

2 February 2023		Item: 8
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Qaisar Abbas, Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities		
Accountable Assistant Director: N/A		
Accountable Director: Les Billingham, Interim Director Adult Social Care & Community		
This report is Public		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the first report of the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities.
- 1.2 This report has been drafted to reflect the activities of the service during the year. The challenges facing the Council during 2022 are well publicised and this report should be read in that context. Future service activity will need to reflect the intervention the Council finds itself in. Particularly difficult decisions will need to be made on levels of service and methods of service delivery during 2023 and beyond.
- 1.3 This report outlines the key areas of the Portfolio and highlights the achievements across the last year. The report is split into the following seven sections:
 - Arts, Culture and Heritage;
 - Community Led Local Development (CLLD);
 - Community Development and Equalities;
 - Libraries;
 - Thurrock Register Office;
 - Community Safety Partnership;
 - Finance.

Part 1:

2. Arts, Culture and Heritage

- 2.1 Arts, Culture and Heritage have an important role in driving opportunity and supporting economic growth and regeneration across Thurrock. The Council's vision for cultural regeneration in Thurrock is one where culture brings people together, strengthens communities, and contributes to the creation of a more vibrant place, harnessing the power of culture and creativity to support health, social care, education, physical environment and economic development where culture and creativity improves the well-being of individuals and tackles inequalities.
- 2.2 Thurrock has been designated a Levelling Up for Culture Place by Arts Council England (ACE), which comes with a commitment to focus additional engagement and investment in Thurrock. Recently ACE announced their National Portfolio Organisations for 2022-26. There are three successful Thurrock organisations that have been awarded funding to deliver creative and cultural engagement, activity and outcomes across the borough, these are Kinetika People, Arts Outburst and CoDa Dance Company.
- 2.3 Thurrock Council manages the Thameside Theatre, Thurrock Museum and supports development of the arts across the borough. The Cultural Services team has worked hard to revive and strengthen community engagement, creative and cultural activity since lockdown restrictions have been lifted.
- 2.4 During the past 12 months the Museum has designed and curated displays for several temporary exhibitions that celebrate and commemorate significant local, national, and international anniversaries and events, including Armistice Day, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and Windrush Day, supported by an enthusiastic and dedicated team of volunteers.
- 2.5 A major focus for the Museum this year has been to identify, record and digitise all the items within its collections, estimated at around 30,000 objects. This project is an important first step in enabling the Museum to redesign the services and in ways that increase accessibility to its collections for residents and communities across Thurrock. This work is expected to continue until at least June 2023.
- 2.6 The Museum has also supported cultural education by creating and delivering opportunities in local schools to experience 'A Day in the life of a museum curator' and to learn about the 'Battle of Britain', through the Royal Opera House Thurrock Trailblazer programme.
- 2.7 The Museum Team has started a conversation with Essex Fire Museum to display articles in both Museums and agreed to work together in future.
- 2.8 The Thameside Theatre continues to deliver a diverse programme of creative and cultural activities to engage with and entertain local communities, including amateur and professional shows, and community activities both within the Theatre as well as participating in external events across Thurrock.

- 2.9 Funding from the Cultural Recovery Fund has enabled the Theatre to diversify its cultural services offer and invest in different ways to share cultural activity with audiences such as equipment to enable filming, including recording and editing the music video for the unofficial England World Cup song 'Stick Another Star on the Shirt'.
- 2.10 Creative experiences for children and young people (CYP) has continued to be an important outcome for the Thameside Theatre. This includes supporting the Thameside Young Producers by providing volunteering opportunities at the theatre that enable CYP to gain invaluable skills and experience which may lead to further educational opportunities, such as university placements, and jobs in prominent creative and cultural settings, such as West End theatres.
- 2.11 The Theatre also delivers activities and experiences designed to engage with residents who are differently abled, including hosting dementia and autism friendly shows, and supporting the Toy Library to deliver a Christmas decoration making session.
- 2.12 Both the Thameside Theatre and Thurrock Museum are located in the Thameside Complex in Grays which has a history of underinvestment and thus a backlog of maintenance needs.

