

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 **15 March 2023**

Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Mark Coxshall (Leader), Deborah Arnold (Deputy Leader), Qaisar Abbas, Jack Duffin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney, Graham Snell and Luke Spillman

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of Cabinet held on 22 February 2023.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4 Declaration of Interests	
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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Members are asked to consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

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

Agenda published on: **7 March 2023**

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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 22 February 2023 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-ins is Monday 6 March 2023 at 5.00pm.

Present:	Councillors Mark Coxshall (Leader), Deborah Arnold (Deputy Leader), Qaisar Abbas, Jack Duffin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Ben Maney, Graham Snell and Luke Spillman
In attendance:	Ceri Armstrong, Strategic Lead – Adult Social Care Mark Bradbury, Director of Place Asmat Hussain, Interim Director of Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer John Jones, Director Law & Governance, and Monitoring Officer Gareth Moss, Interim Chief Financial Officer Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services Ewelina Sorbjan, Interim Director of Housing Luke Tyson, Delivery and Strategy Manager Ian Wake, Acting Chief Executive Karen Wheeler, Director Strategy, Engagement and Growth Jonathan Wilson, Interim Director of Finance and S151 Officer Nicole Wood, Essex County Council Commissioner Lucy Tricker, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded; and would be uploaded to the Council's website.

97. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 11 January 2023 were approved as a true and correct record.

98. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

99. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

100. Statements by the Leader

The Leader began his statement by explaining that Cabinet had to make tough decisions, such as the proposed rise in council tax, to ensure the Council could maintain statutory services for residents. He explained that historically Thurrock had had a low council tax base, due to previous decisions not to raise council tax in line with referendum levels, and this had a compound effect on the Council's ability to provide services such as adult

social care, bin collection, and payment of staff. He stated that Members needed to consider the budget carefully and ensure it was sustainable for the future.

101. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues

Councillor Maney explained he had met with officers, alongside Councillor Jefferies, to discuss the unauthorised developments in Buckles Lane, and they had requested an urgent Cabinet paper on the issue.

102. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

No petitions had been submitted by members of the public.

103. Questions from Non-Executive Members

No questions had been submitted by Non-Executive Members.

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

Other than those items already contained within the agenda, no items had been referred to the Cabinet for their consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee.

105. Draft General Fund Budget 2023/24 (Decision: 110638)

Councillor Snell introduced the report and stated that the Quarter 2 2022/23 that had been submitted to Cabinet had shown a 2022/23 deficit of approximately £469mn, and a £180mn deficit in 2023/24, which had led to a Section 114 Notice being published on 19 December 2022, alongside a request to central government for exceptional financial support (EFS). He explained that the budget being presented to Cabinet assumed that central government would grant the request for EFS, but this was not guaranteed at this time. He explained that even if EFS was granted, the Council needed to work to mitigate the deficit through a 20-year financial strategy, which included raising council tax, disposing of assets, and revising the Minimum Revenue Position (MRP) policy, all of which was included in the report. He added that inflation was also having an impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as gas and electricity prices had risen by approximately 10%; petrol prices had risen by 8.9%; and diesel prices had risen by 22%. He explained that the team monitored inflation rates carefully.

Councillor Snell moved on and explained that on 6 February 2023 the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) had granted the Council dispensation to raise council tax rates above referendum levels, without holding a referendum. He stated that the finance team had carried out comparative work with other peer unitary authorities, and had found that Thurrock had a lower council tax base than its peers, which meant that the Council could not raise as much income to pay for services to

residents. He confirmed that a hardship fund of approximately £116,000 would be introduced, alongside the Local Council Tax Scheme, to ensure vulnerable residents received support paying their council tax. He stated that the budget presented to Cabinet assumed a 9.99% rise in council tax. He added that non-domestic rates would also be levied to increase income for the Council by approximately £7mn in 2023/24. Councillor Snell commented that the team were also undertaking research into a business rate pool with other local authorities, but an application needed to be submitted before this proposal could be progressed. He summarised and stated that the budget remained challenging, as it could only be balanced for 2023/24 with EFS from central government, but needed to be sustainable in the long-term.

The Interim Director of Finance explained that the Council needed to demonstrate to central government that they understood the scale of the financial challenge and were taking action to resolve these financial issues. He stated that the budget was being presented to Cabinet as a point in time report, as the context behind the budget was continually moving, and presented underlying fragility. He stated that the team were now reversing one-off measures and working to deliver savings to work towards a sustainable budget. The Interim Director of Finance explained that core service pressures were now outweighing council income, which had led to a £180m budget gap, which had been compounded by investment income issues. He added that the council were carefully monitoring interest rates and working on the divestment of assets and investments, as well as MRP charges that remained high and presented additional risks. He stated that the Council had to demonstrate to government they were working to mitigate financial issues, and this had to include the proposal to raise council tax. He described how the Council's finances were now exposed to risk and this could present a problem in achieving financial sustainability through the 20-year model. He stated that conversations between the Council, central government, and commissioners remained ongoing to resolve financial issues, and this included considering all areas of the Council including fees and charges, to find further solutions and new innovations.

The Interim Director of Finance moved on and explained that the proposal to raise council tax was important as the Council were starting from a low council tax base, but a hardship fund would be introduced to ensure vulnerable residents received support. He highlighted the S25 Statement at Appendix 8 and explained that it was unusual as the proposed budget assumed EFS from central government, and this had not yet been agreed. He stated that the Council needed to continue to engage positively with the commissioner and intervention process, as well as key partners, to take action and resolve the Council's financial crisis.

The Leader thanked Councillor Snell and officers for the report and felt that the proposed rise in council tax was important to ensure the future of Thurrock Council. He stated that the Council had to take tough decisions and do the right thing for the future sustainability of Thurrock. He stated that the budget presented a restart for the Council to undertake a new way of working and improving the culture, as well as ensuring future proposed regeneration could

take place. He added that as council tax had not been raised to referendum limits in the past, Thurrock Council had lost approximately £50mn in compound tax collections.

Councillor Spillman questioned the structural deficit of the Council if investment issues were removed. The Interim Director of Finance explained that the Council had a deficit of approximately £17.7mn of service pressure, which represented the difference between income, growth and savings; and service costs. He stated that further savings would need to be delivered within 2023/24 and the capital programme was being reviewed. The Interim Director of Finance explained that previous decisions not to raise council tax also meant that the Council's budget base was smaller than other comparable unitary authorities. Councillor Spillman supported the budget as he felt it would help to ensure the viability of the Council and would help to close the structural deficits. The Deputy Leader agreed with the proposals to raise council tax, as it would help to ensure that frontline care such as staff, equipment, and residential care continued to be provided to vulnerable residents. She added that the £1.5mn raised through the Adult Social Care precept increase would help to provide these services, but would not fully close the £4mn service pressure. Councillor Spillman asked which services would be cut if Council only agreed to raise council tax by 4.99%. The Interim Director of Finance explained that if council tax was raised by 4.99%, compared to 7.99%, this would increase the Council's deficit by approximately £2.3mn. He stated that if this was the case, the Council would need to undergo further service transformation.

The Leader highlighted that if council tax was not increased, this would have a compound affect for the next 20 or 30 years, and Members needed to ensure the Council was financially sustainable. Councillor Abbas supported the budget as he felt it would protect statutory services for residents, but highlighted 3.9 of the report and asked what further adjustments would be made in future. The Essex County Council (ECC) Commissioner stated that although the budget was detailed, further work needed to be undertaken, for example the Quarter 1 review of fees and charges; and a fuller review of the capital programme and further potential savings in this area. She stated that the budget represented a point in time and further service transformation would be required in 2023/24. She added that central government would place conditions on the EFS, if it was granted, for example regarding the disposal programme. She highlighted that the EFS request for £630mn over 2022/23 and 23/24 had been submitted to the minister, but was not yet approved as the Council were waiting for a 'minded to' letter. The Leader stated that all Members needed to work together on the budget. He thanked the commissioners and the finance team for their hard work on the budget. Councillor Spillman echoed the Leader's comments and thanked the finance team for their hard work.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader, and seconded by Councillor Snell. All Cabinet Members agreed the recommendations as listed below.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1. Commented on the proposed updates to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy including the deficit positions set out in each year.**
- 2. Noted on 6 February 2023 Thurrock Council was granted permission by the levelling up minister to raise council tax by an extra 5% to 10% without the need for a local referendum.**
- 3. Noted the paper assumed as council tax increase of 7.99%, as per paragraph 9.6.**
- 4. Supported a 2% Adult Social Care precept increase as per paragraph 9.6, and noted that this will be used to fund increased demand and provider fees with older people care services.**
- 5. Noted the council tax requirement of £82.355m as per section 8.**
- 6. Noted the net cost of services requirement is £327.647m as per paragraph 8.1.**
- 7. Noted the proposed savings as per section 12 and Appendix 4 and noted that these are insufficient to address the funding gap without the need to seek exceptional financial support from government.**
- 8. Noted that exceptional financial support is required to balance the 2023/24 budget and discussions with central government are ongoing, as per Appendix 3.**
- 9. Noted the budget had been set based on the assumption that the request for exceptional financial support in respect of the 2022/23 budget deficit is granted.**
- 10. Noted the changes to the capital programme as set out in the report and associated appendices.**
- 11. Noted the impact of the new Prudential Borrowing on the debt levels of the Council as set out in Appendix 5.**
- 12. Noted the capital programme will be subject to a further review as set out in the report and following the issue of a Section 114 Notice.**
- 13. Noted the projected revenue impact of the Minimum Revenue Position (MRP) costs as set out in Section 14.25.**
- 14. Commented on the proposed delegation to Cabinet to approve additions to the programme based on the criteria set out in section 14.24.**
- 15. Noted the Dedicated School's Budget is set out at £51.258m as per**

paragraph 15.13.

16. Commented on the draft budget proposals within this report to inform the final budget proposals to be presented to Full Council on 1 March 2023.

17. Noted further reviews have been commissioned into the fees and charges policy and the pay policy as per paragraph 9.23 and 10.4 respectively.

18. Noted the Council's position on Reserves, recognising the unique situation the Council faces and a need to revisit the adequacy of Reserves as savings and service transformation are affected during 2023/24.

19. Noted that work on the budget will continue during 2023/24, with more savings required to Council services.

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

106. Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Decision: 110639)

The Interim Director of Finance introduced the report and stated that three of the original intervention directives linked to the Treasury Management Strategy, and these were: writing a new Strategy; introducing a plan for debt reduction; and revising the Council's MRP and debt write-down strategy. He explained that these directives were included in the new strategy, which also included cashflow management; funding; the capital programme; investment strategy; and debt strategy. He stated that capital programme planned expenditure was listed at page 36, but no future investments would be undertaken to pay for these projects. He highlighted page 39 of the report and stated that the Council retained approximately £1bn of investment, but the Council would be seeking to divest these as outlined in the borrowing strategy. He explained that the MRP was linked to the level of deficit, which made up £74m of the £180mn budget gap, but the team were working to reset the policy in relation to investments, particularly the solar and wind farm investments. He stated that some investments had a 20-year life span, but these would be written down using the new debt strategy, which was forward compliant with the Prudential Code. He felt that this put the Council in a good position, as other Councils had to grapple with the new Prudential Code, and were not receiving the level of support that Thurrock were receiving.

The Interim Director of Finance explained that the Council still had a capital financing borrowing requirement, and this could present a risk to the Council until it was written down through the MRP. He explained that if this process had been followed in the past, it would have provided the Council with more financial protection. He added that one of the capitalisation directives was to divest investments, although this would not cover the total cost of debt, and therefore remained an unresolved problem, which the Council were working

closely with commissioners and central government on. He highlighted page 62 of the report, which outlined the borrowing strategy. He explained that the Council were working to divest investments, but the current borrowing strategy represented a holding position. He felt hopeful that the Toucan investment would be divested within the next financial year, and the speed of divestment would help to stop significant financial pressures and reduce the MRP charge. He added that the team were working on borrowing as it matured, for example by replacing inter-authority borrowing with Public Works Loan Board borrowing, but this would be impacted by the speed of divestment. He added that an update on the Treasury Management Strategy would be brought back to Cabinet mid-year in 2023/24, as this report represented a holding position based on the assumption of EFS being granted.

The Leader highlighted page 62 of the report and stated that the Toucan asset was the largest asset and needed to be divested quickly within the next financial year to reduce interest payments. He also sought assurance that this Strategy was compliant with the Prudential Code, as previously strategies presented to Members had not been compliant. The Interim Director of Finance assured Members that the report was compliant with the current Prudential Code and would be forward compliant with the next Prudential Code iteration. The Interim Chief Finance Officer added that the strategy had gone through a rigorous checking process, which had been externally reviewed for its robustness. He added that it had also received independent verification and gone through an external comment process. The ECC Commissioner added that a compliant MRP was one of the government directives, and CIPFA had reviewed the document for compliance. She added that further costs may be identified through the process and further financial issues may arise, for example the 2020/21 accounts remained open, and work was pending on the HRA and associated companies. She added that no issues had thus far been found, but work was still ongoing.

The Deputy Leader highlighted pages 41-42 of the report and asked if Members would receive further training on investments and liquidity. She also asked for a complete table of all investments in one document. The Interim Chief Financial Officer replied that he would provide this document for Members. Councillor Johnson thanked officers for their assurances regarding the Treasury Management Strategy compliance, and asked if updates on the Strategy could be provided at every Cabinet meeting. The Interim Chief Financial Officer explained that the Treasury Management Strategy would be presented regularly at the Investment Advisory Panel, if agreed at Cabinet, and the outcomes from the Investment Advisory Panel would be presented to Cabinet.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader, and seconded by Councillor Snell. All Cabinet Members agreed the recommendations as listed below.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

Recommended that Full Council:

- 1. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 including the approval of the Annual Minimum Revenue Position (MPR) statement for 2023/24.**
- 2. Notes comments from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy for consideration.**
- 3. Considers the current assumptions (as set out on page 3 of the Strategy) underpinning the Treasury Management Strategy and note that this will be subject to further updates in 2023/24.**
- 4. Considers the strategy in the context of the directions issued by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities and specifically the need for a strict debt reduction plan.**
- 5. Notes the increase in the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in 2022/23 as a result of the expected support from DLUHC in the form of a capitalisation direction, as set out in section 3.16.**
- 6. Notes the divestment of investments and the sale of property assets are required to repay the Exceptional Financial Support from DLUHC and this is a key assumption supporting the strategy.**
- 7. Notes the Council's borrowing level will exceed the CFR in 2022/23 but is planned to be managed within this from 2023/24 and onwards, as set out in section 3.17.**
- 8. Notes the Prudential indicators included within the strategy that show commercial capital investments are generating net losses to the Council in the context of the revised MRP charges and current and projected interest rates, as set out in section 3.6.**
- 9. Notes that the borrowing strategy supporting the commercial investment portfolio will be reset alongside wider revisions to the strategy in 2023/24.**

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

107. Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2023/24 (Decision: 110640)

Councillor Snell introduced the report and explained that it provided a list of future fees and charges from 1 April 2023. He stated that fees and charges would raise approximately £7.641mn income for the Council, which was an increase of 4% on 2022/23. Councillor Snell confirmed that fees and charges were being reviewed and this would be presented to Cabinet in Quarter 1 2023/24.

Councillor Johnson questioned why Cabinet Members were not listed as receiving delegated authority for in-year fees and charges amendments. The Director of Law and Governance suggested that “in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder” was added to recommendation 2. This amendment was agreed by all Cabinet Members.

The Deputy Leader felt it was good to see a review of fees and charges would be occurring. She highlighted that some Adult Social Care fees and charges were means-tested so vulnerable residents could continue to access services. She highlighted the removed charge relating to meals on wheels, but confirmed that the service would continue for residents, but would be delivered in a different way. The Leader echoed these comments and felt it was good to see fees and charges would be reviewed. He highlighted the fees for weddings and registrars, and asked if the numbers of people getting married had increased. The Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth replied that this figure had increased throughout 2022/23. The Deputy Leader thanked the registrars’ team for their hard work, and confirmed that she had got married in the new registrars’ office and had enjoyed her day.

The recommendations, including the amendment to recommendation 2, were proposed by the Leader, and seconded by Councillor Snell. All Cabinet Members agreed the recommendations as listed below.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1. Agreed the proposed fees and charges, including those no longer applicable, as per Appendices 1 and 2.**
- 2. Approved delegated authority to the following Directors, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, to vary Fees and Charges for the respective service area within the financial year 2023/24 in response to legal and regulatory requirements only:**
 - i. Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth (para 4)**
 - ii. Director of Public Realm (para 4,5)**
 - iii. Director of Place (para 4,5)**
 - iv. Director of Adult Social Care and Community (para 6)**
 - v. Director of Housing (para 7)**
 - vi. Director of Children’s Services (para 8)**
- 3. Considered the feedback and additional information from all Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and additional meetings held in relation to fees and charges, as per Appendices 3, 4, and 5.**
- 4. Noted the requirement for a detailed review of our Fees and Charges in Quarter 1 2023/24 alongside a revision of our strategy for raising income and fee charging policy.**

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

**108. Housing Revenue Account - Rent Setting and Budgets 2023/24
(Decision: 110641)**

Councillor Spillman introduced the report and stated that it proposed an increase of 7% to rents, and 11% to service charges. He explained that even with these proposals, the service would still be in deficit and was lower than inflation, which was currently 11 + 1%. He explained that the increase in rents and charges would raise approximately £2.974mn, but the service was currently in £4.269m deficit. He thanked the housing team and Interim Director of Housing for their hard work, for the engagement afforded to him in the budget setting process, and for the level of detail contained within the report. He stated that the service would need to make tough decisions such as keeping open vacancies, increasing service charges, and stopping some non-statutory services. He added that there were risks associated with the budget, such as the increase in costs; the increase in the number of people presenting homeless, which had increased across the UK; and new legislation regarding damp and mould which could have cost implications. Councillor Spillman explained that due to the Council's financial situation some capital projects in the HRA were no longer viable and would be reviewed, but he felt the team had to set a sustainable budget for the future of Thurrock.

Councillor Abbas supported the proposals, but questioned how the Council could explain a 7% increase to rent. Councillor Spillman explained that there was currently a national housing crisis in the UK. He stated that there would be a contingency fund in place for those residents who struggled to pay their rent, and the rent team would work closely with residents on financial inclusion to avoid residents going into debt. The Interim Director of Housing explained that the budget had been stress-tested to ensure it was sustainable and prepared for every eventuality. Councillor Snell queried if the proposed Blackshots development would be continuing. Councillor Spillman explained that the commissioners were currently considering the plans, and a Cabinet paper would hopefully be delivered at the next Cabinet meeting.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader, and seconded by Councillor Spillman. All Cabinet Members agreed the recommendations as listed below.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1. Supported the proposed changes in the base budget for 2023/24 (as set out in Table 1).**
- 2. Supported the proposed increase in domestic rent charges of 7%, in line with the 30-year HRA business plan, to be implemented from 3 April 2023.**
- 3. Supported the proposed increase in service charges to reflect the**

cost of running each service in line with the budget estimate from 3 April 2023.

4. Supported the proposed charges for garage rents (para 3.10) to be implemented from 3 April 2023.

5. Supported the proposed increase in Traveller sites rent (para 3.11) to be implemented from 3 April 2023.

6. Supported the proposed Capital Programme schemes as detailed in Table 5 (para 3.13).

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

109. Establishing the Strategic Investment Advisory Panel

The Leader introduced the report and stated that it proposed a new Investment Advisory Panel to ensure openness and transparency within the Council, and to allow residents to see decisions and outcomes relating to investments. Councillor Jefferies felt pleased to see a formal Advisory Panel would now be in place and felt it was a good step forward for the Council. The Deputy Leader highlighted 2.6, 2.7, and 4.1 of the report and felt pleased to see the positive and proactive measures being implemented. She asked if the requirement for mandatory training could be included in the Terms of Reference. The Director of Law and Governance stated that the requirement for mandatory training was listed at 3.7 of the report, but could be included in the Terms of Reference.

Councillor Maney queried what the relationship between the new Advisory Panel and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be. He also questioned if the Advisory Panel meeting quarterly would be often enough. The Leader explained that the meeting dates would be in the diary quarterly, but the Chair could call meetings more often depending on the workload. He added that the Advisory Panel would feed into both Cabinet and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to ensure both bodies had a good understanding regarding investments. He added that the Advisory Panel would report to the Leader and Cabinet, but the Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee could request reports. Councillor Abbas queried if there would be a limit on the number of co-optees on the Panel, and if they would be paid an allowance. The Director of Law and Governance explained that co-optees would be brought onto the Panel to discuss areas of specialist knowledge, on an ad-hoc basis. The Leader added that their allowance would be agreed by the independent remuneration panel, who would be meeting during 2023/24. The Leader thanked the outgoing Monitoring Officer for his hard during his time at Thurrock Council, and welcomed the new Director of Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer to the role.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader, and seconded by

Councillor Snell. All Cabinet Members approved the recommendations as listed below.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1. Established the Strategic Investment Advisory Panel as outlined in Section 3 and Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 2. Requested Council to endorse the panel and terms of reference, and agree to the necessary appointments to the panel.**

The meeting finished at 8.35 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

15 March 2023		ITEM: 10 Decision: 110642
Cabinet		
Thameside Centre		
Wards and communities affected: All wards	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Leader of the Council		
Accountable Assistant Director: N/A		
Accountable Director: Mark Bradbury – Director of Place		
This report is: public with an exempt appendix which is exempt due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).		
Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report: 7 March 2023		

Executive Summary

The future of the Thameside Centre has been the subject of consideration for some time. In July 2021 Cabinet declared the building surplus as part of the Council's 3R's approach to Releasing, Reusing or Retaining property assets.

Following a public campaign to stop the closure and sale of the building, meetings with interested representatives of the community took place on 22 September, 30 November and 13 December 2021. The Portfolio Holders for Regeneration; Strategic Planning & External Relationships and Adults & Communities and various officers represented the council.

In January 2022 Cabinet were advised and noted that there was still significant work required on a business case and issues to be resolved from the council's side. Cabinet agreed to allow time for discussions with community groups interested in taking over operation of the building to establish whether there is a financially sustainable alternative to closure and disposal.

In addition, meetings have also taken place with individuals and groups as part of ongoing engagement to develop a shared Cultural Strategy for Thurrock with partners.

Discussions and meetings continued in early 2022 which led to the submission of an Outline Business Case by a partnership between Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) and Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC).

Waltham International College also expressed interest in leasing the building and it was agreed that they should be allowed time to submit a proposal.

Both parties were given the opportunity to review and if appropriate update their proposals following clarification meetings with officers.

This report considers both proposals and other options available to the council and concludes that neither proposal delivers a financially sustainable alternative and closure and disposal of the property with the library and museum being relocated remains the best option for eliminating future financial liability for the building and meeting Medium Term Financial Plan targets.

The challenges facing the Council are well publicised and this report should be read in that context. Future service activity will need to reflect the intervention the Council finds itself in. Particularly difficult decisions will need to be made on levels of service and methods of service delivery during 2023 and beyond.

The Council's financial recovery will be reliant on significant capital receipts from asset disposals in addition to significant revenue savings. The requirements of the s114 Notice that the Council is currently operating under mean that the Council is unable to spend any resources on any item that is not covered explicitly in statute. The 2023/24 Budget report makes explicit reference to the difficult decisions the Council has to continue to make, including further revenue budget savings.

1. Recommendations:

- 1.1 Cabinet notes the bids from Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions/Thurrock International Celebration of Culture and Waltham International College and thanks them for their efforts to try and offer a financially sustainable alternative for the future of the building.**
- 1.2 Cabinet notes the significant concerns regarding both proposals and that neither is recommended as a financially sustainable alternative for the future of the building.**
- 1.3 Cabinet authorises the Director of Place to undertake consultation on alternative options for the delivery of cultural activities and events in Grays.**
- 1.4 Cabinet authorises the Corporate Director of Adults, Housing & Health to undertake consultation on the relocation of the Library from the Thameside Building to the Civic Offices.**
- 1.5 Cabinet authorises the Director of Place to undertake consultation on the relocation of the Museum from the Thameside Building to the Civic Offices with a view to achieving Accredited Museum status.**

1.6 Cabinet notes the allocation of £1.2 million in the Capital Programme agreed at Council on 1st March 2023, funded from asset sales, for the relocation of the Library & Museum

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Thameside Building opened in 1972 and has housed a Library, Theatre and Museum for many years along with several other council, cultural and community organisations and activities. The Registry Office was also located in the building but relocated to the new Thurrock Town Hall in 2022.
- 2.2 The Thameside Building is now over 50 years old and in recent years there has been a significant lack of investment in the building and its mechanical and electrical fixtures, and this has led to a backlog of investment necessary to continue effective operation and maintain statutory compliance.
- 2.3 In July 2021 it was reported to Cabinet that the annual cost of running the building was more than £500,000 and the capital cost to refurbish the building and carry out all necessary repairs was circa £16 million. With the rise in inflation and construction costs in the intervening period the estimate is now between £18 and £20 million.
- 2.4 Cabinet declared the building surplus on 7th July 2021 (Decision 110568).
- 2.5 Following a campaign against any closure of the theatre and several roundtable meetings with interested members of the community a further decision was made by Cabinet in January 2022 to 'Continue with discussions and the development of a business case that could see a community organisation taking over the Thameside building including the transformation of the building and related cultural services' (Decision 110595).

3. Internal & External Consultation

- 3.1 Following the public campaign referred to above, meetings with interested representatives of the community took place on 22 September, 30 November and 13 December 2021. The Portfolio Holders for Regeneration; Strategic Planning & External Relationships and Adults & Communities and various officers represented the council at these meetings.
- 3.2 In January 2022 Cabinet were advised of the progress made at these meetings and noted that there was still significant work required on a business case and issues to be resolved from the council's side. Cabinet agreed to allow time for discussions with community groups interested in taking over operation of the building to establish whether there was a financially sustainable alternative to closure and disposal.
- 3.3 Discussions and meetings continued in early 2022 and these led to the submission of an Outline Business Case by a partnership between Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions and Thurrock International Celebration of Culture.

- 3.4 In summer 2022 Waltham International College (WIC) also expressed interest in leasing the building and it was agreed that they should be allowed time to submit a proposal. TLS/TICC were informed of this.
- 3.5 Once both proposals had been received and reviewed both parties were given the opportunity to review and if appropriate update their proposals following clarification meetings with officers. A revised proposal was received from TLS/TICC, and further clarification was also supplied by WIC.
- 3.6 Following full consideration of the options (as set out in 4. below) it is proposed that consultation with staff, users, and stakeholders regarding alternative options for the delivery of cultural activity and events in the borough is undertaken.
- 3.7 Consultation on the proposed relocation of the Library and Museum will also be undertaken.
- 3.8 Consultation will commence shortly after the May elections and is expected to run for up to 8 weeks with a mixture of online, face to face and stakeholder panel opportunities to engage.
- 3.9 Staff have been engaged and updated on the options throughout the process but will be included along with users and stakeholders in the consultations referenced above.
- 3.10 Where there are staffing implications there will be formal consultation with affected staff.
- 3.11 Meetings have also taken place with a range of individuals and groups as part of ongoing engagement to develop a shared Cultural Strategy for Thurrock with partners and this will continue.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Following receipt of the two proposals referenced above it is considered that the following options are available to the Council
 - 1.) Close the theatre, relocate the library & museum, and sell the property with vacant possession
 - 2.) Progress a lease to TLS/TICC
 - 3.) Progress a lease to Waltham International College
 - 4.) Retain control of the building, invest in eliminating the maintenance backlog and in the services based there and seek to lease out the remaining space
 - 5.) Do nothing
- 4.2 Options Analysis

1) Option 1 - Close the theatre, relocate the library & museum, and sell the property with vacant possession

Closure and disposal of the building presents the greatest certainty of eliminating future financial liability for the building with the potential for a significant capital receipt.

An independent valuation of the building with vacant possession has been obtained and the details are set out in the exempt appendix. This is considered commercially sensitive at this stage as disclosure could adversely impact the level of bids received following marketing.

This option would require the closure of the theatre. It is proposed that there should be consultation with staff, users and stakeholders regarding alternative options for the delivery of cultural activity and events in the borough.

There will be staffing implications, and these will be the subject of formal consultation with staff.

This option proposes that the library and museum are relocated to the Civic Centre, where there is sufficient surplus space to accommodate it. There are not expected to staffing implications, but the proposed move will be the subject of consultation with staff, users and stakeholders. Subject to that consultation it is expected that the library move could be completed and completion of a sale of the building would occur by March 2024.

The cost of relocation is estimated at between £800,000 and £1,000,000 and a further contingency sum of 20% should be allowed. This figure will be reviewed following the consultation and if approved funded from capital receipts from property disposal.

2) Option 2 – Progress a lease to TLS/TICC

This option offers the potential to retain a community led cultural hub in Grays town centre linked to a programme of cultural capacity development.

This option retains the library, theatre and museum in the current locations with the operation of the theatre and museum taken over by the proposed tenant and the library continuing to be run by the Council.

The building would be transferred to the bidder via a 25-year lease. The space occupied by the library would be leased back to the Council via a sub-lease. No rent would be payable on either lease, but the Council would be liable for payment of a service charge to the lessee for the maintenance, cleaning and security of the building.

The latest business plan proposes that the Council will support the lessee by providing a £750,000 grant at the start of the lease and revenue funding support totalling £1,000,000 spread evenly over the first 3 years.

There however remain several concerns regarding the bidder's capacity to deliver and the potential for future cost implications to the Council as a result, despite ongoing discussions over many months.

Whilst the business plan includes a sum for annual maintenance, beyond the initial grant from the Council there no provision for major refurbishment or replacement of mechanical and electrical equipment which is considered essential over the 25-year lease life. Failure to ensure the proper repair and maintenance of the building by the tenant could have significant implications for the operation of the library and the future value of a council owned asset.

The proposed tenant projects that income from leasing out space within the building, operating the café and making a modest profit from running the theatre amounts to only 25% to 30% of the estimated cost of operating the building. Their business plan is therefore heavily reliant upon unconfirmed external grant funding from the Community, Trusts and Foundations and Lottery based funders, amounting to over £400,000 per annum from year 4 or approaching £10 million over the lease.

There is therefore a significant risk that the proposed lessee will be unable to meet the ongoing revenue and capital costs of running a dated, complex building and that these liabilities will fall back to the Council through either further requests for financial support or early termination of the lease.

3) Option 3 – Progress a lease to Waltham International College

This option retains the library, theatre and museum in their current location with operation of the library and museum remaining with the Council. The remainder of the building would be used as a college with a mix of further and higher education and some focus on the creative industries.

This option will also require an initial capital contribution to the tenant of £400,000 (by way of reverse premium) from the Council but could deliver a rental income of up to £115,000 per year over a lease term of 25 years.

This proposal was put together in a relatively short period of time and, despite a number of meetings with the bidder, there remains significant due diligence to be carried out by the Council and the Bidder to ensure that the proposal is robust. The Council has yet to see a detailed business plan or cashflow to understand the assumptions made regarding capital refurbishment and maintenance and to understand the likely ongoing cost of operating council facilities in the building. If this option were to be

favoured significant further due diligence will be required before a final decision could be confirmed.

The potential net present value (NPV) of the proposed rental stream would be lower than the net capital receipt from a sale after the costs of relocating the library are deducted.

Officers have met with the bidder to discuss the future operation of the theatre and are yet to be satisfied the bidder and its proposed partner have the capacity to run the theatre with a meaningful and sustainable programme.

Concerns have also been expressed regarding the possible impact of another college in Grays on existing course provision and the South Essex Technical University and these have yet to be fully addressed.

An OFSTED Report into WIC following an inspection in July 2022 has rated their overall effectiveness as Inadequate. Several areas including 'The quality of education'; 'Leadership and management' and 'Adult Learning Programmes' have also been rated Inadequate. It is understood that the Mayor of London and other authorities are currently reviewing funding they provide to WIC.

- 4) Option 4 - Retain control of the building, invest in eliminating the maintenance backlog and in the services based there and seek to lease out the remaining space

This option could ensure the ongoing presence of the Library, Theatre and Museum with rental income from leased surplus space contributing towards the overall cost of operating the building.

This option will however require significant capital investment estimated at between £18 and £20 million to address the maintenance backlog, replace or update mechanical and electrical services to reduce operating and utility costs and to create lettable space.

Rents will be relatively low even following this investment and the low net to gross ratio of lettable space, the fragmented nature of the space and the likely tenant mix will lead to high management costs reducing the true net income.

From a high-level analysis of potential income, it is clear that with the cost of borrowing to fund works, minimum revenue provision and ongoing operational costs the return on investment will be negative.

- 5) Option 5 – Do Nothing

Doing nothing increases the maintenance backlog, reduces the potential for alternative options to be viable and does nothing to address current and future revenue implications.

5. Reason for Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposal from TLS/TICC is heavily dependant upon unconfirmed external funding and grants and therefore leaves a significant risk that the proposed lessee will be unable to meet the ongoing revenue and capital costs of running a dated, complex building and that these liabilities will fall back to the Council through either further requests for financial support or early termination of the lease.
- 5.2 Waltham International College have recently received an overall OFSTED rating of Inadequate, with all areas of activity being rated either 'Inadequate' or 'Requires Improvement'. Inadequate is the lowest rating given by OFSTED. There are further concerns regarding the possible impact of a new college on existing provision and the proposed lessee's capacity to deliver a meaningful programme in the theatre. Further details regarding the financial business case will also be required to assess whether the proposal is financially sustainable. It is not considered appropriate to enter into a lease with these concerns outstanding.
- 5.3 Option 1 currently offers the greatest certainty to make savings already identified in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and remove the future liabilities associated with this building. In addition, a market assessment of the potential capital receipt indicates that even after the estimated cost of relocating the library there is a net capital receipt to help address the Council's current financial position.
- 5.4 It is therefore recommended that consultation be undertaken on the proposed relocation of the library and museum and on alternative options for the delivery of cultural activity and events.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Dammy Adewole**
Senior Management Accountant

Following the decision in July 2021, the budget for the building operating and energy costs of the Thameside Complex was reduced by 50% on the assumption that the building would be sold by September 2022. As the building has remained open and unsold the current forecast for the full year of £640,000 is over double the budget and has been further impacted by rising energy costs. This figure includes allowance for forecast income of £62,000 per annum from existing tenants.

Cost Centre	Subjective	Budget 2022-23	YTD		P8 Variance
			Actuals to P8	P8 Forecast	
CL022 - Thameside Complex	Expenditure	391,807	392,151	698,650	306,843
	Income	(31,550)	(33,947)	(62,480)	(30,930)
	Net Budget	360,257	358,204	636,170	275,913

The theatre operating costs (excluding building maintenance, security and energy costs (included in the budget above) are budgeted to be net neutral with income from productions, hires and bar take covering staff and other operating costs. A shortfall is however currently forecast for 2022/23 as shown in the following tables.

Total Theatre Budgets: -

Cost Centre	Subjective	Budget 2022-23	YTD		P8 Variance
			Actuals to P8	P8 Forecast	
Theatre	Expenditure	662,246	329,305	607,892	(54,354)
	Income	(669,147)	(394,237)	(542,289)	126,858
	Net Budget	(6,901)	(64,932)	65,603	72,504

Theatre Budgets Breakdown

Cost Centre	Subjective	Budget 2022-23	YTD Actuals to P8	P8 Forecast	P8 Variance
MA030-Arts (Cultural Services)	Expenditure	392,246	256,852	389,307	(2,939)
	Income	(269,147)	(167,042)	(194,789)	74,358
	Net Budget - MA030	123,099	89,810	194,518	71,419
MA031-Thurrock Promotions	Expenditure	270,000	72,453	218,585	(51,415)
	Income	(400,000)	(227,195)	(347,500)	52,500
	Net Budget - MA031	(130,000)	(154,742)	(128,915)	1,085
Total Net Budget - Theatre		(6,901)	(64,932)	65,603	72,504

The receipt from a disposal will be received after costs have been incurred in relocating the library. These costs will need to be financed in the interim from borrowing and this will need to be reflected in the Capital Programme and MTFP.

Further information on the revenue and capital implications for each option is included in the exempt appendix.

Disposal of the property will deliver a significant net capital receipt and revenue savings to support the Council's financial recovery.

Whilst the factors influencing this decision are more than just financial ones, as mentioned in Para 1.10 the financial requirements of the s114 Notice are also material considerations for Members on this subject.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Corporate Governance Lawyer & Deputy
Monitoring Officer

The Council has fairly wide discretion to dispose of its assets (such as land or buildings) in any manner it wishes. When disposing of assets, the Council is subject to statutory provisions, in particular, to the overriding duty, under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, to obtain the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained for the disposal. This duty is subject to certain exceptions that are set out in the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003.

Each asset will need to be checked to ensure its formal ownerships and appropriation enable general disposal with terms to be confirmed. A final analysis of the legal title and terms of disposal will be included in the final disposal decision report.

Thurrock Council has a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service to residents. Therefore, to support the proposed relocation of Grays Library, Thurrock Council must be satisfied that the relocation will not adversely affect library service provision in Grays.

When a significant change is being proposed to a service, it is recommended that the Council formally consult with the public to get their opinions on the proposal. Consultation on changes to service provision must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to enable intelligent consideration and response; adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals. The Council must give genuine and conscientious consideration to the responses received from the consultees during the consultation before making its final decision on the proposals.

The Council will need to make a final decision about how Council resources are utilised in the interests of the whole community, taking into account competing priorities against the background of their legal requirements. The

Council can take their available resources into account when deciding how to deliver their public library service.

In making this decision the Council must consider the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This Act creates a public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation marriage and civil partnership.

6.3 **Diversity & Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

The Council's legal responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty are outlined in section 7.2.6 of this report. A detailed Community and Equality Impact Assessment (CEIA) will be undertaken and informed by consultation feedback.

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

The Thameside is used for a range of purposes including direct service delivery and use by community groups and residents. A number of these activities can be relocated to the Civic Centre/Town Hall either within the relocated library or in the new meeting and community spaces within the Town Hall. The council recognises the value and positive impact culture, arts and heritage can have on the health and wellbeing of residents, and this will be reflected in a new Cultural Strategy.

Staff and volunteers based at the Thameside building have been kept informed of the ongoing considerations about the future of the building since July 2021 including the possible implications for the services where appropriate. They have also been actively engaged in the development of the Cultural Strategy. There will need to be formal consultation with staff in the Theatre and Museum teams and FM staff based at the building regarding the future of their roles and any resultant redundancies.

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):

7.1 Cabinet Report - July 2021 -
<https://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/s30979/Asset%20Review%20Disposals.pdf>

7.2 Cabinet Report – January 2022 -
<https://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/s33583/Report%20on%20Asset%20Related%20Savings.pdf>

8. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Exempt as it contains commercially sensitive information regarding the market assessment of value of the property which if published could impact on the price achieved if a decision was made to sell the property.
- Appendix 2 – Business Case submitted by Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions and Thurrock International Celebration of Culture
- Appendix 3 – Business Case submitted by Waltham International College

Report Author

Mark Bradbury, Director of Place

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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 **thameside**

Thameside Complex Business Plan

2022 – 2027

“From Credible to Incredible”



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Executive Summary

Our Vision	“The Thameside is the beating heart of Art and Culture in Thurrock”			
Our Mission	Transforming from credible to incredible by...			
	Making Space	Making Time	Making Memories	Making Connections
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To nurture artistic development careers and skills To amplify the voices of those typically unheard and respond to them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To expose people to new experiences To drive economic and environmental sustainability that ensures a better future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To entertain and inspire people in a diverse and inclusive safe space To lead an ambitious and collaborative approach to build creative communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be held to account by local people To improve opportunities for the community to be heard and for them to have agency

Areas of Focus	Governance	Finance	Transformation
Our Core Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Confidence Cooperative Connected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair Feasible Funded Funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Inspire Involve Innovate

What we will do with the building	Step 1: TLS	Step 3: Capital	Step 5: Building
	Transfer management of the building from Thurrock Council to Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC via a lease of at least 30 years length.	Following resolution of ‘red list’ repair items by Council (£220K), the provision of £750,000 capital funding to TLS to deliver transformational capital improvements required	Internal modifications to enable more flexible creative and cultural use, anchored by Theatre, Library and Museum – making space, time, memories and connections

What we will do within the building	Step 2: TICC	Step 4: Revenue	Step 6: Additionality
	Transfer management of cultural activity from TLS to Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC) in short term as the current ‘custodians’ via a Memorandum of Understanding based on transformation	Investment by Council of £1,000,000 over 3 years enabling TICC to generate traded income and leverage external funding – saving Council £2.5million over 10 years whilst improving the asset further	Chief Excitement Officer, supported by Community Artistic Directors bringing the building to life complementing CPP and Cultural Strategy, including secondment of Theatre staff to maximise creative freedom

What we will do to maximise public benefit even further	Step 7: Governance	Step 8: Fundraising
	Conversion of TICC into a charitable entity with community shareholder members to maximise fundraising potential. Led by an expanded, <u>balanced</u> and diverse board as future ‘custodians’, supported by a range of community sounding boards to shape delivery.	Development and delivery of a compelling fundraising strategy leveraging charitable advantages not available to Council to improve the asset and raise £3,000,000 over 10 years



A vision from 2030...

What started in 2022 as an endeavour by Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC), Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS), Save your Thameside and Thurrock Council to prevent closure of the Thameside Complex, has progressed into the **most cited and celebrated case study of a reimagined arts and culture hub in England's cultural sector**.

Affectionately referred to in the national press as the **'Barbican of Essex'**, its 7 floors of creative and cultural groups and organisations buzz with colour, life and energy, drawing in people from across the Estuary and beyond.

Overseen by passionate community and cultural representatives who since 2022 have forged a financially viable 'Thameside Trust', the regional impact of its cultural contribution draws people in from all over the world to learn from its example.

The turnaround in cultural engagement from the bottom in the region to the top within less than a decade represented an unprecedented civic achievement that other places yearn to emulate. Thurrock has joined places like Manchester, Belfast and Liverpool where cultural regeneration is lauded as a success story. Because of the Thameside's reputation, **Thurrock is perceived as a visionary, forward looking place where residents actively turn aspirations into reality**.

Arriving at Grays Station in 2030 during a typical evening, it is hard to miss the illuminated landmark. A visual light installation has

transformed the Tower into a beacon viewable from the River Thames. A magnet for visitors, Grays High Street and Orsett Road now pulses with activity as restaurants and bars have responded to the night-time demand.

Walking into the lobby of the Thameside, Thurrock's famous woolly mammoth stands to attention – drawing in thousands of school children during the day to **Thurrock's accredited Museum**, it is complemented by high-quality audio-visual displays reflecting the theme 'By Thames to All Peoples of the World'. A global interpretation company servicing prestigious clients are based here and produced this to the highest specification at cost – given the talent within the Thameside, it is easy to make good stuff like this happen quickly and to world class standard.

To the left, the café is packed, and the smell of quality coffee fills the air. Beyond the mammoth, the **clever architecture coined the 'kit of parts' is in evidence**. The concierge space makers are busy pulling together an impromptu stage to accommodate the latest dance practice taking place. The **library space has now become a co-working space, blending central library provision with the needs of Thurrock students** – completing their coursework in a quirky, campus like space. Those wanting more quiet have retreated into the pods viewable on the mezzanine floor away from the action.

Next week the Thameside 4 U 2030 programme kicks off with the Thurrock Film Festival in the evenings and the Essex Children's Book Festival launches the week after. There happens to be a performance on within the Theatre on this occasion. The National Theatre are in (with Thurrock actors), performing in the expanded auditorium.

Having seen a jump in visitors once it became its own Trust in 2023, the Theatre was awarded a £5million 'Cultural Dividend' grant in 2025 facilitating a front extension and addition of a roof garden. **The Thameside being an Arts Council NPO organisation was critical in ensuring this was possible.**

A restaurant opened above the Theatre soon after and is now rated Number 1 on TripAdvisor with its unrivalled 360 views. During the day, it is famous for its intimate stand up performances with the Thames as the backdrop. Tomorrow, these spaces will be animated by Thurrock children rehearsing their roles for the home-grown panto 'Santa and his Digital Reindeer'. The state-of-the-art streaming equipment with VR video recording compatibility **allows children across Thurrock to participate in real time too** using VR headsets. The Thameside now delivers panto at the Cliffs Pavilion, such is its reputation.

Away from the action, **the Tower is full to capacity**. In hindsight, it was extremely fortuitous that the Thameside transferred to the Thameside Trust when it did. The changing funding structure for publicly funded cultural organisations ensured world-class London-based organisations started making the Thameside its home from 2024. **They are now synonymous with Thurrock's global brand.**

There is now even talk to rename Thurrock itself 'Thameside'.

Working with us to deliver this plan
represents the first step towards
making this ambitious aspiration a
reality...

Why support this Plan?

The Thameside Complex represented genuine vision from councillors who from 1967 set out to tangibly improve artistic and cultural opportunity in Thurrock. Driven by a desire to ensure that Thurrock people could enjoy easy access to a comprehensive library, free Museum, and a borough Theatre, the £19M (in today's money) complex has ensured low-cost access for generations of residents across the 50 years since it was opened in 1972.

As we look again at cultural opportunity in Thurrock, this is a once in a generation chance for councillors today to realise a vision for the next 50 years, echoing the achievements of their forebears.

This Plan has benefits for Council, Community and Culture:

For Council:

- This is a cost-effective way of looking after a Council asset, enhancing its value over the next five years
- The Council will retain control as part of the governance proposals anchored in partnership and co-production.
- Has potential to generate savings for the Council – the bottom line is a story of investment and making a return
- It is low risk – if it doesn't work, the Council will still have the asset
- It is an opportunity for the Council to demonstrate vision and ambition, supporting a vibrant cultural hub which brings Thurrock Council greater recognition

For Community:

- Offers real social value to current and future residents
- Will continue to provide a home for important Council services in the heart of Grays
- An offer and governance model that reflects contemporary richness and diversity of Thurrock culture today
- The Thameside represents an ideal of accessible cultural opportunity held dear by the community for over 50 years with a desire to pass this sense of purpose to our young people as the next generation

For Culture:

- A home for aspiring and established creatives within Grays, distinct yet complementary to High House Production Park
- Energise the Creative People and Place investment within Thurrock, generating a virtuous spiral of growth rather than a decline - just as strategic efforts are bearing fruit
- Accelerate Thurrock cultural development in support of the emerging Cultural Strategy - intent on enhancing cultural 'Connections, Capacity and Capital'
- An innovative environment for arts and culture experimentation and development to support future Levelling Up opportunities
- A test and learn space to facilitate the transformational change of the council services allowing due consideration for them to move away from the Thameside if deemed appropriate.

Who has shaped this Plan?

The thinking within this Plan has evolved in response to a wide range of contributions including:

- Meetings with Save Your Thameside Campaign Committee comprised of general members of the public.
- Conversations in person or via messenger and social media with the 1,400 followers of the Save Your Thameside Facebook page.
- Discussions with Thurrock young people via various groups and associations including Thameside Young Producers, Students at Thameside Park School and members of various dance/creative arts groups at the Thameside
- Conversations with individual residents at public meetings, protests or at the Thameside, including ideas including the spoken word, mixed media artists, art shows and classes.
- Feedback from creative groups in the community including. Thurrock Court Players, Thurrock Operatic Society, Lightning & Thunder, JTD and TipToes
- Conversations with current users of the complex from both sides i.e hirers and audiences.
- Meetings and discussions with various Thurrock Council staff members within the complex and the tenants.
- Comments made at roundtable meetings from the various reps present from different community groups.
- Thurrock's Next Top Boss, drawing in ideas from hundreds of young people

The framework for the Plan was developed during February and March 2022 by Sam Byrne, Neil Woodbridge, Jon Tilley, Vic Gray, Angela Clark, Daryl Branch and Mark Allinson – Directors of TICC – in response to the public contributions made.

Further refinement of the plan were made in May 2022 and November 2022 to incorporate further thinking relating to a future National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) application to Arts Council England and Thurrock Council requests for a 10 year time horizon and inclusion of utilities within forecasts. This also included increased alignment with Thurrock Creative People and Place, which draws on over three years of public consultation and development.

The detail within parts of the Plan framework deliberately retains fluidity to allow for further refinement by the public – which will be delivered through the governance proposals set out within this Plan.

Where do we want to be?

Our vision

“The Thameside is the beating heart of art and culture in Thurrock”

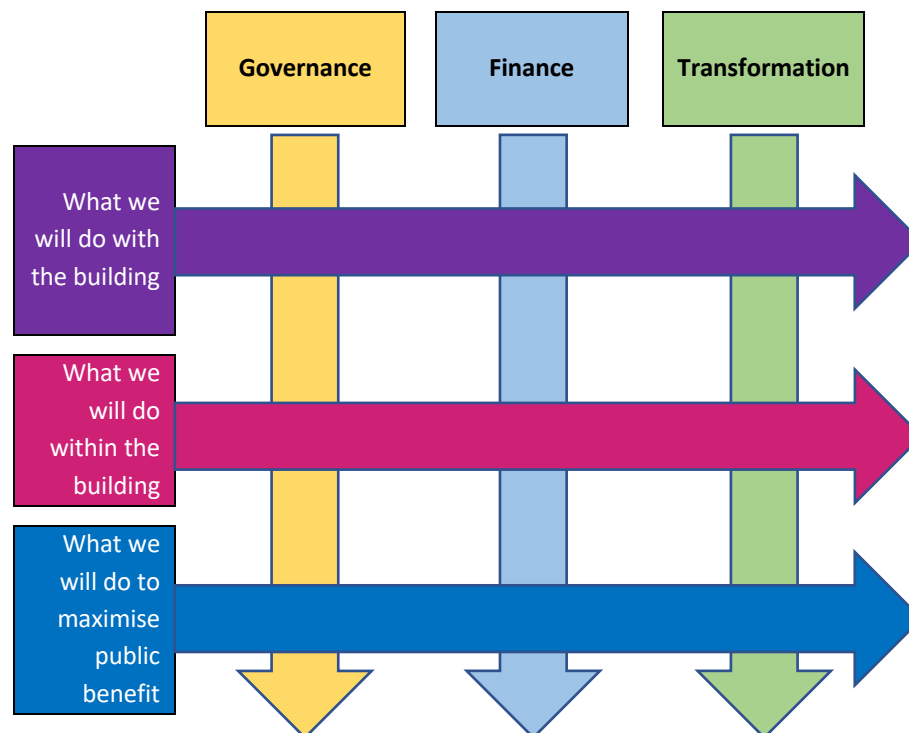
Our mission

“To transform the Thameside Complex from credible to incredible by making space, time, memories and connections”

Making Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To nurture artistic development careers and skills To amplify the voices of those typically unheard and respond to them
Making Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To expose people to new experiences To drive economic and environmental sustainability that ensures a better future
Making Memories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To entertain and inspire people in a diverse and inclusive safe space To lead an ambitious and collaborative approach to building creative communities
Making Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be held to account by local people To improve opportunities for the community to be heard and for them to have agency

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Our Areas of Focus



Both us and yourselves within the Council have had to move incredibly quickly to form and develop these plans. This means there will inevitably be areas of ambiguity we will need to work through together. We expect to refine further aspects of this plan with you.

However, we believe we have a credible strategy that addresses your requirements around **governance, funding and transformation** whilst clearly explaining what we will do **with the building, within the building** and how we will **maximise public benefit** even further.

Governance

At present, the Thameside Complex is wholly subject to local authority governance processes to ensure accountability as a public asset. Our proposals would ensure continued accountability regarding what we do with the building, within the building and how we will maximise public benefit even further. The key principles behind our proposals for governance are:

- **Community:** Listening and responsive to local need
- **Confidence:** Starting with tried and tested vehicles
- **Cooperative:** Work with the Council as an engaged partner
- **Connected:** Draw on expertise across Thurrock to do more

We understand that the Council has many other tasks to fulfil, significant limitations on its budget and less appetite for risk. However, by working with us, we can share the risks, generate more cash, and develop a diverse cultural offer beyond that possible now. In summary, our governance proposals are:

What we will do with the building	Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC to act as the building custodian – based on a real and successful transformational track record
What we will do within the building	Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC) to deliver oversight of the offer within the building in the short term
What we will do to maximise public benefit	TICC to be converted into a charitable entity with expanded and balanced board supported by public sounding boards in the medium term

We believe there are compelling reasons why our governance approach will ensure a viable arts and culture hub for Grays:

- We will be better placed to access resources from Trusts and Foundations to develop and deliver public benefit that are not available to the Council, which increases value
- Many private donors do not find it attractive to give to local authorities; they see such funding as the responsibility of Council taxpayers. This is where we come in.
- Many volunteers find voluntary opportunities to support the running of local authority services less appealing than for charitable organisations due to perceptions that such services should already be covered via Council Tax
- A charitable structure will be a stronger vehicle for attracting major gifts and the support of diverse donors, and accessing newer forms of financial support, including community shares which we are building into our model
- We will have greater cultural freedom and operational flexibility to better respond to supply and demand as a body single-mindedly committed to making the Thameside and arts and culture a vibrant success in Thurrock.
- Similar endeavours (e.g., Tilbury on the Thames Trust; Queen’s Theatre in Hornchurch) have proved themselves to be suitable vehicles for such development working closely with landowners
- The Council will naturally retain its interest as the owner, ensuring ongoing influence via the governance and engagement as a stakeholder in a successful Thameside whilst benefiting from an improving public asset.

Step 1: Transfer Building Management to Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions CIC

We understand that the Council would likely perceive the transfer of Thameside Complex management to an untested entity as an unacceptably high risk.

This is why Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC has stepped forward. They are a successful social enterprise accustomed to using arts and culture to include disabled people in the community with a recognised track record of taking former Council services and buildings over, lowering costs and transforming services. With a turnover of £4M and rules that mean profits and assets are locked to social purposes, they have the business acumen and knowledge to ensure due diligence and profitability. Of relevance to the Thameside, TLS CIC are also the Locally Trusted Organisation for Riverside Big Local (£1M of Lottery funding) and a Core Consortium member of Thurrock Creative People and Place (£1M of Arts Council England investment).

The first step therefore is to ensure a comprehensive lease agreement between the Council and TLS CIC with a fair apportionment of risk and reward once ‘red list’ items have been addressed by the Council. This must be at least 30 years in length to enable us to access new sources of funding for the Thameside. We accept the need for break clauses so that us and the Council can review progress based on lived experience and cultural development opportunities in Grays that may emerge in the future.

Action 1:	Agree a lease between Thurrock Council and Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions of at least 30 years in length with a fair apportionment of risk and reward.
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Step 2: Thurrock International Celebration of Culture to provide oversight of cultural offer

In terms of the cultural engagement activities that take place within the Thameside Complex, we propose to use the existing company of Thurrock International Celebration of Culture Ltd (TICC) as the legal vehicle of transformational change – for the short term – to be replaced later (Step 7). This ensures that the existing Directors drawn from the Thurrock community are already listed and held to account. TICC has many years’ experience of running small, inclusive events. (see this film: <https://vimeo.com/176188475>).

In order to ensure a mandate for TICC to develop the cultural offer, a Memorandum of Agreement will be put in place between TLS CIC and TICC that clearly defines respective roles and responsibilities regarding the transformational offer.

This is likely to cover functions such as building maintenance, resident engagement, marketing, partnership development, fundraising, and administration.

It will also set out how resident sounding boards as a critical part of the Governance will be established and managed to ensure the TICC board develop proposals in response to local need and demand.

Thus, we propose the following three sounding boards:

1. BUILDING	2. ARTISTS AND COLLABORATORS	3. GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity • Layout • Physical Transformation • Volunteers • Audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance • Visual • Music • Acting • Spoken Word • Authors • Audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essex Cultural Diversity Project • Creative Estuary • We are Creative • Big Local • Culture • Library • Audience • College • Schools

We expect the Council to be a consultee in this process, further cemented by ensuring a seat on the TICC board is made available for the Council.

Action 2a: Put in place a Memorandum of Understanding between Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC and Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC) Ltd with the agreement of Thurrock Council. This is to ensure a clear mandate for TICC to develop a cultural offer based on a clear understanding of respective roles and responsibilities with residents input via public sounding boards.

Action 2b: With Thurrock Council, identify a Council Officer or Member to join the TICC board of directors

Step 7: Develop Thurrock International Celebration of Culture into a charitable entity with expanded board

In order to fully realise the potential of our proposed governance arrangements over the longer term, we acknowledge the need to move towards a new legal structure to maximise funding opportunities and to develop our board further.

We want to engage a diverse range of cultural leaders and volunteers (age, gender, background, skills, experience) reflecting the local creative and community sector and the public benefit that an arts and culture hub can bring to our borough.

We appreciate that in the medium to long term, there could be a new arts and culture hub in Grays. We believe that the charitable entity could be tried and tested within the Thameside and later transferred to a new hub in the future.

As an early action, we wish to appoint a charity expert to facilitate an appraisal of governance options to help us identify the specifics of a new charitable structure. In this way, we can make strategic decisions to proceed based on a full understanding of the pros, cons, opportunities, and risks. We would want the Council to be part of this process with us.

This kind of development exercise could be resourced via a development grant from a lottery funder (e.g., Community Fund, Arts Council England). Whilst it would take longer to secure a grant, the advantage would be to start building a relationship with a

strategically important funder who would then have a stake in our future.

Action 7a: Identify and apply for development grant opportunities from a strategically important funder.

Action 7b: Appoint a charity professional to co-produce with us and the Council an options appraisal to inform a range of strategic decisions by the TICC board regarding the transition of TICC into a charitable structure.

Whilst full detailed proposals are expected to emerge from this process, we know that we will need a plan for the following areas:

- Legal entity
- Charitable objects and powers
- Chair of the board
- Number and composition of the board
- Members and stakeholders
- Transition period

Here, we outline our key assumptions regarding each as a basis for developing our business case for a charitable entity.

Legal Entity

TICC Ltd could become either a charitable company or a charitable incorporated organisation. There is little to choose between these

two legal forms. In the likely event that we need to utilise a non-charitable trading company, there could be benefits in being a charitable company.

Action 7c: Apply to Companies House and/or the Charity Commission to convert TICC Ltd into either a Charitable Company or a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

Charitable Objects and Powers

We understand that Charitable Objects permit a registered charity to undertake certain activities. Given the cultural and community benefits that the Thameside Complex brings to Thurrock, it is important that these Objects are drawn widely.

We believe it is very likely that a non-charitable trading subsidiary will need to be established in the longer term given our need to generate commercially earned income (e.g., ticket sales, bar etc), but broad Objects will ensure that most activities are treated as primary purpose and therefore within the charitable objects. A comprehensive set of powers will need to be agreed for the charitable entity enabling it to operate flexibly. We could use the current TICC Ltd articles of association as a starting point.

Action 7d: Once the decision regarding legal structure has been made, prepare broad Charitable Objects reflecting the cultural and community role of the Thameside

Chair of the Board

To ensure our organisation is outward looking and strategically contributes towards Thurrock cultural development and Levelling Up, we would want to ensure that an independent Chair of the Board is sought at an early stage. The Chair will need to be a person of standing, able and willing to work closely with us, our tenants, the Council, Members (across political parties) and Officers, local businesspeople, local communities, cultural agencies and with other public bodies.

The Chair would take the lead in seeing that the governance of the Charitable Trust set out to meet the good practice standards of the Charity Governance Code (2017). The Chair would be encouraged to take part in support networks such as the Association of Chairs and those associated with the Theatres Trust.

Action 7e: Undertake a recruitment exercise to secure an independent Chair of the Board.

Number and Composition of the Board

To function well, the Board must work effectively as a team. For this reason, we believe that the number of members of the Board should be capped at 11. Board members would be able to claim reasonable expenses to cover travel expenses but would not be paid a salary.

All members of the Board should bring multiple skills and experience. To ensure a balance of existing building interests and independent perspectives, we think the board structure could be:

INTERESTS	1 Independent Chair seat	INDEPENDENCE
5 'building interest' seats: 1. Theatre 2. Museum 3. Library 4. Council 5. Other Tenants		5 'independent' seats, including: 1. Finance, 2. Legal, 3. Fundraising 4. Cultural Leaders 5. Community Leaders

The structure deliberately balances key building interests with an equivalent number of independent or skills-based trustees with no direct stake in the building. This is to ensure that the board does not become inward looking and operationally focused. We want the board to actively consider and engage with wider cultural and community strategies in Thurrock. An independent chair carrying a casting vote will help reinforce this structure to ensure a strategic voice that contributes to the wider cultural and community ecology of Thurrock.

Induction and training should be provided for all Board members. We would need to consider the maximum length of service any Board member can offer (e.g., 3 terms of 3 years, 2 terms of 4 years etc) to ensure the input of fresh energy, ideas, and enthusiasm over the long term.

This will be important in ensuring all future Trustees have a firm grasp of their responsibilities and effective plans to implement once the charitable entity is in place. The development of the concepts within

this section including governance training could potentially be resourced via a development grant from Arts Council England. We can also explore training opportunities via Thurrock CVS.

The Council will retain the right to nominate one member of the Board. This could be a Member, a senior Officer or someone drawn from the local community. In making their nomination, the Council should be mindful of the skills the Board requires, and the expectation that their nominee will attend the Board regularly and contribute actively to the work of TICC.

Action 7f: Undertake a recruitment exercise to secure independent trustees for Board.

Action 7g: Provide induction and governance training for all board members

Members and Stakeholders

We would want to explore the raising of community shares, whereby residents can buy into our proposals becoming members of TICC with voting rights and other benefits. This would need to be reflected in our updated constitution with the Board being elected by members via an AGM.

The Board may wish to invite guests/observers to its meetings. The Board will liaise with local networks and forums relating to Grays development, Thurrock cultural development such as a Creative People and Place and the Council regarding plans for the Thameside.

These networks should seek to ensure inclusion within any major new capital development for arts and culture provision in Thurrock.

Transition Period

Starting from the existing TICC board of directors, we would undertake the recruitment of new independent board members and chair to create a Shadow Board for the transition period prior to the legal establishment of the new charitable entity.

Areas where further information from Council is needed:

- Identification of a Council Officer to be closely involved in the development and implementation of the governance proposals within this plan.

Finance

Our financial plans are based on a fair and reasonable balance of shared investment and risk in pursuit of common cultural goals. The council benefits immediately from having rent-free space for important community services, and from having the Thameside Complex enhanced and protected as an enduring asset, as well as being at the centre of Thurrock transformation plans. We believe that the arrangements should be:

- **Fair:** We should be set up to succeed, not fail
- **Feasible:** Ambitious, yet grounded in reality
- **Funded:** Supported by the Council whilst we develop income and other funding to reduce dependency on the Council.
- **Funders:** Better able to seek third party investment

For the Thameside Centre to realise its commercial and community potential, it will need investment of both capital and revenue funds.

Capital funding is needed in the short-term to complete 'red list' repairs and maintenance. Further capital investment is needed to make the building an attractive proposition for commercial renters and to provide spaces suitable to achieve the transformational ambitions of the council and the community.

The entity which takes on the lease of the building will also need revenue investment to support the cultural offer in Thurrock whilst the business develops and expands current lines of income.

Rent free

Our offer is built on providing the council with rent-free accommodation for the services currently provided at the centre, and with no service charge. The council currently occupies 73.5% of the rentable space in the building (including library, museum, and theatre, excluding offices. Plant, circulation space and toilets excluded) greatly reducing our ability to generate income. The 'lost' income is calculated at over £300,000 per year.

Holding the risk

This provides an opportunity for the council to invest in the cultural experience of local people in a cost-effective way, in partnership with us. We will bear most of the risk for developing a transformational cultural offer whilst enhancing the building and the area's cultural reputation. Working with the council and the services in the building, we will develop a transformational cultural hub in a flexible way that leaves the Council still owning an enhanced asset that they could cash in at a later moment in time to pay for a new building.

The headline finance numbers

Here we summarise the headline finance numbers. We will generate £4.5M through generated income and fundraising over the next 10 years by subletting building space, whilst providing rent-free accommodation for the library, museum, and theatre. For this to work financially, the business will require co-investment from the council over five years of:

1. £1m capital
2. £1M revenue

Recent global and consequential macro-economic shocks have appeared that do challenge the assumptions used in the construction of the financial forecasts.

Firstly, the accelerating price of energy caused by the war in Ukraine. As a corporate purchaser there is no “price cap” set by the regulator and thus no buffer from both the absolute prices in the market and their volatility.

These two issues would potentially endanger the project given the relatively small nature of the business entities concerned when compared with the Council’s total energy purchases. Whilst we have factored in the cost of energy following a request from the Council, this does expose our project to greater risk.

The overall projected cost savings for the Council over 10 years would be £2.5M (Appendix 1.7).

Secondly, the impact of the energy crisis on the cost of living, and the forecast economic recession will severely restrict discretionary spend, and likely hit hard the arts & cultural sector more than most others. This puts a significantly higher risk profile on the potential income area of the financial model for the project, and hence we have not decreased the revenue grant requested to offset that risk.

It is also our intention to have a clear look at opportunities to make the transformational change be as environmentally sustainable as possible – part of which has already been debated in terms of

Community Batteries, solar, heat pumps, insulation etc which will all serve to reduce costs.

The following table summarises the capital and revenue requirements for the Thurrock Thameside Complex, set alongside the anticipated income.

Full details including assumptions are included in the Appendix.

Areas where further discussion with Council are needed:

- Whether the council will pay rent and service charge for the space they use or pay this as a grant as we’ve assumed
- Utility costs and associated risk mitigation
- The amount and timing of capital investment to realise the cultural ambitions of the council and the community – ideally to release capital and revenue in one ‘lump’ as part of the transformational fund as discussed
- Whether the amount of space the council uses can be consolidated beyond what we propose in the transformation to provide more space for commercial rent
- Business rates relief and/or exemptions

In summary:

What we will do with the building	Once 'red list' repair items have been resolved, TLS will use £750,000 capital funding from Council to deliver the transformational capital improvements required to make a new cultural offer happen
What we will do within the building	TICC will deliver a new cultural offer by leveraging £1M Council grant over 10 years to generate traded income of c.£1.5M and secure c.£3M external funding – saving the Council £2.5M whilst enhancing their asset further
What we will do to maximise public benefit	By maximising the advantages of our governance plans, TICC will develop and deliver a compelling fundraising strategy to raise c.£3M

The following section describe in more detail the resourcing of the capital improvements and the transformational cultural offer, whilst also flagging up the potential for external fundraising to improve the revenue position, community buy in and add value through grant funded programmes.

Step 3: Resource the Capital Improvements

The Thameside Centre needs important short-term investment in the fabric of the building to meet its immediate repair and maintenance needs. The council has referred to this as the 'red list' of jobs and we propose that these are addressed urgently.

Realise the potential of the building

To make more of the building's potential, significant investment is needed. The spaces which could be sublet as commercial space need refurbishment to meet current market expectations. The building's technology and appearance need a significant overhaul to offer an attractive and competitive package to possible tenants. Without investment to make the necessary improvements, the building will struggle to compete. A better equipped and more attractive internal space will help the centre to maximise income by bringing in and retaining longer-term tenants, otherwise risking being a 'cheap' space with higher levels of tenant churn.

By making capital improvements in consultation with incoming tenants, we will be able to successfully rent out the office spaces, converting such capital investment into ongoing revenue income.

For the publicly accessible areas of the building including the library, we are proposing to implement a flexible architecture ("a kit of parts") which will create far more opportunities to host community and cultural activities in a cost-effective way. This will ensure a proportionate investment leaving open the possibility of a new arts and culture hub in future. Full details in the transformation section.

Action 3:	Confirm £750M of capital investment over 2 years to improve the rentability of spaces and to implement a flexible architecture ("kit of parts") within the publicly accessible areas of the Complex including the library.
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Step 4: Resource the Transformational Cultural Offer

The Thameside Complex needs to be more than an attractive and functional space – it needs people and ideas to make it something special. It also needs funding to ensure it can meet its running costs in the short to medium term whilst it works through a repairs and refurbishment programme, whilst it develops spaces which it can sublet at a good rate, and in which an exciting cultural offer can develop. The building running costs include:

- Utilities
- Concierge
- Maintenance
- Cleaning
- Insurance
- Business Rates

Our cultural transformation plans will also require a Chief Excitement Officer (£50,000 including on costs per year) lead the plan and leverage external investment. This comes to over £500,000 a year and so this plan asks the council for £500,000 in the first year, then £250,000 a year for two years after towards these costs.

Action 4: Confirm £1M of revenue transformational investment over 3 years to ensure viability of these proposals – saving the Council £2.5M compared to an in-house approach

High running costs

The alternative is for the council to meet the running costs of the building averaging over £500,000 per year.

The table in Appendix 1.7 below shows the requested council revenue investment alongside the costs of running the building, demonstrating the £2.5M saving over 10 years.

By working with us, the council passes on the liability for the building's running costs. In return, an investment by the council of £1M revenue over 3 years will enable us to generate traded income and leverage external funding. This will save the council around £2.5M million over ten years whilst the capital investment and good stewardship will further improve the Council's asset and its value.

Step 8: Maximise External Funding opportunities

Should the Council retain full control over the Complex, its fundraising options will be limited to on-site income generating opportunities and opportunistic public sector-based grants.

However, our governance proposals to become a charitable entity open up the possibility of a wide range of additional funding opportunities that could further improve the financial position during the five years of the plan.

Here we outline the key opportunities for us to generate more cash to deliver even greater public benefit within Thurrock. An early

action for us will be to anchor these within a fundraising strategy that becomes an integral part of this plan and the associated numbers.

Action 8a: Once this Plan has been agreed, develop a fundraising strategy to target resource and effort to develop funder relationships and successful grant awards.

Trusts and Foundations

There are around 8,800 grant making trusts and foundations in the UK, giving around £2.7billion a year to charities. The Council is unable to access this cash, whereas we could. As part of the fundraising strategy, we will identify those trusts and foundations with objectives that match ours – arts, culture and community delivering social change within the Thurrock area – and start working to cultivate relationships with the strongest fits with our plan to secure a return within five years.

Action 8b: Identify trusts and foundations that would represent a strong fit with our objectives and start make initial approaches on the basis of this Plan.

Our group includes two Chartered Fundraisers who bring considerable experience within this field – we go into this with our eyes open.

One example where we believe we can be a strong fit is the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. They are currently offering grants of £30,000 - £400,000 for up to 4 years to support arts access and participation,

changing the way the arts are created, presented, accessed, and experienced. As a grassroots group with community connections and a track record (through CPP), we would be eligible for an initial conversation. This is but one example.

Lottery based Funders

The Lottery based funders include Arts Council England, Sport England, Heritage Fund and Community Fund. Within our group we have considerable experience in securing project-based funding across all these funders ranging from grants of £1,000 to over £2.5million – all examples within Thurrock we can discuss further with you.

Once we have secured the building, we will start exploring lottery-based project funding opportunities to maximise the activity programmes for the public as a key plank within our fundraising strategy.

Action 8c: Maximise the activity programme through focussed applications to Lottery based funders

Community shares

The Thameside and what it represents is much loved by Thurrock's community. The strength of feeling when the threat of closure was made demonstrates this. As such, we believe that we can raise community shares as one element of our fundraising strategy. These are a form of withdrawable, non-transferable share capital uniquely

available to co-operative and community benefit societies representing a flexible and effective way of raising finance.

Residents will be able to buy a community share to become a voting member with a stake in our success with added benefits (e.g., discounts, special events etc). The link with our governance is explained within the governance section of the plan (step 7).

With over 1,000 people supporting our campaign to Save the Thameside, just £20 per person would equate to £20,000. This is a conservative estimate.

Action 8d: Develop a community share strategy within our fundraising plan to form part of our overall funding mix.

Transformation

We are tremendously excited by the opportunity to transform the Thameside Complex. Whilst we appreciate that the building may be replaced by another arts and culture hub in the future, the opportunity to test and learn a range of new approaches will help increase confidence, capability, and capacity within Thurrock to do more. These benefits will be cumulative and transferable.

In developing our transformation plans, we have heeded the following underlying principles:

- **Inclusion:** Anyone should be able to take part in shaping and/or benefiting from the offer
- **Inspire:** What we do should change perceptions regarding what is possible within Thurrock
- **Involve:** We must be a central part of Thurrock’s cultural landscape, involving artists and creatives throughout
- **Innovate:** We must transform the Thameside into a testbed of new ideas by ensuring flexibility of approach

In summary, our transformation proposals are:

What we will do with the building	Internal modifications and a ‘kit of parts’ to enable more flexible use, anchored by Theatre, Library and Museum – making space, time, memories, and connections
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What we will do within the building	Chief Excitement Officer, supported by Community Artistic Directors bringing the building to life complementing CPP and Cultural Strategy, including secondment of Theatre staff to maximise creative freedom
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Step 5: Deliver the Capital Improvements

As a prerequisite for any transformational improvements, there must be the resolution of key ‘red list’ repair items. We have not seen this list but believe it will allow us to focus on developing the transformational offer. We understand that the Council has identified these red list items, which would cost £220,000 to address.

We are willing to discuss a transfer of £220,000 for TLS to resolve these red list items. Not being bound by Council procurement rules and contracts, we may be able to deliver the red list items more cost effectively freeing up more resource for the transformational capital improvements to follow.

Action 5a:	Confirm whether the red list items are to be resolved by TLS or the Council, using £220,000 Council capital funding for this purpose
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Our capital transformational plans for Year 1 are based on an innovative approach deployed within Brooklyn libraries, where century old buildings have been realigned with contemporary uses. We believe that the Thameside can be brought into the 21st century by adopting a similar approach.

Case Study: Making Space, Brooklyn NY

Click the picture below to see an explanatory video:



With many of the library hub buildings built to service a very different public service model, it had been difficult to accommodate a diverse variety of activities and services. But rather than seek to construct new buildings at considerable expense, a flexible architecture comprised of a “kit of parts” – ranging from seating, display, storage, lighting, and power - were used instead as a creative and cost-effective way to increase the number and quality of activities.

Imagine a low cabinet that can be used not only as lockable storage space, but as extra seating. This same piece, when incorporated with another frame, becomes a media cabinet. A rolling whiteboard panel can also act as a room divider, with one side as felt for pin up displays and the other as an acoustic dampener. This could lock with other cabinets to become a stage for in-house performances. Ceiling grids provide flexible application of power, light, and curtains.

The first step we will take is to conduct an audit of community and cultural provision in Thurrock to understand what could be serviced by the Thameside in future – everything from arts classes for retired residents, language classes for diverse communities, toddler play groups, homework groups for kids to yoga classes. We have already made a start on this working with Thurrock CVS in support of the successfully awarded Creative People and Place application. The CPP will be auditing cultural provision during its business planning phase until early 2023.

Action 5b: Complete an audit of community and cultural provision in Thurrock to understand need and demand today and in future. This will be aligned with the business planning phase of the CPP.

Once the audit has been completed, we will identify the functional and technical requirements, for example the need for work surfaces, power or a projector set up, or simply four flexible walls and some chairs. This will allow us to group unrelated activities by their shared needs for tools and space.

Action 5c: Based on the audit, identify functional and technical requirements, enabling the grouping of activities based on their common needs for tools and space.

Based on the requirements, we will be able to contract the development of our very own “kit of parts” – which can be readily assembled in myriad combinations quickly and easily. A ceiling infrastructure grid will provide a central framework to distribute power and data without extensive electrical work, whilst also serving

as a suspension structure for lighting, acoustic panels, projects, and the curtains. This will work alongside other components, such as stacking chairs, multi-functional cabinets, mobile partitions, and folding tables that combine, collapse, and consolidate to convert the community room for different activities, audiences, and times of day.

We propose to implement this solution throughout the publicly accessible circulation spaces, bar, and the library within the ‘podium’ part of the Complex, available to service the Museum and Theatre as well. The role of the concierge staff will be to reorganise the “kit of parts” daily as ‘space shapers’ based on a planned cultural calendar.

Action 5d: Based on the audit and requirements, contract the ‘kit of parts’

Action 5e: Operationalise the reassembly of the ‘kit of parts’ daily in line with a cultural calendar

Within the rest of the Complex – primarily the Tower – we plan to rent out the spaces to a range of cultural, educational, and artistic organisations and projects. We have three prospective tenants lined up already.

In order to ensure these are fit for purpose, we will allocate some capital funding ‘grants’ in discussion with the prospective tenants to secure occupancy – converting that capital investment into a revenue stream.

Action 5f: Implement capital improvements to the office spaces within the Tower in discussion with prospective tenants to secure occupancy and revenue income

The schematic below summarises our capital investment proposals during Year 1.

	Podium	Tower
Roof		Aerials
7 th Floor		Capital improvements to spaces in response to prospective tenant requirements (three lined up currently)
6 th Floor		
5 th Floor		
4 th Floor		Implement flexible architecture of “kit of parts” throughout public areas including the library and bar (though excluding theatre and museum public spaces)
3 rd Floor		
2 nd Floor		
1 st Floor		
Ground Floor		
Basement		Plant and Museum archives

From Year 2, we propose annual meetings with the Council to propose, discuss and confirm funding for further capital transformational improvements to the Thameside.

Action 5g: Implement an annual capital transformation meeting between us and the Council.

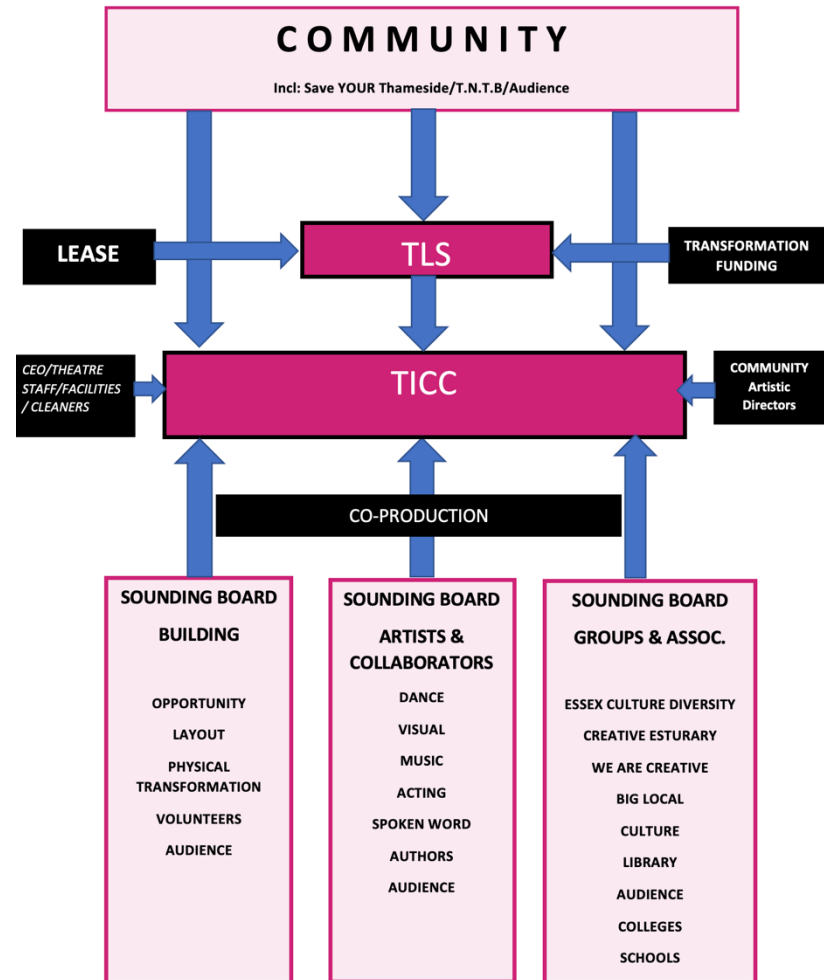
Step 6: Deliver the Transformational Cultural Offer

With the capital transformation work in place, we want to animate the building – bringing it to life through a broad and diverse programme of activities, that responds to community need and demand. In this way, we will be echoing the approach of CPP whereby the public will be granted more influence over the cultural concept and commissioning process, through sounding boards.

We propose that the CPP STARTer panel for Grays – which will be developed for CPP during 2022/23 – will be the sounding boards. The overall structure is summarised on the right.

In order to energise and excite the sounding boards, we will employ a Chief Excitement Officer to work with the sounding boards to develop plans to service existing demand using the ‘kit of parts’ as well as new concepts to try and test new ideas (as part of CPP) through the ‘kit of parts’ or future capital funding. A range of possible ideas emerging via existing sounding boards are included in the appendix.

By trying and testing a range of new approaches, we will build up capability and capacity which can be transferred should plans for a new arts and culture centre come to fruition.



The Chief Excitement Officer will be the lynchpin, linking TLS, TICC, volunteers and the sounding boards to this overall plan for the building. Recruiting this role will be an early priority.

Action 6a: Recruit the Chief Excitement Officer

They will secure through Lottery based funders a activity budget to pump prime activities across activity areas. We are in discussions with Arts Council England following our National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) proposals submitted in May 2022. The continued uncertainty around Thurrock Council meant they could not confirm funding at this time, but remain open for discussions. They now fund an NPO within the Thameside – Arts Outburst.

The 5 activity strands that form the focus of our discussions with Arts Council include:

1. Sounding Boards (Our Captains) – development of our sounding boards to steer cultural provision
2. The Building (Our Harbour) – marketing underused spaces within the Thameside to harbour new creative organisations and activities
3. Thameside 2 U (Our Fleet) – showcasing the best of our local cultural talent off site and online, focusing on an annual moment in Grays each July
4. Thameside 4 U (Our Flagship) – showcasing the best of our local cultural talent within the Thameside throughout the year, using our flexible ‘kit of parts’ to create pop up stages, spaces and sights
5. Theatre, Museum and Library (Our Anchors) – secondment

of Theatre & Museum staff from the Council to integrate anchor services with this wider plan, whilst making the case for full transfer. Includes partnership working with the library service to utilise library spaces for flexible cultural programming.

1: Sounding Boards (Our Captains)

The focus during 2023/24 will be to identify and support a representative range of residents to captain our programme through the sounding boards. The focus will be to develop broad themes in 2023/24 (with CPP increasing exposure to quality) from which resident-supported commissioning will take place in 2024-26. We envisage the sounding boards being hosted at the Thameside by the Chief Excitement Officer (with virtual access) and planned around a fun creative activity on a quarterly cycle. Clear pathways to enable residents to become trustees will be possible through an annual AGM as per our governance proposals. We also wish to harness enthusiasm through a volunteering programme and involve young people via a youth advisory board.

Whilst our consortium can reach c.10,000 interested people, we want to ensure strategic alignment with START: Thurrock CPP. For this reason, we will seek to recruit a pool of people in partnership with Thurrock CPP that could participate in both the CPP and the Thameside offer. The CPP intends to access community sector networks and neighbourhood-based governance structures via Thurrock CVS, which we can support via Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions CIC in their capacity as a CPP core consortium member. We believe that this will strengthen both initiatives and avoid confusion or

duplication.

During 2024-26, we will support the panels to support cultural commissioning based on the broad concepts to bring Activity 3 and 4 to life whilst shaping the anchor offer through Activity 5. The thinking is that with relevant and inclusive activities being programmed, local people will be more willing to take part and pay to see them.

By enabling our residents to become captains through the sounding boards, we will ensure our cultural planning is more responsive to their needs and interests than now. We believe this will help to increase cultural engagement and ensure more local people enjoy the social benefits that publicly funded culture brings.

2: The Building (Our Harbour)

The Thameside Complex represents a considerable cultural asset in an area where cultural capacity has historically been restricted by the infrastructure available. Through responsive management of the building as part of wider place-based partnership working, we can help increase cultural capacity over the life of the plan by harbouring new creatives across our 7 floors. This activity coupled with our favourable geography just outside London, yet integrated with its transport system, will enable us to support ACE's strategy to support relocation of some London-based NPOs relatively quickly. We would love to host more NPOs in Thurrock. (e.g. We are talking to Eastside about possible relocation).

During 2023/24, we will identify a range of spaces – both fixed and flexible – that can be rented out long term or hired ad hoc. This will

enable us to develop key marketing messages to showcase the possibilities afforded by the large, yet flexible Complex. From this, we will deliver a concerted marketing campaign to attract new tenants and hires to fill and energise the building. Our Chief Excitement Officer will focus on developing relationships with prospective creatives, helping to integrate them into the Complex. Through 2024-26, the focus will be flexing the marketing campaign to maximise occupancy whilst supporting those within the building to participate in its governance and programming.

3: Thameside 2 U Outreach Offer (Our Fleet)

We have consistently delivered an annual Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC) event since 2013 (reaching over 14K people). Traditionally led by the TICC directors, in 2023/24 we will shift the locus of control over this moment to our sounding boards (Activity 1). We will link them with the broad range of creatives harboured within or around the Complex (Activity 2) to bring the best of the Thameside to outside participants and audiences. Through 2024-26, we will seek to grow and expand the moment as a showcase for the Thameside and what it represents including a digital offer, bringing the 'Thameside 2 U'. This will be our key outreach event, curated by our Chief Excitement Officer with the sounding boards.

By expanding TICC's annual July event into Thameside 2 U to reflect growing supply and demand, we will be improving access to a full range of cultural activities by showcasing a diverse fleet of local and national talent in Thurrock's central and most multicultural location. In line with the ethos of TICC's original festival, this key annual moment will help connect people and places, including diaspora

communities in a joyous celebration of diversity and difference through arts and culture.

4: Thameside 4 U Cultural Offer (Our Flagship)

The Thameside Complex by virtue of its central location, anchor services and safe spaces sees high footfall from the general public (40K per year). By making more of this flagship status by metaphorically decking it out with vibrancy and colour through a rolling programme of pop up, scalable cultural activities, we will improve access to a full range of cultural opportunity. This includes making more of links with organisations like HighTide Theatre, DanceEast and Firstsite in Colchester.

To enable this, the Complex has a wide range of publicly accessible spaces that can be used flexibly. Deploying an adaptable architecture comprised of a ‘kit of parts’ (i.e. stacking chairs, multi-functional cabinets, mobile partitions, folding tables etc), our concierge service will be recast as ‘space makers’, able to quickly set up and put away a range of configurations depending on need. During 2023/24, we will work with the sounding boards (Activity 1) to develop a cultural calendar that creatives can respond to, using whatever space configuration they require – whether that be performance spaces, lecture areas or exhibition spaces to name but a few.

This will be ‘Thameside 4 U’ – our flagship programme of cultural activities commissioned with resident input that enables greater freedom and imagination than possible under the current model. With make, move, music and meet programme strands, this could

include collaborators including Breakin’ Convention, Challenge 59, Cambridge Junction and Focal Point. As confidence builds during 2024-26, we expect to see increased ambition and quality, attracting both general audiences and followers of the creatives commissioned, to build awareness and reputation (supporting Activity 2). We also wish to host apprentices to build cultural capacity.

5: Theatre, Museum & Library (Our Anchors)

With the Council under increasing financial pressure to cut non-statutory services such as the Theatre and Museum, our plans to work collaboratively to not only secure them but ensure they thrive are critical objectives for us. By anchoring these for the long term, they can continue to support and involve communities in high quality culture, maintain links with schools and colleges, continue volunteering programmes that improve wellbeing and support the wider cultural ecology around them that ensures skills and employment pathways to the cultural sector.

During 2023/24, Theatre and Museum staff would be seconded to our consortium to enable their programming to reinforce Activities 2-4 whilst responding to our sounding boards. We want to demonstrate that by providing increased creative freedom and community ownership, these services can thrive. By testing our business case, we seek to convince Officers and Members to transfer the management of these services to us.

For 2024-26, we plan to evolve these services to increase their resilience. In the case of the Theatre, we wish to facilitate the delivery of recommendations made in the Cultural Recovery Fund

business plan regarding transition to a Trust model. For the Museum, we wish to take forward its journey towards accreditation, whilst repositioning its archive as the hub for Thurrock’s vibrant heritage network (e.g. via DCMS/Wolfson Fund), connecting to Purfleet Heritage Centre, Bata Heritage Centre and Tilbury Cruise Terminal.

Whilst the library would remain a Council service, our Chief Excitement Officer will work closely with library management to animate library spaces as per Activities 1 and 4.

*

Action 6b: Develop and deliver our five activity programmes in discussion with Arts Council England and activity based funders

In order to maximise the full potential of the Thameside Complex, we would require full cultural control of the Theatre and Museum. This includes ringfencing of any surplus in support of this Plan.

These elements represent flagship elements of the overall offer and a valuable overall component of the funding model. Whilst we would require Council support in the short to medium term – particularly in the form of staff secondments - it will enable us to start exploring and testing ideas as well as additional external funding opportunities for these valuable cultural assets that could become their long-term solutions. For example, we would want to explore opportunities for Museum accreditation which would open new funding opportunities.

This is a huge opportunity to do something innovative and different. However, without the Theatre and Museum, the overall financial viability of our Plan is questionable.

We appreciate that this will require further discussion and refinement in consultation with you.

Areas where further discussion with Council are needed:

- Secondment of Theatre staff to TLS or TICC with full control over cultural programming to maximise income
- Secondment of Museum staff to TLS or TICC and ability to scope and progress accreditation process

How will we get there?

Action Plan

Here we summarise the key actions identified within our business plan.

