

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 February 2018 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-ins is Monday 19 February at 5.00pm

Present: Councillors Robert Gledhill (Chair), Shane Hebb (Deputy Chair), Mark Coxshall, James Halden, Deborah Huelin, Brian Little and Aaron Watkins

Apologies: Councillors Susan Little

In attendance: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive
Sharon Bayliss, Director of Commercial Services
Sean Clark, Director of Finance & IT
Steve Cox, Corporate Director Place
Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Jackie Hinchliffe, Director of HR, OD & Transformation
Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
David Lawson, Assistant Director of Law & Governance
Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer

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

89. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 January 2018 were approved as a correct record.

90. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

91. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

92. Statements by the Leader

The Leader started off by stating that the Ockendon by-election had been called for Thursday 22 March 2018. The notice for this would be published in the next few weeks which would move the Council into the pre-election period next Thursday until after the local elections in May.

Referring to the Clean it, Cut it, Fill It Programme, the Leader said that:

- January had filled 536 potholes which brought the year to date figure as 5109 since April last year;
- 2083 tons of waste had been collected since April 2017.
- 74,163 bags of litter picked.
- 42,288 bins emptied
- 1,986 fly tips removed
- 9,300 acres grass cut and cutting works would recommence in March subject to weather conditions.

In Enforcement, Thurrock had issued 272 FPNs in January, with 125 of them paid, totalling to just around £10,000. These fines had been issued for Public Space Protection Order warnings, spitting, dropping food and cigarette debris.

The Leader announced that he had recently been appointed Vice Chairman for the Association of South Essex Local Authorities. On 2nd February, they had announced a game-changing association of South Essex Councils after the Memorandum of Understanding was signed. Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Essex County, Rochford, Southend and Thurrock had joined together, across borders, to work on strategic issues like planning, growth and infrastructure. Councils may see these borders but residents and businesses did not and wanted to see a smooth flow so this would enable councils to work together better. This proposal would be put forward to Full Council in June.

The Leader went on to say that the vision and priorities were agreed at Full Council last week. He reiterated his thanks to everybody who had worked hard on them and was pleased to see they were now agreed. He said this piece of work was probably the most inclusive consultation made in Thurrock to produce its Vision and Priorities ever.

In Housing matters, the Leader addressed the issue of water charges, which had been the subject of recent publicity following a High Court judgement against Southwark Council back in March 2016 where the Council had been reselling water back to residents. He clarified that Thurrock Council did not do this so did not expect any challenges in relation to this.

The Leader continued with his statement by saying that the Council had received:

- An extra £75,000 for Disabled Facilities Grant back in December;
- About £370,000 for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers Care which recognised the burden the Council had to take on and for provisions going forward;
- An additional £409,000 Adult Social Care Grant that had been announced earlier in the day which brought the current figure up to £2.6 million;
- Circa £1 million from Improved Better Care Fund;

- £500,000 extra for the Homes Infrastructure Funding to help with the Claudian Way scheme.

93. Briefings on Policy, Budget and Other Issues

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Health, Councillor James Halden, provided an update on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP). This was key for Thurrock as it contained proposed changes to Orsett Hospital and the reconfiguration of three acute hospitals. A Memorandum of Understanding had been signed between the Council and NHS partners to keep services within Orsett Hospital running until the four Integrated Medical Centres (IMCs) were up and running. He went on to say the IMCs moved services away from decaying buildings and would merge hospital services with GP services closer to home which fulfilled the need and the administration's commitment to provide modern local healthcare to residents. He had recently visited the site of the proposed IMC in Tilbury along with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor Mark Coxshall.

The administration would be supporting the STP through its consultations. The STP aimed to move Basildon and Thurrock Hospital to a centre of excellence and specialist care with patients receiving better care and shuttle services to transport patients between hospitals. Regular reviews would be undertaken to ensure patient needs were met. Councillor Halden stated that he was concerned the Plan did not go far enough to achieve true financial sustainability as it focussed too much on acute hospital services and not enough focus on primary care. Although he supported the STP which would improve patient pathways, it did not go far enough across Essex to address the growth and pressure of demand. He was concerned that this Plan would move back to an older style of hospital organisation and centralisation within the NHS which would undermine local autonomy. Despite this, the STP was welcomed as it would protect the clinical services within Orsett Hospital but there were concerns. The Council would continue to work with the NHS to ensure the best outcomes for Thurrock's residents.