Thurrock Museum faces a number of physical and operational challenges, for example, the main exhibition space is on the 1st floor of the building with museum artifacts stored on the 4th floor and in the building's basement, which has suffered from damp and asbestos. The Thameside Theatre is located on the 3rd floor whilst performer costume changing facilities are located on the 2nd floor. The limited seating (300) and space on the stage restricts the type of touring shows attracted to the venue. During the past 12 months the theatre has also had major issues with the building's ventilation system that resulted in reduced audience capacity.

- 2.13 The Council is particularly supportive of community led arts and cultural activity in Thurrock and is a core consortium partner and providing match funding for the START: Thurrock Creative People and Places programme, funded by Arts Council England. Commencing delivery in April 2023, Creative People and Places is about more people choosing, creating, and taking part in brilliant creative activities.
- 2.14 The programme, being led by the Tilbury on Thames Trust, will draw in more than £1 million investment for cultural and creative activity in Thurrock. Groups and individuals across the borough have come together to help shape a shared vision for community led cultural activity across the borough.
- 2.15 The Council day-to-day operational management and strategic development responsibilities at High House Production Park (HHPP) on behalf of the charity continues, with the costs of this work being met by the charity. HHPP, a world-class centre for creative production, has raised Thurrock's profile as a centre for the creative industries – a growing sector in the UK economy. It will

be important to use the same collaborative approach the Council has adopted for the community driven cultural activity to help the sector to grow and create jobs, inward investment and wealth in Thurrock.

- 2.16 The Council, working on behalf of High House Production Park secured funding from the Creative Estuary programme to refresh the business plan for High House and to conduct a feasibility study on options for further development of creative workspace on site. Creative Estuary is also supporting a pilot programme in Purfleet aimed at embedding cultural facilities and activities into the major regeneration scheme. The Council is also actively involved in the creative industries work being carried out by the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) across south Essex which includes supporting the development of research which identifies and defines the vital role of culture and the creative industries.
- 2.17 The Council is working with the Royal Opera House to deliver the Thurrock Trailblazer programme – enabling young people in Thurrock to benefit from high quality cultural activities.
- 2.18 The Thurrock Local Cultural Education Partnership is a cross sector, strategic group which has been established to address gaps in local cultural opportunity and improve cultural education for children and young people in Thurrock.

The current focus is arts in Early Years, through which the partnership has enabled 10 nurseries and childminders to receive training bursaries, hold two networking events and bring new arts organisations into Thurrock to deliver training for educators and nursery workers.

- 2.19 The Council has supported various communities and creative/cultural organisations and artists over the past 12 months, including We Are Creatives with their 'Music Man' project, Together Productions with their 'Sharing Our Lives' project, Thurrock's Nepalese Community with the world premiere of a film produced and starring members of the local Nepalese community, High House Community Group with their Heritage Open Day and the LGBTQIA+ community with regular networking opportunities and events held at the Thameside theatre.

Going forward

- 2.20 The Local Authority will continue to work with partners to champion the importance of cultural services and in particular the approach to cultural regeneration to better support the Council's place ambitions.
- 2.21 Working collaboratively with communities, partners and creative and cultural organisations, the Council will develop a 'Thurrock Plan for Culture' which will define our shared vision and mission and set out key priorities for nurturing, enabling, facilitating and delivering locally designed and driven cultural engagement and activities with communities in Thurrock.

- 2.22 This important plan will support cultural regeneration in Thurrock that is social, economic and physical over the long-term including exploring ways to maximise the power of culture and creativity to support the well-being of individuals and communities as part of an overall programme for economic growth that impacts positively on social change, tackles inequalities and promotes place shaping through creativity. This work has already commenced, and the Council expect to bring forward the new co-produced cultural strategy early in 2023.
- 2.23 Cultural stakeholders have feedback the need for better co-ordination and collaboration across the sector and in the development and delivery of cultural and creative activities. Utilising funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Council will enhance its Cultural Services team, providing a dedicated resource to better support the creative and cultural sector in Thurrock, build and strengthen relationships that foster cooperation and mutual support to achieve our shared ambitions and provide a cultural co-ordination role. The Council will work in partnership with key stakeholders to identify opportunities to develop and deliver cultural activities across Thurrock.
- 2.24 The Local Authority will work with partners to deliver community driven arts and heritage activity across the borough in ways that help improve the quality of life for Thurrock's residents, reimagine high streets and open spaces, support a new dimension to the borough's economy, one that creates new jobs and opportunities for people to develop new skills as well as contributes to key messages, conveying Thurrock's success and opportunities and helping build external relationships for future prosperity.
- 2.25 The next section of the report provides an overview of the Community Led Local Development portfolio.

