

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24 November 2021 for the rescheduled 22 September 2021 Council at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Sue Shinnick (Mayor), James Halden (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, Abbie Akinbohun, Alex Anderson, Chris Baker, Gary Byrne, Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Mike Fletcher, Robert Gledhill, Shane Hebb, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Susan Little, Ben Maney, Fraser Massey, Allen Mayes, Sara Muldowney, Bukky Okunade, Augustine Ononaji, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley, Jane Potheary, Shane Ralph, Kairen Raper, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Jennifer Smith, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, David Van Day, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Gary Collins, Victoria Holloway and Sue Sammons

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

47. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 30 June 2021 were approved as a correct record.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 21 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

48. Items of Urgent Business

There were no urgent items of business.

49. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Mayor stated the last 18 months since lockdown in March 2020 had been truly unprecedented times and had shown the generosity of individuals,

community, voluntary and faith groups and local businesses who had helped support Thurrock residents during the pandemic. The Mayor stated she had sought nominations for a special Certificate of Recognition which would be given to those in the borough who had gone above and beyond to help their community during the Covid-19 pandemic. There had been 450 nominations for a Covid-19 Community Star and a certificate as a token of appreciation for the help and support they provided would be sent out over the next couple of days.

Councillor Gledhill, Leader of the Council, made the following announcements:

Covid Update - With Christmas on the horizon, Councillor Gledhill urged everyone to remain sensible when it came to taking precautions against Covid-19. Everyone wanted to have a good Christmas celebrating with friends and family and asked residents not to undo all their hard work and risk their Christmas celebrations. That two thirds of Thurrock residents had received two vaccinations, which meant only around 30% of eligible residents had not yet been fully protected. The vaccine's safety and effectiveness had been proved on a global scale and again urged anyone who had not yet received their vaccinations to reconsider and take up the offer as soon as possible. In terms of local rates these had been increasing from an average of 69 new cases per day in October up to 107 per day in November, which was over double in the space of a month. This showed residents could not become complacent and it remained important to do what we could to avoid spreading the virus throughout our families and communities – we must continue to carefully wash our hands, respect the wishes of those who wished to cover their faces, ventilate crowded indoor gatherings and social distance where possible.

Shop Safe, Shop Local - Earlier this month the new campaign Shop Safe, Shop Local had been launched with the support of many independent businesses across the whole of the borough. Lakeside being a brilliant asset for Thurrock but we also had many high streets with a fantastic mix of shops and places to eat. These small and often family run businesses were the beating heart of our towns, and since restrictions had lifted they had done an incredible job safely welcoming shoppers back. That shopping local helped support Thurrock's economy, created jobs, boosted local communities, employment and helped towns thrive. Councillor Gledhill hoped this new campaign would inspire more people to think of their local shops and would give residents the confidence to shop safely. Councillor Gledhill thanked all of the businesses who had already backed the campaign.

Enforcement Success – Councillor Gledhill had joined the Council's Environment Enforcement Team working alongside Thurrock Essex Police and Rural Engagement Team targeting anti-social behaviour which had a significant impact on the lives of residents. The two day operation had focused on fly-tipping, including unlicensed waste carriers who transported and dumped waste illegally. More than 50 individuals were spoken to in vehicles each day and some positive comments had been received from local

residents on how pleased they were with the proactive approach. That 11 Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued with fines totalling more than £3,000; seized three vehicles for no insurance; seized one vehicle which was not roadworthy; reported one individual for not having a driver's licence and one reported vehicle for no MOT. Councillor Gledhill stated the Council worked well with Essex Police and would continue to do so.

Give a Gift – Councillor Gledhill stated Give a Gift was back for the sixth year, that promised to give gifts to Thurrock children, known to our children's services teams, who may receive few, if any, presents this Christmas and urged all members to get involved.

Councillor Gledhill wished everyone a Merry Christmas and extended season greetings to all Thurrock residents.

51. Questions from Members of the Public

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed under the relevant meeting date at <http://democracy.thurrock.co.uk/thurrock> and are attached at Appendix A at these minutes.

Mr Seeger withdrew his question prior to the meeting and a written response would be provided.

52. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed Members that in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, no requisition of notice had been given to present a petition at the meeting

53. Petitions Update Report

Members received a report on the status of those petitions handed in at Council meetings and Council offices.

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

The Mayor enquired whether Group Leaders wished for any changes to be made to the appointments previously made by Committees and Outside Bodies, statutory and other panels.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, stated he had the following changes:

For Councillor Little to be removed from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Thandi would then become a substantial member on this committee.

Councillor J Kent, Leader of the Labour Group, stated he had the following changes:

For Councillor Potheary to be replaced with Councillor Worrall on the Corporate Parenting Committee.

For Councillor Watson to become a substitute member on the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For Councillor J Kent to become a substitute member on all committees except the Planning Committee.

Councillor Byrne, Leader of the Thurrock Independent Group stated he had no changes to make.

Councillors Massey stated he had no changes to make.

55. Report of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

Councillor Maney introduced the report by stating many services across the Council, those within the highways, transport and planning departments had been impacted upon by the pandemic which had affected operations as well as income but despite this Councillor Maney was pleased to report they had risen to the challenges of the past 20 months and delivered an ambitious agenda. Some of the points made:

- Was responsible for an extensive highways network, including 545km of carriageway, 700km of footway and cycle paths, 21,000 street lights and numerous structures and items of street furniture. All of which required a rigorous year-round inspection and maintenance effort.
- 4,586 safety inspections had been carried out this year alone, resulting in a high number of repairs. Including 4963 potholes, continued to exceed KPI targets of a 98% repair rate within timeframe.
- Recently completed jet patching operations across the borough had ensured many additional carriageway repairs ahead of winter.
- From last year's capital programme the Council had resurfaced 41 roads in the borough, equating to over 90,000 square feet of road space.
- The slab replacement programme, footway repairs and reconstructions had taken place at locations across the borough.
- Announced that following on from the completion of the LED programme would over the next two years be spending £350,000 replacing and upgrading older street lighting infrastructure.
- The ITB programme had allowed for £700,000 to be allocated to safety measures, including vital engineering projects such as junction improvements on A128 and the borough's second Average Speed Camera system in Lodge Lane.
- A £2.4m spend from the Safer Roads Fund would also enable safety measures along the A126 including at the Marshfoot Road junction with A1089.

- Safer Routes to Schools programme - four new safety enhancement schemes had been delivered and would continue to work towards making travel to and from our schools a key priority.
- Supporting the local bus operators via the Covid Bus Service Support Grant and making bus travel more appealing with an extensive shelter replacement programme, which would include the installation of digitalised information screens at some locations.
- The dedicated team of CEOs provided a vital service and were a reassuring uniformed presence in our communities.
- Announced approved plans for doubling of the CEO team. This 100% increase would mean more action against those who flouted the rules and made life difficult for others.
- Following recent approval from Cabinet, be commencing on the seizure of vehicles belonging to persistent offenders, or motorists who parked in contravention of a waiting restriction and caused a danger or obstruction.
- In January 2021 the parking team received time limited Government funding in order to extend HGV enforcement activity and this had enabled the Council to pursue operations up until 2.30am.
- Since January 2021, 3322 PCNs had been issued for HGV parking violations, averaging a little over 300pm and amounting to a combined value of £175,068.
- Looking at ways to address nuisance HGV activity where parking enforcement regulations did not apply. The following enforcement actions - 98 Community Protection Warnings, 47 Community Protection Notices and 98 fixed Penalty Notices for non-compliance with a CPN had been taken against companies.

Councillor Maney extended his thanks to officers within the highways, transport and planning teams and stated how impressed he had been with the calibre of officer under his remit. That for some time officers in the highways and transports teams had been subject to unacceptable conduct by a handful of elected members. No officer of the Council should receive abusive emails, see their name posted on social media, nor be made to feel uncomfortable at work. That the decisions they took were in line with policies and budgets that members set and officers should be treated with respect and decency.

Councillor Kerin referred to the Parking Enforcement Plan and questioned whether this plan would be more joined up when looking at the whole of the borough and to put in place the enforcement needed. Councillor Maney reiterated the CEO team was doubling up which would mean more action against those who flouted the rules. The team responded to intelligence and data and encouraged residents to continue to report.

