

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

Cabinet

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **9 October 2019**

Committee Rooms 2 & 3, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Robert Gledhill (Leader), Shane Hebb (Deputy Leader), Mark Coxshall, James Halden, Deborah Huelin, Barry Johnson, Susan Little, Ben Maney and Aaron Watkins

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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4 Declaration of Interests	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

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Agenda published on: **1 October 2019**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest at a meeting?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

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

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 September 2019 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-ins is Monday 23 September at 5.00pm

Present: Councillors Robert Gledhill (Chair), Shane Hebb (Deputy Chair), Mark Coxshall, James Halden, Barry Johnson, Susan Little and Ben Maney

Apologies: Councillors Deborah Huelin and Aaron Watkins

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Tim Hallam, Acting Head of Legal, Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health/Interim Director of Children's Services
Andrew Millard, Interim Director of Place
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer

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

25. Minutes

The minutes of Cabinet held on 10 July 2019 were approved as a true and correct record.

26. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

27. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

28. Statements by the Leader

The Leader announced that Thurrock Council had been successful in their application to the High Court for an interim encampment injunction to prevent anyone from establishing unauthorised encampment in Thurrock without full permission and would be enforceable on public and private land. An illegal encampment would result in immediate arrest and would enable the Council

to move encampments on within a few hours as well as giving the police more powers in enforcing this.

The injunction would also act as a greater deterrent to illegal encampments. It was the second stage of a three stage process and this injunction would be in place for a few months as the Council prepared for a final injunction.

The Leader moved on to state that Grays and Tilbury had been selected in the first stages of two exciting government schemes which would help to bring in millions in funding to improve and regenerate the two towns. Grays had been named as one of the additional 50 towns successful in the first round of bidding for the government's Future High Street Fund. This meant that funding would be received to develop a detailed business plan for the Council to bid for a share of the £1 billion government funding which could be used to revitalise Grays High Street through a new infrastructure that would attract new businesses, shoppers and homes.

Tilbury and Grays had also been selected by the government to receive their share of a new £3.6 billion funding pot to help improve infrastructure, drive economic growth and increase job opportunities. Both towns would be one of the 100 towns to benefit from the New Towns Fund and could potentially acquire up to £25 million each to transform the towns through improved transport, broadband connectivity, skills and culture.

The funding for Tilbury and Grays was in addition to the current Council plans for Grays Town Centre which included the Grays Town Centre Regeneration and the Grays Underpass Scheme. In addition, there was already private investment to transform the State Cinema site and plans to create a revitalised shopping centre which owners, New River, say could include a gym, a hotel and food retail.

Moving on to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), the Leader said that the Council had been successful in continuously targeting ASB acts with a campaign to crack down on the use of nitrous oxide (laughing gas) canisters and in securing a criminal behaviour order against a nuisance neighbour.

Back in August 2019, the Council had launched a joint campaign between Essex Police and Environmental Enforcement Officers to tackle ASB and nitrous oxide canisters in Thurrock's car parks. The first few weeks of this campaign saw:

- 19 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for littering, fly-posting and ASB;
- 22 community protection warnings for ASB involvement in Grays, Chafford Hundred and Tilbury;
- 8 community protection warnings for cannabis possession; and
- 3 community protection warnings for HGV parking in Manor Way.

There had also been success in securing a 10 year Criminal Behaviour Order against a nuisance dog owner along with £12,000 worth of fines due to the

perpetrator's failure to comply with a noise abatement notice. This would also prevent the perpetrator from owning animals for 10 years and shows that people need to have consideration for their neighbours regarding noise nuisances. The Council will continue to take whatever action necessary to protect residents from all forms of nuisance and ASB.

The Leader gave praise to the Council's Principal Social Worker, Fran Leddra, had been appointed to the position of Chief Social Worker for England in a joint role with Mark Harvey of Hertfordshire County Council. He praised Fran Leddra's talent, expertise and experience as well as the high esteem of the services held in Thurrock.

The Leader announced that the Council had been shortlisted for three categories in the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards:

- Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship Initiative for the Council's financial and commercial success;
- Best Efficiency and Transformation Initiative for customer service; and
- Best Community and Neighbourhood Initiative for the Council's Give A Gift.

The APSE awards were due to take place on 12 September 2019 and the Leader wished the teams good luck.

Regarding Clean It, Cut It, Fill It, the Leader gave the following updates:

- 965 potholes filled within agreed timelines;
- 647 fly-tips cleared;
- 1,245 tonnes of waste collected by street cleaning and grounds maintenance teams combined; and
- 1,820 FPNs issued for littering, dropping cigarette butts and ASB.

29. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues

Councillor Halden gave an update on the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) and said that Thurrock was in a great position with realistic plans in place following the inherited deficit back in 2016. These plans had been created in partnership with forward thinking schools and through budget planning. Like many other local authorities, Thurrock had a historic DSG debt due to pressures to the service. Some of this pressure arose from an increase in special needs over the last five years and a sustainable long term plan was needed to resolve these pressures.

Councillor Halden went on to announce that the DSG debt recovery plan had seen a drop from £3.5 million in 2018 to £2.6 million in 2019 and was forecasted to eventually drop to zero by 2022. It would require investment in greater efficiency and a recent example was where school transport costs had been capped but was still able to meet obligations. The Council had provided the DSG with additional financial support and a levy had been agreed to meet

the costs of permanent exclusion and will continue to grow an inclusion model to support pupils where possible.

The New Funding Formula implemented in 2018, had enabled an extra £1 million in Thurrock's education system and the attributed funds would be targeted to more prior pupils than before. Additional investment was also provided by the PM for 2022/23 as part of SEND.

The High Needs Block (HNB) was an active service and Councillor Halden had been in discussions with Officers regarding how reserves in DSG could be allocated to preserve the HNB. For example, Cabinet would be willing to provide former reserves if it could be match funded by an annual contribution from the DSG to maintain reserves for extraordinary care needs.

Councillor Halden thanked School Forums, Councillor Hebb, Director Sean Clark and Senior Officer David May in the Finance directorate on untangling the DSG debt. He finished by saying that by the financial year of 2021/22, Thurrock's education system would see further improvements, DSG funds would be directed to prior pupils, the DSG would be balanced and reserves would be established to preserve stability. This would be in addition to investing revenue and capital in mental health, inclusion, SEND, support for care leavers and building new schools. The aim was for Thurrock Council to lead the nation by example through building a more inclusive borough.

The Leader was pleased to hear that DSG was aiming to get to the position that it should be in to enable it to be used effectively.

30. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

There were no petitions submitted from members of the public.

31. Questions from Non-Executive Members

There were no questions received from non-executive Members.

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

The Leader stated that comments from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the Grays Town Centre Regeneration: Civic Offices Project Position Statement report, would be considered when the report was discussed.

No other matters had been referred to the Cabinet for consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

33. Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 2019/20 (Decision: 110516)

Councillor Hebb presented the report which outlined that the Council's position forecast at the end of June 2019 was a net pressure of £1.502m or

1.10% against the General Fund Directorate budgets. Although this reflected pressures in Children's Services, domiciliary care and Adults, Housing and Health, departments that had made savings should also be recognised. Based on this forecast, the overall General Fund Budget still had a projected surplus of £4.301m.

Councillor Hebb continued on to say that Children's Services had a £0.972 million overspend but had long term objectives and efforts should be recognised. The service had potential high cost packages for individualised support packages but with early intervention approaches, this could help to deliver a level of cost avoidance.

Environment and Highways had a small overspend but always had more services to undertake. With domiciliary care, most other Local Authorities (LAs) were in the same position with pressures as well. The Council was under a legal duty to have a balanced budget by the year end and Councillor Hebb stated that this would be achieved.

There had been a drop in external income from Grangewaters Outdoor Activity Centre but mitigations were in place and Grangewaters were anticipating an improvement as they sought corporate bookings. Councillor Hebb encouraged everyone to visit Grangewaters with their families as it had many great activities and was a fantastic site.

There were challenges in the highways infrastructure but a recovery was anticipated. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was on track with a 0% variance.

Noting the surplus of £4.301 million, the Leader said that this should be celebrated as the surplus would still be there at the end of the financial year. This enabled works such as the DSG and tackling ASB. Councillor Hebb answered that the lead administration team had always prided themselves in not using the surplus to account for shortfalls in revenues and spending.

Councillor Little commented that her portfolio areas were in red but they were actually overspending the budget by less than 1%. Children's Services had big costs and in Adult Social Care, many people had less funding in care packages but some people were clever in hiding their money through passing owned homes to family members as an example. The service was getting rigorous in their care plans. With the Edge of Care plan in Children's Services, this helped to save on costs and the service worked hard to ensure children stayed at home if possible.

The Leader commented that it was not unusual to see an overspend or underspend in each quarter of the year.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet commented on the forecast outturn position for 2019/20 and supported the need for further mitigation to outturn within the agreed budget envelope.

Reason for decision: as outlined in the report.
This decision is subject to call-in.

34. Grays Town Centre Regeneration: Civic Offices Project Position Statement (Decision: 110517)

Councillor Coxshall introduced the report by thanking the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their comments. He referred the Executive to paragraph 2.4 which highlighted that Civic Offices extension would cost the Council £1.2 million less than the full CO1 refurbishment. The extension would not be built on Green belt and as a result, it would free up space, deliver arts and culture to the area and provide accessible key services to the public. Thurrock's MP had been pushing for investment in Thurrock for many years.

Councillor Halden started discussions by saying that he was confused over some of the objections that had been raised by the press and opposition party members. The last administration had earmarked almost £10 million for works of which £4.2 million had been spent to update the Council offices before and there had been plans to make use of a redundant space which had not gone ahead. The current administration wished to put the rest of that money as part of the Grays Town Centre Regeneration but the opposition party was objecting to this.

Councillor Coxshall agreed that opposition party members had raised concerns at Full Council and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and enabled the Executive to be better informed of issues. He went on to say that the last administration had done a good job of updating the Council offices which was good value for money and now the current administration wished to use the remaining money of £4.8 million to deliver facilities for the public to use in addition to new homes in Grays. Councillor Halden agreed but thought it was a misfortune to see opposition to the Civic Offices Project as the leftover money was being put to good use.

Councillor Little was pleased with the report and said that the extension would provide a big office space to presents to be wrapped in for Looked After Children. She continued on by saying that having new homes in Grays would be good for the service's care leavers as they would be close to the station, to town and to the Civic Offices.

Mentioning comments from opposition Councillors, Councillor Coxshall said that the new extension would revitalise the Grade II listed church and would enable it to be more appreciated. There had also been no objections from the church who had also given their support to the project. In addition, Thameside Theatre would benefit from the new extension because the registrar office

would be moved to the new building thus freeing up the space in the Thameside Theatre.

On the running costs on paragraph 2.8, Councillor Maney questioned what the 30% of saved costs would be on. Councillor Coxshall answered that costs would be saved in environmental, energy and maintenance.

Councillor Hebb commented that the current civic offices were not particularly welcoming and did not provide much privacy for people. The new building would give a degree of privacy when needed and there would be cultural benefits to Grays. He went on to mention that Barking and Dagenham had regenerated over the years and had created some great open spaces and that the Civic Offices Project was not just about the offices, it was about regenerating Grays Town Centre.

Agreeing, Councillor Coxshall said that all 49 Thurrock Councillors could see this and the report should allay concerns of costs and show what the project was offering. Thurrock's MP had been lobbying for Thurrock's regeneration and the new PM was supporting the scheme that would bring Grays into the 21st century.

The Leader commented on many regeneration ideas that had been formed for Grays over the years from the last and current administration. With more homes in Grays, it would give families homes and create more business opportunities in Grays which currently had no night economy. He mentioned that the Council offices had been used for filming a BBC comedy show and had been chosen because of its décor that gave the impression of a 1980s design. The Council had evolved over the years and the amount of space originally used were now unused so improvement was needed.

Councillor Johnson agreed and stated that it was time to take action. The Leader agreed and said the planning application for the Civic Offices extension would be reconsidered at Planning Committee on 19 September 2019.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted the contents of this report and recommended how they wish to proceed with the Civic Offices element of the Grays Town Centre Regeneration programme, having regard to any comments provided by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting held on 3 September.

Reason for decision: as outlined in the report.
This decision is subject to call-in.