An update to Environment and Waste was given by the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Aaron Watkins:

- Street cleanliness had seen a 50% improvement;
- Private cleaning had been increased with improvements as the department had been working with Enforcement Officers;
- Additional equipment would soon be acquired in the Environment Team;

Also, the 28 new vehicles recently acquired will be rolled out in the next few weeks and will be named. Councillor Watkins thanked the service department for engaging with schools on naming the vehicles. To prevent further dumping of plastics in the oceans in line with the government, plastics only recycling bins would be looked at and would go out throughout the Borough.

94. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

There were no petitions submitted.

95. Questions from Non-Executive Members

The Leader of the Council advised that no questions had been submitted by Non-Executive Members.

96. Matters Referred to the Cabinet for Consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee

One matter had been referred to Cabinet for consideration from the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee which related to the Grounds Maintenance Charge.

97. Recommendation of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Grounds Maintenance Charge (Decision 0110458)

From the report provided, the Leader felt the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the Grounds Maintenance Charge thoroughly. Enough options had been given to the Committee to consider and he was pleased with the work and effort the Committee had put in.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Cabinet agreed to the withdrawal of the Grounds Maintenance Charge.**

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.
This decision is subject to call in.

98. Children Looked After Placement Commissioning (Decision 0110459)

Councillor Halden, presented the report on behalf of Councillor Sue Little. The report outlined the end of an Eastern Region contract which had been procured years ago to enable the Council to better meet the needs of Thurrock's children and young people. The new proposed contract would cost £10.3 million per year and cover a six year period across placement groups of:

- External Independent Foster Care Agencies (IFAs)
- Children's residential placements
- Post 16 supported accommodation

Thurrock would be able to grow its own network to enable social workers to check on children in a more logistic way which would allow for a more holistic network.

The Leader acknowledged that Councillor Sue Little had put in a tremendous amount of work into the plan and congratulated her on it. He agreed that the

proposed contract was the right way forward which was not about the money but instead about the outcomes. It was a significant amount of money and being able to commission everything locally was the right idea.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Members agreed to the proposal to simplify and improve the commissioning of placement provision, in particular to withdraw from the current Eastern Regional contract when it ended in December 2018.
- 2) That Members approved officers proceeding to tender for placements for children looked after for: Independent Foster Care Agencies, residential accommodation, supported accommodation and family assessment placements.
- 3) That Members sought approval for delegated authority for the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Children's and Adult Social Care to:
 - Award contracts following completion of the tender process
 - Should demand increase, approval will be sought from the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Children's and Adult Social Care.
- 4) That, due to the nature of the services being purchased, Members agreed the recommendation that the Corporate Director of Children's Services is not required to competitively tender contracts for children's placements where:
 - The placement cannot be made on the contract to be awarded under this exercise;
 - The purchase is required in order that the Council may meet its statutory obligations and;
 - the application of the Contract Procedure Rules contained within the Thurrock Council Constitution would prevent the statutory discharge of those statutory obligations.

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.

This decision is subject to call in.

99. Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 (Decision 0110460)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Shane Hebb, started off by saying the Cabinet and Council had supported moving forward with the investment strategy back in October 2017. Since then, it had paid off in dividends and the

Council was now on course to enable self-sufficiency until 2020 and possibly into mid 2021 with the proposal as set out within the report.

Councillor Hebb drew attention to The Prudential Indicator's headings in the appendices and said these were slightly less in number than what was presented. He went on to say that the two indicators that referred to impacts to council tax and rents were disingenuous so the two indicators could be scrapped.

Last month, Thurrock Conservatives had put forward a paper for a new Thurrock Regeneration Limited (TRL) scheme in Belmont Road in Grays, which would provide much needed housing for the future. It would enable the younger generation to buy their first home and provide a council home for a resident in need. A financial positive from TRL was that it would enable the Council to secure income from the investments made. A new recommendation to this report related to TRL was then put forward.

