

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 30 January 2019 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Terry Piccolo (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, Tim Aker, Abbie Akinbohun, John Allen, Alex Anderson, James Baker, Clare Baldwin, Russell Cherry, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Tony Fish, Mike Fletcher, Leslie Gamester, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden, Graham Hamilton, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, David Potter, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Shinnick, Peter Smith and Luke Spillman

Apologies: Councillors Barbara Rice (Mayor), Jack Duffin, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Gerard Rice, Sue Sammons, Pauline Tolson and Lynn Worrall

In attendance: Roger Hirst, Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
Justin Benson-Ryal, Station Manager, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
Darren Horsman, Assistant Director for Communications and Engagement
Chief Inspector Claire Talbot, Essex Police
Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Steve Cox, Corporate Director Place
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Ian Wake, Director of Public Health
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

The Deputy Mayor invited Reverend Canon Darren Barlow to lead those present in prayer.

88. Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 28 November 2018 were approved as a correct record.

The minutes of the Meeting of Extraordinary Council held on the 11 December 2018 were approved subject to the amendment made by Councillor Hebb that on Page 41 Paragraph 5 should start as follows:

Councillor Hebb stated the approach that Highways England had taken

89. Items of Urgent Business

No items of urgent business were received.

90. Declaration of Interests

No declaration of interests were received.

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

The Deputy Mayor announced he had attended the Holocaust Memorial Service on Monday which had been a very moving event supported by a number of local schools with some of their young pupils contributing to the event by giving readings.

The Leader announced that work had started on the A13 Widening Scheme which was one of the largest Local Authority managed schemes in the country. The Council were doing everything to keep disruption to a minimum with two lanes remaining open in both directions during the day time as part of the next phase of works. There would be a temporary speed limit and reduced the width of the road to ensure safety of the workers and the travelling public. The Leader stated that once the scheme was complete it would mean a continuous three lane carriageway from the M25 to Stanford le Hope that would improve congestion and improve journey times.

The Leader stated that Officers from Thurrock Council joined Essex Police and the Environment Agency on operations on Friday to tackle the scourge of illegal waste carriers coming into the borough. The operation involved stopping more than 30 vehicles carrying waste which was approximately one every 12 minutes where a number of fines were issued for various offences such as littering to fly posting.

The Leader then moved onto HGVs where the Council had been consulting with Aveley residents on plans to help prevent lorries using those roads as a rat race. That lorries were ignoring the weight limits and driving down roads they should not be on to get to their destination. The Leader stated that although this was the responsibility of the Police to enforce, the Council wanted to take as much action as possible to prevent this and had worked on a solution for some time. A further

consultation would be carried out across the borough through next year to help reduce the problem.

The Leader referred to the two successful bids for funding from the Department for Digital Culture Media School. With the authorities on the South of Essex receiving £4.5m funding to help improve poor bank connectivity in the more rural region parts of the area, including Thurrock.

The Leader stated the Thames Estuary Production Corridor Partnership had also been awarded £4.3m from the Department for Digital Culture Media School, Cultural Development Fund to kick start a new £6.7m creative estuary programme to change, unlock the culture led growth across Thurrock and South Essex, North Kent, Staffordshire in the region as a creative hub.

And finally, the Leader gave a quick update on Clean It, Cut It, Fill It that since April this year:

- 1,625 fly-tips had been cleared.
- 2,952 fixed penalty notices had been issued on various offences from littering to some forms of anti-social behaviour.
- 1,030 acres of grass had been cut.
- 2,504 potholes had been filled.
- 2,443 tonnes of waste collected by our street cleaning ground maintenance team.

92. Questions from Members of the Public

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed under the relevant meeting date at <http://democracy.thurrock.go.uk/thurrock> and are attached at Appendix 1 at these minutes.

93. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, the requisite notice had been given by two members of the public who wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Mr Mayes presented a petition with regard to the air quality and pollution in Tilbury.

Mr Batchelor presented a petition with regard to the name change from Purfleet to Purfleet on Thames.

94. Petitions Update Report

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

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

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

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, informed the chamber that he wished to make the following change:

For Councillor MacPherson to be removed from the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education and replaced with Councillor Collins.

