

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 **25 October 2017**

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


### Membership of the Council:

Tunde Ojetola (Mayor)  
Michael Stone (Deputy Mayor)

Tim Aker  
John Allen  
Chris Baker  
James Baker  
Jan Baker  
Clare Baldwin  
Russell Cherry  
Colin Churchman  
Gary Collins  
Mark Coxshall  
Jack Duffin  
Tony Fish  
Leslie Gamester  
Oliver Gerrish  
Robert Gledhill  
Garry Hague

James Halden  
Graham Hamilton  
Shane Hebb  
Clifford Holloway  
Victoria Holloway  
Deborah Huelin  
Roy Jones  
Tom Kelly  
Cathy Kent  
John Kent  
Martin Kerin  
Steve Liddiard  
Brian Little  
Susan Little  
Sue MacPherson  
Ben Maney

Bukky Okunade  
Terry Piccolo  
Jane Potheary  
David Potter  
Joycelyn Redsell  
Barbara Rice  
Gerard Rice  
Sue Sammons  
Angela Sheridan  
Peter Smith  
Graham Snell  
Luke Spillman  
Pauline Tolson  
Aaron Watkins  
Kevin Wheeler



**Lyn Carpenter**  
**Chief Executive**



## **Agenda**

Open to Public and Press

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<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>9 - 72</b>
	<p>To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Council, held on 27 September 2017.</p> <p>To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on 27 September 2017.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Items of Urgent Business</b>	
	<p>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.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>	
	<p>To receive any declaration of interests from Members.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Questions from Members of the Public</b>	<b>73 - 74</b>
	<p>In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors</b>	
	<p>In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2(Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Petitions Update Report</b>	<b>75 - 78</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels</b>	
	<p>The Council are asked to agree any changes to the appointments made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels,</p>	

as requested by Group Leaders.

<b>10</b>	<b>Debate of a Petition containing over 1500 verified signatures - Kings Street Car Park, Stanford Le Hope</b>	<b>79 - 84</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Investment and Treasury Management Strategy</b>	<b>85 - 104</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Children's and Adult Social Care</b>	<b>105 - 120</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration</b>	<b>121 - 136</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Questions from Members</b>	<b>137 - 138</b>

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

<b>15</b>	<b>Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies</b>	
<b>16</b>	<b>Minutes of Committees</b>	

Name of Committee	Date
Planning Committee	31 August 2017
Licensing Committee	18 October 2016
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 July 2017
Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 July 2017

<b>17</b>	<b>Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year</b>	<b>139 - 142</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Motion received from Councillor Gerrish</b>	<b>143 - 144</b>
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<b>20</b>	<b>Motion received from Councillor J Kent</b>	<b>147 - 148</b>
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**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](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

**Future Dates of Council:**

29 November 2017, 31 January 2018, 28 February 2018 (Budget) and 30 May 2018 (Annual)

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## **Information for members of the public and councillors**

### **Access to Information and Meetings**

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

### **Recording of meetings**

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

### **Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings**

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

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](mailto: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.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

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



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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**

- |           |    |  |                            |
|-----------|----|--|----------------------------|
| <b>A.</b> | 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>B.</b>		<b>C.</b>	
<b>IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)</b>		<b>If NOT amended i.e. original motion</b>	
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	<b>THEN</b> debate on <b>the subject</b> .	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 100<sup>th</sup> 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.

### October 1917

DATE	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	WARD	RANK	SERVICE	DIED
01-Oct	COLEY	PERCY FRANCIS	27	TIL	GUNNER	RFA	BELGIUM
02-Oct	WILSON	RICHARD	30	G	PTE	D.C.L.I. - 1	FRANCE
02-Oct	FARAWAY	SIDNEY VICTOR	20	G	PTE	GLOUCESTER - 4	BELGIUM
02-Oct	VAUGHAN	PERCY	25	W/TH	PTE	ESSEX - 4	ISRAEL
03-Oct	WADE	EDWARD	27	AVE	PTE	MGC	HOME
04-Oct	MEARS	WILLIAM	34	G	PTE	AIF - 1	BELGIUM
04-Oct	TEMPLER	JOHN HARRY	22	G	PTE	WARWICKS - 1/5	BELGIUM
04-Oct	COLMER	JOHN GEORGE	22	G	GUNNER	RFA	BELGIUM
04-Oct	FARR	ARTHUR JAMES	24	G	PTE	MIDDLESEX - 18	BELGIUM
04-Oct	BEARMAN	STEPHEN HUGH	22	SLH	PTE	MIDDLESEX - 16	BELGIUM
04-Oct	BLOWERS	JOSEPH EDWARD	22	TIL	PTE	LINCOLN - 8	BELGIUM
06-Oct	JIGGINS	ARTHUR THOMAS	26	BUL	PTE	NORTHLAND FUS - 7	EGYPT
07-Oct	HAWKINS	WILLIAM	24	S.OCK	BMDR	RGA	BELGIUM
09-Oct	KEYES	HARRY JOSEPH	26	G	PTE	GLOUCESTER - 4	BELGIUM
09-Oct	SEAMAN	GEORGE	22	SLH	PTE	MIDDLESEX - 16	BELGIUM
09-Oct	NUNN	HENRY PERCY	20	AVE	PTE	MANCHESTER - 19	BELGIUM
10-Oct	PERKINS	EDWARD	U/K	W/TIL	FMN	MERC. MARINE RES.	CHANNEL
12-Oct	FLANDERS	EDWARD	28	AVE	PTE	AIF - 47	BELGIUM

12-Oct	EMMERSON	ALEXANDER VICTOR	26	W/TIL	DRIVER	RFA	BELGIUM
12-Oct	TREDWELL	GEORGE AMOS	20	TIL	PTE	BUFFS - 7	BELGIUM
12-Oct	BEARMAN	FREDERICK GEORGE	23	W/TH	GUNNER	RGA	BELGIUM
12-Oct	PATIENT	JAMES	25	W/TH	PTE	BORDER - 7	BELGIUM
13-Oct	CLARK	EDWARD	32	S.OCK	L/CPL	ESSEX - 10	BELGIUM
15-Oct	YOUNG	JAMES	22	CORR & CSM	L/CPL	AIF - 59	BELGIUM
17-Oct	PACKMAN	THOMAS LEONARD	34	SLH	PO STKR	ROYAL NAVY	NORTH SEA
17-Oct	GILMORE	BERTRAM PERCY	19	FOBB	PTE	LONDON - 14	FRANCE
18-Oct	COLLINS	THOMAS	43	L/TH	CPL	RE	FRANCE
20-Oct	TARGETT	JOHN HENRY	54	G	PIONEER	RE	BELGIUM
21-Oct	GREENWOOD	CHARLES FREDERICK	21	SLH	PTE	ESSEX - 6	IRAQ
25-Oct	MITCHELL	WILLIAM JAMES	19	G	PTE	SOUTH STAFFS - 1	BELGIUM
26-Oct	CRAWLEY	JOSEPH	20	G	PTE	WEST SURREY - 2	BELGIUM
26-Oct	HERRINGTON	WILLIAM HENRY GEORGE	36	G	PTE	LONDON - 3	BELGIUM
26-Oct	REEMAN	FREDERICK GEORGE	19	STIFF	PTE	SOUTH STAFFS - 1	BELGIUM
27-Oct	SMIDMORE	ARTHUR JAMES	U/K	SLH	AB. SEA	RND - HOWE	BELGIUM
30-Oct	GILBEY	WILLIAM GEORGE	33	S.OCK	GUNNER	RGA	BELGIUM

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Extraordinary Council held on 27 September 2017 at 7.00 pm

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**Present:** Councillors Tunde Ojetola (Mayor), Michael Stone (Deputy Mayor), Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Clare Baldwin, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Clifford Holloway, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Potheary, Joycelyn Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, Aaron Watkins and Kevin Wheeler

**Apologies:** Councillors Russell Cherry, Sue MacPherson, David Potter and Pauline Tolson

**In attendance:** Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive  
Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Environment and Place  
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health  
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT  
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation  
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer  
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services  
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service  
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

#### **44. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

#### **45. Electoral Cycle**

Councillor Hebb presented the report that advised Members of the outcome of the consultation on a possible move from elections by thirds to election of the whole-council once every four years from May 2018. Members were asked to note the preferred option recommended by the General Services Committee that was to move to whole-council elections from May 2018 and that the

report had been presented to Full Council for Members to decide. Councillor Hebb stated that Thurrock was ready for this change having listened to the voice of the residents as part of the consultation, which having put their trust in the powers of elections deserved the right outcomes and looked forward to the debate this would generate this evening.

Councillor Snell stated that he would not be supporting the recommendations as the number of responses received as part of the consultation did not represent Thurrock and that out of the 466 responses some would have been linked to this Chamber. Councillor Snell stated that it should be fair and democratic to give residents the option to vote yearly. Councillor Snell stated that UKIP would not have been able to represent if it were not for the elections by third. He believed elections by third brought stability to the Council and that the Council was in a better position because of this.

Councillor Gerrish agreed with Councillor Snell's comments and would be against the recommendations. Councillor Gerrish questioned why an extraordinary meeting had been arranged for this item where there were far more important items that could have been discussed instead.

*At 7.12pm, Councillor Gerrish called a Notice of Motion that the report go straight to the vote. This was seconded by Councillor G Rice. The Mayor announced that he would allow those Members who had already requested to speak to ask their questions.*

Councillor Kelly stated his support for the recommendations as the four yearly cycle would allow Officers to dedicate time to elections and do the job they should be doing.

Councillor G Rice spoke on behalf of democracy that the recommendations would not be good for the residents of Thurrock and focused on the responses rates compared to other consultations.

Councillor Piccolo would be supporting the recommendations as there was a need to forward plan over a number of years and see actions through and the four yearly cycle would give the Council the stability and give confidence to residents.

Councillor Halden would be supporting the recommendations and stated that a proper whole borough election should take place. Councillor Halden highlighted that a number of wards would not go to the vote next year as some wards had 2 or 3 members. Councillor Halden continued to state that the voting procedures for elections by third were not clear enough for residents to understand.

Councillor Huelin stated her support for the recommendations and that the Council would save money and give Officers the opportunity and time to build on policies and gain the stability that the Council needed.



Councillor Gledhill stated his support for the recommendations as residents had asked for this particular item as part of the consultation. The consultation was undertaken fairly and gave all Thurrock residents the opportunity to speak. Councillor Gledhill also echoed Councillor Halden's comments that the voting procedure for elections by third were not clear enough for residents to understand.

Councillor Coxshall stated that the report was critical for regeneration and for future investments into Thurrock and would be voting in favour as this would be the right thing to do.

*At 7.33pm, on a Point of Order, Councillor Jones stated that swearing was unacceptable in the Chamber and that Councillor Coxshall should stand up and apologise. Councillor Coxshall responded by apologising for the bad language used.*

Councillor Hebb summed up and stated that the UKIP and Labour Parties had requested that the extraordinary meeting be held tonight before Full Council and not another night reserved for this discussion and that other committees and task force groups were discussing other urgent matters. Councillor Hebb stated that residents had been given the option to vote and we should agree to that.

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote on the recommendations.

Members voted unanimously in favour of recommendations 1.1 and 1.2.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted as follows for recommendation 1.3:

For	:	17
Against	:	28
Abstain	:	0

Whereupon the Mayor declared recommendation 1.3 lost.

The Mayor stated as recommendation 1.4 was dependent on recommendation 1.3 being carried this recommendation would also be declared lost.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the Council noted the results of the consultation in relation to the election cycle.**
- 2. That the Council noted the preferred option recommended by General Services Committee to move to whole-council elections with effect from May 2018.**

**The meeting finished at 7.40 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](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 27 September 2017 at 7.50 pm

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**Present:** Councillors Tunde Ojetola (Mayor), Michael Stone (Deputy Mayor), Tim Aker, John Allen, Chris Baker, James Baker, Jan Baker, Clare Baldwin, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Clifford Holloway, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Susan Little, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo, Jane Potheary, Joycelyn Redsell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Angela Sheridan, Peter Smith, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, Aaron Watkins and Kevin Wheeler

**Apologies:** Councillors Russell Cherry, Sue MacPherson, David Potter and Pauline Tolson

**In attendance:** Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive  
Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Environment and Place  
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health  
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT  
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation  
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer  
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services  
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service  
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

The Mayor invited Pastor Akin to lead those present in prayer.

### **46. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 26 July 2017 were approved as a correct record.

### **47. Items of Urgent Business**

The Mayor informed the Chamber that he had not agreed to the consideration of any items of urgent business.

**48. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

**49. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor and the Leader of the Council**

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

The Mayor welcomed Members back from the long summer break and made the following announcements:

That September marked 16 years of the atrocious attack on 9/11 and he had the opportunity to accompany 24 students and teachers from local schools in Thurrock on a visit to the 9/11 museum, the United Nations and to hear from witnesses and Mayor of New York about how they coped with the event and had rebuilt their community. The Mayor stated how proud he had been of the exemplary behaviour of the students.

The Mayor congratulated all Thurrock artists who had been involved in the Thurrock 100 event over the summer and that he was working with Well House Gallery to show case some of their work and thanked Terry Finnegan for allowing his work to be displayed in the Mayor's parlour.

The Mayor was sorry to announce the passing away of ex-Mayor George Watts last week who had been Mayor for the year 1988-89 and had chaired a number of scrutiny committees. The Mayor had not worked with him on the Council, but had been aware of his community work on behalf of the Council and that thoughts were with his family at this time.

That earlier this month, the Mayor wrote to all members to remind them about the responsibility to adhere to the code of conduct that Members signed up to as community leaders. The Mayor stated that no matter how passionate Members got he hoped that all Members could display a moral example to the community. As to debating of issues tonight, the Mayor reminded member and also asked residents in the public gallery to be calm and allow questions and answers to be heard. He understood that passions could run high but both the question and the answers had to be heard. The Mayor thanked all in advance for their usual calm behaviour.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, updated Members on the following:

Clean It, Cut It, Fill It, since April this year a continued investment had been made to these important services. That 10 extra street cleansing rounds had continued with nearly 950 tonnes of rubbish collected. That 10 new ride-on-grass mowers had cut 9,000 acres of grass and that £2 million had been invested in road repairs and improvement to surface or treated 44 square kilometres of roads and filled over 4,000 potholes.

Councillor Gledhill stated that five action days had been held in the Grays Town Centre with Police and Council Enforcement Officers tackling street drinking, littering and businesses who had no trade waste duty of care documents. That 44 Fixed Penalty Notices for breaches of the Grays Public Space Protection Orders notices had been issued, covering abusive language and failing to comply with alcohol provisions. Three persistent offenders breaching the Public Space Protection Orders had been subject to prosecution for persistent breach. Also 13 businesses were visited regarding the inspection of trade waste duty of care documents with five penalty notices being issued to businesses who had previously received warnings.

Councillor Gledhill confirmed that 21 Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued to persons who littered and encouraged residents to stop dropping rubbish on Thurrock streets as the Council would fine them.

Councillor Gledhill was pleased to report that one of Thurrock's operatives who wished to remain anonymous, saved the resident's life by quickly applying first aid skills after they had collapsed. Councillor Gledhill stated he intended to thank them personally for their swift actions on behalf of all Members.

Councillor Gledhill attended a reception at 10 Downing Street with a number of other Essex Members of Parliament and the Police and Crime Commissioner and discussed a number of issues:

- **Illegal Traveller Incursion Enforcement:** A lack of direct action from Essex Police when there are unauthorised encampments in the borough and the delay in how Police deal with such encampments in Thurrock.
- Thanks were given to the Police and Crime Commissioner for the extra work undertaken by the Grays Town Centre Team in helping tackle the issue of street drinkers and had reminded him that there were other Designated Public Places Order's that had become Public Space Protection Orders that needed policing.
- The extension of camera enforcement for moving traffic offences such as breaching width restrictions, blocking yellow box junctions and similar offences in Thurrock. This would be vital to keep the heavy logistics traffic moving and at the same time keep residents safe.

Councillor Gledhill stated that following an announcement made on Tuesday 26 September a temporary stop had been made to the grounds maintenance service charge for housing. This item will be referred back to Housing Overview and Scrutiny for further consideration and then returned to Cabinet.

## **50. Questions from Members of the Public**

*At 8.08pm, Councillor Gledhill requested that standing orders be suspended to provide time to hear and debate all Public Questions. Members voted in favour of this.*

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.

#### **51. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors**

The Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, the requisite notice had been given by four members and one member of the public who wished to present petitions at the meeting.

Councillor Hebb presented a petition on behalf of residents of Hadfield Road, Rectory Road, Wharf Road and Fairview Avenue, Stanford-le-Hope to request that Thurrock Council (a) consult on the introduction of a one-way system around Hadfield and Rectory Road and (b) introduce speed-calming measures down both roads.

Councillor Kerin presented a petition to request the installation of CCTV on a section of Seabrooke Rise.

Councillor Jones presented a petition that related to the poor state of road surface in Gordon Road, Corringham.

Mrs Imamzade presented a petition on the Council's proposal to introduce and extend service charges by up to £400 per year for all tenants.

Councillor Jones presented a petition for Thurrock Council to reconsider the unfair rent increase imposed on Council tenants.

#### **52. Petitions Update Report**

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

#### **53. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels**

There were no changes to the appointments previously made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.

#### **54. Recruitment of Director of Environment and Highways**

Councillor Gledhill presented the report to seek the agreement of Council to recruit a new Director of Environment and Highways and stated that the proposed changes in this report to the senior management team were intended to provide the delivery of the Council's Strategic Place ambitions whilst bringing into line all priorities into a single new directorate.

Councillor Coxshall stated that the Portfolio for Regeneration had continually changed over the last 18 months and that himself and a dedicated team of

Officers need to be able to move forward to the delivery stage of projects with the new build of houses as a high priority in Thurrock.

Councillor Duffin stated that he welcomed the two new roles but questioned how when the administration were so against the Lower Thames Crossing they were now funding a new position. Surely this was not fighting against it but helping to build the crossing.

Councillor Halden stated that the Lower Thames Crossing decision was not down to Thurrock and that those new homes referred to by Councillor Coxshall were vital for the new schools and medical centres that are planned for the borough. A dedicated team with proper managerial staff focusing on major projects was essential.

Councillor Snell stated that it was good news that the restructuring proposal was cost neutral and that the Council was reacting to the large projects coming to Thurrock.

Councillor Gerrish welcomed the change and that delivery and regeneration was important to Thurrock rather than structure but stated that the Labour Party would be monitoring progress.

Councillor B Rice would be supporting the recommendation and that the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force had met for the first time last week and that Highways England should be reminded at every opportunity that Thurrock stood opposed to the new crossing.

Councillor Piccolo stated that at July Full Council Members criticised the administration for not taking the Lower Thames Crossing proposal seriously and that this new restructuring and the Task Force Working Group displayed otherwise.

Councillor Hamilton had concerns how information would be filtered back to Members. Councillor Gledhill stated this would be through the Task Force.

Councillor Gledhill stated that the Assistant Director, Lower Thames Crossing post would report directly to the Corporate Director of Place and would lead on the programme management of the high profile project.

Councillor Gledhill also stated that it was the delivery of services that was key to the restructuring and was vital to the future regeneration and investments in Thurrock.

Upon being put to the vote, the overwhelming majority of Members voted in favour of the recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

**RESOLVED**

**That the approval 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 Director of Environment and Highways.**

**55. Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal**

Councillor Hebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal, reported to the Chamber that Thurrock was on the right path, had lived last year within its means and was ready in itself for finance self-sufficiency.

Councillor Hebb continued to update Members on the following:

- That the Council would not be dependent on money of Government contributions towards the general funding
- That in the first year of administration there had been a balanced first year budget and delivered £10 million worth of savings
- Reduced the Labour overspend of children services from £4 million to £1 million
- Commercial Services seen an income generation of £2.5 million
- £1.5 million had been invested into front line services
- Cutting the grass and cleaning the streets of Thurrock
- In collaboration with the Government now filling pot holes across the borough
- Retained the free weekly bin collections
- Purchased a £4 million bin collection fleet
- Clean It, Cut It, Fill It was funded and remained funded whilst the Conservatives are in power
- £65 million investment in the borough for new classrooms, medical centres and new fleets

Although there was much more to do, Councillor Hebb stated that money was not being spent prettily it was being spent to make the borough look pretty.

Councillor Snell stated that the language in the report was bizarre and could the Portfolio Holder stop treating residents as customers and treats them as people.

Councillor Gerrish questioned the Portfolio Holder whether he would commit to increasing the role of investment of the Council in providing new homes to ensure that the Council was made more financially stable in the future.

Councillor Okunade thanked the Portfolio Holder for his report and questioned what strategies were in place for ensuring better engagement with residents in view of consultations.

Councillor Duffin questioned whether amounts of money for grass cutting transferred from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account would



now be reversed if the grass tax were to be scrapped and what cuts would be made to the general fund balance to allow the budgets to balance.

Councillor Hebb replied to Councillor Snell that the Council takes the view to serve whether they are residents or customers and had gone above and beyond to make contact with residents and had the appropriate conversations with them.

Councillor Hebb replied to Councillor Gerrish to confirm that this would need to be looked at in more detail and to look at the housing banding to see what was viable. Councillor Hebb thanked Councillor Gerrish for his contributions.

Councillor Hebb replied to Councillor Okunade and stated that a public participation group had just been launched and would encourage more residents to join.

Councillor Hebb replied to Councillor Duffin and reconfirmed that the grounds maintenance charge will go back to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny for further consideration.

## **56. Report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Central Services**

Councillor Huelin, Cabinet Member for Performance and Central Services introduced the report and stated that it was an honour to stand in the Council Chamber for the second time to report on the performance of the Council over the past year. That it took commitment and hard work and reassured residents they were in safe hands.

The Portfolio Holder stated it had been a year of hard work and change and thanked staff at all levels on how well they had performed. Councillor Huelin compared the 60% target achieved in comparison to the 50% under the previous administration.

Councillor Huelin referenced that 96% of primary schools were being judged as good or better; Clean It, Cut It, Fill It had enabled pot holes to be filled; streets had been cleaned, equipment had been purchased and for parks and roads to be brought up to scratch. That Keep Britain Tidy was judging the cleanliness of streets in Thurrock and had scored amazingly so far.

Councillor Huelin confirmed that response rates had been improved and Members were encouraged to report effectively and referred Members to the Appendix A of the report. Councillor Huelin would forward an electronic copy of this Appendix to all Members so that this could be shared with residents. That the customer service/digital and people strategies had been brought together to improve customer services.

Councillor Snell thanked the Portfolio Holder for her report and stated that there was some good news and how encouraging that the web based reporting had improved and that residents were actually getting a response. Councillor Snell asked for reassurance that there would always be a

telephone call centre available for residents as more services go on-line. Councillor Huelin reassured Councillor Snell that the telephone call centre would always be available.

Councillor Gerrish asked the Portfolio Holder whether the Agency Staff target had been met. Councillor Huelin stated that there had been an increase in the agency spends which was due to putting things right following the previous administration and changes in social care had increased the urgent need of more agency social care staff to care for residents.

Councillor Redsell questioned whether the new street inspections would help meet the targets set. Councillor Huelin stated that praise should be given to the street cleansing team as targets were being met.

Councillor Okunade asked the Portfolio Holder to explain why the Key Performance Indicators for Timeliness had scored worse. Councillor Huelin replied that this was dependent on the nature of the complaint and at what stages these complaints were at. Councillor Huelin stated that the numbers will come down as the Council continued to drive forward to learn from complaints and implement the required changes.

## **57. Questions from Members**

*At 9.25pm, Councillor Gledhill requested that standing orders be suspended to provide time to hear and debate all Member Questions. Members voted in favour of this.*

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 14 questions to the Leader of the Council had been received and 8 questions to Cabinet Members.

*At 10.04pm, the Mayor moved a motion to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11.1 to allow the meeting to continue beyond the 2.5 hour time limit. Members indicated their agreement to the proposal.*

At 10.40pm, the Mayor called for a comfort break.

Full Council reconvened at 10.50pm.

*At 10.50pm, Councillor Snell moved a motion to suspend the remainder of member questions and move to the Motions.*

The Mayor invited the Chamber to vote. Upon being put to the vote, Members voted as follows:

For	:	14
Against	:	24
Abstain	:	0

The Mayor adjourned Full Council at 11.21pm due to a general disturbance making orderly business impossible.

*Councillor Wheeler left the Council Chamber at 11.22pm.*

Full Council reconvened at 11.23pm.

The Mayor adjourned Full Council again at 11.23pm due to a general disturbance making orderly business impossible.

*Councillors Hague and Sammons left the Council Chamber at 11.30pm.*

Full Council reconvened at 11.33pm.

The Mayor made an apology on behalf of all Members in the Chamber to residents in the public gallery.

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

**58. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies**

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

**59. Minutes of Committees**

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

**60. Update on motions resolved at Council during the previous year**

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

Councillor J Kent requested an update on the following Motion presented by Councillor Jones on the 28 September 2016:

*We call on Thurrock Council to write to the Secretary of State to express many residents' views that in its present state the police service contact number 101 is not fit for purpose.*

Councillor C Kent requested an update on her Motion presented on the 26 July 2017 and questioned why the process had taken so long:

*This Council urges the Essex Fire Authority and the P.C.C to urgently review the crewing of all special appliances in Thurrock.*

*Councillor Maney left the Council Chamber at 11.42pm.*

**61. Motion received from Councillor B Rice**

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

*This Council calls on the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex to fully review and evaluate Police numbers in Thurrock in light of the serious nature of crimes that are we are experiencing in the Borough.*

Councillor B Rice presented the Motion that highlighted the increased level of crime and anti-social behaviour in Thurrock and that residents should not have to put up with this. That immediate action was required by the Government to establish the confidence back into Thurrock residents. A poem written by a local Police Officer highlighting the need for better services was read out by Councillor B Rice.

Councillor Gerrish was proud to support this Motion with more than ever the number of crime and anti-social behaviour incidents being reported by residents had increased. That the budget set by the Conservative Government should be ashamed of how residents had been treated and with Labour's plan to recruit ten thousand Police Officers as protection should not be done on the cheap. Councillor Gerrish stated that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner should listen and action.

Councillor Spillman stated that there was a crisis in Thurrock with no Police presence in public spaces and demanded that the Government action as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Jones stated that he would be supporting this Motion and echoed Councillor Spillman's comments. Councillor Jones stated he had recently attended a RAF memorial service where there was no Police presence to stop the unfortunate anti-social behaviour taking place at this event.

Councillor Gledhill stated that he would be supporting this Motion and quoted incident and offence figures and would insist that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner listened to what Thurrock needed.

