

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2017 at 7.00 pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Barbara Rice (Chair), John Allen (Vice-Chair), Tom Kelly and Gerard Rice (Substitute) (substitute for Oliver Gerrish)

**Apologies:** Councillors Oliver Gerrish, Terry Piccolo and Peter Smith

**In attendance:** Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Place  
Andrew Millard, Assistant Director Planning & Growth  
Matthew Brown, Regeneration Programme Manager  
Jacqueline North, Senior Project Officer  
Fred Raphael, Transport Development Manager  
Stephen Taylor, Programmes and Projects Manager  
Natalie Warren, Community Development and Equalities Manager  
Charlotte Raper, 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.

### **15. Minutes**

The minutes of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 September 2017 were approved as a correct record.

### **16. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **17. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

### **18. Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19**

The Corporate Director of Place introduced the report which specifically outlined the charges within the remit of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which would take effect from 1 April 2018. Members were advised that the full list of proposed charges could be found within the appendices to the report.

The Chair advised the Committee that she had sought clarification from officers, prior to the meeting, regarding the pricing for skip licences. She had

assumed it would impact upon residential use but was assured that the new charge would only affect skip businesses. The Chair noted that the majority of fees and charges were proposed to remain the same with a few slight increases, which overall she considered to be very fair.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the revised fees, including those no longer applicable, and the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this Committee.**
- 2. That Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**

**19. Aveley Community Hub Business Report and New Build**

The Programmes and Projects Manager introduced the report which updated the Committee on the project. Members were asked to present their views on the new building and the business plan and support a request to Cabinet for approval to procure a building contractor for the scheme. The Community Development and Equalities Manager highlighted the exciting opportunity to see the first purpose-built Community Hub in Thurrock.

The Chair stated that the project was fantastic. There was a slight concern around the moneys for the first few years however she felt the Aveley community was very deserving and had been lacking in facilities for some time. She stressed the importance of ensuring the community was engaged and their requests met through the consultation process. Aveley was one of the areas of deprivation and health inequality within the borough and therefore the project should seek to look after public health as much as possible through the services and activities provided, even down to thoughtful, healthy choices within the café.

Councillor Kelly echoed the Chair's support for the project and recalled how the Planning Committee had welcomed the scheme when the application was considered. He was pleased to see the project was moving forward.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the progress made with the proposals for the Aveley Community Hub and review and comment on:**

- 1. a) the business plan for the Aveley Community Hub;  
b) the proposals for the building;**

**c) the proposal to combine phases of the build programme to develop the whole hub using a combination of S106 funds held by the Council and additional capital funding from the Community Hubs capital programme;**

- 2. To support a report to Cabinet seeking approval to procure a building contractor.**

## **20. Coalhouse Fort Conservation Management Plan**

The Regeneration Programme Manager presented the report which review the progress already made in developing and consulting on the Conservation Management Plan and outlined the actions to follow once the Conservation Management Plan was adopted by the Council.

The Chair welcomed anything to preserve, conserve and develop the two forts within the borough, highlighting that Coalhouse Fort had been neglected for some time. The Conservation Management Plan should take on board opportunities for uses and functions, especially engaging school children. The fort provided living history and this would be a chance for it to be revitalised. It was true that generally Tilbury and East Tilbury were not associated with their forts when they should have status which could provide sources of income and national acclaim.

Councillor G. Rice agreed that the project should be welcomed as Coalhouse Fort was a treasure in Thurrock and it would be useful to have it fully open to members of the Public. He was interested to see the proposals as they emerged as heritage was of great importance to the borough.

The Vice-Chair echoed the views expressed. Coalhouse Fort was of great historical significance and he welcomed the proposals as, despite the poor condition in some areas, the fort had stood the test of time. He was keen to get the ball rolling and get East Tilbury put on the map.

The Chair reiterated the need to engage children, and continued that through children parents would be involved which would attract people for fund raising opportunities.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the suite of policies and principles in the Conservation Management Plan for Coalhouse Fort presented at 3.1 in the report.**

## **21. Update: Winter Maintenance / Routine Gully Cleansing**

The Chair advised that this was a briefing note, as requested by Members, and a full report would be added to the work programme for a later meeting.

