

Appendix 1
CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY PROJECTS 2016/17
END OF YEAR PROGRESS

Create a great place for learning and opportunity

Work with partners to provide training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities linked to key local industries

The Employability and Skills team continues to build and maintain employer contacts in Thurrock and beyond, in order to extend provision that directly links to key priority sectors and enables local employers to recruit to vacancies.

In 2016/17 Opportunity Thurrock, the borough wide annual careers fair, hosted more than 130 exhibitors ranging from local/national employers, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) to speak to more than 2,500 students about their aspirations/pathways for the future. Close liaison with the regeneration team has enabled the development of a job vacancies website as another route for local employers to promote opportunities.

This has been branded as **Opportunity Thurrock** so it is immediately recognisable and linked to the careers fair and key priority sectors. Regular liaison with the regeneration team enables the inclusion of apprenticeship and employment with training, training for existing staff and the recruitment of local people as part of their statutory obligations via Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act.

With regard to opportunities within the council, the number of apprenticeships during 2016/17 has been impacted by the uncertainty of the new apprenticeship levy framework. There has been considerable cross-council work between Children's Services and HROD to ensure there is a clear system in place for 2017/18 to meet the requirements of and targets within the new national framework.

Other programmes, include:

- OnTrack Thurrock provides bespoke services for NEET (Not in Education, Employment of Training) young people to develop skills to enable employment.
- Thurrock's Next Top Boss provides students with high profile business mentors to resolve real time business challenges.
- Careers and Enterprise Company programme is recruiting business leaders as volunteers to provide strategic direction to Headteachers/Principals to create whole school/college Enterprise Strategy as well as simplify the range of offers and services available to schools and traded work experience service.
- In addition, joint work is underway, with an external partner and HR & OD, for the council to consider the creation of fixed term contract employment opportunities for vulnerable young people.

The service has continued to work closely with the Regeneration Team to ensure that we are supporting new employers into Thurrock – a recent example is the work being undertaken with Amazon – a consortium of learning providers have been brought together to support the employability and skills element in terms of the recruitment of these new opportunities.

Over the past six months the service has worked around supporting young people to consider a pathway into higher education. This links directly with work around raising aspirations and supporting the highest achieving students. The Thurrock Top Achievers

programme has seen over 80% of the young people having a provisional offer to a Russell Group University. The service has also submitted a range of applications to further support this work and is currently awaiting the outcome.

Work with schools and other partners to increase percentage of good/outstanding schools, academies and early education facilities in the borough in line with new legislation

The School Improvement Team continues to work closely with the three Teaching School Alliances to use data to identify the needs of schools within the borough. There is a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development offer available to all schools in the borough.

Of the 50 schools with a current inspection grade, 48 (96%) are good or better. The Early Years' Team works closely with child-minders and early education and childcare businesses in the borough to support and prepare them for Ofsted inspections. Of the 44 private, voluntary and independent early education and childcare settings in the borough with a current Ofsted grade, 100% are good or better; ensuring the best outcomes for our youngest children. Currently 99% of child-minders with an Ofsted inspection grade are judged to be good or better.

Review school improvement and other children and young people services and develop proposals for future delivery to make best use of available resources

The school improvement service has been reviewed and new structure put in place. The majority of Thurrock's schools are now Academies and this is reflected in the size of the improvement function that remains in the council. Increasingly the service has a strategic and facilitative role through the Teaching School Alliance.

The Children's Centre new structure is now complete. Children's Centres will also be working closely with the Brighter Futures Prevention & Support Team and Public Health to ensure a greater number of families are supported and early identification of need and support is provided to reduce the number of referrals to social care.

Using outcomes of the iMPOWER review and Ofsted Inspection, develop and deliver strategic plan for demand management of children's social care services

The Ofsted Improvement Plan continues to be progressed and is monitored by the Corporate Director, Children's Services, via bi monthly meetings. The direction of travel remains positive in all areas.

In December 2016, iMPOWER completed their final report with Children's Social Care and wider council services to support the restructure of these services in order to offer more effective early help and prevention.