Ref	Action	Lead
Step 1: Transfer Building Management to Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions CIC		
1	Agree a lease between Thurrock Council and Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions of at least 30 years in length with a fair apportionment of risk and reward (e.g. The Council hold the Utilities responsibility).	TLS
Step 2: Thurrock International Celebration of Culture to provide oversight of cultural offer		
2a	Put in place a Memorandum of Understanding between Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC and Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC) Ltd with the agreement of Thurrock Council. This is to ensure a clear mandate for TICC to develop a cultural offer based on a clear understanding of respective roles and responsibilities with residents input via public sounding boards.	TLS and TICC
2b	With Thurrock Council, identify a Council Officer or Member to join the TICC board of directors	Thurrock Council
Step 3: Resource the capital improvements		
3	Confirm £750K of capital investment to improve the rentability of spaces and the implement a flexible architecture ('kit of parts') within the publicly accessible areas of the Complex including the library.	Thurrock Council
Step 4: Resource the transformational offer		
4	Confirm £1M of revenue transformational investment over 3 years to ensure viability of these proposals – saving the Council £2.5M compared to an in-house approach	Thurrock Council
Step 5: Deliver the capital improvements		
5a	Confirm whether the red list items are to be resolved by TLS or the Council, using £220,000 Council capital funding for this purpose	Thurrock Council
5b	Complete an audit of community and cultural provision in Thurrock to understand need and demand today and in future. This will be aligned with the business planning phase of the CPP.	TICC

Ref	Action	Lead
5c	Based on the audit, identify functional and technical requirements, enabling the grouping of activities based on their common needs for tools and space.	TICC
5d	Based on the audit and requirements, contract the 'kit of parts'.	TICC
5e	Operationalise the reassembly of the 'kit of parts' daily in line with a cultural calendar	TICC
5f	Implement capital improvements to the office spaces within the Tower in discussion with prospective tenants to secure occupancy and revenue income	TICC
5g	Implement annual capital transformation meeting between us and the Council.	TICC
Step 6: Deliver the transformational offer		
6a	Recruit the Chief Excitement Officer	TICC
6b	Develop and deliver our five activity programmes in discussion with Arts Council England and activity based funders	TICC
Step 7: Develop Thurrock International Celebration of Culture into a charitable entity with expanded board		
7a	Identify and apply for development grant opportunities from a strategically important funder.	TICC
7b	Appoint a charity professional to co-produce with us and the Council an options appraisal to inform a range of strategic decisions by the TICC board regarding the transition of TICC into a charitable structure.	TICC
7c	Apply to Companies House and/or the Charity Commission to convert TICC Ltd into either a Charitable Company or a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).	TICC
7d	Once the decision regarding legal structure has been made, prepare broad Charitable Objects reflecting the cultural and community role of the Thameside	TICC
7e	Undertake a recruitment exercise to secure an independent Chair of the Board.	TICC
7f	Undertake a recruitment exercise to secure independent trustees for Board.	TICC
7g	Provide induction and governance training for all board members	TICC
Step 8: Maximise external fundraising opportunities		
8a	Once this Plan has been agreed, develop a fundraising strategy to target resource and effort to develop funder relationships and successful grant awards.	TICC
8b	Identify trusts and foundations that would represent a strong fit with our objectives and start make initial approaches on the basis of this Plan.	TICC
8c	Maximise the activity programme through focussed applications to Lottery based funders	TICC

Ref	Action	Lead
8d	Develop a community share strategy within our fundraising plan to form part of our overall funding mix.	TICC

Appendix 1: Financials

1. Base Forecast

Base Forecast													
		Base Case	Discounted										
		2022/23	Case Year 1	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
COSTS	Yr 1 Delays												
Utilities	100%	£ 60,000.00	£ 192,000.00	£ 195,840.00	£ 199,756.80	£ 159,805.44	£ 156,609.33	£ 159,741.52	£ 162,936.35	£ 166,195.08	£ 169,518.98	£ 172,909.36	
Concierge	75%	£ 172,800.00	£ 129,600.00	£ 179,712.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	
Maintenance	100%	£ 64,800.00	£ 64,800.00	£ 67,392.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	
Cleaning	100%	£ 70,200.00	£ 70,200.00	£ 73,008.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	
Insurance	100%	£ 16,200.00	£ 16,200.00	£ 16,848.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	
Business Rates	100%	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	
CEO	100%	£ 51,000.00	£ 51,000.00	£ 53,040.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	
Sub-Total		£ 436,689.60	£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
INCOME	Yr 1 Voids/Occupancy												
7th Floor	100%	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,427.24	£ 8,595.78	£ 8,767.70	£ 8,943.05	£ 9,121.92	£ 9,304.35	£ 9,490.44	£ 9,680.25	£ 9,873.85	
6th Floor	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
5th Floor	20%	£ 10,121.10	£ 2,024.22	£ 10,323.52	£ 10,530.00	£ 10,740.60	£ 10,955.41	£ 11,174.52	£ 11,398.01	£ 11,625.97	£ 11,858.49	£ 12,095.65	
4th Floor	20%	£ 310.55	£ 62.11	£ 316.76	£ 323.10	£ 329.56	£ 336.15	£ 342.88	£ 349.73	£ 356.73	£ 363.86	£ 371.14	
3rd Floor	50%	£ 15,459.61	£ 7,729.81	£ 15,768.80	£ 16,084.18	£ 16,405.86	£ 16,733.98	£ 17,068.66	£ 17,410.03	£ 17,758.23	£ 18,113.40	£ 18,475.67	
2nd Floor	100%	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,428.55	£ 21,857.13	£ 22,294.27	£ 22,740.15	£ 23,194.96	£ 23,658.86	£ 24,132.03	£ 24,614.67	£ 25,106.97	
1st Floor	0%	£ 8,274.08	£ -	£ 8,439.56	£ 8,608.35	£ 8,780.52	£ 8,956.13	£ 9,135.25	£ 9,317.95	£ 9,504.31	£ 9,694.40	£ 9,888.29	
Ground Floor	0%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Basement	100%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Café	50%	£ 15,888.46	£ 7,944.23	£ 16,206.23	£ 16,530.36	£ 16,860.96	£ 17,198.18	£ 17,542.15	£ 17,892.99	£ 18,250.85	£ 18,615.87	£ 18,988.18	
Roof Ariels	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
Sub-Total		£ 134,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
Profit from Theatre	Annual target	£ 6,000.00	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	
Community Fundraising	£ 30,000.00		£ -	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	
Trusts and Foundations	£ 125,000.00		£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	
Lottery Based Funders	£ 250,000.00		£ -	£ 50,000.00	£ 100,000.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	
Sub-Total		£ 140,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 248,092.28	£ 326,434.12	£ 454,890.80	£ 558,469.42	£ 562,177.69	£ 566,024.01	£ 570,017.54	£ 574,168.24	£ 578,486.99	
Operating Surplus/Deficit		-£ 296,285.41	-£ 423,378.85	-£ 339,437.32	-£ 257,512.28	-£ 89,104.24	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	
Net Surplus/Deficit			-£ 423,378.85	-£ 339,437.32	-£ 257,512.28	-£ 89,104.24	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	-£ 993,137.01

2. Scenario Model Forecasts

Forecast Two		More challenging trading conditions										
Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
	Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks	0.04	0.026	0.021	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	
	Adjusted figure	£ 546,509.18	£ 602,805.37	£ 596,209.27	£ 554,874.94	£ 551,614.91	£ 554,809.74	£ 558,068.47	£ 561,392.37	£ 564,782.75	£ 568,240.94	
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
	Market pressures: drop in demand, more voids	-0.2	-0.1	-0.05	0	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	
	Adjusted figure	£ 81,688.60	£ 123,383.05	£ 132,842.42	£ 142,630.80	£ 152,757.59	£ 155,812.74	£ 158,929.00	£ 162,107.58	£ 165,349.73	£ 168,656.73	
	Theatre profit	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	
	Fundraising	£ -	£ 105,000.00	£ 180,000.00	£ 305,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
	Net Surplus/Deficit	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,766.86)	£ (99,984.14)	£ 14,128.68	£ 14,787.60	£ 15,523.59	£ 16,344.58	£ 17,259.28	£ 18,277.32	-£ 1,113,672.83
Forecast Three		More challenging trading conditions, more profit from theatre										
Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
	Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks	0.04	0.026	0.021	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	
	Adjusted figure	£ 546,509.18	£ 602,805.37	£ 596,209.27	£ 554,874.94	£ 551,614.91	£ 554,809.74	£ 558,068.47	£ 561,392.37	£ 564,782.75	£ 568,240.94	
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
	Market pressures: drop in demand, more voids	-0.2	-0.1	-0.05	0	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	
	Adjusted figure	£ 81,688.60	£ 123,383.05	£ 132,842.42	£ 142,630.80	£ 152,757.59	£ 155,812.74	£ 158,929.00	£ 162,107.58	£ 165,349.73	£ 168,656.73	
	Theatre profit	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	£ 14,147.69	
	10% per year more than forecast											
	Fundraising	£ -	£ 105,000.00	£ 180,000.00	£ 305,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
	Net Surplus/Deficit	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,106.86)	£ (99,258.14)	£ 14,927.28	£ 15,666.06	£ 16,489.90	£ 17,407.51	£ 18,428.52	£ 19,563.48	-£ 1,106,125.15
Forecast Four		Better trading conditions, more profit from theatre and fundraising										
Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
	Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks											
	Adjusted figure	£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
	Market pressures: drop in demand, more voids	-0.1	-0.05	0	0.05	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	
	Adjusted figure	£ 91,899.68	£ 130,237.66	£ 139,834.12	£ 149,762.35	£ 160,031.76	£ 163,232.40	£ 166,497.05	£ 169,826.99	£ 173,223.53	£ 176,688.00	
	Theatre profit	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	£ 14,147.69	
	10% per year more than forecast											
	Fundraising	£ -	£ 105,000.00	£ 198,000.00	£ 335,500.00	£ 445,500.00	£ 445,500.00	£ 445,500.00	£ 445,500.00	£ 445,500.00	£ 445,500.00	
	10% more than forecast											
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
	Net Surplus/Deficit	£ (433,589.92)	£ (346,291.94)	£ (238,852.28)	£ (50,746.69)	£ 73,517.43	£ 74,464.34	£ 75,500.46	£ 76,634.61	£ 77,876.48	£ 79,236.73	-£ 612,250.77

3. Average of Scenario Model Forecasts

		2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Outturn
Base Forecast												
	Trading position	£ (423,378.85)	£ (339,437.32)	£ (257,512.28)	£ (89,104.24)	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	£ (993,137.01)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,581,276.86
Forecast 2												
	Trading position	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,766.86)	£ (99,984.14)	£ 14,128.68	£ 14,787.60	£ 15,523.59	£ 16,344.58	£ 17,259.28	£ 18,277.32	£ (1,113,672.83)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,460,741.03
Forecast 3												
	Trading position	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,106.86)	£ (99,258.14)	£ 14,927.28	£ 15,666.06	£ 16,489.90	£ 17,407.51	£ 18,428.52	£ 19,563.48	£ (1,106,125.15)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,468,288.72
Forecast 4												
	Trading position	£ (433,589.92)	£ (346,291.94)	£ (238,852.28)	£ (50,746.69)	£ 73,517.43	£ 74,464.34	£ 75,500.46	£ 76,634.61	£ 77,876.48	£ 79,236.73	£ (612,250.77)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,962,163.10
Forecast X	Based on averaging the four forecasts above											
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028						Outturn
		£ (446,652.48)	£ (355,643.48)	£ (262,309.57)	£ (84,773.30)	£ 30,060.97	£ 30,791.14	£ 31,603.00	£ 32,504.89	£ 33,505.99	£ 34,616.39	£ (956,296.44)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
	Capital investment	£ 750,000.00										
	Revenue requirement	£ (446,652.48)	£ (355,643.48)	£ (262,309.57)	£ (84,773.30)	£ 30,060.97	£ 30,791.14	£ 31,603.00	£ 32,504.89	£ 33,505.99	£ 34,616.39	£ (956,296.44)

4. Income Potential

INCOME	Yr 1 Voids/Occupancy												
7th Floor	100%	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,427.24	£ 8,595.78	£ 8,767.70	£ 8,943.05	£ 9,121.92	£ 9,304.35	£ 9,490.44	£ 9,680.25	£ 9,873.85	
6th Floor	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
5th Floor	20%	£ 10,121.10	£ 2,024.22	£ 10,323.52	£ 10,530.00	£ 10,740.60	£ 10,955.41	£ 11,174.52	£ 11,398.01	£ 11,625.97	£ 11,858.49	£ 12,095.65	
4th Floor	20%	£ 310.55	£ 62.11	£ 316.76	£ 323.10	£ 329.56	£ 336.15	£ 342.88	£ 349.73	£ 356.73	£ 363.86	£ 371.14	
3rd Floor	50%	£ 15,459.61	£ 7,729.81	£ 15,768.80	£ 16,084.18	£ 16,405.86	£ 16,733.98	£ 17,068.66	£ 17,410.03	£ 17,758.23	£ 18,113.40	£ 18,475.67	
2nd Floor	100%	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,428.55	£ 21,857.13	£ 22,294.27	£ 22,740.15	£ 23,194.96	£ 23,658.86	£ 24,132.03	£ 24,614.67	£ 25,106.97	
1st Floor	0%	£ 8,274.08	£ -	£ 8,439.56	£ 8,608.35	£ 8,780.52	£ 8,956.13	£ 9,135.25	£ 9,317.95	£ 9,504.31	£ 9,694.40	£ 9,888.29	
Ground Floor	0%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Basement	100%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Café	50%	£ 15,888.46	£ 7,944.23	£ 16,206.23	£ 16,530.36	£ 16,860.96	£ 17,198.18	£ 17,542.15	£ 17,892.99	£ 18,250.85	£ 18,615.87	£ 18,988.18	
Roof Ariels	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
Sub-Total		£ 134,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
Profit from Theatre		£ 6,000.00	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	
	Annual target												
Community Fundraising	£ 30,000.00		£ -	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	
Trusts and Foundations	£ 125,000.00		£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	
Lottery Based Funders	£ 250,000.00		£ -	£ 50,000.00	£ 100,000.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	
Sub-Total		£ 140,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 248,092.28	£ 326,434.12	£ 454,890.80	£ 558,469.42	£ 562,177.69	£ 566,024.01	£ 570,017.54	£ 574,168.24	£ 578,486.99	

5. Investment Table (calculated from the above forecasts and income potential)

INVESTMENT TABLE							
	Capital	Revenue	Income	Theatre Profit	Fundraising	Total revenue	
2022/23	£ 750,000	500,000	£ 102,111	£ -	£ -	£ 602,111	
2023/24		250,000	£ 137,092	£ 6,000	£ 105,000	£ 498,092	
2024/25		250,000	£ 139,834	£ 6,600	£ 180,000	£ 576,434	
2025/26			£ 142,631	£ 7,260	£ 305,000	£ 454,891	
2026/27			£ 145,483	£ 7,986	£ 405,000	£ 558,469	
2027/28			£ 148,393	£ 8,785	£ 405,000	£ 562,178	
2028/29			£ 151,361	£ 9,663	£ 405,000	£ 566,024	
2029/30			£ 154,388	£ 10,629	£ 405,000	£ 570,018	
2030/31			£ 157,476	£ 11,692	£ 405,000	£ 574,168	
2031/32			£ 160,625	£ 12,862	£ 405,000	£ 578,487	
Totals	£ 750,000	£ 1,000,000	£ 1,439,395	£ 81,477	£ 3,020,000	£ 5,540,872	

6. Base Assumptions

BASE Assumptions										2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
COSTS																				
Utilities				£ 60,000.00						220%	2%	2%	-20%	-2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Concierge				£ 160,000.00						8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Maintenance				£ 60,000.00						8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Cleaning				£ 65,000.00						8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Insurance				£ 15,000.00						8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Business Rates				£ 1,689.60						0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
CEO				£ 50,000.00						2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Sub-Total				£ 786,689.60																
INCOME																				
		Current usage (references the occupancy calcs below)	% of area used by council	Available for rent	Potential rent	Actual rent if council rent free	Potential Service Charge	Actual service charge if council rent free	Potential Occupation Income Total	Actual if council rent free										
7th Floor			0%	100%	£ 5,400.00	£ 5,400.00	£ 2,700.00	£ 2,700.00	£ 8,100.00	£ 8,100.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
6th Floor			0%	100%	£ 16,000.00	£ 16,000.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
5th Floor	Library		63%	37%	£ 16,000.00	£ 5,880.09	£ 11,000.00	£ 4,042.56	£ 27,000.00	£ 9,922.65	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
4th Floor	Theatre, museum		98.8%	1.2%	£ 15,076.92	£ 180.42	£ 10,365.38	£ 124.04	£ 25,442.31	£ 304.46	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
3rd Floor	Theatre, bar		84%	16.1%	£ 55,692.31	£ 8,981.62	£ 38,288.46	£ 6,174.86	£ 93,980.77	£ 15,156.48	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
2nd Floor	Theatre, library		75%	24.9%	£ 48,923.08	£ 12,205.31	£ 33,634.62	£ 8,391.15	£ 82,557.69	£ 20,596.46	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
1st Floor	Theatre, museum, library		90%	9.6%	£ 49,846.15	£ 4,807.02	£ 34,269.23	£ 3,304.82	£ 84,115.38	£ 8,111.84	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Ground Floor	Theatre, bar, library		100%	0.0%	£ 25,846.15	£ -	£ 17,769.23	£ -	£ 43,615.38	£ -	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Basement	Museum		100%	0.0%	£ 3,876.92	£ -	£ 2,665.38	£ -	£ 6,542.31	£ -	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Café			0%	100%	£ 9,230.77	£ 9,230.77	£ 6,346.15	£ 6,346.15	£ 15,576.92	£ 15,576.92	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Roof Ariels			0%	100%	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Sub-Total					£ 272,892.31	£ 89,685.22	£ 168,038.46	£ 42,083.59	£ 440,930.77	£ 131,768.82										
					Loss >>>>	£ 183,207.08	Loss >>>>	£ 125,954.87	Loss >>>>	£ 309,161.95										
Profit from Theatre					£ 6,000.00		cumulative over 5 years				0	0%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	
					Annual target															
Community Fundraising					£ 30,000.00						£0.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	
Trusts and Foundations					£ 125,000.00						£0.00	£25,000.00	£50,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	
Lottery Based Funders					£ 250,000.00						£0.00	£50,000.00	£100,000.00	£150,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	
Occupancy calculations																				
These calculate the percentage of rentable space on each floor which the council currently uses and the consequent amount of space available for commercial rent																				
			m/2	Other rentable use	Total	Total by council	Percentage by council		Potential value of the rentable space not used by the council											
7th Floor			94	94	94	94	94.3	£ 132.00	£ 12,408.00											
6th Floor			263	263	263	263	263.2	£ 99.26	£ 26,105.38											
5th Floor	Library		170.9	99.3	270.2	270.2	63%	£ 99.26	£ 9,856.52											
4th Floor	Theatre, museum		322	3.9	325.9	325.9	99%	£ 104.50	£ 407.55											
3rd Floor	Theatre, bar		596	114.6	710.6	710.6	84%	£ 80.40	£ 9,213.84											
2nd Floor	Theatre, library		685	227.7	912.7	912.7	75%	£ 39.88	£ 9,080.68											
1st Floor	Theatre, museum, library		951	101.5	1052.5	1052.5	90%	£ 39.88	£ 4,047.82											
Ground Floor	Theatre, bar, library		817	0	817	817	100%	£ 83.60	£ -											
Basement	Museum		150.5	0	150.5	150.5	100%	£ 38.40	£ -											
Café							156													
Roof Ariels																				

7. Council savings

	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>	<u>2028/2029</u>	<u>2029/30</u>	<u>2030/31</u>	<u>2031/32</u>	<u>2032/33</u>
Traded Income	£102,111	£137,092	£139,834	£142,631	£145,483	£148,393	£151,361	£154,388	£157,476	£160,625
Revenue Grant	£500,000	£250,000	£250,000							
Total	£602,111	£387,092	£389,834	£142,631	£145,483	£148,393	£151,361	£154,388	£157,476	£160,625
Running Costs	£474,490	£534,490	£531,926	£491,975	£488,779	£491,911	£495,106	£498,365	£501,689	£505,079
Profit / Loss	£127,621.15	-£147,397.32	-£142,092.28	-£349,344.24	-£343,295.51	-£343,518.03	-£343,745.00	-£343,976.50	-£344,212.64	-£344,453.50
Savings to Council	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50
			Total Council savings over 5 Yrs		£2,574,414					

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Thurrock Thameside Financial Forecasts

Four forecasts for the Thameside complex which demonstrate the need for transformation funding to maintain the value of the asset for the owner and to deliver a range of community benefits.

Base Forecast		<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>	<u>2028/2029</u>	<u>2029/30</u>	<u>2030/31</u>	<u>2031/32</u>	<u>2032/33</u>	<u>Outturn</u>
Trading position	£	(423,378.85)	£ (339,437.32)	£ (257,512.28)	£ (89,104.24)	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	£ (993,137.01)
Council savings		(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,581,276.86
Forecast 2	Trading position	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,766.86)	£ (99,984.14)	£ 14,128.68	£ 14,787.60	£ 15,523.59	£ 16,344.58	£ 17,259.28	£ 18,277.32	£ (1,113,672.83)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,460,741.03
Forecast 3	Trading position	£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,106.86)	£ (99,258.14)	£ 14,927.28	£ 15,666.06	£ 16,489.90	£ 17,407.51	£ 18,428.52	£ 19,563.48	£ (1,106,125.15)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,468,288.72
Forecast 4	Trading position	£ (433,589.92)	£ (346,291.94)	£ (238,852.28)	£ (50,746.69)	£ 73,517.43	£ 74,464.34	£ 75,500.46	£ 76,634.61	£ 77,876.48	£ 79,236.73	£ (612,250.77)
	Council savings	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
												£ 1,962,163.10
Savings	Maximum	£ 1,962,163.10										
	Minimum	£ 1,460,741.03										

TRANSFORMATION FUNDING IMPACT

The argument is that the Thurrock Thameside complex requires two types of investment:

1. Capital investment to make essential improvements to ensure the property is in good, marketable condition, enabling the charging of market-rate rents
2. Revenue investment to fund the operating shortfall, offset by the potential savings to the council

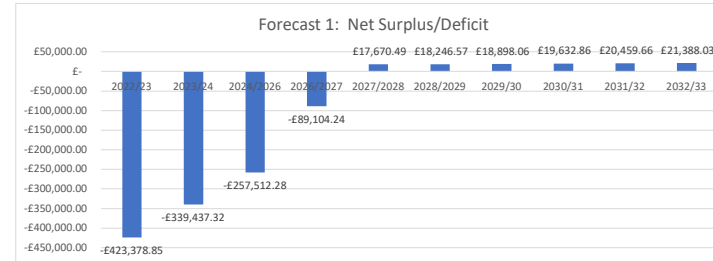
Forecast X	Based on averaging the four forecasts above											
		<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>						<u>Outturn</u>
	£	(446,652.48)	£ (355,643.48)	£ (262,309.57)	£ (84,773.30)	£ 30,060.97	£ 30,791.14	£ 31,603.00	£ 32,504.89	£ 33,505.99	£ 34,616.39	£ (956,296.44)
Council savings		(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50	£2,574,413.87
Capital investment	£	750,000.00										
Revenue requirement	£	(446,652.48)	£ (355,643.48)	£ (262,309.57)	£ (84,773.30)	£ 30,060.97	£ 30,791.14	£ 31,603.00	£ 32,504.89	£ 33,505.99	£ 34,616.39	£ (956,296.44)

The capital investment could be spread over 1, 2 or more years

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Base Forecast

COSTS	Yr 1 Delays	Base Case	Discounted										
		2022/23	Case Year 1	2023/24	2024/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
Utilities	100%	£ 60,000.00	£ 192,000.00	£ 195,840.00	£ 199,756.80	£ 159,805.44	£ 156,609.33	£ 159,741.52	£ 162,936.35	£ 166,195.08	£ 169,518.98	£ 172,909.36	
Concierge	75%	£ 172,800.00	£ 129,600.00	£ 179,712.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	£ 176,256.00	
Maintenance	100%	£ 64,800.00	£ 67,392.00	£ 67,392.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	£ 66,096.00	
Cleaning	100%	£ 70,200.00	£ 70,200.00	£ 73,008.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	£ 71,604.00	
Insurance	100%	£ 16,200.00	£ 16,200.00	£ 16,848.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	£ 16,524.00	
Business Rates	100%	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	£ 1,689.60	
CEO	100%	£ 51,000.00	£ 51,000.00	£ 53,040.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	£ 52,020.00	
Sub-Total		£ 436,689.60	£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96	
INCOME													
Yr 1 Voids/Occupancy													
7th Floor	100%	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,262.00	£ 8,427.24	£ 8,595.78	£ 8,767.70	£ 8,943.05	£ 9,121.92	£ 9,304.35	£ 9,490.44	£ 9,680.25	£ 9,873.85	
6th Floor	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
5th Floor	20%	£ 10,121.10	£ 10,121.10	£ 10,323.52	£ 10,530.00	£ 10,740.60	£ 10,955.41	£ 11,174.52	£ 11,398.01	£ 11,625.97	£ 11,858.49	£ 12,095.65	
4th Floor	20%	£ 310.55	£ 62.11	£ 316.76	£ 323.10	£ 329.56	£ 336.15	£ 342.88	£ 349.73	£ 356.73	£ 363.86	£ 371.14	
3rd Floor	50%	£ 15,459.61	£ 7,729.81	£ 15,768.80	£ 16,084.18	£ 16,405.86	£ 16,733.98	£ 17,068.66	£ 17,410.03	£ 17,758.23	£ 18,113.40	£ 18,475.67	
2nd Floor	100%	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,008.39	£ 21,428.55	£ 21,857.13	£ 22,294.27	£ 22,740.15	£ 23,194.96	£ 23,658.86	£ 24,132.03	£ 24,614.67	£ 25,106.97	
1st Floor	0%	£ 8,274.08	£ -	£ 8,439.56	£ 8,608.35	£ 8,780.52	£ 8,956.13	£ 9,135.25	£ 9,317.95	£ 9,504.31	£ 9,694.40	£ 9,888.29	
Ground Floor	0%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Basement	100%	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Café	50%	£ 15,888.46	£ 7,944.23	£ 16,206.23	£ 16,530.36	£ 16,860.96	£ 17,198.18	£ 17,542.15	£ 17,892.99	£ 18,250.85	£ 18,615.87	£ 18,988.18	
Roof Ariels	100%	£ 27,540.00	£ 27,540.00	£ 28,090.80	£ 28,652.62	£ 29,225.67	£ 29,810.18	£ 30,406.39	£ 31,014.51	£ 31,634.80	£ 32,267.50	£ 32,912.85	
Sub-Total		£ 134,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45	
Profit from Theatre	Annual target	£ 6,000.00	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	
Community Fundraising	£ 30,000.00	£ -	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	
Trusts and Foundations	£ 125,000.00	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	£ 125,000.00	
Lottery Based Funders	£ 250,000.00	£ -	£ 50,000.00	£ 100,000.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	
Sub-Total		£ 140,404.19	£ 102,110.75	£ 248,092.28	£ 326,434.12	£ 454,890.80	£ 558,469.42	£ 562,177.69	£ 566,024.01	£ 570,017.54	£ 574,168.24	£ 578,486.99	
Operating Surplus/Deficit		-£ 296,285.41	-£ 423,378.85	-£ 339,437.32	-£ 257,512.28	-£ 89,104.24	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	
Transformation Fund													
Net Surplus/Deficit			-£ 423,378.85	-£ 339,437.32	-£ 257,512.28	-£ 89,104.24	£ 17,670.49	£ 18,246.57	£ 18,898.06	£ 19,632.86	£ 20,459.66	£ 21,388.03	-£ 993,137.01



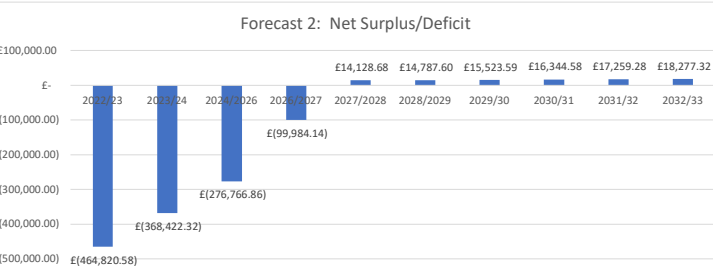
Total deficit: £1 M

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Forecast Two

More challenging trading conditions

Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96
Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks		0.04	0.026	0.021	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Adjusted figure		£ 546,509.18	£ 602,805.37	£ 596,209.27	£ 554,874.94	£ 551,614.91	£ 554,809.74	£ 558,068.47	£ 561,392.37	£ 564,782.75	£ 568,240.94
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45
Market pressures: drop in demand, more voic		-0.2	-0.1	-0.05	0	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Adjusted figure		£ 81,688.60	£ 123,383.05	£ 132,842.42	£ 142,630.80	£ 152,757.59	£ 155,812.74	£ 158,929.00	£ 162,107.58	£ 165,349.73	£ 168,656.73
Theatre profit		£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53
Fundraising		£ -	£ 105,000.00	£ 180,000.00	£ 305,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00
Net Surplus/Deficit		£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,766.86)	£ (99,984.14)	£ 14,128.68	£ 14,787.60	£ 15,523.59	£ 16,344.58	£ 17,259.28	£ 18,277.32

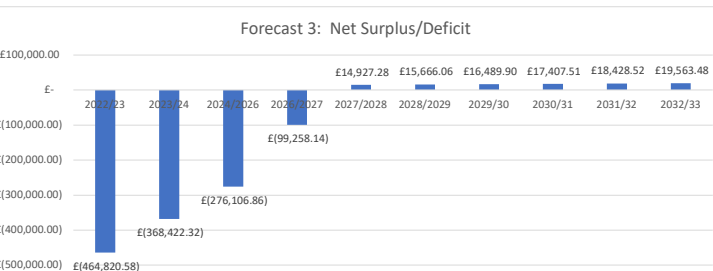


Total deficit: £1.1 M

Forecast Three

More challenging trading conditions, more profit from theatre

Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96
Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks		0.04	0.026	0.021	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Adjusted figure		£ 546,509.18	£ 602,805.37	£ 596,209.27	£ 554,874.94	£ 551,614.91	£ 554,809.74	£ 558,068.47	£ 561,392.37	£ 564,782.75	£ 568,240.94
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45
Market pressures: drop in demand, more voic		-0.2	-0.1	-0.05	0	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Adjusted figure		£ 81,688.60	£ 123,383.05	£ 132,842.42	£ 142,630.80	£ 152,757.59	£ 155,812.74	£ 158,929.00	£ 162,107.58	£ 165,349.73	£ 168,656.73
Theatre profit		£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	£ 14,147.69
10% per year more than forecast		£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 7,260.00	£ 7,986.00	£ 8,784.60	£ 9,663.06	£ 10,629.37	£ 11,692.30	£ 12,861.53	£ 14,147.69
Fundraising		£ -	£ 105,000.00	£ 180,000.00	£ 305,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00	£ 405,000.00
Net Surplus/Deficit		£ (464,820.58)	£ (368,422.32)	£ (276,106.86)	£ (99,258.14)	£ 14,927.28	£ 15,666.06	£ 16,489.90	£ 17,407.51	£ 18,428.52	£ 19,563.48



Total deficit: £1.1 M

Forecast Four

Better trading conditions, more profit from theatre and fundraising

Total costs		£ 525,489.60	£ 587,529.60	£ 583,946.40	£ 543,995.04	£ 540,798.93	£ 543,931.12	£ 547,125.95	£ 550,384.68	£ 553,708.58	£ 557,098.96
Cost pressures: inflation & economic shocks		0.04	0.026	0.021	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Adjusted figure		£ 546,509.18	£ 602,805.37	£ 596,209.27	£ 554,874.94	£ 551,614.91	£ 554,809.74	£ 558,068.47	£ 561,392.37	£ 564,782.75	£ 568,240.94
Total income		£ 102,110.75	£ 137,092.28	£ 139,834.12	£ 142,630.80	£ 145,483.42	£ 148,393.09	£ 151,360.95	£ 154,388.17	£ 157,475.93	£ 160,625.45
Market pressures: drop in demand											

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BASE Assumptions COSTS	Inflation/Growth										
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
Utilities	£ 60,000.00	220%	2%	2%	-20%	-2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Concierge	£ 160,000.00	8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Maintenance	£ 60,000.00	8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Cleaning	£ 65,000.00	8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Insurance	£ 15,000.00	8%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Business Rates	£ 1,689.60	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
CEO	£ 50,000.00	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Sub-Total	£ 786,689.60										

INCOME	Current usage (references the occupancy calcs below)	% of area used by council	Available for rent	Actual rent if		Actual service		Potential	Actual if		Inflation/Growth									
				Potential rent	council rent free	Service Charge	rent free	Occupation Income Total	council rent free	2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
7th Floor		0%	100%	£ 5,400.00	£ 5,400.00	£ 2,700.00	£ 2,700.00	£ 8,100.00	£ 8,100.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
6th Floor		0%	100%	£ 16,000.00	£ 16,000.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
5th Floor	Library	63%	37%	£ 16,000.00	£ 5,880.09	£ 11,000.00	£ 4,042.56	£ 27,000.00	£ 9,922.65	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
4th Floor	Theatre, museum	98.8%	1.2%	£ 15,076.92	£ 180.42	£ 10,365.38	£ 124.04	£ 25,442.31	£ 304.46	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
3rd Floor	Theatre, bar	84%	16.1%	£ 55,692.31	£ 8,981.62	£ 38,288.46	£ 6,174.86	£ 93,980.77	£ 15,156.48	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
2nd Floor	Theatre, library	75%	24.9%	£ 48,923.08	£ 12,205.31	£ 33,634.62	£ 8,391.15	£ 82,557.69	£ 20,596.46	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
1st Floor	Theatre, museum, library	90%	9.6%	£ 49,846.15	£ 4,807.02	£ 34,269.23	£ 3,304.82	£ 84,115.38	£ 8,111.84	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Ground Floor	Theatre, bar, library	100%	0.0%	£ 25,846.15	£ -	£ 17,769.23	£ -	£ 43,615.38	£ -	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Basement	Museum	100%	0.0%	£ 3,876.92	£ -	£ 2,665.38	£ -	£ 6,542.31	£ -	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Café		0%	100%	£ 9,230.77	£ 9,230.77	£ 6,346.15	£ 6,346.15	£ 15,576.92	£ 15,576.92	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Roof Ariels		0%	100%	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 27,000.00	£ 27,000.00	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Sub-Total				£ 272,892.31	£ 89,685.22	£ 168,038.46	£ 42,083.59	£ 440,930.77	£ 131,768.82											
Profit from Theatre				£ 6,000.00	£ 183,207.08	Loss >>>>	£ 125,954.87	Loss >>>>	£ 309,161.95	0	0%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%

	Annual target	2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32
Community Fundraising	£ 30,000.00	£0.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Trusts and Foundations	£ 125,000.00	£0.00	£25,000.00	£50,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00	£125,000.00
Lottery Based Funders	£ 250,000.00	£0.00	£50,000.00	£100,000.00	£150,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00

Occupancy calculations

These calculate the percentage of rentable space on each floor which the council currently uses and the consequent amount of space available for commercial rent

	m/2	Other		Total	Total by council	Percentage by council	Potential value of the rentable space not used by the council	
		rentable	use				£	£
7th Floor		94	94	94	94	94.3	£ 132.00	£ 12,408.00
6th Floor		263	263	263	263	263.2	£ 99.26	£ 26,105.38
5th Floor	Library	170.9	99.3	270.2	270.2	63%	£ 99.26	£ 9,856.52
4th Floor	Theatre, museum	322	3.9	325.9	325.9	99%	£ 104.50	£ 407.55
3rd Floor	Theatre, bar	596	114.6	710.6	710.6	84%	£ 80.40	£ 9,213.84
2nd Floor	Theatre, library	685	227.7	912.7	912.7	75%	£ 39.88	£ 9,080.68
1st Floor	Theatre, museum, library	951	101.5	1052.5	1052.5	90%	£ 39.88	£ 4,047.82
Ground Floor	Theatre, bar, library	817	0	817	817	100%	£ 83.60	£ -
Basement	Museum	150.5	0	150.5	150.5	100%	£ 38.40	£ -
Café						156		
Roof Ariels		3,692	904	4,596				
					Car park	22		£ 71,119.78

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Thameside Theatre Business Plan Modelling COSTS

Cost growth assumption, based on
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/306720/cpi-rate-forecast-uk/> 4.0% 2.6% 2.1% 2.0% Mar-22

Total costs	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	
Fixed costs	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	Notes
Salary	£ 237,000	£ 244,534	£ 250,892	£ 256,161	£ 261,284	
Shift Pay	£ 20,200	£ 21,567	£ 22,128	£ 22,592	£ 23,044	
National Insurance	£ 34,048	£ 35,660	£ 36,587	£ 37,355	£ 38,103	
Superannuation	£ 49,165	£ 51,756	£ 53,102	£ 54,217	£ 55,301	
Building Maintenance Day To Day	£ 11,000	£ 11,440	£ 11,737	£ 11,984	£ 12,224	
Insurance Builds						
Plant Equip	£ 350	£ 364	£ 373	£ 381	£ 389	
Car Allowances	£ 250	£ 260	£ 267	£ 272	£ 278	
Equipment Purchase	£ -	£ 1,000	£ -	£ 2,000	£ 4,000	None required in 2021 / 22
Stock Taking Service	£ 1,664	£ 1,731	£ 1,776	£ 1,813	£ 1,849	
Clothing and Uniforms	£ 750	£ 780	£ 800	£ 817	£ 833	
Telephones Line Rental	£ 750	£ 780	£ 800	£ 817	£ 833	
Marketing budget	£ 43,700	£ 35,100	£ 35,100	£ 35,750	£ 35,750	This is in addition to any marketing effort from the council
Totals	£ 398,877	£ 404,972	£ 413,562	£ 424,160	£ 433,888	
Variable costs	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	Notes
Provisions Food & Drink	£ 25,000	£ 50,000	£ 55,000	£ 60,500	£ 66,550	Combined cost of food and drink for 7 months in 2021/22; 10% increase thereafter to reflect increased demand
Stationery	£ 500	£ 1,000	£ 1,026	£ 1,048	£ 1,068	Increased business = increased variable costs
Promotions and Publicity	£ 7,500	£ 7,800	£ 8,003	£ 8,171	£ 8,334	Council's marketing team contribution
Postage	£ 1,034	£ 1,075	£ 1,103	£ 1,126	£ 1,149	
Telephones Line Rental	£ 750	£ 780	£ 800	£ 817	£ 833	
Licenses	£ 2,500	£ 2,500	£ 2,565	£ 2,619	£ 2,671	
Professional Fees	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	Fees reduced in 2021/22 for the shorter season. Fee costs are a proportion of sales, c70%
Commission	£ 20,000	£ 20,000	£ 20,520	£ 20,951	£ 21,370	
Totals	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	

		Actual	Forecast	Saving
April Superannuation was £1722.4	£ 1,722	12 £ 20,664	£ 4,097	£ 2,375
April NI was £1359.58	£ 1,360	12 £ 16,320	£ 2,837	£ 1,477
		£ 36,984		
Total salaries paid £17720.90	£ 17,721	12 £ 212,652	2,300 savings	
Total Shift Pay £1705.61	£ 1,706	12 £ 20,472	1,000	

Salary figures for April & May	£ 36,657
One sixth of a year	6
Adjusted year cost	£ 219,942

Rule of thumb is 6 to 7% of turnover

Shift pay	£ 1,705
	£ 20,460

National insurance	2921
	6
	17526
Supperannuation	3734
	6
	22404

Marketing sub-budget	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26		
Staffing costs	£ 20,000	£ 25,000	£ 25,000	£ 25,000	£ 25,000		
Website	£ 5,000						
Relaunch campaign	£ 2,000						
Monthly venue							
marketing spend	£ 3,600	£ 3,600	£ 3,600	£ 4,000	£ 4,000		
Brochure	£ 6,000	£ 6,000	£ 6,000	£ 6,000	£ 6,000		
General design							
support	£ 500	£ 500	£ 500	£ 750	£ 750		
Mailchimp monthly							
cost	£ 900	£ 900	£ 900	£ 1,200	£ 1,200		
Hospitality							
marketing	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000		
FoH signage	£ 1,000		£ 1,000				
Venue campaign							
spend	£ 3,700	£ 3,700	£ 4,000	£ 4,300	£ 4,600		
Totals	£ 43,700	£ 35,100	£ 35,100	£ 35,750	£ 35,750	£	185,400
As a % of costs vs.							
6% benchmark	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!		

Gnd Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX
 1 April 2017 - present
 Your rateable value is **£42,000.00**

	Rateable Value	Business Rates	Service Charge	Rent
	100%		42.31%	61.54%

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value				
Ground	Reception / entrance	502.7	£83.60	£ 42,026.00				
Ground	Loading bay	13.9	£8.80	£ 122.00				
Total		516.60		£ 42,148.00				
Total value	£42,148.00			£ 42,000.00	£ 0.512	£ 21,504.00	£ 17,769.23	£ 25,846.15
								£ 50.03

1 St Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX
 Your rateable value is **£81,000.00**

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value				
First	Office	93.3	£79.75	£ 7,441.00				
First	Office	670.14	£79.75	£ 53,444.00				
First	Office	514.44	39.88	£ 20,516.00				
Total		1277.88		£ 81,401.00				
Total value	£81,401.00			£ 81,000.00	£ 0.512	£ 41,472.00	£ 34,269.23	£ 49,846.15
								£ 39.01

2 Nd Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX
 Your rateable value is **£79,500.00**

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value				
Second	Office	740	£79.75	£ 59,015.00				
Second	Office	514.44	£39.88	£ 20,516.00				
Total		1,254.44		£ 79,531.00				
Total value	£79,531.00			£ 79,500.00	£ 0.512	£ 40,704.00	£ 33,634.62	£ 48,923.08
								£ 39.00

3 Rd Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX
 Your rateable value is **£90,500.00**

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value				
Third	Office	614.36	£80.40	£ 49,395.00				
Third	Office	514.44	£80.40	£ 41,361.00				
Total		1,128.80		£ 90,756.00				
Total value	£90,756.00			£ 90,500.00	£ 0.512	£ 46,336.00	£ 38,288.46	£ 55,692.31
								£ 49.34

4 Th Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX
 Your rateable value is **£24,500.00**

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value					
Fourth	Office	235.8	£104.50	£ 24,641.00					
Total		235.8		£ 24,641.00					
Total value	£24,641.00			£ 24,500.00	£ 0.512	£ 12,544.00	£ 10,365.38	£ 15,076.92	£ 63.94

5 Th Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX

Your rateable value is £26,000.00

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value					
Fifth	Office	263.2	£99.26	£ 26,125.00					
Total		263.2		£ 26,125.00					
Total value	£26,125.00			£ 26,000.00	£ 0.499	£ 12,974.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 16,000.00	

6 Th Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX

Your rateable value is £26,000.00

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value					
Sixth	Office	263.2	£99.26	£ 26,125.00					
Total		263.2		£ 26,125.00					
Total value	£26,125.00			£ 26,000.00	£ 0.499	£ 12,974.00	£ 11,000.00	£ 16,000.00	

7 Th Flr Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX

Your rateable value is £12,250.00

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value					
Seventh	Office	94.3	£132.00	£ 12,448.00					
Total		94.3		£ 12,448.00					
Total value	£12,448.00			£ 12,250.00	£ 0.499	£ 6,112.75	£ 2,700.00	£ 5,400.00	

Batias Cafe 4 U Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX

Your rateable value is £12,250.00

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value					
Ground	Restaurant	156	£80.00	£ 12,480.00					
Total		156		£ 12,480.00					
Total value	£12,480.00			£ 15,000.00	£ 0.499	£ 7,485.00	£ 6,346.15	£ 9,230.77	

Bsmt Thurrock Central Library & Council, Orsett Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 5DX

Your rateable value is £6,300.00

Floor	Description	Area m ² /unit	Price per m ² ,	Value
Basement	Store	165.81	£38.40	£ 6,367.00
Total		165.81		£ 6,367.00

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	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>	<u>2028/2029</u>	<u>2029/30</u>	<u>2030/31</u>	<u>2031/32</u>	<u>2032/33</u>
Traded Income	£102,111	£137,092	£139,834	£142,631	£145,483	£148,393	£151,361	£154,388	£157,476	£160,625
Revenue Grant	£500,000	£250,000	£250,000							
Total	£602,111	£387,092	£389,834	£142,631	£145,483	£148,393	£151,361	£154,388	£157,476	£160,625
Running Costs	£474,490	£534,490	£531,926	£491,975	£488,779	£491,911	£495,106	£498,365	£501,689	£505,079
Profit / Loss	£127,621.15	-£147,397.32	-£142,092.28	-£349,344.24	-£343,295.51	-£343,518.03	-£343,745.00	-£343,976.50	-£344,212.64	-£344,453.50
Savings to Council	(£127,621.15)	£147,397.32	£142,092.28	£349,344.24	£343,295.51	£343,518.03	£343,745.00	£343,976.50	£344,212.64	£344,453.50
		Total Council savings over 5 Yrs		£2,574,414						

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LETTER OF INTENT Strategic Partnership Agreement

This Letter of Intent (hereafter “Lol”) dated 08/09/2022 is made between:

Waltham International College
of
Glebe House, Vicarage Drive Barking, England IG11 7NR
(hereafter “WIC”)

and

Anglo Asiatic Arts & Heritage Alliance
of
15D Chalk Court, Jetty Walk, Grays, Essex RM17 6PQ (hereafter “AAAHA”).

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Lol is to outline how AAAHA will provide management services for Thameside Theatre as an independent producer on behalf of WIC.

- This Lol is not legally binding, except as specifically set out below.
- This Lol can be amended only in writing and subject to agreement by both WIC and AAAHA.

2. Scope

The scope of this Lol covers any arts, cultural and academic events that would be programmed in the Theatre. This will cover all aspects of performance, workshops, film screenings and talks.

3. Expectations and Benefits

Under the terms of this Lol AAAHA will aim, within the scope of this agreement, to:

- Create an arts, culture and heritage strategy for events that entertain audiences and activities that include participants
- Identify synergies between AAAHA, the Museum and Library to develop and deliver partnership events where they relate to arts, cultural and heritage
- Create opportunities for future joint or allied funding of such activities
- Support working with local, national and international groups, organisations and other stakeholders where appropriate
- Identify and measure the impact arising from these activities and alter or develop actions in response to this

4. The Working Relationship with Partners

Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- sharing and development of relevant strategies
- mapping connections and priorities
- signposting to cultural productions, expertise and identification of leading groups in areas of interest
- events include performances, film screenings, talent contests, showcases, workshops and conferences
- cultural and academic exchanges
- evaluating the benefit of collaboration
- introductions to third parties that can assist in defining and scoping areas of interest

5. Management of the Partnership

The partnership will be managed through the AAAHA Board of Directors through the Creative Director and WIC. They will review any collaborative activities and agree new activities based on the alignment of strategy and objectives, levels of engagement and commitment between the Parties, communications and forthcoming opportunities.

6. Intellectual Property and Data

As part of any collaboration, intellectual property will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Intellectual Property will remain the property of the organisation which owns it, though licensing arrangements may be entered into as part of any project or programme

Whilst retaining an open data policy enabling free access to all data generated as part of the requirements of any required funding conditions, there are instances where data products are generated, where significant added value may have been invested in developing the initial data, or where proprietary models are used or data belonging to other providers is incorporated into a product or service. In these, or related instances, license agreements will be developed with the aim of minimising the costs or complications arising.

7. Brand Protection

This paragraph is legally binding. WIC and AAAHA require that any Lol should protect both brands and their use either separately or in partnership.

8. Commencement, duration and termination

The effective commencement date of this working relationship will be the date of the signing of this MoU and the working relationship shall remain in force for the foreseeable future.

The working relationship can be terminated at any time by any Party following a consultation period of 30 (thirty) calendar days or such period as agreed otherwise between the parties and thereafter giving 30 (thirty) calendar days written notice of termination to the other Party.

9. Points of contact

Waltham International College (WIC)
Glebe House,
Vicarage Drive
Barking,
England
IG11 7NR
Attn: Imran Pirzada
Tel: 02070180430
Email: imran@wic.ac.uk

AAAHA
15D Chalk Court
Jetty Walk
Grays
Essex
RM17 6PQ
Attn: Hi Ching
Tel: 7846614691
Email: info.aaaha@gmail.com

10. Signatures

Signed for and on behalf of WIC by:



Name Imran Pirzada

Title Assistant Principal

Date 08/09/2022

Signed for and on behalf of AAAHA by:



Name Hi Ching

Title Creative Director

Date 08/09/2022

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THAMESIDE THEATRE PARTNERSHIP

Executive Summary

Anglo Asiatic Arts and Heritage Alliance (AAAHA), a not for profit company limited by guarantee with an honorary Board of Directors, agrees to act as manager of Thameside Theatre as a partner with Waltham International College (WIC) under the business lease WIC contracts with Thurrock Council.

Income and expenditure will fall into two areas – Shared Costs (percentage of costs shared by WIC and AAAHA); Project Costs (costs borne by AAAHA). The percentage shared between the two organisations is based roughly on the square footage used by each party; WIC (13,000 sq/f) and AAAHA (5911 sq/f). These amounts to be discussed further.

AAAHA agrees to be solely responsible for the planning and delivery of public and private productions, performances, film screenings and workshops in the theatre and backstage/dressing rooms areas on floors two and three. This will include budgeting, marketing and box-office.

AAAHA is committed to manage Thameside on a long term basis.

Introduction to AAAHA

AAAHA was form in 2016 as a not for profit company limited by guarantee. It has an honorary Board of Directors who support the Creative Director's vision and projects. AAAHA has a network of artists in its alliance who have previously worked with the Creative Director and which are engaged on projects if necessary. AAAHA operates on a project by project basis. Funding for all projects are raised before any project is delivered and expenditure is within the limits of income raised.

The Creative Director, Hi Ching, has over forty years experience of running one off projects and touring productions throughout the UK. Highlights include the Handover of Hong Kong was a three day event in the London Docklands in 1997 funded by the Hong Kong Government Office and the London Docklands Development Corporation. This was followed by the First Anniversary of Handover in Grosvenor Hotel that included VIP dinner and performance, paid for by The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office. In 2000, the Hong Kong Tourism Board paid for the performances at Millenium Dome. In 2008, the BBC contracted Hi Ching to be Artistic Director of Silk Screens that marked the Beijing Olympics in four cities with BBC Big Screens (London, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow) and at the same documenting the biggest Chinese oral history interviews with local Chinese in these four cities. From 2007-2015, Hi Ching, as Artistic Director of Foundation for Indian Performing Arts, produced

touring productions for theatres in the UK including the Royal National Theatre, Buxton Opera House, South Bank Centre, and outdoor festivals including the Norwich and Norfolk Festival and the London, Glasgow, Leicester and Belfast Melas amongst others. Since AAHA was formed to carry out productions in Thurrock, it has run TICC Festival (2018, 2019), TIC Film Festival now Thurrock Film Festival (2018-2022), Christmas Light Up in Grays Town Centre (2019), Thurrock Festival (2020-02022) and the Platinum Jubilee Pageant, touring Purfleet-on-Thames, Hardie Park and Grays Town Park.

Organisational Mission

AAHA aims to develop Thameside Theatre as a vibrant community hub for arts and culture addressing local needs as well as aspiring for international projects.

With the Museum and Library based within the same building, we will explore with them to Collaborative partnership events.

Local Needs

This refers to what the local community reasonably expects from a local theatre.

- 1 Panto season
- 2 Regular hires to amateur performing companies (drama, dance, music etc.)
- 3 Talent shows (showcasing local and new performers - musicians, singers and dancers)
- 4 Competitions (local dance and theatre schools)
- 5 Screening of popular films (for families and cult audiences)
- 6 In house performance companies (Michael Spencer drama group, East Asian Music and Arts EAMA)
- 7 Rehearsal space (using the theatre for music and singing groups such as Thurrock Music Services)
- 8 Monthly Thurrock Film Club
- 9 Cultural festival events

International Aspirations

This refers to partnerships and projects developed with professionals.

- 1 Thurrock Film Festival TFF (annual)
- 2 Performance partnerships built with national and international professionals (facilitated by e.g. Romanian Cultural Institute, SOAS University of London, Ukrainian ballet dancer Ivan Putrov and East European Zinaida Mamedova)

Financial Overview

The theatre will operate on an ad hoc basis from a remote office.

Hi Ching will be Creative Director deciding on artistic decisions and in charge of overall management. He is Creative Director of AAAHA and works under the supervision of the Board of Directors. He will have a team of ad hoc assistants – A curator and assistant for film, a theatre manager, theatre technician, bookkeeper and a social media and marketing assistant. AAAHA has a network of artists, administrators and workers who will be engaged as appropriate per project.

AAAHA Accountants are SKS Ramon Lee.

Income

This will either be through hire fees or box-office split 35%(goes to WIC/AAAHA) /65% (goes to production house). WIC would retain all of the 35% of earnings, and AAAHA will invoice WIC for staff costs for the staff provided by AAAHA for commercial hires only. AAAHA would re-coup all other expenses as hire costs from its funding partners.

Panto proceeds is expected to cover basic running costs for the year. Additional income has to be covered through income/grants per project.

- 1 Panto income
- 2 Regular annual bookings from local groups (viz. Thurrock Courts Players, touring theatre companies for children)
- 3 Popular film screenings and talent shows
- 4 Hire income from touring productions
- 5 Grants for delivering projects such as TFF, Michael Spencer's drama, EAMA

Expenditure

This falls into two areas.

Shared costs

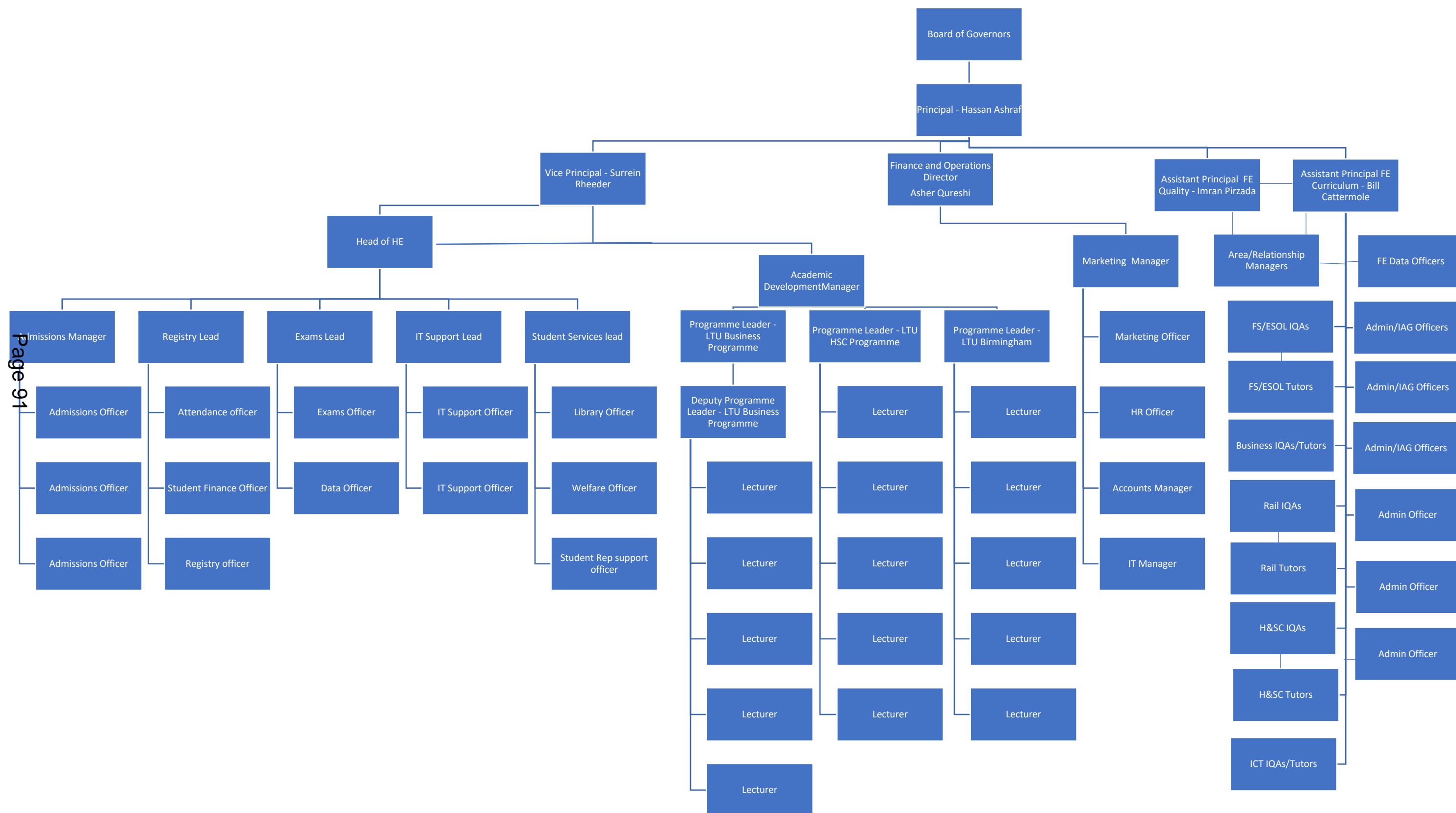
- 1 Utilities
- 2 Security
- 3 Cleaning
- 4 Insurance
- 5 Business Rates?

Theatre Project Costs per individual project

- 1 Administration costs
- 2 Artists

- 3 Front of house staff
- 4 Technicians
- 5 Marketing
- 6 Accountancy
- 7 Insurance

Very rough costings of the Panto season and a sample Family Film cost is attached. It is not possible at this stage to make any sort of financial forecast without having any information about the detailed income and expenditure of the running of Thameside Theatre.



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1.0 Governance and Strategy

1.1. Governance and Management Document

For BOG approval BOG September 2021

Version Number 6

Reviewed by Head of HE August 2021

Version Control

Version	Date	Changes Made	Reason	Written/Changed By	Date of Next Review
1	28/09/18	New Document	Document to provide Guidelines on College Governance arrangements	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 19
2	23/01/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of compliance with OFS Public Interest Governance Principles and Additional Principles Integration of external reference points Introduction of the Quality Improvement Plan Outline of the terms of reference of the quality Improvement Committee 	Strengthen governance arrangements Establish independent oversight of Governance of Academic Quality and Standards	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 19
3	01/07/19	Added Prevent and Safeguarding to the role of OMC, reformatted add standing agenda's and report formats	Annual Review of Policies	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 20
4	July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlined and standardised format of standing agenda items and reports of all Boards, Panels and Committees Action planning is now a key standing agenda to include new plans and review of old plans Removed reference to Pearson to a more generic term: awarding bodies/organisations Removed reference to specific programmes to a more generic reference Improved formatting Correction of grammar and spellings where necessary Clarified membership of SSL committee, which should include all students (not nominated students) Outlines the minute-taking responsibilities introduced for training purposes Included the External Advisor to the HE Academic Board as member of the Academic Board Included reports of the external Advisor to the HE Academic Board All paragraphs in the main document numbered for easy reference Incorporated key governance policies under governance instruments to enable the board of Governors to directly oversee these policies 	Annual Review of Policies	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 21
5	October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further clarified the separation of the FE and HE provisions and their respective terms of reference and responsible committees Changed some titles to account for changes effective from 1 November 2020 	Clarification	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 2021
6	August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated changes due to Covid and updated to reflect changing legislation around freedom of speech necessitating a stand alone policy. 	Annual Review	Head of HE	Jul/Aug 2022

External Reference Points

The design and content of this document is based entirely on the OFS Standard Public Interest Governance Principles for all registered providers of Higher Education.

It also references the guidelines of the:

- Nolan Principles of Public Governance
- Ofsted Inspection Framework (Guidance effective from September 2019)
- ESFA funding Guidance wherever applicable

Related Policies and Documents

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- WIC Policy on Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression
- WIC Policy on Academic Freedom
- WIC College Strategic Plan
- Quality Improvement Plan for the HE
- Quality Improvement Process (QIP) for the FE
- WIC Policy Statement on Risk and all associated Risk Management Documents

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Introduction

1. Waltham International College (The College or WIC) has adopted its articles of association: Companies (Model Articles) Regulations 2008. Under the terms of these articles of association, the Shareholders and Director of WIC agreed to hand the legal responsibilities for the College's governance to a governing body (the Board of Governors or BOG). Under this agreement, BOG is an independent and autonomous body with a fiduciary duty to the directors.
2. This document provides the governing arrangements at WIC under this agreement. It outlines, in Section 1, the structure, functions, principles and practices of the Board of Governors and in Section 2, those of staff, boards, panels and committees with deliberative responsibilities and leadership and management of the College. Section 3 outlines protocols and instruments for governance and supervision.
3. Additional details are given in:
 - Appendix 1 - Terms of reference of the Board of Governors
 - Appendix 2 - Job descriptions of key members of staff

Background

4. The College believes it has a role to play in the economic development of the local Borough of Barking and Dagenham, the surrounding areas, and within Greater London. The director believes that this local area is a high growth area, with skills development as one of its primary objectives. This growth mirrors the trends in several boroughs within Greater London.
5. Thus, WIC is currently in the high growth stage of its life cycle, in line with the growing trend in the local area and elements of Greater London. At this crucial stage of its growth, WIC is determined to ensure that it demonstrates effective governance in everything it does.
6. WIC has two provisions: the FE and the HE. These provisions are separately managed and respond to different regulatory and quality assurance requirements. However, they have a symbiotic relationship: applicants who do not meet the full entry requirements on the HE receive referrals to the FE provision for further training. The FE provision also provides additional support needs to HE students in functional skills where they lack. The HE offers natural progression pathways for FE students. The Board of Governors of the College, therefore, have oversight and control of both provisions.
7. The HE provision also positions itself first to teach Franchised degree programmes and, later, deliver under validation arrangements and eventually award its degrees. These ambitions are in line with current national trends in the HE Sector. The dreams also provide the necessary solidification of pathways that allow students to progress from Level 1 on the FE, leading up to Level 6 on the current HE provisions.
8. The HE and FE departments respectively is now required to produce and is accountable for a range of data to:
 - The regulatory bodies: Office for Students (OFS) and Department of Education (DfE)

- Funding Bodies: Student Loans Finance (SLC), Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Greater London Authority (GLA), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
- Quality and Standards Bodies: Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TESOF), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
- Statistical agencies: HESA, HEAPES and NSS
- Awarding organisations
- Local Area organisations

9. Standards and Quality on the HE provision are reviewed by QAA using the Quality and Standards Review (QSR) methodology. QSR is based on a new Quality Code introduced in 2019 and is designed for new and existing HE providers to meet the quality expectations as a condition for their registration with OFS. Under QSR, the QAA will evaluate Expectations for Standards and Expectations for Quality.

10. Under the Expectations for Standards and Quality, the QAA reviews that
- the academic standards of courses taught to meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications frameworks
 - the value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards
 - courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed
 - from admission through to completion, all students receive the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education

These reviews reference a set of core practices for each of the expectations.

11. The Department for Education (DfE) regulates the FE sector. Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is an executive agency of DfE and the primary funder, and its role is to set financial reporting, audit and assurance requirements, ensure compliance with funding agreements and intervene where there are concerns about corporation financial management and/or college educational quality. WIC also comes under the scope of other funders, such as Greater London Authority (GLA) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) who conduct performance management reviews on their respective contracts.

12. Ofsted inspects and reports on the quality of education and training in FE, including how well safeguarding and Prevent obligations are met. During an inspection, following areas receive overall judgements;

- Quality of Education (Intent, Implementation, Impact)
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management

13. In July 2019, WIC had a monitoring visit from Ofsted and we were found to be making 'Reasonable Progress'.

14. The Ofsted report can be viewed at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/33/1270871>

15. The FE provision submits Self-Evaluation Reports (SAR), Quality Improvement Process (QIP) and External reports. The FE Curriculum and Quality Panel summarises these reports after deliberations.

Section 1: The Governing Body

Basic Structure of the College

16. WIC's governance structure ensures that the two provisions remain separate and that each has a level of autonomy to set its policies and make its own decisions. On the HE provision, the Academic Board provides oversight of academic governance. The Curriculum and Quality Panel serves a similar purpose on the FE provision the respective Heads of Provision chair these bodies.

17. Through the Operations Management Committee (OMC), the Principal ensures the two provisions have and are making optimum use of resources and providing the resources' adequacy. OMC coordinates the functions of the two provisions, ensuring that they are working together towards a common goal.

18. The Academic Board, FE Curriculum and Quality Panel and OMC make up the leadership and management bodies of the College. Whenever it conducts its meetings, BOG will consider the business and operations of the whole organisation. BOG oversees the activities of Leadership and Management with regular reports outlining how they are implementing the College's strategy and following BOG's strategic direction and objectives. Each committee also reports on progress made with key actions and projects.

Membership of the Board of Governors

19. By design, the size, composition, diversity, skills mix, and terms of office of the Board of Governors of Waltham International College remain appropriate for the nature, scale, and complexity of the College. For current conditions, the Board of Governors will be composed of the minimum numbers given below:

20. There will be a minimum of five governors who are independent of the College. Independent member's terms of office are limited to a maximum of three terms of three years or two terms of four years.

21. Skills mix of independent members include

- At least one member possessing
 - knowledge and understanding of the needs of the local community or businesses
 - a background, experience in and thorough knowledge of government policy or has worked in management or quality assurance in UK HE
 - a background, experience in and thorough knowledge of government policy or has worked in management or quality assurance in UK FE
 - expertise in Finance and Accounts, Audit and Compliance or law

22. At least one representative from each of the colleges deliberative structures may sit on the Board of Governors. These are presented from the Operations Management Committee (OMC), HE Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel.

23. At least one student on the Board of Governors represents each provision or the appropriate subject area.

Summary of the Responsibilities of the Board of Governors

24. The Board of Governors is the ultimate authority of the College. It ratifies and approves policies and the college's strategy. However, individual members cannot make decisions or be held accountable for the decisions made in the name of the Board or on its behalf.

25. The Board of Governors has been assigned legal responsibilities for the governance of the College by the Director. The Board of Governors:

- Maintains oversight of the College to provide the best possible education and educational opportunities for all the students
- Sets the strategic direction for the College
- Takes corporate decisions about the regulatory requirements within the business environment

26. Under the Ofsted Inspection Framework, Governors:

- provide confident, strategic leadership and create strong accountability for, and oversight and assurance of, educational performance to ensure continuous and sustainable improvement
- understand their role and carry this out effectively, ensuring that the College has a clear vision and strategy and ensure effective management of resources
- ensure that the College fulfils its statutory duties, for example, under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for instance, about the 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of learners

27. The Board of Governors holds the college's management structure to account for the quality of education and training and value for money. The BOG therefore plays a strategic role in the running of the College. The part includes overseeing the strategic framework of the college, its aims and objectives, and approving policies and targets for achieving the goals and conducts progress reviews.

28. BOG acts as a "critical friend" to WIC by monitoring and evaluating what is happening in the college, including checking progress and approving plans. It holds to account all other committees and management. The Board supports the Principal and staff and maintains good relationships with them. The Board provides advice and support. The BOG is also accountable to key stakeholders, including students, for the College's performance.

29. BOG delegates authority to the Principal, management, and other Boards and committees to conduct the college's day-to-day running. It reviews and approves the constitution, membership, and terms of reference of all Boards and committees: the Academic Board, the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel and their subsidiary Boards, the Operations Management Committee and Panels.

30. The Board of Governors is responsible for observing the duties set out in the documents the College signs as a condition of receiving public funds. On the HE Provision, the Board of Governors is responsible for the final sign-off of any data reported on behalf of the college and the respective outward-facing reports required before sending the data off. On the FE Provision, the Board of Governors signs off any actions, data and information relating to the areas relevant to the Ofsted inspection. It will perform tests and challenge management to prove how well they show effective leadership and management,

strengthening the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development behaviour and welfare and outcomes for learners.

31. The Board of Governors oversees any collaborative arrangements-ensuring that the College maintains high ethical and professional standards within such relationships.

32. The Board of Governors enforces the College's principles of transparency, accountability, continuous improvement, and providing value for money to its students, funding agencies, and all other stakeholders.

33. It ensures that the leadership and management structure in place provides clarity in job roles and responsibilities and promotes communication, where each member of staff is assigned a specific position. It ensures that clear allocated of duties to eliminate duplication of tasks and thoroughly communicated to remove ambiguity. Incumbents agree and sign for the allocated roles to ensure clear communication and agreement of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

34. The Board of Governors receives reports from leadership and management and panels for scrutiny, discussion, and advice and the approval of strategic decisions and ratification of actions. The reports allow BOG to revise the Strategic Plan and strategic objectives.

Standing Panels

35. BOG comprises Independent Governors, Internal Representatives and Panels. BOG appoints Panels to act on its behalf to provide independent oversight of the Strategic Plan and strategic objectives of the College. Standing Panels meet regularly to evaluate activities of the College and to produce reports. These reports contain recommendations and action plans, which form part of the standing agenda items for the Board of Governors. Significant actions move to the Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) where necessary.

36. The three Standing Panels are Audit and Finance, Risk and Compliance and Public Information Panel each are chaired by an Independent Governor.

General Terms of Reference of Standing Panels

37. Each of the Standing Panels comprises at least three members with a Chair who is Independent and preferably, an expert in the field. The Board of Governors appointed chairs of standing Panels at their first meeting and this will be reviewed annually in the internal self review. Each Panel will have at least one student member. It may not be possible and therefore not necessary for the student member to be a Governor. Any student representative can serve on a panel.

38. Thus, panel membership will comprise a minimum of:

- One Independent Governor
- One College representative
- One student

39. The Audit and Finance Panel advises the Board of Governors on the college's financial matters.

40. The Risk and Compliance Panel is responsible for evaluating potential risk areas and appropriately advises the Board concerning risk.

41. The Public Information Panel conducts regular reviews of published information and identifies any issues concerning the information available to students and applicants.

Ad hoc Panels

42. From time to time when required, the Board of Governors appoints other panels on an ad hoc basis and task them to investigate specific issues and report back to the Board. Members from the Independent Governors will normally chair these. Ad hoc panels will typically be assigned to explore, discuss, and recommend specific issues in their areas and the terms of reference will be agreed on appointment. These panels can include, for example:

- HR issues: Including the appointment of key staff and advice on Pay rates for the senior team and dividends for shareholders
- Business development and strategic partnerships
- Curriculum development

Governance Protocols for all Panels

43. The Chair of each panel reports formally to the Board of Governors regarding the panel's proceedings at each meeting of the Board of Governors and on how it has discharged its responsibilities. The report should contain recommendations the Panel wishes to make to the Board on any area within its remit and where action or improvement is needed. The Chair of each Panel responds to any questions from other Board members on the Panel activities.

44. Each Panel advises the Board of Governors on new developments in the market and regulatory and quality assurance.

Frequency of meetings

45. Standing Panels are scheduled to meet three times per academic year, at least termly, following the published calendar of Board of Governors meetings.

Outputs

- Action plans
- Recommendations
- Reports
- Meeting minutes

Basis of the design of the Governance Structure

46. Although the following guidance allows the College to meet the OFS expectations on Governance, they apply to governance across both the HE and FE provisions

Compliance with Public Interest Governance Principles

47. Underlying the governance structure's actual construction is the public interest governance principles specified by the Office for Students. These, and how the design will fulfil them, are discussed in the following paragraphs. Any other Principles required to maintain conditions of registration with funding bodies on the FE provision will also be applicable.

Academic governance

48. The OFS Guidance Principle on Academic Governance (Principal IV) states that: *“The governing body receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective through explicit protocols with the senate/academic board (or equivalent).”*

49. The Board of Governors has delegated responsibilities for the Academic Governance to the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel for the HE and FE provisions, respectively. These maintain oversight of Academic Standards and Quality as discussed in Section 2. The protocols in place to assure effective governance include regular meetings and reports to the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors receives information from the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel, which heads of Provision present. It scrutinises the reports and questions any aspect of Academic Governance. The Board of Governors may request the minutes of the Academic Board and the FE at any time and can appoint panels for further clarification on Academic Governance.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech

50. The College is committed to upholding academic freedom and Freedom of speech for its staff as outlined in the two Public Interest Governance Principles below:

51. *“I. Academic freedom: Academic staff at an English higher education provider have freedom within the law: o to question and test received wisdom; and o to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider”* and

52. *“VII. Freedom of speech: The governing body takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured within the provider”.*

53. The policy on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom contains this principle to promote the independence of unhindered academic thought and Academic Research. Therefore, academic governance is separate from and independent of overall business management, with the Academic Board and the FE assuming apparent oversight.

54. The Board of Governors has a policy statement on Freedom of Speech which allows staff and students to express their views freely. Staff do not have to fear being victimised or losing their privileges for exercising this freedom. However, the Board is aware that it should

allow staff and students to exercise this right within the law. They have therefore identified and highlighted within the policy where it overlaps with the Prevent Duty.

Accountability

55. OFS Guidance Principle on Accountability (Principle II) states:
“The provider operates openly, honestly, accountably and with integrity and demonstrates the values appropriate to be recognised as an English higher education provider”

To ensure transparency, accountability, continuous improvement, and value for money, WIC has set up a Governance Structure comprising Standing Panels and committees with specific agreed terms of reference. This structure facilitate openness accountability and integrity with standing agenda items that facilitate accountability.

56. Governors are collectively responsible for observing the duties set out in the College documents as a condition of receiving public funds. The Board of Governors is responsible for the final sign-off of any data on behalf of the college and the respective outward-facing reports required before sending the data off. However, when deadlines fall outside possible board meetings and if Independent members of the Board of Governors are not available, the Operations Management Committee signs off any such data. It then presents a report to the Board of Governors to ratify such actions at the next Board meeting.

57. The Board of Governors requires a student at every committee, board, and panel. Students practice the same rights to vote and make decisions as to any other member. Wherever possible, and in some instances when it becomes necessary, Independent members are invited to sit on College Boards and committees, with a similar mandate as for the student representatives.

58. The structure encourages the College to operate openly, honestly, accountably and with integrity and to demonstrate the values appropriate for an English higher education provider at all levels. The Board of Governors embeds accountability within all the functions of the different levels of management.

Fit and proper

59. *“Members of the governing body, those with senior management responsibilities, and individuals exercising control or significant influence over the provider, are fit and proper persons.”*

60. Governors further observe the Nolan Principles of Public Governance. The director declares any conflict of interest or partiality in any of their functions within the College. Conflict of interest also refers to instances where Governors have or are likely to have a personal or financial interest in any other institution that is likely to affect their role within the College are required to declare such interest. The Risk and Compliance Panel also investigates, collects, and reports information regarding any conflicts of interest.

Student Engagement

61. The Board of Governors promotes and has student engagement as a critical aspect of its construction. Students have opportunities to engage with the College's governance through their representation at every committee, board, and panel of the College.

62. The only exclusions to the requirement for the representation of students on committees, boards and panels are the Assessment and Awards Boards, the Operations Management Committee and Student Management Committee. Meetings of these often deliberate on personal issues concerning other students or members of staff.

63. The Student body elects members of committees and has the freedom to question, challenge, and positively contribute to its effectiveness. The College considers students as partners in decision-making processes and establishes an environment that provides them with the best learning experience. Involving students on all committees and boards ensures that each committee is accountable to the students.

64. Student opinion is collected at every meeting as well as at every stage of their learning process. Results of such views are central to all decision-making processes. Students also engage in open discussions with senior staff at the monthly student representative meetings to express their opinions and perspectives on the College's management and how Academic Quality and Standards are maintained. During all its sessions, the Board of Governors reflects on the results of all consultations with students.

Risk management:

65. The OFS Principles of Public Governance require that:

“The provider operates comprehensive corporate risk management and control arrangements (including for academic risk) to ensure the sustainability of the provider’s operations, and its ability to continue to comply with all of its conditions of registration.”

66. The Risk and Compliance Panel ensures the identification, analysis, and contingency arrangements to mitigate against the impact of risks. The Governors maintain a risk policy that outlines the College’s approaches to risk and identifies all potential risk areas.

Value for money

67. The Office for Students requires that:

“The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to provide transparency about value for money for all students and (where a provider has access to the student support system or to grant funding) for taxpayers.”

68. The principles and arrangements to maintain value for money apply across both the HE and FE provisions.

69. The Policy Statement on Value for Money references the National Audit Office, which highlights the need for:

- a. efficiency,
- b. economy,

- c. effectiveness
- d. and prudence

in the administration of public resources, to secure value for public money about the public grant funding received and all funding secured from the taxpayer on behalf of the students.

70. The Board of Governors has made arrangements for the Audit and Finance Panel to report how and whether the College maintains value for money. The Board has developed a Policy statement on value for money, with guidelines on how it will be measured and published for students and taxpayers

71. The Board has also made arrangements such as scrutiny and detailed analysis of budgets, variances, and purchases. The Audit and Finance Panel publishes information regarding expenditure, including staff pay and the cost of supporting students. The Panel should make extensive use of indicators to benchmark the College's spending to other similar providers. The Panel should also investigate other measures of ensuring value for money and make proposals to the Board of Governors.

Regularity, propriety, and value for money

72. *“The governing body ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to ensure public funds are managed appropriately, in line with the conditions of grant and the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, and to protect the interests of taxpayers and other stakeholders. This also applies to any funds passed to another entity for the provision of facilities or learning and teaching, or for research to be undertaken.”*

73. Should the College secure access to grants, its Policy Statement on Value for Money allows it to comply with the following principles:

Regularity:

74. The College will use grant funding only for its intended purposes. Through Risk and Compliance, the College complies with the relevant legislation and has any terms and conditions attached to any funding received. It reports to the Board of Governors all issues that relate to funding received.

Propriety:

75. The Board of Governors is required to show transparency. Whilst the Risk and compliance Panel monitors and checks on risk, the audit and Finance Panel will publish all information about expenditure. Students and Independent members also play an active role on each of these panels where they have a right to question, challenge and scrutinise all cost relating to public funds

Section 2: College Management Structures

76. The Board of Governors informs vital decisions of the Academic Board and the FE and Operational Management Committee and, where appropriate, commissions panels to investigate issues and recommend actions to the board. It ensures transparency and has

Independent experts who scrutinise, challenge and take management to account for their decisions and appropriately advise management.

77. The HE Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel oversee the business of each provision. The Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel have oversight of Academic Governance. Therefore, they are responsible for setting and maintaining Academic and Quality Standards and ensuring curriculum design appropriate for the enhancement of the student experience.

78. Each provision's structure should primarily facilitate the College's high growth without compromising on Academic Standards and Quality; for example, future growth will depend on introducing new programmes on both provisions.

79. Therefore, the Board of Governors receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective through explicit protocols with the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel.

80. Appendix 1 covers the protocols under the terms of reference of the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel. These meet quarterly or as and when required. The output of their meetings are minutes containing action plans and recommendations for policy changes and other issues such as resourcing of teaching and learning.

81. Reporting to HE Academic Board is the Academic Management Committee, which oversees the activities of the Programme Boards and attends to student issues regularly. The Registrar chairs the Academic Management Committee. Appendix 1 contains the Terms of reference of the Academic Management Team and Programme Boards.

82. As the College is on a high growth strategy, the Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel will add more Programme Boards and Assessment Boards as and when required. The organisational structure allows for the addition of new programmes without disturbing their basic design or affecting quality. It also allows the addition of provisions where necessary

83. The Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel maintain oversight of the programmes, set policies, and take the ultimate responsibility to maintain academic standards and quality. The Head of HE and Assistant Principal, Quality, for the HE and FE, respectively, have oversight of academic standards. These Boards are also responsible for the overall performance of the provisions. They monitor and manage student performance, retention and progression for each provision. Therefore, they are responsible for the Assessment Boards. Through Assessment Boards oversee the award of credit, the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel approve the ordering of certificates.

84. The Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel are responsible for setting the college's enhancement strategy and the policies and ensuring its successful implementation.

85. On the HE, the Academic Team is responsible for the operational running of the provisions. It is headed by the Head of HE, with the additional role of overseeing the distribution of resources, for example, setting and managing the effectiveness of timetables, allocating staff, and carefully planning and implementing student support.

86. Also, on the HE, Programme Leaders chair their Programme Boards. Programme Boards ensure programmes are running smoothly, ensure teachers plan teaching resources and assessment instruments effectively and that these are appropriately applied.

87. Students attend Student Representative (SR) meetings, which they help to organise, and student representatives chair and take minutes. Having students sitting at the College's committee meetings affords them not just the opportunity to question management decisions. The College considers students as partners in decision-making. Students play an active and decisive role in quality assurance processes. Having students on all committees allows them to specify what they expect from the college, suggest actions for improvements in quality and implementation, and follow up regarding promised activities. Having students attend the SR meetings allows them to sit with staff in a free and relaxed environment to discuss issues on a plan and decide for themselves.

88. The Operational Management Committee, chaired by the Principal, sets and oversees the overall strategy of the College, and ensures that both provisions have all the resources they require and that their interdependent relationship is working smoothly. It brings together all critical functions of the College, including Human Resource Management, Marketing, Accounting and Finance, IT and student information, and the FE and HE provisions.

89. The College also maintains other operational boards, panels, and committees. These can also advise the board and are as follows:

- Assessment Boards, which decide on the maintenance of standards and quality in assessments. Assessment Boards are part of the Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel
- Student Management Committee oversees the student support arrangements and how these impact attendance, retention, and achievement. This committee uses risk measures to forecast attendance, retention and achievement rates using a traffic light system
- Student recruitment and admissions panel convenes whenever an admissions cycle is complete to establish lessons learnt and advise the Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel and recommend changes to information strategy to the Public Information Panel
- Student induction panel. This Panel also reports to the Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel and advises the Public Information Panel on the use and effectiveness of information given to students on induction
- FE and HE are each responsible produce reports to OFS and Funding Bodies. They report to the Board of Governors through the Standing Panels and the Academic Board, the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel and OMC as appropriate.

Section 3: Governance and Management Elements

Deliberative Bodies and their Protocols

90. Boards, Committees and Panels are the deliberative elements of the College's Governance and management. These use policies, protocols and terms of reference and generate different policies, actions, and recommendations (instruments) to higher-level Boards to inform their deliberations.

91. Boards, Committees and Panels have reporting arrangements that reflect the level of the chair in the organisation. Committees should maintain a fixed agenda, with some key agenda items compulsory for each committee, including the Prevent Duty (except Assessment Boards), Health and Safety, Enhancement and Action Planning.

92. Each of these elements works to specific TOR (shown in Appendix 1), dictating the membership, frequency of its meetings and the nature of its business. TOR of each committee are structured to ensure that extensive deliberations concerning the implementation of policies, availability of resources, and operations effectiveness occur at the lower levels. The higher committees approve decisions, recommendations, action plans and completed actions of the more subordinate committees and develop, amend, or recommend changes or introduce policies where necessary.

93. No staff member can chair two committees, except the Head of HE, who chairs both the Academic Board and Assessment Board. Senior members of staff who chair higher committees cannot be members of the lower committees. However, they can attend meetings of such more subordinate committees as observers or where they are required to provide some information to the committee. They can only participate in deliberations of the committees as advisors but cannot take decisions. They cannot participate in panels that they have appointed, except on invitation to give evidence or information, and should not get involved in the deliberations of the panels.

Clerical Roles

94. Each board, committee and panel will be served by an internal staff member for all clerical duties. All minutes of all such bodies shall be kept centrally on the College Virtual Learning Environment in a minute's folder. Staff with clerical responsibilities will have access to the sub-folders containing the minutes of the meetings that they serve. These are as follows:

Deliberative Board	Clerical Responsibility
Board of Governors	External
Academic Board and FE Curriculum and Quality Panel	Admin
Operations Management Committee	Secretary
All Board Panels except Ad Hoc Panels	Admin
Ad Hoc Panels	Appointed by the Board Chair as necessary
Academic Management Committee	Admin
Programme Boards	Member of Academic Staff (alternating)
Assessment Boards	Member of Academic Staff (alternating)
Staff-Student Liaison Meetings	Student Representatives

95. All schedules of meetings will be released in July each year for the rest of the year. The Student Support Manager is responsible for preparing the plans of meetings, which will be approved and published by the Public Information Panel.

Governance Instruments

96. Policies and action plans are vital instruments of the College's governance. As a rule, these action plans are reviewed annually or as necessary, based on recommendations of the committees.

97. Annual reviews are another critical governance instrument. These usually occur at the end of the academic year in July and are approved in early September to mid-October each year. Each annual review results in an action plan, which lays out the plans for the following year.

98. During the Annual Monitoring Review, all Academic action plans are drawn together into the 'Overarching Action Plan' overseen and approved by the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel. Similarly, operational actions drawn into an 'Overarching Action Plan' overseen and approved by the Operations Management Committee (OMC). Committees should always generate and monitor Action Plans.

99. The College has invested in an IT system that serves as an instrument of communication to ensure the speedy dissemination of policies and communication decisions. Minutes of meetings are posted onto the College Virtual Learning Environment and are accessible to staff and students, as necessary.

Key Policies

Academic Governance

100. The Office for Students (OFS) Public Interest Guidance Principle on Academic freedom requires that Academic staff at the College should have freedom within the law to:

- question and test received wisdom
- put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions

101. Members of Academic Staff should exercise these freedoms without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have.

Responsibilities

Staff and Students

102. Staff and students at WIC have freedom within the law to question and test established ideas or received wisdom and develop and advance new and innovative ideas and proposals regarding whether or not such ideas and suggestions may be controversial or unpopular.

103. Staff and students exercise this without forgetting that the College has a diverse population and with due regards to its welcoming and inclusive attitude towards such diversity. Staff and students should be responsible to each other and society to:

- respect and honour such diversity

- accommodate different perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and culture that such diversity brings
- respect the rights of other individuals to hold different beliefs and views

Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel

104. Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel will exercise its role in governance, and under the Public Interest Guidance Principles, to ensure that academic staff:

- promote a culture of research and questioning
- maintain rigour and make use of evidence and academic arguments to express their views
- recognise the gaps and weaknesses in their arguments
- minimise the risks of any harm for other members of the College, in promoting their views

105. As part of their regular reports to the Board of Governors, the Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel will report on Academic Freedom, progress made in research, and any new and innovative ideas advanced by academic teams within the College. The Academic Board and the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel will also report recent developments in academia and integrate new developments into the College.

The Governing Body

106. The Board of Governors will ensure that policies in place promote Academic Freedom and encourage research and the development and expression of new and innovative ideas and opinions. The Board will exercise its oversight to ensure that any new arguments advanced within the law, regardless of how controversial, should not result in the victimisation of staff or in staff losing their privileges within the College.

The Prevent Duty

107. The Board of Governors has the oversight of the College's Prevent Duty. Therefore, the board should seek to advance the Prevent Duty without restricting academic freedom given to staff and students. Instead, the Board of Governors should encourage research and healthy debate around controversial issues such as religion, politics, or current affairs.

108. The Board of Governors encourages staff to show behaviours that exemplify and promote the 'fundamental British values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those of different views and persuasions.

External Speakers

109. WIC recognises that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right and that these are protected by law. The College tolerates a wide range of political and academic views, regardless of whether they are unpopular, controversial, or provocative. Therefore the College does not deny the use of its premises to any individual, group or members of groups on the grounds of their beliefs or on the grounds of the policies or objectives of groups they represent but will ensure that external speakers access the college community safely.

110. BOG, therefore, ensures that the College has in place
- Requirements to ensure that members, students, visitors of the College and for Visiting Speakers exercise freedom of speech
 - Procedures to maintain a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate in a supportive, inclusive, and safe space for students, with clearly defined and effective procedures for upholding the law.
 - Communication to all members, volunteers, and staff is their mutual responsibility to comply with all relevant policies. Both WIC and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
 - The requirement to obtain permission to hold an Event on College Premises or away from the College, where the event is considered as being controversial
 - Requirement that if an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to go against the College's conditions for a safe event, a reasonable, informed, and lawful outcome is achieved.
 - Requirements for the scrutiny of external agencies, individuals, or speakers to ensure that they do not breach the limits of freedom of speech.
 - A protocol and procedure for admittance of external visitors to the college and that all staff understands this protocol, governing body members, visitors, and students
 - Clear instructions for organising events with external contribution and outline roles and responsibilities for vetting external speakers

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference of Boards, Committees and Panels

Board of Governors

Membership

The Board of Governors will be composed of minimum numbers provided before to ensure that its size, composition, diversity, skills mix, and terms of office remains appropriate for the nature, scale and complexity of the College,

The Board of Governors may choose to appoint additional Associate Members as required for their specific expertise, who do not hold any voting rights at Board of Governors or panel meetings. Each of the Independent Governors serves for a maximum of three terms of three years.

Individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the Board of Governors, except where the whole Board of Governors has delegated a specific function to that individual. The Board of Governors is legally liable for all actions taken in its name by individuals or panels to which it has delegated functions. Therefore, the Board of Governors ensures that it delegates specific responsibilities and appoints a competent person to record its decisions keeps minutes of all meetings.

Chair

The Chair of the Board of Governors shall be appointed by nomination at the end of the summer term before the start of the next academic year or the next full meeting following the resignation of a Chair

Frequency of meeting

Each quarter (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

The quorum shall be 50% of the total membership rounded up to a whole number, excluding vacancies.

Duties (Terms of Reference)

It is the duty of the Board of Governors to:

- Agree on strategic matters, including procedures where the Board of Governors has discretion.
- Work with the Principal to provide oversight and strategic direction to the College
- Oversee the activities of the College's Boards and Committees
- Form panels where necessary and decide the delegation of some of its functions

- Review and approve College Boards and Committees' Terms of reference
- Receive reports from Boards, committees and panels and individuals to whom a decision has been delegated and consider whether any further action by the Board of Governors is necessary.
- Review the delegation arrangements annually.
- Keep the Health and Safety Policy and its practice under review and make revisions where appropriate.
- Maintain oversight of the College's Prevent Duty
- Ensure all statutory policies are in place, including those related to Safeguarding, Prevent and GDPR and ensure that a review of said policies is conducted annually by the delegated Board as agreed.
- Review procedures for appointing and suspending staff, taking account of legal requirements.
- Assess the industrial relevance and suitability of the curriculum of the Courses delivered at the College
- Ratify new (or changes to existing) courses and degree programs
- Guide how WIC can catalyse, encourage, and foster a higher level of industry involvement in its programmes
- Identify and consider any recent or longer-term developments and concerns of the industry which are likely to have a significant impact on the College's activities
- Ratify potential educational collaborations and opportunities
- Evaluate and agree on targets for achievement.
- Approve the first formal budget plan of the financial year and agree on a budget strategy. Receive reports on the budget and decide on actions as required.
- Ensure the use of any Grants received according to the regulations under which it was obtained and for the prescribed purposes.
- Receive proposals for enhancement/expansion and adopt the College Enhancement Strategy.
- Be accountable to the College's partners and regulating organisations.