35. Proposal to Adopt S34 Duty of Care for Domestic Waste; and S42 Idling Engines in Parked Vehicles

The Leader introduced the report and said that the s42 Idling Engines in Parked Vehicles would help to prevent drivers sitting outside schools from leaving their vehicle engines on while parked. It would help to improve air quality and there was a common misconception that more fuel was used if an engine was turned off then back on. It was actually that fuel costs were already saved when a vehicle engine has been turned off for more than 10 seconds.

On the s34 Duty of Care for Domestic Waste, householders have a duty of care when disposing of their waste and steps have to be taken to prevent their waste from escaping and causing harm to the environment. By following these guidelines, householders would not be at risk of being fined for fly-tipping. The duty of care required domestic householders to take reasonable measures in securing their waste as well as ensuring their waste is removed by an authorised person.

Councillor Little mentioned that she had recently seen a lorry that had not been correctly netted and had resulted in waste dropping out of the lorry. She questioned what actions could be taken to resolve this type of issue. The Leader replied that the issue was a matter for the police and there had been reports of people throwing litter out of their vehicles as well. It would be a matter of writing to the owner company of the lorry to ensure they correctly net their vehicles to secure their waste.

On s42 Idling Engines in Parked Vehicles, Councillor Hebb thought it made a good point and mentioned that train stations in Thurrock also had this same problem. He went on to that in Stanford le Hope west, cars would idle outside a car home causing much pollution. The s42 showed ethical responsibility and would help to improve air quality.

The Leader said that the report had been through the relevant scrutiny committee and that it was a common sense approach to the issues raised.

RESOLVED THAT:

1.1 Cabinet approved the adoption and enforcement of S34 – Duty of Care for domestic waste.

1.2 Cabinet approved the adoption and enforcement of S42 – Idling engines in parked vehicles.

36. Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2019/20

On behalf of Councillor Huelin, the Leader introduced the report which highlighted that almost three quarters of indicators were already achieving target and that 53.5% were already performing better than the previous year. The waiting times for face to face customers had consistently been one minute which was a significant achievement in customer services.

The Leader thanked the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for overseeing corporate performance and he thought the services had come a long way from meeting a third of KPIs to now almost meeting the majority of KPIs. It was not unusual to have some areas that were hard to maintain a KPI such as filling a pothole within a 24 hour timeframe due to unforeseen weather conditions.

Referring to page 47 of the agenda, Councillor Johnson noted that satisfaction was strong across the board and was confident that the route to green would be achieved.

Councillor Hebb was pleased to hear that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had put proposals forward for improvements and remembered that there had been some areas that were consistently in the red. He said it was great to see the improvement now and that the gap to achieving a KPI needed to be reduced.

The Leader mentioned that the rate for FPNs had increased and a report would be brought to Cabinet next month which may further influence an increase in payment rates going forward. In Councillor Watkins's absence, the Leader noted the collection of bins within target for the fifth month running and the great work that had been undertaken in recycling, with the service looking at ways to implement recycling facilities in flats.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1.1 Cabinet noted and commented upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators in particular those areas which are off target**
- 1.2 Cabinet identified any areas which require additional consideration**

The meeting finished at 8.04 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

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9 October 2019		ITEM: 10
Cabinet		
Education Support Strategy		
Wards and communities affected: All		Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor James Halden, Portfolio Holder Education and Health		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education and Skills		
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director, Adults, Housing and Health / Interim Director of Children's Service		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The educational landscape across Thurrock has seen significant change over the last five years. The majority of our schools either have joined Multiple Academy Trusts or have become stand-alone academies in line with national government policy.

The Education Support Strategy, which has been developed in partnership with our schools, aims to set out how the Local Authority is looking to further imbed our partnership-working ethos to ensure that children and young people can access educational provision that offers a well round and balanced curriculum for all.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Cabinet to approve the Education Support Strategy.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Thurrock is a place of opportunity – our place making agenda over the coming year's sets out the need to provide in the region of 32,000 new homes and in the region of 20,000 new jobs.
- 2.2 The need to ensure that Thurrock has good or better schools to support this exciting agenda has been recognised with the successful bids for three new free schools – one of these being a new special school.
- 2.3 The LA has also undergone some significant changes and we have realigned a number of our services to schools to meet the changing demand. As the

majority of our schools have embraced the academisation route we have had to ensure that we have built strong partnerships with the key message of keeping the child or young person central to all decision making processes

- 2.4 Thurrock has remained committed to acting as a critical friend when required and seeking additional funding to support a range of activities within our schools. The Educational Support strategy looks to bring together in one place the key work of the LA in providing support and challenge when required.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The Local Authority in partnership with schools has developed an Education Support Strategy, which sets out how we are looking to engage and support schools over the next five years. The strategy is underpinned by our strategic vision which states “all children and young people will enjoy and engage with learning” it recognises the joint responsibilities that the LA and Schools have in ensuring that all children and young people have access to educational pathways that meet individual needs.

The key Education Support priorities for Thurrock Council are:

- 1) Attainment. Raise attainment and close the attainment gaps between key pupil groups, across all key phases and key stages.
- 2) Capacity. See all of our schools as good or outstanding and look at the principle of a minimum of five schools from both primary and secondary phases within single MATs and ensure that we support each MAT to have the greatest capacity for recruitment, retaining highly skills staff across all key phases.
- 3) Inclusion. Secure high quality alternative provision, which includes a mainstream offer and implement a vision for SEND that ensures that every child and young person has an equitable access to a great education.
- 4) Employability and Skills. Ensure all children and young people have access to high quality Careers, Information and Guidance, which includes bespoke education and skills pathways, working with partners in the public and private sector to unlock opportunity for and meet employment needs for young people.
- 5) Wellbeing and safety. Promote of an inclusive approach to creating improved mental and physical health, as well as lead the fight against anti-social behaviour, violence in all its forms and gang related issues.
- 6) Rigour and partnership. Work in partnership with schools, academies and our Teaching Schools to be the constant critical friend, regularly applying data and information to support and challenge in order to ensure that problems are never a surprise, that our practice stands up to scrutiny and that we are always Ofsted ready.

4. Reason for Recommendation

Cabinet have a clear and accountable governance responsibility around how we support and work with schools to provide strong educational pathways for all children and young people.

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

5.1 Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5.2 Local Educational Providers

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

6.1 This report contributes to the following corporate priorities:
- create a great place for learning and opportunity

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead - Finance

The role of school support has changed with the academisation programme as a result much of the school improvement work that would have been undertaken by the LA has been devolved to schools. However Thurrock has pro-actively identified additional funding routes to provide a range of targeted services to schools and will seek to identify any other potential funding routes to support educational pathways across Thurrock.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Legal

Cabinet is asked to note the report content under the remit of Cabinet's terms of reference and powers.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project Officer

Supporting our children and young people to enjoy schools links to the Council's key strategic priority around learning. The opportunities over the coming years in Thurrock mean that children and young people need to be able to learn and develop the skills that will mean they can engage fully with the regeneration agenda. The Education Support Strategy sets out the Local Authority's vision around how work in partnership with schools and recognise them as part of the community network of support for residents across the LA.

As this is a new strategy we have produced an equalities impact assessment to support this work across local communities.

- 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

N/A

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

N/A

9. **Appendices to the report**

Education Support Strategy

Report Author

Michele Lucas

Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Appendix 1



Thurrock Council Education Support Strategy 2019-2022



Thurrock Council Vision

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

Thurrock Council Education Support Strategy 2019-2022

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Thurrock Council Education Support Strategy 2019-2022

1. Executive summary for the Education Support Strategy 2019-2022

Working with our schools, early year's settings, partners and parents, we are proud to unveil our new Education Support Strategy for Early Years settings, Schools, Colleges, Parents and Partners which focus on six key areas.

Thurrock education will always hold a special place in my heart. From Primary School in Corringham, Secondary School in Stanford and onto College in Grays, Thurrock education gave me my start in life. I am only here today, getting to do this amazing job and having been elected at 19 years old because of the schools and teachers here in Thurrock.

With Ofsted criteria rightly becoming more rigorous, we need to ensure that Team Thurrock rises to the challenge. But more to the point, we want to ensure we are working together to build a system which is ambitious, inclusive and sustainable. Key to this is the local authority's role as a constant critical friend, using our data to challenge and support our partners to close the attainment gap and to demonstrate progress for each child/young person. Equally, this means partners telling us about where they feel we can improve.

We have one of the most ambitious capital projects anywhere, with circa £70m of investment set aside to deliver around 3,500 new school places by 2021. Our locally grown multi-academy trusts have worked hard with the council to attract this record investment from the ESFA and our success is a strong commentary on our close working relationship with a range of strategic partners. A key focus of ours is to support the growth of our schools and our Multi Academy Trusts to ensure we both drive economies of scale and build internal capacity to recruit, train and retain the best teachers within our MAT's.

One of our six key priorities is mental and physical health, recognising the need to offer early help so our young people have the tools they need to cope with an often hectic world. We know that children who are well are children who succeed. The financial plan Thurrock Council has run from 2016 has ensured we eliminated a £30m funding gap in the borough's finances, and balanced the budget, while producing modest surpluses over 4 years. To demonstrate how important we take supporting wellbeing within our family of schools, we invested over £1.5m extra in the 2019 financial year alone to support non-statutory services such as mental health provision and supporting the schools forum with the historic deficit in the Dedicated School Grant. We have also invested almost £4m extra in improving sporting facilities. We are also working closely with the police and schools forum to ensure that our early offer of help and youth offending offer are accessible for schools and young people outside of school hours.

We take inclusion seriously. Another of our six goals consists of building on the work to ensure we establish resource bases to try and support all children in mainstream education wherever possible – this is good for young people, avoids over and inappropriate use of PRU education and protects core budgets. We must build on this, certainly as we look to a new long-term vision for Educational Needs and Disabilities and ensuring that Education Health Care Plans work is timely and effective for young people. Thurrock is also proud that we are one of the few authorities, working with the School' Forum, to be fully rolling out the new National Funding Formula from 2020 (with 2019/2020 being used as a transitional year) to ensure that funding is closely targeted towards deprivation, and thus strengthening our inclusion agenda.

Thurrock has a bright future. We are on the doorstep of the greatest capital city in the world, with some of the best and most inclusive schools anywhere and with a local authority which is a leader in local government. We will do more to support the delivery of our skills agenda across the South Essex Corridor to ensure that every Thurrock pupil has a clear and bespoke employment pathway. Between our Skills and Employment Service, Inspire, and our family of schools, we want to ensure that the skills agenda is something that is embedded throughout every school phase. We all know that we must build a local economy and a workforce which have the skills required to deliver the infrastructure of the future and in which students are ready and equipped to take advantage of the enormous opportunities around them.

I am very grateful for every teacher, governor, parent, student and members of the council and school staff who have done so much to make Thurrock such a success story today, and what we are all doing to make

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us the envy of the country tomorrow. I am even more grateful for what we continue to do make us the envy of the country tomorrow.

Councillor James Halden

Cabinet Member for Education Thurrock Council



The key Education Support priorities for Thurrock Council are:

- 1) Attainment. Raise attainment and close the attainment gaps between key pupil groups, across all key phases and key stages.
- 2) Capacity. See all of our schools as good or outstanding and look at the principle of a minimum of five schools from both primary and secondary phases within single MATs and ensure that we support each MAT to have the greatest capacity for recruitment, retaining highly skills staff across all key phases.
- 3) Inclusion. Secure high quality alternative provision which includes a mainstream offer and implement a vision for SEND that ensures that every child and young person has an equitable access to a great education.
- 4) Employability and Skills. Ensure all children and young people have access to high quality Careers, Information and Guidance which includes bespoke education and skills pathways, working with partners in the public and private sector to unlock opportunity for and meet employment needs for young people.
- 5) Wellbeing and safety. Promote of an inclusive approach to creating improved mental and physical health, as well as lead the fight against anti-social behaviour, violence in all its forms and gang related issues.
- 6) Rigour and partnership. Work in partnership with schools, academies and our Teaching Schools to be the constant critical friend, regularly applying data and information to support and challenge in order to ensure that problems are never a surprise, that our practice stands up to scrutiny and that we are always Ofsted ready.

2. Vision for Education in Thurrock

Thurrock Council Education Support Strategy 2019-2022

The Thurrock School Education Support Strategy, which includes the Policy for School Improvement, sets out how early years settings, schools, academies, MATs, colleges, teaching schools and the Council will work in partnership to achieve our vision:

In Thurrock we have a relentless drive to champion all of our children and young people to ensure they have the best start in life, make the most amount of progress enabling them to have a fulfilling and prosperous future. We want all of our schools to be sustainable, provide high quality learning and skills opportunities, including a rich cultural entitlement whilst continuing to raise standards to improve educational outcomes and meet the needs of our diverse growing communities.

The Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health take the statutory duties very seriously and therefore will ensure that they know the schools, academies and free schools in the borough well. They will ensure their officers gather accurate and timely information about all schools, academies and free schools through annual conversation visits which take place at the beginning of each new academic year.

Our aspiration is that by 2022, Thurrock will be one of the top 25% of local authorities nationally for the quality and provision of learning across all age groups and abilities. Our ambition is that all schools in Thurrock are in the Multi Academy Trust of at least five schools, which include both primary and secondary phase.

3. Principles

Our principles have a foundation in the statutory duties that local education authorities are required to carry out. The table shows how they will be applied in Thurrock. In so doing the Council will act as the champion for all Thurrock children and young people.

Statutory Responsibility	What we will do in Thurrock
Provide strong, strategic local leadership and development of an increasingly autonomous and diverse education and children's services sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote high educational standards for all our children and young people in the borough and ensure that particular attention is given to the most disadvantaged groups. Work in partnership with the Department for Education, Regional Schools Commissioner, local school leaders and the Dioceses, ensuring that school organisation is centred on the needs of children and young people as learners. Actively form partnerships with Multi- Academy Trusts, and Teaching School Alliances Ensure all those working with children and young people will fulfil their responsibilities as corporate parents.
Safeguarding children is 'integral to all local authority, schools and other partners to'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with all partners to ensure children are effectively safeguarded. Support self-evaluation of school cultures for safeguarding and challenge when these are not secure. Facilitate the Safeguarding Leads Forum to ensure clear communication and planning of support arrangements between all agencies and schools through direct briefing and engagement activities with the safeguarding leads in school.
Work with partners to promote prevention and early intervention so early problems are dealt with before they become serious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with other Council services such as Brighter Futures, and beyond, such as Health Services. As champions of children we will work with school leaders so schools cultures ensure that the emotional wellbeing and mental health of pupils and staff is everyone's concern. Provide access to Educational Psychology Services to support consultation and early intervention with children and young people.
Promote the interests of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thurrock primary, secondary and special schools will actively form

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children, young people, parents and families and work with local communities to stimulate and support a diversity of school, early years and 16-19 provision that meets local needs

- sustainable partnerships to improve standards, and be more able to withstand all aspects of external scrutiny and will be financially sustainable.
- There will be sufficiency of high quality local places that support parental preference whilst avoiding costly surplus capacity (a target of no more than 5% spare capacity).
- Young people will have the knowledge, skills and experience to be ready to work and have access to vocational and technical pathways, comprehensive careers information advice and guidance and meaningful employer engagement.
- Children and young people in the care of the Council are at the centre of all we do and benefit from all services.
- The Headteacher of the Virtual School champions the educational rights of all 'children looked after' and will ensure that they achieve the best possible educational outcomes and works with schools to use Pupil Premium Plus funding to best effect.

Work with Headteachers/Principals, school governors and academy sponsors and principals, to 'promote educational excellence for all children and young people and be ambitious in tackling under-performance'

- Continue the national drive for self-improving schools through strong school leadership and governance.
- School leadership will be challenged to provide high quality teaching, learning and leadership through the strong partnership work with the LA.
- School leaders will be challenged to provide concise evidence of standards and strategies for improvement during annual conversations with the Corporate Director Children Services (CDCS) or his representatives.
- Under-performance will be challenged by CDCS and through discussions with the Regional Schools Commissioner.
- Pupil performance data will be made available and will be used to underpin monitoring and evaluations.

Source: Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities for the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services

3.1 Outcomes

We and our partners have already made great strides in raising standards at all key stages during the past few years. The ambitions in this strategy underpin our drive to secure the very best start in life for all children and young people in Thurrock. As the local education authority, this strategy enables Thurrock Council to:

- ✓ Have a fully embedded partnership model, which involves all our stakeholders working together in practice not just in theory.
- ✓ Be known for our ability to work in a supportive and challenging way delivering on commitments and dealing with issues regardless of how hard they appear to be.
- ✓ Be operating within budget with fully developed business areas that are recognised for quality and provision nationally.

Our work is underpinned by the following key principles:

- School leaders are the drivers of school improvement and the teaching schools and the council are the enablers of school improvement and effectiveness.

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- Schools are self-managing and autonomous institutions, working within a local and national context. They are responsible for their own performance.
- The role of Thurrock local authority is to commission or broker support for schools and to intervene should provision and high quality outcomes for children and young people be compromised.
- Where we identify concerns, we aim to broker improvement to prevent schools falling into a category
- Schools will be supported and challenged to continue and sustain improvement, both in attainment and in the rate of progress of our children and young people.
- Learning must be personalised, and partners will work together to narrow the attainment gap for all pupils and particularly for the most vulnerable.
- All pupils must have the support they need to overcome any barriers to their learning and well-being and to achieve the highest possible standards.
- Young people in Thurrock aged 14 – 19 will have access to the widest range of education and skills opportunities and guidance in order to meet their interests, aspirations and needs and to be able to benefit from the growth in the area.
- In Thurrock we share performance data and use the analysis of it to improve outcomes for all children and young people. We will work together as one community for the benefit and ongoing improvement of all education establishments in the borough.
- All pupils need access to a range of opportunities which enable them to access support when required, this includes supporting both physical and emotional wellbeing.

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3.2 How we will measure progress made:

Outcomes	Measures for Success
All children and young people are ready for school and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Children entering school at age related expectations ✓ Children achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage ✓ Children attain at least the 'expected standard' at the end of KS1 and KS2 in reading, writing and mathematics combined ✓ Children make at least the expected progress at the end of KS2 in reading, writing and mathematics ✓ Young people attain at least grade 5 in English and mathematics at the end of KS4 ✓ Young people make good progress between the end of KS2 and KS4 leading to high progress 8 scores ✓ Children looked after, children with SEND and disadvantaged children achieving educational outcomes in line with their peers ✓ Access to support around physical and emotional wellbeing
Access to education that meets the needs of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Thurrock early years settings, including childminders, schools and colleges are judged good or outstanding by Ofsted ✓ Children's centres that improve outcomes for children and their families, reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers; in child development and school readiness and raise parenting skills and aspirations and improve child and family health and life choices ✓ Take up of funded early education and childcare for two, three and four-year-olds ✓ Services for Post-16 young people are effective ✓ Sufficient, good quality early years, school and college places for all our children and young people

3.3 The School Support Strategy

This strategy sets out how Thurrock Council will balance both the support and challenge offered to all our education stakeholders. The goal is that all Thurrock's children young people leave school and college at Post-16 or 18 with a strong desire for learning, an ability to prosper and fully participate in the community in which they live and work. It has two elements; priorities for School Organisation and a School Improvement Policy.

In delivering the Education Support Strategy, Thurrock Council will:

- ✓ Collaborate with education providers to Improve attainment and progress for all Thurrock pupils.
- ✓ Reduce dips in attainment arising from transition points when children change school phases.
- ✓ Develop our collective commitment to enable all children and young people to experience an inclusive education.
- ✓ Embed the ambition to raise standards for all pupils including those who are disadvantaged, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those in the care of the Council.

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- ✓ Secure long-term financial sustainability for all schools taking into account funding challenges and increasing pupil numbers.
- ✓ Work in partnership with all stakeholders who play a role in education provision and standards across Thurrock.

We will evaluate our progress made and report to the Corporate Director of Children's Services Management Team, Children's Overview and Scrutiny and stakeholders annually.

4. Reasons for Change

The landscape for education in Thurrock is changing in line with the national context:

- The implementation of the revised National Funding Formula presents challenges to all schools, both nationally and locally regardless of whether they have experienced an increase in funding or a reduction in funding. We recognise that our smaller primary schools are likely to be particularly vulnerable – and we will continue to support opportunities to expand smaller primary schools to support the funding landscape.
- The curriculum demands under the new inspection regime from Ofsted will increase the range of leadership responsibilities. These will affect all schools, but are especially demanding for smaller schools alongside changes in funding.
- School leadership is demanding. School leaders have to respond to challenges to recruit high quality staff and the governing body to ensure that it has a full complement of members. This can be a challenge across our borough and is intensified in some schools.
- Outcomes across key stages 1 and 2 have risen and are all nearly at, or above, national averages, however not enough disadvantaged pupils and Pupils with SEND make the expected progress.
- Key stage 4 is below the national average, so standards need to improve.
- There is a growing need and therefore an increasing demand for specialist provision for children and young people with SEND.
- Demand for school places is increasing as the population grows in some parts of the borough but some schools remain unpopular with parents.

4.1 Inclusion

Thurrock has a long standing commitment to an inclusive system of education health care and support that actively enables access and full participation to all aspects of community life.

Developing inclusive practice is a consistent theme in ensuring the success of this strategy. All children and young people are entitled to an education which enables and empowers them to achieve the best possible outcomes. The majority of school aged young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend a mainstream school in their local community.

A small number of children / young people have special needs that are appropriately met in a special school which provides for pupils with special needs. In Thurrock there are 2 special academies which provide for those pupils with special educational needs and a further special free school which is due to deliver a further 75 places in the academic year 2021/22. There are also a number of bases located within schools catering for Social Emotional Mental Health, Hearing and Visual Impairment and Speech, Language and Communication needs.

We recognise that for some children with SEND need a mainstream school which will provide the best educational opportunities, as a result of this we have introduced the following model:-

An additional Primary Resource Base for children and young people who have Education Health and Care Plans describing their social emotional and mental health needs. This resource base is being developed to build on the successful practice of the existing Primary Resource Base to provide opportunities for these children to be involved in the wider community of the school.

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Two inclusion bases – this will offer primary school children who are experiencing difficulties in mainstream school and are at risk of, or have been permanently excluded from school. Admission to these two bases is through the Inclusion and Access service of the Local Authority and managed through the Primary Inclusion Panel with the view to reintegrating these children back into mainstream school when they are able to engage fully within the community of the school.

The Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service provides a wide range of consultation and support to enable schools to develop their inclusive offer for all children. Educational psychologists working in Thurrock undertake direct work with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in line with the statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. In addition to this schools and academies are able to commission an educational psychologist to support early intervention with children and young people who require SEND support. This can be through consultation, person centred planning meetings, assessment and intervention activities, and training/support for staff.

We take a holistic approach to promoting positive outcomes across all areas of development and learning for children and young people. We also follow a person centred planning approach. This means that our practice is always informed by which is important for the child/young person.

We offer:-

1. Facilitating person centred planning meetings
2. Supporting parent/carers to understand the child or young person's needs to promote positive outcomes
3. Assessment of the child or young person's individual needs within the context of their educational setting and community
4. Consultation, supervision and training for school staff and other professionals working with children and young people
5. Liaison across agencies to facilitate a holistic approach to supporting children and young people

The Virtual School

In order to thrive, all young people need to feel safe, cared for and loved. For some children this responsibility falls on local authorities and is underpinned by statutory guidance. The Council has a unique responsibility to children in care and, as corporate parents, should ask the question 'would this be good enough for my child?'

All officers of the Council, working in collaboration with partner agencies, have a responsibility to ensure that all 'children looked after' receive the highest quality education. The Virtual School provides challenge and support to all partners and promotes the educational rights of all 'children looked after'.

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4.2 SEND Strategic Vision

Our vision is that all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities across the Local Area access outstanding support in their early years, school, college and at work that enables them to fully achieve their potential and have happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Outreach

The Council has commissioned **Beacon Hill Academy** to provide Outreach to all schools and academies in Thurrock supporting pupils with physical, severe or complex learning difficulties in:

- Early Years learning
- ICT access
- Risk assessment and manual handling
- Physical Education

The Council has commissioned **Treetops School** to provide Outreach to all schools and academies in Thurrock supporting pupils with learning difficulties and autism in;

- Specialist Applied Behavioural Analysis/Verbal Behaviour (ABA/VB support for pupils with Autism)
- Specialist assessments and support for dyslexia
- Specialist support for learning difficulties

The Council has commissioned The Osborne Trust to provide outreach for children and young people with Hearing or Visual Impairment from the Resource Bases at St. Clere's School.

The Area SENCo will also support early years' settings and schools to ensure all pupils have access to an appropriate, challenging place of learning with a curriculum that has expectations and meets the needs of all learners.

The Area SENCO will also advise early years' settings and schools on the SEND processes and how to access Disability Access Funding (DAF) and the Early Years Inclusion Fund.

