

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Council

To the Members of Thurrock Council

The next meeting of the Council will be held at **7.00 pm** on **28 February 2024**

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6SL

Membership of the Council:

Susan Little (Mayor)

Qaisar Abbas (Deputy Mayor)

John Allen

Alex Anderson

Deborah Arnold

Paul Arnold

Gary Byrne

Adam Carter

John Cecil

Daniel Chukwu

Gary Collins

George Coxshall

Jack Duffin

Tony Fish

Robert Gledhill

Aaron Green

James Halden

Vikki Hartstean

Mark Hooper

Mark Hurrell

Andrew Jefferies

Barry Johnson

Tom Kelly

Cathy Kent

John Kent

Martin Kerin

Steve Liddiard

Ben Maney

Jacqui Maney

Cici Manwa

Fraser Massey

Valerie Morris-Cook

Sara Muldowney

Augustine Ononaji

Srikanth Panjala

Maureen Pearce

Terry Piccolo

Georgette Polley

Kairen Raper

Joycelyn Redsell

Elizabeth Rigby

Sue Sammons

Sue Shinnick

Graham Snell

Neil Speight

Luke Spillman

James Thandi

Lee Watson

Lynn Worrall



Dr Dave Smith
Chief Executive

Agenda published on: 20 February 2024

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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<p>To receive additional items that the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>	
4 Declaration of Interests	
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Council	29 November 2023
Council	6 December 2023
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Jenny Shade, Principal Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Future Dates of Council:

20 March 2024

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Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

Advice Regarding Public Attendance at Meetings

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Recording of meetings

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If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

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- You should connect to TBC-GUEST
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

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You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#) or [Android Device](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

PROCEDURE FOR MOTIONS

No speech may exceed 4 minutes without the consent of the Mayor [Rule 19.8], except for the proposer of any motion who shall have 5 minutes to move that motion (except on a motion to amend where the 4 minute time shall apply) [Rule 19.8(a)]

All Motions will follow Section A and then either Section B or C

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|--|----------------------------|
| A. | A1 | Motion is moved | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A2 | Mover speaks | [Rule 19.8(a) (5 minutes)] |
| | A3 | Seconded | [Rule 19.2] |
| | A4 | Secunder speaks or reserves right to speak | [Rule 19.3] (4 minutes) |

Then the procedure will move to either B or C below:

B.		C.	
IF there is an AMENDMENT (please see Rule 19.23)		If NOT amended i.e. original motion	
B1	The mover of the amendment shall speak (4 mins).	C1	Debate.
B2	The seconder of the amendment shall speak unless he or she has reserved their speech (4 mins).	C2	If the seconder of the motion has reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.
B3	THEN debate on the subject .	C3	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.
B4	If the seconder of the substantive motion and the amendment reserved their speeches, they shall then speak.	C4	Vote on motion.
B5	The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply.		
B6	The mover of the substantive motion shall have the final right of reply.		
B7	Vote on amendment.		
B8	A vote shall be taken on the substantive motion, as amended if appropriate, without further debate.		

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

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WW2 in Memoriam

Remembering Thurrock's Fallen : Civilian Deaths due to enemy action and Roll of Honour

Today we share names on the Roll of Honour. These are people whose home address was shown as Thurrock who lost their lives during the Second World War whilst serving with the armed forces or merchant navy.

In recognition of the adversity and bravery experienced by ordinary people in Thurrock civilian deaths are also noted here in relevant months. 101 non-combatants were killed in Thurrock between 1939 and 1945 who will also be remembered.

A special thanks to Museum volunteer Pam Purkiss for compiling the Roll of Honour information. Civilians added by Valina Bowman-Burns from Thurrock Museum.

The names have been listed in date order.

February 1944

HORN Dennis H
WAKEFIELD Charles T
CHAPPLE James
KING Albert William
POTTER Edwin
BINKS Alice Louise
APPLEYARD Gilbert Owen
AUSTIN Archibald J C

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Mayoral Roll of Honour

The Roll of Honour has been introduced to recognise and celebrate charities, businesses, individuals, and community groups that have strived to make Thurrock a greater place to live, work, learn and play.

