with the Healthy Lives, Healthy People, Our Strategy for Public Health in England, 2010.

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

5.1 Consultation has taken place with representatives of the following;

- NHS England – through the 0 – 5 HCP Transition Strategic Meetings for Greater Essex
- North East London Foundation Trust - through the 0 – 5 Transition Work stream
- Children and Young People’s DMT – a paper was previously presented to DMT in 2013
- Children’s Partnership Board –received an update paper October 2014, received and agreed the Project Initiation Document (PID) June 2015
- Directors Board received an update paper in October 2014.

5.2 There will be further ongoing consultation as required before and after transition.

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

6.1 Impact to the community should be minimal with a smooth transition and no disruption to service delivery.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Finance Manager – Children’s and Adult’s

The funding for the transfer of 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme is provided the Department of Health through its financial allocation to the Local Authority. This is to be used in order to meet the statutory requirements relating to the 0 – 5 HCP services which will be under the remit of Thurrock Council. Detail of this is provided in Para 3.2 and 3.3. This should ensure that statutory duties are met.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Angela Willis**
Major Contracts Solicitor

- I. The law applicable to this matter, including a discussion of the implications of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is referred to in the body of the report.
- II. The content of this report is consistent with the provisions of the Council's Constitution and Contract Procedure Rules.
- III. Legal Services is available to advise and assist with the contractual arrangements necessary on the part of the Council.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

The transfer of Public Health commissioning responsibilities for 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to the local authority represents a significant opportunity for local government to review opportunities for linking in with other services for children, young people and their families such as the 5 – 19 School Nursing service. Some of the most significant improvements in health and well-being and life expectancy came about because of initiatives led by local government, particularly in the area of public health.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the draft Health and Well-being Strategy highlight some of the significant health challenges facing Thurrock where there are wide variations in life expectancy and the quality of health outcomes. The PHG should be used to minimise these variations, challenge some of the inequalities in health outcomes that exist and work with Thurrock's communities to improve health outcomes.

Any future decommissioning proposals as a result of reduction in the Public Health Grant should be carefully considered. It is important that any diversity implications and community impact are fully assessed before they are finalised.

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):

- Health Visitor Implementation Plan; 2011 – 2015;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213110/Health-visitor-implementation-plan.pdf
- Healthy Child Programme;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/167998/Health_Child_Programme.pdf
- 0 – 5 Public Health Funding Allocations 2015 – 2016;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/420129/Final_allocations_doc_v0.15_FINAL.pdf
- FNP Information pack for local authorities
<http://fnp.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/files/FNP%20information%20pack%20-%20An%20overview.pdf>

9. Appendices to the report

- **Appendix 1** – List of Key abbreviations

Report Author:

Elozona Umeh

Public Health Manager

Adult, Health and Commissioning

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Appendix 1: Key Abbreviations

- **FNP** – Family Nurse Partnership. This is a home visiting service for teenage mothers.
- **HCP** – Healthy Child Programme. This is the main universal health service for improving the health and wellbeing of children, through: health and development reviews, health promotion, parenting support, screening and immunisation programmes.
- **SEPT** – South Essex Partnership Trust. SEPT is our local mental health provider delivering mental health services across the whole of South Essex.
- **NELFT** – North East London Foundation Trust. NELFT runs the majority of our local community services such as District Nursing, therapy services and most services based at the Thurrock hospital.
- **PID** – Project Initiation Document. The PID collates the plan of approach for the transition of 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme. It stipulates the objective and milestones to be achieved within a particular project.
- **CCGs** – Clinical Commissioning Groups: CCGs will become formally established from April 1st 2013 when they take over the bulk of the commissioning responsibilities from Primary Care Trusts. They will be our key commissioning partner. Thurrock CCG will be based in the Civic Offices.

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9 September 2015	ITEM: 15 01104413
Cabinet	
Housing Estate Regeneration and Local Growth Fund Update	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Portfolio Holder for Housing	
Accountable Head of Service: Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing Investment and Development and Corporate Commercial Services	
Accountable Director: Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

Reports to Cabinet in December 2014 and June 2015 updated Members on the progress that had been made on the housing estate regeneration programme, obtained approval for the vision and objectives for the programme, and the next steps required to prepare for and facilitate the procurement of a regeneration partner or partners to assist in the programme's delivery.

This report provides an update of progress and seeks the necessary approvals to progress the programme's delivery.