5. SEND Priorities

Priority	Evidenced by
1. Ensure that children and families are at the heart of an effective send system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement and co-production in all areas of SEND. • The role of the parent/carer Forum in putting forward parent voice through CaPa • Parent, child and young person engagement in service commissioning, planning and delivery • Co-production of individual Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) • Pupil voice and targeted engagement work • Feedback via surveys and group work
2. Ensure every child and young person is making good progress and attends a good place to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive range of high quality SEND services available in mainstream and special early years settings, schools and colleges for children and young people for SEND support and EHCP • Measures of individual outcomes progress through EHCP and SEND support and beyond academic attainment • Appropriate range of specialist places in place • SEND progress measures in schools and bases for EHCP and SEND support • Targeted monitoring and support for all vulnerable groups including SEND support, EHCP, LAC, CIN and young offenders
3. Ensure children and families are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality comprehensive information on all SEND services

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well supported	<p>through the Local Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality support services in all provision to enable parents, children and young people to achieve identified outcomes • High quality advisory and support services through IS and Information, Advice and Guidance services (IAGS) • Clear and comprehensive routes of access to co-ordinated Health & Social Care support including SEND support, CAF, Health Pathways including Emotional, Health & Mental Wellbeing and EHCP
4. Ensure an effective and responsive approach to assessing and meeting the needs of children and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality and efficient SEND assessment, delivery, monitoring and administration at early years settings, schools and college provision with effective Local Authority, Health and Social Care contributions • Comprehensive support for children and young people in place leading to enhanced outcomes for all children and young people
5. Ensure the identification of early support for children with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive early identification and support systems including Early Support, Portage, Outreach services and co-ordinated support in Early Years settings incorporating Health, Social Care and Education systems under a single co-ordinated system • Clear systems of support and advice to early years settings to ensure identification of needs and support including support from the Area SENCo • Access to Educational Psychology Services for early intervention and support
6. Ensure young people are well prepared for adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and timely Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) planning ensuring young people have a wide range of opportunities and achieve across all six areas of PFA • Clear and effective systems enabling young people to transition to adult education, employment, health and social care services based on their individual needs

5.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding in Education is a high priority. This includes providing training to Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in schools and other educational settings and coordinating DSL forums to ensure regular updates and information. We regularly provide advice and support to schools and parents as appropriate.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO is responsible for co-ordinating and managing the process and framework for allegations of abuse against children by people who work either in a professional or voluntary capacity. It may be that the person either:

- has or may have behaved in a way that has harmed a child
- may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

By law, unitary local authorities like Thurrock have a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who is involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. The LADO does not investigate cases but they do:

- give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- work closely with the police and other agencies
- monitor cases to make sure that they are dealt with as quickly, thoroughly and fairly as possible

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Allegations against employees must be reported to:

- a senior manager in the organisation immediately
- the LADO within 1 working day

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6 School Organisation

Aims

Our School Organisation aim is that by 2022 Thurrock will have sufficient high quality early years and education places for all of the children and young people in the borough. Every parent should be confident that their child will be able to attend a local, good or better school that meets their needs.

6.1 Objectives

- Secure sufficient places for children in all phases and types of school.
- Maximise the proportion of children being offered a place at their first choice of school
- Schools will be of a sufficient size to be viable in the future, offer a high quality and broad curriculum, attract pupils from the local community and provide strong outcomes for children.
- Primary schools will be readily accessible* to pupils; for the majority of children within walking distance in urban areas and with transport to school in rural areas, in accordance with the Borough Council's [*Home to School Transport Policy April 2016](#)

To meet our objectives, we will:

- Plan school places to meet both current and projected future demand.
- Actively promote strong schools, encouraging the best schools to expand.
- Work with the Admissions Service to maximise the opportunity for parents to secure a place at one of their three preferences when applying to a school for admission.
- Work with schools to ensure they remain a popular choice for local parents and young people
- Work in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE), the Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses, Multi-Academy Trusts, local councils, Regional Schools Commissioner's Office and agencies to secure the best and most sustainable schools for local communities.

Further guidance on School Organisation across Thurrock is given in the Borough Council's ['Pupil Place Plan](#)

6.2 Sufficient School Places

It is the role of Thurrock Council to plan, organise and commission places in the borough, in a way that raises standards, manages rising pupil numbers and creates a diverse community of schools. The Council seeks to exercise this function in partnership with the DfE, local and National MATS and the ESFA

The need for school places changes in response to population movements and birth rate variations. Increases in demand can lead to the creation of a new school or the expansion of existing schools by adding permanent or temporary accommodation. Surplus places can also mean the reduction of school provision in an area through reduced admission arrangements or the rationalisation of school provision, including changes to existing catchment areas. Predicting school place demand is a complex task. Where children go to school involves a range of factors such as housing growth, inward and outward migration and parental preference. For instance, some of our schools on the edges of Thurrock cater for out-of-borough pupils, some Thurrock pupils attend schools in neighbouring counties, and other schools rely on significant numbers of pupils beyond catchment areas to fill places.

Every year the team works extremely hard to produce a new Pupil Place Plan which forecasts the future need for pupil places. This document not only informs the Council strategically where education provision will need to be expanded, but also informs housing developers where educational infrastructure will be required.

We are very fortunate in Thurrock to have built strong working relationships with our schools and academies and this allows us to work in partnership with them when identifying locations where we can build in additional

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capacity for schools places. The Council regularly updates the Schools' Forum so that we are able to widely communicate where schools will be expanded or take bulge classes. Schools in the relevant planning area are also consulted when the Council is looking at options for expanding schools to take additional pupils to meet demand for places. This allows for total transparency with decisions that are made when meeting the demand for additional places. The Council also provides updates on the schools capital programme via the Head Teachers Bulletin as well as termly Head Teacher Briefings. This has further strengthened the partnership working we have in place with our schools and academies across Thurrock.

As a result, planning for school places is based on a number of different variables. The Council's forecasting for school places to date has been robust and accurate and again this year, as last year, there was only a 0.9% difference between forecasts and actual numbers admitted for September. Any review of school provision undertaken by the Borough will, in the large part, be led by forecast pupil numbers. We are committed to ensuring there is best match of pupil places to pupil demand, wherever practicable.

There will be a total investment of £100 million in our schools which includes the expansion of some good schools, the building of two new secondary free-schools, Thames Park and Orsett Heath and a new Treetops Special School. There will also be new accommodation for Harris Riverside which will be in full operation in their new premises from September 2019.

There has been a strong schools capital programme 2018/19 which has delivered over 400 additional primary and secondary schools places in order to meet demand and support parental choice for schools places.

6.3 A Diverse Supply of Strong Schools

Thurrock also has a growing population – predicted to rise by approximately 10% every decade. The ethnic profile of Thurrock has become increasingly diverse over the last decade. Both the age and ethnic profiles differ significantly between the 20 wards.

Thurrock Council is in a unique financial position. It is the first top tier authority who not only successfully balanced the budget until 2021/22 without cutting services, but is also well on its way to achieving its ambition to become self-sufficient from national revenue support grant funding.

Under the banner 'People, Place, Prosperity', the council is creating a place where people and businesses want to stay and thrive, and developers and investors want to invest. Investment in infrastructure for the benefit of residents and local businesses is key. Good roads, health services, schools and leisure facilities are all required to enable people to live and work, play and stay in the borough.

Thurrock is a mix of semi-rural and urban areas and we want to ensure that education provision is sustained in all parts of the borough to ensure the needs of our local communities are met. This is especially important given the national challenges that we face. We will work with schools to provide the best provision of school places and outcomes for pupils within a given locality.

The Council will support a governing body to find and join a suitable multi-academy trust where there is a need to raise standards or expand the variety of provision in an area. All schools are different and governing bodies need to reflect on which option works for them. We will also work with the Regional Schools Commissioner to support academies with falling standards to become a part of an existing MAT. Thurrock is keen to keep the 'family of schools' in Thurrock and to work alongside them to ensure schools continue to meet the needs of the population.

6.4 Admissions Process

Thurrock Borough Council subscribes to the national admissions process. This includes rounds for starting school and secondary transfers and managing in-year admissions. It also includes adhering to a Fair Access Protocol to place children who may be considered vulnerable.

Our admissions team will strive to ensure every child in Thurrock is offered a school place on national offer day. They will also arrange appeal hearings for Thurrock community and voluntary controlled schools and some academies who wish to buy into the service.

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The governing body or academy trust arranges appeals hearings for foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools

Every year the Council has ensured that every Thurrock child has a school place on national offer day.

On national offer day on 15th March 2019, 1708 (71.2%) Thurrock secondary school applicants were offered their 1st preference school (71.2%), 263 Thurrock applicants were offered their 2nd preference school (10.9%) and 140 Thurrock applicants were offered their 3rd preference school (5.8%).

On Primary national offer day, on 15th April 2019, there were 2126 offers made, 87.96% got their first choice of primary school place for this September, 160 (6.62%) applicants got their second choice place and 42 (1.74%) were offered their third choice school place.

Nearly 100% of primary and secondary school applications are made online.

7 School Education Support

7.1 Aim

Our School Education support aim is that by 2022, there will be an effective process to 'challenge and support all schools to increase quality and standards of education'.

Thurrock has an innovative approach to school/college effectiveness which involves the council and all schools and colleges. This includes:

- The sharing of LA data with all stakeholders to ensure identification of vulnerable/ low performing institutions
- Sector led improvement – schools/colleges providing analysis, challenge and support to each other to effect rapid and sustained improvement
- The teaching schools, good and outstanding schools, stand-alone academies, academy chains and free schools providing capacity and school improvement strategies for others with the ambition to ensure all schools are good or better at their next inspection
- Working with the teaching school alliances to promote and participate in evidence based improvement and CPD activities
- High quality, school driven initial teacher training with continuous professional development for the extended QTS requirements and a continued focus on recruitment and retention of the best staff to our institutions
- Ensuring the 'Family of Schools' in Thurrock remains strong and increases the pace of improvement and accelerates progress especially in English, mathematics and science whilst maximising the unique benefits of working in partnership with the Royal Opera House, Thurrock Music Service and other outstanding external cultural partners to ensure our pupils have a rich and varied curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils
- Developing a range of high quality employment, apprenticeships and training opportunities supported by settings, schools, academies, higher educational establishments and local business to ensure no one is NEET

The teaching schools will;

- Deliver high quality, evidence-based CPD.

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- Work closely with the Local Authority to ensure that schools access the training opportunities that have been developed.
- Recruit and train new teachers.
- Share their best leaders to coach and mentor staff in other schools.

Offer additional support to schools that have judgements of RI or inadequate, as brokered by the Local Authority

7.2 Objectives

- Through the Schools Standards and Progress Board, chaired by the Assistant Director of Education and Skills, effectively monitor all schools and categorise local authority maintained schools annually to ensure that council resources are targeted where they are most needed to make the biggest difference.
- Enhance the support provided by the three teaching schools to all schools and academies that are deemed not yet 'Good' by Ofsted.
- In partnership with the teaching schools, use local and national data and intelligence to continue to develop school improvement services which are available to all schools and settings through a comprehensive traded portfolio of continuing professional development.
- Work in partnership with Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner where schools are judged 'Inadequate' to support them to improve.
- Broker and commission National Leader in Education (NLE) in Thurrock and beyond to provide school-to-school support where necessary.

7.3 School Improvement Policy

Thurrock Council has a statutory duty to promote high standards of care and education across Thurrock. In order to do this we need to work in strong partnerships within a sector led improvement system and with reducing national funds.

The Council will work with all of those involved across the education system. We each have a different role to play, but will work together to make the biggest improvement for children and young people so they get the best start in life.



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Academy trusts, governing bodies and leaders will:

- Fulfil their responsibility to continuously improve outcomes for children.
- Lead a school that at least meets national expectations.
- Accumulate evidence for well-judged self-evaluation.
- Develop effective systems for self-improvement.
- Accurately evaluate the standards of the school against national benchmarks.
- Develop a highly skilled workforce with strong succession planning.
- Have high expectations of themselves, teachers, other staff and pupils.
- Effectively withstand external scrutiny.
- Seek to emulate best practice locally, borough-wide and beyond the borough borders.
- Work in partnership with other school leaders, teaching schools, DfE and the Council to improve their school.
- Use any strengths and additional capacity they have to support other schools.