February 2024

Viv Crouch - Services to Stifford Clays Medical Centre

Rebecca Dale - Services to the voluntary sector in Purfleet-on-Thames

Terri Austin - Services to the voluntary sector in Purfleet-on-Thames

Kyra Hodgins - Services to the voluntary sector in Purfleet-on-Thames

Joanne Roberts - Services to the voluntary sector in Purfleet-on-Thames

Albertina Aparicio - Services to midwifery

Len Orpin - Services to the voluntary sector within the community

Reg Goldsmith - Services to the local community

Tina Holland - Services to the Grays Community Hub



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Minutes of the Meeting of the Extraordinary Council held on 31 January 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Susan Little (Mayor), Qaisar Abbas (Deputy Mayor), John Allen, Deborah Arnold, Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu, George Coxshall, Tony Fish (*arrived 6.08pm*), Robert Gledhill, Aaron Green, James Halden, Vikki Hartstean, Mark Hooper, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Jacqui Maney, Cici Manwa, Fraser Massey, Valerie Morris-Cook, Sara Muldowney, Srikanth Panjala, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley (*arrived 6.16pm*), Kairen Raper, Joycelyn Redsell, Sue Sammons, Sue Shinnick, Graham Snell, Neil Speight, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Paul Arnold, John Cecil, Gary Collins and Mark Hurrell

In attendance: Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive and Managing Director
Commissioner
Asmat Hussain, Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place
Claire Demmel, Interim Director Public Realm
Alix MacFarlane, Communications Advisor - Intervention and Improvement, Interim Director
Patrick McDermott, Chief of Staff to the Thurrock Commissioners
Alex Powell, Assistant Chief Executive
Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Kerry Thomas, Chief of Staff
Ian Wake, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Matthew Boulter, Head of Democratic, Scrutiny and Member Services
Jenny Shade, Principal Democratic Services Officer

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

104. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

105. Freedom of the Borough

The report presented set out the case for conferring the ceremonial status of 'Freedom of the Borough' to Reverend Canon Darren Barlow.

Members commented this was a well-deserved recognition and testament of the work that Reverend Canon Darren Barlow had undertaken in the borough. For the support, advice, care and respect that he had offered to the community. Members recognised his commitment and dedication as he had undertaken his role and how he would be missed in the community and at council meetings. Members wished him and his family good luck and well wishes for his new move to Shenfield.

RESOLVED

Council conferred and agreed the award of Freedom of the Borough on the Reverend Canon Darren Barlow.

The Mayor presented Reverend Canon Darren Barlow with a freedom of the borough badge and scroll.

The full recording of this meeting can be viewed from the following link:

[Council - Wednesday 31 January 2024, 6:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

The meeting finished at 6.32 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**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 31 January 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Susan Little (Mayor), Qaisar Abbas (Deputy Mayor), John Allen, Alex Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Paul Arnold, Gary Byrne, Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu, George Coxshall, Tony Fish, Robert Gledhill, Aaron Green, James Halden, Vikki Hartstean, Mark Hooper, Mark Hurrell, Andrew Jefferies, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Martin Kerin, Steve Liddiard, Ben Maney, Jacqui Maney, Cici Manwa, Fraser Massey, Valerie Morris-Cook, Sara Muldowney, Augustine Ononaji, Srikanth Panjala, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley, Kairen Raper, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons, Sue Shinnick, Graham Snell, Neil Speight, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors John Cecil and Gary Collins

In attendance: Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive and Managing Director
Commissioner
Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place
Claire Demmel, Interim Director Public Realm
Asmat Hussain, Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Steven Mair, Interim Chief Financial Officer/Section 151 Officer
Alix MacFarlane, Communications Advisor - Intervention and Improvement, Interim Director
Patrick McDermott, Chief of Staff to the Thurrock Commissioners
Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Alex Powell, Assistant Chief Executive
Kerry Thomas, Chief of Staff
Ian Wake, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Matthew Boulter, Head of Democratic, Scrutiny and Member Services
Jenny Shade, Principal Democratic Services Officer

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

106. Minutes

Minutes of Council held on the 29 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

Minutes of Extraordinary Council held on the 6 December 2023 were approved as a correct record.

107. Items of Urgent Business

There were no urgent items of business.

108. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Mayor acknowledged the good work being undertaken by the Men's Health Charity, CHAPS, on prostate cancer screening and Men's health checks and asked Members to spread the word of an event planned on Thursday 7 March from 2pm to 6pm, at Blackshots Impulse Leisure.

The Mayor congratulated Thurrock MP Jackie Doyle-Price for becoming a dame in recognition of her public and political services.