Recommendations

- 1.1 Cabinet to note the progress of the Housing Development Programme being funded by Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) through the programmes under the Local Growth Fund and approve the feasibility studies for these potential developments.**
- 1.2 Cabinet to endorse the exploration of potential additional Growth Fund Bids with HCA to support the housing estate regeneration plans within the borough.**
- 1.3 Cabinet to approve the consideration being given to the use of sites identified within the Council's emerging Grays Town Centre master plan to facilitate the development of new, high quality housing and the wider housing regeneration proposals for the Seabrooke Rise Estate.**

- 1.4 Cabinet to approve, subject to consultation with residents, the development of the extended Tops Club site in South Grays and re-location of community play area to support the on-going regeneration of the Seabrooke Rise estate.**
- 1.5 Cabinet to note the progress in relation to the potential joint development of the Riverside/Rippleside site on Argent Street, South Grays and approve for the inclusion of the Council-owned part of the site within the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration plans if a joint development with the adjacent owners is not deliverable.**
- 1.6 Cabinet to note the progress that has been achieved on the Housing Estate Regeneration programme and the publication of the Prior Information Notice (PIN) in relation to the proposed housing regeneration opportunity.**
- 1.7 Cabinet to note the HRA's acquisition of the former Prince of Wales public house in South Ockendon as a strategically important development site to facilitate the wider estate regeneration plans for the Flowers estate.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Since 2013, Cabinet have approved key objectives and programmes designed to improve the quality homes within the borough and in June 2015, approved the vision and strategic objectives associated with a broader programme of regeneration on our key housing estates. Estates where the cost of meeting the Transforming Homes standards are very high, will not provide comparable benefits in terms of regeneration and on estates that were built to very low-density standards with under used and poor quality garage and open space provision.
- 2.2 Adopting a wider regeneration approach, the Council will be able to provide better quality housing for existing residents and better meet future housing needs of the borough by providing much needed additional housing within the footprint of the existing housing estates and adjacent opportunity sites.
- 2.3 The Housing Department was successful in securing additional borrowing and HCA grant for a number of potential developments across the borough. Further feasibility, coupled with further discussions with planning and further exploration on the scope and phasing of any potential estate regeneration programme has required us to re-evaluate individual developments and make amendments to our programme.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The housing regeneration and development team constantly appraises the opportunities and options available to the Council to deliver high quality homes across the borough to meet current and future housing needs. This process is on-going and the recommendations outlined for approval within this

report have been fully appraised to deliver the number of new homes as agreed by DCLG and HCA under the Local Growth Fund programmes and to appropriately facilitate the wider estate regeneration proposals of the Housing Department.

- 3.2 As outlined above, we were successful in securing additional borrowing and HCA grant for a number of potential developments across the borough. Further feasibility, coupled with further discussions with planning and further exploration on the scope and phasing of any potential estate regeneration programme has required us to re-evaluate individual developments and make amendments to our programme. The proposed changes are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Changes to Proposed Developments

Development	Current Position	Proposed	Commentary
Tops Club, Grays	16 units	40 units	Re-provide play area in consultation with residents and extend site to deliver more homes to facilitate Seabrooke Rise wider regeneration plans.
Yacht Club, Grays	30 units	-	This site is now being considered as a part of the Council's wider South Grays regeneration and it is therefore proposed to remove it from being specifically identified within the Housing development programme
Kings Walk, Grays	30 units	-	Small site unable to achieve proposed unit numbers. Include within Seabrooke Rise wider regeneration proposals and explore non HRA housing and commercial use of this site.
Vehicle Testing Centre, Purfleet	79 units	79 units	Large development site able to achieve mixed tenure housing provision and capable of facilitating the wider regeneration of the Garrison estate. No changes proposed.
Argent Street	38 units	20 units	Further feasibility work confirms a reduction in units likely on this site due to size. Joint development with Riverside/Rippleside Metal Works a possibility.
Sub-Total	193	139	Net reduction of 54 units so further sites to be explored to deliver 54 units required.

- 3.3 Given the changes outlined in Table 1 above, further HRA sites have been sought to deliver 54 units required for our current levels of DCLG and HCA funding. Maps of the proposed new sites are attached at Appendix A. All sites are conveniently located and compliment well the wider estate regeneration proposals that are currently being worked up for the Council’s key housing estates. Cabinet is recommended to approve the sites identified in Table 2 for further feasibility studies. If approved, the Housing Department will explore and recommend the changes with DCLG and HCA for approval.

