

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 30 November 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors James Halden (Mayor), Susan Little (Deputy Mayor), Qaisar Abbas, John Allen, Alex Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Paul Arnold, Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu, Gary Collins, George Coxshall, Mark Coxshall, Tony Fish, Robert Gledhill, Shane Hebb, Victoria Holloway, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Fraser Massey, Allen Mayes, Sara Muldowney, Augustine Ononaji, Srikanth Panjala, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Shane Ralph, Kairen Raper, Joycelyn Redsell, Sue Shinnick, Graham Snell, Luke Spillman, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Chris Baker, Gary Byrne, Colin Churchman, Jack Duffin, Cathy Kent, Jane Potheary, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons and Jennifer Smith

In attendance: Ian Wake, Acting Chief Executive
John Jones, Director Law & Governance, and Monitoring Officer
Ewelina Sorbjan, Interim Director Housing
Karen Wheeler, Director Strategy, Engagement and Growth
Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

78. Minutes

Minutes of the Council meetings held on the 13 October 2022 and 26 October 2022 were approved as a correct record.

79. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

80. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

81. Announcements on behalf of the Mayor and the Leader of the Council

The Mayor made the following announcements:

The Mayor thanked all community groups who had done the borough incredibly proud during the period of remembrance. The Mayor had attended

seven remembrance services, with a Mayor's office representative at a further 14 services.

The Mayor praised the Mayoral Roll of Honour named on page 9 of the agenda.

Members were reminded that "Give a Gift" was still open which ensured looked after children, vulnerable and refugee children got a Christmas gift this year. The Mayor thanked the residents and businesses of Thurrock who had been incredibly generous.

The Mayor was delighted that the Mayor's Charity Fund had raised just over £18,000 for good causes and looked forward to attending the intensive care unit for babies at Thurrock Basildon Hospital to present them with a sizeable cheque.

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

The financial report that had been published yesterday had presented the serious state of finances the council were in. The numbers were truly shocking, and it was the first step of the recovery plan to understand the full extent of the problem. He understood the gravity being faced and was determined to do the right thing and to take some tough decisions. Some financial support would be required from Government over a number of years to stabilise the financial position and to give time for a balanced budget to be set. He confirmed that it was impossible for local authorities to go bankrupt, but it had become clear that a lot of decisions needed to be made by all Members, especially himself. Those decisions were uncertain at present but there would be no immediate changes to services and work would continue with the commissioners to discuss the size of this challenge and bring Thurrock back into a stable, safe and sustainable financial position. By next week an improvement plan would be delivered to the Secretary of State. Some tough decisions would need to be made going forward and the Leader realised the consequences. He would take full responsibility to ensure this got done. He would need all 49 Members to ensure the survival of Thurrock with the determination and decisions being democratically made for those that stand and lead the Council in the coming years.

82. Questions from Members of the Public

The Mayor informed the chamber that due to the resident being unwell, a written response would be provided.

83. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

The Mayor informed the chamber that three notices of petition had been received this evening.

Mr Hurrell presented his petition requesting Thurrock Council to urgently provide a school crossing patrol on Daiglen Drive at the junction with Broxburn Drive. In response to this Councillor Maney acknowledged the petition.

Councillor Fish presented his petition by calling on Thurrock Council to urgently tackle noise nuisance, inconsiderate parking and litter at the Lighthouse Centre in Quarry Hill. In response to this Councillor Jefferies acknowledged the petition.

Councillor Ralph presented his petition by calling on Thurrock Council to provide a zebra crossing outside Abbots Hall School. In response to this Councillor Maney acknowledged the petition.

84. Petitions Update Report

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

85. 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 change to make:

To replace Councillor M Coxshall with Councillor G Coxshall on the Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority outside body.

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

Councillor Massey nominated himself onto the Mucking Charitable Trust.

Councillor Allen stated he had no changes to make.

Members agreed with the nominations.

86. The Localism Act 2011 - Appointment of Independent Persons

The report presented followed 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 had been in place for some years. Following a recruitment process, the Monitoring Officer had identified two candidates to share the role until Annual Council in 2026. Councillor M Coxshall proceeded to the recommendation.

Councillor J Kent agreed to go straight to the vote.

With 38 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstained, the recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED

For the purposes of section 28 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council agreed to appoint Ms Cheryl Campbell and Mr Simon Carey to the role of Independent Person until the Annual Council in 2026.

87. Questions from Members

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

At 7.55pm, Councillor M Coxshall raised a point of order to extend this item to hear the remaining questions.

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

88. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

No reports were presented.

89. Minutes of Committees

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

90. 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.

The meeting finished at 8.11 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