

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where
individuals, communities and businesses flourish

Council

To the Members of Thurrock Council

The next meeting of the Council will be held at **7.00 pm** on **27 January 2016**

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

Membership of the Council:

Sue Gray (Mayor)
Cathy Kent (Deputy Mayor)

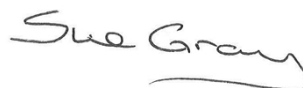
Tim Aker
Chris Baker
James Baker
Jan Baker
Clare Baldwin
Russell Cherry
Colin Churchman
Mark Coxshall
Leslie Gamester
Oliver Gerrish
Robert Gledhill
Yash Gupta (MBE)
Graham Hamilton
Garry Hague
James Halden
Shane Hebb

Terence Hipsey
Clifford Holloway
Victoria Holloway
Barry Johnson
Roy Jones
Tom Kelly
John Kent
Martin Kerin
Charlie Key
Steve Liddiard
Brian Little
Susan Little
Sue MacPherson
Ben Maney
Tunde Ojetola
Bukky Okunade

Barry Palmer
Jane Potheary
Robert Ray
Joycelyn Redsell
Barbara Rice
Gerard Rice
Andrew Roast
Peter Smith
Graham Snell
Richard Speight
Deborah Stewart
Michael Stone
Pauline Tolson
Kevin Wheeler
Lynn Worrall



Lyn Carpenter
Chief Executive



Councillor Sue Gray
Mayor of Thurrock

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	Page
1 Apologies for absence	
2 Minutes	9 - 36
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on 25 November 2011.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4 Declaration of Interests	
To receive any declaration of interests from Members.	
5 Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council	
6 Presentation from Essex Police	
A short presentation by Essex Police, followed by up to 45 minutes of Member's questions.	
7 Questions from Members of the Public	37 - 38
In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
8 Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors	
In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2(Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
9 Petitions Update Report	39 - 48
10 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels	

The Council are asked to agree any changes to the appointments made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels, as requested by Group Leaders.

11	To Note the Appointment of the Interim Corporate Director of Children's Services Service	49 - 52
12	Annual Pay Policy Statement 2016/17	53 - 72
13	The Local Council Tax Scheme 2016-17; setting of the Council Tax Base for 2016-17 and Determination of The Collection Fund Balance 2015-16	73 - 94
14	Questions from Members	95 - 96

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

15	Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies
16	Minutes of Committees

Name of Committee	Date
Corporate Overview & Scrutiny	17 September 2015
Planning Committee	29 October 2015
Housing Overview & Scrutiny	2 September 2015
Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny	13 October 2015
Standing Advisory for Council Religious Education	14 October 2015
Corporate Parenting Committee	29 October 2015
Standards & Audit Committee	24 September 2015
Planning Committee	26 November 2015
Housing Overview & Scrutiny	30 November 2015
Corporate Overview & Scrutiny	19 November 2015
Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny	1 December 2015

- | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------|
| 17 | Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year | 97 - 102 |
| 18 | Motion submitted by Councillor Hebb | 103 - 108 |

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution.

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Future Dates of Council:

24 February 2016, 23 March 2016, 25 May 2016 (Annual Council)

Information for members of the public and councillors

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If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

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If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

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The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

PROCEDURE FOR MOTIONS

No speech may exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Mayor [Rule 19.8], except for the proposer of any motion who shall have 5 minutes to move that motion (except on a motion to amend where the 3 minute time shall apply) [Rule 19.8(a)]

All Motions will follow Section A and then either Section B or C

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|--|----------------------------|
| A. | A1 | Motion is moved | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A2 | Mover speaks | [Rule 19.8(a) (5 minutes)] |
| | A3 | Seconded | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A4 | Secunder speaks or reserves right to speak | [Rule 19.3] (3 minutes) |

Then the procedure will move to either B or C below:

B.		C.	
IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)		If NOT amended i.e. original motion	
B1	The mover of the amendment shall speak (3 mins).	C1	Debate
B2	The seconder of the amendment shall speak unless he or she has reserved their speech (3 mins).	C2	If the seconder of the motion has reserved their speeches, they shall then speak
B3	THEN debate on the subject .	C3	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply
B4	If the seconder of the substantive motion and the amendment reserved their speeches, they shall then speak	C4	Vote on motion
B5	The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply		
B6	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply		
B7	Vote on amendment		
B8	A vote shall be taken on the substantive motion, as amended if appropriate, without further debate		

Vision: Thurrock: A place of **opportunity**, **enterprise** and **excellence**, where **individuals**, **communities** and **businesses** flourish.

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspiration and attainment so that residents can take advantage of local job opportunities
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Promote Thurrock and encourage inward investment to enable and sustain growth
- Support business and develop the local skilled workforce they require
- Work with partners to secure improved infrastructure and built environment

3. Build pride, responsibility and respect

- Create welcoming, safe, and resilient communities which value fairness
- Work in partnership with communities to help them take responsibility for shaping their quality of life
- Empower residents through choice and independence to improve their health and well-being

4. Improve health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being and safeguard the most vulnerable people with timely intervention and care accessed closer to home
- Enhance quality of life through improved housing, employment and opportunity

5. Promote and protect our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock's river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock's natural environment and biodiversity
- Inspire high quality design and standards in our buildings and public space

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100 Years in Memoriam

Remembering Thurrock's Fallen of World War One

Each month during the centenary period of the First World War, Thurrock Council will pay tribute to the 834 local residents known to have lost their lives due to causes associated with the war and their service. At each meeting of Council until November 2018, the 100th anniversary of signing of the Armistice with Germany, a Roll of Honour will be published with the agenda detailing the casualties from that month 100 years ago to commemorate the sacrifice made by Thurrock residents.

January 1916

DATE	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	WARD	RANK	SERVICE	DIED
03-Jan	MONK	CHARLES EDWARD	22	W/TH	PTE	ESSEX - 9	FRANCE

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 25 November 2015 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Cathy Kent (Deputy Mayor), Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Clare Baldwin, Russell Cherry, Colin Churchman, Mark Coxshall, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Yash Gupta (MBE), Graham Hamilton, James Halden, Shane Hebb, Terence Hipsey, Clifford Holloway, Victoria Holloway, Barry Johnson, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Charlie Key, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Tunde Ojetola, Bukky Okunade, Barry Palmer, Jane Potheary, Robert Ray, Joycelyn Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Andrew Roast, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Richard Speight, Deborah Stewart, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson, Kevin Wheeler and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Sue Gray (Mayor), Tim Aker and Garry Hague

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
David Bull, Director of Planning and Transportation
Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive
Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services
Roger Harris, Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance
Jackie Hinchliffe, Head of HR, OD & Transformation
Richard Parkin, Head of Housing - Community & Needs
Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications
David Lawson, Monitoring Officer
Matthew Boulter, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Stephanie Cox, Senior Democratic Services Officer

The Deputy Mayor advised that she would be Chairing the meeting as the Mayor was unfortunately unwell.

Before the start of the meeting, the Deputy Mayor invited Reverend Barlow to lead those present in prayer and a one minutes silence was held as a mark of respect of the recent atrocities in Paris and other countries.

The Deputy Mayor then informed all present that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

100. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of Council, held on 28 October 2015, were approved as a correct record.

101. Items of Urgent Business

The Deputy Mayor informed the Council that she had not agreed to the consideration of any items of urgent business.

102. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

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

Firstly the Deputy Mayor invited all those present to reflect and remember Thurrock's fallen of World War One.

On behalf of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor thanked all Councillors for laying a Mayoral wreath on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th November 2015 at the Remembrance Services in their constituencies.

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that Thurrock resident, Mr Albert England, had been awarded the Legion d'Honneur for his role in the D-Day Normandy landings.

Members were advised that Mr England had requested that his friend, Mr Neil Speight, read on his behalf an extract from a poem of tribute called 'At Dawning' written by Tony Chapman,, a member of the Landing Craft Association and dedicated to the men of D-Day on June 6th 1944.

Mr Speight read an extract from the poem 'At Dawning' following which Members congratulated Mr England on his achievements.

It was reported that the Mayor had written a letter of condolence to the Mayor of Paris and the people of France in respect of the recent atrocities in Paris.

Finally, the Deputy Mayor thanked all Councillors who had sponsored a Looked After Child to go to the Christmas Pantomime.

The Leader of the Council commented upon the Chancellors recent Autumn Statement and Spending Review; that the main revenue support grant to local authorities was expected to be phased out over the remaining term of Parliament, and that business rates collected locally would not be retained by the local authority but distributed nationally. The Leader also expressed concerns regarding the two per cent adult social care precept, which was presumed in addition to any Council Tax rise ceiling imposed by the government.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the news that the first National College for Creative and Cultural Industries would be established at the Backstage Centre, High House Production Park in Purfleet, which put Thurrock on the map as world class centre for excellence.

104. 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 to these minutes.

105. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, the requisite notice had been given by one Councillor who wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Councillor Hebb presented a petition on behalf of residents of Webster Road, Stanford-le-Hope, which called on the Council to commence a review in aid of securing additional parking arrangements and facilities in the immediate vicinity.

106. 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.

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

There were no changes to appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels declared.

108. Members' led body on Prevent duties and review of existing Prevent provision

Councillor J. Kent, Leader of the Council, briefly introduced the report which set out the outcomes of deliberations between the Constitution Working Group and the Monitoring Officer in response to a motion passed by Full Council in July 2015.

Councillor J. Kent observed that it would be appropriate if Councillor Ojetola, as proposer of the original motion, introduced the report.

Councillor Ojetola firstly observed that he was pleased a letter of condolence had been sent to the French Government in light of the recent atrocities in Paris.

He further thanked Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services, for all her hard work as she was due to be leaving employment at the Council.

Councillor Ojetola thanked all officers and Members involved in the Constitution Working Group and stated that atrocities started with radicalisation; as a result he felt that it was important that Members worked with partners to gather intelligence and set strategy to prevent radicalisation.

Councillor Jones firstly thanked the Leader of the Council for highlighting such a serious issue. He noted that going forward the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for the policy development of Prevent duties, and as Chair of the Committee, he felt that the membership of the Committee should be expanded to include an additional 1 or 2 Members as attendance had recently been poor by some Members appointed to the Committee.

Councillor Jones felt that with such an important issue aligned to the Committee he would expect all Members appointed to the Committee to attend meetings to engage in the debate.

Councillor Jones further highlighted that the report stated that the matter had been the subject of consultation with the Chair of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Group Leaders, and that as Chair of the Committee he had not been consulted and to his knowledge neither had the Group Leader of the UK Independence Party (UKIP).

Councillor Ray drew Members attention to the section of the report entitled 'enhanced role of Local Councillors' which stated that Councillors could use their authority and legitimacy to challenge the narratives of radicalisers and extremists to put forward positive alternatives. He personally had concerns with such a statement and felt that the term 'radicaliser' was not the correct terminology to use in this situation.

In response to the questions raised, Councillor J. Kent reported that all Group Leaders had been in attendance at a meeting to discuss Prevent duties but apologised to Councillor Jones as Chair of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee if he had not been consulted as this was an oversight.

Councillor J. Kent accepted Councillor Jones suggestion of increasing the Membership of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee but confirmed that this would need to be considered by Full Council at the Annual Council meeting in May 2016.

Councillor J. Kent observed that Councillors, as the eyes and the ears of the community, were well placed to notify the correct people if they had concerns about radicalisation and emphasised that there was not 'one type' of person who could be radicalised, rather that radicalisation knew no boundaries.

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

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the terms of reference of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committees be updated to address the overview, scrutiny and policy development of Prevent duties and that the Committee be recommended to set up standing cross**

party “Members Prevent Working Group” pursuant to Rules 8 – 9 Chapter 4, Part 1 – Article 6 of the Constitution

- 2. That such a Members Prevent Working Group to address the terms of reference found at paragraph 3.5 in this report.**
- 3. That the terms of reference of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be likewise updated to address Prevent duties in the context of their remit for child protection.**

109. Thurrock Local Plan, Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Councillor Speight, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, introduced the report which set out a revised Statement of Community Involvement to reflect recent changes in Government legislation and the national Planning system. He explained that to just produce a statement was not enough and it was important to engage effectively with local communities.

Councillor Ray commended what he felt was a thorough report and questioned what the Council determined as a ‘major development.’

In response the Cabinet Member explained that he was not aware of any changes but he would confirm the exact number that constituted as a major development outside of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Council adopt the Thurrock Local Plan: Statement of Community Involvement.**
- 2. That the Report of Consultation be approved by the Council alongside the Statement of Community Involvement.**

110. Recruitment of Corporate Director of Environment & Place (New), Corporate Director of Children's Services (Existing) and Director of Commercial Services & Commissioning (New)

Councillor J. Kent, Leader of the Council, introduced the report which sought agreement to recruit three new Director positions, the Director of Environment and Place, the Director of Children’s Services and a new Director of Commercial Services and Commissioning.

The Leader of the Council advised that £430,000 per year would be saved from the Senior Management payroll and that the Head of Corporate Finance, HR and Legal would gain the title of Director but without any additional pay.

He further observed that although there would be time to say a proper farewell to the current Director of Children's Services, Carmel Littleton, he wanted to take the opportunity to thank Carmel for all her work in Thurrock.

Councillor Halden felt that Thurrock was in a stronger place educationally because of the work of Carmel Littleton and thanked her for all her work.

Councillor Gledhill, Leader of the Opposition, agreed with the report and felt that it was a positive forward step in the right direction which reduced the excess of pay at the top without losing functions.

Members from all sides of the Chamber commended the work of Carmel Littleton and paid tribute to her achievements in driving forward educational attainment in Thurrock.

Councillor Kent briefly summed up the report and moved the recommendations, which was seconded by Councillor Gledhill.

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

RESOLVED:

1. To note and approve in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Pay Policy Statement:

Subject to the outcome of formal consultation, General Services Committee to make arrangements for the recruitment of a Corporate Director of Environment & Place, Corporate Director of Children's Services and a Director of Commercial Services and Commissioning; and

2. The recruitment of Senior Officers.

111. Report of the Cabinet Member of Central Services

Councillor Holloway, Cabinet Member for Central Services, introduced the report and, in doing so, highlighted some of the key achievements of the Portfolio, which included:

- That strong debt recovery performance continued and totalled £4.7 million compared to £5.7 million for the comparable period the previous year.
- That the service continued to perform strongly in relation to Council Tax collection rates.
- That the Council continued to promote online transactions which were now available for a number of activities, including making payments.
- That the Counter Fraud and Investigation Service had been praised for its professional approach to tackling economic crime following a

recent inspection by the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, due to its unique access to Police data.

- That the Council's Counter Fraud and Investigation Service was the only unit outside of the Police which was accredited to deliver the Professionalising Investigation Programme, which meant that all investigation staff in the department were trained to the same standards as Police Detectives that enabled them to investigate the most serious crimes.
- That Thurrock Shared Legal Services had received Municipal Journal (MJ) achievement and "lawyer of the year" whilst building capacity and creating resilience, which was supported by the service receiving a top performing Legal Service for Lexcel Accreditation by The Law Society.

The Cabinet Member for Central Services also welcomed staff who were transitioning back to employment at the Council from Serco.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Gledhill observed that it was good to see some improvements, particularly in relation to fraud and risk management. He felt that despite successes there were still a number of failures and questioned what steps the Cabinet Member was taking to ensure that poor departmental performance was not rewarded.

The Cabinet Member advised that she would need to examine this in further detail.

- Councillor Hebb recognised that staff were working for the betterment of residents but felt that in order to move forward Thurrock needed to improve accessibility of customer service functions, especially as some residents worked seven days a week which would make it difficult to visit the Civic Offices. He called upon the Cabinet Member to undertake a review of the existing labour resource to ensure that residents who worked long hours, and needed to access front line services, were not hampered due to the Council offering a 9 am to 5 pm service.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that it was important for residents to be able to access services when they needed it at a time convenient for them, and as a result the vast majority of services could be transacted online however there was still a call-centre in operation for those who preferred to speak to someone.