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

Councillor Spillman, Leader of the Thurrock Independence Group, informed the chamber that he had no changes to make.

96. Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (Presentation)

The Deputy Mayor introduced the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, Chief Inspector Claire Talbot, Justin Benson-Ryal, Station Manager, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Assistant Director for Communications and Engagement, Darren Horsman to the meeting and asked that they deliver their presentation which would then be followed by questions by Members.

Roger Hirst updated Members on the following:

- Crime had become more complex with new crimes such as internet, fraud and hate.
- Familiar crimes such as violence with injury were a major concern.
- Essex crime rate was up 5% this year and needed to be addressed.
- Monitoring of hate crime rates and the effectiveness of this.
- Recruit 150 Police Officers from April 2018. 54 already passed out and deployed and working with local Police teams.
- Work continued with London Metropolitan and London Borough Police.
- Monitoring cross border crimes.
- Government were making the case to match fund this year for £970m in total for Policing in the United Kingdom.
- £500m from Central Government into central Policing and £300m for local Police forces.
- The match would be through council tax and be raised by £2 per month.
- With 365 Police Officers being recruited this time next year.

Roger Hirst updated Members on the Local, Visible and Accessible Policing with extra Police Officers from the 2018/19 funding to increase six Police Constables for Community Policing Team, six Police Constables for Local Policing Team and three Police Officers for the Domestic Violence Unit. That Essex Police had been the fastest growing rate of Special Constabularies and second in the country.

Roger Hirst stated that for Gangs and Violence an additional funding of £664,000 from the National Early Intervention Fund had been sought.

Roger Hirst stated that the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service did not have the same pressures as the Police Service with a significant reduction in the number of fires in the last ten years. With 31% of incidents attended over the last five years were fires. The development of the Fire and Rescue Plan for 2019-24 was underway and encouraged involvement and feedback from Members.

Roger Hirst referred Members to the Fire and Rescue Plan Draft Priorities were:

- Prevention, protection and response
- Create a positive culture in the workplace
- Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the service
- Help the vulnerable stay safe
- Collaborate with our partners
- Improve safety on our roads
- Be Transparent, open and accessible
- Make best use of our resources

Members raised the following questions:

Councillor Smith: What strategies were in place for the 101 service. Roger Hirst stated that the waiting times were down from 29 to 13 minutes but agreed the service needed to be slicker and the service was working on it.

Councillor Spillman: Essex had been quoted as having the lowest funding per head of population of any Police force in the country and questioned whether this was still the case; if so, what improvements had been made and where was Essex on the league table now. Roger Hirst stated improvements had been made and Essex was no longer at the bottom but in the bottom quarter. Roger Hirst stated that it would take time to get where Essex should be and that a new fairer formula was being introduced in 2021.

Councillor Cherry: Thanked Roger Hirst for the presentation and questioned how residents can get in touch with their Neighbourhood Police Officer and invited Mr Hirst to attend a Neighbourhood Watch meeting on the 6 February in Tyrrells Hall. Mr Hirst stated that it was good Members were promoting the Neighbourhood Watch initiative and would check his calendar for availability. Claire Talbot echoed Mr Hirst's comment's and would ensure that a member of the team was in attendance.

Councillor Jefferies: Questioned the consistency of the S61 against unauthorised encampments. Roger Hirst stated efforts were being made to standardise the approach taken and stated that copies of the protocol had been sent to all Councils.

Councillor Redsell: What had been done to combat nuisance motor and quad bikes and what successes had there been. Claire Talbot stated the Police had a

great partnership with the Council with a good success rate of arrests, warnings for no insurance and possession of cannabis. Claire Talbot stated that if Councillor Redsell had an area where nuisance bikes took place to let her know.

Councillor Allen: Questioned whether keeping anti-social behaviour under control would stop some cases of anti-social behaviour escalating into more serious crime. Roger Hirst agreed that there had to be a change in focus and to stop the smaller crimes and to divert young people into other activities. Roger Hirst stated he was proud that anti-social behaviour was down but agreed there was still a long way to go but the system was working.

Councillor Hamilton: Questioned whether there was any way of estimating the true report figures on the basis that some crimes were not being reported. Roger Hirst stated the Crime Integrity was a factor that looked into this detail with Essex not fairing too badly. Roger Hirst stated it was hard to guess what the Police don't know with third party surveys being undertaken to monitor such cases.