Councillor Duffin stated that crime was a serious problem in Thurrock with residents not having any confidence when they rang the Police 101 number and although the administration praised the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner nothing had been done.

Councillor Potheary stated that she would be supporting the Motion but residents who reported crime were being batted back to the Council by the 101 service and that the procedure required clarity.

Councillor J Kent welcomed the Motion but with new challenges being faced with less Officers he called on the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to undertake a full review of Thurrock.

Councillor Coxshall stated he would be supporting the Motion as confidence had to be restored back into the community. Councillor Coxshall questioned how in Essex we could pay more to get more Police and quoted that an extra

ten pound on everybody's tax could generate a further 100 Police Officers for the county.

Councillor Huelin stated that she would be supporting the Motion and praised the quick response made by the Police following an incident in Corringham.

Councillor Allen stated that as Thurrock grew with the potential infrastructure and new homes being built in Thurrock it was vital that residents got proper Police presence.

Councillor Smith stated he would be supporting the Motion and go straight to the vote.

Councillor B Rice summed up by stating that Members owed it to the residents of Thurrock to increase the Police presence in the borough.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

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

*Councillor Sheridan left the Council Chambers at 0.03am.*

## **62. Motion received from Councillor Spillman**

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

*Council calls on Cabinet to work with local arts and music groups to assist them in looking at options for establishing:*

- *A not-for-profit community arts and music multi use venue open to all arts, crafts and music groups across Thurrock which will be able to secure relevant licenses that will allow the venue to be financially sustainable by raising revenue through ticketed music and performance events, and*
- *A not-for-profit, open air, "Festival of Thurrock" to provide an opportunity for a wide range of artists and musicians in Thurrock to showcase their talents.*

Councillor Spillman stated that the Motion was about art and not politics.

Councillor Halden stated he would support this Motion and explained that structures could be connected with existing services that Schools and the Council already provided. Councillor Halden would be more than happy to meet with Councillor Spillman outside of this committee.

Councillor Duffin spoke in favour of the Motion and requested the Motion go straight to vote.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

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

**63. Motion received from Councillor B Rice**

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

*Members in this Council Chamber to call on the Cabinet to re-evaluate the need for £5 per week charge for grounds maintenance to Council tenants as this will cause many residents further hardship.*

Councillor B Rice stated that the service charges were unfair and unjust to the residents of Thurrock that the consultation was not transparent and that the correspondence sent to residents was not clear. Councillor B Rice stated that Councillor Gledhill should stop blaming Officers and the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for his mistakes. Cabinet made the decision and those residents of Thurrock should not be punished for this mistake.

Councillor Kerin stated that the service charges should be scrapped all together as they were unfair to those residents that could not afford them and that Councillor Gledhill should listen to those individuals.

Councillor Spillman stated as Chair of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it was not his job to fix the problem but to ensure that this did not happen again and try and regain the faith of residents by looking and supporting any new proposals.

Councillor Okunade stated her support for this Motion.

Councillor Duffin stated that the Leader had to be taken into account and withdraw the service charges and that the administration had to come to their senses otherwise a pre-signed "vote of no confidence" motion would be used going forward.

Councillor Aker questioned what other ideas had been put forward before this proposal and urged the Leader to say that the service charges would be scrapped from tonight.

Councillor Gledhill stated that any increase in new charges or rent increases was unpopular. Councillor Gledhill stated he would not be bullied into making any decisions and reconfirmed that residents would only be charged for the services they used and that further decisions would go back to Cabinet following scrutiny. Councillor Gledhill stated that a decision would be made when ready.

Councillor G Rice stated that the service charges were scandalous and that the administration should be ashamed of themselves.

Councillor Gerrish questioned whether the service charge was suspended this evening as the Leader thought he might have had an easier ride. That the Leader should not have blamed Officers or Scrutiny Committees but to take the blame and responsibility for himself. Councillor Gerrish stated that some residents would not be able to pay the service charge therefore they should go completely.

Councillor Potheary stated that she was a strong opposition to the service charges and that she would be proud to support the Motion. Councillor Potheary thanked the previous chairs of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for all the hard work previously undertaken. That Councillor Potheary was proud of the campaign and that petitions, consultations and scrutiny committees should be listened to. Councillor Potheary concluded that the service charge was not right, not fair and should be scrapped.

Councillor Jones stated that the service charges were wrong and hitting the wrong people. Councillor Jones then gave Members a brief overview of the expenditure of an elderly resident living in sheltered housing.

At 0.28am, Councillor Gledhill, called a Point of Order on personal explanation or clarification. Councillor Gledhill stated he wanted to make clear that the charges were only on the services that were used which would in turn free up money that could be put back into other services.

Councillor B Rice thanked Members for their support and was disappointed in the Leader's approach and was not becoming behaviour of a Leader of a Council. That Councillor Gledhill should now do the right thing and scrap the service charges. Councillor B Rice spoke on behalf of the residents that Councillor Gledhill should now take full responsibility

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Following a unanimous vote in favour, the Mayor declared the Motion carried.

**The meeting finished at 0.31 am on Thursday 28 September.**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

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## Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 27 September 2017

### **Item 6 – Questions from Members of the Public.**

6 questions were submitted from members of the public.

#### **1. From Mr Atkins to Councillor Gledhill**

Can the Leader of the Council tell me if Council residents are liable for the upkeep and maintenance of the water tanks that are in their property?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Mr Atkins for your question. No, as the landlord, the Council is responsible for maintaining these types of installations. Inspections of water tanks are included where appropriate and the gas safety inspections which are carried out at all properties, at the mandatory year point. Full contemporaneous records of these inspections are kept, including an inspection record which is signed by the tenant to confirm that the inspection took place,

In the event of any failure to a tank or its component parts the Council is responsible for responding through its responsive repairs contractor. Tenants are not charged for these repairs, which fall with our obligations as a landlord. That also extends to the inspections.

Should a fault occur with the system, the Council would only be at fault as a landlord if it had notice of a defect and failed to undertake repairs where necessary, i.e. knew that there was a necessary problem and neglected to fix it. This is covered under case law which is O' Brien vs Robinson which states 'when a latent defect i.e. one that is not evident when it occurs and arises in a demised premise, tenant's home, the Council will not be held liable as they have not received notice'. This relates to where a ceiling fell in and the landlord could not be held responsible. This is why we strongly suggest residents have contents insurance in the event of such a problem.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Mr Atkins, do you have a supplementary question?

**Mr Atkins**

In a fashion I did but since my problem was rectified, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Councillor Gledhill, Councillor Baldwin and David Lawson for their time.

## **2. From Mr Perrin to Councillor Gledhill**

Councillor Gledhill, in a letter signed by you, dated 25 August 2017, you notify me, and other Council Tenants, that Thurrock Council has made the decision that from 2 October 2017 service charges will be introduced for those tenants receiving each service. One of the four services you will be charging me for is an item titled "Grounds Maintenance" at £5.00 per week. Councillor Gledhill can you please tell me what weekly "grounds maintenance" the Council will be carrying out on my premises which justifies such a charge?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Mr Perrin. As I already stated Mr Perrin, obviously there is a temporary suspension to this charge whilst it's being re-reviewed. However, I have been provided with your address and the location of your property. There are grassed areas in the area immediately opposite your property which are on housing land, and are maintained as part of the grounds maintenance service. This has been confirmed with visits to the property in question and confirmation of ownership of the land through the Council's GSI mapping system.

As I've stated in previous press releases and at Cabinet, this charge does encompass a number of different things, it's not just grass cutting. It also covers for tree maintenance, repairs to footpaths, hardened areas and indeed, play areas. On this basis, you have been chosen among the tenants liable to pay the charge as outlined.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Mr Perrin, do you have a supplementary question?

**Mr Perrin**

Councillor Gledhill, for 36 years, I have been the tenant of my council home which is a ground floor maisonette with an approximate 30sq yard front garden. During that time, the council has never cut the grass or maintained my front or back gardens. On the contrary, the council has specifically held me, not the upstairs tenant, solely responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of both gardens as part of my tenancy agreement. Does the council intend to impose a charge of £5 per week on both the ground floor and upstairs tenant, amounting to a charge of £260 per tenant, per year, totalling £520 per year for cutting the grass on a small patch of garden?

There are 12 such front gardens in a row of maisonettes in my street, for which you intend to charge the 24 tenants £5 per week for ground maintenance, a total of £6240 per year, as Delboy would say to Rodney,

“We’re on a nice little earner here”. I call it extortion. Can you assure me and all the other council tenants in Thurrock that they will only be charged for services actually received and if they cut and maintain the garden themselves, they will not be charged for the privilege?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Mr Perrin. I think it’s been made clear time and time again, this is not about cutting what your tenancy requires you to cut. This is about the communal gardens outside your front/back garden. There is a total of 50 hectares of green space, there are 14 play parks, there are 30 hectares of hard standing and 20 hectares of path, 2000 trees. Plus various other areas that we go through in the year. This is what you, in your own words, tenants will be paying for. It’s not for cutting grass in your front garden, that’s your responsibility. So thank you for reiterating what we are saying, this is about tenants paying for services that they will receive. Thank you.

**3. From Mr Akhigbe to Councillor Gledhill**

Which areas in my ward, Little Thurrock, have an PSPO in force, if any, and which such zones have CCTV for enforcement and are there any pending PSPOs for the area?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) were introduced by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014, giving local authorities powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) related activities in specific areas. They last for up to three years, but can be extended, if justified. Enforcement is by police officers and authorised persons, including some Council Officers.

There are currently two PSPOs in Thurrock covering Grays town centre and the area near the Lakeside shopping centre. There are two Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) in the Little Thurrock Rectory, which is also the ward I represent, covering Delafield Park and the Little Thurrock Village Green. These are in the process of being made into PSPOs in the sense that signage is audited to make them very clear.

With regard to CCTV coverage, I will not divulge the areas covered by CCTV as that gives those either looking to breach the PSPOs or commit other crimes with the advantage of knowing where and where not to go to avoid detection. But beyond this, I’ve taken up the issue of street drinkers, for instance, using the bench on the Village Green and quite frankly, somewhat objectionable in their language when challenged by myself and the other residents. I’ve taken this up to the police recently and in the past. You may be aware that we are currently procuring new enforcement officers and looking at

how and what we can enforce as a council to help make Thurrock a borough that works for everyone and not just limited to the town centres. I would also reiterate that at 10 Downing Street, I took this up with the Police & Crime Commissioner, not just for Little Thurrock. There are other DDPOs that are now PSPOs across the borough which also need policing as well as the ones in the town centre.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Mr Akhigbe, do you have a supplementary question?

**Mr Akhigbe**

Thank you very much for your answer. I guess the next question will be if you had the number of notices that have been served on the existing PSPOs in Little Thurrock Rectory?

**Councillor Gledhill**

To the best of my knowledge, it is zero. I'm not particularly impressed with this amount, indeed residents regularly contact me to say we got the same people back on the benches. I've gone to the benches myself and have asked them to move along. I've asked the police to come along and enforce it. They're a little bit unsure as to whether the DDPO has changed to a PSPO and I made clear that it was, the signage is a little bit ambiguous at the moment which needs to be changed. The very second it is changed, I will again be asking the police to be paying special attention, not only to the Village Green but to the PSPO on Delafield Park. I do apologise, also forgot to mention, you asked where there are other PSPOs planned for Little Thurrock. We do need to have evidence of where ASB is happening, it needs to be documented, needs to be regular. Once we have that, then we can apply for the PSPO. If that's happening and not reported to me, which shall be very, very rare, then please come and see me and we can discuss this.

**4. From Mr Kankiya to Councillor Gledhill**

As a resident in South Chafford, one of the biggest issues facing residents in the area is the constant sound of the cruisers in the lakeside area which has a detrimental effect to residents living nearby. My question is what has happened to the PSPO that was meant to be in the area and would the council consider implementing speed restrictions to deter these cruisers from continuing to behave this way?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Mr Kankiya. The issue of car cruisers and disruption to local residents has been the subject of extensive consultation with Highways England, who have responsibility for the A126 Dumbbell Roundabouts, which is where a lot of this activity is taking place. Police have been negotiating with their representatives and recent discussions have suggested that these roundabouts will be blocked off by Highways England in the foreseeable future, to prevent the car cruisers using them for doughnuts and all the other ASBs they commit there.

That said the PSPO is indeed still in force there, latest figures confirm that there were 56 complaints of ASB incidents in 2016, that was a reduction from the 105 incidents recorded in 2015. 99 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued in 2016, as well as 8 arrests made and 11 PSPO tickets issued. Even so the noise disruption to residents is a very serious matter, as is the very serious threat of major injury to the participants and spectators and indeed, anyone travelling there. It is therefore to be hoped that Highways England do make the necessary changes to the road layout to block this as soon as possible. I know officers are in discussions with them regularly about this.

However, your suggestion on speed restriction is noted but it must be remembered that things like speed bumps are in place 24/7 and affect the millions of legitimate road users that use and visit lakeside each year. Whilst there are times that speed humps would make little difference to the speed of vehicles travelling to and from Lakeside, especially at Christmas, they are unlikely to be the best solution. But of course there are other solutions. The Council is considering the use of average speed cameras in the area which will form part of a bid to Government for road safety funding for the A126, a road that has already been identified by Government as a road with a high risk of collision.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Mr Kankiya, do you have a supplementary question?

### **Mr Kankiya**

Thank you. So in relation to the average speed cameras that you're talking about, Councillor, when are these likely to be implemented? Because as I said, as a resident in the area, this is something of great concern and I've only lived in South Chafford for about 3 years now but I understand that this is an issue that has been going on for well over a decade and anything that could be welcomed would be really helpful. Thank you.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

You're quite right. This has been going on for far too long. Obviously the PSPO has made a bit of a difference but as with any enforcement action, unless it is enforced and in this case, it would be the police enforcing it because it's a moving traffic offence, then it does go a little by the wayside. The noise is quite annoying, I have friends who live in Chafford, I've been with

them and you can hear the noise, it's terrible. As I said, the bid will go in and by the time the bid comes back, we will look to put them in as soon as we possibly can. However, more importantly, the Highways England, our officers and the police are in regular discussions to very quickly, hopefully in the next couple of weeks, put in the barriers of the Dumbbell roundabout to help stop the issues there. It's not to say it won't push it to somewhere else but it's certainly a start. I have spoken to the local police commander on this, this week, he's fully aware of it and will hopefully be allocating time for his officers to enforce on that. Thank you.

**5. From Mr Towlson to Councillor B. Little**

In light of a question on Low Emission Zones submitted to Full Council in September 2016, Can the Portfolio Holder for Transport make a full statement as what actions are being undertaken to reduce all forms of Pollution, including Pollution from Traffic?

**Mayor**

Councillor B. Little

**Councillor B. Little**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Mr Towlson for your question. The Air Quality and Health Strategy were approved at Cabinet in December 2016, which contained an action plan of initiatives which will help improve air quality in the Borough. The strategy can be found on the Council's website for further information.

Since then, the actions set out in Section 4.2 of the report have been progressed. A programme of weight restrictions and advisory HGV routing has been progressed across the borough. Following various bilateral initiatives with private sector and police partners, the Council is re-launching the Freight Quality Partnership in October, with particular emphasis on encouraging more responsible behaviours from HGV drivers in avoiding, where possible, residential areas. Variable message signs to advise traffic of network problems and advise on alternative routes have been installed. On the 15th June, the Council ran a pilot programme to tackle idling outside of schools which was attended by myself, together with the Public Health, Strategic Transport and Road Safety Teams. The scheme engaged with two schools, Purfleet Primary and Woodside Academy. The purpose of this project is to engage with parents who leave their cars running outside the school gates at pick up and drop off and make them aware of the impact on the health and children and the environment.

As part of Thurrock's preparation for engagement with Highways England on Lower Thames Crossing, the Council is currently developing a position statement on all environmental pollution in Thurrock. A more detailed update on air quality management will be presented to CGS O&S at their October meeting.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Mr Towlson, do you have a supplementary question?

**Mr Towlson**

Thank you Mr Little. My supplementary question is, I feel most of Thurrock's residents want Thurrock to be seen as a forward thinking and progressive council. What are the future plans and actions to reduce and, possibly eliminate traffic pollution as large areas of green belt land may be lost to roads, homes and businesses etc?

**Councillor B. Little**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Mr Towlson for your supplementary question. Thurrock has been in dialogue with Transport for London (TFL) for the last year regarding the operation of the existing low emission zone and their plans to roll out ultra-low emission zones by 2020. We are keen to learn from London's experience but we're very mindful that Thurrock has a very different pattern of trip making and vehicle usage. Rolling out a London style low emission zone in Thurrock is not a viable option at present time. Additionally, Thurrock's transport strategy sets the Council's commitment to encouraging low emission transport, including working with partners to deliver charging points for electric vehicles. Currently in Thurrock, we have charging points in motor services, Ikea and Lakeside along with council owned facilities, civic offices, Ground Road, Argent Street and Canterbury Parade. A recent bid to central government for national productivity investment funding includes and asks for funding for future sites.

**6. From Mrs Imamzade to Councillor Gledhill**

In a street with 1 council owned, 1 private rented and 1 privately owned property how is it fair that a grass verge that is open to public use and spans the full length of all properties should suddenly become the responsibility of one tenant to pay for its up keep. How is that a fair and just charge?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Mrs Imamzade for your question. As you are aware, obviously I have suspended the implementation of this charge pending further review.

However, I must make clear, not only for this question but indeed, for shouts from the audience, there are two types of land in Thurrock that the council is responsible for. That's the General Fund land, which is covered by the council

tax that you pay and there is Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land. The upkeep of this is only paid for by council tenants, it's not paid for by everybody else. Every elected Member in this chamber is aware of this and every elected Member should be making clear to residents the difference. However, as mentioned, the cost of the grounds maintenance service is currently being met by using part of the rent paid by all tenants, including those who do not live near any HRA maintained areas. The service charge was set to enable the cost of the service to be met from those tenants who were deemed as receiving the service freeing up money to be spent on repairs and improvements to our housing stock.

We must remember that the charge is not just for cutting the verge outside of a particular property, irrespective of who lives there and around, but it's also as mentioned, the cost of cutting the 50 hectares of grass, fixing 30 hectares of hard standing, 20 hectares of paths and 14 play parks that the HRA has to cover the cost of.

As I made clear yesterday there were far too many anomalies after a review, not only from different properties but from different areas. Information I received yesterday and from visiting some of the sites across the borough, talking to residents and other councillors I felt there were too many questions unanswered so have as mentioned suspended the charge pending further scrutiny.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Mrs Imamzade, do you have a supplementary question?

### **Mrs Imamzade**

Mr Gledhill, I'll put it to you, that teams around you knew exactly what you were doing when you put this tax forward. I put it to you that you couldn't be trusted to get this right the last two times that this went to scrutiny so how and why should we believe you now? Councillor Gledhill, the public request that this is scrapped and as you stated in the previous meeting, these meetings are about what the public want.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. First of all, when something goes to scrutiny, it's for the scrutiny committee to scrutinise the information in front of them, to form an opinion, to bring that opinion to Cabinet and for Cabinet to take consideration of that and other matters. Regrettably, on the two occasions, it did go through scrutiny, the main responses were about the sheltered housing accommodation charges. Very little was said with the exception of one Member, thank you Councillor Potheary and I will praise you again later for this, in relation to other service charges. Indeed, the Chair of that committee mentioned 30 times the £15 charge to sheltered housing but only mentioned 27 words in two meetings in relation to this charge. That is not scrutiny, that



does not help us make the decision. We now have a much better Chair for scrutiny in my opinion. I spoke with him at length yesterday and the day before, we're both of the same opinion. It will eventually go to scrutiny through the proper democratic process. It will then come back to us after the Chair has decided what to do. When it comes back to us, Cabinet will then make a decision based on the good scrutiny done this time I would hope and any further information that becomes available between now and then.

### **Item 13 – Questions from Members**

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 14 questions had been received to the Leader of the Council and 8 questions had been received to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee had been received.

### **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

#### **1. From Councillor Jones to Councillor Gledhill**

Would the Leader explain to Members and the residents of Thurrock what measures are this Conservative administration putting into place to combat the rising crime rates and ASB in the Borough.

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Jones. My first part of this statement will be no doubt shocking to you as it was to me when I found this out.

Apparently, the number of reported cases of ASB to the Police fell during the first quarter, by 5.8%. I too laughed but remember this is reported cases. The Council has an ASB Team within the Housing service that deals with cases involving tenants. These and all other cases are reviewed in fortnightly geographically based Locality Action Groups, attended by Council officers, police, private housing associations and other interested parties.

Currently, two of the major issues in which the Council is engaged with Essex Police include the actions with Highways England to address the car cruiser issues at Lakeside as I previously outlined in questions from members of the public. Regular operations as I outlined in my statement earlier in relation to the PSPO in Grays which should result in a number of street drinkers not being able to return for 48 hours. I'm talking to the local commander who believes that there has been a slight increase in the number of ASB reports in the past couple of weeks. It's down to the number of people reporting the street drinkers. We are carrying on with these operations, I won't say when they are happening or where they will be happening but trust me, they will continue.

35 fixed penalty notices issued to persons who littered, totalling £2,800 of fines, as well as the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices. Work is also in hand to use robustly other legal measures to reduce various nuisances. Use of communications, via social media to demonstrate successful legal action is also sending a clear message that we have a zero tolerance policy on things such as littering.

The service is currently dealing with some complaints from Stanford and Corringham residents about youth nuisance in the Town Centre and Hardy Park. The ASB Team and Essex Police are co-ordinating one response aimed at reducing disorder within a small identified cohort of young people. This includes but is not limited to joint out-of-hours patrols, referrals to the Youth Offending Team and/or Children's Services where appropriate, warning letters to parents and guardians, and multi-agency meetings at local secondary schools. The police are also leading on intelligence-gathering for the consideration of disruption and enforcement action if necessary. Only 9 formal reports of ASB in this area were recorded between April and August 2017. This doesn't bear any resemblance to what I'm seeing on Facebook social media and indeed, I'm sure what you're seeing through your workload. We are aware of residents' concerns however, and we are trying to resolve this through working with the police.

Across the borough as a whole there have been 112 ASB incidents reported to the Council from April to August this year – this compares to 135 over the same period in 2016. Again, please, if you feel free to laugh, this is a reduction of 17% on reported incidents.

In the same period our CCTV service has provided a total of 286 packages to the Police and the Council's Tenancy Services teams, either in response to a request for footage relating to a known incident or pro-actively when new incidents are picked up when footage is being reviewed. In 58 cases to date formal enforcement action has been taken by the Police following the provision of such footage.

For Council accommodation the Housing service takes its own enforcement action where it appears clear that serious breaches of tenancy have occurred – formal action has been taken in 21 such cases in the first five months of this year. As the Courts are reluctant to evict social housing tenants that are found guilty of this, we have to place a strong focus on informally resolving low-level ASB through the use of warning letters, mediation and intensive housing management. Since April a total of 147 reported cases have been successfully resolved through this approach. I think that shows the housing service and the police working with the Council, we are doing something. I leave open to interpretation, the number of reported ASBs.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Jones, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Jones**

Thanks very much Leader. It seems to be a lot of things going on but the one thing I think that's not going on is police on the streets. The way you about how crimes are down, that's probably because the 101 number as we said before, we stated many, many times, is not fit for purpose. So people just give up, they don't bother. Now, in April this year, a petition was run in my area, Stanford and Corringham, and in a two week period, there were 2300 signatures for that petition. That was followed by a public meeting in which the PCC attended a packed hall and basically, the theme that night was that the residents do not feel safe on our streets. Now, I went to a memorial on Sunday before, with the Mayor, where the IRF laid wreaths. It was a fantastic event but you know what let it down? Lack of police, there was anti-social behaviour, there were drunks all around. This was in front of a police station, there's no police there, not even to come out to lay a wreath or stop the traffic. When are the residents of Thurrock going to get what they pay for in their council tax? And that's a police force capable of tackling these crime rates.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mayor and thank you Councillor Jones for your supplementary question. I couldn't agree more. The reason I mentioned the reported crimes time and time again, I was hoping you would mention the appalling 101 service that is currently being supplied by Essex Police. This is quite clear, I know the Chief Executive, I know I have, I know Councillor Cherry, who is not here this evening and a number of other elected Members have sat on the phone for 20, 30, 40 minutes to get through. By which time, if the ASB is not over, it's probably developed into something else. It is absolutely dreadful. I did speak to the PCC as said, last week, and he again reassured me this service is being reviewed. There's a new police officer in charge of this particular service. Of course, I can't respond on behalf of Roger Hirst, that's his role. It's his role to be held accountable for the police service. It is atrocious that a service where we are remembering our fallen and those that fought for this country so that people could have a good, honest democratic life is being abused by people who really don't know a simple right and wrong. If you want a drink, stay at home, drink reasonably, don't ruin it for everyone else. Yes, more needs to be done, I'm really surprised and shocked more hasn't been done in Stanford and Corringham in relation to the issues there. Again, when I speak to the PCC, as I do regularly, I will make it clear to him, our disgust at how things are not changing. ASB is number two on his crime directive, it doesn't appear that is happening. Thank you.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Jones, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

### **Councillor Jones**

Thank you Mayor. Thank you Leader for your in-depth reply. You know, I think as I said before, it boils down to cuts. The Tory government cut 50 out of 80 police stations in Essex, they cut 850 police and now we're seeing what this causes. The ASB and all what's going on. Now, what I urge you to do, and this is as a Conservative administration, is to talk to your two Conservative MPs, to go to your government and say, 'Do you know what, we need something on the streets, so our residents feel safe'. That's what I'm asking, thank you.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mayor and thank you Councillor Jones for your second supplementary. It needs to be clear, the government last year, did not cut the amount of money going to the police service. This does not mean in real terms or any other term that anyone wants to play politics with, doesn't mean that there is less money being spent on those on the streets. You've just said yourself, couldn't believe the terrible, appalling actions outside the police station. Police stations do not cut crime, police officers on the street cut crime. I agree with you 100% and as a former special constable, you can never have enough police officers on the street. So for someone from the City of London, where there are 1000 police officers per square mile, effectively, we could have (*interruption in middle of sentence*). As I was saying, we could have one person on the end of every corner of every street. Guess what, we still had the highest number of assaults against the person out of one police station, not just in London, but the whole of the country. So it's not just about police out on the streets, it's about people behaving themselves. Yes, I will speak to the Police & Crime Commissioner, yes I will speak to both our MPs to see what can be done, to see if anymore money can come in. but I am also and I shall make this very clear right now, I am also supporting Councillor Barbara Rice's motion later on, that the police service for Thurrock and the amount of police officers here need to be reviewed as a matter of urgency. Thank you.

