

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Council

To the Members of Thurrock Council

The next meeting of the Council will be held at **7.00 pm** on **28 November 2018**

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

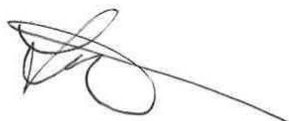
Membership of the Council:

Barbara Rice (Mayor)
Terry Piccolo (Deputy Mayor)

Qaisar Abbas
Tim Aker
Abbie Akinbohun
John Allen
Alex Anderson
James Baker
Clare Baldwin
Russell Cherry
Colin Churchman
Gary Collins
Mark Coxshall
Jack Duffin
Tony Fish
Mike Fletcher
Leslie Gamester
Oliver Gerrish

Robert Gledhill
Garry Hague
James Halden
Graham Hamilton
Shane Hebb
Victoria Holloway
Deborah Huelin
Andrew Jefferies
Barry Johnson
Tom Kelly
Cathy Kent
John Kent
Martin Kerin
Angela Lawrence
Steve Liddiard
Susan Little

Sue MacPherson
Ben Maney
Bukky Okunade
Jane Potheary
David Potter
Joycelyn Redsell
Gerard Rice
Elizabeth Rigby
Sue Sammons
Sue Shinnick
Peter Smith
Luke Spillman
Pauline Tolson
Aaron Watkins
Lynn Worrall



Lyn Carpenter
Chief Executive

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1	Apologies for absence	
2	Minutes	9 - 40
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on 31 October 2018.	
3	Items of Urgent Business	
	To receive additional items that the Mayor 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	
	To receive any declaration of interests from Members.	
5	Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council	
6	Questions from Members of the Public	41 - 42
	In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
7	Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors	
	In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2(Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
8	Petitions Update Report	43 - 44
9	Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels	
	The Council are asked to agree any changes to the appointments made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels, as requested by Group Leaders.	

- 10 Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways 45 - 64**
- 11 Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities 65 - 80**
- 12 Questions from Members 81 - 84**

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

- 13 Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies**
- 14 Minutes of Committees**

Name of Committee	Date
Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 September 2018
Extraordinary Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17 October 2018
Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 September 2018
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force	15 October 2018

- 15 Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year 85 - 86**
- 16 Motion submitted by Councillor J Kent 87 - 88**

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

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

Future Dates of Council:

11 December 2018 (Extraordinary), 30 January 2019, 27 February 2019 (Budget), 20 March 2019 (Provisional)

Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

Recording of meetings

This meeting will be recorded with the audio recording being published on the Council's website. The meeting will also be filmed and live streamed. Members of the public not wishing to be filmed the Mayor will give them the opportunity to leave the chamber. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

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.

PROCEDURE FOR MOTIONS

No speech may exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Mayor [Rule 19.8], except for the proposer of any motion who shall have 5 minutes to move that motion (except on a motion to amend where the 3 minute time shall apply) [Rule 19.8(a)]			
All Motions will follow Section A and then either Section B or C			
A.	A1 Motion is moved A2 Mover speaks A3 Seconded A4 Secunder speaks or reserves right to speak	[Rule 19.2] [Rule 19.8(a) (5 minutes)] [Rule 19.2] [Rule 19.3] (3 minutes)	
Then the procedure will move to either B or C below:			
B.		C.	
IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)		If NOT amended i.e. original motion	
B1	The mover of the amendment shall speak (3 mins).	C1	Debate.
B2	The seconder of the amendment shall speak unless he or she has reserved their speech (3 mins).	C2	If the seconder of the motion has reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.
B3	THEN debate on <u>the subject</u>.	C3	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.
B4	If the seconder of the substantive motion and the amendment reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.	C4	Vote on motion.
B5	The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply.		
B6	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.		
B7	Vote on amendment.		
B8	A vote shall be taken on the substantive motion, as amended if appropriate, without further debate.		

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

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100 Years in Memoriam

Remembering Thurrock's Fallen of World War One

Each month during the centenary period of the First World War, Thurrock Council will pay tribute to the 834 local residents known to have lost their lives due to causes associated with the war and their service. At each meeting of Council until November 2018, the 100th anniversary of signing of the Armistice with Germany, a Roll of Honour will be published with the agenda detailing the casualties from that month 100 years ago to commemorate the sacrifice made by Thurrock residents.

November 1918

DATE	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	WARD
03-Nov	STOKES	ERNEST WILLIAM	27	W/TH
04-Nov	KNOWLES	LEONARD	29	G
04-Nov	WRIGHT	ARTHUR	30	W/TH
05-Nov	WHITE	ARTHUR	35	G
05-Nov	BERESFORD	GEORGE HENRY	31	MUCK
06-Nov	HODGES	WILLIAM JAMES GEORGE	21	STIFF
13-Nov	GORE	RICHARD	30	G & L/TH
14-Nov	TAPSELL	THOMAS EDWARD	35	G
16-Nov	DORNER	WILLIAM	29	G
16-Nov	WHITWELL	ARTHUR CHARLES	29	G
16-Nov	LAKE	BERTRAM	27	S.OCK
17-Nov	BOSTON	WILLIAM DAVID	24	G
17-Nov	JACKSON	FREDERICK	27	ORS
18-Nov	WILLIS	ALFRED	18	HOH & S.OCK
20-Nov	WHITING	WILLIAM	24	W/TH
22-Nov	BILES	SIDNEY	26	PUR
23-Nov	MONK	EDWARD CHARLES	21	G
27-Nov	CURRIE	ROBERT	36	MUCK
27-Nov	SPICER	CHARLES	25	S.OCK

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 31 October 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Barbara Rice (Mayor), Terry Piccolo (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, Abbie Akinbohun, John Allen, Alex Anderson, James Baker, Clare Baldwin, Russell Cherry, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Mike Fletcher, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, David Potter, Joycelyn Redsell, Gerard Rice, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Shinnick, Peter Smith, Luke Spillman, Pauline Tolson, Aaron Watkins and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Tim Aker, Tony Fish, Garry Hague, Tom Kelly, Jane Potheary and Sue Sammons

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sharon Bayliss, Director of Commercial Services
Steve Cox, Corporate Director Place
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
David Lawson, Assistant Director of Law & Governance
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

The Mayor invited Reverend Canon Darren Barlow to lead those present in prayer.

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.

50. Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 25 July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

Councillor Redsell commented on Page 11 of the Agenda the words should have read "when the Mayor's seat was passed to Diane Revell from Councillor Redsell."

51. Items of Urgent Business

No items of urgent business were received.

52. Declaration of Interests

No declaration of interests were received

53. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council

The Mayor invited all those present to reflect on and remember Thurrock's fallen of World War One.

The Mayor announced it had been a great pleasure and heartening to see all the World War One commemorations taking place throughout the borough for the 100 year anniversary of the end of the First World War and what a splendid job residents had done. The Mayor thanked Thurrock Council for the large poppies being displayed on lampposts throughout the borough. On the 11 November, Thurrock church bells will ring out in unison with the whole nation in honour of those that lost their lives during the First World War.

The Mayor invited Councillor Redsell to update Members on the recent trip made by the Royal British Legion Standard Bearers to Ypres in Belgium.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Gledhill to make any announcements he wished to make as Leader of the Council.

The Leader announced that Highways England was currently running its consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing proposals. The proposed crossing was now a 3 lane motorway which would tear through the borough and had no obvious benefits for local businesses or residents and had failed Highways England's own scheme objective which was to support sustainable local development and regional economic growth in the medium to long term. Highways England had removed the Tilbury link road, instead, putting a motorway rest area in East Tilbury. That lorries coming in from the north on the Lower Thames Crossing would not be able to travel west on the A13 to get to the Port of Tilbury so they would have to go on to the A13 junction and double back. This was going to do nothing but add more pressure on the Manorway roundabout. The Leader encouraged everyone that lived and worked in the borough to get involved in the consultation by attending one of the public information events and complete and return the consultation form by Thursday 20 December. These can be found online or paper versions can be found in the Grays Library or the Tilbury Hub.

The Leader referenced the east facing slip road on the A13 and that it was great to see the Government had put aside £50 million to make that happen. This would hugely improve the exiting at Lakeside.

The Leader referred to the recent media coverage on whistleblowing allegations and confirmed that the allegations had been made under the whistleblowing policy and procedure with the matter now being independently reviewed in line with process and was being done via a specialist barrister with expertise in children's social care. The review was still ongoing and the findings would be released once known. In addition, Ofsted, the Government's responsible agent for child protection issues have been kept informed of the review. The Leader stated that in regards to media reports of hush money being paid to an individual, this had been properly processed and signed off as a compensation payment to a complaint in line with finance procedure rules and agreed by the relevant officers and political leadership at the time. The Leader stated that all whistleblowing allegations would be robustly investigated.

The Leader then referred Members to the C17 gang injunction and dispersal order and asked for all Members to join him in commending the excellent work which had taken place with Essex Police and Thurrock Council in securing the injunction against this criminal gang. The C17 injunction had now stopped a tenth person from going to certain parts of the borough, from associating with certain gang members, from wearing hoodies and from riding bikes in certain areas. This injunction tackled the issue of gang violence. The Leader urged the community to get behind this and report if they see any of the ten gang members breaching the injunction. Essex Police had also secured a dispersal order covering much of Chafford Hundred, Lakeside and parts of West Thurrock and Grays. The order will help them to prevent any Halloween related anti-social behaviour that residents experienced last year in and around the marked areas. The order came into force at 4.00pm on the 31 October and will last until 4.00pm on the 1 November. This would give our local Police Officers the power to remove people that are causing anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Leader mentioned a series of events which would be taking place in the coming weeks for the 100 year anniversary of the end of the First World War and the Council ensured that celebrations took place at every single war memorial this year. 834 poppies, one for each of the brave servicemen who lost their lives in the war will be displayed in Thurrock. All the war memorials had undergone specialist cleaning and maintenance. Special commemorative planters had been installed at war memorials. Silent soldier silhouettes will be on display at war memorials and cemeteries. The Council had also helped the communities help restore the beacons at Coalhouse Fort and Purfleet for the lighting, something that's a big national event. The Leader was pleased all the effort in preparations made this anniversary an important occasion that everyone would get behind and said a well done to the people of North Stifford for all their hard work in making North Stifford come alive for this event. The Leader stated that the Council will be remembering those that paid the ultimate price for our freedom in wars after the First World War.

The Leader provided a Clean It, Cut It, Fill It update:

- 1784 potholes had been filled in our roads with 99% of those done within target time.
- 798ft of grass had been cut.
- Street Cleaning teams had collected 1641 tonnes of litter.
- 908 fly-tips had been cleared;
- 2127 penalty notices had been issued for offences such as littering, dropping cigarette butts and various anti-social behaviours such as spitting; and
- 52 £400 fixed penalty notices issued for people fly-tipping in the borough.

The Leader spoke of the budget announced this week with an extra £650 million for social care, £45 million for disabled facilities grant and £84 million for children's services over the next 5 years.

A £28.8 billion national road fund would support roads and infrastructure with local Authorities receiving an extra £420 million to deal with potholes and other traffic maintenance issues. £150 million would be available to tackle traffic hotspots such as making improvement to traffic junctions and £500 million for housing infrastructure funding, something that Thurrock had a history of successfully bidding for.

And finally, the Leader congratulated Councillor Tom Kelly and his wife on the birth of their new baby. Councillor Kelly had sent his apologies and pointed out that this was the first Full Council he had missed in a significant amount of time.

54. Questions from Members of the Public

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed under the relevant meeting date at <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock> and are attached at Appendix A at these minutes.

55. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, the requisite notice had been given by three Members who wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Councillor Smith presented a petition on the behalf of Aveley residents calling for the pedestrian crossings in Ship Lane and High Street to be upgraded to Pelican crossings with an additional Pelican added to Stifford Road, creating a three way controlled scheme.

Councillor Allen presented a petition calling for Thurrock Council to review its Permit Parking Area in Hobart Road which had left inadequate parking for all residents of Freemantle House, Brisbane House and Tasmania House. This had left residents of the high rise blocks with just 50 spaces which were short of the number required for the occupants.

Councillor C Kent presented a petition in respect of the parking restrictions in Lodge Lane to allow residents to be able to park on their crossovers.

56. Petitions Update Report

Members received a report on the status of those petitions handed in at Council Meetings and Council Offices.

57. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels

The Mayor enquired whether Group Leaders wished for any changes to be made to the appointments previous made to Committees and Outside Bodies, statutory and other panels.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, informed the Chamber that he wished to make the following changes:

For Councillor Rigby to be appointed as a member of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillor Hague to be appointed as a member of the Standard and Audit Committee.

For Councillor Kelly to be appointed as a member of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillors Jefferies and Halden to be appointed as substitute members of the General Services Committee.

For Councillor Watkins to be removed from the Coalhouse Fort Project and to open this appointment to other groups.

Councillor J Kent, Leader of the Labour Group, informed the Chamber that he wished to make the following changes:

For Councillor Akinhobun to be appointed as a member of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillor Okunade to be appointed as Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Spillman, Leader of the Thurrock Independent Group, informed the Chamber he had no further changes to make.

58. Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Johnson, Portfolio Holder for Housing, presented his first Portfolio Holder report and outlined some of the services:

- The department would continue working with the homeless in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and providing temporary accommodation for people. To continue to secure homelessness accommodation in Thurrock and continue with the work on purpose builds.
- The Council dealt with 5 homelessness cases daily.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) new build programme will deliver new Council homes for rent.
- The 88 unit scheme consisting of a mix of bungalows, houses and low rise flats will be built with the tenders for Claudia Way already commenced.
- The Thurrock Regeneration Limited's aim would be to develop 1000 units over a five-year period.
- The allocation of properties in line with the Allocations Policy would be addressed for ease of understanding with a report being presented at overview and scrutiny for Cabinet decision.
- The review and management of garages in the borough had been requested by the Portfolio Holder.
- The Portfolio Holder stated that the fire in George Tilbury House in June 2018 had resulted in no casualties with minimum damage caused.

Councillor G Rice thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report and welcomed the news of the new builds and affordable homes. The Portfolio Holder stated that everything was being done to provide these 1000 homes over a five-year period.

Councillor J Kent welcomed the report and welcomed back Councillor Johnson into the Chamber. Councillor J Kent referenced the 5 homelessness cases being dealt with daily and the availability of temporary accommodation and asked for reassurance that Thurrock homeless residents would be found accommodation in Thurrock and not in other areas. Councillor Johnson stated it was not always possible to house homeless residents in Thurrock and everything was being done to ensure that the best place which was safe and suitable was found.

Councillor Spillman thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report but asked whether the portfolio holder was happy that the recommendation to install sprinklers in highways blocks had been avoided. Councillor Johnson stated the recommendation had not been ignored but had relied on the professional advice given by the experts.

Councillor Cherry questioned whether the Allocation Policy removed universal and eligibility rights of those residents who become homeless. Councillor Johnson stated that the Allocation Policy was Thurrock tailored and was fit for purpose.

Councillor Duffin stated that suitable accommodation in the borough for homelessness residents should be found first before moving them outside of the borough.

59. Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Adult Social Care

Councillor Little, Portfolio Holder for Children and Adult Social Care, presented her Portfolio Holder report and stated that since her last report the following successful developments had taken place:

- The Shared Lives scheme had 5 care arrangements in place and a further 3 were in the pipeline.
- There were now 52 Micro Enterprises established.
- The Micro Enterprises will be meeting in Committee Rooms 2 and 3 on the 7 November 2018 from 9.30am to 3.30pm and encouraged Members to come and visit.
- The Chichester Close for people with learning disabilities was now complete.
- The Independent Alliance had been reviewed and was now free for all service users.
- The new residential care home in Whiteacre/Dilkes Wood site in South Ockendon had been agreed.
- The ground works had commenced on the 6 units for the new scheme launched to support young people with autism.
- The number of children in care and the number of children on protected plans had been reduced.
- The Ofsted report had stated performance had improved.
- The adoption service had been brought back in house.

Councillor Okunade thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report and the highlighted achievements but questioned the process taken to ensure that there would be no risk to those children on protection plans as part of these reductions. Councillor Little stated that every child was safe and this was not a cost cutting exercise as children were more important than money. Councillor Little assured Members that the process had been seen by Ofsted and would be a positive move forward and that work would continue with early intervention at schools and working with families.

Councillor Holloway thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report and stated that workforce was key to ensuring that the best were recruited into Thurrock to guarantee that excellent adult social services be provided. Councillor Little stated a positive recruitment drive had taken place that reached out to communities and work was underway on how to promote this profession.

