

28 November 2018

ITEM: 10

Council

Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways

Report of: Councillor Aaron Watkins, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways

This report is Public

Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Portfolio Overview

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

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

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

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

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

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

Major Schemes

1. *A13 Widening*

- 1.1 The £79 million A13 Widening scheme is one of the largest local authority-managed road schemes in the country and involves widening a 2.3 mile section of the A13 from two to three lanes in both directions between the A128 (Orsett Cock roundabout) and the A1014 (The Manorway, Stanford le Hope) and replacing four bridges over the widened carriageway (Saffron Gardens accommodation bridge, Horndon Road Bridleway Bridge, Orsett Cock East Bridge and Orsett Cock West Bridge). Orsett Cock roundabout will be remodelled to increase capacity and connect with the two new bridges. Traffic signals will be installed on the roundabout to help manage vehicle flows more safely. Once the A13 scheme is completed, there will be a continuous three lane carriageway from the M25 to Stanford le Hope, reducing congestion, improving journey times and supporting further economic growth.
- 1.2 Preparatory work started in December 2017 and will continue throughout autumn and winter 2018. It involves vegetation clearance, boundary fencing, surveys, the construction of site offices, wildlife protection, archaeology, diverting underground pipes and cables, drainage work and the construction of a new balancing pond. This work is mainly taking place away from the road with minimal impact on road users.
- 1.3 Public information events took place in October at Horndon on the Hill, Orsett and Stanford le Hope.
- 1.4 The main works are due to start in early 2019 and be completed by November 2020. During the daytime, there will be two narrow lanes open in both directions; work taking place at the roadside or in the central reservation;

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

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

2. *Stanford-le-Hope Railway Station*

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

3. *Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan*

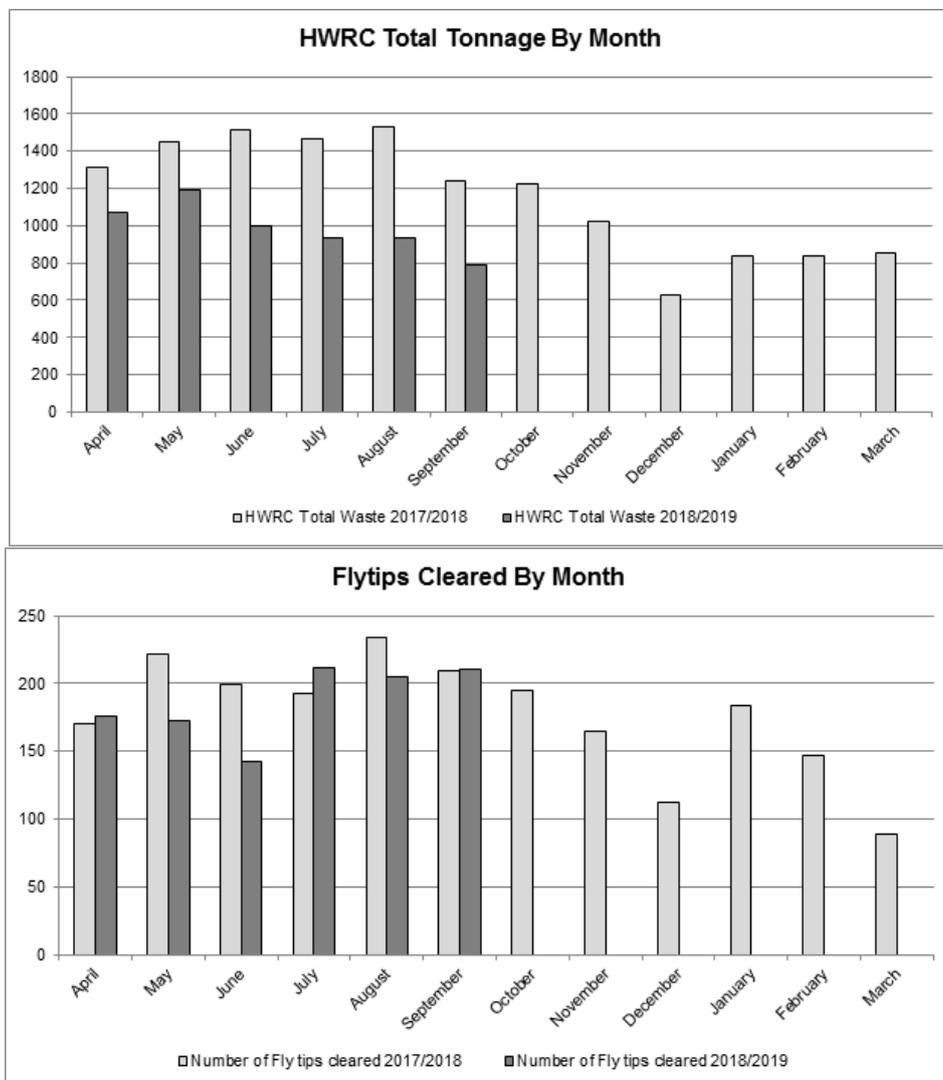
- 3.1 In July 2014 Thurrock Council was awarded £5 million towards cycle route improvements to be delivered across the borough by 2019. These involve constructing missing links in the borough-wide cycle network and /or installing toucan crossings and tiger crossings to make it easier and safer for cyclists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

