Present: Councillors Mrs A Cheale (Mayor),
Tunde Ojetola (Deputy Mayor), Phil Anderson,
Amanda Arnold, Charles Curtis, Wendy Curtis, Tony Fish,
Angie Gaywood, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill,
Sue Gray, Yash Gupta, James Halden, Diana Hale,
Eddie Hardiman, Martin Healy, Roisin Hewitt,
Terry Hipsey, Barry Johnson, Cathy Kent, John Kent,
Steve Liddiard, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney,
Val Morris-Cook, Danny Nicklen, Bukky Okunade,
Barry Palmer, Amanda Provost, John Purkiss,
Joycelyn Redsell, Diane Revell, Mike Revell,
Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Neil Rockliffe,
Andrew Smith, Stuart St. Clair-Haslam, Mike Stone,
Pauline Tolson, Steve Veryard, and Lynn Worrall.

Apologies: Councillors Juliann Burkey, Lynn Carr, John Cowell,
Garry Hague, Ian Harrison and Wendy Herd,

In attendance: Ms. Rebekah Gough – Mayoress
Reverend Barlow – Mayors Chaplain
Mr. Mike Carpenter - Chair of the Standards Committee
Mr. Brian Little – Vice Chair of the Standards Committee

At the start of the Meeting, the Mayor advised all present that the meeting was being recorded.

The Mayor then invited Reverend Barlow to address the Chamber and lead those present in prayer.

The Mayor then requested all in attendance at the meeting to be upstanding for one minute’s silence in memory of those killed and for those still missing following the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

137. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1 March 2011 were approved as a true record.

138. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

The Mayor informed the Council that she had not agreed to the consideration of any additional items of business.
139. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**Councillor Stone** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 11, as he was an LEA governor of Thurrock Adult Community College.

**Councillor C Curtis** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 5, as he was a governor of the Ockendon School.

**Councillor Hale** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 11, as she was a member of the Corporation of South Essex College.

**Councillor Gaywood** declared the following:

- a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 7, as two of her children attended school in Stanford, and, as she was also the Chair of governors of a school that was within this Ward.

- a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 8, as she was a member of a management committee on Orsett Village Hall.

**Councillor Hipsey** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 11, as he was LEA Governor of Thurrock Adult Community College.

**Councillor Ojetola** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 8, as he represented the Council on the Board of Impulse Leisure.

**Councillor Healy** declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 14, question 8, as he was a member of the management committee of Drake Community Hall.

140. MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed the Chamber that this was her last meeting as Mayor before the Annual Council Meeting. The Mayor took this opportunity to thank all those Councillors who would be standing-down at the election in May for the work they had done on behalf of the residents in Thurrock.

The Mayor then offered her best wishes to those Councillors who would be seeking re-election.

Finally, Members were reminded that a service for St. George’s Day would be held at St. Peter & Paul’s Church, Grays, on 24 April 2011 at
4.00 p.m. The Mayor hoped that Members could take the time to attend the service along with their families and friends.

The Mayor then invited the Leader of the Council to make any announcements he wished to make. The Leader advised the Chamber that he did not wish to make any announcements.

141. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed on CMIS at http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/

142. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

The Mayor informed the Council that, in accordance with the Council’s Petition Scheme, no members of the Council or members of the public had given the requisite 10-day notice that they wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Two members of the public did request to present petitions at the meeting, whereupon the Mayor exercised her discretion and allowed the petitions to be presented.

Mr Cook addressed the Council and presented a petition in support of Thurrock Adult Community College, calling upon the Council to reconsider its decision to close the premises and re-locate provision to the yet to be built FE/HE Campus.

A local resident addressed the Council and presented a petition, which expressed concerns that the “privatisation” of Grays Beach would be to the detriment of the service, would see charges rise and would see the less well off not being able to use the facility.

Both petitions were collected by Democratic Services at the meeting to enable them to be processed.

143. PETITIONS UPDATE REPORT

Members noted an information report on the status of those petitions handed in at Council Meetings (and Council Offices) over the past 6 months.

144. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES, STATUTORY AND OTHER PANELS

The Mayor asked Group Leaders whether they wished for any changes to be made to the appointments made to Committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.
The Leader of each political group indicated that they did not wish to make any changes to the appointments that had been previously agreed by the Council.

145. COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation contained within the report, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Community Strategy be adopted by the Council as a working document and a draft for consultation with partners.