Councillor J Kent referred the Portfolio Holder to the fragile domiciliary care services and questioned why Thurrock only paid £16.25 instead of the £18.01 care allowance. Councillor Little stated that the care allowance had been uplifted by the Administration following this allowance being set at £13.50 by Labour. Councillor Little stated that the domiciliary care packages had been accepted and used by other providers.

Councillor Spillman thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report and asked whether the portfolio holder knew of any child that had come to any serious

harm under the care of the Thurrock Children's Services department. Councillor Little said there were none.

Councillor Cherry asked the Portfolio Holder whether she was concerned that the Thurrock Children's service believed they were above democratic scrutiny. Councillor Little stated the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee look at what was being undertaken and that perhaps the Thurrock Independents should have nominated a chair to that committee when the opportunity arose earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Worrall questioned what was being done to ensure young people leaving care would have access to accommodation of their own rather than shared. Councillor Worrall also asked what assurances are given to those university care leavers that they can return to the borough following graduation. Councillor Little stated that this was a question for Councillor Halden.

Councillor Little thanked Officers, Directors and Foster Carers in Thurrock and stated that all Members were Corporate Parents who should be aware and support all the events taking place.

Councillor Little referred Members to the "Give a Gift" tree at Lakeside where Members were encouraged to offer their time and encouraged to take a star.

60. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 3 questions to the Leader had been received and 6 questions to Cabinet Members. Those not heard would either receive a written response or have the option to withdraw and resubmit.

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be found at Appendix A to these minutes.

At 8.36pm the Mayor called time on this time.

Councillor Anderson withdrew his question and would resubmit.

Councillor Rigby withdrew her question and would resubmit.

Councillor Okunade withdrew her question and would resubmit.

Councillor J Kent withdrew his question.

61. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

Councillor G Rice attended an Anglian (Eastern) Regional Flood Defence Committee where it had been announced that floodgates across Grays and Purfleet had been completed, with discussions taking place on the new Thames Barrier in Purfleet.

Councillor Redsell attended a Police, Fire and Crime Panel where it had been announced the committee was in its early stages but was working well. It was reported that Essex now had the largest number of police officers since 2014, rising from 360 to 427 officers with a further 150 officers being recruited. It was recognised that the emergency 101 number needed to be better and work was ongoing. The visibility and strengthening the number of the police into the wider community would continue. Councillor Redsell also stated that the number of fire incidents had decreased.

62. Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of Committees as set out in the Agenda were received.

63. Update on motions resolved at Council

Members received an information report updating the progress in respect of Motions received at Council.

64. Motion 1 submitted by Councillor Halden

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Halden and seconded by Councillor Huelin. The Motion read as follows:

The Chamber congratulates our schools for the summer exam results and resolves to continue to work closely with them to deliver the new school places we need.

Councillor Halden introduced the Motion by stating that Thurrock was serving children at every stage of life with 100% of the Early Years setting being rated by Ofsted. Those primary school aged children, at the end of key stage 2, the disadvantage attainment gap had reduced again which was a three year downward trend from 22% down to 16% which was the gap from children on free school meals compared to children not on free school meals. For those secondary school children, 89% of Thurrock children go to a school that was good or outstanding. For Thurrock A Level students, 100% of students in Thurrock schools achieved at least one A Level pass this year. Councillor Halden stated there were too many brilliant achievements to name them all but he praised Grays Convent, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and St Cleres, who all achieved significantly higher results.

Councillor Halden concluded that this was a remarkable picture and the Council should congratulate schools, teachers, governors, parents and of course, the students sitting these exams.

A proposed amendment to the Motion had been submitted by Councillor Duffin and seconded by Councillor Spillman. The amended Motion read as follows:

The Chamber congratulates our schools for the summer exam results and the Council should continue to work closely with them to deliver the new school

places we need. The Institute for Fiscal Studies reports that since 2010 we have seen an 8% cut per pupil and Council calls on the Government to reverse this worrying trend in their review of the national funding formula and properly support the young people in our borough.

Councillor Duffin introduced his amendment and stated that he was in agreement with the Motion and congratulated those on a fantastic job. The amendment had been brought to make the motion more balanced and to actively fight back the 8% cut per pupil since 2010 and for the national funding formula to be readdressed.

Councillor Spillman referred to the Budget announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and put into the context the monies for “little extras” for schools.

Councillor Coxshall stated that this was a record spend and by far the largest spend nationally made by the Government.

Councillor Hebb thanked teachers, parents and pupils for the hard work undertaken and stated that schools were better equipped today and that some Members should perhaps visit these schools to see what actually was happening.

Councillor J Kent stated the Motion was positive and showed the fantastic work being undertaken by schools and the pupil engagement with a marked increase in the last decade. Councillor J Kent stated that investments were going into schools as more children were going to school. With schools being let down by the national Budget for “little extras” where schools need more teachers and more equipment.

Councillor Gledhill stated that this should have been a wonderful motion but instead shocking political statements were being made. Teachers and pupils should be applauded for the hard work undertaken.

Councillor Redsell stated that teachers should be applauded for the work that they do with the children in the borough.

Councillor Huelin stated that it was a shame that some members had used this opportunity to turn this motion round into a political argument. This was the time to congratulate all those that had taken exams and achieved good results. The results proved this was a job very well done.

Councillor Duffin stated that the Administration gave great praise for the good work but happy for the Government to cut teacher’s wages.

Councillor Halden stated that funding levels had gone up due to resources and facilities being better. That it was remarkable that exam results were up with more children attending a good school or nursery. Councillor Halden stated some Members should not attack the national formula without fully knowing and understanding the formula.

The Mayor called a vote on the Amended Motion.

Upon being put to the vote, 25 Members voted in favour of the Amendment with 18 Members voted against, whereupon the Mayor declared the Amendment carried.

The Mayor called a vote on the Substantive Motion.

Upon being put to the vote, 25 Members voted in favour of the Substantive Motion with 18 Members abstaining their vote, whereupon the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

65. Motion 2 submitted by Councillor Gledhill

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Gledhill and seconded by Councillor Smith. The Motion read as follows:

We call on the elected members of Thurrock Council to support any judicial review, or other legal action, that may be possible against Highways England proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing.

Councillor Gledhill presented his motion stating the Council was unanimously against the proposed Lower Thames Crossing with the scheme failing to bring any obvious benefits to Thurrock residents, with Highways England delaying the process and misleading residents and businesses. Councillor Gledhill stated that every effort will be made by the Council to leave no stone unturned and to get the best for the borough. Councillor Gledhill encouraged members to support this motion so that the judicial review can commence with the evidence gathering process and be ready to challenge with the support of Councillors, Essex Councils and Thurrock Business Board.

Councillor Smith stated his support for the Motion that it was now time for the Council to move forward with the judicial review and present the evidence. That Highways England had failed to respond to requests made by the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force which had delayed the opportunity for the Council to challenge. Councillor Smith encouraged all to get involved in the consultation.

Councillor J Kent stated his support to the Motion and his opposition to the Lower Thames Crossing and that there was a need for a crossing but at the right place. The plans offered would deliver no benefits for local businesses or residents but increase congestion on the roads. Councillor J Kent supported the judicial review but consideration had to be taken into account if this option failed. Every resident had a reason to reject this plan and should be encouraged to respond to the consultation and be given the information and evidence required to do so.

Councillor G Rice stated his support for the motion and called on the Government to review and look again at the plans.

Councillor Little stated her support for the motion with residents having the threat of a Lower Thames Crossing over the last 10 years. There appeared to be no logical to the plans with the consultation teams out of their depth advising residents incorrectly of road designs. Councillor Little encouraged all Members and residents to join the “Lower Thames Crossing Action Group”.

Councillor Huelin stated that the proposed Lower Thames Crossing would affect everyone in Thurrock and should engage with the consultation process.

Councillor Redsell stated her support for the motion and it was good that all 49 Councillors were working together. Councillor Redsell stated that the Council were not being informed sufficiently and the consultations were not working.

Councillor Spillman stated his support for this motion and noted his initial concerns over how the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force was set up and what evidence was presented at that time. Councillor Spillman stated that for the right evidence to be presented this time the Council would have the full backing from the Thurrock Independent Members.

Councillor Gledhill summed up by encouraging all residents, businesses and workers to get involved in the consultation process. Councillor Gledhill thanked Members for the comments and to take the motion forward.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a clear majority in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

At 9.30pm the Mayor stated that it was the close of the meeting and that Members with Motions still to be heard could either speak on the Motion for no more than three minutes before the Motion will be put to the vote without debate or they may withdraw the Motion and resubmit for the next available meeting.

Councillor Tolson left the Chamber at 9.30pm.

66. Motion 3 submitted by Councillor Spillman

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Spillman. The Motion read as follows:

Full Council asks for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee under its cross cutting remit on overall performance and monitoring and steering the overview and scrutiny function to look into:

- the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny processes at Thurrock Council*
- the effectiveness of Motions agreed at the Full Council.*

Councillor Spillman stated the Council had been working dysfunctionally as a democratic institution with poor reports being presented, recommendations being ignored and motions being lost in the process. This had resulted in a chair resigning from an overview and scrutiny committee. Councillor Spillman stated that the Council lacked in business and should be more of a decision making body and urged Members to support the Motion.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a clear majority in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

67. Motion 4 submitted by Councillor J Kent

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor J Kent. The Motion read as follows:

Thurrock Council notes that since decriminalisation of parking in 2005 residents of Lodge Lane have been able to park on their crossovers - as they had been able to for decades before. The decision to enforce against residents parking in this way has caused significant anger and concern against those affected. Council calls on cabinet to revisit this decision and find a way of allowing residents to park in the way they have for many, many years without any problem.

Councillor J Kent stated that the decision made by the Council to change the rules of how residents of Lodge Lane could park on their crossovers lacked common sense and that further options should be explored on how best to deal with this now and in the future.

Councillor J Kent stated that a Petition had been already been presented this evening and that voting for the Motion would be the right result for residents and requested a requisition vote.

The Mayor called a requisition vote on the Motion.

A requisition vote took place, the result of which was:

For: Councillors Abbas, Akinbohun, Allen, Baker, Baldwin, Cherry, Duffin, Fletcher, Gamester, Gerrish, Hamilton, Holloway, C Kent, J Kent, Kerin, Lawrence, Liddiard, Okunade, Potter, B Rice, G Rice, Shinnick, Smith, Spillman and Worrall (25)

Against: Councillors Anderson, Churchman, Collins, Coxshall, Gledhill, Halden, Hebb, Huelin, Jefferies, Johnson, Little, MacPherson, Maney, Piccolo, Redsell, Rigby and Watkins (17)

Abstain: (0)

Whereupon the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

The meeting finished at 9.39 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 31 October 2018

Item 6 – Questions from Members of the Public.

There were 2 questions from members of the public.

1. From Mr Atkins to Councillor Halden

Could the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health tell me how many children are currently waiting for a school place via the SEN department please?

Mayor:

Councillor Halden.

Councillor Halden:

Thank you Madam Mayor, thank you Mr Atkins.

As of the start of this year, there were 1331 of the Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) held by the Council. When I checked last week, out of the 1331, there are 5 children who have plans but do not currently have a school place. That's the equivalent of about 0.5%. Out of these five individuals, three of these children are currently receiving home tuition and there are consultations with all three to make arrangements with a special school for a placement. The fourth child was previously home educated, however, this has been deemed unsuitable and there is a consultation in place with a mainstream school to seek a placement. And finally, the fifth child, who moved into Thurrock at the end of April 2018, there is ongoing work to ensure the EHCP reflects input of all professionals in the decision making process. So out of the five of almost 1400, it's a combination of errors where we still have to do that little bit of extra work to go the final mile to get a child a place. And also, to develop a balance to the wishes of the parents in terms of what support they may wish to have in the home setting.

Mayor:

Mr Atkins, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Mr Atkins:

With parents having to stay at home to look after their children because the SEN department can't allocate them a school place, some are falling behind their rent and other bills due to leaving work to look after their children. As a Portfolio Holder, could you look into these cases as a matter of urgency please?

Mayor:

Councillor Halden.

Councillor Halden:

Thank you Madam Mayor. Certainly, any parent who writes to me, I'm always happy to look into their case with my Officers. It gives me the opportunity to give a brief update in terms of what we're doing with our SEN department.

Over the last 2 and a half years, we've worked very hard to strengthen the SEN departments for all children with special educational needs and disabilities. One of the challenges that we've got in Thurrock is despite how talented and hardworking our team is, we've got two Outstanding rated special needs school that attracts a huge amount of parents here who believe that by moving to Thurrock, they'll get access to one of these schools.

The result is, an over demand for a lack of supply. So, we do not have a surplus of these places. However, quite a few of these parents do move here believing that we do. We've done a huge amount to try and address the level of demand we're experiencing. We've expanded the size of the SEND team, we've hosted a Peer review and an inclusion conference to look at how we can work more efficiently. And of course, we're investing £20 million to build a brand new special needs school.

However, we need to be aware of the fact, Council can make mistakes and we don't always move in the most efficient or always the quickest manner. We need to understand what the criticism is from some parents and how we can address it. There are issues in the system, parents do expect us to act and it isn't always good enough and I get that.

To this end, I'm announcing a series of engagement events will take place over the next few months as we review our wider performance of how we process, formulate and action SEND plans. Obviously, we're going to talk to schools as part of this engagement process as we do through regular SEND consultations but what's vital for me is that we hear the voices of parents, who on the vast majority of occasions are saved by the machine but on a few rare occasions where the machine lets them down. That's why I will be hosting a series of events to parents to come forward and give their honest thoughts and impressions what it's like to work with Thurrock Council and the wider system. No filters, no Communications officers, just myself, other Senior Cabinet Members and our most Senior Officers.

Face to face with the parents, frank, honest and open. I'm very lucky that we have the Parents Carers Association helping us to organise the events. There will be 3 events across the Borough, different locations, different types of buildings and at different times designed to allow as many people as possible to come forward. It can't be just about listening, we then need to act. One thing that we're blessed with in Thurrock is a very strong relationship with our schools. That's why I've been working very hard over the last few weeks to solicit the support of the post-16 SEND lead of Palmer's College, the Chief Executive of the Treetops Special Needs Trust and the Head of East Tilbury, that is a SEND expert for every age group in receipt of full time education, that's an amazing resource for a panel who will sit down with us and go through some of the complaints we're facing.

We're a listening council, an active council. It will never be job done with SEND because of how complex it is and because of how much demand there is in the system. Services can always be better, I'm always clear about that and we want to work with our parents, work our schools to create that more efficient system.

2. From Mr Perrin to Councillor Collins

The Council recently submitted two complaints to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), about the Editor of a Local Newspaper. Was there any financial cost to the Public, if yes, how much?

Mayor:

Councillor Collins.

Councillor Collins:

Thank you Mr Perrin for your question.

There are no financial costs involved in submitting complaints to the Independent Press Standards Organisation known as IPSO. It is important to note that the complaints submitted by the Council to IPSO were related to the content of stories published, not complaints about the Editor.

Mayor:

Mr Perrin, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Mr Perrin:

Yes Madam Mayor.

Councillor Collins, I am pleased that there was no cost incurred. However, I am concerned that it appears that the Council is at war with a local press. Councillor Collins, were you and your Cabinet colleagues consulted before the Council decided to submit a complaint to the Independent Press Standards Organisation? Both of which were dismissed. And did the Cabinet agree with that decision? With the benefit of hindsight, would you all agree with me that rather than trying to out-trump President Trump, Council Officers could in future be more circumspect before complaining about the Press? The Press are not nor should they be the Council's propagandist.

Mayor:

Councillor Collins, you wish to respond?

Councillor Collins:

I should point out to you, that as Councillors, we're given strategic guidance but operational running of these departments is the matter of the Officers. And as we've previously stated, the Council continues to engage with all members of the Press and this position's not changed. The issue relates to a decision taken to, under the Council's agreed Unreasonable Behaviour procedure which is in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour by individuals. We have nothing to do – this has nothing to do with freedom of speech, freedom of expression is a fundamental right under British law and international human rights law.

Mayor:

Thank you very much and thank you Mr Perrin.

Item 14 – Questions from Members

QUESTION TIME

Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There were 3 questions to the Leader and 6 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

1. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Gledhill

Crime in Thurrock is on the rise. Can the Leader give us the year on year increase in sexual offences, robbery and crimes against the person?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Kent for your question.

Some of this were provided to the Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 4th October 2018. This showed that between 2016 – 17 and 17 – 18, reported incidences of sexual offences increased by 72; robbery by 61 reported offences and violence against the person up by 674 offences. It also showed reported burglaries down; criminal damage down; racial and religious aggravated offences down. The following information is provided for 18 – 19 so far, is Essex police's provisional data and is for the 6 months from April 18 to September 18 and is comparable to the same period in 2017.

