

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24 July 2019 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Terry Piccolo (Mayor), Sue Shinnick (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, Abbie Akinbohun, John Allen, Alex Anderson, Chris Baker, Gary Byrne, Daniel Chukwu, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Mark Coxshall, Tony Fish, Mike Fletcher, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Garry Hague, James Halden (*arrived 7.29pm*), Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Deborah Huelin, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Susan Little, Sue MacPherson, Ben Maney, Fraser Massey, Allen Mayes, Sara Muldowney, Bukky Okunade, Jane Pothecary, David Potter, Shane Ralph, Joycelyn Redsell, Gerard Rice, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons, Jennifer Smith, Luke Spillman, David Van Day, Aaron Watkins and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Jack Duffin, Andrew Jefferies and Martin Kerin

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sharon Bayliss, Director of Commercial Services
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
Andrew Millard, Interim Director of Place
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Jonathon Wilson, Assistant Director, Finance
Tim Hallam, Deputy Head of Legal
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.

29. Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of Annual Council held on the 19 June 2019 were approved as a correct record.

Councillor Okunade stated that the word "Motion" should have read "Mother" on page 27, paragraph 5, line 5 of the Appendix A transcript of members questions.

30. Items of Urgent Business

No items of urgent business were received.

31. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

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

The Mayor presented a plaque to Olivia Busby the young lady who Thurrock Sports Council and Recreation Charity had sponsored and who had become the European Champion and had achieved two world records in the USA for power lifting.

Councillor Redsell, as a member of the Sports Council, extended her congratulations on the achievements made by Olivia Busby.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gledhill, updated Members on Policing and announced that seven more officers dedicated to policing town centres in Thurrock had started this week and would provide a visibly increased Police presence in Grays, South Ockendon and Stanford-le-Hope and work would continue with communities to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour and crime against local businesses. Councillor Gledhill stated he would make enquiries to look at how Police presence could be increased into Tilbury. That the Council had committed to spending £1 million over the next three years to tackle anti-social behaviour and serious violence across the whole of the borough and was due to meet with the Local Chief Inspector to discuss how this would progress.

The Leader stated that three more members of the C17 gang had now been made the subject of a strict injunction with another jailed for breaching it. With more gang members being made subject of the order which had already been very effective in tackling those who committed crimes, including selling drugs, committing violent assaults and preying on young and vulnerable people.

The Leader reminded Members that the Police could only work with the intelligence supplied by residents and encouraged all to report any crime by either contacting 999 in an emergency or 101 for non-urgent incidents. Residents can also call Crimestoppers anonymously with information being passed onto the Police.

The Leader stated that a public consultation was now underway about proposals to formally rename Purfleet as Purfleet-on-Thames. The consultation will run until Sunday 13 October and would offer everyone an opportunity to give their views about the proposed name change.

The Leader congratulated the Trading Standards Team who had won the Product Safety Hero Award at the recent Chartered Trading Standards Institute Hero Awards. The Leader stated that Thurrock was a gateway to the world and the team had done an incredible job keeping millions of people safe

from the risks posed by dangerous goods and worked tirelessly to identify dangerous, consumer products and confiscate such items before they made their way into the hands of unsuspecting shoppers.

The Leader provided a Clean It, Cut It, Fill It update and stated that since April 2019:

- 792 potholes had been filled on the borough's road with 100% repaired within agreed time frames.
- 730 tonnes of waste collected by our street cleaning team.
- 548 fly-tips cleared.
- 1,398 fixed penalty notices had been issued for offences such as littering and dropping cigarette butts.
- 49 people prosecuted for not paying fixed penalty notices.
- More than 99% of household waste bins had been collected on the correct day.
- Eight Traveller encampments had been moved on from public land in the borough
- 91 £400 fixed penalties issued for fly-tipping

33. Questions from Members of the Public

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

34. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed Members that in accordance with the Council's petition scheme, one requisite of notice had been given to present a petition at the meeting.

Councillor Rice presented a petition with regards to the anti-social behaviour in Thamesview, the elderly sheltered housing in Chadwell St Mary.

35. Petitions Update Report

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

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

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

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

For Councillor Maney to be removed from the Standard & Audit Committee and replaced with Councillor Collins.

Councillor Potheary, Leader of the Labour Group, informed the chamber that she had no changes to make.

Councillor Spillman, Leader of the Thurrock Independence Group, informed the chamber he would like to make the following change:

For Councillor Byrne to be removed from the Licensing Committee and replaced with Councillor Ralph.

37. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19

The Mayor referred Members to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2018-19 as published in the Agenda.

Councillor Worrall welcomed the annual report but noted that the report appeared to be muddled and the content was repetitive. Councillor Worrall had been disappointed that no photo of the chair had been included.

Councillor Spillman stated the report appeared to be light with insufficient details of some of the major issues that had been discussed at overview and scrutiny committees this municipal year.

Councillor Okunade also made similar comments with the report being repetitive to what was in the report against what each chair had written.