Councillor G. Rice highlighted the A1306 and the fact that a number of gullies had grass growing from them; the maintenance was therefore evidently not effective. He felt there should be a system to deal with such issues to prevent motorists aquaplaning which would be dangerous and could lead to Thurrock Council being considered liable. The Corporate Director of Place advised that inspectors had been undertaking a review since September, as outlined within the report, and the outcome could be expected in January. A report to the Committee would follow.

The Vice-Chair noted that there were approximately 26,000 gullies along the borough's highways and asked whether all were the responsibility of the Council to maintain. He requested data around how many had been identified as requiring further investigation, given the number of gullies filled with mud and growing foliage. He also questioned how many were cleaned per working day and whether the 2-man team was set a daily target. The Corporate Director of Place advised that some gullies were located along roads which fell within the responsibility of Highways England but a breakdown would be provided, along with the other information requested, outside of the meeting.

## **22. Thurrock Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Strategy**

The Assistant Director of Planning and Growth presented the report which

Councillor G. Rice welcomed the Strategy and questioned how funding was progressing for east-facing slip roads into Lakeside to prevent the local network being clogged with Lakeside Traffic. The Assistant Director of Planning and Growth advised there was a whole raft of solutions to be developed within the Local Plan which would allow for the Infrastructure Strategy and funding bids. The slip roads in question would certainly form a part of the process.

The Vice-Chair echoed the need for the slip roads to divert shopping traffic from the local area. He stressed the need to ensure plans for the additional 30,000 homes required in the borough were done correctly as the congestion problems could be exacerbated otherwise. He urged Officers to look at congestion planning for the future as part of locating these sites. The Assistant Director of Planning and Growth outlined that the Infrastructure and delivery plans sought to manage and facilitate growth in an effective way. Moving forward it was not simply a question of hardware but also technology systems which would allow traffic to be managed and redirected where necessary.

The Chair stressed that transport should also consider pedestrians, cyclists and similar, not merely motorists. There was a high rate of asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in the borough and warnings should be considered as a way to inform a wider audience regarding air quality issues. She asked whether there was technology available which could monitor areas of high pollution and display warnings. The Transport Development Manager confirmed that he envisaged connecting the system

with air quality monitoring and using it to advise motorists. There was a five-year plan. The first phase would look at the road network but the next phase would be for public transport systems and working to divert motorists from highly polluted areas to mitigate the impact on air quality.

The Chair highlighted that the number of cases of early COPD was growing and the situation would only get worse as more vehicles would lead to more pollution which would in turn result in more cases of COPD. The Strategy should manage traffic and its impact on people's lives and she would like to see more work around public health, not simply vehicles and congestion.

The Vice-Chair echoed the Chair's sentiments and stressed that air quality should always be paramount. He continued to highlight the potential threat posed by the proposed Lower Thames Crossing with an additional 60,000 vehicles passing through the borough and their impact on local air quality. He felt there could be no higher priority than the health and wellbeing of Thurrock residents.

Councillor G. Rice referred to section 3.1 of the appendix whereby:

*During a recent Lower Thames Crossing Q&A session, Ian Wake (Director of Public Health, Thurrock Council) highlighted Thurrock's death rate for cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease when compared to 15 most similar councils with similar population, Thurrock ended up being ranked the worst.*

He stressed that this was a bad start and asked how discussions with Highways England regarding tunnelling near major populations were progressing, to prevent impact upon air quality and noise pollution from the proposed crossing. He continued that Residents often asked what was being done to safeguard their communities. The Chair noted that, while the threat of the impact of such a huge change to the borough was always on the minds of both Councillors and residents, the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force would be sure to discuss all of those points. The Corporate Director of Place assured the Committee that there would be a meeting of the Task Force on Monday discussing both updates to the scheme and the consultation process and the Council's proposed response to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report. This response would outline areas of concerns and whether they were being adequately addressed as well as clearly outlining the Council's expectations. Mitigations as a result of the EIA would lead to solutions.

Councillor Kelly reminded officers of the importance of the slip roads to divert lakeside traffic, and if there were to be a 'shopping list' they should be a priority.

## **RESOLVED:**

**That the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Intelligent Transport Systems Strategy and provide comments for the final document for final submission and adoption at January 2018 Cabinet.**

## **23. Work Programme**

The Committee discussed the work programme and the following additions were made:

- A standing item to provide an update on the work of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force, within the remit of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- An update on the Local Plan to be presented at the January 2018 meeting.
- A full report regarding gullies to be presented at the March 2018 meeting.

**The meeting finished at 7.45 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)**