

23 October 2019		ITEM: 12
Council		
Thurrock Local Plan Issues and Options (Stage 2) Report of Consultation		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Sean Nethercott, Strategic Lead – Strategic Services		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Interim Assistant Director – Planning, Transportation and Public Protection		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Interim Director Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the preparation of the Thurrock Local Plan and sets out the key messages received in response to the Thurrock Local Plan Issues and Options (Stage 2) Consultation Document that was published for consultation on 12th December 2018.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Council agree the publication of the Issues and Options 2 Report of Consultation on the Council’s website and agree the approach to preparing a new Local Plan.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1** The Council’s approach to growth is that it should be community-driven, infrastructure-led and make a key contribution to high quality place making. The need to plan for future housing and economic provision due to population growth and the impact of wider socio-economic factors means that Thurrock and South Essex will change considerably over the next 20-30 years. Having an up-to-date Development Plan is a key component in ensuring that the borough grows in a sustainable way with the necessary supporting infrastructure in place.
- 2.2** The Council has an adopted Local Plan in the shape of the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development DPD (Adopted in 2011 and updated in 2015). In February 2014, the Cabinet gave approval to undertake a review of the Core Strategy and begin the preparation of a new Local Plan.

- 2.3 A key principle underpinning the operation of the planning system is the requirement that local authorities must have an up-to-date Local Plan for their area. The February 2014 Cabinet resolution recognised that a review of the Core Strategy was required in order to address the impact of economic change and a number of significant changes to the planning system at the national, regional and local levels. These included:
- The need for a more up-to-date statutory planning framework to coordinate the delivery of the Council's ambitious growth strategy for Thurrock;
 - The revocation of the East of England Plan and the requirement for local planning authorities to undertake a fresh assessment of their future development needs;
 - A requirement for the Council to identify a deliverable five-year housing land supply and to bring forward more sites for development to support long term economic growth;
 - Legislative changes that fundamentally affect the form, content and process for preparing a Local Plan; and
 - A need to plan for a decision by Government on the route and location of the Lower Thames Crossing and its potential economic, transport and environmental impact on the Borough.
- 2.4 The first consultation on the new Local Plan Issues and Options (Stage 1) Document (I&O1) was undertaken in February and March 2016 and focused on thematic policy areas. During the 6-week public consultation, 70 organisations made formal responses raising 548 separate comments. An additional 500 comments were received from Members of the Community at events organised to promote and raise awareness of the Consultation.
- 2.5 Based on the responses received from those who made representations on the I&O1 Consultation Document, the following key challenges for the Local Plan to address were identified:
- Reduce inequalities and create more balanced communities;
 - Allocate enough land to meet our housing needs in full in particular affordable housing that meets local needs;
 - Secure sustainable economic growth and create a wider range of local employment opportunities;
 - Ensure that our centres are vibrant and remain relevant to the communities they serve;
 - Create welcoming and engaging spaces and places for young people;
 - Plan for healthier places that encourage people to be active and have a positive effect on the mental wellbeing;
 - Deliver essential strategic and local infrastructure to support new development and regeneration; and
 - Protect the integrity of the green belt.