The Leader made the following announcements:

- A consultation on the Local Plan had been launched, where a range of community events had been planned as part of this and hoped as many residents as possible would engage.
- The consultation on the proposed relocation of Grays Library and Museum into a new building had commenced and again encouraged residents to engage with the consultation.
- Following recent storms, thanked all the emergency services and the council teams who had worked hard to ensure resident's safety.
- The sale of Toucan Energy Holdings had reduced the council's debt position by more than half a billion pounds had been announced which had been the biggest contributor to the council's financial recovery and an important step on the improvement journey.
- That since April 2023, there had been 1855 fly tips cleared, 1876 tonnes of litter cleared from streets and 2941 potholes filled which was more than 98% in the agreed time frame.
- Clarified the Council's position on the Lower Thames Crossing in that the council had consistently opposed National Highway's current proposals for the crossing, fought hard for changes to the proposals, acknowledged the hard work undertaken by the Council's Lower Thames Crossing team in negotiating with the National Highways last year. Currently the decision was now with the Secretary of State and despite what some in the media have said the Council had not caved in. The Council had not given up in our efforts to secure improvements and mitigations nor had it agreed a secret deal to allow the scheme to proceed. The Leader confirmed that in the event that the Secretary of State approved the proposals, National Highway would meet the cost of Thurrock Council officer time in managing any conditions imposed by the consent, so that the Council and local Council taxpayers would not meet that cost.

110. Questions from Members of the Public

The Mayor informed the chamber that four questions had been received from members of public.

From	To	Subject
Mr Perrin	Leader	Thurrock Council's investments and acceptance of shared responsibility.
Ms Ramdenee	Councillor B Maney	East Tilbury "a new purpose-built community hub alongside enhancements/expansion to Gobions Park".
Ms Byrne	Councillor B Maney	Originally funding from the Grays Town Fund for the Thameside Complex.
Ms Hattle	Councillor B Maney	This question fell due to Ms Hattle being unable to attend.

111. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

Councillor J Maney presented a petition in respect of Save Aveley's Pre-School. The Leader provided a response.

112. Petitions Update Report

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

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

The Mayor asked whether there were any changes to be made to the appointments previously made by committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.

The Leader made the following change:

To remove Councillor Redsell from the Impulse Leisure Outside Body.

To appoint Councillor Pearce as a substitute on the Standard and Audit Committee.

The Leader of the Labour group, Councillor J Kent, made no changes.

Councillor Speight as spokesman for the Non-Political Alliance of Independent made no changes.

114. Revised Political Balance

The report presented requested the Council to confirm the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees following the creation of the Non-Political Alliance of Independent Councillors (NPAIC).

RESOLVED

- 1. That the political balance and allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix 1 was approved.**
- 2. That Council noted any subsequent changes to political balance on committees do not take effect by agreement of all group leaders.**

115. Debate on a petition containing over 1500 verified signatures - Public Inquiry into financial collapse of Thurrock Council

The report followed a petition that had been presented at Cabinet on the 8 November 2023 by Mr Sandu, relating to a public inquiry into the financial collapse of Thurrock Council. The petition exceeded the threshold of 1500 verified signatures and in accordance with Chapter 1, Part 2, Article 3 of the Constitution qualified for debated by Full Council.

Mr Sandu was given the opportunity to present his petition.

The Leader in his response reassured residents that there had been changes on how the council operated and learnings were being made from those errors of the past. A public inquiry would help understand more about the financial collapse and the errors that took place. The Leader read out a statement received from Essex Police in regard to specialist police officers liaising with the council, the best value inspection team and insolvency practitioners and wider enforcement partners about the sufficiency for a potential criminal investigation, a decision which had not been made on. The Leader stated he agreed with the Member of Parliament for Thurrock that by holding a public inquiry would not produce anything new and that public money could be better spent.

The Leader recommended a letter from himself, and the Leader of the opposition be sent to the Secretary of State to request holding a public inquiry, the Leader reminded residents that the council did not have the power to call for or set up a public inquiry.

The following points were made:

- Leader of Opposition agreed that a letter should be sent to the Secretary of State with the caveat that Councillor Speight's signed the letter also.
- Referred to a motion that had been raised six months ago asking for a public inquiry which had been rejected, in that this evening's meeting could

have been spent looking at the outcome of that inquiry rather than just now accepting that one was required in asking for that inquiry.

