

MINUTES of the meeting of Council held on 23 October 2013 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors Tony Fish (Mayor), Wendy Curtis (Deputy Mayor), Phil Anderson, Clare Baldwin, Lynn Carr, Mark Coxshall, Charles Curtis, Angie Gaywood, Oliver Gerrish, Robert Gledhill, Sue Gray, Yash Gupta, Garry Hague, James Halden, Shane Hebb, Wendy Herd, Terence Hipsey, Victoria Holloway, Barry Johnson, Tom Kelly, Cathy Kent, John Kent, Charlie Key, Steve Liddiard, Susan Little, Suzanne MacPherson, Ben Maney, Val Morris-Cook, Tunde Ojetola, Bukky Okunade, Maureen Pearce, John Purkiss, Robert Ray, Joycelyn Redsell, Michael Revell, Barbara Rice, Gerard Rice, Andrew Roast, Susan Shinnick, Andy Smith, Philip Smith, Richard Speight, Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson, Simon Wootton and Lynn Worrall.

Apologies: Councillors Martin Healy and Barry Palmer.

In attendance: Reverend Darren Barlow – Mayor's Chaplain

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

The Mayor invited Reverend Barlow to say a few words and lead the Council in Prayer.

Reverend Barlow paid tribute to Councillor Diana Hale, who passed away on 29 August 2013 following a long fight against cancer. He then led the Council in a minute's silence in remembrance of Councillor Hale.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Shinnick to the Chamber following her success at the by-election for Stifford Clays the previous week.

49. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meeting, held on 24 July 2013, were approved as a correct record.

50. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor informed the Council that he had agreed to the consideration of an item of urgent business which related to the result

of the by-election in Stifford Clays and the appointments required to be made to Committees and Outside Bodies, Statutory and other Panels.

51. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations made.

52. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Diana Hale and this was followed by a tribute paid by the Leader, during which the Chamber were informed that discussions had taken place for an educational bursary in remembrance of Councillor Hale.

The Leader of the Opposition paid tribute to Councillor Hale on behalf of the Conservative Party and offered his condolences to her family. This was followed by personal tributes from both Councillor Gaywood and Councillor Halden.

Councillor Coxshall echoed the sentiments of fellow members and suggested that a memorial wall be installed in the Council Chamber for those officers and elected members who had passed away whilst in office.

The Mayor informed the Chamber that he had continued to carry out his Mayoral duties and that by the end of October he would have carried out over 200 engagements since he began his Mayoral year.

Members were informed that the Mayor had visited many of Thurrock's complexes to see how they support the vulnerable residents to be as independent as possible and that he was impressed by the dedication of the Sheltered Housing Officers and also how the residents support each other to achieve a great quality of life.

Members were further informed that the Mayor had attended the Black History Month event at the Thameside Theatre, where the diversity of cultures in Thurrock had been celebrated.

The Mayor informed Members that he had attended the Royal Opera House in London, where Thurrock had been spoken of in glowing terms in respect of the High House Production Park and that this, together with the topping out ceremony at the new South Essex College site, showed that Thurrock was really set to go places.

Finally, the Mayor congratulated the Council on achieving the gold standard in Investors in People accreditation, which was an exceptional achievement that reflected clear leadership and excellent internal communications throughout the Council. The Mayor expressed the Council's thanks to Jackie Hinchliffe and her team for driving these standards throughout the Council.

The Leader of the Council was then invited to make any announcements he wished to make.

The Leader informed Members that in respect of Items 10 and 11 on the agenda, agreement on key issues had only been reached with Dubai Ports World shortly before the commencement of the meeting and that he was concerned that this would not have allowed Members time to be properly briefed.

The Leader advised that it had been agreed with the Leader of the Opposition, that Items 10 and 11 on the agenda be withdrawn and that a special meeting of Council be held as soon as practicable to discuss these two items.

53. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed on CMIS at <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock/>

54. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

The Mayor informed Members that, in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, the requisite notice had been given by two councillors that they wished to present a petition at the meeting.

Councillor Hebb addressed the Council and presented a petition on behalf of residents requesting that the Council review the parking situation on Butts Road, Stanford Le Hope.