146. CORPORATE PLAN AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2011-15

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations contained within the report, whereupon the Mayor declared these to be carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011-15, as detailed at appendix A to the report, be adopted.

2. That the scorecard at appendix B to the report be noted.

147. SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

The Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Leisure introduced the report.

A number of Members indicated their support for the recommendation in the report but felt that it was very important to consider how the Council implemented this Scheme. It was suggested that this ought to be done in a way that unites the community, as their support would be crucial to the success of the scheme.

Councillor Johnson advised the Chamber that he agreed with the comments that had been made in respect of this report but wished the Portfolio holder to provide some information. It was reported that on page 51 of the Appendix to the report, under “Summary of Key Issues” and under the theme of communications it states “19 percent of
respondents indicated that the council is fairly good at communicating with its staff and residents. It was suggested that a council magazine, which would have 100 percent coverage of the borough should be published to address imbalances in the media and communicate with residents”.

Councillor Johnson requested the Portfolio Holder to remind members why the Cabinet had decided to withdraw the magazine when they were aware that consultation on this scheme was ongoing. Furthermore, a request was made for the percentage of the consultation that suggested that the magazine be implemented to be provided.

Councillor Worrall, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Leisure, advised the Chamber that she would ask for officers to clarify this position.

RESOLVED:

That the Single Equality Scheme be approved.

148. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and proceeded to thank those Members who had been involved in the Constitution Working Group, together with Mr. Mike Carpenter, Chair of the Standards Committee, as he had again volunteered to Chair the Working Group.

The Mayor invited Mr. Carpenter to address the meeting, whereupon he thanked the members of the Working Group and briefly explained the process involved in the review of the Constitution.

The Leader drew Members attention to the recommendation for a representative of the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation to be invited to attend meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and the Planning Committee in the capacity of an observer, thus helping the two organisations to mesh in this final year of the Development Corporation.

The Leader then informed Members that a request had been received after the Agenda for the meeting had been published, for the deadline for Members to submit questions to the Cabinet to be shortened, from three working days prior to a meeting, to 10.00 a.m. two working days prior to a meeting. The Leader then moved an amendment to Chapter 3, Part 2, Paragraph 2.29, to this effect.

Councillor Arnold thanked the members of the Working Group for their work and also thanked the Leader for agreeing to this amendment.
Councillor Arnold proceeded to raise an issue regarding the right of Members to speak at meetings of the Planning Committee in relation to applications that are to be determined by the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation. A request was made for reference to Ward Councillors not being permitted to speak on such applications to be removed from the Constitution and for the Constitution Working Group to be asked to re-consider the issue.

The Leader advised the Council that he knew this issue was something that exercised Members and that for those applications where the Council was not the determining authority, what was needed was to check the application against our existing plans and policies and nothing else. Therefore it had been previously thought inappropriate for Members to be involved at this level.

However, the Leader informed the Council that if it was helpful to reach consensus on the remaining amendments that had been recommended to the Constitution, he would be happy for this reference to be removed and for the Council to request the Constitution Working Group to re-consider this matter.

Councillor Arnold thanked the Leader for his proposal.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations contained within the report, as amended at the meeting, whereupon the Mayor declared these to be carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That the amendments to the Constitution, as proposed by the Constitution Working Group and the Monitoring Officer, be approved, subject to the following amendments agreed at the meeting, and that these be implemented from 1 April 2011.

   (a) For Chapter 3, Part 2, Paragraph 2.29, to be amended so as to read “Any Member may submit a maximum of two questions for the next ordinary meeting of Leader / Cabinet addressed to the Leader or a Member of the Cabinet, by delivering them in writing to the Monitoring Officer by 10.00 a.m. 2 working days prior to a meeting of the Leader / Cabinet. The question must relate to an item on the agenda. A question must relate to a single proposition and may not contain more than one part.”

   (b) To remove references contained in Chapter 5, Part 3, for Ward Councillors not to be able to speak at a meeting of the Planning Committee on those
applications where the Council was not the determining authority.

2. That the Council agree to a representative of the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation being invited to attend meetings of the Full Council, the Cabinet and the Planning Committee, in the capacity of an observer.

3. That the Constitution Working Group be requested to re-consider the ability for Ward Councillors to speak on those planning applications where the determining authority is the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation and report back to the Council at the earliest opportunity.

149. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed on CMIS at http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/.

150. MOTIONS UPDATE REPORT

Members received an information report updating them on progress in respect of Motions resolved at Council over the past year.

Councillor Gledhill advised the Chamber that whilst the reports had been updated, a request had been made for copies of any correspondence relating to the Motions to also be included. In particular, reference was made to correspondence in respect of Basildon and Thurrock Hospital that was to have been provided following the last meeting of the Council.

The Leader informed the Chamber that those letters were e-mailed to all Members.

Councillor Gledhill advised that his understanding was that correspondence was to have been published in the Agenda.

The Leader advised that when the Minutes of this meeting were published online, a link to any such correspondence could also be included.

The Chief Executive informed Members that on page 217 of the Agenda, it was mentioned that copies of any correspondence referred to in the update report was available in the Members’ Reading Room.
151. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Motion 1

The Motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor Gledhill and seconded by Councillor Gerrish.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

We call on government to extend the requirement of all councils to publish spends of £500 or more and ask that this be extended to include all public bodies and their major contract holders.

Motion 2

The Motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor Arnold and seconded by Councillor Johnson.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet be called upon to investigate and consider whether South Ockendon centre be used as a pilot for co-location of council services, including housing and library services, with discussions to include the police, forum and pct, for reprovision in a newly developed building on the site of the Culver Centre or other appropriate site in South Ockendon.

Motion 3

The Motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor St. Clair-Haslam and seconded by Councillor Morris-Cook.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

Notwithstanding the hard work and hitherto excellent service of the Waste and Re-cycling Collection teams and given the recent decision of Council to bring this valuable service back in-house, Members are asked to debate whether or not there are any aspects of the current service that can be improved and to ask the Portfolio Holder or other executive member function to look into any issues raised together with ways to further raise the level of
service delivery and efficiency of the waste and re-cycling service, without necessarily any need for an increase in expenditure.

Motion 4

The Motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor Morris-Cook and seconded by Councillor Nicklen.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet is called upon to investigate and consider working with partners to create a Thurrock Service Veterans Charter. Those partners should include (but not exclusively) Thurrock Council, Jobcentre Plus, South West Essex Primary Care Trust, The Royal British Legion, Burma Star National Gulf Veterans and Families Association, Thurrock CVS.

Motion 5

Councillor Healy informed Members that he wished to withdraw the Motion that he had submitted.

Accordingly, the Motion was withdrawn.

Motion 6

The Motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor Hale and seconded by Councillor J. Kent.

Upon being put to the vote, 23 Members voted in favour and 15 voted against, whereupon the Mayor declared the Motion to be carried.

RESOLVED:

Thurrock Council recognises the talent of young performers and the importance of the creative arts scene to the national economy. We therefore urge the Government to support the continuation of Dance and Drama Awards scheme (DaDa) which enables talented performers to train irrespective of their ability to pay. We request that the CEO writes immediately to the Department for Education in support of students at colleges such as Performers College in Corringham who are left in limbo by the DfEs indecision.

152. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor J. Kent circulated a brief update report to all Members in attendance at the meeting in respect of the progress of the new Local
Enterprise Partnership that covers Thurrock, Southend, Medway, East Sussex, Kent and Essex.

Councillor Nicklen informed Members that head recently attended a governors away day for SEPT and that the Trust had just updated the Board on its recent merger with services from Bedfordshire and Luton.

Councillor Fish provided an update on recent events at Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital Trust and proceeded to outline the role of the Board of Governors. In addition, Members were advised that the March meeting had discussed the interaction between the Trust and the Council’s Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Fish informed Members that Sir Peter Dixon had been appointed as the Interim Chair of Governors from 1 April 2011.

Finally, it was reported that elections had been taking place for new governors and Councillor Fish advised Members that he felt confident that the municipal year would end with the Trust being in a strong position to move forward in the future.

153. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees, as set out under Agenda item 18, were received.

154. NON EXECUTIVE MEMBER BUSINESS

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 of the Council’s Constitution, Councillor Nicklen introduced an item of business in respect of the potential role for directly elected police commissioners in Thurrock.

A response was provided by the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Rice.

The meeting finished at 9.11 p.m.

Approved as a true and correct record

MAYOR

DATE

Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact Steve Jones, telephone (01375) 01375 652107, or alternatively e-mail sjones@thurrock.gov.uk