This work is being taken forward and there has been significant progress in bringing together the former Troubled Families and Early Offer of Help teams to form PASS, the Prevention and Support Service. Children's Centres, Disabled Children's Short Break and Outreach Service and the Public Health 0-19 Healthy Families Agenda alongside PASS are now under one prevention offer and will be the integrated brand of Brighter Futures.

Progress is being monitored and governed by the newly formed Brighter Futures Programme Board that is chaired by the Corporate Director, Children's Services. There is still extensive work to be done with council and external partners to ensure that families receive the right support at the right time and reduce the demand on statutory social care services.

Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

Promote Thurrock and what it has to offer to residents, visitors and inward investors

The council has been focusing on a number of different ways to raise the profile of Thurrock and of the council.

There is now more proactive use of social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to raise the council's profile. The residents' e-newsletter was launched in October 2016 with approximately 11,500 registered recipients.

In 2016/17 the approach to raising the profile through awards, trade journals and events was centralised. The council has been finalists for several national awards, including winning entries for human resources, planning, social care recruitment and housing – all of which add to the positive profile of the borough.

Work has been ongoing to ensure the council's brand and Thurrock the place is shared widely and recognised including promoting investment opportunities through the MJ/MIPIM investment guide widely circulated at the Property and Investment Trade Show and through the Thames Estuary Growth Commission. This is a main focus of proactive communication activity going forward into 2017/18.

A new roundabout sponsorship scheme went live during 2016/17 with near-capacity take-up by local businesses in just a few months generating income.

Develop and progress the refreshed Local Plan and associated documents

Thurrock Council is preparing a new Local Plan. This plan will be used to guide decisions on planning applications for development as well as set out the strategic direction of the area on social, economic and environmental matters. All local planning authorities must prepare a Local Plan setting out planning policies for their area.

Following on from a successful consultation on the Stage 1 - Local Plan Issues and Options document in early 2016, the council has been working on updating key parts of its evidence base including but not limited to its Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Economic Development Needs Assessment and a Green Belt Assessment. The findings from these studies will be used to inform the production of a Stage 2 - Local Plan Issues and Options document which is intended to be consulted on later this year. The Stage 2 document will outline a series of options for strategic policies and identify potential directions for future growth.

In addition to the work being undertaken on the emerging Local Plan the Council has started producing a number of design based Supplementary Planning Documents to support the implementation of existing policies in the adopted Core Strategy. In March 2017, Cabinet adopted the Design Strategy; this document is the first document in the Thurrock Design Guide to be adopted. In March, the Council also approved the Residential Alterations and Extensions for public consultation. Consultation on this document ends in May 2017.

Implement the Economic Growth Strategy and progress the six Growth Hubs including Purfleet Centre Scheme

The growth programme in Thurrock continues to be one of the largest and most exciting opportunities in the country. Thurrock's reputation as a place full of opportunity has helped attract a number of large scale regeneration projects including DP World London Gateway, Port of Tilbury expansion and Purfleet Regeneration. These projects in turn have created significant numbers of jobs new facilities such as the fulfilment centre in Tilbury in 2017 presents' further opportunities.

In addition to these large scale projects the council has also focussed on smaller but nevertheless significant projects for local people such as expanding small business accommodation offer in the borough, helping local people to find work and improving the borough's town centres. Good progress has been made in a number of areas as the programme continues to move from plans to deliverables. Highlights include: -

- Securing over £10m of government funding to unlock delivery of the rail crossing in Grays
- Introducing a town centre management function working with the Grays Town Partnership
- Development of the Community Led Local Development strategy and applications for c.£3 m to fund a range of projects in Tilbury
- Accessing significant amounts of external funding for business support activity

A full and detailed update on the progress of the six growth hubs was presented by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to Council in November 2016.

Work with partners to identify and provide for infrastructure needs including tackling issues of congestion and proposals for a new Lower Thames Crossing

In April 2017, the Secretary of State for Transport announced the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing, a bored tunnel between Gravesend and Tilbury. A series of meetings has been set to identify the resources that the council needs to respond to this proposal and produce a list of mitigation measures required.

The Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed that it will provide £66.05m of funding for the widening of the A13 between the A128 (Orsett Cock) and the A1014 (The Manorway), from two lanes to three lanes in both directions. Provided there are no challenges, contracts for Lot 1: Detailed Design and Lot 3a: Construction will be awarded towards the end of May 2017.