Issues and Options (Stage 2) Public Consultation

- 2.6 The spatial strategy set out in the adopted Core Strategy (2015) focuses the majority of new housing development on previously developed land in the urban area. To meet some of the challenges set out earlier in this report the emerging Local Plan will need to look at the possibilities of a combination of denser urban development and the potential of releasing Green Belt sites to meet our housing needs over the next 20 years. This approach would represent a significant change from the Council's current Local Plan.
- 2.7 In this context, the purpose of the Issues and Options (Stage 2) consultation document (I&O2) was to seek views from communities and key stakeholders on how Thurrock should develop and grow in the future and where, in broad terms, new development could be located to meet identified needs. The range of issues consulted on included the following:
- The key challenges and objectives underpinning the development of the Local Plan;
 - The future scale and distribution of new housing, employment, retail and leisure development needed in Thurrock over the plan period up to 2038;
 - The range of broad alternative spatial options and approaches available to accommodate the Boroughs future development requirements;
 - The opportunities available to improve the range and quality of sporting, leisure and recreational facilities, including public open space to meet community needs both now and in the future; and
 - Call for Sites 4 – a further request for landowners to submit sites for assessment and possible allocation for development through the plan making process.
- 2.8 In addition to looking at potential spatial options to accommodate housing and economic growth, the consultation document also sought views on a range of policy options to address a range of locally important issues. These included issues such as housing for older people and specialist needs, hot food takeaways and the need to protect locally important green spaces and buildings.
- 2.9 To ensure that stakeholders were able to make informed responses to the consultation the Council published a number of supporting technical evidence documents including an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) alongside the consultation document. These together with the main consultation documents were made available on the Councils website and in hard copy at various locations across the Borough.
- 2.10 The consultation commenced on Wednesday 12th December 2018 and ran until Friday 8 March 2019. Following requests from a number of parties for additional time to respond, the deadline for responding to the consultation was extended beyond the original date to the 29th March.
- 2.11 The consultation events were delivered through a mixture of community-based sessions and 'Your Place, Your Voice' events organised across the

borough on the dates and locations set out below. In addition to the Consultation events, Officers also attended a number of Community Forum Meetings and held Duty to Cooperate Meetings with neighbouring authorities. These included the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, and Havering with further meetings organised with Dartford Borough Council, Essex County Council and the adjoining South Essex authorities of Basildon, Brentwood, Rochford and Southend.

Principal Community Planning Events

Event Location	Time and Date
South Ockendon – Lime Close Club	Sat 19 Jan 1pm – 5pm
Corringham – Corringham Library	Thurs 24 Jan 5pm – 9pm
East Tilbury – East Tilbury Village Hall	Sun 27 Jan 2pm – 5pm
Tilbury - Tilbury Hub	Mon 28 Jan 5pm – 9pm
Orsett – Orsett Churches Centre	Fri 15 Feb 4pm – 8pm
Grays - St Clements Church and Surgery	Sat 16 Feb 1pm – 5pm
Grays - St John’s Church Hall	Sat 23 Feb 1pm – 5pm
Chadwell St Mary - Chadwell Library	Tues 26 Feb 3pm – 7pm
South Ockendon – South Ockendon Centre	Sat 2 Mar 12 – 3.30pm

Informal Drop-in Sessions

South Ockendon Centre Derry Avenue, South Ockendon	Tuesday 15 January
Aveley Library Purfleet Road, Aveley	Thursday 17 January
Tilbury Hub Civic Square, Tilbury	Monday 21 January
Hardie Park Hardie Park, Stanford Le Hope	Tuesday 22 January
Chadwell Centre Brentwood Road, Chadwell St Mary	Tuesday 22 January
Bulphan Village Hall Church Road, Bulphan	Friday 1 February
The Beacon Centre Drake Road, Chafford Hundred	Thursday 7th February
Purfleet Community Hub 53-54, River Court, Centurion Way, Purfleet	Tuesday 12 February

Acorns Community Centre, Headon Hall, Crawford Avenue, Stifford Clays	Wednesday 20 February
The Beehive Centre West Street, Grays	Thursday 21 February

- 2.12 A full Report of Consultation is currently being prepared and will be made available to view on the Councils Local Plan website. (www.thurrock.gov.uk/localplan). This will provide details of the representations made and set out how the Council will respond to the views of the community and stakeholders in progressing the Local Plan through to preparation of a full Draft (Regulation 18) Local Plan.

