

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage
and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Council

To the Members of Thurrock Council

The next meeting of the Council will be held at **7.00 pm** on
30 November 2022

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

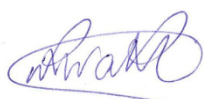
Membership of the Council:

James Halden (Mayor)
Susan Little (Deputy Mayor)

Qaisar Abbas
John Allen
Alex Anderson
Deborah Arnold
Paul Arnold
Chris Baker
Gary Byrne
Adam Carter
Daniel Chukwu
Colin Churchman
Gary Collins
George Coxshall
Mark Coxshall
Jack Duffin
Tony Fish
Robert Gledhill

Shane Hebb
Victoria Holloway
Andrew Jefferies
Barry Johnson
Tom Kelly
Cathy Kent
John Kent
Martin Kerin
Steve Liddiard
Ben Maney
Fraser Massey
Allen Mayes
Sara Muldowney
Augustine Ononaji
Srikanth Panjala
Maureen Pearce

Terry Piccolo
Georgette Polley
Jane Potheary
Shane Ralph
Kairen Raper
Joycelyn Redsell
Elizabeth Rigby
Sue Sammons
Sue Shinnick
Jennifer Smith
Graham Snell
Luke Spillman
James Thandi
Lee Watson
Lynn Worrall



Ian Wake
Acting Chief Executive

Agenda published on: 22 November 2022

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on 13 October 2022.	
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on 26 October 2022.	
3	Items of Urgent Business	
	To receive additional items that the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4	Declaration of Interests	
	To receive any declaration of interests from Members.	
5	Announcements on behalf of the Mayor or the Leader of the Council	
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	In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
7	Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors	
	In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2(Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.	
8	Petitions Update Report	65 - 66
9	Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and Other Panels	
	The Council are asked to agree any changes to the appointments made to committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels, as requested by Group Leaders.	

10 The Localism Act 2011 - Appointment of Independent Persons 67 - 70

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

12 Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

13 Minutes of Committees

Name of Committee	Date
Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 July 2022
Planning Committee	18 August 2022
Standard and Audit Committee	7 July 2022
General Services Committee	29 September 2022
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	8 June 2022
Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1 September 2022
General Services Committee	11 October 2022
General Services Committee	25 October 2022
Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8 September 2022
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force	17 October 2022
Planning Committee	20 October 2022
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 October 2022
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 September 2022

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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

Future Dates of Council:

25 January 2023 and 22 February 2023 (Budget)

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Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

Advice Regarding Public Attendance at Meetings

If you are feeling ill or have tested positive for Covid and are isolating you should remain at home, the meeting will be webcast and you can attend in that way.

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This meeting will be live streamed and recorded with the video recording being published via the Council's online webcast channel: www.thurrock.gov.uk/webcast

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at 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 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-GUEST
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

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

Evacuation Procedures

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

How to view this agenda on a tablet device



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

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

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

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

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

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

Helpful Reminders for Members

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

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

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



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

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

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

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

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

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

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

Pecuniary

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

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

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

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

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

Non- pecuniary

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



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

PROCEDURE FOR MOTIONS

No speech may exceed 4 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 4 minute time shall apply) [Rule 19.8(a)]

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

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|--|----------------------------|
| A. | A1 | Motion is moved | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A2 | Mover speaks | [Rule 19.8(a) (5 minutes)] |
| | A3 | Seconded | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A4 | Secunder speaks or reserves right to speak | [Rule 19.3] (4 minutes) |

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

B.		C.	
IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)		If NOT amended i.e. original motion	
B1	The mover of the amendment shall speak (4 mins).	C1	Debate.
B2	The seconder of the amendment shall speak unless he or she has reserved their speech (4 mins).	C2	If the seconder of the motion has reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.
B3	THEN debate on the subject .	C3	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.
B4	If the seconder of the substantive motion and the amendment reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.	C4	Vote on motion.
B5	The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply.		
B6	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.		
B7	Vote on amendment.		
B8	A vote shall be taken on the substantive motion, as amended if appropriate, without further debate.		

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

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WW2 in Memoriam

Remembering Thurrock's Fallen : Civilian Deaths due to enemy action and Roll of Honour

Today we share names on the Roll of Honour. These are people whose home address was shown as Thurrock who lost their lives during the Second World War whilst serving with the armed forces or merchant navy.

In recognition of the adversity and bravery experienced by ordinary people in Thurrock civilian deaths are also noted here in relevant months. 101 non-combatants were killed in Thurrock between 1939 and 1945 who will also be remembered.

A special thanks to Museum volunteer Pam Purkiss for compiling the Roll of Honour information. Civilians added by Valina Bowman-Burns from Thurrock Museum.

The names have been listed in date order.

November 1942

MINSHALL Frederick W

DAVIS Alfred G

BUTTON Frederick O

CORDEN Frederick P

COX Herbert B

VINCENT Albert Edward

BLOOMFIELD Frank

LAZELL John W

OATS Reginald A

ELLIOTT Laurence H

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Mayoral Roll of Honour

The Roll of Honour has been introduced to recognise and celebrate charities, businesses, individuals, and community groups that have strived to make Thurrock a greater place to live, work, learn and play.

November 2022

JoJo Mitchell- Services to young people in Thurrock Police Cadets

Julie Barker – Services to performing arts within the borough

Terry Hills – Service to young people in Sports.

Janet Parker – Support to young people through fostering caring



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Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 13 October 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present:	Councillors James Halden (Mayor), Susan Little (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, John Allen, Alex Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Paul Arnold, Gary Byrne, Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu, George Coxshall, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Robert Gledhill, Shane Hebb, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Allen Mayes, Sara Muldowney, Augustine Ononaji, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley, Shane Ralph, Kairen Raper, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Shinnick, Jennifer Smith, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall
Apologies:	Councillors Chris Baker, Gary Collins, Victoria Holloway, Martin Kerin, Fraser Massey, Srikanth Panjala and Sue Sammons
In attendance:	Ian Wake, Acting Chief Executive Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services Julie Rogers, Director of Public Realm Ewelina Sorbjan, Interim Director Housing Karen Wheeler, Director Strategy, Engagement and Growth Matthew Boulter, Interim Monitoring Officer Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer Owen Cartey, Political Assistant

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

49. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 27 July 2022 were approved as a correct record.

50. Items of Urgent Business

There were no urgent items of business.

51. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

52. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor

The Mayor made the following announcements:

As this was the first meeting following the sad passing of her Majesty the Queen, the Mayor gave personal thanks to the Mayor's Chaplain, Councillors and Council Staff who had worked to ensure the mourning events for Elizabeth II and the proclamation of the new King had been an appropriate and public event. The Mayor had seen over 700 people across the events that he had supported. Also, the Council had to work together to guarantee the public can take part in equally historic events as we look forward to the coronation next year.

The Mayor welcomed all Members to the new chamber which was a modern fitting facility for the Council to undertake its business. This evening the Mace had been brought in by the Mayor's new Cadet, Cadet First Class McMahon, a tradition which many boroughs had observed and reaffirmed the Council's maritime history.

The Mayor stated that final touches would be made to the chamber in the next couple of days including IT and had been delighted that the Acting Chief Executive and the Leader had agreed with the Mayor that now was the right time for the chamber to be used to conduct democratic functions. The Mayor thanked Sheila Murphy and Ian Wake who had worked so hard to ensure the chamber was available this evening.

The Mayor referred Members to the first published names of the Roll of Honour in the agenda, those people who had help make Thurrock a truly great place and hoped they would inspire others to public service.

The Mayor concluded his announcements by stating as Chairman of Full Council he would like to hear how best to promote the rights of all 49 members in this chamber and stated if Members had further ideas they would like to be fed into the Constitution Working Group, regarding how to improve challenge and debate at full council, the Mayor would be holding an informal tea in the Mayor's Parlour between 4-6pm on the 24 October to which all members would be welcome.

53. To elect the Leader of the Council for a four-year term of office

Nominations were invited for the election of the Leader of the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Gledhill, and seconded by Councillor Jefferies, that Councillor M Coxshall be elected as Leader of the Council.

Members voted 29 in favour and 10 against, therefore Councillor M Coxshall was elected as Leader of the Council.

The Mayor then invited Councillor M Coxshall to make any announcements he wished to make as Leader of the Council:

Councillor M Coxshall thanked the former Leader, Councillor Gledhill, whilst doing the honourable thing of stepping down he would be remembered for the

launch of Clean It, Cut It, Fill It, who had won awards for Thurrock and had given the borough optimism.

Councillor M Coxshall had accepted the leadership of the Council as he believed in Thurrock's greatness to make good decisions from now onwards and be a Leader for all 49 councillors with the aim to have greater democratic accountability as part of his new administration.

Councillor M Coxshall stated that a few years ago, Councillors had approved an investment plan to try and avoid cuts to public services and this approach had worked for some time. However, concerns had been raised about the approach and the reassurances given to Cabinet now appear to have been wrong. There had been warnings that local government was broken with an out-of-date funding model with too much power withheld from elected members and the reasons for this not working would come to light during the best value inspection. Councillor M Coxshall stated the council was in great difficulty and this now had to be put right and would do his best with the help of all members to put this right. That new deep and meaningful reform to local government was required but for now action needed to be taken differently with partners in Thurrock. There would now be a new era of openness, transparency, and honesty. By defending the Council's status as a unitary council and be a leader for all 49 elected councillors, he would end the practice of councillors having to submit questions in advance to cabinet and from now on any councillor may come to cabinet to debate and question items on the cabinet agenda. He would make himself more available for press briefings and would provide monthly cabinet media briefings, to look to reform the system of overview and scrutiny and for the improvement plan to be published and subject to full council debate and vote. There would be better access and dialogue between members and officers.

Councillor M Coxshall welcomed the approach of the Acting Chief Executive and his senior team. He also welcomed the support from HMG and Essex County Council who were acting as commissioners. The focus would be to protect three core services, bin collections, street lighting and grass cutting with the need to protect our services for our constituents. He had invited leaders of the opposition parties to join him in assisting the Acting Chief Executive to help build a recovery plan with the first meeting having taken place this week.

Councillor M Coxshall stated in regard to the debt levels, work was ongoing, and he would report back.

Councillor M Coxshall concluded that he could not put right the wrong doings of previous leaders and administrations over the last 20 years, he believed and desired that all 49 councillors worked together to shape the future. He was ready to work with all members with a new chamber, new leader and a new start.

RESOLVED

That Councillor M Coxshall be duly elected as Leader of the Council for a four-year term of office.

54. Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public.

55. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

No notices of petition had been received.

