

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

## Lower Thames Crossing Task Force

The meeting will be held at **6.00 pm** on **16 October 2023**

**Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

Councillors Fraser Massey (Chair), Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair), Paul Arnold, Mark Hurrell, Terry Piccolo, Kairen Raper, Sue Sammons and Neil Speight

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 8</b>
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force meeting held on 17 July 2023.	
<b>3 Items of Urgent Business</b>	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
<b>4 Declaration of Interests</b>	
<b>5 Update on first 3 months of DCO Examination - to follow</b>	

### Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [direct.democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:direct.democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **6 October 2023**

This page is intentionally left blank

## **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.

Hand sanitiser will also be available at the entrance for your use.

#### **Recording of meetings**

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](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/webcast)

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

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

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities. If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at [CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk) before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee. The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

## Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-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.**

## 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

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 17 July 2023 at 6.00 pm

---

**Present:** Councillors Fraser Massey (Chair), Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair), Paul Arnold, Mark Hurrell, Kairen Raper and Neil Speight

**Apologies:** Councillor Sue Sammons

**In attendance:** Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection  
Chris Stratford, Consultant  
Elaine Sheridan, Electoral Services Manager

---

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

### **7. Minutes**

The minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 19 June 2023 were approved subject to the amendment provided by the Thames Crossing Action Group Representative.

The Resident Representative asked to be provided with the minutes.

### **8. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **9. Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

### **10. Verbal update on Development Consent Order (DCO) Pre-Examination Process and next steps**

The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection informed the Task Force that the Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) had now been signed. Since the last meeting the examination timetable has been confirmed and the officer outlined the next deadline (18 July) and the submission of the council's Local Impact Report (LIR). The LIR will shortly appear on the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) website, along with all other relevant documents. Following this deadline, the focus will be on issue specific hearings and a series of written questions.

The Chair asked for some examples of the impacts and the officer outlined several examples including a) challenging the need for the project, b) the scheme objectives and what LTC is looking to achieve, c) safety impacts d)

value for money e) transport modelling issues, f) access to development sites and lack of consideration of alternatives. The environmental impact and flood risk impacts and emergency services provision were also outlined.

The Assistant Director detailed concerns about the legacy of the scheme in terms of skills, education and employment and concern about unambitious and insufficient localized targets plus commented on the key planning issue of the greenbelt. The applicant has not provided the council with a robust assessment.

The Consultant agreed with the points outlined by the Assistant Director and clarified that the council is not objecting in principle for the need for a crossing, it's the need for this crossing, as designed. The seven scheme objectives initially proposed have not been adequately satisfied. Other issues identified are land ownership, lack of compensation to residents who are seriously affected and control documents which must legally be complied with as part of the DCO application. The council has made suggestions for changes and improvements to those which are not properly covered.

The Task Force were reminded of future deadlines

- Deadline One – tomorrow (18 July 2023)
- Deadline Two – 3 August
- Deadline Three – 24 August

The Examining Authority will issue the first set of written questions on 15 August, with the deadline for response in one month. This is regardless of the number of questions to respond to. The process is due to finish on 20 December 2023.

The Chair asked Members of the Task Force if they would like to comment on the verbal update.

Members of the Task Force questioned if the council was confident it has the capacity to deal with these matters in a timely fashion and respond to the written questions. The Assistant Director informed members that there is a significant consultant team working alongside the authority and made reference to the PPA which provides the mechanism to make sure funding is recovered to cover the costs of the consultant team. Without those there would be cause for concern. The PPA covers the majority of the work and is different to the position of other local authorities largely due to the negotiations that took place. Certain items are not covered in the PPA such as responding to written questions, paying for Kings Counsel and attendance at hearings. These are covered by the business plan which has been approved and takes account of these items.

The Thames Crossing Action Group (TCAG) Representative publicly thanked the entire team for the work undertaken and members echoed this.



Members questioned if it was possible to tell if the examination was going in our favour. The Consultant responded that the first request for a delay was denied and the six-month program for the examination remained in place. The two issue specific hearings held so far have been different in that they have been less interrogatory and more an opportunity for parties to give their views. Overall, it is difficult to tell, and it is the nature of the independent process. Independence and confidentiality is maintained throughout.

The Thames Crossing Action Group Representative outlined that they had attended some meetings and the Inspector had asked some good questions and pushed National Highways to provide a certain level of information on aspects that had been asked for a number of years.

The Resident representative highlighted the site visits made as part of the examination and asked about feedback. Members of the Task Force were informed this is available on the Planning Inspectorate website under the examination library [LTC Examination Library](#)

The Thames Crossing Action Group Representative also highlighted that residents are being listened to at site visits and the Inspector has planned visits to other sites as suggested.

Members of the Task Force discussed the issue of employment and the lack of guarantee for local jobs, in particular, what do National Highways class as 'local'. The Consultant responded that National Highways determine local to be people within 20 miles of the scheme and this has been questioned, along with the very few benefits which flow to Thurrock given that we have 70% of the route. The Local Impact Report therefore suggests that the definition of local is restricted to the three local authorities directly affected – Gravesham, Thurrock and Havering. Members further queried the possibility of setting a target that is not possible to fill and diminishing credibility bearing in mind the specialist workload and building

The Thames Crossing Action Group Representative raised the issue of social media and propaganda regarding hydrogen and reduction of carbon emissions. Members discussed the issue about the PR operation by National Highways and suggested that Thurrock communication team and senior executives should be promoting our cause and issuing releases. It was suggested that the Communication team attend a future meeting of the Task Force.

The Chair raised the future work programme and highlighted the work of emergency services and the need for an item on the program in future. Members agreed and the Consultant summarised that this is covered by the Partners Steering Group on which the council is represented. The Steering Group will make their own submission and we have commented on this. Officers can provide a verbal update at a future meeting following discussion with the Chair if required.

**The meeting finished at 6.51 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

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