The Stanford-le-Hope Transport Interchange scheme is nearing the end of preliminary design. This scheme involves a new station building, bus turnaround facility, taxi and passenger drop-off facilities and cycle parking. Design & build contractor, Morgan Sindall has submitted a planning pre-application and is producing a target cost for construction. Subject to a collaboration agreement with c2c, it is proposed to progress to detail design in June.

Work is continuing on the Congestion Task Force project as follows:

Mitigating impacts of incidents on Dartford Crossing - Variable message signs and static signs are due to be installed on the Thurrock Council road network by the end of June 2017. These will notify road users about diversion routes to follow in the event of incidents

on the Dartford crossing. To date, two variable message signs have been received from Highways England. Further signs are being procured.

Improving free flow of traffic

- Yellow box junction markings were painted at junction 30 in January 2017.
- In April 2017, inspectors started issuing fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to utility company contractors for over-running street works and non-compliant traffic management etc.
- In preparation for the introduction of permitting in October 2017, officers are consulting on traffic sensitive streets and are preparing job descriptions to recruit permit officers, inspectors and co-ordinators for the new Permitting Team.
- Atkins has been commissioned to produce an intelligent Transport Strategy. Their report is due in July 2017.

Future proofing Thurrock's highway networks

Currently identifying funding to undertake Saturn modelling and VISSIM modelling.

Build new homes that are affordable and a mixture of tenures (private and social)

The second half of 2017/18 has seen continued development of proposals and plans for new housing developments. Planning permission has been given to redevelop the former TOPS Club site in Grays for 29 units whilst both the 35 unit scheme for older persons at Calcutta Road, Tilbury and the 53 unit scheme at Chadwell St Mary have both been submitted for planning. All schemes have been subject to an external design review to ensure good quality development and all are 100% for affordable rent within the Housing Revenue Account.

These projects which are part of the Housing Zone will deliver a mix of 117 houses, flats and bungalows for rent which meets evidenced housing need. These schemes are the last funded Housing Revenue Account (HRA) schemes as the HRA borrowing cap will be at its limit and no further resources are available.

The first of Gloriana's new homes are complete and handed over as part of the 128 unit scheme at St Chad's scheme which will finish completely in 2017. Further preparatory work has been undertaken for potential future schemes. The development of a business case to achieve the regeneration of estates with high repair costs and poor environmental conditions has progressed with a range of studies being completed to provide a sound evidence base upon which financial viability work is being considered. The ambition is to redevelop on estates where appropriate and so provide new homes and improve the lives of residents.

Build pride, responsibility and respect

Develop a communication and engagement strategy informed by the Residents Survey

The Communications Strategy has been developed with a view to being implemented during 2017/18. The resident survey was undertaken during November and December 2016 and the results of this have been fed into priority activities for 2017/18, including the principles of the Communication Strategy.

The council has increased its use of social media and this is now a daily, two-way, instant channel of communication with residents and other stakeholders. The council now has over 10,000 followers on Twitter and 2,000 Facebook “likes”.

Work with partners to empower communities

The council has progressed a number of programmes to help empower communities. Most significantly is the adoption of the Community Assets Transfer (CAT) Policy. Often, communities aspire to provide local activities but lack the facilities to do so. This policy provides a consistent opportunity for community organisations to seek the use of land or property owned by the council at a subsidised rate when the public value of the activity is considered within an agreed framework.

Friends of Hardie Park (based in Stanford Le Hope) were instrumental to the development of the CAT policy and provide a current example of the policy in practice. With a pool of dedicated volunteers, the group are campaigning for park improvements and championing local management and maintenance of the park. They have made improvements to prevent vandalism of equipment and anti-social behaviour and secured funding to install a new skate park. A prefabricated building has also been erected and will contain a café and space to deliver training sessions.

A new Community Hub has opened in Purfleet taking the number across the borough to six. Hubs empower communities by bringing people together around common issues and exploring community based solutions to improvement. Often, the simple act of providing a space and support to talk something through can change someone’s perception from being dependent and stuck, to having choice and options about the future. People appreciate being supported by trained volunteers, and hubs are increasingly seen as the first point of call for information and support. Hubs are co-produced with the voluntary sector and local communities, and are underpinned by a commitment to equality.

