

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

Lower Thames Crossing Task Force

The meeting will be held at **6.00 pm** on **16 October 2017**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Peter Smith (Chair), John Allen, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard,
Brian Little, Bukky Okunade, Terry Piccolo and Gerard Rice

George Abbott, Thames Crossing Action Group Representative
Peter Ward, Thurrock Business Representative
VACANT, Resident Representative

Substitutes:

To Be Confirmed

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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2 Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force meeting held on 25 September 2017.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4 Declaration of Interests	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Lottie Raper, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to direct.democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **12 October 2017**

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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.

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

Minutes of the Meeting of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 25 September 2017 at 5.15 pm

- Present:** Councillors Tom Kelly, Brian Little, Terry Piccolo, Roy Jones, John Allen, Peter Smith, Barbara Rice and Steve Liddiard
- Matt Jackson, Thames Crossing Action Group representative (Substitute)
Peter Ward, Thurrock Business Representative
Michael Loveday, Resident Representative
- Apologies:** Councillor Bukky Okunade
- George Abbott, Thames Crossing Action Group Representative
- In attendance:** Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Environment and Place
Ann Osola, Assistant Director of Transportation and Highways
Fred Raphael, Transport Development Manager
Robert Audsley, Highways England
Chris Marsh, Highways England
Tim Wright, Highways England
Lottie Raper, Democratic Services Officer
-

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

1. Appointment of Chair

The Corporate Director of Environment and Place welcomed everyone and introduced the meeting outlining the role of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force. The Democratic Services Officer outlined the process for the nomination and election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Councillor Kelly nominated Councillor B. Little as Chair; this was seconded by Councillor Piccolo. Councillor Allen nominated Councillor Smith; this was seconded by Councillor Jones.

Members were given the opportunity to vote. As there was an equality of votes, the matter was determined by the drawing of lots, in line with the Constitution. Councillor Smith was the successful nominee and the Committee were satisfied with the result.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Chair asked for nominations for the Vice-Chair position.

Councillor Liddiard nominated Councillor B. Rice, which was seconded by Councillor Jones.

Councillor Piccolo nominated Councillor B. Little, which was seconded by Councillor Kelly.

The Committee voted in favour of Councillor B. Rice.

4. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6. Highways England Presentation

Representatives from Highways England gave a presentation to the Committee which outlined key details of the design and process, including key dates to note in terms of decision deadlines moving forward.

The Thames Crossing Action Group representative asked what the expected capacity would be if three lanes were to be used, given that the expected capacity for two lanes was approximately 70,000. The Committee was advised that the increase was not linear as it would be a matter of how well the lanes were occupied. The expected figure was around 85,000-90,000.

Councillor Jones asked for clarification around the proposed height of the roads in the elevated sections. The route would be lowered where possible but it would need to be elevated in part to avoid landfill, flood risk areas and other roads. The section from East to West by North Ockendon would be 6m or 7m above ground level. Councillor Jones noted that it would be visible for miles due to its height.

The Chief Executive interjected that it was crucial that Highways England clearly outlined what aspects might be influenced by the Council and businesses and what would be beyond their control. Everyone involved was entitled to understand exactly what could be influenced before engaging with the public. The Highways England representative agreed that their intention was to make it obvious what could and could not be changed. At the time of the consultation the year before, the process was still in very early stages but now, with a more developed understanding of traffic movements, environmental issues and other factors it was possible to give a clearer picture around what aspects of the proposal could be influenced and altered.

The Chair noted that the data modelling for local traffic had been undertaken several years previously. Given the extensive works carried out along the A13, he queried whether it would be necessary to revisit this. The Task Force

heard that this was definitely correct. Highways England had a requirement to update their information regarding local traffic surveys and local plans. The forecast on both strategic and local road networks would be updated, with the last full year of data being 2016.

Councillor B. Little asked if it would be possible for Thurrock to have access to information regarding its own areas. The information would be made available where possible, some could not yet be released as it was still undergoing Highways England's internal assurance policies.

Councillor Jones enquired whether this would include data regarding air pollution. Highways England were beginning their surveys around air quality presently and the data collected would form the baseline for all future information. It was their intention to share this information too. Councillor Jones wished to clarify the public consultations process as it had been somewhat vague in the last instance. The public consultation would include a period of engagement with local forums, information would be published online and in libraries and there would be public meetings to ensure residents could be heard.