### **2. From Councillor G Rice to Councillor Gledhill**

Please will the Leader of the Council confirm that every Council resident living outside a grass verge will be charged £5 per week for grass cutting, does this mean a weekly cut will take place?

### **Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Rice for your question. I am surprised that, you, of all councillors are asking any questions in relation to the charges that, as I have already announced, am suspending. You were the chair of the overview and scrutiny committee that looked at these proposals twice and at those meeting you didn't ask one question in relation to the maintenance charge. Had it not been for Councillor Potheary, don't worry

Councillor Potheary, I shall mention you again later, this pretty much would not have been mentioned. That is a failure of you as a Chair of overview and scrutiny. That is terrible, something you should be ashamed of (*brief disruption*).

Furthermore, your question asks “every council resident living outside a grass verge will be charged £5 per week for grass cutting and will a weekly cut take place?” I made very clear earlier and a Councillor, someone who regularly pontificates about being a Councillor way back in 1847 or whatever it was, knows the difference between Housing Revenue Account and General Fund. We are not charging every council resident, we are, sorry, we were to charge some council tenants. I’m sorry, if you do not know the difference between council tenant and council resident, perhaps you should not stand for election again. So with your question being so inaccurate, I’m afraid the answer is a clear no.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Rice, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Rice**

I am surprised with your answer Councillor Gledhill, but perhaps you can tell me and the public tonight, now let’s have some facts on the table. There are 10,000 tenants in this borough, you have proposed, you can call it a grass tax, you can call it a maintenance charge, call it what you like; but if you’re going to lever this on the bulk of these tenants, can you tell me tonight, £5 per week, how many of those 10,000 tenants you’re going to charge and what will you raise in collection of that? How many millions of pounds? You tell me and forget about the party politics nonsense. Just tell the people and tell us.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Rice. It’s quite often I’m shocked at what you’re saying so I won’t carry that to heart. However, this is not about party politics, these questions you are asking, are too little, too late. You had the opportunity in December and February. Had it not been for Councillor Potheary, guess what, this wouldn’t have been raised. As I mentioned earlier, you mentioned £15 weekly charge for sheltered housing 30 times. 27 words out of two meetings about the other charges. You should be ashamed of yourself. However, to your question, 6320 odd properties would be liable as it were, for the maintenance charge. This would equate to somewhere in region of £1,000,604. This is the cost that the HRA currently uses to maintain, as I said, the 50 hectares of grassland, the 14 play parks, the 2000 trees, flowers and hedgerows, 30 hectares of hard surfaces, 13 hectares of footpaths as I’ve already laid out.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Rice, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Rice**

Now, you talk about Essex, Councillor, do you think it's appropriate for you to telephone the lead petitioner last night and talk about this? Do you think it's ethical to do that? And to get, before you answer, a member of staff to dig her telephone number out so you can contact her. Do you think that's ethical?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. It's not normal I get a dull roar before I stand up, but thank you very much. Yes, yes I do and the reason is, Councillor Rice, rather than sit in the meeting and pontificating, rather than sitting in an ivory tower somewhere and saying, 'We're going to do this, we're not going to do that, look at how popular we are. Oh guess what, it's all the government's fault all this terrible Tory cut etc.', I'll get on and do the job. Yes it was right, I did not have Mrs Imamzade's number at all. I asked Officers, Officers did the right thing. They contacted Mrs Imamzade and asked her if she was ok with this. She could have refused, she didn't. I spent 30 minutes speaking to Mrs Imamzade, it was very informative. Not only about what is happening tonight but about her past and what has happened there. I'm not going to discuss it but it was very interesting and I cannot wait to speak to her again because unlike you and the people at this side, who only talk to people if there's a vote involved, I want to talk to people when there are problems to be resolved. Thank you Mr Mayor.

3. **From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill**

To date how much has the 1% cut in social rents cost Thurrock Council and how much is it estimated to cost in total by 2020?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Spillman for your question. The loss in projected income year-on-year to the Housing Revenue Account as a result of the reduction is estimated as follows;

2016-17 £460,000  
2017-18 £450,000  
2018-19 £441,000  
2019-20 £431,000

An estimated total over four years - £1,780,000.

## **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Spillman, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

## **Councillor Spillman**

Can you agree that this Conservative government policy has been disastrous for the Council's finances? And it has placed the delivery of basic housing functions in jeopardy?

## **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Spillman for your question. If we look at the previous administration and what they've put, they've put a plan in place that was relied year on year for above inflation, rent increases. The government had to look, not only at the purse within Thurrock, but at the purse across the whole nation. I would only assume that reducing the council rents by 1%, means that the government can calculate exactly how much less housing benefit will be paid over those four years. Thereby, reducing the amount of money this council has to borrow to make ends meet. Don't forget, as mentioned by Councillor Hebb earlier, £1 for every four borrowed. Absolutely appalling situation to be in, the government had to make difficult decisions. Has it had an impact on Thurrock? Yes, it has. Are we trying to address that? Yes, we are.

## **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Spillman, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

## **Councillor Spillman**

When your Party Leader became Prime Minister, she stood on the steps of Downing Street and promised to lead a government that would look after the 'just about managing'. Are you not slightly embarrassed at having to resort to stealth grass tax, specifically targeted at the 'just about managing' in order to fill the black hole created by your government's disastrous policies?

## **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Spillman. Obviously, it's down to local authorities to set the amounts of which people can earn before they're entitled to some form of social housing. That is, as you're fully aware, currently under review. Building more council house, yes, will make more available. Have we been targeting a stealth tax? Now, let me think, a stealth tax, let's look at the word stealth. Something that is stealthy, something that flies under the radar, something that nobody sees. If nobody sees it, we got a whole public area, full of people who have seen it. We've got elected Members here that have seen it. Ok, we got a former Chair of Overview and Scrutiny who kind of missed it.

But we do have everybody fully aware. Now what were they aware of before? Were they aware of the £1.6 million pounds being taken out of their rent to ensure that the grounds were maintained or pay for the four million kilowatt hours of electricity that were being used communally? Or indeed, any of the other services which we are paying? Would that have been fair? Would people have known? No, that was the stealth tax. That's what we're getting rid of and that's what, hopefully as we go through this review, a fairer outcome as you and I discussed yesterday.

**1hr 56mins**

**4. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill**

A year ago I questioned the portfolio holder on whether he believed enough new dwellings were likely to be built to meet the needs of Thurrock's growing population. After 15 months of this Conservative administration what action has been taken to try to improve the situation and has this action been successful?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Obviously, I've still kept one bricklayer out of doing his job by keeping him here. The overwhelming majority of new homes that are built in Thurrock are built by private house builders. In the year to April 2017, 603 net additional dwellings have been built in the borough, enabled by decisions at Planning Committee. Looking ahead the local plan will set the framework for future growth and we will receive the local plan issues and options report at our next meeting in October.

The HRA funded housing schemes will be on site this financial year at Calcutta Road Tilbury, Claudian Way Chadwell and Topps clubs in Grays delivering 112 new affordable homes within the housing system.

Further HRA developments require the HRA debt cap to be lifted and I will this week be writing to Government to make that case. The Council's regeneration company has now completed its first scheme of 128 homes at St Chads, and looking at second and third sites forward in the next 6 - 12 months at Belmont Road Grays and the Culver Centre in South Ockendon.

A recent analysis based on information from over 70 boroughs indicates that the average number of new Council homes being delivered nationally is around only 20 per year per authority. We want to continue exceeding this figure, but the current financial envelope of the HRA makes this very difficult. The overall cost of the 117 new homes at Calcutta Road, Claudian Way and Topps Club is £26.5 million.



As part of our bid for additional infrastructure funding to support sustainable housing development in the borough we are making the case straight to government that now is the time to consider some relaxation of the HRA borrowing limit in Thurrock to enable us to deliver the affordable homes we need. I will be pointing out in my letter that in Thurrock we have already used £7.3 million from Right to Buy receipts to re-invest in the current new build programme. Had we not, we would have been fined heavily by government and it's shame on the previous administration for holding that money back that would have cost a tenant here and everywhere in Thurrock significant amounts of money.

I will also refer in my letter to the fact that Thurrock is one of only a small number of boroughs who have made full use of our current borrowing limit – and yes, I will refer to the fact that we have extended service charges as part of further demonstrating that we are a prudent Council and landlord in the context of asking for more financial flexibility. I am asking for an increase in our borrowing limit to enable us to deliver around 500 more affordable homes. I will not say how much that is but it is a lot less than the £131m plus land costs the previous administration would have been happy spending to try and deliver the same outcome. An appalling amount of money.

We also recognise that to contain the cost of these new homes and to speed up their delivery we need to be looking at non-traditional methods of construction. We are actively looking for partners to deliver modular housing in Thurrock, which can minimise the disruption of development and provide energy-efficient homes and well-maintained for the future. Indeed, last week, I attended one of these modular homes companies and was very, very impressed. They can put these homes together at a rate of nearly four a day, something that we desperately need in this borough.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Spillman, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Spillman**

Thank you for that answer. As you know, I'm an advocate of the borrowing, we've got to do it, it's the only way forward. But can I ask, how many new council developments are being put forward by this leader's administration?

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Again, I'm one of these people that does not go with this aim, fire and hopefully it works. I'm one of these who make sure we've got the money, that we put all the plans together and they are delivered where they need to be delivered. Not delivered after getting plan permission in 2030 costing nearly £425,000 to build each property, delivered three to four years later. Once the money is there with the plans we have, we will be happy to announce where these extra homes will be going.

## **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Spillman, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

## **Councillor Spillman**

We've got a meeting on Monday about the local plan and we've got an Officer coming into to our meeting to talk about all these wonderful plans and I know that Gary is beavering away trying to get it through. The thing is, the local plan that you're going to put to us, on current building rates, is total fantasy. Anything in that document is not even worth reading, the building plans in that document. Because there's no indication in the market, no indication of government funding that you're going to be able to get anywhere near to the figures that you're putting forward so are you not concerned that this borough is going to become only middle class people who can afford to live?

## **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, Councillor Spillman. I'm not going to steal the thunder of Officers when they come to see you on Monday or indeed if Councillor Coxshall is there as well. The plan is actually a very good one, I support it as does the rest of my group and hopefully the rest of the Chamber will do. Is there flexibility within the market? Unfortunately, you can't ask me, you got to build, you got to build, if you then say, well there's no flexibility in the market in which to do so. If we get the master plan approved and it gets through, there is money that comes with that which then enables infrastructure. That infrastructure then makes it more affordable for developers to come to Thurrock to be able to build. When they build, because there isn't infrastructure money they're going to need to add to the cost of each house, they can then build cheaper which then means, they can start delivering as they should do, in my personal opinion, the full 30% at least, affordable housing that should happen with every application. We can't do that, as you rightly said without money, the money will be there if the plan is approved. Thank you.

### **5. From Councillor Jones to Councillor Gledhill**

Does the Portfolio Holder for Housing believe that tenants in general needs Council properties, who will soon be liable to pay a service charge were adequately consulted?

## **Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

## **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Jones. I will focus on your consultation question rather than reiterate temporarily halting of the ground maintenance charge.

The extension of service charges was first proposed in a report to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December, and was the subject of a long discussion at that meeting, The Committee asked for the sheltered housing charges to be re-considered, and another report was taken to the Committee in February. At that second meeting officers outlined in detail the consultation for all tenants which was carried out. These were public meetings with the documents readily available online. The Council's website was updated to include details of the proposed changes and a link to a dedicated consultation portal which tenants could use to respond to the proposals.

However, as I have raised a number of times before tonight, not every resident is glued to the council website or a lot of them cannot access the internet. So In addition to this, every tenant who was potentially liable for the charges was written to individually, with a letter explaining the changes and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document explaining in clear and simple terms what the extension of the charges would mean. For example part of the document runs as follows:

Who is affected? As a question.

All tenants living in flats or houses who receive one or more of the above services.

Question: If I live in a house, will I still be paying service charges?

You will not be charged for lift maintenance, heating and lighting of communal areas or secure door entry if you do not receive these services. You may have to pay a grounds maintenance service charge if the Council is providing this service close to your property'.

A full consultation feedback report capturing all the responses was submitted to Cabinet in July and taken into account in making the final decision.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Jones, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Jones**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Maybe, Leader, I suggest we have the Council officials, I mean the Housing Officers and that, because a lot of the residents say they were confused with some of this stuff as they are with a lot of council stuff. So this is how the residents see it, they see they had a 1% reduction which amounted into pennies per week for them so now that causes a shortfall in the HRA as we all know. So to counteract these measures, this Conservative administration concocts something else up that costs them £5 per week. How is that fair on these residents?

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Jones for your question. Obviously, you are quite right, some residents are confused when they receive stuff from the Council and there are quite clear numbers on there for them to contact to discuss this. They can also contact their elected Members. I know there are some that did and that came out in some of the consultation through overview and scrutiny, through the one Member that mentioned it, Councillor Potheary. When it comes to the pennies as you mentioned, by the end of the 1% reduction it's continually contributed to, the amount of rent reduction would be £11.60 a week on average. The maximum you would be charged, assuming, that the same charge was applied for grounds maintenance would be somewhere in the region of £7.65 I believe. So it would still be a difference. So whilst you say there are pennies now, over the lifetime of this, the residents would end up paying less in rent than they would in the increase of service charges.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Jones, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

### **Councillor Jones**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Leader. The residents don't see it like this, whatever way you put it, they just see it as a stealth rent rise. It's as simple as that, that's what they say to us. Now, who would you say is responsible for this fiasco? Because there's a lot of rumours going around that, who do we actually blame at the door? (*Disruption from the Members*). Gerard (Councillor Rice), will you answer?

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Jones and thank you the entire Labour group for taking the words right out of my mouth. However, I was not going to blame Councillor Rice for this at all. Or shall I? I'm not, I'm a man of principles, I can't blame him for everything as much as I'd like to. However, there is no one to blame for this. This is unpicking a number of years where every other local authority went down the route with a sight to charge, service charges from various services that residents get and that came out from part of the consultation and indeed, a number of the reports. I'm not going to name all of those that we found but it was a significant number. Pretty much all of those along the Thames corridor and into London. So who is to blame? Well, when people come out with the words 'stealth tax', 'grass tax', 'tenants tax', etc, when they know full well, it is not. When they know full well, one account pays for this and that is the only account tenants pay into, I would say it is them to blame. Thank you Mr Mayor.

## **6. From Councillor Allen to Councillor Gledhill**

Can Council explain why so many residents in general needs housing that are without any communal areas are receiving letters telling them they need to pay a service charge?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

The letters sent to each tenant reflect the individual services they are receiving. In blocks with communal hallways a charge is being applied for heating and lighting these areas.

Where tenants in all types of general needs properties – including flats, houses and bungalows – are receiving a grounds maintenance services for the amenities near their properties, the standard grounds maintenance charge was also being applied. I use the term ‘was’ because as you know, as I repeatedly said this evening, we are suspending that pending proper overview and scrutiny. All this was derived from officers in a detailed exercise using maps showing all of the areas maintained under the service specification and information from the housing database. Clearly this wasn’t enough and as I have said the grounds maintenance charge has been suspended pending further scrutiny.

Up until yesterday, where a tenant makes clear they do not believe they should be subject to a particular charge, the service was re-visiting the decision to include them in the ongoing decision by going out to the property concerned and re-assessing the situation. Basically, an appeal. In a small number of cases this has led to an exemption – in most cases tenants have received a response confirming the charge and giving more details of how and why they were made liable to the grounds maintenance service charges.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Allen, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Allen**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Gledhill. Like many colleagues, I have looked through the committee reports and minutes but can see no reference to general needs housing tenants receiving such charges. How can such a controversial policy have ever seen the light of day before going through basic scrutiny?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Allen. Everyone gets to the point of being fed up of blaming Councillor Rice, including myself. Whilst I’m not responsible for the minutes of the overview and scrutiny committee on both

times it went to them, I have got transcripts of those which I'm quite happy to share with you and indeed, any other elected Member, where it was made clear, repeatedly what this was for. Those questions were not asked with the exception of Councillor Potheary. So again, well done Councillor Potheary for raising that. It is not up to me again, to say how a scrutiny Chair conducts the scrutiny of any decisions put forward in advance. However, you would have thought the basic questions would be asked. You would have thought there would have been, when it comes to the minutes, that Chair or indeed any of the other Members, questioning it saying, 'I said this, I said that'. Unfortunately, that's not the case. Thank you.

**Mayor**

*(Suspending orders agreed from Members)*. Thank you. Councillor Allen, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Allen**

In yesterday's press release, Councillor Gledhill, you indicated that you wasn't even aware of the full scale and scope of these charges. Now, as Portfolio Holder for Housing and as Leader of the Council, are you not a little embarrassed that you voted such a controversial policy through two cabinets without understanding what you are voting for?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mayor and thank you Councillor Allen. At no point did I say that. What I said, there are a number of anomalies as we've gone through and I've found them after the decisions been made despite asking the questions beforehand. I have brought this to a shuddering halt as it should be. I've asked it to go back to scrutiny to ensure that the questions that were not asked previously have been asked. That includes, the information I only received on Monday, despite asking for it previously. Thank you.

**7. From Councillor Fish to Councillor Gledhill**

I have received many complaints from residents on Seabrooke Rise about youth nuisance. Can the Portfolio Holder tell me what steps the administration is taking to deal with this?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

The number of nuisance incidents reported to Essex Police between April and August for Grays Riverside ward was 66, an increase of 11 incidents from the same period last year. These figures include all tenures, and the ASB team is obtaining full details from the Police to focus on those relating to Council

accommodation i.e. Seabrooke Rise. As a landlord we do not currently have any open cases in the area and have received only 3 reports of ASB from our tenants over the same period.

We would encourage any residents who are encountering such issues to report them to the Anti-Social Behaviour team at the council in the first instance immediately. Or if it's urgent enough, to call 999 and to make sure the police are aware to tackle the problem appropriately.

I've also received a letter from residents on Seabrooke Rise that say that they themselves have not experienced anti-social behaviour and feel that the entire area is being demonised. I know that is not your intention, indeed, that was mentioned earlier by Councillor Kerin with the petition. I'm quite happy to discuss the issues and indeed, as Councillor Kerin pointed out earlier, the need for CCTV in a very small area. We'll look at that in association with the information we received already. Plus, any other witnesses that come forward now after this meeting. Thank you.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Fish, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Fish**

Thank you Mr Mayor and for your answer Councillor Gledhill. Yes, I agree with you that we don't want to demonise the residents of Seabrooke Rise and that the complaints I'm referring to, do mainly relate to that area. I'm pleased to hear you're looking favourably at the CCTV. But also, the residents that have spoken to me about the anti-social behaviour amongst young people, have also noted the lack of youth facilities in the area. What steps are you taking to look at that and improve that?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, thank you Councillor Fish. Earlier in the summer, unfortunately, the name of the artist escapes me, is engaging with the youths on Seabrooke Rise to develop some street art furniture. I really do hope this continues. They are very, very passionate about coming to Thurrock because of what they've seen when they've come here and this is the kind of thing we got to do. Obviously, we got the new community house open and I would ask you and the other Members of the community to look to see what services these children wish to have. There's nothing worse than supplying services to young people in what we think they are and what they need. We need to engage with them. So please feel free to do so and our ten participation officers will help to facilitate where we can.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Fish, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Fish**

No, Mr Mayor.

**8. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Gledhill**

Does the Leader agree that Thurrock Council lacks the managerial leadership to deliver big or transformational projects?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, Councillor Gerrish. Tonight, as you may have remembered, I know it's been a long meeting, we have agreed the creation of a new director for Environment and Highways. Additionally the head of paid service has made clear that there will a change in two assistant director post to help to increase capacity in the place delivery part of the council due to the significant number of big capital schemes to be delivered in the coming years, including a number of National Strategic Infrastructure Projects which are running concurrently, you've got to remember, 64 of them nationally since 2008. The announcement of Lower Thames Crossing and the work that needs to go in them to show that we are against the Lower Thames Crossing, just for clarity, Councillor Duffin. Monies awarded for Grays Underpass received in January 2017, building more enterprise units for Thurrock businesses, building more homes as mentioned by Councillor Coxshall and Councillor Spillman, through the Council's housing company, widening the A13 the Council's largest capital project, a programme of community hubs, and the fact that this administration is bringing forward ambitious and exciting plans to deliver change in Purfleet and Tilbury. All this at no extra cost to the taxpayer. So I think our actions this evening in agreeing those positions, show that now, we have the managerial capacity to deliver.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Gerrish, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Gerrish**

Thank you Mr Mayor. On the subject of leadership, does it believe that given the balanced political nature of the Council, his administration has given enough weight to the appeals of Members? Particularly on the grass tax where Members gave a very clear signal in February, in the budget setting meeting to halt those proposals.

**Councillor Gledhill**



Thank you Mr Mayor. Sorry, Councillor Rice, you know what I'm going to say. We listen, obviously, to Members, it goes to overview and scrutiny, we look at the reports that come from overview and scrutiny and we take on board the recommendations when only one Member, Councillor Potheary, mentioned these charges. When, it would appear that the whole committee wasn't even particularly bothered. In February, it was made very clear that we was discussing the HRA as it was, not with any planned service charges on them. Again, made very clear. It was made very clear on Forward Plan when we were making the decision. Were there any questions raised in relation to this? On service charges? No.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Gerrish, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

### **Councillor Gerrish**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Tonight, the Leader's blamed the implementation of the policy, presumably that's for Officers for the failure of this grass tax policy. He's blamed scrutiny for the decision. In his version of events, he seems as surprised as anyone that this seems to be actually happening. Is that what he calls leadership?

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor, Councillor Gerrish. No. I'll tell you what leadership is, it's not about making the popular decisions, it's about making the decisions we need to make to turn this Council around and make sure there is enough money to pay for services. In this circumstance, the repairs. I have made very, very clear it should not be the administration who sit as the Chairs of overview and scrutiny as it was under your administration previously. That is also leadership. Unfortunately, when that fails, it has failed on this occasion, I'm glad we now have a new Chair of overview and scrutiny for Housing and indeed other scrutiny Chairs. Again, I will maintain, leadership is not about playing to the crowd, leadership is not about making the popular decision, it's about making the tough ones to make sure we can deliver.

## **9. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Gledhill**

Does the Leader believe that the new tenant service charges makes Thurrock fairer or less fair?

### **Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Something being fairer is a subjective term Councillor Gerrish which I'm sure you're aware. Is making every council tenant pick up the bill for services they may not receive at the cost of them receiving better repairs and improvements to their home? No I don't think that was fair. Is making tenants pay for services they may benefit from to ensure that there is money freed up for those repairs and improvements? Yes, I think that is fair.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Gerrish, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Gerrish**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Can we just try and nail this point about differences between homeowners and tenant charges, and can I give the Leader a scenario? So if a tenant, subject to the grass tax, buys their standard terraced house, so not in a block of flats, would they still be liable to pay once they've bought that house?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Gerrish. Obviously, I cannot say with 100% certainty but it is normal for any house and we have a number of houses across the borough in private areas that pay service charges for private areas in which they live, that these service charges would remain. I cannot, legally unpick nearly 30 years of Right to Buy in Thurrock where previous tenants have bought their house, sold them on and then tried to apply a service charge to them. You know that, I know that, it is what it is.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Gerrish, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Gerrish**

Thank you Mr Mayor. It is what it is and what it is seems to be a pretty big mess at the moment. He's been forced to now suspend these charges and we can think many things about that but being surprised is probably not one. Does he think that he showed an error of judgement in introducing these charges despite very clear public and council opposition?

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillor Gerrish. I'm going to refer to my earlier answer in relation to leadership. We're not here to make the popular decisions, we're here to make the decisions to make sure that everybody gets the services in which they need when it comes to repairs. The way that they will need to be done is by introducing service charges for things that residents

get individually. Now, I'm sorry if people are upset by these new charges. As I've said, I'm not particularly happy with the anomalies that were brought to my attention yesterday and indeed, for those I've been speaking with residents since this became out in public and indeed, from speaking with other elected Members, not just Councillor Spillman.

10. **From Councillor Smith to Councillor Gledhill**

Would the Portfolio Holder confirm that all communal residencies in the housing stock meet the full and latest fire safety requirements, in particular fire escapes and entry and exit fire doors?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

All Council blocks with communal areas have current fire risk assessments in place. The assessments are carried out every three years on a rolling programme. A planned programme of fire safety works is delivered every year, in order to implement any recommendations from these assessments as well as other enhancements identified from within the service.

In the case of older buildings it is not always possible to retro-fit systems which meet the latest building regulations in full – this is fully understood by the Fire service and recognised in their detailed inspections (*disruption from public gallery*) and recommendations tailored to the actual situation in each building.

The means of escape in each building are situated in areas maintained as 'sterile' environments, with staff promptly removing any abandoned items which are identified or reported. Communal fire doors are replaced whenever necessary based again on our own assessments and recommendations for the Essex Fire service and the specialist contractor (previously a senior firefighter) who carries out the risk assessments.

Fire safety remains a top priority in the Housing service – we will be sending regular bulletins to all residents in our stock to maintain awareness and update them on the actions being taken to ensure their safety and security. As an example, us going the extra length of ensuring that our cladding is not that of, what we saw as the tragedy of Grenfell Tower.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Smith, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Smith**

Thank you Mr Mayor. In particular Councillor, I bring to your attention, the communal blocks in Romford Road, Aveley, where elderly residents, vulnerable residents, are concerned that some of the entrance/exit doors are not closing properly. The closing function where it should shut is failing and also the door and lock mechanisms are failing as well. This needs to be addressed and looked into if that's ok.

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Smith for bringing this to my attention. This is the first I was made aware of this and I can assure you, first thing in the morning, I shall bring this up with Officers and I will write to you and the other elected Members of Aveley with the outcome including the residents who are affected. Thank you Councillor.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Smith, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Smith**

No.

**11. From Councillor Potheary to Councillor Gledhill**

At Full Council in March I submitted a petition on behalf of the residents of Seabrooke Rise and the six Grays high rises against introducing new tenant service charges. What consideration was given to this petition by the Portfolio Holder in making the decision to push ahead with plans for new tenant service charges?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Potheary. Firstly I would like to apologise to you due to an administrative and oversight you did not receive a written response which you should have done in relation to a your petition and this should have now been corrected. Has this now been received.