As well as increasing confidence, improving skills and knowledge is an important aspect of empowerment. Subsidised training is available to Thurrock residents active in their communities with Voluntary Sector Training Essex with courses now delivered in Thurrock too including *Finding Funding Faster* and *Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees*.

The key partnership approach helping to empower communities is through the Stronger Together Partnership. A dedicated website, <http://www.strongertogether.org.uk>, has been created to promote the many different programmes in Thurrock supporting people to support themselves and others including Timebanking, the work of Local Area Co-ordinators and support for micro enterprise to name a few. The site is particularly good for promoting good news about Thurrock and examples of community spirit in action.

A number of activities throughout the year have provided an opportunity for people to come

together around the issues they feel passionate about. Community clean ups supported through the Big British Spring Clean are a great example of community led action, improving local areas. 13 community groups collected bags of rubbish weighing a total of 1400kg. This is just one small example of the power and strength of community action and volunteering which is growing stronger in Thurrock all the time.

The Community Environmental Development Fund (CEDF) was launched in 2016 as an opportunity for communities to apply for funds to support improvements in their area. Over £185,000 was awarded to six projects. The largest award was made to the Frost Estate Community Association who established the group to repair roads and build a stronger community.

The road repairs have made a huge difference to residents, not only making for safer journeys – especially for those with mobility problems – but the repairs have reinstated people's pride on the estate which enjoys a special heritage within our borough. The CEDF Fund is considered a successful approach to supporting communities and a new round will be launched spring 2017.

Develop new models for adult social care and support provider development through implementation of the Market Position Statement

Excellent progress continues to be made with the implementation of the key objectives within the Market Position Statement. The micro enterprise project is supporting an increasing number of micro enterprises which are now beginning to provide support to the community. Ategi have been appointed to deliver shared lives in Thurrock in partnership with Social Finance and support from Community Catalysts. A manager for the service is now in place and training and information sessions are being developed for staff and the wider community.

The provision of domiciliary support has continued to be challenging however the specification for the new service is now complete and the procurement will start shortly. The specification encompasses a new way of working to support people to be connected to their communities and to receive the level of care and support they need. The specialist autism service is now moving forward in partnership with Family Mosaic who will be building six units of accommodation with specialist support at Medina Road. A further eight units of accommodation to support people with learning disabilities are currently being refurbished with a grant from the government's Transforming Care programme of work.

Develop a new and transformational Customer Services Strategy including delivery through digital channels where appropriate

The Customer Services Strategy was agreed in April 2017 and will be embedded throughout 2017/18. Throughout the strategy, there is a strong emphasis on digital and self-service for customers that are able to utilise this method but recognition that support must still be available for the customers that cannot. Delivery will be monitored through the Customer and Demand Management Board and, using the principles agreed in the strategy, will support services to identify further opportunities for better, more efficient service delivery. This is a wide ranging piece of work, as there are so many aspects to it, from channel shift, analysis of customer requests and queries through the contact centre, monitoring of trends in complaints and usage of the website to a whole scale look at the quality of the correspondence we send out.

Improve health and wellbeing

Implement the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and deliver the action plans

The Health and Wellbeing Board has reviewed all action plans through the course of the year, with action plan owners providing progress reports. Engagement activity has also taken place to enable Thurrock people to influence and inform actions as they develop and are implemented. An annual report is to be presented to the July Health and Wellbeing Board and will detail key achievements for 2016/17.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a five year strategy, and as such, work is now taking place to refresh action plans for 2017/18. Action plans will be expected to reflect and respond to engagement feedback captured during 2016/17.

Transform and integrate health and social care with a focus on prevention and early intervention, including the delivery of four integrated healthy living centres

Progress has been made with Thurrock's Adult Social Care Transformation Programme. In recognition of the shared vision and direction of travel across health and social care, a decision has been made to have an integrated transformation programme across the council's Adult Social Care and Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The joint programme is under the previously owned CCG brand 'For Thurrock in Thurrock'.

