

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 29 November 2023 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, John Cecil, George Coxshall, Jack Duffin, 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, Augustine Ononaji, Srikanth Panjala, Maureen Pearce, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley, Joycelyn Redsell, Elizabeth Rigby, Sue Sammons, Sue Shinnick, Graham Snell, Neil Speight, Luke Spillman, James Thandi, Lee Watson and Lynn Worrall

Apologies: Councillors Gary Collins, Tony Fish, Sara Muldowney and Kairen Raper

In attendance: Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive
Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place
Claire Demmel, Interim Director Public Realm
Asmat Hussain, Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Gavin Jones, Commissioner, Essex County Council
Steven Mair, Interim Chief Financial Officer/Section 151 Officer
Alix MacFarlane, Interim Director Communications Advisor - Intervention and Improvement
Patrick McDermott, Chief of Staff to the Thurrock Commissioners
Kerry Thomas, Chief Executive Business Manager
Matthew Boulter, Head of Democratic, Scrutiny and Member Services
Jenny Shade, Senior 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.

85. Minutes

Minutes of Council held on the 25 October 2023 were approved as a correct record.

86. Items of Urgent Business

There were no urgent items of business.

87. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Kelly declared a pecuniary interest in Item 12 as he was employee of DP World and he agreed he would leave the chamber for this item.

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

The Mayor thanked those Members who had observed and paid their respect at services held on Remembrance Day.

The Leader made the following announcements:

- Thanked the Government for the £314,000 for fixing potholes.
- The Leader had attended the remembrance service in Grays to pay respect to those that had fallen and thanked those members who had attended other remembrance services within the borough.
- Welcomed the planning permission given to the Youth Zone, which would provide a first-class facility for the borough’s youth to use.
- The Leader had attended the Grays Christmas light switch on and would be attending alongside members other events across the borough.

89. Questions from Members of the Public

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

From	To	Subject
Mr Perrin	Councillor Johnson	Is the Council able to ensure that all children in its care will have a safe and happy Christmas.
Ms Ramdenee	Councillor B Maney	What plans have this Council got for providing social facilities in East Tilbury, West Tilbury and Linford.
Mrs Hattle	Leader	This question fell due to Mrs Hattle unable to attend.

90. Petitions from Members of the Public and Councillors

There were no petitions presented.

91. Petitions Update Report

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

92. 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:

Removed Councillor Spillman from General Services Committee and replaced with Councillor Johnson

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

Councillor Speight as spokesman for the Non-Political Alliance of Independent made the following change:

Added Councillor Byrne to Planning Committee.

93. Updated Annual Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

The report presented outlined that the Localism Act 2011 that required the Council to publish an annual Pay Policy Statement. Council approved the 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement in January 2023 with amendments following the senior manager pay award approved in September 2023.

The following points were raised:

- Labour Members supported the report and the recommendations.
- Member referred to the Pay Multiples within the report and stated the medium salary for the chief executive had been the highest ever in this authority and members needed to be aware and to keep that in mind.
- Member questioned when the reporting of the mandatory gender pay gap would start to which Councillor Snell stated he agreed with the comments made and would provide details on the gender pay gap at a future meeting.

RESOLVED

The Annual Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 was revised to replace the locally agreed pay award with the higher national award.

94. Senior Management Appointments

The report sought the approval of the Council's new senior structure and recruitment to the new senior roles - Executive Director of Place, Executive Director of Corporate Services (Monitoring Officer), Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Assistant Chief Executive. The report also asked members to note the appointment to the Chief Financial Officer had not been made.

The following points were raised:

- Member referenced the stakeholder panels where the emphasis had been to attempt to build the senior management team and help build the support for the chief executive. Highlighted these appointments and the senior leadership team could not simply deal with the present difficulties and the issues of today.
- Member stated a reconsideration needed to be given as to what type of authority Thurrock was and as the new directors joined the council be part of an authority that had a serious future.
- Member noted that having sat on the interview panels these were the very best.
- Member stated his disappointment that the appropriate Chief Financial Officer had not been found and hoped this would be sorted out as soon as possible.
- Member echoed some of the comments made that this was the time to make a fresh start.
- Member encouraged all to support and work together with the new appointed directors.

RESOLVED

1. Council noted the following appointments:

- **Juliemma McLoughlin as Executive Director of Place.**
- **Daniel Fenwick as Executive Director of Corporate Services (Monitoring Officer).**
- **Alex Powell as Assistant Chief Executive.**

2. Council noted that an appointment was not made to the Chief Financial Officer. Options for progressing this role would be considered by the Commissioners.