56. Petitions Update Report

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

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

The Mayor enquired whether there were 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 M Coxshall, stated he had the following changes to make:

1. Replace Councillor Snell with Councillor Carter as substitute on the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. Replace Councillor Snell with Councillor Gledhill on the Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3. Replace Councillor Churchman with Councillor Hebb as substitute on the Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
4. Replace Councillor Snell with Councillor P Arnold on the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. Remove Councillor Arnold as Vice Chair on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
6. Appoint Councillor Rigby as Vice Chair on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
7. Nominated Councillor Massey as Chair on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
8. Nominated Councillor Byrne as Vice Chair, replacing Councillor Thandi, on the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
9. Remove Councillor Churchman from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
10. Add Councillor G Coxshall as substitute on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
11. Replace Councillor Redsell with Councillor Hebb on the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
12. Replace Councillor Gledhill with Councillor Thandi on the General Services Committee.

13. Appoint Councillor M Coxshall as Chair on the General Services Committee.
14. Appoint Councillor D Arnold as Vice Chair on the General Services Committee.
15. Appoint Councillor P Arnold as Chair on the Corporate Parenting Committee.
16. Councillor Pearce to remain on the committee as a member.
17. Appoint Councillor Carter as Vice Chair, previously Chair, on the Corporate Parenting Committee.
18. Replace Councillor Snell with Councillor Collins on the Standard and Audit Committee.
19. Move Councillor Rigby as Chair, but to remain on the Standard and Audit Committee. The Chair appointment to remain vacant.
20. Replace Councillor Ononaji with Councillor Thandi as Vice Chair on the Standard and Audit Committee.
21. Appoint Councillor Carter as substitute on the Standard and Audit Committee.
22. Replace Councillor Gledhill with Councillor M Coxshall on the Governance Working Group.

Councillor J Kent, Leader of the Labour Group, stated he had no changes to make.

Councillor Byrne, Leader of the Thurrock Independent Group, stated he had no changes to make. Councillor Byrne stated he would make a charity donation from the allowance provided from the Vice Chair of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Thurrock Food Bank in Corringham.

Councillor Allen stated they had no changes to make.

Members agreed to all the changes to appointments.

58. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 2 questions to the Leader had been received and 10 questions to Cabinet Members.

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

59. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

No reports were presented.

60. Minutes of Committees

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

61. 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.

62. Motion submitted by Councillor J Kent

The Motion, as printed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor J Kent and seconded by Councillor M Coxshall. The Motion read as follows:

Council notes that the findings of January's Corporate Peer Challenge, and its accompanying action plan, have been published on the council's website. Council believes that it is important that, to ensure members learn from the CPC process, that these documents should be presented to, both, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet for formal adoption.

Councillor J Kent presented his motion by stating those documents were now on the forward plan of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and would like the motion to go straight to the vote.

Councillor M Coxshall stated this had been one of his first acts, as newly elected leader, to add these documents onto the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan. Councillor Coxshall agreed the report had to be presented as quickly as possible and with the Improvement Board Plan being presented quicker to overview and scrutiny would enable the delivery of some of those improvements coming out of that. Councillor M Coxshall also stated that any new improvements coming out of the Improvement Board Plan would be actioned as quickly as possible and hoped the newly appointed Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny would take these as urgent items.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

With the majority of Members voting in favour, the motion was carried.

63. Motion submitted by Councillor Carter

The Motion, as printed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Carter and seconded by Councillor Snell. The Motion read as follows:

The Council calls for the building operationally known as C03 to be renamed as the Town Hall and to be referred to as such in all communications.

Councillor Carter presented his motion by stating Grays had become over time a commuter town, and to build and enhance a community, there needed be a community town hall not a building called C03. The Town Hall would be at the heart of the community and a centre piece for growth and development. With significant investments to regenerate Grays it would be fitting that the Council's newest building had the name which would be more in keeping with

the community. Councillor Carter urged all members to vote in favour of this motion.

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

The Council calls for the building operationally known as C03 to be renamed as the Town Hall and to be referred to as such in all communications when it is in a fit state to warrant 'Town Hall' status.

Councillor Byrne presented his amended motion by stating the building was nowhere near ready to warrant the Town Hall status. Councillor Byrne continued to state the Council did not warrant a town hall based on the mess of the borough and the mess that everything else was in. When the building work had been finalised and the borough was on a better track then maybe then the building would warrant the Town Hall status.

Councillor J Kent stated a town hall was historically a place for entertainment and a place for municipal debate so therefore he had an issue in the name change to Town Hall. Councillor J Kent stated this may have been a missed opportunity to rename the building "King Charles III Centre" and confirmed that he would not be supporting the motion nor the amendment.

Councillor M Coxshall understood Councillor J Kent's point, but the new building had venues and halls with the new building having a more welcoming ceremony suite. The renaming of the building had to be for resident to recognise where they would meet their elected representatives, at the Town Hall, not to a named building. Councillor M Coxshall also agreed with Councillor Byrne's points and had apologised, but the council needed to move forward with a new chamber, new leader and a new start, starting with the Town Hall name.

Councillor Fish stated the building was not welcoming for disabled users with very poor access to and from the building and questioned when this would be improved. Councillor M Coxshall agreed that the building was unwelcoming and agreed to get this right, but the name change would be fitting for the building as it was in the right place.

Councillor Worrall raised her concerns on the inadequate safety measures that should be in place to protect members leaving the offices late at night, she had concerns over the lack of lifts, disability access and that some of the glass panels were loose and very dangerous.

Councillor Redsell agreed with Councillor Worrall's comments on the concerns of safety and inadequate disability access. Councillor Redsell stated that C03 needed a name and that Town Hall sounded good for a building in the centre of the town.

Councillor Snell agreed with Councillor Redsell's comments, that it would be nicer for C03 to have a name especially for those residents using the Mulberry Suite for wedding services.

Councillor Byrne stated C03 was in no fit state to be called a Town Hall.

Councillor Carter stated Thurrock had to look to the future and had been surprised by the defeated attitude this evening. The change of name would create a new community hub and promote Grays as a commuter town into London. Councillor Carter acknowledged there were more issues facing the Council but the renaming of the C03 would connect more within the community and urged all members to vote in favour of the motion.

The Mayor called a vote on the amended Motion. With the majority of votes against the amendment the Mayor called a vote on the substantive motion to which with 30 votes for and 10 votes against the substantive motion was carried.

64. Motion submitted by Councillor Polley

Motion 3 was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

The meeting finished at 8.18 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

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

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 13 October 2022

Item 6 – Questions from Public

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

QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

1. Councillor J Kent

We are told that the new council chamber “has been meticulously designed to stand for generations.” Why then, was this “meticulously designed” chamber unable to be used for annual council, on the 25th of May or for the June and July council meetings?

Mayor

Leader of the Council.

Councillor M Coxshall

The new council chamber has been designed to be modern, public-facing, and a venue to contain democratic matters in a total transparent manner. The construction projects and nature of these projects are specific during these recent times when many challenges were faced during this long journey, not least the impact of COVID, the construction sector supply chains, and construction worker shortages. Unfortunately, as we neared the building completion it became clear that the chamber – aesthetics of the chamber – were not up to the standard and fit that we could see we could use, unlike the rest of the building. Steps were taken to improve this part to hosting meetings and this work took much longer than expected, due to complexity changes. We now have, as you see, a chamber that’s designed for more people in the public gallery than the old chamber, improvements in technology as still doing live-streaming for more democratic and wider external audiences, and allowing more visibility for presentations at planning committees. We are almost there, just a few more tweaks.

Mayor

Thank you Leader. Leader of the Opposition?

Councillor J Kent

So back in March, February budget setting meeting, the then Leader of the Council said that he was disappointed not to be in the new chamber as had been hoped. He said that the works had gone on longer than expected as the finishing touches inside were not up to the standard we would expect. Mr Mayor, that was eight months ago. Would the Leader of the Council tell us just what finishing touches have been changed and detail the changes that have

been made since now and February?

Mayor

Leader of the Council.

Councillor M Coxshall

In February, as you saw, in February the finishing touches are major. We completely came into here as Members and walked around, it was not acceptable. This chamber was not acceptable or fit and that's the major change that we're talking about. It's a whole new chamber, if we see this it's completely different to what it is and there was finishing touches, Members saw it, it was unacceptable and that was not to our standard, so we've got a new chamber and building that we're in now today. What I will say is that I don't want to get into tit for tat, I can't change what the last administration did, it's a different administration.

Mayor

Leader of the Opposition - thank you.

2. From Councillor J Kent to the Leader

Councillor J Kent

Does the Leader of the Council agree with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he says that Thurrock Council has a "culture of poor financial management"?

Mayor

Leader of the Council.

Councillor M Coxshall

Yes.

Mayor

Leader of the Opposition.

Councillor J Kent

Will the Leader of the Council detail what he's going to do to change that poor culture of financial management. What's he going to do to improve that culture?

Mayor

Leader of the Council.

Councillor M Coxshall

I think we see tonight there's some differences in this chamber, we won't go into them. But we can see what we tried immediately when I took over. I think the decisions what I want to make in the Improvement Board are going to come out in that time. I think we're going to make major financial changes and there's a culture that's got to change from the top. I've been invited continuously to the Leaders groups with the officers, I can think of one with the CEO and myself we're going to work together. We cannot change the culture without changing attitudes in this chamber to the 49 of us. I'm not talking about tit for tat and going back over old ground. I can't change the old ground, I can change today and be judged on what I say and do every day, here, now. How I was – I can't change how I behaved in this chamber when I first got here, I'm a different person, learnt my lessons and carry on trying to change. So, I hope that will happen to everyone. I've got to have the honesty and the belief in that change, and that changes from us which goes to the officers. The officers have quite rightly agreed there's a culture change and I think the new Interim CEO will try to make that culture change. Part of the peer review which we'll go onto later is a cultural change and listening to the views of that peer review and saying that the Leader and Chief Executive working together as one, that's a culture change. And once we get a culture change embedded, we believe that's transparent, openness and honesty, we will see that culture change.

Mayor

Leader of the Opposition?

Councillor J Kent

I'm really not sure we got an answer there Mr Mayor. I'd really like some tangible steps that are going to be taken to improve the financial management of this authority. And I have to say that Councillor Coxshall has sat on Cabinet for every day of the last six years, to somehow claim that this is a new administration, and he's been nothing to do with the past six years is just fanciful. So, give me some concrete steps that you're going to take to improve the financial management of this authority.

Mayor

Leader.

Councillor M Coxshall

The offer when you came to me this week is the financial improvement board, that's the biggest thing that we're going to go through. Everything will go through that Improvement Board, that's new. That's part of the recovery plan and part of the commissioner's work. That meets two weekly and that will

change and improve the financials, but that's cultural change we need, that changes from every part of that. That's not finance but, we've got to have a cultural change between Members and officers and how we treat each other in this chamber and outside this chamber and working together that will change that.

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

1. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor Snell

Councillor Byrne

Thank you, Mr Mayor. What due diligence was carried out by the Administration on Toucan Energy and Rockfire before we trusted it with our family silver?

Mayor

Thank you Councillor. Councillor Snell would you please respond?