Governance Protocols

Board of Governors (BOG) Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence

DELIBERATIONS

2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous Board meeting
3. Progress on Actions of the prior meeting
4. Chair's report
5. Reports from Committees, Boards and Panels on General Business
 - Report of the operations management committee (OMC)
 - Report of the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel
 - Report of the HE Academic Board Report on the Risk and Compliance Panel
 - Risk
 - Compliance
 - Prevent Strategy
 - Report of the Public Information Panel
 - Report of the Audit and Finance Panel
 - Report on Enhancement and Value for money
 - Report of the Student Representative to the Board of Governors
6. Approvals
7. Any other Business
8. Actions Planning

Academic Governance – HE Academic Board

Membership

- Head of Provision
- Academic Manager
- Registrar
- Programme Leaders
- External Adviser to the Academic Board
- Student Representative

Chair

Head of Provision

Frequency of meeting

Each trimester (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

50%

Reporting Lines

Highest Academic Authority sends minutes to Board of Governors for approval and ratification (Governance) and (for information) to the Operational Management Committee

Duties (Terms of Reference)

The Academic Board

- is the highest academic authority for the provision, adhering to the *UK Quality Code* and other educational, regulatory requirements
- oversees academic standards and the quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities
- approves and regularly revises all academic policies and procedures of the college, and receives reports /approves the work carried out by its subcommittees
- ensures the effective implementation of the strategies, policies, and practices of the provision concerning the requirements of the college's awarding organizations
- liaises with senior management and the governance of the college to ensure that academic operations are correctly resourced
- oversees academic performance about internal targets and external benchmarks
- leads the assessment board, responsible for assessments, including assessment setting, marking, moderation, feedback to students, the security and integrity of marks, the recognition of prior learning, academic appeals, academic misconduct matters, and communications with external examiners and assessors
- oversees the briefing and training of staff in academic matters
- monitors and analyses outcomes of Academic Management Review (AMR), External Examiner (EE), QAA review and monitoring visits
- scrutinises and approves reports arising from the academic and self-assessment process and monitors the progress made in implementing Quality improvement processes
- supports new programmes, any programme discontinuation and oversees the fair and efficient teaching out of any discontinued programmes
- review feedback from students on the quality of their experience
- continuously evaluate and implement opportunities for enhancement
- monitors annually student performance and the academic performance of the college, including the pattern of admissions complaints
- monitors and reviews the number, level and type and frequency of student complaints and academic appeals that are made over each academic year during the colleges Annual Monitoring Review
- oversees the operation of the Assessment Board and Programme Boards
- approves consideration of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) if any
- assesses academic appeals, complaint, and academic misconduct
- considers requests for all extenuating circumstances such as additional support, extensions, maternity, and deferrals
- oversees educational information published by the college

Academic Governance Protocols

HE Academic Board Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the Previous Academic Board meeting
3. Updates from meetings of Boards and Committees
 - Last Board of Governors' meeting
 - Operations Management Committee meetings
 - Academic Management Committee meetings
 - Student Management Committee meetings
 - Student-Staff Liaison meetings
 - Assessment Board meetings
 - Awards Board Meetings
4. Review of Comments of the External Advisor to the Academic Board: Quality Improvement Plan and involvement of externals where applicable
5. Review of Enhancement Activities
6. Review of Academic Standards and alignment with FHEQ, the UK Quality Code and other external reference points, including requirements and expectations of awarding bodies/organisations
7. Review of Student satisfaction and Feedback data
8. Review of the activities of the Employability Committee
9. Issues about OfS conditions of Registration (initial/ongoing)
10. Consideration of External Examiner visits\Reports
11. Review of the effectiveness of Academic Governance arrangements including Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech
12. Review of Research and Development activities
13. Review of Staff development activities
14. Student Representative Report
15. Appeals/Complaints
16. Prevent and Safeguarding
17. Any other Business
18. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the Academic Boards to the Board of Governors

1. Student Management
 - a. Attendance Trends
 - b. Retention
 - c. Achievement
 - d. Continuation
2. Teaching and Learning
 - a. Resources
 - b. Staff issues: Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression
 - c. Research and Development: Academic Freedom
 - d. Staff Development
3. Student Support
4. Quality Improvement Plan and Report and Comments from the External Advisor to the Academic Board

5. Academic Resources
6. Employability
7. Student Engagement
8. Student Complaints and Appeals
9. Report on Quality and Standards
10. Issues about OfS conditions of Registration (initial/ongoing)
11. Prevent/Safeguarding
12. Action Planning

Terms of Reference of newly proposed Standing Panel:

FE Curriculum and Quality Panel

Membership

Panel membership will comprise a minimum of:

- One Governor expert in the field (Independent or internal)
- One other Governor (internal or Independent)
- One FE Quality Nominee
- One Admin Team member
- One Tutor/IQA

Chair

Governor expert

Frequency of meeting

Each trimester before the Board of Governors meeting (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

100% of the minimum panel membership

Reporting Lines

Reports directly to Board of Governors

Duties (Terms of Reference)

The FE Curriculum and Quality Panel will ensure the

- Reference and Application of the Ofsted's Education Inspection framework within all WIC processes
- Oversight of the College's quality processes for the Further Education provision
- Monitoring of PICS Data, including, Achievement Rates and trends, Progression rates, Destination Data, Learners age and gender data, learners feedback data, staff feedback data and employer feedback data.
- Effective management and monitoring of FE Annual Targets
- Effective leadership and compliance with Prevent Duty and Safeguarding
- Approval of relevant FE policies and procedures

- Investigation of any matters of concern of a regulatory nature, including the College's ability to maintain the conditions of FE contract funders, Awarding Organisations and Ofsted and monitoring and reporting to the Board of Governors, any breaches or procedures and propose remedial action
- Monitoring of the College's Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan
- FE New Programme Approvals and making changes to existing programme offers.

Protocols of the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
3. Discussion of Quality of Education:
 - Reference and application of the Ofsted's Education Inspection framework in teaching and assessments
 - Discussion of Intent – Current / Future Curriculum Offer
 - Discussion of Implementation – Resources for learners
 - Discussion of Impact – Progression and Destination Data, Achievement and Retention Rates
4. Quality of Behaviour and attitudes
 - Discussion of learner feedback
 - Review of Attendance Data
 - Discussion on any issues raised relating to bullying, discrimination.
5. Quality of Personal Development
 - Discussion on learner support mechanisms including Advice and Guidance
 - Discussion on learner progression tracking
 - Discussion on formative and summative feedback to learners
6. Quality of Leadership and Management
 - Self- Assessment report
 - QIP Actions
 - KPIs- FE Targets Monitoring
 - Monitoring of Cross-cutting themes
7. External reports and Actions
8. New Programme and Policies Approvals
9. Staff Development- Teachers OTLR, CPD Plans
10. Safeguarding and Prevent
11. Discussion of issues to refer to the OMC
12. Any other business
13. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel to the Board of Governors

Learner Management

- e. Attendance Trends
- f. Retention rates
- g. Overall and Timely Achievement rates
- h. Outcomes/Destinations
- i. Ethnicity Targets and WIC Ethnicity Data
- j. ESFA Targets

Teaching and Learning

- e. Current Curriculum Offer
- f. Resources
- g. Staff Development

ILR Data Return Snapshot (percentages)

Learner Management and Support

Quality Improvement Plan/Annual targets Actions Update

Employability

Learner Engagement

Learner Complaints and Appeals

Report on Quality and Standards- Self-Assessment report data

Prevent/Safeguarding

Future Curriculum offer

Action Planning

Operations Management Committee

Membership

- Principal (Chair)
- Heads of Provision
- Assistant Principal
- Accounts Manager
- Human Resources Manager
- Representative of the Data Team

Chair

Principal

Frequency of meeting

Every two weeks

Quorum

50%

Reporting Lines

Highest Operational authority (minutes sent to Board of Governors)

Duties (Terms of Reference)

The Operational Management Committee

- monitors the marketing and student recruitment strategy
- monitors progress on the College Strategic Plan
- considers funding requests for resources/ CPD
- receives reports from the Academic Board to make informed resourcing decisions
- reviews and approves Operational policies
- makes critical decisions about the day-to-day running of the college
- discusses College finances and human resources related matters
- signs off data returns
- responsibility for the Prevent Duty and Safeguarding for the College

OMC Protocols

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy Check on the previous OMC minutes
3. Updates from:
 - a. Board of Governors meeting
 - i. Approvals
 - ii. Actions for Panels
 - iii. Actions for other Boards and Committees
 - b. Student Management Committee
 - c. Academic Board
 - d. Other Committees and Boards where relevant
4. Progress on External Reviews, Inspections, and other Processes
5. Marketing and Recruitment
6. Implementation of the College Strategic Plans
7. Human Resources
8. Funding Requests
9. Data Returns/Submissions
10. Prevent Duty and Safeguarding
11. Health and Safety
12. Policies
 - a. Reviewed
 - b. to be referred to BOG for Approval
13. Any Other Business
14. Action Panning

Content of the Report of the Operations Management Committee to the Board of Governors

1. Comment on Progress with implementation of strategic plans and Business Development

- College Strategic Plan
 - HE Strategic Plan
 - Collaborative arrangements
 - Strategic Market Development
 - Review of registration and ongoing conditions of registration with OFS, and outcomes of Quality Assurance Reviews and Inspections
 - Facilities and Resources
 - FE Strategic Plan
 - Contracts
 - OFSTED Reviews
 - Business Development
2. Progress on other External Reviews, Inspections, and other Processes
 3. Prevent/Safeguarding
 4. Strategic Requests for Approval by the Board of Governors
 5. Any other business
 6. Action Planning

Terms of Reference of Standing Panels:

Audit and Finance Panel

Membership

Panel membership will have a minimum of:

- One Independent Governor
- One College Representative
- One student

Chair

Governor expert

Frequency of meeting

Each trimester before the Board of Governors meeting (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

100% of the minimum panel membership

Reporting Lines

Reports directly to Board of Governors

Duties (Terms of Reference)

- Recommends the appointment of the external auditor and the appropriate fee and ensures that the annual audit is conducted in an efficient, cost-effective, and objective way
- Reviews and recommends to the board, approval of the annual financial statements, including the selection of appropriate accounting policies and practices

- Reviews budgets before the Board considers them, seeking explanations for any significant variances
- Reports on critical aspects of the budgets and makes recommendations as necessary
- The Panel evaluates the college's financial performance and reports to the Board any areas of concern. This paves the way for the Panel and Board members to question management regarding financial performance.
- The Audit and Finance Panel maintains oversight for the College's funding arrangements and ensures that all financial conditions related to funding are satisfactory and that value for money is secured
- It is the Audit and Finance Panel that will ensure that the College has adequate and effective arrangements in place to provide transparency about value for money for all students

Protocols of the Audit and Finance Panel

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
3. Review Actions of the prior meeting
4. Management Accounting Report
5. Review of financial reports
6. Review of Budgets
7. Review of the College's approaches to Value for Money
 - Review of significant expenses
 - Review of capital budgets
 - Annual Estimates of Budgets for Value for Money
 - Benchmarking of KPI's for Value for Money
8. Review financial risk
9. Appointment of Auditors (when required)
10. Any Other Business
11. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the Audit and Finance Panel to the Board of Governors

1. Appointments
 - Accountants (when required)
 - of Auditors (when needed)
2. Financial Reports and budgets
 - Management Accounting Report
 - Review of financial reports
 - Review of Budgets
 - Review of the College's approaches to Value for Money
 - Review of significant expenses
 - Review of capital budgets
 - Annual Estimates of Budgets for Value for Money
 - Benchmarking of KPI's for Value for Money
3. Review financial risk
4. Capital Requests for Approval by the Board of Governors
5. Any other business
6. Action Plans

Risk and Compliance Panel

Membership

Panel membership will have a minimum of:

- One Independent Governor
- One College Representative
- One student

Chair

Governor expert

Frequency of meeting

Each trimester before the Board of Governors meeting (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

100% of the minimum panel membership

Reporting Lines

Reports directly to Board of Governors

Duties (Terms of Reference)

The Risk and Compliance Panel will ensure the

- Oversight of the College's Prevent Duty and Safeguarding: it will collect information from Management and interpret it professionally and appropriately to advising the Board of Governor on the appropriate courses of action
- Effective management and compliance with health and safety legislation
- effective management of compliance and operational and reputational risk of the College
- rigorous implementation of the Board-approved framework for risk and compliance management
- performance of the terms of the College's Policy Statement on Risk Management
- approval of relevant policies and procedures
- investigation of any matters of concern of a regulatory nature, including the College's ability to maintain the conditions of registration with the Office for Students
- monitoring of the College's risk profile
- maintenance and review of a consolidated register of material risks in all areas of the College
- review of operational and reputational risk exposures and ensure appropriate action is taken where necessary
- monitoring and reporting to the Board of Governors any material breaches of risk limits or procedures and propose remedial action
- review of risk and compliance training programmes to ensure strengthening of risk and compliance awareness within the College
- review of the risk rating methodology for new and existing risks

- receipt of the input of the Audit and finance panel on finance risk to review its impact on overall risk
- the Risk and Compliance Panel also investigates, collects, and reports information regarding any conflicts of interest

Protocols of the Risk and Compliance Panel

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
3. Safeguarding and Prevent Duty
4. Review of Risk Management Mechanisms and risk rating methodologies
5. Review of Risk Reports
 - Governance
 - Strategic risk
 - Financial Risk
 - Business Continuity
 - Health and Safety
 - Student Protection
 - Prevent/ Safeguarding
 - Economic Risk
 - Evaluation of overall risk
6. Staff Development and Training
7. Compliance Issues
 - Conditions of Registration with the OFS
 - Policies
 - Conflicts of Interest
8. Any other business
9. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the Risk and Compliance Panel to the Board of Governors

1. Safeguarding and Prevent Duty
2. Risk Report summaries
 - Overall risk and main contributors to any changes
3. Summary of Compliance including compliance with Conditions of Registration with OFS
4. Review of Ethics and Practices including Ethnicity and Diversity Data and Admission Procedures
5. Policies reviewed and approved for signing-off by the Board of Governors
6. Conflict of Interest Report
7. Staff Development
8. Action Planning

Public Information Panel

Membership

Panel membership will comprise of a minimum of:

- One Independent Governor
- One College Representative
- One student

Chair

Governor expert

Frequency of meeting

Each trimester before the Board of Governors meeting (additional meetings may be convened if required)

Quorum

100% of the minimum panel membership

Reporting Lines

Reports directly to Board of Governors

Duties (Terms of Reference)

The Public Information panel

- evaluates the quality of the information, modes of communication and frequency and timeliness of the data, both internal and outward-facing
- tests that prospective students make informed choices on deciding whether to study with the college or not and on the choice of course of study
- ensures that the application and admission procedures are clear and informative
- Conducts a full annual information audit of the College
- advises the Board of Governors on areas of good practice regarding information and recommend improvements
- oversees conformity of the College's statement to the GDPR and Data Protection regulations
- monitors information published by the College
- approves information to be published
- Review both Higher Education and Further Education data returns.
- Overview of the initiatives and procedures implemented in the college regarding Prevent duty and Safeguarding.
- Overview of secure exchange of information, internal and external overall Information security

Protocols of the Public Information Panel

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
3. Issues about information for students
 - Quality of information for students
 - Test student choices
4. Information Audit
 - Outcomes
 - Essential Actions
 - Areas for Improvement
 - Good Practice
5. Review of all information approved for publication by the College
6. Report on issues of GDPR and Data Protection legislation
7. Data Returns signed-off
8. Safeguarding and Prevent
9. Information Security
10. Any other business
11. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the Public Information Panel to the Board of Governors

1. Quality of information for students
2. Information Audit
3. Approved information
4. Review of Information Security and Compliance with GDPR and Data Protection legislation
5. Safeguarding and Prevent issues
6. Action Plans

Terms of Reference of the Academic Management Committee

The Academic Management Committee (AMC) is responsible for managing the College's academic affairs. The AMC acts as the executive of the Academic Board.

Membership

- Academic Manager
- Registrar
- Programme Leaders
- Student Representatives
- Registrar
- Academic Support Manager

- Admissions Manager

Chair

Academic Manager

From time to time, and at the discretion of the Academic Manager, a Student Representative may be requested to chair a meeting or a panel as part of their training and development

Frequency of meeting

Meetings will be held a minimum of once a month (except August, where Quorum may be hard to achieve due to annual holidays). If required, sub-committee/panel meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to the appointed panel members

Quorum

A meeting quorum will be 50% of the members of the group

Reporting Lines

Reports directly to the Academic Board

Duties (Terms of Reference)

- The AMC receives reports from and liaises with awarding organisations, internal and external verifiers, and moderators.
- The AMC submits reports with appropriate recommendations to the Academic Board.
- The AMC refers action points from the Academic Board to the appropriate bodies and monitors the implementation of agreed actions:
 - After each inspection, review, or EE visit and at each meeting, the AMC produces an action plan which feeds into the AB's Overarching Action Plan. It tracks progress in implementing this action plan, together with plans delegated by the Academic Board
- The AMC supervises academic development and the management of learning opportunities
- The AMC is responsible to the Academic Board for the management of:
 - Academic Standards
 - Quality of Learning Opportunities
 - Admissions and administrative support
 - Programmes
 - Staff performance
 - The Academic calendar
 - Safeguarding and Prevent HE compliance

Protocols of the Academic Management Committee

Standing Agenda

14. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
15. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
16. Discussion of Academic Standards:
 - Reference and application of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in teaching and assessments
 - Reference and application of the Higher Education Credit Framework for England in choice of units and modules to teach
 - Discussion of feedback from awarding bodies/organisations
 - Discussion of Assessment schedules
 - Discussion of Assessment and Progression
17. Quality of Learning Opportunities
 - Consideration of student comments and reports on Quality and improvements
 - Review of issues and actions raised at the latest SSL meetings
 - Report on Student Support Management and student support
 - Discussion of student feedback
18. External reports and Actions
19. Programme management
 - Programme Boards reports
 - Updates on previous actions arising from programme boards
20. Staff Development
21. Safeguarding and Prevent
22. Academic calendar
23. Discussion of issues to refer to the AB
24. Discussion of matters to refer to the OMC
25. Any other business
26. Action Planning

Content of the Report of the Academic Management Committee to the Academic Board

1. Application of Academic Standards
2. Quality of Learning Opportunities
3. Programme overview
4. External reports and Actions
5. Staff Development
6. Safeguarding and Prevent HE
7. Action Planning

Programme Boards

Membership

- Programme Leader
- Registrar
- Unit/Module Leaders
- Programme Lecturers
- Student Support officer
- Student representatives

Chair

Programme Leader

Frequency of meeting

Twice per trimester

Quorum

50%

Reporting Lines

Reporting to the Academic Management Committee

Duties (Terms of Reference)

This Programme Board oversees the operation and management of each subject area and pathway for a specific awarding body as follows.

- monitors and analyses programme related statistics, including Student enrolment, Student performance data (including retention, achievement and success rates), Student attendance and punctuality, Student absences, Programme changes, Progression rates (internal and external – where available), First destinations data (if and when available)
- reviews the quality of provision using qualitative/quantitative data the outcomes of lesson and peer observations, student feedback and external feedback on programmes, including standards verifier / external examiner (SV/EE), external verifier (EV), moderation feedback and reports
- monitors and follow-up progress on action plans responding to stakeholder feedback (including post-SV/EE, EV and moderation visits or reports, programme related aspects of QAA and ASIC reports)
- ensures the practical application of the UK Quality Code
- Monitor the availability of support for students
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Prevent and Safeguarding strategies in practice
- monitors student appeals, complaints, and isolated instances of assessment malpractice (broader scale issues relating to assessment malpractice are to be reported to the Assessment and Standardisation Board)

- discusses CPD training of staff involved in programmes teaching, learning and assessment
- monitors and analyses student survey outcomes at unit and programme level
- plans and allocates resources for the upcoming term, including assessment deadlines and format
- identifies areas for improvement
- allows Student attendance in the meetings as and when required
- performs an annual review of programme specifications

Protocols of the Programme Boards

Standing Agenda

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Accuracy check on minutes of the previous meeting
3. Discussion of Programme related statistics
 - Student enrolment,
 - Student performance data (including retention, achievement, and success rates),
 - Student attendance and punctuality
 - Student absences,
 - Programme changes,
 - Progression rates (internal and external – where available),
 - First destinations data (when available)
4. Review of the quality of provision
 - outcomes of lesson and peer observations,
 - student feedback and survey outcomes at unit and programme level
 - external feedback on programmes
 - moderation feedback and reports
5. Review and Approval of Action plans for external reports
6. Review and Application of Academic Standards including FHEQ, UK Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements and Expectations of Awarding Body/Organisation
7. Student Management and Support
8. Safeguarding and Prevent
9. Student appeals and Complaints
10. Academic Misconduct
11. Non-Academic misconduct
12. Staff Development and CPD planning
13. Resource allocation and requests
14. Annual review of programme documentation
15. Any other business
16. Action Planning

Content of the Reports of Programme Boards to the Academic Management Committee

1. Programme related statistics
2. Quality of provisions
3. Action plans from external reports
4. Review and Application of Academic Standards
5. Student Support
6. Safeguarding and Prevent
7. Student appeals and Complaints
8. Academic Misconduct
9. Non-Academic misconduct
10. CPD training
11. Student survey outcomes
12. Resource requests
13. Action Planning

Assessment Boards

Membership

- Head of Provision
- Programme Leader
- Academic Manager
- Registrar
- Unit/Module Leaders
- Programme Lecturers

Chair

Head of Provision

Frequency of meet

Once per trimester

Quorum

50%

Reporting Lines

Reporting to the Academic Board and corresponding Individual Programme Board

Duties (Terms of Reference)

This Board oversees the assessment operations as follows.

- confirms that assessment standardisation activities have taken place and any discrepancies have been resolved expediently

- ensures that assessments are fit for purpose and verified promptly
- approves draft examination papers and Programme assignments before submission for external examiner's approval where appropriate
- determines the forms of evaluation for candidates re-sitting assessments
- acts upon the decision made by the Academic Board regarding appeals, extenuating circumstances, plagiarism, etc.; and consider appropriate penalty or course of action following the WIC policies and procedures
- reviews application of special consideration and reasonable adjustments and whether correct procedures had been followed and propose a recommendation to the Academic Board
- reviews the outcomes of any applications of prior learning (RPL)
- monitors academic appeals (whether upheld or not)
- verifies that all scheduled assessments opportunities have been utilised , and that associated written formative feedback has been sufficient to ensure students can make necessary improvement
- confirms that all written assignments have been scanned for plagiarism and that presentations, role-plays and simulations have been effectively observed and recorded
- Considers the marks for all students undertaking the modules being assessed and to satisfy itself that the marks are appropriate
- determines each candidate's progress in the stage under consideration from marks and other assessments supplied, including, where applicable, reports on professional training
- agrees and record results approved by members of the board

Student Representative meetings Terms of Reference

Membership

- Head of Provision
- Programme Leader
- Academic Manager
- Student representatives support officer
- The Student representatives
- All students are invited

Chair

Student Representative

Frequency of meet

Once per month

Quorum

50%

Reporting lines.

Reporting to the Corresponding Programme Board who will, in turn, make recommendations to the Academic Board

Committee Terms of Reference

- To provide a forum for students to discuss the quality of teaching, learning and student support with staff in an open manner.
- The Staff should consult with the SR on new proposals, including introducing new courses and amendments to existing courses.
- To encourage the resolution of issues and improvement to matters at the course level.
- To ensure that discussions and resulting actions are documented and distributed to the student body via the SR
- To follow up on all actions concerning the quality of learning opportunities available to students

Content of the Student Reports to the Board of Governors

1. Teaching on my course
 - Availability of teaching staff
 - Quality of teaching
 - Availability of resources
2. Assessment and feedback
3. Academic support
4. Other support and student welfare
5. Any issues of concern to be addressed by the Board of Governors

Appendix 2: Job Descriptions of Key Internal staff members

Job Description: Principal

The Principal is Director and the Board of Governors to ensure that the College is run professionally and maintains good relations with the Community, Regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders. The Principal oversees the College's strategy: ensuring that both provisions share a common strategy and have a common understanding of this strategy through:

- Clear and regular communication of the College's strategy to all stakeholders
- Appropriately resourcing all operations of the College.
- Chairing regular Operations Committee meetings to bring together all functions within the College to discuss operational issues
- Ensures accountability of all senior managers for their roles and takes responsibilities for their performance in their areas of operation.
- Manage College staff effectively by:
 - Taking responsibility for the appointment of key staff
 - Appropriately designating staff duties and responsibilities
 - Maintaining appropriate Staff development
 - Monitoring their work and using appropriate procedures in matters relating to their wellbeing, performance, discipline, and capability
 - Leading on the recruitment, retention, and succession planning of College staff
- Maintains healthy relationships with the local community, council, and organisations to ensure a good understanding of local development needs

The Principal is accountable to the Directors and the Chairman of the Board for the effective discharge of all duties.

- For a leading role in the development and implementation of strategy, policy and quality assurance and enhancement of the College;
- For a leading role in developing and implementing strategies for the long-term continuance and existence of the College;
- For a leading role in the promotion of the College to external agencies/partners;
- For a leading role to ensure that the College obtains and maintains its status as a Quality Provider of educational programmes in line with the requirements of QAA and other review and accreditation bodies including but not limited to OFS, GLA, ESFA, LTU;
- For ensuring compliance of the Health and Safety policy and current regulations.

This is done through:

- Clear and regular communication of the College's strategy to all stakeholders
- Oversight of resourcing all operations of the College.
- Chairing regular Operations Committee meetings to bring together all functions within the College to discuss operational issues

- Ensures accountability of all senior managers for their roles, and takes responsibilities for their performance in their areas of operation.
- Maintain oversight of management of College Staff
- Maintains healthy relationships with the local community, council and organisations to ensure a good understanding of local development needs
- Forms primary bridge between FE and HE provisions
- Explore industrial potential and business development opportunities in the market for both HE and FE
- Maintains a good understanding of local development needs, and drives a curriculum that is designed to meet these needs in general and student employability needs in particular

Membership

- OMC Chair

Job Description: Assistant Principal- Quality

As a member of the Operations Management Committee (OMC), Assistant Principal-Quality has to take responsibility for the College's Quality to ensure the continuous improvement of provision and is responsible for the College's Quality Assurance process.

Main duties and responsibilities

- To work as a member of the OMC to drive and deliver excellent standards in student achievement and progression
- To promote and develop the college's mission and deliver upon its strategic and operational objectives
- To ensure that Waltham International College sustains and strengthens its standing in the Further Education market
- To ensure that the college delivers programmes of study which meet students' needs and ambitions and provide good value for money
- To participate in the OMC's responsibility for the day to day running of the FE Department, including the maintenance of good order and discipline
- To promote and defend the financial health of the college
- To ensure that the college meets all its statutory obligations
- To provide a role model of excellent practice for staff

Quality Assurance

- To lead the strategic development and implementation of the College's Quality Assurance strategy to drive forward standards and continuous improvement
- To lead in developing a culture of continuous improvement and striving for excellence across the college.
- To monitor FE wide course offer and student-level performance indicators
- To work with the Manager of College Information Systems to maintain and develop data and information that is fit for purpose in monitoring college performance at every level
- To help devise, with the Assistant Principal: Curriculum, effective interventions and improvement plans at the course level
- To help create, with the Assistant Principal: Curriculum, effective interventions and improvement plans at the student level

- To help devise, with the Marketing Coordinators: Marketing Liaison, effective interventions and improvement plans
- To help design, with the Director of Studies effective interventions and improvement plans
- To oversee management and deployment of value-added systems and target positive value-added outcomes for all students
- To develop, monitor and implement the FE wing's quality cycle, including the overall strategy, draft policy for Governor approval, academic quality and review processes, vocational quality and review processes, cross-college quality and review processes, quality calendar
- With the Assistant Principal: Curriculum, to develop, monitor and implement systems for lesson observation, learning walks and student survey/ feedback
- Ensure that quality frameworks and methods are implemented effectively and efficiently across the curriculum and the more expansive college areas.
- To be proactive and implement strategies for improvement with potential quality issues, implement strategies for improvement, and monitor and report on their impact.
- To establish the setting of targets across college's FE provision and work towards their achievement.
- To attend, report to and keep informed, the FE Curriculum and Quality Panel on relevant aspects of Quality Assurance
- To monitor and keep informed on current aspects of Quality Assurance especially OFSTED documentation and Inspection Reports
- To monitor and keep informed on performance data provided by the GLA/EFA/ ESFA/ DFE and analyse and disseminate as appropriate
- To undertake any necessary checking of performance data before publication
- To take responsibility, with the Assistant Principal: Curriculum, for departmental quality standards and schemes; to develop Self-Assessment proformas
- To take responsibility, with the Director of Studies, for departmental and cross-college quality standards and procedures; to develop Self-Assessment proformas
- To work with all department in the production of SAR
- To lead the college's preparation for inspection by relevant external bodies
- To establish and develop contacts outside the College, attend meetings as a representative of the College and build appropriate networks

Job Description: Assistant Principal- Curriculum

As a member of the Operations Management Committee (OMC), Assistant Principal-Curriculum has to take responsibility for all aspects of the curriculum and continue implementing and embedding the current curriculum changes; they will plan for and implement further changes. Assistant Principal-Curriculum works closely with the Assistant Principal- Quality in the drive to maintain and further improve standards across the college.

Main duties and responsibilities

- To work as a member of the OMC to offer the most suited curriculum in line with the learner's needs and drive and deliver excellent standards in student achievement and progression
- To promote and develop the college's mission and deliver upon its strategic and operational objectives
- To ensure that Waltham International College sustains and strengthens its standing in the Further Education market
- To ensure that the college delivers programmes of study which meet students' needs and ambitions and provide good value for money
- To participate in the OMC's responsibility for the day to day running of the FE department, including the maintenance of good order and discipline
- To promote and defend the financial health of the college
- To ensure that the college meets all its statutory obligations
- To provide a role model of excellent practice for staff

Curriculum

- To support the strategic planning, management and quality of the curriculum and related services within their allocated area
- To lead on the changes necessary in these areas to raise the achievements and progression outcomes of learners
- To respond to the local and national drivers to ensure learner numbers and contracts are achieved
- To be responsible for a range of vocational curriculum areas, their delivery, quality and to support their development to achieving the highest standards
- To lead continuous improvement within the relevant areas, implement and embed quality systems working with Department managers to ensure the improvement strategy is effectively implemented and embedded
- To champion the delivery of excellent teaching and learning across the College
- To meet college and curriculum performance indicators in all areas of responsibility and to set appropriate performance indicators for line managed staff
- To implement all College strategies for curriculum development across the College
- To ensure that the relevant college learner and employer services in the relevant areas are comprehensive, inclusive and of excellent quality
- To manage change in a way that supports staff and learners to achieve
- To effectively line address the relevant areas and participate in people management activities across the FE department
- To work as an efficient and influential member of the College management team, contributing to meetings, projects and outcomes across the College
- To establish and develop contacts outside the College, attend meetings as a representative of the College and build appropriate networks
- To follow the requirements of the College policies strictly and in particular the Equality and Diversity Policy and Health and Safety Policy
- To maintain confidentiality in all aspects of College business
- Promote high quality in all aspects of the work of their team by maintaining high standards of achievement and ensuring that all students fulfil their potential through effective teaching and learning, and high expectations
- To manage and analyse the monthly ILR data submissions effectively acting as the key data contact with the funding companies

Job Description: Director of Operations

The Director of Operations is accountable to the Principal for the overall co-ordination of the daily operations of the College;

This includes responsibility for all main HR and financing functions and to ensure:

- College staff are managed effectively by:
 - Taking responsibility for the appointment of key staff
- Appropriately designating staff duties and responsibilities
- Maintaining appropriate Staff development
- Monitoring their work and using appropriate procedures in matters relating to their wellbeing, performance, discipline and capability
- Leading on the recruitment, retention and succession planning of College staff

Appropriately resourcing all operations of the College including but not limited to

- Appropriately resource the College' enhancement strategy
- Ensures that the College has sufficient resources to play its duty of care to students:
 - Plans and appropriately allocates staff resources for all programmes
 - Ensures sufficient resources for all programmes to run smoothly
 - Maintains sufficient numbers of administrative/registry staff to effectively support academic teams

Ensures all the staff are fully trained and competent to run their programmes

- Resource and track training and mentoring of all staff

Job Description: Head of HE

The Head of HE leads and organises the Academic and Registry functions to ensure the efficient running of the provision. The Head of HE contributes as appropriate to the development, management, review, and progress of the College.

The College has elected to register with the Office for Students. It is also actively seeking partners to expand its provision. The Head of HE ensures that the college meets the requirements set by the awarding organisations where appropriate and ensures that the College runs programmes that meet the needs of Ofqual, QAA and other organisations.

The Head of HE also chairs the Academic Board and is responsible for setting Academic Policies, strategies, and procedures and maintaining academic quality and standards.

The Head of HE reports to the Principal on day-to-day issues and is accountable to the Board of Governors. The Head of HE, therefore:

- Plays a leading role in the development and implementation of the College's strategy, policy, and quality assurance
- Is responsible for the College's enhancement strategy
- Actively promotes the College and its courses to students and external agencies/partners
- Ensures the College maintains its membership and registrations with Regulatory, Quality, Standards, Professional and awarding bodies.
- Ensures that student welfare is the College's main priority
- Communicates clear teaching and learning strategies and ensures that these are fully implemented
- Maintains all action plans of the provision through the Academic Board, ensuring that all agreed actions are effectively implemented on time
- Ensures that the College has sufficient resources to play its duty of care to students:
 - Plans and appropriately allocates staff resources for all programmes
 - Provides adequate resources for all programmes to run smoothly
 - Maintains enough administrative/registry staff to support academic teams effectively
 - Ensures all the staff are fully trained and competent to run their programmes
- Maintains oversight of the health and safety within the HE provisions, as well as the Prevent Duty, ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained and understand their role within the Prevent Duty
- Ensures that students are consulted on all aspects of the provision, including resources, quality and standards, health and safety, introduction, and revision of courses, as well as teaching and learning strategies
- Maintains a good understanding of local development needs and drives a curriculum that is designed to meet these needs in general and student employability needs in particular

Membership

- Member of the OMC, Academic Board (Chair), Staff Representative Committee Assessment Board (Chair)



Notes

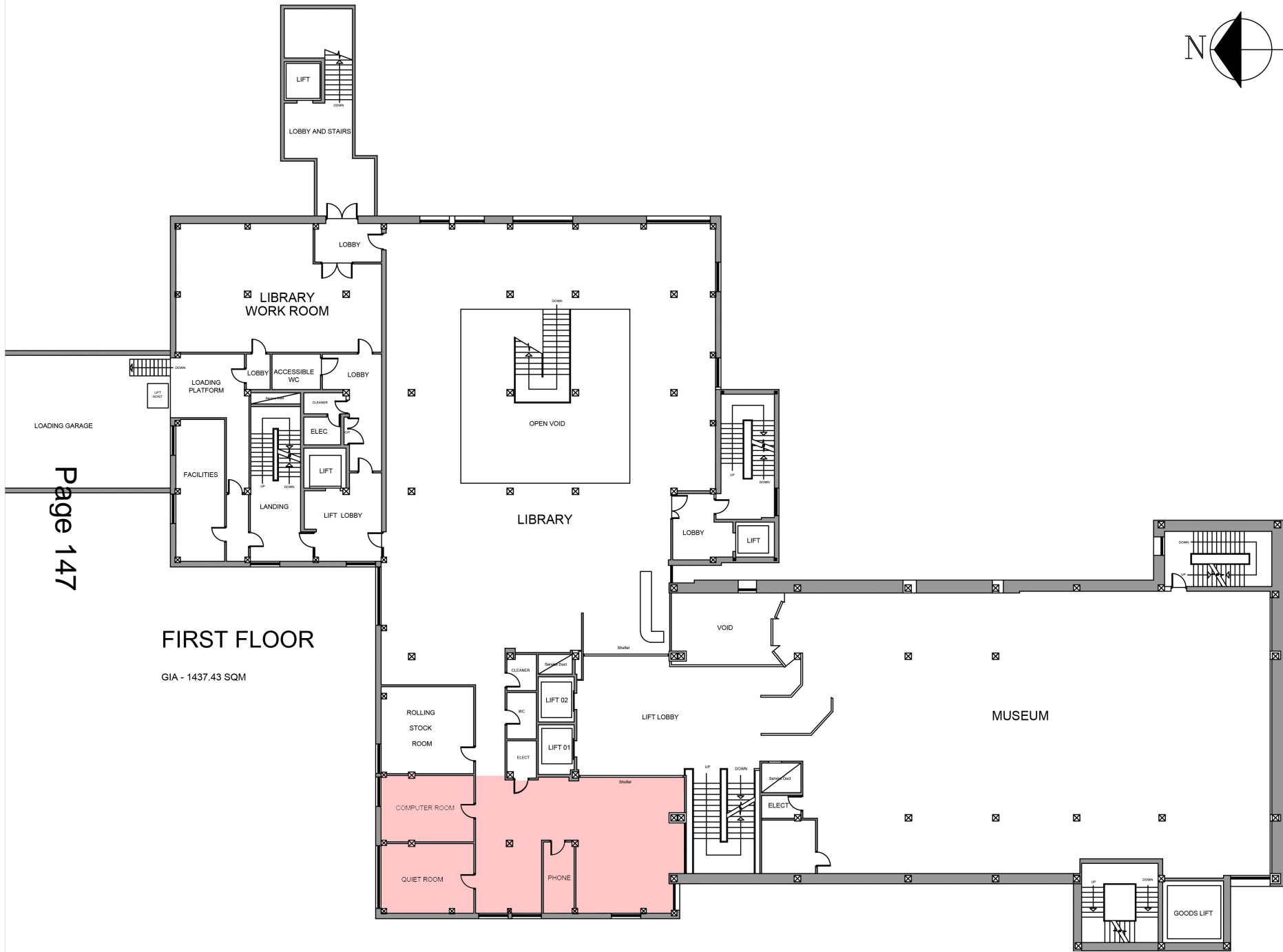
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ORSETT ROAD
GRAYS
ESSEX RM17 6DX
TITLE#

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FIRST FLOOR

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Page 147

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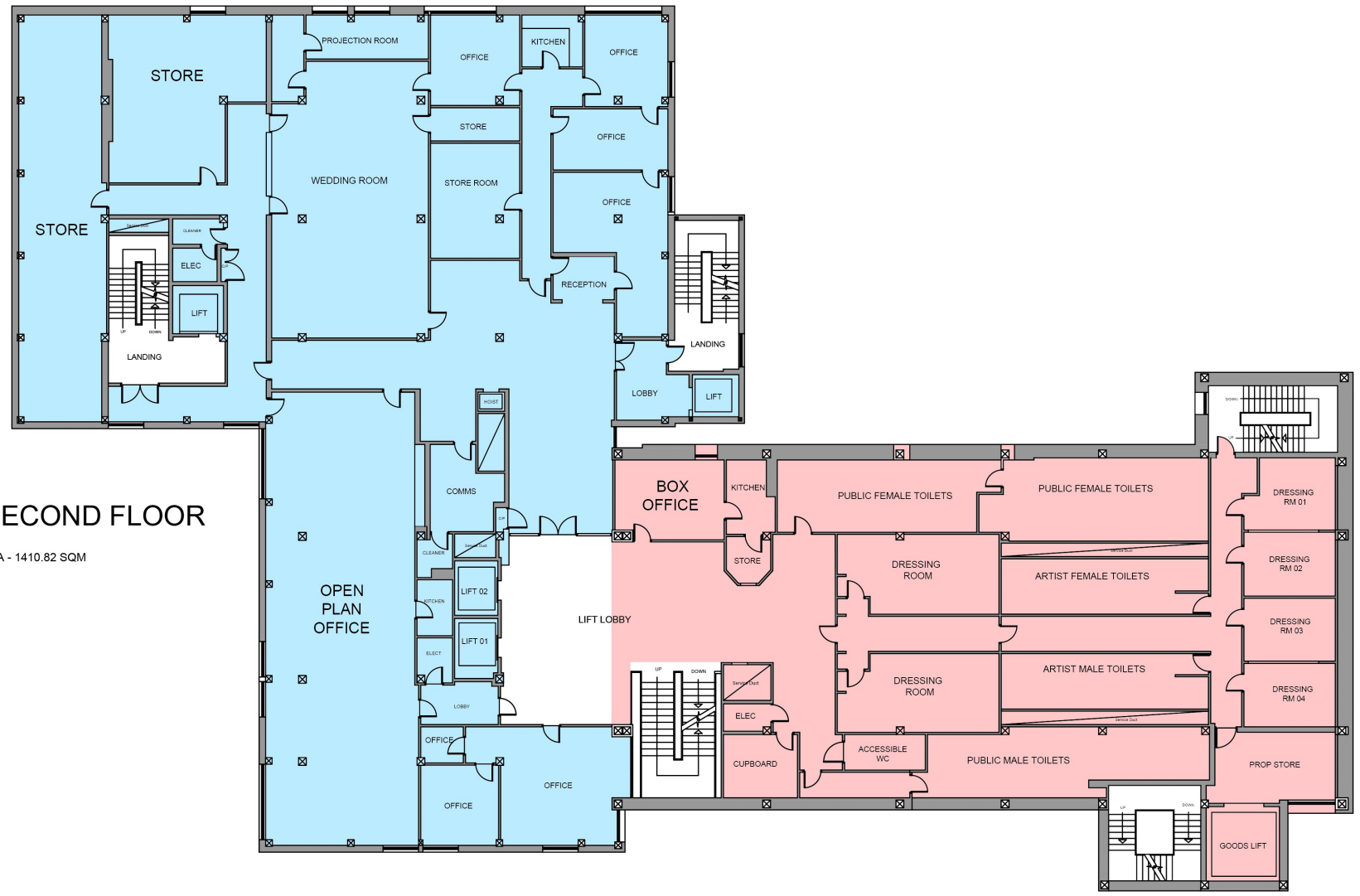
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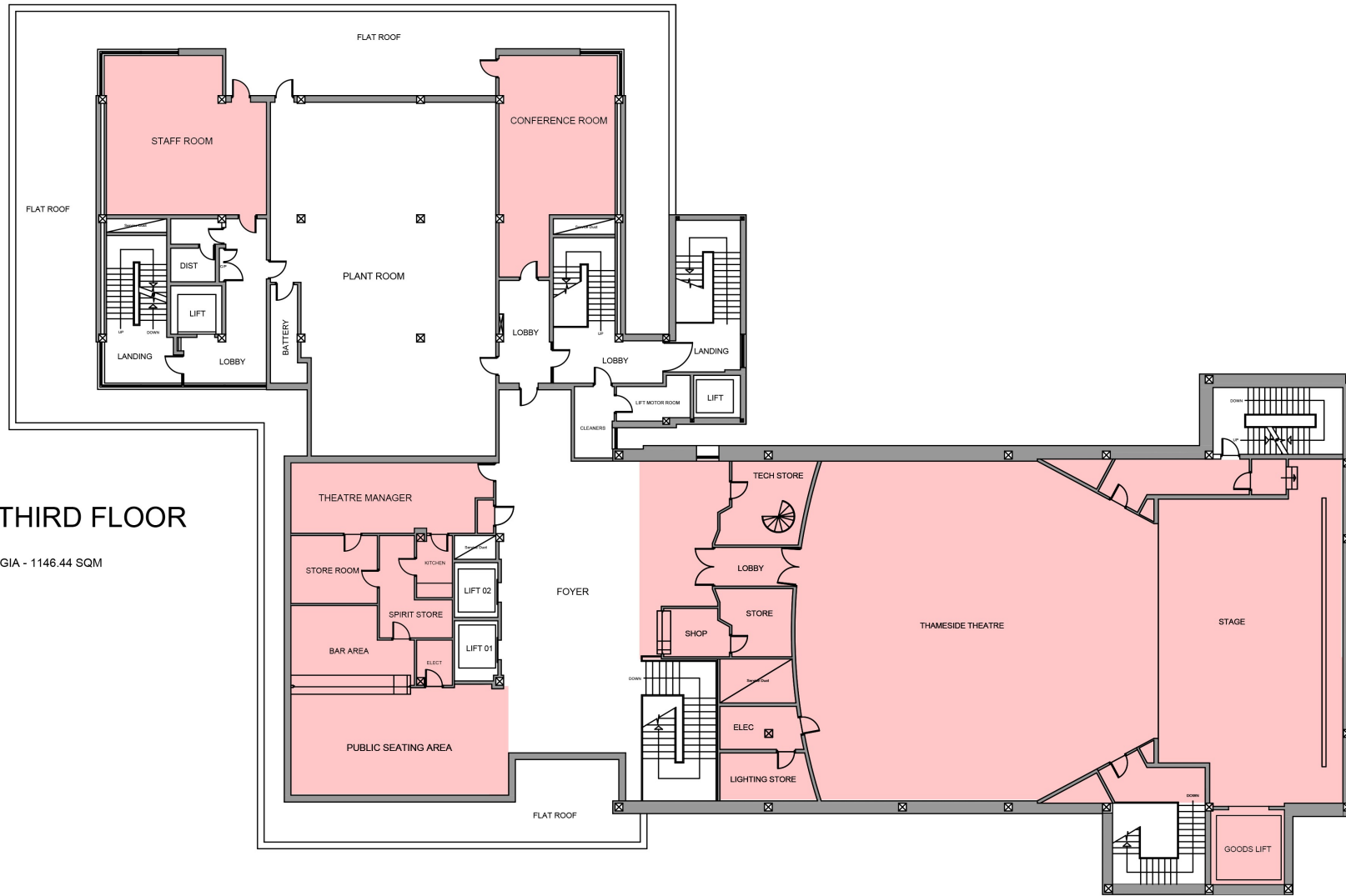
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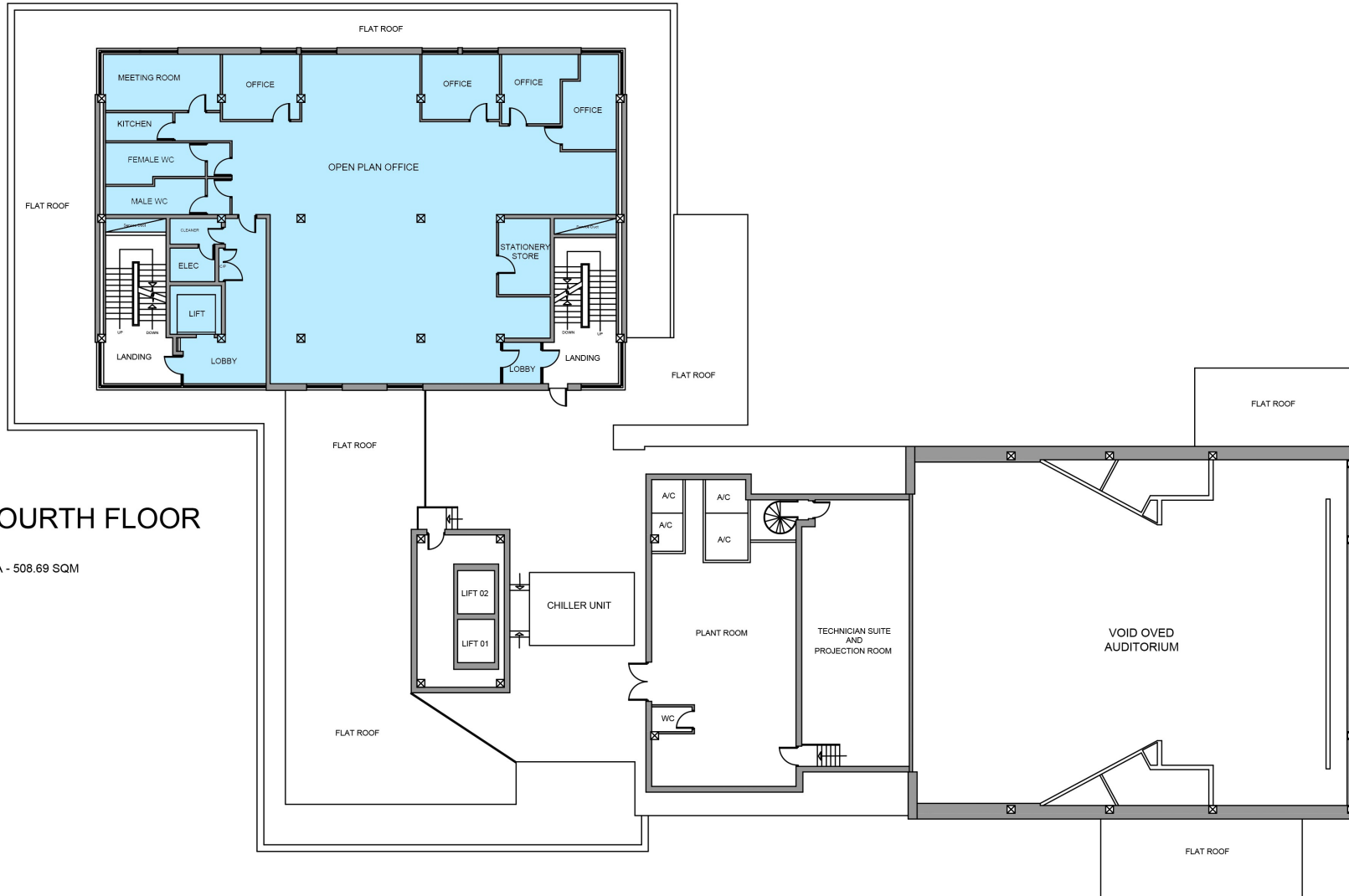
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TITLE
FOURTH_FLOOR_PLAN

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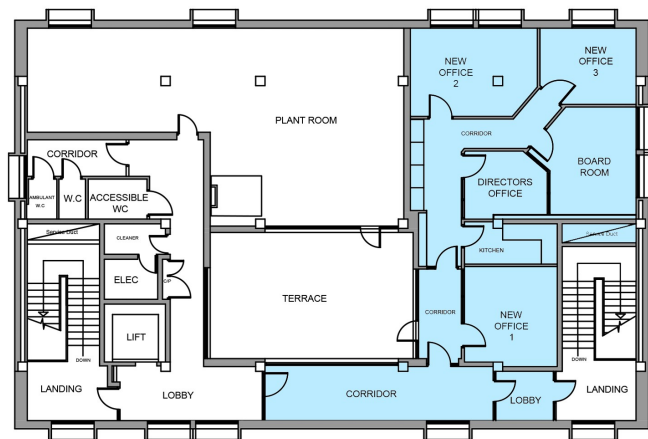
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GRAYS
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TITLE

TOWER_FLOOR_PLANS
5TH_6TH_7TH_AND_8TH

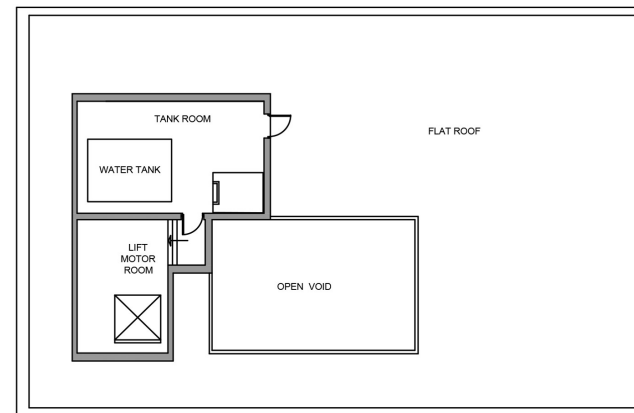
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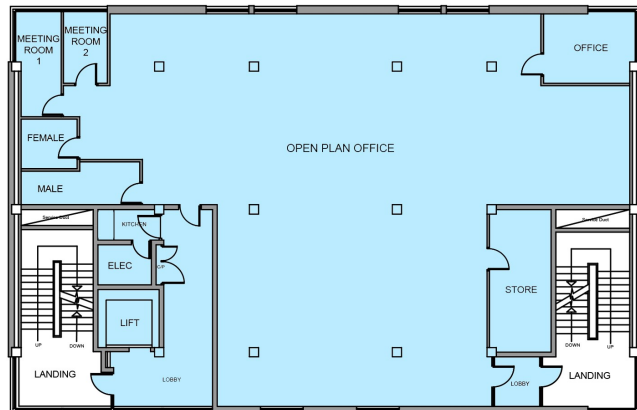
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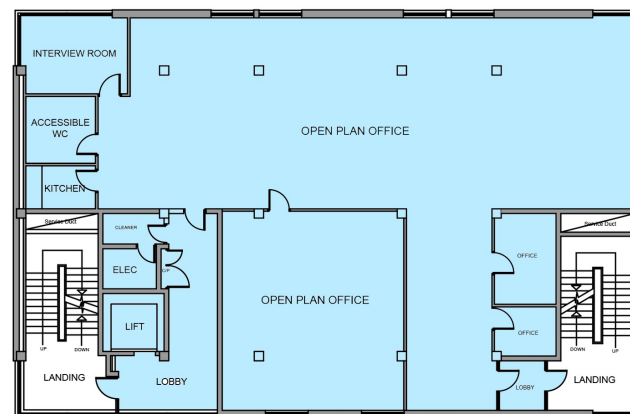
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FIFTH FLOOR

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SIXTH FLOOR

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Outline Business Case For Thameside Building

Submitted by;

Waltham International College Limited

Dated: 14/09/2022

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Executive Summary

The document outlines the proposal for WIC to utilise the space within Thameside Building in Grays, Thurrock, in order to provide services for the local community, focusing on providing higher education, in collaboration with Leeds Trinity University (LTU). This will benefit the local communities of the Borough by providing opportunities for individuals to gain good quality higher education and potentially create more employment.

WIC's and its partners' activities in this project would be community focused, and will aim to support art and cultural organizations, making Thameside an art, culture, education and community hub.

WIC has partnered with Anglo Asiatic Arts and Heritage Alliance (AAAHA) to manage the existing Theatre, which is also located inside the building.

WIC's vision is aligned with the Thurrock Community Strategy vision and priorities to achieve the objectives set in the document. WIC plans to bring a number of improvements to the Thameside building, and aims to continue to offer its support to the wider local community.

Introduction: WIC and its Partners

Waltham International College (WIC) (The College), since its establishment in 2010, has enjoyed exponential growth, as a community college specialising in adult education.

In 2019, WIC entered in a partnership with Leeds Trinity University. Our partnership has gone from strength to strength over the last 3 years and now consists of 1800 students across Business, Health and Social Care and Computer Science Degree and Foundation courses across two campuses. In November 2021, WIC was registered with the Office for students and launched our Diploma in Education and Training course in May 2022. We have targeted and achieved a pass rate of above 85% over the last 3 years.

As part of our strategic objectives, we aim to support the widening participation demographic within the communities where WIC is currently based namely, Barking- London and Central Birmingham, and now look to expand our services to the other areas such as Thurrock.

Our core strategic goals over the next 5 years are related to smart growth and diversification of each of the HE provisions to ensure every student is provided with an appropriate learning programme that is well designed, provides a high-quality academic experience for all students and enables student's achievement to be reliably assessed. In practice, this includes the development of the range of courses and locations available to our students which include validated courses and additional campus launches. By way of example, in Thurrock, we would look to work with the local communities in the Borough to provide opportunities for individuals to progress their employment into higher skill, higher-paid roles which would have a positive economic impact on the community as a whole. Additional degree programmes which we plan to introduce in Thurrock, considering the opportunities within the Thameside building, would be Graduate Theatre Degree Programmes in Performance Making, Drama, Theatre Arts.

WIC has partnered with Anglo Asiatic Arts and Heritage Alliance (AAAHA) to manage the Theatre within the Thameside building. The letter of intent between AAAHA and WIC is attached as **Appendix A**, which provides an overview of the intended Strategic partnership between the two organisations. The outline business proposal for the Thameside Theatre Partnership proposal is attached as **Appendix B**. This document gives the introduction and background to AAAHA.

Waltham International College Limited would be the legal entity taking the lease for Thameside. Mr Hassan Ashraf is the Principal and also the named Director with Companies House. Please see our company Hierarchy attached as **Appendix C**. Our Board of Governors (BOG), which consists of independent and external members, has oversight of the college. The document regarding our 'Governance and Management' is also attached herewith **Appendix D**, which provides further details regarding College's Governance and Management Structure.

Market Evaluation- Why Thurrock?

Thurrock is currently estimated to have a total population of 175,500, sixty three percent (110,200) which comprises working age (between 16 and 64) people. Thurrock has a relatively young population with the highest proportion of residents in the traditional working age group (16 to 64 years) of the working age population, 10% compared to 9.3% in London, claim out of work benefits. This level of benefits claimants is high in the region with 79% of the economically inactive people not wanting a job. WIC specialises in engaging these people. WIC also recruits mature learners that have had a prolonged gap in education. Often our students include non-native English speakers and ones who hold no UK qualifications. Generally, our students hold part-, or full-time employment in low-skilled roles but are seeking to advance their opportunities by gaining and higher education degree. They will act as a role model to their

family and local community and further promote the benefits of pursuing education in any form.

Entry to higher education in the area is similarly lower than the national average. The proportion of residents with Level 4 and above qualifications is 27% (London Average is 59%). Approximately 7.1% of residents have no formal qualifications. The majority of firms, at least 92%, are micro, employing 9 people or less. The development planned under the new Thurrock Local plan is also likely to create further demand for the College's programmes.

WIC offer in line with the Thurrock Community Strategy Vision and priorities

WIC is a community led organisation and we have always kept local community needs at the forefront of all our activities within the regions we operate.

In our London barking campus, WIC prioritises support to meet need, with flexible, inclusive and integrated skills and training provision that prioritises improving progression outcomes, employability and enterprise skills. WIC has made good progress with respect to developing very close relationship with the local authorities and has always involved the Council, through the Job-Centre plus, in its recruitment activities and on Open days. Local Council management also actively participates in the College's induction activities by giving keynote speeches. The College also hires council facilities to host such activities, thus strengthening the relationship in different ways. WIC's has also received various awards by the Local Council of Barking and Dagenham as recognition of our services and support provided to the local community.

The College plans to adopt a very similar community engagement plan, by the establishment of close relationships with Thurrock council, through which it will be able to appeal to the wider community and work together effectively.

WIC would offer its services in accordance to the priorities of Thurrock, which include providing vocational and academic education, skills and job

opportunities for all and by making Thameside an attractive opportunity for the local people, businesses and investors to enhance the local economy.

WIC would tap into the various ethnic groups within the Thurrock region to engage them and enhance the BAME participation to enable them to play a more vital and integral part in the development of Thurrock.

All new or existing activities/services which will be delivered from Thameside Building and main benefits to the local community

WIC would be delivering Higher Education University Degree programmes from the Thameside Building to support the local communities with their educational needs and to support them in gaining employment or progress within education.

WIC has partnered with Anglo Asiatic Arts and Heritage Alliance (AAAHA) to manage the Theatre within the building. The plan for the Theatre explaining how the partnership would look like, including our initial plans for the Theatre is attached as **Appendix B**. 'Thameside Theatre Partnership'.

The existing services within the building i.e. Library and the Museum would continue to be offered to the public and would stay under Council's remit. We will work with Council to support Library and Museum facilities at this location, if and when required to do so. By way of example, we could provide volunteers to support both of the said projects.

WIC would continue to offer its support to the local community groups and facilitate them by providing community space within the building for meetings and events on a not -for-profit basis. As part of the Theatre project, WIC would also allocate working space for local artists at discounted rates.

Rental proposal and our assumptions

Sections of the building would be dedicated to offering a good quality higher education provision to the community. The area shaded in blue, in the attached floor plans (**Appendix E.**), which approximately totals to around 13000 Sq. ft, would solely be used to run the class-room based delivery for our Higher Education Degree Programmes. For this space, we are proposing a yearly rent of £90,000. Kindly note that there are other communal areas which will be in joint use of all the businesses within the building, therefore, we have kept them out of our rental remit.

The area shaded in red on the attached floor plans, attached as **Appendix E**, covers the Theatre and its associated services. This totals to 5911 Sq. ft and would solely be used to run all the theatre related activities along with other community support services. We propose a fixed rent of £25,000 per year for this space.

WIC has a sustainable plan and all the required resources to run the services for a longer term. Therefore, minimum length of Lease required by WIC and its partners would be 25-30 years.

As there would be many different businesses operating from within the Thameside Building, including the College, Theatre, Library and the Museum, this would mean that we would require the most appropriate approval for use of building from the Council.

WIC's understanding is that Council will continue to manage the Museum and Library located within the building, and a tenancy agreement at a peppercorn rent would be put in place.

WIC does not have to retain current staff working at the facility. If in future, we need staff, we will advertise and preference would be given to current staff members.

WIC requires minimum 6 months' rent free period from completion date, to allow us do the necessary renovation and upgradation of the building.

How the proposal would be funded

This proposal would be partly funded through WIC's retained profits. WIC had 1.3 million retained profit at the end of last year (i.e. July 2021), and this year ending July 2022, our retained earnings stand at 2.4 million. The last submitted accounts for WIC confirm this statement.

WIC's main income stream is from the higher education students paying their fee either privately or through Student Finance i.e. Students Loans Company and/ or local authority grants.

Council Grants

WIC would expect Thurrock Council to provide initial grant/funding of £400,000 to re-structure and improve the general outlook of the building.

Improvement plans for the building

We are considering the following improvement plans for the building;

- Improve the general outlook of the building
- Improve/upgrade the Theatre facilities
- Change / upgrade the existing ventilation system, if needed
- Demolish and re-partition the area designated for educational use (coloured in blue on the attached floor plans)
- Upgrade the existing computer facilities on the ground/first floor
- Add appropriate signage on front and back elevation of the building
- Re-locate floor 4 and floor 5 storages to the basement area

- Have a mechanism in place to separate the gas and electric between WIC and Council, where possible
- General maintenance of the building

Consultation with community and other organisations about the proposal

WIC has already engaged with number of organisations based in Thurrock, who have assured their support to us, and we are very excited for future collaboration with these organisations and other groups in the Thameside project.

Some of the Organisations we have been able to engage with so far are listed as follows;

- Anglo Asiatic Arts & Heritage Alliance, Grays
- NASFAT, Grays
- Thurrock Nepalese Gurkha Community
(Note: In the past, WIC has delivered free English Classes for Nepalese Gurkha women in Grays).
- Ex-British Gurkha Veterans & Dependents Society
- Kenyan Community Church, Grays
- Tamil School and Tuition Services

WIC aims to carry on consulting / engaging further community organisations and business within Thurrock.

Willingness to work together

We are willing to work with the Council to discuss and /or amend this plan to suit the Council's and community's requirements.

15 March 2023	ITEM: 11 Decision: 110643
Cabinet	
Thurrock Supported Bus Services	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key Decision
Report of: Cllr Ben Maney, Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety	
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director, Planning, Transportation and Public Protection	
Accountable Director: Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

Thurrock Council supports through financial contribution three local bus services within the borough. These services, tendered by the council in 2019 are funded through a corporate budget. The services are operated by the bus operator NIBS and Stephenson's of Essex on a three-year contract, which concluded in March 2022, with an option to extend by up to a further two years.

Due to uncertainty in the market, and the impacts of the pandemic, a twelve-month extension was implemented for the year to March 2023. The tendered cost of these services was approximately £452,000 per annum, but due to cost pressures, has risen significantly this year. With the receipt of a grants from the Department for Transport, and increased fare revenues, the projected additional liability for this year is £14,611.25 which will form a corporate budgetary pressure on the council.

If these services were to be extended by a further year, there is expected to be a further cost increase of 8%-16%, and a budgetary pressure of between £150,000 - £200,000 for the year 2023/24.

This report presents an analysis of bus patronage data and a twelve-week consultation regarding these supported services to help enable decision makers to determine if these services present value for money. Cabinet is asked to review these findings to help support in their decision making.

This paper was presented to Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 November 2022. Recommendations from the committee have been included within this report.

Additional service options have been explored in detail following input from Ward Members and Portfolio Holder. These options explore how a level of bus service could be retained in the affected communities. The options are set out in Section 10 and are intended to help Members with the recommendations set out in this report.

1. Recommendation

1.1 Cabinet approves the withdrawal of the funding provision of the three supported services the 11, 265 and 374.

1.2 Cabinet approves the procurement of off-peak day-time provision three days a week to the community of Fobbing. This would involve re-routing some existing commercial bus routes through Fobbing, providing a link between Stanford-le-Hope and Basildon. This would be for an initial 12-month period with a review of usage to be undertaken before any extension.

1.3 Cabinet notes the net saving of £427,000 delivered by these decisions.

1.4 Cabinet notes that the following communities will have no or limited public transport provision linking them to the rest of the borough – Bulphan, East Tilbury Village, Horndon-on-the-Hill, North Stifford, West Tilbury, and western parts of Aveley. East Tilbury and Linford would also lose all bus provision. While members will be mindful of the ongoing review being undertaken by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, cabinet directs Transportation Services to keep the public transport needs of these communities under review and consider future options which could address any unmet need, within the context of the council’s financial situation.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock Council currently subsidises the operation of three local bus services within the borough. These services provide access to and from a number of locations and for communities which would not be otherwise supported by commercially sustainable bus services. These three services, the 11, 265 and 374, are further detailed below, with a route map appended to this report (Appendix A).

2.2 Service 11 serves Purfleet-on-Thames, Aveley, South Ockendon, North Stifford, Thurrock Hospital/proposed IMC, Grays, Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminating at Basildon bus station. This bus departs every two hours from approximately 7am until 7pm Monday to Friday only, with one bus in each direction.

- 2.3 The 265 operates twice a day with a solitary bus on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only, connecting Grays, Socketts Heath, Orsett, Bulphan and West Horndon, with departures in each direction between 10am and 2pm.
- 2.4 The 374 serves Grays, Socketts Heath via Hathaway Road, Chadwell St Mary, West Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury, Linford, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminates at Basildon bus station. These buses run Monday to Friday, departing approximately every 90 minutes between 7am and 6pm, with one bus in each direction, and every three hours on Saturdays.
- 2.5 Prior to a formal tender in 2019, papers were submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to agree the continuation of the services. A three-year contract with a two-year extension option was awarded to operators NIBS and Stephenson's of Essex.
- 2.6 The contract was tendered on a "revenue risk" basis, where the council does not pay for the full cost of delivering these services but provides a guaranteed sum to the operator. All fares and revenues collected remain with the operator, providing an incentive to the operator to increase patronage, helping to reduce cost to the council, and placing a risk with the operator if revenues do not meet their projections.
- 2.7 In 2019, the three services carried 89,040 passenger journeys. The subsidy provided by Thurrock Council for these three services for that year totalled £454,318.20. This equated to a subsidy of £5.10 per passenger trip. Of those 89,040 passenger journeys, approximately a third were fare paying passengers, with the overwhelming majority of the remaining riders being older person or disabled concessionary pass holders. Respective figures for 2020 and 2021 are significantly skewed due to the impacts of the pandemic, coupled with government guidance and changes in travel behaviours. In 2020/21 patronage was 30,758, and in 2021/22 patronage was 65,008. This trend in patronage can be seen on all bus services across the country. In 2019/20 only a third of journeys were by fare paying passengers (40% in 2021/22).
- 2.8 These services provide a key community, social, and health and wellbeing benefit to many residents. For example, in 2019, 54% of all passengers on the 11 service were concessionary pass holders, and these were most likely to be older persons. For the 374, this was 64%, and 89% for the 265. This totalled 53,789 passengers in 2019, or 60% of all passengers on these three services. Concessionary pass holders do not pay to use the bus anywhere in England from 9.30am onwards, and this is a statutory provision. In Thurrock, this provision is allowed from 9am. Thurrock Council has a duty to fairly compensate bus operators for concessionary travel, and this is provided from a separate grant and budget.
- 2.9 All other bus routes in Thurrock, except those franchised by Transport for London, and an Essex County Council service which serves Bulphan from

Brentwood, are commercially operated services delivered by Ensign Bus and First Buses Essex.

3. Contract Extension in Financial Year 2022/23

- 3.1 The initial three-year term of the contract came to an end in March 2022. As such, the council has extended the provision of the service through the available contract extension by a further twelve months. Unfortunately, due to inflationary and commercial pressures, this has seen the price increase by approximately £100,000. This increase has been caused by rises in cost to fuel, drivers wages, cost of parts, as well as other increased costs. Over the contracted three-year period, the price had remained the same to the council.
- 3.2 One of the main reasons as to why the contract was extended rather than retendered was due to market uncertainties in the aftermath of the Coronavirus pandemic, with dropped patronage levels. This would likely have increased costs for the council in providing these services. Furthermore, officers were of the mind that competition from alternative providers did not exist within this market, and therefore it could have led to a significant increase in the tendered price beyond that which has been seen through the extension period.
- 3.3 The way the contract pricing was structured also differed from the initial three year period, and became a “Gross Cost” price, rather than revenue risk. In all, the Gross Cost price of the contract was set at £676,281.91. From here, a number of subsidies and generated revenues are to be subtracted from this sum to identify this cost. An initial payment of £55,190.88 was paid to cover the English National Concessionary Travel scheme, which funds free bus travel for older persons and those with qualifying disabilities, which is funded directly by the Department for Transport as a grant allocation to local authorities. In addition, it was projected that the service would generate £71,436 in fare revenues over the course of the year. By subtracting these sums from the Gross Cost, the cost to the council was projected to be £549,655.03. The annual budget to support these three supported services remained at £452,000. Therefore an additional sum of £97,655.03 was required to cover the cost of the delivery of these services for the year 2022/23. This additional sum had not been budgeted.
- 3.4 Given these circumstances, it was requested that the council review these services, based on the increased cost, to ensure they present value for money. Whilst this review is timed in line with procurement, we do need to consider the findings of the review, against the council’s current financial position, which is under significant pressure, with all budgets under review. Any increase in cost presents additional revenue pressures to the corporate budget and in identifying any increases, decreases will need to be found from elsewhere. When considering this paper and findings, there is a need to be mindful of the potential of creating an unsustainable position for the council.

- 3.5 With an increase in costs, work was undertaken to identify if these services should be maintained in their present form, or if there are opportunities to revise the provision. In consultation with the Communities Team and Legal Services, there is legitimate expectation by our communities to be consulted where services are considered for significant alteration or potential for withdrawal, in particular where budgetary pressures are a key underlying factor. In July 2022, Cabinet approved a twelve-week consultation with all communities which are supported by these services. Alongside the consultation, a Community Equalities Impact Assessment was also undertaken to consider due regard requirements set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty. This assessment is appended to this report.

4 Communities Equalities Impact Assessment

- 4.1 A Communities Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this services review. As part of the council's requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which forms part of Section 149 of the Equalities Act, it is required to be fully aware of the impact any changes may have on stakeholders. Public bodies must assess this impact relative to the decision to be taken.
- 4.2 The CEqIA has identified that changes to the services would have a negative impact on the following protected characteristics groups – Age, Disability, and Sex, as well as non-protected groups such as rural communities, workforces, health and wellbeing, and socio-economically disadvantaged.
- 4.3 In each of these cases, there may not be much opportunity to mitigate against the negative outcomes without alternative provision of some sort being provided. This may be providing a different service, or the private sector stepping in to provide provision, as the commercial bus network does across other parts of Thurrock.
- 4.4 Full details of the CEqIA are given in the accompanying Community Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix B) and Communities Impact report (Appendix C). This identifies in detail each of the protected groups and other categories identified within the CEqIA and what measures can be implemented to mitigate any negative impacts.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The public consultation started on Friday 15 July 2022 and was scheduled to run for twelve weeks, closing on Sunday 9 October 2022. The consultation format was primarily digital, using the council's consultation web-portal, with the direct link being <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/bus-consultation-2022>.
- 5.2 The consultation was structured as a standard form-based survey, where participants could provide details about the frequency with which they use these supported services and other bus services in Thurrock, origin and destination for journeys, and whether services remain fit for purpose or could

be enhanced. Alongside the survey, the consultation portal also included an interactive map to help participants better understand the routes of the three supported services being consulted upon.

- 5.3 Given the awareness of types of bus user who ride or rely on these services, and their rural locations, it was determined that alternative provision should be required beyond the digital platform. As a result, the survey was converted into a paper-based form, asking each of the same questions as that on the digital platform, while simultaneously providing the same background information and visualisation of routes. This was published as a four-page colour booklet which was distributed across the borough. Residents in each of the locations which were served by the bus could pick up the survey from key locations, such as libraries and key community facilities. Completed forms could be returned in consultation boxes within each of these communities.
- 5.4 The consultation was also made available for collection on each of the three bus services with posters in the bus to help inform passengers. Particularly for those participants who collected their survey on the bus, but not exclusively, a freepost envelope was also provided to allow the survey to be returned via Royal Mail, without having to identify the location of the nearest collection point.
- 5.5 Many of the bus stops served by the three supported services promoted the consultation through posters and all promotional materials, including the paper surveys included a link and QR code to enable participants to log their responses via the web-portal. These would have been posted either in the bus shelter or timetable casing. Posters were also placed to advise where paper forms could be obtained and submitted for collection.
- 5.6 The full list of locations where forms could be obtained and submitted were as follows:

Locations where forms could be obtained and submitted

Grays Library
Blackshots Library
Chadwell Hub
East Tilbury Library
Stanford Library
Corringham Library
Aveley Hub
Belhus Hub
Tilbury Hub

Locations where forms could be obtained only

Post Office and shop in Horndon on the Hill
Post Office and Village Hall in East Tilbury
The Village shop in North Stifford
Headon Hall in Stifford Clays
Village Hall and shop in Bulphan

Orsett Hospital reception
Village shop in Orsett
Local forum members in Horndon on the Hill
Local Forum Members in Fobbing
Bus Services 11, 265 and 374

- 5.7 All paper forms which were received via the mail and those collected from across the community, were entered into the main consultation portal, to act as a single repository for all collated data. In total 356 individual responses were received to the consultation across the twelve weeks.
- 5.8 A full consultation report has been developed alongside this main report, which analyses the responses, but high-level feedback identified the following:
- 99 respondents identified they were aged over 60, which accounted for 47% of respondents to this question. Those aged 45-59 accounted for 18% (37 responses) and only 7% were under 45 years old (14 responses). The second highest level of response were those who declined to state their age (58 responses, 28%). Approximately 40% of respondents did not answer this question.
 - Three quarters of all respondents were female and only 22% identified themselves as male, with 3% preferring not to state their gender or chose other.
 - Of the 356 respondents, only 22 had not used a bus within the last six months (6%). Nearly 55% of respondents had used the 11 service within the past six months, and nearly 60% had used the 374. Just over 16% identified they had used a different bus service that wasn't one of the three supported services.
 - Exactly 68% of respondents used the bus at least once a week with a further 25% of respondents using the bus at least once a month. Only 5% stated they had never used the bus.
 - The primary reason respondents stated they used the bus was for three core purposes – accessing shops, retail and leisure (67%); accessing health appointments (64%); and visiting friends and family (43%). Smaller numbers used these services for accessing employment (16%) and education (10%).
 - The most prevalent reasons why the bus was used was due to having no other alternative (52%) and due to having a bus pass (51%). The bus was also identified as the most convenient way to travel, as identified by 36% of respondents, as well as for the buses environmental credentials (32%)
 - Approximately 50% of all respondents stated they were regular users of the number 11 service, and 80% of respondents stated that the service met their needs. The most popular destinations on this service in order were Basildon town centre, Basildon Hospital, Orsett (assumed the hospital), followed by Corringham and Stanford. The most popular origin point was Horndon-on-the-Hill.
 - Only 10% of respondents identified as regular users of the 265 bus service, and only 55% of users felt the service met their needs. The

most popular destinations in order of preference were Grays town centre, followed by Orsett (again assumed hospital), followed by North Stifford and West Horndon. Bulphan and Grays were the most popular origin points.

- Lastly, 57% of respondents stated they were regular users of the 374 bus service. Over 80% of users felt this service met their needs (82%). The most popular destinations on this service were Basildon Hospital and Basildon town centre, followed by Grays town centre, and to a lesser extent Corringham, Stanford, East Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary. East Tilbury was the most popular origin point identified.

5.9 Upon review of the free text options offered by the consultation, the responses further strengthened the key themes identified through the CEqIA and in the responses above. In particular, respondents reiterated how these services act as a lifeline in particular for those who are elderly or disabled, provide access to healthcare, access to shopping, provide a social function, and would create social isolation for many, which may lead to other negative outcomes for communities, the council and other services. Respondents also made note of the concerns of costs associated with alternative options to continue making the journeys by these services, and that in many cases taxis are available but unaffordable.

5.10 A full report specific to the public consultation, and its outcomes is given in Appendix D.

5.11 A petition from 255 Fobbing residents was presented to officers on 22nd February 2023. The petition states ‘We the undersigned appeal to Thurrock Council to protect the vital bus service through Fobbing. The loss of which will have a catastrophic impact on the isolated village particularly to our senior citizens who rely on public transport’.

5.12 Of the signatories 189 declared that they were bus users and amongst those the main reasons for bus use were, visiting hospital & doctors and food shopping. Whilst the petition is specific to residents of Fobbing it is not considered that it raises new issues from those raised in the consultation and addressed elsewhere in the report and appendices.

6 Use Analysis

6.1 To attain a better understanding of these three services, all passenger journeys were assessed over a twelve-month period. Between 01 July 2021 and 30 June 2022, all journey data collected by the ticketing machine on the three supported bus services were analysed to better improve the understanding of how these services are used. This is split into four parts, covering all three services, and then each service individually.

6.2 Across all three services, in the twelve-month period that was analysed, there were a total of 68,088 passenger journeys recorded. In total, £73,224.90 was generated in fare revenue. The 374 service accounts for the highest

proportion of passenger journeys (38,272 (56%)) and revenues (£44,586.70 (61%)). It is followed by the 11 with 41% of passenger journeys (28,345) and 38% of revenues (£28,121.50). The 265, which has the lowest frequency and milage accounts for just 2% of passenger journeys (1471) and less than 1% of revenues (£516.70). In terms of the cost of providing these services, the 11 accounts for 51.5% (£259,78.44), the 374 accounts for 43.5% (£219,822.17), and the 265 for just 5% (£24,835.10).

- 6.3 In terms of ridership, over half of all passenger journeys across the three services are made by concessionary pass holders, which may be issued for either age or disability. 38% of passenger journeys are through adult tickets, and nearly 7% are child tickets. Where tickets are purchased – adult or child, approximately a third are purchased using cash, with 67% being made by some form of card or electronic payment.
- 6.4 Further details regarding how these services are used are given in the accompanying Community Equality Impact Assessment and Communities Impact report, which can be found in Appendix C.

7 Impact of Service Withdrawal

- 7.1 Additional analysis has been undertaken to identify what proportion of the population would be impacted if a decision was made to withdraw the three services. This analysis was undertaken against a number of different timeframes across the week.
- 7.2 Using 2020 Mid-year population estimates, it was identified that 113,448 residents were able to access one of these three supported services, by travelling 400 metres or less from their homes. A further 62,083 residents within the borough of Thurrock are not classed as being able to access these services, based on this 400m parameter. Over 6000 residents currently do not have access to any form of public transport within 500 metres of their home.
- 7.3 On a typical weekday, if these three supported services were to be removed, as many as 8,000 residents would lose access to public transport, whereas on a Saturday this would be limited to closer to 4,000. The following table sets out public transport accessibility, measuring service availability within 500m of an access point, including rail services. Therefore, if one public transport service was available within the hour timeframe identified, and the residential dwelling within an actual 500 metre walking journey from the bus stop (or railway station), then that resident was identified as having public transport access.

Day	Time Period	Population currently served	Population served if services are removed	Population losing access to public transport
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Weekday (Monday)	07:00 - 08:00	171,734	164,420	7,314
Weekday (Monday)	12:00 - 13:00	171,637	163,464	8,173
Weekday (Monday)	15:00 - 16:00	171,670	164,098	7,572
Weekday (Monday)	20:00 - 21:00	142,314	139,170	3,144
Saturday	08:00 - 09:00	167,146	164,131	3,015
Saturday	15:00 - 16:00	167,146	163,429	3,717
Sunday	12:00 - 13:00	139,254	139,254	-

- 7.4 The table identifies that during the working week, the biggest impact would be felt by communities during the middle of the working day. On Saturdays, where only the 374 operates on a three-hour frequency, nearly four thousand residents would be without access to public transport.
- 7.5 As a result of this impact work, Members asked for alternative service options to be explored to ascertain if some level of bus service could be retained and funded.
- 7.6 Further details and supportive mapping of this analysis can be found in the accompanying Community Equality Impact Assessment and Communities Impact report in Appendix C.

8. Financial Considerations

- 8.1 As identified in section three, as the contract was extended beyond its initial three-year period, there was an increase in cost, due to inflationary pressures on the operator, which had not been implemented in the initial contracted three-year period. This price was projected to be approximately a £100,000 budgetary pressure on the council, as increases in contract prices had not been factored into the budget. The Gross Cost price for the year 2022/23 has been identified as £676,281.91, with a projected income of £71,436 from fares and a £55,190.88 contribution via the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, this reduced the price to £549,655.03. The council's allocated budget to support these three services is £452,000. This created a budgetary pressure of £97,655.03.
- 8.2 In the year to date, the revenue generation has exceeded the projection by a small sum. The service was projected to generate £47,624 over the eight-month period April to November. Revenues from the service are in fact £56,467.80, resulting in an additional income of £8,843.80. This has currently reduced the council's liability to £88,721.25. Furthermore, the council has managed to secure a further £74,200 in grants from the Department for Transport for this year only, which will be allocated to this expenditure, further

reducing the budgetary liability to £14,611.25. This also assumes revenues will meet projected incomes for the remaining four months of the year.

- 8.3 Therefore, for the financial year 2022/23 it is predicted that the cost for delivering these three services will be £466,611.25. This is therefore an overspend of £14,611.25 against the budgeted amount of £452,000.
- 8.4 Going forward, the council has sought to engage with the existing operator to identify a projected cost for financial year 2023/24, on the assumption no alterations are made to the services by the council. Due to the fluctuating circumstances in the economy, the operator has reasonably been reluctant to specify an exact price for next year. However, for sake of guidance, they have identified key financial bands which may help the council to plan. A best-case scenario is an 8% increase in costs, which would give a gross cost of c£730,000. A worst case was identified as being 16% increase in price, bringing the gross cost value to c£784,500. Without significant fare rises, these price increases are likely to further extend the budgetary pressure on the council, with little likelihood of additional grants being received from the Government, as were those received this year.

9. Overview and Scrutiny

- 9.1 A paper was presented to Planning, Transportation & Regeneration (PTR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) on Wednesday 23 November 2022 on the topic of the Thurrock Support Services. The Members of PTR were presented a number of options on how to proceed with these services, to help inform the decision making by Cabinet.

These options were:

- a) To withdraw these three services;
 - b) Maintain these services without amendment
 - c) To maintain one of the three services (as is or amended)
 - d) Option c but with enhanced frequencies; and
 - e) To use the funding to develop a Thurrock-wide fare scheme.
- 9.2 Members of PTR showed concern of the impact of the withdrawal of these services to residents and communities which would become isolated as a result. There was however acknowledgement that these services have limited patronage levels with high levels of subsidy per passenger journey and were minded to see how services could be provided more efficiently.
- 9.3 Members of PTR did not advocate for the full withdrawal of services but did not advocate maintaining the existing provision either. They did propose that officers return to the committee with further details on how a service (or a number of services) could be provided to ensure communities which would be cut off from public transport provision could be connected to public transport routes, either through a dedicated service or some form of “hub and spoke” system, where community services shuttle residents into key connection

points. In addition, Members of PTR also advocated for the development of a Thurrock-wide fare scheme, but one which was developed in collaboration with the bus industry and local operators, and if implemented, not at cost to the council. Members of PTR asked for this proposal to be returned to the committee, however the time critical nature of this issue means that this report needs to be considered now.

10. Alternative Options

- 10.1 A decision to withdraw these services would deliver will be an annual budgetary saving of £452,000 effective three-months after formal notice is given to the operator as per the contractual agreement between the council and the service operator, provided no alternative service is offered.
- 10.2 Alternatively, Cabinet may wish to consider a reduced provision, ensuring some of the most impacted communities retain a level of bus service access for residents who have no alternative. Three options have been assembled, with a cost estimate. Further details and indicative operating timetables are given in appendix E.

Option 1

- 10.2.1 To offer service levels similar to the existing Saturday service on route 374 on weekdays for two or three days of the week. This would see the implementation of one single bus connecting the existing communities served by the 374 between Grays and Basildon Bus Stations and amended to incorporate Horndon-on-the-Hill. The bus would provide three runs in each direction, with a headway of three hours and thirty minutes. The approximate cost for this provision is projected to be c.£198,000. This option could be implemented without needing to seek any external procurement by utilising the existing contract, through until March 2024.

Option 2

- 10.2.2 To propose a route between Chadwell St Mary and Basildon, covering West Tilbury, East Tilbury, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham and Fobbing to operate with a single bus three days a week. Industry figures have suggested the cost of this service would be as much as c.£198,000, however the council would have to go out to tender to implement this option if an interest existed in the market to provide such a service. Such a route could offer four runs a day in each direction on a three hour headway. There are operational considerations regarding turn-around and appropriate layover facilities, which may necessitate the route operating slightly further west than Chadwell St Mary.

Option 3

- 10.2.3 To provide off-peak day-time provision to the community of Fobbing only, three days a week. This would involve re-routing some existing commercial bus routes through Fobbing, providing a link between Stanford-le-Hope and

Basildon. This would offer a minimum of three runs in each direction between 9am and 2pm and is projected to cost £25,000 per annum, with all fares retained by the operator. Due to the cost, this option could be procured without formal tender.

- 10.3 The following table sets out other options which were considered, and presented to PTRO&S, but have been rejected in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport.

Option	Reason
Maintain the services without amendment	Financially unsustainable – need to identify additional revenue budget to support
As above but with enhanced frequencies	Financially unsustainable – needs ongoing revenue support at levels additional to above
Develop a Thurrock-wide Fare Scheme	Financially unsustainable – needs ongoing revenue support. This option was supported by Members of PTR O&S Committee, but did not want to see this funded by the council

11. Reasons for Recommendation

- 11.1 The report has been developed to provide the necessary information to help inform a decision by Cabinet in March 2023 on the future of the three financially supported bus services delivered by Thurrock Council. The identified recommendation to withdraw these services is not supported by data and the public consultation, and not formally endorsed by the Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, however the recommendations present an opportunity to make a significant annual financial saving, in turn supporting the council's wider budgetary concerns.
- 11.2 Upon review of this report and supporting appendices, and the recommendation made by members of PTR O&S on 23 November 2022 given in section 9, Cabinet are asked to withdraw these services based on the information provided and the recommendation given in section 10 of this report.

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

- 12.1 Any future reduction, or withdrawal of these services will have a significant impact on those communities in Thurrock which have no or limited alternative public transport provision in the borough. Most impacted will be those from socio-economically disadvantaged communities and groups who may not have alternative to other forms of transport, and the Communities Equalities Impact Assessment has identified older persons, those who are women, and those with disabilities who will be most negatively impacted.

13. Implications

13.1 Financial

Implications verified by **Laura Last**

Senior Management Accountant

The Council continues to experience significant revenue budget pressures and exceptional wider financial risks and, as a result, a section 114 notice was issued on 19th December 2022. This means that all expenditure must meet strict criteria in order to be authorised. The Thurrock Supported Bus Services contract was extended by a further 12 months in March 2022. The initial three year contract had a budget of £452,000 per annum, funded through a dedicated corporate budget. The budget for 2022/23 remains £452,000 and therefore any price increase in the extension is currently unfunded and will cause a budgetary constraint. This is currently projected to be £14,611.25 for the year 2022/23. If the services were to be withdrawn, this would create an annual budgetary saving of £452,000 per annum, effective three-months after formal notice is given to the operator (as per the contractual agreement between the council and the service operator), provided no alternative service is offered. Any reduction in services may result in a saving, but this would have to be determined.

13.2 Legal

Implications verified by **Gina Clarke**

**Corporate Governance Lawyer & Deputy
Monitoring Officer**

It is not a statutory requirement for the Council to fund any public local bus services. However, the Council does have powers under the Transport Acts 1985 and 2000 and Local Transport Act 2008 to enter into agreements with public transport operators to provide subsidies for services which are not available commercially.

Any withdrawal of subsidies for bus services will need to be justified and such a decision would need to be based on robust evidence and analysis. The decision-making process would need to be supported with consideration by Cabinet of the outcome of the consultation, the consultation responses, and the Equality Impact Assessment, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements under Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 as detailed in Appendix C of the of report, together with any other relevant factors such as budget constraints.

13.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**

Community Engagement and Project Management Officer

A Community Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support any decision made on these services, as referenced in section 4 of this report to ensure compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty. A formal consultation with residents and affected communities has also been undertaken, taking into consideration existing users and their locations of residence, and the consultation process was fair and accessible. The outcomes of the consultation were used to inform and support completion of the Community Equality Impact Assessment. This determined the following groups - age, sex and disability - would be negatively impacted if these services are reduced or withdrawn.

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

Changes to these services will likely have an impact on residents who are reliant on these supported bus routes and do not have access to alternative modes of travel. This may then result in costs transferred to other parts of the council or health services, providing access to services and facilities, including hospitals and education, as well as access to food and other retail services.

14. 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 – July 2022 – Thurrock Supported Bus Services; - <https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s35273/Thurrock%20Supported%20Bus%20Services.pdf>

15. Appendices to the report:

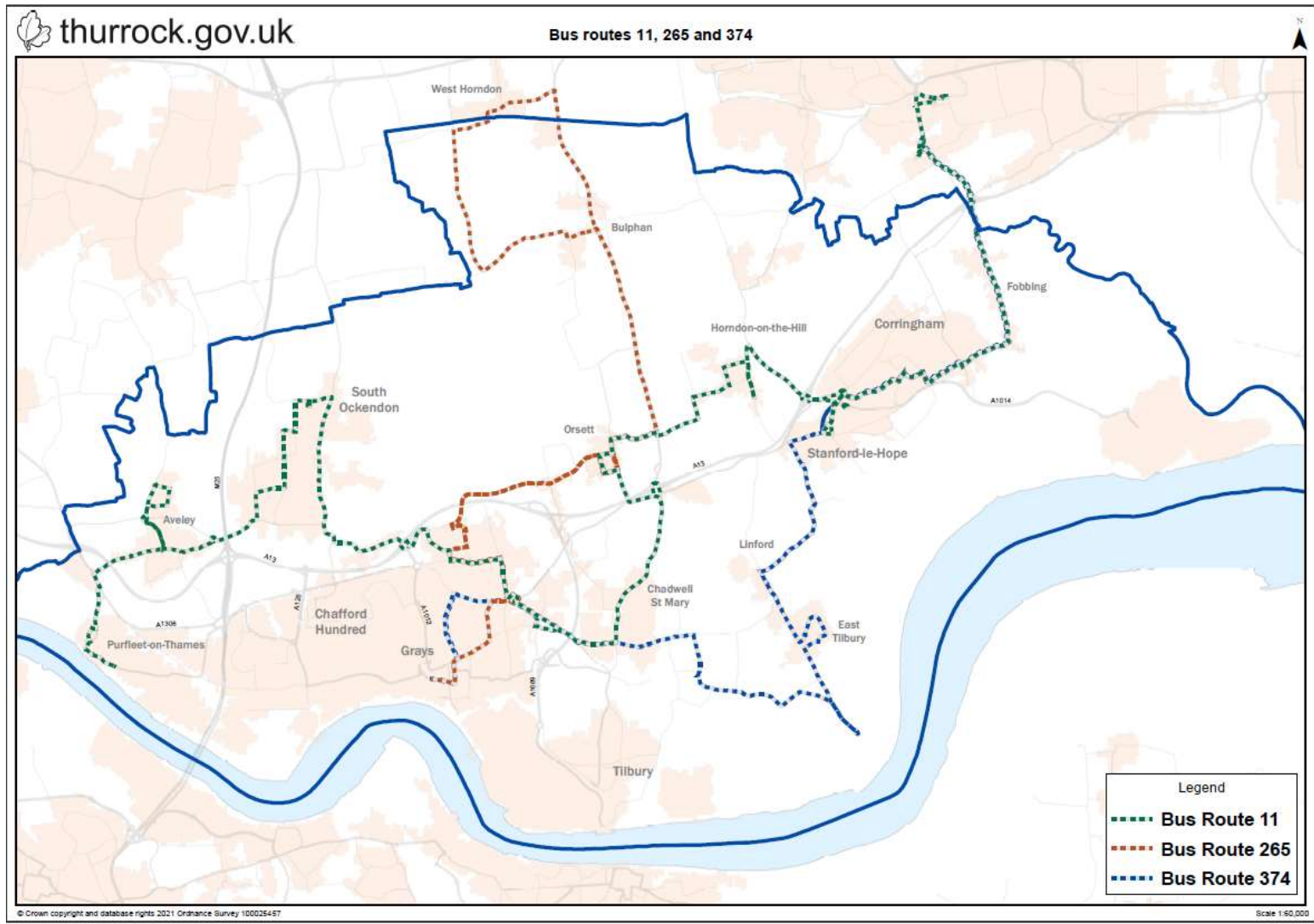
- Appendix A - Map of Supported Services – 11, 265, and 374
- Appendix B - Communities and Equalities Impact Assessment template
- Appendix C - Supported Services Communities Equalities Impact Assessment and Community Impacts Report
- Appendix D - Supported Services Consultation Report
- Appendix E – Minimum Service Level Options

Report Author

Navtej Tung
Strategic Transport Manager

Appendix A – Supported Services Route Map – 11, 265, 374

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Community Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.

The concept of ‘due regard’ was reinforced in 2012 during the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which “requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”

‘Due regard’ is dependent on the relevance and potential impact of the decision being considered. The greater the relevance and impact, the higher the regard due.