Part 2:

3. Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

- 3.1 The Tilbury Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme covers Tilbury St Chads and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park wards. The focus of the programme is to support local SME businesses as well as new start-ups and investment in projects that help unemployed or economically inactive residents to become economically active again. A Local Action Group (LAG) comprised of voluntary and community sector, resident, Member and business representatives agreed the priorities for the area and make key funding decisions.
- 3.2 The delivery element of the programme will run until March 2023. It is part-funded through funds drawn down through the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and Department for Work and Pensions.
- 3.3 The CLLD Programme offers grants of £1,000-£4,000 to small and medium-sized businesses to improve their business frontage or to provide funding for small items of equipment, marketing or procured services. By the end

of December 62 local businesses had been awarded £221,423 in grants, 38 being general grants and 24 frontage improvement grants. The aim is to support at least 68 businesses by the time the project concludes. To this end over 1,000 registered SMEs have been contacted about the grant scheme in the last two months.

- 3.4 The investment to support unemployed or economically inactive residents has to be matched pound for pound, meaning that the funding has only attracted interest from providers with project activity already funded in the area. Four projects are currently running, offering a range of help to prepare for, find and secure work or move into learning. Providers include voluntary and community sector, Thurrock Adult Community College and Council teams, with £1.32m in funding awarded. These services have been badly affected by the lockdown and the changing labour market but all of them are now delivering support in the heart of Tilbury. Around 250 residents have been registered to date with almost 70 helped into work.
- 3.5 An evaluation of the Programme is being commissioned, and work is underway to explore future support, including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Freeport skills fund.

The next section of the report provides an overview of the Community Development and Equalities portfolio.

Part 3:

4. Community Development and Equalities

- 4.1 The Community Development and Equalities Team enables services to engage with communities to increase participation and opportunities for collaboration and co-production. The Team helps people to come together to take positive action on what is important to them, often in partnership with others including the voluntary sector, community hubs and libraries.
- 4.2 The Team leads on equalities for the Council, ensuring proposals developed by services are informed by duties as a public body under the Equality Act 2010 and also representative of local priorities. Building strong, resilient communities that enable integration and cohesion in a growing borough underpins the wide and varied work of the service.
- 4.3 Increasingly, so much of the Council's ability to achieve the best outcomes for residents relies on an independent and thriving voluntary, community and faith sector.
- 4.4 The current portfolio holder has initiated meetings with around 50 community groups and voluntary sector organisations, inviting them into the new Town Hall to hear about their work in Thurrock and to thank them for all they have achieved and to discuss options how as a council we can help and support them in their future projects. As a result of this, several practical steps have been taken to support their work including signposting to CVS for help with

policies, suggesting funding to develop their work, linking with other services to form new partnerships and helping to identify buildings where they can operate from. All are encouraged to join the Stronger Together database to further promote their work to residents and other partners, and all have welcomed the recognition and new relationships these meetings have helped to foster.

- 4.5 Many of the groups the portfolio holder has met with and introduced to the Council are supporting diverse communities who have not always felt they have a voice or influence as Thurrock residents. By helping to raise their profile and recognise the social value they bring to Thurrock, the Council is building their confidence to achieve more and to link with local services. A very successful marketplace was hosted by the Council in Interfaith Week which helped to showcase the diversity of faith in Thurrock. This included a new Hindu temple which has a recently established regular presence at the Lightship Café in Grays although the community has lived here for some decades. They no longer need to travel out of borough to practice and the Council welcome the contribution they can now make locally. As the borough grows, it is increasingly important to ensure services and infrastructure reflects the changing needs of local people. The Local Authority is grateful to the Environment Team for enabling a dedicated space for Muslim burials as well as this year developing a dedicated section for burials in the Nepalese Gurkha community. In addition, we also planted a tree and installed a plaque in Grays Town Park to remember the victims of the genocide in Srebrenica.
- 4.6 Following the support given through Covid, the Stronger Together Partnership is developing as a key resource to help increase community resilience. A Cost of Living conference was held in December 2022 with over 100 services, businesses, schools and community groups coming together to map current support and consider future opportunities. A dedicated web page promotes local provisions. This includes a network of warm spaces across the borough which offer free hot drinks and activities, connecting communities, highlighting issues and helping to support positive change wherever possible.
- 4.7 In partnership with CVS, the Community Fund invested over £40,000 in May 2022 to local organisations to further their social value across Thurrock. Some of this funding included targeted support to build resilience post-pandemic. A further round opened in November 2022 and it is heartening to see the dedication and commitment from those who want to make a difference for their community be it of place, or of interest.
- 4.8 Small Sparks has been a huge success this year. Funds have been invested in supporting community initiatives including street parties to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee as well as communities coming together around Christmas and festive celebrations. The fund, administered by Thurrock CVS, remains open to support Warm Spaces at the present time.
- 4.9 The Council continues to support its own volunteer programme with over 200 volunteers active throughout this year in a variety of roles. This year the Libraries Summer Reading challenge was supported by 37 young volunteers