Councillor Snell

Thank you Councillor Byrne for your question. As the Leader mentioned in his opening statement today, a lot of this kind of information is subject to the ongoing investigation. Now as you know the intervention has only just started, really got underway this week and there are a lot of details that are coming out or yet to emerge, and I can't really comment right now on what happened, but suffice to say – can I finish my answer?

Mayor

Councillor Byrne, Councillor Byrne – Councillor Snell is trying to answer the question.

Councillor Snell

If you'd like to let me finish the answer at least before we get onto the next bit. The next bit I was going to say is that as far as due diligence was concerned, we do – that was given out to several outside agencies, respectable agencies. But it would be wrong of me at this moment to name those and to comment on their findings right now because that information is part of the intervention that's currently ongoing. So, we will come to the answers, they will come to this chamber at some time in future when the best value inspection is finished and then all this information will be revealed, and we can go from there. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Byrne

Yes but the question was what due diligence did the administration do and if we believe it was only last August you knew about it, the answer has been absolutely none. So, what we're saying is you didn't do any, or you knew before August. Same question, what due diligence was carried out on Liam Kavanagh by the administration before we trusted him with our money.

Mayor

Councillor Snell.

Councillor Snell

That's actually the same question again and I'm afraid the answer is exactly the same. Those details are – I know everybody wants this information, I know we all want this detail to come out and it will, it's just not there yet. So, all the things you've just asked about the due diligence going into Toucan to start off with, information on Liam Kavanagh himself – that will all come out, it's just not there yet. The intervention has just started now, we've had our first meetings this week and you know it's going to be ongoing. As the Leader said it will be fortnightly and as this information comes to light, we will bring it to Council, and you will get the answers you're looking for. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you have a final supplementary?

Councillor Byrne

Yes please. You're the third Cabinet – you're the number three Cabinet Member in the last few months, that's ironically the same number of different colour rosettes you've worn. I think we deserve to know that you're not bringing the same level of schoolboy naivety to the table we've witnessed over the last two years. So, my question is what are you bringing to the table in terms of audit and accountancy skills, and for example can you read numbers?

Mayor

Councillor Snell would you like to respond?

Councillor Snell

I'm not sure I should deign that one with a response really – do I know numbers. But let's put it this way I got nine O-levels at school – when I went to school they were O-levels – and I got two A-levels, so I'm pretty good with

numbers and words and things generally I think. But again, all I can say is look, the report's going to be published by the BVI in January and the answer's that you're looking you'll get then. In terms of my competence, the Leader's placed his faith in me to do a job and I will do that to the best of my ability. Thank you.

2. From Councillor Muldowney to Councillor M Coxshall

Councillor Muldowney

Thank you. Can the Portfolio Holder tell the Chamber what this administration intends to do with the land known as Flat Irons Field opposite Cole Avenue?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall.

Councillor M Coxshall

This question has been a long time coming hasn't it. I've seen it for months. Flat Irons Field is owned by the council and is held on a charitable trust basis. The council is in discussion with the Charities Commission what it can do and how it could use the revenue. Any revenue raised from the land to the betterment of the children of Thurrock, and it won't be sold.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney do you have a supplementary?

Councillor Muldowney

Yes please Mayor. Thank you. A Freedom of Information record shows the Council has received £1012 a year in rent and wayleave since 1970 on behalf of the children's charity that was set up to receive this money on behalf of the children of Chadwell, and the borough. But at the time of enquiry none of this was paid into the trust. It may this year after further enquiries by me, I was assured the payments had been ringfenced and they'd be paid into the trust the following week. However, to date only four payments totalling £168 have been deposited into the trust from the years from 2018-2021. What has happened to the other £3880 covering those four years and the additional thousands of pounds still missing from previous years.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall.

Councillor M Coxshall

I agree with you it should be paid into the trust and that's why the ongoing conversation with the Charities Commission to make sure we abide by the law

and should pay that into there and should expedite that as quick as possible.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney, final supplementary?

Councillor Muldowney

Thank you Councillor Coxshall for that undertaking. We've been waiting a long time for that money to actually end up where it is. I think we need to be clear about what's happened here. First, this administration has tried to sell land that didn't belong to it, and we managed to stop that. Secondly, it's failed in its trustee role to submit money received into the charitable trust set up for that purpose. It's become increasingly clear in recent weeks that this administration can't be trusted with taxpayers' money, now it can't be trusted with money meant for the children's charity. Does the Portfolio Holder agree that this administration has hit a new low by withholding money meant to benefit the children of this borough?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall.

Councillor M Coxshall

It would do if it did it maliciously. It didn't and you know that. If it was malicious – one thing, and if they deliberately withheld it that's one thing, but if they inadvertently, accidentally or forgetfulness, that's a different matter. What you're accusing is unlawful behaviour and that's highly serious. Not illegal but unlawful if you withheld money if you knew you was supposed to. If you didn't do it without that, it may be mismanagement, completely agree. But that's what we need to be doing. That small item there is just one of bigger items and noughts on it, and I think it shows the relationship has broken down and how the council works. And what we've got to do is actually solve these problems and that small item there is writ large across the council, some of these things, and how we've got to work together better to make sure it works.

3. From Councillor Pearce to Councillor M Coxshall

Councillor Pearce

Thank you, Mr Mayor. To ask that the Portfolio Holder for Growth comment on suggestions that's held discussions with landowners or developers who may have had an interest in developing large areas of greenbelt, often insensitively referred to as 'the smile', which is behind the Ship Lane, Hall Road, Love Lane and Purfleet Road in Aveley? Thank you.

Mayor

Thank you Councillor Pearce. Councillor Coxshall would you like to respond?

Councillor M Coxshall

Landowners and developers as part of the call for sites exercise in preparation for a Local Plan always speak to Councillors and council. This is a legitimate activity, but I will make sure that it's always done in an open and transparent way because it hasn't – it's very difficult when you find out too late, and Members can find out too late. I think there's a new published directorate of all meetings now to get people used to the training and I encourage you to come up. I think it was a great meeting this week actually with members there that I enjoyed going to with members, to make sure they're aware of what's happening, who's doing what, what officers are speaking and when they're speaking in your wards. It's a legitimate activity, but as for this site in question, no decision's been made at this time about the allocated locations for any growth, and it would be up to a vote in this Council and then a public inquiry of the Local Plan, and even then, it'll have to go through a Planning Committee in the normal way. I want to encourage ward Members from across this Council to take part in Local Plan discussions and consultations and get as many residents engaged in this process over the next few months. Only then we can have a plan that residents want, not developers.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Coxshall. Councillor Pearce do you have a supplementary?

Councillor Pearce

Yes, I do. Earlier this year I was concerned to read in the public domain that the Council had held, and I quote 'secret meetings' with those interested in developing the land known as the smile. Would the Leader ensure that all such meetings have transparency and held in good faith?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall would you like to respond?

Councillor M Coxshall

Yes, I will look into how we minute the meetings and publish any meetings that officers have, because day in day out, especially the Local Plan team speaks to local developers, residents, on an hourly basis. None of them means that there's guarantees and it's an open process that everyone can go through this process. I talk about land across the borough – there's thousands, we're in a great experience. These people in here, I've said before, 49 of us can choose these sites, we're not like other local authority sites across the country where they haven't got a choice of where they build in the next twenty years. We have and that means loads of these land developers will be disappointed because they won't make the bar and then

that's – how we motivate the bar is how you give your representations of your residents to the Planning Committee, to the Local Plan team, but I will make sure that no meetings like that come out again, and it was like, it was a mistake secret meeting. It wasn't a secret meeting, there are plenty of meetings, we need to make sure how we work together to make sure when these meetings happen, I think the Labour group and the opposition groups have been invited to talk to these them, and the more you listen to everyone, including our officers, and the planning developers to make legitimate choices and take back to your residents. So, we will make assurances, it will be nothing will happen without being as open as possible to make sure these don't happen again.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Coxshall. Councillor Pearce do you have a final supplementary?

Councillor Pearce

Yes, I have. I'm grateful for that reassurance and know that the Aveley residents will be too. From what I know of the smile plans so far, having followed the public engagement events up to date, I'm for one wholly opposed to such large-scale housing estates on Aveley's greenbelt. Would the Leader make clear that should the plans come to fruition, and I hope indeed they don't, will the voices of local residents be heard? Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall?

Councillor M Coxshall

Absolutely, the reason they've had that and you've been involved in that was there was a design charette piloted to actually see what residents want and working through that and working all through the sites. And because we haven't got local plans and parish councils that's really the critical thing to make sure we – development happens at the request of local areas. That's the factor of this, if you don't want the development make your representations known and give good reasons, not just you don't want that development, but also listen to what you get from the development, and if it's not good enough say so because that's the only way we get a sturdy local plan that we want development in the right places and we don't want development and we want to protect our nice greenbelt. That site as well, I'm going to keep an open mind right the way through it, but I hear your concerns because in the end I'm the Cabinet Member for that and for the local plan. But it would be a choice and make your representations next year, if that makes the grade next year, and then have a conversation about that and what you want there. If not, quite rightly, you shouldn't be making any representations and it shouldn't make the grade. It's up to you – it'll be up the residents and

the Councillors in this to decide these questions.

4. From Councillor Pearce to Councillor Maney

Is the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Public Safety aware of recent incidents of HGVs entering The Village Development in Aveley and what action has been taken to address this? Thanks.

Mayor

Councillor Maney, would you like to respond?

Councillor Maney

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Pearce for your question. Mr Mayor although I've not been made aware of recent HGV incursions into the village estate, I do know that there have been issues up until the start of this year. At that time, I saw complaints from local residents and reported that HGVs were indeed entering the area on a frequent basis and causing a nuisance. There was a suggestion that drivers were following GPS devices which were inadvertently directing drivers onto the estate. This led to vehicles having to turn in very narrow spaces and I saw images of HGVs mounting residential gardens and communal greens, and clearly this wasn't acceptable. I'm pleased to say that following the intervention of former Councillor David van Day and local MP Jackie Doyle-Price, who lobbied the Council and the developer for a solution, signage was erected at the entrance to the estate at Lance Corporal Nicky Mason Way, then the Aveley Bypass. This measure appears to have ensured something of a solution as reports of HGV incursions have not been brought to the attention of the transport development team since. Whilst the Council has limited options at this stage, I would of course expect us to review the situation, should there be a need for this. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Maney. Councillor Pearce do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Pearce

I do Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Maney for that answer. As Portfolio Holder, you may be aware for a year there was no working street lights on part of the estate and I had to fight, with another resident over there, and it took us almost a year to get lights, lucky enough it's up and running now. Then we had the issue of these HGVs entering the estate and being unable to turn. I've now learned that the roads have yet to be adopted by the Council and there are concerns over maintenance. I'm worried that the area will become a forgotten part of Aveley. Would Councillor Maney advise whether HGV weight restrictions in Aveley could be extended to cover this area, and could you suggest when the Council will be in a position to adopt these roads

serving this estate. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Maney, would you like to respond?