- Councillor S. Little explained that there were still residents who were not able to access public services online and questioned what arrangements were in place to ensure that those without digital services did not become ignored.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that there were still a number of options in place for those residents who could not access services online, which included a call-centre.

- Councillor Redsell expressed frustration and concern at the telephone system, and questioned what level of service the public received if Councillors could not be put through to the service they wanted, as her phone call had been transferred back to the call-centre six times during one phone call.

The Cabinet Member agreed that there were issues with the telephony system which was one of the reasons the Serco contract was being brought back so that the Council could have greater control and improve the service.

- Councillor Johnson highlighted the value of the Sundry Debtors system and asked whether the Cabinet Member could provide assurances that the statistics were a result of good recovery systems and not due to staff writing off debts too early.

The Cabinet Member assured Members that debts were not written off quickly or easily.

- Councillor Stewart reported that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recently requested officers to review accreditations the authority could undertake to demonstrate performance and asked if the Cabinet Member could also investigate this matter. Examples that were provided included ISO 9000 certification and Occupational Health and Safety.

The Cabinet Member advised that she would follow this matter up with officers.

- Councillor Ojetola questioned how the request for services were being recorded correctly centrally when enquiries were received from residents.

The Cabinet Member explained that each department had specific monitoring records which categorised and logged enquiries.

- Councillor Ray congratulated the Cabinet Member for the report and savings which were expected to be delivered by the transfer of Serco but asked for clarification regarding the Serco staff pension provision and whether costs had been taken into account.

The Cabinet advised that the details of pension provision were still being identified but they were a consideration.

112. Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Councillor Speight, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, introduced the report which outlined the growth programme in Thurrock and included master planning for the vision of the Civic Square in Tilbury, the securing of the preferred developer PCRL (Purfleet Centre Regeneration Limited) for the development in Purfleet and a bus station next to the Chafford Hundred Rail Station footbridge.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Gledhill questioned what was being done to ensure that local residents could take full advantage of job opportunities and the creation of local business supply chains in Thurrock.

The Cabinet Member advised that Thurrock was working with other nearby local authorities to take advantage of pooling of local business rates to provide a communal offer and that the Council was working with major companies, such as the NFT distribution and Travis Perkins to promote

- Councillor Halden felt that night-time economy should be developed, possibly through the development of a super-casino, as he felt that the Borough lost out to other places such as Southend.

The Cabinet Member expressed concerns at the idea of developing a super-casino, and although affirmed that Thurrock performed strongly in logistics and retail due to its location, felt that a night-time economy was being driven forward in other ways, such as through the leisure offer in Lakeside and the JD Weatherspoon's development in Grays Town Centre.

- Councillor B. Little reported that at a recent meeting which he had attended a representative from the Port of Tilbury had stated that they were struggling to fill vacancies. He questioned whether specific roles not being filled could be identified so that assistance and skills training could be offered to residents to enable them to take up employment.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that he would investigate this matter further and report back to a future meeting of the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- Councillor Tolson referred back to last meeting as she did not believe she had received a response to a question she had raised regarding Coalhouse and Tilbury Fort. She further asked the Cabinet Member when further details would be made available on the reconfiguration of Stanford-le-Hope station.

The Cabinet Member explained that the reconfiguration of Stanford-le-Hope station fell under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation who would need to provide a response.

- Councillor Redsell asked how the regeneration department was working local communities to develop sporting facilities, such as the Blackshots Field Hub, as residents believed that they were not being listened to.

The Cabinet Member explained that conversations were happening with local communities but recognised more also needed to be done, and highlighted the Purfleet development as an example of strong community engagement from an early stage to set out the sporting offer.

- Councillor Gupta requested an update regarding the Grays Rail Underpass and when plans would be implemented.

The Cabinet Member advised that officers had been working with Network Rail but that funding was required to develop detailed design work. He explained that Network Rail also faced budget challenges and as a result capital money would need to be identified, but that the work was being prioritised and officers were working with Network Rail in order to move forward with plans.

- Councillor Worrall congratulated the Cabinet Member as she welcomed the regeneration scheme for the Civic Square in Tilbury which she felt was long overdue.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Regeneration and Planning teams for all their hard work.

113. Questions from Members

The Deputy Mayor informed the Chamber that no questions to the Leader of the Council had been received but there were four questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

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

114. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

There were no reports from Members representing the Council on outside bodies.

115. Minutes of Committees

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

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

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

Councillor Redsell explained that in relation to her October motion regarding the nuisance of motorbikes and other vehicles on open spaces, she had not seen any posters on display and called for these to be displayed somewhere more visible.

Councillor Worrall asked officers if a reply from MP's had been received in relation to her motion which had been passed in September, and requested officers to report back.

117. Motion submitted by Councillor J. Kent

The Motion, as printed in the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor J. Kent and seconded by Councillor B. Rice. The Motion read as follows:

"This Council remains opposed to government plans for a further river crossing in Thurrock and commits to continue campaigning, alongside local residents, on this issue."

Councillor J. Kent introduced the motion, and in doing so, expressed concern that all of the options for the new Lower Thames Crossing would put increased pressure on the existing road network in the Borough and cause enormous damage to the greenbelt and villages, especially Options A and C, which he understood were the preferred options of Government. He felt that it was time to reassert a unanimous decision to oppose the new Lower Thames Crossing to government and Thurrock MP's as hundreds of responses had been received to the 'none of the above' campaign.

Councillor Jones expressed frustration that the government seemingly continued not to listen to Thurrock residents who did not want a new Lower Thames Crossing in the Borough, which he added would also exacerbate issues around Air Quality that was already recorded as the worst in the Country at certain times.

Councillor G. Rice stated that he would be supporting the motion as one of the proposed routes would come within a distance of 500 yards of homes in Chadwell-St-Mary, decimate the countryside and destroy the historic area of West Tilbury. He reported that what was needed was an outer orbital crossing to decrease levels of traffic congestion on the M25 and called upon colleagues across the Chamber to take a united stand against the proposals.

Councillor Ray explained that he would be supporting the motion but he felt that government's consideration of where the crossing should be would be dictated by funding, which was why he felt that Option A would be approved as it would be of negligible cost to government.

Councillor Gledhill highlighted that the Borough already did not have a good Air Quality record and that Option C would see the bulldozing of greenbelt land and a bridge as tall as The Shard. He reaffirmed his support for the motion as Thurrock already had increased traffic problems, and agreed that an outer ring road such as Option D would be preferred.

Councillor Worrall stated that she did not know of anyone in Thurrock who supported a new crossing which would cut across the countryside and reduce air quality, and therefore expressed her disappointment at a recent press article from a local MP which reported that 90% of residents had been consulted.

Councillors V. Holloway and Gerrish explained that the plans would impact residents of Purfleet and called for cross-party consensus.

Councillor Palmer remarked that the plans would completely destroy the conservation village and historic site of West Thurrock.

Councillor Coxshall observed that the local MP's comments had been misreported and not been presented correctly during the debate.

Councillor C. Holloway felt that the two Thurrock MP's were accountable and called on them to do the right thing and listen to the views of Thurrock residents.

Councillor Snell advised that he would be supporting the motion but felt that there was still a degree of ambiguity around the plans, and called upon the local MP to clarify the position.

Councillor B. Rice highlighted that it was a pleasure to second the motion and felt that every Councillor should stand up and be counted on the matter to work collaboratively against the plans. She reported that Option D had already been ruled out by Government due to the cost and reaffirmed that Thurrock was 100% opposed to any new crossing in the Borough.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Deputy Mayor declared the motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

This Council remains opposed to government plans for a further river crossing in Thurrock and commits to continue campaigning, alongside local residents, on this issue.

118. Motion submitted by Councillor Halden

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

“Thurrock Council adopts the official position of being pro grammar school and desires that Thurrock children should have access to them.

The Authority should actively pursue / explore opportunities for grammar schools to expand into Thurrock via an annex”.

Councillor Halden introduced the motion, and in doing so, explained that if Grammar Schools were expanded into Thurrock, parents would have greater choice, competition and diversity. He felt that the argument that grammar schools were selective and elitist was purely ideological as schools already streamed children and young people by creating different sets dependent on ability.

Councillor Halden reported that 96 students in Thurrock had grammar school offers and that Thurrock pupils had to compete among thousands of others for Grammar School places, therefore he argued that a Grammar School should be created so as not to deny local choice and leave people out.

Councillor Kerin remarked that he respected Councillor Halden’s commitment to education but felt that local authorities should prioritise two criteria; firstly that schools should be established in areas where they were needed and secondly that the local authority should work to ensure that all schools were ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’. He felt that the motion did not support these principles and had concerns with Members taking on individual pet projects, which could sometimes lead to unintended consequences, and that legislation prevented local authorities from opening schools.

Councillor J. Kent observed that the motion contradicted national Conservative Party policy and felt that it would damage every one of Thurrock’s secondary schools. He argued that Thurrock free schools, maintained schools and academies were improving and working collaboratively with each other.

Members were advised that the Head Teacher of the Harris Academy won the achievement of ‘Head Teacher of the Year’ and Councillor J. Kent felt that the motion would send a message to such people that their work was somehow not good enough and that a Grammar School was needed, which was not the case.

Councillor J. Kent further reported that local authorities were responsible for ensuring that there were sufficient school places in the Borough and to work with partners to develop free schools; he felt that to support the motion would be to put such work on hold and that instead Members should focus on improving current schools so that every Thurrock child had the opportunity to access a ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ education.

At 9.16 pm, the Deputy Mayor moved a motion to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11.1 to allow the meeting to continue beyond the 2 ½ hour time limit until 10.00 pm. Members indicated their agreement to the proposal.

Councillor Johnson did not agree with the sentiments made by Councillor J. Kent and argued that the motion would not put a stop to the good work the authority was already undertaking but allow greater choice for Thurrock pupils.

Councillor Snell observed that he would be supporting the motion, which was in line with UKIP party politics, and that it would send a message to Grammar School providers that Thurrock would look favourably on any proposal to develop provision in the Borough.

Councillor Gledhill stated that it was not right to hold back opportunities for Thurrock pupils to access Grammar School places and that the motion encouraged choice; although he agreed with Councillor Kerin that every school in the Borough should be 'good' or 'outstanding.'

Councillor Potheary remarked that she would not be in support of the motion, which would focus on a few gifted children or those who could afford Grammar School places. She argued that there should be a move away from testing children at 10 years of age rather than encouraging it.

Councillor B. Rice argued that she did not want to see the Borough go back to a Grammar School system which disadvantaged those people who did not attend Grammar Schools.

A further detailed debate took place during which a number of Members spoke in favour of Grammar Schools, which they argued offered greater choice, and others who were against as it would disproportionately disadvantage those from lower income backgrounds.

Councillor MacPherson commended the fact that all Members were passionate about education in Thurrock but argued that there was no one size fits all provision, and as a result the possibility of Grammar School expansion into Thurrock should be explored.

Upon being put to the vote, 29 Members voted in favour of the Motion, 16 Members voted against and none abstained, whereupon the Deputy Mayor declared the motion to be carried.

RESOLVED:

Thurrock Council adopts the official position of being pro grammar school and desires that Thurrock children should have access to them.

The Authority should actively pursue / explore opportunities for grammar schools to expand into Thurrock via an annex.

119. Motion submitted by Councillor Stewart

Under Council Procedure Rule 19.17 Councillor Stewart proposed an alteration to her Motion, which read as follows:

“That we ask Cabinet, at its next meeting, to immediately fund an alteration to the bus route to serve Fobbing over the winter months”.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Stewart and seconded by Councillor Roast, to which Members signified their consent to the alteration of the motion without discussion.

Councillor Stewart introduced the motion, and in doing so, argued that the time to consider a change had passed and that residents now required action to ensure that Fobbing was not cut off during the winter months. She felt that it was the Council’s duty to safeguard the most vulnerable and that £9,000 was a relatively small amount to ensure that residents could access medical treatment and shop for essentials.

Councillor Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, reported that over the previous months he was pleased to meet with Fobbing residents and could announce that a strong way forward had been identified as the service would be retendered in early 2016. Councillor Gerrish advised that in the interim period he believed money could be redirected from income raised to deliver the service during the winter months, and in light of this progress expressed that he would agree with the motion.

Councillor Jones, as local Ward Councillor, explained that there were a large number of elderly residents who were affected by the bus service alteration and felt that a solution needed to be identified for Fobbing residents.

Councillor B. Little, as Chair of the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, expressed his disappointment at the Portfolio Holder’s announcement that a solution had been found only now when the Committee had been working to identify such a solution and its calls to resolve the problem speedily had previously been ignored. He expressed his frustration with the situation, which he felt could have been resolved earlier.

Councillor Gledhill asked for reassurances that the alteration would be enacted before the Christmas period and stated that he would contact MP Stephen Metcalfe regarding a waiver to the 56 day notice.

Councillor Ray remarked that he was pleased the alteration had been amended and that Fobbing residents could be assisted over the winter period; although he was still concerned at the lack of footfall for the service in the long-term.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the Motion, whereupon the Deputy Mayor declared the motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

That we ask Cabinet, at its next meeting, to immediately fund an alteration to the bus route to serve Fobbing over the winter months.

The meeting finished at 9.56 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

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 25 November 2015

Item 6 – Questions from Members of the Public.

1 question was submitted from a member of the public.

1. From Mr Perrin to Councillor J. Kent

At the Cabinet meeting on 11th November, you outlined the problem of homeless people in the Borough. You painted a somewhat bleak picture stating that the number of homeless people was increasing whilst at the same time the Council was financially limited, as a consequence of cuts to funding by the Government to Local Authorities. Has the Council any plans to make this Christmas more enjoyable for homeless people, especially young people leaving care?

Councillor J. Kent

Well I think the situation really is pretty bleak, especially for those people who are homeless, and the rise in homelessness that we have seen since 2010 is something that really saddens me and if I'm being honest makes me pretty angry.

We are seeing a terrifying rise in homelessness up and down the Country. Nationally the number of people sleeping rough has increased by 55% since 2010, that's 55%, and the number making a homeless application nationally is up by over a quarter in the same time and Thurrock just can't be immune to that; and we are seeing similar increases in those coming to Council for homelessness.

No matter how hard we work, we just cannot ensure that every case is resolved speedily or satisfactorily. For example we currently have more than 90 households in temporary accommodation, that's a third more than compared with the same time last year and the year before.

I have to say I doubt very much that no matter what we might do, no matter what we may try to do, that any homeless person, or anyone threatened with homelessness, will enjoy their time over Christmas whilst worrying about their future.

So of course we are doing all we can to help homeless people but we have to do that year round. Of course we are doing all we can for young people leaving care. So I have to say that we will not be making any special Christmas plans, we have to work every single day of the year to try and help the poor people that this government is failing, the people who are having their benefits cut, the people who learned today that they are having their tax credits cut, the many hard working people who are seeing the welfare state safety net being swept away when they need it the most. And just for clarity at

this moment there are no care leavers, none known to the service anyway, that are street homeless.

Deputy Mayor

Mr Perrin, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Mr Perrin

Thank you Madam Deputy Mayor. I do. I fear, in view of your previous statement, Councillors have been asked to put their hands in their pockets to send people to a pantomime. I am going to ask them again to put their hands in their pockets. If you could just read out or divulge the contents of an envelope I have you earlier that will kick off proceedings I think.

Deputy Mayor

Mr Perrin gave me this envelope earlier. I'm just opening it here and there is £50 in the envelope.

Mr Perrin

I make this contribution hoping that all 49 Members will contribute a like amount so that £2,500 can be used to ensure that some of those in needs can be cared for this Christmas.

I hope that my gesture will not be seen as coercive or shaming Members into contributing. £2,500 will enable £50 per person to be spend on 50 needy people, such as young adults leaving care and living alone, homeless ex-service personnel, pensioners living alone and lonely or any other person desperately in need, or £100 per person for 25 such people.

