

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 July 2024 at 7.00 pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Gary Byrne (Chair), Paul Arnold, Daniel Chukwu, Aaron Green, Mark Hurrell, Steve Liddiard, Fraser Massey, Sue Shinnick and Cathy Sisterson

Sue Hodgson, Co-Optee Member

**Apologies:** Councillors Victoria Holloway, Valerie Morris-Cook

**In attendance:** Councillor Lee Watson, Portfolio Holder for Good Growth  
Claire Demmel, Executive Director Place  
Claire Dixon, Scrutiny Officer  
Lucy Tricker, Scrutiny Officer  
Ashley Baldwin, Chief Planning Officer  
Paul Crick, Chief Operations Lead- Place  
Michael Dineen, Assistant Director Counter Fraud, Enforcement and Community Safety  
Paul Southall, Assistant Director Street Scene and Leisure  
Emma Trencher, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Before the start of the meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live streamed and recorded, with the video recording to be made available on the Council's Youtube channel.

### **1. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

### **2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 5 March 2024 were approved as a correct record.

The Minutes of the Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 21 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

The Minutes of the Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 7 September 2023 were approved as a correct record.

The Minutes of the Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 7 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

The Minutes of the Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 19 March 2024 were approved as a correct record.

### **3. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Responsibilities**

There were no questions raised on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee responsibilities agreed at Full Council in March 2024.

### **5. Thurrock Scrutiny Protocol - Working Document**

There were no questions raised on the Scrutiny Protocol agreed at Full Council in March 2024.

### **6. Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group: Scoping Report**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report, advising this had come from a motion brought by former Councillor Redsell at the end of 2023.

Members raised the following points:

- Before agreeing to the Task and Finish Group, it was noted there needed to be very clear terms of reference for the group, to avoid it being led off task when consulting all schools in the borough.
- Could head teachers be asked to give evidence and/or be added to the membership.

#### Action arising

If the group felt it would be beneficial head teacher could be co-opted members to the group. Alternatively head teachers could be invited to a witness session or evidence session. Schools should be contacted to ascertain their individual parking problems and to ascertain if there was a common theme.

- Members questioned whether there were enforcement officers that patrol the schools. If so, how many? How does the enforcement work? Was enforcement a deterrent?
  - A. The Borough had 18-20 Civil Enforcement Officers, that operate on a rota around the borough. Data analysis determined where they were focused. However, the committee was advised that although enforcement could play a part, it was not the solution to school parking problems as there are procedures that needed to be followed.

### Action arising

The Task and Finish Group could look at different parking restrictions around schools, i.e. remove double yellow lines and replace with no waiting.

- Timelines were questioned when to start the Task & Finish Group, given schools would be on summer holidays soon until September.

### Action arising

Desktop analysis to be undertaken over the coming months, looking at complaints received, traffic hot spots and previous data in preparation for starting formal discussion in September.

- Membership to the Task & Finish Group was discussed.

### Action arising

Communication would be made with absent Councillors to confirm whether they would like to be part of the Task & Finish Group.

## **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to a 10-week time limited Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group.**
- 1.2 Members commented on and suggested relevant amendments to the Draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) and Scoping Document (Appendix 2), in accordance with the updated overview and scrutiny guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS).**
- 1.3 As the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed with recommendation 1.1: the Members agreed the size and membership of the Task and Finish Group should be 6 members (3 labour, 2 conservative and 1 independent) and will commence in September 2024 for a 10 week period.**

## **7. Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) Task Force Report**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report. Following the General Services Committee recommendation to change the current Lower Thames Crossing Task Force and replace with a Task and Finish Group.

Members noted and raised the following points:

- It was acknowledged that the LTC Task Force had done some very good and valuable work since it had been established, it was felt it should remain in place.
- As there had been a change of government and there was now a new Minister for Highways, who would be making the decision over the LTC. Members questioned whether Thurrock should write to the Minister setting out Thurrock's opposition to the scheme and their current position.

#### Action arising

This would be looked at outside of the committee by officers and a decision would be made and reported back to the committee.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the continuation of the LTC Task Force until the Development Consent Order (DCO) decision was published; at which point officers will review the request for a standing or time limited LTC Task and Finish Group, in accordance with the new overview and scrutiny operating model and would present a further report to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members.**
- 1.2 The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that in advance of the government's DCO decision, the Place Directorate commit to providing LTC Task Force Members with regular monthly email updates regarding the scheme.**

#### **8. Future of the Delivery of Private and Housing Stock Task and Finish Group**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report.

Members noted and raised the following points:

- Could officers and Portfolio Holders advise what were their recommendations and priorities.
  - A. It was advised there were a list of priorities and this would be brought back to committee via the Work Programme.
- As the Housing Strategy was a fluid policy and was being developed, it was felt the Task and Finish Group should be decommissioned and the Housing Strategy should be brought to the Committee under the Work Programme.
- It was acknowledged there was a shortage of houses. It was asked, how many people were on the housing allocation waiting list in Thurrock?

### Action arising

Officers to provide this information.

- Councillor Green proposed an alternative recommendation for officers to bring a report back to the Committee setting out their highest housing priorities and for the Committee to then decide if a Task and Finish Group would be beneficial to look at the recommended priorities.
- It was requested for information to provide clarity over what crosses over with the People O&S Committee as there was some confusion.

### Action arising

A revised list would be looked at clarifying the remit of each committee to avoid any duplication and further confusion.

## **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 Place O&S Members agreed to decommission the Delivery of Private and Housing Stock Task and Finish Group. This was the recommendation supported by senior officers, however it was noted Councillor Green voted against this.**

## **9. Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Officer asked if there were any changes or additional reports the committee would like to add to the Work Programme.

Reports requested:

- Section 106 Money
- Derelict land within the borough

### Action arising

The Scrutiny Officer to liaise with Committee Members to obtain their views on what they would like to be added to the Work Programme.

A full recording of this meeting can be found from the following link:

[Place Committee - Tuesday 16 July 2024, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

**The meeting finished at 7.59 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)**