Significant progress has been made during the year which includes:

- Agreement on joint brand, joint programme, joint vision and joint direction of travel
- Consultation and engagement on the principles underpinning our joint vision and direction of travel
- Commencement of a project to examine a variety of alternative delivery models for the provision of current in-house provided Adult Social Care services
- Development of a feasibility study to provide options for Thurrock's in-house residential care home
- Scoping of an alternative approach to the delivery of homecare – including a pilot to test identifying and meeting the outcomes that are most important to people receiving a homecare service – including meeting outcomes within the community
- Development of Thurrock First – the single point of access between Adult Social Care, Community Health and Mental Health – due to go live this Summer
- A number of micro-enterprises being established – with a further few at different stages of development
- The appointment of a provider to manage Thurrock's Shared Lives service

Work continues on the Integrated Healthy Living Centres (IHLC). A project focused in Tilbury to develop a population-health approach to the delivery of health and social care will influence the contents of the Tilbury IHLC and its operating model. Depending upon the success of the model, the Tilbury model will be scaled-up with the approach being implemented across Thurrock. The delivery of the Tilbury and Purfleet IHLCs is set for 2018/19 – but with co-location of services taking place in 2017/18.

Deliver Transforming Homes programme for 2016/17

The Transforming Homes programme has successfully refurbished 1,115 properties internally this year. This brings the total number of properties refurbished to date to 6,953

and equates to 69% of the total housing stock.

In the last year more than 250 of the completed properties have benefited from adapted facilities such as showers or wet rooms as part of the programme. This has enabled the tenants to continue to live independently in their homes. A further 138 properties have been adapted through this programme in response to referrals from Adult Social Care (Community Solutions).

A key focus across the programme is to drive improvement by continuing to monitor the resident satisfaction and ensure robust challenge of contractor performance. Average resident satisfaction with the programme across last year has been very good, achieving 85% against an 80% target.

Improve efficiency and effectiveness of homelessness prevention

The Housing Solutions service has continued to see a rise in the number of applications for assistance and cases where the local authority has a statutory duty to accommodate households. This has resulted in increased numbers in temporary accommodation. The main cause of homelessness continues to be the ending of private tenancies, in line with the national trend. The department continues to work with private landlords to negotiate new and continuing tenancies.

In order to avoid expensive bed & breakfast accommodation the department has secured a contract for a new 10 bed property in The Broadway, Grays for single, homeless people. However, more accommodation is needed and the service continues to look at options for alternative provision, working with local providers.

Phase 1 of the new Housing ICT system (Northgate) was successfully implemented in November 2016; the first phase includes a homelessness module which will enable much improved case monitoring and reporting on homelessness.

A new pilot scheme called *Housing First* was introduced in November 2016 and is jointly funded by Housing, Adult Social Care and Public Health. The scheme provides intensive support for homeless individuals with the most chaotic lives and complex needs, who cost public services such as the NHS and criminal justice system thousands of pounds. St Mungo's, a housing charity working with homeless people, were procured to run the service for the first year and there are five spaces available on the pilot. The scheme reverses usual processes by providing housing before support services are accessed. A national *Housing First* programme is being encouraged across the UK and the Thurrock scheme will be showcased to other boroughs looking to implement similar schemes.

The Homelessness Reduction Bill received royal assent in April 2017 and is anticipated to commence in April 2018. The new legislation confers extra duties on the local authority to prevent homelessness and to assist all household groups, not just those with a priority need. The changes will require new ways of working for the Housing Solutions team. Training by the National Practitioner Support Service is being held in Thurrock in July 2017. New toolkits for homelessness prevention will be provided in line with the new legislative requirements.

A recent bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for funding of a specialist accommodation based support and service reform was successful in securing £250,000 per year for two years. This was a joint bid involving Basildon, Thurrock, Castle Point, Rochford and Brentwood councils along with SERICC, Citizens Advice Bureau

(CAB), Changing Pathways and Essex Police. The funding will include the provision of a domestic abuse “One Stop Shop” providing a single point of contact for domestic abuse clients, to access relevant services on a single day in one location. Work is underway to implement the new programme which is anticipated to start in June 2017.

