

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 February 2025 at 7.00 pm

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**Present:** Councillors Gary Byrne (Chair), Roy Jones (Vice-Chair), Paul Arnold, David Day, Aaron Green, Mark Hurrell, Barry Johnson (Substitute for Tom Kelly), Steve Liddiard, Sue Shinnick and Cathy Sisterson

Sue Hodgson, Housing Tenant Representative

**Apologies:** Councillors Tom Kelly and Daniel Chukwu

**In attendance:** Councillor Lee Watson, Portfolio Holder for Good Growth  
Claire Demmel, Executive Director Place  
Paul Crick, Chief Operations Lead (left at 7.44pm)  
Paul Southall, Transformation Consultant for Waste (left at 7.36pm)  
Jonathan Keen, Principal Planner Development Management (left at 7.10pm)  
Nadia Houghton, Team Leader Development Management (left at 7.10pm)  
Faraz Latif, Senior Planner Development Management  
Lucy Smith, Scrutiny Officer  
Kenna-Victoria Healey, 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.

### **44. Apologies for Absence**

It was noted Councillors Tom Kelly and Daniel Chukwu had sent their apologies.

### **45. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 January 2025 were approved as a correct record.

### **46. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **47. Planning Development Management Performance**

The Chair of the Committee explained that a call-in had been received on the Planning Development Management Performance report. He suggested to

defer the item to the March meeting so to ensure there was no conflict with the call-in process.

Following concerns from Members, the Scrutiny Officer explained that even if the item was heard at this meeting the call-in process would still be followed as it had not yet been validated by the Monitoring Officer. Should the call-in be deemed valid it would be heard at the next available meeting.

Members voted on whether to defer the item to the March meeting:

For: Councillors Byrne (Chair), Jones (Vice-Chair), Arnold, Day, Hurrell, Johnson, Liddiard, Shinnick and Sisterson (9)

Against: Councillor Green (1)

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee defer the Planning Development Management Performance report to their March meeting.**

**47. Adoption of Thurrock Council Enforcement Policy – Cabinet Discussion/Recommendations**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the briefing note to the Committee explaining it outlined the discussions and recommendations made by Cabinet regarding the Adoption of Thurrock Council Enforcement Policy, which was previously presented to Place Overview and Scrutiny on 23 October 2024.

Members noted the briefing note.

**48. Thurrock Recycling Rate - Strategic Roadmap to 50% Recycling Rate by 2031**

The Transformation Consultant for Waste introduced the briefing note explaining it provided an update to clarify and expand on the recycling rate figures that were discussed at the February Corporate Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

Members heard it was previously stated that the council's recycling target was 30% and this figure actually reflected the council's current recycling rate and not the long-term goal for the council, which was committed to increasing recycling rates in line with its Waste Strategy and outlined a target of reaching 50% by 2031. The Briefing note outlined the strategic road map to achieve that goal detailing key initiatives such as weekly food waste collections, improvements at household waste recycling centres, infrastructure upgrades and Community engagement programmes.

The Committee through their discussions raised the following:

- Enquired as to when kerbside collections for small electrical items would be introduced. It was confirmed this would be April 2025.
- Queried how the proposed re-use shop would work. Members heard how staff at the HWRC would be given training to enable them to look at items and see if they could still have a purpose and therefore if an item was reusable.
- General recycling was discussed with some households overfilling their recycling blue bin and therefore using their refuse green bin for additional recycling. It was commented some families may require a bigger bin, however if residents were not recycling as a final outcome enforcement matters could be look into.
- Members raised concerns as to whether the HWRC would receive an upgrade to the site to enable it to support new roles. Officers explained there were no plans as yet to upgrade the site, however they were researching next options.

Members noted the briefing note.