So far in that comparison period, there has been no change compared to the previous year for sexual offences, 159 offences for the 6 month period, whereas robbery of a person property – sorry, personal property has decreased by 3.2%.

Before I go onto the next one, there has been a change in National Crime Recording Standards in 2018. For example, stalking and harassment are now recorded as separate offences; even if one were a more substantive offence was disclosed at the same time. So now, all offences on these occasions are recorded, not just the most serious. This was following Home Office guidance to all forces and is particular prevalence to domestic violence situations. Along with the rest of Essex, Thurrock has seen an increase in the number of reported harassment offences which are also included in the now violence against the person stats. So, crime against the person is now recorded as

violence against the person and an additional 712 incidents in the first 6 months have been recorded. But as per my explanation, the police are not comparing like for like. This increase is in line with the national trend and along with Essex. A representative comparison will be made available in 12 months' point once those changes have been embedded.

But equally worth of note, there have been an 18.6% reduction in burglary, equating to 250 less victims in April, as well as a reduction in theft from a vehicle, theft from pedal cycles, shopping and other thefts.

Mayor:

Councillor John Kent, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Kent:

Please Madam Mayor. I mean, it is clear that crime is on the rise if we just look at the example of possession of weapons up by 45% last year alone. We know that Essex Police have lost 600 officers since 2010, they've lost 300 PCOs since 2010 and in Thurrock, we have lost 3 police stations front desks. We know there was nothing at all in the budget this week for general policing. Will the Leader agree that it's time that we launched as a Council, a concerted campaign to make a strong case to government to give us the resources we need across Essex to keep our streets safe?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Kent for your quite fantastic question.

Just need to clarify though, since last week on speaking to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the number of police officers in Essex has now risen above 3000 which is the first time I believe since 2016. Which is worthy of note.

It's been very clear that keeping open a front desk in a police station doesn't actually solve crimes or prevent crimes. What it does do is take money away from front line policing. So I do support the Police and Fire, Crime Commissioner in what he's done so far.

But equally, I support exactly what you're saying there Councillor Kent. It is right that we lobby, not just as Thurrock, but right across Essex and I will take this to my fellow Essex leaders when we next meet. It was also worth remembering that in the budget, the Chancellor did say that the police funding announcement was really December, will also include the Home Secretary

saying there will be a review of police spending power. But, I do agree with you and it's a good suggestion and will be taking it forward.

Mayor:

Councillor John Kent, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question? Thank you very much.

2. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Gledhill

Will the Leader of the Council reaffirm his opposition to the proposed new Lower Thames Crossing and set out how he has made our case to colleagues on Opportunity South Essex and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Kent.

As said in my statement earlier, I, this Council remain opposed to any new crossing in Thurrock. Following the recent start of consultation on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing, I already made clear my disgust and the unacceptable lack of engagement and information from Highways England. Despite requests from the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force, meetings with myself along with other Group Leaders and meetings with Officers, they have failed to supply sufficient information in good time to allow us to properly prepare and provide guidance to residents or fully inform our other partners.

However, it's not just about process. I committed to providing the necessary funding to proceed to apply for leave of judicial review which hopefully, will be all back later on. And we will continue to scrutinise the actions of Highways England, to continue to obtain legal opinion and continue to stand ready to take legal action.

I've made it clear our stance at meetings, have not just overstate, said it, but also meetings of Essex Leaders, ASLA and indeed, the Chair of London Councils and at the Thames Estuary Commission. I've also written to businesses in Thurrock and formal letters to members of ASLA, OFC and SELEP will be sent later this week, outlining that we remain opposed to the proposed crossing and hopefully, the acceptance this evening that we will go forward for a JR.

This has all led to Thurrock Business Board changing their stance on the crossing and they now stand opposed to the proposals and some Leaders of other South Essex Councils, will also be making clear their objections.

As we further understand the detail of the scheme, Highways England have changed, changed and changed yet again. I will continue to make the case wherever necessary with the updated information as we go forward.

Mayor:

Councillor Kent, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor J Kent:

Well, Madam Mayor, that's okay as far as it goes. Councillor Gledhill, at the end there, said he will continue to make the case wherever is necessary but I took the opportunity just to look at the minutes and the attendance at SELEP over the last year or so. The Strategic Board met on the 15th of December last year, Councillor Gledhill wasn't there; on the 16th of March this year, Councillor Gledhill wasn't there; on the 29th of June this year, Councillor Gledhill wasn't there; on the 28th of September this year, Councillor Gledhill wasn't there. For the accountability board, it's met 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 times this year, the minutes show Councillor Gledhill has been there twice.

Madam Mayor, can I just ask, why is Councillor Gledhill not attending these vital meetings with our partners where we have the opportunity to make a strong case for Thurrock?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Kent for your question.

Let me make it clear, as with most things in life, you'll find that it's quality over quantity. Labour know where I'm going with this one.

I have made very clear at these boards, SELEP strategic board on 21st September 2016, opposed the option of a route running directly through Thurrock; SELEP strategic board meeting on the 9th of December 2016, I made Thurrock's opposition to Lower Thames Crossing consultation options very clear; at the SELEP meeting board on the 3rd of March 2017, twice. Number one, because they forgot to mention the fact that I was in attendance at the previous one or indeed that I mentioned it. I advised the Board that we're still opposed to building the Lower Thames Crossing and the locations currently defined by the government agency involved, Highways England. And at the SELEP strategic board meeting on the 22nd of September 2017, I once again stated that Thurrock remains opposed to the Lower Thames Crossing.

As mentioned, I've also made it very clear of meetings with Essex leaders, and at ASLA and with one time meetings with other Council Leaders, and as

mentioned, Thurrock Business Board have now changed their thoughts in relation to what's their stance in relation to the Lower Thames Crossing.

I also took the opportunity, John, to go through some of the minutes from previous meetings. And as I said right at the start, it is about quality over quantity. So I'm checking the minutes since 2012 to 2016 when you were in attendance. Despite the Lower Thames Crossing being mentioned at 6 meetings, you only ever mentioned it once.

And I will go further than that. At the last SELEP meeting, one of the members said, "We always hear Thurrock's stance on the Lower Thames Crossing at these meetings and other meetings from Rob. But I cannot remember once when it was mentioned by John Kent, the previous Leader. Had he done so, our view may have been different."

Mayor:

Councillor Kent, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor J Kent:

Madam Mayor, when I was the representative on SELEP, SELEP's priorities did not include the building of a new Lower Thames Crossing. SELEP's transport priorities were the widening of the A13, the installation of free flow tolling at the crossing. It's only since I haven't been there, that they've managed to put the Lower Thames Crossing as one of their transport priorities.

Madam Mayor, the fact is, that Councillor Gledhill has taken the stance of the empty chair when it comes to representing Thurrock at these crucial meetings for the past year and frankly, it's just not good enough. We need it to be Rob centre stage, not what we've got now, which appears to be Sideshow Bob.

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Sorry Madam Mayor, a bit like SELEP, we're actually waiting for them to be mentioned at the Lower Thames Crossing. I was actually waiting for a question. You say that it wasn't our priorities, John, but as I've said, there were 6 meetings in which it was mentioned and it's been minuted that it was mentioned. Total silence. Doesn't matter if a chair is occupied or filled, it's what actually happens when you're there and you make it happen, John.

So, I have made a difference, and the difference is, that the business board – John, you can sit there and deny it all the time or you can just be silent and allow me to finish. As I've said, John, the business board have now changed their stance. Other Local Authority Leaders have come to me and have said,

“Actually, Rob, from what you’ve said, we’re going to be making clear our position.” You can sit there and deny it, John. I’m going on facts, the one that are printed in the minutes. That you, quite rightly brought up.

3. From Councillor MacPherson to Councillor Gledhill

Having seen the good news about the C17 gang member injunctions that Essex Police have secured can the Leader outline how Thurrock Council assisted in this and what benefits it will bring residents of Chafford Hundred?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Macpherson.

As Portfolio holder for Anti-social Behaviour and Public Protection; through the Community Safety Partnership, we have been engaging with Essex Police and partners to address the issues created by this gang and the impact it has been having on our residents.

I committed additional funds to Essex Police’s Operation Raptor Team which enabled them to carry out, for example, 186 hours of additional proactive policing in 1 month alone, target this cohort and obtain the evidence required for the injunction.

Along with the chair of the Community Safety Partnership, and Youth Offending Services Manager I submitted a community impact statement to the courts outlining why it was vital to our residents that this injunction to be granted.

Essex Police have worked closely with our Youth Offending Service who now manage a violent cohort of offenders. Our Children’s Services are now dealing with the increase in exploitation, and missing persons, many which are linked to the activities of this criminal gang, C17.

Our Anti-Social Behaviour Housing Officers have supported through joint patrols and have been identifying perpetrators for the police. And we have funded additional CCTV which is monitored 24/7 by our CCTV team, and this has been used to support evidence gathering in relation to the injunction and now for monitoring to support enforcement.

Our Adult Social Care Team has worked with and supported victims of cuckooing which have led to links to C17 and our Trading Standards team are working with support businesses to combat the sale of knives across the Borough.

Chafford Hundred, along with other areas of Thurrock, will benefit from the wider restrictions within the injunction which include:

- non-association with other members of the C17 gang, this means they cannot be anywhere as a collective group;
- the banning of making drill video music – sorry music videos, which is then publically available through YouTube;
- wearing hoodies or face coverings in public; and
- being in the company of girls under 16.

If they are found in breach of any of these conditions, anywhere in the borough they will be subject to arrest. Conditions may be extended to disperse and from other areas if this is evidenced and evidence is gained. This will not only reduce crime, it's getting the message out that gang life in Thurrock does not pay.

Mayor:

Councillor Macpherson, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Macpherson:

Thank you Madam Mayor.

A lot of work goes on behind the doors that we don't know about and at the end of the day, we just see the injunction so a huge thank you to both yourself and to Officers as well as the police for getting this in full. But obviously, this injunction is only effective if it can be enforced. Can you outline what is being done in that respect please?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and Councillor Macpherson for your supplementary question.

As I mentioned in my recent statement, the actions of Essex Police has been absolutely fantastic and second to none. This has now led to an additional gang member being included in the injunction. But, yes, as you said, it is about whether or not it is actually enforced. It is being robustly enforced and I shall give you some examples of refs of the breaches that have already happened.

The leader of this gang was arrested on Monday the 1st of October for breaching the order. He was found wearing a hoodie, carrying a knife, cannabis and two mobile phones which was not registered with the police. He

appeared at Basildon Magistrates Court and was given a 28 day suspended sentence.

17 year old boy from Grays was arrested in Grays on Thursday the 18th on suspicion of breaching the order. He appeared at Chelmsford Magistrates Court the next day who denied the breach, and will return to court later this month.

17 year old boy, another 17 year old boy from Grays was arrested on Thursday the 19th for breach of the order, for wearing a hoodie. He admitted the breach but was not made subject of any sentence. He was further arrested on Sun – Saturday, the October 21st, for riding a pedal cycle in Grays. He admitted the breach and is awaiting sentencing.

The leader of the gang was again arrested on Monday this week and was bailed to appear in court on November – I can't mention too much from that because it's an ongoing case.

But we need to remember these injunctions have a positive effect and this is from the police. Talking to town staff, Grays town center businesses, "My staff and customers were very intimidated and scared witnessing drug deals and smelling cannabis every day. Since this injunction and the following actions, the drug dealers have all but disappeared and the staff are no longer afraid to leave work at night. And neither, as added, people were afraid to come and walk, to come into my shop, and walk past them. They were regularly threatening my staff and making them feel intimidated about coming to work. Since all of this action, my staff actually enjoy coming to work."

Essex Police, Operation Raptor continue to enforce these injunctions through high visibility patrols and responded to the increased intelligence being provided by the public. And I would urge every member of the public to go onto the Essex Police website, get the pictures of these individuals and memorise them. We are putting them up in Council offices and wherever we can.

Council will obviously continue to take preventive role safeguarding vulnerable people from this criminal gang. I need to say that this, all these criminal gangs been given the opportunity to work with the Council to get them out of gang life. So it's not just about the injunction being enforced, it's about us trying to actually draw them away from that and put them back on the straight and narrow.

Mayor:

Councillor Macpherson, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Macpherson:

Yes please, it's amazing the work that is going on. Can you tell us of any other initiative that the Council is working on and helping Essex Police with at the moment?

Mayor:

Councillor Gledhill.

Councillor Gledhill:

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Macpherson.

Yes, there are a number. I've had to say this to other elected Members, obviously, it's not my role or Council Officers' role to take action through direct criminal activity such as drug dealing, that's solely down to the police. But we are helping the police in whichever way we can, to not only act against this particular gang but others that are causing anti-social behaviour. I'm not going to go into all of them, I can't go into all of them, some of them for operational security reasons.

But, for example, canisters of special spray that tap motor cycles, quad bikes, to identify them later on when it's safe to do so, this has led to 46% reduction in the reports of the associated crimes. Purchasing specialist CCTV cameras – I'm not going to say what type, improving CCTV coverage so the police can call to gather evidence. Increased officer presence in anti-social hotspots to increase residents' confidence in the ability to report crimes to the police. Without those reports, course the police can't target their resources. And of course, we're looking to additionally fund 8 extra full time police officers, PCSOs to provide the uniform presence in the areas where crime and anti-social behaviour has been causing problems for our residents.

Now, most of this has been possible through the good financial stewardship of this Council from the one off circumstances

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Worrall to Councillor Watkins

What is the importance of parks and improving our open spaces for residents to enjoy?

Mayor:

Councillor Watkins.

Councillor Watkins:

Thank you very much Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor for your question.

Parks and spaces play a vital role within Thurrock. Obviously, they are used by everyone really, from the elderly residents using it for their social care purposes and the children of Thurrock using it for the enjoyment of the sport and to the people wanting to just walk their dogs or just to have a leisurely walk around the parks and open spaces.

(Member makes a remark).

Thank you for your remark. You may want to refer to Councillor Gledhill's earlier comments on what we're doing with that.

Mayor:

Can we please keep to the business. Thank you.

Councillor Watkins:

As part of the administration's policy in regards to Clean It, Cut It, Fill It, obviously, we wanted to ensure that not only are our parks and open spaces clean and tidy but they are also maintained and improved. So in July 2017, a report went to the Cleaner, Greener Overview Scrutiny Committee outlining the plans which we were going to take over a 3 year period of time.

£1.25 million plus worth of investment, would first of all happen in a review looking at all the important areas such as consultations with the residents; the health data of those areas; the operational requirements, the type of equipment already within those parks and open spaces; the physical activity levels around those areas and also the sort of equipment which may well be needed within those areas in order for more people to use it such as sensory equipment. And that's stuff that's already ongoing. I had the privilege in the summertime of meeting with residents in Aveley rec who were taking a keen interest in trying to get that park and open space improved. They got some real good plan they want to bring forward to the Council which I do ask any residential group who want to get involved with local space to come forward to the Council because we're very much willing to listen to your idea, we want to work with you not against you.

And I know that there has been some good work that's gone on there with some maintenance of that equipment recently as well which is really good news. So yes, Madam Mayor, our parks and open spaces play a vital role to residents in this Borough and I'm proud that this administration is also investing in them.

Mayor:

Councillor Worrall, would you like to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Worrall:

Yes please Madam Mayor. So of course, I love our parks, just to name but a few, we've got Grays Beach, you know the great work that's done there. Hardie park, you know what they're doing over there. Recently, we've got the work that's going on in the Daisy Field with them raising money. But tonight, I want to talk about our park in Grays and that's the Elm Park where residents are facing losing a well-used and open space. As Cabinet Member for overall responsibility for parks and I direct it at you and not Councillor Halden because it is about losing a facility. Can you assure us, in the Chamber, that residents and Councillors will be fully consulted on any possible closure of our parks as was announced 3 months ago? And secondly, can you assure us that every other location will be fully investigated before any decision is made and this will, again, form part of the initial consultation?

Mayor:

Councillor Watkins.

Councillor Watkins:

Thank you very much Madam Mayor. I know obviously, she's directing the question at, sorry, saying she, that's quite rude of me. Apologies, Councillor Worrall. That Councillor's directing the question to me. I will ask if you will wait till Councillor Halden's question in a moment and the answers you will be given. I can say though, in any circumstance whereby a park or open space within the Borough is needed to be used for something else such as a school. I mean, obviously, we do support the opening of new schools across the Borough. We know how important it is that we give every kid the opportunity within Thurrock to kickstart their life and they require good and outstanding schools to do that. And it's great to see that, we, the Council is investing in those new schools. And obviously, in those moments, the right consultations and events will go on with that to ensure that parks and open space facilities can obviously be used somewhere else where necessary and the work that can go on with other parks and open spaces around the area.