**Councillor Potheary**

No

**Councillor Gledhill**

It will be received by 9am by tomorrow morning. The content of the petition was considered in the normal way and taken into account along with the responses to the consultation. The decision to proceed with the charges was taken after two scrutiny meetings, I'm not going to go over that again, however it was in which you, you alone, made your concerns for the general need of residents which were obviously listened to. Cabinet also took into account the fact that tenants on Housing Benefit will have the charges included in their rent, and any tenants in financial difficulties will receive full support from the service not necessarily financial.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Potheary, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Potheary**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you for your response Councillor Gledhill. I wish my warnings had been heeded as we would have had this pantomime tonight. However I am going to quote back to you Councillor Gledhill that something you said towards the beginning of the meeting which was a very long time ago and I think you said in response to question by Councillor Barbara Rice. You said we take a consultation response based on the outcome sort so you ignored the consultation because it didn't suit you. You ignored the petition because it didn't suit you. You ignored what I said on Housing O&S because it didn't suit you. You did it anyway. You went ahead and why because you thought Council tenants were a soft touch. I think tonight it has shown they are not. I had hoped in the wake of the Glenfill Tower fire we had stopped with tenant bashing. This is specific to my high rises in the borough does Councillor Gledhill really believe it is fair to force residents placed by the Council in a 14 storey tower block to pay for having a lift, is a lift really a privilege. Will you reconsider that charge as well.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I am not going to mention anything about pantomimes and I am sorry that I do not think our residents sorry our tenants are soft touches and indeed accusing me of tenant bashing is somewhat distasteful. Do I believe it's a luxury it's a lift I wouldn't want to live on the 12 floor and have to drag all my shopping up to those 12 or 14 floors or indeed children in prams it is part of the construction of a tower block. We have service level agreements to ensure they are repaired as soon as they break down. Should the tenants in those tower blocks be paying for them yes should the other approximately 9000 tenants across the borough should they be paying for the servicing and maintenance of the lifts through their rent no.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Potheary, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

### **Councillor Potheary**

Thank you Mr Mister. Thank you Councillor Gledhill for your response. So far this conservative council has gone after toddlers, vulnerable pensioners in need of sheltered housing and has now decided to penalise those least able to afford the extra charges and making them pay for the most basic amenities, lift and grass verges. Due bear in the mind that tenants of the high risers already pay for additional charges for their caretakers, this is on top of that as well. Does Council Gledhill agree that this is just another example of how conservatives are strong against the weak and weak against the strong.

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you for Councillor Potheary for your question. When you say attacking toddlers I assume you mean Councillor Halden fantastic change to the family centres um children's centres, sorry, which has proved we are outreaching more people getting more services for less rather than sitting in a building somewhere in the borough waiting for someone to turn up. Again it gets back to something you said here, caretaking, the residents of those flats pay extra for caretaking reason being that this is an extra service that they get direct to themselves. They also get the lift service themselves and the communal lighting in there that needs to be paid for. It should not come out of the 10,000 tenants across the whole of the borough to pay for this service. So I will reiterate it is right for these service charges to remain and are no different to any other or a majority of other local authorities in the immediate area that make these kind of charges. Will I reconsider them, no.

### **12. From Councillor Collins to Councillor Gledhill**

Is the Leader able to outline what the £2 million he expects to raise from the new service charges will be used for?

### **Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

### **Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Collins. The revenue from these charges will be used to pay for these services and these services alone. However this frees up money in the HRA to put back into our housing stock to the responsive repairs budget. This was a budget that ran at a deficit of half of million pounds last year because of the amount of work that needed to be done. However due to finance prudence across the whole of the HRA a balanced budget was delivered at the end of the financial year. Detailed budget proposals shared throughout the process and with the scrutiny committee also show that the additional revenue from the extension of charges will be used from the following. As in the money freed up by these

charges were paying from the direct. To expand the Transforming Homes programme to include the provision and upgrade of loft insulation works in the most energy inefficient properties in the stock at a cost of around over the next 3 years of about £750,000. Council also has 138 non-traditional properties which require extensive refurbishment to ensure they remain fit for purpose for another thirty years. In deed we had to spend a significant amount of money on urgent repairs recently as the cladding fell off because of poor neglect over the years. The estimated cost of these works is £2.9 million and will be spread over four years from 2017/18 to 2020/21.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Collins, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Collins**

I just want to query a figure of £11.60 savings a week was mentioned can you tell me what portion of those tenants were in work, can you tell me what proportion of the current housing tenants are currently working please.

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I will make clear the £11.60 would have been the amount of rent that would have been charged had the previous administration rent increases over the years being applied. So residents will paying £11.60 more at the end of the 1% reduction. In relation to how many residents are, sorry how many tenants, are working I don't have that exact figure however I am pleased to announce 48% only 48% of the rent received in relation to the HRA is paid for by the housing benefits scheme. So more than 50% of the rent is paid by tenants direct and doesn't come in that state of the form of housing benefit.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Collins, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Collins**

That's good hear. Can you outline what percentage of those residents could afford to rent privately to free up much needed social housing for those that cannot afford to rent in the private sector please.

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Collins for your question. There were proposals as we know for what was dubbed pay to stay for those residents that were deemed that they could afford to pay the local rentable value as we all know those in private rented accommodation know that renting

in Thurrock is exceptionally high there is now a very large section of the community that under the old scheme that have got earning a little bit too much money that need to qualify for the housing property but have absolutely nowhere near enough to be able to afford to pay for private renting. We are currently looking at that with a proposal going to the overview and scrutiny to increase the amount of money that residents can earn before they qualify for housing properties. Unfortunately there is no methodology for us to find out how much residents are earning and even if we did we actually in no position to ask them to move out of their property at the moment into private rented accommodation or to purchase the property. That part of the legislation was stopped with the change of prime minister.

13. **From Councillor Redsell to Councillor Gledhill**

Could the Leader outline the actual cost of building council homes agreed under Labour?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Redsell. Seabrooke Rise (The Echoes, 53 units): the final account was settled at £12,873,634. Or cost of around £243 on average per unit. Sorry £243,000 per unit. Of this just over £1 million was community housing fund related and the Council received a HCA grant of £1,325,000. Derry Avenue (Bruyns Court, 25 units): the final account was settled at £5,872,500. An approximate cost of £235,000 per unit. The Council also received HCA grant of £1,225,000. Bracelet Close (12 units): final account was £5,098,365. A cost of a whopping average £425,000 per unit. A total spend of £23,844,499 for nine properties. I need to make it very clear that it does not include a land value. But had this been a private company building we also have had to purchase the land in which these buildings stand. So add to that the Council land plot costs that is over and above what you would normally pay for a brand new property in Thurrock at any level.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Redsell, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Redsell**

Thank your Mr Mayor. These building costs are astronomical compared to the building in the private sector can you let me know what you will be doing to reduce these costs in the future.

**Councillor Gledhill**



Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Redsell. Councillor Rice I will not be taking your advice and I will also not be taking your advice when it comes to spending money on building council houses. I'm sorry but the price is quoted £425,000 for a property in Stanford whilst I am sure there are lovely properties in Stanford, whilst I am sure there are lovely properties in Stanford. 2013 planning permission all delivered on my watch couldn't do anything about the costs. What am I doing to reduce this. We have engaged with the builders who are using modular homes which not only does it reduce the actual costs of the building materials which reduces the costs of labour. Something that we obviously need to do both in the physical sense and indeed the political sense and we will be setting a price for these properties when we go to the HCA but I will not be announcing how much we intend to pay per unit as I want the market to come to us and say this is the best we can do not try and match how much we are saying we have got per unit.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Redsell, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Redsell**

Thank you Mr Mayor. It's a shame to see so much money spent on buildings these houses when more could have been built if the contract to build them was much more lower. Could you possibly give us an outline on how many more could have been built if the build costs were similar to those of the private housing market.

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Redsell. I am no building expert but have spoken to one of our members who has an awful lot of experience in this. I have been told that you would normally pay out one third for the land, one third for build costs and one third for profit. That said we are not here to make profit we should be paying for land and we should be paying for the build as you don't pay for land its more cost to the build. Quite clearly a third more minimum if we go along with what I intend to put forward to the HCA and we will be able to build a significant number of more social housing to get our residents off the housing list into new properties that we can afford from the housing revenue account and indeed maintain over the years.

**14. From Councillor Redsell to Councillor Gledhill**

Can the Leader outline what the housing rent levels are now and what they would have been had Labours 2015 plan been adhered?

**Mayor**

Councillor Gledhill

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mister. Thank you Councillor Redsell. I have already outlined this earlier that there would be a £11.60 difference at the end of this at the moment is it just around the £5 mark from just over £86 at the moment to around £90 had the original plan been kept in place.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Redsell, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Redsell**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you for that Councillor Gledhill. When the properties that you spoke of were built what would be the rent.

**Councillor Gledhill**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Redsell. When the new properties were built at the Echoes the other place previously outlined the previous administration set 70% limit which is 70% of the indict rent which is obviously significantly more than the current housing stock. When these come on line there will be a business case and to how best these could be afforded and indeed the money coming in ploughed back in to the housing revenue account. To either build more houses or to improve our stock. I would not be able to give an exact figure but we would be looking at something in the region of 70 per cent mark of those that have already applied.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Redsell, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Redsell**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

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

**1. From Councillor Duffin to Councillor Hebb**

Will the Council be pushing ahead with the Communications Strategy as agreed at Cabinet?

**Mayor**

Councillor Hebb

**Councillor Hebb**

Thank you Councillor Duffin yes we will be pushing ahead with the communication strategy or be it not the one that was initially shaped out at Cabinet. We do want to push ahead with this very valuable document it's not just about a document on a shelf it's about how we engage with local representatives on the public participation piece that we talked about earlier. How we can encourage filming, commercial opportunities, the way we talk with residents in terms of twitter. I'll try not to say it how I said it earlier. Be more personnel, be less corporate was the expression. But also supporting the residents who were not as IT savvy as others were. We want to be able to support them. There was a lot of maturity in that document and that was recognised with some of the local press. In the answer to your next question yes the Cabinet will look heavily at the proposal that was made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny last Tuesday, um ya last week, to be specific there were 22 words Mr Mayor out of about 1500 that were disagreed with. I take that challenge as in deed I did on the 29 June when I attended the meeting to discuss that call in. It is now the 27 September I said back then that Cabinet would reflect and take on board the discussions at that meeting, three months later after some delay I am saying it again. But we are going to do, get on with it, we can now do. I think it is a good suggestion speaking frankly my whole Cabinet colleagues also think along those lines. The spirit of the strategy remains but ultimately the spirit of the call in should also be respected at the forth coming Cabinet.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Duffin, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Duffin**

Thank you very much for your response. While large parts of the comms strategy were good there were areas which needed serious work. A large of the part of the way the comms teams deal with the press. So the comms team said the strategy strongly very, very strongly worded with regards to making sure the accuracy of titles of press releases, press stories, so why on the 27 July why did the Council actively mislead the media with a titled press release which led to a local newspaper luckily one that is not being represented tonight miss report what happened at Council, while I understand you are not responsible for writing the press releases can you please look into it and make sure our Council's comms team is correctly reporting what actually happens in Council and not making it up to suit their narrative.

**Councillor Hebb**

I will have a look, look can we specify this is where the Council was united, and well frankly it didn't say it was wholly united but that it was united. I think

we need to stop having a nag at the Council's comms team as quite frankly they are the sort of people that are getting up at 5am in the morning on an August Saturday and Sunday morning when we had an horrendous issue down on the Manorway. I didn't see many others in this chamber or in this building here. The comms team were there throughout the whole thing. With respects they do a very good job and I am proud of the team I have got with me. To answer your question about the comms strategy I did make a point that any comms that we couldn't look at a standards and audit report at looks at some of the appropriateness of some of the comms, I don't think that was out of order. Jack, you have been known yourself to put a few nice PRs out made out of a couple of tweets, create a four paragraph document but god I am worse for that your equally as culpable . But we look at it, we will look at it and let's carry out working together. Yes we look at it certainly.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Duffin, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

### **Councillor Duffin**

Well I would say if you call something Council united you are obviously united on something and not voting different ways. There are different interpretations of it. I just want to pick up on something that happened tonight with Councillor Gledhill confirming this evening that he was not aware of the first sentence of his press release last night, can I ask whose writing the press releases, why Councillor Gledhill doesn't know what's in them and can I recommend that potentially yourself or Councillor Halden give him some political advice.

### **Councillor Hebb**

You have got more advice that you could give us than we could ever give you Rob so don't worry we have your back. With respect I shall defer outside of this meeting as I am sure Councillor Gledhill will give you a very direct blunt and conducive answer.

## **2. From Councillor Liddiard to Councillor Coxshall**

Would the Portfolio Holder please update members and inform the residents of Tilbury what action will be taken to mitigate and compensate for disruption due to the upcoming 10 years of misery caused by three developments of national importance i.e. Lower Thames Crossing, Tilbury 2 and the replacement Electricity Generating Station

### **Mayor**

Councillor Coxshall

### **Councillor Coxshall**

With all of those proposals are from a Nationally Infrastructure Projects. Thurrock Council is not the Planning Inspector but is working with the detailed plans to arrange to the pre-application stage. This includes mitigation packages that accompany any applications. About what I am surprised is that the word misery is used in your question because I don't look at these a misery but to look at them as an opportunity. I am trying to be polite, as an opportunity not as a problem. If you come into something thinking that these are a problem you are always going to get what we have had for many years, the Thurrock shrug, the thing that always gets done to us. If we work constructively with these three projects we could get some very good deals and some good advantageous things for the Tilbury Town. There is no doubt about it Tilbury Town does need some love. It needs the love and it needs that and this is an opportunity. One of things, let's talk about the individual cases. Let's look at Tilbury 2 first. Tilbury 2 was the idea of a green lung to actually get Tilbury to actually move and see that and see that fantastic fort there that the Queen Elizabeth was in and open that up and make that more accessible. We can't afford that as a council we have been talking about that if we live beyond our means but if Forth Ports are going to spend one billion pounds on Tilbury 2 we can see some great advantages there immediately I think the main link between the two and the railway line are good sight lines, with good access across these are my ideas but as we go through the planning communication process we can see some other ideas which I have also wanted, good indication to get these ideas in if we don't ask we don't get. You have got to ask, so that's what we want we want people to ask what people want for this Tilbury 2. If you look at the other one I am absolutely astonished that you mention the new power station. Look at the noise that when Ed Miliband so called the spad Polly Billington decided to bring in the carbon, what was the long laborious European name for it, the combustion palm directive that closed Tilbury and we all agree we all wanted a power station how dare they, you now say that Tilbury C is going to be misery. That's new jobs, a new power station and sustainability in our energy markets, that's ridiculous. And it was the [swear word deleted], oh sorry, Councillor so I can't believe it.

**Mayor**

Thank you Councillor Coxshall I think your time is up. Councillor Liddiard, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Liddiard**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Only a fool could see that all three accumulative effects of three developments of national importance wouldn't cause misery for some of our residents. Can I count on you to support all future discussions so that we can minimise and mitigate circumstances please.

**Mayor**

Councillor Coxshall do you want to start off with an apology, again.

## **Councillor Coxshall**

Sorry, Yes yes it is so frustrating for me. What we have got is three projects that can deliver the transformation to Tilbury. It can, I say it can and I understand the concerns that you have got as previous national projects weren't done properly. That's the problem and we have had too many generations of Thurrock, you look at it and then the project has been failing and it's failed because we have never had that first conversation. I am hoping that this doesn't I can't give you a complete guarantee but I want it that good engagement we have a good set of demands from all members for all the residents living in Tilbury to actually deliver something around that next month is when I launch the Tilbury master plan. This a master plan across the whole Tilbury Town including what could come from these and what we need out of this. Because we can't have Tilbury staying as it is, I understand that there is nothing in but we need to deliver good quality, high quality buildings in Tilbury. High quality high street in Tilbury, high quality health provision which we are badly missing and high quality green space to make sure that Tilbury just doesn't look its jugged on the end of a dock. That is exactly what I won't for Tilbury and this is how we can get that is to making sure that we can get some money from these three national developments and with your help like questioning talking and asking and making sure that we can make sure that the developments going forward is international and we will get that. Now I understand that residents of Tilbury it is awkward we have had too many times if you look where I used to live in Purfleet I had to go in Purfleet there was a terrible problem where you had to go to a petrol station to get a sandwich or get a loaf of bread. It is nearly that stage in Tilbury as well like we can't have that we need communities and place. Place sounds very corporate like we were talking earlier. It's the place where people live and play and that's what we want to deliver from these three projects.

## **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Liddiard, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

## **Councillor Liddiard**

No thank Mr Mayor.

### **3. From Councillor Stone to Councillor B Little**

Could the Council liaise with Highways England as to why the 50 mph restriction between Grays and Wennington on the A13 are still in place even though the carriage works have finished?

## **Mayor**

Councillor Little

### **Councillor Little**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Stone for your question. The Council has been in contact with Highways England, who confirm that the A13 Average Speed Cameras between the A1012 (Grays) and A1306 (Wennington) junctions are permanent, and although linked to the M25 Junction 30/A13 Corridor Relieving Congestion Scheme, they were constructed before the start of the major scheme and have been operational for almost three years. They were never temporary average speed cameras for the major scheme and were never publicised as such.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Stone, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Stone**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

#### **4. From Councillor Smith to Councillor Watkins**

Earlier in the summer, Council notified residents of unusual vehicular breakdowns with the refuse vehicles. Over the past 6/8 weeks Aveley residents have continually had missed bin collections, suggesting the problem maybe wider than the "6 vehicles broken down". Would the Portfolio Holder be able to offer an explanation for those missed collections and consider offering an apology to Aveley residents for the inconvenience they have experienced together with an assurance going forward that they will receive a first class service?

### **Mayor**

Councillor Watkins

### **Councillor Watkins**

Thank you Mr Mister, thank you Councillor for your question. Firstly I would like to assure residents that this council does offer a first class service but of course I would apologise to the residents of Aveley who have experienced any issues with bin collections over the last couple of weeks. I would like to add that we are one of the few councils across the country that have kept and maintained a weekly bin service which I think is a great service which is a greater achievement for this council but for also the residents and they should be proud of that. Yes as you have seen and it's been discussed tonight obviously we have now made the order for 27 new waste vehicles with over £4 million of investments but we have had many, many issues over the recent weeks with defects with the vehicles that could range from anything such as a light bulb going out to the crane not lifting the bins not working properly. Obviously for safety reasons for public if the vehicle has in any way got defects has to be serviced and maintained so that is what we are doing

making sure the service for residents and the protection of residents is first class. If there are any issues obviously have been expressed and no doubt reported when we do get reported to us the team is working very hard every single day to get these issues corrected will get them corrected. If you have any further issues please do email me

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Smith, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Smith**

I would like to put on record the guys that work the fleet are absolutely superb and they have been collecting my own bins for 15 years so top hats to them guys. Just a couple of things would you look into a repetitive failures in Stanford Gardens, Aveley Close and St Michaels Close in Aveley and could you also look into what we just discussed a moment ago about the transfer of waste from one residents wheelie bin to another residents wheelie bin which I found quite strange. But I am led to believe that that is actual policy but perhaps you could come back to me on that later please. Thank you.

**Councillor Watkins**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor. Yes as it has previously been expressed please do inform me of all those issues and those areas and we will get those investigated immediately. I would ask all councillors in the chamber this evening as many have already done if you do have any issues with bin collections please do make me aware and I can action and look into it urgently. Thank you.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Smith, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Smith**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

**5. From Councillor V. Holloway to Councillor S. Little**

Can the Portfolio Holder reassure Councillors and residents that adequate social care services are available at all times?

**Mayor**

Councillor Little

**Councillor Little**



There is also some pressure on social services as we all know but Thurrock's Adult Social Care has been very successful in providing services to meet demand through a combination of initiatives and approaches and a remarkable commitment by the team, they are absolute fabulous. Recently waiting lists for services have been cut significantly which I am pleased to say for example last spring there were about 50 on the waiting list, last week we only had 2 which was really good news and in addition to this 18 months ago we had people waiting for occupational therapy 16 weeks we have now cut that down to 4 to 6 weeks. Whilst it is impossible ever to say that adult social services will be available immediately for everyone I can reassure you that the Council has the situation well managed and those most at risk will always get the appropriate services when they need to have them.

### **Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Holloway, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Councillor Holloway**

Thank you for your reply and hope your back gets better. I am referring to a couple of weekends ago that were raised by my residents and other council colleagues where people felt they did not receive the care they expected over a couple of weekends. I understand this was due to staffing shortages but I know no one did this intentionally I agree and I echo that we have got a fantastic team but we definitely do have a problem with regards to attracting staff and would like to ask the portfolio holder what the plan is to make sure that these incidents where the people did not have the care expected at the weekend does not happen again and also is there anything that we can do as Councillors to help as I know you will agree that this is not an ok situation.

### **Councillor Little**

Thank you Councillor Holloway. It would be lovely if you all came out to help, absolutely brilliant. But actually the two weekends that are always the worst or whenever they fall is the last weekend in August, the bank holiday, and usually Christmas. And that is because people either using the last of their summer holidays up or they like to be with families at Christmas. It doesn't matter what occupation whether you work for Amazon, Argos or anywhere all the staff levels seem to drop then. But I can assure you there was a little bit of a rumour mongering shall I say that we were lacking yes we were working flat out but everyone had their calls made. And if we don't have them made I get very few things through from other local councillors telling me a service has been missed. When I do get these calls through or emails through I am usually pretty quick picking up emails and the team will tell you I am straight on the telephone to make sure they are covered. So you know with all the extra money we had £2.5 million Conservative government money coming in we had the £1.7 million from the preset that is £4.2 of new money coming into Thurrock. You know this has been amazing for us and you know the government recognise yes we do have a problem but yes we are sorting it. So

if you please any of you councillors if you have a problem just come straight to me, email me and I will usually pick it up quite quickly. Thank you.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Holloway, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Holloway**

Just briefly. You identified the 2 specific weekends that caused problems do we have plans in place knowing those weekends have issues and this won't happen again on those weekends next year.

**Councillor Little**

Yes as we always notice that this is what always happens I am sure you know when Councillor Barbara Rice will tell you, yes it is something that everyone knows usually happens so yes that was why we were covered. So yes thank you for the question and as I say I can only iterate that if any of you have any problems with the elderly and the care packages and what we are providing in Thurrock please let me know. I try and look out and go around as many places as I can. I actually follow care workers around, I look like a stalker sometimes but heyho do I care? No. So thank you for your question.

6. **From Councillor V. Holloway to Councillor B. Little**

Parking in Angle Road, South Stifford is a major problem. Can the Portfolio Holder for Transport outline what could be done to assist residents?

**Mayor**

Councillor Little

**Councillor Little**

Thank Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Holloway for your question. This road was investigated as part of a residents request and road space is very limited there. There is no scope to provide any additional parking provision within the adopted highway, however, officers would be happy to meet with residents and ward councillors to explore some other possibilities.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Holloway, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Holloway**

Thank you and I really appreciate the offer of meeting and will definitely be taking that up. There are also other roads as well in the area. Mill Lane is another one that residents have again raised issues with parking and I am sure it is just not just me that has certain roads in the borough that have parking problems. Do we have long term plans in place to deal with roads like this or do is it meeting by meeting to have it sorted.

**Councillor Little**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Thank you Councillor Holloway for your supplementary question. We take each case on its individual merits because they are all different, different locations and different circumstances. Some near schools that you can appreciate are dependent on people going to school to other ones when you are down the dead end of a road like you do an angle road so they are all treated differently and different proposals are put forward. But there are some possible solutions but some of them are not very pleasing for some residents like some residents parking in places that they could park rather than parking outside their houses

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Holloway, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Holloway**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

**7. From Councillor Maney to Councillor Coxshall**

Given the history of reported planning infringements associated with Buckles Lane in South Ockendon does the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration agree that it is high time the council took action to address the situation there?

**Mayor**

Councillor Coxshall

**Councillor Coxshall**

Thank you. After many years of turning a blind eye to this problem the Conservative Council here, today, recently served 45 planning contravention notices on individual plots. I can also confirm that there are plans for a budget resource to make the process move forward here in this area. There is already a large number of meetings have been held and internal meetings and external bodies to ensure a full and investigative matters across the area. This will also help us inform and actually decide amongst when projects are in the local plan to do what can be done in that area of Buckles Lane and not just leave it as a festering sore. We anticipate to have this work completed by

the end of this municipal year and will assist with other works alongside the local plan as well.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Maney, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Maney**

Yes thank you Mr Mayor. I am pleased to hear that at long last the Council does appear to be taking some action instead of hiding behind whatever regeneration or planning documents is being drawn up at the time. My question to the portfolio holder is that. Does he agree essentially that the question of fairness. For far too long, for years in fact, there has been a complete lack of parity in the planning rules in Thurrock with residents and businesses elsewhere being held to one set of rules when some people in Buckles Lane seem to create their own and this is no longer acceptable. I know Members won't be able to see this but I was recently sent two aerial photographs of Buckles Lane. This one was from 2003; I know Members won't be able to see it. Another one I received was from 2015 and the scale of development is simply shocking. It is infringement of the green belt. It was gone on for far too long and there needs to be some action. I know the Portfolio Holder has given a commitment to look at that and my other question is that does he agree with me that from this point onwards any new unlawful incursions that are identified should be dealt with in the spirit of enforcement rather than regularisation. Thank you Mr Mayor.

**Councillor Coxshall**

Yup, I understand and moving forward here is a very critical point. We have a massive ingrowth of a large development that is growing and growing and what we need to do is make sure it is regularized, it is actually people there need to have some certainty of their life and moving forward there are sites there that I have visited that they need to have some regularisation on that site and they have been there many years and need to be fairly treated and that is what the Council needs to do. What we need to do going forward is to make sure that this does not keep expanding, expanding, expanding and that I can give that undertaking that we need to call it and look at it and I think this local plan as it goes through is an opportunity to look at Buckles Lane and that land around there what we can do and how we can make sure the Council make everyone abide by the law and as well as that make sure the residents there who have been there for many years are regularised and safe and feel that their homes are in Thurrock.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Maney, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Maney**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

8. **From Councillor Maney to Councillor Watkins**

Would the Portfolio Holder confirm that it remains this council's policy to prohibit horse grazing during winter months on local authority owned land in the Mardyke Valley? Further, to ask that the Portfolio Holder takes steps to ensure the said policy is enforced now that summer has passed?

**Mayor**

Councillor Watkins

**Councillor Watkins**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Maney for your question. Yes the Council does have an agreement in place and works very closely with the grazer during the winter months of course the Council takes animal welfare as a top priority and thank you for sending me some of the press articles from a few years ago and have seen first-hand some of the shocking stuff that have gone on and should we are be made aware of any issues that have been breached the Council will act swiftly to resolve it.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Maney, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

**Councillor Maney**

Thank you Mr Mister I do have a brief supplementary. [*Public Disruption and Council Adjourned*]. Thank you Councillor Watkins for answering the question, I can't remember what it was now as there has been a long passage of time, certainly last year and possibly other years the Council or Council Officers have given an undertaking to inspect the Mardyke Valley to make sure there are horses grazing beyond the period when they shouldn't be there and it was been publicly stated that there aren't any horses but for anyone who drives over the Mardyke Valley over the A13 can see them, it's not difficult, to see horses in the field. What I am asking of Councillor Watkins is that he instructs Officers to write to the owners of the horses now before the November when the winter grazing is due to end write to them now and remind them of their obligation to remove the horses before that time. Thank you Mr Mayor.