Councillor Redsell addressed the Council and presented a petition on behalf of residents in respect of traffic problems on the smaller roads leading off of Blackshots Lane.

55. PETITIONS UPDATE REPORT

Members received a report on the status of those petitions handed in at Council Meetings and Council Offices over the past six months.

56. ITEM OF URGENT BUSINESS – RESULT OF THE STIFFORD CLAYS BY-ELECTION AND CHANGES TO APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

The Mayor introduced a report, which requested Members to note the result of the by-election held in Stifford Clays on 17 October 2013, following the sad death of Councillor Diana Hale, and to make the necessary appointments to committees and outside bodies. A copy of the report was circulated to Members electronically prior to the meeting, with a paper copy being provided at the meeting.

The Mayor informed Members that the Leader had made the following nominations required of him:

- for Councillor Shinnick to be appointed to the vacancy on the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- for Councillor P. Smith to be appointed to the vacancy on the General Services Committee
- for Councillor W. Curtis to be appointed to the vacancy on the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- for Councillor Shinnick to be appointed to the vacancy on the Board of Governors of the Basildon and Thurrock NHS Hospitals Trust

Members indicated their agreement to the nominations made.

The Mayor called for nominations to be made to the vacant position of Chair of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor J. Kent, and seconded by Councillor B. Rice, that Councillor C. Curtis be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

It was then proposed by Councillor Anderson, and seconded by Councillor Gledhill, that Councillor Halden be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

Upon being put to the vote, 23 Members voted in favour of Councillor C. Curtis and 23 Members voted in favour of Councillor Halden.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 20.4, the Mayor used his casting vote and declared Councillor C. Curtis appointed as Chair of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Finally, Members indicated their agreement to Councillor C. Curtis, as the Chair of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, being appointed to the Thurrock Children's Trust Partnership Board.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That the result of the Stifford Clays by-election, held on 17 October 2013, be noted.**
- 1.2 That Councillor Susan Shinnick be appointed as a member of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 1.3 That Councillor C. Curtis be appointed as the Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

- 1.4 That Councillor P. Smith be appointed as a member of the General Services Committee and Councillor W. Curtis be appointed as a member on the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 1.5 That, the Chair of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be appointed to the Thurrock Children’s Trust Partnership Board.**
- 1.6 That Councillor Shinnick be appointed to the Board of Governors of the Basildon and Thurrock NHS Hospitals Trust.**

57. 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 to Committees and outside bodies, statutory and other panels.

Each of the Group Leaders informed the Mayor that they did not wish to make any changes to the appointments previously made.

However, Councillor Anderson indicated that he would look to replace Councillor Gledhill on the Local Government Information Unit at a future meeting.

58. PROPOSED LONDON GATEWAY LOGISTICS PARK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER: CONSIDERATION OF HABITAT SCREENING ASSESSMENT

The item was withdrawn from the agenda.

59. PROPOSED LONDON GATEWAY LOGISTICS PARK: ADOPTION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER

The item was withdrawn from the agenda.

60. FIRST WORLD WAR COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

Councillor Worrall, Portfolio Holder for Communities, introduced the report which informed Council of the initial plans to commemorate the First World War and its impact on Thurrock.

A number of Members spoke in support of the work that had been identified in the report.

RESOLVED:

That Council note the progress to date.

61. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE SPECIFICATION AND LICENCE CONDITIONS

Prior to the consideration of the report, the Mayor informed Members that recommendation 1.1(b) had been amended to read:

'Agree that the revisions should come into effect on 1st February 2014'.

A copy of the amended recommendation was circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Stone, as the Chair of the Licensing Committee, introduced the report which requested Council adopt a reviewed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle specifications and licence conditions. It was noted that this followed public consultation and consideration by the Licensing Committee.

Councillor Stone proposed recommendation 1.1(a) and the amended recommendation 1.1(b) and this was seconded by Councillor Maney.

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

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- a) **Adopt the vehicle specification and licence conditions for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles (Appendix B).**
- b) **Agree that the revisions should come into effect on 1st February 2014.**

62. REVIEW OF THE STATEMENT OF POLICY FOR THE LICENSING ACT 2003

The Mayor informed the Chamber that pages 238 and 239 of the agenda had been replaced and that a copy of the replacement page had been circulated to Members at the meeting.

