

A fresh start for Thurrock – introducing our corporate plan 2024-2029

Foreword

Realising Thurrock's full potential requires all of us to come together and play our full part; residents, businesses, voluntary, faith and community groups, public sector partners and the council. Collectively, we will make a difference.

The loss of confidence in the council will have a long legacy. Building trust and confidence that the council will play its full role and collaborate effectively with all our partners and stakeholders is dependent on the council demonstrating it is different and better. Work continues with a clear focus to deliver our recovery, to move towards establishing ourselves on a financially sustainable footing and to be a credible organisation. We are focussing on how we can best serve our communities and work with our partners.

We now have a huge opportunity, to challenge embedded ways of doing things, to look outside the borough and learn from others, and to genuinely work with our communities to co-design solutions to the things that matter most.

This Corporate Plan, building on our Improvement and Recovery Plan, sets out what we are doing, how we are doing it and what we aim to achieve as a result of our efforts over the coming years.

Dave Smith
Managing Director Commissioner and Chief Executive

Councillor John Kent
Leader of the Council

Why do we need a corporate plan?

Every well-run council needs a plan, so staff, residents and partners understand what the organisation is trying to achieve and how it plans to do that. It helps everyone prioritise and pull together around common goals, so we deliver what we have promised.

The Corporate Plan is not intended to cover everything the council does but sets out our aspirations for change that will be delivered alongside our day-to-day activities. Whilst set out as a 5-year plan, it will be reviewed every year, so we are clear about our planned programme and are open and honest about how we are performing.

Our purpose

In response to the growing demands and limited resources local government is experiencing, we see the council's purpose changing. While we will of course continue to deliver statutory services and support our most vulnerable residents, we believe our purpose is to:

- lead our communities, bringing local residents, businesses, community groups and partners together to better understand the opportunities and needs of the borough and individual neighbourhoods.
- bring together and engage all who can make a contribution to supporting local people with their needs, and to realise opportunity.
- provide high quality analysis to support open and transparent decision-making on strategic and operational priorities.
- be consistent and comprehensive in analysing and evaluating the impact of our collective strategies at addressing need and opportunity to enable us to learn how to improve.

We will do this by:

- focusing on ensuring our residents and communities have access to affordable and responsive services
- using digital tools to ensure our processes are simple and effective.
- harnessing the strengths of our partners to deliver outcomes.
- enabling and empowering others to provide more services, ensuring there is a diverse and innovative community of support available for residents.
- always delivering good value for the public purse.

Our values

To achieve the ambitions of this plan, the whole council needs to sign up to shared values, which cover how we will work within the council, with our communities, and with partners. Our shared values are:

1) Together, we hold ourselves to account to get things done

We do this by demonstrating accountability and integrity.

2) Together, we make possible what cannot be achieved alone

We do this by being collaborative and focusing on impact.

3) Together, we will listen and act to continually improve

We do this by being responsive to local people and the issues they raise, and adapting our approach to achieve better outcomes.

Our priorities

We have organised our priorities into three main areas:

An Enabling council, People, Place.

What can staff and residents expect to see as we roll out our plans? Here are some examples within each area:

Enabling

Easier access to the council, using digital technology backed up by welcoming community hubs across the borough.

A clear understanding of what Thurrock is and what it wants to be, described in a shared narrative that everyone recognises.

Better communications direct to residents, via the channels they like to use.

People

Better integrated services for older and vulnerable people, through closer working between the council and the NHS.

More jobs, skills and opportunities for our young people, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities, care leavers and others who need extra support.

More meaningful engagement with residents who use our services and the organisations that provide them, so that they can help design essential services.

Place

A clear vision for development in our borough – housing, industry, community infrastructure, jobs and growth - discussed openly with residents and local businesses so they can help shape future Thurrock.

More services delivered locally in the areas or neighbourhoods that people call home.

The economic potential of the Thames Freeport and the Thames Estuary realised and maximised to benefit local people, delivering local employment, apprenticeships, business opportunities and infrastructure.

Next steps

The full Corporate Plan, including details of how we will monitor and share our progress against delivery of the plan, will be considered by Members over the summer. If agreed, we will then formally launch it with staff and residents, to ensure

it is widely understood, so we can all work together to deliver on our shared ambitions for Thurrock.