Table 2: Additional HRA Sites Recommended for Feasibility

Site	Estimated Provision	Commentary
Orchard Road/Tamarisk Road, South Ockendon	12 units	Good site to facilitate wider estate regeneration of Flowers estate.
Defoe Parade	12 units	Under-utilised HRA garage site adjacent to community retail provision.
Martin Road, Aveley	20 units	Good sized, HRA site within existing residential area.
Former Prince of Wales Public House, South Ockendon	10 units	Strategically important, road-facing site adjacent on Flowers estate in South Ockendon. Acquisition of site by HRA.
Sub-Total	54 units	Required number of units to accommodate changes to existing developments.

- 3.4 The Housing Department is seeking approval from Cabinet to proceed with the development of the extended Tops Club site in Grays, including development on the play area adjacent to the Tops Club. It is recognised that this play area was established by the local community, and as such detailed consultation will need to take place about the location and content of a re provided play area. Reprovision of the play area will allow for a larger development of c.40 units that provides an attractive and landmark corner development for this site of high quality, new homes, in keeping with the character and new homes being provided to the north of the Seabrooke Rise estate. The Tops Club is a strategically important site for the wider regeneration proposals, as it is proposed that new homes on this site be ring fenced to affected residents in the first instance subject to compliance with lettings policy, if decant status is awarded as part of Seabrooke rise regeneration proposals.
- 3.5 The former Prince of Wales public house in South Ockendon is a prominent, road-facing and generous development site adjacent to HRA-owned land on

the Flowers estate. This site came to market and was under offer with planning approval for a flatted development. Given its location and emerging, broader master plan and regeneration proposals for the Flowers estate, the acquisition of this development site by the Council was evaluated to be strategically important to the broader regeneration of the Flowers estate. Following appraisal of the residual land value associated with the site, confirmation as to the affordability to the HRA and the qualitative aspects of this site, an Urgent Decision was sought to approve the acquisition of this site by the HRA. The freehold interest in the site was acquired on 20 August 2015.

- 3.6 Discussions with Riverside/Rippleside Metal Works are on-going in relation to a potential joint development of the metal works site together with the Council-owned site adjacent to Argent Street. In the event that a joint proposal is unlikely to be deliverable, or too delayed, then Cabinet are recommended to approve the inclusion of the Council-owned land within the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration plans so that this site does get developed out with high quality, new housing. Cabinet are requested to note the current position in relation to this site and approve the potential inclusion of the Council-owned site within the Seabrooke Rise regeneration plans.
- 3.7 The other key points of note in relation to the current Housing Estate Regeneration and Local Growth programme are as follows:
- The Seabrooke Rise “Echoes” development is progressing well and will deliver 53 new, high quality homes for local people. We are currently undertaking further feasibility and scoping on the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration proposals and are likely to utilise this development for any proposed decant that is recommended for the Seabrooke Rise regeneration plans.
 - The Derry Avenue HAPPI development in South Ockendon, remains on schedule to deliver 25 new homes for residents aged 55 years and above, at the end of November 2015.
 - Claudian Way - Architects, Bailey Garner, have been appointed to work on developing proposals in consultation with residents and ward members for this site in Chadwell St Mary. Initial discussions have taken place with Ward members and Chadwell forum to agree an outline timetable of consultation with residents. These initial discussions have informed the need to develop a set of proposals that deliver a development that is sensitive to the current use of this space but also provides much needed additional high quality new homes.
 - Bracelet Close and Calcutta Road are progressing in line with previously reported programme and plans.
- 3.8 Our housing estate regeneration proposals are progressing well and we are working with our advisers to better establish the proposed scope and phases of any regeneration plans to ensure they deliver the required mix and numbers of

new housing that meets local need, is affordable to the Council and can be delivered by a regeneration partner. We are also continuing with our community consultation so that local residents can help shape and inform the proposals prior to formally commencing the procurement of a housing regeneration partner. The Housing department is scheduled to present the results of our community consultation activities and make specific recommendations to Cabinet in relation to the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration proposals in October 2015.

- 3.9 Specialist advisers have been appointed and are appraising the options available and type of partner we are seeking, prior to formally commencing the procurement of a partner. As previously agreed, a Prior Information Notice (PIN) notifying the market of the potential opportunity was published in August. This also conforms to the timetable that was outlined to those interested organisations that participated in our soft market testing exercise in April and May 2015.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Quality housing provision and choice in areas that people live are central to us achieving our vision for Thurrock. It is necessary for us to find alternative and suitable HRA sites where we are able to develop high quality, new housing that meets are current and future housing needs within the borough. We also need to ensure that we are delivering the number of new homes, within the approved and agreed timeframes with DCLG and HCA to properly utilise the additional funding and grant levels that have been agreed and continue to be monitored.
- 4.2 Development and delivery of a programme of housing development that also best facilitates the wider regeneration and investment proposals across the borough is also critically important.