Consultation responses – The key messages

- 2.13 By the close of the consultation period on the 29th March around 700 organisations and individuals had responded to the Issues Options (Stage 2) Consultation with nearly 3,000 separate comments having been made in response to the 40 questions set out in the Consultation Document. This included over 400 representations in the form of a signed standard letter requesting the allocation of land in the North Grays / Blackshots area, to include a new community football facility for the use of local teams including Grays Athletic.
- 2.14 Given the volume of representations received, this report only sets out the key messages arising from the consultation. Further information will be made available in the Report of Public Consultation that is currently under preparation and it is intended to provide more detailed information on the responses received on a thematic basis.

Issues and Options 2 – Key Responses

Introduction

- The evidence base underpinning the plan needs to be up-dated in order to ensure that the Council plans to meet the full future development needs of the Borough.
- The Council needs to undertake a further more fine grained Green Belt Assessment when considering the future allocation of sites for development.
- There needs to be more consideration of the cross boundary implications of development and its impact on public rights of way; biodiversity and water bodies including the Mardyke and the River Thames; marine planning considerations; and on the need for essential community infrastructure.
- The Council should consider the need to plan to accommodate any unmet housing and employment needs arising from London and neighbouring South Essex authorities through the Duty to Co-operate and the emerging South Essex JSP.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of a new general hospital rather than local hubs given the scale of new development proposed across South Essex.

Challenges for the Future

- The key issues and challenges identified in the IO2 Consultation Document although comprehensive should be expanded to take into account and/or provide better recognition of the wider aims and objectives of statutory consultees and key delivery partners and stakeholders.
- The Local Plan Vision is broadly supported but should be recast to better reflect the need to address climate change and the wider aims and objectives of statutory consultees and key delivery partners and stakeholders.
- The Draft Strategic Objectives underpinning the plan should be expanded to better reflect the wider aims and objectives of statutory consultees and key delivery partners and stakeholders.

What level of growth is needed – Housing?

- Strong support from the development industry and local businesses for the Local Plan to set a housing target higher than Thurrock's objectively assessed housing need calculated using the standard method to support increased economic growth.
- Strong support for increasing the delivery and mix of affordable, Self-Build and Custom Build housing and specialist housing products subject

to viability considerations being taken into account.

- Recognition that the Borough would not be able to meet its future housing needs by relying on any one Spatial Option including Urban Intensification.
- Support for a 'mix and match' approach utilising a range of spatial options depending on sustainability, deliverability and infrastructure considerations.
- Unlikely that Thurrock would be able to meet any part of its future housing needs through the Duty to Cooperate due to the perceived difficulties that neighbouring authorities were facing in meeting their own needs first.
- Little support for the development of a new settlement at West Horndon beyond the scheme promoters. This is due to its location – better placed to meet London housing needs by virtue of good east- west rail connectivity; the adverse impacts of development on this scale for the Green Belt in this location; the high infrastructure costs associated with developments of this nature; potential adverse impacts on the rate of housing delivery over the plan period elsewhere in Thurrock; and a lack of regeneration/positive economic spin-off benefits for existing Thurrock communities.
- Development of a new settlement at West Horndon opposed by Brentwood Borough Council and West Horndon Parish Council due to impact on the character of the existing settlement.
- General support for the development of urban extensions (major/small) from landowners and developers but needs to be balanced against concerns over long lead-in times for delivery and the availability of funding for strategic infrastructure provision.
- Support from landowners and developers for the village expansion option but less so from members of the community. Concerns arising over impact of development on the character of the villages and a lack of infrastructure to support growth.
- Support for isolated site allocations from landowners and developers with an interest in the land on the basis of their ability to support the delivery of housing early in the plan period and/or reuse previously developed land in the Green Belt.
- Recognition of the need/opportunities available from locating development around the urban fringe in providing existing communities with better access to the green belt and new leisure and recreation opportunities.
- Although numbers responding were small, strong community concern over the need to ensure infrastructure improvements come forward in advance of new development irrespective of the spatial option(s) being promoted.