But in regards to individual parks, I will pass this over to Councillor Halden in the following question. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mayor:

Councillor Worrall, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Worrall:

I certainly do. And why I brought it here, is because, in the Cabinet meeting that I attended where this was announced. Councillor Watkins, you didn't make a peep of a noise in opposition to giving up a park. You know, this is an open space, this is a park. I'm not against the need for schools but I have not seen one real piece of evidence that should we once have the expansion of

the William Edwards site, that we actually do need this school and I'm not that we have, I'm not sure that we have done enough consultation to just write off one of our parks and again, we haven't gone out to consultation and last month, we had a motion in here, where you apologised for not consulting and it's in the minutes. Councillor Gledhill agreed everything would be consulted and it's still 3 months later, we still haven't had the consultation start. 3 months, Madam Mayor, and if there is a consultation, we, as Councillors have not been advised that there is going to be one so we're asking, do not start it without us.

Mayor:

Councillor Watkins.

Councillor Watkins:

Oh Madam Mayor, there was no question within that. As far as I can see it, it was just a long statement. I refer again, to the question coming up shortly by Councillor Halden.

2. From Councillor Jefferies to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health outline what is being done to deliver more school places in Thurrock?

Mayor:

Councillor Halden.

Councillor Halden:

Thank you Madam Mayor. Thank you Councillor Jefferies for your question.

This evening, I can announce some exciting news regarding new school building in Thurrock – news that balances the need to deliver high quality school places and preserve and enhance sporting and open spaces.

As Members will know, between capital monies that the council holds, and monies that we worked with on our MAT's to win via the free school delivery programme, we are currently investing £70 million to deliver 3,500 new good school places and more modern facilities across this Borough. As Council will know – minus Councillor Worrall apparently – we have 1000 too few school places in Grays by 2021 to a statement that she's not quite sure if she needs a school.

(Member makes a remark).

Mayor:

Can we please just keep –

Councillor Halden:

Let me just say Councillor, as Members will know, we are currently delivering 3 brand new free schools. The Treetops special needs school and 2 Grays based secondary schools to address this looming crisis. For all 3 sites, we had to identify council land because for every penny of money that the ESFA (Education, Skills Funding Agency) are not spent on land, can be invested into our children's education.

The land disposal for Treetops 2, adjacent to the current Treetops 2, has been approved by myself and heads of terms have been signed with the ESFA. Planning approval is on course. And our special school, £20 million of investment would duly be delivered.

The land for William Edwards 2 (Orsett Heath Academy) is a council land next to the Thurrock Rugby Club, but not the rugby club itself. There has been some concerns regarding the rugby club losing some space from the council that they sometimes use. The council is satisfied that this outstanding rated specialist sports academy will be able to forge a great future working in partnership with the rugby club, as outlined by the letter signed by the rugby club President and the school's CEO. As such, any planning application will ensure any community and sports access to this site will be cemented. On this basis, the Council has agreed heads of terms with the ESFA to proceed.

Finally, the land offered for St Clere's 2 school, the Thames Park Secondary, is the council open space on Elm Road, next to Thameside Primary. There has been a great deal of concern regarding this site, but we forged forward because if we had not provided a council owned site, the ESFA would not have progressed plans for the new school on the basis that we would be a delay. The ESFA plan has now gone to the next stage with the Council offering our full commitment for the disposal of land below market value. The ESFA have now decided that they would rather procure a different site for a range of reasons.

As such, Council Officers forcefully made the argument with the ESFA that because we offered the land in good faith, and the ESFA have chosen that they would like an alternative piece of land, the cost must be borne with the ESFA and the project cannot be put at risk. The Council has done what we were prepared to do and prepared to make a difficult decision to dispose of open land to prevent the looming placement crisis in Grays. The EFSA have accepted this argument, we have won this fight and they will invest additional monies to acquire a private site. As such, in consultation with Councillor Coxshall, I have rescinded the instruction to dispose of this site. While I know this is the position many people hoped for, this is a position that can only be arrived at by forging past NIMBY pressure from the start and ensuring that we offered land available. If we did not be here, fore say, simply would have come back to us as they have with countless other Authorities in the country and said that we are land banking and that they cannot proceed on this basis. That is not what we've done and this is a good outcome.

Madam Mayor, as I have already said, November Cabinet will see a release of additional funds for temporary accommodation where it is needed to ensure that we deliver our new free schools. I will be clear, the money that we'll release will be in a robust amount to reassure people these schools will be delivered and will comply with our policy that temporary accommodation will simply not be portable cabins but rather be a lasting legacy for sports and education provision.

Mayor:

Thank you very much Councillor Halden, that brings us to the end of our question time. The 30 minutes is finished. I would now go to the rest of the questions and ask the people asking the questions if they would like those questions to have a written response or if they would like the questions to fall. So the next one – *(Member asks question)* carried over yes – Councillor Anderson?

3. From Councillor Anderson to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health update the chamber on children centre provision?

Question was withdrawn and be resubmitted.

4. From Councillor Rigby to Councillor Halden

Please can the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health update the chamber on the progress to deliver new Medical Centres in the Borough.

Question was withdrawn and be resubmitted.

5. From Councillor Okunade to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder for Health and Education tell us what the Council is doing to protect the health and wellbeing of our Tilbury residents from the hazardous air pollution?

Question was withdrawn and be resubmitted.

6. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Johnson

How many homeless families are Thurrock Council helping at the current time?

Question was withdrawn.

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There are 2 questions from members of the public.

1. From Ms Swash to Councillor Watkins

Could the portfolio member tell me what tests have been carried out in Tilbury in light of the dark, finely milled dust like substance that is blighting Tilbury Homes?

2. From Mr Perrin to Councillor Little

Is it a fact that children for whom the Council has a statutory responsibility under Corporate Parenting legislation, cease to be the Council's responsibility at the age of 16 as they are then classed as young adults?

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Petitions Update Report – 28 November 2018

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Presented (by)	Status
512	The Un-Lawful use of Parker Road Recreational Field and alleys/walkways and right of way surrounding Parker Road, Belmont Road, Castle Road, Rosebery Road and London Road	5 October 2018	Mrs R Stammers	It is the Council's opinion that the applicant has correctly sought permissions, the planning application was correctly processed and accords with legislation. The Council has therefore not acted unlawfully or inappropriately.
513	Against the noise of barking dogs at 49 Lea Road, Chadwell St Mary, Grays, RM16 4DD	22 October 2018	Mr Taylor	Officers have observed the barking of dogs as alleged by the petitioners and served notice on the occupier under the relevant legislation. Observations are continuing and should a recurrence of the barking be witnessed by the Council's officers the appropriate prosecution will be commenced. To date no barking after the notice came into effect has been witnessed by officers.
514	Calling for the pedestrian crossings in Ship Lane and High Street to be upgraded to Pelican crossings with an additional Pelican added to Stifford Road, creating a three way controlled scheme.	31 October 2018	Councillor Smith	The Transport Development team have drafted a number of design proposals in order to address the issues. These options will be discussed in detail with the ward members so that an agreed approach can be identified and taken forward for wider consultation with local residents and business in December.
515	Call for Thurrock Council to review its Permit Parking Area (PPA) in Hobart Road. This has left inadequate parking for all residents of Freemantle House, Brisbane House and Tasmania House.	31 October 2018	Councillor Allen	The provision of additional parking spaces to support residents in this location will require an allocation of Thurrock Council Housing land. This has been discussed with the Council's Housing team and locations considered to ascertain if additional parking spaces can be provided. There are another 2

Petitions Update Report – 28 November 2018

				<p>car parks in addition to the car park situated next to Tasmania House, that provide in excess of another 40 spaces. These are located on Leicester Road and on Hobart Road (opposite no 9 Hobart Road) that residents living in the High rise flats could use. If the land is found to be suitable a revised plan to identify additional parking will be progressed and residents will be informed. Initial indications identify that 12 additional parking spaces could be implemented within the land that has been identified. A scheme to deliver these parking spaces is likely to commence in January/February 2019.</p>
516	<p>The residents of Grays are opposed to Thurrock Council's new interpretation of the parking restrictions on Lodge Lane which go against the agreement reached in 2005.</p>	31 October 2018	Councillor C Kent	<p>The Transport Development Team have commenced a review of the Traffic Regulation Order covering Lodge Lane and potential options will be considered. These options will be prepared for consideration and action as appropriate over the next few weeks.</p>

28 November 2018	ITEM: 10
Council	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways	
Report of: Councillor Aaron Watkins, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways	
This report is Public	

Introduction

It is an honour and pleasure to be presenting my second annual report, this time not only for Environment but also for Highways too. When I look at Thurrock, my home, I want it to be a borough we are proud to live in and a Thurrock that is clean and tidy. I am proud that I am part of a team not only delivering that vision but part of a service that is critical to it.

The last year has been a great year for both services and has seen increased investment, increasing targets and raised expectations and I am proud that the teams have taken on these challenges and strived to achieve them. This Council is pushing hard to make Thurrock a borough which works for every single person who not only lives here but works here, has friends and family here or just visits. Clean It, Cut It, Fill It is integral to that, ensuring we are filling pot holes and roads are resurfaced, our grass areas are cut and tidy, our streets are clean, our bins are emptied, and our cemeteries and parks look how we expect them to.

Since my last report, we have emptied over 50,000 street bins, emptied 10.5 million residential and trade waste bins, cut over 1185 acres of grass, filled 3,837 pot holes, resurfaced over 5.2.miles of road. We have also installed new traffic measures across six roads, introduced permit parking to four zones to assist residents to park in their roads and worked with other organisations across Thurrock to deal with congestion.

Circa £8m of additional capital has been invested in purchasing of new equipment and vehicles to facilitate improvements across Thurrock to the landscape, cleaning the streets, cutting the grass and emptying our bins. The Highways Service has spent over £1.8 million on fixing potholes and resurfacing our road. The Major Projects team is delivering a £79m project that will widen the A13; the main works are planned to commence in early 2019 and has delivered several cycle infrastructure projects to enhance connectivity and sustainable travel within the borough. In addition, the Transport Development team was successful in securing £50 million for East Facing slips project which will improve traffic flows between Lakeside shopping centre and the A13. Furthermore, although a much smaller project, I am proud to see contactless payment options installed in all car parks and

on street parking meters in Thurrock, this can make the world of difference to residents and visitors parking in Thurrock.

These are truly fantastic achievements, something I am proud of and even prouder when I look at the team around me. But there is always room for improvement.

I am aware of the need to improve our roads in relation to HGV parking and routing. A programme and change is much needed to enable enforcement action against those who illegally drive across our roads and cause disruption to us all. Junction 31 congestion, along with HGV parking on the A1089 and Highways England's part of the A13 continue to be a challenge in relation to cleansing and litter. We are working closely with Highways England on strategies to address these challenges and starting to receive some positive action.

I strive for a Thurrock which is utilising technology to its maximum when dealing with congestion, working with commercial partners and residents, ensuring residents have advanced knowledge of journey issues before they have left their starting location. I am also aware of the need to ensure Environmental Services are meeting resident's expectations and that missed collections to their bin service are kept to an absolute minimum. All these areas are currently being addressed and are a focal point for our continuing flexible strategy.

As we look forward to 2019, I look to a Thurrock which is moving forward together in its vision and outlook. A Thurrock which will continue to be cleaner, greener, tidier and with improved road surfaces. A Thurrock which has a smarter outlook to dealing with congestion and where residents can walk down the street with clean paths, and a Thurrock we can be proud to call our home.

I would like to thank all my teams across Environment and Highways. To every person who empties the bins, cleans the streets, cuts the grass, fills the pot holes, resurfaces the roads, repairs the vehicles, takes resident phone calls and works to improve the service, I thank you all for ensuring we have a better Thurrock.

Portfolio Overview

The last year has been a busy one with my Portfolio role expanding to include Highways. To address any confusion, the below outlines Director responsibility for aspects of my Portfolio.

Major Schemes	Steve Cox
Transport Development	Steve Cox
Highways Development and Control	Steve Cox
Passenger Transport	Julie Rogers
Network Management	Julie Rogers
Parking Enforcement	Julie Rogers
Fleet Management and Logistics	Julie Rogers
Highways Maintenance	Julie Rogers
Street Services – Street Sweeping, Grass Cutting, Litter Pickers, Grounds Maintenance	Julie Rogers
Waste and Recycling	Julie Rogers

In the past 12 months there has been significant investment into the services within the portfolio. The list below is a summary of some of the additional funding that has been made available to drive improvements across the Borough.

- £0.939m for Clean It, Cut It, Fill It (CICIFI);
- £0.300m for Highways White Lining;
- £0.247m for improving Borough Signage
- £13.4m for A13 Widening
- Circa £8m Environment and Highway vehicle procurement
- £2.6m for Thurrock Cycling Infrastructure Delivery Plan

A number of capital funded projects have been initiated, many of which are detailed within the body of this report. A summary list of the programmes includes:

- Structural maintenance of roads
- The vehicle and plant replacement programme
- Target hardening

Major Schemes

1. *A13 Widening*

1.1 The £79 million A13 Widening scheme is one of the largest local authority-managed road schemes in the country and involves widening a 2.3 mile section of the A13 from two to three lanes in both directions between the A128 (Orsett Cock roundabout) and the A1014 (The Manorway, Stanford le Hope) and replacing four bridges over the widened carriageway (Saffron Gardens accommodation bridge, Horndon Road Bridleway Bridge, Orsett Cock East Bridge and Orsett Cock West Bridge). Orsett Cock roundabout will be remodelled to increase capacity and connect with the two new bridges. Traffic signals will be installed on the roundabout to help manage vehicle flows more safely. Once the A13 scheme is completed, there will be a continuous three lane carriageway from the M25 to Stanford le Hope, reducing congestion, improving journey times and supporting further economic growth.

1.2 Preparatory work started in December 2017 and will continue throughout autumn and winter 2018. It involves vegetation clearance, boundary fencing, surveys, the construction of site offices, wildlife protection, archaeology, diverting underground pipes and cables, drainage work and the construction of a new balancing pond. This work is mainly taking place away from the road with minimal impact on road users.

1.3 Public information events took place in October at Horndon on the Hill, Orsett and Stanford le Hope.

1.4 The main works are due to start in early 2019 and be completed by November 2020. During the daytime, there will be two narrow lanes open in both directions; work taking place at the roadside or in the central reservation;

lower vehicle speeds with camera enforcement for safety; and a free vehicle recovery. Overnight, there will be some lane closures on A13 in both directions; some slip road closures at the Stanford le Hope and Orsett junctions.

- 1.5 Up to 12 total closures of the A13 will be required over this two year period to demolish the existing bridges and to lift new bridge beams into place. Carefully planned diversions will be used to minimise the effect on local roads during full closures. Variable message signs will be deployed at strategic locations to encourage people travelling long distances to use the A12 and A127 instead of the A13 or the A1013. These closures will be publicised months in advance via the local newspapers, project newsletter, Council website and social media.
- 1.6 There are currently two lanes on the A13 in both directions. During the widening works, two narrow lanes will be provided in both directions with speed restrictions and camera enforcement. Drivers will be encouraged to remain on the A13. Therefore, traffic conditions in Corringham, Stanford and Horndon are not anticipated to change significantly.

2. *Stanford-le-Hope Railway Station*

- 2.1 The Stanford-le-Hope project comprises of a multi-modal transport interchange with bus turn-around, enhanced cycling facilities, new footbridge and lifts, enhanced station building with improved accessibility and passenger handling capability and customer information system. This will greatly enhance the arrival experience for people visiting Stanford-le-Hope and/or travelling onward to the Port.
- 2.2 In April 2017, design & build contractor, Morgan Sindall completed the preliminary design and submitted a target cost. Unfortunately, the target cost exceeded the available budget and we were unable to instruct Morgan Sindall to proceed to stage 2 (detailed design and construction).
- 2.3 In February 2018, Thurrock Council as Planning Authority granted planning consent for the Stanford le Hope scheme. Later the same month the development agreement with c2c was finalised and vegetation clearance was undertaken.
- 2.4 In May 2018, an independent cost review was undertaken to ensure value for money. This involved estimating the project cost from first principles and comparing the target cost with the outturn cost of similar projects at railway stations elsewhere.
- 2.5 In June 2018, we instructed Morgan Sindall to proceed with detailed design only. This brought forward the detailed design from stage 2 to stage 1. Morgan Sindall completed the main packages of the detailed design in October 2018 and submitted their final target cost on 9 November., which is currently under review.