Councillor Maney

Thank you, Mr Mayor and thank you, Councillor Pearce for your supplemental question. I'm disappointed to hear that you have concerns for the residents of the village development, and I hope they don't feel that they are a forgotten part of Aveley. But, in truth the questions that you're asking on behalf of your residents are very pertinent ones, and you're doing your job in highlighting them here. I'll take the issue of the road network first because that answers the second question in relation to the weight restriction that you asked. As you know the village development is a sizable one, there's several hundred houses there and the road network should have transferred to the local authority already. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened because there are issues with the construction and maintenance of the road, which don't make them of an acceptable standard and we simply can't adopt them until they are of a standard that we would expect. When that happens, we will be free to extend the existing weight restrictions in Aveley to cover the village development. Obviously, it's not the done thing to implement a weight restriction on essentially land we don't own. It's theoretically possible, we can do it, but we need the consent of the developer, which is Persimmon Homes. Unfortunately, I have challenged the officers on this and they've shown me evidence that they have repeatedly asked Persimmon for meetings and attempted to engage with them on the issue of the road adoption, so it can be brought up to the standard that we expect, and I know we also have been talking to them about extending the weight restrictions, but regrettably they've not been in a communicating mood and so far they haven't responded to any of our communications. I understand we are looking at other options, which involves the use of a third party, but all I can say to you is we're very mindful of the issues you've raised, they do need to be addressed, and that'll be a lot easier when we've adopted the roadway or the highway network, but at the moment that all hinges on the developer cooperating with us, but I promise to keep you updated on that as it progresses. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Maney, Councillor Pearce do you have a supplementary? Okay, thank you.

5. From Councillor Redsell to Councillor Jeffries

Thank you, Mr Mayor. I am sure that Councillor Jeffries will like me have been concerned and disturbed by footage and images of recent fires around the country this summer, particularly the one in Wennington which led to the destruction of many residential properties. Would the Portfolio Holder advise

what steps the council has taken to assess and reduce the risk of grass/vegetation catching fire on council owned land particularly those areas surrounded by residential properties?

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies, would you like to respond?

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Redsell for your question. A normal maintenance programme of clean and green includes firebreaks and paths being cut into grass areas where the grass is left to grow e.g., meadows. As an additional measure the width of the firebreak was broadened to try and reduce the risk of grass and vegetation – vegetation catching fire on council owned land during the extreme hot weather. The areas of priority were those areas surrounded by residential properties and the firebreaks are designed to prevent any potential fires from spreading into these areas.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Jefferies. Councillor Redsell, do you have a supplementary?

Councillor Redsell

Thank you, Mr Mayor I do. Councillor Jefferies, thank you for that. As you may be aware there was a series of vegetation fires at Hangman's Wood this summer during the extreme heat, with the woods surrounded on most sides by residential properties. Homeowners were left to fight the flames themselves at times. Unfortunately, the council did not cut the grass until well into the summer this year, and only after Councillor Maney and I intervened and undertook a site visit with officers in July. By this time the grass had become very tall, and increasing the risk of fires spreading, even when it was cut the grass lay as a blanket on the ground posing a risk. Would Councillor Jefferies ensure that where council woodland and open spaces are close to homes and buildings, they receive a first cut before high summer, and not once vegetation has already become overgrown and dry? Would he particularly apply this to Hangman's Wood?

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies, would you like to reply?

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Redsell. Firstly, let me apologise to you and Councillor Maney for having to bring this to our attention. It should have been cut at an earlier stage but let me assure you that the firebreaks in this area will be cut early in the growing season and maintained through

regular cutting. Hangman's Wood is maintained as a wood in line with the guidelines from Natural England and our adopted public land maintenance strategy.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Jefferies. Councillor Redsell?

Councillor Redsell

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Jefferies for that. Just a short one, it was reported to us as Ward Councillors that fire engines were unable to gain access to Hangman's Wood during the fires and this hampered their efforts. Would Councillor Jefferies confirm that the Council has now discussed this with the fire service and that there will be no restricted access in the unfortunate event of another emergency? Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies?

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Redsell. So, the locks on the gates have now been changed to standard fire brigade keys, as these are standard keys that the ECFRS carry, and as such there should be no further issues with access to this area.

6. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor Duffin

In February this year, the portfolio holder for communications promised a good news story to come out of Comms every day. What happened, are we short of good news stories?

Mayor

Councillor Duffin, would you like to respond please?

Councillor Duffin

Thank you very much for your question, Councillor Byrne. It's not actually quite what I said, so just to repeat what I said for clarity of everyone in the Chamber: "so I'm challenging the comms team to put out 365 different, positive Thurrock stories in the next municipal year. That's not press releases, that could be social media, it could be other ways, but hold me to account on this because I think there's so much great stuff that we can be shouting about, and we need too". And at my last date and update which was the 26th of September we were at 143 days since that began and 143 unique good news stories have been put out. That's 55 social media posts, 30 e-news articles, 58 press releases. Obviously, we would have been well ahead of target, but

quite rightly with the passing of the Queen, social media and a lot of comms was put on hold. So, I'd like to thank the comms team for their work in achieving this target and we'll keep striding for even more, because I don't want to just hit the target, I want to beat it.

Mayor

Thank you, Councillor Duffin. Councillor Byrne, do you have a supplementary please?

Councillor Byrne

Yes please. In June we voted to be more press friendly to Neil Speight, but now he's been told he's not allowed to speak to officers. Why are we still trying to stop him doing his job and suppressing the news? We're telling Neil Speight he's not allowed to speak to officers.

Mayor

You have wild gesticulation behind you Councillor Byrne. Councillor Duffin, would you like to respond please?

Councillor Duffin

Yeah, I couldn't possibly comment on the fact that the member in question that you're talking about of the media was having, let's say a liquid refreshment with the Chief Executive only this week, so the narrative you're trying to push doesn't really stack up in facts I'm afraid.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you have a final supplementary?

Councillor Byrne

Yeah, he got the same email as me and it's in writing. Read the email, you're reading everything else, read the email you got. Come on you're full of – blah, blah, blah. Anyway, once you told me the only journalist worth its salt is Neil Speight, don't bother talking to the Thurrock Gazette, you said that it's a bias Tory paper. They get their column inches, and they will not go against the Tories or TBC. Is it right that our Communications Portfolio Holder only supports the party he happens to be with at the time. Journalists have the freedom to deliver the news without fear of retribution is what we should be having.

Mayor

Councillor Duffin, would you like to respond to the question?

Councillor Duffin

Yeah, I'm still trying to work out what the question was. Obviously, the first bit is around the email. I don't know which email you're referring too, by all means please send it to me. But yeah, I've made many comments on my views on members of the media, both nationally and locally, and I don't shy away from that. I'm guessing that's from some WhatsApp many a year ago no doubt. But it's hardly like there's some element of secrecy under this administration when the member of the media you're talking about is apparently banished, no one will talk to him. Why is he meeting the Chief Exec and having drinks with him - is that some kind of evil plot. I don't know what you're trying to get at here, but there is a new administration, there is a new trying, we want this and there's a lot of stuff in process. The Leader of the Council spoke earlier about monthly Cabinet briefings for media, there is more we want to do and we'll continue to do that, but I think some of the rhetoric that comes from Councillor Byrne just needs to be toned back and it might be worth just speaking again to that member of the media which you're saying has been completely blocked off from everyone, because it doesn't actually appear to be the truth.

7. From Councillor Polley to Councillor D Arnold

How many Residential and Nursing Homes within the Thurrock area operate a No Lift Policy in the event of a resident falling?

Mayor

Councillor Arnold would you like to respond please.

Councillor Arnold

Thank you, Mister Mayor, and thank you Councillor Polley for your question. During Covid in order to help reduce ambulance attendance in the community the NHS via the ICS gave riser chairs to homes and Thurrock Council used grant money to buy more so that we could provide other providers - care providers with chairs and in that we included training on how to use the chairs and also train the trainer so that they could perpetuate that training. So, we spoke to our older care homes in Thurrock, and they all assured us that they have riser chairs and more importantly they are using them to get people up after a fall providing there's no injury of course. So actually, none of our older people homes are operating a no lift policy.

Mayor

Councillor Polley would you like to put a supplementary forward.

Councillor Polley

Thank you very much for that Mister Mayor. I believe some of our homes did previously operate no lift policies and I - for the good our residents and for their well-being prolonged times on the floor could actually require them to

have an unnecessary hospital attendance so could the portfolio holder offer me any reassurance that we're actively encouraging these care homes to use those facilities. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Arnold, would you like to respond.

Councillor Arnold

Thank you, Mister Mayor, and thank you Councillor Polley. It's really important that we help the ambulance service as much as possible. They are already under stress and strains and there's long delays because of that stress and pressure that goes on so we are acknowledging that. We've proactively phoned every home to talk about riser chairs. We're also proactively encouraging our providers to discuss and review their lift or no lift policy so that we can make sure they are lifted in those instances when they can and in light of equipment being available to them and we're also in the process of arranging additional training to increase their confidence and to have those discussions with them to make sure that they feel comfortable when and when not to use them. I suppose what is perhaps a difficult thing for them because they want to make sure that somebody hasn't got an injury. There's also a provider's meeting in November and this very subject has now been added on to the agenda so that they can have a much broader wider discussion. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Polley, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Polley

No thank you.

8. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Snell

It has been widely reported that, between late 2018 and early 2019, Thurrock Council made payments of £138 million to companies linked to Liam Kavanagh. Can the Portfolio Holder explain what these payments were for?

Mayor

Councillor Snell, would you like to respond.

Councillor Snell

Thank you for your question, Councillor Kent. I find myself in the unenviable position of almost repeating the answer I gave before. This is subject to an on-going investigation as you are aware. There are a few elements to this whole scenario where things are particularly sensitive and what we must be

careful of in this chamber is saying anything which might in the future prejudice an action that may or may not be taken regarding particular aspects of it. This is one of those. There is information there that may or may not be true. We may know stuff we may not, we're not sure to be honest where we are with this at the moment so what the approach were taking is yet again, let's wait for the investigation, let's see what comes out of that and we will go from there but right at this moment it's too sensitive to make much of a comment on it. Thank you.

Mayor

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

Councillor Kent

Could the Portfolio Holder at least acknowledge that those payments were made.

Mayor

Councillor Snell.

Councillor Snell

I can acknowledge that payments were made, yes.

Mayor

Councillor Kent, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Kent

No thank you.

9. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Snell

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism reports that Thurrock Council has hired Camdor Global Advisers to value the solar farms, owned by Toucan, that the council has invested in. They report the value of those solar farms is £200 million less than the council's investment. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm whether this is the case?

Mayor

Councillor Snell, would you like to respond?

Councillor Snell

Thank you, Councillor Kent, for your question. No, I can't confirm that yet again, I know it's a bit repetitive, but this is subject to ongoing investigation and when the BVI report and the intervention comes to its January conclusion shall we say they will know a lot more but right this time now I can't confirm.