aged between 13-16, volunteering for over 780 hours. The Team provide training, advice and guidance to services on involving and supporting volunteers. A new Teams channel has been set up to support staff acting as a volunteer manager across all directorates, with anyone welcome to join.

- 4.10 Aveley Community Hub was launched in August 2022 and now hosts a library with study space and access to PCs and Wi-Fi, nursery, community hall and a café that provides affordable meals to visitors. The space also hosts Thurrock Adult Community College, a changing places provision and rooms to hire. In recent weeks, volunteers have worked with the hub to develop a warm space, toddler group, a winter warm coat rack and a community pantry. Services at the hub continue to develop along with its links to Purfleet Hub which reopened in March 2022. Since that time, Purfleet Hub has significantly expanded and is now open three days a week with a wide range of services for residents that extends from school uniform provision for families on a low income, art classes, a community fridge and plans for a community shop to open on the Garrison Estate.

Going Forward

- 4.11 Priorities for the future include building on the commitments set out in the Collaborative Communities Framework adopted in January 2021 and continuing to align the principles of engagement; empowerment and equality through the implementation of other key strategies including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Better Care Together Thurrock – Further Case for Change, Backing Thurrock and emerging Corporate Plan.

This approach includes improving the Council's engagement with all communities to shape the development of the organisation and its priorities, particularly working with those who may face barriers or be marginalised. In doing so, the development of new ways of working will seek to influence all new and existing strategies and improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for residents, for example, by piloting Community Investment Boards to agree local priorities and attract funding and resource to address inequalities at Primary Care Network (PCN) level.

- 4.12 The Council will improve how it embeds its understanding of health and equality considerations across the organisation and the transformation of services to ensure that its focus aligns with the need to level the playing field and improve equality outcomes for all residents.

The next section of the report provides an overview of the Libraries portfolio.

Part 4:

5. Libraries

- 5.1 Thurrock Libraries develop activities and service provision opportunities under the framework of both local strategic priorities and the Universal Offers as

defined by Libraries Connected, incorporating Information and Digital, Health and Wellbeing, Reading, Culture and Creativity, and the Children's Promise.

- 5.2 Thurrock Library Services continue to underwrite public access to books (for education and leisure purposes), authoritative information and PC facilities, including internet and printing. During April 2021 until March 2022 loans of physical items were at nearly 274k, and annual footfall across the borough for in-library services was almost 172k.
- 5.3 Thurrock joined The Libraries Consortium (TLC) in April 2021 and since then three other authorities have joined, broadening the range to 7.3M items available for Thurrock residents across 321 libraries. TLC is a business partnership of 23 library authorities, 19 of which are London boroughs, and that partnership provides value for money, shared resources, and joint contracts.
- 5.4 Physical stock is supplemented by a popular and expanding digital library, consisting of thousands of e-books, e-audiobooks, newspapers and magazines. During April 2021 until March 2022 approximately 13k loans were registered for eBooks and almost 14k for eAudiobooks for Thurrock.
- 5.5 Grays Library maintains a comprehensive Local Studies archive, containing items of unique historical interest, while East Tilbury hosts the Bata Heritage Collection.
- 5.6 Libraries are continually adapting and look for opportunities for good community engagement and income streams. Following the closure of Corringham Barclays Bank branch, they now operate two days a week at Corringham Library.

Grays and Chadwell libraries are hosting the Lower Thames crossing documents for public perusal. These two initiatives have generated an income of approx. £27k.

