

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Luke Spillman (Chair), Vikki Hartstean, Tom Kelly and Lee Watson

Apologies: Councillors Alex Anderson (Vice-Chair) and Jacqui Maney

In attendance:
Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place
Kevin Munnely, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Place Delivery
Luke Tucker, 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.

24. Items of Urgent Business

There were two items of urgent business, the first item was regarding the readiness and publication of reports for the committee. The BVI Report and Town Funds Report.

Apologies were given by officers. In relation the BVI Report officers sought to discuss with the committee what the committee wished to see in a report to avoid duplications of reports that have already been presented to the committee and where scrutiny can add value. The Towns Funds Report was ready to be presented to the committee on the date, despite work pressures and illness of officers.

ACTION: Officers will look into making sure a situation like this does not reoccur.

Members asked why Appendix 1 was not attached to the agenda. Appendix 1 did not make it through the IT system due to the size of the file but was presented by officers at the committee meeting.

ACTION: Democratic Services will publish Appendix 1 now it has a version that can be moved through the IT system.

Members expressed their concern that they could not scrutinise effectively with incomplete reports.

The second item of urgent business was regarding the Local Plan. The Local Plan will be heard at committee the day before council as there was no plan for the committee to see the Local Plan Report to scrutinise it.

25. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

26. Towns Fund - To Follow

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Place Delivery presented the report to the committee. The report and presentation provided to update Members on progress on the delivery of the Tilbury Town Fund (TTF) and Grays Town Fund (GTT) programmes since the confirmation of funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Homes & Communities (DLUHC) in March 2023.

Thurrock Youth Zone

It has been identified the nearest youth zone is in The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBB). It was suggested that a visit to the Youth Zone in LBBB be arranged.

Member sought clarity regarding the money awarded by the board. £7 million of the £22.8 million is marked for the Youth Zone and asked where the other £15.8 million marked for.

Member also sought clarity regarding the ground lease and asked if the rent would be peppercorn or at market value.

- Officer said it was under negotiation.

Member asked if the construction cost outweighed the money that has been committed, would there be any impact for the Local Authority if they have to step in and fund the differential.

- Costings have been provided on actual development happening. The Local Authority is making sure that contingencies are in place and would not commit to build until funding has been secured. The Local Authority will not be the client for the contract but the operator.

Member expressed gladness that the Local Authority was working with a company with a good track record.

Member asked for more information regarding the lease.

- A reasonable length of lease to recoup the investment, possibly 40, 50 plus years but nothing has been agreed yet.
- Local Authority is not expecting a significant rent as it is a ground rent.

Member was happy with the funding stream for the project.

Member was disappointed that the rent was only peppercorn/low income and its location.

- Lease is still to be negotiated.

Member expressed concern for Tilbury residents.

Member asked if the ground lease arrangement is similar see what happens in other local authorities.

- It varies between local authorities. There are different models depending on local authority input. Thurrock council's expectation is that this is funded by the programme not the council. The local authority is renting the land not a building.

- None of the Youth Zone centres built so far have failed.

Heritage Projects – Pontoon

Member identified that there was a high demand for Thames Clipper services. Members look forward to hearing more details on the project in the future. £5.6 million pounds out of the £22 million has been allocated to the pontoon. Member asked if there were investments coming from elsewhere or if the money was solely coming out of the towns fund.

- It is a work in progress.

Tilbury - Heritage Connectivity Projects

An introduction to the project was given by officers. Hub – Tilbury Station-St. Andrews Square, Heritage Links – Hairpin Bridge, Ferry Road Trail, Tilbury Pier Approach/Riverside, The Heart – Brennan Road, 15a Civic Square and Public Realm.

Member expressed their frustration that the square only comes to life around Christmas time.

Member asked if English Heritage had any involvement. There are world class historical assets in Tilbury and like the idea of connectivity.

Member gave praise to the board for their proposals.

- Officers explained English Heritage was involved initially. English Heritage wanted a refurbishment to the gift shop, but this was identified not be a priority by the towns board; dialogue is ongoing. Discussions are ongoing regarding the improvement of the vista along the seawall.

Member noted that the distribution of funding was good and further asked for more detail about pick up and drop off zones in the square.

- The aim is to make the space more flexible, there is no net loss of parking. Ensuring that the bus stops are laid out effectively, to make it easier to operate in the area.

Member of if there was enough funding to complete all these projects.

- Yes, and there are priority projects and flexible projects. There is flexibility in the projects.

Member asked who will be running the skills centre.

- Operated by Local Authority, Towns Board will pay for the refurbishment.

Member asked if the towns board would utilise the IMC (integrated medical centre).

- NHS has not confirmed.

Grays

An introduction was given by officers.

Member expressed concern how there hasn't been a meeting with board for a time and the restaurant proposal. Member also expressed the importance of getting the Grays Beach project right.

Member noted that the activity centre just needed to be a Scouts Hall structure.

Member noted it looked like nothing has been achieved for Grays.

ACTION: Member would like a briefing note before next PTR.

- Officer explained what scope creep was to the committee.

Member noted that there were other places for restaurants already in the town.

- Officer explained popup trucks could be an optional use for the town and beach which have been successful and can go on to use permanent units.

RESOLVED:

That the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1.1 Notes the proposed changes to the original programmes and the progress on delivering the Tilbury & Grays Towns Fund programmes.

27. Work Programme

Members discussed the work programme.

- Report on the Local Plan will be heard on the 5th December 2023.
- Member expressed concern in regard to road infrastructure. An update on feasibility work on East Facing Slips and Lower Thames Crossing.

A full recording of the meeting can be viewed from the following link:

[Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday, 15th November 2023 at 7:00pm](#)

The meeting finished at 8.35 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