Mayor

Councillor Kent to you wish to pose a supplementary question?

Councillor Kent

So, Mister Mayor we know that we've ended up in a pretty catastrophic financial place and you know those of us who have been warning about this for some years have been stonewalled, ignored, falsely reassured, we've been lied to, fobbed off and misled. This evening the Leader of the Council has said that he wants his administration to set an example for what openness, honesty and transparently looks like. I've got to say Mister Mayor we've had precious little of that so far. I can't believe that the Portfolio Holder hasn't been briefed. So, I'll ask again is that figure of £200 million in the right ballpark.

Mayor

Councillor Snell.

Councillor Snell

This process that we're going through is going into at least January. I understand that the opposition party wants answers right now, we don't have the answers right now. We will have the answers though, so this isn't about trying to conceal things this is about let's make sure we absolutely know what went on before we start saying things that might be completely inaccurate. We just don't know at the moment so you will get the answers and I appreciate that you're sort of impatient for those, but when we get to it we will get to it and you will all know about it. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Kent do you wish to pose a second supplementary question?

Councillor Kent

Mister Mayor we've been promised by the Leader change this evening, but it doesn't sound like change that sounds like more of the same. So, let's talk about something that we can agree on. At last week's Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee we were told that people in Thurrock, the people of Thurrock, would be paying for the next 30 or 40 years at the price of the Conservative mismanagement of our funds, that's our children and our grandchildren that will be paying for this. Given the opportunity last week to

apologise, the Portfolio Holder refused, will he apologise to the people of Thurrock now.

Mayor

Councillor Snell

Councillor Snell

Thank you for the question, Councillor Kent, as you well know that's outrageous, you know that was speculation on behalf of the Labour member of that particular academy. The question was asked, and the answer was, you know we don't know. We hope 20 years, but we don't know what the answer is to that and as I said at the time and as I've been saying again tonight once we know what's gone on, once we know where we are with the whole situation, once we know who's to blame and who's not to blame, then we will start bringing that to the chamber. You can shake your head as much as you like but what we cannot do is start saying stuff that might be proven to be completely wrong because then the first thing you're going to do is coming in here saying well you got that wrong. We're not going to be pressured into answers now. You will get them, but you're just going to have to be patient I'm afraid. Thank you.

10. From Councillor Kerin to Councillor Johnson

Due to Councillor Kerin sending his apologies, a written response was provided.

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26 October 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors James Halden (Mayor), Susan Little (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, John Allen, Alex Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Paul Arnold, Chris Baker, Gary Byrne, Adam Carter, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, George Coxshall, Mark Coxshall, Jack Duffin, Tony Fish, Victoria Holloway, , Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Fraser Massey, Allen Mayes, Augustine Ononaji, Srikanth Panjala, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley, Jane Potheary, Shane Ralph, Kairen Raper, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons, Sue Shinnick, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Daniel Chukwu, Robert Gledhill, Shane Hebb, Andrew Jefferies, Sara Muldowney, Joycelyn Redsell and Jennifer Smith

In attendance: Ian Wake, Acting Chief Executive
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Julie Rogers, Director of Public Realm
Ewelina Sorbjan, Interim Director Housing
Karen Wheeler, Director Strategy, Engagement and Growth
Jonathan Wilson, Interim Director Finance & S151 Officer
Matthew Boulter, Interim Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

65. Items of Urgent Business

The Mayor had agreed an urgent item of business this evening to approve, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, the appointment of the Interim Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer). The Leader presented the report which had been a result of government intervention and the Best Value Inspection work. A report with several recommendations regarding the senior management structure had been taken to General Services Committee on 29 September 2022. At that meeting, General Services Committee agreed to commence the recruitment of the Director of Legal and Governance role with the interview process taking place at the 25 October 2022 General Services Committee.

The Leader thanked Matthew Boulter and Mark Bowen for undertaking their interim appointments in great manner and congratulated them on the work undertaken.

With 42 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstained, the recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED

Approved in accordance with the Council's Constitution the appointment of John Jones as Interim Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer).

66. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Mayor praised the Mayoral Roll of Honour names listed on page 9 of the agenda. The Mayor also thanked Matthew Boulter for his services as Interim Monitoring Officer who was an officer who fully understood the role of elected members and respected scrutiny and debate.

Councillor M Coxshall, the Leader of the Council, made the following announcements:

The Leader had promised, two weeks ago, to transform the culture between councillors, officers, media and between parties in this chamber and hoped that already members had seen some improvements.

The Leader spoke about the 'Just Stop Oil' Protests on the QEII Bridge who had stopped people from across Thurrock from going to work and taking their children to school because of those two self-important individuals. This had affected a great many of Thurrock businesses in the area, stopped some of our essential services and had hampered the blue light emergency services.

The Leader updated members on the progress of his six actions and looked forward to seeing as many members as possible at the cabinet meeting on the 9 November where any member could come and ask questions about items on the agenda. None of these need to be tabled in advance. The Leader would also arrange a press briefing for any member of the media before Cabinet. He also stated the council needed to be better at scrutiny which was why he had offered chairs and vice-chairs of overview and scrutiny committees to opposition groups.

The Leader stated that members were already forming an important part of the Improvement Plan with Councillor J Kent on the Finance and Improvement Boards alongside himself and had been informed of the

council's actions as they happened. The Leader reaffirm that the Improvement Plan would come to a debate at Full Council.

The Leader stated that access and dialogue at this council to staff and members had been improved and hoped the weekly letters were a useful way of keeping up to date. He stated he was the leader for all members of the council and would make sure that all members were properly informed as much as he could.

Finally, the Leader stated that changes were being made to the culture between officers and councillors. At Cabinet two weeks ago, he had clearly announced the executive decisions that had been made on free school meals and grants for local businesses and a process he had promised to continue. There had been significant changes to senior leadership with more directors proactively working to keep quality public services running. These restructures had put some of our best officers in senior positions that would change culture and dynamics. The Leader also expected councillors to be completely fair and reasonable with officers and their workload and with building trusting relationships going two ways and sometimes members should show their appreciation better.

To conclude, the Leader stated important steps had already been taken to improve the council and reiterated that he could not change the past, he had very little power to influence the future, but the council could decide how it acted here and now. With the journey being much easier if members across the chamber could continue to work together and put governance before party. The Leader offered for any member to walk into his office for a coffee and a chat at any time.

The Leader thanked all members for their continued support

68. Questions from Members of the Public

There were no public questions from members of the public.

69. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

No notices of petition had been received.

70. Petitions Update Report

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

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

The Mayor enquired whether there were 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 M Coxshall, stated he had the following changes to make:

Replace Councillor Rigby with Councillor Thandi as Vice-Chair on the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Replace Councillor Ononaji with Councillor Redsell on the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Return Councillor Rigby as Chair on the Standards and Audit Committee.

The Leader of the labour group, Councillor J Kent stated he had no changes to make.

Councillor Byrne, Massey and Allen stated they had no changes to make.

72. Ethical Standards - Changes to the Constitution

The Leader presented the report that recommended changes to the Council's Constitution in accordance with recommendations made by the national Committee on Standards in Public Life in its report on local government ethical standards to update the Member Code of Conduct. The report also recommended the adoption of the social media policy for Members.

Councillor J Kent agreed to go straight to the vote as the report had already been presented at the Standard and Audit Committee.

With 42 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstained, the recommendations were agreed.

RESOLVED

- 1. The adoption of the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix 1 to replace Members Code of Conduct 15 November 2013 set out in Chapter 7, Part 3.**
- 2. The adoption of the Social Media Policy for Members as set out in Appendix 2 - to be incorporated into the Constitution as Chapter 7 Part 3A.**
- 3. Noted that the Standards and Audit Committee considered the Local Government Association's Guidance on Member Code of Conduct Complaints Handling and recommended that the Monitoring Officer revised the Council's existing arrangements to reflect best practice for approval at a future meeting of Full Council.**

73. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the chamber that three questions to the leader had been received and eight questions to cabinet members.

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

74. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

No reports were presented.

75. Minutes of Committees

The minutes of committees as set out in the agenda were received.

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

Members were informed that an update to the Motion Update Report would be provided at the 30 November 2022 meeting.

77. 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:

Cost of Living - This Council resolves to work with the Government to ensure that it delivers the much-appreciated support to the residents of Thurrock as quickly as possible, and that the Council proactively identifies those most in need of support in the Thurrock area and ensure that they have access to all the Government support they are eligible for.

Councillor Polley presented her motion by stating the third sector in Thurrock was amazing and it was those voluntary sectors that could identify where the most need was for this support. She referred to the amazing work and knowledge of the LACs, nationally the 18 million homes in fuel poverty would likely increase winter death by 10% with an additional cost to the NHS by £2.5 billion, the increased pressures put on the emergency fire and rescue services and the need to continue with school meal payments for children when not in school. Councillor Polley concluded that she would like to see Thurrock Council work with the government as much as possible to ensure the maximum amount of relief be distributed to Thurrock residents and to ensure Thurrock residents were looked after.

Councillor Spillman stated his support and welcomed the motion and agreed more integrated frontline services across local government was required to

prevent multiple visits to resident's homes and to ensure help could be provided quicker. That a review of housing services would commence next month to see where services could be integrated more effectively into health and social care functions.

Councillor J Kent stated his support on this motion and had been surprised this motion had been put forward by a conservative member when over the last 12 years as a conservative government there had been the biggest drop in take-home pay in history, with food and fuel prices soaring, inflation at a 40-year high and family budgets at breaking point. Councillor J Kent referred to the nationally 18 million homes in fuel poverty which could lead to 10,000 winter deaths when the NHS was already facing unprecedented pressures. The council was having to deal with a Conservative financial catastrophe which limited the type of services that the council could and should be undertaking. This was the time to make some one-off grants to voluntary bodies, food uniform grants, a Thurrock's hardship fund could have been established to help residents and although labour members would be supporting the motion it had not to be forgotten who was to blame for the situation that Thurrock had found itself in.

Councillor Byrne stated his 100% support to the motion.

Councillor Mayes supported this motion and stated although he was very grateful to the government for the cost-of-living payment of £650, the payment towards the fuel bill of £400, the capping of the energy cost for the average home at £2,500, the disability cost of living payment of £150 as well as the council tax rebate of £150 he felt that in the future this should be more targeted. Councillor Mayes stated his gratitude for this support, moving forward the support should be given to those in a more targeted way, for those that needed it the most which would be the right and fair thing to do, and action needed to be undertaken as quickly as possible for those struggling residents.

Councillor Polley summed up by thanking members for their support and agreed targeting should be introduced and welcomed that the chancellor had recognised this had not been the best laid out plan and not been afraid to say the government would not want to be in this position nationally or locally and to find ways to start to move forward. Thurrock needed to ensure that all the help coming from government was disseminated out to Thurrock residents.

The Mayor called a vote on the motion. With the 42 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstained the motion was carried.

