

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 27 June 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Barbara Rice (Mayor), Terry Piccolo (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, Tim Aker, Abbie Akinbohun, John Allen, Alex Anderson, Russell Cherry, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Mike Fletcher, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Deborah Huelin, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Susan Little, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Sue Shinnick, Peter Smith, Luke Spillman, Aaron Watkins and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors James Baker, Clare Baldwin, Colin Churchman, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, Victoria Holloway, Andrew Jefferies, Sue MacPherson, Gerard Rice and Pauline Tolson

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sharon Bayliss, Director of Commercial Services
Steve Cox, Corporate Director Place
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
David Lawson, Assistant Director of Law & Governance
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

The Mayor invited Reverend Canon Darren Barlow to lead those present in prayer.

12. Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 23 May 2018 were approved as a correct record.

13. Items of Urgent Business

The Mayor informed the Chamber that she had received a request from Councillor Spillman to table an urgent item regarding the recent fire at George Tilbury House in Chadwell St Mary. The Mayor stated that this item would not be considered as an urgent item of business as the Deputy Leader would provide an update to Members in his announcements and members in the chamber did not have the factual information needed from the Fire and Rescue Services.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Hebb, stated the Essex Fire Service had responded to the recent fire incident at George Tilbury House in Chadwell St Mary on Tuesday evening in a sound way and he had been relieved that no casualties had been reported. Councillor Hebb stated the response from Essex Fire Service, South England Ambulance Service and the Council had been fabulous and had recognised the efforts made by all. Unfortunately some residents had sadly lost their homes and that it was now the priority of the Council to support those residents and to re-house them. Councillor Hebb stated that a review to define the details and understand the facts of the fire would be undertaken.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Hebb and stated that all Members agreed with the comments made.

14. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Duffin declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Motion 1 as he was a season ticket holder for East Thurrock United Football Club.

15. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council

The Mayor invited all those present to reflect on and remember Thurrock's fallen of World War One.

The Mayor stated that it had been a pleasurable experience as her first month as Mayor and had attended 22 functions already, with the Deputy Mayor having also attended a number of events in the borough. It had been a pleasure to see the good things that Thurrock had to offer and the unity within Thurrock.

The Mayor congratulated and presented a gift to Reverend Canon Darren Barlow on his 20 years of service as an ordained member of clergy.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Hebb, endorsed the Mayor's kind gesture to Reverend Canon Darren Barlow.

16. Questions from Members of the Public

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed under the relevant meeting date at <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock> and are attached at Appendix A at these minutes.

17. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, the requisite notice had been given by one Member of the Public who wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Ms Chantelle Dyson presented a petition to implement a protection mechanism to provide safety and prevent vehicle access to open green space by Rainbow Road and Felipe Road, Chafford Hundred.

18. Petitions Update Report

Members received a report on the status of those petitions handed in at Council Meetings and Council Offices over the past six months.

Councillor Kerin requested an update on Petition 498 submitted on the 27 September 2017 in relation to installing CCTV on a section of Seabrooke Rise.

19. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels

The Mayor enquired whether Group Leaders wished for any changes to be made to the appointments previously made to Committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Hebb, informed the Chamber he had no further changes to make.

Councillor Gerrish, Leader of the Labour Group, informed the Chamber that he wished to make the following change:

For Councillor C Kent to be appointed as member of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to replace Councillor Akinbohun.

Councillor Spillman, Leader of the Thurrock Independent Group, informed the Council Chamber that he wished to make the following changes:

For Councillor Aker to be removed from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillor Gamester to be removed from the Planning Committee and be appointed as a member on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillor Sheridan to be removed from the Corporate Parenting Committee and be appointed as a member on the Planning Committee.

For Councillor Spillman to be appointed as a member on the Corporate Parenting Committee.

For Councillor Sheridan to be removed from the William Palmer Trust Outside Body.

20. Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2017/18

The Mayor referred Members to the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report for 2017-18 as published in the Agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18 were noted.

21. Constitutional Amendments - Public Access to Committees

The Mayor referred Members to the report as published in the Agenda.

