

Petitions Update Report

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Presented (by)	Responsible Director	Status
552	<p>Save The Thameside Complex - As published in the cabinet agenda and report released on the 29 June, for discussion on the 7 July, the Thameside complex has been listed as a disposable asset. The Complex is home to a multitude of arts and cultural entities, including the theatre, Creative Blast, Performing Arts Studios, Thurrock Museum, Thames Delta Radio and the current Grays Library. The building is also host to tenants not mentioned in the report such as Transvol & Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions, who work through-out the Borough promoting equal rights for the disabled as well as the Cafe at the front of the building. Talking newspapers also has weekly meetings here, bringing the news to those unable to read a newspaper. By closing the building and potentially losing the Theatre, we also lose local groups such as Thurrock Court Players and TOPS on stage who are frequent users of the theatre and the local Scouts who perform their annual Gang Show on the stage, as well as many, many other groups performers and dance schools both local and out of the Borough. According to the report published the Register Office is set to be relocated to the new Civic Offices extension, the library is also up for discussion of relocation. It would be a terrible shame to not only lose all of the arts and culture located in this building, but to lose a vital piece of local history.</p>	21/7/21	Council	Karen Wheeler	<p>A response to the petition was provided on 23 August.</p> <p>A paper to Cabinet in July set out proposals for the disposal of Council owned assets including the Thameside Complex that are underused and / or not fit for purpose. The decision is in principal and concerns the building only and not the services. No decision has yet been made on the building and the Council is open to discussions with anyone about viable alternatives and options. The Thameside Theatre reopened on 7 September and the Thurrock Museum reopened on 14 September. We have confirmed Theatre bookings, including the Christmas panto which takes place through to January 2022 while both a final decision is made on the future of the Thameside Complex building and a new cultural strategy is developed. Members and Officers have commenced a process of engagement with local groups and wider stakeholders to discuss the theatre and museum, future delivery models and cultural services more generally.</p>

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	<p>As we come out of the pandemic, people need things to bring them joy, need to be able to laugh and smile, and have things to look forward too and the Thameside Complex can bring this to the community.</p>				<p>To date (30/09/21) 16 meetings have taken place including three roundtable discussions with Thurrock Heritage Group (16 external participants); Thurrock Museum Volunteers (8 external participants); and a group convened by Arts Thurrock with participants from across the arts and cultural sector (10 external participants including the petitioner). Officers will continue to work with partners to develop a new cultural strategy, a shared vision and priorities to support cultural regeneration across Thurrock. The positive effects of arts, culture and heritage on health and well-being, contribution to quality of life, and role in supporting economic growth is recognised.</p>
553	<p>The petition is against the proposed sale of the 6.8 acres of green fields opposite Cole Avenue, RM14 4JQ by Thurrock Council.</p>	21/7/21	Council	Sean Clark	<p>Following petition and related member representations the Council is carefully considering with its external advisers the historic position of this site in order to ensure that all material factors are adequately managed. Whilst the review is ongoing, active steps to progress the sale of the site are paused.</p>