Councillor Gledhill noted the comments made by Members and stated if Members were unhappy with the content of their report the recommendation could be changed to reflect this and suggested that the recommendation be changed to:

“That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19 would be returned to Council at a later date”.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the amended recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19 would be returned to Council at a later date.

38. Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer

Tim Hallam left the Council Chamber at 7.25pm.

Councillor Gledhill presented the report to seek the agreement of Council to appoint Tim Hallam as the Interim Monitoring Officer whilst an external

recruitment process for a permanent Monitoring Officer was undertaken following the departure of David Lawson next Friday. Councillor Gledhill thanked David Lawson for all his hard work and stated all three group leaders had agreed to appoint the candidate following a Governance Group meeting.

Councillor Potheary stated that the timings on the process to recruit senior officer process had again not been quite there but asked commitment from the Leader that further recruitment of senior officers would go through the General Services Committee process.

Councillor Spillman stated that it had been a pleasure to work with David Lawson who would be greatly missed and would support the recommendation.

Councillor Gerrish thanked David Lawson for his help and guidance over the years and wished him well but stated that it was important that the recruitment process be looked into to ensure that proper consultation was available to all Members.

Councillor Halden arrived into the Council Chamber at 7.29pm.

Councillor Gledhill stated that David Lawson would be solely missed but supported the recommendation that Tim Hallam be appointed the Interim Monitoring Officer and gave his commitment to both Councillor Potheary and Councillor Gerrish that the recruitment of senior officers would go through the General Services Committee process.

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation, whereupon the Mayor declared this to be carried.

RESOLVED

That Tim Hallam be appointed the Interim Monitoring Officer of Thurrock Council.

Tim Hallam returned to the Council Chamber at 7.31pm.

39. Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation

Councillor Hebb, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transformation, presented his portfolio holder report by stating that Thurrock Council's economy was strong and that services to which residents used and depended on would be safe until at least 2022/23.

Councillor Hebb briefly highlight the following services included within that portfolio:

- Thurrock Council's budget exceeded the legal obligation to balance council's budget.
- Thurrock was a great place for residents to live in.

- Thurrock Council was not only financially balanced but had delivered a multi-year, multi-million pound financial surplus – a surplus which had been spent, penny-for-penny, on the borough.
- The Council would focus on what the Council had rather than what the Council did not have.
- Fair Debt Summit to identify ways to help people help themselves, avoid debts of any type.
- Council Spending Review “Round 2” to focus on service quality.
- Infrastructure Investments of £78m to expand the A13 at Orsett Cock and £17m on expanding schools.
- Protected the Council’s services by increasing the Council’s “rainy-day” reserve account by 38%.
- Thanked Officers and Portfolio Holders for their support.

Councillor Gerrish thanked the portfolio holder for the report and stated that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had looked at the KPIs for commercial income and had been disappointed that the target had been lower than the previous year and that the Council needed to ensure that trading income increased and not declined. Councillor Hebb stated that the Council would continue to look at targets and build on that basis.

Councillor Potheary thanked the portfolio holder for the report but had concerns over the lack of Members in the making of key decisions and that the Council Spending Review should involve more Members to ensure that residents are represented and questioned how the portfolio holder planned to do this. Councillor Hebb stated that the Council Spending Review would go over everything to understand the full scope of the Council and what had been requested by Cabinet. That the history of including Members from other groups had not been good but the plan would be to include a wider involvement of Members over the coming months.

Councillor Spillman echoed Councillor Potheary comments and stated the process of the Council Spending Review should change to ensure that those Members responsible for budgets have sufficient information to comment and be able to debate. Councillor Hebb stated that the longer term opportunities would be looked into and noted Members support in the new proposed review.

Councillor Kelly questioned what work had been undertaken on the Fair Debt Summit. Councillor Hebb stated that three approaches had been set (1) those who want to pay, but can’t (2) those who can pay, but won’t and (3) to help future generations anticipate and avoid getting into debt. Councillor Hebb thanked Michelle Lucas, Thurrock Adult Community College and Councillor Halden and stated the three schools had signed up to the pilot phase and the programme would continue to work with care leavers and more secondary schools.

Councillor Allen asked what the Council were doing to address the big issue of mental health in the borough and how was the Council looking to reduce waiting times. Councillor Hebb stated that a commitment had been made by

all three group leaders and Councillor Massey that half a million pounds from the surplus fund would be used to address and improve the concerns made by Councillor Allen.

Councillor Hebb thanked the remarkable work undertaken by his teams.

40. Questions from Members

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

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

41. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

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

42. Minutes of Committees

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

43. 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.

44. Motion submitted by Councillor J Kent

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

Thurrock Council congratulates Grays Athletic Football Club on being named the Bostik League Football Club of the year for 2018/19.

Councillor J Kent stated the word "Community" had been missed from the Motion and should now read as follows:

Thurrock Council congratulates Grays Athletic Football Club on being named the Bostik League Community Football Club of the year for 2018/19.