Thurrock Council will:

- Promote educational excellence for all children and young people and be ambitious in tackling underperformance.
- Ensure that all schools effectively safeguard children and young people.
- Challenge underperformance in leadership, governance and pupil performance.
- Support how school leaders effectively promote pupil health and care, including their mental health and well-being.
- Build effective relationships with school leaders and understand a school's strengths and areas for development.
- Work in partnership with leaders of the school-led improvement system, such as teaching schools, to support school improvement in any Thurrock school.
- Use statutory powers of intervention where there is evidence that this is needed.
- Work with school leadership and governance so that they can effectively withstand external scrutiny, such as inspection by Ofsted.
- Liaise with the Regional Schools Commissioner to ensure academies and free schools provide high standards of education for Thurrock pupils.
- Support local authority maintained schools in delivering an appropriate and broad national curriculum.
- Work towards effective inclusive cultures and practice in schools and Thurrock Council.

7.4 School Improvement Approach

The School Effectiveness Team provided by Thurrock Council consists of school improvement colleagues, early years' welfare and improvement team, educational welfare services, governance development team and as an appropriate body for newly qualified teachers.

The Corporate Director of Children's Services (CDCS), through a range of engagement opportunities including the annual conversation meetings, challenges and supports school leadership teams and governing bodies or boards so their schools are (at least) a 'Good' place for Thurrock children to enjoy learning so they have the best start in life. We aim for school leaders to effectively self-evaluate, self-manage and self-improve. The local authority has a strong data analysis function and uses this to identify performance concerns and issues in individual schools. The senior officers draw on this data pack and the knowledge from the Schools Standards and Progress Board (SSPB) when they make their annual conversations to schools to examine progress against targeted outcomes, strengths and priorities for the school or academy.

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The SSPB is held termly to enable the Assistant Director for Education and Skills to carry out the statutory duty of the LA to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential. The board is a mechanism for the sharing of intelligence held within separate departments within Children's Services and identifying areas of strength and vulnerability. It forms part of the Council's school effectiveness framework. Contributions from a range of officers support the CDCS conversations with the Regional Schools Commissioner, The Department for Education, HMI and Ofsted.

The use of data, Ofsted Framework and Outcomes, annual conversations and local intelligence also determines the Continuing Professional Development offer from the Early Years Team, Teaching Schools and commissioned partners.

The **Early Years Team** also sits within the School Improvement Team and consists of the 2 Year Old Entitlement Team, Childcare Sufficiency Team, 0-3 Learning & Development Officers, Welfare Requirement Development Officers and Early Education Improvement Officers. Alongside the [Thurrock Brighter Futures Children's Centres](#), the team focuses on ensuring improved outcomes for children aged 0-5, ensuring a positive start to early education and childcare and school readiness. The **Thurrock Early Years Strategy**, when complete will evidence how this work is aligned to the Education Support Strategy.

The School Improvement Team will work with the teaching schools to host high quality conferences for Early Years, Governors, School Leaders, SEND and Inclusion, with national speakers at the forefront of their fields. We will continue to hold termly Headteacher Briefings to share and disseminate developments,

The governor development service provides support and training to ensure all governors have a good understanding of schools and the skills to both challenge and support their teachers and leaders. The team offer advice and training through the Thurrock Traded Services website. Governing Boards and Trusts can commission bespoke training to meet the needs of their school.

The Appropriate Body: The Council acts, on a service level agreement basis, as the appropriate body service for newly qualified teachers. It jointly commissions training, support for mentors, advice, quality assurance and accreditation.

Moderation: As part of the Council's statutory duties, Statutory Assessment Test administration monitoring and moderation of EYFS, Phonics Screening Checks, Key Stage 1 and 2 teacher assessment will continue to be undertaken by the School Improvement Team and LA external moderators. All LA external moderators and School Improvement colleagues must undertake and successfully complete the national Standards and Testing Agency (STA) training and standardisation exercise annually. The School Improvement Manager is the designated Moderation Manager for the Council and therefore is responsible for ensuring all moderation activities comply with the all DfE statutory guidance.

Academies are required by the DfE to have a written agreement with their chosen moderation provider. The agreement is circulated to all primary schools and academies within the Moderation Handbook each autumn term. Headteachers/Principals are required to sign and return the agreement before the first informal moderation session in the autumn term. The Moderation Handbook clearly sets out the moderation process within the borough.

When instructed by the STA, on behalf of the DfE, Officers from the School Improvement Team may undertake maladministration investigations. These will be carried out in accordance with the maladministration guidance from the DfE and will serve for the sole purpose of fact finding. The officers will not be asked to make a decision as to whether a maladministration has occurred. This is the role of the STA maladministration team. Where a maladministration has occurred the CDCS will send a letter of expectations to the school leaders, including governors, requesting what changes the school has made to reassure the Council that there will be no repetition of maladministration. Should maladministration occur in a local authority maintained school, the Council will work with governors to understand why and to ensure that it will not happen again.

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The **Education Welfare Service** will provide support for schools and families to ensure all children and young people on school rolls attend school every day. It is understood that there is a correlation between poor attendance and under achievement and possible safeguarding concerns. It is essential therefore that poor attendance is addressed by schools at the earliest possible opportunity. Thurrock Council is committed to supporting schools and welcomes contact from partner agencies who have concerns about a child or young person who may not be in the receipt of an education.

The service will continue to support schools and academies in the promotion of positive attendance and provide a service where school attendance levels are a concern in line with the Education Act 1996. Statutory action will be considered in order to protect children's rights to an education.

Education Welfare attendance management work is a traded service to academies, however the Council is committed to ensuring the cost is easily affordable to all academies.

They will also work to ensure children missing education are located and in receipt of a suitable form of education. Children and young people of compulsory school age can be considered missing from education if they are not attending full-time education.

This includes children who are:

- not on a school roll
- not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school

Children not receiving full-time education are often amongst the most vulnerable in Thurrock. They are at increased risk of harm from exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and are more likely to engage in criminal and anti-social behaviour.

We will ensure that these children and young people can receive a suitable form of education as quickly as possible. However, it is important that all professionals who have contact with young people work together to find and place children missing from education.

The Education Welfare Service will maintain robust processes and procedures to reduce the risk of children missing education. These are supported by a central register of children missing education which is maintained by the Pupil Tracking and Child Employment Officer.

The Education Welfare Service will also issue work permits, child performance licences and chaperone licences using a responsible and considered process ensuring children's education is a priority.

The Education Welfare Service also monitors that home education sometimes known as elective home education EHE is efficient, full-time and suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude in line with the Education Act 1996. They also monitor the number and frequency of requests to EHE in order to ensure schools are not encouraging pupils with difficulties to EHE.

A well-established **Recruitment and Retention Strategy Group** which was formed as a result of a Thurrock Council commissioned Recruitment & Retention strategy that has the following aims:

- Thurrock will lead the way in developing a learning culture across partners that will ensure it attracts, develops and retains a highly motivated, inspirational, diverse teaching workforce, which will make the major contribution in achieving Thurrock's ambitious vision for the young people who live and are educated here.
- Thurrock schools understand that the quality of Teaching and Learning is the factor that has the greatest impact on the achievement of pupils and young people. It is vital, therefore, that Thurrock attracts, recruits, develops and retains high quality teaching staff. Schools, the Local Authority and other key strategic partners need to work together to offer high quality training opportunities to those interested in joining the profession and to attract, recruit and develop newly qualified and experienced teachers, and to retain those who can contribute to raising standards in Thurrock schools.

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- Improving the efficiency and equity of schooling in Thurrock largely depends on ensuring that competent people want to work as teachers, their teaching is of high quality and all students have access to high quality teaching. The issue is not simply recruiting teachers, but recruiting appropriate teachers. Thus Thurrock will commit to adopt strategies which will recruit and retain the right staff at the right time, for the right roles. This is at the heart of improving the education of young people in Thurrock - as well as being the key to flourishing schools.

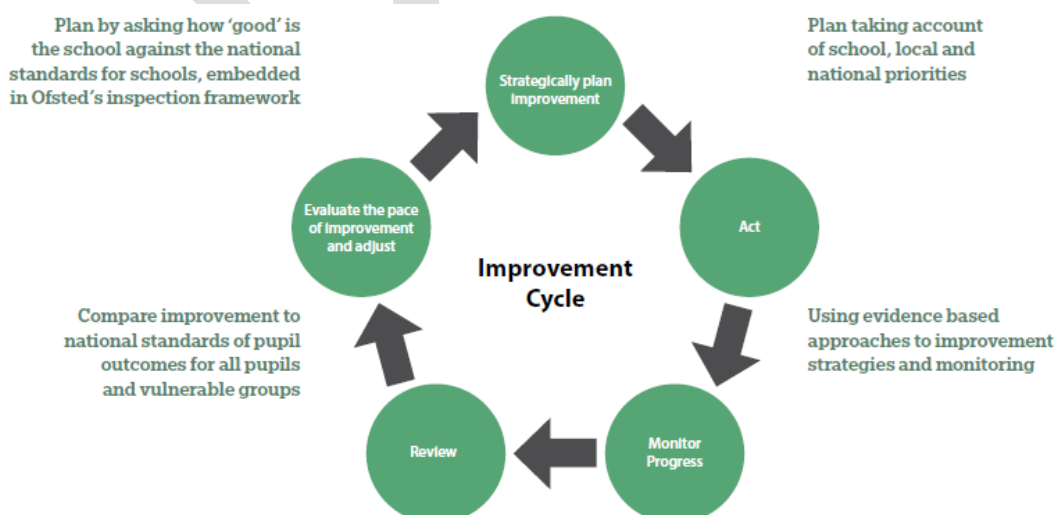
The Council is working with all three teaching schools to ensure the best quality candidates are attracted to train and teach in the borough. The strategy group has partners with a preferred agency who will work with the Council to attend university fairs across the UK to promote Thurrock as a place to train, teach and work. The teaching schools will continue to deliver high quality Initial Teacher Training (ITT), whilst researching and developing innovative ways to develop ITT and continuing professional development (CPD) which has been shown to be a driver for the retention of staff.

As part of the recruitment and retention of the highest quality leaders, teachers and support staff in Thurrock Educational Establishments, the annual [Thurrock Education Awards](#) will continue to recognise the quality of teachers, leaders, support staff and partners who contribute to the education of the children and young people in Thurrock. The Council is committed to ensuring the event celebrates and awards the very best in the borough.

Thurrock Council will continue to work with the education establishments and cultural partners to support the Cultural Entitlement. Through the Royal Opera House and Bridge, the Local Authority has and will continue to encourage all Thurrock schools to take up the Cultural Education Challenge, to connect more children and young people with great art and culture and really make a difference to their educational achievement and progress.

The [Thurrock Trailblazer](#) programme was established following detailed research into how to achieve Thurrock wide cultural entitlement to enrich the lives of young people in Thurrock, raising their attainment and aspiration through opportunities to engage with a rich programme of high quality cultural activities. Thurrock Trailblazer is an innovative programme of high quality arts and cultural activities, visits to heritage sites and specialist teacher training, that boosts creative learning in schools and accelerates pupils' development.

The Council has committed to part-funding Thurrock Trailblazer until 2020 and is actively working with the Trailblazer steering group to develop a Thurrock Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) that is informed by the values of Trailblazer.



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All teams will work in close partnership with the Headteacher and staff of the Virtual School so that children and young people in the care of the Thurrock Council find success in learning, care in schools and a parental response from us all so that they achieve and make at least expected progress in all Thurrock schools and beyond.

8 The Role of Governance in Schools

'Good' or 'Better' schools require good or better governance. School governors are vital to school improvement and to secure the educational outcomes for Thurrock children and young people. Governors' carry out a strategic role and are required to fulfil three strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

In order for schools and their pupils to thrive, governors must fulfil their responsibilities to create a strong school vision, appointing strong leadership teams and challenging them to improve. They also have a duty of care to the Headteacher so that they can fulfil their role effectively.

The governance of schools in Thurrock takes a wide variety of forms, mainly dependent upon whether they are an academy or local authority maintained. A governing body of a voluntary aided or controlled school will be constituted to reflect their relationship with the Dioceses.

School Governors are vital in the decision making for taking their institution into a MAT or converting a school to academy status. Thurrock Council will work closely with governing bodies (and the Diocese) when options are being considered. At the earliest possible moment, consideration needs to be given on how schools can respond to the organisational challenges outlined in this strategy. We will expect governors to understand future challenges of funding, curriculum and leadership and what this means for them and nearby schools. It is expected that they will engage in the process of consultation, considering the future prospects of the school and how it fits in the local family of schools.