#### **49. Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group – final report**

Councillor Green, Vice Chair of the Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group presented the report to Members, in doing so he stated:

*“The wait is over as Vice Chair I will be presenting the highly anticipated School Parking Task and Finish Group final report this evening.*

*This group bought together cross-party support, with meetings with different stakeholders.*

*These meetings consisted of a Q&A with the Thurrock’s Youth Cabinet who got to express as young people, their experiences while attending school. We heard from Thurrock Council’s road safety lead who shared in a lot of detail her role and good & bad practices she has witnessed. It was clear our work with our colleagues on People O&S Childhood Obesity Task and Finish Group overlapped we decided to have a joint meeting where we discussed cross over of the importance of exercise like walking to school with the tackling of childhood obesity.*

*This work needed to be led by the residents we are doing this for, so throughout the process we held a public survey which residents could do online and in paper version, more details on results can be found in appendix 2 of the agenda pack.*

*I want to touch on the toolkit at appendix 1 of the agenda pack, Nav who produced this has done an excellent job highlighting different ways bad parking can be challenged with the potential financial side it may occur.*

*I’ll start off with no cost to implement which are campaigns around car sharing, car parking charter putting the onus on the parents on how to park. Second, we have drop of zones which could be implemented.*

*The lower costs options to implement would cross over to People Task & Finish group would be the park and stride, walking bus & learning to ride a bike. This option would help get cars away from the schools all while giving the child exercise while walking to school.*

*I wanted to end with a hard measure which can be costly if implemented which is a school street, restricting the road for opening and leaving school for a certain period normally 30-45 mins.*

*There are many options in appendix 1 but its clear not one option may suit all our borough schools. This toolkit will initially be trailed at one of our schools before it is finalised.*

*Finally, I would like to say for the group our thanks to Lucy & Nav for all their support to getting us across the finish.”*

Members welcomed the report and thanked Cllr Green on behalf of the Task and Finish Group for their hard work. It was commented it this was a major step forward and Members supported the positive next steps.

**Action** - A thank you letter be drafted on behalf of the Place O&S Committee to officers and Members for all their hard work on the Parking at Schools Task and Finish Group.

#### **RESOLVED:**

##### **That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Endorse the Parking at Schools Toolkit, as attached at Appendix 1.**
- 2. Note and comment the key activities and consultation responses, as attached at Appendix 2**

#### **50. Local Plan Timetable Delay, Analysis and Implications**

The Portfolio Holder for Good Growth introduced the item stating the report outlined the progress, recommendations and the implications of the local plan timetable.

She continued by explaining one of the key reasons the Local Plan had been delayed was following the Stantec review, 50 failures were identified which in turn meant there would be 50 mitigations of recommendations to consider. This included lack of corporate plan, lack of a transport strategy and these were fundamental strategies which would be included in a local plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Good Growth assured the Committee there was now an internal board monitoring the progress of the Local Plan and quarterly Cabinet meetings.

During discussions Members highlighted the following points:

- Members sought reassurance on how to ensure that past decisions were not repeated and that as a Council we wouldn't be back in this position. Cllr Watson commented that she understood Members frustrations, however there was a completely new Planning Team with a Chief Planner and an Executive Director who had personally taken an interest in the Local Plan and was ensuring that every month a meeting was held to regularly go through the 50 failures and learn from these. The Local Plan was now being looked at very realistically on what can be achieved and what can be taken forward.
- Concerns were raised that as the Council didn't have an active Local Plan developers may try to submit developments which were not suited for the borough, and these would be enforced because of these. Members heard that the Chief Planner had a good working relationship with all developers in the borough and the Council had a good Planning Committee who still had to judge each application on its merits and within planning law.
- It was commented that a Local Plan was a 25-year plan, however every 10 years this should be reviewed and looking ahead at the next 10 years. Unfortunately, this wasn't done with the previous Local Plan which was left and then there was a rush to get it completed which ended with it being delayed.

#### **RESOLVED:**

#### **That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Note the progress made regarding the preparation of the Thurrock Local Plan based on the 50 recommendations outlined in the Stantec Local Plan review report (Appendix A).**
- 2. Note the implications of the extended timetable.**
- 3. Agree the contents of this report as a response to the motion set out at paragraph 1.2 and 1.3 of this report.**

#### **52. Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the work programme. She advised Members there was one meeting remaining for the municipal year and this included the Housing Works Procurement report. It was suggested by Members if the Call-In on Planning Development Management Performance was to be successful then this should, if possible, be heard at an extra-ordinary meeting.

The work programme was noted by the Committee.

#### **53. Action Log**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the action log.

The action log was noted by the Committee.

**54. Recommendations Tracker**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the recommendations tracker.

The recommendations tracker was noted by the Committee.

A full recording of this meeting can be found from the following link – [Thurrock Council - Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 19/02/2025](#)

**The meeting finished at 8.05pm**

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)**