Councillor Hamilton: Were there any plans to re-open the closed Police stations to restore resident's confidence. Roger Hirst stated what would give residents confidence would be to see Police in the community and would not be spending millions on buildings but spending millions on Police Officers.

Councillor Lawrence: Could the issues of anti-social behaviour be addressed on Derwent Parade and surrounding areas. Claire Talbot stated the Police were aware of issues and work had been undertaken and with the increase of high visibility of Police patrolling.

Councillor Anderson: Questioned whether the Corringham Fire Station would continue to have permanent Police presence. Roger Hirst stated that Police needed somewhere to rest, have secure lockers and a place to get paper work done. That good feedback had been received with more visibility patrols. It was the aim to roll out to 10 to 12 fire stations in the county but would not revert back to the old fashion Police facilities.

Councillor Okunade: Do Police deploy CCTV into recognised hot spots. Roger Hirst stated that a strategy was already in place and coordinated with the Council with the Police also working alongside the private sector on CCTV.

Councillor Fletcher: Questioned the rise in burglaries in his ward and raised the concern of residents and asked what reassurance could be given to residents of South Ockendon. Claire Talbot stated that more Police Officers were on the street patrolling and these should be more visible. Where there were any trends in an area a request would be made to the Police Central Teams. The Police had good results on stop and search.

Roger Hirst thanked Members for their time this evening and that a number of continued concerns had been heard and would be taken away. Roger Hirst encouraged Members to read the Fire and Rescue Plan and welcomed any feedback.

Roger Hirst agreed to come back to Council as and when Members requested.

The Deputy Mayor thanked, on behalf of the chamber, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, Chief Inspector Claire Talbot, Justin Benson-Ryal, Station Manager, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Assistant Director for Communications and Engagement, Darren Horsman for their time this evening.

At 8.10pm, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, Chief Inspector Claire Talbot, Justin Benson-Ryal, Station Manager, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Assistant Director for Communications and Engagement, Darren Horsman left the Council Chamber.

97. Healthy Housing for the Third Age: Improving Older People's Health through Housing - Annual Public Health Report 2018

Councillor Halden, Portfolio Holder for Education and Health, presented the Annual Public Health Report that considered the current and future needs of older people with respect to housing. The report reviewed the evidence that worked for older people's housing to describe the vision for Thurrock and that local and national data would be analysed to form a set of specific recommendations.

Councillor Halden stated that there was evidence that showed the links between good housing and health and that it was Thurrock's ambition to provide attractive housing and communities that would meet the needs of the borough's population as they age and to keep them healthy and independent as long as possible.

Councillor Halden thanked the Public Health team for the work undertaken in preparing the report.

Councillor Holloway as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked Ian Wake and his team for the fantastic evidence based report and stated that although the report showed joint working with Housing there should also be reference to joint working with the Planning teams. Councillor Halden thanked Councillor Holloway for her comment.

Councillor J Kent stated the report contained some good detail and evidence and that the following recommendations could have been in more depth.

Recommendation 1(a). A need to be more aware that not all elderly residents had access to on-line facilities and information should be available in all formats. Recommendation 3(b). That a specific exercise should be tailored as part of a local resident engagement. Recommendation 3(d). That advice should be as independent as possible and there was a lack of housing advisors who were able to advice on housing options available to residents. Councillor Halden agreed with Councillor Kent's comments.

Councillor Spillman stated the report had been presented at Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had no negative comments. Councillor Spillman stated that until the Administration told the Government that there was a housing

crisis and until the Government provided further monies the aspirations in the report would not be achievable. Councillor Halden stated that the Council supported private sectors to target and build the houses that Thurrock needed and the homes needed for elderly would be incorporated into the Local Plan.

Councillor Potheary welcomed the report that contained some levelled evidence base but had concerns that the number of proposals in the report rested on new properties being built and questioned whether the Council's proposal was a reality. Councillor Halden stated that in March 2018 monies were directly put into building new homes and not through the HRA which enabled more opportunities for the 1000 new homes to be built.