- Referenced the motion above by stating this was not Thurrock specific, that motion was about local government on a wider scale.
- Welcomed Alex Powell the new Assistant Chief Executive to the council.
- Praised the work of officers to members and residents.
- Genuine leadership was required in rebuilding the trust that had been lost.
- It had taken the steadfast of residents of the borough to do what the leadership within the council should have done some time ago.

At 8.00pm the Mayor extended this item by 15 minutes.

- A public inquiry needed to be heard in public and for the results to be made public, no accountability had been made of specific officers, members, services, or processes that were in place and this was what the public inquiry should deliver.
- A full public inquiry needed to be undertaken to ensure the council had undertaken everything it could to ensure those culpable were held to account.
- A detailed analysis of account was required to ensure this did not happen again.
- Referenced the limitations of the Best Value Inspection report and whether Thurrock had met and able to demonstrate its duty to deliver best value and how it would continue to carry out its work.
- The inquiry needed to establish the facts, find out what happened, why, who was accountable and to learn lessons.
- Gratitude was made to the Corringham Fobbing and Homestead forum in their help in getting this item debated this evening.
- A full enquiry would satisfy resident's hunger for justice.
- With the council meeting in February to discuss the budget, those budgets could not be balanced this year or subsequent years without borrowing millions of pounds.
- The public enquiry needed to go further than what the best value inspection had carried out.
- This was a very motive debate and residents wanted accountability and all 49 members needed to accept their responsibility.

Actions:

- Letter to be written to the Secretary of State regarding Public Inquiry.

RESOLVED

That Full Council considered the petition and made any recommendations it felt appropriate as a response to the petition. A letter to be sent to the Secretary of State from the Leader, Leader of the Opposite and from Councillor Neil Speight requesting to hold a public inquiry.

116. Progress on Thurrock Council's Improvement and Recovery

The report presented provided Members with a progress update on the work to date to deliver the Council's Improvement and Recovery Plan. This was the second report following Members' agreement to receive quarterly updates and allowed for scrutiny and constructive challenge to the delivery of the Plan and Council's recovery overall.

The following points were made:

- The report was welcomed and that all members were given the opportunity to have a say on the progress being made.
- The report needed to include and be recognised what was taking place in the wider Thurrock, more of an outward look.
- The majority of officers and staff who worked for the authority were recognised for the fantastic job they had undertaken.
- Recognised that progress had been made but also acknowledged the council was still at the beginning of the journey to recovery.
- Stated that the journey of recovery and the budget setting had stalled.
- To enable the setting of the budgets, conversations should need to take place with Government.
- The report lacked data to support the findings.
- On page 46/47 of the agenda, aspect of the plans to include what the risk was and the current RAG status.
- Would be beneficial for this information to be made available on the web site for residents to view what progress had been made.
- The report did not highlight any tangible progress.
- Highlighted inaccuracies within the report and questioned how many more were there.
- Concern was raised at the pace of the recovery.
- Following the advice of the Best Value Inspection report, the council still needed to question itself on how it went about its business and get better at what it did.
- The Leader and his cabinet, the chief executive and the senior leadership team were praised on the considerable progress that had been made.
- There needed to be more focus on the set of issues that resulted in the need for an investment strategy in the first place.
- This was an opportunity for Thurrock Council to advocate, not only on internal specific problems, but on how the council had dealt with the root causes of how the council had got into these circumstances.
- There was a need to look at legislative change to how local government was structured.
- Recognised the new recruitment of senior officers meant new talent was coming into the council which in turn would make a difference going forward.
- There was not a long-term plan in place, not just for Thurrock but for all local authorities and that the Government needed to look at local government funding in its entirety.

RESOLVED

That Full Council noted and commented the progress made on the Council's improvement and recovery.

117. Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places / Polling Stations 2023/2024

The report presented set out the consultation regarding the polling districts and polling places and the recommendations of the Returning Officer in respect of the responses received. The report requested Council to consider and approve the recommendations of the Returning Officer and Chief Executive.

The Leader proposed the following three amendments:

- South Chafford, North – Polling District AL
The amendment is to retain the polling place within polling district AL, with the Returning Officer to provide a temporary structure and associated facilities at either of the following locations (A) Sainsbury car park or (B) Bannatyne Health Spa
- The Homesteads, Balstonia - Polling District AW
The amendment is for No Change to Polling District AW. Retain the temporary structure within polling district AW, at Balstonia Recreation ground.
- Grays Riverside – Polling District W
The amendment is to for No Change to Polling District W. Retain the use of the Town Hall as the polling place.