Councillor Hebb continued with the report stating that TRL was a unique opportunity which would deliver 1,000 homes by the end of 2022/23 with 350 being affordable and possibly council owned. 35% of these would be on the affordable housing scheme. To facilitate the delivery of 1,000 homes, an indicative lending facility of £250 million would be needed over the 5 years. This would give TFL flexibility and freedom to operate within the housing market through joint ventures. He finished the report by saying that he hoped this policy would be supported by every party in Thurrock which was a win-win solution.

Councillor Halden congratulated Councillor Hebb on balancing the budget for the future and for accelerating a massive home building scheme. He praised Councillor Hebb's work as great especially since the Cabinet had inherited a big deficit. The budget proposed was positive and optimistic which the Borough deserved.

Councillor Coxshall echoed the same sentiments and stated that the residents along with everyone else wanted good quality homes to live in. The Cabinet had to ensure that this was delivered and not just a vision. He felt it was important to see people putting the key into their first homes. He positively stated that a turnaround time of three to five years could be done and positive actions and strategies would see this through.

Recognising points brought up from Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Councillor Hebb said a lot of good work had been done on the strategy. He was excited to start building the 1,000 homes from next year. He went on to say that people used to move to Thurrock because of cheaper house prices but now looked past the Borough due to rising house prices. Coupled with the recent stamp duty announcement, young people would now be looking to buy again and he wanted to make Thurrock the place to play, live, stay and work.

The Leader said it was a realistic strategy and congratulated everyone who had been involved in the work done. He was proud to see that the Council

was looking at a four to five year balanced budget whilst other councils were declaring bankruptcy. This balanced budget would put less strain on Officers and Thurrock Council was spending money wisely yet still delivering the same services with some providing better services.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommended that the Council:

- 1) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19 including approval of the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2018/19;**
- 2) Approve the adoption of the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix 1;**
- 3) Note the revised 2017/18 and 2018/19 Treasury Management projections as set out in paragraph 2.33; and**
- 4) That Cabinet requested a paper to be produced and brought to February's Full Council, specifically calling for a significant acceleration of TRL's ability and ambition – specifically achieving 1000 new homes and delivered by the end of 2022/23, 350 of which will be affordable and/or potentially council owned properties.**

Reason for decision – as stated in the report.

This decision is not subject to call-in (Chapter 5, Part 1 – Article 8, paragraph 10.5).

100. Medium Term Financial Strategy And Draft Budget Update (Decision 0110461)

Presenting the report, Councillor Hebb announced that Thurrock Council's budget, and the ability to provide the same services, would be protected by two and a half years. Following years of Labour's excessive public borrowing, the Conservative Party had taken part in funding reductions to reduce the national deficit from £165 billion down to £45 billion. He went on to state that there would be no top-down cuts to services over the next two and a half years. From the Cabinet's economic plan, there would be flexibility for a real service reform instead.

Through a Council Spending Review, the grant-funding deficit has been closed and a bottom-up look had been taken to view the way services were run and funded. This ensured market parity and the Treasury Management Strategy which would secure a sound rate of return. The investment approach taken was delivering and provided the Council with extra cash to spend on the community:

- Clean It Cut It had nearly half a million pounds extra;

- Fill It saw nearly £1 million extra;
- Lower Thames Crossing had £380,000; and
- Anti-social behaviour which was a well needed investment had a quarter of a million.

The house building delivery vehicle mentioned in the previous report would provide an income to the Council's treasury which would enable the funding deficit in the years 2020/21 and 2021/22 to be negligible and managed to be achieved by internal budget management. This would also be put forward in the February budget meeting at Full Council.

Councillor Hebb continued by saying that the Cabinet would be extending the two and a half years solvency to at least three and a half to four years. All that had been achieved in the past 18 months had been done without taking advantage of a 2.99% general tax increase but he thanked the Local Government Ministry on recently announcing that councils could levy a 2.99% council tax increase. He stated that the Cabinet would not be doing this as they wanted Thurrock's residents to keep as many pounds in their pockets as possible and that the increase was unnecessary for the Council's economic plans. Therefore recommendation 2 would be the proposal of a 1.99% increase and not 2.99%.