I must confess I have no idea of the logistical problems involved but I am sure that they are not insurmountable. As they say, where there is a will there is a way. I would be prepared to give some of my time on Christmas Day and Boxing Day to help.

Dependent on the generosity of Members, and I am confident there is not a scrooge among you who would say 'barr humbug', would you look into the feasibility of providing a Christmas and Boxing Day dinner and do your utmost to bring it about, thereby ensuring an enjoyable day for those most in need.

As this is the last Full Council meeting of 2015, I take this opportunity to wish all Members a very happy Christmas.

Councillor J. Kent

Madam Deputy Mayor, that is a very generous offer and a very generous donation. Mr Perrin in his question said he wasn't sure of the logistical difficulties there were but I think we all accept the donation and we accept the suggestion in the spirit which it was made.

I am aware that Madam Mayor, Councillor Gray, has already said that she is giving up her Christmas afternoon to do something similar at the Ockendon hub and I think it appropriate, if Members did wish to make their own donation that we would involve Mr Perrin and Councillor Gary in working out just how the money raised would best be distributed. Thank you.

Deputy Mayor

Thank you Mr Perrin.

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Item 15 – Questions from Members

The Deputy Mayor informed the Chamber that four questions had been submitted to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee. No questions to the Leader were received.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER

No questions to the Leader were received.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Hebb to Councillor Gerrish

Please can you describe what good service looks like for you from your department, in terms of line painting across the borough?

Councillor Gerrish

From my point of view I think the first point to say is that good service would be having sufficient funding to maintain and refresh all road markings across the borough as and when required.

The highway infrastructure deficit was reported to Cabinet in February 2015 and as a result an additional £4 million of capital funding was allocated to highway maintenance, to be spent over the next 3 years, of this £250,000 was allocated specifically for the maintenance of road markings. An in context Madam Deputy Mayor that is against £30,000 that we were spending on road markings previously, so that's a big increase in the amount that we are spending.

£75,000 was allocated for 2015/15 and the work programme is well underway with a number of zebra crossings and mini roundabouts being recovered. In particular, Madam Deputy Mayor in the context of funding challenges I would say that prioritising properly and appropriately is key in delivering that plan.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Hebb, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Hebb

Thank you Madam Deputy Mayor I would dearly like to ask a supplementary. Textbook. Quite literally textbook. Thank you for relaying to me what your officers have written for you Councillor Gerrish, that wasn't actually the answer to the question which I asked. So hopefully the rest of the administration won't be reciting what officers have provided tonight, although we will get the answer to how many Council's only have 20 day complaints

returns and we will find out why the MP didn't write to Councillor Potheary about her last motion. Probably because he was too busy talking to the Prime Minister, actually doing something value adding. Anyway, we move on.

So Billet Lane, Councillor Gerrish. We have been in communication quite considerably over the last few weeks. I have been asking for a 1.5 metre extension of a yellow line, and it has now got to the point that I am asking at this meeting because I'm not getting anywhere. Before full documented evidence or anyone from the Labour side tells me what officers have said, I've done that and I'm sick of it.

Can I have a 1.5 metre extension to a yellow line down Billet Lane to allow disabled residents to go up and down a ramp and safely reverse down the lane?

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Gerrish?

Councillor Gerrish

Thank you Madam Deputy Mayor. What I will say, and I guess first of all it does sound like there were some delays in this particular case, and as Councillor Hebb has made clear we have correspondence on this matter. I don't think what I want to do is stand up here and make a ruling on a particular piece of local casework, I don't think that's appropriate, and I don't think that's the way policy should be conducted in the Council.

What I have offered Councillor Hebb, and I hope he takes it up, is a meeting between myself and the Head of Highways to discuss this matter in particular check the right prioritisation criteria has been applied in this case, and if it's not then clearly we should make sure that it has been.

I say that Madam Deputy Mayor, and it's quite an important point, in that I think there is a very good case for delivering this piece of work. I think it looks relatively inexpensive and should be done. What I don't know is the entire backlog of work that it should be prioritised against, and clearly as an authority we have to prioritise on road safety, and if there are works that have been prioritised against then we should do that. However, what I am saying is that at the meeting we look into the facts of the case in more detail, and I think there are further facts required before we make that decision and I'm willing to take that forward with him if he finds that acceptable.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Hebb, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Hebb

I do, thank you Madam Deputy Mayor, and I do thank Councillor Gerrish for that commitment. I would say that I have been trying to get this to happen since May. I have to say that you and I, if we don't get anywhere by January 2nd, 3rd, 4th, go out and get a pot of paint and go and do it ourselves. So my question is, do you trust me to paint the line straight?

Councillor Gerrish

Madam Mayor, I'm sure Councillor Hebb is an excellent painter.

2. From Councillor Hebb to Councillor V. Holloway

Please can you describe what reasons there could be for a 28-day reply timeframe (four weeks) for Thurrock Council to respond to residents and members alike?

Councillor V. Holloway

The council's timeframe for responding to member enquiries is 14 calendar days (not 28 days). The timeframe for responding to Stage 1 complaints is 15 calendar days, for residents' concerns 5 calendar days, and for stage 2 and 3 complaints 28 calendar days.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Hebb, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Hebb

I do, thank you Madam Deputy Mayor. I just want to go over the point for concerns and a few stages that we have in play here. Thank you for whoever wrote this for me, it is very illustrative. Six Council's out of eight that have been benchmarked and have a time frame of 20 working days for responding to Stage 2/3 complaints or those of a similar nature. Can I ask if you think having 3 to 4 stages of a complaints process is nothing more than a mere dilution of data and stops us from getting to the root cause of issues and tackling them at root cause.

Councillor V. Holloway

You admonish Councillor Gerrish for reading out a response provided by officers but can I just say Councillor Hebb, that officers also provide responses for you, but never mind.

Councillor Hebb

What's good for the good is good for the gander.

Deputy Mayor

Members please, can we respect each other and listen to Councillor Holloway?

Councillor V. Holloway

Thank you Madam Deputy Mayor. I do actually think the stages are appropriate. There is a reasonable line between the stages and I am aware these are similar to other Council's.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Hebb, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Hebb

I do and it's ever so brief. OK, I will work with you on this one. I'm not convinced but what I would like to do it perhaps for you and I to engage and look at the complaints, the headings and the categories that are coming out.

So perhaps do some analysis to understand what our biggest issues are. At the end of the day our customers are the residents on the shop floor and I think it's important we get on top of issues.

Hopefully you will give me that undertaking. I'll happily work with you on this one and hopefully you can convince me that 4 stages of a complaints process is appropriate.

3. From Councillor Hipsey to Councillor Potheary

Prime Minister David Cameron MP, has recently questioned the Police and Crime Commissioner for Oxfordshire, (the county he resides), about the Police stations that are to close in Oxfordshire. Would the cabinet member inform me if either the MP of Thurrock or the MP of South Basildon and East Thurrock have to date troubled themselves to contact the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex about the recently announced Police Station closures in Thurrock?

Councillor Potheary

Thank you Councillor Hipsey for your question. I'm afraid I can't really comment on what the MP's might of done, I'm afraid I haven't actually received a response from them both so far, which I think is frankly bad manners, but never mind.

I have also written to the Home Secretary as well to express this Chamber's concerns for our communities and neighbourhoods and I can confirm that the PCC will be attending January's Council meeting along with the Chief

Constable after I met with both of them at the last Police and Crime Panel meeting in Chelmsford.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Hipsey, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Hipsey

Yes it is a bit of a brief question, I'd like you to invite the PPC for Essex Police to come along to the January meeting as I believe the Chief Constable is coming along. I am sure like this side of the Chamber, and also our UKIP Members, I'm hoping that our Conservative Members will have some very pointed questions to their Conservative colleague who is leaving Thurrock unpoliced virtually. With the incident that happened over at Bluewater my words at the last meeting were with security, is becoming a threat to Thurrock and we don't want to see Thurrock unpoliced or unmanned police stations, so please would you ensure the PPC is here?

Councillor Potheary

Yes Councillor Hipsey, the PCC will be here in January to allow Members to put those questions to him. And we will need to put the pressure up to make sure that the cuts are reversed and we have a properly funded Police force to protect us.

Deputy Mayor

Members, I have asked for you to respect each other when speaking and you are still not doing so. If you continue I may move for you to be removed from the Chamber until the end of the meeting.

Councillor Hipsey, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Hipsey

No thank you Madam Deputy Mayor.

Deputy Mayor

I have been informed by Democratic Services that the question should have been directed to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Lynn Worrall, and not Councillor Potheary as stated in the agenda. Councillor Ojetola would you please read your question out to Councillor Worrall?

4. From Councillor Ojetola to Councillor Worrall

How many Houses in Multiple Occupation do we have in Thurrock?

Councillor Worrall

Thank you Councillor Ojetola and as always I am always happy to answer your questions. And we have been doing a piece of work on this so it's a really nice time for you to be asking this question.

From the statistical data that is both local and national we believe it to be about 300 but we do have potential that it could be 400 HMO's.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Ojetola, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Ojetola

Thank you Madam Deputy Mayor. Councillor Worrall, what inspections are carried out to ensure the safety of Thurrock residents at these HMO's?

Councillor Worrall

HMO's are quite complication and you only need to licence a HMO if it is above 3 floors and we have got 5 of these in the Borough and we believe that we licenced all those that we know about, and these checks are carried out by our Private Housing Team who are Environmental Health Officers who will check things like fire doors, safety in and out of the home, make sure there is adequate gas, central heating and that sort of stuff. So if we are made aware we do do them. We are also very aware that there might be a change to government rulings on this and HMO's will be checked as they come down to 2 floors which will of course make a big job to be doing because we don't have so many of the 3 floors but we do have of the 2 floors and it could be that we have to increase staff if we are going to properly make sure that they are licensed and checked.

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Ojetola, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Ojetola

Yes thank you Madam Deputy Mayor and thank you Councillor Worrall for your answer. Indeed it should be one of those that's self-funding if we try to take it on. I know that there is a consultation going on, well I read about that, but we dedicated our own policy to go to 2 floors, and I know it's not just 3 floors, it's about the number of the size of the room, the number of families dwelling in the property etc. But if we decided as a Council to go down to 2 floors etc then it should be self-sufficient because there is a licence fee which I think is about £750 a year over a couple of years which we could charge that and generate.

Madam Deputy Mayor I am hoping if you agree to this then it will protect our

residents even more. Are you happy to review that strategy so that we can ensure the protection of Thurrock residents?

Councillor Worrall

Thank you Councillor Ojetola and as always residents safety is always paramount to me, so more than happy to, the right officers are sitting in the room tonight and the minutes will reflect that. I'm sure we do need to make sure that any licence is carried out and we do all that we can to protect any residents in our houses as we see more HMO's across the Borough.

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There is one question from a member of the public.

1. **From Mr Perrin to Councillor J. Kent** (received 10/01/2016 @ 18:31)

“Resulting from the “Awareness” campaign organised by Mrs Deirdre Lodge it is accepted that damp and mould, especially toxic black mould, is a serious threat to the health and wellbeing of those living with it in their homes, though I believe there are some people, Councillors included, who would dispute that toxic black mould is a category 1 hazard. I acknowledge that this Council has taken this matter seriously and has endeavored to tackle the problem. What is the Council’s ultimate goal in the battle is it complete eradication of toxic black mould in Council homes, if so are you winning the battle?”

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Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

Petition No.	Description	Presented by (and date)	Portfolio Holder	Status Full copies of the responses may be obtained from Democratic Services
464	<p>Petition received by the Council from residents in opposition to the proposed Parish Council on the Frost Estate.</p> <p>There is no denying that some roads of the Frost Estate have fallen into a very poor state of dis-repair. In particular the cross roads on the junction of Central Avenue and Gifford's Cross Avenue.</p> <p>While the majority of residents want to see this area brought up to an acceptable condition and maintain the character of the estate, there is a split in the opinion that a Parish Council is the correct way to address this issue.</p> <p>We the undersigned want to identify an alternative solution to the Parish Council that has (as a result of the public meeting on the 15/06/2015) highlighted many issues including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road repair is not historically within a Parish Council's responsibility. 2. No confirmed precept costs 3. Precept costs linked to Council Tax banding – not equal across the estate! 	12/08/2015*	Cllr J Potheary	This petition was considered by Members as part of the decision making process regarding the Frost Estate Parish Council at the Extraordinary Council meeting held on Wednesday 28 August 2015.

* indicates petitions handed in at the Civic Offices or e-petitions - not presented at Council

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

465	Petition received by the Council from residents in respect of the nuisance of silver birch trees at The Close, Grays	08/08/2015	Cllr G Rice	<p>The Council has responded to comments regarding the Silver Birch trees in this area in the past and after complaints about the potential safety of the tree by a local resident, the tree was inspected by an independent arboriculturalist and he reported in March 2014. A copy of the report was provided to the resident which showed that the tree was in good health and should have maintenance on a less frequent basis. The trees in this area are Silver Birches which are widely used as street trees both in Thurrock and across the country due to their strength and suitability in an urban environment.</p> <p>There are many hundreds of similar trees across the borough and to remove these particular trees which are in good health would set an unwarranted precedent. Street trees are an important feature across the urban environment breaking up the monotony of buildings, providing shelter for birds and insect life and through photosynthesis removing carbon dioxide from the air and re oxygenating the atmosphere.</p> <p>The reasons put forward to remove these trees have now changed from the original complaint but do not offer any new compelling reason for the destruction of the greening of the local environment.</p>
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Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				<p>Further update 15/10/15</p> <p>Mike Heath Head of Environmental Services had agreed with the Resident Mr Cavanagh who sent the petition that if Mr Cavanagh pays £300 for a replacement tree, the mature silver birch beside his bungalow will be removed and replanted with the replacement tree this will all be during the dormant season. Mike and Mr Cavanagh have spoken on the phone.</p>
466	A Petition to Thurrock Borough Council by residents to reinstate the 374 bus route service.	9/9/2015	Cllr O Gerrish	<p>Residents of Fobbing or Corringham and other visitors, who relied on the 374 bus route that previously ran along High Road, Fobbing urge Thurrock Borough Council to commit to reinstating this much valued public transport service.</p> <p>The deadline to respond to the lead petitioner is 9 October 2015.</p> <p>There are six communities within Thurrock that require financial support for a bus service to be provided. A number of options for April 2015 were considered. Faced with a diminishing budget it was extremely disappointing that we could not seek to provide a bus service that met the needs of all residents. Both Amber Coaches and First Essex buses were prepared to put on a limited service for Fobbing but not on a commercial basis. Therefore the financial implications for the authority exceeded the</p>

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				<p>bus budget available and difficult decisions had to be made. As part of ongoing concerns from residents and ward members this issue was taken to Overview & Scrutiny for Planning & Transportation on both the 29th July 2015 and 16th September 2015. It was agreed that a further review was required in order to try and encourage bus operators to offer commercial services through Fobbing. We have approached commercial operators who are not willing to divert existing services through Fobbing. We are continuing to try to find ways of delivering bus services for all of our communities; however, the budget position for 2016/17 requires further reduction to bus subsidies.</p>
467	<p>Petition to save our homes being pulled down: Butler, Davall and Greenwood.</p>	<p>23/09/15 at Council</p>	<p>Cllr Worrall</p>	<p>At the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 October 2014 (decision 01104415) it was resolved to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet not to award decant status to three Grays high rises – Butler, Davall and Greenwood House, but instead to note that continued consultation should take place with residents to include detailed design on alternative home provision to ensure residents are given a clear unambiguous set of choices. 2. Cabinet to agree that officers consider feedback from this consultation as part of the development of the emerging master plan for Grays Town Centre. 3. Cabinet to note that the Council's new