- 5.7 A dedicated Libraries Facebook page went live in October and Wi-Fi printing was successfully launched in November 2022. New promotional material has been produced in the form of z-cards which promote apps and online services and the Bitesize sessions where residents can book in for support have been a great success.
- 5.8 Libraries and Hubs have responded to the cost of living crisis by offering residents free, safe and supportive Warm Spaces between 2:00pm and 4:00pm at certain libraries on selected days during the colder winter months which have been supported by local organisations and supermarkets. During this time, residents have access to free hot drinks and trusted information.
- 5.9 Libraries also secured the National Databank offer via Good Things Foundation which provides free mobile data, texts and calls to people in need. SIM cards are distributed via libraries to adults who meet the criteria. SIM cards with 6 months sim and data have been gifted to 85 residents to the end

of December 2022. This amounts to a saving a resident between £100- £200 in the period of 6months. Cards are usually renewed for a further six months.

- 5.10 The Library offer has been extended with the support of Citizens Advice South Essex and Thurrock Adult Community College, who under a Self-Service Partnership Agreement open libraries on days which they are usually closed. Both organisations operate their own service, whilst enabling residents to access library facilities such as PCs, Wi-Fi, and printing and to browse, borrow, renew and return items using the self-service kiosks.
- 5.11 A successful £10k joint health literacy bid with Public Health will enable the upskilling of staff at three libraries. This will support residents to improve their local health literacy and digital skills and navigate local NHS and council services, access trusted health resources in partnership with Knowledge Staff at Basildon Hospital library. This is due to launch in March 2023.

Going Forward

- 5.12 The Council will build on its partnership with communities and services to develop the local offer within place-based settings. The Local Authority is working with organisations to generate income through room/space hire and will continue to maximise Library and hub outreach, activities and groups to tackle social isolation and to promote the value of reading. Libraries and hubs welcome more service contact to ensure better outcomes for residents in response to their local needs. The Council will continue to build on the success of regular events to enjoy and celebrate reading including the Summer Reading Challenge.

The next section of the report provides an overview of the Thurrock Register Office.

Part 5:

6. Thurrock Register Office

- 6.1 The Register Office provides the statutory service of registering births deaths and marriages, alongside the non-statutory service of citizenship ceremonies on both a group and individual basis.
- 6.2 This year the service has relocated to the new Council building providing all aspects of the service there from September. However, the new ceremony rooms were available to guests since April.
- 6.3 The new venue has enhanced the service as the Council is now able to offer new functions for ceremonies including live streaming and improved sound systems, as well as a new garden.
- 6.4 The Register office provides a welcoming, private and compassionate service to those users registering births, deaths and marriages with over 1000 being taken so far this year.

- 6.5 As the Registrar for weddings within Thurrock, the service has attended 450 ceremonies this year. Half of those took place in a Council venue, where families and guests were welcomed to the offices for the joyous occasion.
- 6.6 Citizenship ceremonies both private and group are carried out by the Register Office team. 89 ceremonies have taken place this year with each group session welcoming approximately 25 new citizens and their guests. Welcoming new citizens at this ceremony is an important event which the Mayor also attends.
- 6.7 The Team has been able to provide a consistent service this year with no COVID-19 restrictions which has allowed all aspects of the work to be completed efficiently and within a timely manner.
- 6.8 Customers can now complete satisfaction surveys following their use of the service in person and online, which allows the Local Authority to take on board the feedback and continue to improve the service.

Going forward

- 6.9 Ongoing promotion of the services that the Register Office provides.
- 6.10 Review of the website to ensure that the information is clear and relevant to users.
- 6.11 Continue to benchmark against other local authorities to ensure that the Council's fees and charges are in line.
- 6.12 Further review of the service to ensure that it is delivered efficiently and meets the needs of users.
- 6.13 Continue to provide all aspects of the service in line with the requirements of the General Registrar's Office.

The next section of the report provides an overview of the Community Safety Partnership portfolio.

Part 6:

7. Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

- 7.1 The Culture and Communities portfolio has been extended to include the work of the Community Safety Partnership which is key in supporting Thurrock's communities to remain resilient and has strong links to their health and well-being and supports the aims and ambitions of Domain 6 of the Health and Well Being Strategy 2022/26, which are:

- Thurrock is a place where people feel and are safe to live, socialise, work and visit;

- The Council will also ensure that victims/survivors of crime are able to access support to cope and recover from their experiences, should they need it.

