

<b>16 July 2024</b>		<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group: Scoping Report</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> N/A	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key	
<b>Report of:</b> Lucy Tricker, Overview and Scrutiny Officer		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Helen Nicol, Assistant Director Legal & Governance		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Daniel Fenwick, Executive Director of Corporate Services & Monitoring Officer		
<b>This report is public</b>		
<b>Version:</b> Final Version		

### **Executive Summary**

This report details the governance and other areas for consideration regarding the request to commence a Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group, which would report its work and findings to the Place Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee.

The Draft Terms of Reference and Scoping Document are appended, which detail the purpose and proposed goals of the Task and Finish Group, as well as potential timeline of activities that could be carried out by the Group.

### **Commissioner Comments**

N/A

- 1. Recommendation(s)**
  - 1.1 That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree to a 10-week time limited Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group.**
  - 1.2 Members comment and suggest relevant amendments to the Draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) and Scoping Document (Appendix 2), in accordance with the updated overview and scrutiny guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS).**
  - 1.3 If the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree with recommendation 1.1: Members to agree the size and membership of the Task and Finish Group.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 A motion was proposed at Full Council on 25 October 2023 by Councillor J Redsell, which read as follows: *Members resolve that a Task and Finish Group or similar be established to look at options for tackling school parking across the borough. Further, that a report on such options should be produced at the conclusion of the group's review.*
- 2.2 Members debated the motion and agreed that problem parking outside schools was a long-standing issue across the borough, and safety remained paramount for parents, schools, and Ward Members. Members requested that any potential Task and Finish Group should look at innovative ways to tackle the problem and have clear and tangible outcomes. Members also felt that there should be a co-ordinated approach across the borough that should include input from Members, schools, parents, and school children. Members voted on the motion, and it was carried unanimously.
- 2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny function was undergoing significant restructuring and development in 2023. Following the recruitment of two Overview and Scrutiny Officers in January 2024, they began the scoping exercise for the review in accordance with the new protocols and guidance put in place following improvement work on the scrutiny processes.
- 2.4 Overview and Scrutiny Officers met with transport colleagues to discuss the scope of the proposed Task and Finish Group. Officers also discussed potential activities and workstreams that could be undertaken, and any background comparative work which officers could begin before the formal work of any potential Task and Finish Group.
- 2.5 In September 2022, Thurrock Council entered a period of intervention by the government, following concerns regarding finances. The Commissioners examined and investigated many areas of the council including finances, major projects, and governance. Following this, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) were brought in to review governance and the scrutiny function. Their findings were reported to the Governance Recovery Board in September 2023 where they recommended a refresh of the scrutiny system, including reducing the number of committees and changing the way Task and Finish Groups were utilised.
- 2.6 A report on the changes to the overview and scrutiny function was presented to General Services Committee on 13 February 2024 and agreed by Full Council on 20 March 2024. The report, based on advice and guidance from the CfGS, advises that each O&S Committee only establish two Task and Finish Groups at any one time. This is to ensure that Members and officers have adequate resources and capacity to undertake high quality reviews with clear outcomes.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 Recommendation 1.1 outlines the proposal for a 10-week time limited Task and Finish Group to consider a new School Parking Policy document which would be presented to the Place O&S Committee, and Cabinet for final approval, once findings and recommendations had been completed. The draft Scoping Document and Terms of Reference are included as Appendices 1 and 2.

- 3.2 This option would be in line with the CfGS recommendations as the Task and Finish Group would be time-limited, could have tangible outcomes, and may be able to impact Council policy.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 Place O&S Members are being asked to agree to a Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group, based on the motion from Councillor Redsell in October 2023 and taking into consideration the guidelines from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS).

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

- 5.1 This report has been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team.
- 5.2 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) have been consulted on the contents of the report as part of ongoing officer meetings.

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

- 6.1 Parking at schools can have a large impact on the community, for those that have school-aged children and for those that live near schools. Members should consider this issue through the appropriate governance channels.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**  
**Finance Manager**

**18 March 2024**

There are no financial implications associated with the commencement of a Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group. If any financial impacts are identified in future, a separate report or briefing note will be presented to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Additional Task and Finish Groups to those agreed in the advised structure will require officer support and resource.

##### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Caroline Robins**  
**Locum Principal Planning and Highways Solicitor**

**19 March 2024**

There are no direct legal implications at this stage of the process.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**  
**Team Manager – Community Development & Equalities**  
**20 March 2024**

The report does not have any direct diversity or equality implications. Any direct implications will be considered within committee or Task and Finish Group reports, and residents will be engaged through the democratic process.

### 7.4 Risks

There are several risks associated with this decision, namely ensuring the appropriate governance regarding parking at schools, and the ability for officers to support additional committees outside core work, considering the intervention and guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

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

There are no other implications to be considered.

### 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):

- 25 October 2023 Full Council: Item 7 - [Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 25th October, 2023, 7.00 pm | Thurrock Council](#)

### 9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Draft Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2 – Scoping Document

### Report Author:

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