There were no member comments.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the changes tabled on Page 3 of Appendix 2 were approved including those amendments proposed by the leader.**
- 2. That the existing arrangements for polling places also set out in Appendix 2 were confirmed, excluding those amendments proposed by the leader.**

118. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the chamber of the questions received to the Leader and to cabinet members and committee chairs:

From	To	Subject
Councillor Redsell	Leader	Changes to bin collections.
Councillor J Maney	Leader	Success of the collection of Christmas trees.
Councillor Speight	Leader	Current working facilities and conditions of CO1 building.
Councillor Fish	Leader	Improve access to CO3 for disabled people.
Councillor Morris-Cook	Leader	Confirm all available funding from Government had been applied for.
Councillor J Kent	Leader	Progress on Greater Essex Devolution.
Councillor J Kent	Leader	Timescale for implementing recommendations of PAS review.
Councillor Panjala	Leader	Overall strategy to tackle crimes in the Thurrock region.
Councillor Morris-Cook	Leader	Roundabout sponsorship programme.
Councillor Byrne	Councillor Snell	Requested the portfolio holder shared all the paid for recommendations from PwC.
Councillor P Arnold	Councillor B Maney	Future of the Ferry Service between Gravesend and Tilbury.
Councillor Speight	Councillor Johnson	Progress made on decant of the three Blackshots tower blocks.
Councillor Polley	Councillor B Maney	Importance of delivering the Local Plan for people of Thurrock.
Councillor Polley	Councillor Coxshall	Integrated Medical Centres.
Councillor Byrne	Councillor Snell	Justification of spending on advertising Totem.

At 9.01pm, Councillor Rigby left the meeting.

At 9.27pm, following a point of order from Councillor J Kent, the Mayor agreed to extend the meeting to close of business.

119. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

Councillor Speight spoke on behalf of the East Thurrock Community Association by thanking officers for the work they had undertaken to move a matter forward. The club was situated in a council building which was now up for sale. He stated this was a successful community organisation being run in Thurrock, being run by a committed group of people who had put their own money and time into the building. He asked the council and the senior leadership of the council when making the decisions on the future of the building was that they took the humanity of the community into account.

120. Minutes of Committees

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

Councillor Carter raised a concern on the minutes recorded at the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 16 November 2023. The Mayor stated those comments had been noted and would be dealt with at the next Children's Services committee.

121. 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.

122. Motion submitted by Councillor Speight

The Motion, as printed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Speight and seconded by Councillor Byrne. The Motion read as follows:

"This council acknowledges the tremendous contributions to community and sport by Margaret Whitbread and Fatima Whitbread and in doing so puts in motion the relevant process to offer both the freedom of the borough of Thurrock."

Members of the chamber agreed the Freedom of the Borough was well deserved for Margaret Whitbread and Fatima Whitbread for the inspirational work and for their life achievements. Members agreed this was a testament to the work they had undertaken within the borough.

Councillor Speight summed up stating it was an honour to put this motion forward this evening and thanked Members for their kind words. The recognition was long overdue and encouraged all members to support.

The Mayor called a vote on the motion, to which members voted unanimously in favour. The Mayor announced the motion carried.

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

[Council - Wednesday 31 January 2024, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

The meeting finished at 10.15 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**

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

3 questions received from members of the public.

1. From Ms Hattle to Councillor B Maney

How much money has been spent via S106 on bus stops in East Tilbury, Linford and Horndon in the last 10 years including bus stops and shelters for future approved developments?

2. From Ms Byrne to Councillor Snell

At the Extraordinary Corporate overview and Scrutiny meeting held on the 1 November 2023, Councillor Snell stated that the councils Transformational fund contained £12 million. On the 14 February 2024 Cllr Snell again stated at the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny meeting that the fund now stands at approximately £7.5 million. What is this money earmarked for now?

3. From Ms Ramdenee to Councillor B Maney

Why is the Council willing to pour more and more money into the project at Stanford station, potentially borrowing £15m to do this, when they're cutting essential services for vulnerable residents of the borough?