7.2 The Partnerships priorities for 2022/23 are:

- 1. Tackling disproportionality in relation to Violence Against Women and Girls** – including sexual offences, stalking and rape, whilst recognising that men and boys can also be victims;
- 2. Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse:** in line with the Domestic Abuse Duty and needs assessment;
- 3. Violence and Vulnerability:** Tackling gang related activity and offensive weapons to reduce drug driven violence;
- 4. Counter Extremism and Terrorism:** Preventing Violent Extremism locally;
- 5. Reduce harm to and safeguard victims from Hate Crime** – including Sex/Gender based hate crime;
- 6. Tackling Community based Anti-social Behaviour and Safeguarding victims** - including off road motorbike nuisance;
- 7. Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery, and Organised Immigration Crime;**
- 8. Safer streets through increased visibility and community engagement;**
- 9. Tackling offending** – reducing high volume crimes, for example burglary.

7.3 In 2022 the following progress has been made towards each of the CSP's priorities:

Violence Against Women and Girls

- 7.4 eLearning awareness product for Sexual Violence and Abuse developed and launched to provide a cost-effective training tool that can reach a wider audience across the borough.
- 7.5 Council Member awareness training delivered on sexual violence and abuse from the perspective of men and women.
- 7.6 Professional awareness session delivered on sexual violence and abuse from men and boys (survivor perspective).
- 7.7 Community Engagement pop up engagement event as part of 16 days of action event promoting Safer Streets.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

- 7.8 Year 1 and 2 of the New Burdens funding delivering against the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 continues to be rolled out resulting in more support services in Refuge, including:
 - Financial inclusion support officer;

- Trauma focused counselling for children;
- Childrens worker- increase in capacity;
- Trauma focused counselling for adults;
- Specialist sexual violence and abuse counselling for survivors in Refuge and onto resettlement;
- Training for Refuge staff;
- Inclusion drop-in service;
- Tuition for Children;
- Flexible funding arrangements, following the principles of the Whole Housing Approach.

7.9 Professionals' visits to Thurrock Refuge continue with positive feedback from attending professionals and Refuge staff resulting in new connections and partnerships.

Violence and Vulnerability

7.10 Olive Outreach programme is in place and being well received by Secondary schools who are referring in those at risk of exclusion.

7.11 Contextual safeguarding reports are shared termly with school colleagues.

7.12 The recruitment of a 'Young Persons Exploitation Worker' has allowed for more structured work to be delivered to the under 18 years cohort. This provides opportunity for a 12 week period of structured intervention to be delivered which specifically focuses on gangs and exploitation.

7.13 Walk online roadshows highlighting risks in relation to online exploitation, gangs and knife crime delivered to years five and six. Years seven and eight are planned for March 2023.

7.14 Eight interim gang injunctions secured on youth members of the GTM gang.

Counter Terrorism and Extremism

7.15 Delivering ongoing training for Professionals on Prevent and includes an overview of hate crime.

7.16 Situational risk assessment shared quarterly as appropriate, including education settings, and action plan updated to reflect any emerging risks.

7.17 Communication strategy and plan drafted and shared for implementation.

7.18 Event Policy/speaker policy agreed and shared with some premises for testing.

7.19 Engagement with Members through Overview and Scrutiny and Hidden, and Extreme Harms Committee, including a Home Office led round table.

- 7.20 Presentation to community members of the Independent Advisory Group which the portfolio holder is a member of by the Counter Terrorism policing team.

Hate Crime

- 7.21 Thurrock has 210 trained hate crime ambassadors and the portfolio holder is one and was pleased to support promotion of this priority through attending events during Hate Crime Awareness week and reaching out to the borough's faith groups through the inter related faith week event.
- 7.22 Stay safe has been launched online for people with a learning disability.