Councillor Stone, as the Chair of the Licensing Committee, introduced the report which requested the Council to adopt the reviewed Statement of Licensing Policy following review by the Licensing Committee.

Councillor Stone proposed the recommendation in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Maney.

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

RESOLVED:

That Council adopts the reviewed Statement of Licensing Policy for Thurrock as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

63. ANNUAL PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

Councillor Barbara Rice, Deputy Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health, introduced the report which provided the Council with details around the new Annual Public Health Report (APHR) 2013.

Members welcomed the first Annual Public Health Report and spoke in respect of the item and raised the following points:

- The need to invest in annual health checks, the facilitation of healthy eating programmes in schools and educating parents on healthy eating to help reduce obesity, the support of immunisation schemes and the promotion of smoking cessation in pregnancy.
- Concern was expressed regarding the life expectancy of residents in the affluent and deprived areas of Thurrock, the percentage of premature deaths associated with cancer and the number of 15-24 year olds in the borough who use opiate and/or crack cocaine.
- The value to residents of the information available at the community hubs on healthy lifestyles.

RESOLVED:

That Council note the contents of the report and support the twelve priorities identified at paragraph 3.2 to improve the health and wellbeing of communities in Thurrock.

64. REPORT FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC PROTECTION

Members received a report from Councillor Gaywood, Portfolio Holder for Public Protection, and were then invited to put questions.

The report of the Cabinet Member was set out on pages 351 to 360 of the Agenda. Members questioned the Cabinet Member and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Wootton welcomed the report and asked how many Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) had been issued over the last year for dog fouling and how many notices had been issued as a result of PIPPA.

The Cabinet Member informed members that 50 PCNs had been issued for dog fouling and littering over the past year and that to assist the reduction in these crimes, uniform and non-uniform patrols at peak times had been introduced, new signage displayed stating the maximum penalty chargeable and officers had become more responsive to complaints.

The Cabinet Member further informed members that 1,599 PCNs had been issued during the first 4 months of the PIPPA scheme which equated to an income of £42,000, however this figure did not meet the cost of running the vehicle. Members were informed that a report recommending an extension to the 6 month vehicle trial would shortly be presented to Cabinet.

- Councillor Anderson questioned whether anti-social behaviour was worsened by underage drinking; what was the combined strategy for anti-social behaviour and underage drinking specifically in Corringham and what did the Cabinet Member hope to achieve from it?

The Cabinet Member informed members that the multi agency Thurrock Community Alcohol Partnership (TCAP) had been launched in Corringham and that the partnership brought together Trading Standards, Licensing and Essex Police and focused on trying to tackle the issue of anti-social behaviour and underage drinking.

- Councillor Gledhill asked what action was being taken by the Essex Countywide Travellers Unit (ECTU) in relation to enforcement to unauthorised traveller encampments, in particular to sites within Little Thurrock Rectory Ward.

The Cabinet Member explained to members the difference between unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments and that it was her belief that the land which Councillor Gledhill had referred to was unauthorised development, as the land had been purchased specifically by the traveller community.

- Councillor Ojetola expressed concern regarding dog fouling in the Chafford Hundred area and informed members that there was a campaign by residents on Facebook. The Member asked whether the Cabinet Member would meet with residents to discuss this issue.

The Cabinet Member informed members that it was difficult to apprehend culprits as the crime needed to be witnessed by an officer, however she confirmed that she would be willing to work with residents to find a way of reporting culprits.

- Councillor P. Smith suggested that a working party be established to review parking restrictions in the borough, with the aim of removing restrictions which were no longer applicable, hence reflecting better the needs of an area.

The Cabinet Member informed members that she would welcome a more cohesive and constructive way of implementing enforcement on restrictions and the removal of those no longer required and would support the suggested working party.

- Councillor Key welcomed the response provided to car cruising in the Lakeside Basin, however he asked when the phrase 'leading partner' would be replaced by 'multi-agency' as the Council had played a key part in the reduction of cruising in the borough.

The Cabinet Member informed members that the Council were one of two key leading partners in the Cruiser Strategic Group and that meetings of the Group were attended by the Shadow Cabinet Member.