Councillor Kerin referred to Active Travel Fund of £600K and questioned why the amount received had been far short than the amount promised by Government to which Councillor Maney stated no reasons were given by Government. The submission was looked at and the allocation was given

accordingly but this was still a huge amount of money and had been gratefully received.

Councillor Kerin questioned why there had been no mention of the A13 delays and overspend in the highways element of the report and asked the portfolio holder to support a Local Government Association Peer Review into the A13. Councillor Maney stated the delivery of the A13 project would fall within Councillor Coxshall portfolio holder remit but stated there was no need for a Peer Review as when completed it would be a major benefit to the residents of this borough. That no more delays or reviews were in order just to get the project finished.

Councillor Anderson referred to approved Street Lighting Network and asked the portfolio holder that the Council would not be adopting a policy of part night lighting as seen in other authorities to which Councillor Maney assured members that Thurrock would not be following the example of other boroughs and street lighting would continue in the borough.

Councillor J Kent referred to the Safer Travel to Schools and a motion raised by Councillor Worrall at the June 2021 Council calling on Cabinet to recognise the huge problems residents of Ward Avenue and surrounding areas were experiencing being caused by parents, and others, dropping off and picking up children attending the three schools in this area. Councillor J Kent stated this situation continued and had worsened and asked Councillor Maney to reconsider, look again and re-evaluate these problems. Councillor Maney stated he would be happy to look or relook at any problem to see what could be done to resolve that but reiterated the CEO team would be doubling in size and would make operations outside schools much easier. Councillor Maney reminded members that schools were responsible for managing traffic and were reliant on schools producing school travel plans. Where schools did this, the Council would work with them and where there were solutions he would ask these to be brought forward.

Councillor Byrne stated that he stood by every email he had sent to officers and that respect amongst members and officers had to go both ways.

Councillor Massey referred to HGV nuisance parking and questioned whether the doubling of the CEO team would include the HGV evening parking team to which Councillor Maney stated very much so with the night time operations continuing when the Government funding run out.

Councillor Muldowney referred to over 80 pot holes filled in Sabina Road and Holyrood Gardens in Chadwell St Mary and the request the roads be resurfaced. That some of the pot holes had been jet patched but had understood from residents this type of repair had not lasted very long and could not be very cost effective and asked the portfolio holder to commit to a long term solution to resurface these roads and other effected roads in Chadwell. Councillor Maney stated Chadwell were getting a lot of attention in regards to roadways, pathways and cycle path repairs following the election of Councillor Carter. That Chadwell St Mary would be judged in accordance with

the same policies of any other area and most roads in the borough would be inspected on an annual basis and where intervention was required this would be actioned.

Councillor Abbas referred to the recent repairs to Stone Hill Lane and questioned why a small section had been left unrepaired to which Councillor Maney stated the repair work had to stop somewhere and where the repairs had stopped the road thereafter would have been in a serviceable condition. Councillor Maney stated if Councillor Abbas still had concerns to bring this to the attention of officers.

56. Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Air Quality

Councillor Mayes introduced the report by thanking all NHS Staff and Health Care Professionals who had supported Thurrock residents through the Covid-19 pandemic over the last 18 months. This had been an extremely difficult time for Thurrock residents and for everybody across the country. Even though this had been difficult it was essential to do all we could to save lives and to protect the NHS. This year had seen the successful rollout of the Covid-19 vaccines which had enabled the Government to review restrictions. In Thurrock as of the 18 November, approximately 80% of Thurrock residents had received their vaccinations which had been a remarkable achievement. Councillor Mayes thanked everyone who had been involved in the vaccination programme. During this time we had continued to work successfully with health partners. Brighter Futures implementation was underway for younger people to have the wraparound support for them and their parents. Work continued on the four Integrated Medical Centres and committed to delivering the Integrated Medical Centre model and implementing all the primary care services and benefits these would bring. Recognised the pressure on general practitioners during the pandemic and how they were trying to catch up over the last 18 months although some general practitioners had been better at undertaking face to face appointments than others. Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group planned to visit practices throughout Thurrock now the restrictions had been lifted and have the opportunity to speak to those delivering the service. Mental Health Transformation, the successful trial of a new strategy which had been rolled out at Primary Care Networks within Thurrock would improve access to services. Recognised more could be done and committed to work with health partners to ensure this got better. In regards to Air Quality, actively recruiting an Air Quality Officer who would undertake air quality reviews which were greatly needed in the borough and to look at the Tilbury dust.