The Cabinet would also be supporting the need to provide more funding into Adult Social Care to reduce issues of isolation and enable the elderly to maintain busy and involved lifestyles. This would prevent cases to grow in the years to come.

Councillor Hebb finished his report by thanking all that had been involved in the delivery of the Council's vision. The budget would see that Thurrock become the place that it could be, one that would work for everyone living in the Borough.

Councillor Halden praised the work done stating that it was evident that the plan was working because the Cabinet had not taken the additional tax offer. There were greater investments, new IMCs and no council tax increases to the maximum unlike other councils.

From the setting of the Treasury Management Strategy, the Leader could see this had enabled the Medium Term Strategy to be set. He agreed that the Cabinet had not taken the 2.99% council tax increase because their plan had worked well to enable them not to need it. The proposed increase of council tax was modest and asking for the 3% council tax increase to provide funding to Adult Social Care was justified and necessary. No other Local Authority was able to reject the maximum council tax increase and achieve a strong five year budget plan as Thurrock Council did. Nor did Thurrock have to make cuts to services due to the excellent Treasury Management Programme and Officers who were looking outside the Borough to look at how to save money through investments into Thurrock. He hoped that the other Political Parties would support the Cabinet with the recommendations to be put forward at the Budget Council meeting in February.

The Leader went on to say that the 40% increase in the Reserve Fund was great as no other Local Authority could say the same thing. He mentioned that the Council Spending Review was not just something the Cabinet did as this was done across Parties. For this, he thanked the Parties for attending and stated that everything discussed was transparent to ensure all Parties understood what the Cabinet was doing and why. He said that there may be a question of why council tax was increasing when there was extra money available. This extra money had been gained through good financial planning and would be used to fund other projects and improve services e.g. reducing service costs, to fight the Lower Thames Crossing etc.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommended to Full Council:

- 1) That the Cabinet propose a 3% council tax increase towards the cost of Adult Social Care;**
- 2) That the Cabinet propose a 1.99% council tax increase to meet the increasing costs and demands of all other services and to move the council towards greater financial sustainability for the medium to longer term; and**
- 3) That the Cabinet agree to the budget proposals set out throughout this report and appendices.**

Reason for decision – as stated in the report.

This decision is not subject to call-in (Chapter 5, Part 1 – Article 8, paragraph 10.5).

101. Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19 (Decision 0110462)

Councillor Hebb started the report off by announcing that fees and charges formed a critical part of council income. The administration had taken significant steps to ensure market parity in charges for more discretionary services to make it as close to cost recovery as possible. It was important to keep recognised services requiring a fee, competitive and that sustainable services could only be consistent if the economics were right in the Council.

Some key points to note in the Fees and Charges plan for 2018/19 were:

- Thurrock's Conservative Party were proud to abolish charges on personal alarms as part of the Careline service. The Cabinet did not consider assistive technology to be a luxury item but instead something much needed.
- Residential car permit fees would continue to be free for the first two years within a dwelling which would support the parking management

needed within Thurrock's denser areas such as Grays and Stanford-Le-Hope.

- The Cabinet will be abolishing the admin internment fee for all children under 16 years of age instead of the current age of five. This was a small gesture that the Council could provide to bereaved parents and guardians in the tragic loss of a child.

The Leader said that it was good that the Council recognised those terrible situations a parent could be in. He agreed with the abolishment of the fee and congratulated Councillor Hebb and Officers on putting this forward.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Cabinet agreed the proposed fees and charges, including those no longer applicable as per Appendices 1 and 2.**
- 2) That Cabinet approved delegated authority to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal or regulatory requirements, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.**
- 3) That Cabinet noted the feedback from all Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings as per Appendix 1.**

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.
This decision is subject to call in.