Councillor Jefferies asked Councillor Halden what provisions were being made for the provision of healthy housing for the elderly residents in Ockendon.

Councillor Rigby questioned whether the levels of bedding at the Community Hospital on the Long Lane site would be sustained or moved elsewhere once the Integrated Medical Centre had been built.

Councillor Allen stated that Tilbury was short of eight general practitioners and requested an update. Councillor Halden agreed to write to Councillor Allen.

RESOLVED

That Council noted the contents of the report and approved the recommendations within it.

98. Local Council Tax Scheme 2019-20

Councillor Hebb, Portfolio Holder for Finance, presented the report and stated that the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme had been implemented on the 1 April 2017 and agreed for the 2018/19 financial year with no changes. Councillor Hebb stated the proposal for 2019/20 would be to continue with the current scheme in light of no planned changes to the Housing Benefit legislation for the coming year.

Councillor Gerrish stated the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme should be scrutinised by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee who would be able to review the elements of the scheme for the future. Councillor Hebb agreed with Councillor Gerrish's suggestion and requested the report went to the vote.

Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation.

RESOLVED

That the Council agreed to maintain the existing scheme for 2019/20.

99. Report of the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour

Councillor Gledhill presented his first report as Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour and highlighted the following services included within that portfolio:

- A key behaviour being Anti-Social Behaviour and how the Council supported the Police dealing with this.
- Secured funding for three years to enable five Police Officers and one Sergeant to be based in the Civic Offices.
- Worked closely with the Police, through the Community Safety Partnership, to help tackle certain crimes.
- CCTV evidence had been used in the past year in co-operating with Police in Operation Raptor.
- Operation to combat motor bike and quad bike activities.
- Environment Enforcement team had been built from the Clean It Cut It Fill It initiative and the Council would continue to take action on those that blighted the borough.
- 15 New Police Officers will be based in Civic Offices.
- Trading Standards team expanded their remit to include the operation of the Product Safety at Ports and Borders.
- Public Protection that alongside Trading Standards were Licensing and Food Safety.

Councillor Lawrence, as Deputy Chair on the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested an update on the injunction on unauthorised encampments in the borough. Councillor Gledhill stated Thurrock Council had gathered evidence to apply to the High Court for an injunction in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, prohibiting the setting up of unauthorised encampments within the borough. This application had been submitted in December 2018 however an appeal from London Borough of Bromley v Persons had been submitted, which could have an impact on how injunction applications were considered going forward. Council Gledhill stated that legal advice at this time was to await the outcome of the appeal prior to submitting Thurrock's application.

Councillor J Kent questioned the increase in crime and how the latest figures confirmed that the situation was getting worse and asked could residents have some comfort that crime would be down in a year's time. Councillor Gledhill stated that he could not say this within a year but confirmed that £1m had been invested in extra Police Officers. With 15 extra Police Officers based in the Civic Offices and that this time last year the 24 Police Officers would not have been patrolling the streets. Councillor Gledhill stated that prevention was critical to reducing crime being committed and that residents took on the responsibility to start reporting any crime.

Councillor Spillman questioned whether the CCTV used for evidence gathering was live and was it the Police or Thurrock Officers that got involved with the monitoring and evidence gathering. Councillor Gledhill stated that CCTV was live and monitored from Tilbury where evidence would be shared to support crime incidents and assist emergency services and CCTV footage could be used to

supply information for further investigations. It was proposed that a review of CCTV be undertaken.

Councillor Potheary raised a concern on gang related violence in Thurrock where young people were part of gangs who had moved from London and questioned how the Youth Offending team were made aware of such individuals. Councillor Gledhill stated the issue went beyond Thurrock and that Members of the Essex Leaders had written to the Mayor of London and stated that every time an individual, either homeless or troubled families, had moved into another area that London Borough should make contact. Councillor Gledhill stated that the process did not work and relied on Agencies letting the Council know of such individuals.

Councillor Kerin welcomed the CCTV that had been installed in Seabrooke Rise and requested that the portfolio holder engaged with members from the Seabrooke Rise Association on where future CCTV should be installed. Councillor Gledhill stated that information from residents was vital so that the Council could engage with the Police.

100. Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Councillor Coxshall, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, stated he was delighted to present his portfolio holder report which summarised the considerable work carried out over the last 12 months and highlighted the following:

- Government had committed to providing funding for and help deliver the £46m east-facing slips project at Lakeside, which was a crucial infrastructure priority for Thurrock.
- £47m on the east facing slip road this would make a major difference around the Lakeside basin.
- £80m on the A13 widening scheme which was a huge project and would include three lanes from the M25 right up to Stanford le Hope.
- £1b investments into the Thurrock which was a large sum of money for a small borough.
- Four Integrated Medical Centres would be built that linked to a wider reconfiguration of hospital services across South Essex.
- £80m for the refurbishment of Thurrock Hospital.
- Ten new schools in the next ten years resulting in more new school places.
- Thurrock Local Plan Issues and Options (Stage 2) Consultation Document where the public consultation will run for 12 weeks from 12 December 2018 to 8 March 2019.
- Progress had been made on the asset management and release programmes to dispose of assets no longer required.
- Managing major planning applications over the next few months which would potentially deliver approximately 5,000 homes and 5,000 jobs.

Councillor Kerin thanked the portfolio holder for the report and the update on the exciting projects but questioned the potential delays and uncertainty on crucial projects such as the Civic Square, Grays Underpass, Purfleet Regeneration,

Extension to the Civic Offices, Local Plan being behind schedule and questioned whether these projects should have been executed in a more efficient way.

Councillor Coxshall stated the delay of the Civic Square was due to Labour referring the closure of Orsett Hospital to the Secretary of State. That the £11m business plans for Grays town centre were critical and that the Council was on target to start these in 2019/20. The Purfleet Regeneration Limited had signed contracts and engaged with Swan Housing and was currently addressing an objection from the Mayor of London. That the Local Plan was now open for public consultation and the Council would listen to resident's comments.

Councillor J Kent commented on the lavish plans for the extension of the Civic Offices and questioned how the proposed £10m spend would benefit Thurrock residents. Councillor Coxshall stated that as part of the Grays Regeneration Framework all public buildings such as the library, Civic Offices, Crown House and the state cinema were all part of that plan and this would be the opportunity to connect the entrance to the Civic Offices in the right location so that residents can see where they have to go.

Councillor Spillman stated that two floors of the theatre were empty and the wasted space was not generating any revenue and asked for assure that this would be on the agenda and addressed. Councillor Coxshall agreed that maximum income from the Thurrock's assets was vital and the plans moving forward would be to move more staff into the Civic Offices but further consultation and engagement would be required.

Councillor Smith questioned that alongside the planned projects there should be an assurance that a 21st century transport link be addressed to take the pressure of the roads in Thurrock. Councillor Coxshall agreed that invested had been made to the roads in the borough and that a rail scheme needed to be addressed but this could not be done in isolation and would need to work with the South Essex and Thames Estuary Partnerships. Councillor Coxshall stated that Thurrock had a great independent bus service provider.

Councillor Coxshall reiterated that the Local Plan was at a critical point with all 49 Members having to make some big decisions that could affect Thurrock for the next 25 years.

101. Questions from Members

The Deputy Mayor informed the Chamber that 1 question to the Leader had been received and 10 questions to Cabinet Members. Those not heard would either receive a written response or have the option to withdraw and resubmit.

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

At 9.30pm the Deputy Mayor called the close of the meeting and that the one motion would be heard and advised Councillor Kelly that he had three minutes to speak before the motion would be put to the vote.

102. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

This item fell due to time limit of meeting being met.

103. Minutes of Committees

This item fell due to time limit of meeting being met.

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

This item fell due to time limit of meeting being met.

105. Motion submitted by Councillor Kelly

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

Full Council requests that Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, under its remit on regeneration, planning and growth look into how Section 106 money is scoped, allocated and spent. This would help ensure democratic oversight of benefits achieved and decision processes followed.

Councillor Kelly introduced the Motion by stating that Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be the representation as to where S106 monies were being spent and allocated. The Motion would also give each elected Member a stronger role as to how the S106 monies are spent.

The Deputy Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

Upon being put to the vote members agreed unanimously, whereupon the Deputy Mayor declared the Motion carried.

The meeting finished at 9.33 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**