RESOLVED

- 1. That Council noted the non-constitutional initiatives that the constitution working group had endorsed.**
- 2. That Council agreed to reduce the timeframe for repeat questions being disallowed at Full Council from 12 months to 3 months.**
- 3. That Council agreed to reduce the timeframe to submit a question or statement at Overview and Scrutiny Committees from 3 working days to 2.**

22. Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Health

Councillor Halden, Portfolio Holder for Education and Health, presented his Portfolio Holder report and stated that it was an honour and a pleasure to be presenting his third portfolio holder report. Councillor Halden updated Members on following achievements:

- That investment had been secured to build around 3,500 school places.
- That more children than before got their first choice of school.
- That the number of General Practitioners rated as good had improved from 2 in 2016 to 21 today.
- That the Children Service Reform had saved the Council millions of pounds.
- That the increase of eligible children for this service had risen by 6%.
- That the number of sessions delivered by Children's Services had increased by 34%.
- That young care leavers had been taken out of paying council tax.
- That the Tilbury Medical Centre and Harris Riverside Free School Projects had been saved.
- That 94% of Thurrock schools are rated as either good or outstanding.

- That £150 million had been invested on new education and health estates.
- That Thurrock now had an amazing foundation to build on.
- That the Mental Health Summit had been strengthened by schools and health providers, with Thurrock launching a brand new and national approach to strengthen mental health within Thurrock schools.
- That the Council would completely rebuild the Pioneer School in Purfleet.
- That the number of Integrated Medical Centres would increase.

Councillor Gerrish thanked the Portfolio Holder for his report and agreed with the required continued improvements to schools in Thurrock. Councillor Gerrish stated that the Portfolio Holder's report made no reference to any education overspend. Councillor Halden stated that the inherited overspend Dedicated Schools Grant had now been closed and that funding in schools was up £3.4 million and that £70 million would be spent building brand new estates. Councillor Halden stated that the Administration would heavily invest in the future.

Councillor Spillman asked the Portfolio Holder to name three things in his portfolio that had not gone well and what the plans were going forward. Councillor Halden stated that building the four integrated medical centres had taken more time than expected and that two planning applications were soon to be processed. That there was no perfect model for mental health and a new initiative would be launched in schools. The Administration was reflective and intervened on issues and that was demonstrated where matters were being dealt with in all party wards.

Councillor Kerin thanked the Portfolio Holder for his report and the good number of good or outstanding schools in the borough and questioned whether an impact assessment had been made with regard to grammar schools in the borough and what effect this would make on existing schools in the borough. Councillor Halden stated that work continued to build more school places which was a great foundation to build on. Councillor Halden also stated he was pro-grammar schools and was adamant that the Administration would receive a good part of the £50 million to be used to expand grammar schools and stated that a working relationship with a Grammar School in Essex would shortly commence.

Councillor Okunade thanked the Portfolio Holder for his report and questioned whether the Council was adequately meeting the significant responsibility on supporting pupils who are permanently excluded. Councillor Halden stated that the number of fixed exclusions was down, in 2016 there were 450 where in 2011 it was 1000 pupils. That progress was being made in a tough situation with the Exclusions Units being created. There was no good reason why children at primary school age are permanently expelled and sent to other institutions. Councillor Halden stated that children belonged in schools and that this was the model that was being worked on with schools.

Councillor Duffin asked the Portfolio Holder to get the Council to publically apologise for the confusion made in a recent press release that stated all rugby pitches and facilities would be retained by the Council.

Councillor Halden summed up by replying to Councillor Duffin stating that the Council was going into the formal consultation stage but the positives of the scheme had to be looked at. There would still be a great future for the Rugby Club but delays would not be accepted and that formal agreements could be made at the planning stage.

Councillor Halden stated that the Children Services Reform registration was up by 6%, that sessions provided was up by 36% and that out of the savings 100% had been achieved with no corporate complaints.

Councillor Halden stated that Members could contact him if there were any further questions.

23. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that four questions to the Leader had been received and seven questions to Cabinet Members.

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be found at Appendix A to these minutes.

24. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

The Mayor informed the Chamber that no reports had been received.

25. Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of Committees as set out in the Agenda were received.

26. Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year

Members received an information report updating the progress in respect of Motions received at Council over the last year.

27. Motion submitted by Councillor Duffin

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Duffin and seconded by Councillor Spillman. The Motion read as follows:

Thurrock Council should look into contacting all sports teams/clubs competing across the borough and ask them what support they need moving forward. Many need support with facilities and raising awareness that the Council can assist with without giving financial support.

Councillor Duffin stated that the Motion had been brought to Full Council to highlight that not enough positive news on sporting and club activities was

being shared with residents by the Council. There was insufficient information on the Council web-site about clubs, sporting facilities and events taking place in Thurrock. Big events were taking place with no promotion being undertaken and that the Council should be offering assistance and advice to these clubs on how best to support and promote them. Councillor Duffin stated that Members should be seen at such events and highlighting the good cause that these clubs do for residents of Thurrock.