3. *Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan*

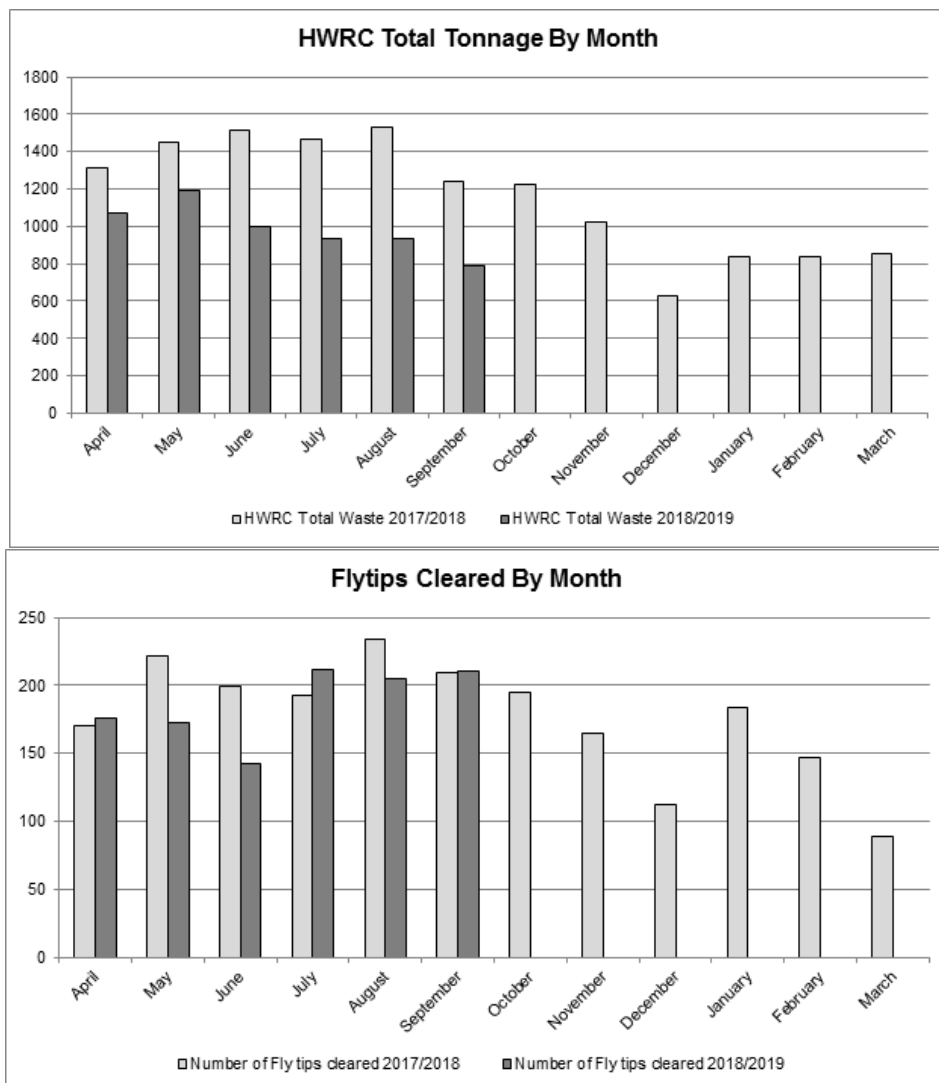
- 3.1 In July 2014 Thurrock Council was awarded £5 million towards cycle route improvements to be delivered across the borough by 2019. These involve constructing missing links in the borough-wide cycle network and /or installing toucan crossings and tiger crossings to make it easier and safer for cyclists and pedestrians to cross main roads.
- 3.2 The cycle infrastructure enhancements will enable residents to consider making short journeys by bike instead of the car. Cycling has many benefits, including improved health and wellbeing, shorter journey times, reduced congestion and improved air quality. For people on low incomes, cycling can also help open up opportunities to training and employment.
- 3.3 The Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been developed in collaboration with the Local Access Forum and cycle groups. Following representation from horse riders, we have also sought to maximise opportunities for sections of route to be designated as bridleways, allowing them to be used by horse riders as well as cyclists. The programme was approved by the Cabinet in January 2016 and public engagement was undertaken on the emerging feasibility designs in June 2016. The delivery of the programme is on target to be completed by March 2019.

4. *Grays Town Centre*

- 4.1 In September 2015, Cabinet approved phased changes to traffic management implementation in Grays Town Centre. Phase 1 was completed in 2016 except for signalling the Bridge Road Bridge width restriction. This element was delayed due to a number of technical approvals required for works on the bridge over a live railway line. I am pleased to however state that site works started on 12th November 2018 and are expected to be complete in December 2018.
- 4.2 Phase 2 of the Grays Town Centre traffic management changes included making Orsett Road a two-way system between Derby Road and Stanley Road. Localised modelling of the four junctions undertaken in January 2018 suggested that making Orsett Road two-way would worsen queue lengths and delays, particularly at peak times. Therefore, further traffic modelling was undertaken to assess the impact on the wider area of the Town Centre. The results indicate that the overall Town Centre network performance improves when the Crown Road is opened to two way traffic. These results give us confidence that there are no further reasons to delay the implementation of the two-way working on Orsett Road / Stanley Road junction. Hence, the revocation order of one-way working on Crown Road and at Orsett Road/Stanley Road junction will be released for consultation at the end of November 2018.

5. *Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC)*

- 5.1 In June 2017 the Council bought back in-house the management of the Linford site. A number of changes and improvements at the site have resulted in an easier to use, more efficient and safer service for residents.
- 5.2 As a result of demonstrable abuse of the Household Waste and Recycling Centre by traders/commercial operators, a permit scheme for van-like vehicles and vehicles with trailers was approved and implemented early this year. Since the introduction of the scheme 2,709 permits have been issued to residents. The process for residents to apply for permits is currently being reviewed and will be automated within the next 3 months. This will result in a quicker turnaround time from application to permit being received.
- 5.3 The table below shows the reduction in tonnages disposed of at the site as a result of the permitting scheme. Despite concerns, this action has not resulted in an increase in fly-tipping in the Borough.



- 5.4 Approval for the redevelopment of the HRWC has been granted and planning application submitted. The planned improvements, proposed for 2019-20

include:

- The modernisation of the site and improved safety and accessibility for users
- A dedicated right turn lane on Buckingham Hill lane to reduce congestion at the site entrance
- An increased range of recycling and reuse containers available
- Facilities to support partnership working with local re-use community groups ensuring that more items are re-homed and re-used
- The introduction of a dedicated commercial waste disposal facility on site allowing for income generation and providing commercial waste producers with a further avenue for disposing of their waste legally and responsibly
- The implementation of an ANPR system to enable accurate recording of numbers of vehicles entering the site ensuring appropriate resource levels at all times.

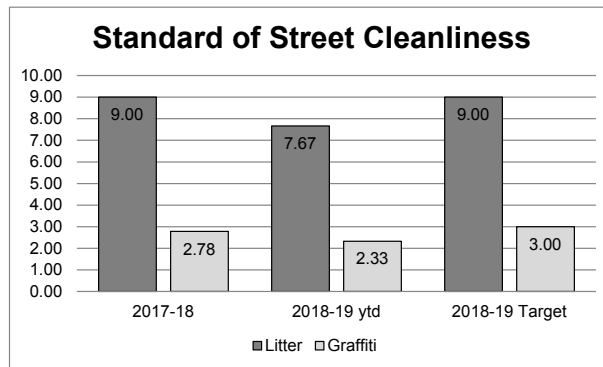
6. *Cut it - Clean it*

6.1 After the successful launch of Cut-it, Clean-it last year, the focus has continued for the Cleaning and Greening teams, imbedding and improving on services and schedules and ensuring efficient ways of working. The implementation of a digital back-office system monitors schedules, productivity and identifies capacity for enhanced or commercial activity. The system enables frontline staff to receive their daily work packages electronically via an app on a smartphone, enabling them to not only mark work as completed, but also raise service requests identifying additional work that has been undertaken, reporting fly tips and other incidents.

6.2 The team have been proactively improving the standard of cleanliness with a number of deep cleanse programmes rolled out over the course of the year. These have taken place across a number of sites including Chafford Hundred and Lakeside. We have also brought in staff at weekends to ensure that the Boroughs Parks are litter picked and the areas are welcoming and enjoyable for residents. On the days that Grays Market is in operation, we have deployed additional staff and resource, to maintain the high standard of cleanliness in our town centre. The table below provides an overview of some of the key outputs for residents.

Service Area	Function	Annual Output
Greening (includes all Parks and Open Spaces and Country Parks)	No. of Playgrounds maintained.	77
	Total Area Maintained	517.50 hectares
	No. of Urban Parks maintained.	90
Street Cleansing	Annual cleansing miles of highways.	210 miles of road swept on a weekly basis
	Number of litter bins (majority emptied at least weekly)	570
	Tonnage of Street Cleansing waste collected.	2,114

6.3 In 2017-18 the assessment of the standard of cleanliness of the Borough started to be undertaken by Keep Britain Tidy, unlike previous years this is carried out by an external assessor. The inspections are undertaken 3 times a year and are carried out without prior notification to the Council. Based on higher than target performance last year, the target for the KPI was lowered for the current year. The table below provides a summary of performance to date.



The team continue to monitor the scores from KBT, identifying areas in need of improvement and hot spot areas which require more frequent visits.

- 6.4 The service continues to actively engage with voluntary groups. This includes providing litter pickers, bags and gloves to groups and ensuring that all waste gathered is collected and disposed of appropriately.
- 6.5 Once again this year the team was actively engaged in supporting the “Clean for the Queen” programme, although the weather on the scheduled weekend was poor, ten voluntary groups were supported in local litter picks on that date and adjacent weekends.
- 6.6 Three Park Engagement Officers (PEO) are being recruited, their roles will be to consult and engage with community groups and residents to develop parks. This will ensure that facilities meet resident’s needs as well as supporting the health and wellbeing agenda to encourage activity and reduce obesity. By promoting, educating and training in the use of park gym equipment, planting community flower beds, litter picking and becoming ambassadors of the parks, the PEO’s will also support the prevention of vandalism and reduction in ASB.
- 6.7 Street Cleansing will further benefit from the fleet replacement programme, two medium sized street sweeping vehicles are currently deployed and the delivery of two new large mechanical sweepers is eagerly awaited, replacing aging vehicles and providing increased reliability. The service is also implementing more effective working practises by integrating the mechanical and manual sweeping programmes.
- 6.8 Over the next 12 months a focus for the team will be reviewing the balance of mechanical and manual cleaning, with trials of some pavement mountable mechanical sweepers. Whilst the service exceeded cleansing targets last year

and are on target to deliver this year, the service will continually aim to exceed Key Performance Indicator targets set. The service are also exploring whether a small waste vehicle could be used across all services to assist with public bin emptying, increasing efficiency and potentially overcoming blocked access issues for the waste collection service.

- 6.9 The new ride-on mowers that have been deployed this year have resolved some of the previously experienced reliability issues, ensuring that all areas have been cut to schedule and enhancing the height of cut for specific areas.
- 6.10 Further focus has been given this year to target hardening and protecting our open spaces. Following each unauthorised encampment, sites are assessed and preventative measure put in place including the replacement of knee fencing, inserting pressure treated timber bollards, the use of bunding and the installation of height barriers at entrances.
- 6.11 All access gates have also had padlock protections fitted, which have proved to be highly effective. Previously padlocks were cut off by unauthorised traveller incursions and sites entered. We are pleased to report that these measures have been extremely effective to date, none of the new protections have been breached.
- 6.12 At the same time as ensuring the parks are protected, work has been undertaken to ensure that facilities have been improved with repairs and replacement pathways/surfaces, replacement of play equipment, foliage reduction, installation of benches and litter bins.
- 6.13 Country Parks continue to provide beautiful environments for residents to engage with nature and explore the outdoors. In an exciting development at Langdon Hills, the Ranger team are working collaboratively with Natural England to create one of the biggest SSSI sites in England. Langdon Ridge will cover a range of different habitats in a corridor of land with numerous owners. Coalhouse Fort has also demonstrated a high level of maintenance by retaining the prestigious Green Flag status this year.

7. *Winter Maintenance*

- 7.1 Shrub pruning winter maintenance programmes are due to commence at the end of November, ensuring that all shrub areas across the borough are maintained. Previously schedules spanned a 5 year programme; this is being reduced to a tri-yearly programme, and includes our open cemeteries.
- 7.2 Teams have worked hard throughout the grass cutting season in our cemeteries to improve the standard of maintenance. Winter maintenance work will be carried out over the next 5 months, with a view to enhance the appearance of these sites. The winter maintenance will include path edging and shrub and hedge pruning. There is a programme in place to ensure that cemeteries are looking their best.

8. *Centenary of WW1*

- 8.1 The Leader of the Council announced last year that a project team had been established to ensure that the borough was presented at its best for the Centenary of WW1.
- 8.2 Communities were consulted and fully engaged and have worked tirelessly both independently and with the Council to support this project which ensured all war memorials were cleaned and restored. Poppies were installed on lamp posts in the areas around the memorials to commemorate the 834 military personnel fallen in Thurrock.
- 8.3 Silent soldiers were positioned at all of the memorials the Council are custodian of and others were located in open cemeteries and by the beacons which were restored in time for the Centenary celebrations.
- 8.4 “There but not there” silhouettes were also placed in Thameside and St. Peter & St. Paul’s Church in Grays. Replanting of flower beds has taken place and planters were installed to provide an opportunity for less able bodied residents/visitors to place small wooden crosses, without the need to bend.
- 8.5 Feedback has been very positive with many emails, messages and personal thanks for how great the borough was presented, confirming the tribute for the fallen was to the standard expected by the community.

9. *Bin it*

- 9.1 The public bin review is complete with the type and design of new bins agreed and procurement completed. Rollout of bins commenced in October 2018 and is planned to conclude in February 2019. 300 new litter bins have been procured, in a consistent style, some town centre areas will have blue bins for recycling and black bins for general waste. Following the successful trial of Big Belly bins, some will be relocated and we will also be installing more into appropriate parks and open spaces. A review of the bin provision in cemeteries is underway for installation in Spring 2019.
- 9.2 The waste collection service has had a challenging year which has regrettably impacted on performance and the service to residents has not been to the standard they should expect. Earlier in the year the standard of performance was affected by proposed industrial action, which was successfully mitigated. Other factors that have caused disruptions to the collection service are continued difficulty in securing agency HGV drivers to cover annual leave, etc. In particular during the summer season.
- 9.3 The service is actively seeking improvements to the collection cycle, with new initiatives being trialled and implemented, these include:
 - The creation and recruitment of a bank team of HGV Drivers that can be called at short notice

- Drivers from all services are being cross trained to enable them to support waste collections as and when required
- A pilot of two shunter drivers is in progress and has eliminated the impact on recycling rounds of having to drive into London during peak periods to empty vehicles
- Recycling and residual rounds have been re-optimised, without direct impact to residents, to ensure that a sufficient level of resource is being deployed and to incorporate growth both in domestic and commercial waste with two additional rounds added to the collection programme.

Function	Annual Output
No. of domestic bin collections per year.	10,422,828
Annual domestic tonnage disposed	72,161tonnes
% of domestic bins collected on time.	2015-16 98.5%
	2016-17 98.3%
	2017-18 98.2%
	2018-19 ytd 96.5%

9.4. I am pleased to advise this work has started to show improvements with October's performance achieving a 99.6% collection rate.

9.5 Further success has been seen this year with the increased growth of commercial waste service, over and above the forecasted business plans. The table below shows the increase in commercial waste customers over the past two years. The increase in book value of the service from April 2017 is circa £300k.

Year	Number of Customers
April 2017	347
April 2018	602
To date (Oct 2018)	679

9.6 Another area of focus for the waste service has been the drive to increase the level of recycling within the Borough. This is something that we require all residents to engage with and support. Some of the programmes and activities to encourage increased recycling are:

- The roll out of the "Recycle It" programme including a refresh of the website, new posters on the refuse collection vehicles and regular e-newsletter and social media messages
- With the deployment of the new vehicles, the service engaged with local primary schools as an initiative to raise awareness of recycling. Pupils were asked to propose names for the vehicles. Over 100 entries were received and the 28 vehicles now have new names and colourful posters on their doors
- The roll out of "Oops!" hangers is imminent; this will alert residents to the fact that they have been placing non-recyclable materials in their recycling bins and contaminating them, referring residents to the web page and

encouraging/educating residents which items go in which bin. This will be preceded by a communication and education campaign.