What level of growth is needed – Employment Growth

- The Local Plan should consider allocating additional employment land to diversify the Boroughs economic base and attract further investment in growth sectors and provide some flexibility to meet changing market requirements.
- The Thurrock Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) (2017) and Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA)(2017) underestimate the future need/demand for employment space in Thurrock and need to be updated.
- Additional land should be identified to support port and logistics related growth in close proximity to the ports and with good access to the strategic road network and Lower Thames Crossing.
- Need to plan for additional local employment 'grow on' space provision in town centres, established employment areas and in new strategic growth locations
- No clear view from respondents on the most appropriate option or options suggested to manage the supply and development of employment land over the plan period.
- Further investment in the transport infrastructure both within and outside the Borough is required to improve access to the strategic economic hubs.
- No clear view from the respondents on the need for additional lorry parking facilities, the benefits associated with their provision or the most appropriate locations to accommodate their development.
- The Council should not be overly protective of poor quality employment sites and premises where there is potential to secure their redevelopment for a range of uses including housing.
- The Council should develop a programme for the voluntary "lifting and shifting" of bad neighbour uses from existing urban area. This should be coupled with the stricter enforcement of planning conditions to ensure that the residential amenity of exiting communities is protected.
- Need to take care not to lose existing and viable businesses through the adoption of a restrictive approach to managing established industrial areas.
- New employment or housing areas should be segregated in order to avoid any adverse impacts upon each other.
- Viable waterside industrial developments, including wharves and port facilities should be provided with a level of safeguarding to ensure that they are protected from adverse impacts of surrounding uses.
- The improvement of digital infrastructure serving Thurrock is strongly supported but concerns over who should cover the cost of it's installation.
- Section 106 and CIL contributions should help cover the cost of new digital provision.

What level of growth is needed – Retail and Leisure?

- Intu Lakeside should continue to be the principal focus for comparison shopping and leisure in Thurrock.
- The future scale of development at Lakeside should not have an adverse impact on town centres within Thurrock and neighbouring authorities
- Transport and access issues at Lakeside will need to be addressed before further development is permitted.
- Gridlock and congestion are having an adverse impact on local communities. Infrastructure improvements need to be assessed and upgraded to meet additional demand.
- Need to ensure Grays is not neglected.
- Agree that future convenience floorspace should be directed to growth locations.
- The redistribution of convenience floorspace provision should not occur in a way that undermines existing centres.
- Town centre planning policy needs to be more flexible so that better use can be made of surplus floorspace.
- Smaller town centres such as Stanford-le-Hope and Corringham need to be supported and improved.
- Lakeside already functions as a town centre and preconditions which seek to limit its potential development are unnecessary. The emphasis should be on facilitating and guiding development in a positive way. The idea of an Inset Plan or similar for the northern part of the Lakeside Basin is therefore supported.
- Scale nature and timing of any further development at Lakeside should be subject to the delivery of suitable infrastructure needs.
- Future development at Lakeside should not have an adverse impact on Borough Centres in Havering, particularly the Metropolitan Centre of Romford.
- Any significant further development at Lakeside should consider the relationship with and impacts on London's Town Centre Network.
- Need to improve the range and quality of retail and other service provision in Grays Town Centre.
- Supportive of concept of reconnecting Grays Town Centre to the River Thames and provides an opportunity to develop a riverside strategy approach as set out in the TE2100 Plan.
- Access to and around Grays Town Centre needs to be improved.
- A series of Place Studies should be prepared for locations such as Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Aveley and Ockendon.
- New urban extensions may require policies that identify suitably scaled centres.
- High Streets need to evolve into multi-use facilities to attract more people to visit.
- Strong support for limiting/restricting the growth of hot food takeaways and betting shops.
- Access to and around Grays Town Centre needs to be improved as the one-way system is ill thought out.
- To maintain the viability of smaller town centre retail offerings adequate

short to medium stay parking should be maintained to prevent residents traveling further afield for their requirements.