As an authority, we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to new policy, strategy, functions or service development including reviews or changes to existing policy, strategy, functions or services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Service (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition, the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service and reason for the development or review process

Name of service	Transportation Services; Planning, Transportation and Public Protection
Lead Officer	Navtej Tung, Strategic Transport Manager
Contact Details	ntung@thurrock.gov.uk ; 01375 652006

Why is this policy, strategy, function or service development/review needed?
<p>Thurrock Council financially supports three local bus services which operate across the borough, supporting predominantly rural communities where commercially operated bus provision does not exist and is unlikely to be deemed financially viable. The existing tendered contract has come to the end of its initial three-year period, with a significant price increase as part of the allowable contract extensions, the council are seeking to understand if the routes are fit for purpose and retain value for money. The council are therefore undertaking a review of these services, to determine if these services should continue, plus understanding what impact there would be if these were removed.</p>

1. Community impact (this can also be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered)

<p>1.1 What impacts will this policy, strategy, function or service development/review have on communities, workforce and the health and wellbeing of local residents? Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?</p> <p><i>Consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and local data sets – please see guidance Complaints Consultation and service monitoring information Voluntary and community organisations The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups. 					
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general			x	A potential reduction or withdrawal of services would have a negative impact on communities, most particularly those communities which	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.

				are smaller, rural or not within the main conurbations within Thurrock.	
Age			x	Any reduction or withdrawal of service would have a negative impact on members of the community who are older, in particular those who have qualified for concessionary bus passes (c.90% of all concessionary bus passes issued in Thurrock are for age). The largest group of respondents to the consultation are those aged over 60.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Disability			x	Those with disabilities in communities without alternative provision are likely to be negatively impacted without owning their own transport. Persons with disabilities are eligible for concessionary travel (as may necessary companion who is required for travel). C10% of concessionary pass holders qualify through disability.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Gender reassignment		X			
Marriage and civil partnership		X			

Pregnancy and maternity		X			
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		X			
Religion or belief		X			
Sex			X	Women are disproportionately likely to be impacted with reductions or withdrawal of services, particularly older women who may not have access to a car or are able to drive. c75% of respondents to the consultation identified as female.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Sexual orientation		X			
Any community issues identified for this location? <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i> If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please include any detail of relevance – for example, is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?			x	A number of rural communities are likely to be impacted by any reduction or withdrawal of services. These communities are likely to be Bulphan, Orsett, East Tilbury, West Tilbury, Aveley. Groups identified above living in these communities are most likely to be disproportionately impacted, if they have no private transport alternative.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.

Workforce			X	People in employment who are reliant on these services are likely to be impacted through any reduction or withdrawal of services, especially if there are no alternate route, if alternatives are longer, more costly or require interchanges, or do not have own private transport.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Health and wellbeing			X	Based on the identification of the groups above, those most affected by the withdrawal or reduction of these services will be negatively impacted. The consultation has identified that the main use of these services by respondents is to access food/shopping, access health appointments and for visiting friends and family. Each of these journey purposes is strongly linked to health and wellbeing of residents.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.

2. Consultation, data and intelligence

2.1 Please highlight the steps you have taken, or plan to take, to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups? For further guidance please contact: consultations@thurrock.gov.uk

This is a vital step

The Passenger Transport Unit has taken multiple steps to increase the reach of this consultation, targeting specifically users of the bus services. To do this, key factors have been taken into considering, in collaboration with the Communities team. The primary method of consulting is the council's web-portal. This is accessible via different devices and supports different needs to be accessible. However, taking into consideration the rural nature of some of the communities served by these bus services, and reflecting on the age profile of users, alternative options were put forward. A paper-based survey was made available to all users, which was available from the following locations – onboard the three bus services under consideration, each of the boroughs libraries and community hubs, key community locations such as post offices and community shops, as well as available for collection from certain community forum members. Responses could be submitted at many of these locations, or via Royal Mail, as a freepost address was set up. The consultation was promoted through posters at bus stops and key locations, and also advising the nearest location from where forms could be collected. All Local Forums and all elected members were advised of this consultation. Posters were also advertising the consultation on the buses.

2.2 Please also provide details on the sources of data or intelligence you have used to inform your assessment of impact and how they have helped you to understand those that will be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review outlined?

Prior to the undertaking of the consultation, the council used patronage data for a full month (May 2022) to help inform and better understand service user profiles. This helped to better understand the profile of user groups and how to target. It was already know that over 50% of all trips were undertaken by persons who qualified for concessionary travel under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. This was combined with local knowledge within the council and the team to target and make available consultation materials.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
If there are changes in service provision, to undertake a shorter follow-up survey with those participants of the consultation who have opted in to being contacted into	6-12 months after any	Passenger Transport Team

<p>3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in Section 1 and 2 and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i></p>		
the future, to see how journeys are being made or what the impact has been on residents. Approximately 100 people have opted into being contacted further.	change to the service	
To propose options to help minimise any impact of service reductions or withdrawals within final report	Dec 2022	Strategic Transport Manager
Where possible to seek funds to implement measures to minimise impact. This may include developing alternate service options, or ticketing measures	2023	Passenger Transport Unit

4. Next steps

It is important to ensure that the information gathered is used to inform any council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template and the Equality and Diversity Implications section for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

It is recognised that any reduction or withdrawal of services will have a significant impact on key communities and persons. These services are provided on routes which are not commercially viable, and therefore it is not expected they could be replaced by commercial providers. They also link key communities which do not have alternative public transport provision. Data collected identified persons who were older, in particular those qualifying for concessionary travel on the basis of age, and those who are disabled within these communities are most likely to be impacted. Following the consultation, gender has also been identified as a key indicator of impact, with over 75% of consultation respondents being women. People who rely on these services are likely to do so for a number of reasons, as they may not have alternative options, own their own transport, or for affordability reasons. The health and wellbeing of users within these communities are also of importance and could have other impacts on the council or other stakeholders if services are reduced or withdrawn, as a high number of users use these buses to access health care appointments, particularly at hospitals and in future at the Integrated Medical Centres programme which the council are delivering in hand with the NHS, to access food, retail and leisure, and also to visit friends and family.

The consultation did not identify a large number of respondents who use the bus for employment or education, but it is known that a significant volume of fare paying passengers are in this bracket. Those who rely on these services may be impacted in the future if they are reduced or withdrawn as they may not be able to access centres of employment, impacting on their employability and therefore quality of life.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role – for example, project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Navtej Tung	Strategic Transport Manager	19/10/22

Appendix C

Thurrock Council

Supported Services Community Equalities Impact Assessment and Community Impacts Report

Bus routes 11, 265 and 374

CEqIA and Data Analysis report

October 2022

V1

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Thurrock Council currently subsidises the operation of three local bus services within the borough. These services provide access to and from locations and for communities which would not be otherwise supported by commercially sustainable bus services. These three services are the 11, 265 and 374.
- 1.2. These services connect many parts of the borough, and in particular communities which have limited, or no other public transport provision. The communities of East Tilbury Village, Fobbing and Horndon-on-the-Hill have no alternative public transport provision and Bulphan has no other provision linking it with any other part of Thurrock. East Tilbury and Linford have no other bus provision, but do have access to rail services, although it should be noted that some parts of East Tilbury are a significant distance from the railway station.
- 1.3. These supported services were tendered in 2019, with a three year contract, with an option to extend by up to two years. This three year period came to an end in March 2022. In implementing the first year of the two year contract extension, there has been a significant cost increase in the provision of the services, by approximately £100,000. This price increase will create a budgetary pressure on the council.
- 1.4. The council is also under immense pressure to balance its budget for future years, and is in a difficult financial position. All council budgets are under review, to ensure they present value for money.
- 1.5. Given this price increase, and potential price increases into the future, the council is undertaking an assessment of these three supported services, budgeted at £452,000 per annum, to determine if they continue to present value for money to the council. Ongoing price increases, without an allocated budget are unsustainable for the council to maintain.
- 1.6. In undertaking this assessment, this report presents details of the impacts of these services on the community, and any potential impacts were these to be reduced or withdrawn. This report includes an Communities Equality Impact Assessment, a data analysis of patronage across a twelve month period, and an assessment of the impact on communities if services are withdrawn.

2. Communities Equalities Impact Assessment

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders. The concept of ‘due regard’ was reinforced in 2012 during the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which “requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”
- 2.2. ‘Due regard’ is dependent on the relevance and potential impact of the decision being considered. The greater the relevance and impact, the higher the regard due. The council believes that all policies, strategies, functions and services should be assessed in terms of the impacts they have on the different groups which make up our community. It is essential that all decisions are informed by an assessment of the impact they will have on the community. With the scale of the challenges being faced by the council, carrying out these assessments will help with the work needed in identifying potential impact for different equality groups and what might be put in place to mitigate negative impacts and where possible enhance the positive impacts.
- 2.3. Community and Equality Impact Assessments (CEqIA’s) must be carried out for any changes to policy, strategy, function or services which affect residents and stakeholders. This CEqIA should then be used to help inform any outcomes in the development of a new policy, function or service. It is important it is carried out at the early stages of development, where feasible at the scoping stage of the process. Carrying out a Community and Equalities Impact Assessments (CEqIA) helps the council to:
- Ensure council services are accessible to all and meet the needs of its customers and staff
 - Ensure the council deliver its policies, strategies, functions and services in a practical way
 - Meet the council’s legal responsibilities and duties set out in the relevant legislation
- 2.4. The council needs to ensure the implications to its services are understood if it is to serve its diverse community appropriately. This ensures that services are provided fairly, are genuinely accessible to all and avoid an unintentional negative impact on any group of people.
- 2.5. To support this wider body of work on the future impacts on the three supported bus services in the borough, a CEqIA has been undertaken.
- 2.6. The CEqIA has identified that any changes to the services – be it a reduction in provision or full withdrawal would have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. These are Age, Disability, and Sex, as well as non-protected groups such as rural communities, workforces, health and wellbeing, and socio-economically disadvantaged. Following further outcomes from the twelve-week consultation, these groups have been further evidenced as being negatively affected.
- Age**
- 2.7. Within the age category, there are key age groups which are generically most likely to be impacted by reductions or withdrawals of any bus services. These would be school age children who use the bus to access education and training, working age adults who use buses to access employment as well as social and utility functions (visiting friends,

accessing transport hubs, shopping), and older persons who are eligible for concessionary travel through the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, which offers all persons who are of State Pension Age free bus travel across England during allocated times (typically after the morning peak rush hour). Within Thurrock, this is Monday to Friday 9am to midnight, and all-day weekends and bank holidays.

- 2.8. Upon reviewing bus patronage data over a twelve-month period, covering July 2021 to June 2022 across these three services, it has been identified that the key age groups that would be most impacted by any change to these three services would be older persons who qualify for concessionary travel (see table x.x below). Across the three services combined, 55% of all journeys made were by concessionary pass holders. This means over half of all passenger journeys made on the three supported services were likely made by persons over the state pension age¹. Individually, none of the three services had ridership of less than 50% by concessionary pass holders. The lowest was for the 11 service, where 51% of passenger journeys are by concessionary pass holders, and the highest is 80% on the 265. The 374 has 58% of all passenger journeys made by concessionary pass holders.
- 2.9. For those travellers who are school aged, only 7% of all passenger journeys are made by those purchasing a childrens ticket. These are available to anyone aged below 16 and these services offer child tickets at all times of the day. The service 11 has the highest proportion of childrens tickets – 7.5%, followed by 6% on the 374, while the 265 has the lowest at 2.5%.
- 2.10. Adult/full fare ticket purchases account for less than 40% of all passenger journeys across the three services (38%) with the highest proportion being on service 11 at 41% and lowest on the 265 at 17.5%. The 374 has 34% of all journeys made by adult tickets. As is noted above, concessionary passes are not valid until 9am, so some adult ticket purchases on the 11 and 374 may be made on journeys prior to 9am by older persons.

Service	All Journeys	Adult Journeys	Child Journeys	Concessionary Journeys			
11	28,345	10,998	41.34%	1,998	7.51%	13,610	51.15%
265	1,471	255	17.54%	37	2.54%	1,162	79.92%
374	38,272	12,652	36.41%	2,126	6.12%	19,974	57.48%
Combined	68,088	23,905	38.06%	4,161	6.62%	34,746	55.32%

- 2.11. Further to the bus patronage data which was analysed, further evidence was received through the twelve-week consultation. The consultation identified that 47% of all respondents identified as being aged 60 years or older. A further 28% did not identify their age category. Only 24% identified as being of working age (45-59 – 19%, and 25-44 – 5%). Lastly only 1% identified as being 17 or under. No persons responding identified

¹ The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme provides concessionary passes for those over state pension age, and those qualifying under certain disabilities. Analysis has not been done on these concessionary journey trips to determine which are by age and disability, however within Thurrock 91% of all concessionary passes are issued on age. In total, 21,153 concessionary passes have been issued (2015-2022), of which 19,299 are older persons passes.

themselves as being 18-24 years old. Further details can be seen in the accompanying Consultation Report appendix.

- 2.12. In light of the evidence given, it is clear that age, and in particular those aged 60 and over will be negatively affected by any reductions or withdrawals of these services. This is supported through hard patronage data and further evidenced by the public consultation outcomes. These negative impacts are not likely to be addressed unless alternative transport provision of some form can be provided, especially to those persons who are unable to access a personal motor vehicle. Given how older persons can be impacted by mobility issues, it may not be practical to expect these users to walk further distances to access alternative transport options, even if they live in more urban areas.

Disability

- 2.13. Within the Disability Group, there is less hard data in the patronage analysis to identify those with disabilities most affected by reductions or withdrawals in services. However it has been included within the CEQA, as it is known that persons identifying with disabilities are more likely to be negatively impacted by the withdrawal of services.
- 2.14. Across England, persons with certain disabilities are eligible to claim a concessionary bus pass through the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. Claims can be made if persons:
- are blind or partially sighted
 - are profoundly or severely deaf
 - are without speech
 - have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term effect on your ability to walk
 - do not have arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms
 - have a learning disability
 - have applied for a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, and have your driving application refused under section 92 of the Act (physical fitness) on grounds other than misuse of drugs or alcohol
- 2.15. Within Thurrock, between January 2015 and October 2022, 1,854 of concessionary passes have been issued to persons claiming under one of these disabilities. In addition, a further 689 of companion passes have been issued, with provide free travel to the pass holder, provided they are travelling with a qualifying disabled concessionary pass holder.
- 2.16. In undertaking the public consultation, it asked if persons identified as having a disability. Approximately one in five respondents identified as having some form of disability, with the most common being long-term medical condition and mobility issues (but not in wheelchair). Other popular conditions were Mental health conditions, hidden impairments and hearing impairments. A smaller number of respondents identified visual impairments, learning difficulties, and mobility - wheelchair users.
- 2.17. Taking this information into account, those members of the community who identify with a disability, in particular those qualifying for a concessionary pass are likely to be negatively impacted by any reduction or withdrawal of services, as these persons are less likely to have access to their own motor vehicle for personal mobility. Without alternative options for transport, this will likely impact on their quality of life.

Sex

- 2.18. Gender of public transport users is an important consideration, and one which has been identified in the CEqIA. The twelve-month patronage data for these three services does not differentiate between gender, however other data can help to paint a picture. Within Thurrock, 57% of all concessionary pass holders are female, compared to 43% male. Within the consultation data, 74% of all respondents identified as female, and 22% male. Only 3% did not give a gender and 1% stated other. Collectively, this data starts to identify that women are more likely to be users of bus services in general within Thurrock.
- 2.19. With reference to external data, the Department for Transport's National Travel Survey data² identifies year on year travel patterns across the country, based on age, and sex by mode dating back to 2002. Data from 2019 showed that women of all ages were six percent less likely to drive than men and 50% more likely to be a car passenger. However when identifying those aged 60 and above women were 40% less likely to drive, and almost 3 times more likely to make trips as a passenger in a car. In terms of local bus journeys, women take 33% more trips than men, and in the 60 and above category, this is 50% more local bus journeys. The data also supports that women are more likely to make journeys by walking, but this reduces on journeys over a mile where men are more likely to make those trips, and cycling women are three times less likely to make a journey by bike compared to men, and four times less likely aged 60 and above. These metrics show gender is a significant factor journey making, and any reduction or withdrawal in these services are likely to negatively impact women in particular along these route corridors, particularly when there are no alternative public transport options within a reasonable walking distance, and where there is no access to a car.

Other Protected Groups

- 2.20. The CEqIA did not identify other protected groups as specifically being impacted by any potential reduction or withdrawal of services. These groups are Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnerships, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, and Sexual Orientation. Data from the consultation does not also identify these characteristics, but it does not specifically ask questions about these groups, with the exception of race. This question where answered, showed that 86% of respondents identified as being White – British. A further 3% did not wish to state. The remaining 11% identified across 9 different categories. This is reflective of the general population, and no one ethnicity is expected to be negatively impacted than another.

Local Communities

- 2.21. The three services serve a number of communities which have few or no other public transport provisions. Communities such as Bulphan, Orsett, East Tilbury, and Aveley have other public transport alternatives, but to replicate the links these three supported services provide may be significantly increased in time and cost. Other communities, such as West Tilbury, Hordon-on-the-Hill and Fobbing do not have alternative provision, and therefore those members of these communities which do not have private transport provision may be cut off, or face increased costs to use other modes such as taxi's and rideshare modes.

² Department for Transport – Statistical Data Sets – Mode of Travel - [Mode of travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Workforce

- 2.22. Due to the links these services create for certain communities, and the lack of alternatives, it is likely that a small proportion of the community uses these buses to access employment. Given the patronage levels, this is likely to be a small number, however service withdrawals could have bigger implications on access to employment and employability of residents. Where alternatives may exist, which require connections to make the same trip, this will likely impact on cost of the journey and the time taken to undertake the journey. If either or both of these increase, then it may no longer be viable to maintain employment.
- 2.23. Data from the consultation identified that use of these services for accessing employment was the fourth most identified journey purpose, however it was identified by only 8% of respondents. This was significantly less than the three more popular purposes. A further 5% of respondents use these services for education and training, but this may include responses from those below working age.

Health and Wellbeing

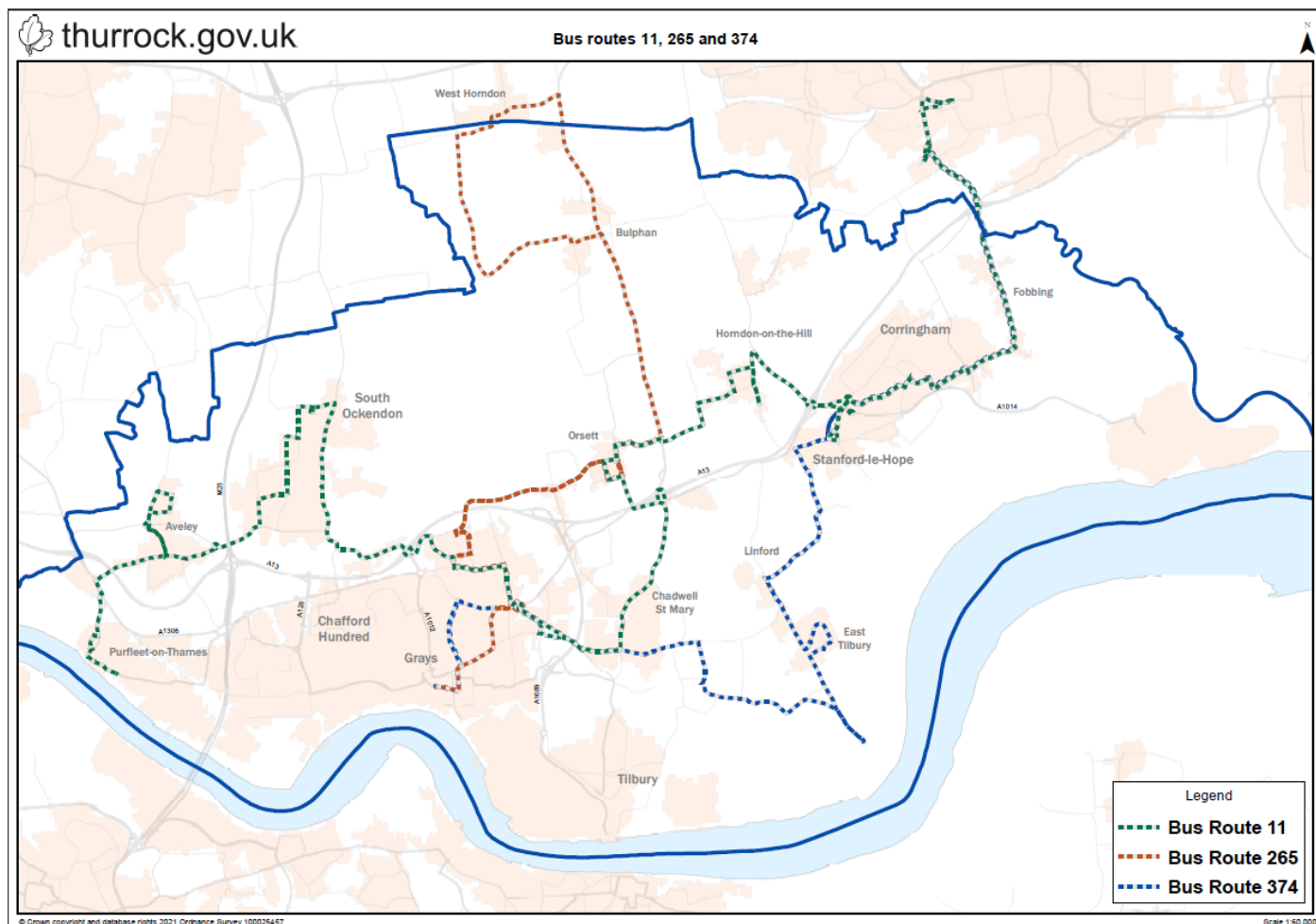
- 2.24. Any reduction or withdrawal of services, particularly in areas where there are limited alternatives, or where accessing alternatives may be too difficult, too far or too expensive, this will then have an impact on the quality of life of service users. One resulting outcome may be that residents who use these existing services may no longer be able to make trips as they would have previously, reducing their interaction with other members of the community, reducing access to education, training and employment, and other purposes.
- 2.25. Where there is reduced access to transport, and therefore reduced opportunity to access services, leisure, health or other facilities, this is likely to impact on health and wellbeing of communities. This may be the physical health of people – by no longer being able to access appointments with doctors, or the proposed network of Integrated Medical Centres within the borough, or to mental wellbeing, where not being able to get out for leisure and social purposes may significantly impact on members of the community who have limited opportunities via other modes of travel. Both physical and mental health and wellbeing concerns will likely have knock on impacts for other parts of the council or other public sector services into the future.
- 2.26. The consultation identified the key purpose of journey by users. These are given in the table below, however identified that going shopping (32%), accessing health appointments (30%) and visiting friends and family (20%) ranked as the three highest responses. Getting to and from work (8%), education and training (5%) and other (5%) were the other notable purposes.

Journey Purpose	Proportion
Going Shopping	32%
Accessing Healthcare / appointments	30%
Visiting Family and Friends	20%
Getting to/from work	8%
Accessing Education/Training	5%
Other	5%

- 2.27. In reviewing each of the groupings identified within the Community Equalities Impact Assessment, it has determined the negative impact any reduction or withdrawal of the three supported services may have on the groups and communities. The CEqIA template seeks to identify how these negative impacts could be mitigated. Given the nature of these services and what they offer, it is unlikely that the impacts of service reductions or withdrawals could be mitigated easily. Without some alternative transport provision being implemented which replicates these services or enables trips to be made without other adverse factors (significant increase in journey time and connections, costs, further distance to access), it is likely these negative impacts will remain to these individuals and to the groups. One way would be if the private sector in transportation services were to replace publicly funded services. It is however expected that commercial operators are unlikely to step in to replicate these services, as patronage and revenues are not sufficient to cover the costs. In fact, had these been commercially viable, it is very unlikely the council will have been supporting these services to date. However, this review of these services may enable the council to work with commercial operators to showcase where parts of the network have potential for growth and could be incorporated into existing routes. Alternatively, the council, in collaboration with transport providers look at exploring options to reduce ticket prices, and costs where travel goes across different operators, minimising the impact on communities impacts by any service reductions or withdrawals.
- 2.28. A full copy of the Community Equality Impact Assessment is given in the appendix of this report.

3. Service Provision Analysis and Impacts of Withdrawals

3.1. This section of the report provides an analysis of how the three supported services in Thurrock support communities currently, how they are used, and what the potential impact will be through any reduction or withdrawal of these routes.



3.2. The above map shows the routes of the three services across Thurrock.

Service Use

3.3. One of the preliminary exercises was to understand how the current services are used. The following table sets out annual usage of the services over each year of the three-year contract period, commencing April 2019. The first year of the contract saw 89,000 passenger journeys across the three years. There is a significant decline in the years that follow, due to the impact of the global Coronavirus pandemic. This hit hard on passenger revenues generated through ticket sales, with lockdowns and government messaging recommending users from avoiding passenger transport services reducing demand. Patronage by those with concessionary passes under the ENCTS remain below 2019/20 levels.

Year	11	265	374	Total	Revenues
2019/20	35922	1254	51854	89030	£75,991.50
2020/21	12637	809	17530	30976	£31,536.10
2021/22	26449	1441	37116	65006	£69,169.60

3.4. The annual revenues are also shown in the table above, with nearly £76,000 generated in 2019/20. In 2021/22, despite some disruption from the pandemic, saw revenues recover to just under £70,000 – a shortfall of £6,000 against 2019/20 levels, despite having 25% fewer passenger journeys.

3.5. To delve further into how these services are used by bus users, a detailed analysis of patronage data was undertaken. Boarding data for a twelve-month period from July 2021 to June 2022 was reviewed, to help better understand who used the services, and where. This time period fit nicely with the removal of covid-related restrictions ending in June 2021, so not to directly influence the data. This analysis covered all three routes.

Service	All Users	Revenues	Proportion of Users	Proportion of Revenues
11	28,345	£28,121.50	41.63%	38.40%
265	1,471	£516.70	2.16%	0.71%
374	38,272	£44,586.70	56.21%	60.89%
Totals	68,088	£73,224.90	100.00%	100.00%

3.6. Over this 12-month period, there were just over 68,000 passenger journeys by all passengers, and fare revenues of £73,225 were generated. The table shows the 374 route as the most popular with highest levels of patronage and revenues, while the 265 is the lowest, however it runs at significantly lower frequencies than the other two services.

Service	Adult	%	Child	%	Concessionary	%
11	10,998	41.34%	1,998	7.51%	13,610	51.15%
265	255	17.54%	37	2.54%	1,162	79.92%
374	12,652	36.41%	2,126	6.12%	19,974	57.48%
Total	23,905	38.06%	4,161	6.62%	34,746	55.32%

3.7. In looking at the make up of users across the three services, more than 50% of users are those with concessionary passes, under the ENCTS. Across the three services, these users make up 55% of all passenger journeys, with it being as high as 80% on the 265. Concessionary passes are issued to anyone who is of State Pension age, or those via a qualifying disability, with 91% of passes issued for age. Tickets purchased as full paying adults accounted for nearly 40% of all passenger journeys, but is much lower on the 265 at 17.5%. Lastly, child fares only account for nearly 7% of all passenger journeys, despite child fares being offered on all journey times across the week, for any one under 16.

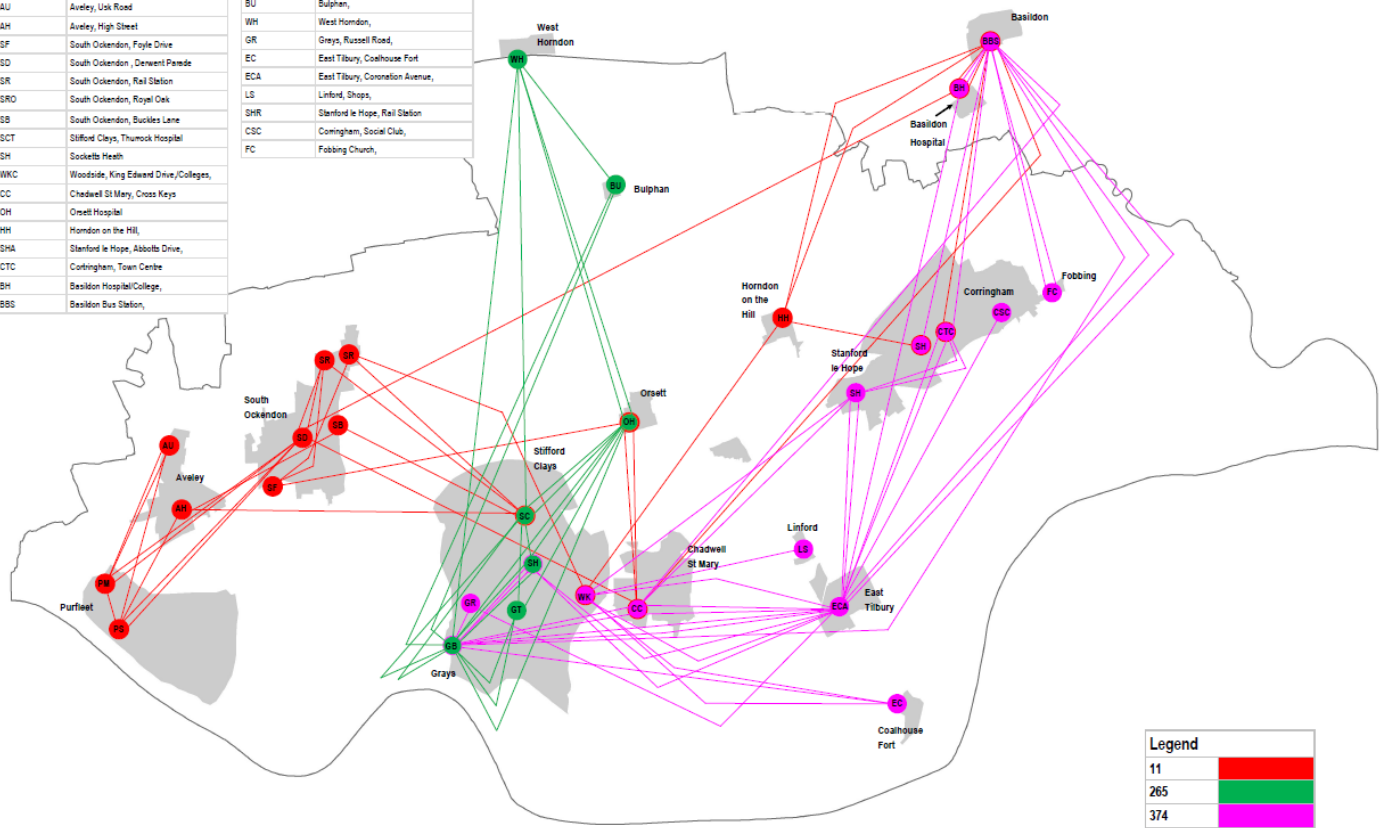
Service	Very Rare <5 trips	Rare 5-10 trips	Occasional 11-40 trips	Regular User >40 trips	Total Unique Users
11	4,782	314	333	76	5,505
265	416	6	7	6	435
374	5,606	337	356	140	6,439
Totals	10,804	657	696	222	12,379

3.8. The table above identified how frequently the bus is used by individuals. While most journeys are identified in passenger journeys, this table has been able to identify individual passengers and how many trips they undertook. It should be noted that this is based on passengers who have key identifiers, and therefore those who pay with physical cash are excluded from this list. Only one third of all trips which are paid for are by a cash transactions. Overall, the data identified 12,379 unique users across the three services.

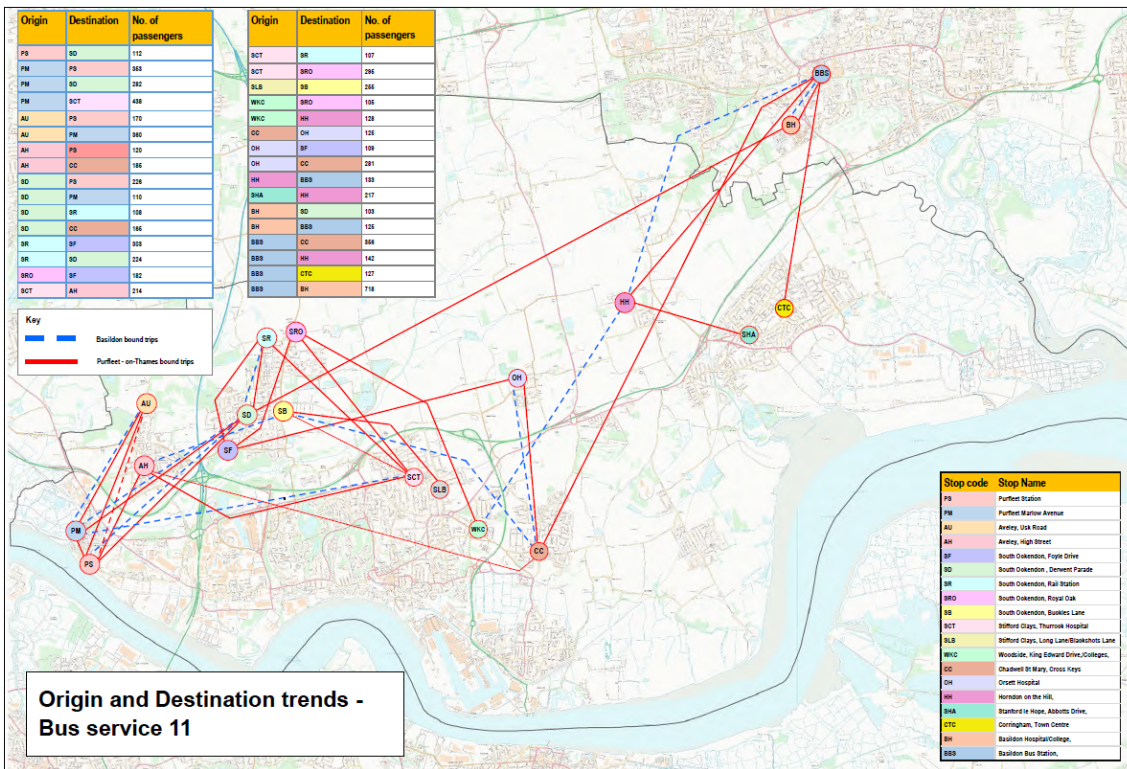
3.9. Using the data from the table, it is clear that the overwhelming majority – 87% - use each of the services on less than five trips per year, and on the 265 this is over 95% of all users. This shows that a large proportion of the users of these services use the bus two to three days per year, assuming a two-way trip is made per day. Users who use the bus occasionally or frequently, so that is more than ten trips per year, account for 7.5% of all users. The number of regular users is relatively low, accounting for less than 2% of all users.

Origin & Destination

Origin code	Origin	Origin code	Origin
PS	Purfleet Station	GBS	Grays Bus Station,
PM	Purfleet Marlow Avenue	GT	Grays, Turps Corner
AU	Aveley, Usk Road	BU	Bulphan,
AH	Aveley, High Street	WH	West Horndon,
SF	South Ockendon, Foyle Drive	GR	Grays, Russell Road,
SD	South Ockendon, Deventer Parade	EC	East Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort
SR	South Ockendon, Rail Station	ECA	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue,
SRO	South Ockendon, Royal Oak	LS	Linford, Shops,
SB	South Ockendon, Buckles Lane	SHR	Stanford le Hope, Rail Station
SCT	Stifford Clays, Thurnock Hospital	CSC	Corringham, Social Club,
SH	Socketts Heath	FC	Fobbing Church,
WKC	Woodside, King Edward Drive/Colleges,		
CC	Chedwell St Mary, Cross Keys		
OH	Orsett Hospital		
HH	Horndon on the Hill,		
SHA	Stanford le Hope, Abbots Drive,		
CTC	Corringham, Town Centre		
BH	Basildon Hospital/College,		
BBS	Basildon Bus Station,		



3.10. The following section identifies how the services are used, and where bus users across the three services travel to and from. The above map shows the key travel patterns across the three services, with the 11 shown in red, the 265 in green, and the 374 in purple. These are the most popular journeys identified within the data, above certain thresholds, specific to each route. These are given in greater detail.



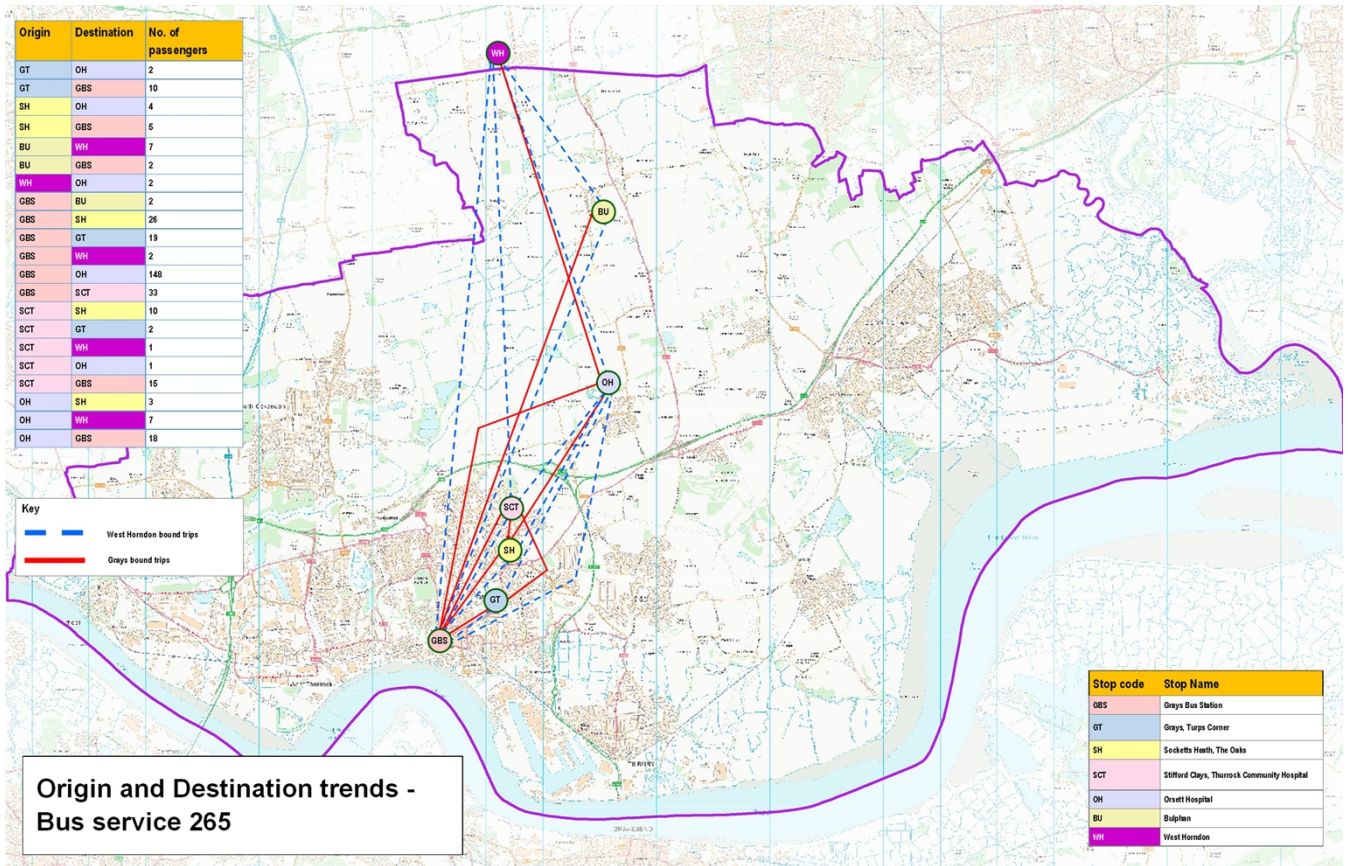
Purfleet, Rail Station - South Ockendon, Derwent Parade 112 Passengers	Purfleet, Marlow Avenue - Purfleet Rail Station 353 Passengers	Purfleet, Marlow Avenue - South Ockendon, Derwent Parade 282 Passengers	Purfleet, Marlow Avenue - Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital 438 Passengers	Aveley, Uak Road - Purfleet Rail Station 170 Passengers	Aveley, Uak Road - Purfleet, Marlow Avenue 360 Passengers
Aveley, High Street - Purfleet, Rail Station 120 Passengers	Aveley, High Street - Chadwell at Mary, Cross Keys 185 Passengers	South Ockendon, Derwent Parade - Purfleet, Rail Station 226 Passengers	South Ockendon, Derwent Parade - Purfleet, Marlow Avenue 110 Passengers	South Ockendon, Derwent Parade - South Ockendon, Rail Station 108 Passengers	South Ockendon, Derwent Parade - Chadwell at Mary, Cross Keys 165 Passengers
South Ockendon, Rail Station - South Ockendon, Foyle Drive 303 Passengers	South Ockendon, Rail Station - South Ockendon, Derwent Parade 224 Passengers	South Ockendon, Royal Oak - South Ockendon, Foyle Drive 182 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - Aveley, High Street 214 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - South Ockendon, Rail Station 107 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - South Ockendon, Royal Oak 295 Passengers
Stifford Clays, Long Lane/Blackshots Lane - South Ockendon, Buckles Lane 255 Passengers	Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges - South Ockendon, Royal Oak 105 Passengers	Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges - Horndon on the Hill 128 Passengers	Chadwell at Mary, Cross Keys - Orsett Hospital 125 Passengers	Orsett Hospital - South Ockendon, Foyle Drive 109 Passengers	Orsett Hospital - Chadwell at Mary, Cross Keys 281 Passengers
Horndon on the Hill - Basildon, Bus Station 133 Passengers	Stanford le Hope, Abbots Drive - Horndon on the Hill 217 Passengers	Basildon Hospital/ College - South Ockendon, Derwent Parade 103 Passengers	Basildon Hospital/ College - Basildon, Bus Station 125 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Chadwell at Mary, Cross Keys 356 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Horndon on the Hill 142 Passengers
		Basildon, Bus Station - Corringham, Town Centre 127 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Basildon Hospital/College 718 Passengers		

- 3.11. The map and grid given above show the origin-destination pairs which are most popular on the 11 service. The OD pairs are graded in three shades, with those pairs with more than 100 journeys in the lightest shade of red, increasing in 100's with those in darkest red for trips with 300 or more journeys. Each of these pairs is shown on the corresponding map.
- 3.12. The most popular Origin-Destination pairs identified are Basildon Hospital to Basildon Bus Station – 653 passengers, Usk Road Aveley to Purfleet Marlow Road – 405 passengers, Purfleet Marlow Road to Usk Road – 340 passengers, Chadwell Cross Keys to Basildon – 326 passengers, Purfleet Station to Purfleet Marlow Road – 325 passengers, Foyle Drive to Ockendon Station – 279 passengers, Ockendon Royal Oak to Thurrock Hospital – 271 passengers, Derwent Parade to Purfleet Marlow Road – 259 passengers, Chadwell Cross Keys to Orsett Hospital – 258 passengers, and Buckles Lane to Long Lane, Blackshots – 232 passengers.
- 3.13. There are 132 bus stops, or origin points served by the number 11 bus. Therefore, there are 17,292 origin-destination combinations. Of the served bus stops, the most popular origin stops are Basildon Bus Station – 3,430 passengers, Derwent Parade, South Ockendon – 2,214 passengers, Corringham Town Centre – 1,442 passengers, Basildon Hospital – 1,210 passengers, Cross Keys Chadwell St Mary – 968 passengers, High Street Aveley – 893 passengers, Marlow Avenue – 884 passengers, Orsett Hospital – 808 passengers, High Road Horndon-on-the-Hill – 780 passengers, Nursery Road/Abbotts Drive Stanford-le-Hope – 736 passengers, Ockendon Railway Station – 716 passengers, and Purfleet Railway Station – 714 passengers.
- 3.14. The most popular destinations were Basildon bus station – 1,722 arrivals, Purfleet Marlow Road – 1,163 arrivals, Derwent Parade South Ockendon – 989 arrivals, Thurrock Hospital – 981 arrivals, Ockendon Station – 941 arrivals. Other destinations with higher numbers of arrivals included Orsett Hospital (795), Usk Road Aveley (608), Basildon Hospital (593), Aveley High Street (591), and Chadwell Cross Keys (498).

Journey Departures	Patronage
0715	3163
0745	1013
0915	6247
1115	5107
1315	5387
1515	4264
1715	2627
1905	560
Total	28,298

- 3.15. Finally, the most popular service for the 11 is the 0915, which carried over 6000 passenger journeys, followed by the following two runs across the middle of the day carrying over 5000 passenger journeys. Presumably, this is due to persons being able to use their concessionary passes issued under ENCTS, which allow free travel after 9am.

During the morning rush hour, the 0715 run carries over 3000 passengers. The lowest level of patronage is at 1905, carrying just 560 passenger journeys.



Grays, Turps Corner - Orsett Hospital 2 Passengers	Grays, Turps Corner - Grays, Bus Station 10 Passengers	Socketts Heath, The Oak - Orsett Hospital 4 Passengers	Socketts Heath, The Oak - Grays, Bus Station 5 Passengers	Bulphan, Village Hall - West Horndon, Railway Station 7 Passengers	Bulphan, Village Hall - Grays, Bus station 2 Passengers
West Horndon, Railway Station - Orsett Hospital 2 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Bulphan, Village Hall 2 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Socketts Heath, The Oak 26 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Grays, Turps Corner 19 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - West Horndon, Railway Station 2 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Orsett Hospital 148 Passengers
Grays, Bus Station - Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital 33 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - Socketts Heath, The Oak 10 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - Grays, Turps Corner 2 Passengers	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - West Horndon, Railway Station 1 Passenger	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - Orsett Hospital 1 Passenger	Stifford Clays, Thurrock Hospital - Grays, Bus Station 15 Passengers
Orsett Hospital - Socketts Heath, The Oak 3 Passengers	Orsett Hospital - West Horndon, Railway Station 7 Passengers	Orsett Hospital - Grays, Bus Station 18 Passengers			

- 3.16. The map and grid given above show the origin-destination pairs which are most popular on the 265 service³. The OD pairs are graded in three shades of green, with those pairs with more than 30 journeys shown in the darkest shade of green. Each of these pairs is shown on the corresponding map.
- 3.17. The 265 service has relatively low levels of frequency, with only two return journeys per day, operating on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only. As a result, it has low patronage and low numbers in Origin-Destination pairs. The most popular journey on the service is between Orsett Hospital and Grays Bus station with 148 journeys, followed by Thurrock Hospital and Grays Bus Station (41 journeys).
- 3.18. The bus station in Grays is the most popular destination (211 arrivals), followed by Thurrock Hospital and Orsett Hospital with 27 and 26 arrivals respectively. The most popular origin points are Grays Bus Station – 437 embarkations, Rectory Road/Penn Close – 255, Orsett Hospital – 163, and Recreation Ground Bulphan – 162. There were a total of 1,471 passenger journeys.

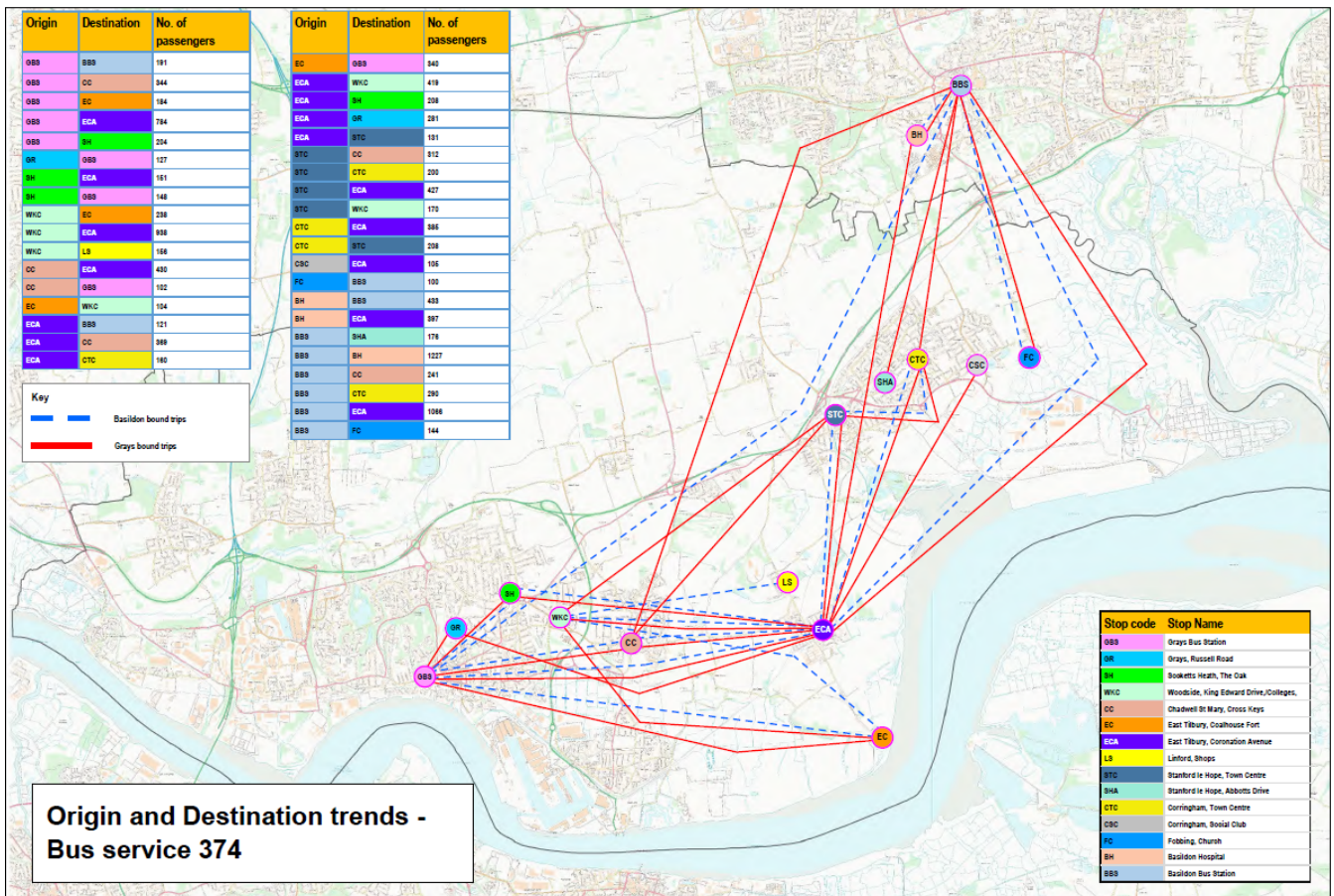
Journey Departures	Patronage
1015	549
1200	662
1400	262
Totals	1,472

- 3.19. The above table highlights when passenger journeys are made on the 265. The most popular service is the midday departure from Grays with 662, however based on journey length, the 1015 service has a higher proportion of passengers per mile travelled than the subsequent departure. The lower number of passengers on the 1400 departure are likely to be returning home from Grays or either hospital.
- 3.20. The following map and grid show the origin-destination pairs which are most popular on the 374 service⁴. The OD pairs are graded in three shades of yellow, with those pairs with more than 100 journeys in the lightest shade of yellow, increasing in 100's with those in darkest yellow for trips with 300 or more journeys. Each of these pairs is shown on the corresponding map.
- 3.21. The most frequent Origin-Destination points were Basildon Hospital to Basildon Bus Station with 1,115 passenger journeys, East Tilbury to Basildon Bus Station with 1,001 journeys, East Tilbury to King Edward Drive – 875 passenger journeys, East Tilbury to Grays Bus Station with 721 passenger journeys, Basildon to Basildon Hospital with 412

³ While analysis has been undertaken, the majority of trips made on the 265 are undertaken by persons using concessionary travel passes, and therefore the data can only identify embarkation points, but end destination is unknown. This accounts for 80% of all journeys.

⁴ While analysis has been undertaken, the majority of trips made on the 374 are undertaken by persons using concessionary travel passes, and therefore the data can only identify embarkation points, but end destination is unknown. This accounts for 61% of all journeys.

journeys, East Tilbury to Chadwell Cross Keys with 403 passenger journeys, East Tilbury to Stanford-le-Hope town centre with 391 journeys, King Edward Drive to East Tilbury with 388 journeys, East Tilbury to Basildon Hospital with 371 journeys, and East Tilbury to Corringham Town Centre with 358 journeys. From this data set, it is clear a high proportion of passenger journeys are made from East Tilbury towards both the east and west.



- 3.22. The most popular destinations on the 374 are Basildon town centre with 3,269 arrivals, East Tilbury with 2,133 arrivals, Grays Bus Station with 1,943 arrivals, King Edward Drive with 1,363 arrivals, and Stanford-le-Hope town centre with 1,285 arrivals.
- 3.23. The most popular origin points for journeys on this service are Basildon Bus Station – 5,965, Grays Bus Station – 3,316, Corringham Town Centre – 2,999, Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury – 2,567, Basildon Hospital – 1,937, Trent East Tilbury - 1906, Nursey Road Stanford – 1,709, Cross Keys Chadwell – 1,604, Stanford Railway Station – 1,598, and Gloucester Road East Tilbury – 1,352.

Grays, Bus Station - Basildon, Bus Station 191 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys 344 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - East Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort 184 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 784 Passengers	Grays, Bus Station - Socketts Heath, The Oak 204 Passengers	Grays, Russell Road - Grays, Bus Station 127 Passengers
Socketts Heath, The Oak - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 151 Passengers	Socketts Heath, The Oak - Grays, Bus Station 148 Passengers	Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges - East Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort 238 Passengers	Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 938 Passengers	Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges - Linford, Shops 156 Passengers	Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 430 Passengers
Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys - Grays, Bus Station 102 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort - Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges 104 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges 121 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys 369 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Corringham, Town Centre 160 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Grays, Bus Station 340 Passengers
East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges 419 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Socketts Heath, The Oak 208 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Grays, Russell Road 281 Passengers	East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue - Stanford le Hope, Town Centre 131 Passengers	Stanford le Hope, Town Centre - Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys 312 Passengers	Stanford le Hope, Town Centre - Corringham, Town Centre 200 Passengers
Stanford le Hope, Town Centre - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 427 Passengers	Stanford le Hope, Town Centre - Woodside, King Edward Drive/ Colleges 170 Passengers	Corringham, Town Centre - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 385 Passengers	Corringham, Town Centre - Stanford le Hope, Town Centre 208 Passengers	Corringham, Social Club - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 105 Passengers	Fobbing, Church - Basildon, Bus Station 100 Passengers
Basildon, Hospital/ College - Basildon, Bus Station 433 Passengers	Basildon, Hospital/ College - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 397 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Stanford le Hope, Abbotts Drive 176 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Basildon, Hospital/ College 1227 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Chadwell st Mary, Cross Keys 241 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Corringham, Town Centre 290 Passengers
		Basildon, Bus Station - East Tilbury, Coronation Avenue 1066 Passengers	Basildon, Bus Station - Fobbing, Church 144 Passengers		

3.24. The following table sets out patronage across each departure on this route. The most popular service is the 0845 departure from Grays, with over 4000 passenger journeys. This likely reflects the opportunity for concessionary pass holders to access the bus using their pass. The next most popular service is the 1630 departure from Basildon Bus Station at just under 4000 passenger journeys. All other departures carry a relatively even number of patronage between 2000 and 3000 passenger journeys with only two services dropping marginally below this 2000 figure. Unlike the 11, patronage is more even across the departures, but this is likely due to increased levels of frequency and lower waits between services, and also a shorter overall route journey.

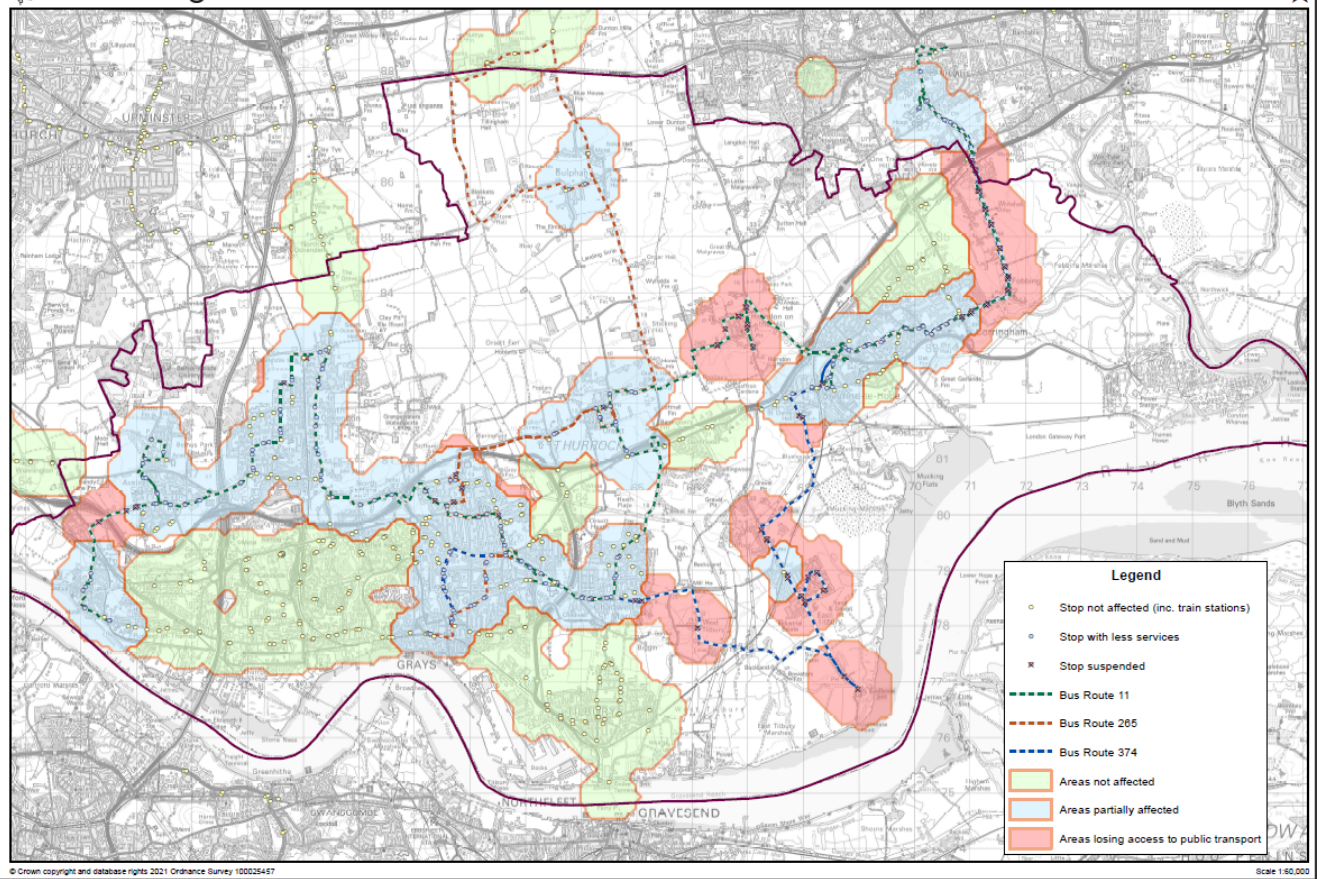
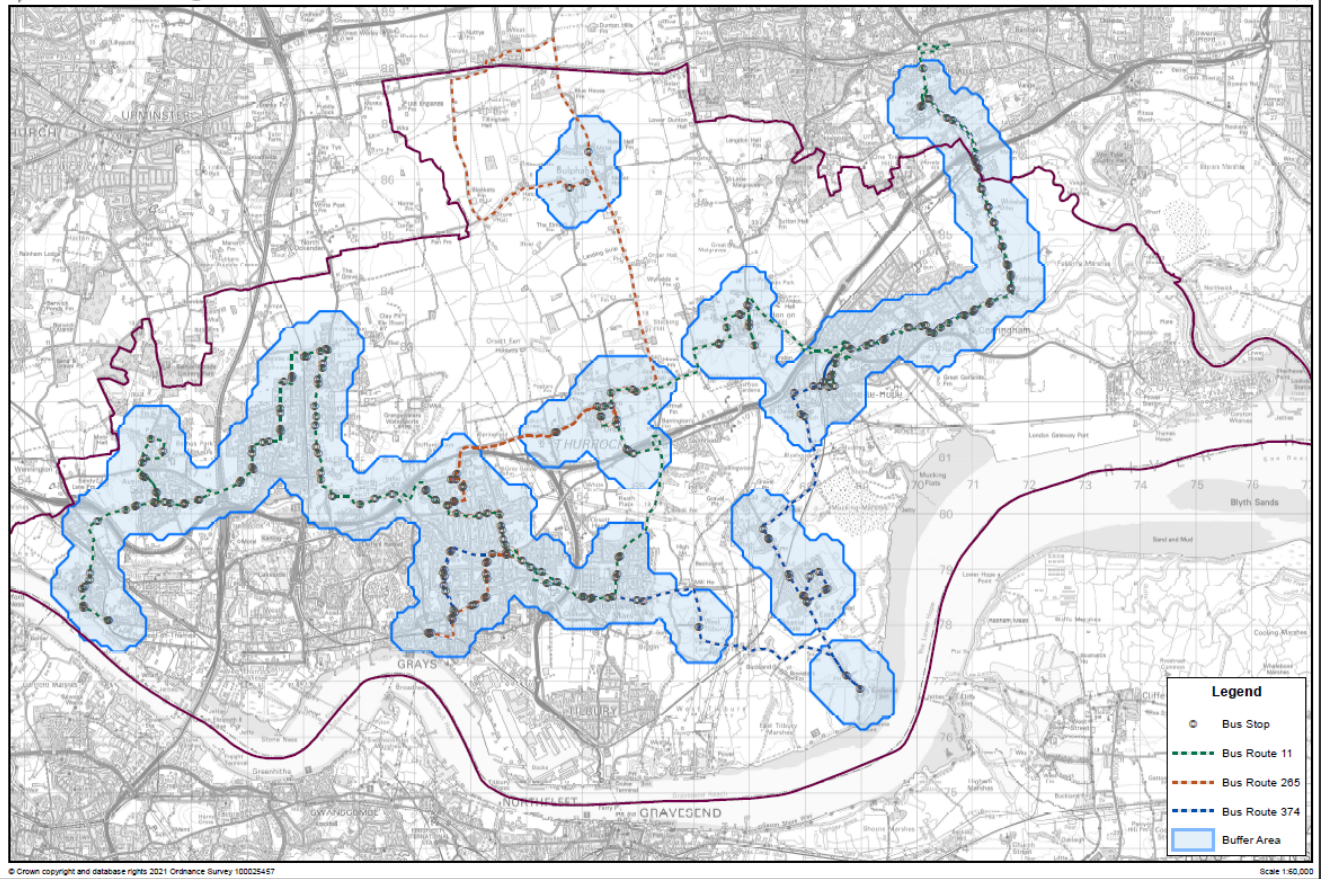
Journey Departure	Patronage
0710	2,597
0720	1,904
0845	4,048
0900	2,337
1018	2,983
1030	2,692
1148	2,740
1200	2,618
1318	2,079
1330	2,642
1448	3,119
1500	2,810
1630	3,974
1750	1,876
Total	38,340

Impact of Withdrawal

3.25. The following section identifies where communities would be impacted if services were reduced or withdrawn. The approach to this process has been to use the full passenger transport network within Thurrock – that is bus and rail, and to remove the three supported services from the available options. A specialist transport accessibility modelling tool TRACC was used to identify what proportion of those residents who are currently able to access these three supported services, would be able to continue accessing some form of public transport if these were removed from the network. Historically it is recommended that there should be a maximum walking distance of 400m to access a bus⁵, and extended to a mile for heavy rail services. For ease, this analysis has used a 500m walking distance buffer to identify the number of people who can access an alternative public transport provision. It does not however identify if these alternatives will provide like for like alternatives, but does significantly increase the likelihood of transfers being available to reach the end destination.

3.26. The below map shows where residents, dwellings or communities are within a 400 metre actual walk (as opposed to as-the-crow-flies) of a bus stop which is served by any of these three services. The total residential population served by these three services within 400 metres is 113,448 based on 2020 mid-year population estimates.

⁵ Department of Environment Circular 82/73 (DOE, 1973)



3.27. The above map shows the impact of withdrawals of these three services across the borough. It reflects all areas within Thurrock which can be utilised within 500 metres of an access point such as bus stop or railway station. The areas shown in green are those communities which have some form of transport provision but were not able to access these three supported services, and therefore are excluded from this analysis. Those areas shown in blue are the communities which are within a 500m access of the three supported services but are able to access an alternative provision if these three routes were withdrawn. Lastly, the map shows areas of red – these are communities and residents who would not be able to access an alternative provision were these services removed. The following table identifies the number of residents who are thereby impacted by potential changes to these services, assuming all other services remain the same, based on the previous map.

3.28. Of the 113,448 residents served by these three supported services, if they were removed, this would result in nearly 9,000 residents no longer have any access to public transport, in addition to over 6000 which currently do not have any provision. Collectively, this would result in 9% of the boroughs total population not having any access at all to public transport. If these services were removed, 104,523 residents would have access to at least one alternative public transport service, either via rail or bus. A further 56000 residents, who are not able to access these three services will also continue to access at least one public transport service.

Impacts of Withdrawals	Dwellings	Population
Areas not affected (green area)	24,393	55,880
Areas partially affected (blue area)	50,569	104,523
Areas losing access to public transport (red area)	4,464	8,925
Out of scope (non-shaded)	3,644	6,203
Total	83,070	175,531

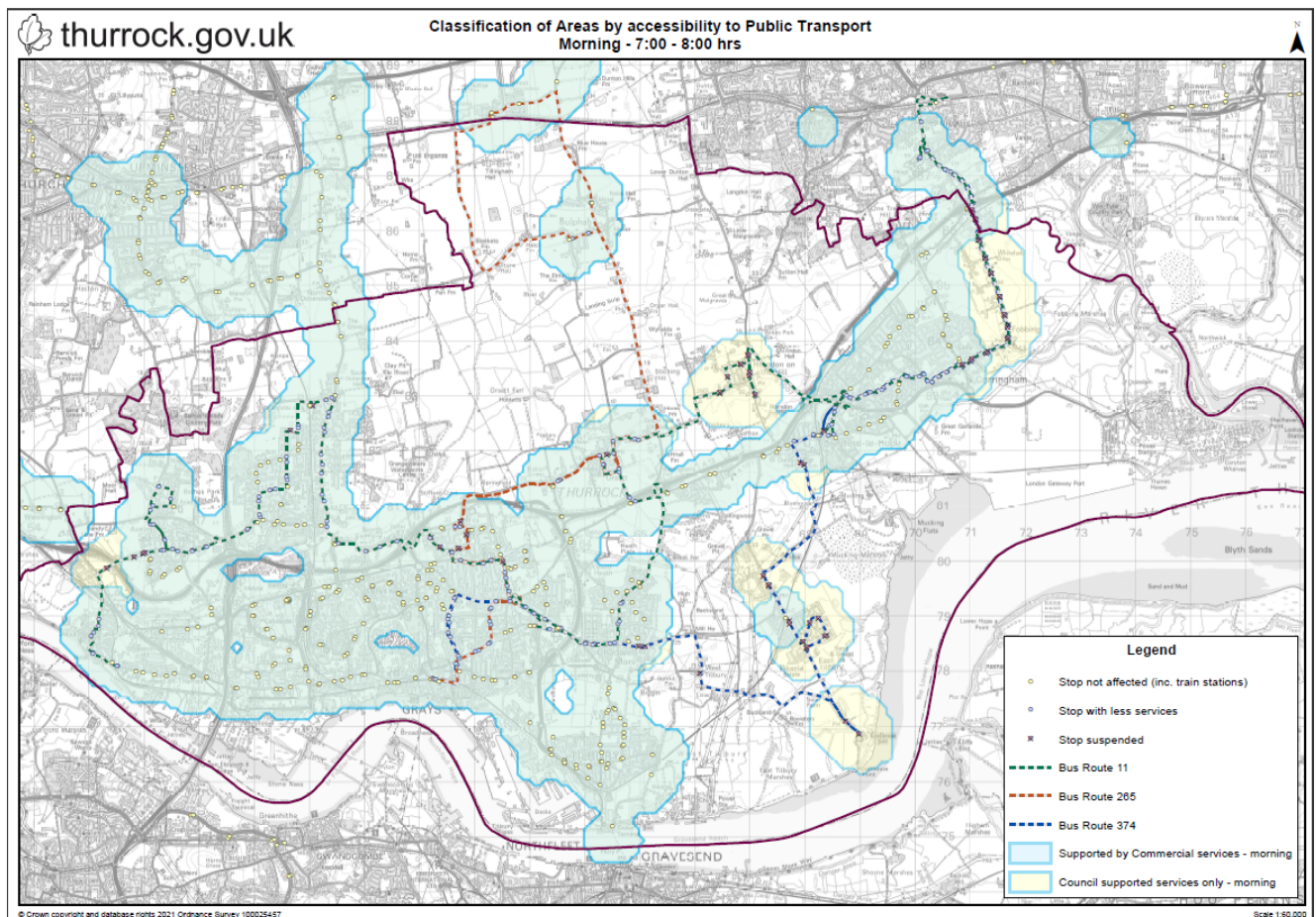
Day	Time period	Population currently served	Population served after withdrawal	Population losing access to public transport
Weekday	07:00 - 08:00	171,734	164,420	7,314
Weekday	12:00 - 13:00	171,637	163,464	8,173
Weekday	15:00 - 16:00	171,670	164,098	7,572
Weekday	20:00 - 21:00	142,314	139,170	3,144
Saturday	08:00 - 09:00	167,146	164,131	3,015
Saturday	15:00 - 16:00	167,146	163,429	3,717
Sunday	12:00 - 13:00	139,254	139,254	-

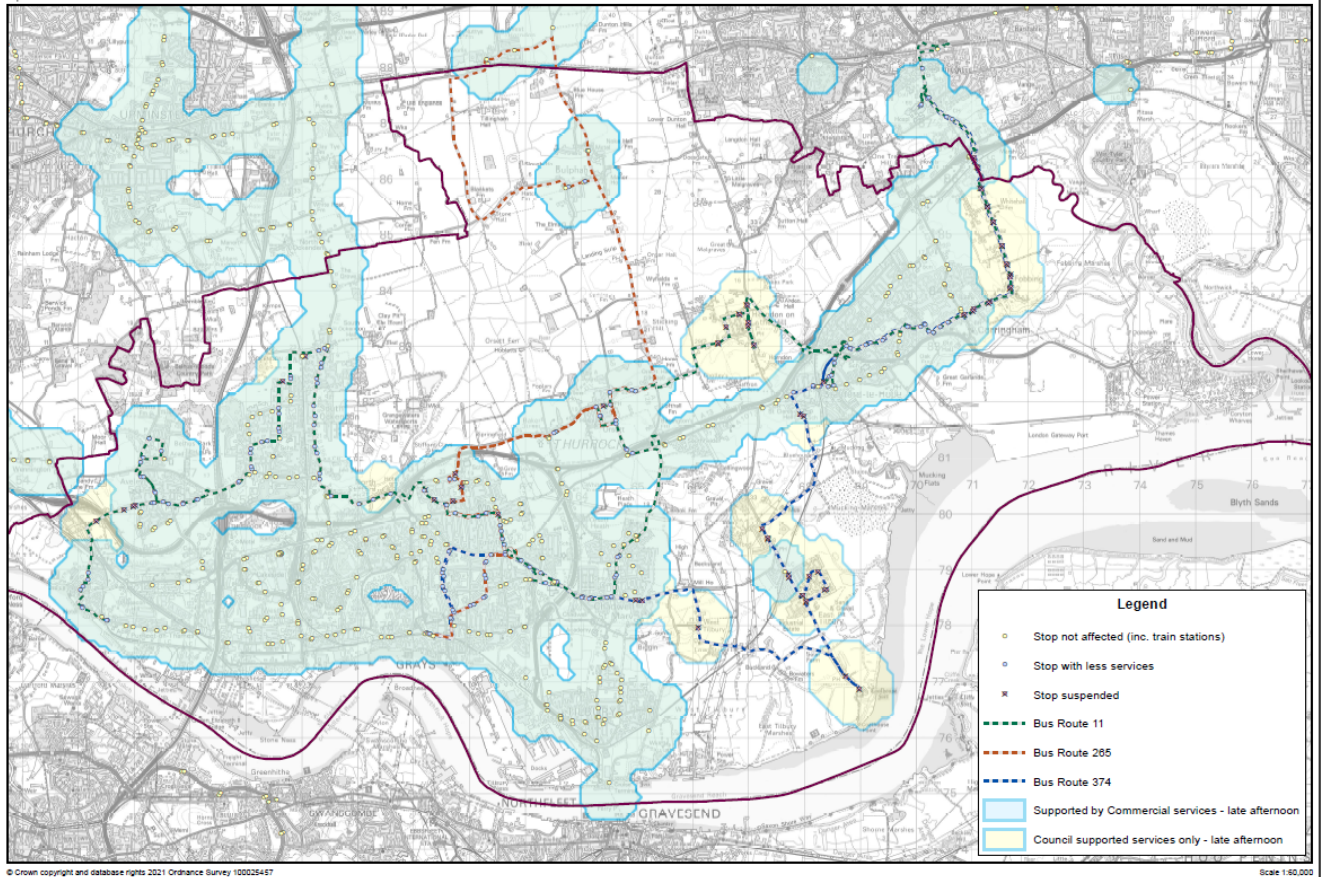
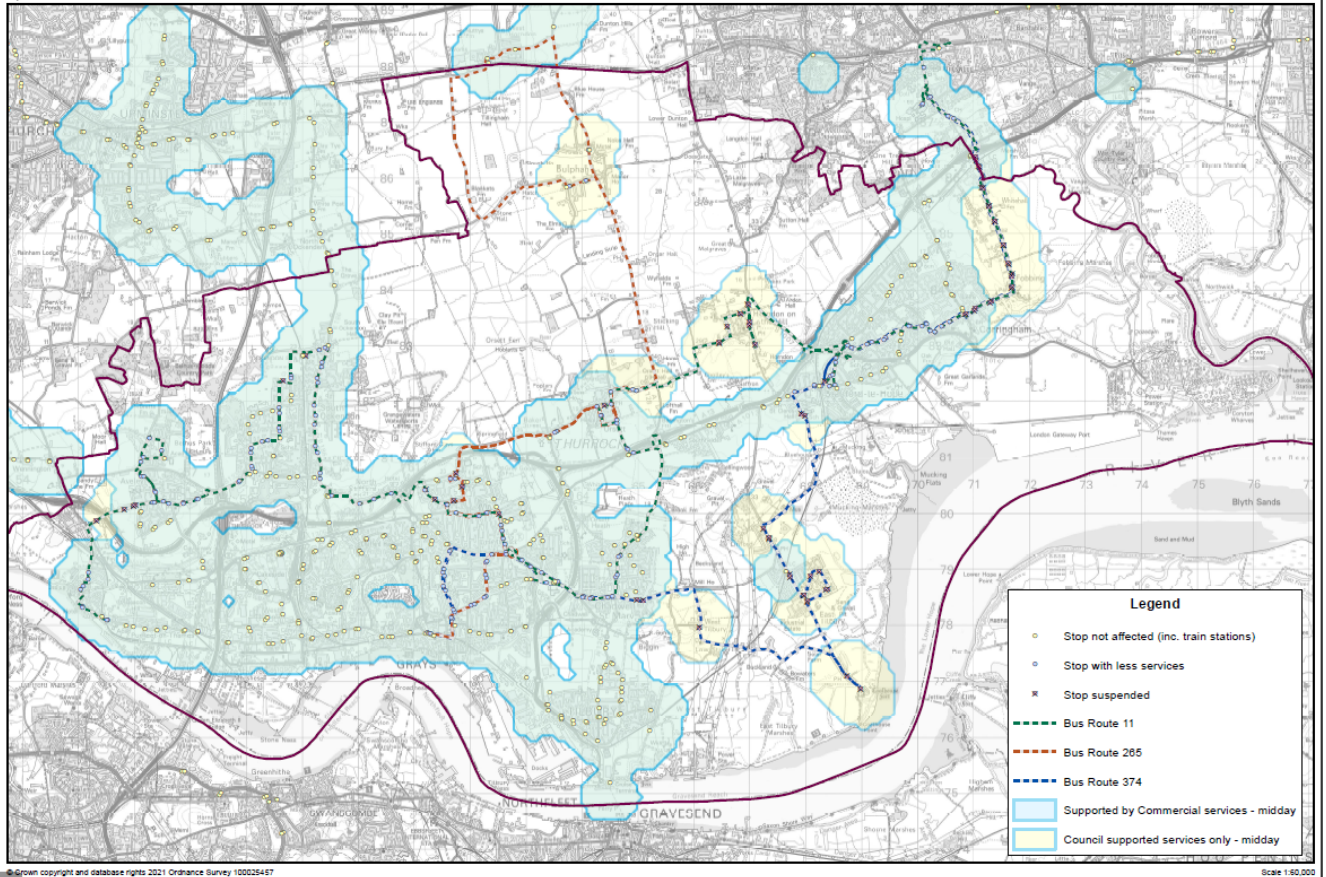
3.29. The table above identifies the impact of services withdrawals across different parts of the day during the working week, and across the weekend. This data is based on all residents in the borough and will include those communities served by the three

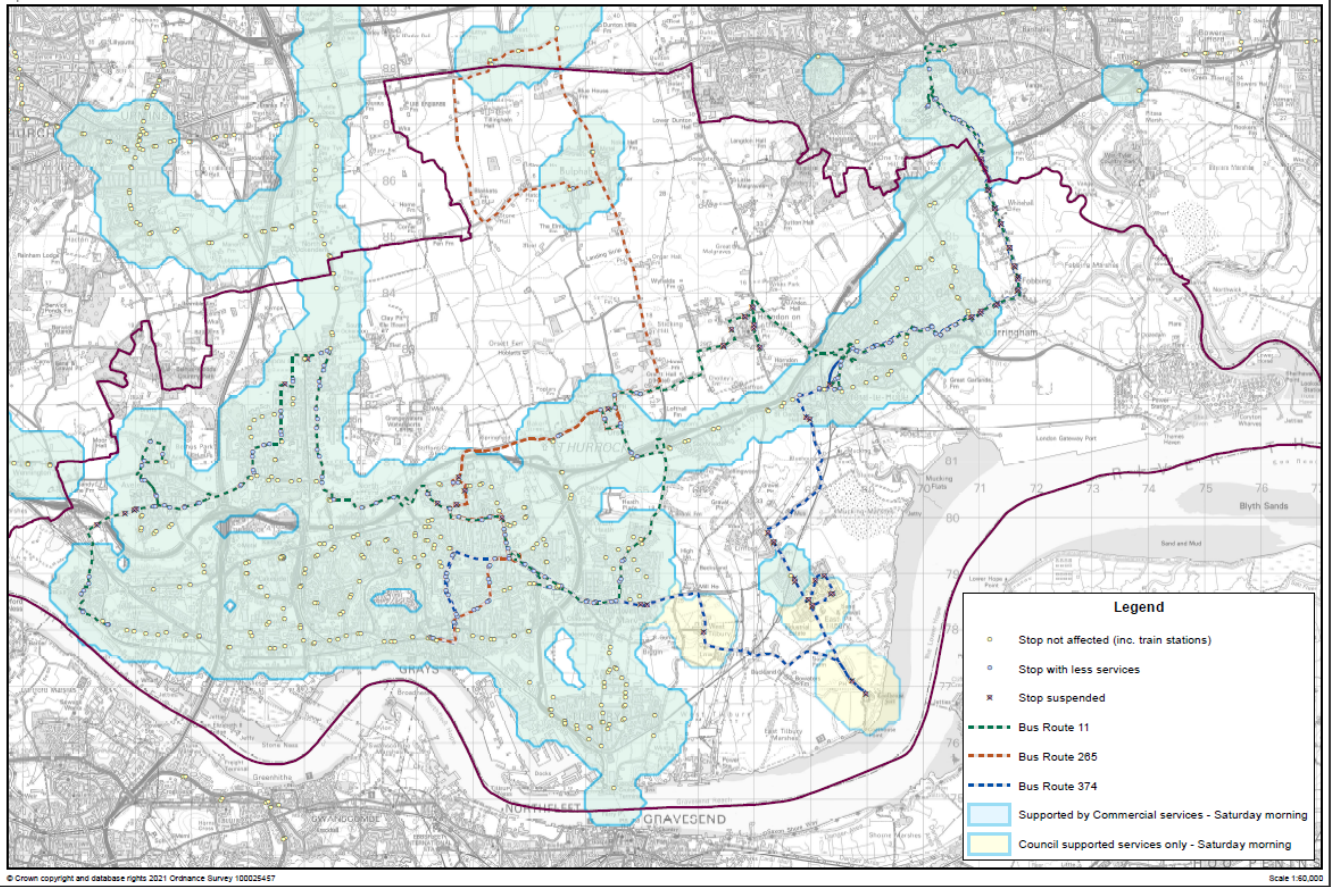
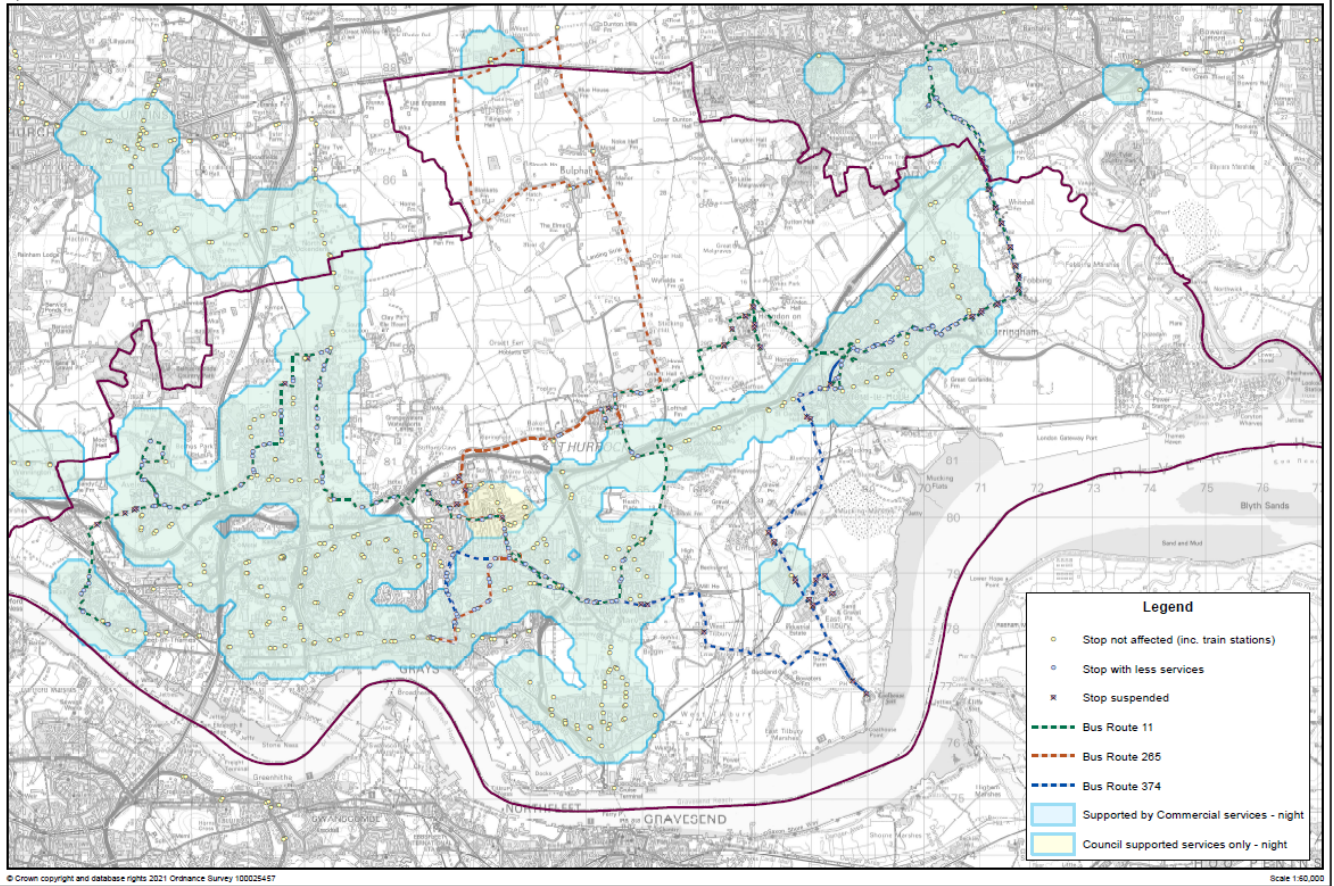
supported services. The biggest impact to be felt by communities would be on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the middle of the day, as this is a time period when all three services would otherwise be operating. Between 12pm and 1pm midweek, over 8000 residents would lose access to any form of public transport. During core working day hours, there are over 7000 residents who will lose access to any form of public transport. For completeness, Mondays were used to assess the midweek provision.

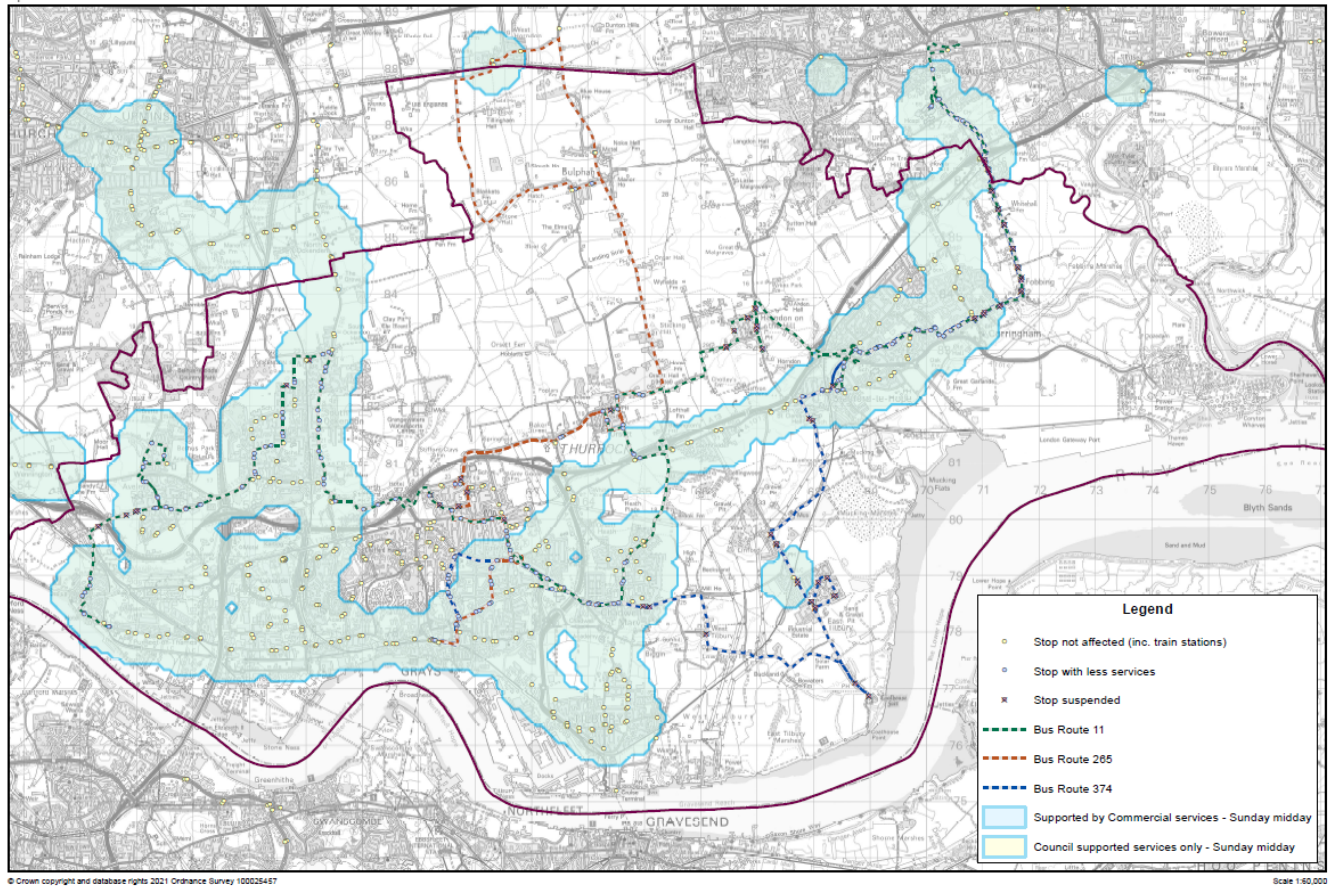
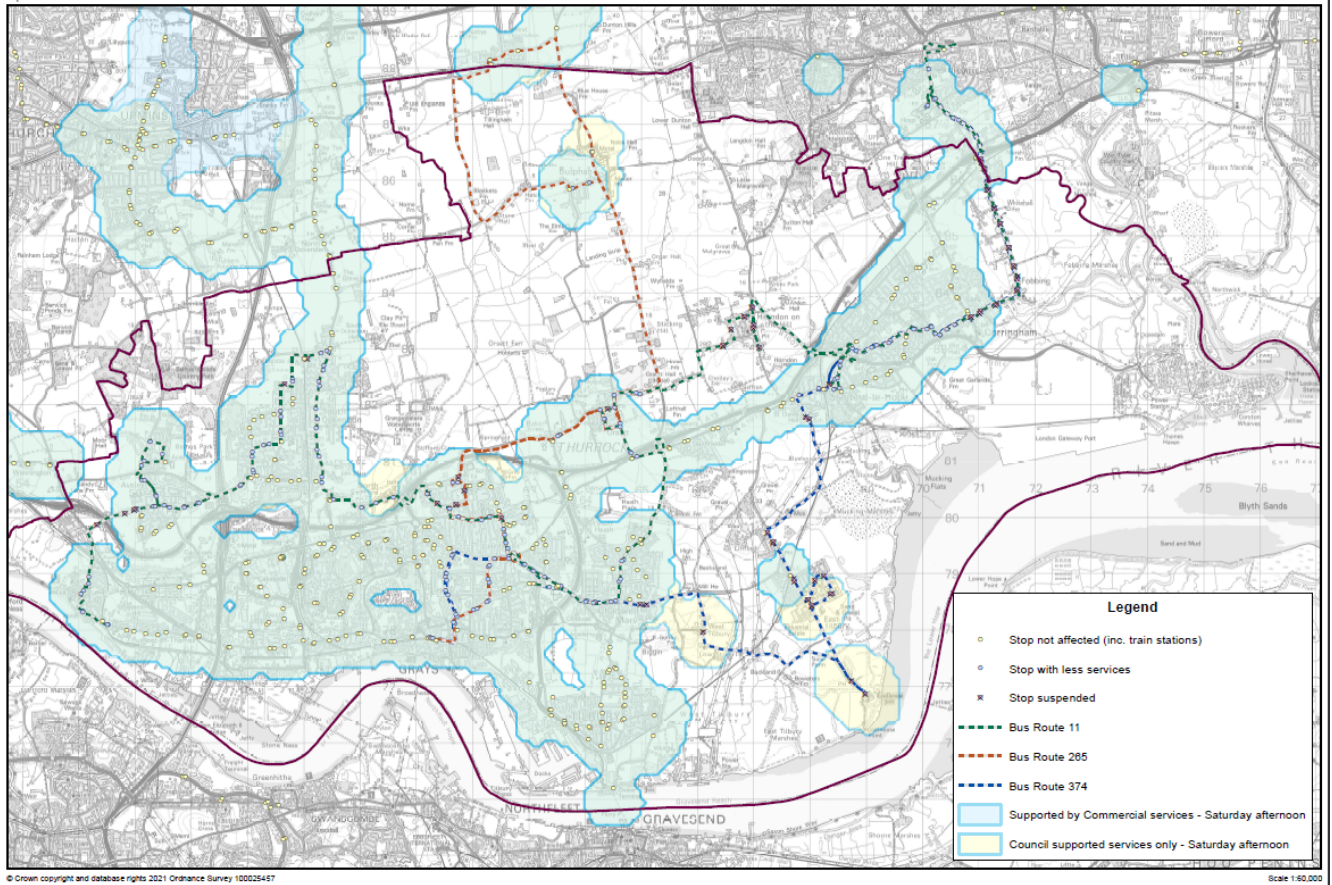
3.30. On the weekends, the 374 is the only supported service to offer a Saturday provision at a reduced frequency of once every three hours. Therefore, its removal would impact up to 3,700 residents. Sundays do not show any additional impact as none of these services operate on that day.