Councillor Potheary questioned the under-doctoring in the borough, with Thurrock being the third worst borough in the country. Asked what the key drivers were of that problem and what the best route of this would be when working with health partners. Councillor Mayes stated it had been very difficult to recruit general practitioners into Thurrock and the way to do this would be to look at better working environments and for new general practitioners they would be looking at an area which were transforming their primary care services and delivering the Integrated Medical Centres in a timely fashion.

Councillor Potheary questioned whether the closure of Orsett Hospital had been put on hold during the Covid outbreak and whether during this time any further plans or rethinking had been made to save the future of Orsett Hospital. Councillor Mayes confirmed the services currently at Orsett Hospital would be moving out and in consultation with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Health Partner this would be in 2025 with no movement in delaying those plans.

Councillor Potheary stated that air quality was one of the biggest challenges being faced in this borough and stated her frustrations there were no bold radical plans in place to deal with those issues and asked the portfolio holder to commit to some sort of action or timetable on when this situation would improve, when radical action would take place and when the borough would see the action on promises that he had made. Councillor Mayes stated that to make any improvements you had to have the data and facts but the situation had improved and as example referred to the installation of electric charging points in the borough for electric vehicles. That until the recruitment of the air quality officer this could not be moved forward.

Councillor Ralph referred to face to face appointments with general practitioners and going forward what could residents do if they were still unable to get a face to face appointment and had there been any reported improvement of this. Councillor Mayes stated the data supplied to him had indicated an increase and for those residents who felt they were not getting the service they felt they should get, would be to report this to the practice manager at their general practice or use the 111 service.

Councillor Redsell referred to air quality and stated until the air quality officer was in place we did not have the information or data we needed. Councillor Mayes shared member's frustrations as this had been a very difficult recruitment process.

Councillor J Kent referred to the issue of access to general practitioners and again asked the portfolio holder in partnership with health partners and colleagues what they urgently plan to do to improve this situation. Councillor Mayes agreed this had been difficult and in conversations with health colleagues, the Clinical Commissioning Group and general practitioners there had been a lot of pressure and trying to catch up in a situation that was not normal. That ultimately an environment had to be created that would attract new practitioners into the borough and to look at different ways of working. Councillor Mayes also stated some residents preferred the telephone/video appointments and there had to be some flexibility on primary care services to move this forward.

Councillor Byrne questioned why all S106 monies were being diverted to health and not to its intended destination. Councillor Mayes stated that he was sure health were not getting all the S106 monies.

Councillor Massey expressed his shock on the air quality spent for 2020/21 was only £28,000 and based on the scale of the problem this seemed a very small financial amount. Councillor Massey questioned whether idling enforcement fines could be ring-fenced towards air quality spend in the future and questioned how many £40 fixed notice penalties had been issued in 2020/21 to which Councillor Mayes stated this would not within his gift as portfolio holder and would need to be agreed by Cabinet.

57. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that two questions to the Leader had been received and ten questions to Cabinet Members. Those questions not heard would either receive a written response or have the option to withdraw and resubmit.

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

No reports were presented.

59. Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of Committee 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.

61. Motion submitted by Councillor J Kent

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

Council notes the Thameside Complex was, formally, opened on 22nd of January 1972 with the first performance in the theatre taking place in October 1971. Council agrees: (1) that a celebratory event should be held, at the Thameside, in January 2022 to mark the Golden Anniversary of the complex and (2) to call on Cabinet to identify the resources necessary to refurbish the theatre and ensure the future of the complex.