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				<p>build development on Seabrooke Rise will be allocated in accordance to the Council's existing Lettings Policy and existing residents of the Seabrooke Rise high rise towers will not benefit from enhanced priority status at the current time, therefore Council explores a local lettings plan as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>4. Cabinet to note that the Council is currently reviewing the proposed Housing Development Plan and Estate Regeneration Programme in the light of the Government's imposed reductions in rent. The Council are assessing the implications and options available to ensure that the financial parameters of the HRA are met, whilst retaining an affordable and deliverable programme of housing investment and new build development.</p>
468	<p>Noise and pollution from 'The Village' building works in Aveley. Petition to complain about the activity at 'The Village' Persimmon building development in Aveley, numerous complaints have been made already about the noise from the work site. Work often begins before 8am, carries on after 5pm and on Sundays too. Thurrock Council has warned the site managers about this before and have found out that work is being done outside the permitted time and, as such, there is scope for prosecution.</p>	23/09/15 at Council	Cllr G. Rice	<p>Planning Enforcement and Environmental Health monitor sites for compliance with the construction environment plan agreed as part of the original planning application.</p> <p>This plan includes provisions to control dust and noise.</p> <p>If evidence of failure to comply with the conditions is found the builder will be contacted and the relevant changes in practice agreed or failing this regulatory action started.</p>

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

	<p>Further to this, many residents in St Michael's Close and Stanford Gardens in Aveley have been unable to use their gardens owing to the failure of the workers to dampen waste rubble that is causing dust to pour into residents' gardens. Many residents have been unable to use their gardens and this is particularly affecting families with children.</p> <p>The petition seeks compensation for residents of Stanford Gardens and St Michael's Close and that something is done so we can use our gardens again and not have to put up with building noise outside of normal working hours.</p>			<p>No evidence of breaches at the Village site is currently available. Residents experiencing issues resulting from this site should continue to report these to either the site or the Council on a case by case basis.</p>
469	<p>We, the undersigned residents of Blackshots, Woodside and also many other areas affected by bikes travelling at speed on pavements across main roads ending up on Blackshots Park, we have been blighted by this problem for many years. We ask that Councillors, Council and Police take notice of this problem that is escalating day by day, waiting for a traffic accident to happen.</p>	23/09/15 at Council	Cllr G. Rice	<p>Anti-social use of motorcycles and other vehicles is dealt with under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002. The Thurrock Neighbourhood Policing Team formed in July are tasked with dealing with this in Thurrock. So far this year 11 vehicles have been seized by Thurrock Police but unfortunately this is not broken down by cause or vehicle type on the relevant police computer system and so it is not possible to determine what percentage of these seizures were for section 59 at Blackshots.</p> <p>The Police have advised that they have no reported injuries or road traffic collisions attributable to this activity and that over</p>

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				<p>recent months complaints to them about nuisance motorbikes have reduced.</p> <p>They will continue to deal with these complaints on a case by case basis with the continued support of the Councils CCTV system and other departments as necessary.</p>
470	Petition to demolish Butler, Davall and Greenwood High Rise blocks in Grays.	14/10/15	Cllr Worrall	<p>At the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 October 2014 (decision 01104415) it was resolved to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet not to award decant status to three Grays high rises – Butler, Davall and Greenwood House, but instead to note that continued consultation should take place with residents to include detailed design on alternative home provision to ensure residents are given a clear unambiguous set of choices. 2. Cabinet to agree that officers consider feedback from this consultation as part of the development of the emerging master plan for Grays Town Centre. 3. Cabinet to note that the Council’s new build development on Seabrooke Rise will be allocated in accordance to the Council’s existing Lettings Policy and existing residents of the Seabrooke Rise high rise towers will not benefit from enhanced priority status at the current time, therefore Council explores a local lettings plan as a matter of urgency. 4. Cabinet to note that the Council is currently reviewing the proposed Housing

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				Development Plan and Estate Regeneration Programme in the light of the Government's imposed reductions in rent. The Council are assessing the implications and options available to ensure that the financial parameters of the HRA are met, whilst retaining an affordable and deliverable programme of housing investment and new build development.
471	The petition is with regards to the shelters on Dilkes Park on the Belhus Estate, the undersigned would like them to be removed. Issues include groups of individuals setting fires, taking drugs, drinking and generally terrorising residents.	22/10/15	Cllr Potheary	<p>Resident of the surrounding area of Dilkes Park have suffered from persistent antisocial behaviour in the area resulting in worry for the community.</p> <p>Although the Police, supported by the Council, have been addressing the issues and taking action in the area against perpetrators, it is agreed that these shelters should be removed.</p> <p>On visiting the site it can be seen that the shelters are not in keeping with what is otherwise a very family friendly park.</p> <p>The shelters are repeatedly damaged and vandalised, leading to the Environmental workforce having to continually commit resource to address ongoing issues.</p> <p>The intention is to have the shelters removed before Christmas 2015.</p>

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

				<p>There is a risk that this will just move the problem of the antisocial behaviour, however the Police will continue to work with the Council and the Community to address any ongoing issues.</p> <p>It should be noted that removal of the shelters will be an estimated cost of £4000.</p>
472	Residents of Long Lane (Rugby Club end), Kerry Road, Jesmond Road and Laird Avenue are asking for a one way system for the bus route number 88.	28/10/15 at Council	Cllr Gerrish	<p>Bus route 88 is operated by a private operator, Ensign Buses, and they have confirmed there are no major operational issues and do not intend to register a route change with the traffic commissioners as requested.</p> <p>In such circumstances the Council have no or few powers to act due to bus deregulation.</p>
473	<p>The residents of Webster Road call on the Council to commence a review in aid of securing additional parking arrangements / facilities in the immediate vicinity. A suggestion is the potential reconfiguration of the land outside properties with the lowest door numbers in Webster Road on the grass section in front of houses (i.e. numbered 1,3,5,2,4,6 etc).</p> <p>Residents call on Thurrock Council to discuss this with the local residents to see how this piece of land could be changed / adapted to accommodate more vehicles. A potential example can be found in Deveron</p>	25/11/15 at Council	Cllr Gerrish	<p>An investigation into the possibility of providing parking on the Highway green in front of properties 1-9 & 2-10 Webster Road.</p> <p>The area will be reviewed with a view to providing verge protection to the green to permit parking whilst retaining the pleasant feel of the area and to assist with drainage. A scheme proposal will be drawn up and a cost estimate will be calculated.</p> <p>However, a preliminary view of the site indicates that currently vehicles are parking in the turning head in front of the green and I must point out that that some of this will be lost to permit access to the green and allow</p>

Item 9: Petitions Update Report – 27 January 2016

	Gardens in South Ockendon.			for vehicles to turn. Officers will advise when furthers costs are known.
474	The petition is too keep gate 129 between College Avenue and Bradleigh Avenue, Grays closed. It has been gated and closed to the public since 2008 following local residents fighting long and hard for it to be. The Pathway is close to a school and house.	1/12/15	Cllr Gerrish	The current Gating Order is valid until October 2017. Officers are exploring the case for permanently stopping up the footpath using the Council's powers under s116 of the Highways Act, and proposals will be subject to formal consultation in due course.

27 January 2016	ITEM: 11
Council	
To Note the Appointment of the Interim Corporate Director of Children’s Services Service	
Wards and communities affected: N/A	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Councillor J Kent, Leader of the Council	
Accountable Head of Service: N/A	
Accountable Director: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Council is required to appoint a Director of Children’s Services to fulfil statutory functions and comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Normally statutory Chief Officer /Director Appointments are confirmed at Full Council however, given the urgent need to recruit an interim Director for Children Services, Rule 9 of the Employment Rules covering interim appointments applied enabling General Services Committee to make both a selection and an urgent interim appointment.

General Services Committee met on 6 January 2016 to conduct the selection and agreed to appoint David Archibald.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 To note the appointment of David Archibald as Interim Corporate Director of Children’s Services with effect from 25 January 2016.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Following the resignation of Carmel Littleton, the current Director of Children’s Services, Council approved General Services Committee to make arrangements for the recruitment of a Corporate Director of Children’s Services.

2.2 Recruitment of a permanent Corporate Director of Children’s Services is underway with the intention of conducting selection interviews in March and

bringing a recommendation to full Council. Due to the requirements of the role and to comply with our statutory duty, an interim appointment is required.

- 2.3 This report asks Council to note the appointment of Mr David Archibald as interim Corporate Director of Children's Services following a meeting of the General Services Committee on 6 January, which agreed to appoint him to the post.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council has a statutory duty to appoint a designated Director of Children's Services.
- 3.2 This is a key role for the Authority which the current post holder leaves on 29 January 2016. With the Ofsted Inspection of services potentially due to be announced at any time, the council needed to appoint an appropriately qualified candidate to enable an appropriate handover from the current Director and to maintain stability and continuity of critical services.
- 3.3 Consideration was given to an internal acting up arrangement; due to the demands of the role and the need to maintain appropriate senior capacity for the Ofsted Inspection this did not represent an appropriate solution.
- 3.4 The Monitoring Officer advised that Rule 9 of the Employment Rules would be applicable as this is a short term appointment. General Services Committee considered both the selection and appointment of the candidate at its meeting on 6 January 2016.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To appoint an Interim Corporate Director of Children's Services to ensure continuity of statutory functions and appropriate senior leadership of critical services.

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

- 5.1 The recommendation in this report is the outcome of a formal recruitment process conducted by General Services Committee to appoint the Interim Corporate Director of Children's Services.
- 5.2 Pursuant to Rule 4 of the Employment Rules, Cabinet has been duly notified and no objection received from the Leader.

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

- 6.1 The recruitment of an interim Corporate Director of Children's Services is essential to the Council to comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to ensure statutory functions are maintained.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Director of Finance and IT

The interim appointment will be covered by the existing budget for the substantive post.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Legal

Normally statutory Chief Officer appointments are confirmed at Full Council however there was an urgent need to recruit an interim Director for Children Services as the current post holder leaves in January and the Authority needed to seek urgent interim cover from an appropriately qualified candidate by both selection and appointment at General Services Committee on 6 of January 2016 to ensure sufficient time for an informed handover to the interim appointee for continued stability and continuity.

It is the Monitoring Officer advice that as this interim cover is by short term consultancy contract then Rule 9 of the Employment Rules covering interim appointments would be applicable and that in the circumstances it would be within the terms of reference of General Services Committee to make both a selection and an urgent interim appointment pursuant to Rule 9 of the Employment Rules - given the urgency of the temporary appointment, it's Interim nature and the essential need to maintain continuity of cover of the core statutory functions in respect of Children Services.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development and Equalities
Manager**

The Council is under a statutory obligation to ensure that appropriate equality consideration is given in the exercise of its services and functions.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- N/A

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):

- N/A

9. **Appendices to the report**

- N/A

Report Author:

Lyn Carpenter
Chief Executive

27 January 2016	ITEM: 12
Council	
Annual Pay Policy Statement 2016/17	
Wards and communities affected: N/A	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Councillor J Kent, Leader of the Council	
Accountable Head of Service: NA	
Accountable Director: Jackie Hinchliffe – Director of HR, OD & Transformation	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish an annual Pay Policy Statement for chief officers. This must be approved by Council by 31 March each year. Like many other local authorities, Thurrock's statement includes a pay policy for all categories of employee. Council are asked to consider and approve the 2016/17 Pay Policy Statement.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The cost of living pay award for single status staff for 2016/17 should continue to reflect any award agreed by the NJC.**
- 1.2 Senior management should receive no cost of living pay award for 2016/17.**
- 1.3 The Council should continue to pay the UK Living Wage as a supplement to its lowest-paid employees, and that this rate should rise on 1 April 2016 in line with the Living Wage Foundation's recommended rate of £8.25ph.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report seeks approval of the Council's annual Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17; in particular, the elements of this statement which vary from, or are in addition to, those contained in last year's pay policy.
- 2.2 The proposed statement attached at Appendix 1 was approved at Directors' Board on 12 January 2016.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

The principles of the 2016/17 statement are similar to those in last year's statement. The only new development is the introduction of the statutory National Living Wage in April 2016, which is explained in Section 6 below.

4. National Pay Award for Single Status Employees 2016/17

4.1 Under Thurrock's 2006 Single Status Agreement the Council agreed to move away from National Joint Council for Local Government (NJC) pay rates but to continue to honour any pay awards determined through nationally negotiated pay settlements as a minimum.

4.2 Pay negotiations between the NJC and trade unions for 2016/17 are on-going.

4.3 The Council has set aside £652,000 for a 2016/17 cost of living pay increase. This would allow for pay rises of up to 1%. For the purposes of this document a 1% increase is assumed. The actual, agreed rate can be applied to the Pay Policy Statement as soon as national pay negotiations have been concluded.

5. Pay Award for Senior Management 2016/17

5.1 An independent market assessment of senior management pay undertaken in December 2015 has recommended that there should be no cost of living pay award for senior managers in 2016/17. This will be the seventh year since senior management pay rates were last increased; representing an avoided increase of 5% with a value of circa £130K.

5.2 Members are reminded that under a restructuring, agreed by Council in November 2015, the number of senior managers has been further reduced by 3 (14%), saving £430k. This will contribute towards meeting the forecasted deficit in 2016/17, and should be seen in the context of previously reported reductions in the cost of senior management totalling circa £1m.

6. The Minimum Wage

6.1 From 1 April 2016 there will be three minimum wage rates:

- i) The National Minimum Wage – the legal, minimum hourly rate first introduced in 1999. From 1 April 2016 this will only apply to workers aged under 26.
- ii) The UK Living Wage – the rate set by the Living Wage Foundation since 2011 and calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK.
- iii) The National Living Wage – the legal, minimum wage for workers aged over 25, to be introduced on 1 April 2016.

6.2 Table 1 shows where these three minimum wage rates would feature on the Council's single status pay scale from 1 April 2016 if a 1% pay increase were agreed.

6.3 The National Minimum Wage ((i) above) will have no effect on pay as it is below pay point 1.

6.4 The National Living Wage ((iii) above) will have no effect on pay if the Council continues to pay the UK Living Wage.

Table 1

Pt	Band	Band	2016/17 (1% incr)	Hourly rate					
					Statutory national minimum wage for age 21+ £6.70				
1	1		13,134	6.81					
2			13,314	6.90					
3		2	13,494	6.99					
4			13,671	7.09	Statutory national living wage for over 25s £7.20				
5			14,085	7.30					
6			14,502	7.52					
7			14,904	7.73					
8	3		15,354	7.96					
9			15,810	8.19	UK Living Wage £8.25				
10			16,290	8.44					
11			16,770	8.69					
12		4	17,274	8.95					
13			17,796	9.22					

6.5 The Council has paid the UK Living Wage as a discretionary payment to its lowest-paid employees (excluding apprentices) since April 2013. On 31 October 2015 the Living Wage Foundation recommended an increase from £7.85 to £8.25 per hour. If applied in 2016/17, this would cover all staff on pay points 1-9 (it currently applies to points 1-7).

6.6 It would be payable to 53 FTE corporate staff, plus 85 FTE school-based employees who are on points 1 to 9, as support staff in maintained schools fall within the single status pay arrangements.

6.7 Since 2014 the Council has increased the UK Living Wage on 1 April each year to coincide with the single status pay increase.

6.8 Alternatives to paying the £8.25 UK Living Wage (in order of decreasing cost) include:

- i) Continuing with the current, 2014/15 living wage of £7.85 into 2016/17.
- ii) Paying the new National Living Wage to all staff on pay points 1-4, and the UK Living Wage to all staff on points 5-9.
- iii) Paying staff on points 1-4 new National Living Wage if over 25 and the National Minimum Wage if under 26.

6.9 Payment of the living wage is becoming increasingly common by organisations in all sectors. It is seen by many as being morally right that employees should be able to afford the basic cost of living. It remains an affordable option to

Thurrock and projects the Council as a good employer in a borough where 80% of the workforce are residents.