4. *Grays Town Centre*

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

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

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



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

include:

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

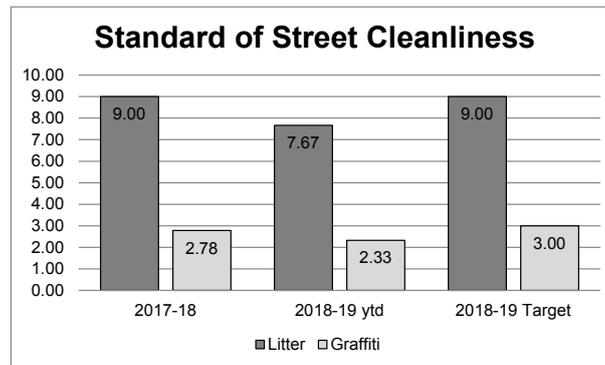
6. *Cut it - Clean it*

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

7. *Winter Maintenance*

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

8. *Centenary of WW1*

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

9. *Bin it*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. *Highways Maintenance and Fill it*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11. *Transport Development*

Road Safety

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

Projects delivered and initiatives include:

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

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

Highways Development Control and Traffic

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

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

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

Liaison with c2c

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

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

Smart Thurrock

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

Transport Strategy

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. *Passenger Transport Unit – Local Bus Services*

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

13. *Network Management*

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

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

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

14. *Parking Enforcement*

- 14.1 The main objectives of the Parking Enforcement Team is to help maintain the free flow of traffic on our roads to support the safety of all road users and council-managed car parks; assist the efficient movement of traffic; increase compliance, and to maintain access to services and amenities; Additionally, there is a special focus on tracking HGV parking in and around residential areas. During the last 12 months 32 parking machines across the Borough have been replaced to enable payment via debit/credit card. This has provided residents and visitors with the convenience of payment type choice.
- 14.2 A successful pilot of foreign debt recovery work was undertaken in the summer last year, and saw the recovery of circa £38k from parking fines issued to HGV vehicles registered in Europe, the team are planning to repeat the programme before the end of January 2019. This pilot achieved a partnership working award at the British Parking Awards ceremony.
- 14.3 The Manor Way is a stretch of road which wasn't decriminalised in 2005. The Council have received significant reports of HGV's causing criminal damage to grass verges and public footpaths at the Manor Way. The only service with powers to enforce in this area are the Police. In response to these complaints, Environment Enforcement officers have been carrying out regular visits to the Manor Way and have been trialling the use of the Community Protection Notice (CPN) process, in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, to enforce on HGV drivers and their company's. This meant that a Community Protection Warning (CPW) would be issued in the first instance and then if this warning was breached a community protection notice would be issued. Breaches of the CPN's would lead to £100.00 fines being issued. This focused approach has resulted in 50 CPW's, 14 CPNs and 9 fines of £100.00 being issued to both HGV drivers and their Company's, also reduced the number of lorries parking along the Manor Way from up to 30 per night down to only 2 on last visits.

15. *Fleet Management*

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

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

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

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

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

Summary

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