3.31. The following maps visualise the impacts of service withdrawals.









Community Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.

The concept of ‘due regard’ was reinforced in 2012 during the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which “requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”

‘Due regard’ is dependent on the relevance and potential impact of the decision being considered. The greater the relevance and impact, the higher the regard due.

As an authority, we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to new policy, strategy, functions or service development including reviews or changes to existing policy, strategy, functions or services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Service (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition, the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service and reason for the development or review process

Name of service	Transportation Services; Planning, Transportation and Public Protection
Lead Officer	Navtej Tung, Strategic Transport Manager
Contact Details	ntung@thurrock.gov.uk ; 01375 652006

Why is this policy, strategy, function or service development/review needed?

Thurrock Council financially supports three local bus services which operate across the borough, supporting predominantly rural communities where commercially operated bus provision does not exist and is unlikely to be deemed financially viable. The existing tendered contract has come to the end of its initial three-year period, with a significant price increase as part of the allowable contract extensions, the council are seeking to understand if the routes are fit for purpose and retain value for money. The council are therefore undertaking a review of these services, to determine if these services should continue, plus understanding what impact there would be if these were removed.

1. Community impact (this can also be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered)

1.1 What impacts will this policy, strategy, function or service development/review have on communities, workforce and the health and wellbeing of local residents?
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – please see guidance
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and community organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?

Local communities in general			x	A potential reduction or withdrawal of services would have a negative impact on communities, most particularly those communities which are smaller, rural or not within the main conurbations within Thurrock.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Age			x	Any reduction or withdrawal of service would have a negative impact on members of the community who are older, in particular those who have qualified for concessionary bus passes (c.90% of all concessionary bus passes issued in Thurrock are for age). The largest group of respondents to the consultation are those aged over 60.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Disability			x	Those with disabilities in communities without alternative provision are likely to be negatively impacted without owning their own transport. Persons with disabilities are eligible for concessionary travel (as may	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.

				necessary companion who is required for travel). C10% of concessionary pass holders qualify through disability.	
Gender reassignment		X			
Marriage and civil partnership		X			
Pregnancy and maternity		X			
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		X			
Religion or belief		X			
Sex			X	Women are disproportionately likely to be impacted with reductions or withdrawal of services, particularly older women who may not have access to a car or are able to drive. c75% of respondents to the consultation identified as female.	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.
Sexual orientation		X			
Any community issues identified for this location? <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i>			x	A number of rural communities are likely to be impacted by any reduction or withdrawal of	Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.

<p>If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please include any detail of relevance – for example, is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?</p>				<p>services. These communities are likely to be Bulphan, Orsett, East Tilbury, West Tilbury, Aveley. Groups identified above living in these communities are most likely to be disproportionately impacted, if they have no private transport alternative.</p>	
<p>Workforce</p>			<p>X</p>	<p>People in employment who are reliant on these services are likely to be impacted through any reduction or withdrawal of services, especially if there are no alternate route, if alternatives are longer, more costly or require interchanges, or do not have own private transport.</p>	<p>Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing</p>			<p>X</p>	<p>Based on the identification of the groups above, those most affected by the withdrawal or reduction of these services will be negatively impacted. The consultation has identified that the main use of these services by</p>	<p>Unlikely to be mitigated unless an alternative provision is provided.</p>

				<p>respondents is to access food/shopping, access health appointments and for visiting friends and family. Each of these journey purposes is strongly linked to health and wellbeing of residents.</p>	
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2. Consultation, data and intelligence

2.1 Please highlight the steps you have taken, or plan to take, to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups? For further guidance please contact: consultations@thurrock.gov.uk

This is a vital step

The Passenger Transport Unit has taken multiple steps to increase the reach of this consultation, targeting specifically users of the bus services. To do this, key factors have been taken into considering, in collaboration with the Communities team. The primary method of consulting is the council's web-portal. This is accessible via different devices and supports different needs to be accessible. However, taking into consideration the rural nature of some of the communities served by these bus services, and reflecting on the age profile of users, alternative options were put forward. A paper-based survey was made available to all users, which was available from the following locations – onboard the three bus services under consideration, each of the boroughs libraries and community hubs, key community locations such as post offices and community shops, as well as available for collection from certain community forum members. Responses could be submitted at many of these locations, or via Royal Mail, as a freepost address was set up. The consultation was promoted through posters at bus stops and key locations, and also advising the nearest location from where forms could be collected. All Local Forums and all elected members were advised of this consultation. Posters were also advertising the consultation on the buses.

2.2 Please also provide details on the sources of data or intelligence you have used to inform your assessment of impact and how they have helped you to understand those that will be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review outlined?

Prior to the undertaking of the consultation, the council used patronage data for a full month (May 2022) to help inform and better understand service user profiles. This helped to better understand the profile of user groups and how to target. It was already known that over 50% of all trips were undertaken by persons who qualified for concessionary travel under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. This was combined with local knowledge within the council and the team to target and make available consultation materials.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
If there are changes in service provision, to undertake a shorter follow-up survey with those participants of the consultation who have opted in to being contacted into the future, to see how journeys are being made or what the impact has been on residents. Approximately 100 people have opted into being contacted further.	6-12 months after any change to the service	Passenger Transport Team
To propose options to help minimise any impact of service reductions or withdrawals within final report	Dec 2022	Strategic Transport Manager
Where possible to seek funds to implement measures to minimise impact. This may include developing alternate service options, or ticketing measures	2023	Passenger Transport Unit

3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

4. Next steps

It is important to ensure that the information gathered is used to inform any council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template and the Equality and Diversity Implications section for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

It is recognised that any reduction or withdrawal of services will have a significant impact on key communities and persons. These services are provided on routes which are not commercially viable, and therefore it is not expected they could be replaced by commercial providers. They also link key communities which do not have alternative public transport provision. Data collected identified persons who were older, in particular those qualifying for concessionary travel on the basis of age, and those who are disabled within these communities are most likely to be impacted. Following the consultation, gender has also been identified as a key indicator of impact, with over 75% of consultation respondents being women. People who rely on these services are likely to do so for a number of reasons, as they may not have alternative options, own their own transport, or for affordability reasons. The health and wellbeing of users within these communities are also of importance and could have other impacts on the council or other stakeholders if services are reduced or withdrawn, as a high number of users use these buses to access health care appointments, particularly at hospitals and in future at the Integrated Medical Centres programme which the council are delivering in hand with the NHS, to access food, retail and leisure, and also to visit friends and family.

The consultation did not identify a large number of respondents who use the bus for employment or education, but it is known that a significant volume of fare paying passengers are in this bracket. Those who rely on these services may be impacted in the future if they are

Implications/ Customer Impact

reduced or withdrawn as they may not be able to access centres of employment, impacting on their employability and therefore quality of life.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role – for example, project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Navtej Tung	Strategic Transport Manager	19/10/22

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Appendix D

Thurrock Council

Supported Services Consultation Report

Bus routes 11, 265 and 374

Public and Stakeholder views

October 2022

V2.2

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1. Introduction

Following deregulation of bus services by the government in 1984, buses are run by private companies and local authorities no longer have an influence over the services they operate: private companies decide which bus routes to operate and the frequency of services. If the local authority identifies a social need for additional and/or enhanced services to some areas of the borough that isn't commercially viable for the bus company, it can provide financial support to a bus company to run that service.

Thurrock Council financially supports three passenger bus services within the borough: **11**, **265**, and **374**. These services support nearly every community in Thurrock, including some of the more rural areas which are not supported at all by commercially viable bus routes.

The bus services supported by Thurrock Council are:

- **Service 11** serves Purfleet-on-Thames, Aveley, South Ockendon, North Stifford, Thurrock Hospital, Grays (Blackshots), Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminates at Basildon bus station. There are seven journeys a day in each direction, Monday to Friday only.
- **Service 265** serves Grays, Socketts Heath, Orsett, Bulphan and West Horndon, the service operates twice a day between 10am and 2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays only.
- **Service 374** serves Grays, Socketts Heath via Hathaway Road, Chadwell St Mary, West Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury, Linford, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminates at Basildon bus station. These buses run Monday to Friday, departing approximately every 90 minutes, and every three hours on Saturdays.

2. About the Consultation

2.1 Purpose

The aims of the consultation are to determine public and stakeholder opinion, including members and representatives of protected characteristic groups, on the current provision of these three supported services. This information will give the council an opportunity to review these services and see if they remain fit for purpose in meeting the needs of the community and retain value for money.

This document presents the feedback and provides a summary analysis of the consultation responses. It outlines the next steps the council is proposing in response to the outcome of the consultation.

2.2 Consultation Process

The consultation was open for a period of 12 weeks between 15th July and 9th October 2022, inviting residents and other stakeholders to provide their views on the current provision of bus services 11, 265 and 374.

2.3 Consultation approach

To raise awareness of the consultation and encourage participation, the consultation offered a number of ways in which residents, communities and other stakeholders could engage:

- An online portal on the council's website offered a survey form and an interactive map where routes could be viewed at a street level and comments added.
- Consultation material and hard copies of surveys were distributed and collected from locations across the borough, including community hubs, local shops and libraries, with a focus in areas directly served by the affected services. Hard copies of surveys could also be returned via our Freepost address. A list of venues can be found in Appendix A.
- The council held community engagement events which were scheduled across the borough in Summer 2022 as part of the Your Place, Your Voice programme. During these events, attendees were able to speak with council representatives about the bus review and complete surveys and/or provide comments to representatives.
- Affected ward councillors and community forum members were notified and asked to engage on behalf of the service within their communities and support participation.
- Consultation material was provided to Local Area Co-ordinators, who then disseminated this information throughout their local community.
- Publicity posters were displayed at bus stops directly served by routes 11, 265 and 374 and on buses operating these tendered routes. Consultation forms were made available for passengers to collect on buses that provided the services under review.
- Visual displays - a digital copy of the consultation poster was on display through the real time "totem" units and shelter displays along the routes of the tendered services.

The consultation was published on the Thurrock Council website consultation webpage 'Have My Say' and can be viewed and downloaded at: <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/bus-consultation-2022>

3. Summary of Consultation responses

Respondents were able to self-select questions and provide answers and/or comments to more than one of the specified bus services. The number of consultees providing a response to each question is shown in the summary of each survey question.

Whilst the consultation was open to all residents and stakeholders within Thurrock the majority of those responding to the consultation (95%) were users of the bus service, with 85% identifying specifically as users of bus services 11, 265 and 374.

Responses from each survey question have been condensed into brief summaries, but the full public and stakeholder responses have been used to inform the analysis. The full list of responses can be found in appendix A at the end of the document.

3.1 Response rate

There were 356 responses to the consultation:

- There were 1,500 visitors to the Council's bus consultation web page of which 179 people went on and completed the on-line survey.

- A further 177 responses were received by the council in the form of hard copies of the survey, or responses that had been recorded by representatives on behalf of the council.

3.2 Demographic Profile

The tables below show the demographic profile of all consultees who responded.

- The majority of consultees who responded to the consultation were female (74.8%)
- Response spans a mix of ages, but the highest proportion were those aged 60+ (47%)
- There were 69 respondents (19%) who identified as having a disability.

Table 1: Please specify your gender (207 responses)

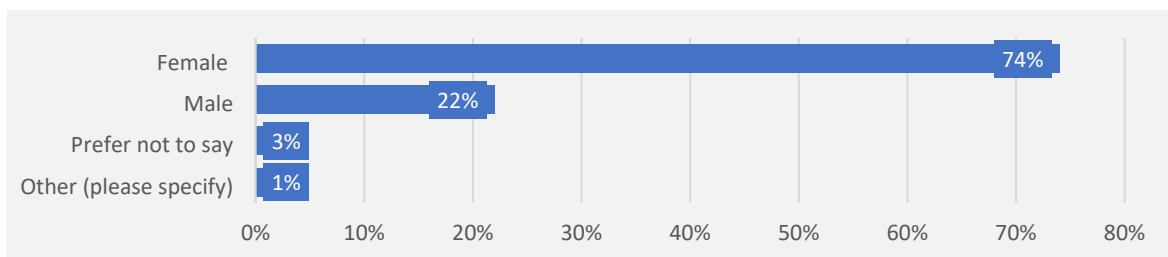


Table 2: Please specify your age bracket (208 responses)

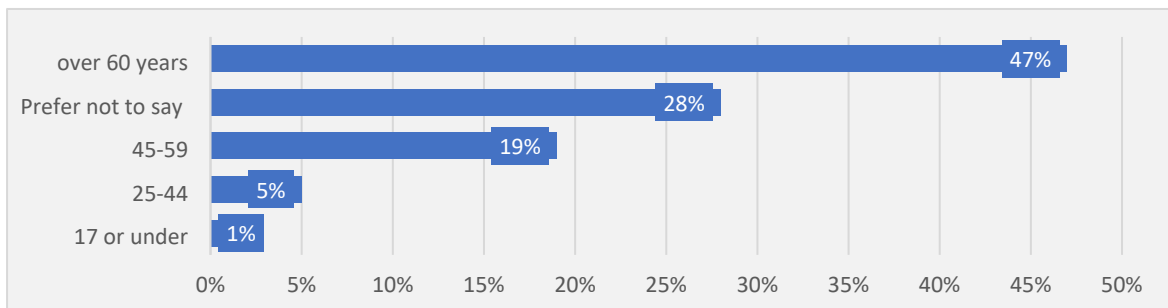


Table 3: If you are disabled, how would you describe your disability? (69 responses)

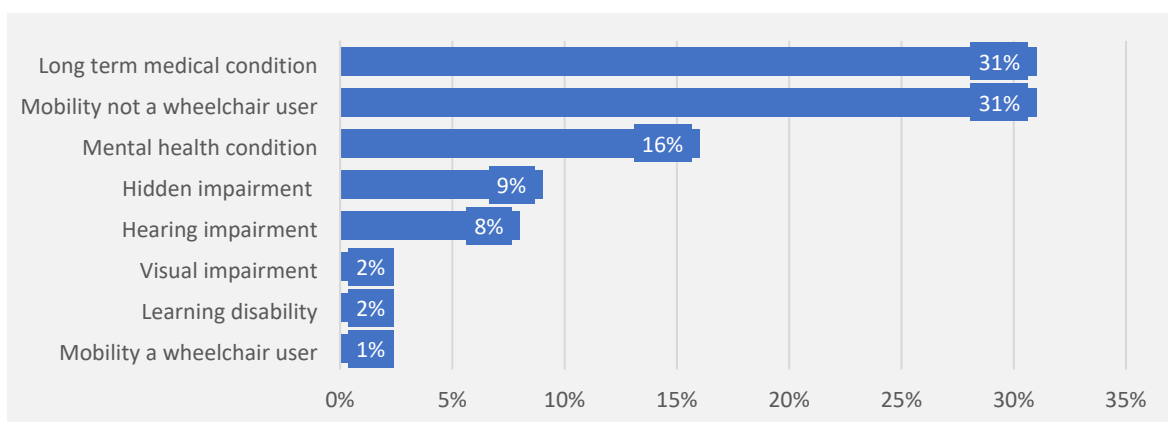
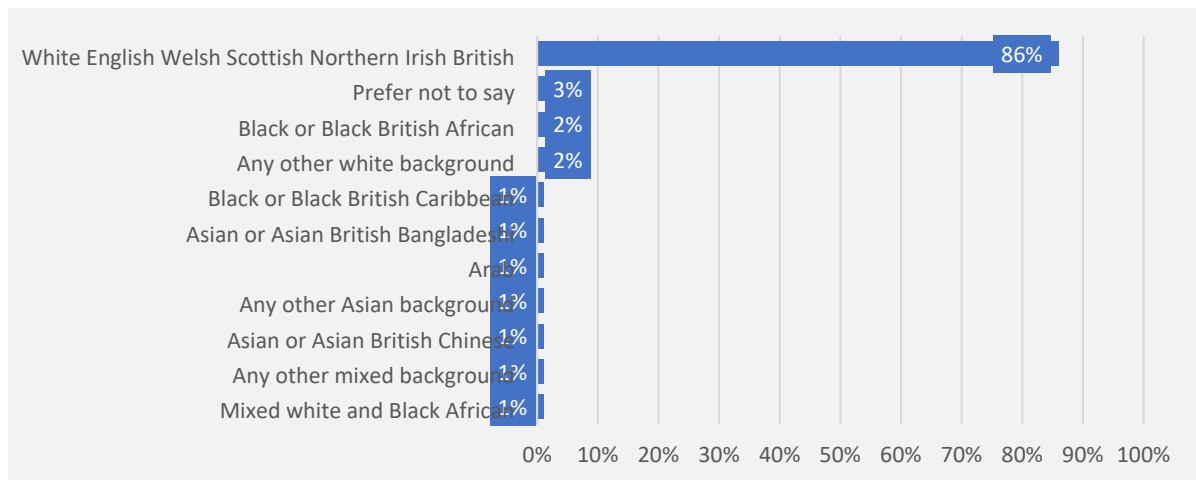


Table 4: What is your ethnic group? (147 responses)

Note: this question was not answered by 41% of respondents



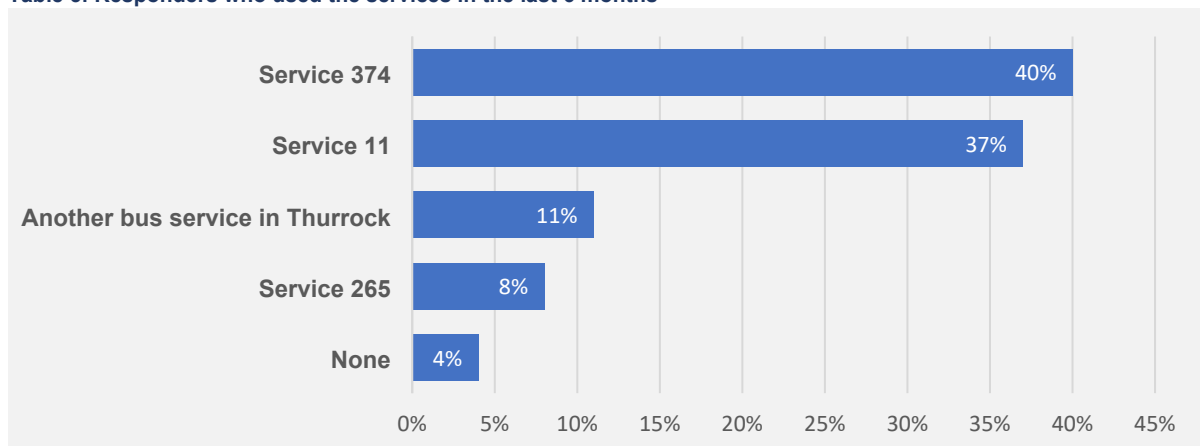
3.3 Summary of responses to survey questions

The consultation set out eleven specific questions, this section summarises the response to each question.

Question 1: Which of the following bus services have you used in the last 6 months?

In total 362 responses were recorded to this question.

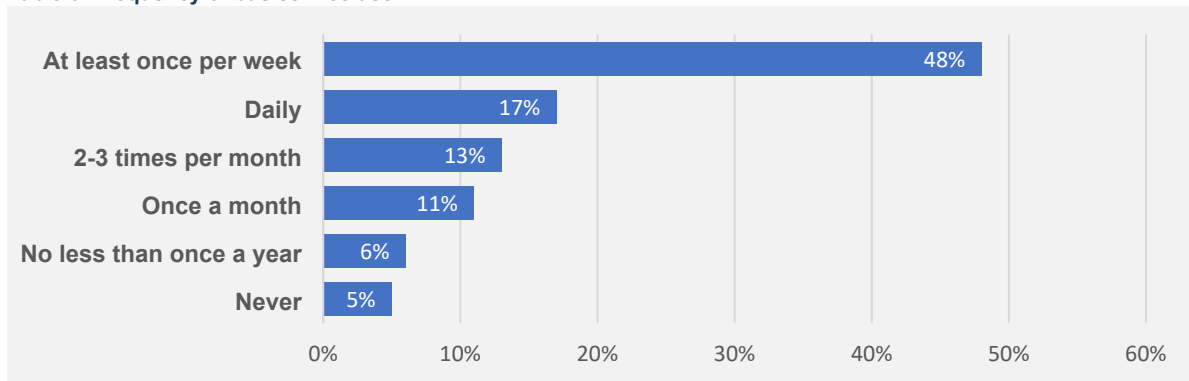
Table 5: Responders who used the services in the last 6 months



Question 2: Consultees were asked how frequently they used the bus service.

In total 371 responses were recorded to this question.

Table 6: Frequency of bus service use

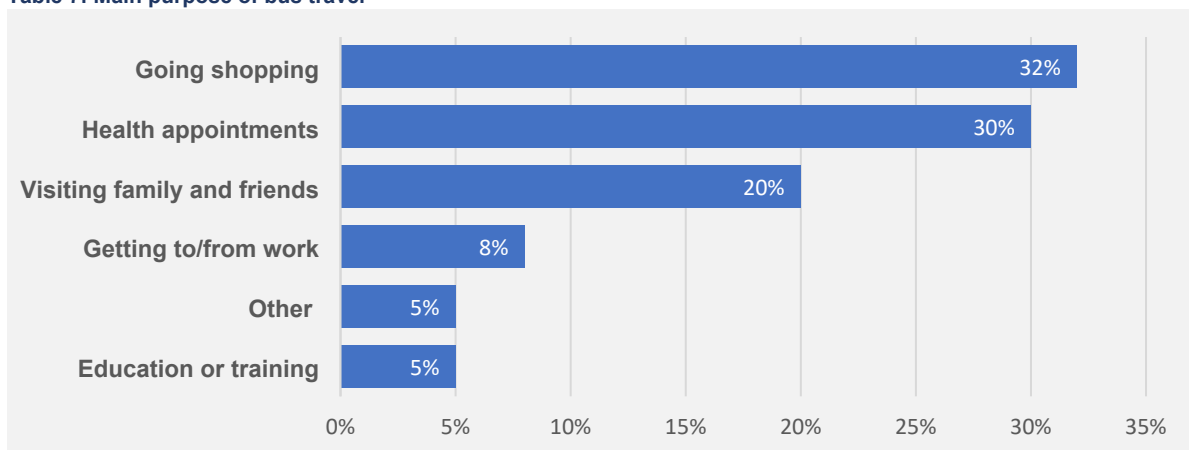


Question 3: What are the main purposes for your bus travel?

In total 361 responders were recorded to this question, providing 752 responses (48% identified more than one purpose).

- The services were used primarily to carry out essential activities such as going to the shops, attending healthcare appointments or to access work or education.

Table 7: Main purpose of bus travel

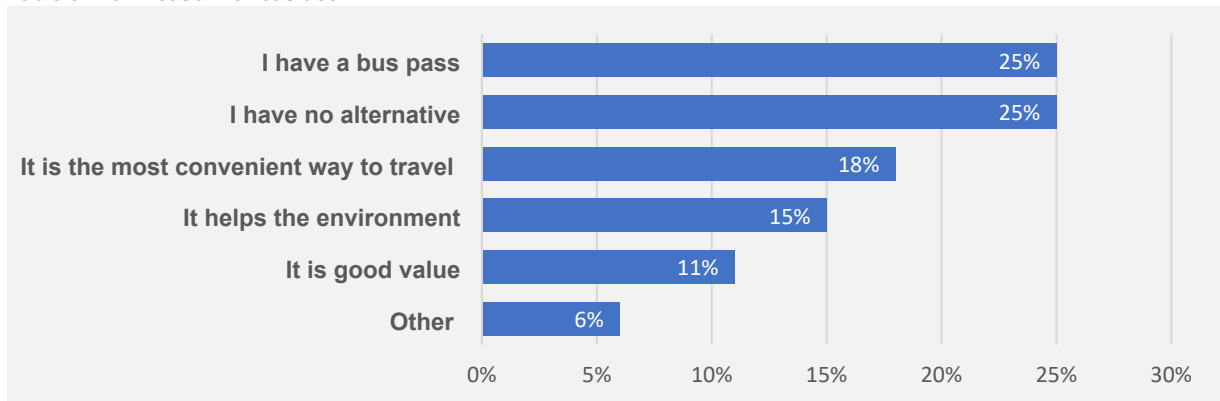


Question 4: What are your main reasons for travelling by bus?

In total 361 responses were recorded to this question.

- Consultees used the services for multiple reasons, 25% of respondents had no other transport alternative and were reliant on the services.
- Respondents appear to be making good use of bus passes (25% use the service because they have a bus pass).

Table 8: Main reason for bus use:

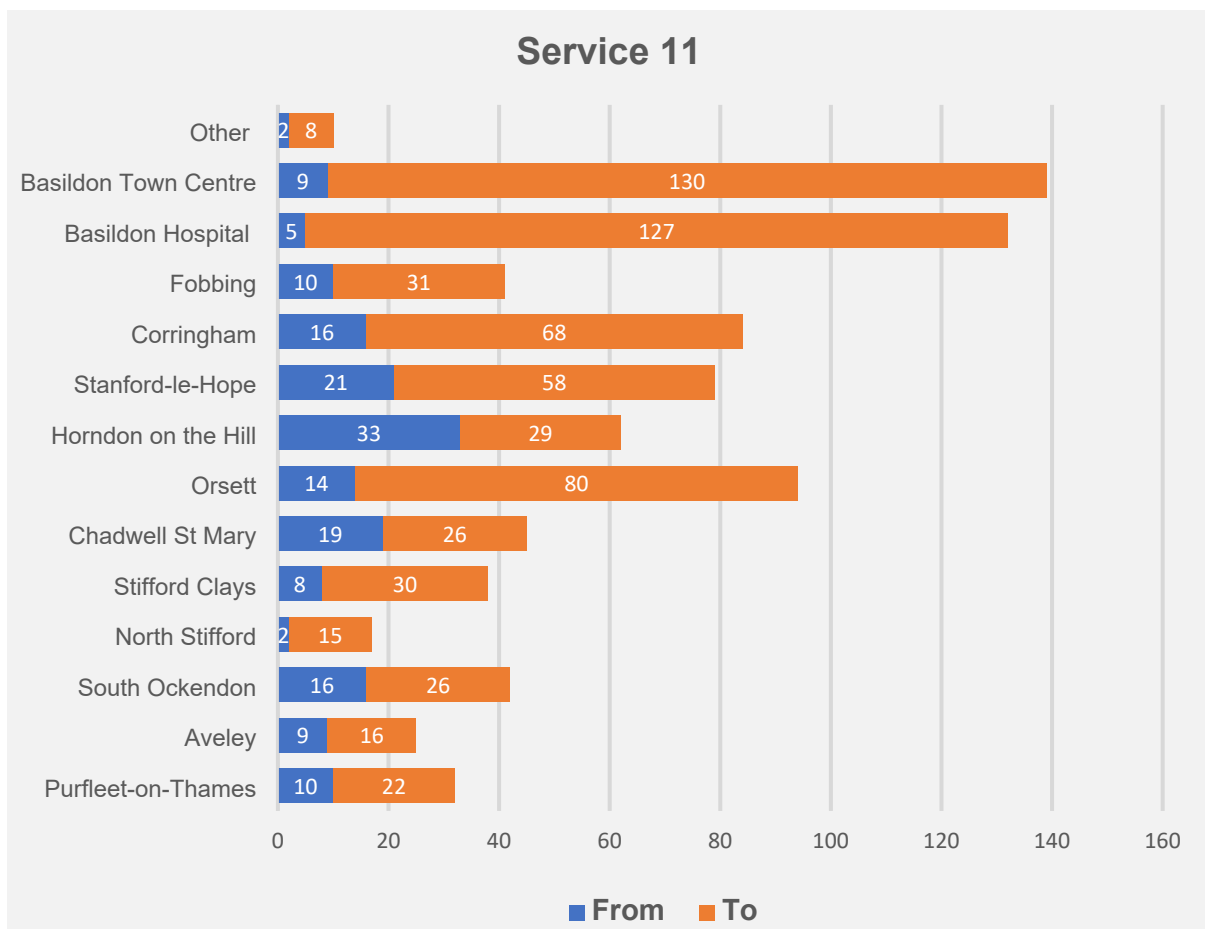


Question 5:

Where do you travel to and from on Service 11

In total 214 responses were recorded to this question.

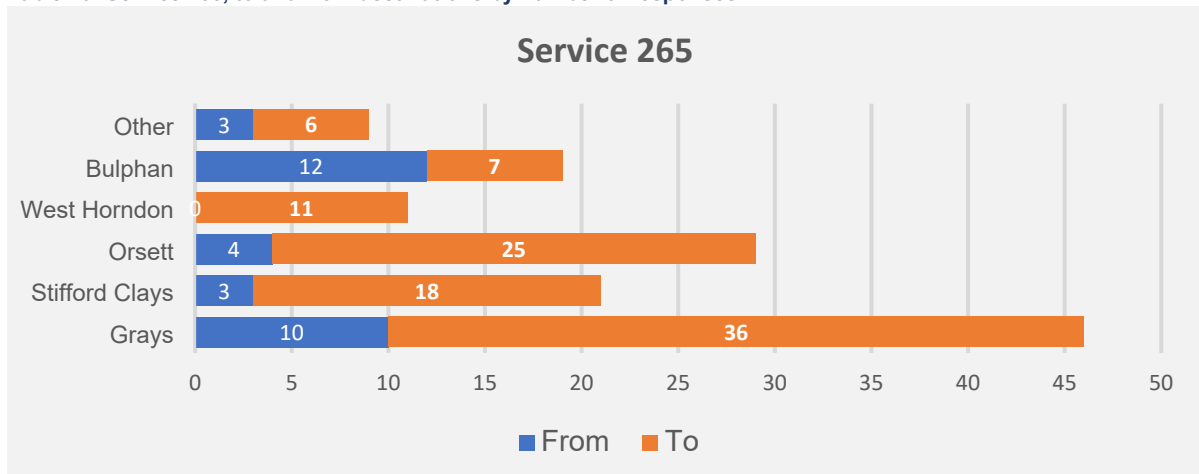
Table 9: Service 11, Travel to and from destinations % of all journeys by number or responses



Where do you travel to and from on service 265?

In total 51 responses were recorded to this question.

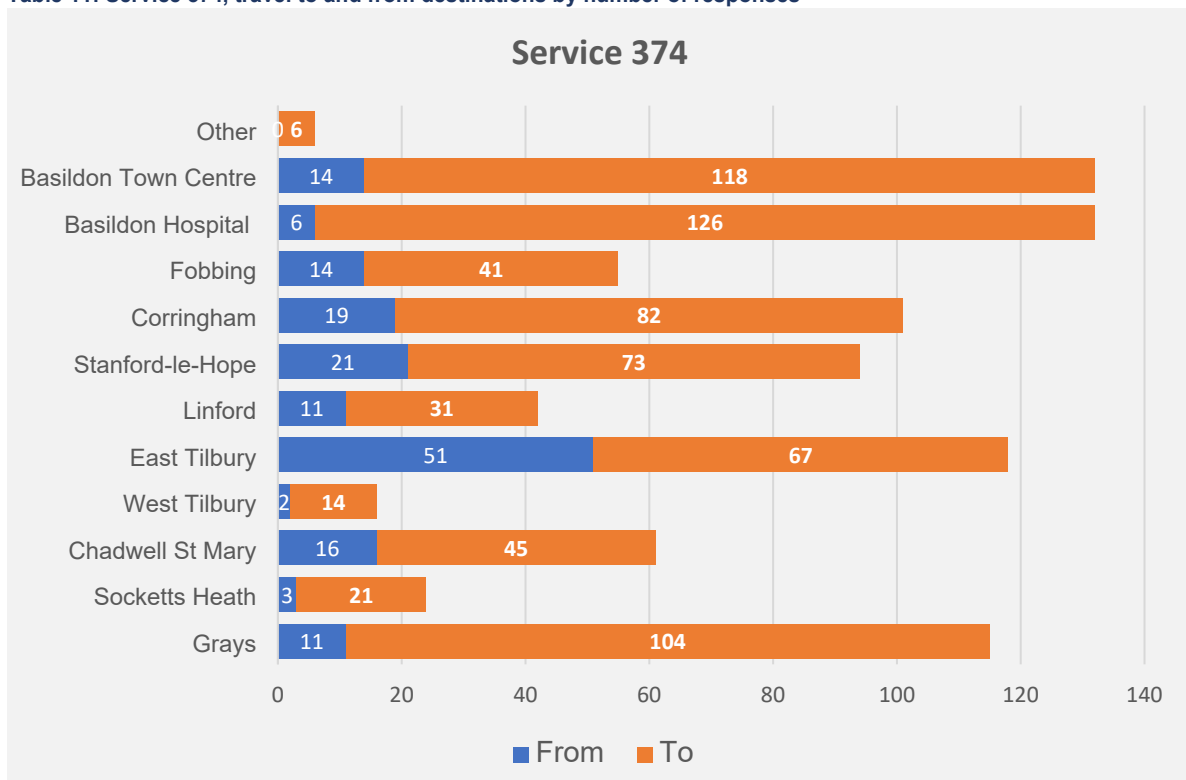
Table 10: Service 265, to and from destinations by number of responses



Where do you travel to and from on the 374 service?

In total 215 responses were recorded to this question.

Table 11: Service 374, travel to and from destinations by number of responses



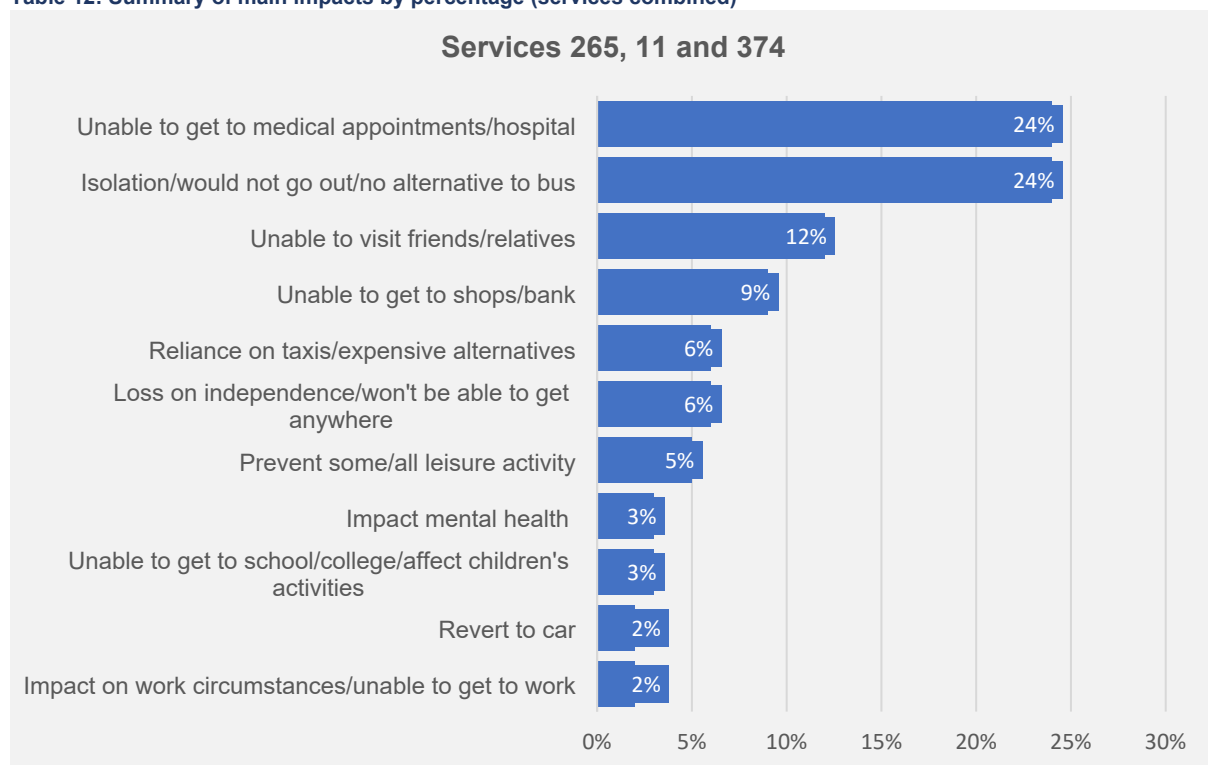
Question 6:

If services 11, 265 or 374 did not operate, what would be the impact on you or others you may know?

- Consultation responses indicated that any reduction to these services would have an overwhelming negative impact on the communities they serve. Consistent with usage patterns, one of the main impacts on respondents is not being able to access hospital/medical appointments.
- Almost a quarter of respondents (24%) had no alternative transport mode, and although some identified taxis as an alternative method, many indicated they would struggle financially to afford a taxi service.
- A significant number of responses raised concerns about the adverse impact of service reductions on specific demographic groups such as the elderly or disabled.
- As well as improving access to a range of necessities such as healthcare and shops, the results highlighted the role access to the services played in tackling social exclusion - by providing greater freedom and independence.

For the purposes of reporting, respondent comments have been categorised into main themes. Please note service user comments often covered more than one theme.

Table 12: Summary of main impacts by percentage (services combined)



Example comments which represent consistent themes for each service can be found below:

Services 374

In total 213 comments were submitted to this question.

“I am completing this on behalf of my parents. This is the main way they can travel to the hospital and Basildon town centre. due to walking problems, they cannot reach the bus stop for the 100 buses. Should this service be stopped, they would have no affordable way of getting to hospital appointments or shopping”

"I am 88 and do not drive. I do not have the money to pay for taxis to visit my wife who is in a care home in Chadwell St Mary. If you take away the 374 route, I will not be easily able to visit her, go shopping to Stanford, go to Basildon Hospital or Corringham. It would severely impact on my life"

"It would be devastating. We would be unable to travel when we want to"

"My son would not be able to get to Palmer's college. I would not be able to get to blood tests and shopping and seeing my Great Aunt"

Service 11:

In total 207 comments were submitted to this question

"I would be unable to get to work, pupils won't be able to attend William Edwards and people would not be able to attend Orsett or Basildon"

"There are a lot of regular users on the bus that I see daily. They are elderly and would be housebound without this service. Many have hospital appointments or are going to Basildon hospital. The cost of a taxi would not be a viable option"

"Some people would not be able to make it to their doctors' appointments and various other appointments. As well as this, I wouldn't be able to travel safely as I do not drive"

"My service user with disabilities would be completely isolated"

Service 265

In total 60 comments were submitted to the question

"If I could not go out, I would be depressed, I wouldn't see my local family as they don't drive, we (on the bus) are like a little family and some have no family of their own, the bus is a lifeline".

"A dozen or more residents of Bulphan who do not drive would not be able to get to Grays to carry out transactions with the council, banks etc or to do shopping or visit library"

"As with all the local services it is important to provide those who do not have the ability to drive, a convenient and reasonably priced service. Removing services such as these isolates villages and especially the more elderly population"

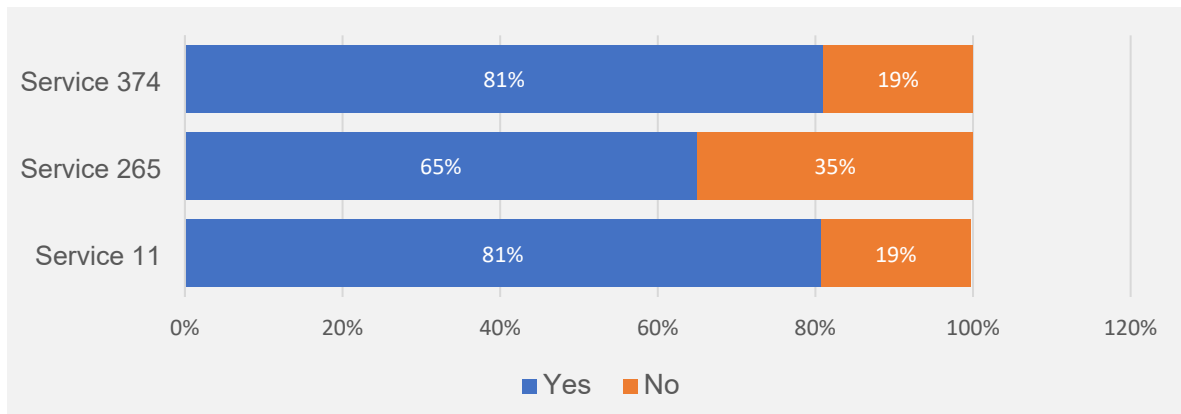
"If the bus didn't operate, I would feel isolated, and wouldn't be able to get any shopping done"

Question 7: Do you feel that the services meet your needs as a user?

The majority of consultees responded positively, with many valuing the bus service as an essential part of their lives. Overall, services were suiting circumstances, respondents that answered 'no' to this question identified the main reasons as services not operating frequently enough or were sometimes unreliable.

In total 218 responses were recorded to this question for service 11, 59 responses were recorded for service 265 and 217 responses were recorded for service 374.

Table 13: Does the service meet your needs as a user?

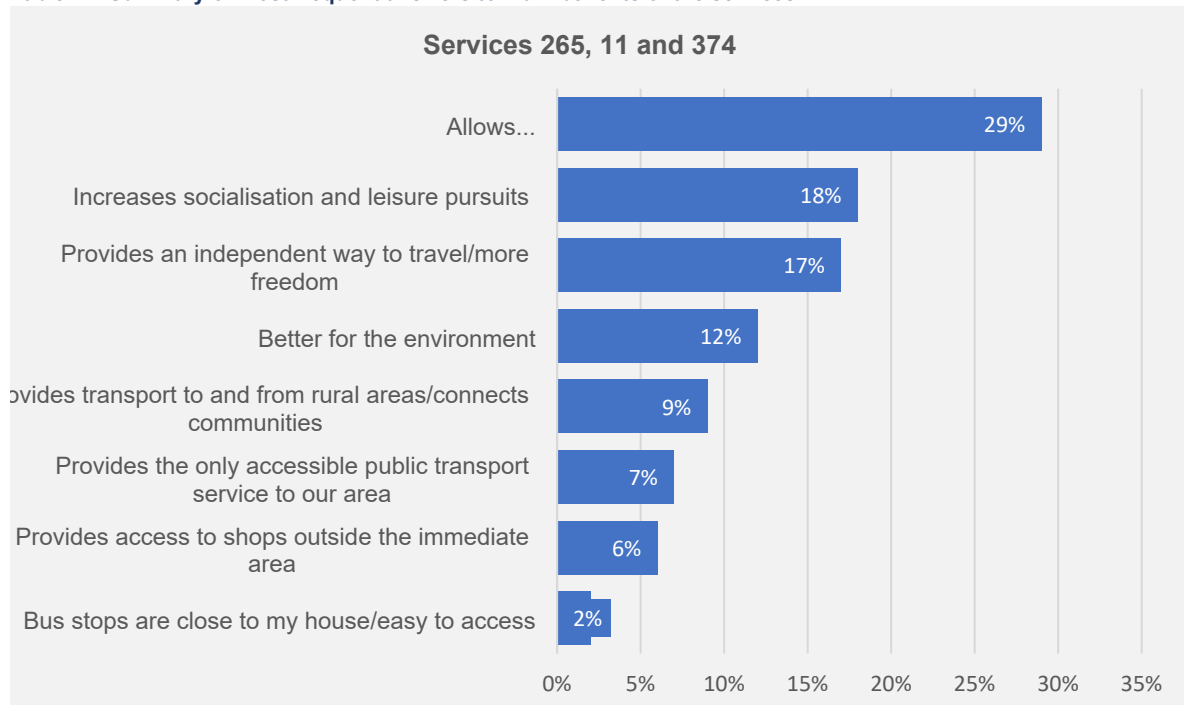


Question 8:

What benefits do these services bring to you and/or your community?

- Responses were consistent with previous themes; most frequently cited benefits were those associated with the ability to use the services to carry out essential activities
- The bus stops for these services were conveniently located for some of the elderly responders
- Responses highlighted environmental benefits associated with less car use

Table 14: Summary of most frequent answers to main benefits of the services:



Example comments representing consistent themes are listed below:

Service 374:

“East Tilbury do not have safe cycle paths connecting them to other areas, Stanford le hope or Chadwell. The community is reliant on public transport to safely navigate around as a non-driver. It would be non-sensical to remove this service for the residents ET community”

“The chance of getting away from the standard routes to Grays/Lakeside/Basildon. A beautiful, leisurely route that everyone enjoys from all walks of life, not just disabled people”

Service 11:

“The service benefits a disabled person who has no way of getting to these appointments if the service is cut”

“The route has the potential to link sizeable communities in places like Aveley and Ockendon with three of the proposed integrated medical centres (Purfleet, Thurrock Community Hospital and Corringham) and with Basildon Hospital. Scrapping the route would confirm the complete lack of consideration that is being given to public transport users in planning medical services in Thurrock”

“There are only a couple of buses that cover the ride of the 11, public transport is meant to help the environment and to make a contribution to help global warming”

Service 265:

It is the only means of transport for some of our young and elder community. For me, its a welcome alternative to driving.

Independence given our advancing years.

As this is my only way of getting about, this service is very beneficial to my wellbeing as it enables me to get out and about to meet with people which is so important as you get older

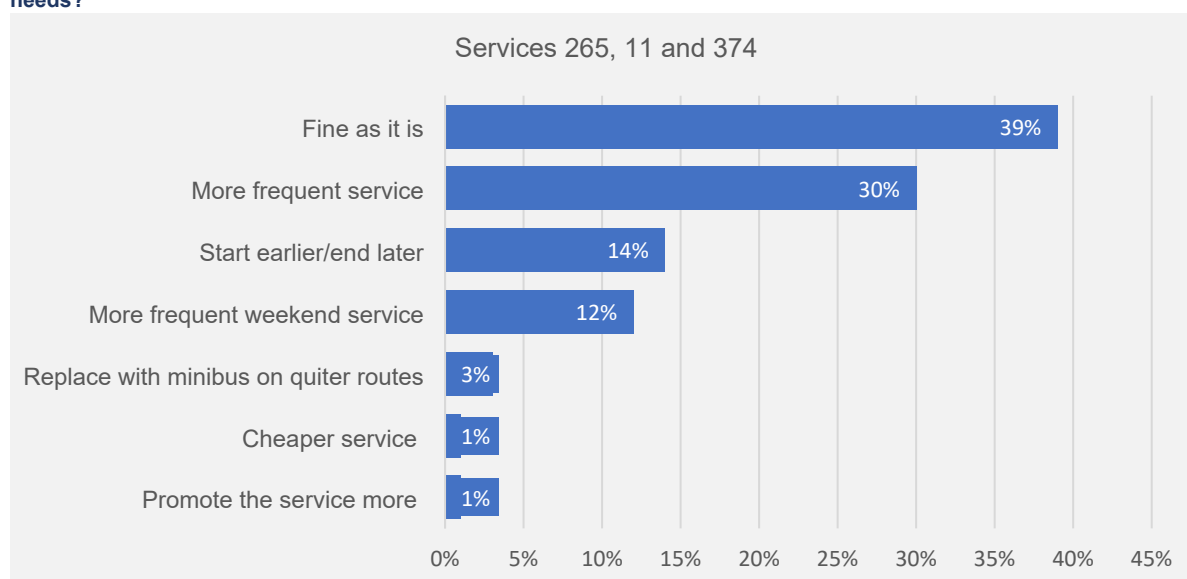
Question 9:

Please tell us how these service(s) can be changed to better meet the needs of the community?

In total 424 responses were recorded for this question

- Almost 70% of respondents were happy with the existing service or would like the services to be operated on a more frequent basis.
- Some responders suggested the use of a smaller bus or minibus on some of the more rural or less frequent routes.

Table 15: Summary of most frequent responses to Q How would you change the service to better meet community needs?



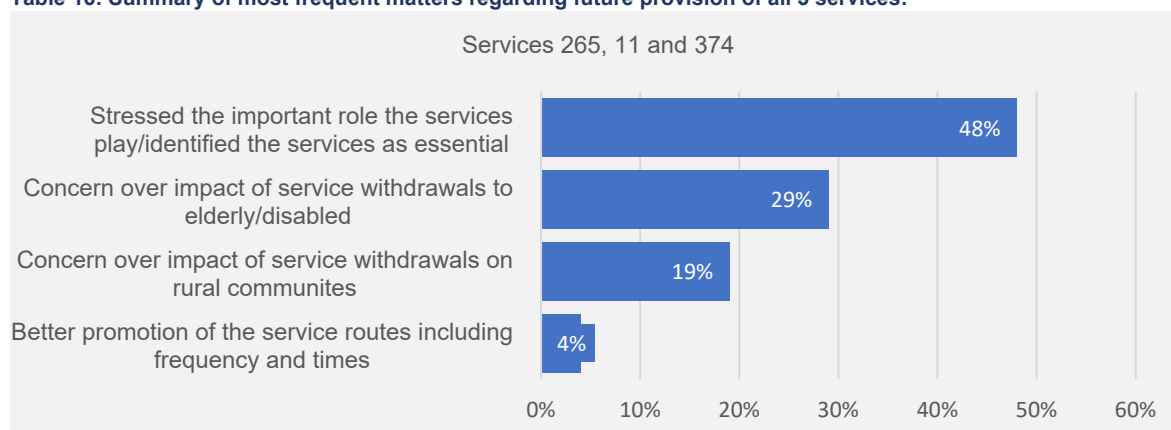
Question 10:

Is there any other matter you would like to raise regarding the future provision of the three supported bus services?

In total 219 responses were received to this question.

- The overwhelming majority of responses expressed concern over the potential loss of the services, particularly for elderly and disabled users.
- Improvement and promotion of the routes would increase uptake of the services – make them better rather than take them away.

Table 16: Summary of most frequent matters regarding future provision of all 3 services:



Example comments representing consistent themes are listed below:

“I have had a lot of sadness through bereavement during the last few years and the service has allowed me to get out and meet my friend, which has helped my mental health”

“They are reliable, the drivers are very professional, kind and student use the bus very often. Bus 374 is the best thing that has happened to us in East Tilbury community. Thank you”

“Horndon-on-the-Hill is not well served by busses. With a high number of elderly people in the village and people now not affording to run cars, we need a regular bus service”

“For me and my children, BUS 11 serves a vital service every day. As my children attend Purfleet Primary and Harris Academy and we live in Aveley, this is the only bus that serves that route to school. The schools are too far to be able to walk daily and therefore this bus service is essential. Please allow Bus 11 to continue service as without it we won’t know what to do. Thank you”

Question 11:

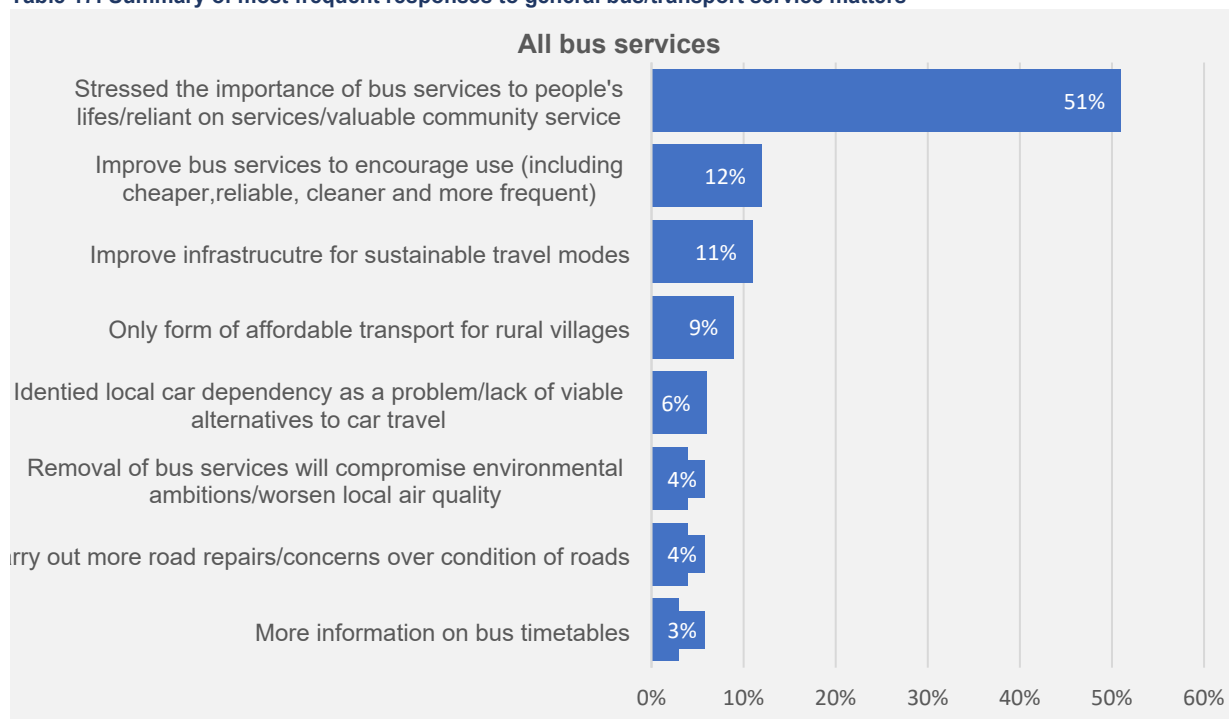
Is there any other matter you would like to comment on regarding bus or transport services in Thurrock?

In total 221 responses were recorded to this question.

Respondents were provided with an opportunity to submit any additional comments or concerns about bus services generally in Thurrock.

- Consistent with similar themes, responses highlighted the important role buses play, expressing a variety of concerns and/or detrimental impacts to local communities if services were withdrawn
- Recognition of the environmental benefits associated with public transport use
- Improvements to infrastructure that support sustainable travel modes and/or road conditions would encourage more people to switch and/or improve journeys.

Table 17: Summary of most frequent responses to general bus/transport service matters



4. Overall Findings

- The majority of respondents provided one or more comments to all of the consultation questions with the exception of questions relating to personal demographics, which some respondents chose not to answer (it may have been because these were at the very end of the survey).
- The results show a largely consistent view of the 3 bus services in Thurrock, with an overwhelming majority valuing the service they provide. Feedback reiterated the desire to either maintain current service provision or enhance it.
- The buses provide a vital service to residents of all age groups, some of whom have no other means of transportation, although one group particularly dependent are the elderly - and for some they have been cited as an absolute lifeline.
- For the majority of respondents, the services played an important role in supporting the everyday journeys that make up their lives and improved access to a range of basic necessities such as healthcare and shops.
- In addition to supporting necessary journeys, the results demonstrate the services are potentially a cost-effective contributor to social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and public health. It was clear access to these transport services were providing significant 'spill-over' benefits in tackling social exclusion, providing greater freedom and independence, and maintaining wellbeing.
- Results emphasised service user concerns for specific population groups, particularly the impact any changes may have on the lives of elderly users.
- Concessionary travel on all 3 routes for older and disabled people is both popular and successful.
- Respondents acknowledge the role buses play as part of a sustainable transport system, reducing congestion and pollution associated with car use. Any reduction in services may encourage more residents to use their cars, impacting air quality and making it more difficult to achieve the boroughs air quality improvement aims.
- Suggestions for future service provision/changes put forward were varied, although the most common responses related to encouraging more use of the services and the need to match bus capacity to passenger demand, whilst retaining connections to key locations. The use of minibuses was suggested on less frequently used routes.

5 Next Steps

We will use the information provided by the consultation to inform the next stages of the review. Further information and assessment are currently being sought to aid the process and over the coming months we will continue to appraise the services. Some of this information will include:

Data of routes: 12 months of passenger data will be collated to establish the actual level of demand for the services.

Equalities Impact Assessment: As part of the review process an Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed to understand how changes to bus services may adversely affect specific demographic groups – the elderly, those with protected characteristics, children and young people, low-income households and other groups who may be disproportionately affected by any changes.

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Survey distribution and collection locations

Location
Aveley Hub
East Tilbury Hub
Belhus Hub
Tilbury Hub
East Tilbury Library
Stanford-le-Hope Library
Horndon on the Hill Post Office/Village Store
East Tilbury Post Office
East Tilbury Village Hall
North Stifford Village Store
Stifford Clays Headon Community Hall
Bulphan Village Hall
Bulphan Stores
Orsett Hospital Reception
Orsett Village Store
Forum members of Horndon on the Hill and Fobbing (for wider community distribution)
Bus services 11, 265 and 374

Appendix B: Consultation responses

Due to the large volume of consultation responses, these are published on the consultation webpage - <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/bus-consultation-2022>

Appendix C: Consultation materials

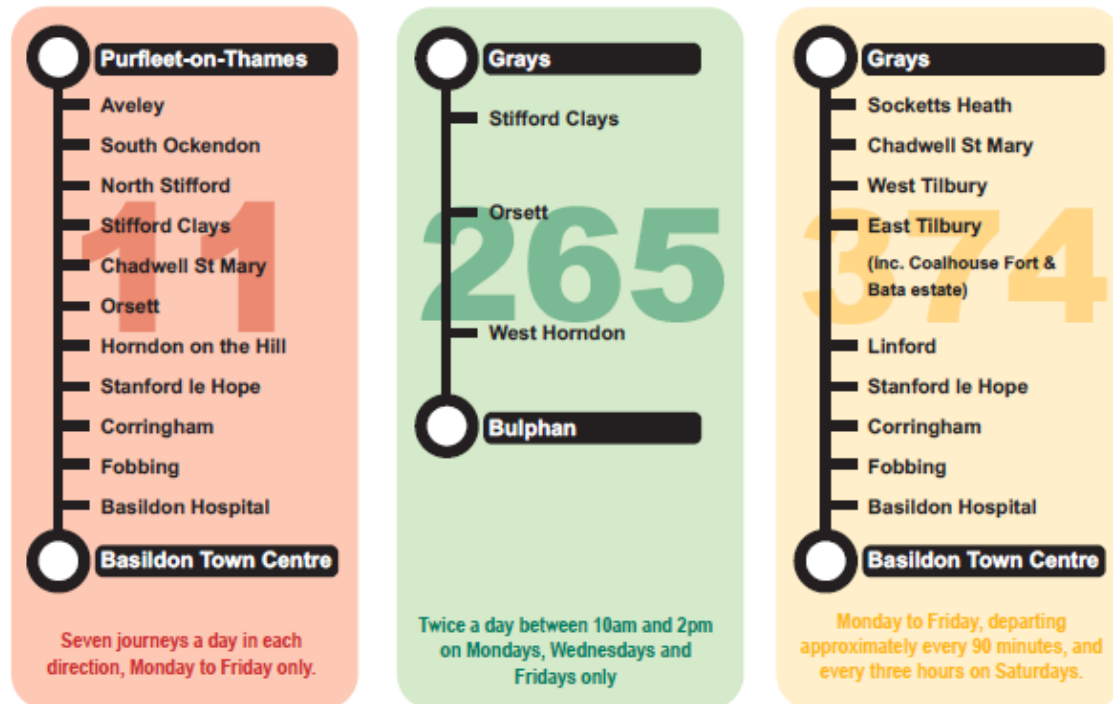
Copy of the paper consultation form

Thurrock Supported bus services consultation



Thurrock Council financially supports three bus services within the borough. These services, support nearly every community in Thurrock, including some of the more rural areas which are not supported by commercially viable bus routes.

They offer the following:



The council is seeking the views of all stakeholders regarding the provision of these three supported services, to learn more about their importance to the community, and to understand how they are used. This information will then give the council an opportunity to review these services and see if they remain fit for purpose to the needs of the community and retain value for money. As an outcome, this may result in a change to the way in which services supported by the council are provided, with service withdrawals a possibility.

This consultation will run for **12 weeks** and closes on **9 October 2022**. The council intends to review and finalise any actions by no later than the end of 2022.

Returning your questionnaire

Completed forms can be dropped off at **any public library in Thurrock, Thurrock Community Hubs, or at the Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL**. Alternatively, completed questionnaires can be returned by Freepost to the following address : **FREEPOST - Council PTPP**

Questionnaires can also be completed on our website at : www.thurrock.gov.uk/say

Consultation questions

1. Which of the following bus services have you used in the last 6 months? (please select as **many** as you wish)

11 265 374 Another bus service in Thurrock, not listed above

2. How often do you use the bus? (please select **one** only)

Daily More than once a week Weekly Once a month
 Several times a month 2-3 times per month No less than once a year Never

3. What are the main purposes for your bus travel? (please select as **many** as you wish)

Getting to/from work Going shopping Health appointments
 Visiting family and friends Education or training Other (please specify below) :

4. What are your main reasons for travelling by bus? (please select as **many** as you wish)

It is the most convenient way to travel I have no alternative

It is good value It helps the environment I have a bus pass

Other (please specify)

5. Where do you regularly travel to/from or have travelled to/from on these services? (please select as **many** as you wish)

11	To	From	265	To	From	374	To	From
Purfleet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aveley	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stifford Clays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Socketts Heath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Ockendon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orsett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chadwell St Mary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Stifford	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	West Homdon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	West Tilbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stifford Clays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bulphan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	East Tilbury (Coalhouse Fort)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chadwell St Mary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	East Tilbury (Bata Estate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orsett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Linford	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homdon on the Hill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Stanford le Hope	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stanford le Hope	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Corringham	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corringham	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Fobbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fobbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Basildon Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basildon Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Basildon Town Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basildon Town Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Other *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

* If "Other" is selected, please specify :



6. If services 11, 265 or 374 did not operate, what would be the impact on you or others you may know?

7. Do you feel that services 11, 265 or 374 meet your needs as a bus user ?
(please select **one** only)

Yes No If "no" please specify why not in the box (below) :

8. What benefits do these services bring to you and/or your community?

9. Please could you tell us how these service(s) can be changed to better meet the needs of the community ?

10. Is there any other matter you would like to raise regarding the future provision of the three supported bus services?

11. Is there any other matter you would like to comment on regarding bus services in Thurrock?

Thank you for participating in this consultation.

We expect to announce the outcomes from this consultation prior to the end of this year (2022), along with the next steps.

Should you have any issue or wish to get in contact with the council regarding other issues related to buses, please email the team at passengertransport@thurrock.gov.uk.

Please state your **ethnicity** as you best describe it, in the box below :

Do you consider yourself as having a **disability** ?

Yes No

Please specify your **gender**

Female Male Transgender

Prefer not to say Other

Please specify your **age** bracket

17 or under 18-24 25-44

45-59 Over 60 years Prefer not to say

Your details

Post Code : Email Address :

Residential address (Optional) :

Please tick this box if you would like to be contacted on the outcome of this consultation or any other Thurrock bus matters.

Data protection and fair processing statement

We will use your information to provide the service requested. We may share your personal data between our services and with partner organisations, such as government bodies and the police. We will do so when it is of benefit to you, or required by law, or to prevent or detect fraud. To find out more, go to thurrock.gov.uk/privacy. Get free internet access at libraries and community hubs.

The following email shows the promotion of the consultation to all Thurrock councillors.

Supported Bus Services Consultation



To Members (All)

Cc PassengerTransport@thurrock.gov.uk; [redacted]

Reply Reply All Forward

Mon 18/07/2022 23:22

Thurrock Council is undertaking a consultation with residents and key stakeholders regarding bus services which are financially supported by Thurrock Council – routes 11, 265, and 374. These services support nearly every community and ward in the borough. The council is seeking the views of all stakeholders regarding the provision of these three supported services, to learn more about their importance to the community, and to understand how they are used. This information will then give the council an opportunity to review these services and see if they remain fit for purpose to the needs of the community and retain value for money. As an outcome, this may result in a change to the way in which services supported by the council are provided, with service withdrawals a possibility.

The services which are being consulted on are as follows:

- Service 11 serves Purfleet-on-Thames, Aveley, South Ockendon, North Stifford, Thurrock Hospital, Grays (Blackshots), Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminates at Basildon bus station. There are seven journeys a day in each direction, Monday to Friday only.
- The 265 operates twice a day between 10am and 2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only, connecting Grays, Socketts Heath, Orsett, Bulphan and West Horndon.
- The 374 serves Grays, Socketts Heath via Hathaway Road, Chadwell St Mary, West Tilbury, Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury, Linford, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Fobbing, Basildon Hospital and terminates at Basildon bus station. These buses run Monday to Friday, departing approximately every 90 minutes, and every three hours on Saturdays.

With the exception of TfL services, and one service funded by Essex County Council, all other bus services are commercial operations and do not fall within this consultation.

This consultation is scheduled to close on 9 October 2022 and will have run for 12 weeks. To enable the necessary participation by all members of the community, officers are looking at how we can make this as accessible as possible. On Friday 15 July, the online consultation portal went live, and is the preferred method for encouraging participation by residents and stakeholders. The link to the portal is: <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/bus-consultation-2022>. This page includes a survey and an interactive map. Additionally, we are making hard copy's of the survey available from key locations across the borough, which can either be handed in at local libraries, or we are finalising a freepost license to enable these to be posted back to the council. Passengers on these three services will also be able to request a hard-copy of the survey from the bus driver. We will also be promoting the consultation via posters in bus stops and key locations. We will also be reaching out to all respective Community Forums which represent communities that are served by these three routes, and work with them to help promote the consultation and to distribute surveys.

Should members require copies of the survey, please do let me know how many, and where to send these to, and we can provide them. Also if there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

[redacted]

Appendix D: Submission sources

The following data is taken from the Consultation web portal, showing how users accessed the portal and to better understand its reach.

Traffic Channel	Source	Aware Visits	Informed Visits	Engaged Visits
Direct	-	495	227	143
Referrals	android-app	8	5	3
Referrals	apps.talktalk.co.uk	1	0	0
Referrals	email.bt.com	1	1	0
Referrals	Inks.gd	61	29	6
Referrals	purfleet-on-thames.org	4	0	0
Search Engine	bing	13	7	3
Search Engine	duckduckgo	1	0	0
Search Engine	google	96	49	10
Email	ehq	40	27	8
Email	ehq_newsletter	125	84	25
Email	govdelivery	6	0	0
Email	yahoo	1	0	0
Social	facebook	577	243	23
Social	twitter	14	5	1
.GOV sites	gov	62	32	6

Appendix E – Minimum Service Level Options

Introduction

The Leader of the Council sought advice and review from the Passenger Transport Team of a proposed bus service route, which would aim to provide a minimum service level for communities which would be adversely impacted by any withdrawal of the existing three supported bus services.

Options

Officers have sought very high-level proposals from existing bus operators with indicative costs of service proposals.

Option One - First Essex have considered a potential route that connects Stanford-le-Hope to Basildon via Fobbing, at an annual cost of £25k. This would run three days a week, between 9am and 2pm. A proposed timetable prepared by First Essex is included as an addendum. If this was the preferred consideration, the only area that would benefit is Fobbing. This would leave many other areas such as Orsett, East Tilbury Village, West Tilbury, and Horndon-on-the-Hill without any provision. The indicative annual cost is approximately £25k, based on a charge of £160 per day, with the operator also retaining all revenues. This option could potentially be implemented without needing to go out to open tender in the first instance, due to its projected costs being within the threshold of requiring only one written quote.

Option Two - An Ensign Bus proposed route option includes Chadwell St Mary, West Tilbury, East Tilbury, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-Le-H. It is mooted that this proposal, based on a single bus operating three days per week could cost circa £100k per annum. Officers have drafted an indicative timetable which could support this level of provision. Were this to be considered as the preferred option, it would not provide the desired link to Grays, which is the final destination of choice of most users identified within the consultation and user study, and it also does not offer a turnaround point for the bus or any layover areas for breaks, which is a practical consideration to make any route workable. Realistically, this route would either need to continue to Civic Square in Tilbury, or Grays bus station to access these layover facilities. The indicative annual cost has been suggested as £100k, however officers have not been able to evidence this cost. Further details on the procurement considerations are given further in this note.

Option Three - The existing Saturday timetable for the 374 offers a template for a single bus three-day service with an indicative cost of around £198k per annum. Such a service would cover Grays, Chadwell St Mary, West Tilbury, East Tilbury Linford, Horndon on the Hill, Stanford Le Hope, Corringham, Fobbing and Basildon. Officers have drafted an indicative timetable, and is given as an addendum. This would support each of those communities identified as being at risk of not having any provision but would not provide a direct link to Orsett Hospital, which does benefit from other connecting services. The route also offers turnaround points and layover areas. This option is projected to have an annual cost of £198k, based on projected costs linked to delivery of the existing Saturday 374 service. This option could be implemented using the existing contract, but would expire in March 2024. It would give officers the time to explore and implement option two.

All three options are based on one bus service which is perceived to be the minimum level of offer for these small rural communities for a three-days a week operation.

There are two areas which are not considered by these three proposals - Bulphan and Orsett, however each is already supported by alternative bus provision. Bulphan is served by an Essex County Council funded bus which links to Brentwood. Orsett is served by a commercial service – the 200 bus provided by First Essex.

Procurement Advice

A discussion has been broached with the council's procurement department regarding their advice on undertaking exploratory engagement with the bus industry on the potential viability for operators to deliver these routes within the parameters sought by the council, in particular for option two.

Officers are advised that to ensure a fair and transparent approach, local providers - including the existing operator, can be invited to express an interest in providing a service via the Council's e-tendering portal, particularly for option 2. If more than one operator is able to provide the service and if the total contract value exceeds the UK threshold of £213,477 per annum (inclusive of VAT), then, in compliance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015, an open competitive tender process can be run via the portal. This will enable both local and national providers to submit a bid and will take between 6-9 months to complete. It should also be noted that due to the Government Intervention and Best Value Inspection, an expenditure control process has been put in place and, before any tender exercise can commence, a Stage 1 governance form will need to be approved by the Strategic Panel. Within the bus industry, it can be expected that a further period of up to three months may be required for the operator to mobilise for service delivery following the completion of the award of contract.

If the current operator is the only one to express an interest, then the council will be able to vary the existing contract to operate until March 2024.

Appendix 1 – First Bus Fobbing variant timetable

Days		MWF	MWF	MWF
Basildon, Bus Station		0940	1040	1315
Basildon Hospital, Main Entrance		0945	1045	1320
Fobbing Church		0952	1052	1327
Corringham, Town Centre		0958	1058	1333
Stanford-Le-Hope, The Green		1005	1105	1340
Days	MWF	MWF	MWF	MWF
Stanford-Le-Hope, The Green	0910	1010	1110	1345
Corringham, Town Centre	0917	1017	1117	1352
Fobbing Church	0923	1023	1123	1358
Basildon Hospital, Main Entrance	0930	1030	1130	1405
Basildon, Bus Station	0935	1035	1135	1410

Appendix 2 – Ensign Bus proposed route – Indicative timetable

Chadwell, Cross Keys	07:00	10:00	13:00	16:00
Coalhouse Fort	07:11	10:11	13:11	16:11
East Tilbury Coronation Avenue	07:17	10:17	13:17	16:17
Linford, Shops	07:22	10:22	13:22	16:22
Horndon on the Hill	07:31	10:31	13:31	16:31
Stanford le Hope, Victoria Rd	07:37	10:37	13:37	16:37
Corringham, Gordon Rd	07:44	10:44	13:44	16:44
Fobbing, Church	07:50	10:50	13:50	16:50
Basildon Hospital	07:57	10:57	13:57	16:57
Basildon Bus Station	08:02	11:02	14:02	17:02
Basildon Bus Station	08:30	11:30	14:30	17:30
Basildon Hospital	08:35	11:35	14:35	17:35
Fobbing, Church	08:42	11:42	14:42	17:42
Corringham, Gordon Rd	08:48	11:48	14:48	17:48
Stanford le Hope, Victoria Rd	08:55	11:55	14:55	17:55
Horndon on the Hill	09:03	12:03	15:03	18:03
Linford, Shops	09:10	12:10	15:10	18:10
East Tilbury, Coronation Ave	09:15	12:15	15:15	18:15
Coalhouse Fort	09:21	12:21	15:21	18:21
Chadwell, Cross Keys	09:32	12:32	15:32	18:32

Appendix 3 – 11/374 Variant – Indicative timetable

Grays Bus Station	07:00	10:35	14:10	17:45
Hathaway Rd, Shops	07:05	10:40	14:15	17:50
Socketts Heath, The Oak	07:09	10:44	14:19	17:54
Grays, Palmers College	07:11	10:46	14:21	17:56
Chadwell, Cross Keys	07:16	10:51	14:26	18:01
Coalhouse Fort	07:27	11:02	14:37	18:12
East Tilbury, Gloucester Ave	07:31	11:06	14:41	18:16
Linford, Shops	07:37	11:12	14:47	18:22
Stanford le Hope Railway Station	07:45	11:20	14:55	18:30
Horndon on the Hill, South Hill Crescent	07:53	11:28	15:03	18:38
Corringham, Gordon Rd	08:08	11:43	15:18	18:53
Fobbing, Church	08:13	11:48	15:23	18:58
Basildon Hospital	08:20	11:55	15:30	19:05
Basildon Bus Station	08:25	12:00	15:35	19:10
Basildon Bus Station	09:00	12:30	16:05	
Basildon Hospital	09:05	12:35	16:10	
Fobbing, Church	09:12	12:42	16:17	
Corringham, Gordon Rd	09:18	12:48	16:23	
Horndon on the Hill, South Hill Crescent	09:33	13:03	16:38	
Stanford le Hope, Railway Station	09:40	13:10	16:45	
Linford, Shops	09:47	13:17	16:52	
East Tilbury, Coronation Ave	09:51	13:21	16:56	
Coalhouse Fort	09:57	13:27	17:02	
Chadwell, Cross Keys	10:08	13:38	17:13	
Grays, Palmers College	10:11	13:41	17:16	
Socketts Heath, The Oak	10:14	13:44	17:19	
Hathaway Rd, Shops	10:18	13:48	17:23	
Grays Bus Station	10:23	13:53	17:28	

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15 March 2023	ITEM: 12 Decision: 110644
Cabinet	
Financial Update – Quarter 3 2022/23	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Graham Snell, Cabinet Member for Finance	
Accountable Assistant Director: N/A	
Accountable Director: Jonathan Wilson, Interim Director of Finance	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to set out the current forecast financial position of the 2022/23 revenue and capital budgets as at quarter 3 (covering the period April-December 2022). The short to medium term outlook remains incredibly challenging and the council cannot fund its in-year expenditure without exceptional financial support from Government.

There is an in-year general fund deficit projected at £469.553m before mitigation, reducing to £452.352m once applied as set out in the table below. As previously noted, this remains a grave position and at this point the council cannot find a way to finance their expenditure in-year. A request to the Secretary of State (SoS) for exceptional financial support (EFS) for 2022/23 has been made and a response was received on 1st March 2023. The s151 Officer has also implemented actions within Thurrock to restrict expenditure in line with the requirements of the Section 114 notice issued on 19 December 2022 whilst ensuring statutory services and contractual commitments are met. Furthermore, opportunities continue to be progressed to enable capital receipts to be generated through the disposal of assets.

The report has been prepared and agreed with Commissioners and sets out the position upon:

- 2022/23 General Fund Forecast Outturn at Quarter 3 (including assumed use of reserves, treasury & cash flow)
- 2022/23 Capital Programme Forecast Outturn at Quarter 3
- 2022/23 Dedicated Schools Budget Forecast Outturn at Quarter 3

The updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been presented to Cabinet as part of the 2023/24 budget proposals on 22 February 2023.

2022/23 General Fund Outturn at Quarter 3

The summary forecast position is set out in the table below including comparison to the quarter 2 position presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. In summary, there have been net adverse movements within service pressures of £2.330m, including the pay award to staff, which have been offset by a benefit to the Council of recent interest rate changes. The detail is set out in the report in section 3 and Appendix 1.

The cost of interest charges in 2022/23 is £26.869m (Budgeted £22.089m as per table 3), however, there remains an overspend of £4.780m which forms part of the overall general fund deficit position. Interest rates are subject to movement, and as a result impact the forecast borrowing costs significantly. Since Quarter 2, the forecast borrowing rate estimated for the replacements borrowing strategy has been favourable. Members should note that the improvement in the treasury position is outside of the control of the Council and hence the positive movement since quarter 2 reflects the ongoing financial risk (both positive and negative) the Council is exposed to.

2022-23 Summary Position	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Movement £'000
Service pressure, net of earmarked reserves (Table 1)	1,772	4,102	2,330
Prior year investment income losses	29,927	29,927	0
In-year treasury position (Table 3)	33,268	30,910	(2,358)
Investment asset impairment	275,373	275,373	0
Further MRP in respect of capital investments	129,241	129,241	0
Funding gap before mitigation	469,581	469,553	(28)
Mitigation			0
Use of Reserves: Treasury Equalisation, Financial Resilience & Transformation (Table 4)	(7,591)	(7,591)	0
Potential asset sales/capital receipts (Table 5)	(9,610)	(8,410)	1,200
Potential movement in NNDR position (paragraph 3.4)	0	(1,200)	(1,200)
Remaining funding gap	452,380	452,352	(28)

The figures reflect the known positions to date and further work continues as part of the intervention which may identify further adjustments although these are not expected to be material. The potential asset sales also are subject to further assessment and will continue to be monitored through to the end of the financial year. This is the single most sensitive element of the 2022/23 budget as outlined above.

The position reflects the write down of four investment assets of (£275.373m), the impact of the provision for the write down of the remaining investments over their lives (£129.241m) and increased pressure on the treasury position (£30.910m – current year and £29.927m prior year) reflecting the impact of projected lost income from specific investments and increased borrowing costs. These positions are consistent with Q2 but remain under review.

The table includes potential mitigation based on a combination of available reserves and the use of capital receipts from projected asset disposals. The former is provisional and subject to closure of prior year audits and the latter is assumed on the basis the capitalisation direction has been received from government. Finalisation of the NNDR

collection fund and section 31 grants position could provide further mitigation to the overall position.

The requested support is expected to be in the form of a capitalisation direction which has been requested to mitigate the short-term funding gap and provide sufficient time to develop solutions which ultimately fund the financial shortfall. This further enables the Council to continue to deliver services to residents and provides assurance to wider partners, suppliers, and staff.

The request for support was made to The Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) in December 2022 and a response was received on 1 March 2023. This is specific to the 2022/23 funding gap and the projected deficit for 2023/24. This is included at Appendix 6. Where further support is required in subsequent financial years then requests will be made in the relevant period following detailed assessment.

It is important to note the cash flow consequences of the position set out above continue to be managed in conjunction with Commissioners and DLUHC. The Council will continue to deliver core services and meet its contractual financial obligations while working through options to resolve the financial position set out.

2022/23 Capital Programme Outturn at quarter 3

A comprehensive review of the programme, to identify reductions was undertaken in July 2022. A further interim review has been conducted to support the setting of the 2023/24 budget (with a wider review to be undertaken in quarter 1 of 2023/24). This has further reduced the programme and there are a number of further projects that are held pending further assessment in the context of the requirements of the s114 notice.

This has been reflected in the budgets included in the Table below, with the remaining schemes forecasting slippage of £11.685m against the revised budget of £59.664m.

A further detailed review on the Capital programme will be completed as part of the intervention and recovery plan.

1. Recommendations:

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the 2022/23 forecast gross funding gap of £469.553, note the mitigation proposed locally and the wider need for exceptional financial support to mitigate the net funding gap.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet note the position set out in respect of the capital programme in section 4 and that a further review of the programme will be undertaken in Q1 of 2023/24.**
- 1.3 That Members note the fragility of the financial situation and in particular the reliance upon asset sales to deliver the above position.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In June 2022, the Council confirmed there was significant financial risk attaching to three specific investments within the wider investment portfolio. This identified**

potentially significant impairments and a workstream was developed to provide clarity on the financial position and identify the potential for mitigating actions including legal remedies.

- 2.2 As reported at quarter 1 on 2 September 2022, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced directions to implement an intervention package at the Council.
- 2.3 The delivery of this package is being overseen by Essex County Council as the appointed Commissioners to the Council.
- 2.4 On 19 December 2022 the Council's Acting Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer issued a report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1998. This advises Councillors that the Council faces 'a financial situation of an extremely serious nature.'
- 2.5 As part of the intervention process the scale of the financial risk faced by the Council was provisionally quantified as part of the Quarter 2 financial report presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. This confirmed the need for exceptional financial support from government. This was because the actions the Council was able to take to mitigate the scale of financial losses reflected were not sufficient to address these losses. Consequently, there is currently no clear path to financial sustainability without exceptional support from government. Discussions continue with officials at DLUHC to consider this position.
- 2.6 The financial impacts of the work are reflected in the report and are subject to ongoing assessment and discussion between the Commissioners and the Council. It confirms an initial assessment of the impact of the Council's exposure to the financial risk attached to the investment strategy. This position remains unchanged at Quarter 3.
- 2.7 A response to the request for exceptional support is expected by the end of February 2023.
- 2.8 The position will evolve, and further consideration of wider mitigations is required to consider the impact on the overall sustainability of the Council.

3. 2022/23 General Fund Forecast Outturn

Service position

- 3.1 The forecast outturn compared to budget at quarter 3 is estimated to be £13.146m overspent, prior to support from additional resources. This is equivalent to a 9% variance to budget. This is over £3m worse than the quarter 2 service position and is predominately (£2.758m) due to the costs associated with the changes to the 2022/23 pay policy (formally agreed at the Full Council meeting on 25 January 2023).
- 3.2 The use of earmarked reserves and an assumed reduction in cost for the last quarter by continuing to ensure tight control over all non-essential spend could

potentially reduce the projected in-year pressure to £4.102m. This is £2.33m worse than the quarter 2 forecast position:

Table 1 Service Pressures (net of earmarked reserves):

Directorate	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of travel
Adults, Housing and Health	50,966	3,407	2,982	(425)	▲
Children's Services	40,826	2,461	2,033	(428)	▲
Housing General Fund	1,581	93	272	179	▼
HR, OD, and Transformation	8,924	(738)	(902)	(164)	▲
Public Realm	35,140	40	(192)	(232)	▲
Resources & Place Delivery	13,967	1,246	1,424	178	▼
Strategy, Engagement & Growth	3,450	(131)	(191)	(60)	▲
Corporate Costs	1,819	(786)	(695)	91	▼
Backdated 2022/23 Pay Award	0	0	2,758	2,758	▼
Unallocated Vacancy Factor	(3,000)	3,000	3,000	0	No change
Projected Intervention Costs	0	1,500	2,657	1,157	▼
Service pressures quarter 3	153,672	10,092	13,146	3,054	▼
<i>Mitigation:</i>			0	0	
Use of Earmarked reserves		(7,514)	(8,238)	(724)	▲
Cost control in quarter 4		(806)	(806)	0	No change
Remaining service pressure	153,672	1,772	4,102	2,330	▼

*The vacancy factor is held as a central target, the quarter 3 actual position on vacant posts is contained within the directorate outturns and is shown in table 2 below with further detail provided in Appendix 1.

- 3.3 Table 2 shows key variances that have been identified as part of the budget monitoring process with comparison to the quarter 2 position presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. This is **before** any mitigating action is applied. Further explanation is included in Appendix 1. The 2023/24 budget agreed by full council includes growth allocations to mitigate ongoing pressures within the categories listed.

Table 2 Key forecast variances at Quarter 3:

Variance category	Risk detail	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of travel
Demographic growth	Adults External Placements	32,658	3,269	2,943	(326)	▲
Employees Costs	Vacant post saving	90,267	1,362	(50)	(1,412)	▲
	Backdated Pay Award	0	0	2,758	2,758	▼
Demand	Homelessness	(397)	0	419	419	▼
	School Transport	3,292	616	380	(236)	▲
	Waste Disposal	8,371	(604)	(845)	(241)	▲
Complexity of care	Children's external placements	12,282	1,741	2,148	408	▼
	Children's Legal proceedings	272	453	363	(90)	▲
Corporate Costs	Pension / Corporate Overheads	1,819	(786)	(695)	91	▼
	Cost of Intervention & additional resources	0	1,500	2,657	1,157	▼
Delay to savings	Asset Rationalisation	300	128	129	1	▼
	Capitalisation of staff	(1,378)	487	987	500	▼
	Ground maintenance saving	(150)	130	130	0	▼
	Waste Collection	5,136	636	557	(79)	▲
Income generation	Counter Fraud	(582)	(1,123)	(921)	201	▼
	Parking charges	(465)	327	431	104	▼
	Planning fees	(1,229)	463	169	(294)	▲
Inflation	Utilities	2,725	995	1,011	16	▼
	Other income/expenditure	751	499	576	77	▼
Total Service Pressure		153,672	10,092	13,146	3,054	▼

3.4 The assumption has been made that there will be no other significant variances within the central financing or other corporate cost allocations. These remain subject to finalisation of the NNDR collection fund and section 31 grants position, which could result in additional funding within the General Fund of £1.2m (referenced in Table 6).

Expenditure Control Process

3.5 Following the issue of the S114 notice, the Acting S151 Officer implemented a process by which all spend exceeding £500 is subject to additional scrutiny and the need to demonstrate that expenditure meets the requirements of the notice. spend can only be approved is it meets the following criteria:

- existing staff payroll and pension costs
- expenditure on goods and services that have already been received, and for which purchase orders had already been approved
- expenditure required to provide of statutory services at a minimum possible level
- urgent expenditure required to safeguard vulnerable citizens
- expenditure required through existing legal agreements and contracts
- expenditure funded through ring-fenced grants
- expenditure necessary to achieve value for money or mitigate additional in-year cost

3.6 The operation of the panels is further controlling spend through ensuring the requirements of the S114 notice are upheld. Where the requirements are not met, requests are rejected by the panels resulting in reduced spend which is contributing to the positive movements show in table 2a below. The wider impact

that is evident from the improvement below, and which cannot be specifically captured, is that where potential requests to the panels are likely to fail officers are simply not requesting the expenditure and continuing to manage within existing resources. The wider management of the recruitment panel is also clearly positively impacting spend levels as the vacant post saving delivery is now on track as set out in Appendix 1.

- 3.7 The quarter 3 outturn position already shows an improved forecast outturn at a directorate level as services reduce their commitments against non-statutory services. It can be reasonably assumed that further improvements to the position will be seen in the final quarter of the year and further analysis will be carried out to ascertain the potential full year effect on spending levels in 2023-24.

Table 2a Movement in Operational Service positions (extract of Table 1)

Directorate	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of travel
Adults; Housing and Health	3,407	2,982	(425)	▲
Children's Services	2,461	2,033	(428)	▲
Housing General Fund	93	272	179	▼
HR; OD and Transformation	(738)	(902)	(164)	▲
Public Realm	40	(192)	(232)	▲
Resources & Place Delivery	1,246	1,424	178	▼
Strategy; Engagement & Growth	(131)	(191)	(60)	▲
Total	6,378	5,425	(953)	▲

In-year Savings progress

- 3.8 Table 2b shows the progress against the 2022/23 savings target. Over 80% of the savings have been achieved or are on track to be realised by the end of the financial year. £2.142m has been identified as non-deliverable by 31st March against a target of £13.906, this is equivalent to 15.4%. One-off mitigation has been applied, either in the form of service underspends or the use of reserves, this is set out in Appendix 1.

Table 2b In-year savings progress:

As at 16/01/23	Savings Totals		Delivery RAG Assessment				
	Original (Baseline) £'000	Actual (excl. non deliverable) £'000	Amount of savings that are non-deliverable £'000	Amount of savings At High Risk of not being delivered by 31/3/23 £'000	Amount of savings At Risk of not being delivered by 31/3/23 £'000	Amount of savings on target for delivery by 31/3/23 £' 000	Amount of savings already delivered £'000
Adult Social Care	1,861	1,661	200	0	0	0	1,669
Housing General Fund	1,519	1,519	0	0	0	1,519	0
Public Health	200	200	0	0	0	0	200
Children's Services	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	448	2,552
Corporate	1,500	1,000	500	0	0	0	1,000
HR, OD & Transformation	616	616	0	0	0	0	616
Public Realm	1,853	1,431	422	272	26	959	174
Resource & Place delivery	2,908	1,888	1,020	128	0	1,635	125
Strategy, Engagement & Growth	449	449	0	0	0	0	449
Total Savings	13,906	11,764	2,142	400	26	4,561	6,785
% of Savings			15.4%	2.9%	0.2%	32.8%	48.8%

In-year Treasury position

3.9 The projection in the table below is a summary of the position using the information which is currently available. The position continues to be monitored in the context of interest rate movements specifically and the wider ongoing review of investments.

Table 3 In-year Treasury position:

Treasury Quarter 3	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
Interest payable on borrowing	22,089	26,869	4,780
Investment Income	(41,472)	(13,223)	28,250
MRP on existing capital programme	9,957	7,683	(2,274)
Thurrock Regeneration Limited	(1,174)	(1,021)	154
In-year pressure	(10,601)	20,309	30,910

The Key variances are as a result of the following factors:

- Increases in interest rates relating to the cost of borrowing which far exceeds those projected when the base budget was set. This reflects the costs of refinancing inter-authority debt with historic rates of less than 1%, new one-year PWLB debt with interest rates to between 3.75% and 5.06% over the last 4 months when the strategy to refinance existing short-term debt was implemented. This was part of the strategic approach to borrowing and the need to accelerate the switch of debt from inter authority lending to one-year PWLB, as agreed with Commissioners.
- Loss of investment income based on the latest assessment of investments

Savings within MRP, notwithstanding changes to the policy and capitalisation directive, due to a reduction in the Council's planned capital programme.

- 3.10 The below table shows the movement from the reported quarter 2 and current quarter 3 positions which remain subject to further interest rate fluctuations in the final quarter of the year:

Table 3a Changes to Treasury forecast:

Treasury	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of travel
Interest payable on borrowing	5,721	4,780	(941)	▲
Investment Income	29,667	28,250	(1,417)	▲
MRP on existing capital programme	(2,274)	(2,274)	0	No change
Thurrock Regeneration Limited	154	154	0	No change
Total	33,268	30,910	(2,358)	▲

Use of reserves

- 3.11 It should be noted that the 2022/23 budget was set with the inclusion of a £3m contribution from reserves to support the general fund budget. This is reflected in table 4 which shows the remaining financial resilience reserve balance.
- 3.12 Based on the current allocations, the reserves shown below are available to reduce the overall budget pressure and have been included in the summary position. Approval from Cabinet to utilise these reserves was sought as part of the quarter 2 report.