- 6.10 It should be noted that the LGA have recently expressed serious concerns about the Government's intention to increase the National Living Wage to £9.00 ph by 2020. The LGA have described this as a 'pay nightmare' owing to the unprecedented rate of increase planned. This has the potential to create difficulties with regard to affordability, single status and outsourced contracts. These considerations will be taken into account as part of the Council's on-going pay review.

7. Apprentices

- 7.1 At present, the starting pay for Council apprentices is the statutory National Minimum Wage for apprentices, currently set at £3.30 per hour. This rate is reviewed on 1st October each year. Thurrock apprentices are paid this rate for six months, after which they progress to the national minimum wage according to their age, as follows:-

	Age 21 and over	Age 18 to 20	Age under 18	Apprentice Rate
Rates for Oct 2015 - Oct 2016	£6.70	£5.30	£3.87	£3.30

- 7.2 This arrangement attracts cross-party support. In 2015/16 members asked for it to continue in future years without the need for further authorisation.

8. Independent Pay Reviews

In order to ensure that pay levels continue to be fair and represent good value, it is recommended that the council continues to commission annual, independent market reviews into the pay rates of single status employees and senior managers.

9. Senior Manager Pay and Responsibilities

Following the introduction of the Local Government Transparency Code in 2014¹, the Council will continue to publish specific details of their senior managers' pay and responsibilities.

10. Consultation with Local Trade Unions

The Council's recognised trade unions were consulted on 11 November and have raised no objections to these proposals.

¹ 'Local Government Transparency Code 2014' published by DCLG: [Transparency Code](#)

11. Implications

11.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Director of Finance & IT

The financial impact of the increase in the UK Living Wage, the pay award for single status pay scales and the increase in apprentice pay rates has been considered through this report and has been accounted for during the 2016/17 annual budgeting processes.

11.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Chris Pickering**
Principal Solicitor - Employment & Litigation

The legal implications in connection with this report arise from consultation with trade unions which has been considered throughout. It is therefore noted that the trades unions presented no objections to these proposals.

11.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Strategy & Communications, Community Development

This pay statement is mostly confirmation of either existing practice or standard protocols set by law and therefore there are no diversity and equality implications arising. The increases in the UK Living Wage and apprentice pay rates are both likely to have a positive impact on employees at lower ends of the pay scale.

11.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

No other significant risks have been identified.

12. Appendices to the report

Appendix 1 - Pay Policy Statement 2016/17

Report Author:

Neil Mercer

Interim HR Strategy and Policy Manager

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THURROCK COUNCIL
PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016/17

VERSION CONTROL SHEET

<i>Title:</i>	Pay Policy Statement 2016/17
<i>Purpose:</i>	To advise on the Council's pay policy including requirements under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.
<i>Owner:</i>	Human Resources & Organisational Development
<i>Approved by</i>	Full Council
<i>Date:</i>	27th January 2016
<i>Review frequency:</i>	Annually
<i>Next review date:</i>	October 2016

Thurrock Council Pay Policy Statement 2016/17

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Scope**
- 3. Determination of pay grades and salary levels**
- 4. Pay progression**
- 5. Cost of living pay increases**
- 6. Lowest paid employees / UK living wage**
- 7. Apprentices**
- 8. Pay multiple**
- 9. Acting up payments**
- 10. Other payments**
- 11. Contractors or consultants**
- 12. Appointment of senior officers**
- 13. Payment on termination, and re-engagement of officers**
- 14. Transparency code**
- 15. Publication of information**

Appendix 1 Senior officer pay scales
Appendix 2 Single status pay scales

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement complies with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, which requires local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for each financial year in order to improve transparency and accountability within Local Government.
- 1.2 It may be adapted and/or updated by agreement at a full Council meeting.
- 1.3 Thurrock Council is, in addition, conducting a pay review with the intention of modernising and simplifying current pay arrangements. Any changes will be reflected in future pay policies.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Statement is applicable to both Council and school-based employees covered by the Council's single status agreement, and to senior officers. Youth workers, those on Soulbury contracts of employment and employees covered by TUPE are also included but their pay is determined by separate processes. This Statement does not apply to teachers, who are employed under separate terms and conditions.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this Statement, Thurrock's senior officers are the chief executive, corporate directors, directors and heads of service.

3. Determination of pay grades and salary levels

Senior officers

- 3.1 The chief executive's and other senior officers' remuneration was determined in 2009. It was based on the median pay point of a market salary and reflected remuneration levels for comparable jobs in unitary authorities and London boroughs.
- 3.2 The 11 senior pay bands are shown in Appendix 1. Heads of service are paid on the HOS bands, ranging from points 1 to 15; directors and corporate directors are placed on a DIR pay band (points 16 to 30) while the chief executive is on the CEX pay band: points 31 to 33.
- 3.3 Since 2010 annual, independent pay reviews have been conducted to reassess the salary levels that these pay bands should attract. These assessments take account of:
 - (a) **The type and size of Thurrock Council:** Thurrock is a medium sized, unitary council with a significant degree of complexity due to its location, its changing demographics, its regeneration agenda and its complex external relations.

- (b) **The geographical location of Thurrock Council:** Located on the eastern boundaries of London and within easy commuting distance of London, the Council is competing in the same labour market as many London boroughs as well as Essex County Council and other unitary local authorities.
- (c) **The market for senior posts in Local Government:** In recent years many posts have become more demanding as a result of changes in legislation and public demand. This has led to a position whereby significant differences now exist regarding the remuneration attached to certain posts.
- (d) **Affordability:** Producing an affordable pay structure for senior managers is a principal aim of this policy.
- (e) **Transparency and clarity:** Thurrock Council is committed to establishing a pay structure which is clear, rational and able to withstand challenge.

Employees who are not senior officers

- 3.4 Employees other than senior officers are subject to the pay levels set out in the Council's single status agreement which contains 10 pay bands (see Appendix 2). Pay bands contain between 6 and 11 incremental pay points. Posts have been allocated to a pay band through a process of job evaluation.
- 3.5 All new or revised single status posts must be evaluated. This is done by independent job evaluation specialists using the James job evaluation scheme. The results of any such evaluation are subject to approval by the Council's Pay & Reward Board, which comprises of officers and trade union representatives.

4. Pay Progression

Senior officers

- 4.1 Senior officer pay bands contain three pay levels:
 - i. A lower point – for a post-holder with sufficient competence or experience but with some development needs. This is expected to apply to some appointments at the time of recruitment.
 - ii. A median point – for a fully competent and appropriately experienced/qualified post-holder. This is expected to apply to most appointments.
 - iii. An upper point – for an exceptional post-holder. The difference between the median point and upper point will only be paid as an additional non-consolidated payment for 'exceptional'

performance. Few post-holders will be rewarded at this level, which is based on the 75th percentile of the market data.

- 4.2 The award of an annual increase to points (ii) or (iii) above is subject to satisfactory job performance.
- 4.3 For recruitment purposes, posts will be advertised at the median pay point, with the possibility of an additional non-consolidated payment for an exceptional candidate. A newly appointed senior officer's starting salary will be reviewed on 1st April after appointment, regardless of how long they have been in post.

Employees who are not senior officers

- 4.4 New starters are paid in accordance with Section 12.6 of the council's recruitment policy which states; 'normally the pay point will be the minimum point of the band. Exceptions to this rule may be considered where the minimum point is below the candidate's current salary.'
- 4.5 Employees will receive an increase of one incremental point each year, effective from 1st April, providing they (i) have performed their role entirely satisfactorily; (ii) have 6 months' service before 1st April; (iii) are not already at the top point of their pay band. Performance objectives will be linked to service delivery plans and priorities.
- 4.6 Until 4th September 2014, the award of additional pay increments (known as accelerated increments) on the grounds of special merit or ability were also made on the recommendation of the employee's line manager and providing they were not already at the top point of their pay band. Such increases were subject to approval by the Council's Pay and Reward Board.
- 4.7 From 4th September 2014, following consultations with the trade unions, it was agreed that in the light of the Council's financial situation, accelerated pay progression should be suspended until further notice.
- 4.8 Employees who are protected under TUPE arrangements will be paid according to their contract of employment.

5. Cost of living pay increases

Senior officers

- 5.1 The annual, independent market assessment conducted in December 2016 concluded that there should be no cost of living pay increase for senior officers in 2016/17.

Employees who are not senior officers

- 5.2 Under its single status agreement, the council must at least match any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government

Employees (NJC). This applies to all employees other than senior officers.

- 5.3 The pay rates shown in Appendix 2 reflect an anticipated 1% cost of living pay increase in 2016/17 for single status staff.

6. Lowest paid employees / UK living wage

- 6.1 For the purposes of this Statement, employees on Band 1 of the Council's pay structure are classed as the lowest paid employees. The only staff paid at a lower rate than Band 1 are apprentices (see below).
- 6.2 The Council has paid the UK Living Wage as a discretionary payment since April 2013. This supplements the income of Thurrock's lowest paid employees. With effect from 1st April 2016, this guarantees a minimum, hourly pay rate of £8.25, in accordance with the Living Wage Foundation's recommended rate.

7. Apprentices

The starting pay for Council apprentices is the national minimum wage apprentice rate: currently £3.30 per hour. This rises to the national minimum wage rate according to age after six months' satisfactory service.

8. Pay Multiple

- 8.1 Calculations made on 14th January 2016 using the 2016/17 pay scales in Appendices 1 and 2 show the pay ratios between the chief executive's salary and the average salary of the workforce are as follows:

Chief Executive : mean salary of the workforce = 1:6.67

Chief Executive : median salary of the workforce = 1:7.85

- 8.2 These ratios were calculated from the median chief executive salary level of £170,000; the mean salary of all staff other than the chief executive of £25,760 and the median salary of all staff other than the chief executive of £21,666.

9. Acting up payments

- 9.1 For acting up or secondment arrangements, an individual will be paid at the lowest point of the band being acted into, or one pay point higher than their substantive pay point if pay bands overlap.

- 9.2 If this arrangement continues for over six months, performance will be reviewed and pay may increase to one of the higher pay points in the acting up band.

10. Other payments

- 10.1 The Council pays business user car allowances to single status staff who meet specific criteria relating to the frequency and type of business journeys they are expected to undertake. There are three levels of business user allowance: £1,149, £600 and £300 per annum. Any employee using their own vehicle for work purposes is eligible to claim 40p per mile.
- 10.2 A car allowance is consolidated into the senior officer pay rates given in Appendix 1. In addition, senior officers receive a mileage payment of 10p per mile.
- 10.3 The Council has an employee relocation package, available to all new employees, subject to eligibility criteria.
- 10.4 The Council does not operate a bonus scheme for any employees, nor does it offer any other informal benefits to its senior officers.
- 10.5 On occasions, for posts below senior officer level, temporary market supplements may be paid where difficult market conditions lead to recruitment and retention problems. Such supplements must be agreed by the Council's Pay & Reward Board.

11. Contractors and consultants

- 11.1 Should the Council engage the services of an individual at senior officer level under a contract for services (ie not on the Council's payroll), the level of remuneration paid to the contractor, consultant or agency employing them will not exceed the equivalent salary points outlined in Appendix 1.
- 11.2 In exceptional circumstances, and with the express approval of the chief executive, a contractor or consultant at senior officer level may be engaged at a pay rate outside the equivalent salary point in Appendix 1.

12. Appointment of senior officers

- 12.1 Full council will agree to the recruitment of any new, permanent, senior officer post prior to the appointment being made.
- 12.2 Contractor appointments to senior officer roles or those exceeding an annual payment of £70,000 will be agreed by full council prior to confirmation of the appointment.

13. Payment on termination, and re-engagement of officers

- 13.1 In the event of redundancy or the early retirement of any employee, the Council will pay its standard severance payments within the discretions of the Local Government Pension Regulations.
- 13.2 In exceptional circumstances and where it represents best value for the Council, additional payments may be made to comply with the terms of a settlement agreement. These will be subject to the delegated powers and processes outlined in the Council's Constitution.
- 13.3 The Council will not normally re-engage, either in a contract of employment or a contract for services, any officer who has previously been paid a discretionary payment (via a settlement agreement or retirement package) on leaving the Council's employment. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of the Chief Executive and the General Services Committee, will such an arrangement be sanctioned.
- 13.4 The Government is introducing, through the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015, a £95k cap on "exit payments". Regulations will be inserted by the Enterprise Bill 2015-16 and a date for implementation is expected in 2016. This will limit the amount a public sector worker could be paid for losing their job to £95k. This will apply to all staff but predominately high earners and will cover:
- Redundancy payments
 - Payments on voluntary exits
 - Pension strain costs
 - Severance or ex-gratia payments
 - Payment for outstanding entitlement
 - Compensation under the terms of a contract
 - Pay in lieu of notice
 - Any other payments made as a result of loss of employment
- 13.5 A different set of regulations, the Repayment of Public Sector Exit Payment Regulations 2015, will come into force on the 1st April 2016 which will set out the liability to repay, based upon tapering arrangements, any exit payment if the exit payee returns to the same 'sub-sector' within 12 months of receiving the payment. Full Council may exercise a waiver to exclude such a repayment. If a waiver is issued it must be published along with the reasons for doing so in the preceding twelve months at the beginning of a financial year or published in the annual accounts. Guidance is awaited on the exercise of a waiver. If reclaimed an exit repayment is made to the 'old' employer and the sum passed through to the Treasury.

14. Transparency code

In accordance with Government guidelines¹, the council publishes details of senior managers' pay on its website.²

15. Publication of information

This Statement will be published on the Council's website. Any in-year changes to this Statement will be published in the same way following full Council approval.