- The aim to reduce the use of private cars is commendable but impractical in the short to medium term. Need for better parking provision in all shopping centres outside Grays to ensure their viability. Any major new facilities should have adequate parking and a robust travel plan.
- The improvement of riverfront cycling from Southend to London is a favourable ambition due to the benefits associated with it. Need for better connectivity between Five Bells and Corringham.
- Need for a Park and Ride Scheme to serve Basildon Hospital.
- Need for edge of town park and ride facilities to serve Corringham and Stanford –le-Hope
- More parking (and affordable parking) in the vicinity of railway stations would encourage people to limit car use.
- Essex County Council would welcome an exploration of the effect of free car-parking at Lakeside on the wider transport network.

Health & Well-Being

- The main leisure centres have a good spread across Thurrock which should be retained and improved. New centres should be placed in and around these and incorporate other community facilities.
- Leisure facilities at Blackshots are dated and old fashioned and new residential development in North Grays could help fund improvements.
- Leisure facilities at Corringham are dated and old fashioned and new residential development in Corringham and Stanford-le-Hope could help fund necessary improvements.
- New facilities should be located in North Grays/Blackshots area to include a new community football facility that will facilitate the relocation of 32 teams including Grays Athletic as well as complementing the proposed Orsett Heath Academy School.
- The LP should improve spectator sporting facilities including the construction of high class outdoor stadia capable of hosting national/international/elite sport. There should be a specific focus on upgrading the amenities for motor sport as a planned development of the Arena Essex site. The Local Plan should seek to support the future viability of the 'Hammers'.
- The closure of Essex Arena is a great loss. Encourage the Council to look at what Peterborough have achieved and aim for same. An Essex showground with speedway track, other sports facilities, a conference centre and a meeting/social event space.
- Please find an alternative location so that speedway can continue in the Borough.
- Policies that support the development and maintenance of new and existing riverside and on-river leisure activities such as rowing clubs etc must be encouraged.
- Priority should be given to new and improved open space, sporting and

leisure development alongside existing and planned new residential areas.

- Sport and leisure development and open spaces in coastal locations connected by estuary side routes will help promote riverside routes for leisure side activity and sustainable movement patterns.
- New residential development in Orsett could contribute towards improving existing leisure facilities in the area.
- There is an opportunity within the Green Belt at Little Thurrock Marshes to provide a significant area of new open space and recreational land which could be delivered by planning for new housing/mixed use developments in the Green Belt.
- Improvements to Belhus Country Park could be supported by contributions arising from the development of land at Avontar Road for housing.
- The former private sports ground adjoining ICLs West Thurrock Works should be re-allocated for employment use.
- The Active Place Strategy (APS) should be published before the next stage of the Local Plan, in order for landowners and developers to assess the implications for delivering their sites and addressing wider needs.
- Need to update the local plans evidence base (playing pitch, indoor/built sports facilities strategies) and the development of long term commitment by the Council to coordinating the development of action plans to implement these strategies.
- Need to take a positive approach to the principle of new and enhanced facilities that meet the needs of clubs.
- Need to secure provision of provision of new facilities through development and use of Section 106 agreements. The Council's current approach is reactive ad hoc and is not considered appropriate. Where areas of major growth are proposed a strategy should be prepared for each setting out how provision for sport and recreation will be made.
- Need for a sub-regional approach to planning for the delivery of new indoor and outdoor sports facilities across local authority boundaries.
- Thurrock Council is asked to complete it's evidence work (Active Place Strategy) to allow for cross boundary opportunities to be identified (with Basildon Council).
- Support for incorporation of Sport England's Active Design Principles in the Local Plan. These can be applied at a strategic scale in the master planning of major new developments or at the local scale in the detailed design of new developments.
- The proposal to incorporate Active Design Principles within Local Plan policy is supported but it must be done in a flexible way.
- The adoption of Sport England's guidance would give more weight to any decisions the Council make with regards to improving the supply of sporting facilities by way of contributions. The Council should encourage competition in the sports market and consider different delivery models.
- Needs of equestrians should be addressed in the Local Plan.
- Health Impact Assessments should be submitted as part of large and/or

sensitive applications to ensure that the health impacts of developments are fully considered.