102. Capital Programme Proposals (Decision 0110463)

Presenting the report was Councillor Hebb, who introduced the report by saying that heads and investments had turned toward Thurrock since the Conservatives had come into administration. Investments did not happen in places with no hope, instead, this went to perceived and anticipated winners and Thurrock was racing ahead in that race. He went on to say what the Capital Plan included:

- The start of the long awaited improvement programme of Stanford/Orsett/Chadwell A13 road improvements;
- Regeneration programmes in Purfleet, Grays and Tilbury which included a new infrastructure, homes and an underpass in Grays as announced by Cabinet at the end of the last year;
- The long neglected ward of Aveley would be benefitting from a new hub-like facility filled with learning and play;
- The Cabinet had put in circa £67 million investment into building new school facilities for primary, secondary and special needs;
- A new bin collections fleet to replace the current dying fleet which would improve bin collections; and

- A significant upgrade to the Linford Waste Facility which would improve access to the site, reduce manual handling and improve general site safety.

Councillor Hebb added that between 2017/18 and 2020/21, Thurrock would have circa a quarter of a billion pounds spent on it which would make Thurrock the best place to work and play, and live and stay. He was confident in what the Borough could achieve as the Cabinet moved into the next phase of their capital spending agenda.

This year, the Cabinet was apportioning money to allocations which related to their aspirational programme e.g. service reviews, property investments etc. Some of the new schemes proposed directly linked to flagship schemes as well as:

- New bins and receptacles across the Borough;
- New tools and equipment to help the Council clean better and quicker including currently ignored areas;
- Improve war memorials;
- A commitment that Thurrock would join the 21st century with the installation of card and cash ticketing machines for car parking;
- A brand new residential care facility for the elderly and those in need of regular social provision;
- New IMCs;
- Investment in technology in the Civic Offices to enable better services, better inter-departmental working and improved working systems to enable Thurrock to serve better.

Councillor Halden said the Capital Plan was important in that it was spent and used. It was working well as more children in Thurrock had got their first choice of school than ever before and working with a group of schools, he had enabled the sign off for three school bids. His department was also looking at a circa of £90 million to be spent on school infrastructures in the next few years and was excited about the expansion of the civic amenity site.

Adding to this, Councillor Coxshall said that more investors were coming into Thurrock and one of them was C2C who were keen to improve in Grays. He went on to say that Grays needed a new look and the Council needed to do their part in this now as the town needed to move forward and in line with the Lower Thames Crossing.

Councillor Watkins said that great things were happening in the Environment department and highlighted the pilot of big belly bins. Referring to the Linford Waste Facility, he agreed that improvements would be coming forward which would benefit the residents. Plans were also going forward to ensure war memorials were at an acceptable standard.

The Leader commented that the only problems with Capital Programme Proposals were concerns from residents and opposition Parties on the amount of money to be spent. Although announcements were made now,

these proposals would not start until two, three or four years' time with completion dates further into the future. These are split out in the proposals but aspirations were needed within the Borough as it grew with more investments coming in so plans were needed which was why the Capital Programme Proposals were put forward. There was a lot of money not yet spent as they were waiting to collect critical masses or to start projects to enable successful deliveries of the proposals. Projects took time but things were on route.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Members considered the approach of general allocations as set out in section 4;**
- 2) That Members commented on the specific proposals set out within Appendix 3 of this report; and**
- 3) That Members recommended these proposals to Full Council.**

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.
This decision is subject to call in.

103. Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan and Budgets (2018/19 - 2047/48) (Decision 0110464)

The Leader introduced the report which would highlight some stories and updates within the Housing department in Thurrock. The report showed a balanced outturn that had been achieved without a decrease in the quality of service despite financial challenges faced by all social landlords. The big three performance indicators for housing management – repairs, rents and void turnaround time, had also seen good progress.

98% of repairs in all categories had been completed within the target timescales and complaints related to Mears Ltd were at an all-time low. Overall, 34% of complaints had been upheld so far this year which was down from 41% last year. It was now below the target of 40%.

Rent collection was at 98% and Financial Inclusion Officers had assisted 500 tenants with budgeting and benefits advice to prevent them from losing their homes. The Voids performance had improved with an average turnaround time that had been below the target level of 30 days for each of the last three months.

Savings on staff costs had been achieved which enabled the staffing budget for the next year to be reduced by £300,000. This had enabled more to be spent on important matters to tenants:

- The Neighbourhood Improvement budget had been protected and increased. The service would be speaking with tenants about how they would like to see the money spent within their local areas.