- We will develop a strong group of expert governors to spread good practice.
- We will expand the range of services available to buy that are offered by the governor development service.
- We will challenge governors to effectively withstand external scrutiny as inspection changes and monitoring by the local authority increases.
- We will work with all schools and academies to recruit and develop strong governors and clerks.

9 Schools Standards and Progress Board (SSPB) - Using Data to Drive Improvement

This Board is chaired by the Assistant Director for Education and Skills along with various LA children's service educational leads. The Board meets every term to scrutinize progress of all schools to identify any emerging concerns or areas of good practice to share more widely. This Board will also look to identify school to school support around Ofsted inspections, and actively brokers' opportunities, for example mock Ofsted inspections.

The Board identifies support and resources to maintained schools and also considers broader issues – for example, trends on school attendance. Where an academy is considered to be vulnerable appropriate action is then taken to address any further needs in line with the school led improvement system; resources are commissioned/identified through the teaching schools and the deployment of SLEs, NLEs and school to school support is brokered.

The local authority has a strong data analysis function and uses this to identify performance concerns and issues in individual schools. The senior officers draw on this data pack when they make their annual

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conversations to schools to examine progress against targeted outcomes, strengths and priorities for the school or academy.

Yearly data analysis at the start of the autumn term provides the basis upon which the priorities for the borough and its community of schools are made. These priorities are shared and discussed at SSPB and where, in the case of a maintained school funding, will be allocated to commission the appropriate services offered by a range of partners and driven by the Teaching Schools Alliance to deliver the desired outcomes.

In the case of an academy being identified as in need of support, the SIM will discuss with the Teaching School Leads who will identify the appropriate support.

9.1 Letters of expectation

The local authority effectively identifies, intervenes and will use formal powers in schools where necessary. Where school performance is causing concern there remains a statutory responsibility to provide support, challenge and, where necessary, intervention to bring about rapid improvement. Thurrock works closely with the school and all relevant partners when considering these issues.

If a school's standards drop, or Ofsted judges a school, academy or free school to be less than good, a letter of expectation will clarify the Corporate Director of Children's Services and the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health expectations of that institution.

9.2f Power of Intervention

The local authority follows the statutory guidance for local authorities given by the Department for Education, on behalf of the Secretary of State. Section 72 of the Education Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all local authorities in England, in exercising their functions in respect of maintained schools causing concern, to have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State.

Where an academy is a cause for concern the Assistant Director for Education and Skills will inform the Academies Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to discuss the level of support required.

The RSC will address underperformance in academies on behalf of the Secretary of State in line with the statutory guidance for Schools Causing Concern (February 2018) and the ESFA funding agreements.

If a school does not improve or show significant signs of improving to 'Good' by the end of six half-terms, consideration will be given to the use of the power to intervene by the local authority. This includes, but is not limited to, using warning notices or the installation of an Interim Executive Board (sections 67 to 69, Education and Inspection Act, 2006).

A discussion may be held with the Regional Schools Commissioner's office about whether school governors should meet with academy trusts who may be able to rapidly improve the school.

Warning Notices

A warning notice can be issued, in relation to performance standards and safety or teachers' pay and conditions, to a maintained school by either a Local Authority or the RSC (on behalf of the Secretary of State). Warning notices to academies will be issued by the RSC.

We will consider the guidance in respect of warning notices and liaise closely with both the LA and the RSC. If the LA feels that a warning notice should be issued, and the school is a maintained school, it will seek to issue a warning notice. If the school is an academy then it will discuss the concerns with the RSC, who has the power to issue a notice if they feel one is appropriate.

When considering the statutory guidance relating to warning notices, the LA will also consider the engagement of the school with the support and challenge process. In a situation where the level of engagement is limited there will often be a smaller evidence base upon which to make an interpretation of the guidance. In these cases a warning notice is more likely to be recommended to the Local Authority, in the case of a maintained school, or discussed with the Regional Schools Commissioner, in the case of an academy.

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Specific Intervention Powers

Other forms of intervention will be considered in a similar way. Thurrock LA will consider the guidance in relation to requiring a governing body to enter into arrangements, the appointment of additional governors, appointing an Interim Executive Board (IEB) or suspending the delegated budget as required, liaising closely with the LA and the RSC. If we feel that an intervention power should be used, and the school is a maintained school, it will make a recommendation to the LA. If the school is an academy then it will discuss the concerns with the RSC, who has the power to act if they feel it is appropriate. It is clear in the Schools Causing Concern Statutory Guidance that the RSC may act independently of the LA in relation to maintained schools if it chooses to do so.

Thurrock Council's School Improvement Manager will continue to work with regional colleagues to develop regional practice in a peer led system.

10 External Peer Review Support

Thurrock Council plans to work with the three teaching schools to develop a system-led school improvement process to build upon previous peer to peer support brokered by the school improvement team.

- In year 1 (2019/20) we will develop a limited number of pilots and examine the benefits of the processes already used in some schools or MATS.
- In year 2 we will roll out a peer review model across Thurrock to all schools in a like for like, reciprocal, no cost offer.

There may be a variety of peer review models, but typically three school Headteachers/Principals will review each other's schools supported by an LA Officer. One Headteacher/Principal will take a lead and write up the findings from the review. The external adviser will act as providing quality standards and rigour.

The following principles will be applied:

- Does it have external support from someone who has a wide view of standards (TIC, LA Officer Ofsted Inspector or is a National Leader in Education)?
- How rigorous is the process, does it cover all areas of standards (or do a thorough job of a focused area)?
- The process should not be burdensome to participants, but provide enough time for a thorough review and feedback.
- The process should be cost neutral to the Council and minimal to schools.
- Is it challenging and supportive of senior leadership so they know why they are doing well and what they need to improve?
- Does leadership develop a further ability to withstand external scrutiny (most likely inspection)?
- Do all parties find it very useful and worthwhile?

11. Developing Young People's Skills

Strong education for young people is important in ensuring Thurrock is a prosperous place to live and work. The development of skills in preparation for further learning and the world of work start at a young age. The new primary national curriculum places an increased emphasis on skills such as reasoning, application and effective communication. This is continued and expanded upon in the new GCSEs. As young people prepare to enter the world of work, they should do so with confidence, knowing they have received a consistent and high quality education. Comprehensive and impartial career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is the corner stone of the provision of post-16 options for young people in Thurrock.

As part of the education provision in Thurrock, the Council in partnership with all the Thurrock secondary schools has signed up to the Young Person's Entitlement based on the Gatsby Benchmarks and offering the following to all the young people in the borough:

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1. A programme of careers education and preparation for adult life within the curriculum, from Year 7 to age 19 supported by a named careers leader.
2. Information about the full range of options available in education, training and programmes to prepare for adult life at each point of transition, and about the progression of opportunities from those options.
3. Up to date information about the job market and future choices.
4. Opportunities to have direct contact with employers and employees offering every young person seven encounters with employers – at least one each year from Year 7 to Year 13, including Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) employers.
5. Opportunities to hear from, and visit, other Post-16 providers, sixth form and further education colleges and universities to inform pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
6. First-hand experiences of the workplace.
7. Regular reviews of young people's achievements and progress, and emerging career plans.
8. Individual impartial careers guidance, from an appropriately qualified careers adviser, at times when young people need it, from Year 8 to age 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs or disabilities).
9. Opportunities for young people to feedback comments and suggestions on the careers education, information, advice and guidance provided.

Thurrock Council and schools are committed to delivering high quality apprenticeships to provide formal on-the-job training and practical experience with qualifications.

Inspire Thurrock Careers (ITC) delivers a robust offer of support to all young people at risk of becoming NEET by rigorous tracking of all young people throughout Year 11 (in close partnership with the schools). The September Guarantee offer of an educational/training place to all Year 11s has been consistently 100% for the past few years underpinning the Post-16 work that allows Thurrock Council to reliably report on '0' Unknowns' to the DfE. Thurrock is ranked as 1 out of 152 LA's in the LA Unknown ranking. The combined Unknown and NEET figure of 1.7% puts Thurrock in 4th place in the country in the LA ranking. For Raising of Participation Age statistics Thurrock Council is ranked 13th in the country for the Year 12s whilst the Year 13s Participation (97.7%) is higher than all statistical neighbours.

This data demonstrates the commitment of the service to work with 16-18 year old young people in need of support to timely identify those at risk, put support measures in place during the Year 11 transition, procure necessary tailored training provision where gaps are identified; continuously support the vulnerable young people in their choice of training, education or employment. A strong focus on Labour Market Information (LMI) through strong partnership with Thurrock's Regeneration Department keeps the career advice relevant and up to date.

The EET figure for the Looked After Children is on the right trajectory at 67% (target 70%). Innovative solutions include employing a Maths and English tutor to engage with those young people who are not ready for full time learning provision, delivering a course on Life Skills by a personal adviser. Trialling a DofE provision specifically for this cohort has increased engagement resulting in five looked after young people completing all elements of the programme which culminated in a two day successful expedition. By promoting the benefits of the Prince's trust programme through a Careers Personal Adviser, six looked after young people have completed the Prince's Trust Programme with strong positive results.

ITC organise a range of inspirational assemblies, projects, hand holding sessions and parent events to support progression of Thurrock young people into HE and especially into Russell Group universities where appropriate and increase access to HE in Thurrock as a whole.

Grangewaters, providing outdoor education to Thurrock young people, made a profit for a second year running with ambitious plans for 2019-2020 having achieved the AALA, ROSPA and RYA inspections that have raised the status of Grangewaters as a well-respected Outdoor Education Centre with a strong

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commitment to Health and Safety. A new scheme 'Sail Thurrock' is being implemented through Active Essex funding and in partnership with the Thurrock Yacht Club which will aim to revive sailing in the borough.

OnTrack, a Youth Employment Initiative programme for young people aged 15-29 in Thurrock, part funded through the European Social Fund and managed by the Department for Work and Pensions, has successfully met its targets and is seeking further investment in the model for the next three years.

12. School Wellbeing Service (SWS)

The School wellbeing service is a universal service that will be accessible to all school aged children. The service focuses on the importance of early intervention and prevention in regards to promoting positive wellbeing, with a key focus on mental health. The School Wellbeing Service will work in partnership with schools, academies, local communities and services to help 'tip the balance', so that children and young people have the best start in life and are able to thrive. The service will work with schools to extend and deepen their existing work on promoting good mental health by strengthening protective factors and reducing risk factors.

The aim is to transform the way that emotional wellbeing and mental health support is delivered in schools by; tackling problems and difficulties more quickly, working preventatively and intervening at an earlier stage. We recognise that capacity is already stretched within schools and that Teachers and Head Teachers are juggling a broad spectrum of competing demands. The service will provide a significant additional resource in the form of School Wellbeing Practitioners that will work directly with teaching and non-teaching staff. The School Wellbeing Service will share evidence based resources and interventions with schools, so that they feel confident and competent to support students who are experiencing emotional distress, highlight those who are experiencing mental health difficulties and are then able to signpost and refer them to the appropriate services. Some direct work with children, young people and their parents/carers will be part of the service, however, the emphasis will be placed on working with school staff to enhance their current knowledge and skills on how to best support their students mental health as well as promoting positive wellbeing for all and developing a mentally healthy school. The service will integrate, embed and strengthen existing commissioned initiatives on mental health within the existing offer for children, young people and their families and provide training and support to school staff.

The model for the new Thurrock School Wellbeing Service is based on the recommendations set out in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA):

- Focus on early intervention and prevention – building strengths and reducing risk factors.
- Promote protective factors that keep children and young people mentally well.
- Highlight and reduce the risk factors that can increase the risk of mental ill health.
- Develop a new partnership model with schools.
- Gather and share information on what is already being done to improve children and young people's mental health.
- Improve mental health data and track effectiveness of the service by empowering and supporting schools to complete the Brighter Futures Survey.

The service aims to deliver a tailored approach that meets the needs of each school within Thurrock, recognising that every school and the population it serves will have differing needs and that 'one size' will not fit all. The School Wellbeing Service team consists of 6 practitioners and a team administrator, the key functions of the service are as follows:

- In conjunction with schools, to oversee a schools-based mental health assessment and develop an individual mental health action plan to improve and protect the wellbeing and mental health of their students.
- To work with schools to complete a mental health action plan.