¹ 'Local Government Transparency Code 2014' published by DCLG: [Transparency Code](#)

² <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/what-we-publish/local-government-transparency-code>

Appendix 1

Senior Manager pay scales 2016/17

		50/50% Lower Base Pay		50/50% Median Base Pay		50/50% Higher Base Pay
	SCP	Annual Pay £	SCP	Annual Pay £	SCP	Annual Pay £
CEX	31	155,000	32	170,000	33	181,000
DIR5	28	121,002	29	132,000	30	140,001
DIR4	25	113,001	26	125,502	27	131,001
DIR3	22	105,500	23	117,000	24	120,000
DIR2	19	93,500	20	103,000	21	108,000
DIR1	16	86,502	17	95,502	18	100,002
HOS5	13	83,502	14	93,000	15	97,002
HOS4	10	82,500	11	90,000	12	95,001
HOS3	7	77,001	8	86,001	9	89,001
HOS2	4	72,000	5	79,500	6	83,502
HOS1	1	68,502	2	72,000	3	80,001

Appendix 2

Band	Pay Point	Band	2015/16 Salaries	2016/17 Salaries	Hourly rate	Living wage Supplement per hour	Total Salary	
1	1		13,005	13,134	6.81	1.44	15,917	
	2		13,182	13,314	6.90	1.35	15,917	
	3	3	13,359	13,494	6.99	1.26	15,917	
	4	4	13,536	13,671	7.09	1.16	15,917	
	5	5	13,947	14,085	7.30	0.95	15,917	
	6	6	14,358	14,502	7.52	0.73	15,917	
		7	14,757	14,904	7.73	0.52	15,917	
	8	8	15,201	15,354	7.96	0.29	15,917	
	9	9	15,654	15,810	8.19	0.06	15,917	
3	10	10	16,128	16,290	8.44		16,290	
	11		16,605	16,770	8.69		16,770	
	12	4	17,103	17,274	8.95		17,274	
	13		17,622	17,799	9.23		17,799	
	14		18,153	18,336	9.50		18,336	
	15		18,696	18,882	9.79		18,882	
	16		19,254	19,446	10.08		19,446	
			17	19,830	20,028	10.38		20,028
18	18	20,427	20,631	10.69		20,631		
5	19	19	21,039	21,249	11.01		21,249	
	20	20	21,666	21,882	11.34		21,882	
	21		22,320	22,542	11.68		22,542	
	22		22,980	23,211	12.03		23,211	
	23	6	23,670	23,907	12.39		23,907	
	24		24,381	24,624	12.76		24,624	
	25		25,113	25,365	13.15		25,365	
	26		25,863	26,121	13.54		26,121	
			27	26,643	26,910	13.95		26,910
			28	27,441	27,714	14.36		27,714
	29	28,260	28,542	14.79		28,542		
7	30	30	29,106	29,397	15.24		29,397	
	31	31	29,994	30,294	15.70		30,294	
	32	32	30,894	31,203	16.17		31,203	
	33		31,821	32,139	16.66		32,139	
	34		32,772	33,099	17.16		33,099	
	35		33,762	34,101	17.68		34,101	
	36		34,779	35,127	18.21		35,127	
	37	8	35,814	36,171	18.75		36,171	
	38		36,897	37,266	19.32		37,266	
	39		38,004	38,385	19.90		38,385	
	40		39,147	39,537	20.49		39,537	
	41		40,320	40,722	21.11		40,722	
	42		41,523	41,937	21.74		41,937	
	43	42,762	43,191	22.39		43,191		
	44	44	44,043	44,484	23.06		44,484	

9	45		45,360	45,813	23.75		45,813	
	46		46,707	47,175	24.45		47,175	
	47		48,093	48,573	25.18		48,573	
	48		49,518	50,013	25.92		50,013	
	49		51,000	51,510	26.70		51,510	
	50		52,518	53,043	27.49		53,043	
	51		54,081	54,621	28.31		54,621	
	52	52	10	55,698	56,256	29.16		56,256
	53	53		57,363	57,936	30.03		57,936
	54	54		59,073	59,664	30.93		59,664
	55	60,756		61,365	31.81		61,365	
	56	62,487		63,111	32.71		63,111	
	57	64,269		64,911	33.65		64,911	
	58	66,096		66,756	34.60		66,756	
	59	67,986	68,667	35.59		68,667		
	60	69,924	70,623	36.61		70,623		

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27 January 2016	ITEM: 13
Council	
The Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17; setting of the Council Tax Base for 2016/17 and Determination of The Collection Fund Balance 2015/16	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Councillor John Kent, Leader	
Accountable Head of Service: Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT	
Accountable Director: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

There are three elements to this report:

Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

The current Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme was implemented on 1 April 2013. Thurrock Council agreed its current scheme through a public consultation exercise informed by cross party Members working groups. The resulting scheme was agreed by both Cabinet and the Council.

The current approved scheme recognises and takes into account people who are working and has a disregard of the first £25 of earnings. The scheme also disregards child maintenance and child benefit in calculating the support available and so provides assistance to those with children in households. At the end of March 2015 the Council had collected 96.1 per cent of council tax due from those in receipt of support.

The public consultation closed on 25 October 2015. The survey attracted 369 “hits” and 53 responses were received. These results largely support how the scheme has been structured and delivered to date.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

This report also sets out the number of properties within Thurrock that are chargeable for council tax and classifies them into Band D equivalents for budget setting purposes.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

The Collection Fund regulations require a local authority to estimate the balance on its Collection Fund as at 31 March each year. Any such balance relating to Council Tax is to be distributed to/borne by the Council and the Essex Police and Fire Authorities in proportion to the value of their respective precepts.

Any such balance relating to Business Rates is to be distributed to/borne by the Council, Central Government and Fire Authority in proportion to the agreed split under regulations.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the LCTS scheme for Thurrock Council is maintained with the inclusion of a reduction in the period an award can be backdated to four weeks. This reduction is in line with welfare reform legislation changes to housing benefit from 1 April 2016. The 2016/17 Scheme will now contain the following elements:

- **The first £25 per week of earned income will be disregarded when calculating levels of council tax support.**
- **The maximum capital limit is to be set at £6,000. This means anyone who has savings over £6,000 may not receive support with their council tax.**
- **For working age claimants, the maximum support that will be allowed will be 75% of their full council tax bill.**
- **Child benefit and child maintenance received will not be included as income in the calculation of council tax support.**
- **The maximum period a claim for LCTS can be backdated when a customer provides good cause for not claiming earlier is four weeks.**
- **There is a full disregard of military compensation payments, including War Disablement Pensions, War Widow's Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments.**

1.2 To recommend that Council set the Council Tax Base for 2016/17 by approving the following resolutions:

- (a) That the report of the Head of Corporate Finance for the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the year 2016/17 be approved; and**
- (b) That pursuant to the Head of Corporate Finance report and in accordance with the relevant regulations, the amount calculated by**

Thurrock Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2016/17 shall be 48,856.

1.3 To recommend that the Council:

- (a) Determines the estimated 31 March 2016 balance of the Council Tax Collection Fund to be a surplus of £1,199,312 (before distribution to major precepting authorities).**
- (b) Allocates the surplus to the three main precepting bodies in proportion to their precepts for 2015/16 as follows:**
 - i) Thurrock Council £1,007,909;**
 - ii) Essex Police Authority £131,877; and**
 - iii) Essex Fire Authority £59,526.**

1.4 To recommend that the Council:

- (a) Determines the estimated 31 March 2016 balance of the Business Rate Collection Fund to be a deficit of £5,761,084 (before distribution to Central Government and Essex Fire Authority).**
- (b) Allocates the deficit to the three main precepting bodies in the proportion set out in legislation:**
 - (i) Thurrock Council £2,822,931;**
 - (ii) Central Government £2,880,542; and**
 - (iii) Essex Fire Authority £57,611.**

2. Introduction and Background

The Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

- 2.1 The design of each LCTS scheme must be finalised by 31 January ahead of the relevant year to which it relates. Failure to provide a scheme by this date will trigger the implementation of a default government scheme. The default scheme would require the Council to revert back to the level of support that would have been provided under the national council tax benefit arrangements.
- 2.2 Local authorities will take on the risk that liabilities under LCTS exceed the amount projected for at the start of the relevant financial year. This risk is shared between billing and major precepting authorities with about 15% of the council tax collected by the Council being paid over to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police.

- 2.3 The scheme impacts on the council tax base, a key component in estimating the resources available to the Council, and hence the scheme is agreed by Cabinet prior to them agreeing the council tax base.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

- 2.4 The Valuation Officer of the Inland Revenue (called the Listing Officer for council tax purposes), places each property in the Borough in one of eight valuation bands. Each band relates to the estimated capital value of the property as at 1st April 1991. Examples are that the lowest band (A) covers properties that were then up to a value of £40,000 whereas the highest band (H) covers all properties which then exceeded £320,000 in value.
- 2.5 Having done this, the Listing Officer produces a Valuation List, which shows the band allocated to each property. The individual properties are then added together to produce the total number of properties in each band and the total of all properties in the borough. The current list for this Authority gives the following results:

<u>BAND</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PROPERTIES</u>
A	7,360
B	13,142
C	26,366
D	11,481
E	4,440
F	2,079
G	784
H	41
Total	65,693

- 2.6 From this it can be seen that 71.3% of Thurrock properties are in Bands A-C.
- 2.7 Each band will be charged a different amount of tax. The proportion payable by each band is laid down by statute. A Band D property was taken as the national average and occupants of these properties will therefore pay the base rate of tax. Lower banded properties pay less (Band A properties pay two thirds of the Band D rate) while higher banded properties pay more (Band H properties pay twice the Band D rate).
- 2.8 As required, the full calculation of the tax base is set out in Appendix 4 to this report.

The Final Calculation:

2.9 2013/14 saw the introduction of the LCTS that required those of working age that were in receipt of council tax benefit to now have to pay a minimum of 25% of the annual charge. As this applies to the more vulnerable sections of the community, it is not surprising to see lower rates of collection from this group. On non LCTS bills, the Council is collecting circa 99%. Adjusting for LCTS, it is prudent to set an overall collection rate of 98.75% and so account for a lower collection rate for this group. After this and other adjustments have been made, the final tax base would look as follows:

<u>BAND</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PROPERTIES</u>
A*	4
A	2,902
B	7,474
C	19,311
D	10,139
E	4,971
F	2,815
G	1,211
H	29
Total	48,856

A* is Band A properties entitled to Disabled Relief reduction.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

2.10 This report sets out the information required for Council to approve:

- the determination of the estimated balance of the Council Tax Collection Fund that will be apportioned between the Council and the major precepting authorities (the Police and Fire Authorities); and
- the determination of the estimated balance of the Business Rate Collection Fund that is apportioned between the Council, Central Government and the Fire Authority in accordance with regulations.

The Council's Constitution does not delegate this determination to Cabinet or any officer and so requires a decision from Council.

2.11 Each billing authority is required to maintain a separate Collection Fund which shows its transactions in relation to business rates and council tax and illustrates the way that these have been distributed to preceptors and the General Fund.

2.12 The key reasons for balances arising on the Collection Fund are:

- The estimated council tax base will differ from the actual position throughout the year. The base comprises of the number of properties, the number of voids and the various discounts and exemptions awarded, it is inevitable that these will change and that a difference will arise;
- The business rates estimated at the start of the year and any predicted growth in those rates may differ from the actual amounts collectable from business rate payers, mainly as a result of growth and business closures; and

The Collection Fund also includes contributions to the bad debt provisions for council tax and business rates which are reassessed each year.

2.13 Council Tax billing authorities are required by the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992 to estimate any surplus or deficit on their Council Tax Collection Fund for the year as at 15 January every year and, at the same time, apportion such amount between themselves and the major precepting authorities.

2.14 Billing authorities are required by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to estimate any surplus or deficit on their Business Rate Collection Fund for the year as at 15 January every year and, at the same time, apportion such amount between themselves and the major precepting authorities in accordance with regulations. This is then notified to central government through the NNDR 1 form which will be issued in due course. This will be populated using the data supporting the position included in this report and will form the calculation of available resources to be included in the final budget proposals.

2.15 Based on the latest forecasts of collections and write offs the Council Tax Collection Fund is estimated to be a surplus of £1,199,312 as at 31 March 2016. This is apportioned to the major preceptors as follows:

Major Precepting Authority	£
Thurrock Council	1,007,909
Essex Police Authority	131,877
Essex Fire Authority	59,526
Total Allocated	1,199,312

2.16 The Council's share of the balance is a surplus of £1,007,909 which needs to be taken account of in the budget for 2016/17 and has been included in the medium term financial strategy (MTFS).

2.17 Based on the latest forecasts of collections and write offs the Business Rates Collection Fund is estimated to have a deficit of £5,761,084 as at 31 March 2016. This is apportioned under regulations as follows:

Major Precepting Authority	£
Thurrock Council	2,822,931
Central Government	2,880,542
Essex Fire Authority	57,611
Total Allocated	5,761,084

- 2.18 The Council's share of the balance is a deficit of £2,822,931 which needs to be taken account of in the budget for 2016/17 and has been included in the MTFS.
- 2.19 The cause of the ongoing deficit on the fund was the provision for the impact of appeals lodged with the Valuation Office. The impact of specific appeals on the Council's resources is a one off charge linked to the refund of backdated appeals and then an annual reduction going forwards. The Council's share of these charges is 49% with the remaining share split between Central Government (50%) and Essex Fire Authority (1%). The reduction in business rates income in the Collection Fund was £14.8m between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2015. This reduced council income by £7.3m in this period.
- 2.20 There is a specific emerging issue in regard to the treatment of purpose built GP surgeries. A legal ruling meant further provision has been made for appeals received in respect of these properties. This could result in a backdated one off charge to the Collection Fund of up to £2.1m with an ongoing cost of up to £0.36m per annum. The impact on the Council would be a one-off charge of up to £1.03m with an ongoing cost of £0.176m.
- 2.21 This report is also one of the components required for the setting of the 2016/17 budget and Council Tax. It does not fix the council tax rate. This will be decided as part of the 2016/17 budget reports, which will be considered in February 2016. The Council's Constitution does not delegate this determination to Cabinet or any officer and so requires a decision from Council.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

- 3.1 Officers initially used the modelling tools provided by Northgate IT software providers (who support the Council's revenues systems) to test a variety of possible schemes. The key variables were: definition of income, level of disregard for weekly earnings, level of savings at which households would not be eligible for support.
- 3.2 From 2014/15, any specific funding for the LCTS scheme is rolled up into the main Revenue Support Grant (RSG) as provided to local authorities by the Government. It will be entirely for local authorities to decide how much they

are prepared to spend on their LCTS scheme. Officers have considered the findings from the consultation undertaken recently which supported the proposed scheme for 2016/17. Officers have also reviewed the structure of the scheme and noted the cost of the scheme has reduced from £8.5m to approximately £8.0m since 1 April 2013. This has increased the council tax base and reduced the cost of the scheme since inception. Given these findings officers recommend continuing the scheme based on the same principles with an adjustment made for the eligible period for backdating claims.

- 3.3 The impact of reducing the support offered by the scheme from a maximum entitlement of 75% of the council tax liability is shown in the table below and includes three scenarios (and assumes 100 per cent collection of the liability):

Max Entitlement	Claimants Affected	Reduction to cost of scheme	Average Additional annual charge to Claimant
70%	5529	£246,320	£45
65%	5596	£495,575	£89
60%	5692	£748,944	£132

Officers have considered the potential savings in each of these scenarios. However there is concern there will be a reduction in the ability to pay of people within the scheme as support is withdrawn and this will offset the savings identified above. It is noted that a 10 per cent reduction in collection rates would equate to approximately £210,000 of lost income. In addition to date there have been significant reductions in the expected support required as claimants have moved into employment.

- 3.4 Officers have maintained a close working relationship with other Essex authorities and have continued to work on the same principles that were originally agreed at the start of the LCTS schemes – this includes:

- a common approach to consultation between the billing and major precepting authorities;
- joint working on consultation on scheme designs between Essex authorities and the public;
- a standardised approaches to processes such as claims, fraud and appeals;
- common components to scheme designs;
- there remains general consensus throughout Essex that the cost of the LCTS scheme will remain within the projected costs estimated each year.

- the schemes will as far as possible include any expected growth in demand and each authority will look to reduce the complex nature of the schemes and make them easier to claim and administer.

3.5 Some components of the LCTS scheme have been directed by Government such as:-

- All low income pensioners will be protected under the national framework as defined by DCLG.
- Consideration for protection for vulnerable working age groups will be allowed for.
- Each authority's scheme will maintain work incentives wherever possible. The Government continues to stress the importance of this principle given the current economic climate and their welfare reform agenda.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

3.6 The council tax base represents the Council's total taxable resources. A brief explanation of the method of calculation is given in this report. The full Council is required to make this calculation and, because it is also used by the police and fire authorities to calculate the precept payable, the precepting bodies must be notified of the result before 31st January in each year.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

3.7 A key issue in this report is the accounting for the levels of business rate appeals that are with the Valuation Office. The calculation includes a provision for an increase in business rates of an additional £0.43m in 2015/16 bringing the total provision to £15.26m. This is based on the levels of appeals waiting to be heard and an assessment of their likelihood of success. This figure could obviously change significantly and any variation would be accounted for in the setting of the 2016/17 budget.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

- 4.1 The collection rate for 2014/15 for council tax from those in the scheme was 96.1per cent. The design of the scheme, which builds in various protections and incentives, supports a high collection rate. In order to maintain collection rates the key elements of the scheme are unchanged in 2016/17.
- 4.2 The LCTS expenditure for 2014/15 was £8.2m. The expenditure for 2015/16 is estimated to be circa £8.0m of which circa £3.75m relates to claimants of pensionable age. It is expected that individual working age awards will

increase following welfare reforms that will reduce tax credits beginning April 2016. The expected cost of the scheme for 2016/17 is proposed at £8.5m to allow for any potential additional cost to the scheme.

- 4.3 The introduction of Universal Credit in the Authority for single unemployed people has not made any significant change to the amount of LCTS awarded to claimants.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

- 4.4 The council tax base must be set in accordance with legal requirements.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

- 4.5 There is a legal requirement to agree the collection fund balance calculations and to include it within the budget setting process.