Councillor Piccolo noted that the statutory consultation was listed for mid-2018 yet surveys were scheduled to be ongoing into 2019. He felt the outcomes of these surveys would be relevant to the consultation and it seemed strange to hold the consultation without some of the information. The Highways England representative outlined that the statutory consultation would provide a snapshot of the information obtained up to that point in time and more refined information, around ecology and other areas, would continue to develop overtime. The engagement process would be ongoing up to the submission of the Draft Development Consent Order (DCO). It was not unusual to gather data in a prioritised way and it would all be presented in the DCO.

The Vice-Chair stressed that Thurrock Council still held the official position that they wished for no further crossings within Thurrock. The Task Force had been formulated to better understand proposals and represent the interests of residents. She felt the presentation assumed that this would be the road forward and while Members wanted to ensure any development was made as easy as possible for residents, the Council's position had not changed. Residents should not be an afterthought, the key issues were what would be done for residents and how would their lives be impacted upon. It was understood that the Task Force represented strong views and Highways England were keen to engage regarding impact particularly around schools, road network and the local community.

Councillor B. Little requested that if letters were sent to residents affected by the scheme they could be asked if they were happy for the Council to be contacted. During the last consultation Councillors had no way of knowing which residents had been contacted and it had therefore been difficult to engage with the necessary residents within their wards.

The Chair encouraged Co-Opted Members to join the debate as their views were important.

Councillor Allen asked whether Highways England had an interest in the health and wellbeing of Thurrock residents, particularly in terms of air quality. Levels of above 40 parts/million were considered dangerous and certain areas within Thurrock already measured levels of 56 parts/million. An increase of vehicle movements throughout the borough would increase pollution levels and he wanted to know what would be done to protect residents. It was confirmed that Highways England's assessments would account for changes in vehicle movements and vehicle quality over time, as well as environmental factors. Forecasts would be carried out and the aim was to minimise effects on local residents and pollution as far as possible.

Councillor Allen continued that the air quality was 'to be predicted' but there was already evidence of poor air quality within Thurrock. The aim might be to minimise the impact but it was unlikely that vehicles would be stopped from using the new route and therefore there were no assurances for residents. He felt the situation would become increasingly worse. The Highways England representative recognised concerns and outlined that there was a duty to explain what they believed effects would be. There was a desire to work with residents and address their concerns.

Councillor Piccolo requested data showing the figures for traffic originating in Thurrock or whose final destination was Thurrock, to assess the percentage of traffic that was actually related to Thurrock itself.

Councillor Kelly expressed his view that the group was somewhat restricted. While there was no desire to sound as though the Council's position had changed, Members also had to be pragmatic in their approach to ensure that, whatever the outcome, it was as beneficial as possible for Thurrock. He had a number of concerns regarding proposed Route 3, which he would raise at the next meeting.

Councillor B. Little highlighted that the construction phase would impact tremendously on Thurrock. If the development were to take place he asked that Highways England work to ensure the Council was comfortable with the impact and mitigation in place. The DCO had to be consulted with Local Authorities and residents. This would be a major project and therefore concerns regarding construction traffic, dust and noise would be mitigated as much as possible. There were intentions to use the Thames as much as possible to reduce the effects of construction traffic.

The Thames Crossing Action Group representative referred to the proposed elevated section at Baker Street which would be 60m high with high polluting HGVs. This section would run alongside a conservation area and he asked whether it would be possible for that section of the route to be tunnelled. He also noted that the proposed new junction in East Tilbury would have a huge impact on a small neighbourhood. The Orsett Cock roundabout would be used by DP World traffic too, so he asked whether it might be possible to

move the junction further east to mitigate the number of HGVs forced onto the Orsett Cock roundabout and roads nearby. The Highways England representative agreed to liaise with the engineering department for a response to these points. The Chair requested that a member of the engineering department attend a meeting in future to discuss possibilities.

7. Terms of Reference

It was noted that whilst the Terms of Reference were important, they were not completely defining of the Task Force.

Councillor B. Little raised the question of nominating substitutes and Councillor Piccolo agreed that he wished to discuss in more detail. The Vice-Chair also highlighted the possibility of inviting other parties to offer their input.

The Task Force agreed to discuss this item fully at the next meeting.

8. Governance and Decision Making

The Task Force agreed to discuss this item at the next meeting. Councillor Liddiard also proposed submission of written questions.

9. Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

10. Work Programme

Officers noted that a number of items had been raised for the next meeting's agenda. It was agreed that a full work programme would be formulated then.

The meeting finished at 6.20 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**

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LOWER THAMES CROSSING TASK FORCE

Aim:

To create a responsive working group to discuss and make recommendations in relation to environmental, economic and social aspects of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC).

Membership:

- 9 elected Members (3 Conservatives, 3 UKIP, 3 Labour)
- 1 representative from the Lower Thames Crossing Action Group, who is also a resident of Thurrock
- 1 representative from the Thurrock business community
- 1 Thurrock resident from the wider community

All members of the group have a right to vote if so required during a meeting of the group.

Chair:

The Chair will be elected by the membership of the Task Force on an annual basis to run within each municipal year. The election will take place at the first meeting of the Task Force each municipal year.

Duration:

The Group will be established to continue for an indefinite period until such time as all business of the task force is complete. The ultimate decision to discontinue the group will lie with the General Services Committee but the Chair of the Task Force may make such a request to disband the Force upon completion of business.

Meeting Schedule:

The Task Force will meet each month at a date and time to be scheduled in advance. The schedule will be agreed at the first meeting of the task force.

Activities

The Task Force will undertake all but not exclusively the following activities:

1. To act as a consultee for Planning Committee or any other executive/quasi-judicial committee on LTC matters if that committee so desires.
2. Receive any reports which it is required to make recommendations upon by officers, Cabinet or any other relevant committee of the Council.
3. Receive a monthly update of all Council activity in relation to the LTC (by way of an update report)
4. Invite strategic partners to meet with them to gather evidence to aid the Council's work in relation to the LTC.
5. Commission or undertake research on behalf of the Council in relation to the LTC.
6. The Chair to provide a monthly/bimonthly report to Cabinet on its work.
7. Any other duties within its powers to do so.

Decision-Making:

The Task Force has no executive powers and will refer all recommendations direct to the appropriate executive or quasi-judicial committee via a report for action.

16 October 2017	ITEM: 8
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force	
Environmental and Air Quality Issues	
Report of: Ann Osola, Assistant Director – Transportation & Highways	
Accountable Directors: Steve Cox, Corporate Director, Environment and Place	
This report is Public.	

Executive Summary

At its September meeting, the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force heard from Highways England that the first formal opportunity that Thurrock Council would have to shape the evidence available to the Planning Inspectorate in their consideration of plans for a Lower Thames Crossing would be in its response to Highways England's Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report. It is expected that the Council will receive a copy of this document at the end of October, and then have 28 days to submit a formal response to the Planning Inspectorate. In order to prepare for this process, the Task Force is invited to (i) receive a presentation from Thurrock's Independent Technical Advisor explaining the coverage of an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report and its role within the national infrastructure planning process; (ii) provide initial comments and specific matters to note under the various headings covered; (iii) receive an update on progress in relation to the Council's discussions with Highways England to jointly establish a process for independent air quality testing, and ensuring that the Council has access to all data used to reach decisions.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the Committee receives a presentation from the Council's Independent Technical Advisor on the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
- 1.2 That Task Force Members flag particular issues for officers to take on board in their preparations to respond to the expected Environmental Impact Scoping Report.
- 1.3 That the Task Force provides comments on the proposed way forward to relation to establishing a process for independent air quality testing and access to air quality data used to reach decisions. (Details to be tabled at the meeting.)