The meeting finished at 8.05 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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Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 26 October 2022

Item 6 – Questions from Public

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

QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Worrall to Councillor M Coxshall

In your recent interview with BBC Essex you stated that to deal with the level of debt our council is facing nothing is off the table, including all of our assets. Can you expand on what you meant by this?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question.

Councillor Coxshall

The council is considering a range of options to manage the impact of financial losses. Asset sales are ongoing discussions with the commissioners, and it is expected to be a wider capital flexibility available to us as part of these options. These discussions remain at an early stage, and I promise further detail will be shared with members as soon as possible, as soon as I know them. What is needed is to close the gap and reduce the costs to make sure that all us residents are covered to the maximum.

Mayor

Councillor Worrall do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Worrall

Absolutely, thank you Mister Mayor. I'm sure you and the cabinet member for housing would both accept that our 10,000 council homes are one of the most valuable assets that we have here in Thurrock. They bring an income of about £50 million a year to the HRA, many other portfolios benefit from the income from the HRA for example Seabrooke Rise with the new lighting coming out of the HRA. So, you know lots of people do benefit from that. Can you give us your assurances and comfort to the 10,000 tenants living in our homes that their homes are not and will not be on the table as part of the assets sales to reduce the catastrophic debts this council has now found itself in.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question.

Councillor Coxshall

I cannot at this stage and that's the honest, not at this stage until everything is on the table, the commissioners are assessing everything, we have to look through everything and we will go through that process.

Mayor

Councillor Worrall do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Worrall

Thank you. I don't know what to say. You know I really don't know what to say. In all of the times of being a councillor here would I ever imagine that I even have to ask that question. You know they are probably most treasured thing that we have here in Thurrock, and I thought it was Chinese whispers that I was hearing, I really really did. So really how will we know, I mean is there going to a fire sales list that we get rid of this before this you know how far down the list really are those 10,000 houses and how will you ensure your openness and transparency which you promised and I know that you are probably as sad as we are but we are where we are, you know like I just wish the cabinet members had just asked a few more questions about where our money was going because this is why we have we got here is because nobody went deep enough and I'm so angry and so are 10,000 residents out there going to be angry that they could end up with a housing association running our houses, I could cry for those residents I really could. So how are you going to keep engaged and make sure that you dig us out of this mess that you lot have got us in to and you save our homes of our residents.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question

Councillor Coxshall

Yes, like I said I could have answered that with a mealy-mouthed answer, I am not going to be, I am going to be open and transparent on this and I can't promise to take those 10,000 houses, that's more than 10,000, 10,000 homes, had more people in that I realise that could be 20 25,000 people's lives there. I take that responsibility every day and think about that. I do think that what we have got to go is go through every item in what this council does and owns and then discount them as we go through. I can promise you there will be no fire sales, there will no fire sales, there is no interest in that at all, there is no value to that at all. What this is is a concerted effort to go through what this council does line by line and make sure where the value is and what we can do and to minimise that is the number one priority.

2. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor M Coxshall

Will the Leader of the Council give an update on the work of the Improvement and Recovery Board?

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

The work is ongoing to be ready for the first meeting of the 1 November, as you know councillor, the ECC/Thurrock Finance Board has already met twice and will feed into the Improvement and Recovery Board and at my request yourself and myself both sit on both boards.

Mayor

Councillor Kent do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Mister Mayor, picking up on the financial recovery board can the leader of the council give an update on the potential impact of the financial catastrophe on next year's budget.

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

Not at this time.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Ok in the interests of openness and transparency that were hearing so much about does the leader of the council believe that the council can avoid issuing a section 114 notice in effect declaring bankruptcy.

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

That's not my decision.

3. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor M Coxshall

Will the Leader of the Council give an update on the ongoing review of council assets?

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

Yes, that is an ongoing concern, that is our decision, we can actually go through that line by line as instructed last week with the commissioners, the new director of place met the commissioners and were going through it, were producing it, already gone to cabinet, is a question later on but we are producing our asset list before we got to this stage. We're going through to make sure there is full list of assets and will come to cabinet as soon as we can to have a look and any decisions will be made as we see fit. Some items should never be sold, some items can be sold and some items, with conversations in here to be sold but that was always going to be, there an asset sales value right the way through as you see in my papers through the 3 Rs process.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Mister Mayor, the leader of the council said that was always going to be what clearly was not always going to be a large-scale transfer of our housing stock to another community provider to a housing association or something else. In the interests of those residents who are likely to suffer as a result of that can the leader of the council give us a rough timetable for the decision making on that and tell us when he expects to be consulting tenants.

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

I hope to have some sort of decision in front of me and yourself very shortly before it goes to the secretary of state and then before that we should be put the before anything like this should be coming to full council. What I can do on disposal process at the moment over the last year we've generated £12 million in the last 18 months from the sale of 18 properties, 43 approved for sale and negotiations are underway at this time and there would be more coming.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

So Mister Mayor were not sure what the timetable is, I just remind the leader of the council that I'm not the decision maker, cabinet is the decision maker, but will he take this opportunity to apologise to those tenants that he was talking about earlier for the worry and concern that he will be causing them.

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

I am as worried and as concerned as them.

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

1. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Abbas

When does the Portfolio Holder expect the future of the Thameside to be resolved?

Mayor

Councillor Abbas would you like to respond to the question.

Councillor Abbas

Thank you, Mister Mayor, and thank you Councillor Kent for your question, this is not under my portfolio, Councillor Coxshall is responsible for his bit if this councillor wants to ask me this question, so I am happy to answer. The paper will go overview and scrutiny committee in December and to full Cabinet in January 2023.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Mister Mayor it is quite clear when you read the list of portfolio responsibilities it actually says that Thameside under Councillor Abbas. I think we all know that there are two interested parties in taking over the responsibility of the Thameside, we know that one is the Thurrock International celebration of

culture, an organised based here in Thurrock, made up of voluntary bodies and local arts. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that the second interested body is the Waltham International College?

Mayor

Councillor Abbas would you like to respond to the question.

Councillor Abbas

Like I said I am not responsible for this process which is going through there are two bidders and officers are going through the process. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

So we notice again Mister Mayor that openness and transparency seems to have again disappeared so I will ask again can the portfolio holder confirm that the second interested party is the Waltham International College and if he can't answer that perhaps he can answer this, when did Councillor Abbas stand down as a governor of the Waltham International College.

Mayor

Councillor Abbas would you like to respond.

Councillor Abbas

Yes, they are the bidders. Thank you.

2. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Abbas

There is much concern in Thurrock's Voluntary Sector at the Portfolio Holder's proposal to cut funding to the sector by 10%, next year. Will he have a rethink and maintain funding to our voluntary sector at, at least, the same level as this year?

Mayor

Councillor Abbas please respond to the question.

Councillor Abbas

Thank you, Mister Mayor, and thank you councillor for your question. All services are being asked to review budgets to consider efficiency savings, including the budget that supports voluntary sector grants. Thurrock Council fully values the contribution of the voluntary sector to supporting communities

in our borough. At this stage, I have not made any decision to cut funding as we remain committed to explore all options to support the voluntary sector. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent, do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Mister Mayor, the council wrote to voluntary sector leaders on the 5 September 2022 setting out your intention to cut budgets by 10%, I think everybody's glad to hear that is still under review. Can I ask when the portfolio holder intends to meet with representatives of the voluntary sector to discuss his proposal for a 10% cut.

Mayor

Councillor Abbas would you like to respond.

Councillor Abbas

I think I am probably the first portfolio holder who has opened this office for all these community groups, so they are more than welcome to come and speak to us before making any decision we will consult all organisations involved.

Mayor

Councillor J Kent do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor J Kent

Mister Mayor the voluntary sector in Thurrock does a tremendous job and, in many ways, can be part of the solution to get us out of the situation that we find ourselves in. Does the portfolio holder understand just how much damage to that sector and how many damage it will do to this authority if he continues with his proposal for a 10% cut to grants next year?

Mayor

Councillor Abbas please respond to the question.

Councillor Abbas

Thank you, Mister Mayor, and thank you councillor for your supplementary. As I can said we haven't made any decisions to cut funding at this stage and I'm taking every opportunity to help and support different community groups, faith and voluntary sector organisations and will not make any decision without consulting them. Thank you.

3. From Councillor Worrall to Councillor Spillman

What impact has the Council's financial crisis had on the Housing Revenue Account and Housing General Fund budgets?

Mayor

Councillor Spillman please respond to the question.

Councillor Spillman

Well major projects now have to be signed off obviously over certain value but in terms of the budget I mean as the shadow portfolio holder knows that after taken considerable steps to reduce our general fund expenditure, so that's a positive but in terms of the HRA while we fall under the investigation that's going on we are not funded through the investments as she knows, that were funded through our own rents and we basically pay as you go, that's the nature of the HRA, we spend what we earn but yes its an extra layer of bureaucracy but there has been no significant impact on my day to day. I have much bigger concerns at the moment which I am sure she would share if she was in my position, when she was in my position, she experienced something similar. That would be the level of, that we have a rent cap more than likely which is going to be way below inflation, which is going to be significant, I mean that's not finalised yet, but we've looked at the window and its going to be a significant cut to the budget which is very disappointing and also the borrowing costs are of concern as well. Obviously, interest rates going up are of real concern because they make some projects problematic but not but beyond delivery entirely, but they just mean that a lot of projects would now have to go back to the drawing board and look at how much they cost and look at how we can deliver as perhaps an envelope rather than as individual projects. Hope that's a good answer for you.

Mayor

Councillor Worrall do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Worrall

Thank you, Mister Mayor. I kind of feel like I've had the wind taken out of my sails tonight you know with the response I had from Councillor Coxshall so I suppose I would like to use my first question to you is how do you feel hearing that and that your very possibly going to the last housing portfolio holder of our council homes. Did you ever expect the day that you know we didn't have our amazing council homes you know and all of the work, £50 million a year how could we have missed that and our residents, you know, how do you feel that this is where its gone, you were part of that cabinet Luke, I know, you know, that you must be sitting there thinking if only I'd asked a few more questions. I just wonder how you, you know, feel about what a mess there is now that we could possibly lose our council homes would probably be my first question to you.

Mayor

Councillor Spillman please respond.