Councillor Spillman endorsed the Motion and stated it was important that Members attended events being held in Thurrock. Using the recent Kanitha World Cup held at the Aveley Football Club as an example he stated the Council had looked discourteous by not welcoming visitors to this sporting event. Councillor Spillman stated that sport and culture are both important in bringing communities together.

Councillor Huelin thanked Councillor Duffin for submitting the Motion and reassured Members that steps were being taken and the Activity Strategy Plan that covered all the sporting activities in the borough and that supported the local plan would soon be presented. Councillor Huelin gave Members a guarantee that an interested engagement with the community was on-going and that the Administration listened to residents of the borough to ensure that the facilities were available and the offer of help available. The social clubs information on the Council web site would be reviewed and updated.

Councillor Redsell stated her support for the Motion and that work continued with the Sports Council and Active Essex to provide these facilities and that clubs should come together to ensure that the appropriate funding can be obtained.

Councillor Halden stated that there was only so much a Council could do in promoting more sports in schools and that this should be rolled out in a more considered way such as in the Activity Strategy Plan.

Councillor Hebb thanked Councillor Duffin for his well spirited Motion and referenced Members to the 2012 Olympic Legacy that the Council agreed in 2011.

Councillor J Kent stated his support for the Motion and stated that clubs in the borough did not feel loved. The Council should be more creative and use the education facilities available to achieve those goals. Councillor J Kent stated that the Council had to start getting better relationships with clubs and undertaking consultations in the borough correctly. That other clubs such as Cubs and Scouts were also concerned about increases to rents and that the Council should be helping and supporting these clubs.

Councillor Duffin summed up by thanking Members for their support and that good news stories should be shared more by the Council. Councillor Duffin attended a fair share of sporting events in the borough and encouraged other Members to do more. That more fans would generate more funds for these clubs and this could only be done when events are promoted.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a clear majority in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

28. Motion submitted by Councillor Aker

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Aker and seconded by Councillor Spillman. The Motion read as follows:

This Council calls on Cabinet to commit to looking at each private contract and assess whether, or not, it could be fulfilled locally and begin a process of bringing private contracts back in-house as soon as possible so that the Council can maximise the benefits for Thurrock rather than multi-national corporations.

Councillor Aker stated that some of the services provided by the Council should be brought back in-house. Those opportunities should be made available for local companies to provide services rather than using larger out of borough companies. Councillor Aker stated that all opportunities should be addressed to ensure the betterment for residents of Thurrock.

Councillor Spillman stated that not all services should be in-house nor have any private provision but that all options should be available and be presented fairly to ensure fair decisions can be made to improve the service and save money.

Councillor Huelin stated that she would not be supporting the Motion as this process had been managed as part of the Council Spending Review where the Council monitored in-house those Thurrock companies tendering for contracts.

Councillor Halden made reference to the wording “multi-national companies” and stated the only Thurrock contract had with a multi-national company would be for Adult Social Care.

Councillor Duffin stated his support for the Motion and that this was an opportunity to support and promote small businesses.

Councillor J Kent stated he would proudly be supporting this Motion to ensure that best value was being maintained for residents and had the best interest for local businesses and the environment. Councillor J Kent questioned whether negotiations were being undertaken fairly and not behind closed doors and the Council should work together to maximise the use of small local businesses.

Councillor Huelin clarified negotiations were not being undertaken behind closed doors and that contracts formed part of the Council Spending Review.

Councillor Hebb stated he would not be supporting this Motion as engagement with small businesses was already taking place and Councillor Aker had not provided any data to state otherwise. As part of the Council Spending Review services were reviewed every 5 years with gap analysis undertaken and private, in-house and voluntary services had contracts with the Council.

Councillor Coxshall stated he would not be supporting this Motion as local businesses were already being used with hardly any contracts being with large companies.

Councillor Aker stated that views of Members had been made clear and called the Motion to go to the vote.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Upon being put to the vote, 25 Members voted in favour of the Motion with 14 Members against whereupon the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

29. Motion submitted by Councillor Gerrish

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Gerrish and seconded by Councillor Kerin. The Motion read as follows:

Thurrock Council notes the recent consultation which included the future of Orsett Hospital. Thurrock Council further notes the overwhelming opposition of Thurrock residents to the closure of Orsett Hospital. Thurrock Council calls on Cabinet to work with health partners to seek a solution which leaves Orsett Hospital open and retains all services in Thurrock.