Councillor J Kent introduced the Motion by stating that a similar motion had been raised by Councillor Duffin in June 2018 to support sport clubs in the borough where residents were involved in supporting and volunteering to give youngsters a positive attitude to sport. Councillor J Kent stated the remarkable work undertaken by Grays Athletic Football Club from being formed in 1990 to nearly going out of business to the club now being relaunched to a community football club that was owned by supporters, each

member having one share and one vote. That a director and a chair had been elected and had over 30 sides playing and over 500 players registered.

That an appropriate measure should be undertaken to congratulate the team that would reflect this achievement of sport being undertaken in the borough by either a letter, presentation or for the Council to sponsor a home game as this would mean a lot to the players.

Councillor J Kent stated that the Council could help Grays Athletic Football Club to identify a plot of land for their new club. Councillor J Kent again stated the remarkable achievements made by the club and again congratulated the team.

Councillor Potheary congratulated Grays Athletic Football Club that a real offer to find a new home ground would be a dedication to local people.

Councillor Rice stated his support to the motion and congratulated Grays Athletic Football Club on the wonderful work that they do to support youngsters in the community and they should be congratulated in some form.

Councillor Mayes left the Council Chamber at 8.26pm.

Councillor Gledhill thanked Councillor J Kent for the motion and stated his support and would be working with the portfolio holder and directors to look at potential locations.

Councillor Redsell stated that infrastructure should be taken into account when considering potential locations.

Councillor Spillman echoed Members comments and stated his support for the motion although Councillor Spillman felt the Council did not do enough to promote clubs, the leisure options and events in Thurrock.

Councillor C Kent stated her support for the motion and congratulated Grays Athletic Football Club for the work that it had undertaken. Councillor C Kent also congratulated all the other sport clubs in the borough to the amount of time and dedication undertaken by volunteers and stated that the Council should do more to encourage and support sporting activities in the borough.

Councillor Watkins congratulated Grays Athletic Football Club for their achievements and congratulated all other sport clubs, volunteers and those residents that went to these sport clubs. Councillor Watkins stated his continued support as work continued on the Sports Strategy that would include contributions from Members, residents and sport groups to support and promote sport clubs across Thurrock.

Councillor J Kent thanked Members for their support that agreeing to the motion this evening would show sport clubs in Thurrock that they had the Council's support.

The Mayor offered to support local clubs as much as practicable and stated those clubs should contact the Mayor's Office.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

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

45. Motion submitted by Councillor Holloway

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

That Council notes with extreme concern, the recent instruction from NHS England to NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to set out a clear and agreed timeline by the end of September 2019 for a CCG merger to create a single CCG covering Mid and South Essex.

Council finds the complete lack of consultation by NHS England with us as a key statutory partner and with local residents, prior to issuing an instruction of this magnitude, unacceptable and disrespectful.

Council strongly opposes any move by NHS England to create a single CCG for Mid and South Essex which we believe will damage the strong partnership working and local relationships we have with our NHS partners, shift focus away from local health and care transformation at Thurrock level, and will make our local NHS less accountable to our residents.

Council calls on NHS England to retain a fully constituted CCG at Thurrock level with a Thurrock CCG Accountable Officer and Executive.

Council also resolves to write to our two local MPs to ask them to support our calls and work with us to intervene to prevent this merger.

Councillor Holloway introduced the Motion by stating that NHS England had shown complete disregard to Thurrock Council, the Cabinet, Members, Directors and herself as chair of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The instruction would have enormous implications on how Thurrock delivered the vision of health care. Councillor Holloway stated the importance of Thurrock CCG would be to ensure that health services were clinically safe and effective, the quality of primary care improved, transform the quality of general practitioner surgeries and mayor decisions on health and care would be taken locally. Those decisions designed to meet the needs of Thurrock residents. Councillor Holloway informed Members that a strong partnership had been built up with local general practitioners and Thurrock CCG Chief Officers over many years and had been crucial to improving health and care for local residents.

Councillor Halden stated he would vote in favour of the motion and had been against NHS England forcing the merger of CCG onto Thurrock. Councillor

Halden stated that were the plans available for consultation they would be flawed and Officers should continue to consider the approach and legal challenge if necessary.

Councillor Spillman welcomed and supported the motion and stated CCG powers should be held at local level and for the needs of Thurrock residents.

Councillor Little thanked Councillor Holloway for raising the motion and stated her support. Councillor Little stated as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board she had attended meetings where discussions had taken place with the CCG and had been disappointed by the lack of consultation being undertaken by NHS England. Councillor Little informed Members that she had already written to Thurrock's MPs with her concerns and had received a reply from Steven Metcalfe, Conservative MP. Councillor Little read out the reply to Members that displayed his full support and commitment to write to NHS England.

Councillor Coxshall stated his support for motion and the reorganisation of NHS at local level should be for the benefit of Thurrock residents.

Councillor Holloway stated that the focus of the NHS from Thurrock to a larger and remote geography of Mid and South Essex would make no sense to Thurrock residents and encouraged all Members to vote in support of the motion and send a strong message to NHS England. Councillor Holloway thanked Members for their comments and thanked Councillor Little for writing to the MPs and encouraged Members to write to the NHS and their MPs.

The Mayor called a vote on the Motion.

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

The meeting finished at 8.49 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**