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

- 5.1 Our programme of consultation with all relevant stakeholders associated with all proposed housing developments and regeneration proposals are on-going. Local support and influence is critically important for all housing development and regeneration. A further report will be available in October 2015 outlining the results of and recommendations for Seabrooke Rise estate.

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

- 6.1 Achieving regeneration for the Council's housing stock is a key priority and part of the Council's overall growth targets and corporate objectives, helping

to deliver improved health and wellbeing, build pride in our communities and their environment and promote skills development and job creation.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Head of Corporate Finance

- 7.1.1 The medium to long term financial implications of any project undertaken for housing development or estate regeneration will be, and are considered as, part of both the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the HRA business plan which evaluates both the financial viability and affordability of the schemes incorporating both Capital and Revenue implications with regards to funding and additional revenues generated.
- 7.1.2 We can confirm that the recommendations outlined above are within the affordability parameters of the HRA Business Plan. At this stage the proposals in this report do not involve any net additional expenditure beyond existing approvals. Work is ongoing to ensure the viability of the estate regeneration proposals as they are developed within the HRA Business Plan and a further report on the financial implications and the HRA Business Plan will be made to Cabinet in November 2015, including the impact of the government's budget announcements on 8 July 2015
- 7.1.3 Further reports to Members will be presented on the affordability position of the housing development and regeneration plans on conclusion of the feasibility and affordability studies outlined above. We will also seek approval from Cabinet on the proposed delivery mechanisms and any changes to the required HRA expenditure and business plan as a result of these programmes.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Evonne Obasuyi**
Senior Lawyer

- 7.2.1 The report provides an update on the Council's estate regeneration programme. Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985 provides local authorities power to acquire land for the provision of housing accommodation. Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 provides local authorities with disposal powers. The Council's land acquisition and disposal rules will also need to be complied with in the delivery of the programme.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

Regeneration of the Council's housing estates will have positive impact on the availability of high quality affordable housing in Thurrock, including for vulnerable groups and will be developed through a process of consultation and engagement with all residents and the local community. Regeneration objectives include not only high quality housing but also holistic objectives around health and wellbeing, improving education and job creation and improving economic prosperity. Contractors and developer partners will be required to have relevant policies on equal opportunities, be able to demonstrate commitment to equality and diversity and to supporting local labour initiatives that achieve additional social value.

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

8. Background papers used in preparing the report

8.1 Previous reports to Cabinet on housing development and regeneration.

9. Appendices to the report

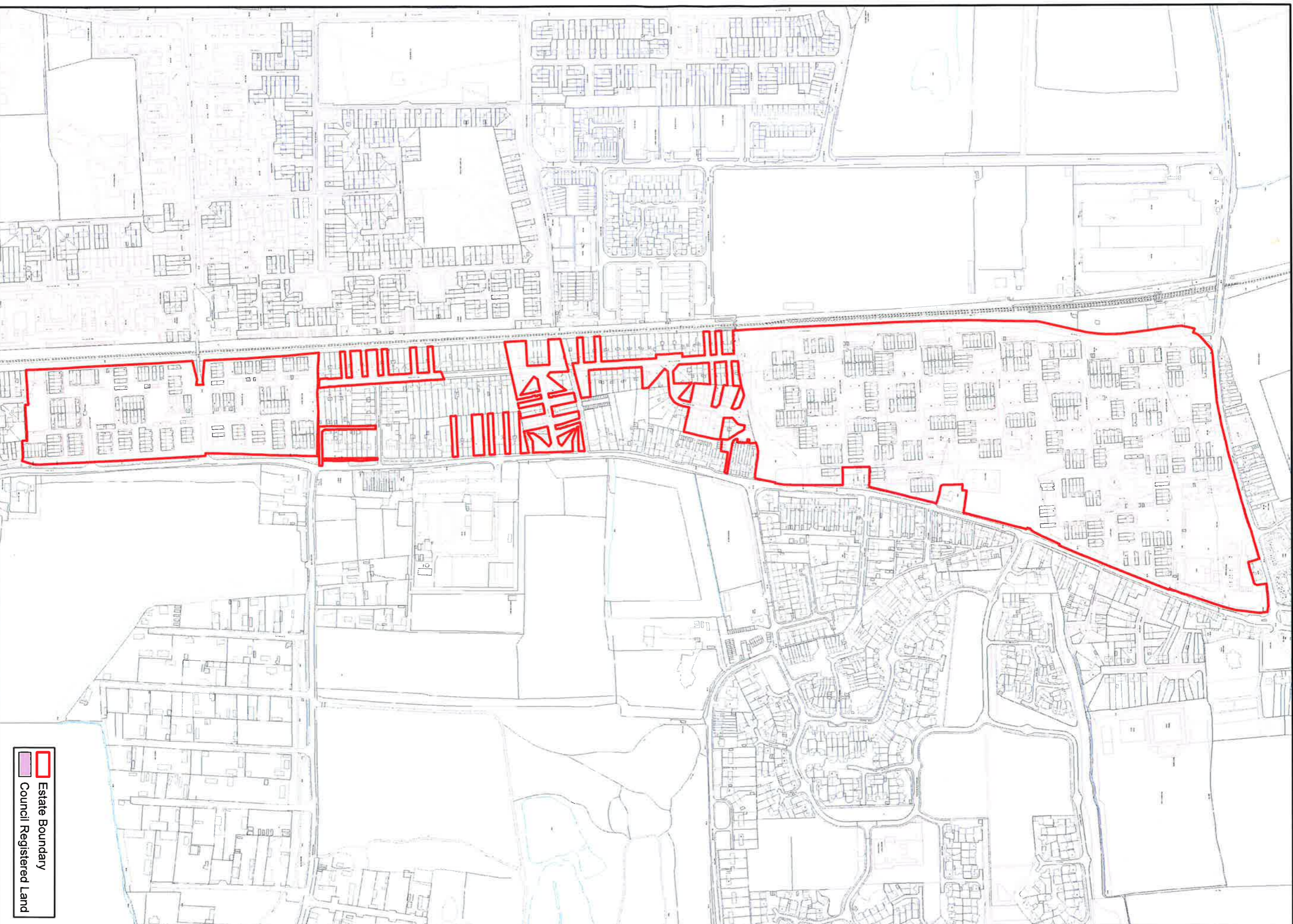
Appendix A: Maps/Locations of new HRA sites identified for housing development:

- Appendix 1: Former Prince of Wales Public House, South Ockendon
- Appendix 2: Orchard Road/Tamarisk Road, South Ockendon
- Appendix 3: Defoe Parade, Chadwell St Mary
- Appendix 4: Martin Road, Aveley

Report Author:

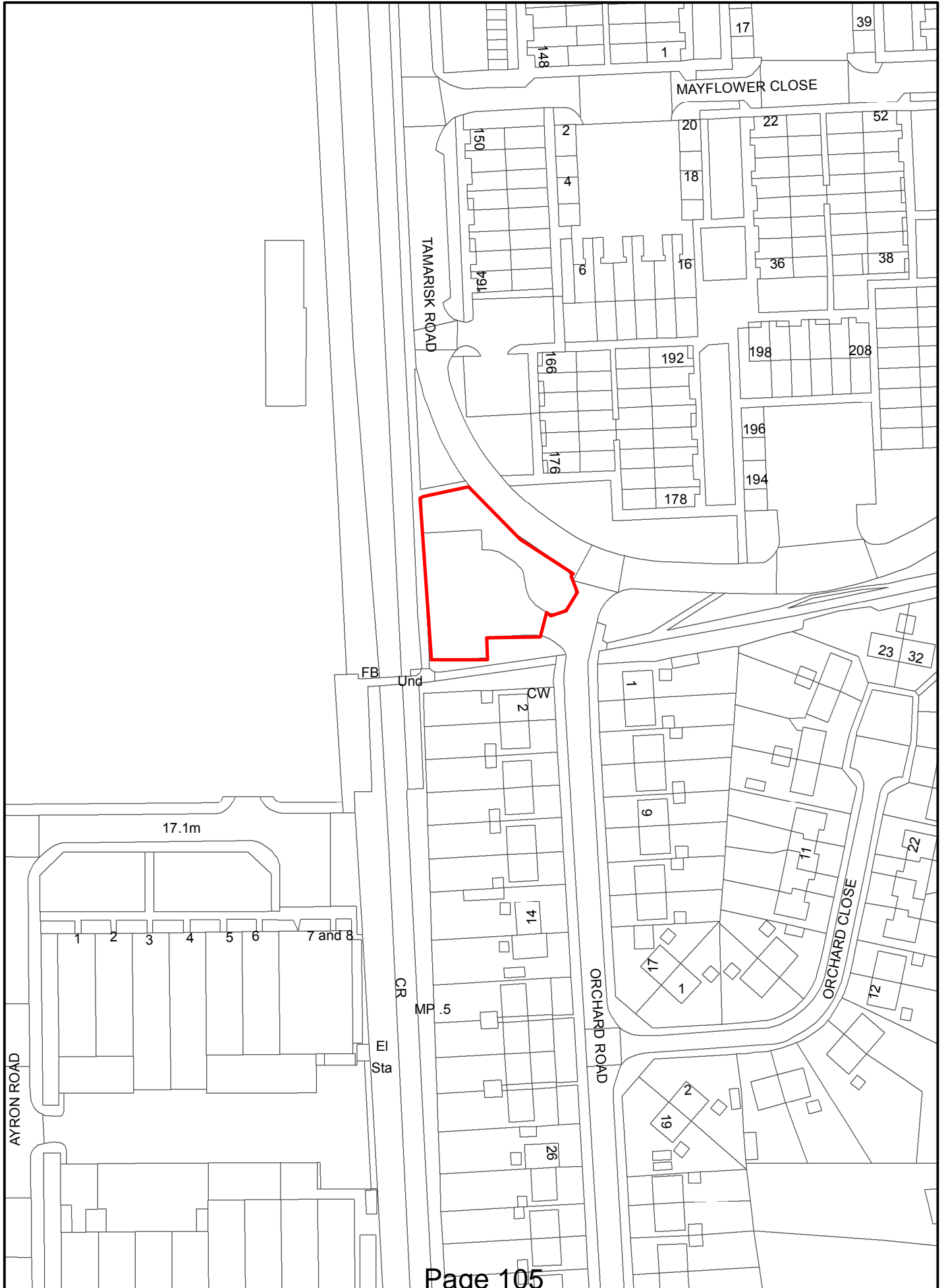
Kathryn Adedeji
Head of Housing Investment and Development
Housing