Councillor Spillman

Councillor Coxshall has shown great candor to say that everything is on the table but I would clarify that to say that whilst everything is on the table there are no active discussions selling HRA he was just being absolutely honest with you that is something that is potentially possible but there are a lot of potential possibilities, but I have had no discussions with officers regarding selling council properties. I've had no discussions with commissioners about selling council properties its just Councillor Coxshall wants to be absolutely honest at all times that, you know, that decision is a potential future but I would like to reassure that this is not a future that is in discussion at the moment and it is not anything that I have had discussions with whatsoever but again I just think its important that we wait until January to see exactly where we are but the other thing about moving to a registered social landlord is that that would be a process that could take more than half a decade. Its not something, like, it not a short-term solution to our situation, it's not something that's going to fix it because it would take so many years for us to realise that that it won't deal with the immediate concern, we've got so I would clarify that everything is on the table because we are in a very serious situation but there are no active discussions about this, whatsoever. So I would be careful about unduly worrying residents, say that everything is on the table but I have not had a single discussion with my director or commissioner regarding the sale of HRA assets other than perhaps land we're not using but I've not had any discussions regarding the sale of council homes but we have to be realistic and I think that, you know, Councillor Kent, I know its not in his nature, to be unkind but I think Councillor Kent was slightly unkind when he suggested we are not being open I think the leader of the council has been remarkably open since he took the role about what faces us and I think that is another example of it. Its about being honest that everything is on the table but that doesn't mean that we're selling all the council homes tomorrow its just not a discussion being had.

Mayor

Councillor Worrall do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Worrall

Yes please of course, what brought it here was that I listened to BBC Essex and Councillor Coxshall was clear it was all assets including our houses were on the table, so that's why I brought this question here, you know it's a very legitimate question for me to be asking, here in this chamber here tonight. So, I don't feel like you should be saying that I'm making something that isn't there Luke because we shouldn't really be having this conversation and you know that. So alright then, ok I'll move away from the sale of the council houses. So

it is estimated that about 9,000 of our families here in Thurrock are living in fuel poverty, many struggling to pay their rents, their council tax, can't turn their heating on you know, private landlords will be ramping up their rents so you know we are likely to see homeless applications go up, changes to welfare reform, you know phasing out the traditional benefits. Our partners are worried, that council officers are worried about that transition and what it does to incomes and you know and every year we're talked about the discretionary housing budgets you know so I think we are going to need this this winter and you will probably agree that we are going to need this more than ever this winter you know everything is higher but this fund has been slashed by 30% this year. So how do you mitigate the impact and the hardship that this huge reduction is going to have on our residents.

Mayor

Councillor Spillman please respond.

Councillor Spillman

As my day job, as part of my day job is to go out and identify people that are in need of housing support funds (Councillor Worrall – that's not here) so no, I'm just saying that I do fully understand what is going on. We have a good welfare team; you've been housing, providing a lot of support to residents that includes income maximisation that include helping people with budgets, dealing with debts and stuff like that, there's a lot of support coming from government as well. With gas, electricity and those sort of things I think that we need to make sure as councillors that we make, that we make sure that our residents are aware that they can claim these grants because a lot of people don't know about it, most of the people I visit don't know about it and when you tell them about it, it's a godsend to them, to put it mildly. So, I think the main thing is encouraging uptake and there are traditional underspends on that budget as well so it's all about encouraging uptake, encouraging using the money that we have got through the housing support fund through the government, and I think really if the crisis continues, we won't be beyond the realms of the possibilities of seeing more government funding. But in terms of, another concern that she raised about general stress on homelessness, I think that one of the things that we did do is that we built, because of the threat of increased homelessness we built a huge amount of extra capacity within our homelessness services so we do have, you know, there is a current spike at the moment about 40% in temporary accommodation but a lot of that is probably the bottle neck that comes through the courts opening up again so I'm personally hopeful that trend decreases and then even if we see an uptrend in problems caused by private right to buy markets and private lets, I am confident that because of the extra capacity we've built that we will be able to manage any extra homelessness demand and I think that is one of the things that the councillor should be most proud about in recent years, what we have done over the previous years regarding homelessness, yes it's my baby yes, and yes the main thing is, too reiterate is make sure you are aware of everything that your tenants can claim and make sure they are aware of it and if you have any problems with applications getting through the system then

please contact me as I know these benefits inside out and I will do everything I can to smooth that process.

4. From Councillor Shinnick to Councillor M Coxshall

Can you please inform me if any measures are being taken to make sure the past mayors names can be highlighted on the stone plaques in the Council Chamber, so we are able to read their names?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond on the question.

Councillor Coxshall

The stone plaques have been relocated from the old chamber and we're looking to what we can do to improve them.

Mayor

Councillor Shinnick do you wish to ask a supplementary question.

Councillor Shinnick

Thank you. Another question is in regard to the stone plaques can you inform me when the freedom of the borough names are going to be put up in the chamber.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall

As soon as possible.

Mayor

Councillor Shinnick do you wish to ask a second supplementary question.

Councillor Shinnick

No thank you.

5. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor M Coxshall

Can the Portfolio Holder update the Chamber on the current state of play with Stanford Station please?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question.

Councillor Coxshall

In September 2021, Thurrock Borough Council issued tenders to contractors for the detailed design and construction of Stanford le Hope Station. In March 2022 contract was awarded based on a tender within the budget and within compliant. Concerns arose over the liabilities and issues in terms of the scope, definition, approval and risks of inflation. Allocation of risk and the national procurement led to time delay during and following the pandemic. Issues prevented the fixed price contract being signed but a letter of Intent was issued to mitigate the delays to enable activity to occur to resolve the issues.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Byrne

It didn't start in 2021, did it, December 2017 we had a trumpet blowing press release, station plans debated on the 18 February 2018, the owners offered £18k for the land opposite, June 2019 work halted on this new station. Three years ago, this month a temporary ticket office opened. November 2019 the council admits it needs more land for the botched development plan. We've paid £3.5 million for a site that was offered £800,000 three years before. 2020 we were told we would resume on the car park on the station. November 2022 still no station. Five years on, surely the residents and commuters deserve another apology from you on behalf of the ex-leader, this catalogue of errors allowed to happen under this watch. It's been five years this month.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question.

Councillor Coxshall

Yes.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Byrne

So, you failed to deliver on the station, the brewery site, the A13, little things like the Wharf Road underpass, a simply little task like grass and moss covered drain hole taken me and Councillor Ralph six emails, daily photos from residents and three attempts to repair it. Why do we constantly fail to

deliver on projects we start, its not the first time I have asked this question why are we so shockingly poor at project management.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall please respond to the question.

Councillor Coxshall

I can't answer why we are so shocking all I can say is we are shockingly poor at project management, we continually are, what I can say is we have a new assistant director in regeneration, who we brought back just in the last couple of weeks is the new director of place to bring that back under one roof, one directorate to make sure we actually move forward and we have a new assistant director who is actually determined to keep budget management on time and the phase the station breaks into two phases and in decisions on what we do with that can't continue, that is why I'm hoping we can get to a resolution on phase 1 and we have got to get a resolution on phase 2 for the later part of next year.

6. From Councillor Watson to Councillor Maney

Can the Portfolio Holder for Transport please tell me what Thurrock Council is doing to mitigate the ongoing issues around West Thurrock Academy for parking in Flint Street, Schoolfield and London Road during drop off and pick up times?

Mayor

Councillor Maney would you like to respond please.

Councillor Maney

Thank you, Mister Mayor, thank you Councillor Watson for your question and pleased that you have clarified the school you were talking about. Mister Mayor the starting point for me whenever I'm answering a question on school parking and traffic congestion around schools are starting point, I think is always we have to remind ourselves this isn't the council's fault that these problems occur issuing behaviour and with the best will in the world the council can implement parking restrictions we can enforce them to the best of our ability. We can look at school travel plans but unless parents change their habits, you know I feel we are always going to be talking about his problem. So, I think it's important to remember that there's only so much the council can do. This is a common problem around schools not just across Thurrock but is a national problem, that doesn't mean its ok and it doesn't mean there aren't things we can do, I'm happy to talk about West Thurrock Academy. So, if we take the roads that you've referred to, London Road and Flint Street first of all the problem that the council has at present is there are very few on street parking restrictions. There is a very good reason for that, if we were to implement them, they would apply to resident equally and as you'll know

those properties have precious little off-street parking as we can look, we will look, at whether this needs to implement a parking scheme but it has to be borne in mind that will affect residents. Schoolfield Road does have as you know no parking any time restrictions at various junctions, we do patrol them and as ever we will enforce an issue penalty charge notices where there are violations. At present the council is engaging with the school, it has been a hard task I have to say but the council has now managed to establish some communications we are working on a school travel plan and I very much that some of the issues that you have highlighted can be addressed in that. The first thing I think is worth mentioning is that when the school was given planning consent there was obligation for there to be two parking facilities, one is a pickup and drop off zone for parents. I understand that is currently been closed by the school and I've asked officers to look into potentially enforcement proceedings not only in respect of this school but other schools across the borough who have taken similar measures in respect of their obligations. Thank you, Mister Mayor.

Mayor

Councillor Watson do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Watson

Thank you, Mister Mayor, thank your Councillor Maney for the positive news. Specifically, why I have chosen that school anyway is the level of arguments that are currently taking place from that school. To the point that the actual school itself is trying to mitigate some of those arguments and its coming into quite a confrontational and quite violent in some forms or another. Especially down Flint Street where the residents can't even get out of their doors or go in at all. Is there anything that you can do or is there any form of enforcement to try and help some of what is currently happening on a day in, day out basis. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Maney would you like to respond please.

Councillor Maney

Thank you, Mister Mayor. I am all too aware of that kind of conflict, my own ward is greatly affected by these kinds of problems, and I know the kind of friction that it causes, I know it can lead to real confrontation and it goes back to what I say that more parents driving their children to school need to be more considerate. I said in my answer that in Flint Street there are very few on-street parking restrictions so in terms of enforcement that the council has are very limited options so in answer to your question it probably isn't much more we can do because we have to have something to enforce. As I said I'm happy to review the situation, we constantly look at parking situations around schools and if it is found a case is made that we should look at implementing more parking restrictions we can, but I do need to reiterate that would apply to

residents also and it hasn't been popular in some locations. So, if your asking can we review the restrictions or lack of restrictions and come up with a scheme I'm happy to take that away and speak to officers and engage a view on it, but it won't be an easy process. Thank you, Mister Mayor.

Mayor

Councillor Watson do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Watson

No thank you.

7. From Councillor Watson to Councillor M Coxshall

We have a cross party shared ambition for the regeneration plans for Purfleet on Thames. Can the Portfolio Holder for Growth tell me what is the likely impact to those plans in light of the financial crisis?

Mayor

Leader of the council.

Councillor Coxshall

The regeneration of Purfleet on Thames remains an absolute priority. The global economy uncertainty and our financial challenges will not make this easy to deliver but I am working with the new director of place and looking at how we can bring this forward with speed. I will share the financial position and the delivery options as they become clearer in the coming weeks and months and be assured the local councillors will be the first to know.

Mayor

Councillor Watson do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Watson

Thank you. The development corporation if you remember rightly was brought land and they brought a substantial amount of land that is now in Purfleet on Thames to carry out the regeneration for Purfleet on Thames. There is an agreement in place that those parcels of land will be released to that development as they are currently in the ownership of the council. Will that development agreement be honoured and will those parcel of land be released as the scheme carries forward?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall

At this time there is no intention to stop the regeneration in Purfleet on Thames so in the financial position of what is happening in Purfleet on Thames regardless of our financial position but what happens in Purfleet on Thames. We have to make sure in this global economic crisis to make sure that we deliver a regeneration of Purfleet on Thames.