Councillor J Kent presented this motion by stating the Thameside Complex comprised of a theatre, library and museum that had been completed in 1971 and on the 18 October of that year saw the first play performed. In 1972 the Thameside Complex had been officially opened by Lord Goodman, the chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain. There had been two phases of building the complex with the rear tower being built first and then the foyer, theatre and museum. It had been built that way so the library could be

relocated into the new building without any break in service. That arts, culture and heritage played a vital part in bringing people together, enrich the communities and bring new experiences and ideas and making a massive contribution to the economy both locally and nationally. That for the past 50 years Thameside had provided a wonderful little theatre which had welcomed over two million visitors. Dance schools had performed dance and drama performances. The museum gallery displays some 1500 items, plus there were two floors of artefacts that could not be displayed. The central library continued to be well used, computers that youngsters could use in a quiet area to study and playing host to a range of community and group activities. This was all well worth celebrating and wished residents could go forward with confidence for the next 50 years but with Cabinet proposing to close the Thameside Complex in order to save the £600k that it claimed it cost to run the building each year. That closing the Thameside without a new building in place was unacceptable to Councillor J Kent and to the Labour Group. That the library with its purpose built children's library deserved to be housed in a building designed for that purpose. That no firm proposal had been received on the relocation of the museum and how those 1000s of artefacts were not on display would be catalogued and secured stored. That the Thameside Theatre was a professional theatre and there was nowhere else in Thurrock could offer the same facilities and no professional events could be attracted to Thurrock, give local groups the opportunity to perform in a proper theatre or give Thurrock residents the opportunity to visit a theatre without leaving the borough. That the Thameside Theatre created the heart of Thurrock on arts, culture and heritage of the borough which would not be lost without a fight. Councillor J Kent stated now was the time to delivery and come up with the resources needed to keep the Thameside Complex open and thriving into the future.

An amendment to this motion had been received from Councillor Snell and seconded by Councillor Carter and read as follows:

Council notes the Thameside Complex was formally opened on 22nd of January 1972 with the first performance in the theatre taking place in October 1971. Council agrees: (1) that a celebratory event should be held, at the Thameside, in January 2022 to mark the Golden Anniversary of the complex and (2) to call on Cabinet to identify the resources necessary to improve and secure the future of the theatre service and all the services at the complex.

Councillor Snell presented the amended motion by stating he echoed a lot of what Councillor J Kent had said that Thameside Complex had been a terrific facility for Thurrock over the years and it would be appropriate to have some form of celebration on the services that it had provided over those years. That moving into the future it would be more about securing the services not the building. It was time to create better facilities and better scenarios where residents got to have a better use of what Thurrock could offer and this could no longer be served by being in the Thameside theatre. That it was time to concentrate on the services used the theatre, when raising or securing funds for the future lets concentrate on the people and the services that used the complex and not the run-down building.

Councillor Carter stated that modern services required modern delivery and agreed the good and bad history of the complex should be celebrated and the building was past its prime and should be looked at as such.

Councillor Muldowney stated she would be voting against the amended motion and in favour of Councillor Kent's motion. Had been puzzled by the claim made by the portfolio holder that theatre services could be improved by closing the theatre, whilst providing a theatre offer at an unspecified location. Questioned how a theatre offer without a building could be provided or improved and how could current services housed in Thameside be improved by moving them into inadequate venues. The Thameside complex was a social and arts hub and where the community could meet and use the café, library and theatre which would help with boosting the night time economy. Only at Thameside would young people be given the opportunity to perform on a real professional stage and closing the theatre would rob them of this opportunity. Councillor Muldowney urged members to vote for the original motion submitted by Councillor J Kent.

Councillor Worrall stated Thurrock had an outstanding history of celebrating achievements and milestones and the Thameside Complex had been part of that history. Councillor Worrall's stated her love for the theatre and the number of shows she had attended at Thameside and wanted this to continue, not necessarily at Thameside Complex but for another theatre to be built. Councillor Worrall wanted to continue to attend theatre shows in Thurrock and not outside the borough and urged members to support Councillor J Kent original motion.

Councillor C Kent stated the Thameside Complex was the heart of Grays for residents to visit and use all the services, where youngsters were learning how to put on a show with acting, scenery, sound and lighting to which these things could not be done in a village hall. Councillor C Kent stated the services needed to continue at Thameside and the Council had to think outside the box to ensure it remained open for the future and for the future generation of Thurrock's children.