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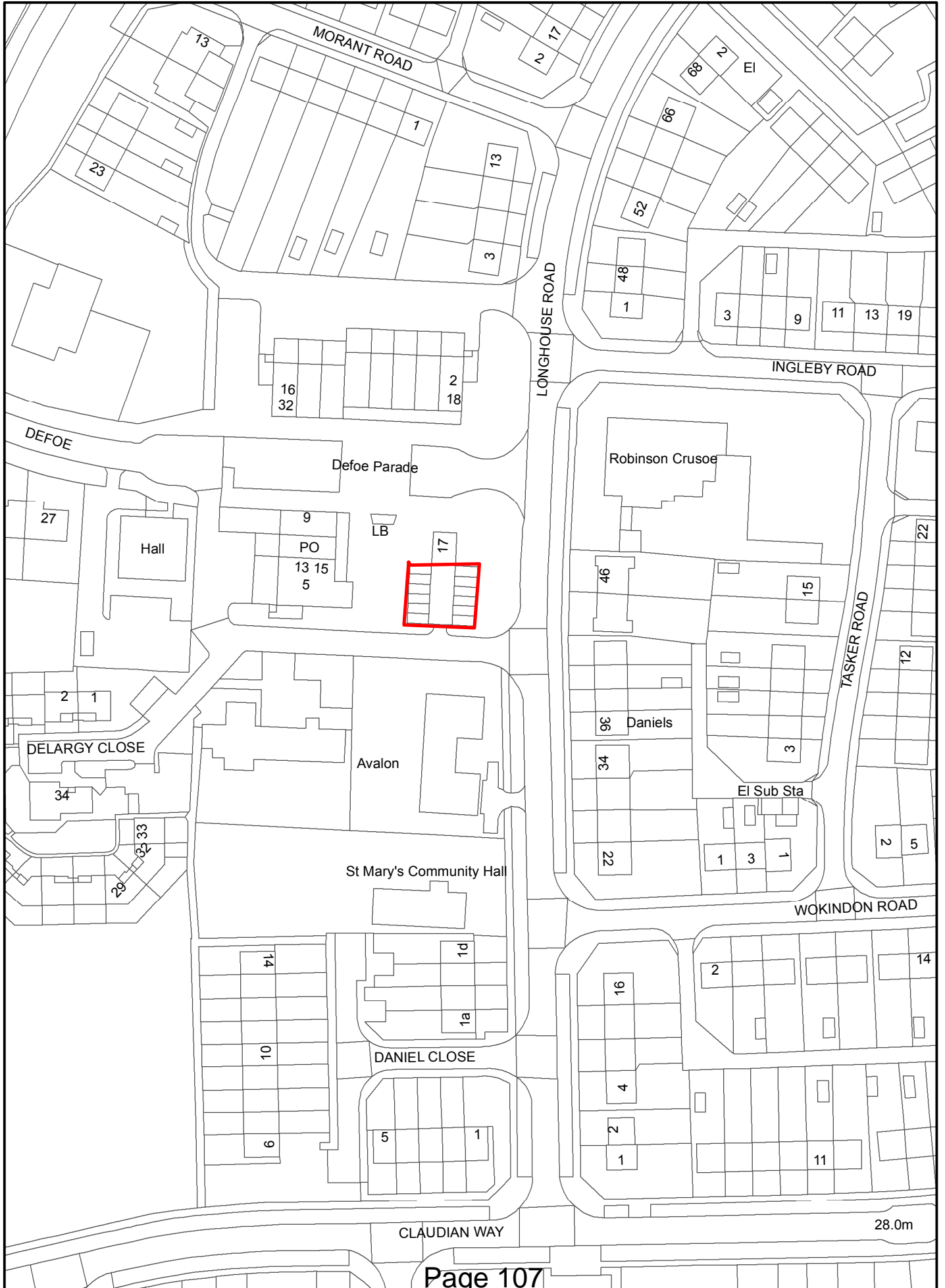