- A pilot programme is underway to engage with blocks of flats/communal buildings that have previously had low levels of recycling. The focus will be to ensure residents have clear information about recycling and a review of the bin facilities to ensure that recycling is feasible. A trial of different bins to monitor usage will also be implemented.
- Following the successful WEEE Amnesty over the Christmas period last year, which proved popular with residents, this will once again take place this year with clear bags being available for residents who need additional recycling capacity over the festive period. As in previous years, the bags will be available from libraries and hubs.

10. *Highways Maintenance and Fill it*

- 10.1 The Highways Maintenance team has achieved the highest Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) Band 3 again this year, this is essential to ensure retention of the highest level of funding from central government for planned maintenance to roads and other assets. Achievement of this is confirmation that processes relating to planning, policy, and the allocation of resources and data led decision making are effective and well managed.
- 10.2 Over 70% of the Capital Programme has been delivered in the first six months of this year. Just a few of the roads that have been resurfaced this year are South Road and Dunnings Lane in South Ockendon, Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury, Chadwell Road, Grays, Romford Road, Aveley and some extensive repairs to sections of the Manorway, SLH, whilst footway improvements have been carried out in South Stifford and Corringham. Drainage works and surveys have been carried out in and around Orsett, Bulphan, West Thurrock and Stanford-le-Hope. Furthermore, the additional funding from revenue surplus last year has enabled the relining of 64 roads (approximately 88km) across the Borough.
- 10.3 On the week commencing 12th November £884,000 of funding was received from the Department for Transport for road maintenance. Using HMEP criteria, a schedule of works is being prepared for delivery prior to the 31st March 2019.
- 10.4 During the course of the past 12 months 60 general bridge inspections have been completed. This has helped to identify areas where more detailed inspection and review may be required and to inform us of the priority works for inclusion in next year's work programme. Priority works completed this year include waterproofing to the bridges in Fenner Road, Chafford and Botany Way, Purfleet.
- 10.5 The highways inspectors have walked 1,112 safety inspections and driven a further 1,117. This has resulted in 3,044 work instructions being raised for repairs to carriage ways and footpaths. This figure includes a number of different types of interventions including potholes. The table below provides

the details of the number of potholes that have been filled both last financial year and for the year to date. The Corporate KPI for this service continues to be in line with target.

% of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe	2017-18	97%
	2018-19 ytd	99%
Number of potholes filled (The 2018-19 figures include potholes to the end of September)	2017-18	6,482
	2018-19	1,783

10.6 To actively address flood management in the Borough, an additional gully tanker has been deployed during the course of this year. This is having a marked impact on the number of drains that can be cleaned each month, assisting with flood prevention in a number of areas. The additional resource that has been allocated to this work stream is improving performance. This also enables us to address problematic areas efficiently and adopt a proactive and planned approach to ensure our surface water drains remain free flowing and reduce the risk of flooding. So far this financial year the teams have worked on 5,903 gullies, leaving them running freely. There are approximately 26,000 gullies in the Borough. The inspection regime is adjusted for different areas.

- Flooding hotspots – 3 monthly
- Leafy area – 6 monthly
- Main routes – 12 monthly
- Secondary routes – 18 monthly
- Cul-de-sacs - 24 monthly

10.7 The winter gritting teams are on standby and carried out their first run on Tuesday 30th October, new vehicles have been procured and the necessary staff training is complete. The teams for winter gritting are comprised of a number of drivers across a range of Environment and Highways service areas, this helps to ensure that they are familiar with the Borough and the areas they are gritting. Each time a gritting run is called, 5 trucks are deployed to cover major routes across the borough. Last winter saw an increase in the number of gritting runs completed – largely due to the very cold period late in the season (Beast from the East). The table below provides an overview of the service for the last three years.

Function	Annual Output	
Tonnage of salt used	29 tonnes per gritting run	
Number of gritting runs per year	2015-16	35
	2016-17	40
	2017-18	90

11. *Transport Development*

Road Safety

11.1 The Road Safety team continue to deliver a wide-ranging programme of educational and practical initiatives. These include road safety walks in all schools, roadside activities, young-driver interventions and road safety campaigns to promote safer and sustainable journeys to school/colleges.

Projects delivered and initiatives include:

- Bikeability Cycle Training (including Level 1 & 2, Balance Bike and Learn to Ride) in 41 Schools covering 2,400 pupils.
- Road Safety Pedestrian training in 45 Schools for 8,400 pupils
- Twilight Trail events (awareness of being Bright and Being Seen during the winter months) held in 14 schools for 213 Year 3 pupils and parents.
- Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO's) adopted in 3 schools
- Crucial Crew safety event held for 1,150 Year 6 pupils in one week.
- Surround a Town (SAT Days) held in conjunction with the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and Thurrock Road Safety.
- 15 School Crossing Patrol (SCP) sites
- 15 School Travel Plans completed on-line with Modeshift STARS

11.2 Looking forward to the current academic year and into 2019, the Road Safety team are committed to delivering even more support and initiatives across the borough. Their efforts will see the continuation of work in schools to enable all schools to achieve accreditation with a sustainable travel plan. Bikeability, Learn to Ride and Balance Bike sessions will continue to be offered to schools. Scooter Training will be offered to all pupils in Year 3 and a further 8 Surround a Town days are planned. The success of Crucial Crew means that it will be held again in Summer 2019. An additional School Crossing Patrol is planned to be provided at Warren Primary School.

Highways Development Control and Traffic

11.3 Our Development Control and Traffic Team have been influential in supporting and providing transport input for large developments such as Tilbury 2, Intu Lakeside, Amazon and Purfleet Centre Regeneration Ltd. They also continue to provide transport input and advice for a huge number of smaller planning applications and proposed development.

- Parking Permit Areas (PPAs) have been identified, consulted upon and progressed in Stanford le Hope, Grays and Tilbury.
- The Council's Integrated Transport Programme (ITP) identifies a commitment to £950,000 of capital schemes. Alongside this the DC team deliver development related improvement schemes ranging from new cycle routes to junction improvement schemes and tackling HGV parking issues in areas such as The Manorway in Corringham.

- A new average speed camera system has been investigated, designed and implemented on Southend Rd, SLH to address the high number of Personal Injury Accidents recorded on this part of the network.
- The team will continue to focus on designing and delivering schemes that focus on Accessibility, Visibility and Safety across the network and prioritise the implementation of schemes against set criteria.
- Over £1m has also been secured for the A126 through the DfT Safer Roads Fund. A package of safety measures will commence next year.

Liaison with c2c

- 11.4 At a recent liaison meeting with c2c we discussed recent service issues and potential solutions to ensure that a high level of service is provided to Thurrock rail users. Improved communication is imperative and the Council's Comms Team are working with c2c to develop a collaborative comms strategy (including social media sharing, Variable Message Signs at stations, Tic-Tac network updates and other measures). c2c are committed to delivering infrastructure improvements that will enhance their service and it is encouraging to note that internal station refurbishment works are expected to commence at Ockendon and Grays before Christmas and that c2c have plans to undertake similar works at East Tilbury, Tilbury Town and Chafford Hundred. New trains will be added to the Thurrock line from 2021 and timetable amendments are to be explored (focusing on the peak period at Chafford Hundred).

Officers are also progressing discussions with DfT and others in order to understand what is needed to bring forward contactless payments at all Thurrock stations. c2c currently provide their smartcard option, but the Council is looking to build on this and progress a more inclusive contactless payment option for rail users.

Smart Thurrock

- 11.5 This year the Council has started the journey to enabling a smart borough in line with the Connected Thurrock Digital and IT strategy. Officers are now reviewing opportunities afforded by this type of technology, and early consideration includes managing traffic flows through Variable Message Signs (VMS), Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS) and Real-time Bus Information. Moving towards a Smart Thurrock approach has the ability to provide the Council with greater control and responsibility to manage our road network, something that becomes increasingly important as we move towards the delivery of A13 east facing slips, A13 widening enhancement and implementation of the Lower Thames Crossing.

Transport Strategy

- 11.6 The Transport Strategy team are developing a collaborative working relationship with colleagues in Southend and Essex to deliver the £3.3m South Essex Active Travel programme which encourages and enables increased walking and cycling across the borough. A number of innovative

ideas and events (including the Civic Offices Healthy Walk) have been delivered and developed and SEAT has enabled the Council to engage with local businesses on a very detailed level.

- 11.7 2019 will see the opening of Thurrock's first cycle hub, in Tilbury, a scheme funded by the Council's Public Health team and SEAT which will deliver improved access to cycling opportunities, refurbished bikes and community advice that will encourage increased cycling.
- 11.8 Workplace travel plans continue to be assessed and approved in order to bring forward sustainable travel options that will mitigate the impacts of new development. Encouraging and enabling more walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing are all recognised as having a beneficial impact on the highway network.
- 11.9 The team continue to work with Highways England to identify options that will allow traffic signals at J31 to migrate to Highways England in order to provide 24/7 coverage on the network and to allow more appropriate and effective clearance plans to be applied at J31 when there is severe congestion or in the event of an incident. The migration of these signals is expected to commence in Spring 2019.
- 11.10 An additional but very important role provided by the Transport Strategy team is their input and support relating to Flood Risk Management, working with ECC to ensure the appropriate level of advice and support is given to the Thurrock area. The Council has developed a Flood Risk Management Strategy and associated maps, and is continuing to work collaboratively with the Environment Agency (working one day a week within the Council offices).
- 11.11 A major success story for the team is the recent announcement on A13 East Facing Slips Roads. Earlier in the year the team developed the initial Expression of Interest to the DfT to push for the East Facing Slips Scheme. The work identified proposals and costs to allow this scheme to be considered for funding by DfT. As a result of the Expression of Interest, Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport announced (on 1st October) that funding will be allocated to "new slip roads in Thurrock". The next steps in the process will include DfT working with Thurrock Council to develop full details of the scheme for Spring 2019.

The team also helped London Gateway to develop and launch a new local bus service supporting the Port and Park development – creating a sustainable transport link to Stanford-le-Hope train station and local communities.

- 11.12 The team continue to submit funding bids for alternative sources of funding that will support and enhance the network. In addition to the SEAT fund and the ITP annual allocation we have submitted funding bids for:

- LGF – support funding for East Facing Slip roads to take forward feasibility and design in light of the Secretary of State announcement
- LGF – Thames Enterprise Park sustainable measure

12. *Passenger Transport Unit – Local Bus Services*

- 12.1 The Passenger Transport Unit has been working collaboratively with colleagues in Education and Children’s Social Care to ensure that pupils are well supported in their journeys to school whilst managing costs. In some instances it has been feasible and appropriate to encourage students to use existing public transport for their journeys to school, rather than continuing to use private hire vehicles. This continues to be an area of review.
- 12.2 Over the past year the subsidised bus routes within the Borough have remained stable, despite a change in supplier for some routes. In the last financial year 2,506 concessionary fare passes have been issued to residents that met the criteria. This work is helping to ensure that residents maintain their independence and mobility around the borough
- 12.3 Bus services throughout the borough are provided by commercial operators. The Council has a duty to consider the needs of communities that are not served by the commercial service. In October, Cabinet gave approval to proceed with the procurement of a local bus service to serve the communities that would otherwise not have connectivity between their towns/villages. This means we are able to continue to provide a service for residents of Orsett, Bulphan, Horndon-on-the-Hill, East Tilbury, West Tilbury, Linford and Fobbing that will provide a link to shopping areas and leisure centres. The local bus service will also provide vital links to the integrated medical centres as and when they become operational. The contract will be awarded according to the routes and services offered within the Tender that best serve residents and the local community.
- 12.4 To support the bus services, the procurement process will begin this year to take over the ownership and control of bus shelters around the borough from the current commercial provider. The aim is for the Council to own and control the stock so that improvements can be made to enhance the street scene and modernise the existing ageing stock as appropriate

13. *Network Management*

- 13.1 The permit scheme that has been implemented in the last year has been a great success in reducing the amount of days that works promoters are occupying the highway. It has enabled proactive management of the highway network to maximise the safe and efficient use of road space as well as improve the quality and timeliness of information and compliance with legislation from all activity promoters. A great example of this was phase 1 of the Cadent gas works on London Road which involved a huge amount of time and effort from all parties and resulted in the works being completed a full 2 months ahead of schedule. Both the low pressure and medium pressure mains were replaced to limit the amount of disruption in future years. This has

instilled confidence that the remaining phases over the next 4-5 years will be equally as successful.

13.2 This year has also seen the introduction of the TIC TAC (Thurrock's Incident Co-ordination Tracker Action Card) which gives an early indication of any accidents, incidents and congestion on the Thurrock road network as well as the surrounding area which could have an adverse effect on the borough. The TIC TAC goes out to members, local businesses and transport providers, as well as other stakeholders and also informs the communication team enabling them to relay appropriate messages on social media, assisting drivers in deciding whether or not an alternative route should be considered. This area remains under review to ensure we continue to reach out and capture the wider audience. Mobile message signs have also been deployed at key locations around the borough to support the information communicated on social media

14. *Parking Enforcement*

14.1 The main objectives of the Parking Enforcement Team is to help maintain the free flow of traffic on our roads to support the safety of all road users and council-managed car parks; assist the efficient movement of traffic; increase compliance, and to maintain access to services and amenities; Additionally, there is a special focus on tracking HGV parking in and around residential areas. During the last 12 months 32 parking machines across the Borough have been replaced to enable payment via debit/credit card. This has provided residents and visitors with the convenience of payment type choice.

14.2 A successful pilot of foreign debt recovery work was undertaken in the summer last year, and saw the recovery of circa £38k from parking fines issued to HGV vehicles registered in Europe, the team are planning to repeat the programme before the end of January 2019. This pilot achieved a partnership working award at the British Parking Awards ceremony.

14.3 The Manor Way is a stretch of road which wasn't decriminalised in 2005. The Council have received significant reports of HGV's causing criminal damage to grass verges and public footpaths at the Manor Way. The only service with powers to enforce in this area are the Police. In response to these complaints, Environment Enforcement officers have been carrying out regular visits to the Manor Way and have been trialling the use of the Community Protection Notice (CPN) process, in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, to enforce on HGV drivers and their company's. This meant that a Community Protection Warning (CPW) would be issued in the first instance and then if this warning was breached a community protection notice would be issued. Breaches of the CPN's would lead to £100.00 fines being issued. This focused approach has resulted in 50 CPW's, 14 CPNs and 9 fines of £100.00 being issued to both HGV drivers and their Company's, also reduced the number of lorries parking along the Manor Way from up to 30 per night down to only 2 on last visits.

15. *Fleet Management*

15.1 A crucial support to the Environment and Highways Service is its Fleet Management. Whilst they have continued to maintain, service and repair all Council vehicles they have also tendered and procured over 100 new vehicles in the last twelve month period, representing an investment of circa £8 million. This programme of vehicle replacement was undertaken as many of the vehicles previously being used by service teams were reaching end of life, resulting in disruption to service due to reliability issues. The new fleet not only ensures that vehicles are reliable; it has also reduced overall emissions from the fleet. This procurement included the purchase of:

- 28 new refuse collection vehicles
- 5 Gritting Lorries
- 1 Grab Lorry
- 4 Road Sweepers
- 5 Tractors
- 7 Ride on Mowers
- 20 Caged tippers
- 40 Vans

15.2 In addition, the Fleet Management Division has been income generating through commercial activity including safety inspections, undertaken for private hire vehicles in the Borough and MOTS. There are 480 private hire and hackney carriage vehicles currently receiving this service, generating an annual income of £19k.

15.3 They have also procured and implemented a vehicle tracking and driver behaviour system. This has been installed in approximately 100 vehicles to date. This will enable services to monitor how vehicles are being used during service delivery. It will also support work to ensure that drivers are compliant with road legislation through monitoring and targeted training.

15.4 In the next year there is more improvement to the fleet planned with the replacement of specialist vehicles underway, including two new gulley tankers.

Summary

A lot has been achieved over the last year and this report has highlighted much of that. It shows the investment going into both services to ensure residents have a clean, tidy and accessible borough. There are a number of major projects either in process or due to commence very soon, as well as a number in the pipeline. We are actively dealing with congestion issues and fixing the roads. We are investing in our parks and open spaces and making sure our town centres and streets are clean and tidy. We know we have more to do and as ever, we look forward to working towards achieving even more over the next year.

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28 November 2018	ITEM: 11
Council	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities	
Report of: Councillor Deborah Huelin, Cabinet Member for Communities	
This report is Public	

Introduction by Cabinet Member

I am delighted to present to Council my report which details many of the areas of work and achievements within my Portfolio since I took on this role in May 2018. I am passionate about the range of services included within my Portfolio, and I am committed to seeing the different community services align, giving a strong, complimentary offer to residents in Thurrock.