Councillor Huelin stated a new modern viable service was required when compared to other local Theatres and Thurrock community deserved better facilities. That celebrations should be around the arts, culture and people who had been involved in the last 50 years and not the building. Those 50 years of hard work, dedication of performers, artists, volunteers of those who had spread joy and laughter. The Administration recognised there should be a theatre service and the Thurrock community deserved better so by agreeing to Councillor Snell's amendment to part two of the motion. A more improved sustainable registrar had been built and a future for the library had been secured and would continue to work to improve the arts, culture and heritage offer.

Councillor Kerin focused on the library and how this could be accessed by everyone regardless of income. That this was the heart of the library service

and provided an opportunity for the next generation to learn and grow and by reducing this service to a few shelves in another building would be cultural vandalism and should be housed in a building worthy of its status. The library, museum and theatre must be saved. It was not just about the service, buildings for theatres were also important and should be purpose built and to respect culture and save Thameside.

Councillor Spillman stated that Labour were not presenting new ideas and when he had spoken about arts with stakeholders they had all agreed the current offering in Thameside was not good enough and was not structured to deliver. What was required was a redesign of the offering in the existing building or a new building and the people to run that building would be the arts themselves and for them to provide business plans and to see an offering that could deliver funds, generate money and be self-sufficient.

Councillor Byrne stated that Councillor Snell's statement demonstrated they were from someone who had no love or interest of the arts and had no understanding.

Councillor Piccolo compared performance at Thameside Theatre and from 2005 to 2008 there had been 172 performances, between 2009 to 2019 there had only been 45 performances over that 10 year period. Last year there had been three theatrical performances. This had demonstrated that it was not being used as a theatre and would be better somewhere else where we could attract better crowds and bigger performances.

Councillor Redsell agreed there was passion amongst members to have a Thameside Theatre but members were not looking forward, always looking backwards, that something more positive was required, a new theatre was required so that shows and performers would continue to come to Thurrock.

Councillor Duffin shared his love for musicals but was having to travel outside of Thurrock to watch these top London performances as Thurrock did not offer the facilities available for them to perform. Thurrock needed to have a theatre that would attract top talent and performances. That there was the capability and drive to do this so encouraged business plans to be presented and get an organisation, not the Council, to run this.

Councillor Maney stated his support for Councillor Snell's amendment as he had hoped when Councillor J Kent had moved his motion there would be a forward plan, a radical plan, business case or plans to find the money to repair a building that was not suitable. That Cabinet were open to all options but needed something to work with and this just had not been forthcoming from opposition members.

Councillor Coxshall stated a good theatre operation was required, that worked and would be open to all ideas on what that asset could be used for. Also open to where could we put something better for the community and where those great acts could perform. Councillor Coxshall wanted to see a

community business plan and Cabinet would not make a decision until everyone had been spoken to.

Councillor Little stated the Thameside Complex was a third rate building and this was not acceptable and to concentrate on the community, the library and the theatre and agreed it should be the community that led on this and to look for a first class building to accommodate the services. To celebrate on what work the arts and culture had done and not celebrate the building.

Councillor Abbas questioned what the plans were for the new theatre and Thameside was not just a building it offered educational, artist and cultural facilities which needed to be saved and protected.

Councillor Fletcher agreed the passion in the room was shared for supporting the arts to have a bigger, better facility that Thurrock could be proud of. Councillor Fletcher questioned why the amendment had not been amended to call on Cabinet to identify the resources necessary to approve and secure a new theatre and library complex.

Councillor Chukwu stated his support for Councillor J Kent's motion and stated if the Thameside Complex were to be shut we should be thinking of a new building the community could use.

Councillor Polley recognised the passion in the room this evening and the need to attract new acts and performers to Thurrock but not forgetting that Thurrock had home-grown talent that also needed to be supported. That High House Production facility trained people in theatre skills but then had nowhere in Thurrock to practice those skills. That successful community projects that Councillor Polley had seen had been led by the community and would be supporting Councillor Snell's amendment as it was the passion and services that Thurrock did not want to lose.

Councillor Gledhill stated himself and Councillor Snell had sat on the committee that had looked at the provision at Thameside and the words that Thameside was a failing building and not fit for purpose had been part of that report. Stated to Councillor Fletcher the constitution was clear the amendment could not alter the motion substantially.

Councillor Ralph referred to the great museum facility and referred to the two floors of artefacts hidden away that were of historic importance. That the amendment referred to services that the building had, and to move to somewhere that had a better museum, better library and better art facilities which was very positive.