- Disagree with need for HIA for each application. This should be done through the plan-making process which should set out how health impact related considerations will be addressed over the plan period.
- A number of local green spaces were suggested to be protected and designated Local Green Space.
- A number of local buildings and features were suggested for inclusion on the Local List.

Your Place, Your Voice

2.15 As set out above, community and stakeholder engagement is an important and central feature of the planning system and in order to engage with as many people as possible the Council launched a series of Your Place, Your Voice (YPYV) community planning events. These events were devised in response to comments that residents felt overwhelmed by the technical nature of planning consultations and the volume of Council consultations that all seem to ask similar questions. The community planning events were run on a drop in basis giving local communities the opportunity to feed into the Local Plan and other Council documents and strategies by participating in a range of informal and highly interactive consultation activities.

2.16 In total 17 events were held across the borough between February and April 2018. Across all of the events, there were a number of issues consistently raised by local communities. These included:

- Poor and failing infrastructure;
- Lack of affordable homes and homes for older people;
- Anti-social behaviour, drugs and crime;
- Neglected open spaces; and
- Congestion and poor air quality.

2.17 A number of the issues raised by residents at the YPYV events fell outside the remit of the Local Plan so these issues were relayed to other relevant services to consider and address as appropriate. Some progress on these issues has already been made and includes:

- To address concerns over community safety, additional funding to increase police resources in the borough has been provided by the Council;
- To address issues with HGV parking in inappropriate locations, laybys have been closed at night and dedicated HGV parking facilities have been provided;
- To address concerns regarding parking around schools, a school road safety review is underway.

2.18 A series of follow up YPYV events were programmed to run alongside the Issues and Options (Stage 2) Consultation in order to provide local residents with greater range and more accessible means of engaging with and influencing the plan-making process. As part of the IO2 consultation process, nine events were held on evenings and weekends. In addition to these, 18 drop in sessions at libraries and community hubs across the borough were organised to raise awareness of the Local Plan process and to promote the YPYV events. While the questions in 2018 were designed to solicit the public's priorities and issues, the events in 2019 focussed on the ways the Council could potentially address those priorities through the Local Plan and other services. Some of the responses highlighted ongoing issues but most related to opportunities for housing and community facilities. Again, the main issues were:

transport	224
open spaces, sports & leisure	199
housing	94
community cohesion	91
crime, ASB, litter	82
health care	81
other	72
employment and shopping	71
education	43

2.19 The top 10 comments made by the community during the YPYV process related to the following matters:

- the need for housing (specifically affordable, social, and adaptable for older residents);
- concerns over air quality;
- the desire for more or better gym and sport facilities;
- the need to address traffic congestion and gridlock;
- the need to protect natural landscapes for enjoyment and for ecology;
- the desire for better community facilities including more GP services;
- A greater and more visible police presence including an increased frequency of police patrols in the evenings;
- The re-routing of HGV's away from residential areas and village centres;
- An improved network of walking and cycle paths;
- Additional bus routes, more frequent services and increased rail capacity.

2.20 A more detailed summary of the comments made at each of the Community Planning Events is set out in Appendix 1 to this Report.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Thurrock Local Plan - Next Steps

3.1 The ability of the Council to make further progress on the preparation of the Local Plan is severely constrained by the need to await the outcome of the

Lower Thames Crossing Development Consent Order (DCO) process. Having taken advice from leading Counsel it is now clear that while the Council should proceed with the preparation of a draft plan, it will not be possible for Thurrock to submit a Local Plan to the Secretary of State until after the conclusion of the DCO process (expected at the earliest in 2021). This arises due to the potentially adverse impacts of the scheme, including any future design changes, on the ability of the Council to prepare a sound and deliverable Local Plan.