Table 4 Use of Reserves

Use of Reserves in Quarter 3	£'000
Treasury Equalisation Reserve	(1,907)
Financial Resilience Reserve	(2,000)
Transformation Reserve	(3,684)
Total	(7,591)

- 3.13 Appendix 5 details the full reserves position and shows opening and closing balances.
- 3.14 Consideration is being given to redirect other earmarked reserves not already being utilised and may provide further mitigation. A reserves strategy has been developed as part of the 2023/24 budget and consulted upon with Members and Commissioners. This was reported to Cabinet on 22 February 2023.
- 3.15 The Council's General Fund reserve balance, totalling £11m at the start of the year is held to mitigate against the financial risks inherent in delivering Council services; this represents around 1 month's operating expenditure for Thurrock and is considered the minimum position for this Council.

- 3.16 It should be noted that whilst the external audit review for 2020/21 and 2021/22 remains outstanding and consequently the opening reserve position is subject to change. The proposed mitigation from reserves is based on the current unaudited balances.

Provision for the Repayment of Debt funding the Investment Strategy

- 3.17 The intervention, required certain actions to be taken by the Council, including the need to review the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy to ensure prudent provision is made in accordance with the CIPFA Prudential Code and it is mandatory the Council complies with this. MRP is an annual amount required to be set aside from the General Fund to meet the capital cost of expenditure funded by borrowing or credit arrangements, that is, capital expenditure that has not been financed from grants, revenue contributions or capital receipts. MRP is sometimes referred to as the mechanism for setting aside monies to repay borrowing.
- 3.18 The Council has now updated its MRP policy and reported the revised approach to Cabinet on 22 February 2023. This confirms a specific focus on investment capital funded from borrowing arrangements. Historically there has been no MRP charge for these assets which was in contravention of the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. A figure of £74.988m represents an assessment of the value of a provision expecting that relevant assets are written down in full over the life they are held by the Council. This remains under discussion with Commissioners.

Asset Impairment

- 3.19 Thurrock holds investments with a book value of £1.047bn. The focus on the financial intervention to date has been on the high value and high-risk investments outlined below which represent 75% of the investment portfolio. Investments are subject to review each year, to confirm the carrying value of each investment is in line with the recoverable/realisable value at the maturity date.
- 3.20 The work by the Council's advisors identified that the value of four of the Council's investments are subject to significant impairment. An impairment is a permanent reduction in the value of an asset to less than its carrying value. Where an impairment arises on an investment asset it must be written down to the revenue account. This is either through an MRP charge in respect of a capital investment or, for a revenue investment, through a write down of the value under the accounting requirements of IFRS9.
- 3.21 The projected total write-down of investments is £275.373m. The positions remain under ongoing review and are subject to significant change but remain consistent with the Quarter 2 position. Further information on these investments will be provided to members in due course.

Use of Capital Receipts

- 3.22 Under the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Guidance, the 2022/23 budget was set with the assumption that £3.190m of spend within core services (that relates to transformational activity and/or contributes towards ongoing financial savings) would be funded through capital receipts generated from the disposal of council assets.
- 3.23 Reports presented to Cabinet in July 2021 and July 2022 identified a range of council owned properties that were considered surplus to requirement.
- 3.24 Between Apr-Dec 2022 £9.2m has been generated through asset disposals which exceeds the base budget assumption. Further flexibility will need to be agreed by DLUHC to allow balances over and above this amount to be applied to further offset in-year revenue pressures, below sets out indicative figures.

Table 5 Potential Asset Sales/Capital receipts:

Capital Receipts	£'000
Generated to date	(9,000)
Additional projected disposals within 2022/23	(2,600)
Potentially available to off-set in-year spend	(11,600)
Already assumed in base budget	3,190
Potential further use of capital receipts in 2022/23	(8,410)

- 3.25 This has been included as a potential mitigation to offset the wider budgetary gap in 2022/23. It is noted that there remains risk to the level of receipts still to be generated in-year due to the time required for the full completion of asset sales.

Additional Risk & Uncertainty

- 3.26 The budget is set on assumptions and economic forecast but there is inherent risk and uncertainty throughout this report which should be taken into consideration:

Table 6 Additional risk areas:

- 3.27 In financial terms, risk is the probability that actual results will differ from expected results, this can be a positive or negative movement and key areas have been set out in the following table:

Risk Area	Concern
Inflation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inflation has increased significantly in recent months and is impacting supply chain costs across many services. Whilst there is some evidence that this has tailed off recently, it remains an area of focus for us Energy costs continue to fluctuate impacting Corporate Landlord services

Provider failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are significant additional financial pressures on external providers to deliver core services commissioned by the Council, in particular around energy costs, inflation and wage pressures.
Ongoing demand volatility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the pandemic recedes the level of demand for key services within the system and particularly within the Social Care services has risen.
Uncertainty of government funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There remains uncertainty in planning for services in the medium term
Delivery risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant savings were applied to the 2022/23 budget allocation, and these remain subject to implementation in the agreed timescales
Advisory costs Potential further impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are ongoing costs relating to the assessment of the investments and the ongoing monitoring of these assets. This will include the assessment of the value of each investment and may result in adjustments to carrying values.
Interest rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the Bank of England interest rate may further impact the cost of borrowing
Intervention costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core intervention costs relating to the commissioners are known. Wider costs include additional capacity to support the response to the intervention – this will provide support to the corporate finance team, the property team and will support wider structural changes agreed with Commissioners. There will be further support required from a range of advisors to support specific aspects of the intervention. Recruitment timescales potentially impact this position.
Slippage on the completion of Asset Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time taken to complete sales may lead to the disposal income being realised in the following financial year.
Reassessment of NNDR Section 31 Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further review of the NNDR collection fund has identified a reduction in the forecast to return Section 31 grant funding, due to the level of business rates reliefs applied, this would result in additional retained general fund grant funding above the current forecast.

4. Capital Programme Update

4.1 Capital schemes and resources are identified in two specific categories:

- Mainstream schemes – capital expenditure funded through prudential (unsupported) borrowing, from capital receipts, from the capital contribution from revenue budget or from earmarked capital reserves; and
- Specific schemes – capital expenditure funded through external funding sources, for example, government grants and Section 106 monies which are ring fenced for specific projects.

General Fund Schemes

4.2 The current position for General Fund schemes for 2022/23 is summarised below:

Table 7 Capital Programme – Projected Outturn as at Quarter 3

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme - by Directorate	Quarter 2 Forecast	Latest Agreed Budget	Quarter 3 Forecast	Forecast Variance
Expenditure:	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children's Services	5,542	5,499	3,924	(1,575)
Chief Executive's Office	0	0	0	0
Commercial Services	16	0	0	0
Adults; Housing and Health	2,519	1,908	1,218	(690)
Public Realm	28,551	19,585	18,389	(1,196)
Resources & Place Delivery	52,047	23,911	19,537	(4,374)
HR; OD and Transformation	6,988	8,482	4,805	(3,677)
Strategy; Engagement & Growth	279	279	107	(172)
Total Expenditure	95,942	59,664	47,980	(11,684)
Resources:				
Prudential Borrowing	(71,110)	(44,642)	(35,277)	9,365
Capital Receipts	(58)	(58)	(58)	0
Reserves	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	(15,915)	(13,714)	(11,404)	2,310
Other Grants	(6,713)	(538)	(538)	0
Developer Contributions (S106)	(2,146)	(712)	(703)	9
Total Resources	(95,942)	(59,664)	(47,980)	11,684
Forecast Deficit/(Surplus) in Resources	0	0	0	0

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme - by Portfolio	Quarter 2 Forecast	Latest Agreed Budget	Quarter 3 Forecast	Forecast Variance
Expenditure:	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults and Health	6,830	1,443	1,062	(381)
Culture and Communities	3,223	2,022	1,233	(789)
Children and Education	5,992	5,944	3,965	(1,979)
Central Services	34,798	11,451	7,126	(4,325)
Environment	4,781	3,992	3,870	(122)
Growth	4,598	7,595	4,160	(3,435)
Housing	88	88	88	0
Transport and Public Safety	35,632	27,129	26,475	(654)
Total Expenditure	95,942	59,664	47,979	(11,685)

- 4.3 The forecast position at quarter 2 has been restated to include projects which were shown separately as “under development” in previous reports.
- 4.4 The table above illustrates a movement of £36.3m between the previous forecast at quarter 2 and the latest agreed budget. Following the Government intervention, Director’s Board and Officers have been able to reduce the capital programme by £22.4m by removing projects from the Digital, Property and Service Review pots, for projects which had yet to commence. A further £10.6m of expenditure had been re-profiled into future years. In addition, several projects have been placed on hold, pending a review and therefore their associated budgets have been removed from the programme.
- 4.5 The table above also shows a projected outturn at the end of the financial year of £47.979m, which is £11.685m less than the latest agreed budget of £59.664m for the year.
- 4.6 The forecast underspend is principally due to slippage on current schemes (£10.851m). Consequently, the funding remains allocated to specific current schemes and will be re-profiled into subsequent years. The impact of the reprofiling will be an ongoing exposure to inflationary pressures on costs and hence capital budgets. This continues to be assessed on a project-by-project basis.
- 4.7 Following the quarter 3 review, several projects have either completed under budget or no longer proceeding (£0.834m) and their associated budgets will be removed from the programme.

Slippage on Capital Programme

- 4.8 The slippage on the capital programme schemes is shown in the table below

Table 8 – Capital Slippage by Project

Description	Carry Forward £'000
Grays Underpass Land Acquisitions	2,500
Digital Pot	2,338
SEN Capital (B0800)	800
Secondary and Primary Schemes (to be Identified) (B099)	552
IRL - Scheme Development - Staff Costs	500
Robotic Process Automation	487
Leisure Centre Works (L0410)	400
Purfleet Land Assembly Development Agreement (R0501)	400
Service Review Board Pot	326
Disabled Facility Grant	300
Microsoft 365 Design, Build and Delivery (Phase 2)	250
Grays Town Fund (General)	250
Universal infant free school meals (B0738)	222
Demolition of Buildings	200
ICT Operating Software System Upgrades (T0506)	190
CO1 Infrastructure Decommissioning	183
Environmental Enhancements at Play Sites (N0277)	150
Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Hub	129
TTF Heart - Civic Square	125
Purfleet SELEP Land Acquisition (R0502)	115
Well Homes Offers	66
Aveley Community Hub (R0740)	65
Deployment of overt 4G CCTV camera systems	56
Pupil Referral Unit Relocation (D0020)	50
TTF Hub - Station Gateway	45
Improvements to Village Halls (D0010)	33
Softphone capability	30
Core Licencing	28
LADO Recording Functionality within LCS	18
4Me Service Desk Self Service Enhancement	12
SEND Synergy Upgrade/Improvement	10
South Ockendon Community Hub Phase 2 (09/50035/TT)	9
Applications Alignment to Office 2019	8
Bridge Repair and Strengthening (E2828)	2
Libraries Services Technology Modernisation	1
All Directorate	10,850

□

4.9 Land Acquisitions for the Grays Underpass scheme are anticipated to take place within the next couple of years. Although the overall project is under review, land will still be required for any future design. Early negotiations are being held with land owners and budget reprofiling is required to match expected spend.

4.10 Capital schemes within the Digital Pot are based on demand and include enhancements to Oracle, ICT upgrades, Synergy and Data Analytics

improvements. The remaining budget is to be re-profiled into 2023/24, pending a further review of projects within the pot.

- 4.11 SEN Capital is likely to spend around £0.2m this financial year with the remainder to be profiled in future years. Children's services are looking to build a new Special Education Needs facility within the borough, possible locations for the new building are still be investigated.
- 4.12 The financial impact resulting in the delay of the projects will be assessed and included within the 2023/24 programme. This will range across the schemes and will be subject to further viability assessment.
- 4.13 A schedule of General Fund projects is included in Appendix 3.
- 4.14 Several capital schemes are expected to complete construction in future years with expenditure totalling £65.717m. Budgets for these schemes have already been profiled accordingly.
- 4.15 Major projects are reported within the current annual budget envelopes as part of this report. The wider detailed updates on project progress will be shared with Cabinet by the lead officers as soon as practicable.
- 4.16 As part of a high-level review of capital activities, several projects have been put 'on hold' meaning that the budgets and financing for these have been temporarily removed from the programme pending a decision on whether they can be reinstated. This will be continued, in conjunction with a review of the remaining programme, in greater detail throughout the year as part of the wider review of the Council's finances and impact of proposed government support. A revised position will be reported to Members as early as is practical in the new financial year. It is noted that should projects be reinstated to the programme there will need to be further consideration of the impact on prudential borrowing and, where this relates to a general fund project, the associated interest, and Minimum Revenue Provision charges to revenue.

Housing Revenue Account Capital Schemes

- 4.17 The current position for Housing Revenue Account schemes for 2022/23 is summarised below.

Table 9 HRA Capital Programme – Projected Outturn

Summary of the 2022/23 HRA Capital Programme	Quarter 2 Forecast	Latest Agreed Budget	Quarter 3 Forecast	Forecast Variance
Expenditure:	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Housing Development	3,130	1,885	1,885	0
Transforming Homes	43,583	46,878	44,363	(2,515)
Total Expenditure	46,713	48,763	46,248	(2,515)
Resources:				
Prudential Borrowing	(34,114)	(36,011)	(30,639)	5,372
Capital Receipts	(2,045)	(1,459)	(4,301)	(2,842)
Reserves	0	(739)	(754)	(15)
Government and Other Grants	0	0	0	0
S106	0	0	0	0
Major Repairs Reserve	(10,554)	(10,554)	(10,554)	0
Total Resources	(46,713)	(48,763)	(46,248)	2,515
Forecast under/overspend in Resources	0	0	0	0

- 4.18 The budget for Transforming Homes in 2022/23 is £46.878m and the forecast spend is currently £44.363m. Current slippage is expected to be £14.872m and further detail is shown below:

Slippage on Capital Programme

Description	Carry Forward
	£'000
Tower Block Refurbishment	14,223
Non Traditional Properties	349
HRA Highways and Lighting	300
Transforming Homes	14,872

- 4.19 The slippage on the tower blocks relates to those within the Blackshots estate. Further options on the long-term solutions to the issues identified in these dwellings are currently under consideration, and therefore works have commenced on the blocks in Grays as the first phase of the programme. In addition, there was additional requirements relating to the design, and agreement of sign off on external wall installations and window installations, as per social regulator. This has added some delay to the project
- 4.20 The requirements needed for the non-traditional properties has changed from the original estimate and are subject to further surveys. The additional requirements, coupled with current workforce and supply chain limitations has resulted in slippage to the project.
- 4.21 In addition, funding of £8.5m has been added to the programme relating to HRA Phi property purchases. These purchases are funded from right to buy receipts and HRA prudential borrowing. This scheme is to enable to HRA to purchase open market properties and increase the overall level of Council owned dwellings. This is part of the corporate savings plan, as it provides a significant revenue saving, coupled with the ability to move people into long term accommodation solutions, and reduce the need for temporary accommodation.

- 4.22 Funding has also been added to the programme for the Carbon Reduction Programme (£2.815m) which was previously earmarked for use in 2023/24 and is funded from prudential borrowing. This funding forms part of the SHDF wave 1 project, for which the Council secured match funding. In conjunction with the department, a change request template was submitted on 16th January 2023 to inform that works will continue into 2023/24, and provide assurance that unspent budgets would be carried forward to the new year
- 4.23 The transforming homes programme is moving at an accelerated rate, and it is anticipated an additional £1m will be required during 2022/23. Funding is expected to be drawn down early from the Major Repairs Reserve.
- 4.24 Spend incurred up to 31 December 2022 was £31.272m.
- 4.25 The Capital programme is being updated as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process and will be reported in due course. Consideration will be given to the financial impacts of the slippage on a project-by-project basis.

HRA New Build Schemes

- 4.26 The revised budgets for 2022/23 for HRA New Build Schemes are set out in Appendix 4 and covers Calcutta Way, Vigerons Way and Loewen Road. The current forecast is set to be contained within the current allocation of £1.885m. These projects will utilise receipts held under Right to Buy sharing agreement between the Council and the DLUHC and are forecast to be delivered with the current timeframes and budgets allocations.

Impact on MRP for scheme slippage and projects removed from the programme.

- 4.27 Following the quarter 3 review of the capital programme, the table below shows the MRP savings for future years, for unsupported prudential borrowing.

MRP - Prudential Element

Year	Previous Forecast Charge	Revised Forecast Charge	Movement
	£'000	£'000	£'000
2022/23	5,149	5,149	0
2023/24	6,967	6,500	(467)
2024/25	8,022	7,766	(256)
2025/26	8,139	7,871	(268)
2026/27	8,187	7,907	(280)
2027/28	8,139	7,846	(293)
2028/29	8,007	7,749	(258)

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set and deliver a balanced budget annually and this can include the use of reserves.

5.2 This report sets out the budget pressures in 2022/23 and notes that exceptional financial support is required in order to deliver a breakeven position.

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

6.1 This report is based on consultation with the services, Directors' Board, and portfolio holders and Commissioners (Essex County Council).

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

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

7.2 The budget gap identified in the report will also necessitate engagement with the Department for Levelling-up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding exceptional financial support. The outcome of this engagement in terms of conditions applied to the support may require further savings within budgets to be made, further impacting on the ability to deliver services.

8. Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Interim Director of Finance

The financial implications are set out in the report. The report continues to confirm the need for exceptional financial support to address the funding gap arising from the impacts from both the impairments of specific investment assets and the wider implications which include a reduction in investment income, increased borrowing costs and the need for a prudent write down of the capital financing requirement that relate to the remaining investment balance.

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy reported to Cabinet on 22 February 2023 confirms the need to take specific action to reduce borrowing and minimum revenue provision costs. This intrinsically relates to the need to divest of investments to address these pressures.

The position indicates that significant action is required from the Council to focus on the delivery of core statutory services, fund only essential spend and deliver a significant programme of savings. This enables management of the core operational deficit and alongside this an asset disposal programme will be required to address the ongoing impacts of requests for exceptional financial

support.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Deputy Monitoring Officer & Governance Lawyer

There are no specific legal implications set out in the report. There are statutory requirements of the Council's Section 151 Officer in relation to setting a balanced budget.

Under section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council is under a statutory duty to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends. The Council is facing a challenging situation in relation to its budgetary position.

The issuing of a S114 Notice by the S151 Officer restricting Council spending to statutory services and contractual commitments and other proposed actions together with additional financial support from government will assist the Council to reduce the overspend.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement & Project Monitoring Officer

The Equality Act 2010 places a public duty on authorities to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics so that positive or negative impacts can be understood and enhanced or mitigated as appropriate. Services will be required to consider the impact on any proposals to reduce service levels through a community equality impact assessment which should seek to involve those directly affected

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

There are no other implications arising directly from this update report.

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

There are various working papers retained within the finance and service sections.

10. Appendices to the report

Appendix 1: Key general fund variances and savings mitigation quarter 3

Appendix 2: Dedicated Schools Budget

Appendix 3: Current Capital Programme

Appendix 4: Current HRA capital programme

Appendix 5: Reserves position

Appendix 6: Exceptional Financial Support letter to the Leader

Report Author

Jonathan Wilson

Interim Director of Finance

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Appendix 1- Key General Fund Variances

The below table shows the direction of travel between the quarter 2 and quarter 3 forecast with further explanation in the subsequent section. There remains volatility in a number of areas as set out.

Variance category	Risk detail	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of travel
Demographic growth	Adults External Placements	3,269	2,943	(326)	▲
Employees Costs	Vacant post saving	1,362	(50)	(1,412)	▲
	Backdated Pay Award	0	2,758	2,758	▼
Demand	Homelessness	0	419	419	▼
	School Transport	616	380	(236)	▲
	Waste Disposal	(604)	(845)	(241)	▲
Complexity of care	Children's external placements	1,741	2,148	408	▼
	Children's Legal proceedings	453	363	(90)	▲
Corporate Costs	Pension / Corporate Overheads	(786)	(695)	91	▼
	Cost of Intervention	1,500	2,657	1,157	▼
Delay to savings	Asset Rationalisation	128	129	1	▼
	Capitalisation of staff	487	987	500	▼
	Ground maintenance saving	130	130	0	▼
	Waste Collection	636	557	(79)	▲
Income generation	Counter Fraud	(1,123)	(921)	201	▼
	Parking charges	327	431	104	▼
	Planning fees	463	169	(294)	▲
Inflation	Utilities	995	1,011	16	▼
	Other income/expenditure	499	576	77	▼
Total Service Pressure		10,092	13,146	3,054	▼

Variance category	Risk detail	Forecast Variance £'000
Demographic growth	Adults External Placements	2,943
<p>a) There has been a significant increase in demand for Homecare and Residential services for older people. The improved quarter 3 forecast outturn position is as a result of the utilisation of the Adult Social Care Hospital Discharge Grant, which has funded some of the placements that were included in the previous additional demand forecasts. In addition, there has been an improvement in the forecasted level of client contributions income, which has now been reflected in the revised year end estimate.</p>		

- b) The increased level of care needs for people being discharge from hospital requiring continuing social care support to live independently outside of residential care. This has been exacerbated by the change in the hospital discharge criterion from 'medically fit' to 'medically optimised' meaning patients are discharged earlier and with a greater level of care acuity.
- c) Increased complexity and the associated requirement for additional level of care support to existing clients. This is particularly prevalent in the substantial increase in the number of homecare packages that the Local Authority is commissioning within the external care market
- d) Longer term ramifications following the covid pandemic including the pausing by the NHS of secondary prevention programmes to manage residents with long-term conditions that is now resulting in significantly increased presentation of very unwell patients presenting at A&E for emergency hospital and the subsequent demand on ASC through increased hospital backdoor pressures. Along with the "hidden" impacts of COVID amongst both working age adults and older people caused by the lockdown and removal of non-crisis intervention by health. This is particularly prevalent in Mental Health services.

Employee Costs	Vacant post saving	(50)
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The position on vacant posts continues to be monitored against a corporate target of £3m. The month 9 position demonstrates the savings has been achieved as shown in the below table. However, this saving needs to be considered within the context of the overall position. In some cases, reduced spend within the employee category will be offset by an under recovery of associated income or expenditure pressures elsewhere within the service area. The position will be monitored alongside the actions of the recruitment panel, the review of agency spend and wider restructures in the Council:

Directorate	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
Adults; Housing and Health	20,420	20,513	93
Children's Services	29,452	27,970	(1,482)
Housing General Fund	2,067	2,154	87
HR; OD and Transformation	7,835	7,018	(817)
Public Realm	17,429	17,286	(143)
Resources & Place Delivery	11,307	10,819	(488)
Strategy; Engagement & Growth	4,758	4,458	(300)
Unallocated Vacancy Factor	(3,000)	0	3,000
Total	90,267	90,217	(50)

Employee Costs	Alignment to NJC pay offer	2,758
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Following approval of the Pay Policy at Council in February 2022, the Council implemented a pay increase of 2.5% for Bands A & B and 2.25% for Bands C to I. This is significantly below the offer that has now been agreed nationally. The national pay award represents a pay increase of over 13% to the Council's lowest pay point and 2.75% to the highest pay point. Full Council agreed amendments to the Thurrock pay policy at their meeting on 25th January 2023 and payment is due to be paid to employees in February 2023, the month 9 position assumes estimated costs of £2.758m.

Demand	Homelessness	419
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The most significant risk on the housing general fund is centred around the demand for temporary accommodation placements. This will include finding accommodation solutions for vulnerable people and is a demand lead service.

The average monthly level of placements in TA accommodation is shown in the below table:

TA types. Year 2022/23	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B&B	1	1	3	3	3	5	4	5	5
Nightly Let	116	120	120	115	110	106	101	102	102
Furnished Let - in house	79	88	96	103	119	137	139	143	143
Charles Street Hostel - through Sanctuary	27	29	27	27	24	24	28	29	29
Brook House Hostel - In house	9	10	10	7	8	10	10	10	10
Clarence Road Hostels - in house	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Grand Total	235	251	259	258	267	284	285	292	292

The number of cases has continued to grow throughout the year, but significant investment has been made into the service to find alternative accommodation solutions to bed and breakfast and nightly lettings though the utilisation of dwelling owned by the Council.

A further 64 furnished letting dwellings have been utilised in the period between April and December. This has reduced the number of nightly lets by 14, but the overall number of cases of TA has increased by 57 over the same period.

The average cost of a nightly let is £8,528 compared to furnished lettings at £3,210. The utilisation of the council existing stock is one of the few ways in which the department is able to reduce costs in the face of rising demand. It also offers a better solution to people that are in need of temporary accommodation.

Demand	School Transport	380
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Increase in demand for Education Health and Care Plans and the phased expansion of specialist provision within Thurrock by 96 places has placed additional pressure on the service.

The reduction proposal at the St Clere's school has now been deemed to be an unsafe route therefore affecting the viability of the savings target.

The service commissioned an external consultant (funded from central transformation funding) to undertake a review of SEND transport to ensure discretionary transport policy is being applied correctly and to identify potential changes to process and practice which may reduce the current overspend on SEND transport. This review is currently ongoing, and updates will be presented in due course

Cost Centre Description	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
Alternative Provision	147	93	(54)
Autumn Term - Covid (Education Transport)	0	0	0
Denominational Transport	8	0	(8)
Home To School Transport - Primary	659	309	(349)
Home To School Transport - Secondary	251	373	122
Home To School Transport - Special	288	802	514
Independent School Fees (Transport)	1,361	1,349	(13)
Out of Borough - LAC	15	57	41
Out of Borough - Other LA's	36	(6)	(42)
Out of Borough - Post 16	411	277	(133)
Post 16 SEND	113	271	159
Resource Base - Primary	2	145	143
	3,292	3,671	380

Demand	Waste Disposal	(845)
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The waste disposal figures are reviewed on an ongoing basis by finance and the service as the financial year progresses. This is Public Realm's largest volatile budget and has the potential to have a big impact on the outturn position at year end. There is a variable element to the disposal contracts, impacted by recycling rates/contamination of recycling and can fluctuate throughout the year.

Complexity of care	Children's external placements	2,148
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Significant cost pressures are generated by moves within care. Children with the most complex needs are experiencing a high level of placement instability driven by both providers giving notice on their placement and by intervention by the regulator. Thurrock is reliant on external providers for residential and complex care including SEN placements.

Placement Type	Budget Numbers 2022/23	Dec-22 Numbers
Placed with Parent / Adoption	10	10
Internal Fostering	127	106
Supported Accommodation	26	41
External Fostering	103	104
External Residential	29	21
Secure Placement	0	0
Unregulated	0	7
Education Contribution	0	0
Remand	2	2
Total LAC	297	291

Number of External Residential Placements		
	Budget	Dec-22
<£2,000	0	1
£2k but LT£3k	5	6
£3k but LT£4k	6	3
£4k but LT£5k	8	3
£5k but LT£6k	4	4
£6k but LT£7k	2	2
£7k but LT£8k	1	0
£8k but LT£9k	2	0
£9k but LT£10k		3
£10k but LT£11k	1	0
£11k but LT£12k		1
£12k but LT£13k		2
£13k but LT£14k		1
£14k but LT£15k		2
Total	29	28

Unregulated placements are where the Local Authority are unable to secure a suitable placement with a provider to meet the needs of the young person. In these instances, the LA has to develop a package of support around the child and seek judicial approval until a regulated place can be provided. By nature, these placements are highly complex and costly. Thurrock currently have 5 such placements an increase of 1 at a cost implication of £2.969m. Ofsted registration is being progressed.

There are currently 10 high-cost placements with a total forecast of £4.745m

Complexity of care	Children's Legal proceedings	363
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The forecast is based on the current case level of 34 with 5 to issue, a total of 39 cases and a contingency for 8 more cases to the end of the financial year. Average case cost is £0.016m and a contingency for legal fees of £0.090m for ad hoc other and new cases has been included. In addition, included for assessments is a contingency of £0.070m, based on costs of between £0.001m to £0.005m.

In 2021/22 Children Services incurred legal costs of £0.965m in fees and assessments based on 58 cases at its highest point. With the introduction of the new Think Family Team, it is anticipated that the costs of assessments will be lower in 2022/23 but will still exceed the budget allocated.

Corporate Costs	Pension costs & Audit fees	(695)
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Costs have not materialised to the expected levels.

	Cost of Intervention & additional resources	2,657
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The estimated cost of Intervention covers the commissioner time, Best Value Inspection, specialist external financial advisors, legal fees and additional resources/staffing capacity required to support and implement the Improvement Recovery Plan. Many of the costs are subject to successful recruitment and therefore there is potential for slippage within these estimates.

Delay to savings	Capitalisation of staff	987
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Due to delays in approving significant regeneration schemes such as Towns Fund and Thames Freeports we have not been able to allocate costs to those schemes to the levels envisioned at the time of budget setting. A wider review of the capital programme has provided further clarity on the ability to charge staff time to existing budgets and this has adversely affected the general fund position.

Delay to savings	Ground maintenance saving	130
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£0.150m target was set for income generation in relation to the Commercial Grounds Maintenance service, work continues expanding the service offer to external businesses with the support of the Business Development & Innovation Team.

Delay to savings	Waste Collection	557
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The decision to delay the fortnightly waste collection plan has led to an in-year pressure. There have also been several staffing and operational issues which have required additional resource to manage and ensure continued service delivery. The value of the unachieved saving is £0.322m.

Delay to savings	Asset Rationalisation	128
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Revenue savings of £0.850m were assumed in the 22/23 base budget in relation to the disposal of operational buildings and the corresponding reduction in running costs and/or increased income through rent review on commercial properties. Outstanding decisions on key buildings has delayed the deliverability of this saving.

Inflation	Utilities	1,011																				
<p>The global energy crisis has impacted the cost of gas and electricity; market prices for gas and electricity are extremely volatile with prices peaking at new highs in September 2022 before falling back. The current estimates are reflective of information from our suppliers regarding price per k/w and our local usage levels.</p>																						
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Subjective Description</th> <th>2022/23 Budget £'000</th> <th>Quarter 3 Forecast £'000</th> <th>Forecast Variance £'000</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Electricity</td> <td>1,692</td> <td>2,320</td> <td>628</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fuel and Oil</td> <td>911</td> <td>1,106</td> <td>195</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gas</td> <td>122</td> <td>309</td> <td>188</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>2,725</td> <td>3,736</td> <td>1,011</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Subjective Description	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000	Electricity	1,692	2,320	628	Fuel and Oil	911	1,106	195	Gas	122	309	188	Total	2,725	3,736	1,011
Subjective Description	2022/23 Budget £'000	Quarter 3 Forecast £'000	Forecast Variance £'000																			
Electricity	1,692	2,320	628																			
Fuel and Oil	911	1,106	195																			
Gas	122	309	188																			
Total	2,725	3,736	1,011																			
Inflation	Other income/expenditure	576																				
<p>Inflation is currently more than 10% which is impacting the general supply of goods and services across the Authority.</p>																						
Income generation	Parking charges	431																				
<p>Changes to working practices and continued agile working have impacted the recovery of in-year parking revenue, particularly within the Grays Central location. Fees for on-street parking have increased for 2023/24 and should help mitigate part of the shortfall going forward, alongside increased income through other fees and charges sources and a wider review scheduled for quarter 1.</p>																						
Income generation	Counter Fraud	(921)																				
<p>The Counter Fraud and NATIS operating model is set to deliver a surplus position in the current financial year.</p>																						
Income generation	Planning fees	169																				
<p>Income is below expected levels for the year and the loss is assumed to be linked to the wider economic uncertainty affecting the number of requests for improvements to property.</p>																						
General Fund pressures before mitigation		13,146																				

Mitigation for undeliverable in-year savings:

Directorate	Title of Project/Programme	Non-deliverable £'000	At High Risk of not being delivered by 31/3/23 £'000	At Risk of not being delivered by 31/3/23 (£ 000)	Summary of mitigation
Adult Social Care	New Model of Care – Supported Living	200			Use of ASC reserves in 22/23. New models were delayed and are being introduced now, should provide savings in 23/24
Corporate	MRP and Treasury	500			Not provided
Public Realm	Fortnightly Collection	322			Mitigated elsewhere in the directorate by an improved Waste Disposal position
Public Realm	Bulky Waste charges			5	Met by underspends within the directorate
Public Realm	Commercially Trade CCTV Capability	100			Mitigated elsewhere in the directorate by an improved Waste Disposal position
Public Realm	Introduce Pay & Display in Free Car Parks - put back to £100k 4/10/21		94		These car parks are due to open, however the full year impact will not be made. This will be mitigated elsewhere in the directorate largely by an improved Waste Disposal position.
Public Realm	Commercial Grounds Maintenance Contracts		130		Mitigated elsewhere in the directorate by an improved Waste Disposal position. The service is working to generate additional income by year end.
Public Realm	Council vehicles to be parked in the Depot overnight to reduce fuel costs			21	Met this year by underspend elsewhere in the Directorate. Work ongoing to ensure reduction for next year. Practice of vehicles being taken home will cease from April 2023.
Public Realm	Off- hire long term hire vehicles (not Covid related)		48		Mitigated elsewhere in the directorate by an improved Waste Disposal position. Review of hired vehicles as part of the service review and future savings
resources and place delivery	Capitalisation of costs	987			Due to delays in approving significant regeneration schemes such as Towns Fund and Thames Freeports we have not been able to allocate costs to those schemes to the levels envisioned at the time of budget setting .
resources and place delivery	Additional General Costs (DER) following DB	33			Mitigated by reduced expenditure in the service
resources and place delivery	Asset Rationalisation - reduced to £850k 4/10/21		128		Revenue savings of £0.850m were assumed in the 22/23 base budget for a number of assets. Delays to the disposals have impacted the ability to realise a full year impact.
		2,142	400	26	

Appendix 2 - Dedicated Schools Budget

Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23

The current projected outturn for 2022/23 is a breakeven position.

DSG 2022/23	Funding Settlement	Academy Recoupment	Funding Block Transfer	Final DSG	Projected Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Schools	146.520	(140.961)	(0.700)	4.858	4.181	(0.677)
Central Services	1.688	0.000	0.000	1.688	1.613	(0.075)
High Needs	32.662	(6.500)	0.700	26.862	27.614	0.752
Early Years	12.880	0.000	0.000	12.880	12.880	0.000
Total	193.750	(147.461)	0.000	46.288	46.288	0.000

The outturn position reflects the following key areas:

- Schools Block – Pupil Growth, in line with projections, has an underspend of £0.677m.
- Central Services Block – Staffing underspends and maximisation of external funding.
- High Needs Block – An overspend of £0.752m. The overspend relates to increased demand for EHCP's, Specialist and Post-16 placements.

The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £1.705m into 2022/23. No Change to this is currently forecast in 2022/23.

Thurrock with a DSG deficit of £1.705m, is part of the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme that aims to support LA's to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people while ensuring services are sustainable. The programme will provide dedicated support and funding to 55 local authorities. It is expected that this will start in March 2023.

Appendix 3

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22) £'000	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000		
Childrens Service								
<i>Beynon Primary - Expansion (B0750)</i>	282	0	0	282	0	0	-15	-5.39
<i>Capital Maintenance Schemes (to be identified) (B0997)</i>	0	110	0	0	110	0	0	0.00
<i>Emergency Health and Safety Works (B0719)</i>	22	0	0	22	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Priority Suitability and Condition Programme (B0661)</i>	59	0	0	59	0	0	2	2.56
<i>SEN Capital (B0800)</i>	1,239	3,269	3,266	439	4,069	3,266	225	51.36
<i>Secondary and Primary Schemes (to be Identified) (B0998)</i>	752	7,500	7,000	200	8,052	7,000	0	0.00
<i>St Cleres Expansion (B0744)</i>	209	0	0	209	0	0	106	50.99
<i>Temporary Classrooms (B0725)</i>	225	0	0	225	0	0	37	16.53
<i>Universal infant free school meals (B0738)</i>	222	0	0	0	222	0	0	0.00
<i>Grays Convent High School - Additional Classroom</i>	34	0	0	34	0	0	-12	-34.80
<i>Headstart Housing</i>	81	0	0	81	0	0	63	77.34
<i>Thames Park Secondary School</i>	112	0	0	112	0	0	73	65.19
<i>Abbotts Hall Improvements</i>	2,162	0	0	2,162	0	0	1,328	61.43
<i>Oaktree Centre Feasibility Study and Surveys</i>	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	0.00
Total Childrens Service	5,499	10,879	10,266	3,924	12,454	10,266	1,808	46.06
Adults; Housing and Health								
<i>21st Century Care Home (S0220)</i>	200	0	0	200	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Aveley Community Hub (R0740)</i>	130	0	0	65	65	0	0	0.00
<i>Community Hubs (T3100)</i>	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Improvement to Library Facilities (B5001)</i>	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Libraries provision of RFID units (B5003)</i>	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Libraries replacement of PC's (B5002)</i>	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>South Ockendon Community Hub Phase 2 (09/50035/TTGOUT)</i>	9	0	0	0	9	0	0	0.00
<i>South Ockendon Community Hub Phase 2 (09/50035/TTGOUT)</i>	0	49	0	0	49	0	0	0.00
<i>Thurrock Park Way Environmental Improvements (78/00601/OUT)</i>	0	51	0	0	51	0	0	0.00
<i>Travellers Site Refurbishment Works</i>	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Libraries Services Technology Modernisation</i>	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.00
<i>Community Environmental Developments Fund</i>	349	0	0	149	0	0	6	4.18
<i>Well Homes Offers</i>	66	200	0	0	266	0	-38	0.00
<i>Disabled Facility Grant</i>	1,104	1,000	0	804	800	500	332	41.25
Total Adults; Housing and Health	1,908	1,300	0	1,218	1,240	500	300	24.63

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22)	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Public Realm								
<i>B186 West Thurrock Way - Road Capacity and Efficiency</i>	9	1,188	0	9	1,188	0	0	0.00
<i>Bridge Repair and Strengthening (E2828)</i>	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0.00
<i>East Tilbury 1st payment (CCTV / Anti-Skid / VAS / Bus Stop</i>	0	92	0	0	92	0	0	0.00
<i>Environmental Enhancements at Play Sites (N0277)</i>	269	250	0	119	400	0	4	3.40
<i>Footway Maintenance (E2876)</i>	225	0	0	225	0	0	120	53.29
<i>Grays Riverside Park - Replace Splash Pool & Water Features</i>	25	25	0	25	25	0	0	0.00
<i>Improvement works between Thurrock Park Way and Manor Road</i>	0	287	0	0	287	0	0	0.00
<i>Improvements to the Manorway Interchange (E0911)</i>	65	0	0	65	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Kerb It - Highways (E1870)</i>	561	0	0	561	0	0	206	36.82
<i>Leisure Centre Works (L0410)</i>	1,420	825	0	1,020	1,225	0	702	68.88
<i>Mayflower Road parking management and capacity improvements</i>	0	421	0	0	421	0	0	0.00
<i>Other Infrastructure (Drainage) (E2878)</i>	96	0	0	96	0	0	61	63.22
<i>PRS - Borough wide Disabled Bays (E1843-T3429)</i>	19	0	0	19	0	0	1	4.83
<i>PTI - Local Bus Infrastructure (E1838)</i>	56	0	0	56	0	0	3	5.52
<i>Pot Holes & Challenge Fund (E2840)</i>	1,429	0	0	1,429	0	0	621	43.45
<i>RSF - Node 4 - North Stifford Int (E1830-T3031)</i>	10	250	0	10	250	0	1	7.52
<i>Redevelopment of Household Waste & Recycling Centre (Linford)</i>	62	0	0	98	0	0	40	40.82
<i>Replacement of Bus Passenger Shelters (E1839)</i>	332	500	0	332	500	0	171	51.63
<i>Rights of Way (E1841)</i>	67	0	0	67	0	0	27	40.80
<i>Safety Fencing (E2831)</i>	33	30	0	33	30	0	0	0.00
<i>South Road / Stifford Road Junction Improvements (E0908)</i>	0	190	0	0	190	0	0	0.00
<i>Street Lighting (E2877)</i>	239	0	0	239	0	0	116	48.44
<i>Structural Maintenance A Class Roads (E2826)</i>	517	0	0	517	0	0	203	39.34
<i>Structural Maintenance B and C Class Roads (E2827)</i>	320	0	0	320	0	0	215	67.23
<i>Structural Maintenance Unclassified Roads (E2874)</i>	253	0	0	253	0	0	195	76.98
<i>Target Hardening of Various Sites (N0278)</i>	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Traffic Signals (E2833)</i>	192	0	0	192	0	0	92	48.27
<i>Upgrades to the Drainage System; Gully Frames and Lids (E2882)</i>	50	0	0	50	0	0	7	13.50
<i>Vehicle & Plant Replacement Programme (N0256)</i>	3,001	0	0	3,001	0	0	2,445	81.48
<i>White Lining (E2832)</i>	118	0	0	118	0	0	57	47.85
<i>Street Lighting LED Completion</i>	74	0	0	74	0	0	25	33.50
<i>Carriageway Summer Damage Treatments</i>	433	0	0	433	0	0	433	100.00
<i>VMS Purchases and Installation</i>	158	0	0	158	0	0	-0	0.00
<i>Vehicle Restraint System</i>	239	0	0	239	0	0	105	43.92
<i>Replacement of Wheeled Containers</i>	181	0	0	181	0	0	150	82.57
<i>Other Road Markings</i>	33	0	0	33	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Unallocated Budget Traffic Management (E9999-T7001)</i>	48	0	0	48	0	0	0	0.00
<i>CON - Aveley Village Freight Management</i>	0	187	0	0	187	0	0	0.00
<i>PRS - Ad-Hoc Parking Requests</i>	20	0	0	20	0	0	13	63.05
<i>TFM - Ad-Hoc Minor Works</i>	91	0	0	91	0	0	31	33.72
<i>SRS - Tyssen Place - Benyon Primary Sch</i>	19	0	0	19	0	0	19	100.00
<i>A13 Eastbound Slip Roads</i>	40	0	0	40	0	0	0	0.00

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22)	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Stonehouse Lane Improvement Works	86	0	0	85	0	0	85	100.00
Tilbury Link Road	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Traveller Injunction	0	46	0	0	46	0	0	0.00
Plotbox Burial Software Project	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Principal Bridge Inspections and Remedial Works	1,381	0	0	1,381	0	0	618	44.75
High Risk Concrete Lamp Column Replacement	227	0	0	227	0	0	167	73.56
Footway Slab Replacement Programme (2020-2025)	416	0	0	416	0	0	402	96.57
Surveillance Fleet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
A1013 School Access Improvements (Treetops)	250	1,630	0	250	1,630	0	26	10.53
Flats Recycling	327	250	0	327	250	0	127	39.00
Emergency Active Travel Plan	51	150	0	51	150	0	0	0.00
PRS - EV Charging Upgrade and Expansion	168	0	0	168	0	0	0	0.00
CON - Fort Road Bus Lane	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	0.00
Traffic Management Salary Capitalisation 2020-2021	226	0	0	226	0	0	0	0.00
Private Works	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
N13 Cycle Route	707	0	0	707	0	0	272	38.53
A126 Improvements	150	2,102	0	150	2,102	0	10	6.74
Replacement Enforcement Software	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Deployment of overt 4G CCTV camera systems	56	0	0	0	56	0	0	0.00
Trading Standards Facility at London Gateway (DPW)	4	0	0	4	0	0	-63	-1,484.56
Urgent repairs to road leading between Tilbury Port and Tilbury2	12	0	0	12	0	0	10	79.90
A1014 The Manorway - Carriageway Repairs	28	0	0	28	0	0	1	4.75
Highway Street Lighting Central Management System	1,022	0	0	1,022	0	0	960	93.93
Highways Lit signage replacement programme	447	343	0	447	343	0	144	32.23
A1014 The Manorway - Footway Protection	537	305	0	537	305	0	420	78.25
Wharf Road, SLH - Drainage scheme	188	0	0	188	0	0	61	32.68
SRS - East Tilbury Primary School	305	0	0	305	0	0	5	1.80
AIP - Area XX - Tilbury (East of St Chads)	92	0	0	92	0	0	19	20.25
ATF - Corringham Road/Billet Lane	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	0.00
ATF - Purfleet Road	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	0.00
ATF - A128 Junction Signal Scheme	25	0	0	25	0	0	8	30.72
Food Caddies	0	500	0	0	500	0	0	0.00
Tree Fund	117	62	62	117	62	62	0	0.00
1934 Fort Road Tilbury - Bridge repairs	85	700	0	85	700	0	28	33.49
Junction 31 Electrical Repairs	170	170	170	170	170	170	0	0.00
Orchard Footbridge renewal	85	560	0	85	560	0	42	49.47
Grover Walk Street Lighting Refurbishment	48	0	0	48	0	0	0	0.00
Carriageway Concrete Slab Replacement	355	0	0	355	0	0	50	14.07
Public Rights of Way - FP36 SLH	160	0	0	160	0	0	92	57.74
London Road West Thurrock	0	265	0	0	265	0	0	0.00
AIP Chadwell South and Grays Riverside areas	243	0	0	243	0	0	0	0.00
AIP - 3 Villages - Orsett Ward	75	0	0	75	0	0	0	0.00
Walking and Cycling	20	0	0	20	0	0	13	64.55
Works to Council Car Parks and Pay and Display Machines	116	0	0	116	0	0	47	40.11

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22)	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<i>IRL - Scheme Development - Staff Costs</i>	500	0	0	0	500	0	0	0.00
<i>Surface Renewal Oliver Close Depot</i>	78	0	0	78	0	0	72	92.42
Total Public Realm	19,585	11,389	232	18,389	12,497	232	9,679	52.63
Resources and Place Delivery								
<i>A13 Widening (Works) (E2910)</i>	12,454	400	0	12,454	400	0	8,928	71.69
<i>Aspirational Capital Pot - Feasibilities - Culver Centre/Callan Grove</i>	139	0	0	139	0	0	100	71.76
<i>Coalhouse Fort Improved Access (R0800)</i>	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Contract Management System (T0508)</i>	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration (R0670)</i>	400	0	0	400	0	0	267	66.73
<i>Implementation of Corporate Property Database (T0702)</i>	27	0	0	27	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Improvements to Village Halls (D0010)</i>	33	150	0	0	183	0	0	0.00
<i>LGF - Orsett Road Two-way (E2950-T6003)</i>	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Pupil Referral Unit Relocation (D0020)</i>	233	750	0	3	800	0	3	98.58
<i>Purfleet Centre Fees Budget (R0500)</i>	367	144	300	367	144	300	96	26.23
<i>Purfleet Land Assembly Development Agreement (R0501)</i>	666	1,500	0	266	1,900	0	326	122.25
<i>Purfleet SELEP Land Acquisition (R0502)</i>	131	0	0	16	115	0	12	76.50
<i>Purfleet Thurrock School Contribution (R0503)</i>	25	0	0	25	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Stanford Le Hope Interchange (E2920)</i>	600	5,000	10,646	600	5,000	10,646	389	64.87
<i>Tilbury Integrated Medical Centre (R0913)</i>	40	0	0	40	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Civic Offices 2 - Chilled Water Services (P0300-P0097)</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	100.00
<i>Civic Offices 2 - Replace Heating Boilers (P0300-P0089)</i>	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	100.00
<i>Tilbury Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Packages (R0745)</i>	0	46	0	0	46	0	0	0.00
<i>Purchase and Development of Navigator Park</i>	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Corporate Landlord Compliance</i>	1,358	1,795	0	1,358	1,795	0	725	53.36
<i>Investment Portfolio Compliance</i>	128	1,010	0	128	1,010	0	2	1.28
<i>New River Development</i>	9	75	0	9	75	0	0	0.00
<i>Investment Portfolio Spend to Save</i>	136	538	560	136	538	560	1	0.84
<i>Corporate Landlord Spend to Save</i>	287	1,299	0	287	1,299	0	0	0.00
<i>Jetty Structure at Cory's Wharf</i>	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Blackshots Regeneration Study</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Stanford Childrens Centre Windows & Doors</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Woolmarket External Decoration</i>	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Tilbury Towns Fund - Accelerated Funding</i>	163	0	0	163	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Grays Towns Fund - Accelerated Funding</i>	242	0	0	242	0	0	134	55.35
<i>Property Pot</i>	0	1,759	0	0	769	990	0	0.00
<i>Service Review Board Pot</i>	362	1,489	0	0	1,815	0	0	0.00
<i>Property Demolitions</i>	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Grays Town Fund (General)</i>	818	0	0	568	250	0	370	65.15
<i>TTF Heart - Civic Square</i>	321	0	0	196	125	0	113	57.59
<i>TTF Heart - Youth Zone</i>	175	0	0	175	0	0	88	50.00
<i>TTF Heritage - Riverside</i>	240	0	0	240	0	0	240	99.61

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22)	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<i>TTF Hub - Station Gateway</i>	150	0	0	105	45	0	103	97.30
<i>Tilbury Strategic Project Costs</i>	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Ground Floor CO2 Refurbishment</i>	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	95.00
<i>Demolition of Buildings</i>	300	250	0	103	450	0	12	11.50
<i>Civic Offices Tenanted Areas Alterations</i>	227	0	0	227	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Grays Underpass Land Acquisitions</i>	3,740	2,860	0	1,240	5,360	0	0	0.00
Total Resources and Place Delivery	23,911	19,065	11,506	19,537	22,119	12,496	11,920	61.01
HR; OD and Transformation								
<i>Aspriational Capital Pot - Feasibilities - Civic Offices (R1000-AP002)</i>	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	100.00
<i>ICT Infrastructure Refresh and Extension (T0505)</i>	75	0	0	75	0	0	32	42.76
<i>ICT Operating Software System Upgrades (T0506)</i>	190	0	0	0	190	0	0	0.00
<i>Network Infrastructure Upgrades (T0511)</i>	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Oracle Improvement / Cloud Upgrade (T0015)</i>	123	0	0	123	0	0	90	73.08
<i>Oracle Improvement / Cloud Upgrade - Evosys (T0015-TC050)</i>	153	0	0	153	0	0	40	26.18
<i>The Central Grays Civic Buildings Optimisation project (T3010)</i>	351	0	0	351	0	0	113	32.08
<i>Thurrock On-Line Phase 2 (T1001)</i>	250	360	0	250	360	0	21	8.40
<i>Transformation Programme Management Support (T3050)</i>	747	0	0	747	0	0	321	42.91
<i>Corporate Payments</i>	17	0	0	17	0	0	16	95.27
<i>Strategic Wi-Fi - non Civic Offices</i>	88	0	0	88	0	0	5	6.21
<i>Agile Working</i>	244	0	0	222	0	0	222	100.00
<i>Customer Contact Centre</i>	96	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>CO1 Infrastructure Decommissioning</i>	250	250	0	67	433	0	26	39.36
<i>School Transport – Synergy Project</i>	12	0	0	12	0	0	6	49.76
<i>Microsoft 365 Design, Build and Delivery (Phase 2)</i>	606	250	0	356	500	0	214	60.02
<i>Local Full Fibre Network</i>	1,167	0	0	1,167	0	0	988	84.70
<i>Data Analytics - Phase 4</i>	242	0	0	242	0	0	91	37.56
<i>Robotic Process Automation</i>	592	0	0	105	487	0	105	100.00
<i>Oracle Cloud Recruitment (OCR)</i>	57	0	0	57	0	0	0	0.00
<i>4Me Service Desk Self Service Enhancement</i>	33	0	0	21	12	0	21	100.00
<i>Core Licencing</i>	38	0	0	10	28	0	10	100.00
<i>Applications Alignment to Office 2019</i>	37	0	0	29	8	0	29	100.00
<i>Disaster Recovery replacement design</i>	9	0	0	9	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Smoothwall Internet Filter Replacement</i>	30	0	0	30	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Thurrock Adult Community College Tech Refresh</i>	33	0	0	18	0	0	14	81.14
<i>Softphone capability</i>	35	0	0	5	30	0	5	100.00
<i>Teams Enabled Meeting Rooms</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	58.96
<i>Thurrock WAN Upgrade</i>	520	0	0	520	0	0	359	69.08
<i>Digital Pot</i>	2,338	20	0	0	2,358	0	0	0.00
<i>LADO Recording Functionality within LCS</i>	42	0	0	24	18	0	0	0.00
<i>Core Website Rebuild (Drupal 7 to Drupal 9)</i>	98	0	0	98	0	0	0	0.00

Summary of the 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22) £'000	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000		
Total HR; OD and Transformation	8,482	880	0	4,805	4,424	0	2,734	56.90
Strategy, Engagement and Growth								
<i>Digital Enablement 0-19 Yrs Transformation (B3004)</i>	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>SEND Synergy Upgrade/Improvement</i>	10	0	0	0	10	0	0	0.00
<i>Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Hub</i>	176	0	0	107	129	0	107	100.00
Total Strategy, Engagement and Growth	279	0	0	107	139	0	107	100.00
Total Expenditure	59,664	43,513	22,005	47,980	52,874	23,495	26,547	55.33

Appendix 4

Summary of the 2022/23 HRA Capital Programme by Directorate	Approved Budget			Projected Outturn			CY Spend (Dec-22)	% Spend against CY Forecast
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Housing Revenue Account								
<i>Aspriational Capital Pot - Feasibilities - Loewen Road</i>	17	0	0	17	0	0	6	34.67
<i>Redevelopment of Council Offices For Residential Accommodation</i>	289	0	0	289	0	0	174	60.21
<i>Blackshots Housing Development</i>	20	0	43,375	20	0	43,375	6	30.00
<i>Broxburn Drive Housing Development</i>	200	0	0	200	0	0	137	68.74
<i>Vigerons Way Housing Development</i>	100	0	0	100	0	0	34	33.54
<i>Teviot Avenue Housing Development</i>	350	0	11,078	350	0	11,078	51	14.55
<i>Aveley Library Housing Development</i>	150	0	0	150	0	0	26	17.12
<i>Loewen Road Construction</i>	580	1,220	0	580	1,220	0	138	23.84
<i>Affordable Housing - Calcutta Road</i>	178	0	0	178	0	0	18	10.16
<i>Affordable Housing - Claudian Way</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	-199	0.00
<i>Thurrock New Standard - Wates</i>	11,910	10,046	11,307	12,910	10,046	11,307	10,686	82.77
<i>HRA Fire Safety Works</i>	3,249	1,494	1,000	3,249	1,494	1,000	603	18.57
<i>Non Traditional Properties</i>	2,359	2,921	0	2,010	3,270	0	1,033	51.37
<i>HRA Garages</i>	682	548	500	682	548	500	160	23.51
<i>Sheltered Housing Improvements Works</i>	349	0	0	349	0	0	160	45.90
<i>Adapted Bathrooms</i>	300	219	200	300	219	200	151	50.22
<i>Tower Block Refurbishment</i>	20,167	990	0	5,944	15,213	0	2,565	43.16
<i>Heating Replacement Programme</i>	824	658	600	824	658	600	725	88.03
<i>Lifts Refurbishment</i>	184	209	190	184	209	190	63	34.45
<i>Door Entry Installation</i>	507	549	500	507	549	500	108	21.38
<i>Water Mains</i>	138	176	160	138	176	160	105	76.36
<i>Transforming Homes Programme Support</i>	160	176	160	160	176	160	261	163.22
<i>Stock Condition Survey</i>	300	0	0	300	0	0	223	74.33
<i>Carbon Reduction Requirements (3 blocks)</i>	685	5,196	5,881	3,500	2,381	8,696	1,721	49.16
<i>HRA Highways and Lighting</i>	400	439	300	100	739	300	0	0.00
<i>Carbon Reduction Requirements External</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
<i>Electrical infrastructure Testing - Check Revenue implications</i>	500	274	250	500	274	250	0	0.00
<i>Pram Sheds Buy Backs</i>	0	0	0	15	0	0	15	100.00
<i>HRA Property Purchases</i>	633	0	0	633	0	0	633	100.00
<i>H2920-HRA Phi Property Purchases</i>	3,531	0	0	12,058	0	0	12,058	100.00
Total Housing Revenue Account	48,763	25,115	75,501	46,248	37,172	78,316	31,663	68.46

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Appendix 5 Reserves

Reserve	Opening 2022/23	Use to Finance Base Budget	Used to Fund Specific Expenditure	Used to balance outturn position	Closing Balance
General Reserves					
BS300 - General Fund Balance	(11,000,000)	0	0	0	(11,000,000)
BS370 - Financial Resilience Reserve	(5,144,005)	3,144,005	0	2,000,000	(0)
BS369 - Transformation Reserve	(3,840,190)	155,995	0	3,684,196	0
BR013 - Treasury Equalisation Reserve	(1,906,804)	0	0	1,906,804	0
	(21,891,000)	3,300,000	0	7,591,000	(11,000,000)
Service Reserves					
	(9,881,098)	1,015,691	851,472	7,513,728	(500,206)
BS388 - Collection Fund Section 31 reserve	(14,707,821)	0	14,707,821	0	0
Ring Fenced or Third party funds					
	(10,898,862)	0	10,898,863	0	0
	(10,898,862)	0	10,898,863	0	0
Carried Forward Grants					
	(5,843,102)	0	5,843,102	0	0
Supporting Major Projects / Member initiative					
BS372 - Local Plan Reserve	(1,113,387)	0	1,113,387	0	0
BS366 - Lower Thames Crossing (GF)	(466,138)	0	466,138	0	0
BS371 - Additional police Officers	(406,363)	0	406,363	0	0
	(1,985,888)	0	1,985,888	0	0
Needed to support savings generation					
BR002 - ASC - Libraries and Communities	(120,000)	0	120,000	0	0
BR011 - Resource and Place Delivery	(358,935)	0	190,434	168,501	0 *
BS378 - Environment Reserve	(264,921)	0	100,000	164,921	0 *
BS337 - Commuted Sums (GF)	(390,976)	0	0	390,976	0 *
	(1,134,832)	0	410,434	724,398	0
Total	(66,342,603)	4,315,691	34,697,579	15,829,127	(11,500,206)

*As part of the 2023/24 budget proposals creation of a transformation reserve has been recommended, therefore £0.724m can be redirected to support the in-year position

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Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Lee Rowley MP

*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Local Government and Building Safety*

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities**

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Councillor Mark Coxshall
Leader of Thurrock Council

By email

1 March 2023

SUPPORT FOR THURROCK COUNCIL

I am writing in relation to your Council's request of 17 January 2023 for exceptional financial support in respect of 2022-23 and 2023-24. I am grateful for the seriousness and the work that the new leadership has done in recent months to start taking the difficult decisions which will begin Thurrock's very long journey back to sustainability.

As a result of the Council's serious past failings, you have made a request for exceptional financial support of an unprecedented scale. This is deeply concerning and clearly demonstrates the gravity of the challenges facing the Council. While I hope and expect the Council will take the lead on the long path to improvement, it is also important to recognise that this is just the start of the process of the Council's recovery, and there is significant further work to be done. In this context, I have considered very carefully the Council's position including the interests of local people in Thurrock, and the need to provide sufficient stability to the Council and to make sure that service delivery, especially for the most vulnerable citizens, is not disrupted.

The Secretary of State's Commissioner for your Council, Essex County Council (appointed on 2 September 2022), will provide their second report in June, which will be an opportunity to further assess the scale of the leadership, financial, and managerial challenges faced by the Council. It is critical that you continue to cooperate closely with the Commissioner, as you have been providing regular assurance that you are working at sufficient pace to deliver the scale of change that is needed. The Best Value Inspection has now concluded and the Secretary of State and I are carefully considering that Report, together with the representations made by your Council and others on our proposal to expand the intervention.

It is within this context that the Secretary of State has considered your Council's capitalisation request. The Secretary of State has also not opposed your request for a higher council tax referendum threshold of 9.99% to be applied in 2023-24 (i.e. an additional 5% above referendum principles applied to other councils).

This letter sets out the Department's current position but does not constitute a capitalisation direction.

The consideration of your request has been based on the estimates that the Council has provided to date of its significant budget gaps. The Commissioner has provided assurance, as far as possible, that these estimates are reasonable and appropriate. I recognise, however,

that these estimates are based in significant part on assumptions, and that final amounts will only be confirmed as part of the closure of the Council's financial accounts, which are significantly overdue. I am conscious that during this process some of these estimates may change and the Council's projected budget gaps could increase. I am clear, however, that the Council should take all reasonable action and necessary steps to minimise this risk, and reduce pressures where possible, without incurring additional borrowing – this is because reducing the Council's indebtedness is critically important to its long-term financial sustainability.

With respect to the period between 2022-23 to 2023-24, the Secretary of State is minded to approve capitalisation directions totalling £632.661 million. This total is broken down by each financial year as follows:

- 2022-23 – £452.491 million
- 2023-24 - £180.17 million

I understand that adjustments relating to accounting periods prior to 2022-23 have not yet been calculated, and therefore the total adjustment for all prior years is reflected in the 2022-23 figure reported above.

As you would expect, there is a considerable process to undertake before capitalisation directions in respect of any of the above years are approved. The Council will need to demonstrate that it continues to take the necessary steps towards improvement, and I will need assurance from the Commissioner that you are making good progress against the Improvement and Recovery Plan, as per the directions issued to your Council on 2 September 2022, and any subsequent directions issued in the future relating to the intervention. In addition, if the Secretary of State decides to approve any capitalisation directions, he would confirm in due course any conditions that would be applied. Finally, any decisions would, amongst other factors such as demonstration of adequate progress, be contingent on the Council reporting to the Department the final amounts identified for which you need capitalisation for each year, with the agreement of the Council's external auditors and endorsed by the Commissioner. Each of these steps is addressed in more detail in the attached annex.

I also recognise that you included in your request an indication of support required for future years beyond 2023-24. As you will understand, we cannot make any spending commitments beyond the period covered by the current Local Government Finance Settlement. We will also need to see significant ongoing progress from the Council, for example in delivering against the Improvement and Recovery Plan, before we can consider the provision of any Government support for future years. The Department will continue to engage closely with your officers in the coming months to understand your position going into the financial year 2024-25.

A meeting will be scheduled with the Department and your officers to discuss the position set out in this letter.

I should be grateful if the Council confirm to me in writing by 10 March that you wish to proceed in accordance with the conditions outlined in this letter. I am copying this letter to the Commissioner. This letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Palmer', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

LEE ROWLEY MP

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
for Local Government and Building Safety**

Annex – Process for approving capitalisation directions

Assurance

If the Secretary of State decides to give any directions, he would confirm in due course the final amount of capitalisation support and any conditions that would be applied. The Department's consideration will include evidence from the Commissioner of the Council's progress against the actions it is required to take, as per the Secretary of State's directions (dated 2 September 2022) made under section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999. This will include evidence of the Council's:

- Progress in delivering against an Improvement and Recovery Plan to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, including an action plan to achieve financial sustainability and to close any short and long-term budget gaps identified by the Authority across the period of its medium-term financial strategy (MTFS), including a robust multi-year savings plan;
- Progress in delivering against plans to ensure the Council's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable. The plans should include specific targets for the delivery of capital receipts, when the Commissioner has agreed those targets.
- Progress in delivering against a strict debt reduction plan, and an updated minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy in line with all relevant rules and guidelines; an action plan to ensure the Authority is complying with all relevant rules and guidelines relating to the financial management of the Authority; and a suitable scheme of delegations for financial decision-making.
- Progress in delivering further savings in 2023-24 in addition to those put forward in the budget. These savings should include changes to fees and charges; draft savings concepts not finalised at the point of setting the budget; a full review of the capital programme; and the transformation of the operating model.
- Overall financial position and its ability to meet any or all of the identified budget gap without additional borrowing.

Your plan to achieve financial sustainability, which will be a significant component of the Improvement and Recovery Plan, must include an ambitious and deliverable asset disposal strategy, including specific targets for the delivery of capital receipts, when the Commissioner have agreed those targets.

Conditions

Such directions may be subject to conditions, which would be set out in any capitalisation directions should the Secretary of State decide to exercise his powers under sections 16(2)(b) and 20 of the Local Government Act 2003.

If the Secretary of State decides to give any directions, he is minded to attach the following conditions:

- The Authority may only capitalise expenditure when it is incurred;
- Where expenditure is capitalised, that the Authority shall charge annual Minimum Revenue Provision using the asset life method with a proxy 'asset life' of no more than 20 years, in accordance with relevant guidance;
- Where the Authority's capital financing requirement is increased as a result of the capitalisation of expenditure under this direction, any further borrowing from the date of the capitalisation letter up to and including, but not exceeding, the increase in the financing requirement must be obtained from the Public Works Loan Board and must

be subject to an additional 1 percentage point premium on the interest rate above the rate the loan would otherwise be subject to. This requirement does not apply to borrowing in relation to your Housing Revenue Account. Where any borrowing to which these conditions initially apply is refinanced, the conditions must continue to apply to the resulting borrowing;

- The Authority makes good progress against its Improvement and Recovery Plan, as assessed by the Best Value Commissioner, in their regular reports to the Secretary of State.

With this in mind, the Secretary of State also reserves the right to attach additional bespoke conditions to any directions issued in respect of the financial years above, depending on the Council's individual circumstances.

Confirming final amounts

Although the Secretary of State is minded to approve capitalisation directions for the period between 2022-23 to 2023-24, this would be contingent on the Council reporting to the Department the final amounts identified for which it requires capitalisation for each year, with the agreement of the Council's external auditors and endorsed by the Best Value Commissioner.

15 March 2023		ITEM: 13 Decision: 110645
Cabinet		
Greater Essex Devolution		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Leader of Thurrock Council		
Accountable Assistant Director: n/a		
Accountable Director: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

The Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill sets out the legislative framework for places to seek a devolution deal that would enable greater local control over a range of powers and funding currently held by central government and builds on the Levelling Up White Paper published last year.

A significant proportion of the potential powers and funding on offer relate to skills, transport, infrastructure, the environment and the economy, for the benefit of residents, communities and businesses.

Thurrock Council has been engaged with all local authorities across Essex to consider the potential for Greater Essex devolution – this work was instigated by the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Group last summer with discussions focussed on opportunities for giving local partners the resources, powers and policy levers to unlock Greater Essex's substantial economic potential.

The council's Improvement and Recovery Plan commits to continuing to engage with partners on discussions around the options for devolution, ensuring the interests of Thurrock residents and businesses are reflected and protected which will require officer and Member time to progress.

The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the Expression of Interest (EOI) to Government to open a dialogue for a devolution deal for Greater Essex (including Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council areas) and whether to support its submission. The alternative is to do nothing and play no further part in the work across Greater Essex.

It is important to highlight that this report is about gaining agreement to express an interest for further discussion only. Any potential deal offered by Government would require consultation and formal decision making to follow. If submission of the EOI is agreed by the three top-tier local authorities, once it has been submitted to government an initial dialogue and process of negotiation taking at least six months is anticipated to develop a devolution proposal document for further consideration.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the Cabinet considers the Expression of Interest and agrees whether to support a submission to Government to begin a dialogue for a Greater Essex devolution deal and understand the benefits it might bring to the residents of Thurrock or to take no further part in the process at this time.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth, in consultation with the Leader, to make or agree amendments to the annexed Expression of Interest prior to its submission to government.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In May 2022 the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill had its first reading in Parliament. The Bill provides the legislative framework necessary for some of the ambitions set out in the Levelling Up White Paper published earlier that year subject to receiving Royal Ascent.
- 2.2 A core element of both is the creation of a framework to support the greater devolution of powers from central government – supporting the commitment that ‘by 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement’.
- 2.3 The three levels set out in the devolution framework are summarised below and in full at Appendix A:

<p>Level 3 A single institution or County Council with a directly elected mayor (DEM), across a functional economic area (FEA) or whole county area;</p>	<p>Access to the largest set of powers, including the ability to consolidate existing core local transport funding into a multi-year integrated settlement, devolution of locally-led brownfield funding, mayoral control of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions where boundaries align and the ability to introduce a mayoral precept and supplement on business rates.</p>
<p>Level 2 A single institution or County Council without a DEM, across a FEA or whole county area;</p>	<p>Fewer powers than Level 3, but still significant powers, including control of appropriate local transport functions, ability to introduce bus franchising, the ability to provide input into Local Skills Improvement Plans, and Homes England compulsory purchase powers.</p>

<p>Level 1</p> <p>Local authorities working together across a FEA or whole county area e.g. through a joint committee.</p>	<p>Access to three core powers: the ability to host Government functions best delivered at a strategic level including more than one authority, the opportunity to pool services at a strategic level, and the opportunity to adopt innovative local proposals to deliver action on climate change.</p>
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- 2.4 Thurrock Council has been engaged with all local authorities across Essex to consider the potential for Greater Essex devolution – this work was instigated by the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives (ELCE) Group last summer with discussions focussed on opportunities for giving local partners the resources, powers and policy levers to unlock Greater Essex’s substantial economic potential. This has led to the development of the Expression of Interest at Appendix 2 and support at ELCE to enter dialogue with government on the basis of exploring the potential for a Level 2 and a Level 3 deal.
- 2.5 Under the terms of the proposed legislation which is currently being considered and based on functional economic geography, any devolution deal needs to be agreed by Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council, and Thurrock Council. The district, city, and borough councils in Essex and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner do not need to sign off the devolution deal. However, given the potential impacts across all authorities, the Leaders of Essex, Southend and Thurrock have taken the view that they wish to pursue a collaborative approach to devolution and have therefore developed the EOI in dialogue with and the support of other authorities across Greater Essex.
- 2.6 This process began in June 2022 when ELCE agreed an approach to exploring the potential for a devolution deal. It was agreed to establish three Greater Essex devolution working groups to consider options and opportunities offered by the new framework. Workstreams were led by the Leaders of Essex, Southend and Thurrock Councils and supported by Chief Executives from other authorities. Leaders and Chief Executives from across Greater Essex have participated in the workstream meetings. The workstreams met twice and their deliberations fed into subsequent discussions at ELCE on 8 December 2022 and 30 January 2023. Leaders and Chief Executives have been shaping the EOI throughout this period and the current draft reflects that collaborative approach.
- 2.7 Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea City Councils’ Cabinets met during week commencing 20 February to consider the EOI and both agreed to support its submission to government. Southend-on-Sea City Council do not support Level 3 and a directly elected Mayor.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The Expression of Interest (EOI) at Appendix 2 sets out the benefits a Greater Essex devolution deal could potentially bring based on the four tests set out

by government – effective leadership, appropriate geography, flexibility and appropriate accountability – and the powers available within the framework.

- 3.2 Greater Essex is a large economy – similar in scale to Northern Ireland’s - with huge potential. It has a GVA of more than £40bn, and is home to 75,000 businesses, including some of the best known and most innovative companies in the world, employing more than 700,000 people.
- 3.3 A Greater Essex devolution deal could help build on its strengths, unlocking at least an additional 50,000 high quality new jobs and £5bn of added economic output to make it one of the fastest growing economies in the UK.
- 3.4 To achieve that a devolution deal would need to help address the challenges Greater Essex faces. For example, it has 72,000 fewer people with NVQ 4+ qualifications than the national average as a proportion of its population. It needs to build 200,000 new homes by 2040 and in a way that is sustainable, creates thriving communities, and doesn’t add stress to the existing transport infrastructure. There are currently 183,000 people living in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods in the country. Devolution could help address these challenges and the strategic case is set out in the EOI.
- 3.5 The potential for a deal is set out in the EOI and is a starting point for the dialogue with government. The content is expected to change through that dialogue and therefore relevant councils will be asked to formally sign up to the content of the devolution deal only after those discussions have completed. Assuming dialogue can be opened up with government in the next month or so, we expect that decision to come forward in the Summer.
- 3.6 At this stage, the decision being sought is just for agreement to express an interest for further discussions only. There is currently no commitment to Thurrock Council beyond that needed to remain engaged with partners to explore possible future options. That engagement is an action the Council has committed to as part of the Improvement and Recovery Plan.
- 3.7 In summary, the EOI covers the areas described below:
 - *On skills*, skills is an area where devolution could be a game changer for Greater Essex, enabling it to address long-standing issues with low skills and low productivity and make the transition to new fast-growing economic growth sectors. The skills devolution offer is very substantial and would give us control or much greater influence than we have now over a key economic lever. This includes control over the adult education budget (£28-84m a year); influence over the Local Skills Improvement Plan ensuring skills provision is matched to our local economy and the sectors where Greater Essex has the opportunity to see significant growth; and influence over DWP employment programmes, adopting a more joined-up and co-ordinated approach across the skills system with powers and flexibilities for joint working with key agencies.

- *On the economy*, with a level 3 deal, Greater Essex could use the gainshare/investment fund of approximately £1bn, alongside the new powers on skills, transport, and strategic infrastructure planning to transform the Greater Essex economy and make it the fastest-growing in the UK outside London. Stronger strategic co-ordination would enable it to attract higher levels of inward investment through effective place promotion. Devolution would also enable it to absorb the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions and therefore transform strategic engagement with business - both businesses that are already here and new businesses.
- *On the environment*, devolution can accelerate the drive to net zero; make serious inroads into the 400,000 homes in Greater Essex that need retrofitting; create 18,000 local green jobs by 2030; and save consumers money by developing smart, local energy systems.
- *On transport*, transport, particularly sustainable transport, is key to energising and enabling many shared objectives: boosting economic growth, tackling disadvantage and inequality, boosting public health and improving the environment. Devolution would enable Greater Essex to become a strategic transport authority, giving it the levers to create a more integrated, connected and sustainable transport network. Potential powers include bus ticketing and franchising, forming rail partnerships, multi-year transport funding and powers over the key route network.
- *On housing*, meeting the challenge of having to build many more new homes to meet the needs of an increasing population and to improve the affordability, quality and carbon/climate challenges of housing. Devolution will give new powers to do this, including the ability to be a stronger partner with Homes England, to accelerate and unlock building on brownfield sites, to take forward strategic planning ensuring an infrastructure first approach (driven by local control of infrastructure funding and delivery) and to boost regeneration where it makes sense to do so.
- *On infrastructure*, a level 3 deal would include use of the gainshare fund of approximately £1bn to significantly improve the county's infrastructure.
- *On communities, community safety and public services*, devolution offers the opportunity to bring together on a common Greater Essex footprint, and in a much more integrated way, action on the wider determinants of health (such as employment, skills and housing), public health and community safety. This could enable strengthened community resilience and reduce health inequalities that widened during the pandemic and are likely to widen further as a result of the cost of living crisis. It will also help address entrenched deprivation which in some parts of our geography is a significant and growing issue. Work in Glasgow and Greater Manchester highlights the benefits of this public health approach to community safety. Other devolution deals have also offered combined authorities the opportunity to work more closely with government agencies in supporting people with complex needs.

- *Outside the devolution framework*, most places negotiating devolution deals have also sought to identify some opportunities outside of the formal devolution framework. Through the workshops, a wide range of proposals were identified where it could go further than the Government's framework. These areas include: the devolution of powers to enable leadership of Local Area Energy and Heat planning, bringing systems thinking to the design of a net zero energy system that works for all; devolved capital funding to support the delivery of housing priorities in Greater Essex including new affordable homes, net zero ambitions and specialist housing; the ability to negotiate for Greater Essex to pilot new sustainable building standards that go beyond the bare minimum.
- 3.8 Until there has been dialogue with Government it is not possible to state definitively what the full benefits of devolution to Thurrock residents will be. However, what is clear, given the pressures faced across all local government, all local authorities in Essex are keen to explore any opportunity to deliver more efficient, joined up services to residents and businesses. Many of the big issues that residents across all our local geographies face – economically, socially, environmentally – are more strategic and significant than any one council has the capacity or resources to cover effectively.
- 3.9 There are different levels of deal available as part of the Devolution Framework. Discussions so far within ELCE suggest that most authorities are happy to go into the dialogue with government on the basis that the benefits of a Level 2 and a Level 3 deal will be further explored and considered should a deal offer be received. Southend-on-Sea City Council have expressed a clear position on consideration of Level 2 only and do not support Level 3.
- 3.10 Due to the nature of the legislative framework for devolution as set out in the Bill as currently drafted, there are limited options for consideration. While other geographies could be considered more recognisable functional economic areas such as South Essex and the already well-established role of the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA), which is essentially already at Level 1, the proposed legislation does not allow for a devolution deal that splits a county council area. This has been confirmed by DLUHC. The permissible options are therefore limited to:

Option 1:

Endorse the submission of the EOI to government so that Thurrock can fully understand the potential benefits of devolution across Greater Essex for its residents and communities.

Option 2:

Do nothing. There is no legal requirement for areas to enter into a deal with government. However, not pursuing dialogue with government means that Thurrock and Greater Essex have effectively ruled out devolution at this time without fully understanding and considering its potential benefits.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 This particular decision is about gaining agreement on whether or not to express an interest for further discussions only and the rationale is set out in the body of this report.
- 4.2 Any potential deal offered by Government would require consultation and formal decision making to follow, so no substantial decision is to be made at this stage other than endorsing the submission of an Expression of Interest.

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

- 5.1 Thurrock Council officers and Members have been engaged throughout the consideration and development of proposals for Greater Essex devolution – this work has been instigated by the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives (ELCE) Group involving all local authorities across Greater Essex.
- 5.2 Workshops and briefings have been held since Summer 2022 including recent briefing sessions for all Members across wider Essex including Thurrock. MPs have also been consulted. Essex County Council has also led on engagement with Health Integrated Care System Chairs, businesses and universities as well as the Essex Association of Local Councils – representing parish and town councils.
- 5.3 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider the EOI and its submission to government ahead of Cabinet at their Extraordinary meeting on 7 March 2023. The committee’s feedback will be provided to Cabinet verbally at the meeting.
- 5.4 A period of formal consultation would be required before establishing any new arrangements and would take place after any devolution deal heads of terms were agreed with Government. Engagement with residents, businesses and other stakeholders will come later and is a formal part of the process.

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

- 6.1 The council’s Improvement and Recovery Plan commits to continuing to engage with partners on discussions around the options for devolution, ensuring the interests of Thurrock residents and businesses are reflected and protected.
- 6.2 Thurrock Council is committed to exploring every possible option to enable the efficient and sustainable delivery of essential services to residents and to make the borough a socially, economically and environmentally healthy and vibrant place to live and work. The right devolution deal for the borough could support that goal. The extent of the benefits and impact for Thurrock will not be fully understood until negotiations commence. Consideration should be

given to whether pursuing a devolution agenda is a priority for Thurrock Council at this time.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Gareth Moss**
Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications contained in this report. However, Members should be aware that the s114 Notice that the Council is currently operating under will mean that any ability to support further work in this area will need to be thoroughly assessed. This will include officer time working on the detail of any proposed devolution deal and how it should be prioritised against other key requirements of the intervention and delivery of the Improvement and Recovery Plan.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Governance Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill when brought into force will amend the Local Democracy Economic Development and Contractions Act 2009 to enable the establishment of a county combined authority.

The Government has invited local authorities or groups of local authorities to submit expressions of interest for new powers and governance arrangements in relation to a proposed devolution deal. Negotiations on these proposals are not legally binding, and Government will decide which proposals to progress, and what powers, if any to devolve.

The councils involved in proposing to establish a county combined authority will need to carry out a governance review including consultation in order to decide whether to proceed. Having decided to proceed, the councils must prepare and publish a Scheme for the county combined authority. The key provisions of the Scheme will be area, name, membership, voting, executive arrangements, transport, scrutiny, functions, powers and duties, incidental provisions, funding and sub structures.

A county combined authority will be created by statutory instrument and the councils involved will be consulted on the proposed content of the statutory instrument.

The county combined authority will be a new legal entity completely separate to the councils involved, with its own decision-making arrangements. The

Council will have some ability to negotiate these. It is clear that the Council will be entitled to appoint at least one member to the county combined authority and other members will need to take part in the combined authority scrutiny function. There will also be legal agreements and arrangements for decision making that are needed.

The monitoring officers across the 15 local authorities and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner have met to have an initial conversation and discuss how this would be co-ordinated and resourced.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a). Greater Essex Devolution

There are no equalities implications associated with this report and the submission of the expression of interest. If a devolution deal is negotiated with government then the equalities implications of the deal will be considered further through a Community Equality Impact Assessment before a formal decision is made on whether to accept the deal or not.

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

This particular decision is about gaining agreement to express an interest for further discussions only. Any potential deal offered by Government may have implications and any formal decision making would consider such implications fully as part of that process.

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):

- Levelling Up White Paper
- Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Devolution Framework
- Appendix 2: Greater Essex Devolution Expression of Interest

Report Author

Sarah Welton

Strategy Manager

Appendix 1: Devolution framework in the Levelling Up White Paper

Level 3 – A single institution or County Council with a directly elected mayor (DEM), across a FEA or whole county area

Level 2 – A single institution or County Council without a DEM, across a FEA or whole county area

Level 1 – Local authorities working together across a FEA or whole county area e.g. through a joint committee

Function	Detail	L1	L2	L3
Strategic role in delivering services	Host for Government functions best delivered at a strategic level involving more than one local authority e.g. Local Nature Recovery Strategies	✓	✓	✓
	Opportunity to pool services at a strategic level	✓	✓	✓
	Opportunity to adopt innovative local proposals to deliver action on climate change and the UK's Net Zero targets	✓	✓	✓
Supporting local businesses	LEP functions including hosting strategic business voice		✓	✓
Local control of sustainable transport	Control of appropriate local transport functions e.g. local transport plans*		✓	✓
	Defined key route network*			✓
	Priority for new rail partnerships with Great British Railways – influencing local rail offer, e.g. services and stations			✓
	Ability to introduce bus franchising		✓	✓
	Consolidation of existing core local transport funding for local road maintenance and smaller upgrades into a multi-year integrated settlement			
Investment spending	UKSPF planning and delivery at a strategic level		✓	✓
	Long-term investment fund, with an agreed annual allocation			✓

Function	Detail	L1	L2	L3
Giving adults the skills for the labour market	Devolution of Adult Education functions and the core Adult Education Budget		✓	✓
	Providing input into Local Skills Improvement Plans		✓	✓
	Role in designing and delivering future contracted employment programmes			✓
Local control of infrastructure decisions	Ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations (with consent of host local planning authority)			✓
	Devolution of locally-led brownfield funding			✓
	Strategic partnerships with Homes England across the Affordable Housing Programme and brownfield funding			✓
	Homes England compulsory purchase powers (held concurrently)		✓	✓
Keeping the public safe and healthy	Mayoral control of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions where boundaries align [^]			✓
	Clear defined role in local resilience*			✓
	Where desired offer MCAs a duty for improving the public's health (concurrently with local authorities)		✓	✓
Financing local initiatives for residents and business	Ability to introduce mayoral precepting on council tax*			✓
	Ability to introduce supplement on business rates (increases subject to ballot)			✓

* refers to functions which are only applicable to combined authorities

[^] refers to functions which are currently only applicable to mayoral combined authorities

APPENDIX 2

GREATER ESSEX DEVOLUTION: DRAFT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

(VERSION 13.02.2023)

Section 1: Why do we want a Devolution Deal: Summary

Greater Essex¹ is a dynamic, thriving, entrepreneurial and creative region with the potential to outpace the economic growth of other parts of the country. We see devolution as the key to helping us punch our weight and unlock that growth for the benefit of our residents and for the UK as a whole.

Over the past century, hundreds of thousands of people have come to Greater Essex to improve their lives. People have moved here to enjoy the quality of life offered in our villages, towns and cities, and to grasp new economic opportunities. While there is no single Greater Essex character, most of the 1.9m people who live in the area are here because they or their parents saw opportunity and seized it.

Greater Essex's hard-working residents have built up the area's economic position and have reaped their just rewards. Economic output in Greater Essex is similar in scale to that of Northern Ireland at c.£47bn per year. The region is home to c.81,000 businesses, including some of the best known and most innovative companies in the world, employing more than 700,000 people. We have a history of low unemploymentⁱ and average incomes exceed national and regional benchmarks.ⁱⁱ Leaders across Greater Essex today – whether in parliament, local government, wider public service or in business – share this same ambition and drive.

We have significant assets and opportunities that a devolution deal will help us capitalise on. We are a gateway to trade and investment with two international airports (Stansted and Southend) and two Freeports – Thames Freeport and Freeport East (Harwich). As well as being well connected to London, Cambridge and the M11 corridor. We have the opportunity to build on our assets to accelerate the pace of growth in key sectors of our economy (construction and retrofit; clean energy; advanced manufacturing; digitech; life sciences) to the tune of 50,000 additional jobs by 2030. And we have a strategy ready to implement this.

We have world class businesses with whom we have excellent relationships – including Manchester Airport Group and DP World on logistics; Ford, Raytheon and Teledyne on advanced manufacturing; Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult for life sciences; Kao Data and Global Marine Systems on digitech.

We have three universities, the University of Essex, Anglia Ruskin University, and Writtle College as well as some of the most outstanding schools in the country – four of which – the girls' and boys' grammar schools in Chelmsford and Colchester – regularly feature amongst the top 20 schools in the whole country. We have opportunities to create new and thriving communities in Greater Essex with the need

¹ Greater Essex is the Administrative County of Essex as well as the two unitary areas of Southend and Thurrock.

for 200,000 new homes by 2040 – we need the powers in respect of infrastructure and spatial planning to enable us to achieve that growth in a way that supports our wider economic ambitions for Greater Essex.

Our local authorities are typically low tax authorities and deliver high quality services. There is a strong record of partnership and sharing of services, including a powerful anchor network of our public service institutions. We have also collaborated strongly on the issues that Thurrock has faced showing the strength of our peer support and problem-solving approach.

Despite these strengths and successes, there is also untapped potential in Greater Essex that devolution can help to unlock. In recent years we have seen Greater Essex fall behind its neighbours in the wider South East in terms of the pace of economic growth and levels of productivity. A growing population, combined with relatively slow growth in the number of jobs, and particularly high-value jobs, across some of our towns and cities has fuelled high levels of commuting, placing a strain on our local transport infrastructure, and high claimant counts in some parts of the region, leading to lower financial resilience and reliance on support services such as food banks and emergency funding schemes.

Around 183,000 Greater Essex residents now live in areas that are amongst the most deprived 20% in England, compared to only 106,000 in 2007.ⁱⁱⁱ The COVID-19 pandemic, shocks to the global energy market and food supply chains, and the current cost of living crisis risk further exacerbating these pressures and amplifying inequalities, including gender inequalities.

If we are to extend the opportunities that Greater Essex has enjoyed in the past to today's young people and to future generations, we will need to think differently, and work together in new ways.

We want Greater Essex to be the fastest growing UK economy outside London in the years to 2030. We see a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable economy as the strongest possible foundation for improvements in local living standards, health outcomes, educational attainment and the future viability of public services. We are seeking a Devolution Deal that will give local partners the resources, powers and policy levers to unlock Greater Essex's substantial and untapped economic potential and to share the proceeds of sustainable growth across communities – tackling disadvantage and spatial inequality and securing progress on the twelve levelling-up missions set out in the *White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom*.

Alongside boosting economic growth and Levelling Up, we also need to deal with climate change – a critical issue that requires urgent action now and into the future. Our residents and businesses are already facing impacts from flooding, coastal erosion, water scarcity, overheating: these impacts will increase year on year. Beyond this we are committed to lead the way in moving to a low carbon economy that will secure a long-term future for our businesses and residents. Net zero and climate resilience principles underpin our vision for Greater Essex alongside action to secure and protect our natural environment and our agricultural productivity.

The right deal will help us to:

- a. Boost skills and productivity: the relative shortage of high skilled jobs in Greater Essex is a reflection of the skills base of the working-age population. A relatively low proportion of our local workforce is qualified to Level 4+, constraining labour productivity, sustainable business growth and inward investment. A further 101,000 workers qualified at level 4+ would be needed in Greater Essex just to bring the area into line with national averages.
- b. Deliver improvements in local infrastructure: historic growth in communities across Greater Essex, and increased freight movements, have not been matched with improvements in local transport infrastructure. This has impacted the resilience of key inter-urban road links across Greater Essex and fuelled congestion in our town and cities. Despite a reduction in rail journeys following the COVID pandemic, demand is expected to exceed the capacity of the network within the next decade. These factors place a constraint on future growth by increasing journey times, diminishing employers' access to customers and suppliers, and limiting the supply of skilled labour. A locally determined package of infrastructure improvement, including sustainable transport and digital connectivity, will be vital.
- c. Create and foster thriving communities: we need to build 200,000 new homes by 2040 to accommodate a growing population and workforce, whilst minimising stress on our transport infrastructure. We want these new homes to be environmentally sustainable and climate resilient, of a quality and price that attracts talented people to Greater Essex, and located in thriving communities. Achieving this means investing in the broader sustainability of our towns and cities, including the regeneration of our town centres, local schools and the local living environment. If we get this right, we can attract inward investment, retain growing firms, and ensure that the benefits of sustainable growth reach all parts of the region. And we want to do this in such a way that we are creating community capital and building not just housing and homes but social connections that strengthen the resilience and well-being of our residents.
- d. Take a Public Health approach to strengthening health and well-being: reversing the increase in inequalities across Greater Essex is a key priority for us, including reversing widening health inequalities which are putting unsustainable pressure on the health system and on other public services. Poor health also means that many people are unable to play their full role in the economy and society. The Health Foundation estimates that 40% of the burden on health services may be preventable and around 50% of health outcomes are shaped by the wider determinants of health, in particular people's access to good jobs, education, a healthy environment and good housing.

Devolution is therefore critical to tackling health inequalities in Greater Essex as it will give local leaders greater control over key levers on the economy, housing, skills, environment and transport. This will help Greater Essex to bolster the work of the NHS and our integrated care systems in promoting better population health – helping people to live longer, healthier, more productive lives. Devolution will enable us to join up interventions on these issues in a way that is tailored to the needs of local places, and also to

integrate more closely with the public health and prevention work that is being led by the Integrated Care Systems (ICS).

- e. Exploit the strengths of key sectors and maximise returns from our economic assets and the transition to net zero: Greater Essex has strengths in the med-tech and life sciences sectors and digital clusters in key cities. The growth of advanced manufacturing (particularly in south Essex), and in logistics (focused around our two freeports and airports) represents a major opportunity. There are also major opportunities in clean energy generation through hydrogen, solar farms and offshore wind – facilitated by our location on the energy coast.
- f. Accelerate our drive towards net zero: across Greater Essex there is an opportunity to create c.19,000 green jobs by 2030 – transitioning the workforce into growing sectors of the economy and reducing Greater Essex’s environmental impact. There are also significant opportunities to reduce energy consumption, ease financial pressures on residents and generate income through the development of smart local energy systems, and the roll out of retrofit programmes. An estimated 400,000 homes across Greater Essex are currently in need of retrofitting.
- g. Deliver a more integrated system of sustainable transport: this is key to energising and enabling many of our objectives: connecting residents with economic opportunities, removing constraints to growth caused by congested infrastructure, tackling disadvantage and inequality, improving public health and reducing our environmental impact. There are also significant opportunities to decarbonise the transport system to meet targets in the national transport decarbonisation plan.
- h. Take advantage of the power of data and digital technology: we want digital skills and technology to be a key strength of an inclusive Greater Essex economy. Central to this is the roll out of digital connectivity, including in remote and rural areas. This is a vital platform for future growth and improved productivity, and an essential element in promoting access to services, education and to social connections. We also want to help close the digital divide, equipping residents with the skills and tools they need for the digital age and to harness the power of data and digital technology to transform our public services so they are faster, better and cheaper. This builds on a wide range of existing work, including the Essex Centre for Data Analytics.

The right deal will position our investments in jobs, homes and infrastructure, within a policy framework that enables effective climate action to cut carbon and build resilience while unlocking improvements in the health of the population and in levels of wellbeing, crime and community safety. We want a Greater Essex Devolution Deal to create new opportunities for local agencies to tackle entrenched social deprivation and to work closely with government to support people with complex needs – enabling them to take new opportunities and, wherever possible, reducing demand and cost on the wider system of public services – including the police, the criminal justice system, the benefits system, the health system and social care.