**Councillor Watkins**

Thank you Mr Mister and thank you Councillor Maney for your supplementary question. Yes I will ensure that does happen as soon as possible and make sure that we remind the grazer of what is in place.

**Mayor**

Thank you. Councillor Maney, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

**Councillor Maney**

No thank you Mr Mayor.

## QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There are 8 questions from members of the public.

**1. From Mrs Imamzade to Councillor Halden**

Can you tell us how far you have gone with the agreement and plans for the new Integrated Medical Centre in Tilbury. We desperately need this to improve the very poor health outcomes for Tilbury and Chadwell residents?

**2. From Mr Jackson to Councillor B Little**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Transport provide a high level transport plan that supports 32,000 new homes within the borough of Thurrock that does not add additional burden to the 17 air quality management areas already identified in 2016?

**3. From Ms Blake to Councillor Gledhill**

Where does the Leader of the Council propose to build 32,000 new homes in Thurrock?

**4. From Mr Towlson to Councillor B Little**

Further to my question to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Councillor B Little on the 27 September 2017 and on reading the Thurrock Transport Strategy for the period of 2013 to 2026 what reassurance can the Council supply to disprove my belief that it will fail to deliver on the 'Health and Well-being' and 'Protecting the Green Environment' aspects of the Strategy due to possible further massive road expansions, the requirement of further housing and as it has also been claimed by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health "that there was only so much the Council could do on their own"?

**5. From Mrs Pegley to Councillor Coxshall**

At the last public Council meeting it was stated that 32,000 homes were to be built in Thurrock, can the Council tell me please where is the land situated to build these houses?

**6. From Mrs Parker to Councillor Watkins**

Can I ask the Council, if they will be tagging bins again which for whatever reason were not collected? It appears this is currently not happening, and it can help residents understand why bins were not collected.

**7. From Ms Watson to Councillor Halden**

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm from his correspondence with health partners what the process and timetable will be for consultations on the future of Orsett Hospital?

**8. From Mr Slade to Councillor Gledhill**

Why has Thurrock Council recently set a housing target 40% above their assessed need when neighbouring boroughs are reducing theirs?



## Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 25 October 2017

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Portfolio Holder	Status Full copies of the responses may be obtained from Democratic Services
490	Object to the tory-led Thurrock Council's proposal to introduce and extend service charges of up to £405 a year for all Council tenants. We call on the Tories' to abandon these unfair and unaffordable charges.	30 March 2017	Cllr Gledhill	Completed
491	Concerned citizens urge our leaders to act now to push for the removal of these Double Yellow Line Road markings on specific parts of the Phase 1 build at Persimmon Homes site Village@Aveley and for engagement in dialogue between the residents and the relevant authorities in a fair and detailed consultation.	30 March 2017	Cllr B Little	A draft proposal was sent to community stakeholders for comment on 5 September 2017. We are awaiting feedback before determining next steps and expect the position to be clarified by the end of October.
492	Road(s) known as Kersbrooke Way, Elmstead Close and Fernside Close located in Thurrock, Essex, do hereby petition Thurrock Council, and make known our objection and constant dissatisfaction to the current use and constant noise of the garages off Kersbrooke Way, which are currently being used for purposes outside of the planning agreement and existing deeds. We call on Thurrock Council and the owners of the garages to ask for something to be done.	13 April 2017	Cllr S MacPherson	Completed

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493	Changes that will calm the traffic on Flint Street, Grays, RM20 3HA.	28 June 2017	Cllr B Little	A survey of traffic speed and volumes in Flint Street was undertaken and completed in September. The data recorded by the survey found the 85 <sup>th</sup> per centile speed was 16.3mph (this is the official DfT measure for considering the appropriateness for speed limits). There were no recorded vehicles travelling over 30mph in Flint Street. The recorded speeds in Flint Street are low and therefore do not meet the requirements for the introduction of traffic calming.
494	To the clearing of the alleyway between Salisbury Road and Kent Road.	28 June 2017	Cllr Tolson	Further enforcement action on the clearance of this alleyway to be considered in light of the outcome of the current review by CGS O&S. This is subject to consultation. It was agreed to carry out a Member led review of fly tipping in alleyways.
495	Kings Street Car Park - We the undersigned request Thurrock Council to do everything in their power to secure a minimum of 2 hours free car parking in Kings Street Car park, Stanford le Hope with or without the private owner's cooperation, using whatever means necessary to achieve this.	26 July 2017	Cllr Piccolo	This petition will be discussed at October Full Council as an agenda item.
496	Relating to the poor state of road surface in Gordon Road, Corringham.	27 September 2017	Cllr Jones	Over the last 12 months patching and pothole works have been undertaken in Gordon Road, Corringham. There are currently no intervention level defects as a result although the road surface is cosmetically poor.

## Item 8 : Petitions Update Report – 25 October 2017

				Gordon Road, along with other roads in a similar condition, are currently being assessed for prioritisation for inclusion in the 2018/19 Programme. In the meantime, it will be monitored by our Highway Inspectors and should any defects occur, they will be addressed accordingly.
497	Resident(s) of Hadfield Road, Rectory Road, Wharf Road and Fairview Avenue, Stanford-le-Hope request Thurrock Council (a) consult on the introduction of a one-way system around Hadfield and Rectory Road, and (b) introduce speed-calming measures down both roads (also looking to Fairview Avenue also).	27 September 2017	Cllr Hebb	(a) The council previously developed a proposal for a one-way system around Hadfield and Rectory Road in 2015, however, this was not supported by local stakeholders at the time. This will be included in our programme for 2018/19, and project feasibility work and consultation will be undertaken in the Q1 of 2018/19. (b) This will be included on our programme for 2018/19 with a feasibility study in Q1 of 2018/19 to determine the appropriate speed-calming measures that can be introduced.
498	Installing CCTV on a section of Seabrooke Rise.	27 September 2017	Cllr Kerin	The Housing service is considering this proposal with input from the Community Safety team. A judgement about a specific new installation will be made when all the relevant information has been assessed in full, and residents and ward members will be advised of the decision within the next two months.
499	Council's proposal to introduce and extend service charges by up to £400 per year for all tenants.	27 September 2017	Mrs Imamzade	Further to the motion agreed at the Council meeting this reconsideration will be taking place. An update report will be presented to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on

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				17 October 2017 setting out the proposed scope of the review, with a further report setting out a range of options for the Committee to consider to be presented at the December meeting, The final decision in relation to service charges will be made by Cabinet after the report has been presented to the Scrutiny Committee.
500	Reconsider the unfair rent increase imposed on Council tenants.	27 September 2017	Cllr Jones	Further to the motion agreed at the Council meeting this reconsideration will be taking place. An update report will be presented to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 October 2017 setting out the proposed scope of the review, with a further report setting out a range of options for the Committee to consider to be presented at the December meeting, The final decision in relation to service charges will be made by Cabinet after the report has been presented to the Scrutiny Committee.



<b>25 October 2017</b>	<b>ITEM: 10</b>
<b>Council</b>	
<b>Debate on a Petition containing over 1500 verified signatures – King Street Car Park, Stanford Le Hope</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Stanford le Hope West	<b>Key Decision:</b> Not applicable
<b>Report of:</b> David Lawson, Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal Services	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> David Lawson, Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal Services	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

At Full Council in June 2017 a petition was submitted by Councillor Piccolo, Ward Member for Stanford Le Hope West, and entitled “King Street Car Park in Stanford Le Hope”.

The petition exceeded the threshold of 1500 verified signatures, and in accordance with Chapter 1, Part 2, Article 3 of the Constitution qualified to be debated by Full Council.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**1.1 That the Petition be considered by Full Council.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

#### History and Details of Petition

2.1 A petition entitled “King Street Car Park in Stanford Le Hope” was submitted on the 28 June 2017 at Full Council by Councillor Piccolo the Ward Member for Stanford Le Hope West.

2.2 The following statement that accompanied the Petition detailed the actions the petitioners wish the Council to take:

**“We the undersigned request Thurrock Council do everything in their power to ensure a minimum of two hours free car parking in King Street**

**Car Park, Stanford Le Hope with or without the private owner's cooperation, using whatever means necessary to achieve this."**

- 2.3 Democratic Services have verified the petition and confirmed that out of the 2768 signatures received, 1502 were checked as valid, a detailed breakdown of which is provided below:

Number of Signatures Received	<b>2768</b>
Number of Signatures Verified	<b>1924</b>
Number of Valid Signatures	<b>1502</b>
Number of Invalid Signatures	<b>422</b>
Number of Signatures not verified due to the valid number of signatories already checked as being equal or greater to 1500	<b>844</b>

- 2.4 Where a petition in respect of any matter has a number of signatories equal to or greater than the 1500 verified signatures threshold set out in paragraph 7.1 of the Council's Petition Scheme it may be debated by the Council.
- 2.5 Due to the required number of valid signatures, the Mayor has agreed that the petition may be debated at Full Council.

Background Information

- 2.6 Thurrock Council agreed to dispose of the land in 2013 to enable an anticipated redevelopment of the site. One of the conditions of sale was that free parking be provided as part of the new development. The sale agreement did not make any provision for the retention of free parking prior to the site being developed and after ownership was transferred. Planning permission for a mixed use scheme comprising a retail unit and 27 flats was subsequently granted with an obligation to provide free parking spaces. However, this obligation lapsed when the planning permission expired.
- 2.7 Initially, the owners allowed free parking but following overnight lorry parking and littering the condition of the car park deteriorated to the point where the Council began legal proceedings, which are on-going. The owners passed management to a private operator and introduced parking fees. The operator also undertakes site management.
- 2.8 As the car park is in private ownership the Council is not in a position to require the owners to provide free parking. To achieve the outcome set out in the petition joint working with the owners will be necessary. Potential solutions that can be explored through that joint working include the Council buying back the car park; working with the landowners on new development proposals for the site; or seeking to acquire a proportion of the car park that can be managed by the Council.

The work to explore these and any other options will require a full assessment of the financial implications to the Council as well as the practicalities and timing of their implementation. Each will require the Council to work with the car park owner.

#### Procedure for Dealing with the Petition at the Meeting

- 2.9 Under the Council's petition scheme, the petition organiser will be given a period of up to five minutes to speak to the subject matter of the petition at the meeting.
- 2.10 In accordance with the rules of Full Council debate (Paragraph 7.3, Chapter 1, Part 2 – Article 3) the petition will then be discussed by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of the receipt of the petition which has attracted signatures from people who live, work or study in the Borough.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To comply with the requirements of the Council's adopted petition scheme.

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

- 5.1 The petition will be considered at Full Council.

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

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report

### **7. Implications**

#### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**  
**Management Accountant (Environment & Place)**

There are no finance implications arising directly out of this report.

#### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
**Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal Services**

The Council's scheme for responding to petitions states that petitions *may* be debated by Council if the number of signatories is equal or greater to 1500. (Paragraph 5.3 of Article 3). Petitions are founded upon the subjective views of the prime mover and the signatories persuaded to sign.

Whilst they deserve serious consideration and debate, this does not oblige the Council to agree with them or take the action requested.

A legal review of the background of this matter looked at the Cabinet decision-making process and their consideration of the relevant O&S comments - it appears that the 2013 decision making process was procedurally compliant with Council rules.

The issue thereafter appears to be based around the implementation of that decision to sell the freehold and the subsequent lapsing of the section 106 obligation in the absence of any development coming forward on the site within the lifetime of the section 106 obligation.

Whilst the section 106 obligation has now lapsed it is noted that in certain limited situations covenants can be registered a “local land charge” and separately enforced irrespective of the lapsing of a section 106 Agreement. However much depends on a broad interpretation of the precise wording used in the relevant covenant and this may prove a complex and difficult argument requiring specialist counsel and / or proceedings with some uncertainty as to outcome.

However it is clear that the land in question was disposed on a freehold basis and the legal opinion is that a CPO is not a realistic option unless the Council has genuine grounds - such as its own development.

It is noted that a fee has been introduced for parking, perhaps in part because of potential enforcement by environment around alleged litter and infestation issues on the disposed site to better manage the site and keep it clean.

It may be that negotiations and / or a meeting would be the best option in order to explore a more certain consensual solution with the current owners.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

There are no diversity and equality implications arising directly out of this report.

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

None

### 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):

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 January 2017, during which a public question was raised with regard to introduction of these parking charges. This question was submitted and presented by a Thurrock resident.  
<https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s11063/Questions%20from%20Public.pdf>



Transcript of the Council meeting held on 25 January 2017 during which the above question was responded to by Councillor Coxshall.

<https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/b15780/Appendix%20A%20to%20the%20Council%20Minutes%20-%2025%20January%202017%20-%20Transcript%20of%20Public%20and%20Members%20Questions%2025.pdf?T=9>

**9. Appendices to the report**

None

**Report Author:**

Jenny Shade

Senior Democratic Services Officer

Legal and Democratic Services

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<b>25 October 2017</b>	<b>ITEM: 11</b>
<b>Council</b>	
<b>Investment and Treasury Management Strategy</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Shane Hebb, Portfolio Holder for Finance	
<b>Report of Assistant Director:</b> n/a	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT	
<b>This report is</b> public	

## Executive Summary

Council's across the country continue to have to find new ways to live within their means whilst maintaining good quality public services. This position has created a direction of travel for local authorities who need to consider how to achieve financial sustainability in order to protect services to residents and businesses.

The Council works in a cross party manner through the Council Spending Review to consider the financial planning of the organisation, an approach which was positively endorsed through an Independent Peer Review conducted in June 2017.

Consideration has been given to a range of approaches to deliver future balanced budgets which continue to ensure all services continue to be provided to meet the needs of residents. This approach includes income generation, commercial activity and approach, managing demand appropriately and effectively whilst continuing to see to transform the way the council does business.

After cross party discussion and agreement, a report was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 11 October 2017 which agreed an investment strategy approach based on the application of six key principles that are set out in the main body of this report. This report now seeks Council approval of this investment strategy approach and the subsequent related amendments to the Treasury Management Indicators.

### **1 Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That Council agrees the revised Treasury Management Indicators as set out in Appendix 1; and**
- 1.2 That Council agrees that cash investment decisions that fall under a capital definition be treated as capital expenditure and the Treasury Management Indicators amended as necessary.**

## **2 Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 All councils have a statutory duty to ensure that the council is financially sound and delivers a balanced budget on an annual basis. Members will be aware that the council has in comparable terms with other authorities,, less in the way of reserves to support expenditure and so face an annual challenge to both reduce expenditure and increase income. This is despite the planned incremental increases to the General Fund Balance passed at Full Council on 22 February 2017.
- 2.2 The MTFs presented to Full Council on 22 February 2017 showed pressures of £20.2m between 2018/19 and 2020/21 that, after Transformation Board identified savings, reduced to a net three year pressure of £16.6m. The assumptions have now been updated to reflect current information and these figures are now revised to £20.8m and £14.9m respectively. Key changes impacting on the changed position include:
- a) Improved forecasts for council tax and business rates totalling £1.8m;
  - b) An improved position on inflation and other increases of £1.4m;
  - c) Additional growth included to meet Children's and Environmental Services pressures; and
  - d) The inclusion of service review savings over the three years.
- 2.3 The council adopted the Council Spending Review (CSR) approach last year that concentrated on meeting the budget pressures through:
- a) Increased income – this can be through the trading of core services through to investments from the treasury or property function;
  - b) More or same for less – focussing on better value from contracts and wider procurement, reducing spend on agency staff and more efficient processes; and
  - c) Reducing the growth pressures in demand led services – such as concentrating on early intervention.
- 2.4 This is underpinned by a detailed review of all services, Service Review Process, and is delivered through a number of officer Boards that ultimately brings proposals through an informal meeting of the three group leaders and their deputies to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet.
- 2.5 This approach was subjected to a Finance Peer Review, carried out by the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) in June 2017. The review concluded that the CSR approach was in line with other local authorities that are under no overall control and recommended some improvements to the process but to effectively continue.
- 2.6 One recommendation from the review that is especially relevant to this report was to continue seeking investment opportunities.

2.7 External Audit also published their Value for Money Conclusion in September 2017 that focuses on the council's financial standing and its approach to budget setting. The conclusion was positive while also highlighting a need to consider further the level of General Fund Balance.

### **3 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 Whilst considering options, it is important to remember that Thurrock Council has the third lowest net budget of all English Unitary Authorities, whilst having to deliver a large suite of services that Districts do not. This implies that most of the council services are already being delivered at a lower cost than the majority of other councils.

3.2 Whilst every effort is continually made to reduce the net cost of services, it is clear that the budget pressures as reported earlier in this report cannot be met from this approach alone without significant impact on front line services, with a clear risk of not being able to maintain statutory services.

3.3 As such, the council has, in recent years, also delivered savings and increased income through its Treasury Function. These have included:

- a) Debt restructuring;
- b) Challenges to the Minimum Revenue Provision;
- c) Gloriana; and
- d) Cash investments in ventures such as CCLA and Solar.

3.4 Together, these are currently benefitting the council by £11.7m per annum.

3.5 Whilst progressing the budget setting for the life of this MTFS, it is clear that a mix of service reviews, cross cutting reductions, general income increases and investments will be required. Though all equally important, investments have the greater ability to make significant income with the minimum of impact on service provision and so supporting an investment approach is recommended. This approach has been considered and supported by the three group leaders and their deputies and this report now seeks formal support.

3.6 There obviously needs to be control over this approach and this is set out within the Treasury Management Strategy, last agreed at the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2017. In addition, the following principles are recommended:

- a) The agreement to invest does not supersede existing work streams such as the service review process, asset utilisation, etc;
- b) Council should consider a diversified investment approach. This could include further cash investments, (developing the Gloriana offer and ownership of income generating assets, especially where these support strategic objectives);

- c) Investments should favour short-term borrowing by the council;
  - d) Appropriate due diligence, including the assessment of borrowing risk, must take place before new significant investments are made;
  - e) Accountability and governance to the Executive / wider council must be a critical component of “open” investments and an overview of any investment in excess of £10m and for longer than one year be presented to the three group leaders and their deputies before any firm commitment; and
  - f) There has to be firm differentiation between investments which have an implied municipal duty, and investments made in private sector markets. Where the latter, appropriate expertise must be procured so to ensure that the council does not obscure its role and manage entities outside of its expertise.
- 3.7 To achieve this in a timescale that both starts to deliver in 2018/19 but also gives greater certainty at the budget setting meeting in February 2018, it is necessary to make appropriate increases to the Treasury Management Strategy. A revised set of Treasury Management Indicators are set out in Appendix 1 and set the parameters for how much the council can borrow and invest.
- 3.8 Cash investment opportunities are normally balance sheet transactions but, depending on the opportunity, may need to be classified as capital expenditure. This report also seeks the authority to enter into these investments if applicable, subject to the principles set out earlier in the report, with implied changes to the capital programme and Treasury Management Indicators.
- 3.9 Whilst not being able to set out exactly what investments would be entered into at this stage, they would take the form of loans or equity purchases following similar investments in CCLA, the advance to Rockfire Capital to support their acquisition of a solar farm and loans to other bodies such as the Royal Opera House.
- 3.10 Whilst this report seeks approvals for further cash type investments, the overall investment approach does include two further categories which could be explored:
- The need to acquire or build revenue generating assets, especially where this meets regeneration or economic needs; and
  - Bringing more sites forward for development through Gloriana.
- 3.11 These types of investments require significant lead in time but it will be important to gain approval at the earliest opportunity to realise income in the life of the MTFS and will be subject to further reports.

- 3.12 If the council does not wish to follow this approach, the alternative is to reduce expenditure and increase income through other means. Whilst this is still within the MTFs plans and, indeed, meets the first principle in this paper, it is difficult to see how this can be done to such an extent that will not significantly impact on the delivery of frontline services.

#### **4 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget annually and to review its adequacy of reserves. This report sets the foundations for entering into investments that will make a significant contribution towards financial self-sufficiency.

#### **5 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The budget planning governance structure includes involvement and consultation with Officers, Portfolio Holders and Members. The process includes the Council Spending Review Panel, made up of cross-party Group Leaders and Deputies who will meet regularly during the budget planning period and ahead of key decision points.

#### **6 Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The implementation of previous savings proposals has already reduced service delivery levels and our ability to meet statutory requirements, impacting on the community and staff. There is a risk that some agreed savings may result in increased demand for more costly interventions if needs escalate particularly in social care. The potential impact on the Council's ability to safeguard children and adults will be kept carefully under review and mitigating actions taken where required.
- 6.2 An investment approach is the only viable option to increase income significantly reducing the need to impact adversely on frontline services.

#### **7 Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**

**Director of Finance and IT**

Members and officers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the Council can contain spend within its available resources and this report sets out an approach to help achieve this over the coming years.

The report sets out remaining budget gaps over the period 2018/19 – 2020/21 but already assumes efficiency reductions within the full range of services that the council provides. The report sets out an investment approach as a key contributor to the Council managing these pressures and achieving financial self-sustainability.

Members should be aware that all investment decisions do come with risk. The s151 Officer takes advice from advisers and carries out relevant due diligence before entering into any investment and this is further reinforced in the fourth and fifth principles set out in this report.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**

**Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal Services**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

There are statutory requirements of the Council's Section 151 Officer in relation to setting a balanced budget. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Section 114) prescribes that the responsible financial officer "must make a report if he considers that a decision has been made or is about to be made involving expenditure which is unlawful or which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency to the authority". This includes an unbalanced budget.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Price**

**Community Development and Equalities**

There are no specific diversity and equalities implications as part of this report.

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

This report sets out an approach that will go a significant way in meeting the requirement for financial sustainability.

## 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):

There are a number of working papers that support the assumptions in the MTFS and they are held within Corporate Finance.

## 9 Appendices to the report

Appendix 1 – Treasury Management Indicators



**Report Author:**

Sean Clark

Director of Finance and IT

Finance and IT

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## PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2017/18 TO 2019/20

The following prudential indicators are recommended to the Council.

### A. Prudential indicators for Affordability

In demonstrating the affordability of its capital investment plan the Council must:

- Determine the ratio of financing costs (e.g. capital repayments, interest payments, investment income) to net revenue stream for both the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and non-HRA services for a 3 year period.
- Determine the incremental impact on the Council tax and housing rents (in both instances the scope for increases is governed by the Government's ability to limit council tax increases and the current restriction on council rents).

Indicator A1 sets out the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream. The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in this budget report.

*A1: Prudential indicator – Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream 2017/18 to 2019/20*

Indicator	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Non HRA	4.00%	5.09%	5.28%
HRA	13.40%	13.60%	13.80%

Indicators A2 and A3 set out the estimated incremental impact on both the levels of council tax (Band D equivalent) and housing rents of the recommended capital investment plans and funding proposals. The impact has been calculated using the latest projections on interest rates for both borrowing and investments. The impact does not take account of government support included for new borrowing within the formula spending share and housing subsidy.

*A2: Prudential indicator – Estimates of the incremental impact of the new capital investment decisions on the council tax 2017/18 to 2019/20*

Indicator	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Additional annual Council Tax requirement	£2.09	£37.73	£43.31

*A3: Prudential indicator – Estimates of the incremental impact of the new capital investment decisions on the average weekly housing rents 2017/18 to 2019/20*

Indicator	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Addition in average weekly housing rent	£3.38	£8.40	£10.48

## **B. Prudential indicators for Prudence**

### ***B1: Prudential indicator – Gross debt and the capital financing requirement***

This is a key indicator of prudence. In order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.

If in any of these years there is a reduction in the capital financing requirement, this reduction is ignored in estimating the cumulative increase in the capital financing requirement which is used for comparison with gross external debt.

The Director of Finance and IT reports that the Council had no difficulty meeting this requirement in 2016/17, nor is there any difficulties envisaged in future years. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the approved budget.

Where the gross debt is greater than the capital financing requirement the reasons for this should be clearly stated in the annual treasury management strategy.

The table below shows the projected position from 31 March 2016.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Estimate £'000</b>
CFR at 31/3/16	327,980
Increase in 16/17	29,258
Increase in 17/18	46,959
Increase in 18/19	4,786
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>408,984</b>
<b>Gross Debt</b>	<b>400,000</b>

## **C. Prudential indicator for Capital Expenditure**

Elsewhere in this agenda is a recommendation for the capital investment plans for the Council over the next three years. Indicator C1 summarises the recommendations within that report. Indicator C2 sets out the estimates of the capital financing requirement over the same period.

### ***C1: Prudential indicator – Estimates of total capital expenditure 2017/18 to 2019/20***

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £'000</b>
Total Non HRA	53,940	16,744	15,021
Total HRA	13,500	6,500	1,714
Total Programme	67,440	23,244	16,735

In considering the capital investment plan the Council had regard to a number of key issues, namely:

- affordability, e.g. implications for council tax/housing rents
- prudence and sustainability, e.g. implications for external borrowing
- value for money, e.g. option appraisal
- stewardship of assets, e.g. asset management planning
- service objectives, e.g. strategic planning for the Council
- practicality, e.g. achievability of the forward plan.

*C2: Prudential indicator – Estimates of capital financing requirement 2017/18 to 2019/20*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £'000</b>
HRA	193,049	198,286	198,286
Non-HRA	211,148	210,697	208,377
Total	404,197	408,983	406,663

The estimates are based on the financing options included in the recommended capital investment programme. The estimates will not commit the Council to particular methods of funding – the actual funding of capital expenditure will be determined after the end of the relevant financial year.

The Council has a number of daily cashflows, both positive and negative, and manages its treasury position in terms of its borrowings and investments in accordance with the approved treasury management strategy and practices. In day to day cash management no distinction can be made between revenue cash and capital cash. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the Council and not simply those arising from capital spending. It is possible external debt could exceed the capital financing requirement in the short term.

#### ***D. Prudential indicators for External Debt***

A number of prudential indicators are required in relation to external debt

*D1: Prudential indicator – Authorised limit 2017/18 to 2019/20*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £'000</b>
Borrowing	988,521	910,521	918,521
Other Long Term Liabilities	800	600	400
Total	909,321	911,121	918,921

The authorised limit is the aggregate of gross borrowing (i.e. before investment) and other long term liabilities such as finance leases. In taking its decisions on the budget report the Council is asked to note that the authorised limit determined for 2017/18 in the above table is a statutory limit required to be determined by full Council under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The authorised limits are consistent with the Council's current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with its approved treasury management policy statement and practices. The Director of Finance and IT confirms that they are based on the estimate of most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario, with in addition sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for operational management, for example unusual cash movements. Risk analysis and risk management strategies have been taken into account, as have plans for capital expenditure, estimates of the capital financing requirement and estimates of cashflow requirements for all purposes.