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Petitions Update Report

Petition No.	Description	Presented (date)	Presented (at)	Submitted (by)	Status
583	Save Aveley's Pre-School - We the undersigned call on Thurrock Council to reconsider the proposed rent increase in respect of the building occupied by Aveley Pre-School. The excessive increase sought by the local authority cannot be sustained by the pre-school, which would need to close if a compromise is not agreed.	31 January 2024	Council	Cllr J Maney	Response deadline 1 March 2024.

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28 February 2024	ITEM: 10
Council	
Amendment to Polling Place and Station	
Wards and communities affected: Belhus Ward	Key Decision: Not applicable
Report of: Councillor Jefferies, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Economic Development and Directional Leadership	
Accountable Assistant Director: n/a	
Accountable Director: Dave Smith, Chief Executive and Returning Officer	
This report is public	
Version: Final	

Executive Summary

This report is to inform Council of a Polling Place amendment within Belhus Ward.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That members note the new polling arrangements for Belhus Ward, polling districts E2 and F. The new polling place is Belhus Park Scout Hall, Faymore Gardens.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Council received a report on 31 January 2024 detailing the statutory Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations. At that meeting members approved the polling places for forthcoming elections.
- 2.2 Following the meeting, Electoral Services began the formal booking process to confirm polling places for elections to be held on 2 May 2024. Discussions with The Royal British Legion in Belhus Ward indicated that a confirmed booking was unlikely to be available for elections in May 2024. Due to the election timetable and printing deadlines, an urgent decision on any change was required.
- 2.3 An interim review of the ward confirmed that Belhus Park Scout Hall, Faymore Gardens is available to hire and a suitable alternative. It is less than 300ft away from Royal British Legion Hall.

Version Control (delete as appropriate)

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3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 A polling place is required for polling district E2 and F within Belhus Ward. Electors from polling district E2 currently vote outside of the polling district as there is not a suitable venue in E2. Belhus Park Scout Hall provides the electorate with a suitable polling place for both polling districts, with adequate facilities and parking within sight of the previous polling place.
- 3.2 An urgent decision was required due to the impending election timetable and printing deadlines.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The reason for the recommendation is for members to note the change arising in Belhus Ward since the report to council on 31 January 2024.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 N/a

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The Council continually seeks to ensure services are accessible by all users and the change in polling place will ensure that the electorate has a suitable and accessible polling station. Changes to polling places will be communicated to electors on poll cards, in statutory notices and signage as appropriate.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Finance Manager (15 February 2024)

All costs associated with polling places will be contained within the electoral services budget. The proposed hire charge for Belhus Scout Hall for May 2024 is £250. Royal British Legion charged £250 at the last election in 2023.

There is no additional financial impact for this proposed change.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Jayne Middleton-Albooye**
Interim Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
(15/02/2024)

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Local authorities are required to review their polling districts and polling places for UK Parliamentary constituencies at least once every five years. In addition to compulsory reviews, local authorities may also conduct additional reviews at other points depending on local circumstances. The outcome of the compulsory review was approved by Full Council on 31 January 2024.

If a building becomes unavailable before an election, the polling place can be changed by the local authority in accordance with their decision-making arrangements. There are no known further issues with existing polling places or stations, but the following process is detailed within the constitution.

Constitution, Chapter 6, Part 1 – functions which are delegated to Officers.

Rule 7.1 The Chief Executive shall: (d) in cases of urgency or emergency, take any decision on behalf of the Council (after consultation with the Leader)

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development Team
(15/02/2024)

The proposal contained within the report will aid community participation in providing an accessible polling place for electors to partake in the democratic process.

7.4 **Risks**

N/a

7.5 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

N/a

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Thurrock Council Constitution

9. **Appendices to the report**

- none

Report Author:

Elaine Sheridan

Electoral Services Manager, Electoral Services

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28 February 2024	ITEM: 11
Council	
Update on appointment of Interim CFO, Section 151 Officer	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service	
Accountable Assistant Director: N/A	
Accountable Director: N/A	
This report is Public	
Version: Final	

Executive Summary

his report gives the background and details of the decision taken by Commissioners to appoint Dawn Calvert as Section 151 Officer in line with the powers transferred to them by the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities.

As set out in the letter to the Leader of the Council advising of this decision, this report has been brought at the earliest opportunity for Members to note this decision.

This appointment was also considered and recommended to Commissioners at the meeting of General Services Committee on 13 February.