The core services covered by the Portfolio are delivered across four directorates and include:

Sports and Leisure (Environment and Highways Directorate)
Registrars (Place Directorate)
Culture and Arts (Place Directorate)
Heritage Services (Place Directorate)
Community Development and Equalities (Adults, Housing and Health Directorate)
Libraries (Adults, Housing and Health Directorate)
Performance (Strategy, Communications and Customer Service Directorate).

This report provides an overview of the achievements across each of these service areas over the last 12 months, as well as aspirations for the future.

SPORTS AND LEISURE

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

Sport and leisure facilities have always been important to the residents of Thurrock and are not only vital in making Thurrock a great place to live and work but also have many economic, health and social benefits. The well documented benefits of physical activity to improve health and well-being are just one example.

I have spent time visiting the local Leisure Centres both formally as the Portfolio Holder responsible for this area but also as member of the public using the facilities.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

The Council has a partnership with Impulse Leisure, a Charitable Trust that manages the Council's three Leisure Centres at Blackshots, Corringham and Belhus. These centres attract an average of around 700,000 visits per year across all age groups and are popular with both male and female users. During the course of the year the council has invested well over £1m in refurbishing Belhus Swimming Pool. This work included a new roof, heating, ventilation and a pool water filtration system. In addition to this, Impulse Leisure funded the refurbishment of the swimming pool changing rooms which complement their earlier refurbishment of the health and fitness facilities and a more welcoming entrance. They also deliver a wide range of community programmes such as falls prevention support for elderly residents within their homes.

During the summer, the Sports and Leisure Team, working with Public Health colleagues, established an Active Thurrock Network. This brings together key council departments, local organisations and the voluntary sector to link into the County Sports Partnership (Active Essex) and their funding opportunities. The Network has attracted £28,000 of external funding to be spent on local programmes that increase physical activity within Thurrock. It is expected that this network will grow and develop a joint action plan to attract greater funding in the future.

This area of work was managed by one member of staff previously, this year a strategic lead has been recruited for recreation and leisure to ensure we are appropriately resourced to support the growth of the service needs and increase capacity of the team to have a greater impact across the borough.

The Sports and Leisure Team have been working throughout the year with Sport England and various National Governing Bodies of sport including hockey, tennis, football, cricket and rugby to focus on local issues and plans for future development, ensuring proportionate contributions are made from developers implementing housing schemes. Additionally the team have been offering advice and support to other sports such as Thurrock Gymnastics Club who are looking to secure a permanent venue and attract the necessary funding for the specialist equipment required.

From this direct engagement, additional investment in facility improvements have been made to bowling greens in Corringham and Blackshots, Thurrock Gymnastics Club has been supported to finalise a permanent venue and attract the necessary funding for the specialist equipment they require, and community groups delivering sports in parks have been supported to develop their models so they can have a wider long term impact in the local communities.

To ensure the sports clubs get the help they require to grow and thrive, the team has met 42 football clubs, most of the cricket and bowls clubs, pentecque clubs as well as the Thurrock Sunday league, Grays Athletic FC and Thurrock Sports Council. They aim to directly support them with their issues, help signpost to external funding opportunities, and link them more closely with the National Governing Bodies where required. The clubs will all be invited to attend the Active Thurrock user group meetings. This open platform will enable clubs to raise their issues and work with the council to develop projects and activities locally.

► FUTURE

We aim to work with clubs to improve and enhance the sports facilities across the borough by working with the National Governing Bodies and Sport England. Levering external investment, we hope to increase the quality of our outdoor sports provision and also increase the capacity to meet our existing and growing demands. We are working with clubs to improve the quality of their facilities such as improved bowls greens, improved football and cricket pitches, ensuring clubs such as Belhus Cricket Club are able to meet the facility and growth requirements of promotion to the Sheppard Neame Essex League Premier Division in 2019.

We are aiming to develop several floodlit third generation artificial grass pitches. These will enable better use of the spaces and attract young people to use the facilities, which will help to reduce anti-social behaviour. They enable users to play on good facilities for longer periods with significantly reduced maintenance issues and the improved lighting and footfall using the facilities will deter people from loitering around the leisure centres and outdoor facilities.

We are currently in the process of recruiting three additional Parks & Green Spaces Engagement Officers recruited for 2019. The officers will work on the front line directly delivering activities across the borough, helping residents use the outdoor gyms, developing simple activities that the community can continue on their own and engage people to become volunteers who will help support the activities and champion our parks. This will help inspire Thurrock residents to become active and utilise the opportunities across the borough.

We want to increase our connection with the local sports clubs, empowering them to take pride in their sports and leisure facilities across the borough and assist us in reducing the number of inactive people in Thurrock.

Sport and Leisure Budget 2018/19

Sub Service	Cost Centre	Revised Budget	Forecast	Variance	Notes
Sport & Leisure	Sport & Leisure codes	862,233	862,233	0	

REGISTRARS

► SERVICE OVERVIEW

Thurrock Registration Service team provides valuable, statutory and discretionary registration services to a fast-growing community from its base at the Thameside Complex, Grays.

The main functions of the Register Office cover the following statutory duties:

- To register all births, deaths, marriages, still-births and civil partnerships which occur in the Thurrock district
- To take notices of marriage and civil partnership for residents of Thurrock
- To conduct marriage and civil partnership ceremonies at the Register Office and licensed venues throughout Thurrock – licensed venues include:

Orsett Hall Hotel, Orsett
 The Plough House, Bulphan
 Langdon Hills Golf and Country Club, Langdon Hills
 Thurrock Hotel, Aveley
 High House, Purfleet
 Old Regent Ballroom, Stanford le Hope
 Stifford Hall, North Stifford
 Thameside Complex, Grays

- Issuing certificates of birth, marriage, death and civil partnership from archived registers in the custody of the Superintendent Registrar from 1837 to date
- Providing the discretionary Nationality Checking Service, authorised by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, in partnership with the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration.
- Carrying out statutory group and discretionary private Citizenship Ceremonies. Group Citizenship Ceremonies are held in Hawthorn Suite, Thameside Complex approximately every 4/6 weeks. The ceremonies are attended by the Mayor and it is an occasion where a welcome and honour of citizenship is awarded to our new Citizens.

Private ceremonies are made available every day for the best customer experience and greatly appreciated by residents who wish for an earlier ceremony.

- Performing discretionary celebratory ceremonies namely Naming, Renewal of vows, Commitment
- To collect and maintain records of religious marriages from returns supplied by the clergy and authorised persons
- To approve venues for marriage and civil partnership

The current reputation of Registrars staff within Thurrock is exceptional as staff go above and beyond to make the service as successful as possible. We need to build on this commitment, extend our services and facilities and build on our reputation.

► **REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

Over the last year revised background work for ordering copy certificates online has now

been finalised and customers can order by the preferred option – online, by phone, calling in to the office, or downloading an application form and sending it in. Take-up of the online ordering option is increasing daily which is great news.

We are committed to promoting and increasing the choice of Licensed Approved Premises, Coalhouse Fort option being a preferred addition to current venues. We have visited Coalhouse Fort to advise on the legal requirements to become a Licensed Approved venue for marriage and civil partnerships. Coalhouse Fort is a beautiful, historic Fort situated on the River Thames with views across to Kent. To add it to our list of Approved venues is a vital goal in order for Thurrock to compete with so many of our couples marrying in ‘Langtons House’ in our neighbouring Local Authority district of Havering.

Thurrock offer Private Citizenship Ceremonies seven days per week. As we are a small team and working in one location we are able to offer a Private Ceremony in the Hawthorn Suite or Register Office between appointments, at the start or end of the working day. Private ceremonies are a discretionary service and the fees raised for this are invested into the service creating a healthy budget forecast. Importantly customers are thrilled to have the opportunity to avoid waiting for a Group Ceremony. Citizens who do choose a private ceremony enjoy an exclusive, dedicated ceremony any day morning or afternoon. They are invited to attend either alone or with their choice of friends and family. Sixty two private ceremonies and fifteen group ceremonies were held last financial year.

All Statutory and Discretionary Ceremonies are offered by Thurrock seven days per week. Thurrock Registrars are not only willing to work covering each day but also perform late or early ceremonies if requested and reasonable to do so, offering a truly unique, customised ceremony at times to suit the couple.

In the last financial year one hundred and sixty two marriage ceremonies were held in the Register office and two hundred and eighty four at our Approved Premises. We have received 100% Good or Excellent Customer Satisfaction feedback consistently over the years and our reputation is extremely high. This keeps morale high in the team too.

► **FUTURE**

Options for the future location of the Registrars service in Grays are being explored. In the meantime we will continue to promote the existing facilities and encourage prospective approved premises.

A future plan is to pursue agreement for registering Essex births – by law; a child has to be registered in the district where the birth occurred. The majority of Thurrock resident’s babies are born in Basildon Hospital so although a declaration of the particulars can be sent from Thurrock to Essex Registration Service the birth is not registered by Thurrock. Our aim is to discuss with the Registration Manager for Essex to consider us partnering with Essex to enable Thurrock to also register for Essex. This would give a better choice to residents and stream line the service. This partnering will only be pursued should a statutory fee being considered for taking declarations not be forthcoming.

Sub Service	Cost Centre	Revised Budget	Forecast	Variance	Notes
Registrars	Registrars	(71,784)	(59,640)	20,503	This slight overspend is being offset by underspends elsewhere in the service

ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Arts, Culture and Heritage have an important role to play in improving wellbeing, quality of life and place-shaping. The service consists of the Thameside Theatre, a small arts development budget and the Thurrock Museum and Heritage Service.

► HERITAGE SERVICE OVERVIEW

Thurrock has a rich history and the Heritage Service help tell the story of the borough through the museum gallery in the Thameside Complex and a programme of exhibitions, talks and educational workshops. The service are also guardians of the Museum Collection which spans more than 250,000 years and is used to illustrate and bring to life Thurrock's past. The service is supported by a group of dedicated volunteers who help conserve and manage the collection, conduct research and organise exhibitions and events.

► REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Over the past year the service has particularly focussed on re-organising its collection to help improve access and share information about the rich heritage of the borough more easily. The service was successful in securing funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to digitise and catalogue the collection as part of the review process. This project is designed to ensure the Museum complies with current standards and has given us the opportunity to work with local schools and the community to create a travelling exhibition, allowing us to seek further funding. As part of this project we have also been reviewing and updating the Museum's policies and re-organising the storage areas to improve access and store items more efficiently.

Work has also started to improve the Gallery Space within the Thameside Complex with the aim of making it more inviting to the public by renewing some of the older displays and brightening up others.

The Museum has recently started a Facebook and Twitter account [@thurrockmuseum](#) and regularly posts interesting facts about Thurrock's history and items within our collection. We have also improved public access to museum artefacts by taking part in public events at Orsett Show, the Windrush Event, Tilbury on Thames Trust Open Day and Fun Palace.

As Chair of the First World War Commemorative Committee, I have been impressed by the range of community led and council supported ways in which The Great War has been appropriately marked in Thurrock. The Committee includes six members from across the council along with members of the heritage and services organisations. I have been privileged to chair this group since May 2018 which has held a number of events from 2014 onwards to remember the sacrifices made by so many.

As part of its work the Committee commissioned a memory project to capture local people's stories of life in Thurrock, including stories of those who contributed to the war effort with a connection to Thurrock. Twenty seven memories were collected by volunteers with the support of ngage. They are available on the Stronger Together website. They have been published in a book for local schools and libraries and the heritage service has supported the recording of some stories onto a Candle Stick telephone which is currently travelling around the borough in Libraries and public events so that people can listen to those memories.

As part of the WW1 Centenary, the heritage service and community development team has worked with the local community to fix the Beacons at Coalhouse Fort and Purfleet so they could be lit on the 11th November as part of the National Beacon Lighting event. On this day there were also performances and participation from local schools and uniformed groups as part of these ceremonies. Thurrock staff teams have worked hard, contributing over and above to support Thurrock's commemoration of WW1 any my thanks go to all involved. The Museum Volunteers have been particularly supportive of efforts to commemorate WW1. The volunteers have researched and curated a number of exhibitions looking at different aspects of the war and the impact it had on the people and place of Thurrock. The latest exhibition which focused on the Armistice opened in the gallery space at the Thameside Complex on 5th November.

Heritage organisations working in Thurrock have also been able to come together over the year as the Museum has set up a new Local Heritage Group. This takes place quarterly and has been extremely successful in attracting members and identifying opportunities to work together.

▶ **FUTURE**

The Museum will continue the work on the collection and hope to expand on the current programme of school visits at Coalhouse Fort and the Thameside Complex. The team are hoping to apply for 'Working Towards Accreditation' from Arts Council for Thurrock Museum which will open up access to funding opportunities and to expertise that will help the service to develop its offer. The service are keen to work even more closely with the Libraries and Community Hubs to display items from the collection and to share the story of different parts of the borough with residents.

▶ **ARTS SERVICE OVERVIEW**

The Thameside Theatre is a well-loved part of Thurrock's cultural landscape and is always rated highly in the Council's customer survey. Each year the theatre hosts a mix of touring shows and local groups including a number of shows arranged by local dance schools. A highlight each year is

the pantomime which attracts many families over the festive season. The theatre also manage a small arts development budget which is used to support events and activities or as match funding for bids through the year.

► **REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

During 2017 the Thameside was subject to a business planning exercise with the intention of reducing subsidy and working towards a break even financial position. The business plan included a number of recommendations which the theatre team are working towards and which include optimising online booking, including through smart phones. As a result in recent months over 60% of tickets have been purchased online. The system also enables and supports integration to social media marketing and as a result most of the theatres marketing is now by social media or targeted email campaigns. The automatic reporting system has reduced the amount of administration needed to run the box office functions allowing the team to explore other ways in which to further improve sales and maximise income such as merchandise offers and pre-ordering of interval drinks and food. The Thameside must embrace these ideas to compete with commercially run venues.

While there has been a focus on income generation, the theatre also supports Thurrock's diverse community and has continued to host Liam's Club - the disco for customers of Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions, relaxed performances of pantomime for people on the autistic spectrum, the monthly Beautiful Minds Cinema Club for people with dementia and their carers, the Nepalese film programme and Black History Month celebrations among other things. The Theatre has also supported the Museum by hosting exhibitions in the gallery space.

The Thameside Young Producers have also had a successful year. This voluntary group of about 20 teenagers have presented the annual Young Choreographers competition and the Starmaker talent show. They also organised the 'Orsett Show's Got Talent' event as part of the annual Orsett Show.

► **FUTURE**

Old favourites such as the Pantomime will continue - It is expected that about 15000 people will see this year's show Aladdin, making it Thurrock's biggest annual event continuing a pantomime that has been running for over 45 years.

Planning is well underway for the 2019 season with many professional acts booked and a new brochure will be issued in the next few weeks. The Theatre continues to work towards delivery of the business plan including exploring the potential of new ways to generate income for the theatre and the community activities that take place there each year. Examples include increasing the use of the Thameside 2 and the foyer area for activities and performances, and exploring ways to use the theatre on days when it is empty including roll out of the Wicked Wednesday's film offer piloted in the summer.

As regeneration plans for Grays develop, and options for the Thameside come forward, I am keen to see a cultural centre for the future, helping to align the potential for residents to enjoy the arts, culture and heritage with a modernised offer with a Central Library. Outreach across the borough will be essential and I look

forward to a wider offer through modernised buildings that can support more arts, heritage and cultural activities in the future.