Councillor Gerrish stated that a case to close Orsett Hospital had not been made and an alternative to benefit residents would be the Integrated Medical Centres but this was reliant on the centres being up and running before the hospital closed. Councillor Gerrish stated that this was a bad scheme and further consultation with residents would be required. So far the consultation had been poor with no concrete evidence on budgets or staffing and what and where services would be placed. Councillor Gerrish stated the Council had not done their job ensuring the best for residents of Thurrock and a previous Motion had been watered down by an amendment. He added that the past Thurrock Independent Leader had agreed to the closure of Orsett Hospital and facilitated that approach in the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Gerrish hoped that Members would consider the views of the residents and it was time to put residents first and politics second on whether Orsett Hospital should close.

Councillor Spillman stated that he would not be supporting the closure of Orsett Hospital until a further hospital was built in Thurrock. That Councillor

Gerrish had the opportunity to become the Administration in May and directly affect the result of the closure of Orsett Hospital.

Councillor Halden stated a Memorandum of Agreement had been sought from the National Health Service that Orsett Hospital would not close until the Integrated Medical Centres were open, these centres would offer those services currently available at Orsett Hospital. A consultation with residents had taken place and discussions had also taken place at the Health and Wellbeing Board at which no questions had been raised by the Opposition Parties.

Councillor J Kent stated that residents felt let down and uncertain as to what the future plans would entail compared to what residents had been promised. Further questions needed to be answered and that no guarantee could be given that services will be provided once Orsett Hospital closed. The proposed Long Lane Hospital site for minor injuries would not work with insufficient facilities and parking for residents. Councillor J Kent stated that the Memorandum of Understanding was a cover up for the Administration to sell off the National Health Service land.

At 9.21pm, Councillor Halden requested a Point of Order. Councillor Halden clarified that Basildon Hospital had stated only 47% of Hospital Orsett was not used, empty or simply a place host for non-clinical services such as records and yet the National Health Service had stated it would cost £10 million to bring Orsett Hospital up to scratch yet £80 million was being proposed to be spent on estate in the borough.

At 9.23pm, Councillor J Kent requested a Point of Order that Councillor Halden should listen to the Cabinet recording that reference the term “a collection of unused buildings”.

Councillor Kerin stated that the Council should continue to fight against the closure of Orsett Hospital as there would be no going back once it had closed.

Councillor Gerrish stated that Members knew the arguments that had been presented and that voting for the Motion would be the right result for residents and requested a requisition vote.

The Mayor called a requisition vote on the Motion.

A requisition vote took place, the result of which was:

For: Councillors Abbas, Aker, Akinbohun, Allen, Cherry, Duffin, Fish, Fletcher, Gamester, Gerrish, Hamilton, C Kent, J Kent, Kerin, Liddiard, Okunade, Potheary, Potter, B Rice, Sammons, Sheridan, Shinnick, Smith, Spillman, Worrall **(25)**

Against: **(0)**

Abstain: Councillors Anderson, Collins, Coxshall, Halden, Hebb, Huelin,

Johnson, Kelly, Little, Maney, Piccolo, Redsell, Rigby, Watkins
(14)

Whereupon the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

At 9.27pm the Mayor stated that it was the close of the meeting and that Members with Motions still to be heard could either speak on the Motion for no more than three minutes before the Motion will be put to the vote without debate or they may withdraw the Motion and resubmit for the next available meeting. Councillor Spillman stated he would like to speak on his Motion.

30. Motion submitted by Councillor Spillman

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda was proposed by Councillor Spillman. The Motion read as follows:

Council requests that Planning, Transport & Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny Committee consider adding to it work programme at its next meeting on 4 July 2018 research into the feasibility of building 8,000 council, housing association and low-cost homes within the next five years without such buildings threatening the character of any existing settlements within the borough and to seek to explore the extent to which Thurrock Regeneration Limited could input into such a target.

Councillor Spillman stated planning for the future was vital to solve the housing crisis in Thurrock. That it would be important for Thurrock to fund such changes and that the Housing Revenue Account and the Council be ready for any future big plans that arise and deliver a quick turnaround to any new Government policies. The Council should not sit back and abandon the duty of care to residents of Thurrock and work together with services. Councillor Spillman stated that the proposed 32,000 new homes would not deliver the affordable housing that Thurrock needed.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

The majority of Members agreed to the motion, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

The meeting finished at 9.31 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**