 Estate Boundary
 Council Registered Land

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9 September 2015	ITEM: 16 01104414
Cabinet	
Community Delivery of Environmental Services in Parks and Open Spaces	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Councillor Gerard Rice, Portfolio Holder for Environment	
Accountable Head of Service: Mike Heath, Interim Head of Environment	
Accountable Director: David Bull, Interim Chief Executive	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

As a result of significant reductions in the money received from Government and other pressures on services the Council will have to make £27m of savings over the three years between 2016/17-2018/19.

The Council can no longer afford to operate all of the services that it has historically provided and it has to focus its attention on delivering its statutory functions. There are a number of activities and services that the Council has delivered but can no longer fully fund that may be able to be delivered by the third sector. This report explores the options for community delivery of services and functions and highlights examples of opportunities to empower groups to take ownership and responsibility for local facilities.

Discussions with the voluntary sector took place in October 2014 in light of budget savings options which highlighted opportunities that should be considered for transfer to the third sector. Outsourcing in this way can provide opportunities to save valued services whilst realising benefits for local people who can play an active role in their community.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **That officers be authorised to enter into detailed negotiations with groups who have expressed an interest in developing community based services and report back as appropriate.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Council is under severe pressure to deliver a wide range of services with an ever reducing budget. In many instances services and functions which have been delivered in the past but which are not statutory local authority obligations have been squeezed and in some cases withdrawn completely. In front facing operations such as many of those provided within the Environment Services Portfolio there has been a public reaction against the reduced service provision, but the Council still has to face up to the fact that it is not in a position to provide the breadth of services to the same high quality that it has been able to in the past.
- 2.2 The reducing budgets have led to a withdrawal of a number of functions and a move towards a minimum level of maintenance. Many of the 'extras' funded by the authority such as hanging baskets and bedding, park attendants, education rangers and premium services in higher use locations have been withdrawn in order that the department can operate within the limited budget available to it.
- 2.3 Whilst there has been an increase in the number of complaints through the media (print and social) an increasing number of individuals and community organisations have approached the council to discuss how they can make a difference at a local level and they have started to undertake work in their own communities to improve their local environment. These organisations frequently have access to significant funding opportunities that are not available to the Council but which have been set up to encourage localism in service delivery and community involvement. The fact that these funding opportunities exist will continue to encourage local groups and activists to apply to take responsibility for assets within the community and indeed legislation now permits them to apply to take over many areas of Council responsibility (e.g. Community Right to Challenge, under the Localism Act 2011). It is therefore important that the Council should have an agreed approach to such requests made outside of the more formal Community Rights processing order that they can be handled in a supportive rather than adversarial manner recognising the benefits that such an approach can provide.
- 2.4 At a lower level the department has been working with some of the residents in Stanford since last year to assist them in providing Christmas lighting and this summer to help them provide hanging baskets and flower troughs throughout the shopping area. They have also planted some bedding in the main thoroughfares of the town as well as organising litter picks and other minor environmental improvement works. We are able to assist this type of project through our normal operations and indeed are supporting a wide range of community litter clearances and tidy ups across the borough.
- 2.5 The Council has also already been approached by two separate organisations who wish to take responsibility for functions. The first is the Lightship Café who has expressed an interest in running the café at Grays Beach in the initial

instance with the hope that they can expand their operations over time to include the running of the Grays Beach Park as a whole. The second request has come from the Friends of Hardie Park (Stanford le Hope) who wish to take over the running of the park and to expand the range of opportunities and facilities available to park users.