*D2: Prudential indicator – Operational boundary 2017/18 to 2019/20*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £'000</b>
Borrowing	858,521	863,521	868,521
Other Long Term Liabilities	800	600	400
Total	859,321	864,121	868,921

The operational boundary is based on the authorised limit but without the additional headroom. The operational boundary represents a key management tool for in-year monitoring by the Director of Finance and IT. As with the authorised limit figures for borrowing (gross) and other long term liabilities are separately identified.

The authorised limit and operational boundary separately identify borrowing from other long-term liabilities. It is recommended that Council delegate authority to the Director of Finance and IT, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities, in accordance with option appraisal and best value for money for the Council. Any such changes made will be reported to the Council at its next meeting following the change.

*D3: Prudential indicator – HRA Limit on Indebtedness Under Self Financing*

This is known as the Debt Cap and is the absolute level of debt permitted under Self Financing Regulations. The debt cap was set at £188.141m which means debt attributable to the HRA cannot exceed this figure. Agreement to increase the debt cap to borrow by £11.58m in 2015/16 was approved by the DCLG, giving a revised debt cap £199.721m. At 31 March 2016 the Council had total HRA borrowing of £160.9m and the figure will be the same as at 31 March 2017.

***E. Prudential indicators for Treasury Management***

A number of prudential indicators are required in respect of treasury management. The indicators are based on the Council's treasury management strategy and take into account the pre-existing structure of the Council's borrowing and investment

portfolios.

*E1: Prudential indicator – the Council has adopted the “CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services” within its Financial Standing Orders.*

The Council has adopted the code within the financial standing orders and monitors the treasury management function to ensure it continues to meet the specified requirements.

*E2: Prudential indicators – Upper limits on interest rate exposure 2017/18 to 2019/20*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposure	50%	50%	50%

This indicator specifies the limits on the proportion on the Council net outstanding principal sums (i.e. net of investments) with fixed interest payments and variable interest payments.

The upper limit of 100% is a consequence of the Council maintaining an investment portfolio. Indicator E2a exemplifies the indicator over borrowing and investment.

*E2a: Prudential indicators (supplemental) – Upper limits on interest rate exposure 2017/18 to 2019/20*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Upper limit on borrowing – fixed rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit on borrowing – variable rate exposure	50%	50%	50%
Upper limit on investments – fixed rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit on investments – variable rate exposure	50%	50%	50%

Indicator E2a is supplemental to Indicator E2 and shows separately the maximum limits for both borrowing and investments. The indicator is not a requirement of the prudential code but it does show more clearly the interest rate exposure limits within which borrowing and investments will be managed.

*E3: Prudential indicator – Upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing 2017/18*

	<b>Upper Limit</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>
under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	60%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	60%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	60%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	60%	0%
20 years and within 30 years	60%	0%
30 years and within 40 years	60%	0%
40 years and within 50 years	100%	0%
50 years and above	100%	0%

The limits in Indicator E3 represent the amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate at the start of the period.

*E4: Prudential indicator – Principle sums invested for periods longer than 364 days*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Limit	450,000	450,000	450,000

This is the limit that the Council can have in investments that are for greater than one year. The council will have £65m as at 31 March 2017 and this provides headroom for further investments should opportunities arise.

*E5: Prudential indicator – Credit Risk:*

The Council employs Treasury advisors (Arlingclose) who provide monthly updates that consider security, liquidity and yield in that order, when making investment decisions. Credit ratings remain an important element of assessing credit risk, but, they are not a sole feature in the Council's assessment of counterparty credit risk. The Council also considers alternative assessments of credit strength and information on corporate developments and market sentiment towards counterparties. The following key tools are used to assess credit risk:

- Published credit ratings of the financial institution (minimum BBB- or equivalent) and its sovereign (minimum AA+ or equivalent for non-UK sovereigns);
- Sovereign support mechanisms;
- Credit default swaps (where quoted);



- Share prices (where available);
- Economic fundamentals, such as country's net debt as a percentage of its GDP;
- Corporate developments, news, articles, market sentiment and momentum; and
- Subjective overlay

The only indicators with prescriptive values remain to be credit ratings. All other indicators of creditworthiness are considered in relative rather than absolute terms

## Approved Investment Counterparties:

Credit Rating	Banks/Building Societies Unsecured		Bank/Building Societies Secured		Government		Corporates		Registered Providers	
	Amount	Period	Amount	Period	Amount	Period	Amount	Period	Amount	Period
<b>UK Govt</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£unlimited	50 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>AAA</b>	£10m	5 years	£20m	20 years	£20m	50 years	£10m	20 years	£10m	20 years
<b>AA+</b>	£10m	5 years	£20m	10 years	£20m	25 years	£10m	10 years	£10m	10 years
<b>AA</b>	£10m	4 years	£20m	5 years	£20m	15 years	£10m	5 years	£10m	10 years
<b>AA-</b>	£10m	3 years	£20m	4 years	£20m	10 years	£10m	4 years	£10m	10 years
<b>A+</b>	£10m	2 years	£20m	3 years	£10m	5 years	£10m	3 years	£10m	5 years
<b>A</b>	£10m	1 year	£20m	2 years	£10m	5 years	£10m	2 years	£10m	5 years
<b>A-</b>	£7.5m	13 months	£15m	13 months	£10m	5 years	£10m	13 months	£10m	5 years
<b>BBB+</b>	£5m	6 months	£10m	6 months	£5m	2 years	£5m	6 months	£5m	2 years
<b>BBB</b>	£5m	100 days	£10m	100 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>BBB-</b>	£5m	100 days	£10m	100 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>None</b>	£5m	6 months	N/A	N/A	£5m	25 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Pooled Funds ,External Fund Managers and any other investment vehicle approved by the Section 151 Officer – Decisions are based on each individual case following appropriate due diligence work being undertaken

The above limits are the maximum that the Council would expect to have in place at any time. However, in practice the actual duration limits in place are continually assessed in conjunction with Arlingclose and are often much shorter than the limits in the above table.

**Credit ratings:** Investment decisions are made by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used.

**Banks and Building Societies Unsecured:** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail.

**Banks and Building Societies Secured:** Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential loss in the unlikely event of insolvency and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but, the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the highest of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

**Government:** Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multi development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in and there is an insignificant risk of insolvency. Investments with the UK Central government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Corporates:** Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but, are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent.

**Other Organisations –** The Council may also invest cash with other organisations, for example making loans to small businesses as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely. Because of the higher perceived risk of unrated businesses such investments may provide considerably higher rates of return.

**Registered providers:** Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of Registered Providers of Social Housing, formerly known as Housing Associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Homes and Community Agency and as providers of public services they retain a high likelihood of receiving Government support if needed.

**Pooled Funds:** Shares in diversified investment vehicles consisting of any of the above investment types plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Money market funds that offer same-day liquidity and aim for a constant net asset value will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts while pooled funds whose value changes

with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.

Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but, are more volatile in the short term. These allow authorities to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. These funds have no defined maturity date but are available for withdrawal after a notice period. As a result their performance and continued suitability in meeting the authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly and decisions made on entering such funds will be made on an individual basis.

Risk assessment and credit ratings: Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the authorities' treasury advisers who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- No new investments will be made
- Any existing investment that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- Full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other information on the security of investments: The Council understands that credit ratings are good but not perfect predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but, can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the authorities cash balances then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government via the Debt Management Office or invested in treasury bills for example or with other local authorities. This will cause

a reduction in the level of investment income earned, but, will protect the principal sum.

### Specified Investments

Specified investments will be those that meet the criteria in the CLG Guidance, i.e. the investment:

- is sterling denominated;
- has a maximum maturity of one year;
- meets the “high credit quality” as determined by the Council or is made with the UK government or is made with a local authority in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland or a parish or community council; and
- The making of which is not defined as capital expenditure under section 25(1)(d) in SI 2003 No 3146 (i.e. the investment is not loan capital or share capital in a body corporate).

The Council defines ‘high credit quality’ organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of BBB- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds ‘high credit quality’ is defined as those having a credit rating of A- or higher

### Non-specified Investments

Any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment is classed as non-specified. The Council does not intend to make any investments denominated in foreign currencies, nor any that are defined as capital expenditure by legislation, such as company shares

### Non-Specified Investment Limits

	Cash Limit
Total Long Term Investments	£450m
Total Investments without credit ratings or rated below A- with appropriate due diligence having been performed	£70m
Total Investments in foreign countries rated below AA+	£30m
Maximum total non-specified investments	£550m

### Investment Limits

The maximum that will be lent to any one organisation in the Approved Investment Counter Party list (except the UK Government) is £20m. For other investments approved by the Section 151 Officer the amount to be invested will be determined by the Section 151 Officer, taking into account the relevant merits of the transaction such as duration, risk etc following due diligence work undertaken. A group of banks under the same ownership, a group of funds under the same management, brokers nominee accounts, foreign countries and industry sectors will all have limits placed on them as in the table below:

	Cash Limit
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£20m each
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£40m
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£50m
Any external Fund Manager	£425m
Negotiable instruments held in a brokers nominee account	£20m
Foreign countries (total per country)	£30m
Registered Providers in total	£30m
Building Societies in total (excluding overnight investments)	£40m
Loans to small businesses	£20m
Money Market Funds	£40m
Investments approved by the Section 151 Officer	Reviewed for each case

### Liquidity Management

The Council maintains a cash flow spreadsheet that forecasts the Council's cash flows into the future. This is used to determine the maximum period for which funds may be prudently committed. The forecast is compiled on a pessimistic basis, with receipts under estimated and payments over estimated to minimise the risk of the Council having to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments.

<b>25 October 2017</b>	<b>ITEM: 12</b>
<b>Council</b>	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Children’s and Adult Social Care</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Sue Little, Cabinet Member for Children’s and Adult Social Care	
This report is public.	

**Adult Social Care:**

**1. Introduction**

I am honoured to deliver my second Cabinet Member report to Council as Portfolio Holder for Children’s and Adult Social Care. The report gives me the opportunity to reflect on what both my departments have achieved over the last year and detail the future of the services. I am proud of the progress we have made and would like to thank my senior officer team and all staff for their amazing commitment to improving services for the people of Thurrock.

**2. Adult Social Care**

**2.1 Context**

Adult Social Care continues to operate in a challenging environment. I am pleased, however, that these pressures have been acknowledged by central Government and welcome extra funding that has been made available – both through the Improved Better Care Fund and also through the 3% precept agreed by Council earlier this year. This raised an extra £ 4.5m for Adult Social Care and allowed us to manage the growth in demand for care as well as helping to stabilise the care market e.g. we agreed to increase the rates we pay for domiciliary care and agreed a 4% uplift for residential and nursing care homes.

The issues that continue to face Adult Social Care in Thurrock are:

- An ageing population – with people living longer but with a greater number of years in poor health;
- Increased complexity of cases for both older adults and working age adults;
- A competitive provider market – particularly domiciliary care;
- A health and care system established to react rather than prevent; and
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining social care staff – particularly carers.

## 2.2 Rising to the challenge

I continue to see many positive examples of how we are responding and delivering. Having outlined what our key challenges are, I'd like to spend the remainder of this section of my report focusing on both our achievements and also the plans we have in place to ensure we can continue to deliver solutions that the people of Thurrock require.

I spoke last time about our Transformation Programme 'Living Well in Thurrock'. The purpose of the Programme was to ensure that we delivered the change needed to be able to manage demand and in doing so ensure that residents were able to achieve the outcomes most important to them.

As I've already outlined, a number of the issues we are facing are also faced by our health partners. For this reason, during the last year we agreed that we would have a transformation programme that spanned both health and social care. This is called 'For Thurrock in Thurrock' and incorporates all of the elements in 'Living Well in Thurrock'.

Our programme is organised around three elements:

- Stronger Communities;
- The Built Environment;
- Adult Social Care and Health Infrastructure.

### 2.2.1 Stronger Communities

I continue to believe that our communities play a significant role in providing solutions or contributing to solutions that enable us to respond to the challenges for adult social care that I've outlined. Our focus, in partnership with the Voluntary Sector, (through Stronger Together Thurrock) on providing capacity by utilising the strengths of communities and individuals reflects this view. Our aim isn't to replace services, but to find good alternatives and recognise that services are not always the right response. Utilising the strengths available within communities and individuals is also essential to us being able to prevent, reduce and delay the need for health and care services – ensuring that people can remain as independent and connected as possible within their own neighbourhoods.

I wrote last year about some of the things we were doing to develop and harness the strengths of communities. I'm pleased to report that a further year has brought with it further progress, the highlights of which I've detailed below:

**Local Area Coordination** – building on the success of this ground-breaking and nationally recognised initiative, we now have 14 Local Area Coordinators and a Team Manager. The Team continue to identify and work with people who are on the cusp of crisis point and have numerous positive examples of their work. This includes avoiding and reducing service reliance through a focus on delivering the answer to the question 'what does a good life look like to you? As a result of the work of the Team, numerous individuals have been helped to achieve a more fulfilled life – with many of them contributing to their neighbourhoods through volunteering opportunities or being better connected through attendance at neighbourhood clubs and groups.

**Micro Enterprises** – when I introduced my report last year, I spoke about new work to encourage the development of micro enterprises. We now have 18 micro



enterprises established, with another 48 in the pipeline. Aimed at helping people who need a bit of support to live the life they want to live, the micro enterprises enable choice and control and are again key to maintaining independence and a 'good life'.

**Shared Lives** – again, in last year's report I introduced a new service that we had just set up called Shared Lives. This enabled adults with complex needs to live in a family setting in the community – avoiding a residential home placement. Residential placements for adults with complex needs are often few and far between – with many being available 'out of borough' and at a very high cost. The Shared Lives scheme is part of our strategy to build capacity and flexibility in the adult social care market place.

The Shared Lives Contract has been in place since March 2017, the team is now well established in Thurrock with a positive profile. 6 families or individuals have expressed an interest in becoming Shared Lives Carers and are starting the process of assessment and approval. The target for the first year is 5 matches and we are very optimistic that this will be achieved. Developing Shared Lives successfully takes time but we have everything in place to maximise success. Targeted work is being carried out to identify further Shared Lives Carers.

### 2.2.2 The Built Environment

Shaping the place we live in has a significant bearing on our health and wellbeing. We know that influencing the built environment will help us to manage and reduce the demand for adult social care and health for this reason it is a key element of our transformation programme. We have a well-established Housing and Planning Advisory Group in place to help us manage and influence issues that span planning, development and housing. The Group includes representatives from both health and social care. We have a number of projects in train that I want to update on:

**Chichester Close** - in November 2016 the Council, with the support of the Clinical Commissioning Group, was awarded approximately £500k from the Housing & Technology for People with Learning Disabilities Local Authority Capital Fund to develop 8 homes for young people with learning disabilities who may otherwise have to live in residential care outside the Borough. The grant is being used to completely refurbish, and equip with assistive technology, 2 low rise blocks at Chichester Close in Aveley. Works will be completed in October 2017. Residents for the scheme, who will be offered Direct Payments and or Individual Service Funds for their care and support, have been identified and are expected to move in in early November.

**Medina Road** - in 2015, in line with our autism strategy, the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group supported a bid by Family Mosaic (now part of Peabody) to the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund, and £786,948 was awarded to develop 6 homes for young people with autism and/or severe learning disabilities in Medina Road, Grays. Following extensive research and consultation the design has now been finalised and an application for planning permission was submitted on 8 August, with a decision expected later this year. The scheme will be an exemplar in terms of the co-production approach to scheme design, management arrangements and integration with the wider community, drawing on the recommendations of the report "Living in the community Housing Design for Adults with Autism". The scheme is expected to take 12 months to build, with completion in late 2018 and residents moving in in early 2019.

**Calcutta Road** - this housing scheme in Tilbury, being developed by the Council, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> to be designed to follow the recommendations of Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (the HAPPI report). The design addresses the fact that the health of older people is exacerbated by poor housing, particularly inaccessible poorly-heated homes, making older people vulnerable to conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, more likely to have falls and fractures, and to be less active and, as a result, more socially isolated and depressed. Plans were approved in July for the scheme which comprises 31 one-bedroom flats and 4 two-bedroom duplexes with communal facilities. All homes are dual aspect, wheelchair adaptable, with a private outdoor balcony or patio. The scheme will feature three main landscaped external spaces: a small public space fronting onto Calcutta Road, a secure shared podium-level garden and an allotment garden to the north of the scheme. Completion is expected in early 2019.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Residential Care** – as part of our approach, we want to ensure that we provide care that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I wrote in my report last year about developing options to increase capacity. We are currently developing a feasibility case for this. Delivering a new facility will mean being able to increase our residential placement capacity and upgrading the facilities provided to our residents – e.g. all rooms being en suite – but also enabling us to provide greater intermediate care capacity. Many of our residents are ready to leave hospital are not ready to come home as they need an intermediate care option first. A new care facility would also provide increased intermediate care capacity. Cabinet will make a decision about the preferred approach in December.

### **2.2.3 Adult Social Care (and Health) Infrastructure**

I've already commented on the strong relationship between health and social care. For that reason, a number of the projects we're taking forward are integrated in approach and delivery. Of course this doesn't mean that everything we do is joint with health, but most of what we do will have implications for health partners and we discuss more and more of what we do as part of a health and care 'system' rather than in isolation. I've described both what we've achieved over the last year to further our integration plans and also our key achievements for adult social care delivery.

#### **Health and Social Care Integration**

**Thurrock First** – our 'single point of access' across adult social care, community health and mental health demonstrates very well the benefits of an integrated approach to health and social care. The service was launched at the beginning of July and has brought staff from all three providers to work together under the one service. The launch of the service demonstrates the strong partnership working we have in Thurrock and our ability to put aside organisational boundaries for the benefit of our residents. We'll be carrying out a review of the service to identify impact and to look at the possibility of further expansion.

**Better Care Fund Plan** – our Better Care Fund Plan outlines our plans with health to deliver an integrated community-based approach to health and care for people aged 65 and above. This is the third year that we have had a Better Care Fund Plan in place, and as I've said earlier in the report, it demonstrates the solid partnership working that we have in place in Thurrock across Health and Social Care. The Fund is now worth over £40m and consists of 60% Council funding and 40%

Clinical Commissioning Group funding. The Plan sets out how we will use the funding against four schemes:

- Prevention and Early Intervention;
- Out of Hospital Integration;
- Good Discharge;
- Disabled Facilities Grant.

Through having a Better Care Fund, we've been able to broaden the capacity of our integrated teams as well as introducing initiatives that focus on early intervention. We have continued to do this for the 2017-19 Plan.

A significant proportion of people aged 65 and above are in receipt of services from both adult social care and health. The Better Care Fund allows us to take a system-wide view of how we use our resources collectively to best effect – including how we can use the resource available to better manage demand.

**New Models of Care** – alongside health partners and in response to the Director of Public Health's report on delivering system sustainability for adult social care and health, we are developing plans that seek to radically redesign the current health and care system. This will incorporate and respond to a number of separate elements, some of which have already begun – e.g. Wellbeing Teams, Integrated Medical Centres; Multi-Disciplinary Teams. Starting in Tilbury and Chadwell, partners will work together to develop an integrated 'out of Hospital' community health and care model. This will include consideration of how to join up with Stronger Together, and focus on early intervention and prevention as well as providing treatment within the community. The Better Care Fund Plan for 2017-19 reflects the approach being developed.

## **2.3 The local Health and Social Care market:**

### **2.3.1 Delayed Transfers of Care**

Much has been made nationally of Delayed Transfers of Care (or DTOCs as they are often referred as). DTOCs are where someone is medically fit to leave hospital but there is no-where for them to move to. This might be because they need an intermediate care bed but one isn't available, or because they need a care package at home but care providers have no capacity.

DTOC levels have increased however, Thurrock is still performing well compared to other local authorities. It is a key priority in our Better Care Fund Plan. We have increased the numbers of staff in the hospital social work team and are piloting a 'Home from Hospital' service to keep the DTOC numbers as low as possible.

### **2.3.2 Provider Market**

I reported last year that we had taken back in-house over 1600 hours of domiciliary care as a result of two providers either failing or handing back contracts. This had led to a stretched in-house service. Since my last report, a third provider has handed back its domiciliary care hours. This has meant that the Council has again had to act as the 'provider of last resort'. Significant amounts of work have been carried out to stabilise what is a very fragile market.

### **2.3.3 Recruitment and Retention**

Difficulties recruiting and retaining carers in particular remain. In Thurrock,

there are numerous opportunities for flexible and part-time work in the retail and distribution industries. The opening of the new Amazon Distribution Centre for example is impacting upon the pool of people who might consider becoming a carer. We are developing initiatives to respond to the challenge and to professionalise the carer role, we are looking at more flexible contracts and return to work opportunities.

#### **2.3.4 Partnership Working (across the health and care system)**

A number of the challenges felt by Thurrock Adult Social Care are shared by health partners. In the main this is because those individuals who are most resource intensive for adult social care are also the most resource intensive for health providers. They are our most complex and frail residents. As well as Adult Social Care, health providers are also struggling with capacity, recruitment and retention, and face similar demand pressures that are compounded by demographic change.

A number of the service users receiving a service from Adult Social Care will also be receiving a service from one or more health provider. As a result, there has been a growing focus on delivering solutions that span the health and care system and for greater integration – as reflected by our Better Care Fund Plan.

### **2.4 Future Adult Social Care Delivery**

**Wellbeing Teams** – part of our strategy to better manage service demand is to redesign what we do and how we do it. This includes domiciliary care which accounts for the greatest spend in adult social care and also greatest demand. We're looking to develop a new approach based on self-managed teams. The approach looks to work with the individual to find out what outcomes are most important to them and then designs an individual plan that may consist of formal and informal care options – including joining up with what available in the community and what family and friends might be able to do. The teams move away from a traditional domiciliary care system based on delivering a set amount of calls per day and uses resource flexibility on a day by day basis. Evidence shows that resource is used to better effect and individuals are better able to achieve what's important to them when their support is provided by community embedded flexible teams that self-manage. We are hoping to introduce the new approach by April next year and will expand the approach based on its success.

**Social Prescribing** – through the Better Care Fund and as part of Stronger Together Thurrock, we have been able to build on our approach to prevention and early intervention. This has included investment in Social Prescribing. Initially as a pilot, two social prescribers were recruited to work across 14 targeted GP practices. The purpose of Social Prescribing is to provide a service to Thurrock people who present to their GP with issues that have a non-clinical underlying cause. This might mean a social need or those with a chronic condition who regularly attend the GP surgery or are at risk of an unplanned admission.

The job of the navigators is to meet with people referred by their GP at their practice and to signpost them to appropriate services. This might mean providing information and advice, or it might mean signposting to services offering help with health, finance and social isolation. Navigators work closely with the Stronger Together team, Local Area Coordinators and with the voluntary sector.

The service enables people to get the right support and in doing so to also free up

primary care capacity.

Due to the success of the pilot, it has been agreed that the approach will be rolled out across the Borough.

**Domiciliary Care** – we are currently retendering for our domiciliary care providers. We've used the retender process to try to address some of the issues we have that contribute to market instability. This includes a greater focus on outcomes and splitting the tender in to smaller geographical areas which would mean more flexibility for carers – particularly for those who do not drive and want to work closer to where they live. Interviews have taken place and those successful will commence contracts in April. We have kept a number of hours in house to deliver our Wellbeing Teams.

**Safeguarding** – safeguarding vulnerable people is a priority for adult social care. The statutory Board led by Thurrock Council, the CCG and Essex Police is now well established and the safeguarding team provide skilled and person-centred interventions. In 2016-17 there were 711 concerns received and 181 of these went on to be investigated as defined under section 42 of the Care Act. We continue to see financial abuse and neglect being the two highest categories of abuse, and as a result of targeted work with banks, our partners in Trading Standards and our user-led organisation (Thurrock Coalition), we are responding and raising awareness across the Borough. We received positive feedback from the Office of Public Guardian who inspected our Appointee Team. The Team manages the finances of 138 vulnerable adults. The OPG concluded that the Team gave 'outstanding person-centred support'.

**Learning Disability, Autism, Complex Care** – in May 2017 the work we do with disabled young people transitioning in to adulthood was strengthened by the creation of a new 'Preparing for Adulthood' Team. This Team is introduced to young people at 14 years of age and will continue to work with them until they are 25. They ensure people are supported through the changes from children's to adult service and this is further strengthened by the new Preparing for Adulthood Panel that discusses the plans of all those young people aged 17 to ensure continuity of support.

**Transforming Care Partnership** – Thurrock has joined with Essex and Southend as a partner in this national programme, aiming to improve services and support for children, young people and adults with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition. Its key aims are to reduce inpatient provision and help people live happy and healthy lives within their own home. Through creative and skilled intervention, Thurrock is committed to supporting people within their own neighbourhoods rather than institutions.

## 2.5 **And finally.....**

I'm extremely proud of what Thurrock staff have achieved. It is therefore very encouraging when we continue to receive recognition from those charged with setting and developing the direction of travel for the Country.

Chief Social Worker Lyn Romeo visited Thurrock earlier this summer and was impressed with what she found. As a result, she wants to feature Thurrock's strength-based approach to social work in her Chief Social Worker annual report for 2017-18.

Thurrock is regularly 'name checked' for the innovative work it carries out to transform social care, and I am confident that the innovation in Thurrock gives us and our residents the best chance of success in the future.