- 3.2 On the 27th June 2019, the Council was contacted by the Ministry of Housing Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) requesting a meeting to discuss progress with the Local Plan and to explore whether there was any additional support or assistance that Government could provide to Thurrock to help it progress the plan to adoption.
- 3.3 As a follow up to this, Officers met with officials from MHCLG to discuss the following key matters:
 - The Council's ambitions to deliver significant numbers of high quality homes and jobs;
 - The Lower Thames Crossing and its impact on the plan-making process;
 - Improving housing delivery in Thurrock; and
 - The opportunities for support from Government.
- 3.4 Following a very positive meeting, MHCLG immediately confirmed its willingness to assist Thurrock in addressing the issues associated with the LTC and to help facilitate the earliest possible adoption of a new Local Plan.
- 3.5 Following this meeting, the Council also met with Homes England to discuss ways in which they could assist the Council. This included the potential for Homes England to use their influence to promote within Government a greater recognition of the need to support housing and economic growth in Thurrock, as well as their own direct involvement in the Local Plan process and the opportunities to secure their involvement in the possible delivery of strategic developments across the Borough.
- 3.6 In August following further discussions with the Council, MHCG were able to confirm the following arrangements were being put in place to support the delivery of the Local Plan:
 - A senior Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate would meet with Council Officers to discuss the Local Plan related matters including the impact of the LTC and housing delivery;
 - DfT would write to the Council to invite Officers to attend regular meetings with MHCLG, Highways England, and Homes England to help find a resolution to the LTC and M25 Jct30 issues which are preventing the early delivery of development and the progress on the Local Plan;
 - DfT would also write to the Council to set up meetings at a senior political level to discuss outstanding issues between the parties;

- MHCLG's Housing Delivery Team will arrange a meeting with the Council Officers to explore the scope for agreeing a bespoke Housing Growth deal with the Council to support the delivery of strategic development locations
 - The Planning Advisory Service would contact the Council to set up a meeting to discuss how they could further assist the plan-making process with advice and guidance to the Council
- 3.7 It is hoped that the outcome of these meetings will be an increased willingness on the part of Highways England to work with the Council to help support the Local Plan process and greater collaboration and support from the Government on the delivery of critical infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- 3.8 The next stage of the plan-making process is to prepare a full Draft (Regulation 18) Local Plan. It is anticipated that this will take 16-18 months to produce the document and at the conclusion of this process Council will be asked to authorise the publication of the draft plan for public consultation.
- 3.9 It is a key principle of the plan-making process that all local plans should be supported by an up-to-date evidence base. In order to comply with this requirement the Council has commissioned a number of technical studies to help inform the preparation of the plan to ensure that the emerging spatial strategy and policy framework will be effective in delivering the Council's vision and priorities for Thurrock over the plan period. As part of the process of evidence gathering the Council has recently commissioned a series of Infrastructure Baseline studies which reflect the fact that the Local Plan is an infrastructure led plan. These studies will identify the Borough's future infrastructure needs based on different levels of growth and will be strongly informed by the community feedback received in response to the YPYV consultations.
- 3.10 In addition to a number of borough wide technical studies it is also intended to commission a number of 'Place Based' strategies which will also be used to inform the preparation of area based Inset Plans for incorporation in the Local Plan. The proposed scope of this work is set out in the table below.
- 3.11 One of the next key stages in the preparation of the Local Plan will be the rollout of Design Charrettes across numerous settlements in the borough. Design Charrettes are a planning tool that bring together key stakeholders (including local communities, businesses, built environment professionals and other stakeholders) to collaborate on a place-making vision for a new, or existing, neighbourhood that will guide the regeneration and future development of that area. The outcome of the Charrettes will include a set of principles that will shape the overall development strategy to be identified in the Local Plan, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and site specific detailed masterplans. As key stakeholders are actively engaged in the planning and design of their community, the design charrettes help to build confidence and collective enthusiasm for the vision to be taken forward through the Local Plan.