At 8.23pm, Councillor J Kent called Point of Order in relation to Chapter 2, Part 2, Paragraphs 17, 18 and 19, Alteration of Motion of the Council Procedure and Rules and stated if the constitution had allowed, the amendment would have gone further to suggest a new theatre should be built. If this was what Councillor Gledhill was saying he would be happy to alter his

motion in accordance with the constitution. Councillor Gledhill stated that the amendment had been put forward in line with the constitution.

Councillor Potheary stated she had been unaware a new arts complex was being proposed, this was great news and looked forward to seeing the plans. To make sure the Thameside Complex remained open, remained functional and remained with all the services until the day a new complex was opened to which the residents of Thurrock deserved nothing less. Referred to Councillor Polley's passion on High House Production but this was not a theatre that could host those types of shows and experiences that members were referring to. For the community to run the theatre was a brilliant idea and would support but they needed a theatre to run, they needed a building. Agreed with Councillor Huelin that Thurrock should have a modern theatre but this was not what was being discussed, this was a budget saving proposal being driven by finances that would not deliver for Thurrock. There was a lack of understanding in regards to the museum artefacts and what it took to preserve, display and store them. That Thurrock deserved a good central library, a children's library and a specialist children's library and deserved more than eight shelves and two computers. The motion was to make sure that future generations were not robbed of performing on a professional stage, to study, to learn and to discover and this would be for future generations. Councillor Potheary concluded by urging all members to vote for the original motion.

Councillor Snell summed up by requesting the move to the vote.

Councillor J Kent summed up by stating he had enjoyed the debate and two issues from the debate had fallen into two categories – one the current theatre was smaller and older than we would like, it was run down and would like a new theatre. That Councillor J Kent was not alone in saying the Thameside Complex should remain open until a new theatre was in place. That Councillor Snell and Huelin referred to having a theatre service would mean not having a theatre but taking shows and plays on the road. That you could not have a theatre service without a service. For Councillor J Kent it was holding on to what you had, and although the Thameside may not be perfect prior to the Covid pandemic it was functioning fine as a theatre and again reiterated the theatre cannot close without a replacement being in place. Referred to Councillor Maney stating that £16 million was an eye-watering amount of money and agreed it was, it equated to one year's debt interest payment that the Council were paying on its accumulated debt. At Corporate Overview and Scrutiny committee last week, a report on the £16 million was presented but the numbers had not added up, this also included £2.5 million of contingency and project management. That the £16 million had been a wish list, there were things that needed to be done and some that needed to be done quickly. This was a 10 year programme with much could be done much less than what was being suggested.

Councillor J Kent requested a requisition vote and urged members to vote for the original motion. A vote was taken on the amended motion and the results were:

For: Councillors Akinbohun, Anderson, Baker, Carter, Coxshall, Duffin, Gledhill, Halden, Hebb, Huelin, Jefferies, Johnson, Kelly, Little, Maney, Mayes, Ononaji, Pearce, Piccolo, Polley, Ralph, Redsell, Rigby, Snell, Spillman, Thandi and Van Day (27)

Against: Councillors Abbas, Byrne, Chukwu, Fish, Fletcher, C Kent, J Kent, Kerin, Liddiard, Massey, Muldowney, Okunade, Potheary, Raper, Shinnick, Smith, Watson and Worrall (18)

To which the Mayor announced the amended motion be carried.

62. Motion submitted by Councillor Redsell

Councillor Redsell deferred her Motion until the 26 January 2022 Council meeting.

63. Motion submitted by Councillor Polley

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

This Council welcomes the Conservative Governments lifting of the cap on medical school places and acknowledges the success of our young people achieving record A Level results in what had been a very difficult year.

Councillor Polley presented her motion that recognised the lifting of the cap on medical school places and acknowledged the A Level result success in such a testing year. With Thurrock finding it hard to recruit into the area there should be more places available to train home-grown talent. To have the initiative to train and recruit new general practitioners into Thurrock. Councillor Polley summed up by stating these successes should be celebrated.

Members voted unanimously in favour of this Motion to which the Mayor announced the Motion carried.

The meeting finished at 8.39pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**