65. REPORT FROM CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

Members received a report from Councillor Barbara Rice, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health, and were then invited to put questions.

The report of the Cabinet Member was set out on pages 361 to 370 of the Agenda. Members questioned the Cabinet Member and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Hebb expressed concern regarding the recent scrutiny of the Care Quality Commissions (CQC) on their hospital performance findings and asked the Cabinet Member to explain the local authority's stance on the legislation proposed by the Health Secretary to give the Care Quality Commission (CQC) statutory independence to prevent any such accusation being possible in the future.

The Cabinet Member advised Members that it was vital that the right individuals were employed to carry out the inspections, and until the team and their intentions were in place, she was unable to comment.

- Councillor Anderson supported the emerging asset based community development philosophy and asked the Cabinet Member to summarise what steps had been taken towards the development and what results have been seen?

The Cabinet Member informed members that Cormac Russell had carried out a two day training session on asset based community development with the aim of assisting people to change their mindset to recovery model rather than focusing on their weaknesses.

The Cabinet Member further informed members that local area coordinators had been employed and were working in the community and that the Council were advanced in this process.

- Councillor Halden asked whether the Council should encourage vulnerable residents to use assisted technology such as emergency dependant alarms and would the Council consider reducing these charges, as by increasing the risk of hospitalisation would be more expensive in the long term.

The Cabinet Member advised members that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be establishing a task and finish group to look into the costs associated with assisted technology.

- Councillor Gerrish expressed concern regarding the levels of health inequalities in Thurrock and asked what major opportunities and initiatives the Council could lead on to tackle these inequalities.

The Cabinet Member made reference to the 12 priorities listed in the Annual Public Health report, in particular the initiatives on smoking cessation, obesity management, the active child and healthy schools eating programme, all of which the Council were putting forward.

- Councillor Okunade asked whether the high number of families with children in Thurrock struggling financially was related to the Welfare Reform.

The Cabinet Member could not confirm whether the Welfare Reform altered the poverty situation in Thurrock, however, she provided an example of breakfast clubs to provide breakfast to children from low income families.

- Councillor Worrall declared an interest as she was involved with the Princes Trust and the Trust had carried out a joint piece of work with Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions. Councillor Worrall informed members that the project had been selected as one of the top three in the country and that it would be receiving an award. Councillor Worrall asked the Cabinet Member to commit to looking further at the work taken alongside the voluntary sector.

The Cabinet Member informed members that the Health team, Public Health team and the Adult Social Care Team were all committed to moving forward with the voluntary sector and with members of the community to improve the health of residents.

66. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

A copy of the transcript of questions and answers can be viewed on CMIS at <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock/>.

At 9.05pm, Councillor Gledhill suggested that in view of the time remaining, standing orders ought to be suspended to allow the business of the meeting to be completed.

Accordingly, the Mayor proposed that standing orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue until the end of business.

Members indicated their agreement to the proposal.

67. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Purkiss informed Members that the Thameside Nature Park was going from strength to strength with over 100,000 visitors in the past year. Members were informed that over the next few weeks there would be Halloween activities and fireworks at the Park.

68. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees, as set out in the Agenda, were received.

Councillor Ojetola took the opportunity to inform the Chamber that at the last meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee, Councillor Wootton and Councillor Gupta had been appointed to the Members Advisory Panel.

69. MOTIONS UPDATE REPORT

Members received an information report updating them on progress in respect of Motions resolved at Council over the past year.

Councillor W. Curtis requested a copy of the letter which was sent to Essex Water Board and their response in respect of her motion submitted to Council on 24 July 2013.

70. MOTIONS

The Mayor informed the Chamber that one motion had been submitted for consideration at the meeting.

Motion 1

The motion, as printed on the Agenda, was proposed by Councillor Ojetola and seconded by Councillor Key.

Councillor B. Rice spoke in support of the Motion.

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

RESOLVED:

This Council requests that NHS England and Thurrock CCG consider the introduction of a further GP surgery in Chafford, to meet increasing demand, as part of the Primary Care Strategy work already in progress.

The meeting finished at 9.25 pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

MAYOR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Victoria Freeman, telephone (01375) 652205,
or alternatively e-mail VEFreeman@thurrock.gov.uk**