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

- 7.23 The Council has seen a decrease in reports of off-road motorbike nuisance following the implementation of target hardening programme, and Essex Police, Thurrock Council and CSP jointly funded quadbikes to target off road motorbikes.
- 7.24 Car racing in West Thurrock continues to have a detrimental impact to residents, visitors to the borough and businesses despite ongoing enforcement of the West Thurrock PSPO with 78 Fixed Penalty Notices issued in respect of the Public Space Protection Order in 2022 through Op Irish lions.
- 7.25 Following increase in reports of ASB in Ockendon Op Uranium ran to identify the nominals of concern, and out of hours patrols.
- 7.26 Mapping of secondary fires is now reviewed quarterly and has led to education and target hardening in Ockendon area and an education and awareness event in Grays.
- 7.27 The Local Authority continue to use Locality Action Groups to work in partnership to safeguard victims, to promote ASB case reviews and respond accordingly to findings, Thurrock have implemented good practice guidelines of inviting the complainant of the anti-social behaviour to attend the case review in part, street lighting has been invested in in the Corringham area.

Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime

- 7.28 The CSP now have a three year strategy for Modern Day Slavery in Thurrock which sets out Thurrock's approach to tackling modern day slavery and duties under the Modern Slavery Act (MDS) 2015.
- 7.29 Thurrock Council has published a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.
- 7.30 A regular training programme has been scheduled, providing an overview of types and signs of exploitation, what the barriers to reporting maybe for

victims and the action required by professionals to deliver an effective response.

- 7.31 To offer consistency and collaboration across documentation, a Southend, Essex & Thurrock Modern Slavery one minute guide has been completed.
- 7.32 In June 2022, a partnership joint operation with Essex Police, and Trading Standards was completed to inspect car washes through Op Aidant. There were no concerns found.
- 7.33 A toolkit for small and medium enterprises was promoted in Business Buzz newsletter business contacts in the borough.
- 7.34 In October 2022 a memorial service was held in remembrance of the 39 Vietnamese who were found, sadly deceased, in Thurrock on 23 October 2019. 39 trees were planted and a memorial unveiled which sets out Thurrock's commitment to preventing human trafficking and modern day slavery. A video of the service will be used to support teaching and education around organised immigration crime and consequences.

Safer streets through increased visibility and community engagement

- 7.35 Coffee with Cops are held across the district covering different days of the week and times and in partnership with locations, they are also held when community groups are also there to increase engagement.
- 7.36 Ukrainian refugee welcome events attended.
- 7.37 Attended event to celebrate inter faith week event.
- 7.38 Supporting National Hate crime awareness week – visiting HIRCS (hate incident reporting centres) and pop-up in Grays High Street.
- 7.39 Monthly pop-up events hosted in Grays.
- 7.40 Responding to off road motorbike concerns with two pop up events in Stanford Le Hope.
- 7.41 Responding to ASB and community concerns with pop up in Gobions Park which led to funding for street football.
- 7.42 The CSP provide a weekly input to the CVS newsletter highlighting a different topic weekly.
- 7.43 The Partnership hosted a day of activity for 16 days of action – including event at Grays and Palmers college and street engagement at Grays train station.

Tackling offending

- 7.44 Reducing reoffending is a statutory duty of both Local Authorities and CSP's and there is strong partnership working across all key agencies to support all people who have offended, with the aim of preventing them from re-offending. This includes children aged 10-17 years, (managed by our Youth Offending service) and adults from 18 upwards (managed by The Probation Service).

Going forward

Violence Against Women and Girls

- 7.45 Embed harmful sexual behaviours project with NSPCC.
- 7.46 Collection of Thurrock data regarding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to gain knowledge of common themes across the county.
- 7.47 Refresh the strategy from April 2023 incorporating DA.
- 7.48 To identify zones of high risk for women's safety through OP Minerva and put appropriate actions in place.
- 7.49 Development of street pastor project in Grays.

Domestic Abuse

- 7.50 A campaign to reach private landlords to build awareness, information and signposting for victims of domestic/sexual abuse and violence.
- 7.51 Explore with Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) partners the proper mechanism to ensure survivors of DA are involved, represented and shape the delivery of the local response to domestic abuse.

Violence and Vulnerability

- 7.52 Continue to progress work to develop predictive risk model for youth violence and gang involvement and to use it effectively to provide tailored preventative packages to enable effective multi-agency response to those at risk.
- 7.53 Strategic assessment in relation to youth violence is in development, with the draft strategy in response to Serious Youth Violence Duty planned June 2023.
- 7.54 To progress gang injunctions for adult members of the GTM gang.

Counter Terrorism and Extremism

- 7.55 Host an awareness session for Council and Health colleagues to look at those vulnerable due to mental health, utilising case studies.
- 7.56 Embed the revised Home Office training when released.