Commissioner Comment:

N/A – this is a report from Commissioners.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **That Full Council note the decision of Commissioners to appoint Dawn Calvert Interim CFO as Section 151 Officer.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In July 2022, the Council was made aware of concerns around the valuation of specific investments. A review process commenced, and the initial findings highlighted significant concern with three investments and the position was shared informally with the Department of

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Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). On the 2 September 2022 DLUHC announced directions to implement an intervention package at the council.

- 2.2 The then Secretary of State exercised his powers under section 15(11) of the Local Government Act 1999 to give a Direction without complying with the requirement at section 15(9) to give Thurrock an opportunity to make representations about the Directions, as he considered the failures of the Council's compliance with its Best Value duty in respect of the functions specified in the Directions sufficiently urgent. This was because of the following:
1. The scale of the financial and commercial risks potentially facing the Authority, which were compounded by the Authority's approach to financial management and the seriousness of the allegations that were made by third parties about the processes applied to the operation of the Authority's commercial strategy, and.
 2. The failure of the Authority to provide assurance to Ministers and the Department on the adequacy of the actions that they were taking to address the issues, taking account of the scale and pace of the response required.
- 2.3 The Ministerial announcement on 16 March expanded the breadth of the intervention further, transferred additional powers with Commissioners and appointed Dr Dave Smith as Managing Director Commissioner. The Secretary of State's Directions pursuant to his powers under section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 issued on the same day, Commissioners have powers to exercise the functions of the Council relating to the appointment and designation of persons as statutory officers.
- 2.4 Following the outcome of the Senior Management Restructure in August 2023, recruitment commenced to appoint the new Senior Leadership Team. At the end of this process the council was unsuccessful in appointing a suitable candidate for the role of Chief Finance Officer. Following advice from the external market, the council was advised to recruit an interim for a fixed time, this was due to current marketplace and a number of senior finance roles currently being sought nationally.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 On 26 January 2024, Commissioners appointed Dawn Calvert, in the role as Interim Chief Finance Officer for a period of 12 – 18 months, as the Officer responsible for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This role is commonly referred to as the Section 151 Officer.
- 3.2 At the General Services Committee meeting on 13 February 2024, Members Agreed the appointment.
- 3.3 This decision was communicated in a letter to the Leader of the Council on 14 February 2024 which can be found at annex 1 and is published on the Thurrock Council website.

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4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the decision taken by Commissioners to appoint Dawn Calvert as the Officer responsible for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs, known as the "Section 151 Officer".

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 As Section 151 Officer, Dawn Calvert will have responsibilities for all related matters as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, including the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs and function associated with strategic financial management. However, as this report is to note, there are no material impacts as a direct result of recommendation 1.1.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **N/A**

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **N/A**

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **N/A**

7.4 Risks

N/A

7.5 Other implications

N/A

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Directions made under the Local Government Act 1999 (16 March 2023) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/thurrock-council-directions-made-under-the-local-government-act-1999-16-march-2023>

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9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Letter from Dr Dave Smith to Leader of Thurrock Council.

Report Author:

Dr Dave Smith

Chief Executive and Managing Director Commissioner

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Thurrock Council Commissioner Team

Councillor Andrew Jefferies
Leader of the Council

(via email)

14 February 2024

Dear Councillor Jefferies,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Commissioners following the successful appointment of Dawn Calvert, as our new Interim Chief Finance and Section 151 Officer.

As you are aware, the Secretary of State's Directions pursuant to his powers under section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 issued on 16 March 2023, give Commissioners powers to exercise the functions of the Council relating to the appointment and designation of persons as statutory officers.

I can confirm that Commissioners have exercised that power to appoint Dawn Calvert, in the role as Interim Chief Finance Officer, as the Officer responsible for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Commissioners can confirm that Dawn Calvert is suitably qualified in accordance with Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

They have done so in accordance with Section 4(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/3384). These Regulations set out the process for such appointments, which must be incorporated into an authority's Standing Orders.

The appointment takes effect from 4 March 2024 and will remain in place until such a time as the role of Chief Finance Officer is filled on a permanent basis.

I am making arrangements to provide Full Council with an opportunity to note this decision at the earliest opportunity.

A copy of this letter will be published on thurrock.gov.uk as part of our commitment to transparency in the use of Commissioners' powers.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Dave Smith
Managing Director Commissioner

Gavin Jones
ECC

Nicole Wood
ECC

Dr Dave Smith

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Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There were no questions to the Leader and two questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Byrne to Councillor B Maney

Can you give us the total spend to date on the demolished Stanford station, including the old brewery site and SELEP funding?