A further successful funding bid to DCLG led by Essex County Council has secured £891,300 for a two year homelessness prevention trailblazer scheme. The scheme will provide 10 specialist mentors across Essex who will assist households in preventing homelessness. One of the mentors will be based in Thurrock but the department will have access to all ten mentors across the county. Specialisms include offenders, families, private landlords, complex needs and mental health. The provision will assist the council with new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Promote and protect our clean and green environment

Review waste services including collection options, re-tendering of contracts and opportunities for income generation

Cabinet approved the re-procurement of waste disposal contracts on an as-is, like for like basis retaining the current frequency and level of collections across all waste streams. Delegated authority to proceed was obtained at Cabinet in March 2017. The procurement process is underway with new contracts scheduled to go live in December 2017.

The Civic Amenity Site returns to council operation in June 2017. The site is not currently in keeping with modern sites with capacity not being sufficient to support the current site throughput or to meet the requirements of the borough's growth agenda going forward. Capital funding has been sought and work is ongoing to redevelop the site.

The commercial waste service has been subject to a revised sales and marketing plan supported by investment in sales staff. The income generated by the service in 2016/17 exceeded the targets set.

With regard to the waste collection service although no changes have been made to frequencies or materials, new collection routes were implemented in May 2017 to ensure a more efficient and effective waste collection service for residents.

A project is ongoing to understand waste behaviours, looking at ways to increase participation in recycling and reduce issues of non-compliance. The Recycle It campaign will continue throughout 2017/18.

Improve consistency and sustainability of street cleanliness services through stronger enforcement action on fly-tipping and littering and exploring possibilities for trading greening services

In August 2016 the department commenced the Clean it, Cut it, Fill it pilot scheme. This scheme enabled the Street Services section to reintroduce a number of barrow beats, an additional tractor and grass cutting unit as well as a major routes grass cutting team. Changes have been embedded into the service for 2017/18 which have enabled the department to run a pilot of returning street services to service-based rather than the previous area-based teams.

These changes along with the additional resources that have been made available have had a marked impact on the standard of the parks and open spaces, verges and street cleanliness across Thurrock. Whilst the 2016/17 quantitative data in the corporate scorecard does not yet indicate the improvement desired, anecdotal and qualitative feedback highlights significantly cleaner and tidier streets and neighbourhoods around the borough.

A separate piece of work has now also started to focus on making improvements to a number of parks and open spaces across the borough. The improvement programme is to promote greater use and enjoyment of the parks and open spaces and encourage positive activity.

The council engaged a private enforcement company in December 2016 to support the delivery of littering and dog fouling enforcement. To March 2017 over a 1,000 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued. The contract has proven to be cost neutral with a small income

received which will be used to fund prosecutions. 21 prosecutions for littering were heard at Southend Magistrates Court in May/June 2017. The success of the pilot has led to a proposal for an expanded range of services over a long term contract period to be put in place.

Enhance the built environment, public spaces and access to the river through development of a Design Guide and progressing the town centre Growth Hub programmes

The Thurrock Design Guide is a suite of design based planning documents that will play a critical role in reinforcing the importance of place and improving the design quality of all new developments that require planning permission.

In March 2017, Cabinet adopted its Design Strategy, which is the first completed document in the Thurrock Design Guide. In broad terms the Design Strategy sets out the main design principles that should be considered and/or adhered to by applicants when they are working up new development proposals in the borough. It includes requirements for assessing the context of a site and provides specific guidance that relates to the individual characteristics of the borough's five broad place typologies. The typologies used in the guide are as follows:

- Urban Centres and Transport Hubs
- Residential Neighbourhoods
- Commerce and Industry
- Thurrock Lakeside
- Village and Rural Locations

In March, Council also approved for consultation a draft design guide on Residential Extensions and Alterations. This document focuses on balancing the applicants' needs, rights of neighbours and what is best for the wider community and will play a critical role in reinforcing the importance of place and improving the design quality of all residential alterations and extensions that require planning permission.

The proposed guide would also benefit homeowners wishing to alter and/or extend their property using permitted development rights as it provides clear and concise advice on how to make the best out of their alteration/extension. Consultation on the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document ended in May.