- Conditions of garages would be improved and the longer-term use of these would also be considered.
- The Sheltered Housing Improvement Project would deliver external and internal improvements to every one of the Council's sheltered housing complexes.
- The spend of £1 million this year on enhanced fire safety measures in response to the Grenfell Tower Fire.

Adding to the last point, the Leader said the department was waiting on results of the empirical tests of the cladding materials in the Council's tower blocks which had been commissioned as a 'double assurance' previously.

The service department would apply the same approach as covered in the Fees and Charges report of looking for efficiencies to the General Fund activities in the service. Additionally, they would soon be consulting on the phased rents increase for traveller sites which had been subject to increasing management and maintenance expenditure costs in recent years. This increase would reflect the real costs that had not been reflected previously and residents would be asked to make a greater contribution to the services they received.

A similar value-for-money approach had prevented an overspend on temporary accommodation for the homeless. The department had made better use of the Council's stock to reduce third party costs and spent less of the flexible homelessness grant. A focus on prevention had helped with this as the number of homelessness cases had dropped to a 25% year on year figure.

The recent outcome for the Stock Condition Survey revealed a significant amount of work to be done and money to be spent on the Council's current housing stock. This would be over the next 30 years which would need to ensure the best value was maximised for the works to be done.

Thurrock's bid for funding through the national Housing Infrastructure Fund has been successful with £538,000 secured to help with the delivery of new social homes at Claudian Way in Chadwell. Through TRL, the Council would be looking to deliver more new affordable homes along with the recent planning permission granted for Belmont Road. This will push Thurrock into a more modern social landlord that would be able to respond to housing pressures and act creatively to face them.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the assumptions included in the HRA Business Plan, as summarised in the report were noted by Members.**
- 2) That the HRA budgets for 2018/19 were agreed by Members.**

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.
This decision is subject to call in.

104. Pilot Development of Head Start Housing for Care Leavers & Vulnerable Young People (Decision 0110465)

The report was presented by Councillor Halden which outlined the Head Start Housing scheme as support to young care leavers. The development of the houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) had been piloted for quality purposes and the idea was to see the child as a whole person, not a housing or social care case. It would ensure every service that the Council had would be laid bare to care leavers, to prevent them from becoming adult social care cases.

Councillor Halden went on to say that if the Cabinet agreed to exempt care leavers from council tax, this would add to the major package support provided to them. The burden of council tax would be taken off them. Transitional housing would also be looked at to be provided to young care leavers. He finished the report off by thanking Michele Lucas on her hard work in the scheme and individual analysis of care leaver cases.

Echoing the same sentiments to Michele Lucas, Councillor Hebb thought the work had been done well. He said that giving some degree of support to young leavers was great and much needed. He congratulated everyone else who had contributed to the development of the scheme.

Speaking on behalf of Councillor Sue Little, Councillor Brian Little added that this piece of work was important to Councillor Sue Little who had worked with Councillor Halden on it. It was the right way forward to allow young care leavers to continue on with their lives to prevent them from regressing into care.

Councillor Halden said that Councillor Sue Little had asked for comments from specific cases. He read out the second quote from page 181 of the agenda and stated that this was how he wanted other young care leavers within Thurrock to feel.

The Leader felt the quote was a fantastic statement that put things into perspective and it would be great to see more progress as the scheme expanded.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Members approved and supported the ongoing development of the programme to enable more properties to be available for the scheme.**
- 2) That Members approved and supported the development of a transitional housing scheme and would provide personalised support for young people as they enter the aftercare service.**
- 3) That Members approved the joint working approach between Social Care and Housing to improve the offer to care leavers.**

- 4) That Members approved the proposal to exempt Care Leavers from Council Tax between 18-21 and in exceptional circumstances for young people up to 25.**

Reason for decision - as stated in the report.
This decision is subject to call in.

105. Appendix 1 - Children Looked After Placement Commissioning

The Leader stated that this item would not be discussed as it had already been acknowledged within the Children Looked After Placement Commissioning report.

The meeting finished at 8.30 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