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 At its September meeting, the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force heard from Highways England that the first formal opportunity that Thurrock Council would have to shape the evidence available to the Planning Inspectorate in their consideration of plans for a Lower Thames Crossing would be in their response to Highways England's Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report. The likely timescale for receipt of this document is the end of October. The Highways England project team will submit this document to the national Planning Inspectorate as part of the pre-application requirements of seeking a Development Consent Order for the scheme. The Planning Inspectorate will then send a copy of the Scoping Report to Thurrock Council and other statutory consultees, allowing them 28 days to make a formal response which will then be considered by the Planning Inspectorate in forming its Scoping Opinion. This Scoping Opinion, together with the initial Scoping Report, will define the extent of evidence collected on environmental issues, and the emphasis placed on pertinent issues during the Examination in Public.
- 2.2 The Environmental Scoping Report is likely to cover the following elements:
- Introduction
 - Scheme Description
 - Consideration of Alternatives
 - Environmental Assessment Methodology
 - Air Quality
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Landscape
 - Biodiversity
 - Geology and Soils
 - Materials
 - Noise and Vibration
 - People and Communities
 - Road Drainage and Water Environment
 - Climate Change
 - Human Health and Wellbeing
 - Combined and Cumulative Effects
 - Outline Environmental Management Plan
 - Conclusions
- 2.3 Air Quality has already been highlighted as a matter of significant concern for Thurrock residents. At its meeting of 26th July 2017, Thurrock Council resolved that Highways England be asked to engage with the Council to establish a process for independent air quality testing, and to allow Thurrock Council to have access to all data used to make decisions. Council officers have been in dialogue with Highways England representatives to progress this matter, and will provide an update on the latest position at the meeting.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The timescale for responding to the Environmental Impact Scoping Report, once it has been sent from the Planning Inspectorate is very tight, and failure to meet this deadline could result in Thurrock views not being adequately considered by the Planning Inspectorate in setting out its Opinion.
- 3.2 The Lower Thames Crossing Task Force will have a key role to play in the Council's response, and it is envisaged that, by the time of the next meeting of this group, the Council will have received the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report from the Planning Inspectorate, and Task Force Members will be presented with an outline response at their November meeting. In preparation for this, the Task Force is asked to receive a presentation which will provide context for the required response, and set out the main topic areas to be covered.
- 3.3 At an operational level, Thurrock Council has progressed its preparation for responding to the Planning Inspectorate by engaging an Independent Expert to inform the Council's Scoping Report response, particularly in relation to Air Quality. It has also established a working group of relevant Council officers to develop a baseline picture of environmental issues in Thurrock, and start to identify those likely to be of particular concern and significance in relation to the Lower Thames Crossing. Task Force Members will be provided with a PowerPoint presentation of work to date and invited to identify specific areas for further work and focus.
- 3.4 Further to resolution by Council on 26 July 2017 that the Council engage with Highways England to establish a process for independent air quality testing, and that the Council have access to all data used to make decisions. Council officers are in dialogue with Lower Thames Crossing project officers, and a series of face-to-face meetings have been arranged for the days immediately preceding the Task Force meeting. A verbal update will be provided.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The reason for the recommendations is to prepare for the issuing of an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report response in line with Planning Inspectorate timescales.

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

N/A

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

- 6.1 A timely and comprehensive response to the Environmental Impact Scoping Report will support Council and community interests.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The activities set out in this report will be funded from existing budget allocations.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Vivien Williams**
Planning and Regeneration Solicitor

The activities set out in this report support the Council in discharging its obligations as statutory consultee under the 2008 Planning Act.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

Diversity and Equality impacts will fall within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report, and will form part of the Council's formal response.

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

There are no other implications.

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):

- July 2017 Council Lower Thames Crossing Report

9. Appendices to the report

None

Report Author:

Ann Osola

Assistant Director

Transportation & Highways

Key Milestones and Points of Influence

	Action	Influence?
Autumn 2017	• Respond to Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report	Yes
	• Respond to likely revision of 'red line' boundary	No
	• Scope of work for Local Impact Report (Thurrock's Submission to the Planning Inspectorate, which will be considered alongside Highways England DCO Application)	Council Driven
	• Discussions with special interest groups regarding inputs to Local Impact Report	Council Driven
	• Consider potential interdependencies with emergent local plan	Yes
	• Discuss and agree Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Highways England	Yes
Spring 2018	• Respond to Statement of Community Consultation	Yes
	• Respond to outputs from new traffic model	Yes
Summer 2018	• Respond to first round of statutory consultation	Yes
	• Consider potential interdependencies with emergent local plan	Yes

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**Lower Thames Crossing Task Force
Work Programme
2017/18**

Dates of Meetings: 16 October 2017, 20 November 2017, 18 December 2017, 22 January 2018, 19 February 2018, 19 March 2018, 23 April 2018

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
16 October 2017		
Terms of Reference	Democratic Services	Members
Environmental and Air Quality Issues	Ann Osola	Members
Key Milestones and Points of Influence	Steve Cox	Members
Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers
20 November 2017		
Response to Environmental Impact Scoping Assessment Report	Ann Osola	Officers
Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers

Updated: August 2017

18 December 2017		
Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers
22 January 2018		
Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers
19 February 2018		
Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers

19 March 2018

Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers

23 April 2018

Highways England Update	Highways England	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Officers

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