95. London Gateway Logistics Park Local Development Order

Councillor Kelly left the chamber at 7.40pm.

The report presented was concerned with the planning consenting regime for securing the delivery of strategic employment development at London Gateway logistics park.

The following points were raised:

- Member asked for a guarantee that a Planning Lawyer with LDO knowledge would be present at Planning Committees when the item was considered.
- Member requested that East Tilbury be treated the same as other wards going forward.

- Members commented on their support and welcomed the report.
- Member stated that future planning should include the Corringham and Fobbing wards on any proposals of roads around the ports.
- Member commented on the recent piling operations being undertaken and that work needed to continue with DP World to ensure that noise levels were not at the expense of resident's wellbeing.
- Member also commented that the continued use of the Council's enforcement team as they played the watchdog role on behalf of the council.
- Member welcomed DP World's commitment to the borough.
- Member also commented that other methods needed to be explored on the transportation of containers and how these were moved across the borough.

RESOLVED

- 1. Noted the progress made so far on LDO2 and the future actions and processes necessary to bring LDO2 to a position where it is ready to be adopted.**
- 2. Delegated authority on the decision whether or not to adopt LDO2 to the Planning Committee.**
- 3. Delegated authority on the decision whether or not to adopt LDO1.5 to the Planning Committee.**

Councillor Kelly returned to the chamber at 7.55pm.

96. Review of Members' Allowances - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

This report presented the independent findings and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, following its review of the Scheme of Members Allowances in July 2023.

Councillor J Kent stated Labour would be voting against the recommendations.

RESOLVED

- 1. Rejected that all recommendations presented in the Independent Remuneration Panel's report at Appendix 1 and the subsequent Scheme of Allowances at Appendix 2.**
- 2. Rejected the Council implemented the recommendations from the municipal year 2024-2025.**
- 3. Rejected to apply 4% to allowances paid in 2022/23 as outlined in section 3.3 and in accordance with the continued recommendation to index allowances with staff increments.**

4. **Rejected the potential for the IRP to review special responsibility allowances for the Overview & Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair positions six months after the introduction of any new structure to ensure appropriate remuneration.**

97. Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the chamber that six questions to the Leader and six questions to cabinet members and committee chairs had been received:

From	To	Subject
Councillor Hurrell	Leader	how many of Thurrock's residents, adults & and children, fall into the category of being destitute.
Councillor Worrall	Leader	Vision for Thurrock, as a place in five years' time?
Councillor Byrne	Leader	Withdrawn
Councillor Byrne	Leader	Not use the appropriate name or title when addressing members.
Councillor Pearce	Leader	Sports master plan for Belhus Park.
Councillor Kerin	Leader	Rationale behind selecting PwC to assist the council in identifying savings
Councillor Worrall	Councillor Coxshall	Update on the Thameside building.
Councillor Watson	Councillor Coxshall	Health Care Resource Group implemented a new policy requiring patients to schedule appointments via email.
Councillor Polley	Councillor Carter	Number of Educational Health Care Plan's in place to support our young people.
Councillor Watson	Councillor Johnson	Proposed housing developments to be constructed by the Housing Revenue Account for council housing?
Councillor J Kent	Councillor Snell	Percentage of this year's council's revenue budget spent servicing the council's debt.
Councillor J Kent	Councillor Snell	Level of government Revenue Support Grant paid to Thurrock Council for the financial years 2010/11 and 2023/24.

98. Reports from Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies

No reports were presented.

99. Minutes of Committees

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

100. 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.

Councillor Redsell requested an update on her motion in regard to the task and finish group looking at tackling school parking across the borough.

Councillor Speight stated there needed to be an improved way of formatting and logging motions.

101. Motion submitted by Councillor Hooper

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

People in Thurrock are waiting up to eight weeks to get an appointment for a blood test. This is entirely unacceptable, so, Thurrock Council calls on Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust to take whatever action is necessary to hold Phlebotomy First to account for this failure of blood testing in Thurrock and provide a reasonable service.

Members collectively agreed with the motion in that the service provided was not acceptable and not what residents of Thurrock deserved. The waiting times affected all wards and in comparison with other local authorities was incredibly shocking. Member stated there were also delays in diagnosis. With another member suggesting the council set up their own blood testing organisation. Councillor Hooper thanked Members for their support and comments.

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 29 November 2023, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

The meeting finished at 9.04 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**