

12 November 2020		ITEM: 4
Extraordinary Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Pupil Place Plan Update (2020-2024)		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Sarah Williams, Service Manager, Education Support Service, Children's Services		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Education & Skills, Children's Services		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate, Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To report on the latest draft version the Pupil place Plan (2020-2024) and bring to the attention of the Committee the latest forecast of pupil place requirements.		

Executive Summary

Thurrock Council has undertaken its annual review of pupil places and has published the revised Pupil Place Plan (PPP) 2020 to 2024 version, which can be viewed on the Thurrock Council website.

The Pupil Place Plan gives information about the supply of school places in Thurrock and forecasts pupil numbers for the next five years, setting the context of the provision of school places in Thurrock.

The Pupil Place Plan is consulted on each year with all schools and the Schools Forum. This provides a forecasted picture of pupil place planning across Thurrock and helps to identify where we are likely to see capacity issues.

1. Recommendation

1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the PPP recognising the additional schools places that will be required going forward.

2. Introduction and Background:

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child living in its area of responsibility, who is of school age and whose parents want their child educated in a Thurrock school.
- 2.2 To aid meeting this statutory duty, the Council undertakes an annual review of the PPP. This document is used by a range of partner's school sponsors and developers of new dwellings.
- 2.3 As population demographics are dynamic, it is necessary to continually review and update pupil place forecasts. Pupil place requirements are reviewed several times during the year.
- 2.4 The latest draft PPP for the period 2020 to 2024 is attached for review. The PPP gives information about the supply of school places in Thurrock and forecasts pupil numbers for the next five years, with information on the changing context within which planning takes place.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The context within which the Council is required to plan school places is becoming increasingly complex and Thurrock has robust processes in place. A PPP team is in place that meets every 4 weeks and is made up of officers from the PPP team, Finance, Admissions, Awards & Benefits, Transport, Early Years and School Improvement to review current positions, issues and forecasts.
- 3.2 Academies are able to increase their pupil numbers without agreement from the Council within agreed limits.
- 3.3 The birth rate in Thurrock is increasing with the number of live births in 2015/16 being the highest that Thurrock has ever had. Thurrock's population has become more mobile therefore making projections more difficult to manage and forecast. During the last few years the Council has experienced a significant increase in the number of in year applications from families moving into the area.
- 3.4 The School Capital Team work closely with schools and academies in accommodating these large increases by carrying out expansion or adding bulge classes where the need is identified.
- 3.5 Thurrock is made up of a number of planning areas, five for the primary sector: Aveley Ockendon and Purfleet, Grays, Tilbury, Corringham and Stanford-Le-Hope and the Rural area. There are three in the secondary sector: West, Central and East, these larger planning areas provide more flexibility when considering pupil placement.
- 3.6 Thurrock has been successful in free school bids of which there are two new secondary schools, Thames Park and Orsett Heath who opened their doors to new students in September 2020 at their temporary sites. Both schools are on track to open on their permanent sites in September 2022. A new special

free school, Treetops 2, which will provide much needed special school provision which is planned to open in September 2021.

- 3.7 The primary phase forecasts in the 5 year plan are calculated on the basis of known data regarding live births in Thurrock, the number of children already on roll in schools and the anticipated child yield from proposed housing developments in the planning system.
- 3.8 Of the in-year school admissions applications that was processed from September 2019 to August 2020, 36% arrived in Thurrock from other parts of the country and as well as arriving into the UK.
- 3.9 There is currently surplus capacity in the secondary phase following the opening of the two new free schools in temporary accommodation. We anticipate that the surplus capacity in secondary schools will be required going forward as the increased primary population moves through the system.
- 3.10 Due to an increased number of families moving to Thurrock we have needed to open bulge classes this September in Grays, Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet planning areas to support the large increase in demand for primary school places.
- 3.11 Based on PPP forecasts and having reviewed the current school place vacancies we have identified there is a need to create additional school places in the following planning areas:
- Tilbury
 - Corringham and Stanford
 - Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet
- 3.12 As part of the Council's drive to ensure a strategic and proactive approach to pupil place planning regular monitoring is taking place with regular updates on position provided at Schools Forum and Headteachers termly briefings as well as consultation with schools in planning areas where there is a need for additional school places.

4. Reasons for Recommendation:

- 4.1 To ensure that the Council discharges its duties to secure sufficient schools in its area and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEND.

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

- 5.1 The Pupil Place Plan was sent to maintained schools and academies for consultation.

6. Impact on Corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance and Community Impact

- 6.1 The issues in this paper support the council's vision to be an ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future. It also supports the prosperity priority - a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

School places are funded through allocations of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is linked to the number of pupils within school, although it is lagged by one year, so significant growth can put some short term pressure on School Budgets.

The Capital costs of providing the infrastructure to provide more School places are generally funded through Basic Needs Capital Grants. These costs would be detailed within the Schools Capital Programme.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

This report does not require a decision to be made. It requests that Sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996 impose duties on the Council to promote high standards of and fair access to education, to secure sufficient schools in its area and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEN.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Community Engagement Officer

The Pupil Place Plan aims to inform the Thurrock Capital Programme to improve learning environments for young people, support improvements in standards, raise aspirations and give all children the best possible start in life.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

None

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Pupil Place Plan (2020-2024)

9. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Appendix 1: Pupil Place Plan (2020-2024)
- Appendix 2: A Look Behind Pupil Place Planning - Presentation

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Children's Services