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- Facilitate implementation of a tailored package of support programmes that protect and improve the wellbeing and mental health of pupils and staff within the school.
- Provide training and continued professional development for staff within schools in order to increase knowledge and confidence in promoting and protecting their pupil's mental health. Training will be refreshed as needed to reflect changes in policy or practice both locally and nationally.
- Direct delivery of specialist mental health training programmes to children and young people – creating a Wellbeing Youth Forum.
- Provide support in developing whole school mental health policies and strategies.
- Provide support and practical resources to develop and enhance the school's PSHE curriculum, ensuring that it fully promotes emotional and mental well-being, as well as tailoring the curriculum to the needs of each individual school.
- To ensure that the mental health offer for CYP is mapped accurately against the THRIVE model (reference JSNA, 2018), clearly illustrating what services are available to support CYP, families and schools.
- Assist schools to promote, raise awareness and signpost to existing commissioned mental health programmes and services, e.g. through the THRIVE mapped offer, ensuring these are all embedded within school's policies and frameworks.
- Sharing best practice on mental health and wellbeing promotion, creating a network for schools and children and young people to promote and share the work they have been developing within their School or Academy.
- Engage with schools around existing relevant public health programmes including the Brighter Futures Survey.

The School Wellbeing Service will provide schools with resources that focus on promoting positive wellbeing, programmes and interventions will include:

- Anxiety awareness and management
- Anger management
- Building and sustaining resilience
- Responding to self-harm
- Mental health awareness workshops

In order for all the schools in Thurrock to become mentally healthy schools, each school will appoint a Mental Health Lead, the SWS will support schools in doing this and provide the relevant guidance, support and training.

The service will be available throughout the year, the appointed member of the SWS will work with their cluster of schools to identify interventions and support that will be available during school holidays.

Appendix 1:

References - Legislative and Policy Framework

Changes to legislation and statutory guidance means that a local authority has to be agile and proportionate as responses are required in a changing political environment.

- The Framework for the Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement (22 September 2015)
- Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement (2015)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- The Framework for School Inspection under Sections 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006. (September 2015)
- The Education and Adoption Act 2016 (which amends the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Academies Act 2010)
- The Schools' Causing Concern Guidance – Intervening in failing, underperforming and coasting schools (February 2018)
- Policy Agreement for Education in Thurrock 2016-2019

The Department for Education's statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities is available at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/statutory-guidance-schools

DRAFT

9 October 2019		ITEM: 11
Cabinet		
Billet Field Site, Stanford-le-Hope		
Wards and communities affected: Stanford-le-Hope West and Corringham and Fobbing		Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Portfolio Holder, Regeneration and Strategic Planning		
Accountable Assistant Director: Detlev Munster, Assistant Director Property & Development		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Interim Director Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

In April 2014, Cabinet agreed to the disposal of land at Billet Field to facilitate the relocation of the East Thurrock United Football Club (ETUFC) and promote the redevelopment of the current club site for housing development.

This approval was conditioned to include, amongst others, the need to obtain planning permission for both sites, to provide residential development at the current site, the re-provision of sports facilities at Billet Field, and the need to ensure the re-provided facilities were accessible to Thurrock residents.

After a period of inactivity, the Council were contacted by ETUFC in April 2019, indicating that they are now in a position to finalise this land swap and requesting that the Council confirm its willingness to still proceed with the transaction.

There has been a five year delay between Cabinet's decision in April 2014 to approve the disposal of Billet Field and the contact from ETUFC in 2019. During this period, the Council has reviewed its corporate priorities and seen changes in the wider policy context, including two stages of consultation with the Local Plan and the emergence of alternative uses for the site, as well as inflationary increases in land values and development costs. Consequently, it is not considered appropriate to continue with the disposal of this site at this current time.

1. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Consider the contents of this report and agree that the request to progress with the disposal of Billet Field be declined at this time.**

2. Background

Billet Field Site

- 2.1 The Billet Field site is approximately 9.5 acres in size, and is currently laid to playing fields (two adult football pitches in present use, together with a cricket square). The changing room block was refurbished prior to 2014.
- 2.2 There is also a bowls club, which is in poor condition and no longer functioning, a club house pavilion and a bowling green and two tennis courts which are also disused and in poor condition. The pavilion is currently under an occupation that needs to be regularised.

2014 Cabinet Decision

- 2.3 Cabinet agreed to the disposal of the Billet Field to the ETUFC on the 9 April 2014. The disposal was conditional upon:
- planning consents being given for the residential development of the existing ground at Rookery Field and for the sports development of the Billet Field.
 - a contractual requirement for ETUFC to maintain the new playing surfaces at the Billet Field and the existing ones at the Mobil Field to a good standard, at no cost, while also ensuring community access at reasonable cost;
 - formalised consequences for any failure to meet the above condition; this could require, in extremis, the title of the Billet Field land reverting to the Council, with a consequent lease and rent to be paid by the club;
 - design of the proposed facilities being of suitable quality and scale for the variety of sports within the hub (both Billet and Mobil fields), including infrastructure requirements such as changing provision, storage, social areas, access and car parking etc.
 - demonstration of gain in the scale and quality of facilities compared to the existing provision at the Billet, Mobil field and ETUFC; specifying how existing users will be accommodated rather than being displaced or compromised;
 - the agreement of detailed and specific governance arrangements of the new sports hub, and a business plan for its operation and management, showing that the scheme is robust and sustainable, including a pricing policy which reflects the intended community use.
- 2.4 Subject to the above conditions being met, Cabinet agreed to dispose the Billet Field site to ETUFC for £340,000.

Public Consultation of the disposal

2.5 Under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is required to consult on the disposal of public open space. Consultation was undertaken in 2013. The outcome of the public consultation concerning the potential disposal was as follows:

- Five submissions of objection, one including a petition signed by 184 people. The objections centred on fears of loss of access to the current playing fields, noise, litter, light pollution, alcohol associated nuisance, parking and traffic issues along residential roads and the potential for unsightly buildings
- One response supporting the proposal, citing the Club's history involving the Billet site and the benefit to the local community; including improved specialist facilities, the club's delivery of recreation and coaching to youngsters, women's and disability sides and their support of charities including St Luke's Hospice
- Following the closure of the consultation there have been further approaches expressing concerns about ETUFC acquiring the land, including from a local football club that was using the playing fields at the time.

Recent correspondence from ETUFC

2.6 In April 2019, ETUFC submitted indicative designs for the proposed sports facility at Billet Field. Different site options were proposed, but the offer would generally include: a sports pavilion with changing rooms, gym, social area; spectator seating; 4 football pitches; parking.

2.7 An outline plan for the East Thurrock Community Sports Association accompanied the indicative design document, but this document is stated to still be under development.

2.8 In its letter to the Council in April 2019, ETUFC points out that the sale of the football ground at Rookery Hill was delayed due to an internal legal issue but the club is now in a position to progress and has agreed a deal, in principle, with Bellway Homes. It is also pointed out that Bellway Homes will shortly be submitting a planning application for Rookery Hill which will have a linked application for the Billet Field site.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis

Issues related to the details contained in the recent letter

3.1 The proposals presented to the council by ETUFC are only indicative and further information is required. In particular, the proposal is silent on the Mobil Field and is also silent on how the facilities will provide and promote public/community access.

- 3.2 In 2014, the site was valued at circa £285k to reflect its use as sport pitches. However, open space is currently transacting at circa £50k per acre suggesting a possible current use value of the Billet Field Site at circa £463k.
- 3.3 External valuation advice obtained in 2014 pointed out that with planning permission, the Rookery Field site would have a value of circa £5.85m. Given the Club's need to recreate its current facilities elsewhere, this would equate to an increase in value of around £3.6m. According to the valuer, given that the Council would be enabling this development, it would not be unreasonable for it to share in the increased value of the development site at Rookery Field, and commercially it could seek to negotiate a disposal of its land at Billet Field at between £890,000 - £1,180,000.
- 3.4 In 2014, the net annual cost of the Council's stewardship of the Billet Field was around £16,500 taking into account the cost of maintenance, less income received. The net annual cost of maintaining the neighbouring Mobil Field was in excess of £11,000. The alternative maintenance of these sites would present the Council with an annual savings of c. £28,000 per annum, which was estimated to equate to a capital receipt in excess of £300,000.
- 3.5 In arriving at a value in 2014, Cabinet considered both the annual savings it would achieve as well as the social use value that could be attributed with the proposed provision of community sports facilities. Hence a lower disposal value was derived to that of the external valuer.
- 3.6 However, it is now considered that these principles and approach need to be reviewed in light of the time lapsed (with resultant inflationary increases in land values and development costs) and the strategic developments set out below.

Corporate priorities and policy context

- 3.7 Billet Field was scrutinised as part of the 3Rs Programme in 2017 and the site was identified for "reuse". The site presented an opportunity to consolidate recreational open space and release part of the site for development. The Council's Housing team consider the site suitable for housing development, notwithstanding its current planning status as Green Belt.
- 3.8 However, the Council's Environment service has also identified this land for other potential uses, such as a possible site for cemetery expansion. Plans for this are in their very early stages and feasibility is being assessed. It is therefore important that any future decision about Billet Field takes into account other possible uses for the site.
- 3.9 The Local Plan has also progressed through two stages of consultation since the 2014 Cabinet resolution. Matters relating to how sports/recreation provision are some of the key issues that need to be addressed as the Local Plan progresses.

- 3.10 In light of these facts, it is considered that the disposal of this land at this time and in this context would not be appropriate.

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

- 4.1 As set out in the April 2014 paper to Cabinet, the previous public consultation exercise resulted in concerns being raised over the potential disposal of the land. These included matters relating to the loss of access to the playing fields and are linked to therefore to the wider strategic/policy matters highlighted above.
- 4.2 If the proposed deal were to go ahead, there would need to be further public consultations about the proposals.

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

- 5.1 There has been a delay of five years between Cabinet's decision (in April 2014) to approve the disposal of Billet Field (subject to the conditions outlined in the report) and the contact from ETUFC in April 2019, informing the Council that they would now like to proceed. During this time period, corporate priorities and the wider policy context have changed, as explained in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.11 above. Consequently, for the reasons set out in those paragraphs, it is not considered appropriate to continue with the disposal of this site at this current time.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by:

Rosie Hurst

Interim Senior Management Accountant

The lack of progress with negotiations with ETUFC means that the potential capital receipt has not been included in budget considerations, so there would be no direct financial implications if the proposed disposal to ETUFC were not to proceed as originally agreed by Cabinet in April 2014.

The 2014 Cabinet paper also highlighted associated revenue savings (estimated in 2014 as £28,000) from ETUFC taking over the Council's stewardship of Billet Field and Mobil Field. As this has also not happened, the potential revenue savings will not be realised.

The delay of five years between Cabinet's decision and the request from ETUFC to progress will also have an impact on the prices involved, with the inflation of land prices and development costs throughout this time. The financial elements of the proposed deal would have to be revisited to adjust sale price to allow for these impacts, if the deal were to proceed.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
**Acting Head of Legal, Assistant Director
Law and Governance, and Monitoring
Officer**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Strategic Lead, Community Development
and Equalities**

There are no Diversity and Equality implications.

6.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

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

Cabinet Report, April 2014: "Potential Disposal of Billet Field, Stanford Le Hope"

8. Appendices to the report

None

Report Author:

David Moore

Interim Assistant Director, Place Delivery

9 October 2019		ITEM: 12
Cabinet		
Integrated Community Equipment Service		
Wards and communities affected: All		Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Sue Little, Portfolio Holder Adult and Children's Social Care		
Accountable Assistant Director: Les Billingham, Interim Assistant Director, Adults Social Care and Community Development		
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director for Adults, Housing and Health and Interim Director for Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to request that Cabinet agree that Thurrock Council continue to be part of the Section 101 and Section 75 agreement with the Commissioning Partnership which includes Essex County Council, Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group, Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, Mid Essex Hospital Trust, Castlepoint and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) to commission Integrated Community Equipment.

The report details the importance of supplying Integrated Community Equipment and the options that have been explored before seeking approval from Cabinet to continue with the current arrangement to commission the service. The report also provides detail of the discussions Thurrock Council has had with partners for potential future procurement delivery.

1. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet are asked to:

- 1.1 Agree that Thurrock Council enters into a Section 101 and Section 75 agreement with the Commissioning Partnership to procure an Integrated Community Equipment contract.**
- 1.2 Agree to delegate the award of the contract to the Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health and Interim Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Integrated Community Equipment Contract has been delivered by Essex Cares Limited through a partnership arrangement with Essex County Council, Thurrock Council, Mid Essex CCG, Basildon and Brentwood CCG. Thurrock CCG, East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation Trust, Mid Essex Hospital Trust, Castlepoint and Rochford CCG and EPUT.
- 2.2 Essex Cares Limited was established in 2009 as a Local Authority Trading Company of Essex County Council. For the past five years Thurrock Council, under a Section 101 of the Local Government Act 2000 and a Section 75 Agreement together with the commissioning partners have held a contract with Essex Cares Limited to source, supply, install and maintain Community Equipment.
- 2.3 Thurrock Council has a duty to provide Community Equipment to support residents in Thurrock who are eligible under the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 .Community Equipment provides functional support to assist with care delivery and promotes independence. Examples of equipment could include a commode, a grab rail or a hoist. Items of equipment support both vulnerable children and adults within Thurrock.
- 2.4 Adult Social Care adopts a strength based approach focusing on an individual's own strengths and capabilities connecting them to support from friends, family, and the community. The ethos of this approach is providing the right care at the right time in the right pace. Items of equipment such as grab rails, kitchen trolleys, kettle tippers, none slip mats and moving and handling equipment support independence and resilience within a strength based approach. This enables people to remain at home in the heart of their communities delaying the need for care and focusing on their own strengths and abilities. Once equipment is no longer required, where possible items are collected cleaned and reused for other residents.
- 2.5 The Community Equipment Contract does not include specialist Pressure Area Care equipment. Pressure Area Care assistance is the responsibility of Health partners. Examples of pressure area care equipment include pressure mattresses and cushions. This part of the contract has been awarded directly to the Talley Group Ltd by the relevant Health providers from April 2019, this is out of scope of the Integrated Community Equipment contract. The service is commissioned on behalf of the Health partners by Essex County Council through a Section 75 Agreement.
- 2.6 The overall annual contract with Essex Cares Limited for all partners in 2019/20 is £12,260,149. Thurrock Council contribute £578,412. In 2017/18 the contract partnership delivered 157,000 items for 53,430 customers of which 6,545 items were delivered to 1,719 residents in Thurrock.

- 2.7 Thurrock Council is a member of the commissioning Governance Board and collaborates with other partners to monitor contract delivery focusing on service improvements, innovative practice and ensuring best practice.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Community equipment is a key component of Adult Social Care's support offer to vulnerable residents who are eligible under the Care Act 2014. It can enable Service Users to maximise independence preventing and delaying the need for care and support. In addition, it can support complex care requirements for Service Users who are non-weight bearing with items to help with their moving and handling.
- 3.2 Each item of equipment provided within this contract enables the Council to promote autonomy and a good quality of life for those who use it. For example, a perching stool promotes independence and dignity while potentially preventing the requirement of a formal statutory service alleviating pressure on the homecare market and the safety of the carers. The perching stool itself can help prevent a potential fall, making savings to the wider health and social care system.
- 3.3 The service also provides equipment to eligible children either within their home or as part of their Special Education Needs assessment within an education environment supporting children to maximise their potential and ability to learn.
- 3.4 The current contract between Essex Cares Limited and commissioning partners has worked well for the past five years. A benchmarking exercise compared future requirements with the limited competitors within the market and has illustrated that Essex Cares Limited delivers at a competitive rate nationally. Throughout the contract term the whole contract has remained within the financial threshold despite the fact that this is a cost and volume contract. .
- 3.5 To ensure best value for money Thurrock Council undertook an options appraisal of alternative commissioning methods to deliver the Integrated Community Equipment service. The options appraisal analysed four different possibilities;
- Collaboration with other unitary authorities
 - Bringing the service in house
 - A Thurrock procurement
 - Continue with current partnership
- 3.6 The options appraisal found that due to the cost of establishing a new service (purchasing equipment, warehouse space, cleaning facilities) and the viability of the contract size, which highlight the risks within a fragile market that the most viable option was to continue the commissioning partnership with Essex County Council and Health partners. The commissioning partnership

increases buying power, stability and value for money through the contractual process.

- 3.7 The commissioning partnership have explored the option of awarding the contract to Essex Care's Ltd under the "Teckal" exemption rules.

The "Teckal" rule can be only used with a company established by a local authority or other public body, which benefits from contracts awarded by its controlling Contracting Authority without having to go through a competitive tender process.

In order to benefit from the exemptions, as well as there being no private capital participation in the company the following circumstances must exist:

- the Contracting Authority/ies must exercise a control which is similar to that which it exercises over its/their own departments – this means it/they must have a decisive influence over both strategic objectives and ability to make significant decisions about the company either itself or through another subsidiary; and
- more than 80% of the activities of the company must be carried out in the performance of tasks entrusted to it by the controlling Contracting Authority/ies.

This exemption rule allows the contracting authority, Essex County Council to contract with Essex Cares Ltd, a legally distinct entity, which the authority has established.

- 3.8 Essex County Council, on behalf of the commissioning partnership commenced negotiations with Essex Cares Ltd in June 2019 with a Heads of Terms document detailing high level requirements for the contract. This negotiation required efficiencies through exit costs and an increase in equipment refunds. In return, an investment in a new warehouse management system, sustainability payment guarantees and year on year inflation uplift discussions are to take place.

- 3.9 The commissioning partnership has proposed an overall cost model to Essex Cares Limited which is considered to be a fair contract offer comprising of the original Heads of Terms which includes;

- Length of contract
- Cost
- Quality
- Key Performance indicators

- 3.10 The commissioning partnership which is, as noted, Essex County Council, Mid Essex CCG, Basildon and Brentwood CCG, Thurrock CCG, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, Mid Essex Hospital Trust, Castlepoint and Rochford CCG and EPUT are negotiating the terms of the new contract

with Essex Cares Limited. The commissioning partners are committed to working together to secure the best contractual terms possible for the delivery of Integrated Community Equipment across the whole partnership. However, should the negotiation be unsuccessful the partnership will procure Integrated Community Equipment services. Essex County Council will lead this procurement and Thurrock will remain committed to the commissioning partnership and the outcome for a responsive community equipment service.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The current contract with the provider Essex Cares Limited is coming to an end and a new contract for Integrated Community Equipment is required.

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

- 5.1 N/A

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

- 6.1 Integrated Community Equipment contracts impacts on the following Council Priority;

People – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay

- 6.2 The partnership arrangement with Essex County Council and Health partners offers value for money and enables the residents of Thurrock to receive appropriate care and support.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jo Freeman**
Finance Manager

The Integrated Community Equipment Contract has successfully delivered through 2018-19 a total of 6,545 pieces of equipment to 1,719 residents in Thurrock. As has been noted in the report equipment supports the strength based approach to adult social care enabling people to remain independent and stay at home longer. The supply of equipment has a positive impact on the adult social care budget by preventing the need for care, reducing the amount of care required and delaying care provision such as domiciliary and residential care.

Potential efficiencies and inflation uplifts are being discussed as part of the contract negotiations, the budget allocation for Community Integrated

Equipment has not been uplifted and the contract price of £578,412 will be included as part of the 2020-21 budget setting process.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Kevin Molloy**
Principal Solicitor

To ensure that the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 are delivered. Legal Services will support throughout the process to ensure that the service is within the law and reduces any risk to the Council.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Strategic Lead - Community Development and Equalities

Integrated Community Equipment enables some of our borough's most vulnerable residents including older people, Children in Need and people with disabilities to remain independent as possible. The vast range of equipment available supports their dignity and respect, recognising their diverse needs and offering a significant increase in choice.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children)

N/A

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

N/A

9. Appendices to the report

N/A

Report Author:

Michelle Taylor
Commissioning Manager
Adult Social Care

9 October 2019		ITEM: 13
Cabinet		
Re-Procurement of the Corporate Cleaning Contract		
Wards and communities affected: None		Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning		
Accountable Assistant Director: Detlev Munster, Assistant Director, Property Services		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Director of Finance, Governance and Property		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out the proposals for the re-procurement of the corporate cleaning contract (building and window cleaning plus washroom services) which covers the portfolio of Thurrock Council buildings including the Civic Offices, Thameside Complex, libraries and depot. The current cleaning contract expires on 30 June 2020 and a new contract will be put in place for 1 July 2020.

The current building cleaning and washroom services contract has performed to the required standards and the contract has been flexible in terms of variations and delivery of savings. There is likely to be an increase in scope of the new contract as the requirements at the Thameside Complex have expanded since the contract was last procured and they now require cleaning and janitorial services seven days a week.

The current window cleaning contract is under-performing. The incumbent supplier was placed on intensive monitoring in March 2019 and has failed to meet the criteria set. Notice to terminate the contract on 30 June 2020 was served in early September 2019.

Stakeholders across the Council are being consulted as to the most appropriate requirements for the service going forward and the specification has been designed to ensure flexibility during the contract term to meet building changes such as the Civic Offices extension, together with new ways of working that impact staff density and public footfall.

1. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the proposed process for re-procurement of the Corporate Cleaning Contract for a period of up to five years (three years plus two further one year periods subject to performance and funding); and**
- 1.2 Approve delegation to award to the Director of Finance, Governance and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current building cleaning contract was awarded to Servest on 1 July 2015 for a period of three years with the option to extend for two further one year periods. Both extension periods have been exercised and the contract therefore expires on 30 June 2020 and a new tender is required. With the council's agreement, Servest sub-contract the washroom services element of the contract to Initial.
- 2.2 Contract performance has met the required standards. Overall relevant stakeholders across the council are satisfied with the cleaning as delivered. The cost for regular elements of the current contract is £638,508 for the final year, excluding consumables and ad-hoc additional cleaning and variations. The cost of variations for the period 01/04/2018 to 01/04/2019 was £13K.
- 2.3 Following a procurement exercise, the current window cleaning contract was awarded to Hi-Spec Services on 1 July 2018 for a period of three years with the option to extend for two further one year periods. Hi-Spec have underperformed during this contract period and notice to terminate was served in early September 2019. Spend on the regular elements of the current contract is £27,745 per annum.
- 2.4 There is now the opportunity to re-procure three separate lots: Lot 1 – Building Cleaning, Lot 2 – Window Cleaning (internal and external) and Lot 3 – Washroom Services. This will give suppliers the opportunity to bid for one or multiple lots. The re-procurement exercise will also allow the council to incorporate the cost of consumables within the fixed annual service charge. Spend on consumables is currently high at c£50,000 per annum.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The value of the contract requires full compliance with EU Procurement regulations. Proceeding through an EU tender with implementation takes approximately six months from start to finish.
- 3.2 Within this procurement it is important to include sufficient time for implementation because if there is a change in contractor, it is likely there will also be a TUPE transfer of staff at contract change-over for the building cleaning element. Some of these staff may be enrolled within the Local

Government Pension Scheme through the current contractor's "admitted body status". Analysis of pension options or providing time to manage a new contractor's application will require at least a month to complete.

- 3.3 It is anticipated that, should Cabinet agree the recommendations set out in this report, the tender will be issued during October 2019.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to seek approval to proceed to tender for a contract with a whole life cost valued above £750K. The total estimated value for this contract over the maximum five year period of delivery is c£3.6m.

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

- 5.1 This proposal has been discussed and agreed with the relevant building managers or officers responsible for the properties contained within the cleaning portfolio.
- 5.2 Customer satisfaction is monitored in accordance with agreed quality audit checks. A monthly feedback form is completed by each site and the results are collated and recorded; issues raised by staff and visitors in terms of cleaning performance has shaped the output and outcome standards to be set.

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

- 6.1 The new corporate cleaning contract aims to meet corporate priorities overall through the delivery of high quality services, ensuring pride in Thurrock properties for both staff and visitors.

The following two examples show how priorities will be delivered through the contract:

Priority	Delivered By
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
Place – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future	Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Senior Management Accountant

The procurement aims to secure a contract within or below the current total annual price. A schedule of rates will be included for ad hoc cleaning and provision of cleaning operatives to ensure that there is full visibility of costs during the term.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Kevin Molloy**
Principal Solicitor

This report is seeking approval from Cabinet to tender the contract as set out in the report. The proposed procurement being considered is estimated at above EU thresholds for supplies and service contracts (currently set at approximately £181,302). This means that it is necessary to either competitively tender the contract via the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) or use a public service framework such as through the Crown Commercial Services.

Legal Services note this tender will be conducted in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the "Regulations") using the open procedure.

Taking the above into account, on the basis of the information in this report, the proposed procurement strategy should comply with the Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Strategic Lead, Community Development & Equalities

Although this is not a front line service, the procurement process will establish a suitable supplier(s) who are able to demonstrate excellent practice in employment including equal opportunity recruitment, training and staff terms and conditions.

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

None specific

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

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

Report Author:

Sarah Hurlock

Corporate Contract Manager

Commercial Services

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