Mayor

Councillor Watson do you have a second supplementary question.

Councillor Watson

No thank you.

8. From Councillor Muldowney to Councillor M Coxshall

Councillor Muldowney resubmitted her question to November Council.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

One question has been received from members of the public.

1. From Mr Perrin to Councillor Johnson

Despite the possibility of cuts to services due to financial restrictions imposed as a result of the council being placed into financial intervention, can you assure me that no cuts will be made to the services provided to children in the council's care?

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Petitions Update Report

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Presented (at)	Responsible Director / Assistant Director	Status
565	We the undersigned call on Thurrock Planning department to urgently re-engage with Persimmon Homes and use its enforcement powers to ensure the construction workers and residents of Stanford Meadow immediately desist from crossing the ditch between Persimmons Estate and the residents private land as a cut through access. We ask that Thurrock Council and Persimmon Homes work together to re-plan and install more robust security measures between the two estates which will reduce the loss of amenity caused by current lack of security and reduce the visibility from the new development into the above properties. Tree planting would not be a deterrent, also the cycle track/walkway has over a six-foot drop which it has never had before, and it risks injury or worse. A duty of care must be taken into account for the public using the area.	21/9/2022	Office	Leigh Nicholson	The site has been subject of an enforcement investigation; there is a planning condition which requires the site to be landscaped but this could not be done in the summer because of the extreme weather conditions. The landscaping is due to take place in the planting season between October and April. There have been incidences of people crossing the ditch and cutting through the site but the developer, Persimmon, erected fencing to stop this from happening. The issue of trespass is not a planning issue, it is a matter between the landowners. With regard to a more permanent security measure at the edge of the Persimmon site, officers have asked Persimmon whether they would consider installing a fence along the boundary; this is not a requirement of the planning permission, but it is something that Persimmon could pursue (depending upon the height of the fence it may require planning permission). To date Persimmon have not responded to this suggestion, but Officers are chasing them for a response. Cllr Hebb has been updated on this matter.

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30 November 2022		ITEM: 10
Council		
The Localism Act 2011 – Appointment of Independent Persons		
Wards and communities affected: All		Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Councillor M Coxshall, Leader of the Council		
Accountable Assistant Director: n/a		
Accountable Director: John Jones, Director of Legal and Governance		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report follows the decision of the Council on 25 May 2022, which agreed pursuant to section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to appoint new independent persons to replace the long-standing Independent Person who has been in place for some years.

Following a recruitment process, the Interim Monitoring Officer has identified two candidates to share the role until Annual Council in 2026.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That, for the purposes of section 28 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council agree to appoint the following people to the role of Independent Person until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2026:

- Ms Cheryl Campbell
- Mr Simon Carey

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Localism Act 2011 (the “Act”) changed the arrangements for dealing with governance issues regarding the conduct of Members. It abolished the national Standards Board and required that local authorities establish their own Code of Conduct and establish a process for dealing with allegations that members of the authority may have breached the Code of Conduct.

2.2 To add external input, section 28(7) of the Act required the Council to appoint at least one “independent person”, who must be consulted, and their views

taken into account on all complaints investigated and before a decision on any such complaint is made. The Council may consult with the independent person on other matters relating to an allegation and the Member complained about can also seek the independent person's views.

- 2.3 The provisions of the Localism Act took effect from 1 July 2012 and at its meeting on 25 July 2012, the Council agreed a new Code of Conduct and Complaints Procedure to replace transitional arrangements. To ensure "independence", the Independent Person is not to have links to the Council, councillors or officers.
- 2.4 The role of the independent person has since been widened under the Local Authority's (Standing Orders) England (Amendment) Regulations 2015, which came into force on 11 May 2015. These new regulations change the localised disciplinary process in relation to the Council's Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer statutory positions. In the case of any proposed disciplinary action against such a statutory officer, the Council is required to appoint the independent persons who have been appointed for the purposes of the Members Code of Conduct regime to a panel convened to consider a proposal to dismiss a statutory officer, and which makes recommendations to Full Council regarding any decision to dismiss a statutory officer.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Following a recruitment process the Interim Monitoring Officer identified two people to share the role of Independent Person:

- Ms Cheryl Campbell – An education professional with experience in managing and maintaining standards in examinations. Grays based.
- Mr Simon Carey – A sitting magistrate and retired local government employee based in the north-east of England.

All Candidates comply with the regulations in that they have not worked at Thurrock Council in the last five years and have no relations or close friends working for the Council.

- 3.2 The appointment of two Independent Persons builds resilience in the process, for example in cases of holiday or absences. Work can also be shared to ensure impartiality and objectivity at all times.
- 3.3 At Full Council in May 2022, Members agreed to keep the current Independent Person in place until 'no later than Annual Council 2024'. This limited tenure allows this experienced Independent Person to provide support and practical advice to the new starters.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To ensure statutory compliance and effective administration of any business that may engage the Members Code of Conduct.

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

- 5.1 It is a statutory requirement that Council is consulted and approves the appointments.

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

- 6.1 The appointment is a statutory requirement.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Dammy Adewole**
Senior Management Accountant
Resources and Place Delivery

The allowance paid to each of the Independent Persons is met from the Members Allowance Budget.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Corporate Governance Lawyer and Deputy
Monitoring Officer

The statutory requirements are set out in the report and have been met. Under Section 28(8)(c)(iii) of the Localism Act 2011, this decision must be agreed by a majority of the whole number of councillors.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and
Equalities, Adults, Housing and Health
Directorate

The appointments followed an open recruitment process ensuring that the recommended candidates were selected on merit.

- 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder and Impact on Looked After Children

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):

The original recruitment documents relating to each of the Independent Persons contain personal information and as such are exempt under paragraph 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended and it is not in the public interest to disclose those documents.

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

Report Author:

Matthew Boulter

Democratic & Governance Services Manager

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 were 3 questions to the Leader and 10 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER

1. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor M Coxshall

Thurrock Council has now agreed to abide by the ruling of the Information Tribunal and answer the Freedom of Information requests it has been fighting to keep secret. How much Council Taxpayer money has been spent fighting legal action to try and keep this information secret?

2. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor M Coxshall

The scale of the financial catastrophe facing Thurrock Council is now becoming clear. What are the next steps the Leader will take in trying to save the Council?

3. From Councillor Worrall to Councillor M Coxshall

At the July Cabinet meeting it was agreed to release a significant number of council owned assets for sale. Can the Leader give an update on the sale of these assets and how much has been raised since July?

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

1. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor Snell

Where does the missing £138 million and the £5 million reportedly paid to a broker sit in the mix, has it been accrued or another shock to be announced later?

2. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor M Coxshall

Can the Portfolio Holder tell us how much taxpayers money you wasted on the building of the aborted first attempt of the new chamber, demolishing attempt one, and subsequent rebuild on the second attempt?

3. From Councillor Muldowney to Councillor M Coxshall

Further to my questions at the 13 October 2022 Council meeting about the money owing to the Elsie Florence Grover/Flat Irons Field Trust, please can the Portfolio Holder confirm that this money will be hypothecated for use in Chadwell for the benefit of Chadwell's children?

4. From Councillor Worrall to Councillor Spillman

The council housing waiting list continues to increase and now sits at about 8000 applicants. What direct action are you taking to provide more homes for those on the housing waiting list?

5. From Councillor Watson to Councillor Maney

Can the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement please tell me what support the Council is providing to the police in the continuing battle against car cruisers around Lakeside in West Thurrock?

6. From Councillor Pearce to Councillor Maney

What measures does the Council employ to ensure that traders in Thurrock who sell age restricted items or services comply with the law?

7. From Councillor Fish to Councillor D Arnold

The first IMWC has now opened in Corringham, an area of the borough with the lowest health inequality. Can the Portfolio Holder tell me when the other IMWCs in areas such as Tilbury will be opening?

8. From Councillor Shinnick to Councillor Abbas

This year Orchard Community forum paid for the road closure in Grays to facilitate the Remembrance Service can the Portfolio Holder for Communities consider that council fund this next year?

9. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Snell

What level of Council Tax increase does the portfolio holder anticipate recommending for next year?

10. From Councillor J Kent to Councillor Abbas

Does the Portfolio Holder support the continuation of the theatre, library, museum and other cultural and heritage services from the Thameside Complex?

This report lists all motions from the previous twelve months which still have updates forthcoming. All Motions which have been resolved or the actions from officers have been completed are removed.

Date	From	Motion	Status	Director
21 September 2022	Cllr J Kent	Council notes that the findings of January's Corporate Peer Challenge, and it's accompanying action plan, have been published on the council's website. Council believes that it is important that, to ensure members learn from the CPC process, that these documents should be presented to, both, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet for formal adoption.	The Corporate Peer Review is scheduled to go to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2022 and Cabinet in January 2023.	Karen Wheeler
21 September 2022	Cllr Carter	The Council calls for the building operationally known as C03 to be renamed as the Town Hall and to be referred to as such in all communications.	Property are working with the communications team to design new signs for the building and to update references on our website and elsewhere. A programme will be shared with members in due course.	Mark Bradbury
26 October 2022	Cllr Polley	Cost of Living - This Council resolves to work with the Government to ensure that it delivers the much-appreciated support to the residents of Thurrock as quickly as possible, and that the Council proactively identifies those most in need of support in the Thurrock area and ensure that they have access to all the Government support they are eligible for.	Ongoing support for families and children - Thurrock Council is continuing to help vulnerable households across the borough thanks to an additional £1.295 million government funding for the Household Support Fund which will be distributed between now and March 2023. The funding will be used to provide essential support to households most in need including £600,000 allocated to provide free school meals for five weeks during upcoming school holidays and £650,000 to provide help for households in	Jonathan Wilson

financial hardship through the Essential Living Fund which includes help with utility bills. On top of that additional help will be provided for care leavers. Cllr Barry Johnson, Cabinet member for Children and Education, said: “The first two rounds of government funding have ensured that free school meals have been provided during school holidays for the last five school holidays. Thanks to this fund these meals will be provided for the next three, including Christmas. “We will also be able to help households in real financial hardship and need help with the essentials, including utility bills.” To find out more about the Essential Living Fund visit: [thurrock.gov.uk/essential-living-fund/about-essential-living-fund](https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/essential-living-fund/about-essential-living-fund)

The Council have collated links to sources of support with the cost of living onto one webpage here - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/support-with-cost-of-living/cost-of-living-support>. Public Health and Housing are undertaking work on tackling Fuel Poverty, which aims to raise awareness of fuel poverty in Thurrock and increase and better target support for Thurrock residents at risk of fuel poverty through increasing Financial Inclusion Officer capacity (funding applied for from UK Shared Prosperity Fund) and identifying households at greatest risk of adverse outcomes.