## 2.6 Financial Information

Service	Sub-Service	Last Year Outturn	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance
Commissioning	Appointee & Receivership	120k	110k	110k	0
	Assistive Technology	75k	80k	80k	0
	Blue Badges	47k	32k	32k	0
	Commissioning Team	533k	556k	555k	(1k)
	Demand Management	0	500k	265k	(235k)
	Health Watch	124k	124k	124k	0
	Management & Support	222k	(517k)	(569k)	(53k)
	Meals on Wheels	127k	139k	155k	16k
	Special Equipment	146k	79k	79k	0
	Supporting People	380k	333k	333k	0
	Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions	1,386m	170k	170k	0
	Voluntary Sector Contracts	420k	384k	384k	0
<b>Commissioning Total</b>		<b>3,578m</b>	<b>1,988m</b>	<b>1,717m</b>	<b>(272k)</b>
External Placements	Learning Disabilities	9,040m	10,479m	10,797m	318k
	Mental Health	2,802m	2,769m	2,853m	83k
	Older People	6,365m	5,360m	5,277m	(83k)
	Physical Disabilities	2,517m	3,136m	2,972m	(164k)
<b>External Placements Total</b>		<b>20,725m</b>	<b>21,744m</b>	<b>21,897m</b>	<b>153k</b>
Fieldwork Services	Community Mental Health	871k	820k	776k	(44k)
	Complex Care & Transitions	153k	244k	196k	(48k)
	Early Intervention	1,097m	1,267m	1,279m	12k
	Hospital & RRAS	641k	587k	627k	39k
	Local Area Co-ordinators	19k	0	9k	9k
	Older People Mental Health	201k	182k	186k	4k
	Safeguarding	369k	507k	516k	9k
<b>Fieldwork Services Total</b>		<b>3,351m</b>	<b>3,608m</b>	<b>3,589m</b>	<b>(19k)</b>
Provider Services	Business Administration	156k	256k	215k	(41k)
	Collins House Residential Home	758k	714k	766k	52k
	Customer Finance	359k	356k	357k	1k
	Day Care	901k	979k	980k	1k
	Extra Care	711k	587k	557k	(29k)
	Management & Support	339k	357k	361k	4k
	Thurrock Care & Home & Joint Reablement	1,896k	2,363m	2,448m	85k
	Thurrock First	279k	411k	348k	(63k)

<b>Provider</b>				
<b>Services Total</b>	<b>5,399m</b>	<b>6,022m</b>	<b>6,032m</b>	<b>10k</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>34,089m</b>	<b>34,196m</b>	<b>34,065m</b>	<b>(131k)</b>

**Children's Social Care:**

## 1. Children's Social Care

I have considerable experience and knowledge of children's social care services, have chaired the Corporate Parenting Committee and am a member of the Fostering Panel. I understand the strengths and vulnerabilities of the service well and I am passionate about ensuring that we deliver the best possible services to vulnerable children and their families. There is still much work for us to do if we are to achieve our ambition of becoming an outstanding service. However, I remain confident that my officers have the commitment and drive to continue to move the service in the right direction. This is critical in an environment where there is increased oversight and monitoring from the service regulator, Ofsted.

## 2. Context

The Children & Social Work Bill (2016) published in May 2016, a wide-ranging and significant change in legislation for the social work profession. Covering the care system, adoption, Corporate Parenting and; rights of care leavers. In addition, it includes the introduction of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel; significant changes to social worker accreditation, regulation, registration, and training; as well as publication and sharing of information, and a duty for agencies to co-operate when children are at risk of harm.

There is clear evidence nationally that the demand for children's social care services continues to rise, with domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and substance misuse being key drivers behind the rise in the number of children with a child protection plan and children in care. Thurrock continues to have high rates of children in care and children on a child protection plan, but following the review by iMPower in 2016 the department has implemented a number of measures to contain the increase in demand pressures while ensuring our children are safe. As a result we have seen a decrease in the number of contacts and referrals, and the number of children in care has reduced from a high of 353 in 2016 to the current number of 315. Further work will be undertaken by officers to develop services which will enable us to safely reduce the number of children with a child protection plan and the number of children in care.

I am pleased to have seen significant progress in Thurrock Children's Social Care Services over the past year. The service continues to make improvements following the 2016 Ofsted Inspection in readiness for the new inspection framework which is to be launched later this year. Councils where the service has been judged requires improvement will receive a two week inspection as opposed to the lighter touch one week inspection for those authorities judged good. This will be undertaken as part of a 3 year cycle of inspections of all local authority children's social care services between 2018 and 2021. In addition Ofsted will also hold an annual conversation with each authority and expect to see a comprehensive self-evaluation of the service detailing both strengths and areas for improvement. Local authorities can also expect to receive at least one short unannounced inspection. This new approach is designed to identify authorities which are at risk of failing and ensure that action is taken early to address areas for improvement.

### **3. Service Developments**

#### **3.1 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children**

The last 3 years has seen an unprecedented rise in the number of refugee children arriving in Thurrock and entering care. These children usually enter the UK at Dover often in the back of lorry and are subsequently dropped off at Thurrock services on the M25. Alternatively young people have entered the UK via the ports at Purfleet and Tilbury. As they present themselves in Thurrock they automatically become the responsibility of the authority. The Home Office has sent out guidance suggesting that local authorities should be able to accept a number of refugee's equivalent to 0.07% of their overall child population. In Thurrock's case, this should be 28 children. A year ago resources were being stretched to the limit supporting over 100 children which is over 3 times the threshold.

So it is positive to note that tremendous progress has been made in reducing the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children looked after by the council. Under my direction and leadership, officers have worked with colleagues in the Eastern Region authorities to establish a transfer protocol so that the financial burden of looking after refugee children would be shared equally across all authorities in the region. As a result at the time of writing this report there were only 36 UASC in our care with numbers continuing to fall month by month.

### **4. The Social Care Workforce**

One of the key areas of concern from our Ofsted Inspection was the instability of the social care workforce. The high number of agency social work staff was also contributing to an unacceptably high overspend in Children's Services. I am delighted to report that we have made great progress in recruiting more permanent social workers while at the same time reducing the rate we pay the remaining agency staff. Through our collaborative work the Eastern Region Authorities established a Memorandum of Co-operation which has enabled us to reduce the number of agency social workers paid over the agreed rate. In July 2016 we employed 70 agency staff with 56 paid over the Memorandum of Cooperation rate. Today we have employed 47 agency social workers and only 3 are paid over the Memorandum of Cooperation rate. This is positive news for both Thurrock and the region as a whole, as together we have been able to reduce the spend on high cost agency social workers.

As well as having some success in our recruitment, social worker sickness rates in the service remain below the council average, indicating good levels of support and supervision for staff. Further work is underway on the structure of the service to address issues about the size of caseloads and management spans of control to ensure there is effective oversight of casework practice.

#### **4.1 Fostering and Adoption**

The fostering service has been successful at recruiting additional foster carers and reducing the number of children and young people placed out of the borough. In 2016 72% of children in care were placed out of the borough and only 28% inside the borough. We have made good progress by reducing this to 61% placed out of the borough and 39% placed inside the borough. Through my role on the fostering and adoption panel I have acted as a champion for foster care recruitment and this has seen an increase in



the number of foster carers recruited. There were 10 new approvals between April 2016 and March 2017; between April 2017 to August 2017, 22 new applications were accepted. Of that number, 9 families have been approved and 12 applications are at different stages of the assessment process. This will support our aims of placing more children in Thurrock so that they can continue to access good quality schooling and remain close to their families and communities.

I remain determined that more children should be adopted from care than is currently the case in Thurrock. While I am pleased that we outperform the national and regional performance on timeliness, I am setting stringent expectations that there should be a greater number of children adopted from our care.

## **4.2 Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation continues to be well understood and addressed across the service and partner agencies. An extensive training programme has been coordinated by the CSE Manager, bespoke CSE and Trafficking awareness training has been written and delivered in collaboration with Essex Police, Open Door and South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre, (SERICC) variously, to 1119 professionals, (excluding those present at conferences). Agencies and numbers trained so far comprise: CSC and Support Workers: 290; Adult Social Care: 48; Thurrock Foster Carers: 66; Thurrock Housing staff: 201; Independent Fostering Association Providers and Residential Staff: 71; Thurrock GPs: 27; Thurrock Licenced Taxi Operators, Drivers and PAs: 416.

Thurrock has an established Risk Assessment Group, (RAG): The Risk Assessment Group a sub-group of the Thurrock Safeguarding Children Board, continues to meet every 2 weeks, and is attended by a range of statutory and voluntary partners. It has had presented for review 108 referrals for 76 separate children between 01.07.16 and 01.07.17. Facilitating the challenge, oversight and development of plans to reduce the vulnerability of children, and identify opportunities to target and investigate potential perpetrators.

Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Meeting (MASE) oversees the Risk Assessment Group, being attended by up to 13 statutory and voluntary agencies every 6 weeks. The Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy has been translated into the Thurrock Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation, 'Plan on a Page' to guide multi-agency progression around this area: this in turn has informed the detailed Thurrock Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing Children and Trafficking Action Plan 2017/18.

The award-winning 'I Didn't Know' Child Sexual Exploitation Campaign, written by Thurrock Child Sexual Exploitation Manager, Southend Essex and Thurrock partners and Essex Police, was a public awareness campaign re-launched in 2017 for a week on 13th March in the lead up to National CSE Awareness Day, on Saturday 18th March. Recognising that the exploitation of children is not confined solely to sexual exploitation, but frequently linked to other implicitly threatening and explicitly violent contexts into which children are groomed, the campaign shone a spotlight on how grooming and sexual exploitation can manifest in the wider exploitation of children, such as trafficking, criminal exploitation by gangs and organised crime networks.

## **4.3 Female Genital Mutilation**

The Barnardo's National Centre of Excellence in relation to Female Genital Mutilation has received a further grant of £1.7m from wave 2 of the Government's Innovations Programme to extend its reach into high prevalence areas, and its remit to include other harmful practices and abuse linked to faith or belief. The National Centre will continue to work in Thurrock and the FGM specialist social worker will extend her remit to other harmful traditional practices. The Centre will also provide training for children's services staff, so that they can identify abuse and take action where required to safeguard children. Further work will also be undertaken with affected communities to tackle the beliefs which perpetuate these harmful practices. The Centre will also expand the range of information, tools and research included on its knowledge hub which will be available to social workers.

#### **4.4 Youth Offending Service**

Thurrock has one of the smallest Youth Offending Services (YOS) in the country, but provides good value for money and achieves a lower reoffending rate than the national, regional and family averages. Nationally, Youth Justice statistics indicate a continued and positive reduction in the number of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time. In Thurrock we have had some of the biggest reductions in First Time Entrants (FTE) in the country achieving a 60% reduction in the first year of our triage court diversion scheme in partnership with Essex police and Crown Prosecution Service. These numbers have continued to fall year on year but more recently there are indicators that the trend has slowed and our predictions are that the slowdown will reverse.

There is also the recognition that those young people involved with YOSs are often among the most vulnerable children, with complex needs, many of whom are entrenched in offending, often presenting the greatest risk to the public and most challenging to work with. The priority of the service is to reduce overall levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in line with the local Community Safety Partnership targets. Additionally the YOS is developing strategies and interventions to countermand the growing presence of gang related crime in the greater Essex and Kent areas as both gang activity and gang members move further afield from their London bases. Despite the fall in workload I have ensured that the YOS continues to have the resources it needs to rise to the growing threat of gang culture and gang related violence.

#### **4.5 Brighter Futures**

I am pleased to report that Brighter Futures is a new creation bringing together a wide range of services and partners to provide help to children and families in Thurrock as needs emerge. Brighter Futures offers a range of preventative services to support families in Thurrock, allowing children and young people to achieve their full potential. It supports the education, health and wellbeing of children and young people in a coordinated way, preventing problems from developing and, when they do, intervening early to stop them from escalating.

Brighter Futures brings together all of Thurrock Council's universal and targeted prevention services for children and young people (ages 0 – 19). The Core elements of Brighter Futures include:

- Brighter Futures Children's Centres: open to all families offering a range of education, health and play activities;

- Brighter Futures Healthy Families: includes, among other things, Health Visitors who give advice and guidance to all new parents in Thurrock, and School nurses work to keep children healthy in schools;
- Brighter Futures Prevention and Support Service: provides targeted help to families which have specific needs encompassing issues such as parenting support, domestic abuse, sexual violence and the Troubled Families Programme which continues to focus on families where worklessness, poor school attendance, parental physical and mental health issues and Anti- Social Behaviour are featured.

Families all have an allocated Lead Professional who knows the family best and regular Team Around the Family Meetings are held to ensure that individual, time limited, task focussed plans make a real difference to the lives of families. Early feedback from families is encouraging and we will continue to develop the service to meet the needs of families.

#### **4.6 Safeguarding Children Board**

I am a member of the Safeguarding Board and was pleased when following on from the Ofsted inspection in March 2016 the board received the grading of "Good". Subsequently, the Board set out its plans for the coming year to consolidate on the good work achieved and to focus on developing its structure to respond to future demands. In May 2016 the Board held a multi-agency conference -Hear no Evil, See no Evil, Speak No Evil which focused on child sexual exploitation and grooming which included a keynote speaker who was a victim the Rotherham sexual exploitation enquiry. Proactively the Business team on behalf of the Board attended two local family events - The Orsett Show and Grays Big lunch, showcasing the work of the Board and distributing safeguarding information to families. December 2016 saw a change in the LSCB independent Chair. We welcomed David Archibald to the role and thanked David Peplow the outgoing chair, for his contributions over the last four years. The Board published a Serious Case Review (SCR) SCR James in December 2016, which examined the events and circumstances surrounding the tragic death of a looked after young man. Two further reviews, SCR Harry a young man who sadly died whilst in a youth detention centre and SCR Alex a review into physical abuse of young children are also being undertaken and will be published in due course.

The Board ran a number of training events and learning forums throughout the year for professional and parents, developing skills and awareness of safeguarding children across the Borough. Our nationally recognised "Walk On Line "Road shows for the children of Thurrock received acknowledgment from Ofsted in its spring journal and the next phase of the programme took place during March 2017 with a further 2,100 year 5 pupils receiving information on internet safety and stranger danger . This innovative programme has now been rolled out to over 10,000 of our young people over the last four years and goes from strength to strength. Overall during this year in excess of 130,000 different publicity items have been distributed to parents, professionals and children covering the wider safeguarding agenda to support keeping our children and young people safe.

The Board prides itself on the effectiveness of its multi-agency partnership working which provides the platform to openly challenge its partners though its meeting forums and thematic covering locally identified concerns. The Board also actively engages in multi-agency audits identifying learning across the partnerships which is shared through the Boards learning improvement framework and the sharing of good practice. The Board continues to work jointly on Pan Essex processes with its colleagues from Southend and

Essex and have recently updated the Southend Essex and Thurrock Child protections procedures. It also plays an important role with its regional colleagues to influence the national agenda and support the future development of Safeguarding.

## 5 The Challenge Ahead

I remain committed to ensuring that we deliver effective and high quality provision for our most vulnerable children and families and will work with officers to ensure that we continue to drive improvements in the service and manage the demand pressures. I would like to thank our foster carers and staff for their hard work and dedication.

I am under no illusions that we are facing a tough agenda, but we will continue to explore new ways of working and encourage innovation in the workforce to rise to the challenge.

## 6 Financial Information

The forecast for Children's Social Care as reported at the end of quarter 1 is an overspend of £1.885m. This is primarily due to pressures within legal costs, children's placements and social work agency staffing, however, the service continues to work towards driving these pressures down and manage within budget provision.

The forecast assumes that work within the aftercare service continues to have a positive impact with the ongoing review of placements when children reach 18. Systems are in place to ensure that a robust response is maintained so that future costs are contained. If this continues the position for the aftercare service is expected to improve further.

The Corporate Director continues to review high costs residential placements on a monthly basis and where safe to do so, placement costs are reduced as the service focuses on achieving better value and more suitable placements for our young people. In addition, there is ongoing work on re-commissioning of placements provision, and changes to accommodation in aftercare.

At the beginning of the year there were 56 agency workers, however, the trend is expected to continue reducing over the course of the year. The service is working on a major recruitment drive which will enable this to happen.

Sub – Service	YTD Actual	16- 17 Outturn	17/18 Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance
CATO Management & Emergency	238k	474k	682k	689k	7k
Children & Families	3,237m	6,419m	4,599m	5,201m	603k
Family Support	1,37 m	2,686m	2,110m	2,363m	253k
LSCB & Quality Assurance	54k	116k	82k	126k	44k
Placement Support	8,265m	15,634m	14,840m	15,627m	787k

Safeguarding and Child Protection & LADO	437k	992k	822k	911k	89k
YOS and Adolescent Services	517k	563k	632k	728k	96k
Brighter Futures - Prevention Service	1,018m	1,917m	2,413m	2,363k	(50k)
Children and Families Assessment	1,030m	2,352m	1,846m	1,901m	55k
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>16,174m</b>	<b>31,154m</b>	<b>28,024m</b>	<b>30,620m</b>	<b>1,885m</b>

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<b>25 October 2017</b>	<b>ITEM: 13</b>
<b>Council</b>	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Mark Coxshall, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration	
This report is public.	

## **1.0 Introduction and Overview**

I am delighted to introduce this report as Portfolio Holder for Regeneration at a time when the growth programme is delivering real opportunities for all Thurrock residents and businesses.

The growth programme in Thurrock continues to be one of the largest and most exciting opportunities in the country. Thurrock's reputation as a place full of opportunity has helped attract a number of large scale regeneration projects including London Distribution Park at the Port of Tilbury, the continuing investment at DP World London Gateway, Thames Enterprise Park, Purfleet Port and the expansions of Lakeside and the Purfleet Regeneration. These projects in turn have created significant numbers of jobs with the opening of Amazon and UPS facilities in 2017. The announcement of further investment by Halo and Wincanton at London Gateway and emerging proposals for the port expansion at Tilbury2 will ensure further opportunities.

In addition to these large scale projects we have also focussed on smaller but nevertheless significant projects for local people such as expanding our small business accommodation offer in the borough, helping local people to find work and improving our town centres.

Good progress has been made in a number of areas as the Borough-wide regeneration programme continues to move from plans to deliverables. The award of £10.8m from the Local Growth Fund to the Grays South project has secured the implementation of another of our key regeneration projects.

Beyond Thurrock's boundaries we have led the coordination of growth and investment planning across the wider South Essex area and continue to play an important part in the work of SELEP (South East Local Enterprise Partnership). In addition, we have taken the lead in shaping strategic planning discussions in South Essex.

Employment rates remain strong and in the last 12 months to March 2017 (the

latest published figures) 79.1% of working age residents were in employment up 6.4% on the same period last year. With Amazon and UPS both due to become operational in October 2017 with the creation of over 2,000 new jobs the outlook remains very positive.

Development activity in Thurrock remains strong reflecting the growing confidence of developers and investors in the Borough, not least due to the way in which the Planning and Regeneration services pro-actively and positively conduct their business. This puts us in an enviable position to secure lasting change, to address some of the infrastructure issues in the Borough and to create opportunities for local residents.

## **2.0 Progress in the Growth Hubs**

Our focussed approach to securing significant growth within our six key Growth Hubs is delivering results.

### **2.1 Tilbury**

We have continued to make significant progress in our long-term plan for growth.

A wider masterplan for the for all of Tilbury Town was presented to Cabinet in October 2017 which provides a clear and unified strategic framework to be used as a reference point for all future development, and above all empower the Tilbury Community to continue to bring effective challenge and realise benefits from investment.

This incorporates the masterplan for the Civic Square, recognising a number of significant drivers of change which present opportunities for and pressures on the town. Notably there are three Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) all adjacent or close to Tilbury and likely to have significant impacts on the town:

- The Lower Thames Crossing;
- The proposed expansion of the Port of Tilbury (Tilbury2); and
- The new Power Generation facilities.

The new Masterplanning Framework will provide a guide for further development and will support Tilbury residents and businesses to realise the opportunities of development and to mitigate against any potential negative impacts. The new framework has six strategic objectives:

1. integrate projects to deliver place;
2. Enhance public realm;
3. Facilitate employment and skills;
4. Improve access and movement;
5. Balance development and environment; and
6. Support the development of a new Local Plan.

Work has continued with colleagues in Thurrock CCG and other NHS partners to develop an Integrated Medical Centre on Civic Square. The consultant team including an architect will be appointed late 2017, leading to submission of an Outline Business



Case to NHS England in March 2018. It is currently anticipated that the facility will be open in 2020.

Elsewhere in Tilbury plans have been approved for an expansion of the Tilbury Riverside Business Centre. This will create an additional 1,300 square metres of workspace for small and medium sized businesses in Tilbury. The procurement process to appoint a contractor will begin in 2017. The programme aims to support jobs and growth.

A programme of public realm improvements has been developed as a forerunner to the improvements set out in the masterplan framework. These focus on an improved street scene in key areas including Calcutta Road, Montreal Road and London Road. Our housing company has completed the development of the former St Chads school site for 128 housing units. Of these 26 units will be for affordable housing.

The Port of Tilbury and associated industries continue to create jobs for local people. In September 2017 the new Amazon Fulfilment Centre was opened at the London Logistics Park. The facility will operate with two daily shifts, each with up to 1,670 staff, and a further 170 management, administration and security staff giving a total of 3,510 staff. The actual position at opening is a total 1,500 permanent staff, though this is anticipated to rise with a further 1,000 seasonal staff to be recruited shortly. The Port of Tilbury have completed a comprehensive community consultation exercise around their proposals for a port extension at Tilbury2 and more detailed plans will be published shortly.

The Council has continued to work with the newly formed Local Action Group (LAG) of local community and other stakeholders to develop and submit a bid to the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme which will deliver a range of volunteering, skills development, employment and business support projects in the town. The strategy outlining the use of the funding was approved by the DCLG and DWP in the autumn of 2016 and the final funding application was submitted in July 2017. The proposals are based on a local grant scheme model, whereby local organisations will bid to the Council for funding to support local initiatives. If the bid to CLLD is successful the programme will leverage up to £3m additional funding to the town to support skills, jobs and business support activity between 2018 and 2021.

## **2.2 Purfleet**

Purfleet Centre will transform Purfleet, delivering now c. 2,800 new homes, a new town centre including shops, bars and restaurants, community facilities including schools, health centre and leisure facilities. It will also open up access to the riverfront and replace the existing level crossing with a new pedestrian and vehicle bridge significantly improving local public realm and connections through the area.

PCRL have re-worked their funding package and are developing the proposals for the scheme ready for the submission of an outline planning application by the end of this year and a detailed application for the first part of the development in February 2018. Enabling works are expected to start on site in spring 2018 and construction of the first new homes is anticipated to begin swiftly after achieving planning consent.

We have secured a site for a new Secondary School in Purfleet. The EFA is progressing this scheme and a full planning application has recently been submitted, with Harris Riverside opening its doors in Purfleet in September 2019.

### **2.3 Lakeside**

Lakeside Basin provides thousands of jobs for local people, generates significant business rate income and attracts millions of visitors to the Borough every year. We continue to work with landowners and businesses to ensure that the exciting vision for the future transformation and development of the area set out in the Lakeside Area Development Framework becomes a reality.

Under this vision, Lakeside's existing strategic role will be further strengthened and developed through ambitious proposals to expand and diversify the basin to provide more retail floor space alongside greatly enhanced leisure, commercial and residential uses as part of a new Regional Town Centre.

In order to translate the vision into reality the Council has been working closely in partnership with Intu to assist them in bringing forward their proposed £230m investment in new retail and leisure floor space at Lakeside. This includes the renewal of planning permission for the Northern Extension and the grant of planning permission for the first phase of a mixed use leisure scheme which is now being implemented.

### **2.4 Grays**

The Council has continued to deliver its vision for Grays. Recognising that much of the original vision has been delivered or is in the process of being delivered we have undertaken a refresh of the Grays Development Framework. I will be reporting to Cabinet in November with an updated Master Plan that will provide the Council's development framework for the town centre recognising the progress that has been made and identifying further steps and new opportunities to continue the momentum that we have built up. Next year the Master Plan will be part of the Council's Second Issues and Options Consultation on the Local Plan.

Earlier this year we received confirmation of a £10.8 million grant from the Local Growth Fund (Round 3) to complete the funding package for an exciting regeneration project including a new foot crossing under the rail line in High Street with new public squares. The project provides opportunities to create new commercial and residential accommodation around the rail station.

The Council's property consultants have been asked to proceed with the land acquisition required for the project. We have appointed a dedicated project manager with experience of working within Network Rail and the Department for Transport to manage delivery. We will shortly be tendering for a design team to lead the design of the appearance of the project working closely with Network Rail's technical design teams.

The first stage of improvements to the road network around the town centre has

been completed and further work will be done over the next year to enable removal of the one way system.

The Council owns business centres in Grays which accommodate a growing number of small businesses. Alongside the Centre for Business the Council also operates the Old Courthouse (former Magistrates Court) which was converted into a business centre opened in December 2015. There is strong demand for space at both centres and occupancy targets are being exceeded.

In 2016 the Council introduced a permanent Town Centre Management resource to support the local economy and address negative perceptions of place. Between January and April 2016, there was a period of consultation with town centre traders and visitors. This consultation led to the formation of the Grays Town Management Partnership (GTMP) supported by a Town Centres Co-ordinator. The business led GTMP has now published its own business plan containing a range of activities and initiatives to achieve its four priorities:

#### Community Engagement and Integration

- Delivery of free events and festivals such as Love Grays launch, Grays Art Trail & Christmas Switch On

#### Safe and welcome

- Improved relationships with the Police
- Roll out an improved town link radio system

#### Improved Street Scene

- Work with Thurrock Council to improve the cleanliness of the town centre
- Grays In Bloom summer competition

#### 18hr Economy

- Free Open Air Cinema community event
- Pre-theatre dinner vouchers

A marketing and communications working group has also been established to ensure efficient communication of all projects and initiatives. The public destination brand – Love Grays – was formally launched in February 2017, including a website and social media for users of the town centre. The GTMP will aim to build on these existing projects and initiatives into 2018 to continue supporting the local economy and communities in Grays.

Following a successful procurement exercise a new markets operator, Geraud, was appointed with effect from 1 June 2017. Working with the Council the new operator has developed exciting plans to introduce new specialist and food markets to enhance the offer in the Town Centre. Evening street food markets will also be trialled to try and increase the dwell time of commuters returning from London.

## **2.5 London Gateway**

London Gateway Port continues to establish itself as a major operator in international shipping. The first three berths (of an eventual six) are now open meaning that the port has 1250 meters of quay wall, providing three deep-water berths and more ultra-large container vessel capacity than any other port in the UK.

Whilst shipping activity clearly continues to build, the development of the logistics and distribution park remains slower than anticipated. The bulk of the jobs anticipated from London Gateway will be generated through the logistics park and, therefore, the Council remains keen to work with the port owners to secure further development and create job opportunities at all levels for local residents.

Last year, UPS obtained consent to develop their London distribution centre on 18.6 hectares in the distribution park in just 17 days via the London Gateway Local Development Order. Speed of decision-making is paramount to attracting growth and investment and this case highlights the proactive and efficient approach taken by the Council's award winning Planning Service. The UPS facility will open later this year with the creation of 542 jobs and the Council has formed a taskforce to help UPS to recruit their workforce and to look at improving accessibility to these jobs from across Thurrock.

Recognising the benefits of the LDO and the fast track planning process, SH Pratt Group, one of Europe's leading fruit importers recently announced that they are to take leave on a bespoke temperature-controlled facility measuring 108,555 sq. ft. The prior approval application is expected in October 2017.