2. From Councillor J Maney to Councillor Carter

We have heard at a recent Overview and Scrutiny reports of children having to attend schools in the cold in marquees. As the Portfolio Holder, would you like to set the record straight and update us on the temporary buildings that have been built in light of the change on guidance surrounding RAAC?

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This report lists all motions from the previous twelve months which still have updates forthcoming. All Motions which have been resolved or the actions from officers have been completed are removed.

Date	From	Motion	Status	Director
Cllr Speight	14 September 2023	This chamber calls on Thurrock Council to commission a fully independent inquiry into the management and achievements of Thurrock Council's planning department since 2015 – with its remit to produce a year-by-year performance analysis indicating the number of applications received, the number dealt with by delegation, the number progressed to committee and the number passed or rejected that have been contrary to officer recommendation. The report should produce a subjective judgement on the performance of the planning department over each of those years. In addition the remit will include a full and detailed investigation into how and why the council has not been able to formulate a new local plan over the same period of time.	Following the motion it was agreed with Cllr Speight that, in order to avoid possible duplication, we would wait until the outcome of the LGA Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Peer Review of the planning service before progressing an inquiry. The PAS review is now complete and their report published. Officers will now be working with members to agree the scope and terms of an inquiry to cover areas not addressed in the PAS review.	Mark Bradbury
Cllr Redsell	25 October 2023	Members resolve that a task and finish group or similar be established to look at options for tackling school parking across the borough. Further, that a report on such options should be produced at the conclusion of the group's review.	A task and finish group must be properly scoped, and a term of reference drafted and agreed by the parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Transport department has been contacted and both this department and Democratic Services will be working on a joint presentation to O & S in due course. Democratic Services are recruiting to Scrutiny Officer posts at present with these officers expected to start in the early New Year 2024. These officers will be able to take on	Asmat Hussain

			<p>this workstream and progress in accordance with Scrutiny Rules and procedures. This project will also be raised at forthcoming work programme sessions with the CfGS to ensure it is accommodated appropriately in a future Scrutiny structure and arrangements.</p> <p><u>Update January 2024:</u></p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Officers started in their roles in early January 2024. The Centre for Governance Scrutiny (CfGS) is due to meet chairs and vice-chairs of O & S on 23 and 24 January to discuss the work programmes for the future, including Task and Finish reviews. Chairs and Vice Chairs will make a decision on what reviews and items to prioritise at those sessions in the context of the council's special measures. The proposed school parking Task and Finish group will be considered within this session and CfGS are aware of the request and will work into the session.</p> <p><u>Update February 2024:</u></p> <p>The newly recruited Overview and Scrutiny Officers will be meeting with transport colleagues in late February to begin the scoping document for a potential T & F review in the new municipal year. This scoping report will be provided to the new Place O & S Committee at its first meeting in June for their consideration.</p>	
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Councillor Speight	31 January 2024	This council acknowledges the tremendous contributions to community and sport by Margaret Whitbread and Fatima Whitbread and in doing so puts in motion the relevant process to offer both the freedom of the borough of Thurrock.	Preparations are underway to organise the ceremonial meeting to confer the award to Margaret Whitbread and Fatima Whitbread.	Asmat Hussain
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Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor Piccolo

This chamber calls on Thurrock Council to immediately pause the Stanford le Hope Rail Station delivery project pending a thorough review of the proposals; particular emphasis should be given to the financial feasibility of the scheme balanced alongside the benefits it would deliver for the east of the borough.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The motion meets the requirements of Chapter 2 Part 2 Rule 15.2 of the Constitution.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

Paragraph 2.16 of the Capital Strategy 2024-2029 report states:

Three of the projects on hold and not included in the new capital programme are Grays Station, Stanford le Hope and Purfleet developments. The projects have been removed pending new fully funded business cases being brought forward.

Page 2 of Appendix 5 to the above report - Funding to be Removed from the Capital Programme:

Place	Project	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Total £m
Stage 1 Review	Stanford Le Hope Interchange (E2920)	(10.555)	(5.000)	-	(15.555)

Capital Strategy report was presented to Extraordinary Corporate Overview & Scrutiny meeting on the 14 February, Extraordinary Cabinet on the 22 February and Council on the 28 February 2024.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes

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