- 2.6 Each of these requests has a range of implications for the Council in terms of asset ownership and transfer, consideration of discretionary rate relief, any support that may be available from the revenue account as a result of reduced maintenance liabilities etc. In many instances community organisations may be seeking long term leases to enable them to access the funding opportunities which may not be otherwise available to them. The requirement to provide long term leases will need to be carefully considered to ensure that both the Council's and the Community Interest Group's position is protected over the long term and takes account of the range of risks that may apply.
- 2.7 In considering the arrangements for future service delivery of small elements of a much larger entity it is essential to note that this cannot simply mean a transfer of budget to a third party organisation. This takes no account of the impact of the remaining elements of the service that will remain with the Council and the risk of corporate overheads being spread across other services. Only when there is a clear and quantifiable saving to the Council through a transfer of responsibility should a sharing of saving benefit be considered. A key aim of the transfer of services must be to ensure that the remaining operations delivering across the borough are not compromised or disadvantaged. Any arrangement for the transfer of responsibility must take account of the potential risk of the failure of the community delivery mechanism and cannot be allowed to leave the Council in the position of having to fund on-going commitments without the necessary budget provision.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 If the Council were to choose to forego the opportunity to review the possibility of allowing third sector organisations to operate services and functions that it has previously provided then it is likely that as a result of financial pressures that these facilities will simply be closed or the quality of delivery will reduce even further. Looking at the opportunities for the involvement of the third sector may provide additional funding streams that the Council cannot access and ensure that non-statutory services continue to be provided with the Council acting as a facilitator rather than a direct provider.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council has to consider new and different opportunities to facilitate services for its residents and traditional models of delivery are becoming more difficult to sustain. In developing arrangements with voluntary and community organisations financial support that would not be available to the Council can be leveraged in and deliver benefits to local communities which are beyond the Council's current and future capability.

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

5.1 Not Applicable

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

6.1 Following a successful bid to Locality in May 2015, the council has now secured resource from the national Community Ownership and Management of Assets (COMA) programme to complete a strategic review of opportunities for community asset transfer (CAT) across the borough. A small partnership with the voluntary sector has been formed to move the programme forward taking into account the local context for CAT.

COMA priorities include achieving a better understanding of:

- the local appetite and opportunities for CAT,
- capacity building needs within the voluntary and community sector to take on the ownership of assets,
- implications arising for the council, and,
- the principles of good governance to support future decision-making.

6.2 One of the outcomes from the programme in Thurrock will be the development of a clear CAT policy that sets out the council's commitments to fairness, transparency and consistency through the decision-making process. The draft policy will be presented to the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation at a later date.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The required levels of savings needed for the Council to deliver a balanced budget are included within the Councils medium term financial strategy and the shaping the Council Cabinet reports.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Daniel Toohey**
Principal Solicitor - Contracts & Procurement

1. The Local Government Act 1972 contains provisions for entertainment in Parks and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 confers general powers to provide recreational facilities. Whilst the

provision of parks and open spaces is not a statutory function the Local Government Act 1999 provides local authorities with powers to promote the economic social and environmental well being of their communities. The provision of good quality parks and open spaces can make a substantial contribution to all aspects of well being.

2. The Localism Act 2011 contains provisions that allow community groups or members of the public the right to challenge for the provision of certain Local Authority services or the right to bid for certain community assets once listed. For this reason many Local Authorities take a proactive approach to engaging with the community to find mutually beneficial solutions in relation to these matters.
3. The Council will need to bear in mind certain restrictions on the right of the Council to dispose of certain interests or to create a lease re parks/open spaces. "Open Space" is defined in section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as land that is laid out as a public garden or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground. In disposing of such land, the Council will be obliged to comply with section 123 (2A) of The Local Government Act 1972, which requires that it must give notice of its intention to dispose of land for two consecutive weeks in a news-paper circulating in the area in which the land is situated; and that it must consider any objections to the proposed disposal which may be made, albeit there is no obligation to act on objections.
4. Legal Services is available to advise and assist on the potential transfer and transactional issues.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

Equality of opportunity is a key principle of many voluntary sector organisations who often pursue improved cohesion and diversity through their objectives and practice, involving communities in decisions and governance. Recent government policy such as the Localism Act encourages the devolution of services to communities in recognition of the benefits that community involvement can bring to local areas. As noted at 4.1, the council is seeking to develop a Community Asset Transfer Policy and this will provide guidance on ensuring that each transfer opportunity is informed by an equality impact assessment.

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

Not applicable.

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

- None

9. Appendices to the report

- None

Report Author:

Mike Heath

Interim Head of Environment

Environment