## **2.6 Thames Enterprise Park**

The Council initially worked with Thames Oil Port and Thames Enterprise Park [TEP] to develop and agree a masterplan for the 400 acre site that placed Thurrock at the heart of the emerging Green Technology/Energy market. Demolition of the refinery began in November 2014 and clearance of refinery process units is continuing. In 2015 the site was put up for sale with strong interest from investors and the Council continues to support the sale process and to meet potential inward investors. The site was purchased by Marcol and plans are now being driven forward by Thames Oilport investor Greenergy in partnership with iSec, the industrial development arm of Marcol. Since purchasing the site, the DM team have worked closely with the TEP project team to develop their plans to regenerate the site. Planning consent was granted in September 2017 to remediate large parts of the site and to protect biodiversity assets around the creek ahead of the forthcoming application for the entire site, which is expected later this year. The emerging plans show the site to be redeveloped to provide a range of complementary services and functions including food processing, manufacture, storage and distribution, along with a new sustainable energy park and central hub accommodating a new skills academy, research and development, training and conference spaces.

### 3.0 Wider Regeneration and Economic Development

The Council's Planning and Growth Service is responsible for leading a broad range of regeneration, growth and economic development work. Outside of the growth hubs and capital projects the service has focussed on:

- Building strong partnerships and playing a leading role in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP); Thames Gateway Strategic Group; and Opportunity South Essex (OSE). Thurrock has provided the lead for the OSE in developing the Growth Strategy for South Essex and in identifying a pipeline of investment propositions for the business led partnership which serves as one of four federated boards of SELEP.
- Through LGF 3 £10.8m was secured towards the Grays South regeneration project which will see a new pedestrian walkway created under the rail line at Grays station. Working with partners across OSE more than £160m of Local Growth Fund support has already been secured, with nearly £100m coming to Thurrock alone.
- Working with partners to develop a simplified and co-ordinated approach to business support and engagement through the Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST) Growth Hub.
- Strengthening the relationship with our business community through regular meetings of the Thurrock Business Board and Network Groups which have facilitated a two-way discussion on a range of strategic issues.
- Worked with partners to deliver the ERDF funded Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme. This provides support, including grants, to improve business efficiency and to bring new low carbon products and services to market. So far over 205 businesses have received grants, totalling £1.1m, to improve energy efficiency and introduce 'green' business practices. The programme is due to complete by February 2019 and work has begun looking options to extend the programme.
- Funding was secured from the Department for Work and Pensions to pilot a partnership project 'Back to your Future-Thurrock', which successfully supported 15 young and lone parents back into employment, self-employment or training. Funding has now been secured for a further programme, On Track to Your Futures, which will support a further 30 young and lone parents.
- Progressing our ambition for Thurrock to become a 'hub' for social enterprise, with four 'Soup' projects held over the year. The events give budding social entrepreneurs the opportunity to share their business idea and win a sum of money to help get the idea off the ground. A 'School for Social Entrepreneurs' has also been introduced in 2017 in partnership with a number of local community organisations including Grays Big Local and the Eastern Enterprise Hub. The school will support 16 budding social entrepreneurs to develop and implement their business idea with ongoing advice, assistance and support.

- Strong progress has been made through the Economic Development and Skills Partnership in tackling employment and skills issues. Initiatives include:
  - The successful JobTown project ultimately secured over £2m of external resources to tackle unemployment amongst NEETs through the On Track Thurrock Programme.
  - The jobs@opportunitythurrock Facebook page has been developed to provide businesses with a cost effective place to advertise their vacancies and to raise the profile of these vacancies amongst Thurrock residents and communities. This initiative has been particularly effective in helping Amazon and UPS to find the workforce that they require.
  - Developing a digital employability and skills platform, Opportunities South East, as a pilot with SELEP. This platform will bring together all the offers of assistance and support for employers and job seekers, in one place. The platform allows users to post job opportunities, search job opportunities as a user, secure work experience and promote support services for businesses.
- Spent £40,000 through a High Street Innovation Fund on improving the appearance of shop fronts of small businesses in local parades and high streets throughout Thurrock.
- Managing the Council's portfolio of business space to achieve occupancy and income targets. During 2017 a new managing agent, NWES, was procured for the Tilbury Riverside Business Centre.
- Our Business Rates Pool, including partners at the London Boroughs of Havering and Barking & Dagenham and Basildon District Council achieved a surplus of £200,000 in 2016/17. Under the terms of the pool this can be invested in economic development initiatives which will increase business rate income in future years. Partners are currently developing a range of bespoke business growth services.
- Working across Opportunity South Essex and SELEP and to secure external resources. The Council is leading or a key partner in a number of new bids for funding which will support employment programmes, provide support services to priority growth sectors and make finance available to businesses to support their growth plans.

Our efforts to date have ensured that Thurrock has been able to achieve significant growth both in terms of jobs and business growth. We are now strongly placed to realise further benefits and provide local communities with significant opportunities.

#### **4.0 Strategic Planning**

The Council's Strategic Planning and Growth Strategy Teams coordinate and lead on the preparation of sub-regional and local planning policy and associated activity including but not limited to:

- Leading on the development and promotion of the strategic planning process across South Essex.
- Co-ordinating the Council's responses to planning consultations from other authorities and key stakeholders as required under the Duty to Co-operate.
- Co-ordinating the production of sub-regional technical studies such as the South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment; South Essex Strategic Retail Study and the South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment.
- Preparing a new Local Plan for Thurrock which will guide the development of the borough over the period to 2037.
- Developing a comprehensive evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan and to support an increase in housing delivery.
- Undertaking capacity building work on planning matters with key stakeholders and members of the public through the Local Plan Developers, Residents and Youth Forums.
- Preparing the now adopted Thurrock Design Strategy and Residential Extensions Design Guide which will raise design standards and promote quality place making throughout the borough.
- Contributing to the preparation and development of corporate plans and strategies like the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Active Place Strategy.
- Organising the South Essex Health Wellbeing and Planning Summit 2 with colleagues in Public Health.

### Thurrock Local Plan

In February-April 2016 the Council undertook its first formal consultation on the emerging Local Plan to obtain the views of stakeholders, local businesses and the community on the key issues that the Local Plan will need to address.

Since the conclusion of the Issues and Options (Stage 1) consultation the Council has continued to engage key stakeholders through the creation of four discussion forums and through the use of summer roadshows. Both the Local Plan Developer Forum and the Local Plan Residents Forum now meet regularly and have been very successful in providing an effective means of engaging local businesses and the community in shaping the future development of the Local Plan.

It is shortly proposed to begin consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options (Stage 2) Public Consultation Document which will set out for the first time the scale and nature of Thurrock's future housing, employment and retail/leisure needs over the period of the Local Plan. The Consultation Document will also set out a range of spatial options for accommodating the projected levels of housing growth, including

proposals for a number of major urban extensions at selected locations across the Borough. Following the conclusion of the consultation period, work will begin on collating the representations received and the production of Report of Public Consultation which will help inform the next stage of the plan-making process, including, the preparation of a Draft Local Plan.

In addition to the preparation of the Local Plan, the Growth and Strategy Team have also been involved in the production of Master Plans for Grays and Tilbury, with the preparation of further Master Plans for other Borough Centres and the proposed Local Plan Urban Extensions now also under consideration for commissioning and development.

## **5.0 Development Management**

The Council's Development Management Service is responsible for:

- The determination of Planning Applications;
- Pre-application enquiries and advice service;
- Appeals;
- Discharge of conditions; and
- Enforcement of planning controls.

In 2016/17 the Development Management (DM) team ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of 339 Local Authorities nationally for its speed in determining planning applications. This is a great achievement and having a DM team ranking so highly in the DCLG league tables means that Thurrock continues to be an attractive place for business to invest. The team have also continued to hone its proactive approach to planning, delivering front line projects and working with the development industry to realise our regeneration ambitions. Having an efficient Development Management Service and a strong and competitive Building Control service is particularly important in a regeneration area as credibility and reputation has a considerable influence on investor confidence, helping to attract growth and investment in Thurrock.

In 2016/17, the Service produced its first ever Design Strategy and released a new Residential Alterations and Extensions (RAE) Design Guide. These documents mark a new age for Thurrock and lay the foundations to secure higher quality design in Thurrock.

Alongside the design guides, the service has continued to work with Design Council CABE, sending large scale major planning proposals through the Thurrock CABE design review panel. The design review process has been incredibly valuable to applicants as it exposes their schemes to a panel of industry experts who are able to help shape and refine schemes alongside the planning officers, prior to submission.

It is absolutely vital that new development in the Borough is of the highest design quality and the Planning Service is committed to shape schemes to create quality places in Thurrock and challenge schemes that do not meet the standard. Through the publications of design guides, engagement with developers and the partnership



with Design Council CABE, perceptions of the place have already started to change and Thurrock is beginning to be seen as a destination for not just opportunity, but quality.

The reputation and credibility of the Service has also been important in securing commercial opportunities beyond Thurrock's boundaries. In October 2016, after an initial commission, the Service entered into a Managed Service agreement with Brentwood Borough Council. This arrangement sees the Service providing the management of Brentwood's Planning team and in 9 months of working with the team Brentwood have risen from 92<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> nationally in the DCLG league tables. This highlights the commercial and professional capabilities of the Planning team, with the Managed Service arrangement with Brentwood ultimately helping to secure jobs and services at Thurrock.

Looking ahead, my priority will be on improving these levels of performance wherever possible, and working on initiatives to further improve the quality of service delivery and outcomes so as to make Thurrock an even more attractive place for high quality development and investment.

## **6.0 Corporate Property**

- Community Asset Transfer (CAT). The Council's CAT policy was approved by cabinet in July. It sets out the Council's approach to support the VCFS to achieve sustainable community managed assets that meet local needs, maximise social value, support growth and resilience in the sector. Through its application, the policy seeks to deliver the most efficient use of publicly owned buildings and spaces in Thurrock.
- Plot B Hogg lane. The sale was completed and the wider land area has been leased out to enable the adjoining business to expand.
- Treetops, Dell Road. First phase has been completed by Keepmoat and they have now commenced Phase 2. The development will accommodate some 74 residential units. Working in partnership with the Lands Trust the developer will be creating a woodland path and walk for the benefit of the local community.
- Jack Lobley/Olive Academy. The construction of the replacement facilities for the PRU has been completed and the academy relocated on 2 July 2017. This has freed up the culver centre for redevelopment.
- Corporate landlord. The Council has adopted a corporate landlord model for the management of its property assets. A compliance review of all operational properties is underway. This will lead to the more efficient use and management and allow the council to maximise value and opportunity from its asset base.
- Dell Road/Orsett road (1.5 acres). Negotiations for the sale of this site are in progress and it is anticipated will be drawn to a conclusion fairly shortly. The site has the potential for the development of around 34 residential units.

- The East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) has completed a review of the corporate property function and made recommendations for the future provision of the service. We are currently considering these recommendations and developing an implementation plan.
- Following a serious fire the service arranged the urgent demolition of dangerous properties at Botany Cottages, Purfleet.
- A specification is currently being prepared for the development of a single asset management database for the Council. A project manager has been appointed to prepare the specification and procurement of a solution will be completed early in 2018.
- Work is ongoing with the Education Funding agency to find sites for seven free schools in the borough:
  - Treetops Special Free School
  - Thameside Secondary School
  - Orsett Heath Academy
  - Reach 2 – Primary
  - The Gateway Primary Free School
  - Harris Primary Academy Mayflower
  - Harris Academy Riverside

Once plans are finalised a report will be presented to Cabinet.

- A strategic review of all the Council's general fund sites is underway to identify those suitable for housing development by Gloriana.
- The service is working with RSPB to secure a one acre extension to the Rainham Marshes Nature Reserve.

## **7.0 Lower Thames crossing**

On the 12 April 2017, the Secretary of State for Transport announced the preferred route for a Lower Thames Crossing. The planned route will run from the M25 near North Ockendon, cross the A13 at Orsett before crossing under the Thames east of Tilbury and Gravesend. Plans for a proposed future Lower Thames Crossing will be taken through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process for Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIP). The expected date for the submission of the DCO Application is mid-2019. In preparing the Council for the challenges ahead we have spoken with other local authorities with experience of having major infrastructure projects delivered within their area and this has provided valuable learning.

While there are growth opportunities linked to the project it has an unavoidable impact on Thurrock both in its planning and in its delivery. The Council will need to engage with Highways England to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and to protect the interests of residents in Thurrock, particularly in relation to environmental matters. There will be considerable resource implications to achieve this.

The Council has established a Task Force to discuss and make recommendations in relation to the environmental, economic and social aspects of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC). The Task Force will include one representatives of the Lower Thames Crossing Action Group.

## **8.0 Challenges in the Coming Year**

As my report makes clear, there is a significant amount of exciting activity underway in the borough with major schemes now being delivered and generating jobs, new homes and economic prosperity. Thurrock is proving increasingly attractive to investors and developers and we have fantastic opportunities to improve the place we live, work and socialise, create jobs and enhance the lives of our communities.

The major challenge going forward will continue to be maintaining momentum in the face of competing demands. We will also need to be alert to the opportunities and challenges presented by Brexit.

In the coming months there will be a particular focus on:

### **a) Securing maximum benefit through external funds**

External funding to deliver the programmes and projects that will create opportunities for local people is increasingly competitive and difficult to secure.

Thurrock won significant funding allocations in past SELEP rounds of the Local Growth Fund. We will continue to work to turn these allocations into secured funding and make the case for our priorities.

Positive relationships with the Arts Council, Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund are of increasing importance as we work to transform the heritage, arts and culture opportunities available to local people. Further development of these relationships and the development of a portfolio of projects will continue.

We will continue to pursue all opportunities to secure external funding for the borough. Thurrock is leading or a major delivery partner in four applications already and we will continue to scan for opportunities to access additional funding to support priorities in the borough.

### **b) Delivery of key projects**

With many projects now underway the Council must continue to focus on securing their delivery in order to secure tangible benefits. We will play an active role in creating and nurturing these opportunities and developing relationships with partners and investors so that projects are delivered and local people benefit.

### **c) Progressing the development of the Local Plan**

Having a clear and positive policy framework in place is critical to the delivery of the Council's wider regeneration ambitions. Over the next year, our focus will be on engaging with communities to develop a strong spatial vision for the future of the Borough that seeks to build upon the many opportunities that exist to bring investment that will accelerate the delivery of infrastructure, jobs and homes. This plan making process does, however, face a number of challenges:

- Uncertainty surrounding the precise future alignment, design and timing of the Lower Thames Crossing and its link with the M25
- Further changes to the National Planning System including the proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance due out in spring 2018 and our need to respond and react to these changes in timely manner.
- The lack of a five-year housing land supply and the potential risk that developers will begin to submit speculative green belt planning applications if there is likelihood of any serious delay in the plan-making process. .
- Increased need to engage with residents in the plan making process as we explore site allocations and alternative approaches to new development.

The preparation of the Local Plan cannot proceed in isolation of the need to gain Government backing and an agreement to fund the delivery of critical community and transport infrastructure improvements needed to support the development and delivery of up to 32,000 new homes and over 13,000 new jobs and the creation of over a million sq. m of new employment floor space in Thurrock over the period to 2037. A key priority therefore over the coming year will be the need to demonstrate to Government the scale and nature of the Council's ambitions for transformational change and to obtain their commitment to forward fund the essential infrastructure needed to allow local communities to truly benefit from future economic growth in Thurrock.

#### **d) Assisting in the delivery of growth and investment in the Borough**

As a direct result of the scale of the growth agenda in Thurrock we will be supporting three National Infrastructure Projects in the coming years. Managing these projects alongside our other key regeneration projects will place significant demands on the Council and ensuring we have capacity in key areas will be important in maintaining momentum and maximising opportunity for the borough.

Dealing effectively and efficiently with development proposals is vital to ensuring that Thurrock becomes a key location for investment and growth. The work of the Development Management service enables and assists in this being achieved.

Major developments expected to progress over the next 12 months and beyond include further commercial developments associated with London Gateway and the Port of Tilbury, retail and leisure developments at Lakeside and major education projects and housing developments including the new Purfleet Centre.

Maintaining relationships with key regional and national organisations will also be key as work on the Industrial Strategy is finalised and proposals from the Thames Estuary Growth Commission 2050 become clearer. Despite our very significant workload we must continue to look outwards for the next opportunity.

## 8.0 Financial Information:

The financial position for the Regeneration Portfolio is show in the table below.

All service areas are forecasting a balanced position at year end.

Service	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance
XXXDB - Planning & Growth	45,312	261,781	(216,470)	1,047,128	1,047,128	0
XXXDC - Regeneration	1,033,400	129,109	904,291	516,419	516,419	0
XXXDG - Assets	538,655	414,675	123,980	1,658,695	1,658,695	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,617,367</b>	<b>805,565</b>	<b>811,801</b>	<b>3,222,242</b>	<b>3,222,242</b>	<b>0</b>

The YTD actual for Regeneration looks high because of the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) funded LoCASE project which spends money which is then claimed back from the Department for Communities and Local Government retrospectively.

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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 are 4 questions to the Leader and 2 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

**1. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Gledhill**

Will the Leader be apologising to all residents affected by the confusion and chaos surrounding the 'Grass Tax' implementation?

**2. From Councillor Jones to Councillor Gledhill**

Would the Leader insist that members of Grays police station attend this year's remembrance service at Grays memorial and stop the traffic for the minutes silence out of respect for all service personnel that have served and lost their lives fighting for Great Britain in many conflicts over the years.

**3. From Councillor B Rice to Councillor Gledhill**

Does the Portfolio Holder for Housing agree with me that it is only with the go ahead for the New Thames Crossing that he will uphold his commitment to 32000 new homes in Thurrock?

**4. From Councillor Potheary to Councillor Gledhill**

Would the Portfolio Holder for Housing commit to reviewing the new caretaking arrangements for the six High Rise blocks in Grays as residents remain unhappy with the level of service provided?

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

**1. From Councillor Liddiard to Councillor Coxshall**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration please explain why Tilbury was excluded from the grant funded scheme to improve shop fronts?

**2. From Councillor Okunade to Councillor B Little**

The ASDA roundabout in Tilbury is becoming very congested, particularly between 4.30pm and 6.00pm. Does the Portfolio Holder for Transport have any plans to tackle this?

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## Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 25 October 2017

Date	From	Motion	Status	Accountable Director
30/11/2016	Cllr Duffin	This Council supports the need to reduce and eliminate fuel poverty for Thurrock residents who struggle to heat their homes. Council requests that Cabinet investigate what options, including creating a fuel poverty grant that may exist for the Council to support the community by working with residents and providers.	Officers have been in discussion with energy providers to identify any possibly benefits that could be secured. Reviewing other support that is already offered by the sector and approaches from other authorities. Will be added to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny workplan.	Sean Clark
22/02/17	Cllr J Kent	The Thameside Theatre is held in great affection by residents across Thurrock. Therefore the sudden announcement that the theatre is likely to close by April 2019 is causing real concern in many quarters. Council is of the collective view that the Thameside Theatre should remain open until a new civic theatre for Thurrock, situated in Grays, has opened.	Work is ongoing to review what is currently provided at the theatre and what can be done to improve its future financial viability. In parallel, work is continuing to look at options for new theatre provision in Grays in the context of work on the wider Grays masterplan. The commitment remains to theatre provision continuing in Grays to support an evening economy. The theatre will not be closed until there is a replacement. A report on the Grays Masterplan will be considered by Cabinet in November.	Steve Cox
29/03/2017	Cllr Hebb	Thurrock Council resolves to thank HM The Queen, for her selflessness and grace as monarch of the United Kingdom for 65 years, and it thanks her for her years of dedicated public service and advocacy of our great nation. In the spirit in which HM The Queen has herself taken with the Sapphire Jubilee, this council also seeks to recognise the memory of our former monarch George VI, for his unwavering patriotism during our nation's darkest hours. This council therefore resolves to rename a suitable park within the borough to be identified after public consultation - to the George VI Memorial Park in honour of the former King and his years of service to our country.	A process of public consultations is being prepared in order to identify a suitable park to be renamed.	Steve Cox

## Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 25 October 2017

28/06/2017	Cllr Gerrish	<p>Council calls on the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee to conduct a full review of fly tipping in private alleys, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the scale of the issue across the borough.</li> <li>- Review the impact on residents of the council's policy on fly tipping in private alleys.</li> <li>- Evaluate potential policy responses, including understanding the cost to the council of taking action and exploring new, more innovative solutions.</li> <li>- Make recommendations on the best approach to improving the situation.</li> </ul>	<p>The CGS O&amp;S formed a member led panel at its meeting of 13 July to address the Council Motion.</p> <p>The lead member updated O&amp;S at its meeting of 12th October with a view to presenting a final report to O&amp;S at the December meeting, prior to an O&amp;S report to Cabinet recommending any policy adoption coming out of the review.</p>	Steve Cox
28/06/2017	Cllr Halden	<p>Thurrock Council would oppose any closure of Orsett Hospital until new and modern facilities are put in place first to ensure that clinical services are maintained and improved in Thurrock and urges that Council resist attempts to move clinical resources or capacity from Orsett Hospital out of Thurrock.</p>	<p>We are awaiting details from NHS England on when the consultation will commence but we expect it to be sometime during the Autumn. The Council, with its NHS partners, is proceeding with its plans for the four Integrated Medical Centres and is out to tender for the design team for the Tilbury IMC.</p> <p>October Update : NHS England have indicated that the consultation on the STP will start in late October / early November and include consultation on the future of Orsett Hospital. We have appointed the design team to lead on the Tilbury IMC.</p>	Roger Harris
26/07/2017	Cllr C Kent	<p>This Council urges the Essex Fire Authority and the P.C.C to urgently review the crewing of all special appliances in Thurrock.</p>	<p>This motion was taken to the Community Safety Partnership in September and a written update was provided to Cllr C Kent.</p>	Steve Cox
27/09/2017	Cllr B Rice	<p>This Council calls on the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex to fully review and evaluate Police numbers in Thurrock in light of the serious</p>	<p>A letter has been sent to the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner advising of the motion of Thurrock Council and inviting a response on how the issues</p>	Steve Cox

## Item 17 - Update on Motions agreed by the Council – 25 October 2017

		nature of crimes that are we are experiencing in the Borough.	raised would be taken forward.	
27/09/2017	Cllr Spillman	<p>Council calls on Cabinet to work with local arts and music groups to assist them in looking at options for establishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A not-for-profit community arts and music multi use venue open to all arts, crafts and music groups across Thurrock which will be able to secure relevant licenses that will allow the venue to be financially sustainable by raising revenue through ticketed music and performance events, and</li> <li>• A not-for-profit, open air, “Festival of Thurrock” to provide an opportunity for a wide range of artists and musicians in Thurrock to showcase their talents.</li> </ul>	<p>The Cabinet recognises the value of arts and culture in supporting our local communities and creating pride in Thurrock.</p> <p>The Council has been working on options for replacing the existing accommodation at the Thameside Complex with more flexible and adaptable accommodation for arts in Grays.</p> <p>Festivals do require significant resources to organise, produce and manage however the Council continues to work with groups on a range of arts activities and events and is willing to consider new financially viable ideas.</p>	Steve Cox
27/09/2017	Cllr B Rice	Members in this Council Chamber to call on the Cabinet to re-evaluate the need for £5 per week charge for grounds maintenance to Council tenants as this will cause many residents further hardship.	The Grounds Maintenance service charge has been temporarily suspended pending a review. This will be reported back to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.	Roger Harris

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## **Motions Submitted to Council**

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

#### **Motion 1**

##### **Submitted by Councillor Gerrish**

Thurrock Council supports the National Joint Council (NJC) pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of the Council and school workers calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint. NJC pay cannot be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector.

Thurrock Council therefore resolves to:

- Write immediately to the LGA asking it to make urgent representations to Government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review;
- Write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting NJC pay claim and seeking the additional resources needed to fund a decent pay rise and pay spine review;
- Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.

#### **Statement**

For most workers in local government and schools, pay, other terms and conditions are determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services.

On average, across the country, NJC basic pay has fallen by 21% in real terms since 2010.

NJC workers had a three-year pay freeze from 2010-2012 and have received only a 1% pay increase annually since then. Local terms and conditions of many NJC employees have also been cut, impacting on their overall earnings. NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector.

Differentials in pay grades are being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements needed to reflect the increased Statutory National Living Wage.

Council welcomes the joint review of NJC pay spine to remedy the turbulence caused by bottom-loaded pay settlements.

Council further notes the drastic ongoing cuts to local government funding and calls on Government to provide all additional resources to ensure local authorities can fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.

**Monitoring Officer Comments:**

The Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority' area and for which the Authority has a relevant function.

**Section 151 Officer Comments:**

With the number of academies now it is not possible to comment on the additional costs of this motion to schools.

Regarding the Council, every one percent increase equates to approximately £0.7m in immediate increased costs. In addition, there is likely to be further pressures on pensions in the future. Any increase adds to the budget targets set out within the MTFS.

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

Yes

## **Motions Submitted to Council**

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

### **Motion 2**

**Submitted by Councillor Jones**

We call on Thurrock Council to write to the Secretary of State to express many residents' views that in its present state the police service contact number 101 is not fit for purpose.

### **Monitoring Officer Comments:**

The Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority' area and for which the Authority has 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 J Kent**

Thurrock Council believes the, so called, "dementia tax" is unfair and would be damaging to many older residents of Thurrock. The Council calls on the care minister, Jackie Doyle-Price, to rule out forcing older people to pay for their care with their home.

### **Monitoring Officer Comments:**

The Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority' area and for which the Authority has a relevant function.

### **Section 151 Officer Comments:**

There are no direct financial implications from this motion, only from the future of how social care is paid for.

### **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 4**

#### **Submitted by Councillor Gerrish**

Thurrock Council calls on the Government to provide the necessary resources and rule changes which would allow councils to build additional council housing at a scale proportional to need, in particular removing the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap.

Council resolves to:

- Write to the Prime Minister, Chancellor and DCLG setting out our concerns and seeking urgent action to enable the building of council housing at necessary volumes.
- Write to Thurrock's MPs seeking all possible Parliamentary support.
- Request that the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider whether there are any additional local opportunities to increase our supply of new council houses in Thurrock.

#### **Statement**

Thurrock Council believes that in order to build a fairer borough, access to genuinely affordable council housing is a necessity for our residents. Too many people are languishing on an impossibly long waiting list or are frozen out of the system altogether.

#### **Monitoring Officer Comments:**

The Motion relates to a matter which affects the Authority or the Authority's area and for which the Authority has a relevant function.

#### **Section 151 Officer Comments:**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this motion. Thurrock Council has no further scope within its Housing Revenue Account budgets for further new build without direct financial support or an increase in the debt cap.

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

Yes