- 7.57 Extend the Prevent strategy for Thurrock beyond 2023 and refresh the Partnership's action plan.

Hate Crime

- 7.58 Re-engage Hate Incident Referral Centres (HIRCs), reduce where appropriate and enhance with new HIRCs.
- 7.59 Refresh and update printed resources to be shared with HIRCs and wider Ambassador community.
- 7.60 Promote and monitor the reporting of gender-based hate crime, where Essex Police now record Hate Crime where the primary motivation of the perpetrator is directed toward the sex/gender of the victim by delivering refresher training for our ambassadors and including within the CSP's web site and leaflets.

Anti-social Behaviour

- 7.61 One case currently progressing through the Magistrates Court for ongoing breach of a Community Protection Notice in relation to neighbourhood nuisance ASB.
- 7.62 To seek funding to implement identified measures to target harden East Tilbury and Davey Down from off road motorbike nuisance.
- 7.63 Public Consultation on implementing a Public Space Protection Order for (i) dogs to remain on leads in cemeteries (ii) dogs to be prohibited from multi-use games areas, play areas, skate parks and tennis courts, (iii) off road motorbikes and (iv) PSPO for Grays High Street to be renewed pending a public consultation where consideration will be given to extending the area to cover Grays Town Park.

Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime

- 7.64 Host a partnership event to share the latest updates and guidance from leading experts on tackling modern slavery.
- 7.65 Develop a draft Thurrock Modern Day Slavery (MDS) pathway for first responder and professionals who are made aware of a potential victim of MDS/human trafficking.
- 7.66 Promote the Landlord's guide to tackling modern day slavery, to reduce the risk of it in their properties. Private housing teams to carry out checks to properties with partners.

Safer streets through increased visibility and community engagement

- 7.67 Develop links to faith organisations made at the Celebrating Inter Faith Week event.

7.68 Continue to offer pop up events where issues of ASB identified.

Tackling offending

7.69 Continued Partnership working to tackle high priority repeat offenders through the Integrated Offender Management Programme.

7.70 Ongoing promotion and encouragement of referrals to the Essex Restorative Justice and Mediation service with refresher training.

7.71 Review and extensions of the Public Health funded Well Homes project which provides temporary housing accommodation to prolific ex-offenders and works closely with IOM and Thurrock Inclusions to provide employment and training interventions to increase their employment opportunities.

The next section of the report provides an overview of the Finances linked to the specific areas of the portfolio.

Part 7:

8. Finances

Arts, Heritage and Culture

8.1 The Theatre budget is based on a cost recovery basis. Income is generated through ticket sales and/or profit share arrangements, which can be negatively impacted by poor sales and/or other mitigating factors.

8.2 The Museum budget is £75,000 which supports staffing costs and essential costs to facilitate the day-to-day operation of the museum, including health and safety factors. A small amount of income, approx. £1500, is generated through Education programmes.

8.3 The Cultural Services budget is £13,500 and has an annual commitment over 3 years to provide match funding to the START: Thurrock Creative People and Places programme.

8.4 Operational and Strategic services provided to High House Production Park Ltd are delivered through a Service Level Agreement between Thurrock Council and the charity and are based on a cost recovery basis.

Community Development

8.5 £753,949 was spent by the service in 2021/22 with £406,997 distributed as grants to the voluntary sector. The service has an allocation of £835,266 in 2022/23.

Libraries

- 8.6 £1.115m was spent on the library service in 2021/22. The service has an allocation of £1.332m in 2022/23.

Thurrock Register Office

- 8.7 The Register Office budget is based on a cost recovery basis.
- 8.8 Income is generated through provision of services such as attending ceremonies and hiring of the Council's venue; however this is impacted by demand for the service which is outside of the organisation's control. The service is performing well year to date with forecasted income exceeding target for the year. The Council is hopeful that increased marketing of the new venue will enable further income generation next year.

Community Safety Partnership

- 8.9 The CSP has a grant from the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner of £24,976, the same as last year and an £18,343 contribution from Thurrock Council. These funds have been allocated to support delivery of the priorities.
- 8.10 The PFCC and partners have been successful in obtaining additional funds to support targeted work to tackle violence and vulnerability.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 This report highlights the comprehensive and high-quality work undertaken across the diverse portfolio of services that are responsibility of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities. It documents continued performance and sets out an ambitious agenda of further transformation moving forward.