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

- 5.1 The LCTS is subject to an annual public consultation to seek views on the design and operation of the proposed scheme.
- 5.2 Appendix 1 highlights the 6 questions asked as part of the LCTS consultation together with the responses received. These were:

Question 1 - Asked should the percentage discount remain the same at a maximum 75% of the council tax billed. This was largely supported by the results of the consultation and is proposed to be maintained within the scheme.

Question 2 - Dealt with the maximum amount of capital an applicant can hold before being excluded from support. This asked if £6,000 for working age residents and £16,000 for pension age is reasonable. This was largely supported by the results of the consultation and is proposed to be maintained within the scheme.

Question 3 - Asked should the first £25.00 of wages continue to be disregarded from claims to provide a working incentive. This was largely supported by the results of the consultation and is proposed to be maintained within the scheme.

Question 4 - Asked whether child benefit and child maintenance should continue to be disregarded. The majority of responses indicate these elements should be included in the scheme. Officers have considered this but have noted that by continuing to disregard these elements when awarding LCTS the Council will reduce child poverty. Hence officers recommend maintaining this disregard.

Question 5 - Asked if the limit for the period a claim can be backdated for claimants who can prove 'good cause' for not claiming earlier should be altered from 6 months to 4 weeks. This change is in line with changes to Housing Benefit from 1 April 2016. This was largely supported by the results of the consultation and is recommended as a proposed change to the scheme.

Question 6 - Asked if the current 100 per cent disregard of income from military compensation payments, such a war widow and disablement pension, should continue. This was largely supported by the results of the consultation and is proposed to be maintained within the scheme.

5.3 The responses support the current design of the scheme.

5.4 There is no consultation required for the Council Tax base and Determination of the Collection Fund balances.

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

6.1 The Council is required to have a LCTS scheme and hence the proposed scheme meets this requirement. The scheme supports claimants in the community and ensures the revenue raised is collectible supporting the medium-term financial strategy.

6.2 The Council also has a fair debt policy and this is reflected in the collection of council tax from claimants in the scheme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Head of Corporate Finance

Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. Any increases to the amounts billed to residents need to be balanced against likely collection rates. The overall amount to be provided by Government towards 2016/17 is now absorbed into the RSG. Consequently the scheme is funded within the overall grant funding but also needs to consider the fairness of individual measures and the financial needs of the Council. The projected cost of this scheme is expected to be £8.5m for 2016/17. This scheme is in line with the current MTFS assumptions.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

A council tax base of 48,856 is an increase 967 over the 2015/16 council tax base of 47,889 that, at the level of the 2015/16 council tax, would raise an additional £1.09m. This increase has already been factored into the MTFS.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

The Council's share of the Council Tax Collection Fund surplus is £1,007,909 and the share of the Business Rates Collection Fund deficit is £3,508,931. This has been considered in setting both the budget and MTFS.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Legal and Governance

Local Council Tax Scheme 2016/17

The Council Tax Benefit system was abolished by Section 33 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The Local Government finance bill prescribed certain steps in the design of a local scheme, such as consultation and publication, and enables the Secretary of State to introduce both regulations and guidance relating to local schemes. The Government has included regulations to ensure that pensioners will not lose or gain relative to the previous system.

The LCTS scheme must be ratified by full Council by the 31 January 2016 at the latest to enable the authority to implement the scheme from 1 April 2016.

Setting the Council Tax Base 2016/17

The council tax base must be calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2003 and Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Determination of the Collection Fund Balances 2015/16

Council Tax billing authorities are required by the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) regulations 1992 to estimate any surplus or deficit on their Council Tax Collection Fund as at 15 January every year.

Business Rate billing authorities are required under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to estimate any surplus or deficit on their Business Rate Collection Fund at 15 January every year.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development and Equalities
Manager**

The Council has a duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 to consider the equality impact of its policies and decisions. The LCTS can be claimed by anyone in the Borough meeting the eligibility criteria.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

In terms of risk, the estimated council tax base includes prudent assumptions about the tax base and changes in exemptions, voids, discounts and the provision for bad debts.

The assumptions underpinning the amounts of business rate collectable and any associated bad debt provision are also considered to be prudent.

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):

- Statement of Accounts 2014/15
- Working papers retained by Corporate Finance
-

9. **Appendices to the report**

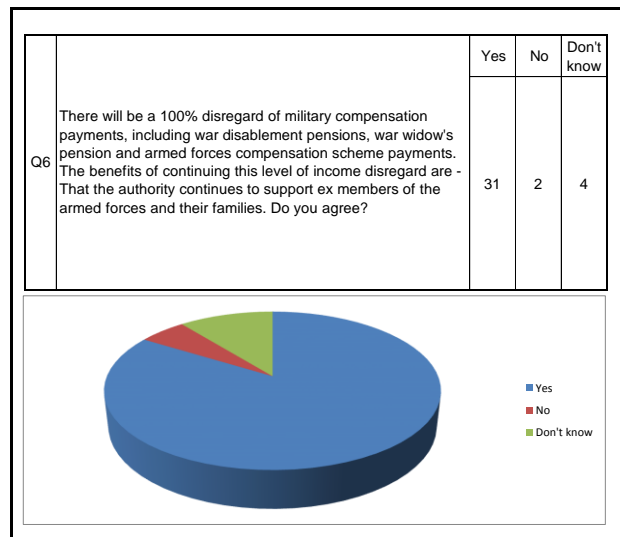
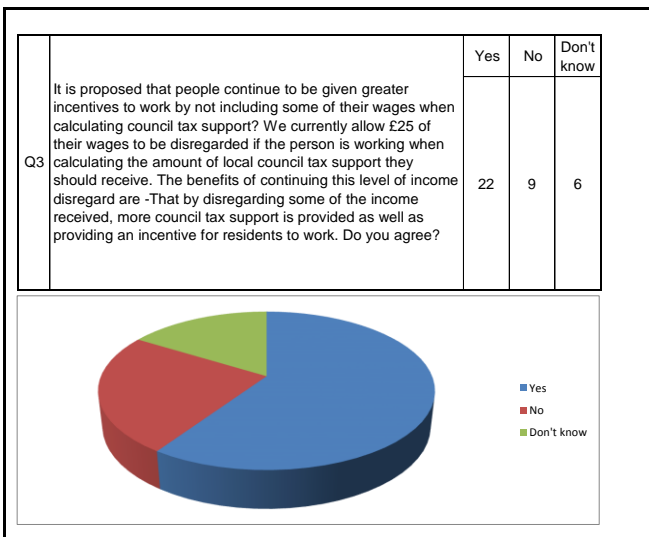
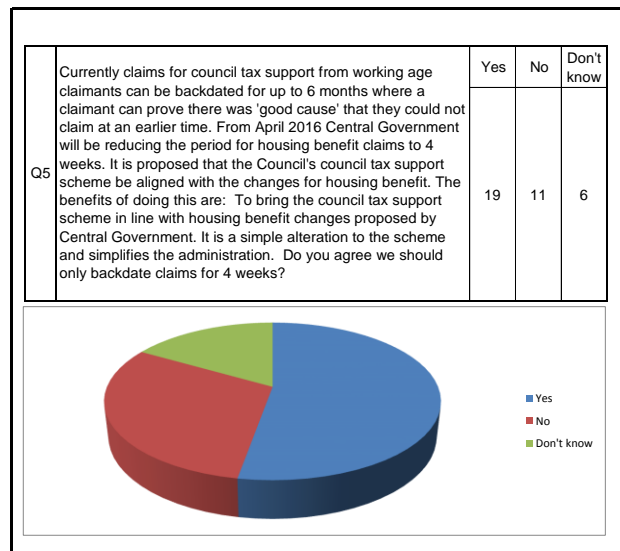
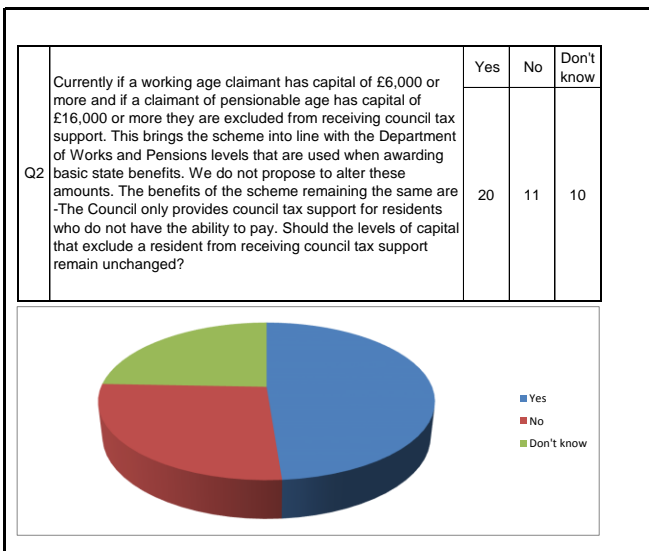
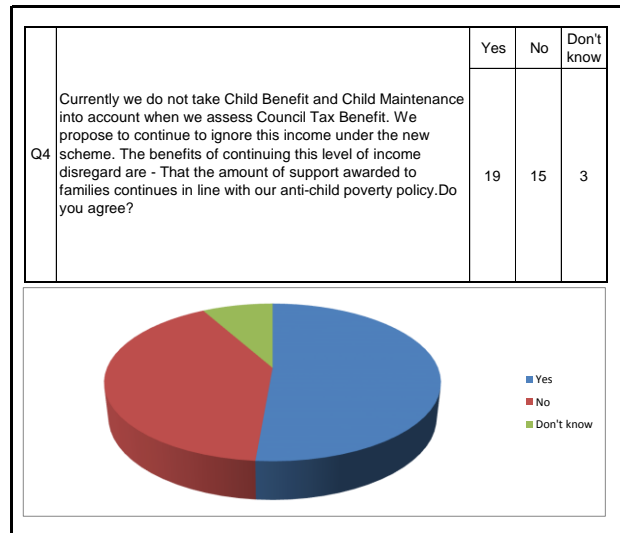
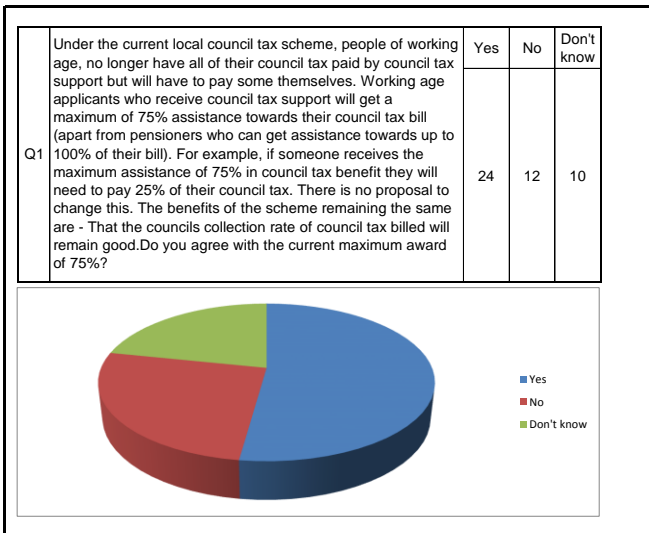
- Appendix 1 - LCTS Survey Results October 2015
- Appendix 2 - Survey comments October 2015
- Appendix 3 - LCTS survey Diversity Information October 2015
- Appendix 4 - Detailed calculation of the 2015/16 Council Tax Base

Report Author:

Sean Clark
Head of Corporate Finance
Corporate Finance

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Appendix 1
Thurrock Council - Local Council Tax Scheme



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Appendix 2

Appendix 2 - Comments from the LCTS Consultation (Unedited)

Have you got any general comments that you wish to make about the proposed changes?

Well it would be good if payment of council tax is not as rigid as it is now, There should be some flexibility to allow people who have no other means of livelihood pay within the month instead of determining how and when people who only reside but due to work commitments have work outside of the borough pay. People who want to pay using the automated system should be able to receive a receipt as proof of payment too. Secondly, whatever decision you choose to arrive at it needs to remember that these supposed help is only in theory and not really helping those who want to pay up but are inundated daily with physical and mental harassment schemes. its more like putting an empty spoon into the mouth of a hungry child and telling the child to swallow.

Thurrock Council DO NOT make it clear who is entitled to any discount. I have been the sole wage earner with 2 full time student adult children for the last 2 years who do not work and I claim PIP but have never been told that I should get a reduction and continue to pay full council tax!!

stop taking from those that have nothing as its not their fault that the bankers bought the country to its knees, go get the tax payers money back from the banks and use it to help the needy not the greedy .the bankers made this mess and our government wants the poor to pay the price. give 100% to those in need and make the rich pay because they can afford it ,its only fair

Since the new benefit changes there has been an increase in council tax defaults, it is no coincidence that people on benefits are finding it hard to make ends meet. By making them pay 25% of the CT this increases the burden on the resident.The council must consider the option of 100% relief for hard hit residents and not just 75% across the board.

Please reduce council tax ,,its higher than london area.

It is annoying when people who are on benefits still find the money to smoke and have mobile phones, and yet still have help to pay their council tax. This is very much unacceptable.

I'm wondering what I'm working for when I'm left with 40 pound out of a monthly wage of 500

I feel that child maintenance payments (or a percentage of)should be classed as income, this can amount to several hundred pounds per month and it is grossly unfair that someone receiving this can claim the same amount of benefits as someone who does not, including child & working family tax credit.

I believe we should encourage claimants to work but not at the neglect of the child. I agree child benefit should be disregarded but should be limited to how many children . There should also be a limit on child maintenance which is disregarded.

Have you amended the date you take council tax direct debits without notification?

1.RUBBISH COLLECTION PRICE AND THE WHOLE 3 ITEM PROCEDURE?????!!!!?????2.CRISIS LOAN aka EMERGENCY HELP >>>>funds for the unforthseeable issues<<<<<< B.STAFF TRAINING AND OVER-VIEWING THEIR WORK CONSTANTLY. APPAULING IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT 'EQUITY ACT' comes to mind

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Appendix 3

Appendix 3 - Diversity Information

Are you responding to this survey as a..	Which organisation	Post Code:	Do you or your partner receive Council Tax Support?	Please select below which best describes your household:	Are you a member or ex-member of the armed forces?	Are you a war widow?	Age:	Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	If you are disabled, how would you describe your disability?
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		rm188rx	Yes	None of the above	No	No	Over 60	Yes	Long term medical condition
Resident									
Resident		rm191qu	Yes	A lone parent household	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		Rm19 1TZ	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		Rm17 6ss	No	A lone parent household	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident			No	A household with full and/or part time workers	Yes	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident		ss17 0ph	No	A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	Over 60	Yes	Long term medical condition
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		RM15 4RB	No	A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		SS17	No	A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident				A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	Over 60	No	
Resident		RM176BU	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident		RM16 4LX	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	Over 60	Yes	Long term medical condition
Resident									
Resident		Rm191sL	No	A household that includes someone who is disabled	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		RM16	No	Don't know	No	No	45 - 59	Yes	Hearing impairment;Mental health condition
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		Rm166rn	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	18 - 24	No	
Resident									
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		RM17 5YX	No	A family with one or two dependent children	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		rm18 8sb	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		L374sj	No	A family with one or two dependent children	No	No	18 - 24	No	
Resident		rm188xp	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident		rm204xp	No	A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident									
Resident		rm154el	No	A lone parent household	No	No	25 - 44	Yes	Mobility (not a wheelchair user) ;Long term medical condition ;Hidden impairment
Resident									
Resident		RM156ns	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	25 - 44	No	
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		rm188hf	Yes	A household that includes someone who is disabled	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident									
Resident		RM15	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident									
Resident		RM18 8YP	No	A single person household or a couple without children	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Resident			Yes	A family with one or two dependent children	No	No			
Resident									
Resident		RM176SL	No	A family with one or two dependent children	No	No	Prefer not to	No	
Resident									
Resident									
Resident									
Resident		rm19	Yes	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	45 - 59	Yes	side effect from surgery to remove cancer;Mental health condition
Organisation									
Organisation									
Organisation	Customer Services Advisor Thurrock Council	SS166TX	No	A household with full and/or part time workers	No	No	45 - 59	No	
Organisation	Tilbury Docks Sports and Social Association								
		Rm17 6hq	No	A lone parent household	Yes		45 - 59	Yes	Long term medical condition
					No	No	17 or under	Yes	Visual impairment

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Appendix 4

COUNCIL TAX BASE Year 2016/17

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Band	Total Properties	No. of Discounts	Exempt Properties	Net Disabled Relief	LCTS	LT Premiums	Changes in Year			Sub Total	Total Band "D" Equiv	Adj for collection rate	Tax Base (Rounded)
		(-)	(-)	(+) or (-)	(-)	(+)	Estimated Discounts	New Properties	Demolitions			1.25%	
A *	0	1	0	9	1		0	0	0	7	4	0	4
A	7,360	1,056	132	17	1,842	9	0	53	1	4,407	2,938	37	2,902
B	13,142	1,367	160	84	2,072	11	0	94	1	9,732	7,569	95	7,474
C	26,366	1,839	239	-37	2,451	14	0	189	2	22,000	19,556	244	19,311
D	11,481	668	99	-39	495	6	0	82	1	10,267	10,267	128	10,139
E	4,440	201	39	-10	105	2	0	32	0	4,119	5,034	63	4,971
F	2,079	63	9	-13	36	1	0	15	0	1,974	2,851	36	2,815
G	784	41	4	1	12	2	0	6	0	736	1,226	15	1,211
H	41	13	1	-12	0	0	0	0	0	15	30	0	29
TOTALS	65,693	5,248	683	0	7,016	43	0	472	6	53,256	49,474	618	48,856

note A* is band A properties entitled to disabled relief reduction.