Crucially, the right deal will enable Greater Essex to secure these objectives within a governance framework that ensures accountability to local voters and taxpayers and which respects and enhances the distinct identities of communities across Greater Essex.

Section 2: Devolution Deal: Powers and Flexibilities

Skills

What is the Proposition

A key enabler of economic growth is a workforce with the skills to support the needs of the Greater Essex economy and our businesses into the future.

Greater Essex has 101,000 fewer people skilled to NVQ4+ than it should have (35% of 16-64 year olds are qualified to NVQ4+ - well below the Great Britain average of 43%). And is 8% below the national average at NVQ3+. We also have low levels of Traineeships and T-levels in England – meaning fewer progression routes into skills-based education and training. And these are aggregate figures for Greater Essex. Within our most deprived areas, the skills gap is even more stark.

In addition to this historic deficit, the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant negative impact on learning and skills. The OECD estimates that pandemic lockdowns decreased workers' participation in learning by an average of 18%, and in informal learning by 25%, and will have prevented unemployed adults from accessing upskilling and training opportunities. This 'lost learning', along with historically relatively low skills is a drag on productivity and an impediment to growth. Currently our workforce is over-represented in lower skilled occupations and under-represented in managerial and professional occupations – leading to lower workplace earnings than both regional and national averages. This is in spite of having some of the largest global businesses in Greater Essex. All sectors will require new skills to unlock the opportunities in the transition to a low carbon, sustainable economy.

We estimate that there are at least 40,000 new jobs in the key growth sectors that are vital to the future prosperity of Greater Essex.

What will be Different

Our approach is to adopt a more joined-up and co-ordinated approach across the skills system which incentivises skills provision more strongly to support the needs of Greater Essex businesses, accelerating our progress to being a high wage, high skill, high productivity economy. This will link with our focus on the key economic sectors that will drive the growth of the future and work with anchor organisations to address more comprehensively workforce needs now and for the future.

We think this will help young people to gain the skills they need to prosper in the modern workplace; enable businesses to find employees with the right skills to support their ambitions; and support UK plc by adding to the productivity and growth of the economy.

And importantly we see skills and wider economic prosperity not only as goods in their own right, but also as important in a range of other key strategic agendas for which a strong economy is foundational – not least the health challenges we face in certain parts of Greater Essex.

What we are seeking

We are seeking the ability to directly address our skills challenges both for the growth sectors of the future and the foundational economy. To achieve that we are seeking:

- Devolved responsibility for the commissioning and funding of education and training for 16–19-year-olds in further education and for adults aged 19+ through the application of the Adult Education Budget. This will enable us to ensure alignment of local provision to the needs of an expanding Greater Essex economy and link provision more tightly to future career opportunities based on the modernisation and expansion of key sectors – recognising the importance of the different economic needs of our functional economic areas. Engagement with business and the experience we have had with regard to this work is that we need to exercise greater control over the curriculum and nature of the provision if we are to be able to achieve our economic ambitions and deliver the outcomes that our businesses need which is young people with good core competencies around communications, maths and science skills, critical thinking, adaptability, and problem solving.
- Building on the recent example of the Multiply fund for adult numeracy, we are keen to explore with Government the scope for greater local flexibility to shape specific skills funding streams in the future, to match them to the current and future needs of residents and businesses in Greater Essex.
- Devolution of unspent Apprenticeships Levy funds from Greater Essex businesses^{iv} into a single place-based budget, and the power to develop a strategy to deploy this budget to respond to local needs and priorities, and achieve a much improved, employer-led offer – including flexibility to support skills tasters, short courses, modules, and full vocational qualifications, not just apprenticeships.
- Powers and flexibilities for joint working with key agencies, for example, joint working with the ESFA and FE Commissioners Office in undertaking FE institutions' reviews of how well the education or training provided meets local need, and joint working with the National Careers Service.
- Design and delivery of DWP contracted employment programmes – this should include working on careers education, Youth Hubs, and the vast range of adult upskilling/reskilling and employability support – ensuring this is fully joined up with vocational skills-based education to create viable pathways into future jobs. We would seek through our deal, the creation of employment and skills pathways into work for our most disadvantaged residents and the upskilling of workers on low incomes to attain better salaries and reduce the dependency on in-work benefits. The value of achieving this will be felt not only in economic but also in health outcomes and we would like to connect these discussions up with health colleagues' focus on the wider determinants of health to establish the potential for further pooling of funding to reduce health inequalities.

- Jobcentre Plus – We are keen to explore with government the scope for local strategic oversight of Job Centre Plus. This could enable Job Centres to become much more integrated into the local economy, public service provision and voluntary sector support. This would significantly improve outcomes both for those temporarily out of work and for those who face more entrenched obstacles to employment.
- The opportunity to extend Education Investment Area status to those parts of Greater Essex that fall below the national threshold (on a district rather than an LEA footprint). As part of our commitment to supporting excellent education for all pupils, we are keen to explore with Government the role that local authorities can play in supporting academies that are not delivering good or outstanding education.
- Funding to create innovative skills activity including Higher Education short courses and enhancements to school curricula to support work-ready training, testing and trialing new models of delivery, engaging non-traditional learners, increasing opportunity and participation and raising aspirations.
- We will establish a Greater Essex skills council (drawing together/consolidating the federations of colleges, training providers, and education groups) linked to the Local Skills Improvement Plan Board and the Business Advisory Board and convene North and South Local Skills Assemblies, reflecting local economic partnerships, through which educational, employer and local authority stakeholders can maintain influence and respond to needs.
- We will wish to play a full role in shaping and influencing the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The LSIP is important because it sets out key priorities and changes needed in the local area to align post-16 technical education with business needs.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Functions

What is the proposition

Our ambition is to be the fastest growing economy in England, outside of London. We are currently a member of SELEP, which does not represent a meaningful functional economic area. Disbanding the existing LEP and forming a new LEP as part of a Greater Essex Combined County Authority will enable us to build on our strengths and track record of collaboration. We want to support businesses across Greater Essex and encourage the growth and relocation of innovative, high productivity sectors that will benefit the wider economy. We will amplify and integrate the strategic voice of business across Greater Essex to turbocharge our economic interventions.

What will be different

The integration of LEP functions will enable Greater Essex to develop propositions around sustainable business growth, innovation, skills, and regeneration linked to the needs of our local businesses, our understanding of the local economy and our commitment to key sectors that will deliver productivity improvements over the next 10 years. It will strengthen collaboration with businesses and create more opportunities to unlock, drive, support and fund sustainable growth across Greater Essex.

What we are seeking

We are seeking responsibility to oversee the delivery of a comprehensive business support programme through a Growth Hub providing business advice, links to grant funding, access to private sector equity finance/angel investment, training and networking, particularly to key sectors that our evidence suggests will be the drivers of prosperity and enhanced economic growth in Greater Essex over the next decade. This will include:

- Grow the sectors of the economy that Greater Essex has underlying strengths in and maximise the economic assets in Greater Essex (such as Freeport East and the Thames Freeport) to boost local growth – creating more high-paying/high-skill jobs.
- Building on our recent proposals to Government for new investment zones across the Greater Essex area, we would like to explore the potential for new enterprise or investment zones type incentives in Greater Essex to allow for boosting of investment, economic growth, productivity and employment in those strategic locations.
- Designate relevant Customs Sites for Freeports: reducing barriers to international trade and investment for Greater Essex businesses.
- Create a business environment in Greater Essex which is successful in attracting domestic and international investment, and fosters a culture of innovation. We are seeking direct engagement with the Department for

International Trade to promote Greater Essex internationally and also to secure our portion of innovation funding from BEIS/Innovate UK so we can drive greater innovation in specific sectors of the local economy.

- Direct the development of high-quality, low carbon business accommodation to places where it is lacking, supporting clustering and agglomeration benefits, and align it with residential development and service provision (such as local schools) to create thriving communities.
- Create a Greater Essex workplace well-being offer with additional pump-priming funding from government to test our ability to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of the workforce with demonstrable benefits to the NHS.

Strategic Economic Investment

What is the Proposition

We consider that the powers set out in the framework will enable us to achieve enhanced and sustainable economic growth across Greater Essex. We are keen to benefit locally from the proceeds of that growth, including from the transition to a net zero economy, and invest for the future to reinforce its momentum. A flexible local investment fund will enable us to make integrated, medium-term decisions about the needs of the Greater Essex economy, enabling a whole-system approach to inclusive and sustainable growth and development.

What will be Different

We are seeking a single long-term transformational investment fund with maximum flexibility because it will accelerate delivery of investment, and enable us to maximise strategic alignment with other funding and opportunities linked to our strategic economic objectives. The determination of the parameters of any fund will need to be agreed but we would see the fund as supporting our sector growth aspirations; the development of our innovation and R&D capabilities and linkages with Universities; strengthening better business collaboration; supporting the development of our digital capabilities and infrastructure particularly in support of some of our rural and coastal areas; and potentially contributing to the development of a public health approach to addressing the wider determinants of health to address spatial inequalities.

What are we Seeking

- Allocation of a multi-year investment fund for Greater Essex to include strategic pooling for our local delivery priorities.²
- Additional funding for Research and Development for Greater Essex aligned to supporting our strategic growth sectors.
- A single departmental-style settlement analogous to the settlements currently under discussion for trailblazing deals.
- A deal for future business rates retention for regionally important regeneration schemes.
- Planning and Delivery of UKSPF – this will enable us to exercise stronger local control and discretion over how we use these funds, the pace of spend and prioritisation. It will also enable greater join up of plans across Greater Essex to support business growth and productivity. We are keen to explore if there is scope to have greater local control over other funding pots to support regeneration and levelling up, to improve outcomes and reduce the inefficiencies of competitive bidding.

² The size of the fund, based on the experience of other devolution deals, we expect to be in the region of £1.2bn over 30 years. This is new money that we will not get without a level 3 devolution deal.

- We wish to develop a local Low Carbon Investment and Business Strategy setting out short, medium and long term plans to decarbonise business and grow green opportunities in Greater Essex. As part of this we want to negotiate with government a new local revolving zero interest loan fund for SMEs to enable investment in energy efficiency.
- We want to work with Government to make Greater Essex a centre for net zero innovation, including on zero carbon energy: hydrogen, solar and wind. The existing energy infrastructure and two major ports within Greater Essex offer potential for the production of green hydrogen for clean energy. The geographical positioning of the freeports with access to renewable energy from the North Sea and the fact that they could offer the space for electrolyzers mean they are well-placed, with the right support, to capitalise on the opportunity.

Transport

What is the proposition

Transport is a fundamental enabler of all strategic outcomes. Our current transport system is not working well enough. It is too reliant on car journeys and does not sufficiently enable active and sustainable travel, which leads to pollution, carbon emissions and congestion. It lacks capacity on some of our key road networks, such as the A12, A120, A127 and A13. It is poorly integrated across different modes and is also poorly connected. North-south travel (as distinct from in and out of London) is difficult and public transport and active travel needs to be better connected to areas of growth and economic opportunity. Some of our most deprived areas are also poorly connected with limited public transport, which entrenches lack of economic opportunity. We want to become a strategic transport authority and take control of local transport levers to enable us to build a more effective transport system.

What will be different

Through local control of strategic transport, we will create a transport system for Greater Essex that is fit for the future. It will be better connected, more integrated, have more capacity, and be more sustainable. We will put a focus on expanding sustainable and active travel. A future transport system will therefore be better able to support economic growth, reduce deprivation and disadvantage, and promote a healthy environment and healthy and active lifestyles.

What we are seeking

- Control of appropriate local transport functions e.g., local transport plans – we want to build a local transport plan at a Greater Essex level, enabling us to build a coherent transport network that works across the economic area, while also allowing for local delivery to meet the needs of local places. In order to support effective transport planning and delivery, we envisage creating a transport body empowered to deliver for Greater Essex in the same way as TfL for London or TfGM delivers for Greater Manchester.
- Ability to deliver a stronger and more sustainable bus network – the option of franchising powers would enable the commissioning of a fully integrated bus network across the whole of Greater Essex if it could secure sufficient revenue. This could include integrated ticketing; zonal fare structures; and its choice of vehicle standards (e.g., electric), fares, routes, and timetables. However, franchising will only work if it has sufficient funding to enable it to be delivered in practice, so we would need to be satisfied about financing before taking on bus franchising powers. If not, the scale of a Greater Essex transport authority would enable us to drive stronger Enhanced Partnership deals across the region, delivering better, lower carbon services and a more integrated network.
- Defined key route network – the combined county authority would have power over our most strategically important routes, enabling Greater Essex to deliver on wider cross-cutting transport priorities and make the changes that are necessary to ensure transport functions optimally across the region. We are developing a

“place and movement” approach to ensure key transport routes support sustainable growth and place shaping.

- Priority for new rail partnerships with Great British Railways – influencing local rail offer, e.g., services and stations – This would enhance the ability to make the case for investments in Greater Essex based on improved passenger outcomes. This could include modest station access improvements (e.g., Wivenhoe); Fliich line frequency; 2nd Stansted tunnel; integration with RTS; and freight improvements (various issues on lines outside Greater Essex such as track improvements around Leicester; and electrification on freight spurs to ports).
- Electric vehicle infrastructure – We note that the government is introducing a new £450 million local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) scheme for local authorities to support local EV infrastructure delivery. Greater Essex is keen to be at the forefront of EV delivery in the UK and we would welcome engagement with Government on how we can best achieve this – not only through the funding stream but also through the appropriate devolution of infrastructure powers.

Housing and Infrastructure

What is the proposition

We have a housing affordability challenge in Greater Essex, driven by insufficient supply, with 200,000 new homes needing to be built by 2040³. At the same time, we need to ensure that housing growth happens in a way that protects, preserves and enhances heritage and natural beauty; and that it is accompanied by the infrastructure and services required to support a growing population. We also need to improve housing security and quality for people on low incomes; and ensure sufficient specialist housing to meet the needs of a growing vulnerable population. New build and existing stock need to be made climate resilient and ready for net zero – we have developed an award-winning Essex Design Guide which sets out how this should be done.

We will ensure that our approach, under devolution, takes advantage of the benefits of strategic planning for housing and infrastructure development, economic corridors and accessible business clusters; but also preserves the benefits of a locally driven approach based around local place shaping.

We also need to acknowledge the clear link between infrastructure development and the wider determinants of health. A Population Health Management approach focuses on the wider determinants of health and the crucial role of communities, local people and public services including councils, the public, schools, fire service, voluntary sector, housing associations, social services, police and transport services. All have a role to play in addressing the interdependent issues that affect people's health and wellbeing.

What will be different

We will start to turn around housing delivery and housing outcomes for Greater Essex, so that housing becomes an enabler of, rather than a barrier to, economic growth, levelling up, improved public health (through design that encourages active travel), net zero, climate resilience, and stronger communities. Infrastructure strategy and decisions will also seek to address the interdependent issues that affect people's health and well-being.

What we are seeking

- Infrastructure Planning - we need to make sure that we can accommodate growth in Greater Essex in a way that is sustainable and enables our communities to prosper. We will consider whether a more strategic infrastructure plan, based on work previously done across Greater Essex to look at our infrastructure needs, will be helpful in enabling us to capture the full benefits of growth.
- Energy - we wish to explore the devolution of powers to enable leadership of local area energy and heat planning, bringing systems thinking to the design of a net zero energy system that works for all.

³ This figure is based on adopted and/or emerging Local Plans across Greater Essex.

- Partnership with Homes England and greater devolution of land holdings – building on our existing work with Homes England, we want to build a more strategic collaboration to ensure that there is a short, medium and long term view of land supply across Greater Essex. This could include direct funding to build local capacity and joint work with Homes England to drive forward the programme across Greater Essex to highlight viable investment propositions to unlock and accelerate stalled housing sites. We would also wish to explore taking control of Homes England land in Greater Essex to enable more successful land assembly to drive housing and employment site regeneration. This would include the Homes England portfolio of existing sites, including the legacy sites from SEEDA and the Commission for New Towns and would involve a presumption in favour of transfer of ownership to the combined county authority.
- House building on brownfield sites, inc. funding – we want to explore the feasibility and benefits of speeding up and simplifying the process for building on brownfield sites through locally led partnerships with a range of support measures including recoverable investment funding.
- Energy performance of new homes – we are seeking to negotiate for Greater Essex to pilot new sustainable building standards that go beyond the bare minimum as part of our shared commitment to tackling climate change; and the ability to set ambitious planning policies that go beyond the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Building Regulations.
- Opportunity area – we want to explore the ability to identify key locations with potential for new homes, jobs and infrastructure of all types. Examples in London are linked to existing or potential public transport improvements and typically have capacity for at least 2,500 new homes or 5,000 new jobs, or a combination of the two.
- Housing development sites pipeline - creating a pipeline over the short, medium, and long term will enable us to both offer the scale to seek strategic partnerships and investment from major developers as well as working with local SMEs, housing associations and LAs/LA housing companies on appropriate sites.
- Devolved capital funding – as other areas have done, we will seek the devolution of some capacity funding to support the delivery of housing priorities in Greater Essex including new affordable homes, net zero ambitions and specialist housing.
- Affordable Housing – we are keen to explore options for funding and flexibility to enable the expansion of delivery by local authorities and local housing associations.
- Retrofit - we wish to seek access to a proportionate share of the Government's Sustainable Warmth and energy company ECO funds, as well as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. In addition, we want to secure the powers to implement a Landlord Registration Scheme to manage compliance with regulations including minimum EPC standards.

- Property Collaboration – we are seeking capacity funding from government to support Greater Essex consideration of a whole scale review of public sector assets with a view to rationalising and leveraging the use of our assets to underpin the delivery of more efficient public services.
- Capacity funding - currently Greater Essex authorities have the powers to enforce building standards and environmental health regulations but too often lack the resources to do so. Establishing shared resources, evidence bases and centres of excellence to ensure the quality of our housing stock would be an important step to empowering Greater Essex to deliver better housing outcomes for our residents. This could include shared resource to support viability assessments, strategic planning capacity, housing development capability, and joint procurement of temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- Land assembly and Homes England compulsory purchase powers – we are keen to explore taking on this power, subject to the agreement of the constituent councils over individual decisions.
- Digital Infrastructure - the government has indicated that engagement with local authorities on the delivery of digital infrastructure and potential economic and public service applications of data and data science is possible through a deal. The ability for us to agree our own contracts with BT Openreach and City Fibre, based on investment principles that recognise the increased cost of delivering to isolated rural areas but also the long-term economic and social benefit to bringing broadband to rural communities and businesses, would allow a step-change in outcomes for residents. It would allow Greater Essex to take a demand-led, responsive programme, delivered at a district level that focussed on quick delivery to targeted areas and may also support efforts to address digital poverty and vulnerability.

Keeping the Public Safe and Healthy

What is the Proposition

We believe it is essential that devolution supports the public health agenda – at a whole population level and in closing widening health inequalities that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. In the medium-term, we would like to explore social care and health integration as part of this process, along the lines of the Greater Manchester model.

In the shorter term, we believe a Greater Essex devolution deal can help boost the work of our integrated care systems, facilitating greater ability to collaborate and work together on a small set of strategic issues to improve population health and well-being and address the wider determinants of health. It will facilitate more joined-up and streamlined conversations in respect of economic development, skills, transport and strategic planning. In addition, building on established and successful examples of partnership working and collaboration we believe that a devolution deal could raise the profile of a public health approach to deliver additional community safety and well-being outcomes.

Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) are coterminous with Greater Essex, and we have already realised many benefits of a directly elected Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, through strong partnership working and greater strategic planning. Building on our existing partnerships, we want to explore more opportunities to deliver services within a public health approach where the benefit derived reaches across systems beyond that of police and fire alone and contributes to their efficiency and effectiveness. Greater Essex, in partnership with Government, will work with the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to agree an appropriate arrangement to ensure close collaboration and productive joint working on public safety, in a manner that learns the lessons of existing devolution models and which protects and preserves the operational independence, direction and control of relevant chief officers.

What will be different

This section highlights how devolution can help to build on and deepen local partnership working, and also strengthen collaboration with government on public service integration and reform.

The impact of air quality, housing, employment, early years, education and skills on health and wellbeing is well understood. Tackling the wider determinants of health delivers benefits not just to the individuals and their communities but will reduce demand on public services across the board. Learning from the work of the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit in developing a public health approach, we believe that this model could achieve additional benefits in other areas such as substance misuse, nutrition and obesity. In addition, greater collaboration would see an enhanced offer to key vulnerable groups.

Devolution provides the opportunity to join up our approach to delivering services more strategically across Greater Essex. Our ambition is to transform public service outcomes through this devolution deal and therefore we will wish to consider some of the fundamental elements of local delivery and how we can continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our offer to local residents through this route.

What are we seeking

- Capacity funding to enhance and expand the progress that has already been made and to extend the public health approach to new areas as described above. The Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit is an example of this, having followed the example set by Glasgow. We could use devolution to build on and expand this approach.
- A data sharing pilot between partners with government support to be able to plan and deliver more targeted and effective interventions. Improved data sharing across areas will allow for more evidence-based approaches to targeting funding and services and analysing what works. It will enable detailed understanding of inequalities across areas with the power to direct funding and services where they are needed. Through this devolution deal we are seeking enhanced dialogue with government and the ONS on establishing local data standards for all public service agencies to make the join up of data at a local level more straightforward and agreement regarding the granularity and timeliness of key data sets to make targeting interventions more evidence-led at the appropriate level.
- Devolution of health and justice budgets from NHS England to whichever directly elected individual exercises the PFCC's functions going forward would mean more targeted and effective health and wellbeing support for people in the criminal justice system. This builds on the work we are already doing through the Essex Integrated Criminal Justice Commissioning Group, which is having a positive impact on supporting vulnerable people in the criminal justice system and helping to reduce reoffending.
- We would also wish to explore whether there are key public health outcomes – for example obesity, healthcare for 0-19s – where devolution would enable us to take a stronger whole-system approach to not just addressing the presenting issue but also tackling the root causes. Building on our existing pilot with Sport England, we are particularly interested in building 'moving more' into the priorities of any future CCA – recognising that movement – especially walking and cycling – provides a range of physical and mental well-being dividends. We will be seeking to promote active workplaces; active schools; active travel; active places; and active communities to realise these benefits and also support our drive to environmental sustainability.

The Environment

The Proposition

Climate change is something that we all face and in Greater Essex we are committed to ensuring we lead the way in moving to a low carbon economy that will secure a long-term future for our businesses and residents. We are already dealing with the impacts from our changing climate and are seeing increasing coastal erosion, flooding, water scarcity, overheating and soil degradation. Our residents and businesses are directly affected and these impacts risk undermining our agricultural productivity and our plans for future development. We need to ensure that we support our communities to be climate resilient through a clear focus on green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

Effectively addressing climate change is core to our vision for a successful Greater Essex. This underpins actions across all of areas of investment and development set out in these devolution plans. Alongside these proposals, a series of core actions are needed to secure our natural environment. These will ensure we can continue to have a successful agricultural sector while securing 30% green infrastructure critical to protect our soils, build climate resilience and providing a healthy environment for our wildlife and our residents.

We also want to lead the way in delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan and the legislation in the Environment Act, balancing our growth ambitions with the nurturing and cherishing of wildlife and biodiversity on land and in the water.

What will be different

Greater Essex is already a national leader on climate action. Through the Essex Climate Action Commission, we have developed and are delivering an ambitious programme of activity to transition to net zero. This involves bringing together action by public services, anchor institutions, businesses and communities. We will use devolution to accelerate progress on net zero across our whole region; to ensure that our natural environment is protected from the impacts of climate change; and to enhance the environment for the benefit of our residents, visitors and future generations.

What we are Seeking

- Green Infrastructure - through a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, we want to bring green infrastructure planning across Greater Essex together in a more integrated way, using powers and funding from DEFRA, Natural England and the Forestry Commission.
- Sustainable farming – Greater Essex is a very rural area in parts and the Essex Climate Action Commission recommended a target of achieving net zero farming by 2050. We want the power to set local criteria that apply to funding of landowners through the national Environment Land Management Schemes. This will enable us to influence the development of more sustainable farming in parts of Greater Essex.

Arts, culture, heritage, tourism and sport

The Proposition

The creative industries are the UK's biggest growth sector, with 1.3 million people working in the creative economy across London and the South East. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills predicts 1.2 million new workers are needed in the sector over the next decade. Tourism and the visitor economy are crucial industries for Greater Essex, with the county attracting large numbers of leisure and business visitors every year. This is particularly important for many of our coastal areas, which include some of the areas of highest deprivation in the region, and therefore is a key element of Levelling Up. The UK government wants to see a growing, dynamic, sustainable and world-leading tourism sector reaching its full potential and driving growth across all parts of the UK. We share this ambition.

Sport and active lifestyles play a powerful role in supporting mental and physical health and addressing disadvantage. Essex is one of 12 national pilot areas that is working with Sport England on a comprehensive and community-led programme to boost physical activity.

What Will Be Different

Devolution offers an opportunity to strengthen how we work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), its arms-length bodies and other national bodies. This will enable us to significantly enhance Greater Essex's track record of developing and delivering ambitious place-based strategies to realise the region's rich cultural potential.

This will include looking across culture, heritage, sport and visitor economy initiatives and identifying opportunities for a joined-up, strategic approach. Building on Greater Essex's outstanding cultural strengths and assets, this collaborative strategic approach will support our cultural partners to deliver an exceptional cultural offer, thus maximising the contribution of culture and heritage to placemaking, local communities and sustainable economic growth across Greater Essex. For example, we will work with DCMS and Historic England on developing legacy investments, the protection and enhancement of Essex's castles and renewing the region's pride and place in further priority places.

Similarly, by building stronger strategic relationships with DCMS and Arts Council England regarding the Levelling up For Culture Places (CPP Project Thurrock) and Arts Council Priority Places (Basildon and Tendring) and the region's National Portfolio Organisations (such as the Focal Point Gallery and Metal Culture Ltd. in Southend), we can work more impactfully and ambitiously to deliver vital levelling up interventions.

Taking forward this work will have significant benefits for the region's economy, including in providing more jobs in areas with high levels of deprivation. Moreover, high quality, accessible cultural and sporting opportunities can act as levers to improve public health outcomes around activity levels, obesity, and mental health, and can also have a positive impact on community safety – for example, using sport

to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, gang-related activity and to help reduce reoffending.

What we are seeking

- Powers to designate areas of Greater Essex as Creative Enterprise Zones where artists and creative businesses can find permanent, affordable space to work; are supported to start-up and grow; and where local people are supported to learn creative sector skills - understanding that arts and culture and the creative industry are important contributors to inclusive growth and placemaking. The Creative Enterprise Zones model in London has helped local areas with accessing inward investment, enabling new and affordable workspaces for creatives, access to skills and training, and community engagement. We would like to build on this model in Greater Essex.
- We want to increase investment in culture, heritage and sport in Greater Essex to boost the local economy and tackle health inequalities. This could include a redevelopment of key cultural infrastructure; investment in key creative industry skills across the county; and the development of support structures for the full range of creative industries e.g., film, gaming, architecture, fashion; artists' studios and gallery space; and continued investment and development of the region's museums and galleries. We want to work with Arts Council England to ensure Greater Essex gets its fair share of national funding, supporting delivery of a regional culture strategy.
- We want to work with DCMS through the accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region to help develop Greater Essex's visitor economy, with a view to harnessing our potential to grow domestic and international visitor spend, and encourage visits throughout the year rather than just during the traditional tourist season. This collaborative work, across those areas set out in the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan, could include the potential to expand major events and festivals and drive up the economic and place-making potential of these; expansion of business tourism by capitalising on our gateway links with Northern Europe; and harnessing Greater Essex's leading voice in delivering green tourism and its ambition to become England's first fully net zero visitor destination.
- We want to build on the work already in train across Greater Essex and review the region's offer regarding outdoor and leisure facilities, considering the challenges facing the leisure centre sector at present from the energy crisis and the impact of the pandemic, aiming to both reduce the carbon emissions from the leisure sector while matching leisure provision with better health outcomes.
- We are seeking continued investment and development of the Essex Film Office to further establish it as a recognised leader in the industry and strengthen the case for creative infrastructure (e.g., film studios, post production facilities and skills/learning facilities).
- Specific projects that we wish to take forward and that could benefit from support include:

- The redevelopment at Roots Hall, Southend
- Relocated stadium for Southend United Football Club
- Recognition of the importance of Southend Pier and continued investment into it
- Development of artists' studios and gallery space, continued investment and development of the region's museums and galleries (particularly recognising the cultural importance of the Princely Burial and the London Shipwreck)
- Continued development of Southend Airport and the Launchpad
- Development and restoration of Essex's heritage include the development of the visitor experience at Cressing Temple Barns
- Restoration, preservation, recording and the interpretation of the cultural heritage of four registered parks and gardens (Belhus Park, Danbury Park, Thorndon Park, Weald Park); and key sites across the county including Saffron Hall Trust; Roman Wall in Colchester; Palace theatre Clacton, and Shire Hall in Chelmsford

Finance

What is the proposition

Our goal is a system of funding for local government in Greater Essex that gives local leaders greater freedoms and flexibilities around resources and raising funding; greater certainty over funding sources so that we can plan effectively for the future; the capacity to fund strategic economic investment; and the capacity to drive even better value for money and outcomes for our residents, through better join up and strategic commissioning of services. Greater Essex leaders are committed to doing this in the most effective way possible, maximising the impact of the public pound and gearing and leveraging private investment into our growing economy. Scale and diversity of assets across Greater Essex presents a potent opportunity for private sector partners, together with our proximity to London and its eastward growth and expansion.

What will be different

Devolution will bring in added investment to the region – principally through a long-term investment fund, but also through other investment propositions that we are putting forward. This is important because it will enable us to make the long-term investments that are critical to delivering against the Levelling Up missions. Greater local control of national funding programmes (as on adult skills) will enable better tailoring of investments to local needs and opportunities. This will include joining up funding in local places to deliver better outcomes and return on investment and working more closely with communities to ensure they own the solutions in their neighbourhoods.

What are we seeking

- Mayoral precepting – should Greater Essex adopt a Level 3 devolution deal, we would look to have mayoral precepting powers to enable the Mayoral Combined County Authority to cover the costs of its operation.
- Business rates – we seek the power in the White Paper to levy a supplement on business rates to fund new infrastructure, subject to the support of the local business community. This will enable the combined county authority to have the power to fund local infrastructure projects that are considered necessary by local businesses and which are not funded by central government or already built into existing local capital plans.
- Alongside the above, we would seek wider flexibility to offer discounts on business rates to encourage certain sectors to relocate to Greater Essex. We would also like to explore the option of retaining a greater share of business rates generated locally, as this will further strengthen the incentives to invest in promoting local economic growth.

Section 3: Leadership and Governance

Greater Essex already benefits from strong local leadership and partnership working across our upper tier authorities, our cities, districts and boroughs, our Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, our health and other partners. We also have an increasingly established way of working in our north and south sub-geographies, which enables us to benefit from working at scale across organisational boundaries, while at the same time tailoring approaches to Greater Essex's diversity.

Whilst our devolution bid is outcome, not governance, led, we are seeking discussions with Government on both a Level 2 and Level 3 deal. This means that we don't start with the question "what governance model do we want"; rather we start with the question "what will deliver the best outcomes for our residents and businesses". With this in mind, we want an ambitious devolution deal for Greater Essex that will enable us to fulfil the economic and social potential of the region and address the big issues that we have set out in this document. Essex and Thurrock are clear that the opportunities and ambitions of Level 3 are significant and would deliver material benefits to Greater Essex residents. Southend-on-Sea City Council passed a Motion in 2020 which stated that 'this Cabinet opposes a directly elected mayoral form of governance, or any form of governance that diminishes the powers of the Southend-on-Sea Borough Council as a unitary authority and the largest conurbation in Essex.' Therefore, understanding both the offer for a Level 2 deal alongside Southend and a parallel conversation on Level 3 elements of the framework is where we would like to begin negotiations in good faith with Government.

- The three upper tier authorities, Southend-on-Sea City Council, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council, would form by statute the founding constituent members of a combined county authority but through the detailed governance work we are keen to explore whether there are other constituting representatives that it would make sense to include in our arrangements.
- We are engaging with city, district and borough councils on the best way of ensuring their effective participation in a future combined county authority. The benefits of devolution cannot be delivered purely by upper tier authorities and requires close collaboration across tiers of local government; and we want to reflect this reality in the governance model for how a CCA will work.
- We are also working with wider public service partners, recognising that they will have a strong interest in shaping the Deal to secure the public service outcomes that are important to the people we serve.
- We are committed to the principle of subsidiarity – that is decisions should be made as close to residents as possible. We don't want to move away from an over-centralised Whitehall model to an over-centralised Greater Essex model. We are supportive an approach similar to that adopted by the East Midlands.⁴

⁴ Principle 6 of the East Midlands deal states: 'The East Midlands MCCA will perform a role that adds value to existing governance arrangements – primarily focused on strategic place shaping functions such as plan

- Discussions are continuing as to whether the PFCC role should be incorporated into a future Mayoral Combined County Authority. This would be facilitated by the fact that the PFCC footprint and the MCCA footprint will be co-terminous. However, we are committed to ensuring that a devolution deal for Greater Essex strengthens and doesn't undermine the success of the forward-thinking model we have had in place for policing and fire and rescue service governance across Greater Essex since 2017 and our collective capability to tackle crime and support community safety.
- The functions of the existing LEP as they relate to Greater Essex would transfer over to the Greater Essex CCA and we have been in discussions about this with the LEP and with Kent and East Sussex, our partners in the existing LEP.

Once the devolution deal starts to take shape, we will be able to confirm these and other details about how the governance model for the new authority would operate, applying the best lessons from existing combined authorities. We will seek to ensure that a combined county authority, however it is constituted, is lean, efficient, provides good value for money and does not duplicate decision making.

making and strategic commissioning. The East Midlands MCCA will not create an additional layer of governance, but instead will bring the governance that currently sits at national government level down into the East Midlands, much closer to businesses and communities. Place making functions will be delivered through the existing local planning authority arrangements that are better placed to deliver functions for which they are statutorily responsible and as close to communities as is practicable.'

The Greater Essex devolution bid and the Government's four tests.

Our approach to devolution meets the four tests set out by the Government as follows:

- 1) Effective Leadership – powers will be devolved to areas that have ‘the necessary structures and leadership for clear, strong local decision-making’ (WP, p.137).

We have strong local leadership in Greater Essex and a strong track record of collaborating together across organisational boundaries. This was demonstrated for example during the pandemic, and is demonstrated in our thematic partnerships and how we are working together in our sub-geographies of North Essex and South Essex.

The governance section confirms that we recognise the need to put in place the necessary governance structures to implement the deal, according to the level of deal that is agreed.

- 2) Appropriate geography – devolution deals should be based on geographies that cover functional economic areas; are ‘locally recognisable’ in terms of identity, place and community; and cover *at least* a whole county council area. Scale is also an important factor and new deals will need to support a population of at least 500,000.

Our EOI is based on the geography of Greater Essex. It recognises that that is the appropriate footprint for devolution as it comprises the most significant functional economic area. Our pitch also recognises the diversity and economic distinctiveness of different parts of the area and we will be building in to our approach arrangements which preserve and enhance the characteristics and distinctiveness of the different parts of our area – particularly building on the arrangements that are in place across South Essex and are currently forming across North Essex.

- 3) Flexibility – the framework set out in the WP is not supposed to be prescriptive. The Government expects deals to be tailored to the needs of local areas and to be built on and extended over time.

We are ambitious for our residents and our place. Our EOI responds to the powers and functions set out in the devolution framework and also seeks to discuss and explore options around additional powers and responsibilities that are linked to the distinctive needs and opportunities of Greater Essex. We have set out some areas – for example around health and social care integration – where we do not expect to secure devolution in our first deal, but where we are signalling a medium-term ambition for further devolution in future.

- 4) Appropriate accountability – local leaders and institutions must be transparent and accountable; work closely with local businesses; seek the best value for taxpayers’ money; and maintain strong ethical standards.

A devolution deal will strengthen value for money, transparency and accountability over how money is spent locally. For example, there is currently no real visibility over how the national adult skills budget is spent in Greater Essex, nor the outcomes that are derived from it. We will change that and use this transparency and accountability to drive better performance. We are keen to develop ways to demonstrate our delivery against the Levelling Up missions in return for greater financial freedom and autonomy which will help secure those outcomes. We look forward to responding to the new accountability framework for devolved authorities.

Section 4: Engagement

We are engaging on devolution with the PFCC and the PFCC's Office and with local Councillors from upper tier authorities and from district, city and boroughs. This is important because we want to ensure that locally elected politicians are fully informed about the details and implications of devolution and have the opportunity to shape the approach we are taking. So far, we have held general briefing sessions open for all Councillors, as well as specific briefing sessions for Councillors from individual authorities. These have been well attended and have seen a high level of engagement.

In addition, the three upper tier authorities have taken the proposal to submit an expression of interest on devolution to their Cabinets and Full Councils during February and March. [A sentence or two to be added re the response of Cabinet and Council discussions]. By taking it to our Cabinets and Full Councils we have also started a public conversation around devolution, which we will follow up on more substantively over the summer and autumn once we are clear on the Government's intention with regards to our proposal.

We have engaged wider system partners and businesses in the discussion. We have engaged Health partners from across the three ICSs. We are also doing the same with the Essex Association of Local Government (which represents our town and parish councils), the Vice Chancellors of the three universities in Greater Essex, representatives of local FE colleges and with the leaders of the main voluntary sector umbrella organisations.

We have held a roundtable event with Greater Essex businesses discussing devolution and what it means for local businesses, including the future of the LEP and support for our two freeports.

Overall, we are confident that at this stage, we have general support for our approach to devolution from local Councillors and from key system partners and businesses. Of course, this will need to be re-assessed through further engagement and in due course through a public consultation once the details of a devolution deal for Greater Essex become clearer.

Section 5: Working with MPs

We recognise the importance of working with our 18 MPs as part of the development of these devolution proposals. In addition to the regular discussions we have with MPs, we have undertaken additional activity to make sure that MPs are engaged and able to influence the process and thinking.

At the outset of the process, we sent all MPs a briefing on the work that we were kicking off across leaders in Greater Essex, and we wrote to all MPs in December to update them on the discussions.

In January, we have held several briefing meetings on devolution, which have been attended by most MPs in Greater Essex, or representatives from their offices. This has enabled us to keep MPs up to date on progress and to ensure their views are reflected in our approach. We will continue to meet with our MPs and engage them in dialogue on these proposals as they are shaped.

Section 6: Timeline

This sets out the timeline we are pursuing with respect to signing off the Deal and establishing new structures – subject to Leaders and Chief Executives agreeing to proceed with the Expression of Interest before the May local elections.

Spring to Autumn 2023: deal refinement and negotiation with Government - we would be seeking to start negotiations with the Government in Spring 2023 with the hope of having a draft deal agreed between Greater Essex Authorities and the Government by late summer/early autumn 2023. Based on reports from other areas we would anticipate this taking up to a maximum of 6 months depending on capacity on both sides and the complexity of the deal.

Autumn 2023: Public announcement of deal and pre-consultation engagement with constituent authorities - following conclusion of negotiations we would be aiming for a public announcement on the deal to be made in the Autumn of 2023 to give time for wider engagement with Greater Essex authorities and key partners ahead of launching a public consultation. As part of the pre-consultation engagement Councils would take the draft deal through their individual governance processes to agree in principle before the public consultation is launched.

Winter 2023/24 Public Consultation - an 8 week public consultation would take place commencing in late 2023 / early 2024 dependent on agreement of all constituent authorities. Consultation results will be submitted to the Government and reviewed by constituent authorities before they formally vote on the draft deal.

Spring 2024. Constituent Authorities vote on the final deal.

Spring / Summer 2024. Government makes statutory order to devolve powers and funding - the timing of this will be determined by the parliamentary timetable and agreed in principle during negotiations with the Government.

Summer 2024 onwards. Implementation of the deal according to the specifics of the deal that have been agreed.

This timeline is based on information provided from other devolution deal areas we have engaged so may be subject to change depending on specific arrangements and agreements made between Greater Essex Authorities and the Government once negotiations have commenced.

ⁱ Between 2004 and 2020, unemployment rates in Essex were, on average, 1% lower than the average for England. Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics. Accessed via www.nomisweb.co.uk in June 2021.

ⁱⁱ The median salary of a full-time worker in Greater Essex is £35,157 - higher than the average for the East of England and England. See Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics. Accessed via www.nomisweb.co.uk in June 2021.

ⁱⁱⁱ ECC analysis of the Indices of Deprivation, 2019 available at <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/2w89n/indices-of-multiple-deprivation-imd-2019-full-report>.

^{iv} CIPD data shows that £1.999 billion of employers' levy funds expired and were returned to the Treasury between May 2019 and March 2021.

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15 March 2023		ITEM: 15 Decision: 110647
Cabinet		
School Capital Programme Update 2022/23		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Barry Johnson, Cabinet Member for Children and Education		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The council's school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess the potential likely demand for school places, this forms part of the council's statutory duties around pupil place planning. The current programme aims to deliver sufficient pupil places for the 2022 and 2023 academic years.

This report seeks Cabinet approval to procure an architect led design team, as well as a principal contractor for the expansion of Tilbury Pioneer Academy from a 2FE to a form 3 FE Primary school which would provide an additional 210 school places plus the potential for an additional special need autism base. Design feasibility studies are already completed at the time of writing this report, with initial indications showing that depending on the option taken, this project will have an estimated provisional total value of up to £3.0M inclusive of Architects fees and all other disbursements.

Additionally, this report provides an update on current capital projects managed by Thurrock Council which form part of the current school capital programme outlining the progress that has been achieved since the last report to Cabinet in January 2021.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 **To approve a £3.0M budget for the expansion of Tilbury Pioneer Academy to be funded from the School's Basic Need capital funding 2022/23.**

- 1.2 To approve the commencement of the procurement process in accordance with Council & UK procurement procedures to appoint 1. A Design and multi discipline project Team, for the Tilbury Pioneer aspect of the School Capital Programme and 2. Following planning approval and the production of a full technical specification, undertake a further procurement exercise to appoint a Principal Contractor to take forward the proposed Tilbury Pioneer scheme.
- 1.3 That authority be delegated to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to enter into any form of agreement following the award of the agreements arising from 1.2 above in compliance with the Council's procurement regulations.
- 1.4 Note the recent in-year accommodation works that have been commenced in order to ensure sufficient pupil places for 2022/2023 in-year applications.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to take up a school place.

The 2022/23 school capital programme has progressed well and incorporated innovative partnership working, as well as utilising modern methods of construction to deliver the identified additional pupil places required.

- 2.2 The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few years we have seen a large increase in 'in year' admissions from families moving into Thurrock. In the academic year 2021/22 (September to July), 1846 children moved into Thurrock. At the time of writing this report, 604 more children moved into Thurrock between September and December 2022. We are not seeing a decrease in the demand for school places, the level of demand continues to be unprecedented. To be in a position to accommodate this demand, we are building in additional places to support in-year growth across a number of year groups where it has been identified that we do not have sufficient school places.

3. Tilbury Pioneer Academy

- 3.1 Despite the recent expansions of the early years provision at Lansdowne Primary School in 2016/7, and a one form entry expansion at Woodside Academy in 2015/16 which created a total additional 240 places within the Tilbury planning area of the borough, following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is now educational need for further primary school places in the Tilbury area.

- 3.2 The report presented to cabinet on 13th January 2021 stated that a feasibility study had commenced at Tilbury Pioneer Primary Academy to identify whether an expansion of the school would be possible, with a view to addressing the shortage of places from September 2023.
- 3.3 Following completion of scoping and feasibility studies, the proposal upon Tilbury Pioneer Primary Academy is to firstly apply to planning to retain the west wing of the old 'Tilbury Manor' building, then if successful, undertake a full internal & external refurbishment of this structure in order to provide an additional 2 classrooms each in excess of 56 m², 8 classrooms each in excess of 47 m², a school hall of 166 m², a new separate entrance lobby with reception office, and back office new WC's including 1 x accessible , a remodelled caretakers office, and 2 no. cleaners cupboards, 1 staff kitchen and 5 no. classroom storage areas. Upon on the 1st floor, 1 new staff room and 1 no. meeting room. Upon completion, Tilbury Pioneer will have capacity to increase from a 2 FE to 3 FE primary School with integral higher needs autism base.
- 3.4 An estimated budget of £3.0M is required to cover both an architect led multi-disciplinary design team responsible for providing specialist services needed to oversee the detailed and technical design for the expansion project, and a Principal Building Contractor for its construction phase.
- 3.5 A JCT consultancy agreement and a separate JCT Standard Building contract both competitively procured and evaluated on both quality and price will provide opportunities for maintaining quality and value for money. This approach will give the Council the added control over design and output specification as well as maintaining control over project costs and variations.
- 3.6 In advance of these procurements, small value individual contracts are being utilised for the carrying out of topographical surveys, transport assessments, and environmental impact assessments, these will be to an increased level of detail for this scheme given that the proposal sites within the Green belt, and also Flood zone 3.

4. Abbots Hall Primary Academy Expansion Update

- 4.1 In summary, the project when completed will seek to expand the existing school by half an FE to accommodate 2 full forms entry ready for the start of the September 2023 academic year. In addition to providing the 2 additional class bases and ancillary facilities, the scheme will look to include an infill extension to the existing school quadrant to provide an enlarged IT suite and library, as well as an extension to create a new nurture room with dedicated outdoor space, link corridor and additional WC's.

Works commenced in Marc 2022, and the first 2 phases have already completed, and been handed back to the school for immediate use. The final phase of the project which comprises a new 2-story teaching block extension is due to be handed over in early March 2023.

5. Further in-year accommodation works

- 5.1 Due to an ongoing challenge of available school places within the Ockendon/Aveley areas, internal remodelling, to create additional class bases at Dilkes Primary has commenced. This involves internal remodelling to convert a large circulation space, and oversized ICT suite into 2 no. standard classrooms with a new corridor leading to emergency exits. The existing ICT suite is being reduced in size and relocated to another area within the school. When completed, these alterations will result in an additional 30 primary school places. The cost of undertaking the above alterations is £94,730 this figure per head (£3,157.66) is significantly lower than the published Department for Education cost per pupil place which is £18,007. In addition, by creating these additional places, prevents pupils being transported to the next nearest school with available places at the cost to the council.

The anticipated completion date for this project is February 2023.

6. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 6.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the Local authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.
- 6.2 Upon the Tilbury Pioneer site, several development options were considered, a copy of the briefing note dated 7th September 2022 is appended to this report and provides an overview of the 4 options. All four options carry a degree of planning risk due to the location of the Pioneer site within both the Green Belt, as well as Flood Zone 3. The decision to pursue option 4 (Refurbishment) is primarily driven by the projected reduced cost, coupled with the much shorter construction phase duration.
- 6.3 Both the JCT Consultancy agreement, and the JCT Standard form of contract, will fall below the UK government's Find a Tender Service (FTS) thresholds, and are therefore not subject to a fully published procurement process.
- 6.4 Following Cabinet approval, it will be possible for the commencement of a sub-FTS single stage procurement exercise for the appointment of the Design and multi discipline project team. A copy of the signed Stage 1 document (REF: PS/2023/006) already approved by Strategic Approvals Panel is appended, this document also contains a draft timeline.
- 6.5 Additionally appended is a copy of the signed Stage 1 document (REF: PS/2023/009) already approved by Strategic Approvals Panel for the undertaking of a procurement exercise to appoint a Principal Contractor. As with the above, this will be conducted as a Sub-FTS traditional single stage exercise and will only proceed on the basis that planning consent is approved.

7. Reasons for recommendations

7.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the Local Authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.

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

8.1 This report is due to be considered by the Children’s Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 14th March 2023.

8.2 The principle has been agreed with schools and any detailed build content will be agreed with the relevant schools. Consultation will continue with each school and key stakeholder, as each scheme and schedule of works evolves within the programme.

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

9.1 The award of these JCT Construction and design contracts will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006.

9.2 The improvement of the educational assets is linked to key corporate priorities:

Priority	Delivered by
People	Improve health and wellbeing through improvements in the quality of the learning environment and opportunities provided
Place	Creating a great place for learning and opportunity by improving the education assets within the borough.
Prosperity	Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity through the provision of local employment and training opportunities.

10 Implications

10.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry,**
Senior Financial Accountant

Additional accommodation, necessary to meet the statutory requirement to provide places for the increasing pupil numbers, will be funded from the DfE capital basic needs grant held for Education provision. Once in-depth feasibility and design studies have been completed, funding requirements will be quantified and confirmed.

There is £15.25m unallocated basic need grant which will be used to fund £3m for the works identified within this report. However, given the financial challenges which face the authority the works must be maintained within this budget and there can be no scope for overspend.

The funds identified are ringfenced and are required to be used in the delivery of our statutory function of sufficiency of pupil numbers.

10.2 Legal

Implications verified by:

Daniel Longe

**Principal Solicitor for Education on behalf
of Thurrock Council**

Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 imposes a specific duty on local authorities to secure within their area that there is efficient primary education, secondary education and further education available to meet the needs of the population of their area. This is an absolute duty that is imposed by statute.

There are additional duties that flow from this such as duties under section 88 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which imposes the duty to set school admissions numbers for each school year as well as Regulation 4 of the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which sets a limit of 30 pupils to one teacher in all infant classes. These duties mean that local authorities must take care to ensure that there are adequate school provisions within their area to meet these duties.

Therefore, Thurrock Council is under an obligation to ensure that there are available school places for children that live in its area and wish to access education in the area. Accordingly, the proposal set out herein is in line with the positive statutory duty to ensure that the demand for school places is met on an ongoing basis.

10.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by:

Roxanne Scanlon,

**Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer**

Whilst there are no direct diversity and equality implications, the provision of these services will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion. The procurement process will follow responsibilities as set out within The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, with due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The procurement approach set out in this report will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006, to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one, whilst ensuring value for money.

11. Background papers used in preparing the report

Cabinet report 13 January 2021 – Approval to increase scope of the Schools Capital Programme.

12. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Huggins Bromage Ferguson Feasibility Study dated: 07/07/2022
- Appendix 2: Tilbury Pioneer Expansion Options - Briefing Note
- Appendix 3: Stage 1 Form - Approval to Proceed to Tender PS_2023_006 - Tilbury Pioneer Architect (part 1) – signed
- Appendix 4: Stage 1 Form - Approval to Proceed to Tender PS_2023_009 - Tilbury Pioneer Contractor (part 1) - signed

Report Author

Sarah Williams

Children's Services

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REFURBISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS, TILBURY MANOR JUNIOR SCHOOL/ TILBURY PIONEER ACADEMY, 43 DICKENS AVE, TILBURY RM18 8HJ

APPROXIMATE COSTING

Approximate costing calculation based on building floor area using SPONS Price Book rates.

Existing building floor area (Less demolished sections)

Gross floor area = 1062 m²

SPONS rate £1350 per m²

1062 x 1350 = **£1,433,700**

Say £1.435 million

As a cross-check on the 'Approximate' costs for the refurbishment works, we have also calculated more detailed building cost for building elements.

ELEMENTAL COSTING

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
1.	Cut out and replace damaged timber superstructure	£50,000.00
2.	Under-pinning/ remedial works to minor subsidence/ settlement	£200,000.00
3.	Remove existing timber cladding and replace with new felt, battens and Hardie-plank cladding 500 m ²	£200,000.00
4.	Repair/ replace external windows and doors	£100,000.00
5.	Replace PVC window surrounds. Remove existing 100m ²	£6,500.00
6.	New carpet and vinyl flooring	£60,000.00
7.	Repair Drainage, replace sanitaryware and cubicles	£50,000.00
8.	New classroom joinery 6 no @ £4k	£24,000.00
9.	Flat Roof, replace and insulate. Corridors and changing block 163m ²	£16,300.00
10.	Pitched Roof repairs, renew valleys, gutters, downpipes etc	£60,000.00
11.	External works; repairs to tarmac. New Play area.	£100,000.00
12.	LED lighting to all areas	£80,000.00

13.	Ceiling- suspended 1000 m ² x £780/m ² =	£70,000.00
14.	Electrics, Dado and additional sockets to classrooms	£80,000.00
15.	Data cable upgrades	£40,000.00
16.	Asbestos removal	£100,000.00
17.	Fire stopping	£20,000.00
18.	DDA improvement, DDA toilet, door widening etc.	£15,000.00
19.	New fire doors; 24 x £400	£9,600.00
20.	Replace glazing to internal corridor windows	£20,000.00
21.	Works to mitigate Legionella risks	£10,000.00
22.	Works to distribution boards	£5,000.00
23.	Works to main switch-gear	£20,000.00
SUB-TOTAL		£1,333,400.00

Elemental cost: £1,333,400.00

Contractors profit and overhead 10% of £133,400.00 = **£1,466,740.00**

NOTES

Costs exclude contingency (5% = £72,500), planning & building regulation application fees and professional fees

INFLATED COSTS

Building material and labour costs have been escalating significantly over the last 2 to three years. The Covid pandemic and more recent Ukraine/ Russia conflict have resulted in persistent material shortages, cost increases and labour shortages and increased labour costs.

ESTIMATED COST

The above approximate costing and Elemental costing give similar cost. **We estimate** the building cost to be **£1.55 Million (including client contingency)**

Factoring in increasing material and labour cost, which we estimate will increase by 20% in the next year to 18 months....

Calculated building cost of £1,550,000.00 x 20 % = £310,000.00

£1,555,000.00 + £310,00.00 = £1,865,000.00.

We estimate costs in the range of between £1.55 million to £1.9 million pounds.

Tilbury Pioneer Expansion Options – Briefing Note – Appendix 2

07/09/2022

In late February 2021, Thurrock Council commissioned Alderton Associates to undertake a feasibility study for the potential 1 form-entry expansion of Tilbury Pioneer Academy. The brief was to provide a report into options for an expansion that would seek to provide additional teaching space for 210 pupils only.

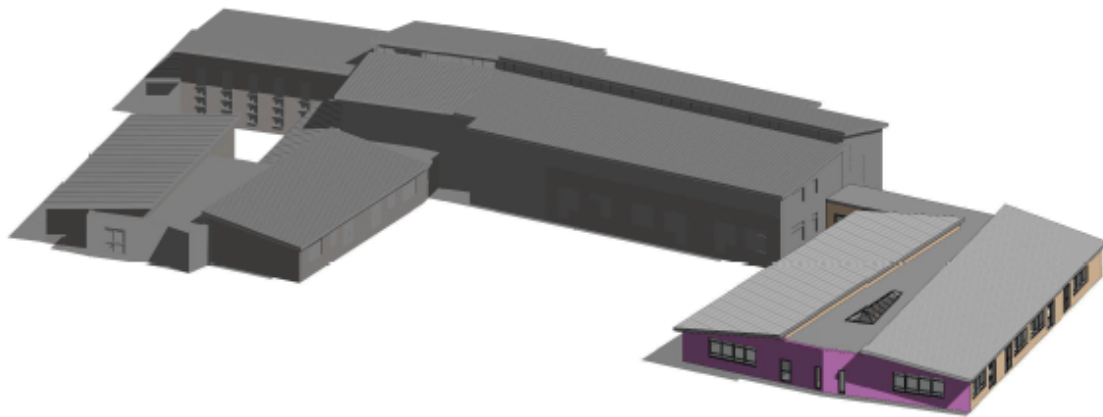
Appended to this note is a copy of the completed feasibility report, along with feasibility sketch drawings for the 3 options provided.

Option 1 is for the construction of a new teaching block to the rear of the site (north of the existing two-storey block). This option proposes to construct a single-storey teaching block comprising 8nr. New classrooms with shared breakout space, unisex pupil WCs, Accessible WC, office and a corridor link to the existing two-storey teaching block. All classrooms would be provided with access to external play areas and sports fields with lobbied entrances including coat and bag storage.

All circulation and teaching areas will be carpeted and have an area of vinyl around a sink and base units (and in WCs). The classrooms and circulation spaces would have suspended ceilings with provision for LED lighting, small power and IT equipment, all internal walls would meet the required Fire and Acoustic standards for schools and would be fully decorated on completion. External windows and doors would be aluminium framed, double-glazed units with solar controlled glazing.

The block easily links to existing walkways within the school and provides a holistic approach to the development of the school. These proposals would require planning approval but due to the position within the site, overall building height and the impact on neighbouring residential areas, the planning risk is considered to be low, and would be unlikely to receive any adverse comments.

At the time of the report, the option was costed at £1,827,500.00 although with the steep increases in costs experienced over the last 20 months, when applying a CPI linked increase, this is now more likely to be in the region of £2,120,730.00 and within the next 12 months projected to increase to approx. £2,438,839.00.



PROPOSED ISO VIEW

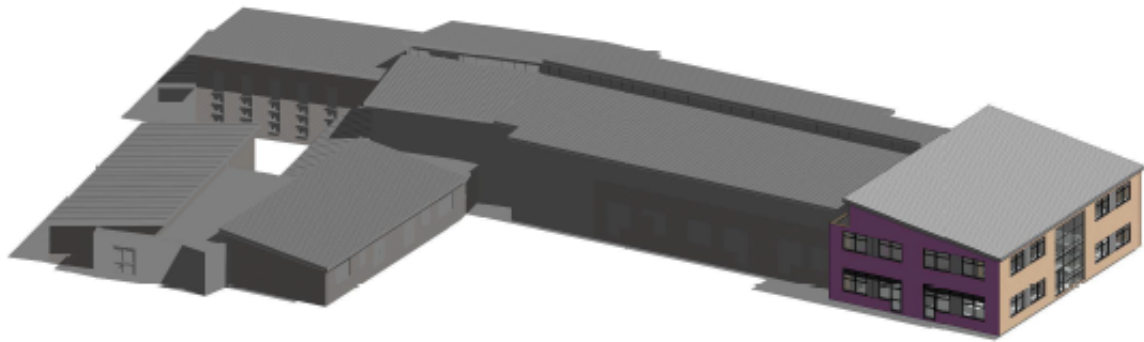
Option 2 also looks to utilise the available space at the rear of the site, with a view to constructing a new two-storey teaching block comprising 8nr. Classrooms for use by the upper years (Years 4,5 and 6) plus WCs, stairs, lift and circulation spaces.

The proposed location provides a link to the existing school at both ground and first floor levels to aid general circulation to and from the new classrooms. The 4nr. classrooms situated on the ground floor will be provided with direct external access to the playground and playing fields.

With construction costs based on a steel frame and masonry construction with suspended concrete plank (block and beam) floor construction on each floor, the building has been designed sympathetically to be in-keeping with the adjacent buildings. The proposal would be to have the same level of finish and provision in terms of power, lighting and IT facilities and all would be designed in accordance with the space standards set out in Building Bulletin 103 and current Building Regulations.

This option would also require planning permission, although it is a two-storey construction it is very much in keeping with the existing buildings in terms of scale and design and is therefore felt to carry a relatively low planning risk. As with previous development on the site, mitigation to flood risk will form a key part of the planning application.

At the time of the report, the option was costed at £1,496,400.00 although with the steep increases in costs experienced over the last 20 months, when applying a CPI linked increase, this is now more likely to be in the region of £1,736,504 and within the next 12 months projected to increase to approx. £1,997,078.00



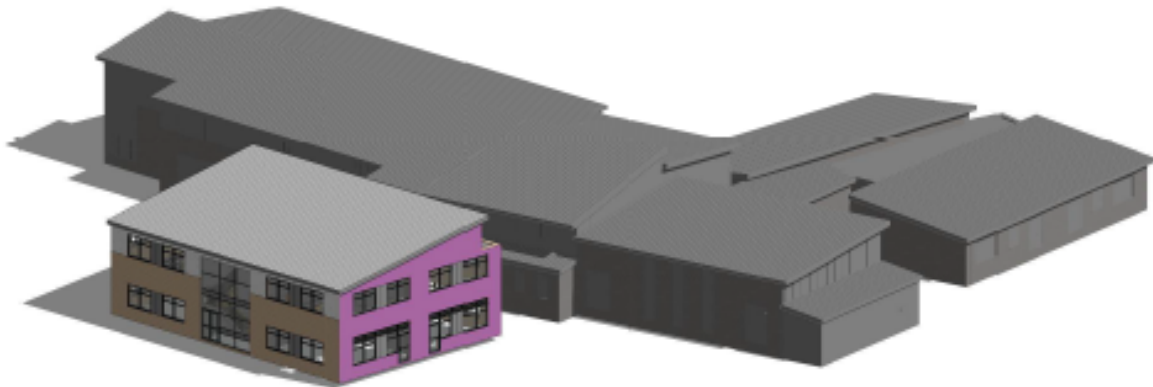
Option 3 proposes a similar two-storey teaching block to Option 2, although an alternative location has been proposed. The intention is to situate the block towards the front of the school site, where one of the bunds are currently located. Although this would require additional groundworks and a slight increase in overall project cost, the location offers a number of benefits due to its close proximity to the main hub of the school comprising the entrance/reception, kitchen, hall and other key ancillary services. This would improve the general circulation of pupils around the school and

reduce the interaction between pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 and the Early Years pupils currently situated in the recently opened two-storey block.

The new teaching block will comprise 8nr. classrooms for use by the upper years (Years 4,5 and 6) plus WCs, stairs, lift and circulation spaces.

A similar method of construction is proposed (steel frame and masonry construction with suspended block and beam floor construction on each floor) to ensure good value for money and a robust construction meeting all requirements for Fire, Acoustic and Thermal performance in accordance with the relevant Building Bulletins and current Building Regulations.

At the time of the report, the option was costed at £1,583,400.00 although with the steep increases in costs experienced over the last 20 months, when applying a CPI linked increase, this is now more likely to be in the region of £1,837,463.00 and within the next 12 months projected to increase to approx. £2,115,920.00



Option 4 (Refurbishment of the old Tilbury Manor Building)

Following high level discussions between the CEO of GLC Academy Trust and the LA's ESS Strategic Lead regarding a further possible option to appraise, Thurrock Council commissioned Huggins Bromage Ferguson Architects to work up a costed proposal for the complete refurbishment of the remaining northern and western wings of the former Tilbury Manor building. This building as existing comprises of the following spaces.

- 2 x classrooms of 56 Sqm.
- 5 x classrooms of 47 Sqm.
- 1 x Hall of 166 Sqm.
- 1 x Separate entrance lobby with reception office and back office.
- 1 x Female WC
- 1 x Male WC
- 1 x Accessible WC
- 1 x Caretakers Office
- 2 x Cleaners Cupboards
- 1 x Kitchen (Staff)
- 5 x Storerooms (Separated from Classrooms)
- 1 x 1st floor Staff Room
- 1 x 1st Floor Meeting Room

Estimated costs are as follows: £1,550,000 at present although as with the other options above, when applying an inflationary value this rises to £1,900,000

This option does carry a greater planning risk however, details are as follows:
When the GLC applied for planning consent in 2018 for the new teaching block, the title of the application was:

20/01339/FUL | Two storey primary teaching block along with associated landscaping, hardstanding, new main entrance, site facilities and phased demolition of the existing junior block and associated earthworks and reinstatement (resubmission of 18/01104/FUL)

The application was approved in January 2021 and the decision notice states that in regard to the phased demolition of the former junior block:

The eastern and northern portions of the existing Junior Block on the site shall be demolished and the resulting material removed from the site. The West wing is permitted to remain in occupation until 30th September 2024 after which it shall be demolished and resulting materials removed from site. Reason: The development has only been approved on the basis that the building hereby approved is a replacement building in the Green Belt in accordance with policy PMD6 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

HBF have enquired with planners whether this obligation could be varied or removed by way of a Section 73 application but received a negative response due to a precedent set from a former application.

Ultimately, the only clean way around this planning obligation would be for the School's Architect to re-apply for planning consent for the new school without seeking demolition of the old block, and there is no guarantee that this would be approved due to the green Belt issue.

Author

Graeme Parker

Senior School Capital Programme Manager

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STAGE 1 FORM - APPROVAL TO PROCEED TO TENDER

Following the introduction of new Spend Control Processes, this form must be completed for all procurements above £25,000. If contract value is over Cabinet approval threshold (£500,000) this form shall be appended to the Cabinet report - this form will be "open" for publication.

Once completed, this form must be sent to the relevant Category Manager.

1.	CONTRACT DETAILS		
1.1	Contract title	Architect led Multi Discipline design team for the 1 Form of Entry Expansion of Tilbury Pioneer School	
1.2	Reference number	PS/2023/006	
1.3	Responsible Officer	Graeme Parker	
1.4	Directorate	Children's Services	
1.5	Contract description	Services	
1.6	Applicability of off pay-roll working (IR35) rules*	Is this an applicable contract?	No
		Employment status for tax**	N/a
1.7	Proposed contract start	30/06/2023	
1.8	Proposed contract end	31/12/2024	
1.9	Proposed extension options	Only in line with agreed JCT terms and conditions	
1.10	Estimated contract value	Excluding VAT	£175,000.00
		Including VAT ¹	£207,600.00.00
2.	BUSINESS CASE		

¹ Required solely to determine whether the contract value exceeds the UK public procurement threshold (which includes VAT)

2.1	Business case	<p>The council's school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess the potential likely demand for school places this forms part of the council's statutory duties around pupil place planning.</p> <p>The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few years we have seen a large increase of 'in year' admissions from families moving into the Authority. In 2021/22, 504 children moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and 1342 pupils from elsewhere within the UK. For the first 3 months of this year, 217 more children have moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and there have been 387 new arrivals from within the UK.</p> <p>We are currently not seeing a decrease in the demand, the level of demand has and continues to be unprecedented. To be in a position to accommodate this demand, we are building in additional places to support in-year growth across a number of year groups where it has been identified that we do not have sufficient school places.</p> <p>Despite the recent expansions of the early years provision at Lansdowne Primary School in 2016/7, and a one form entry expansion at Woodside Academy in 2015/16 which created a total additional 240 places within the Tilbury planning area of the borough, following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is now educational need for further primary school places in the Tilbury area of the Borough.</p> <p>There is political sensitivity as the procurement and appointment of a multi-discipline design team is critical to the delivery of the expansion project and the implication of not undertaking this procurement is that the Council will be unable to comply with its legal duty under section 13 of the Education Act as described at greater length in section 2.3 of this document.</p>
2.2	Expenditure control criteria	The spend is for essential statutory services, goods and/or works
2.3	Expenditure control justification	<p>Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 imposes a specific duty on local authorities to ensure within their area that there is efficient primary education, secondary education and further education available to meet the needs of the population of their area. This is an absolute duty that is imposed by statute.</p> <p>There are additional duties that flow from this such as duties under section 88 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which imposes the duty to set school admissions numbers for each school year as well as Regulation 4 of the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which sets a limit of 30 pupils to one teacher in all infant classes. These duties mean that local authorities must take care to ensure that there are adequate school provisions within their area to meet these duties.</p> <p>Therefore, Thurrock Council is under an obligation to ensure that there are available school places for children that live in its area and wish to access education in the area. Accordingly, the proposal set out herein is in line with the positive statutory duty to ensure that the demand for school places is met on an ongoing basis.</p>
2.4	Award criteria	Most Economically Advantageous Tender 60% Price x 40% Quality

2.5	Social Value	<p>Unfortunately, not only are children negatively affected by not being educated, but the negative affects often reverberate through society. Improving the quality of the education environment of children and young adults is one step that can be taken to improve a society both economically and socially.</p> <p>The proposed award criteria allows for 40% of the overall score to be judged upon the bidders responses to the quality evaluation questionnaire, and specific questions are contained within this part of the tender pack relating to bidders Social value initiatives.</p>
2.6	Previous contract	N/A

3.	FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
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3.1	Previous contract spend	N/A
3.2	Scope of changes	N/A
3.3	Budget considerations	<p>The proposed expansion of Tilbury Pioneer will be funded from a combination of the DfE capital basic needs grant and Section 106 monies held for Primary & Secondary Education provision. There are sufficient funds available within the schools DfE basic need grant, for the works identified within this report.</p>
3.4	Expenditure type	Capital
3.5	Cost centre	B0998
3.6	Anticipated savings	<p>Early stage feasibility studies have already been undertaken to evaluate the relative advantages and disadvantages of multiple options to achieve the desired goal at Tilbury Pioneer. It has been firmly established that there are considerable savings to be realised by choosing the refurbishment of the old building option rather than any of the three new build options that were proposed. These savings are not purely financial, but also in terms of project duration.</p>

4.	PROCUREMENT ROUTE	
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4.1	Procurement route	Other (specify in Rationale below)
4.2	Rationale	<p>As the total contract value is under the current UK threshold for services, a closed invite-only Request for Quotation process will be undertaken to a minimum of 6 organisations thus making evaluation manageable given the limited resources available and time will be saved by utilising suppliers already registered on the Council's e-tendering and purchase systems.</p>

5.	PROPOSED PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE		
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5.1	Procurement timetable	Publish Contract Notice	N/A
		Selection Questionnaire return	N/A
		Invitation to Tender issue	31/03/2023
		Tender return	28/04/2023
		Notification of result	19/05/2023
		Standstill period	02/06/2023
		Expected award	16/06/2023

		Contract commencement	30/06/2023
6.	RISKS, CONSULTATION AND MANAGEMENT		
6.1	Risk management	A copy of the project Risk Register is appended.	
6.2	Contingency	A number of temporary solutions can be arranged at short notice to ensure that sufficient pupil places are available. These have previously taken the form of relocatable classrooms, and remodelling works to redundant rooms to form new teaching spaces.	
6.3	Consultation	Full consultation will be carried out with all stakeholders at detailed design stage, supported by relevant communication plans.	
6.4	Data Protection**	Neither the successful architect or contractor will process any personal data so N/a	
6.5	Project and contract management ²	Tier 3 - Low Level Contract Management	
		There will be established contract management and monitoring arrangements in place as with all schemes undertaken as part of the schools capital programme, Project management will follow the RIBA plan of work 2020 which is the standard protocol for construction projects. Documents will be kept in accordance with the councils document retention policy. Legal Services will retain the original signed copy of the contract and both Procurement & Childrens Services will retain a digital copy of that document. At procurement stage, the Senior Schools Capital Programme Manager will work Closely with the designated Category Manager to produce the tender pack, drawings, preliminaries and technical specification, Legal services will be engaged to provide a draft copy of the relevant JCT contract complete with Thurrock Council amendments. During the tender period all clarification requests will be responded to in a timely manner. Post award, the Schhols Capital programme manager will work closely with the appointed Architect to regularly monitor project costs, issue CAI's, monitor KPI's, interrogate and process monthly valuations and oversee regular monthly progress meetings will all parties including representatives from the end client. A full budget review is undertaken at handover stage, with final accounts formally agreed. The architect will oversee the managing of the defects rectification period as part of the scope of their works. Throughout the duration of the project from initial mandate to the release of retentions, monthly progress reports are submitted to the Education Support Services Strategic Lead for further circulation.	
6.6	Will TUPE apply to the proposed contract?	No	
		N/a	
6.7	Community and Equalities Impact Assessment****	N/a for this project. The provision of these services will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion. The procurement process will follow responsibilities as set out within The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, with due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	
6.8	Exit strategy	N/a – there is no existing contract to exit.	

² Refer to the contract management framework or your category manager for guidance

6.9	Collaboration	Interdepartmental collaboration will occur throughout the project, at Procurement Stage collaboration takes place with Corporate Finance, Legal Services, Community Development & Equalities, in addition to the Procurement Team. At Planning Stage, the contract will allow for collaboration with Planning and any other internal statutory consultee's such as Highways. The construction phase will see collaboration with Building Control, as well as Planners and Finance.
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7.	APPROVALS				
7.1	Strategic Approval Panel	Decision	Approved	Yes	Rejected
		Signed	<u>Marie Ogles</u> <small>Marie Ogles (Jan 30, 2023 11:22 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
		Comments	on behalf of SAP		
7.2	Procurement (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Procurement implications			
		Name	Sarah Hurlock		
		Signed	<u>Sarah Hurlock</u> <small>Sarah Hurlock (Jan 30, 2023 11:41 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
7.3	Legal (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Legal implications			
		Name	Kevin Molloy		
		Signed	<u>Kevin Molloy</u> <small>Kevin Molloy (Jan 30, 2023 16:54 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
7.4	Finance (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Financial implications			
		Name	David May		
		Signed	<u>D May</u> <small>D May (Jan 31, 2023 09:36 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 31, 2023		
7.5	Responsible Officer	I confirm that this procurement will be carried out in accordance with Rule 5 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (Chapter 9, Part 2 of the Constitution).			
		Name	Graeme Parker		
		Signed	<u>G. Parker</u> <small>G. Parker (Feb 1, 2023 08:55 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Feb 1, 2023		
7.6	Authorised Signatory	In accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, I confirm the accuracy of the information contained within this form and authorise this request to proceed to tender.			
		Delegation level	Cabinet delegated authority to Corporate Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (over £750,000)		

		Name	Sheila Murphy
		Signed	<i>sheila murphy</i> <small>sheila.murphy (Feb 1, 2023 10:01 GMT)</small>
		Date	Feb 1, 2023
7.7	Cabinet (only applicable if £750k or over)	Minute number	Click here to enter text.
		Date	

*Guidance on the rules surrounding contractor employment status for tax can be found on the below link:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-off-payroll-working-ir35>

**The Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool can be found on the below link:
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***Information on Data Protection and the DPIA form can be found on the following link:
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/services/information-management/data-protection/>

****You can search for Community and Equalities Impact Assessment guidance using the following link:
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/document-store/>

STAGE 1 FORM - APPROVAL TO PROCEED TO TENDER

Following the introduction of new Spend Control Processes, this form must be completed for all procurements above £25,000. If contract value is over Cabinet approval threshold (£500,000) this form shall be appended to the Cabinet report - this form will be "open" for publication.

Once completed, this form must be sent to the relevant Category Manager.

1.	CONTRACT DETAILS		
1.1	Contract title	Principal Contractor for the 1 Form of Entry Expansion of Tilbury Pioneer School	
1.2	Reference number	PS/2023/009	
1.3	Responsible Officer	Graeme Parker	
1.4	Directorate	Children's Services	
1.5	Contract description	Works	
1.6	Applicability of off pay-roll working (IR35) rules*	Is this an applicable contract?	No
		Employment status for tax**	N/a
1.7	Proposed contract start	17/10/2023	
1.8	Proposed contract end	31/12/2024	
1.9	Proposed extension options	Only in line with agreed JCT terms and conditions	
1.10	Estimated contract value	Excluding VAT	£2,300,000.00
		Including VAT ¹	£2,760,000.00
2.	BUSINESS CASE		

¹ Required solely to determine whether the contract value exceeds the UK public procurement threshold (which includes VAT)

2.1	Business case	<p>The council's school capital programme is developed following extensive pupil place planning to assess the potential likely demand for school places this forms part of the council's statutory duties around pupil place planning.</p> <p>The demand for pupil places has increased significantly, over the last few years we have seen a large increase of 'in year' admissions from families moving into the Authority. In 2021/22, 504 children moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and 1342 pupils from elsewhere within the UK. For the first 3 months of this year, 217 more children have moved into Thurrock from outside of the UK, and there have been 387 new arrivals from within the UK.</p> <p>We are currently not seeing a decrease in the demand, the level of demand has and continues to be unprecedented. To be in a position to accommodate this demand, we are building in additional places to support in-year growth across a number of year groups where it has been identified that we do not have sufficient school places.</p> <p>Despite the recent expansions of the early years provision at Lansdowne Primary School in 2016/7, and a one form entry expansion at Woodside Academy in 2015/16 which created a total additional 240 places within the Tilbury planning area of the borough, following the annual review of forecasts for pupil places and the large increase being experienced with regards in-year admissions there is now educational need for further primary school places in the Tilbury area of the Borough.</p> <p>There is political sensitivity as the procurement and appointment of a Principal Contractor is critical to the delivery of the expansion project and the implication of not undertaking this procurement is that the Council will be unable to comply with its legal duty under section 13 of the Education Act as described at greater length in section 2.3 of this document.</p>
2.2	Expenditure control criteria	The spend is for essential statutory services, goods and/or works
2.3	Expenditure control justification	<p>Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 imposes a specific duty on local authorities to ensure within their area that there is efficient primary education, secondary education and further education available to meet the needs of the population of their area. This is an absolute duty that is imposed by statute.</p> <p>There are additional duties that flow from this such as duties under section 88 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which imposes the duty to set school admissions numbers for each school year as well as Regulation 4 of the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which sets a limit of 30 pupils to one teacher in all infant classes. These duties mean that local authorities must take care to ensure that there are adequate school provisions within their area to meet these duties.</p> <p>Therefore, Thurrock Council is under an obligation to ensure that there are available school places for children that live in its area and wish to access education in the area. Accordingly, the proposal set out herein is in line with the positive statutory duty to ensure that the demand for school places is met on an ongoing basis.</p>
2.4	Award criteria	Most Economically Advantageous Tender 60% Price x 40% Quality

2.5	Social Value	<p>Unfortunately, not only are children negatively affected by not being educated, but the negative affects often reverberate through society. Improving the quality of the education environment of children and young adults is one step that can be taken to improve a society both economically and socially.</p> <p>The proposed award criteria allows for 40% of the overall score to be judged upon the bidders responses to the quality evaluation questionnaire, and specific questions are contained within this part of the tender pack relating to bidders Social value initiatives.</p>
2.6	Previous contract	N/A

3.	FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
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3.1	Previous contract spend	N/A
3.2	Scope of changes	N/A
3.3	Budget considerations	<p>The proposed expansion of Tilbury Pioneer will be funded from a combination of the DfE capital basic needs grant and Section 106 monies held for Primary & Secondary Education provision. There are sufficient funds available within the schools DfE basic need grant, for the works identified within this report.</p>
3.4	Expenditure type	Capital
3.5	Cost centre	B0998
3.6	Anticipated savings	<p>Early stage feasibility studies have already been undertaken to evaluate the relative advantages and disadvantages of multiple options to achieve the desired goal at Tilbury Pioneer. It has been firmly established that there are considerable savings to be realised by choosing the refurbishment of the old building option rather than any of the three new build options that were proposed. These savings are not purely financial, but also in terms of project duration.</p>

4.	PROCUREMENT ROUTE	
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4.1	Procurement route	Other (specify in Rationale below)
4.2	Rationale	<p>As the total contract value is under the current UK threshold for works, a closed invite-only Request for Quotation process will be undertaken to a minimum of 6 organisations thus making evaluation manageable given the limited resources available and time will be saved by utilising suppliers already registered on the Council's e-tendering and purchase systems.</p>

5.	PROPOSED PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE		
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5.1	Procurement timetable	Publish Contract Notice	N/A
		Selection Questionnaire return	N/A
		Invitation to Tender issue	31/07/2023
		Tender return	31/08/2023
		Notification of result	14/09/2023
		Standstill period	25/09/2023
		Expected award	02/10/2023
		Contract commencement	16/10/2023

6.	RISKS, CONSULTATION AND MANAGEMENT	
6.1	Risk management	A copy of the project Risk Register is appended.
6.2	Contingency	A number of temporary solutions can be arranged at short notice to ensure that sufficient pupil places are available. These have previously taken the form of relocatable classrooms, and remodelling works to redundant rooms to form new teaching spaces.
6.3	Consultation	Full consultation will be carried out with all stakeholders at detailed design stage, supported by relevant communication plans.
6.4	Data Protection**	Neither the successful architect or contractor will process any personal data so N/a
6.5	Project and contract management ²	Tier 4 - Light Touch Contract Management
		There will be established contract management and monitoring arrangements in place as with all schemes undertaken as part of the schools capital programme, Project management will follow the RIBA plan of work 2020 which is the standard protocol for construction projects. Documents will be kept in accordance with the councils document retention policy. Legal Services will retain the original signed copy of the contract and both Procurement & Childrens Services will retain a digital copy of that document. At procurement stage, the Senior Schools Capital Programme Manager will work Closely with the designated Category Manager to produce the tender pack, drawings, preliminaries and technical specification, Legal services will be engaged to provide a draft copy of the relevant JCT contract complete with Thurrock Council amendments. During the tender period all clarification requests will be responded to in a timely manner. Post award, the Schools Capital programme manager will work closely with the appointed Architect to regularly monitor project costs, issue CAI's, monitor KPI's, interrogate and process monthly valuations and oversee regular monthly progress meetings will all parties including representatives from the end client. A full budget review is undertaken at handover stage, with final accounts formally agreed. The architect will oversee the managing of the defects rectification period as part of the scope of their works. Throughout the duration of the project from initial mandate to the release of retentions, monthly progress reports are submitted to the Education Support Services Strategic Lead for further circulation.
6.6	Will TUPE apply to the proposed contract?	No
		N/a
6.7	Community and Equalities Impact Assessment****	N/a for this project. The provision of these services will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion. The procurement process will follow responsibilities as set out within The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, with due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
6.8	Exit strategy	N/a – there is no existing contract to exit.
6.9	Collaboration	Interdepartmental collaboration will occur throughout the project, at Procurement Stage collaboration takes place with Corporate Finance, Legal Services, Community Developmant & Equalities, in addition to the Procurement Team. At Planniing Stage, the contract will allow for collaboration with Planning and any other internal statutory consultee's such as Highways. The construction phase will see collaboration with Building Control, as well as Planners.and Finance.

² Refer to the contract management framework or your category manager for guidance

7.		APPROVALS			
7.1	Strategic Approval Panel	Decision	Approved	Yes	Rejected
		Signed	<u>Marie Ogles</u> <small>Marie Ogles (Jan 30, 2023 11:21 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
		Comments	on behalf of SAP		
7.2	Procurement (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Procurement implications			
		Name	Sarah Hurlock		
		Signed	<u>Sarah Hurlock</u> <small>Sarah Hurlock (Jan 30, 2023 11:42 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
7.3	Legal (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Legal implications			
		Name	Kevin Molloy		
		Signed	<u>Kevin Molloy</u> <small>Kevin Molloy (Jan 30, 2023 16:55 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 30, 2023		
7.4	Finance (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Financial implications			
		Name	David May		
		Signed	<u>D May</u> <small>D May (Jan 31, 2023 09:35 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Jan 31, 2023		
7.5	Responsible Officer	I confirm that this procurement will be carried out in accordance with Rule 5 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (Chapter 9, Part 2 of the Constitution).			
		Name	Graeme Parker		
		Signed	<u>G. Parker</u> <small>G.Parker (Feb 1, 2023 08:57 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Feb 1, 2023		
7.6	Authorised Signatory	In accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, I confirm the accuracy of the information contained within this form and authorise this request to proceed to tender.			
		Delegation level	Cabinet delegated authority to Corporate Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (over £750,000)		
		Name	Sheila Murphy		
		Signed	<u>sheila murphy</u> <small>sheila murphy (Feb 1, 2023 09:03 GMT)</small>		
		Date	Feb 1, 2023		
7.7	Cabinet	Minute number	Click here to enter text.		

	(only applicable if £750k or over)	Date	
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*Guidance on the rules surrounding contractor employment status for tax can be found on the below link:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-off-payroll-working-ir35>

**The Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool can be found on the below link:
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***Information on Data Protection and the DPIA form can be found on the following link:
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****You can search for Community and Equalities Impact Assessment guidance using the following link:
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/document-store/>

15 March 2023	ITEM: 16 Decision: 110648
Cabinet	
Children’s Transport – One Year Extension to the Current Framework 2023/2024	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor Barry Johnson, Cabinet Member for Education	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director – Children’s Services	
This report is: Public	

Executive Summary

The contracts for Children’s Transport provision, including home to school transport, are due to expire in July 2023 and therefore due to be renewed for the start of the academic year, September 2023. The continued provision of this transport is required as a part of the Council’s statutory requirements. The value of the contracts means that Cabinet approval to proceed is required.

This report proposes that all of the current contracts procured under the framework are extended for one year to allow time for the service to review options for a full re-procurement of the Childrens Transport for the start of the academic year 2024/2025 to ensure best value is achieved and allows for new transport operators to join during the contract period.

Members have the option to extend the contracts in compliance with Section 14 of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules. This must meet the conditions set out in Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This paper sets out how these will be met.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Cabinet agree that the Director of Children’s Services, in consultation with the Education Portfolio Holder is authorised to extend any transport contracts procured under the current framework, which expire in July 2023 for a one-year period.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The provision of home to school transport is governed by the Education Act 1996 and the Transport Act 1985. In addition, the provision of transport, in exceptional circumstances for children who are subject to Child in Need or Child Protection procedures is supported by the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Childcare Act 2004. This legislation is clear that other than in exceptional circumstances, parents are responsible for getting their children to school.
- 2.2 The current framework agreement (“the Framework Agreement”) originally awarded in 2019 is due to end in July 2023. All contracts procured under the framework agreement cover home to school transport and children’s social care transport. A framework is an overarching agreement between the council and transport operators and outlines the principles under which contracts can be placed. The framework is used to procure transport operators under individual routes and is a closed procurement whereby once awarded onto the framework no other operators can apply to join and can only be for a maximum period of four years with no option to extend other than under exceptional circumstances. This type of framework does not allow for new transport operators to join the framework during its lifecycle. When this framework was last procured in September 2019, there were set transport routes that were published and awarded to operators for a fixed price and over a period of four years, which was not sustainable for the operators given the price rises in fuel costs and cost of living. However, by extending for one year only, will give us the time needed to explore the best options for the re-procurement so that the new contracts would allow new operators to join at any point over the contract period increasing operator availability which is an issue under the current framework.
- 2.3 Current transport operators have been finding delivering routes sometimes difficult due to driver shortages and difficulties recruiting drivers. At the end of December 2022, two transport operators delivering school transport gave notice to the council to cease delivering those routes, which then had to be re-tendered and costs for the transport increased.
- 2.4 Due to the current value of this contract and in line with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules, this report seeks Cabinet approval for the extension of the current framework.
- 2.5 The Council currently has contracts in place for a total of 140 routes covering the full spectrum of primary, secondary, and special Children’s Transport provision. This currently affects 1000 pupils. Transport is provided by coach, minibus, and taxi. Members should note that this is subject to change depending on demand.
- 2.6 In addition to the current transport contracts, Thurrock also provides transport provision in the form of travelling expenses where this represents best value.

- 2.7 The current contract value is approximately £4.5m per annum. This amount fluctuates due to changes in demand where the immediate implementation of additional route contracts is needed.

At the time of writing this report expenditure on these contracts under the current four-year framework agreement from September 2019 to date is £15,497,408 broken down as follows:

Contract Period	Cost £
September 2019 – August 2020	4,199,928.66
September 2020 – August 2021	4,631,607.48
September 2021 – August 2022	5,246,242.88
September 2022 – December 2022	1,419,630.77

- 2.8 There are two distinct areas of home to school transport:

- Mainstream schools - where for example distance / safety of a route to school require the Council to provide school transport. In such cases there is a statutory duty to offer transport.
- Special schools – A statutory duty to offer transport subject to the pupil meeting the relevant criteria.

- 2.9 There continues to be an ongoing transport review looking at a number of areas to ensure best value is achieved wherever possible in line with the adopted Home to School Transport policy and the statutory duties:

- Service transformation whereby school admissions and transport are in the process of being integrated to provide a better overview and ensure pupils are offered places at a more local school, therefore reducing transport costs
- Continual review of routes to ensure efficiencies realised, such as amalgamating SEN and mainstream students where possible
- Providing a fuel reimbursement to parents in the first instance as this is more cost effective and allows parents, should they wish to transport their student. This option also allows for a more comforting journey for the young person.
- Review of the Post 16 statement to make easier reading and understanding for parents.
- To continue understand demand and support future planning
- To review the assessment of transport awards and where this could be better joined up across services and directorates.
- To identify opportunities to better meet and commission transport requirements in a cost-effective way.

- 2.10 Officers have taken a phased approach to the review in order to minimise disruption caused by any changes, however, the following work has been undertaken to date:

- A review of the current policy was completed and approved by Cabinet in 2021 and published in advance of September 2021.
- A route optimisation exercise continues to be undertaken to ensure that the Council is obtaining good value from each route.
- A rolling, school by school programme to review the type of transport offered is in place, this will move to more cost effective public transport options where possible. These changes will, where appropriate, support children to develop independence through, for example, the increased use of Travel Training or through the implementation of central pick-up points in a local area.
- A review of transport currently provided due to 'unsafe routes' is reviewed each year to ensure these are still relevant so that where possible parents are able to make their own arrangements for their children's transport to school. The significant development of the Borough in recent years has meant that many roads and pavements have been developed and may now be safe.
- Improvements to how we offer Children's Social Care transport are in place and it is proposed that any planned procurement is suitably flexible to incorporate social care requirements.

- 2.11 Members should note that there continues to be an increasing demand for Children's Transport particularly home to school transport due to unplaced pupils or children with special educational needs and /or disability being transported to out of borough placements. The current arrangements are being reviewed to ensure that all awards are in line with the current policy and that these are reviewed regularly to support independent travel where possible.
- 2.12 Members are asked to note that the rolling programme of service review will continue. This will ensure that the most effective and cost-efficient method of providing transport that is required within the current statutory duties is implemented.
- 2.13 The continual review will also ensure that the service adapts to meet changing needs to improve services and to encourage independent travel to school where possible.
- 2.14 Contracts and costs will be managed within the service along with a monthly review of budgets and forecast expenditure for the financial year. As part of the contract management process, termly meetings with transport operators will take place and key performance indicators measured in line with contract terms and conditions.
- 2.15 A further report will be presented in the autumn term 2023 to Children's Overview and Scrutiny and to Cabinet for the decision on the re-procurement of the Children's Transport provision after full options analysis has taken place.
- 2.16 An annual update report will be presented to Children's Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The current fixed framework does not allow new transport operators to join during the framework period, therefore restricting the flexibility and availability to provide transport for required routes. This option may have a longer-term financial impact due Consumer Price Inflation which was 10.1% in January 2023, if inflation does not return to previous lower levels before contracts are awarded. Negotiation will take place with transport operators to seek to agree to use Consumer Price Inflation as of 1st September 2023 (Inflationary rises will be written in the new re-procured contract to allow for these rising costs).

3.2 Option 1: Undertake a new fixed four-year framework tender to include 140 existing transport routes

The council has a statutory duty to provide transport for eligible pupils. By undertaking a new procurement exercise this will fix prices for a four-year period. However, due to the lack of drivers, transport operators have been left with no choice but to hand back routes where they are unable to continue to deliver transport due to staff shortages and recruitment issues. We have also seen an increase in route costs where new routes are tendered within the academic year, therefore, this option is not recommended for the new contract. We need to look at other procurement options that allows for new operators to join over the contract period which will increase choice and potentially make savings.

3.3 Option 2: Recommended option – extend all of the current contracts procured under the Framework Agreement for one year

This option will ensure that the council continues to meet its statutory duty to provide transport for the academic year 2023/24 by extending the current framework whilst ensuring dedicated time is given to reviewing options to undertake a full re-procurement for Children’s Transport.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The recommendation to extend the current framework to procure the Children’s Transport will ensure sufficient service and procurement resources are available to undertake a full re-procurement The current contracts for home to school transport expire in July 2023 and the ongoing service review is likely to include recommendations that will make material changes to the way the current routes and contracts are designed and provided. In order to adapt the home to school transport offer in the light of the review findings it is recommended that the current contracts be extended for one year. This will also ensure:

- The Council meets its statutory duties with regards to children’s transport.
- That the Councils Contract Procedure Rules are met
- That best value in providing the services is obtained

- 4.2 Extending all contracts procured under the Framework Agreement which commenced in 2019 will need to meet Public Contract Regulation 72 – Contract Modification for Contracts and Framework Agreements and 14.2 of the council’s contract procedure rules.