Arts, Culture and Heritage Budget 2018/19

Sub Service	Cost Centre	Revised Budget	Forecast	Variance	Notes
Arts, Culture and Heritage	Theatre codes	0	0	0	Theatre income is used to offset direct costs.
	Museum codes	103,099	103,099	0	
	Arts Development	13,500	13,500	0	
		116,599	116,599	0	

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Community Development Team works with residents so they are able to take forward the aspirations they have for their neighbourhoods and communities. In doing so people are supported to liaise with relevant departments across the council to better enable community led activities including fun days, community clean ups and engagement events. The range of services supported spans a number of areas, one of which is liaison with the voluntary, community and faith sector so that there is a strong environment for organisations to thrive. The team works with all local Community Forums and oversees voluntary sector funding through a grants programme administered by Thurrock Community and Voluntary Services. In addition, the Community Environmental Development Fund is managed, which has recently completed its third round of grants. The team helps to build best practice across the council in relation to consultation and engagement, including management of the corporate consultation portal. The service leads the Council's role on the Stronger Together Partnership which looks to build on the strengths and assets within communities, and helps to empower residents so they have the skills, confidence and knowledge to improve the issues they feel passionate about locally. The team plays a key role in promoting volunteering in Thurrock, working with Ngage to develop a range of placements across the borough, and supporting the council's own volunteer programme across all services.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Thurrock Council has delivered grants programmes for many years. Our primary and core funded initiative is the Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) for which the operational management and administration of the budget was taken on by Thurrock CVS in April 2014, and reconfirmed by Cabinet in December 2017. The VSDF provides infrastructure and smaller grant funds for organisations across the borough that contributes to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Community Environmental Development Fund has also entered its third year targeting those

projects that will improve the appearance of the borough, increase community safety and renew, improve or create land, buildings or equipment for the benefit of communities. Outcomes from the programme to date extend from the construction and enhancement of community buildings through to increased access to parks and green spaces in Thurrock. The most recent round supported a number of projects including Thurrock Rugby Club in its pursuit for a new roof for their club, the rebuild of Corringham 1st Scout Hall and match funding towards new dwellings to support homes for adults with mental health needs. As we continue to invest in communities, grants will remain a core component of the Council's funding mix and are increasingly used to achieve targeted outcomes. Officers are about to complete a refresh of the Council's Social Values Framework and supporting strategy that sets out all of those priority outcomes that we wish to achieve through our procurement, commissioning and grant funded activities for the next four years. The refreshed framework and strategy will be published on the Council's website in 2019.

In June this year, the team worked with the Port of Tilbury and Tilbury Riverside Project to deliver a significant event to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Windrush at Tilbury Docks. The arrival of the Empire Windrush to Tilbury Docks is not only an important part of our local heritage, but it marked the birth of multi-cultural Britain and it is important that we celebrate the contribution of the Windrush generation to our country. A fantastic day was held at the Cruise Terminal which attracted over 3000 visitors as well as a river boat carrying NHS staff.

Supporting volunteering is a key priority for the service. As well as working with communities to encourage volunteering, the service oversees the Council volunteer programme. The council has volunteers across a variety of services, the majority of which are in the library or children's services. On 1st April 2018 we started the reporting year with 148 active volunteers. In order to meet our KPI targets a thorough review of the recruitment process for volunteers has been undertaken with the Community Development & Equalities Team and Recruitment teams to streamline the process. Working with the volunteer managers and those volunteers part way through the process we have been able to take on a large number of new volunteers in quarter 2 taking our cumulative total to 225 (the target is 220). This is a fantastic achievement, helped partly by the summer activities such as summer read (through the library service) and empowering parents (through the children's centres). As we continue to monitor and streamline the process it is anticipated that the programme will go from strength to strength with opportunities for larger recruitment drives and the creation of more volunteer opportunities across a number of services.

Recognising volunteer impact is key to retaining volunteer support and encouraging further activity. In February 2018 The Civic Awards recognised 9 champions, charities and local heroes working in creative ways to support and engage residents across a wide range of areas including music, the environment, social care and befriending. The Queens Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award that can be given to recognise effective volunteering. This year, the service worked with the Essex Panel for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service Services to recognise the contribution of volunteers to not one – but three Thurrock organisations. Thurrock Mind; Stanford, Corringham and Tilbury First Responders and One Community

Development Trust all received the Queens Award. This is an amazing achievement and Thurrock performed extremely well to receive all three awards made across Essex in 2018. I very much hope this encourages more of our local organisations to celebrate the difference they make for local people's lives through their passion, dedication and determination. We need to mobilise the incredible skills, expertise and talent within our communities to develop a rich and strong voluntary sector to support and engage Thurrock residents.

Thurrock's Community Hub programme is a partnership across communities, the voluntary sector and Thurrock Council led by the community development team. A network of six hubs exists across Thurrock. Each help to connect people with neighbours or the help people need day to day, they provide an opportunity to network and meet locally and they each enable people to access digital services free of charge, some via the Library service. Each hub supports local priorities from helping people into work, to combating loneliness and isolation. Community Hubs help to articulate a vision for its area's future and this year a great deal of progress has been made by the Aveley Hub in pursuing the first purpose built hub in Thurrock. A business plan was supported by Cabinet in December 2017 and works started on the new build earlier this month. The Aveley Community Forum has shown determination in its pursuit of a local resource and ultimately it has been through working in partnership that this exciting project is taking shape and moving forward.

Through the work of hubs, grant applications made, and the responses to engagement events, we know that Thurrock residents have great aspirations for the future of their areas. Where we can play a useful role in progressing projects with communities, we will continue to do so.

► **FUTURE**

The Community Hub programme will continue to develop alongside the library service where there is opportunity to do so, helping people access support to digital skills and information resources in libraries.

A key role of community hubs is to galvanise communities around the issues they feel passionate about; supporting opportunities to improve local conditions including health and wellbeing, community safety and helping people into work. As the library service and hubs programme align, we will build on this opportunity for residents to influence local decisions and shape the future of their borough through hubs. The team will support the delivery of Your Place Your Voice engagement activities and help residents with a passion for active citizenship to develop the skills and confidence to take an active role in their neighbourhood.

Community Development Budget 2018/19

Sub Service	Cost Centre	Revised Budget	Forecast	Variance	Notes
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Community Development Projects	Community Development Projects	353,524	338,584	(14,940)	Underspend due to part-year vacant post
	Voluntary Grants	332,600	332,600	0	
		686,124	671,184	(14,940)	

LIBRARY SERVICE

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

Thurrock's Library Service includes 9 authority run libraries and one self-serve library within Purfleet Community Hub. Opening hours range from 15 hours in four libraries, 27 in two libraries, 38 in two libraries and 48 at the central Grays library. The principal purpose of the library is to provide equality of access to accurate and up to date information achieved through provision of printed material and increasingly, access to information on line. The service champions reading in all its forms enabling all residents to make the most of the proven benefits of reading, economically better educational prospects leading to better paid jobs as well as supporting health and well-being.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Thurrock's Library Service has continued to support the development of the hubs programme, working closely with steering groups and volunteers to create a single vision and purpose. In South Ockendon and Tilbury, the hub and library are now jointly managed by one Supervisor enabling closer cooperation. Plans for the new Community Hub and Library at Aveley passed an important milestone with a 'ground breaking ceremony' at Aveley Recreation ground last month. The new build is underway and will be fully open by January 2020. Also the refurbishment of East Tilbury library after the fire in 2017, has started on the original site. Due to open in Spring 2019, the refurbished facility will include meetings rooms, the Bata Reminiscence Centre and will develop as a community hub enabling a greater range of community events to run from the premises.

Supporting the Digital agenda is a key priority for the service. Beginner computer courses have continued including sessions on using tablets and digital safety. Along with hub volunteers, library staff assists residents to access online forms, complete job applications and survive in a digital world. A partnership with the University of East London has enabled an increase in coding and robotic sessions for children and young people.

The service has continued to provide volunteering opportunities for all ages, from the 13 to 18 year olds supporting the Summer Reading Challenge to adults delivering our Homelink service and Digital Champions helping people get online. 74 library volunteers gave over 2,000 hours of support in 2017-2018. This is in addition to hub volunteers.

Use of our online services has grown with more residents aware that they can access 24/7 free learning courses, practice driving tests etc. and borrow e-books and e-audio via their phones and tablets. Support for reading continues especially encouraging children and young people to read for pleasure and benefit from the opportunities being able to read well can bring.

All primary schools are invited to visit their local library. In partnership with Health, Children’s Centres and Early Years settings, the Bookstart and Time to Read programmes ensures families with young children are encouraged to share stories and rhymes. While libraries have adapted to meet changing demands, residents still show an appetite to borrow books as is demonstrated in the recent library consultation which ran throughout the summer. 79% stated that a wide range of good quality books was still very important to them and over 337,000 volumes were issued in 2017-2018.

Provision of information and signposting to support agencies remains a core offer. Library staff receive on-going training and work with the hubs to ensure information is easily accessible. It is with thanks to our hard working and dedicated staff that the library service remains a much loved service and a place where residents feel comfortable and safe, knowing they will receive a friendly, warm welcome and the access to information they need. Council and other services increasingly see libraries as places where they can meet with residents informally. Consultation throughout the summer has highlighted the value our communities have for the library service and the role it provides in helping people access information and the services they need. I look forward to seeing this develop in the years to come.

► **FUTURE**

The library service will continue to develop alongside the Community Hub programme. The consultation held summer 2018 has provided a wealth of information to help influence the development of Thurrock’s first library strategy. This sets out our commitment to keep all library branches open whilst modernising and aligning the service alongside community hubs. A key aim of this will be to develop an investment plan for the long term future, considering all development opportunities to enhance future provision. Thurrock’s first ever Library Strategy will come to Cabinet in December 2018. 2019 will see the reopening of East Tilbury library, and the completion of building the Aveley Community Hub. Where possible we will co-locate the library service alongside wider provision from modern buildings. I am confident that the new Library Strategy will enable the service to move forward with clearly defined priorities, able to adapt and change to meet the needs of Thurrock’s residents in the future.

Library Service Budget 2018/19

Sub Service	Cost Centre	Revised Budget	Forecast	Variance	Notes
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Libraries	Library cost centres	1,046,502	1,093,868	47,366	Historical overspend to be addressed through library strategy
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CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

This part of my portfolio is primarily concerned with ensuring the council is delivering against its objectives through the corporate performance framework.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

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

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

For 2018/19, the set of indicators was reviewed by portfolio holders and officers in line with the new vision and priorities agreed by Council on 31 January 2018. They will continue to be reported to both Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, then on to Cabinet, on a quarterly basis, throughout 2018/19.

The increased analysis of internal processes at service level by Directors, which was started in 2016/17 has been positive throughout 2017/18 and as such will continue. This includes a monthly review of service indicators by Directors and each portfolio holder.

This is the third year that corporate performance indicators have been reported simply as having “Achieved” or “Failed” to meet their target. This has proved to be much clearer than the previous system, as seen by the positive improvement. At the end of 2017/18, 66% of key performance indicators achieved their target and nearly 60% also improved since the previous year. As at the end of quarter 2 this was 70% of indicators on target – full details were reported to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in November, and will come to Cabinet in December. As we continue to improve, this is very positive, and the highest percentage on target in recent years.

I have continued this year with the proactive practice of putting any indicators that have failed to meet their target “into focus” which means further explanation is given in the committee and cabinet reports to explain the performance and confirm what action is being taken to improve the situation. Closer scrutiny is also given to indicators where there is a downward direction of travel, but are still on target, to mitigate against continued reduction in performance.

▶ **FUTURE**

The governance for the corporate performance framework is embedded and as such this approach will be continued throughout 2018/19.

This governance is multi-layered – individual teams, lead officers, Directors, portfolio holders and member scrutiny through the Corporate O&S and Cabinet work programme. Teamwork will ensure focus is achieved and improvements made.

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QUESTION TIME

Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There are 5 questions to the Leader and 9 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER

1. From Councillor Shinnick to Councillor Gledhill

Could the Leader please update the Chamber on progress with dealing with Serious ASB issues on the Flowers Estate in Ockendon.

2. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me on whether there are potential benefits to further developing our service user focused approach through more use of qualitative approaches to the assessment of the standard of customer service being provided by departments within Thurrock Council.

3. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

Can the Leader of the Council please explain what steps were taken, prior to the increases being proposed by Cabinet and agreed by Full Council, to assess the impact his administration's council tax rises on consumer spending, local business and the welfare of low-income working households and disabled people in Thurrock?

4. From Councillor Jefferies to Councillor Gledhill

Can the Leader outline the Council's approach to whistleblowing allegations and what the outcomes have been?

5. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Gledhill

Has the Leader of the Council read the full report into whistle blowing allegations carried out by an Independent barrister?

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Anderson to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health update the chamber on children centre provision?

2. From Councillor Rigby to Councillor Halden

Please can the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health update the chamber on the progress to deliver new Medical Centres in the Borough.

3. From Councillor Okunade to Councillor Halden

Can the Portfolio Holder for Health and Education tell us what the Council is doing to protect the health and wellbeing of our Tilbury residents from the hazardous air pollution?

4. From Councillor Shinnick to Councillor Watkins

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways please provide an update on the Flowers Estate with regard to the maintenance of flower beds, grass cutting and fly tipping.

5. From Councillor Smith to Councillor Watkins

With the impending closure of the car park at the 'rec' in Aveley and Council having leased alternative parking to the rear of the Post Office in the High Street would the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways advise what measures are in place to enforce anti-social parking in the access road adjacent the Post Office.

6. From Councillor Fletcher to Councillor Watkins

I have been asked about the new HGV weight restrictions proposed for Ockendon and other parts of the borough. I have continued to chase this and I now understand that the earliest we may see these new restrictions put out to consultation is now December. Would the Portfolio Holder please explain why this enforcement measure has been delayed?

7. From Councillor Fletcher to Councillor Johnson

Many Council tenants in Ockendon have expressed concern at the Council's 'like for like' policy, which appears in some cases to justify inconsistent or even ineffective repairs. Would the Portfolio Holder commit to setting out a consistent principle for repairs to Council property, based not on 'like for like' but on 'fitness for purpose'?

8. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Johnson

Would the Portfolio Holder explain the reasons for changing the access to Doug Siddons Court?

9. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Johnson

Can the Portfolio Holder explain why only 12.2% of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance are accepted as homeless?

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Item 15 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 28 November 2018

Date	From	Motion	Status	Accountable Director
27/6/2018	Cllr Aker	This Council calls on Cabinet to commit to looking at each private contract and assess whether, or not, it could be fulfilled locally and begin a process of bringing private contracts back in-house as soon as possible so that the Council can maximise the benefits for Thurrock rather than multi-national corporations.	<p>A paper has been produced that outlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the balance of in-house v. outsourced services delivered by Thurrock Council - Are larger organisations getting too much benefit from the Council's spending power - The current level of support to local businesses and the voluntary sector <p>The draft paper was presented to CSR on 24 October and will be presented at Cabinet on 13 December.</p>	Sharon Bayliss
31/10/2018	Cllr Halden	<p>The Chamber congratulates our schools for the summer exam results and the Council should continue to work closely with them to deliver the new school places we need,</p> <p>The Institute for Fiscal Studies reports that since 2010 we have seen an 8% cut per pupil and Council calls on the Government to reverse this worrying trend in their review of the national funding formula and properly support the young people in our borough.</p>	<p>The schools will be congratulated on their exam success via the Headteachers' Bulletin which is due to be distributed on 12/11/18.</p> <p>The Council is working with the ESFA and the schools to ensure the three agreed Free Schools open as planned.</p> <p>The Council has written to the Secretary of State on 8 November 2018 calling on the Government to reverse the worrying trend of 8% cuts per pupil since 2010 in their review of the national funding formula and properly support the young people in our borough.</p>	Rory Patterson
31/10/2018	Cllr Gledhill	We call on the elected members of Thurrock Council to support any judicial review, or other legal action, that may be possible against Highways England proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing?	Evidence will continue to be gathered to support a potential future judicial review of Highways England's proposed Lower Thames Crossing. Should the opportunity arise to challenge the process on grounds eligible for judicial review it will be taken.	Steve Cox

Item 15 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 28 November 2018

31/10/2018	Cllr Spillman	<p>Full Council asks for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee under its cross cutting remit on overall performance and monitoring and steering the overview and scrutiny function to look into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny processes at Thurrock Council - the effectiveness of Motions agreed at the Full Council. 	<p>The clerk for Corporate O & S has been informed of the Full Council's motion and will raise at the next committee on 20th November, to be added appropriately onto the work programme.</p>	Matt Boulter
31/10/2018	Cllr J Kent	<p>Thurrock Council notes that since decriminalisation of parking in 2005 residents of Lodge Lane have been able to park on their crossovers - as they had been able to for decades before. The decision to enforce against residents parking in this way has caused significant anger and concern against those affected. Council calls on Cabinet to revisit this decision and find a way of allowing residents to park in the way they have for many, many years without any problem.</p>	<p>The Transport Development Team have commenced a review of the Traffic Regulation Order covering Lodge Lane and potential options will be considered. These options will be prepared for consideration and action as appropriate over the next few weeks.</p>	Steve Cox

Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor J Kent

Thurrock taxi trade is under huge pressure at the current time. Much of this pressure is being caused by the proliferation of Uber in the borough and there needs to be a level playing field for the long standing Thurrock Licensed Taxi Trade and Uber alike. To help achieve this Members call on the Authority to work with Uber London Limited and Transport for London to achieve a redrawing of the boundaries of Uber's geo fence which, currently, includes Thurrock as part of Greater London.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority' area and for which the Authority has a relevant function.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this motion.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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