Column Key

- 1 Property Bandings
- 2 Total Number of Properties as per VO list
- 3 Ratio of properties receiving discounts relating to Single Persons and 1st disregard at 25% and Second Disregards at 50%, Class A at 50% and Class C at 100%
- 4 Number of Exempt properties by band inc. exemption classes B,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,L,N,R,S,T,V,W
- 5 Banding adjustments for Disabled relief
- 6 Ratio of Properties receiving CTS
- 7 Ratio of Properties charged 50% premium for long term empties
- 8 Forecast for increase/ decrease in discounts next year
- 9 Net estimate of new properties (Full year equivalants)
- 10 Net estimate of demolitions

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QUESTION TIME

Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There is one question to the Leader and a further four questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER

1. From Councillor Ojetola

“By the time this question is heard, Chafford's famous young lady Louisa Johnson, would have reigned for almost six weeks on the X factor throne. What, if any, has the Council done to recognise this achievement and to ensure Louisa's determination to excel in exceptional circumstances is a role model to young residents of Thurrock?”

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Johnson to Councillor Potheary

"Can the portfolio holder confirm that the consumption of alcohol ban is still in place on the Flowers Estate South Ockendon?"

2. From Councillor Hipsey to Councillor Rice

“Of recent weeks the North of England has experienced one of the wettest winters on record where small villages, towns and cities have been damaged to the severe flooding and a lack of under investment to river flood defenses.

As one of the ward councillors for Stanford le Hope I feel I have duty bring this to your most urgent attention where any prolonged heavy down pours such as experienced in Northern England could cause real concern for parts of East Thurrock.

Would you kindly explain to the chamber if any lessons have been learned from the North of England tragedy and to consider investigating areas especially where the Government inspectorate

have given prior planning consents in areas that assist to protect the neighborhoods from any risk of future flooding”.

3. From Councillor Liddiard to Councillor Gerrish

“Can the portfolio holder tell us what actions he is taking to ensure the Highways Agency England are cleaning verges of the A1089 and part A13 to a good standard?”

4. From Councillor Stewart to Councillor Victoria Holloway

“Would the Portfolio Holder advise on what system a concern or complaint is recorded and advise how that system ensures all departments of the Council are working together and not in isolation?”

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

Date	From	Motion	Status	Accountable Director
28/01/15	Cllr Pearce	Along with the residents of Aveley and Uplands this council welcomes the decision by the Secretary of State to reject plans for 500 houses on the former fireman's club site in Aveley on greenbelt land.	No update required.	David Bull
28/01/15	Cllr Aker	Thurrock Council calls on the Cabinet to reject fortnightly bin collections.	At its meeting on 11 February 2015 Cabinet considered the comments of the Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the proposal to move to alternate weekly collections for the residual and recycling waste streams. Following receipt of the committees comments Cabinet agreed to withdraw the proposal for alternate week collections of these two waste streams within the current year's budget proposals and instructed officers to seek alternative savings from within the waste collection budget.	Mike Heath
25/03/15	Cllr Gledhill	We call on Thurrock Council to investigate taking similar action to Essex and Harlow Councils and apply for an injunction to help stop unauthorised traveller encampments in Thurrock.	<p>The granting of an interim injunction in Harlow against unauthorised encampments and the future court hearing to establish whether a full injunction will eventually be granted is being closely followed to see if a similar measure would be an appropriate measure in Thurrock. This is being done both locally and through the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit, of which Thurrock is a member council. A further response will be submitted when the outcome of these court proceedings is known.</p> <p><u>Update – January 2015</u></p> <p>On 16th December 2015 Harlow Council and Essex County Council were granted a full injunction in Harlow. It bans 35 named persons from setting up unauthorised encampments on any land in Harlow. It also protects 321 vulnerable sites across Harlow including parks and</p>	Gavin Dennett

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

			playgrounds, previously occupied sites, highway verges, schools, cycle tracks and private land identified by Harlow Council and Essex County Council from persons unknown setting up unauthorised encampments. Officers are now looking at the work Harlow have undertaken in conjunction with Essex County Traveller Unit to see if a similar measure would be an appropriate in Thurrock.	
25/03/15	Cllr Gledhill	This Council thanks all retiring elected members for their service to Thurrock.	No action required.	David Bull
22/07/15	Cllr Ojetola	<p>Radicalisation of youths seems to be quite rampant, doing nothing is not an option as parents are losing their children to extremism.</p> <p>We call on Thurrock Council to create a member led committee to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to tackle the threat of extremism and radicalisation in line with our Duty to Prevent.</p>	A full briefing note on the background, current provision and options for greater Member involvement / panel was provided to Constitution Working Group Members in August 2015.	David Bull
23/09/15	Cllr Halden	<p>Legal highs are quickly becoming a social disaster, from both the point of view of being harmful as substances, but also giving a very incorrect impression of the dangers of substance abuse, especially amongst younger people.</p> <p>We instruct Council to consult with Essex Police on the most effective way of tackling the use of legal highs in public spaces, including Public Space Protection Orders, with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitoring the outcome.</p> <p>In addition we instruct the constitution working group to consider how to best exercise and delegate all of our streamlined public protection powers that</p>	<p>The Head of Public Protection has consulted with the Local Police Commander to determine whether the Police would support the application of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Thurrock to impose control measures on the use of legal highs.</p> <p>The Police have indicated that based on the evidence available to them and the practicality of enforcing control measures against an otherwise legal activity they would not prioritise enforcement of any control measures imposed by a potential PSPO at this time.</p> <p>Should further evidence alter the Police position with regard to the prioritisation of enforcement resources for legal high work they will update the Council and liaise</p>	Gavin Dennett

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

		come from the 2014 Crime and Disorder act to be accessible to all members.	with the relevant council department to consult on a PSPO for this purpose.	
23/09/15	Cllr Worrall	<p>Thurrock Council are concerned over implications for tenants and housing stock of the Conservative government's Emergency Budget's housing measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Benefit withdrawn for 18–21 year olds; • Housing Benefit/ Local Housing Allowance (LHA) frozen for five years; • Tax Credits and Housing Benefit/LHA include only first two children in households born after April 2017; • Market rents charged in social housing where incomes are £30,000, additional rent receipts go to Treasury not Housing Revenue Account or Council. <p>The impact will increase poverty, homelessness and numbers at risk of being homeless, amongst young and very low income families.</p> <p>For individual tenants who have faced significant above inflation rent increases and falling incomes over the last few years, the Budget proposal to cut social sector rents by 1% for the next four years will be welcome.</p> <p>That a 1% rent cut will mean loss of rental income to Housing Revenue Account of £18.75 million by 2019/2020, that loss will have significant consequences for Council's plans to build new homes, maintain and refurbish existing stock of homes.</p>	<p>A paper is scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 11th November on the principles the council may adopt for mitigating detrimental impact that these proposals may otherwise have on our existing affordable housing building programme. This is set to be followed by a report to Housing O&S with the results of the more detailed impact assessments that are currently being undertaken.</p> <p>In addition the Council is in the process responding to recent formal consultations issued in respect of the market rents proposals for all households exceeding £30,000.</p> <p>David Bull will be writing to the MPs in October with the current understanding of the proposed measures on Thurrock Residents.</p>	David Bull

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

		The Council resolves to write to the two MPs for Thurrock to lay out concerns and to highlight the impact on Thurrock residents of these measures in Westminster.		
23/09/15	Cllr Ray	This Council calls for those Councillors who passed away during their service as a member of Thurrock Council (since the turn of the new century) to be commemorated in the Council Chamber for their work and contributions to the community of Thurrock.	Research has been undertaken to identify around ten councillors who have passed away while still serving on the council since 1998. Officers are now looking into the various options for designing a suitable memorial.	Fiona Taylor
23/09/15	Cllr Halden	<p>The current crisis with refugees has led to calls for national and local governments to act in support. The chamber agrees with this.</p> <p>Thurrock resolves to play its part to aid refugees and will make this position known to the Home Office.</p> <p>We instruct the council to be ready with clear plans for service support from housing, social care, to public protection.</p> <p>While we welcome the notion of using international aid funding to help with costs, we of course understand local pressures we are already under and therefore council will make representations to the Home Secretary that support must be evenly sought across local authorities to avoid disproportionate costs being applied to the taxpayer.</p>	<p>Officers have been looking at how the council currently supports refugees and those seeking asylum and how it can do so in the future. There is a well-established process for dealing with unaccompanied asylum seekers who are looked after as children in care. Thurrock has recently looked after higher numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children than in previous years and is already playing a full part in offering support.</p> <p>Departments across the council are looking in details at how refugees subject to the new resettlement scheme can be accommodated successfully in the borough and the funding available from government to achieve this. Early details of government funding for the scheme have been released and these are informing departmental plans. A letter has been sent to the Home Secretary requesting that support is evenly sought across local authorities to avoid disproportionate costs falling to the taxpayer.</p>	Carmel Littleton
28/10/15	Cllr Redsell	We call on Thurrock Council to take action with its partners to help prevent the use of motorbikes and similar vehicles on our green spaces.	The Council work closely with Essex police to address this problem across the Borough. There are posters advising residents against this anti-social behaviour and requesting that they report such illegal use to either the	Lucy Magill

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

			<p>Police or crimestoppers; which have been displayed in all housing communal areas.</p> <p>Specific concerns are brought to the multi-agency community safety partnership Local Action Groups for discussion and attention. This has led to a section 59 notice being served at Blackshots and a subsequent reported reduction in nuisance vehicles.</p> <p>The Police will continue to deal with such reported nuisance with support as required from their partners.</p>	
28/10/15	Cllr J. Kent	<p>Thurrock Council is concerned at reports that government is considering scrapping Universal Free School Meals for infant school children.</p> <p>We believe that such a move would be damaging to both the education and health outcomes of our young people so resolve to write to the Treasury and Department for Education to show our support for the continuation of Universal Free School Meals as well as to our two members of parliament to make them aware of our concerns.</p>	Letter to Treasury, DfE and Thurrock 2 MP's sent out.	Carmel Littleton
28/10/15	Cllr Ray	That this Council will explore ways of working with NHS partners to fully endorse and promote the importance of giving blood and signing up for organ and tissue donation in Thurrock.	<p>Ian Wake, the Council's Director of Public Health has discussed Councillor Ray's motion with senior colleagues in NHS Thurrock CCG.</p> <p>The Council's Public Health team have agreed to develop a joint communications campaign with the CCG to promote blood and organ donation and encourage our population to participate in both of these important national programmes.</p>	Roger Harris / Ian Wake
28/10/15	Cllr Potheary	Essex Police have recently announced they plan to close two of the borough's police stations and sell off a third, as well as cut the number of PCSOs in Thurrock from 38 to just 6. After already making	Letters sent to both MPs	Lucy Magill

Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 27 January 2016

		<p>cuts of £40million, Essex Police is facing having to make over £60million worth of cuts by 2020 thanks to the Government. The dramatic reduction in the number of police officers and PCSOs on our streets is a big issue for our residents and has worrying implications for community safety.</p> <p>The Council resolves to write to the two MPs for Thurrock to set out our concerns about the detrimental impact of police cuts on Thurrock residents and community safety, and ask them to lobby for better funding for Essex Police.</p>		
25/11/15	Cllr Kent	<p>This Council remains opposed to government plans for a further river crossing in Thurrock and commits to continue campaigning, alongside local residents, on this issue.</p>	<p>The Council is expecting a Government decision on route options for the Lower Thames Crossing before the end of January. Two public meetings have been organised to discuss the issues on January 25th and February 25th and a special extended Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Scrutiny is planned for 9 February 2016.</p>	David Bull
25/11/15	Cllr Halden	<p>Thurrock Council adopts the official position of being pro grammar school and desires that Thurrock children should have access to them.</p> <p>The Authority should actively pursue / explore opportunities for grammar schools to expand into Thurrock via an annex.</p>	<p>Local authority officers met with the Regional Schools Commissioner representative on 14.1.15 to explore opportunities for grammar schools to open an annexe in Thurrock. Exploratory discussions will be held over the coming weeks with local grammar schools.</p>	Carmel Littleton
25/11/15	Cllr Stewart	<p>That we ask Cabinet, at its next meeting, to immediately fund an alteration to the bus route to serve Fobbing over the winter months.</p>	<p>This has been implemented. Route 14 serves Fobbing to Basildon via Corringham and will operate until the end of the financial year.</p>	David Bull

Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor S. Hebb

"That Thurrock Council looks to encourage the extension of the current Oyster Card Railcard / Contactless Payment Scheme and/or its replacement from Grays C2C station to all zones across the borough as they would both be helpful and a support to residents and growth.

Council resolves to work with external agencies to realise this request."

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The principle is fine and should be assessed within the context of the transport infrastructure policy. An extension to the zones across the Borough could be a benefit and support residents and growth. However the Oyster card scheme itself is being withdrawn but is to be replaced.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no financial implications arising from this motion. Should there be any extension; C2C should be liable for any costs.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 2

Submitted by Councillor J. Halden

“The chamber resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Health with regards to poor communication/ engagement from representatives of NHS England and NHS commissioning, particularly with reference to the consultation on the PET CT Scanner (cancer services) which we view as an unsound consultation.”

Monitoring Officer Comments:

This motion relates to a matter which affects the authority or the authority area and for the Authority may be said to have a relevant function.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no financial implications arising from this motion.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 3

Submitted by Councillor M. Stone

“Further to the proposed cuts to the fire service across the borough of between one third and one half.

This council resolves to express its concerns by:

- a) Objecting to these proposals through the Essex Fire and Rescue Service (EFRS) public consultation - and urges residents to do the same.
- b) Raising these concerns with the two members of parliament to enlist their support
- c) Urging the EFRS to consider expanding the level of fire cover in Thurrock due to the rapid increase in jobs, industry and homes.”

Monitoring Officer Comments:

This motion relates to a matter which affects the authority or the authority area and for the Authority may be said to have a relevant function.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no financial implications arising from this motion.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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