The relevant clause which the Council proposes to rely upon is Public Contracts Regulation 72(C) – where all of the following conditions will need to be fulfilled:

1. The need for modification has been brought about by circumstances which a diligent contract Authority could not have foreseen
2. The modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract
3. Any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract framework agreement

The above conditions apply in this situation for the following reasons:

1. There has been a major change in service responsibilities and contract management which previously sat within the department of Passenger Transport but has recently moved to Childrens Services. Therefore, a new service review is necessary which is likely to result in material changes to how the service is currently delivered, and which has delayed the re-procurement that was unforeseen.
2. The extension of the said contracts does not change the nature of the current framework agreement and the modification is to extend existing routes and allocate new routes as they required.
3. The spend per annum is around £4.5Million and we anticipate this to increase by 10% on most routes if we applied the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate. This would increase the annual spend by an additional £450,000, therefore, the extension value will be around £5Million, which is less than 50% of the total value of the contract. The original contract value was £20Million over the four years of the current framework. Each of the contracts extended will therefore have an increased spend no greater than 50% of its original contract value.

Under the Councils Contract Procedure Rules Section 14.2 any extension must be shown to be of exceptional need. These are:

1. Home to school transport is a statutory service and therefore the requirements thereof have to be considered
2. The S114 notice requires improved value for money to deliver the statutory function
3. The council has additional governance procedures following the issue of the S114 notice which have complicated the landscape for re-procurement within the very tight timescales the Council is now operating under.

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

5.1 This report will be considered by Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th March 2023.

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

6.1 This report impacts on the following corporate priorities:

- People: a place where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay;
- Place: a heritage rich Borough which is ambitious for its future;
- Prosperity: a Borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The provision of Home to School Transport is a statutory duty on the Local Authority, for those considered eligible, to facilitate their attendance at the relevant education establishment.

Children’s transport costs have a significant impact on Council Budgets. A one-year extension to the existing framework will provide time and capacity to determine the most efficient and effective long term way forward. This will support the S114 notice by securing improved value for money in expenditure required to deliver a statutory function.

The current financial year continues to see an increase in demand for transport, predominantly for children with Special Educational Needs. Consequently, cost pressures are being realised in the current financial year and are anticipated to continue across the medium term. The table below summarises the 2022/23 budget and projected outturn alongside the 2023/24 budget:

Home to School Transport	Budget 2022/23 (£'000)	Outturn 2022/23 (£'000)	Budget 2023/24 (£'000)
Hired Transport	4,479	4,950	5,708
Public Tickets	48	48	53
Personal Travel Budgets	167	168	176
Budget / Outturn	4,695	5,166	5,938
Dedicated Schools Grant	(1,600)	(1,600)	(1,600)
Net Budget / Outturn	3,095	3,566	4,338

The 2023/24 Medium Term Financial Strategy provides growth of £1.243m, recognising significant increases in Special Educational Needs and inflation.

There is significant risk when awarding the contract extensions as Consumer Price Inflation was 10.1% in January 2023. However, it also provides an opportunity to allow inflation to reduce over the 12-month period. The option to extend for 1 year should be agreed with providers at the CPI – September 2023 rate. This would ensure reductions in 2023 are reflected in the inflation rate to be applied.

Sensitivity analysis has been undertaken to assess the stressors in the assumptions that may mean that the budget envelope may be exceeded (£5.9m).

The table below summarises this:

Home to School Transport Sensitivity Analysis 2023/24	Contract cost (£'000)	2023/24 Budget (£'000)	Variance to budget (£'000)
Outturn 2022/23	5,166	5,938	(772)
Inflation at CPI (10.1%) - Applied from Sept-23	304	0	304
Cost base at 2022/23 pupil numbers	5,470	5,938	(468)
Increase Demand 5% and CPI Sept-23	5,744	5,938	(194)
Increase Demand 7.5% and CPI Sept-23	5,881	5,938	(57)
Increase Demand 10% and CPI Sept-23	6,017	5,938	79

The analysis has built in an assumption that there will be a 10.1% uplift in cost base due to general inflation (CPI September 2022). Anything over a combined further increase in cost due to pupil numbers 10% and further contract inflation over 10.1% would lead to the 2023/24 budget being exceeded.

In order to contain cost pressures whilst ensuring that Thurrock fulfils its statutory duty, the most economical and suitable method of transport should be selected, which includes travel allowances, use of the commercial bus network and hired transport. There does, however, remain a cost pressure risk in 2023/24 and beyond. Alternative funding opportunities and mitigations to the pressure may have to be sought by the service to contain it within the budget envelope should this risk materialise.

7.2 Legal

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

Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 which was inserted by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 sets out the general duties placed on

local authorities to make school travel arrangements as they consider necessary for eligible children within their area, to facilitate their attendance at the relevant educational establishment. Such arrangements must be provided free of charge.

Section 508A places a duty on local authorities in England to assess the school travel needs of all children and persons of sixth form age in their area and to assess and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.

Section 508C of the Act provides local authorities with discretionary powers to make school travel arrangements for other children not covered by section 508B but the transport does not have to be free and the local authority is entitled to charge for this.

Section 508D of the Act places a duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance to which local authorities have to have regard to in the performance of their functions under Section 508B (Travel arrangements for other children). The Secretary of State may revise the guidance from time to time. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 expressly states that the child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if the parent proves that the local authority fails to make appropriate transport arrangements to and from school under Section 508, however parents are responsible for their child's attendance at school and local authorities are under a duty to provide home to school transport, where necessary, to enable them to enforce attendance.

The above duties must be viewed against the backdrop of The Council's Chief Financial Officer having issued a section 114 Notice. The Council will need to review **its spending under the Framework Agreement contracts together with any proposed extensions thereof** to ensure that the Council is proactive in ensuring that its **expenditure** supports the financial recovery of the Council.

Members will need to consider carefully having weighed the arguments outlined in paragraph 4.2 above whether the extensions referred to have complied with the requirements of regulation 72 and clause 14.2 of the Council's procurement rules referred to above, as if a Court considers in the event of a challenge that these requirements have not been met then the Council may be judged by the Court to have extended unlawfully, and provide a range of remedies to the successful litigant at the Council's expense. Such an award may be significant in value depending upon the value of the contract(s) challenged.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**

**Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer**

The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services and employment. This means that the Council must ensure that all policies and local strategies promote the inclusion of all groups and equality of opportunity. Any tendering process will be designed with these duties in mind.

We will ensure the partner meets the statutory duties of a local authority in the provision of home to school transport, and also in its HR policies. The authority should note that where an external supplier carries out a function, the Council remains responsible for meeting the statutory duty set out in the Equality Act 2010. The authority should give due regard to ensuring that all services are delivered in a way which is non-discriminatory and promotes equality of opportunity for staff and service users. The services provided will cater for the needs of all users and identifying the needs of particularly vulnerable groups will be a key aspect of the tender process. Prospective contractors should give due regard to the diverse needs of young people in Thurrock and plan to meet these accordingly. The equality requirements will be identified in the service specification and pre-qualification questions.

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

None

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

None.

9. **Appendices to the report**

None.

Report Author

Sarah Williams

Children's Services

15 March 2023		ITEM: 17 Decision: 110649
Cabinet		
Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Capital Programme 2023/24		
Highways Maintenance Allocation and Programme 2023/24		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Ben Maney - Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson – Assistant Director Planning, Transport and Public Protection - Place Julie Nelder – Assistant Director – Highways, Fleet & Logistics – Public realm		
Accountable Director: Mark Bradbury - Director, Place Julie Rogers, Director, Public Realm		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out how the Transportation Services team, within the Place Directorate, will prioritise funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme (ITB) to enhance transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough in 2023/24.

The report also sets out the Highways Maintenance Block Allocation for 2023/24 for the Highways Maintenance Service within the Public Realm Directorate is to be prioritised in alignment with Thurrock Council Highways Assets Management Strategy and Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme.

1. Recommendations

Members are asked to approve the following recommendations:

- 1.1 Approve the 2023/24 ITB capital programme allocations, policy and prioritisation direction for the DfT ITB Block funding under the key Policy areas of Road Safety Engineering, Safer Routes to School, Area Intervention Programme and EV Charging programme (as detailed in Appendix A).**

- 1.2 **Approve the 2023/24 Highways Maintenance Block Allocation Programme (as detailed in Appendix B).**
- 1.3 **Delegate authority to the interim Director of Place and the Director of Public Realm, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety to make any required changes to the ITB programme and the Maintenance programme, for 2023/24, within the overall programme budget, as well as other government funding allocations that may arise within the year to ensure delivery of the programme and to ensure spend of the grant allocations.**

2. Transportation Services - Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The DfT annual settlement provides the allocation for ITB schemes. The total ITB capital programme allocation for Thurrock in 2023/24 amounts to £979,000. This funding is allocated to the capital schemes to be implemented within the programme and staff time required to design, manage and deliver the programme.
- 2.2 The ITB programme has the ability to deliver an extensive range of transport improvements which reflect the vision and aims set out within the Council's long term Transport Strategy (2013-26). Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving air quality and making Thurrock's roads safer are core elements of the Transport Strategy which support sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.
- 2.3 It is important that the ITB programme is closely aligned with the emerging Local Plan and the interim Transport Strategy (currently being developed) so as to make the most effective use of the funding available to deliver necessary improvements to the transport network.
- 2.4 To achieve this, it is important for the programme to have a clear policy direction. Agreed approaches already exist to inform policy, priority and budget allocation. The existing agreed policy areas are:
 - **TDP1 Road Safety Engineering** – schemes proposals are prioritised as a result of criteria consisting of category of road, vehicle movements and safety issues. A 5-year CRASH data search is also used to determine priority and location of potential schemes.
 - **TDP2 Safer Routes to Schools** – scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of set criteria consisting of accident records, site assessment score and school travel plan status.
 - **TDP3 Area Intervention Programme** - scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of Police CRASH data to ensure consistency with other policies. The defined areas for AIP are not similar in geographic size. To eliminate this issue and to ensure that each area has a fair weighting, the accident analysis on PIAs / kilometre.

- TDP4 Electric Vehicle Charging – scheme proposals are identified to align with the OLEV strategy for transition to ultra-low emission motoring. A minimum of 20 charging points will be installed each year within key locations. EV Charging will promote sustainable travel and reduce vehicle emissions in Thurrock. The existing programme ensures the supply and installation of charging points throughout the borough along with ongoing maintenance, back office services, customer service and interface and payment services.

Additional detail on the policy approach is provided in Appendix C.

- 2.5 The report also sets out the 2023/24 DfT Block Allocation Programme £1,383,000, which is prioritised in alignment with Thurrock Council Highways Assets Management Strategy (covered in more detail in Section 5). This is the key document which ties into the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme. This approach has allowed us to achieve the highest funding band 3.

3. Update and Analysis – Policy, Priority & programme

- 3.1 As agreed previously, the ITB programme is informed by an adopted policy and data led approach to intervention. The Transport Development Policies allow the data led approach to be consistently applied to the ITB programme, ensuring that priority areas receive funding to enable measures to be implemented.
- 3.2 In light of the above the funding allocations in the 2023/24 ITB programme have been discussed in detail with the Portfolio Holder and are set out as follows:

2023/24 ITB Capital Funding Allocations	
Road Safety Engineering TDP1	£212,500
Safer Routes to School TDP2	£50,000
Area Intervention Programme TDP3	£350,000
EV Charging Facilities TDP4	£150,000
Emergency Minor Works and Parking requests	£54,500
Passenger Transport	£15,000
Salary costs	£147,000
TOTAL	£979,000

- 3.3 The allocation for each project heading is identified in Appendix A and is based on policy criteria. The allocation for Safer Routes to Schools has been reduced, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to enable an increased funding allocation for Road Safety Engineering and AIP, where some SRTS issues can be addressed. Following the successful award of the EV Charging contract, £150,000 allocation to EV Charging identifies the Council's commitment to delivering increased on-street charging opportunities across the borough. OZEV grant funding will also be explored to enhance the EV Charging budget.
- 3.4 The provision of £54,500 within the Emergency Minor Works budget is proposed in the event that there is a severe adverse impact on the network that needs to be addressed as a priority outside of the Policy process. The allocation of £15,000 to Passenger Transport is considered necessary to support small-scale network improvements in that area. No new funding has been allocated to the Public Rights of Way section of the capital programme as underspend from the previous year and maintenance funding can be utilised in that area.
- 3.5 The Transportation Services team will continue to utilise additional funds received by the Council to deliver the A126 Safer Roads Fund programme, Capital Bid schemes and the Active Travel Fund programme within the 2023/24 financial year.

Variation

- 3.6 The Council is likely to continue to receive regular ad-hoc requests for improvements to be carried out on the transport network. Whilst there is limited flexibility within the programme once agreed, in some cases, requests will need to be implemented within the current financial year rather than held pending a future programme. This might include works to protect the public from risk of injury or where serious deterioration on the network may have occurred.
- 3.7 The responsibility to authorise variations to the ITB and Maintenance allocations, using new funding or carry forward funds, is delegated to the Interim Director of Finance and the Director of Public Realm in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety.
- 3.8 Similarly, delegated authority can be used for additional Government funding (such as Safer Roads Funds, Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme and Active Travel) and schemes can be subject to cost changes as a result of increasing scope or unforeseen revisions to schemes.

4. Highways Maintenance Block Funding

- 4.1 The DfT annual settlement provides the funding for the Maintenance Block Allocation, depending on the HMEP banding achieved. The total funding allocation for Highways Maintenance is expected to be £1,383,000.

- 4.2 Members are advised that the allocations are not 'ring fenced' for spend in the specific areas set out within the programmes therefore, Local Authorities have some flexibility to manage these allocations. As a result, the funding allocations may be amended within the total allocation to meet local needs on the network in accordance with the maintenance strategy. Appendix C provides a summary of how the DfT Block Allocation is allocated across the Council's maintenance programme.
- 4.3 The Maintenance Programme is built around the good practice principals set out in the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure. The Council's adopted approach to this is via the Highways Maintenance Strategy, which focuses on maintaining and prioritising the asset in the most efficient way. Not just focusing on the financial element, but also the end user. It is therefore generated using a data lead approach.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 Endorsing the recommendations set out in this report will enable the ITB Capital Programme and the Maintenance Block Allocation programme to be implemented to ensure ongoing improvements to transport infrastructure, service provision and to ensure ongoing improvements are undertaken to the borough's adopted highway network.
- 5.2 Supporting and endorsing a consistent policy approach for ITB projects provides a level of assurance and consistency for the policy approach that is taken to identify, prioritise and deliver key elements of the ITB programme in relation to Council priorities.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The ITB Capital Programme has been developed in line with the priority areas identified and agreed in the Council's Transport Strategy, following extensive community and stakeholder engagement.
- 6.2 Local residents, interest groups and key stakeholders (including Community Forums, Bus User Group, Local Access Forum and Your Place, Your Voice and Local Plan roadshow events.) have been influential in providing regular input for the evidence base that has informed the development of the ITB Capital Programme. Community Forum engagement, Member Enquiries and Resident Enquiries also allow increased engagement and understanding of local issues. Ward Members will be advised of works affecting their respective wards. The ITB programme is to be added to the Council's web page (when completed and approved by Members) to clarify the schemes and measures to be implemented in 2023/24.
- 6.3 The Maintenance Block Allocation Programme has been developed in line with the priorities identified and set in the Council's Highway Maintenance Strategy.

- 6.4 Once approved, the nature and time frames for delivery of the maintenance schemes will be shared with residents and stakeholders accordingly, with further, more detailed communications being carried out in advance of the works starting.
- 6.5 Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and provided comment on the report at the meeting held on 26 January 2023. O&S members requested that a working group is established next financial year to discuss the ITB programme in detail.

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

- 7.1 The ITB Capital Programme and Maintenance Block Allocation Programme will help improve and enhance the transport network across the Borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible, thereby promoting and supporting People, Place and Prosperity within Thurrock.

8. Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

The Council will be allocated £979,000 ITB capital and £1,383,000 Block Allocation for Maintenance for 2023/24.

The cost of implementation will be contained within the funding announced by Government, by utilising carry forward funds or built into future capital programmes.

The recent s114 announcement has no implications on the ITB and Maintenance programmes.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **John Jones**
Director of Legal and Governance

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations included in the body of the report. A Cabinet decision is required to approve the recommendations. The Council is required to use the allocated funds in accordance with Council approved policies and procedures, and also any conditions and requirements set by the relevant government department as to how the funds are to be spent.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

Transport interventions should support improved quality of life in the Borough and its social and economic regeneration. Transport priorities for congestion & CO2 mitigation, accessibility, safety, air quality and climate change adaptation will have positive impacts including for the health and wellbeing of local residents. Access to services and the safety of residents have been highlighted and will be addressed throughout the plan period.

The ITB and Safer Roads programme is informed through engagement with a wide range of local community stakeholders set out further in section 6.2.1. Feedback from this engagement supports Community Equality Impact Assessment.

The programme takes account of specific areas of the borough and population where implementation will be prioritised to improve road safety, air quality and access to services, taking account of legislative considerations such as the Equality Act 2010. These have been applied to the capital programme.

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

None

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

Thurrock Transport Strategy

10. Appendices to the report

- Appendix A – ITB Capital Programme
- Appendix B – Highways Maintenance Programme
- Appendix C – Transport Development Policy

Report Author

Mat Kiely - Transportation Services – Place

Peter Wright - Highways Infrastructure – Public Realm

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Capital Programme 2023/24 - proposal Nov 22

Lead	Oracle Status	Project	Project Description	Funding area	ITB Budget allocation	All Carry over	ITB carry over	Proposed Budget	Comments
Ford, Matthew									
Salary Capitalisation									
TDP1 - Road Safety Engineering									
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10424	RSE - London Road West Thurrock	ITB	170,000.00	262,407.00	262,407.00	432,407.00	
Ford, Matthew		NEW	RSE - A13 (Five Bells to Manorway Interchange)	ITB	20,000.00			20,000.00	
Ford, Matthew		NEW	RSE - B186 West Thurrock Way	ITB	22,500.00			22,500.00	
TDP2 - Safer Routes to School									
Ford, Matthew		NEW	SRS - 20mph speed zones around schools	ITB	50,000.00			50,000.00	
TD3 - EV charging facilities									
Ford, Matthew		NEW	PRS - EV Charging Upgrade and Expansion Bid 2	ITB	150,000.00			150,000.00	
TD4 - Area Intervention Programme									
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10431	AIP Area 11 Chadwell South & Area 14 Grays Riverside	ITB	150,000.00	240,000.00	240,000.00	390,000.00	
Ford, Matthew		NEW	AIP - Area 27 - Ockendon West	ITB	100,000.00			100,000.00	
Ford, Matthew		NEW	AIP - Area 04 - SLH West	ITB	100,000.00			100,000.00	Subject Active Travel scheme approval - if not approved, monies reallocated to Area 27
Freight Management									
Minor Works budget									
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10098	PRS - Borough wide Disabled Bays (E1843-T3429)	ITB	1,000.00	16,531.00	16,531.00	17,531.00	
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10234	PRS - Ad-Hoc Parking Requests	ITB	9,000.00	8,523.00	8,523.00	17,523.00	
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10235	TFM - Road Safety Audits - Scheme Development	ITB	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	20,000.00	
Ford, Matthew	Approved	10237	TFM - Ad-Hoc Minor Works	ITB	34,500.00	84,532.00	84,532.00	119,032.00	

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Highways Maintenance Capital Works Programme 2023-24

Allocations	DfT Maintenance block allocation	DfT	1,106,000
	Incentive fund Band 3 Block	DfT	277,000
	Total Maintenance		1,383,000
	TOTAL		1,383,000
Cost Code	Project	Funding Source	Budget
10022	LTP Maintenance - Bridges		
Sub Total			
10155	LTP Maintenance - Principal Maintenance (Resurfacing / Reconstruction)		
	Arterial Road, West Thurrock		
	Stanford Road, Orsett		
	Devonshire Road, Chafford Hundred		
	East Thurrock Road, Grays		
	The Manorway, Stanford-le-Hope		
Sub Total			350,000
10156	LTP Maintenance - Classified (Resurfacing / Reconstruction)		
	West Road (C Class), Ockendon		
	Daiglen Road (C Class), South Ockendon		
	London Road (C Class), Purfleet		
	High Road (B Class), Orsett		
	London Road 2 (C Class), Grays		
	Chadwell Road (C Class), Little Thurrock		
	Giffords Cross Road (C Class)		
Sub Total			250,000
10157	LTP Maintenance - Unclassified (Resurfacing / Reconstruction)		
	Abbotts Drive, Corringham		
	Victoria Road, Stanford-le-Hope		
	Gloucester Avenue, East Tilbury		
	Warren Lane, Chafford Hundred		
	Love Lane, Aveley		
	Broxburn, South Ockendon		
Sub Total			250,000
10051	LTP Maintenance - Footway & Cycleway Maintenance		
	Balfour Road, Little Thurrock		
	Araglen Avenue, South Ockendon		
	Lodge Lane, Grays		
	Bradleigh Avenue, grays		

	Arthur Street, Grays		
Sub Total			180,000
10153	LTP Maintenance - Streetlighting		
	Boroughwide - Structural column replacement		
Sub Total			100,000
10097	LTP Maintenance - Other infrastructure (drainage)		
	Boroughwide		
Sub Total			75,000
10180	LTP Maintenance - Traffic Signals		
	PSTN removal phased programme (4G)		
Sub Total			75,000
10192	LTP Maintenance - Other Road Markings		
	Boroughwide		
Sub Total			40,000
10141	LTP Maintenance - Other Safety Barriers		
	Boroughwide		
Sub Total			63,000
	MAINTENANCE TOTAL		1,383,000

Appendix C - Transport Development Policies for Integrated Transport Block (ITB) funding allocation

The Council does not enforce speed limits, being a moving traffic offence and enforced by the Police. Neither is it the Council's role to dictate how the travelling public should use the Adopted Highway, seeking to only guide the public to the most appropriate route and is only responsible for ensuring that the Public Highway is safe for use for the travelling public. To achieve this, it actively seeks to reduce the number of Personal Injury Accidents (PIAs) on its network as the key performance indicator.

In order to achieve this, the Highways authority has developed a number of policies to provide treatment on the network to reduce PIAs on a data led approach and prioritised in accordance with the number and severity of accidents being the main consideration.

In July 2019, the Council's Cabinet approved the introduction of two policies that sought to address 2 accident problems on the network under the headings of TD Policy No.1 - Road Safety Engineering (RSE) and TD Policy No. 2 - Safer Routes to School (SRtS). RSE was identified to treat main routes in the borough (level 1 and 2 routes in the Council's Road Network Hierarchy), with SRtS focussing on roads around all of the boroughs 52 schools. The introduction of these programmes has however, identified a significant proportion of the highway that would not be reviewed as it was either classified as a low category road or away from nearby schools. As such, a new policy is required to include these roads within an assessment and priority procedure, whereby action can be taken to redress any safety risk for the travelling public.

TD Policy No. 3 - Area Intervention Programme (AIP) Policy

This policy is designed to treat roads that fall within the Level 3 Residential Street Classification of the Road Network Hierarchy or not within the TDP1 and TDP2 policies. These roads tend to be low trafficked routes that serve a residential access and individually tend to not see a significant amount of issues in relation to congestion and safety.

However, collectively a number of residential streets in an area may see an increase in issues, particularly if main routes become congested resulting in drivers seeking alternative routes. This can have a negative effect on these routes, which often sees drivers "rat-running" in a manner that is not in keeping with the area, such as speeding. Often this causes conflict due to high levels of on-street parking causing localised congestion and safety conflicts with other road users arise as a result.

As stated, these individual low cat roads do not see high levels of accidents upon them; however, it is often that in these locations even a fairly minor incident will have significant impact on the local area. Where major routes would likely have clusters of accidents in a single location, lower category roads would see a spreading of accidents over a collection of roads that would not identify a requirement for intervention. Nevertheless, when assessing these accidents under an area investigation process, there can be correlation that could result in intervention being an appropriate and proportionate response.

It is also noted that these roads tend to be designed to not support higher levels of traffic flow and may require intervention to remove conflicts and reduce the impact of vehicle movements. This requires assessment to include other improvements such as parking provision, access, public transport, etc. rather than solely focussing on direct accident remediation.

Priority locations

In much the same way the RSE programme identifies key routes to focus allocation of resources, this programme will seek to “package up” Level 3 roads that are in proximity to each other to define assessment areas.

The plan, in appendix 1, identifies the proposed areas (minus the RSE defined roads). A full list of roads included into each area is provided in Appendix 1 that accompanies the plan and will be reviewed annually to include any additional new roads adopted by the Highways Authority. All privately maintained highway will be excluded from the assessment. In total, there will be 28 areas within the assessment criteria

Assessment criteria

It is appropriate to utilise the Police CRASH data for the priority ranking, to ensure consistency with other policies and to ensure the data led approach is a prominent feature. However, it is identified that the defined areas are not similar in geographic size and some areas will see positive or negative bias. In order to eliminate this and to ensure that each area has a fair weighting, the accident analysis will provide assessment on PIAs / kilometre. There should still be a ranking system depending on severity of accident and it is identified that Fatalities should carry significantly more weighting than serious and slight accident classifications; i.e. fatally accidents are multiplied by a factor of 8, with serious by x4 and slights by x1.

Therefore the equation that will be applied is: $R = \left(\frac{3F + 2Se + 1Sl}{L (Km)} \right) \times 1000$

Where: R = Area accident score; F = No. of fatalities; Se = No. of Serious casualties;

Sl = No. of Slight casualties; L = Kilometres of road in area

It is also identified to utilise a 5 years data set from the Police database to determine the priority list for treatment. This will be in the form of the latest data collated by the Police and it is identified that each area will use the same date parameters during investigations process. This is crucial to the delivery of scheme in a timely manner, but at the discretion of the Assistant Director, additional accident data could be included in the priority area if determined is appropriate for the need of the investigation and development of schemes.

Review and consultation

The review of the accidents may require further study to understand the issues within each area that may be unique to that particular area. As such, an extensive investigation programme will be made that will involve community engagement processes. It is envisioned that consultation will be invaluable to ascertain a local perspective of issues, so that solutions can be worked on accordingly.

As this process can take some time to complete, it is identified that feasibility and design will take up to 12 months to complete, with implementation programmed in accordingly thereafter. Some measures can be implemented quickly, with other measures demanding longer development time to

complete. As such it is identified that the whole project life for each area will take between 18 and 36 months to fully be implemented.

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Road Safety Engineering Prioritisation

It is important to identify a methodology for prioritising and delivering the Road Safety Engineering element of the Council's ITB Capital Programme and to ensure a level of consistency and focus for these schemes. The Transport Development Team apply set criteria in order to prioritise and deliver these schemes on an annual basis.

The scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of set criteria consisting of category of road, vehicle movements and safety issues. A five-year CRASH database search is also used to determine priority each year and location of potential schemes.

The schemes that are to be implemented in 2019/20 are identified in Table 1.

Investigation and research will identify which of the remaining locations are identified as priorities and added to the ITB programme over the next 5 years. CRASH data may identify additional areas that need to be considered for future years. These will be assessed and prioritised for inclusion in the ITB programme as required.

TABLE 1

Year	Scheme	Budget
2019/20 schemes	A128 Brentwood Road & Bulphan	130,000
	VAS Upgrade - South Ockendon	50,000
	Lodge Lane red route and speed control	50,000
Future Road Safety Engineering proposals	A126 (A13 to Dock Road, Tilbury)	
	A128 (Bulphan to A13)	
	A1012 (A13 to A126)	
	A1013 (A1306 Grays to A13 SLH)	

A1014 The Manorway	
A1090 (Purfleet)	
A1306 (A13 to Treasel Mine RAB)	
B149 Woodview	
B186 (A1306 West Thurrock to South Ockendon)	
B1335 (A1306 to B186)	
B1420 (A1014 to A13)	
Arisdale Avenue	
Daiglen Drive	
Corringham Road	
Brentwood Road (CSM)	
Long Lane	
Devonshire Road	
Princess Margaret road	
East Tilbury Road	
Purfleet By-Pass	

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Safer Routes to Schools Prioritisation

It is important to identify a methodology for prioritising and delivering Safer Routes to Schools (SRTS) schemes to inform the Council’s ITB Capital Programme and to ensure a level of consistency and focus for these schemes. The Transport Development Team apply set criteria in order to prioritise and deliver these schemes on an annual basis.

The Safer Routes to School scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of set criteria consisting of accident records (total accident factor score 300m radius), site visit assessment score and School Travel Plan status, where schools are accredited a Gold, Silver or Bronze allocation. The requirement to have an effective School Travel Plan has increased over time and the Transport Development team apply a set score to the School Travel Plan element (Gold =4, Silver =3 or Bronze =2).

Each school is awarded a score as a result of these criteria in order to identify which schools will be treated. This assessment criteria is used by the Road Safety Active Travel Co-ordinator within the Road Safety Team, to focus and manage the treatment and delivery of SRTS schemes for the next 5 years.

At present out of 51 school we have 10 schools with travel plans. These schools will therefore gain extra priority in the SRTS programme. Remaining schools will be assessed based on the remaining criteria and will be encouraged to develop a School Travel Plan.

In total, 10 schools have been assessed for implementation in 2019/20, although additional schools can be included if funding allows. The existing priority list for SRTS schemes is identified in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

Ref. No.	Type of School	School	Unitary Wards	Speed (mph)	Travel Plan Status (Gx4, Sx3 & Bx2)	Accident Severity Fatal (x 3 = Accident Factor)	Accident Severity Serious (x 2 = Accident Factor)	Accident Severity Slight (x 1 = Accident Factor)	Accident Factor Score (300m Radius)	Site Visit Score	Total Score	Scheme Delivery Year (Yr1, Yr2, Yr3, Yr4, Yr5)
19	Primary	Kenningtons Primary Academy	Aveley And Uplands	30	Silver 3	0	2	3	7	7.64	43.91	1

APPENDIX 2

11	Primary	Dilkes Academy	Belhus	30	Bronze	2	1	0	7	10	7.64	35.27	1
32	Primary	Thameside Primary School	Grays Thurrock	30	Bronze	2	0	2	3	7	8.91	31.82	1
2	Primary	Arthur Bugler Primary School	Stanford East And Corringham	30	Gold	4	0	0	0	0	7.64	30.55	1
46	Secondary	The Hathaway Academy	Grays Thurrock	30			-	3	16	22	7.27	29.27	1
8	Primary	Chadwell St Mary Primary School	Chadwell St Mary	30			0	3	10	16	7.09	23.09	1
47	Secondary	The Ockendon Academy	Ockendon	30	Bronze	2	0	2	0	4	7.27	22.55	1
10	Primary	Deneholm Primary School	Little Thurrock Blackshots	30			0	2	10	14	7.64	21.64	1
15	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Mayflower	South Chafford	20	Bronze	2	0	1	2	4	5.09	18.18	1
25	Primary	Shaw Primary Academy	Belhus	30			0	2	7	11	7.09	18.09	1
26	Primary	Somers Heath	Belhus	30			0	1	9	11	6.73	17.73	2

APPENDIX 2

18	Primary	Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary	Orsett	30	Bronze	2	0	0	0	2	2	6.55	17.09	2
35	Primary	Tudor Court Primary School	Chafford And North Stifford	30			0	0	1	7	9	7.45	16.45	2
17	Primary	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	Belhus	20			0	0	1	8	10	5.64	15.64	2
37	Primary	West Thurrock Academy	West Thurrock And South Stifford	30			0	0	2	4	8	6.73	14.73	2
31	Primary	Stifford Clays Primary School	Stifford Clays	20			0	0	1	3	5	9.64	14.64	2
21	Primary	Little Thurrock Primary School	Little Thurrock Rectory	30			0	0	0	7	7	7.09	14.09	2
30	Primary	Stanford Le Hope Primary School	Stanford Le Hope West	30			0	0	0	7	7	6.73	13.73	2
36	Primary	Warren Primary School	South Chafford	20			0	0	0	7	7	6.73	13.73	2

APPENDIX 2

24	Primary	Quarry Hill Academy	Grays Thurrock	20			0	1	4	6	7.45	13.45	2
9	Primary	Corringham Primary School	Corringham And Fobbing	30	Bronze	2	0	0	0	0	6.73	13.45	3
6	Primary	Bonnygate Primary School	Ockendon	30			0	1	4	6	7.27	13.27	3
27	Primary	St Josephs Catholic Primary	Stanford East And Corringham	20			0	2	3	7	6.18	13.18	3
43	Secondary	Orminston Park Academy	Aveley And Uplands	30			0	2	1	5	7.64	12.64	3
49	Special Schools	Beacon Hill Academy	Ockendon	30			0	2	3	7	5.64	12.64	3
5	Primary	Benyon Primary School	Ockendon	30			0	0	5	5	6.91	11.91	3
4	Primary	Belmont Castle Academy	Grays Riverside	30			0	1	2	4	7.82	11.82	3
29	Primary	St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School	Grays Thurrock	20			0	0	4	4	7.64	11.64	3
34	Primary	Tilbury Pioneer Primary School	Tilbury St Chads	30			0	0	4	4	7.64	11.64	3

APPENDIX 2

40	Secondary	Grays Convent High School	Grays Thurrock	20/30			0	0	4	4	7.45	11.45	3
42	Secondary	Hassenbrook Academy	Stanford Le Hope West	30			0	1	2	4	6.91	10.91	4
39	Secondary	Gable Hall School	Corringham And Fobbing	20			0	0	4	4	6.00	10.00	4
41	Secondary	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	South Chafford	20			0	1	2	4	5.45	9.45	4
51	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred	South Chafford	20			0	1	2	4	5.45	9.45	4
13	Primary	Giffards Primary School	Stanford East And Corringham	30			0	0	2	2	7.27	9.27	4
44	Secondary	St Cleres School	Stanford Le Hope West	30			0	0	3	3	6.18	9.18	4
12	Primary	East Tilbury Primary School	Tilbury	30			0	0	3	3	6.18	9.18	4
48	Secondary	William Edwards School	Stifford Clays	30			0	0	1	1	7.27	8.27	4
1	Primary	Abbots Hall Primary School	Stanford East And	20			0	1	0	2	6.18	8.18	4

APPENDIX 2

28	Primary	St Marys Catholic Primary	Tilbury Riverside And Thurrock Park	30			0	3	7	13	5.27	18.27	2018
20	Primary	Lansdowne Primary Academy	Tilbury Riverside And Thurrock Park	30	Bronze	2	0	3	4	10	6.91	33.82	2018
3	Primary	Aveley Primary School	Aveley And Uplands	20			0	1	2	4	6.55	10.55	2018
23	Primary	Purfleet Primary Academy	West Thurrock And South Stifford	30			0	3	3	9	6.55	15.55	2018
38	Primary	Woodside Academy	Little Thurrock Blackshots	30	Gold	4	0	0	1	1	7.64	34.55	2018

To summarise; safer routes to school scheme proposals are prioritized based on combination of accident records (total accident factor score) and site visit assessment score. To encourage school involvement, School Travel Plan status (Gold, Silver or Bronze) will play a major role when determining to include the school in priority list or not.

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8 December 2020		ITEM: 6
Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Electric Vehicle Charging		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Matthew Ford, Transport Development Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transportation and Public Protection		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

Thurrock has one of the most significant growth-led regeneration agendas in the country. It is vital to ensure future growth is supported by the right transport infrastructure, providing sustainable travel options for our communities and businesses whilst addressing climate change, reducing congestion and improving air quality.

This report sets out the proposals for the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facilities, both off-street and on-street provision within Council owned assets and on the adopted highway.

The report identifies the budget requirement and the procurement options for the Council and sets out a recommended approach to secure the installation and expansion of EV charging infrastructure up to 2035.

1. Recommendations:

1.1 The Committee is asked to note and comment on the recommendations that will be considered by Cabinet and to:

- 1) Support the procurement of a single contract over a maximum period 15 years. The initial contract period will be 10 years with an option to extend for one further period of 5 years (10+5);**
- 2) Support the creation of a policy to inform the roll out of the charging infrastructure, based upon a demand led approach for on-street and off-street parking provision and the upgrade/expansion of existing Council assets and in town centre locations and transport hubs;**

- 3) **Note the budget and contract value for the full 15 year period to the value of up to £9m based on the following income areas:**
- a. **Allocation of budget on the DfT Integrated Transport Block funding of minimum £75,000 per annum (total allocation over 15 year project life is estimated at being a minimum of £1.125m);**
 - b. **Contributions secured pursuant to Section 106 of the T&CPA1990 (based on Local Plan projections for infrastructure improvements), and;**
 - c. **Office for Low Emission Vehicle (OLEV) grant funding of up to 75% of the capital costs for installation of EV facilities.**
- 4) **Note the approach to delegated authority for awarding contract(s) to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 At present there are only 3 EV charging points (which are located in Grays and South Ockendon) and the Council does not have an established provider of charging points. The existing facilities are in excess of 8 years old and currently provide facilities via a combination of 3Kw 3-pin “household” and a 7Kw 7-pin “Mennekes” socket systems.
- 2.2 EV technology has moved on over the last 10 years and is projected to continue into the future. This growth has resulted in the existing charging infrastructure becoming obsolete, with a requirement to provide alternative socket provision and increase Kw power outputs.
- 2.3 It is vitally important that new housing and commercial growth in the borough is supported by the right forms of transport infrastructure and residents and business are provided the opportunities to use cleaner and more sustainable modes of transport. EV’s will play a key role in the Council’s ambitions to tackle climate change and it is necessary to expand and improve the charging infrastructure within the borough to promote the use of EVs on the network as a cleaner and sustainable mode of transport.
- 2.4 In order for Local Authorities to provide the necessary infrastructure to meet the Government’s aspirations on reducing CO2 emissions and banning Internal Combustion Engines by 2035, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) have provided a funding source to provide up to 75% of the costs for Local Authorities on a match-funding basis. This funding is limited on a first come, first served basis and it is unknown whether the funding will continue past its current allocation.
- 2.5 The Council receives a settlement each year from the DfT in the form of an Integrated Transport Block allocation (ITB). The ITB programme seeks to deliver an extensive range of transport improvements which reflect the vision

and aims set out within the Council's long term Transport Strategy (2013-26). Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving air quality and making Thurrock's roads safer are core elements of the Transport Strategy which support sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.

- 2.6 The total Integrated Transport Block capital programme allocation for Thurrock for 2019/20 amounted to £971,000. It is proposed to redirect a minimum of £75,000 per annum from the ITB going forward towards the roll out of EV charging points. The ITB allocation must be supported by the OLEV grant to enable the proposed level of EV charging to be implemented. The ITB allocation alone will not deliver the required infrastructure and the 75% OLEV allocation must be secured to allow the proposed EV charging improvements to be implemented. The Council can also seek contributions from developers for electric vehicle infrastructure to supplement the ITB budget and aim to secure further match funding opportunities or direct infrastructure funding for facilities in these new development areas so that the costs can be reduced.
- 2.7 With the opportunity to use government funding to subsidise the installation of EV charging facilities it is important that the council establishes a contractual arrangement / partnership to ensure the expansion of charging points in the Borough and to ensure easy access for users.
- 2.8 Subject to government funding being secured, the current budget is estimated to be split as follows:

Contract Period	Projected Budget Allocation per annum	Potential OLEV Funding	Fixed Council funding (ITB)	Estimated Contributions from Developments per annum (£106)	Maximum contract value over period
Fiscal years 1 – 5 (2021-2026)	£300,000	£225,000 75%	£75,000 25%	£0 0%	£1.5m
Fiscal years 6 to 10 (2026 - 2031)	£525,000	£975,000 75%	£75,000 11%	£100,000 14%	£2.65m
Fiscal years 11 -15 (2031–2035)	£575,000	£0 0%	£75,000 12.5%	£500,000 12.5%	£2.875m

Table 1.0 – Estimated funding provision per annum

- 2.9 The contract value is estimated to be circa. £7m in accordance with the above table. However, an upper threshold of £9m would be required, should additional funding sources be provided over the life of the project so to safeguard the integrity of the contract.
- 2.10 The EV Charging Point Contract should be seen within the emerging Thurrock Transport Strategy to promote sustainable travel and reduce vehicle emissions within Thurrock. It will also allow the borough to align with the OLEV strategy for 'unprecedented long-term commitment for the transition to ultra-low emission motoring in the UK.'

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

New partnership / contract outcomes and deliverables

3.1 The contract would need to include the following elements:

- Supply and installation of charging points for on street and off street parking areas throughout the borough;
- Ongoing maintenance;
- All back office services;
- Customer service;
- User interface and payment services

3.2 A suite of Key Performance Indicators and data requirements would need to be developed to accurately measure both the performance of the contractor(s) and the overall success of the programme. Measures would need to be flexible as priorities change over the term of the contract. These KPIs should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Urgent repairs - x% of urgent installations completed within the required timescale;
- Non urgent repairs - x% of non-urgent installations completed within the required timescale;
- Complaints – Number of complaints;
- Contractual meetings - x% of contractual meetings attended;
- Social value - x% Social Value targets delivered;
- Installations per year

Service Model

3.3 A range of different options were considered for both the model and procurement route, including maintaining separate service output, single provider, or part supplier and part in-house operation.

3.4 It is considered that a Sole Provider option will likely be the best option to deliver the scheme over the course of a 15-year programme, which includes the supply, installation and maintenance of EV charging points across the whole of the borough (with the aim of delivering a minimum of 20 installations per year). However, through the tender process, if splitting the contract to supply and installation and then a separate contract for the management of the contract proves to be more cost effective, this will be explored.

3.5 The proposed service arrangement will bring forward a project that is to provide net zero cost to the Authority where the end user will be charged for using the facility. This is consistent with the existing commercial EV charging operations across the UK.

The 'Sole Provider' options has the following advantages:

- Minimal ongoing maintenance costs (dependant on tender outcome);
- Continuity of service;
- Only one organisation to manage;
- Data returns from one source;
- One procurement process;
- Single point of contact, supporting appropriate service allocation, data sharing and monitoring;
- Relatively scalable to meet future budget changes;
- Flexibility with regards to future planning

- 3.6 It has been considered whether any element of the service could be brought in- house, however it would take a significant amount of time to undertake the insourcing exercise, carry out the additional procurement activity and set up an IT system to manage the back office systems. A large Private Sector provider would be more likely to be able to meet the Council's requirement to flex resources over the term of the contract as priorities and funding changes. In light of the above, it is considered that the desired outcome (expansion of EV charging infrastructure) would be less achievable through the 'in house' route.
- 3.7 It is therefore recommended to run the contract through an open market tender exercise to ensure the best chance of cost effectiveness and innovation.

Procurement Route

- 3.8 It is proposed to tender for a single contract over a maximum period 15 years. The initial contract period will be 10 years with an option to extend for one further period of 5 years (10+5). The contract value for the full 15 year period will be of the order of £9,000,000.
- 3.9 There are a number of benefits of a longer term contract as compared to a shorter term contract, which can be seen as follows:
- Potential for lower annual cost as start-up costs can be recovered over a longer period;
 - As both parties are in contract for an extended period of time, there is more room to build trust, allowing for stronger working partnerships;
 - The longer the contract period, the better the supplier understands the Council's business and business processes. This will allow greater integration of business, IT and financial processes alongside increased effective stakeholder involvement from both parties;
 - Long-term relationships provide the opportunity for both parties to engage in a process of continual improvement of both products and services provided.
- 3.10 The final contract would need to include adequate break clauses and the Council's legal and procurement teams would oversee any such clauses to

ensure suitability. A suite of robust key performance indicators and data requirements will also be developed to accurately measure both the performance of the contractor and the overall success of the programme. Measures would need to be flexible as priorities change over the term of the contract.

- 3.11 Due to the value of the service provision, the Council is required to procure these contracts in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and also to comply with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules. Officers have considered a number of options for re-procurement via either an Open Procurement Process advertised through 'Find a Tender' (which from 1st January 2021 replaces the Official Journal of the European Union), or by accessing purchasing consortium frameworks.
- 3.12 Whilst there are many benefits to using framework agreements, it is considered that in this case an Open Procurement Process is the most appropriate way forward. Principle reasons for an Open Process would be that the Council wishes to attract a larger number of bidders that would not necessarily be included on any framework agreement and that as framework agreements can last for up to four years, they may not include suppliers who have come to the market more recently. Whether the procurement route is a framework agreement or an Open Process, key criteria of price, quality and social value would be included as part of any final contract award decision.
- 3.13 Timetable for Procurement and Award

Action	Date
Issue Tender	8 th January 2021
End of Clarification Period	29 th January 2021
Tender Return	12 th February 2021
Evaluation Period Ends	12 th March 2021
Standstill Period Concludes	26 th March 2021
Award of Contract	29 th March 2021
Contract Commencement	29 th April 2021

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 This report is submitted to PTR O&S for consideration and endorsement to proceed with a new budget allocation within the Integrated Transport Budget to provide EV charging facilities across the borough. The total estimated value

of budget allocation within the DfT grant funding of up to £75,000 per annum for a 15 year period.

- 4.2 The report also seeks endorsement to undertake a new tender process to secure a strategic partnership agreement for the roll out of facilities with a contract value of up to £9m over the 15 year period of the contract. The tender processes will seek to provide a model for delivery whereby the Council can seek a partnership model for joint investment and provide a model of limited costs to the Authority in relation to maintenance and running costs.
- 4.3 A new policy would be required to base the rollout on a demand led approach whereby facilities will only be provided from established data led approach and evidence of user demand, with an emphasis of providing facilities for all major town centres within Thurrock and in those areas where on plot and/or off-street parking provision is limited.
- 4.4 Delegated authority to award the contract would enable the award to take place with sufficient lead in time to begin upgrades of existing facilities and work on a new supplier/partnership with a dedicated budget provision and ability to then secure match funding from government initiatives.

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

- 5.1 The contract aims to meet corporate priorities through the delivery of high-quality services in all elements. The following three examples show how priorities will be delivered through the contract:

Priority	Delivered By
Improve existing EV charging infrastructure throughout the borough.	Clearly this is the fundamental scope of the Service. The service aims to increase the accessibility and capacity of EV charging points for residents.
Support climate change and encourage and promote sustainable travel.	The popularity of sustainable modes of travel is growing and with this the infrastructure to support this also needs to grow.
To meet government aspirations.	The government are aspiring to cease the sale of single fuel vehicles from 2035, therefore the demand for charging points will likely increase substantially.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

The budget requirement from the Council is identified as being £75,000 per annum and is to be provide from the Integrated Transport Block funding from the Department for Transport and will be included in the Parking Management area of the programme.

Additional funds will be secured via the bid process with OLEV on a case by case basis and is currently set at up to 75% of the costs per installation. This funding is currently available with no end date other than once the funds have been allocated to Authorities and committed. Once this funding source has ended, this will not prejudice the project delivery but will reduce the level of scheme per annum. Provision of electricity will be net zero cost to the Authority as the end user will be charged for using the facility

Further funding has been identified via the contributions route of Section 106 of the T&CPA1991. This will be secured through the planning process and allocated to projects in specific areas and ring fenced accordingly.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**
Principal Lawyer / Manager – Contracts Team

This report is seeking approval from PTR Overview and Scrutiny Committee for agreement to undertake a tender process for EV charging points within the Borough as noted in the report.

The proposed procurement routes for the Contract must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The open tender process mentioned in this report is provided for under Regulation 27 of the Public Contract Regulation and referred to as the Open Procedure.

Legal Services should be fully involved at every stage of the proposed tender exercise and will be on hand and available to assist and advice on any legal issues that may arise.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

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

The contract would deliver EV charging infrastructure across the whole borough providing our communities with improved opportunities to more sustainable modes of travel. A Community and Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out to identify specific actions to include in the specification so to ensure the needs of target areas and groups of people with protected characteristics are met, as well as ensuring ease of access to services. Bidders' achievement of similar outcomes for a range of target groups and areas will be tested as part of the tender process.

7. **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)
 - None
8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):
 - None
9. **Appendices to the report**
 - None

Report Authors:

Matthew Ford
Transport Development Manager

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15 March 2023		ITEM: 18 Decision: 110650
Cabinet		
Renewing Contracts with Care Home and Supported Accommodation Providers		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Deborah Arnold - Portfolio Holder for Health and Adult Social Care		
Accountable Assistant Director: Ceri Armstrong – Interim Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Community Development		
Accountable Director: Les Billingham – Interim Director Adult Social Care and Community Development		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 stipulates that:

- Where the care planning process has determined that a person's needs are best met in a care home, the local authority must provide for the person's preferred choice of accommodation, subject to certain conditions.
- Where a local authority is meeting needs by arranging a care home, it is responsible for contracting with the provider.
- When commissioning services, local authorities should assure themselves and have evidence that contract terms, conditions and fee levels for care and support services are appropriate to provide the delivery of the agreed care packages with agreed quality of care.

In Thurrock we contract with every care provider located within the Borough and have Local authority funded placements in each home. Despite our not having conducted a competitive tender for this our rates remain extremely competitive. These rates are benchmarked annually against regional colleagues to check that

our contractual approach continues to obtain value for money for the local authority.

Despite our fees being commercially competitive, our quality ratings are above average, with over 90% of our care homes being rated as good or excellent following a Local Authority Contract Compliance Visit.

We place approximately 60% of people within the Borough with the remaining 40% being placed outside of Thurrock, this could be for a variety of reasons, such as family choice, or lack of a suitable vacancy within the Borough. When placing outside of the Borough for older adults' residential homes we honour the rates the host authority pays these providers. For adults of a working age and supported accommodation providers these rates are individually negotiated. These are however regularly benchmarked against rates paid by regional and national colleagues to ensure we are obtaining value for money.

For these reasons, in common with many other local authorities with social services responsibilities, it has been the practice of Thurrock Council not to tender for residential care home services, and this report seeks a waiver from the Constitutional requirement to tender, and approval to follow a single sourcing arrangement for awarding contracts for care home services for both older people and working age adults.

This is consistent with the decision of Cabinet on the 5th April 2017.

Government Intervention & Section 114

In July 2022, the Council was made aware of concerns around the valuation of specific investments. A review process commenced, and the initial findings highlighted significant concern with three investments and the position was shared informally with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). On the 2 September 2022 DLUHC announced directions to implement an intervention package at the Council.

The Secretary of State exercised his powers under section 15(11) of the Local Government Act 1999 to give a Direction without complying with the requirement at section 15(9) to give Thurrock an opportunity to make representations about the Directions, as he considered the failures of the Council's compliance with its Best Value duty in respect of the functions specified in the Directions sufficiently urgent. This was because of the following:

- the scale of the financial and commercial risks potentially facing the Authority, which were compounded by the Authority's approach to financial management and the seriousness of the allegations that were made by third parties about the processes applied to the operation of the Authority's commercial strategy, and;

- the failure of the Authority to provide assurance to Ministers and the Department on the adequacy of the actions that they were taking to address the issues, taking account of the scale and pace of the response required.

The Secretary of State nominated Essex County Council to the role of Commissioner.

On 19 December 2022, the Council's Acting Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer issued a report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. This advises Councillors that the Council faces 'a financial situation of an extremely serious nature'.

Since that period the Council has continued to operate under the s114 Notice and is working alongside Commissioners to tighten its financial management procedures

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That Cabinet approve a waiver from the constitutional requirement for competitive tendering for the provision of care home services for older people, working age adults, and supported accommodation, and approve a single sourcing arrangement for new contracts for care home and supported accommodation placements commissioned by the Council.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet delegate to the S151 officer and Commissioners, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director Adults Housing and Health, the authority to award contracts for care home and supported accommodation services to meet the assessed needs and preferences of older people and working age adults.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 stipulates that where the care planning process has determined that a person's needs are best met in a care home, or a supported accommodation provision that the local authority must provide for the person's preferred choice of accommodation, subject to certain conditions.
- 2.2 Service users (often assisted in their decision making by relatives and friends) commonly express a preference for a care home when assessed as requiring residential care. However, the choice is often also determined by the availability of care homes to meet quite specific assessed needs, including sensory impairments, dementia care, physical disability, mental health needs, substance misuse and autism.
- 2.3 Where a local authority is responsible for meeting a person's care and support needs and their needs have been assessed as requiring a particular type of accommodation in order to ensure that they are met, the person must have the

right to choose between different providers of that type of accommodation provided that:

- the accommodation is suitable in relation to the person's assessed needs
- to do so would not cost the local authority more than the amount specified in the adult's personal budget for accommodation of that type
- the accommodation is available
- the provider of the accommodation is willing to enter into a contract with the local authority to provide the care at the rate identified in the person's personal budget on the local authority's terms and conditions

2.4 The choice of the service user, or the availability of provision to meet their assessed needs, are the main factors which determine which provider is contracted to provide care. This is in keeping with the Care Act 2014. In consequence of this, Thurrock in common with most other councils in the region has tended to follow a single sourcing arrangement in contracting with care home and supported accommodation providers.

2.5 Thurrock has a small number of providers and has few voids. All providers within the Borough are used with insufficient competition justifying selection based on price. The agreed price with Thurrock providers is low compared to benchmarked comparators and 90% of homes are rated as 'good' or above by a Local Authority Quality Compliance Visit which is above regional and national averages and demonstrating that Thurrock has good value for money through its approach.

2.6 For this reason Cabinet are asked to agree a waiver from the requirement in Thurrock's Constitution for competitive tendering for contracts for care homes over £75,000 per annum.

2.7 This report has been drafted in light of the current financial situation the Council faces. The challenges facing the Council during 2022 are well publicised and this report should be read in that context. Future service activity will need to reflect the intervention the Council finds itself in. Particularly difficult decisions will need to be made on levels of service and methods of service delivery during 2023 and beyond.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 In order to be able to set a personal budget for a person who requires residential care or supported accommodation a local authority needs to have regard to the cost of care for the provision. For placements outside Thurrock the Council should have regard to the cost of care in that area when setting a person's personal budget. This arrangement mainly applies to meeting the needs of people aged 65 years and over who's sensory, mobility and cognitive functions may be impaired as a result of the ageing process.

3.2 The local authority rates paid for care home places in Thurrock for people aged 65 and over from 1st April 2022 (per week) are as follows.

- Standard residential care £572.23 (shared room £543.60)
- High Dependency residential care £609.91 (shared room £579.43)
- Dementia care £617.24 (shared room £586.30)
- High needs dementia care £646.63 (shared room £614.22)
- Nursing care £633.73 (shared room £602.24)

3.3 The Council funds placements in 12 care homes for older people in the local area, owned and managed by 6 providers. The Council also funds placements in Essex and Southend, and to a lesser extent elsewhere, and in these cases the Council pays the rate established by those local authorities.

Personalisation

3.4 In addition to service users having the choice of care home (subject to the conditions in the Guidance and set out above), the service specification, developed in conjunction with other councils with social services responsibilities in the East of England, sets out how the service will address the requirements of the Personalisation agenda.

3.5 In the context of commissioning for outcomes, the specific outcomes to be achieved for each service user are agreed between the care manager, the care home provider and the service user, and recorded in the care and support plan. The actual tasks related to the delivery of personal care in the care home will then be agreed between the service user and the care and support provider and recorded in the service user's individual service contract. The care manager must determine that the times and tasks appear appropriate to the delivery of the agreed outcomes.

Quality And Safety

3.6 The Council works closely with the Regional Association of Directors of Social Services Group to address quality and safety in Care Homes. The Group has developed a market management system (PAMMS - Provider Assessment and Market Management System) which incorporates risk rating, monitoring assessment tools, action planning functions, demographic reporting, fee levels and benchmarking data.

3.7 The Council's Contract Compliance Team conduct Quality Monitoring Inspections to develop and maintain quality standards in line with the Regional Group guidelines and contractual standards for Residential Care Services. During inspections the online assessment tools are completed which will determine a rating and an action plan for providers. The rating will establish the level of support and monitoring required to ensure quality

standards are improved and maintained, which will include regular provider checks and visits.

Current Contracts For Care Homes

- 3.8 In order to renew the current contracting arrangements for care homes, the Council must address the requirement in the Council's Constitution, which would ordinarily require contracts of this value to be competitively tendered.
- 3.9 The current contract for care homes was introduced in September 2017. In order to renew the contract, and for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.4 above, Cabinet are asked to agree a waiver from the Constitutional requirement for competitive tendering and to approve a single sourcing arrangement for contracting with care home providers.
- 3.10 The updated Regional Standard Contract for care homes which Thurrock developed in conjunction with the other councils in the East of England will be offered to providers. This will ensure that the terms and conditions of contract and the specification are up to date in relation to relevant legislative requirements, reflect good practice, and are consistent with the terms and conditions used by neighbouring councils.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council's Constitution requires competitive tendering for contracts valued at over £75,000. This report requests a waiver of that requirement in respect of care home (residential care) and supported accommodation services. It also seeks approval of the arrangements for the award of these contracts.

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

- 5.1 Following approval, a letter will be sent to providers inviting them to enter into a contract with the Council for the provision of care home places for an initial period of 5 years which may, by mutual agreement, be extended for a further 24-month period, up to a maximum of 7 years. (Please note there will be a 6 months' notice period to exit this contract, if this contractual approach no longer offers value for money for the local authority the contract can be terminated and reprocured in a different way).

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

- 6.1 The Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) require the Council to commission services at the highest possible standard whilst delivering value for money for the Council.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Strategic Lead- Corporate Finance

The budget allocation for the services covered within the report are detailed in the following table:

Service Type	Client Group	2022/23 Revised Budget £000's	2023/24 Base Budget £000's
Residential Care	Older People	9,431	10,763
	Learning Disabilities	8,355	8,014
	Mental Health	1,559	1,111
	Physical Disabilities	1,216	1,516
Total		20,561	21,405
Nursing Homes	Older People	1,126	1,401
	Learning Disabilities	78	41
	Physical Disabilities	191	59
Total		1,395	1,501
Supported Living	Older People	571	684
	Learning Disabilities	4,394	4,468
	Mental Health	3,072	2,966
	Physical Disabilities	622	1,072
Total		8,659	9,191
Grand Total		30,615	32,097

The 2023/24 draft budget has been formulated to take into consideration that full year effect of the residents receiving a service within the relevant care provisions. This is included within the Draft 2023/24 Budget report to Cabinet on 22 February 2022.

The increase in the funding requirement identified for 2023/24 is as a result of additional demand for residential care services. Funding has been allocated in the Councils medium term financial strategy and is detailed in the aforementioned Draft Budget 2023/24 report.

Within the 2023/24 draft budget, the Council has identified £1.878m growth for price inflation, and £4.520m for demographic and other pressures, to be applied across the Adult Social Care external placement budget.

Furthermore, an additional £1.090m of specific grant fund has been awarded in the local government finance settlement through the ASC market sustainability and improvement fund. In line with the guidance, this

funding will be used to fund additional financial support to the external care market in 2023/24.

At this stage, the budget detailed in the above table does not include any inflationary price uplifts for 2023/24. This is currently under discussion as part of the consultation with external care providers, which will take into consideration national living wage, general inflation as well as recruitment and retention pressures within the care sector. Funding has been identified in the 2023/24 draft budget and will be allocated upon conclusion of the consultation. This consultation forms part of the annual budget setting process each year, and is subject to the economic considerations, which will vary over the life of the contracts, and form part of the Councils MTFS.

The recommendation to following a single sourcing arrangement in contracting with care home and supported accommodation providers has been deemed as the most cost-effective approach to procurement of the services. The 2022/23 and 2023/24 base budgets have been set in accordance with this approach, and outside of the application of inflationary price uplifts, the approval of the recommendation will not have an adverse financial impact on the proposed budget, and conversely, provides certainty over the charges which the Council will pay for the current residents

7.2 **Legal**

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

The Council's Constitution requires a competitive tender to be completed for all contracts over £75,000. However, this requirement may be waived provided the Council complies with its duty to obtain Best Value pursuant to the Local Government Act 1999. The Council is unable to conduct the normal competitive procurement procedure for residential care and supported accommodation providers because of the particular nature of the service provision and the service user choice. However, the Council is required to act transparently, fairly, proportionately and in a non-discriminatory manner when dealing with service providers.

By entering into legally binding contracts with care homes in the borough, the Council will be able to manage the relationship with the accommodation providers, including being able to monitor the standard of care being provided to the service users therefore ensuring the Council's safeguarding function is carried out.

The Council needs to ensure that a robust procedure is established for determining the local authority rate. It is essential that the procedure includes an evaluation of all relevant circumstances relating to the provision of the

service and not just the Council's financial circumstances (although this is also a relevant factor).

Legal Services and Procurement Services will provide ongoing advice and assistance to the client in relation to the procurement process and the legal issues regarding setting the local authority rate.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development & Equalities

The arrangements for contracting with care home providers for older people, and for working age adults, will be undertaken with due regard to equality and diversity considerations. This will include adherence to the relevant 'Equality' Codes of Practice on Procurement. These require consideration of the equality arrangements of all such providers; that they have relevant policies on equal opportunities and are able to demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity. These arrangements will also be subject to a full review as part of the contract management of the services to be provided using the PAMMS Monitoring System.

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

None

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

Care and support statutory guidance Updated 9 December 2016
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

9. Appendices to the report

None

Report Author

Louise Brosnan

Service Manager – Contracts & Brokerage

Adults, Housing and Health

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15 March 2023	ITEM: 19 Decision: 110651
Cabinet	
Commissioning Report – Domiciliary Care and Unpaid Carers	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Cllr Deborah Arnold – Cabinet Member for Health and Adults Social Care	
Accountable Assistant Director: Ceri Armstrong – Interim Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Community Development	
Accountable Director: Les Billingham – Interim Director Adult Social Care and Community Development	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report has been drafted in light of the current financial situation the Council faces. The challenges facing the Council during 2022 are well publicised and this report should be read in that context. Future service activity will need to reflect the intervention the Council finds itself in. Particularly difficult decisions will need to be made on levels of service and methods of service delivery during 2023 and beyond.

We are working to transform the way our services for people living at home are provided, ensuring that our offer is place based and person centred. This is expressed within chapter 8 of Thurrock’s Integrated Care Strategy for Adults ‘Further Case for Change’ (please see background reading for the weblink). This chapter details the new wellbeing model and the work currently being undertaken to review the effectiveness of this approach and the development of blended health and social care roles to minimise duplication and the continuity of care.

The majority of care is not provided by the Council. As agreed within the approvals for the approach within the Case for Change we want to take the learning from these internal pilots into our external commissioning of care and support. The current domiciliary care contracts end on the 31st of March 2023, the extension of the contract has been one widely discussed owing to the challenges of the pandemic, the current financial challenges of the Council and the strategic plan to transform care provision with people’s own homes. The decision has therefore been made to delay the retender of the contracts to facilitate the recovery of the still unstable market, ensuring the market is robust enough to work alongside the Council through

the remodelling of domiciliary care. We have also been waiting for the completed evaluation of the Well Being Team Pilot. The evaluation was delayed due to the pandemic and has just been finalised. We intend to use the outcomes and learning from the pilot to support the transformation of domiciliary care. The outcome we want to achieve is to remodel how care at home for people is provided. This has been outlined in the Strategic Direction detailed in the Better Care Together Thurrock; Further Case for Change, we want to create an integrated flexible and person-centred model which reflects:

- What the person can do for themselves.
- What informal networks can offer
- What 'service' response is required – ensuring that the response if required is flexible and joins up with other professionals

To achieve the above outcomes, we have 9 strategic actions detailed in Chapter 8 of the Case for Further Change. These actions include:

- Expanding our Council provision, Caring for Thurrock, to utilise the Wellbeing Team model
- Undertaking a wider evaluation of Wellbeing Teams to look at system benefits
- Working to shape the external market to deliver a wellbeing model
- Developing the wellbeing model into a blended team to deliver where required health and social care support
- Maximising community assets.

The approach within the Case for Change has been agreed Council wide and with partners and as such the delay in procuring domiciliary care allows and supports this transformational approach.

When the model has been developed and specifications completed, we will return to Cabinet to seek approval for procurement.

To enable us to deliver this strategic direction we are therefore seeking an extension to the following contracts

- Two contracted providers for Domiciliary Care
- Out of Hours Domiciliary Care support and
- The Bridging Service

Recognising the time transformation of this scale takes, we are recommending the extension of our domiciliary care contracts and out of hours contract. We want to ensure that when our 'support in the home' contracts are retendered, they reflect the model detailed within 'The Further Case for Change' noted above. Sufficient and significant work needs to have taken place with existing and potential new providers to ensure that the market is able to respond. Work to develop the existing domiciliary care model and to develop the existing market has been delayed significantly as a result of the recent Pandemic. The risk of not extending existing

current contracts is that the market will not be sufficiently stable prior to contracts being procured.

Given the Council's Section 114 status and the national and local economic uncertainty, we will manage the risk better by working with our current providers and maintaining our positive relationships with them. This will enable us to be in a position where we can deliver the transformation outlined within The Further Case for Change (Chapter 8). This approach will also help to maintain the stability of the care market – which is a duty under the Care Act 2014. In addition, the approach will enable us to meet the commitments contained within the Council's Improvement and Recovery Plan and to best control one of our key corporate risks - market stability. We are seeking an extension until April 2025 to ensure that the transformational work necessary to deliver a new model of support in the home can begin within a stable market.

The Bridging service is part of the Hospital discharge pathway and allows for timely discharge while individuals are waiting for care from a domiciliary care provider. The Bridging service supports people in their own homes, bridging the gap in service from discharge to support from a domiciliary care provider. We have a contract in place until September 2023 and would want to extend this until April 2024. We need to agree with partners the best model for hospital discharge in the future. We want to ensure that the people of Thurrock can be discharged from hospital whilst not having to experience multiple providers/carers in the care journey.

We are also in the middle of a significant transformation of the support provided to unpaid carers. We are seeking an extension to the contract for the Unpaid Carers Information Advice and Support Service. This contract extension is to enable us to test the viability of the carers service undertaking assessments on behalf of the Local Authority in response to carers feedback to have a consistent approach. The work was delayed as a result of the Pandemic, and we want this approach to be embedded within the service before we go out to tender. As such, we are seeking an extension until 31st March 2025. We are also developing a Carers Strategy and want to ensure this shapes the service we eventually procure.

Government Intervention and Section 114

In July 2022, the Council was made aware of concerns around the valuation of specific investments. A review process commenced, and the initial findings highlighted significant concern with three investments and the position was shared informally with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). On the 2 September 2022 DLUHC announced directions to implement an intervention package at the Council.

The Secretary of State exercised his powers under section 15(11) of the Local Government Act 1999 to give a Direction without complying with the requirement at section 15(9) to give Thurrock an opportunity to make representations about the Directions, as he considered the failures of the Council's compliance with its Best Value duty in respect of the functions specified in the Directions sufficiently urgent. This was because of the following:

- the scale of the financial and commercial risks potentially facing the Authority, which were compounded by the Authority's approach to financial management and the seriousness of the allegations that were made by third parties about the processes applied to the operation of the Authority's commercial strategy, and;
- the failure of the Authority to provide assurance to Ministers and the Department on the adequacy of the actions that they were taking to address the issues, taking account of the scale and pace of the response required.

The Secretary of State nominated Essex County Council to the role of Commissioner

On 19 December 2022, the Council's Acting Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer issued a report under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. This advises Councillors that the Council faces 'a financial situation of an extremely serious nature'.

Since that period the Council has continued to operate under the s114 Notice and is working alongside Commissioners to tighten its financial management procedures.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Cabinet agree the proposed two-year extension to the Domiciliary Care Service until 31 March 2025

1.2 That Cabinet agree the proposed 18-month extension to the Out of Hours service until 31 March 2025.

1.3 That Cabinet agree the 6-month extension to the Bridging Service until 31 March 2024: and

1.4 That Cabinet agree a 20-month extension to the Unpaid Carers Information Advice and Support service until 31 March 2025.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Domiciliary Care

2.2 Domiciliary care is the provision of individual care and support services within someone's own home delivered to meet identified outcomes to ensure that people have a good quality of life. Traditionally domiciliary care focuses on personal care. As described above the transformation of this provision is key part of our overall service transformation delivering a place-based wellbeing approach to living well at home. This is consistent with Thurrock's Integrated Care Strategy for Adults: 'The Case for Further Change'.

2.3 The service is demand led with the current two contracted providers delivering on average 3,135.26 hours a week. Our current hourly rate for external provision is £18.93.

- 2.4 The extension being proposed is for 2 years until 31st March 2025 the cost of that extension in total based on the average hours described above would be:

£6,172,498.86

The current contract has been in place since 2018 for 5 years at a total contract value of £16,402,473.54 meaning that the contract extension will not exceed 50% of the original contract price. The pandemic and current financial challenges have brought us within Regulation 72c under Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This is because the care market remains fragile and is still recovering to ask providers to tender at the present time would add pressure and detract from their ability to deliver services.

- 2.5 The Out of Hours service is provided by one of the contracted care agencies and delivers care through the night to provide personal care. This supports people to remain in their own homes rather than being placed in a residential care home.

- 2.6 The cost per annum for the out of hours service is £302,220 therefore for the proposed 2-year extension until 31st March 2025 the cost would be:

£604,440

The current contract has been in place since 2018 for 5 years at a total contract value of £1,511,100 meaning that the contract extension will not exceed 50% of the original contract price. The pandemic and current financial challenges have brought us within Regulation 72c under Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This is because the care market remains fragile and is still recovering to ask providers to tender at the present time would add pressure and detract from their ability to deliver services.

The value of the contracts for Domiciliary Care covered by the extension is therefore **£6,776,938.86** before any uplift is applied following the completion of the fee consultation exercise. The consultation with providers ended on the 25th February 2023 and the recommendations will be produced in a report by mid-March 2023 prior to the start of the new financial year. Any increase in uplift fees will be undertaken in consultation with the Commissioners and the Section 151 Officer.

The above value represents the maximum value of these contracts should providers work to maximum capacity and deliver the total hours contracted for. However, domiciliary care contracts rarely work in this way due to variations in capacity of staff over time. The total budget figure provided in the financial implications of this report constitutes the total value of the domiciliary care budget and includes a number of spot contract providers that enable fluctuations in capacity and demand to be managed within an overall budget envelope.

- 2.7 In addition to the above services, we will require an extension to the Bridging Service currently provided by Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital Trust (BTUH). The Bridging service allows for timely discharge while individuals are waiting for care from a domiciliary care agency. The bridging service supports people in their own homes, bridging the gap in service from discharge to support from a domiciliary care provider. It has been a hugely valuable service and is part of our hospital discharge process. We would require the service to remain in place until 31st March 2024.

Currently the service provides up to 200 hours of care a week at a cost of **£208,000** a year, the current contract has been in place since 1st April 2022.

The current contract is in place until 31st March 2023 with a waiver in place until the 30th September 2023 with funding committed to that point. We would therefore require an extension to the contract until 31 March 2024 to enable development of the new model of provision alongside the domiciliary care contracts. The funding required would be £104,000 so the contract extension will not exceed 50% of the original contract price. Health have not requested an uplift to the current price. The pandemic and current financial challenges have brought us within Regulation 72c under Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This is because the care market remains fragile and is still recovering to ask providers to tender at the present time would add pressure and detract from their ability to deliver services.

We are seeking agreement to a contract extension for Domiciliary Care, the Out of Hours Service and the Bridging Service until 31st March 2025. This will mean that the contract price, detailed above, will then exceed the Cabinet threshold. Procurement is supportive of this approach.

Commercially our approach compares very favourably when benchmarked across the Eastern Region, performance regarding hospital discharge shows that our domiciliary care offer, even with the 23/24 uplift is one of the lowest in the region. Therefore, value for money will not be impacted by this extension. As noted in the financial implications the funding for the provision of domiciliary care is within the base budget estimates. The contract costs have been included within the 2023/24 budget to meet the costs of the contracts at the levels outlined.

It is also important to note that any fee uplift to the contracts will form part of the conclusion of the consultation exercise for which additional growth funding has been allocated in the 2023/24 budget. A two-year extension is the most realistic approach giving an appropriate length of time for the modelling work to be undertaken.

2.8 **Thurrock Unpaid Carers Information Advice and Support Service**

- 2.9 The requirement for Carers services has increased significantly throughout the period of the pandemic and beyond and we want to maintain the stability and responsiveness of our local service. This service is being accessed by

many unpaid carers for the first time due to increased caring responsibilities this increase in carer numbers is also reflected nationally. Carers UK estimate that overnight, an additional 4.5 million people became unpaid carers in March 2020, meaning 1 in 4 (26%) UK adults were providing unpaid care to an older, disabled or ill relative or friend at the height of the pandemic. Carers' support was valued at £530 million per day during the pandemic, or £193 billion for a full year, more than the value of the NHS. Although we expect these numbers to decrease slightly, the numbers of unpaid carers have been rising significantly as the population ages. This assumption has been supported by the number of carers seeking support from our carers service, we have seen an increase of 100%. In Thurrock it is estimated that some 20,000 people are Carers. However, of these under 5% are known to public services and formally recognised and receiving carer support.

- 2.10 Thurrock Carers Service provides information, advice, and support to adult carers. This service is run by Thurrock and Brentwood MIND, a local mental health charity.

The Carers Service will also be carrying out carers assessments on behalf of the local authority, this has been put in place to ensure that carers have consistent support throughout their caring journey.

A one stop shop for cares is provided, along with peer support groups that many carers benefit from. There has been a significant increase in the number of carers seeking support post-pandemic, largely with carers self-identifying as having mental health issues as a result of their caring role.

The Carers service also work in partnership with our young carers service to manage the seamless transition of young carers becoming adult carers. The service co-ordinates awareness raising activities in Carers Week and on Carers Rights Day. Thurrock and Brentwood Mind are very active in accessing other forms of funding in addition to our contract, both charitable and donations from local businesses/organisations.

- 2.11 The current contract has been in place since 2018. We are proposing an extension for 20 months until 31st March 2025

Our current contract price for 2022/23 is £135,478, this price has been negotiated with the provider to remain at the current level and therefore for the period of the 20-month extension the cost would be.

£225,796.66

The current contract value is £709,903. The contract extension will not exceed 50% of the original contract price. The pandemic has brought us within Regulation 72c under Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This is because the care market remains fragile and is still recovering to ask providers to tender at the present time would add pressure and detract from their ability to deliver services.

- 2.12 To extend these contracts allows us to undertake our transformational work changing the delivery of support within people's own homes and the transfer of Carers Assessments to be undertaken by the Unpaid Carers Information Advice and Support Service.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Domiciliary Care

- 3.2 The options are to procure the service which at this time would not be viable for the reasons stated:

- The requirement to transform services to ensure best value and best outcome as outlined in the Strategic Objectives in Chapter 8 of the Case for Change.
- The need to work in partnership with providers to develop a new transformational model of support
- The ongoing stability of the market and the need to mitigate the corporate risk associated with this

Or to extend the current contracts for Domiciliary Care and Out of Hours

- 3.3 Our preferred option is to extend the current contracts to allow for the transformational process to be completed changing how services are delivered to people in their own homes. This will be undertaken in partnership with our current providers and people who have lived experience of services. This will be beneficial for the Council longer term, meeting one of the key objectives within the Recovery and Improvement Plan developing a new locality-based operating model delivering more in collaboration with residents. It will also ensure market stability.

Prior to the close of the extension period, we will also need to begin the tender process to ensure that new contracts are in place for the 1st April 2025

3.4 Unpaid Carers Information Advice and Support Service

- 3.5 The options are to procure the service which would not be viable at this time for the reasons stated:

- The need to ensure that the transfer of carers assessments to the Carers Service is undertaken, at the request of carers to maintain a consistent approach for the Carers on their caring journey.
- To maintain the current contract price

Or to extend the current contracts to deliver the service changes ensuring we meet the identified needs of our increasing carers population.

- 3.6 Our preferred option is to extend the contract to maintain a consistent service, allow for the process to be developed for the Carers Service to undertake the carers assessments on behalf of the Local Authority and maintain the contractual price.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 There are three reasons for the recommendations.

To support a transformational approach to the delivery of support at home and the increased demand for carers services.

To ensure the stability of the Care Market as directed by the Care Act 2014.

To maintain the contract price in this time of unprecedented levels of inflation, subject only to any yearly percentage increases

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

- 5.1 Presented to Health and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9th March 2023.

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

The delivery of domiciliary care and carers services meet many corporate and community priorities. However, the commissioning of these services support Thurrock Council's 'People' priority in particular meeting the following two objectives contained within the People priority.

- high quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
- communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Strategic Lead – Corporate Finance

The level of funding required for the three extensions is included as part of the 2023/24 base budget estimates. These services are required to stabilise the market, deliver best value and allow for a transformational approach, and are essential for the successful delivery of clients receiving care services.

The value detailed in para 2.5 represents the largest of the Council external homecare contractors. The full budget allocation for all homecare services is detailed in the table below:

Service	Client Group	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24
		Base Budget	Revised Forecast	Base Budget
		£000's	£000's	£000's
Home Care	Older People	4,344	6,456	7,070
Bridging Service	Older People	216	323	216
Home Care	Learning Disabilities	75	99	106
Home Care	Mental Health	100	103	145
Home Care	Physical Disabilities	270	789	873
Grand Total		5,005	7,770	8,411

The 2023/24 draft budget has been formulated to take into consideration that full year effect of the residents receiving a service within the relevant care provisions. This is included within the Draft 2023/24 Budget report to Cabinet on 22 February 2022.

There has been a significant increase in demand for Homecare services, coupled with an increased level of care needs for people being discharge from hospital requiring continuing social care support to live independently outside of residential care. This has been exacerbated by the change in the hospital discharge criterion from 'medically fit' to 'medically optimised' meaning patients are discharged earlier and with a greater level of care acuity.

Due the financial year, there has been an increase in complexity and the associated requirement for additional level of care support to existing clients. This has been prevalent in the substantial increase in the number of homecare packages that the Local Authority is commissioning within the external care market

The longer term ramifications following the covid pandemic including the pausing by the NHS of secondary prevention programmes to manage residents with long-term conditions that is now resulting in significantly increased presentation of very unwell patients presenting at A&E for emergency hospital and the subsequent demand on ASC through increased hospital backdoor pressures. Along with the "hidden" impacts of COVID amongst both working age adults and older people caused by the lockdown and removal of non-crisis intervention by health. This is particularly prevalent in Mental Health services.

Within the 2023/24 draft budget, the Council identified the £3.406m gross expenditure growth requirement, and the budget for 2023/24 has been rebased accordingly.

Furthermore, an additional £1.090m of specific grant fund has been awarded in the local government finance settlement through the ASC market sustainability and improvement fund. In line with the guidance, this funding will be used to fund additional financial support to the external care market in 2023/24.

At this stage, the budget detailed in the above table does not include any inflationary price uplifts for 2023/24. This is currently under discussion as part of the consultation with external care providers, which will take into consideration national living wage, general inflation as well as recruitment and retention pressures within the care sector. Funding has been identified in the 2023/24 draft budget and will be allocated upon conclusion of the consultation. This consultation forms part of the annual budget setting processes each year, and is subject to the economic considerations, which will vary over the life of the contracts, and form part of the Councils MTFs.

The recommendation to extend the existing contracts has been deemed as the most cost-effective option at the moment. The 2022/23 and 2023/24 base budgets have been set in accordance with this approach, and outside of the application of inflationary price uplifts, the approval of the recommendation will not have an adverse financial impact on the proposed budget, and conversely, provides certainty over the charges which the Council will pay on the current contracts.

Any re-tendering of the contacts for the financial year 2024/25 will be considered as part of the following years budget setting process, and will be included as part of the base budget setting estimates

It should also be noted that the costs quoted in the report vary accordingly to the length of the contract extension which is being proposed.

Funding has been identified in the 2023/24 budget for the out of hours service and bridging service and unpaid carers information advice and Support Service detailed in Paragraphs 2.7, 2.8 and 2.13

Therefore, the financial implications of the report are contained within identified resources and will not add additional cost pressures.

7.2 Legal

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

The services required under all of the contracts listed above are required as a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 and the Care Act also directs that Local Authorities have a duty to maintain a stable Care Market. Following issue by the Council of a s114 notice the Council must ensure that its resources are not used for non-essential spending. I am satisfied that the contracts at issue here are all essential and the provision of them a statutory duty.

Procurement regulations allow for extensions in specific circumstances with Cabinet agreement. Under Public Contracts Regulations 2015: Regulation 72 under point C the Council may extend a public contract where

all of the following conditions are fulfilled: —

(i) the need for modification has been brought about by circumstances which a diligent contracting authority could not have foreseen.

(ii) the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract.

(iii) any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract or framework agreement

It is contended that the Council could not have foreseen the Pandemic or the current financial challenges facing Thurrock Council which have flowed from that and which are detailed further in this report, the extensions do not alter the overall nature of the contract and in each case the increase does not exceed 50% of the overall contract value. As such, the Council should be in a reasonable position to defend any challenge to its use of Regulation 72. The Council's own requirements to comply with clause 14 of the Council's Procurement Rules will also need to be met.

The report author and responsible directorate are advised to keep Legal Services fully informed at every stage of the proposed variations and tender exercises. Legal Services are on hand and available to assist and answer any questions that may arise.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager Community Development and Equalities

By extending these services we are seeking to support some of the most vulnerable in society to receive services to enable them to live at home and have a choice to do so.

The Carers services support unpaid carers who are one of societies most valuable resources and carers need to have their rights protected and their voice heard.

We are also enabling a stable and consistent service to be delivered within a very fragile market.

- 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e., Staff, Health Inequalities, 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):

[Thurrock Council - Better Care Together Thurrock: The Case for Further Change](#)

9. **Appendices to the report**

- N/A

Report Author

Catherine Wilson

Strategic Lead

Commissioning and Procurement

Adult Social Care

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15 March 2023		ITEM: 20 Decision: 110652
Cabinet		
Market Sustainability Plan		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Cllr Deborah Arnold – Cabinet Member for Health and Adults Social Care		
Accountable Assistant Director: Ceri Armstrong – Acting Assistant Director of Adult Social Care and Community Development		
Accountable Director: Les Billingham – Acting Director of Adult Social Care		
This report is public with the exception of appendix 1		

Executive Summary

This report seeks agreement for the attached Market Sustainability Plan (MSP) to be submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care. It must also be published on Thurrock Council's website.

The MSP forms part of our preparation for the wider Adult Social Care Funding Reforms commonly referred to as the Care Cap (which was due to be introduced in October 2023 and has now been delayed until 2025).

Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 sets out duties on local authorities to facilitate a diverse, sustainable and high-quality market for their whole local population, including those who pay for their own care and to promote efficient and effective operation of the adult care and support market as a whole.

In December 2021 the government introduced the requirement for an MSP to be developed with a final submission in 2023. The MSP should detail how we will meet the duties contained in section 5 of the Care Act specified above. The document details the risks we face in our older people residential care and domiciliary care (18+) markets and how we plan to mitigate those risk and move to 'fair price' of care conducive with a sustainable market.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 To agree the attached Market Sustainability Plan and subsequent submission to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In preparation for the Adult Social Care Charging Reform (the main component of which is often referred to as the 'Care Cap' but also included arranging residential care for people's whose capital exceeded limits) the local authority was required to carry out a number of activities. These reforms were due to be introduced in October 2023 but have now been delayed until at least 2025.
- 2.2 In December 2021, the Government published a white paper, 'People at the Heart of Care' that outlined a 10-year vision for adult social care. As part of these reforms the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund was announced.
- 2.3 The purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to prepare their markets for the reforms outlined in 2.1 and to support Local Authorities to move towards paying providers a 'fair cost' for care.
- 2.4 As a condition of receiving funding, Local Authorities needed to evidence the work they were doing to prepare their markets for these reforms and submit the following documents to DHSC by 14 October 2022:
- Outcome of Cost of Care exercise for 65+ care homes and 18+ domiciliary care;
 - A spend report detailing how funding allocated for 2022 to 2023 was being spent in line with the funds purpose; and
 - A provisional Market Sustainability Plan, using the cost of care exercise as a key input to identify risks in the local market. A final MSP was to then be submitted in 2023 after local government budgets were finalised. The final MSP should detail how the local authority will move towards the cost of care calculated as part of the exercise described in the first bullet point.
- 2.5 Although the reforms have been delayed until 2025, it is still a requirement to submit the final MSP to government on 27 March 2023. We were advised that we would receive feedback on the draft to help shape our final submission – no feedback has been received from government.
- 2.6 The format of the MSP is prescriptive and must be completed using the template provided. Due to concerns raised by LAs with the governments proposed process to determine a 'fair cost of care', the Local Government Association (LGA) sought Kings Counsel (KC) advice on behalf of Councils in England. It is this advice that has helped shaped the final submission. Both the template and the KC advice is referenced in section 8 – Background Reading and should be read in conjunction with the MSP.
- 2.7 The proposed MSP is attached as appendix 1. It is exempt from public view as we have been instructed by government that all confidential information should be extracted and for it to be published on a gov.uk website as directed.

- 2.8 As can be seen from the document, by having such a low self-funder market and by also allowing people with capital in excess of the existing cap to access our contracts (this is not usual practice in other local authorities that have a larger self-funding population) we are not exposed to the same risks as many other local authorities.
- 2.9 We do have many positives within our market, least not our above average quality in residential homes for older people. However, we face different challenges to providing a sustainable market within Thurrock to other local authorities that must also be considered.
- 2.10 Our key risk is the recruitment and retention of the workforce in such a competitive environment. As such, we have been involved in the development of a regional adult social care workforce strategy and are trying to shape alternative models of care to allow people the opportunity to have blended roles in which they can progress. Some of these new models have a proven impact on the recruitment and retention of staff.
- 2.11 Although there are issues with the governments proposed approach to defining a 'fair cost of care', we have welcomed the opportunity to engage with providers and have an open conversation about the challenges they currently face. We hope for this to continue as we develop our own more meaningful fee setting process.
- 2.12 Within the residential care market we had a good level of engagement with providers, resulting in 82% of homes submitting data. However, although the Cost of Care exercise created an 'average', Thurrock Council pays a variety of rates depending on need e.g. high needs dementia rate for those presenting with challenging behaviour who require additional staff/staff with additional expertise. As such, comparisons can be complex as the difference between the mean average and the current rates vary depending on need.
- 2.13 The Council was disappointed to not replicate the high rate of return for residential care with only 25% of domiciliary care providers choosing to submit. Due to such a low response rate and as the organisations who responded were not representative of the market, the Local Authority are unable to rely on the data submission. It will instead be used as a basis for more in-depth conversations with providers.
- 2.14 As such, we are committed to developing a more sophisticated approach to fee setting in partnership with providers so that we can truly move to a 'fair cost' but one that is based on need, local circumstance and changing models of care rather than the blunt tool provided for this exercise.
- 2.15 The completion and submission of the MSP not only allows for a focussed review on segments of our care market but is currently a requirement of accessing Fair Cost of Care Funding from government. This funding is discussed in section 3.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The external adults' placements budget for the current year is £32.658m. The forecast outturn for the year is £35.323m.
- 3.2 As part of the local government finance settlement for 2022/23, Thurrock Council were awarded £0.442m of Market Sustainability and Fair cost of care funding. 25% of this grant funding was ring-fenced to fund the undertaking of the project, and the remaining for part of the uplift that was given to providers weekly rates.
- 3.3 The provisional finance settlement for 2023/24 has seen the grant allocation increase to £1.532m, an increase of £1.090m. This is also now referred to as the Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund.
- 3.4 As detailed in section 2 of the MSP, within the parameters of the £1.090m funding, the Council will work with providers to improve the long term sustainability of their services/sector. We will utilise the funding to address the risks to the sustainability of the market detailed in the MSP and find solutions that make a difference to the sector.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 It is a requirement that we submit a final Market Sustainability Plan to central Government in 2023.

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

- 5.1 Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny – 09 March 2023
- 5.2 Two provider engagement events – 05 September 2022 and 04 October 2022.
- 5.3 Further provider engagement event in February 2023.

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

- 6.1 Although a sustainable market for adult social care can be seen as positively impacting on all corporate policies, it is the 'People' priority and the desire to provide high quality public services that is the most pertinent.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Strategic Lead – Corporate Finance

As detailed within the report, In December 2021, the Government published a white paper, 'People at the Heart of Care' that outlined a 10-year vision for adult social care. As part of these reforms the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund was announced.

Specific grant funding of £0.441m was received in 2022/23, with the allocation increasing to £1.532m in 2023/24. This funding will be used to implement the required changes and increase in the funding which external care providers receive. This will be contained with the grant allocation, and therefore will not have a direct impact on the Councils overall general fund

Funding for future years will be assessed once announcement as made, and the funding is confirmed.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Sarah Dawkins**
Barrister (Consultant) on behalf of Thurrock's
Chief Legal Officer

On behalf of the Chief Legal Officer. I confirm that I have read this paper and attachments referred to therein. As set out in section 5 of the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs, with a view to ensuring services are diverse, sustainable, and high quality for the local population, including those who pay for their own care. Section 4.31 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance confirms the obligations expected as follows:

When commissioning services, local authorities should assure themselves and have evidence that contract terms, conditions and fee levels for care and support services are appropriate to provide the delivery of the agreed care packages with agreed quality of care. This should support and promote the wellbeing of people who receive care and support and allow for the service provider's ability to meet statutory obligations to pay at least the minimum wage and provide effective training and development of staff.

It should also allow retention of staff commensurate with delivering services to the agreed quality and encourage innovation and improvement. Local authorities should have regard to guidance on minimum fee levels necessary to provide this assurance, taking account of the local economic environment. This assurance should understand that reasonable fee levels allow for a reasonable rate of return by independent providers that is sufficient to allow the overall pool of efficient providers to remain sustainable in the long term."

The government is implementing wide-ranging and ambitious reform of adult social care. In December 2021 the Government published a white paper, People at the Heart of Care, that outlined a 10-year vision that puts

personalised care and support at the heart of adult social care, ensuring that people (a) have the choice, control and support they need to live independent lives (b) can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support and (c) find adult social care fair and accessible

Implementation of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund is one of the first steps in the journey to achieve this. The fund was announced on 16 December 2021. The primary purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to prepare their markets for reform, including the further commencement of Section 18(3) of the Care Act 2014 in October 2023, and to support local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair cost of care.

Accordingly, there appears to be no adverse legal implications arising from the recommendations set out within this paper, and they are consistent with the expected obligations upon the Council.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

Due to the nature of the services under discussion in the MSP (older people residential care and domiciliary care for people aged 18+) older people will be disproportionately impacted by any activity in this area.

However, the MSP seeks to identify both the key risks to the long term sustainability of these markets and how as a council (working in partnership with providers) we will mitigate these risks. As such, the development of the MSP should have a positive impact on older people (and all service users) in that it should secure sufficient services to meet needs both now and in the future.

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

None

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

- [Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund: purpose and conditions 2022/23](#)



Fair Cost of Care

- guidance JAKC Revise
- [Annex C – Market Sustainability Plan template](#)

- [Eastern Region Adult Social Care Workforce Development Plan](#)
- [Provisional local government finance settlement 2023 to 2024: consultation](#)

9. Appendices to the report

- Market Sustainability Plan (Final Draft) 2023 – exempt

Report Author:

Sarah Turner

Commissioning Manager

Adult Social Care

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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