- 3.12 MHCLG and the chief planner are supporting this approach to promote development and growth in the borough, with high-quality place-making at the heart of the process. Thurrock has been successful in receiving support from MHCLG to pilot this process and it is proposed that the rollout of the scheme to the first settlements in the borough to benefit from this approach will begin in November 2019.

Further development of the Local Plan Evidence Base includes:

- Detailed assessment of sites and ranking/prioritisation of sites for possible allocation in the Local Plan
- Preparation and completion of Infrastructure Delivery Baseline Study to identify existing/future infrastructure needs.
- Preparation and completion of Transport Delivery Baseline Study to identify existing/future infrastructure needs.
- Climate Change Scoping Study – Baseline Study to identify existing/future conditions/mitigation required and best practice and options

Area Frameworks to include:

- Aveley and Ockendon (including the Mardyke Valley)
- The Fens – land north of the A13/Lower Thames Crossing
- Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary – land west of the Lower Thames Crossing
- East Tilbury, Linford and Southfields – land east of the Lower Thames Crossing
- Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham and London Gateway/Thames Enterprise Park

Master Plans to include:

- Grays Town Centre
- Lakeside – including West Thurrock & Chafford Hundred

Design Charrettes/Development Frameworks/Settlement Studies to include:

- Aveley
- Bulphan
- Chadwell St Mary
- Corringham and Fobbing
- East Tilbury and Linford
- Grays
- Horndon on the Hill
- Orsett
- South Ockendon
- Stanford-le-Hope

- Tilbury

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 it is essential that the Council has an up-to-date Development Plan in place and the supporting documentation that will help drive its delivery.

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

- 5.1 The Local Plan has been previously subject of formal consultation (Issue and Options 2) and engagement with Planning, Transport and Regeneration Committee, the Local Plan Group, All Member Briefings, and Group and Ward Member Meetings.

- 5.2 This report was presented to Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Committee noted the report and supported the approach to preparing a new Local Plan, particularly the involvement of local communities to ensure housing and employment opportunities are realised and supported by essential infrastructure.

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

- 6.1 The Local Plan has an impact on the delivery of all of the Council's corporate objectives.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Senior Finance Manager

There is a dedicated budget for plan making to cover the basic costs of preparing planning policy documents.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**

Acting Head of Law and Monitoring Officer

The current system of plan making is contained in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ('2012 Regulations') and supported by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The Issues and Options Consultation Stage 2 is a preparatory step for the

production of a draft Local Plan as required under Regulation 18 of the 2012 Regulations. In due course, the draft Local Plan shall be prepared and publicised in accordance with the statutory and policy frameworks.

The Authority has a statutory duty pursuant to Section 13 of the PCPA 2004 to keep under review matters which may affect the development of its area. It should be noted that the Secretary of State has intervention powers under section 21 PCPA 2004 and default powers under Section 27 of PCPA 2004 where he thinks that the Authority are failing or omitting to do anything necessary in connection with the preparation, revision or adoption of a development plan document. In such cases, the Secretary of State may, under section 27, prepare or revise the document or direct that the Authority do so.

Under the Council's Constitution and in accordance with the statutory provisions contained in section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, Full Council has the power to make decisions in relation to the preparation and adoption of the Development Plan.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services and employment opportunities. Through a process of proactive engagement, the Council will ensure that the consultation process associated with the emerging Development Plan will provide an opportunity for all sections of the community, including harder to reach groups, to become fully involved in helping to shape the future planning and development of Thurrock.

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

There are no other implications associated with the report.

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**

- Appendix 1 - Summary of Comments From YPYV Community Planning Events

Report Author:

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Place Directorate