

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 22 January 2024 at 6.00 pm

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**Present:** Councillors Fraser Massey (Chair), Paul Arnold, Mark Hurrell, Kairen Raper, Sue Sammons and Neil Speight

Robert Quick

**Apologies:** Councillors Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair) and Blake

**In attendance:**

Mark Bradbury, Interim Director of Place

Chris Stratford, Consultant

Luke Tucker, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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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.

### **15. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair) and Co-Opted member Laura Blake.

### **16. Minutes**

The minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved as a correct record.

### **17. Declaration of Interests**

There were not interests declared.

### **18. Final Update on DCO Examination**

Members were provided with an update from officers. The following points were raised:

- Members were recapped on what the Lower Thames Crossing was set out to achieve.
- 369,000 pages of evidence was produced for the Examining Authority (ExA). This would result in the ExA having to read 150 pages per hour to read all submissions in time for their recommendation deadline.
- Approximately 3,000 submissions made, the Local Authority submitted 31 including appendices. Thurrock Council's case has been put forward.
- Officers reviews the objectives listed on page 14 of the agenda.

Members asked and raised the following questions:

- The Chair noted the loss of the Green Belt would be tragic.
- Cllr Speight shared his concerns regarding the Section 106 agreement and asked what the Local Authority had signed up for.
  - Signed version is in the public domain.
  - 4 full time officers for 7 years and 2 officers on shorter contracts working on heritage and health impacts.
  - Contribution of £100,000 to a pedestrian crossing on Brennan Road.
- Cllr Speight noted the impact on residents of the borough for little in return.
- Officer informed the Task Force that only Thurrock Council, Essex County Council and the London Borough of Havering signed a Section 106 agreement. Those who did not sign the agreement will have a unilateral undertaking. Thurrock Council would have been offered less if it did not sign.
- Cllr Speight was disappointed that the opinion of the members of the Task Force was not asked for.
- The Chair asked what the London Borough of Havering was offered in its Section 106 agreement.
  - London Borough of Havering received officer contributions.
- The Chair asked if a reason was given why no authorities on the south side of the river signed a Section 106 agreement.
  - Unknown at the time.
- Officers did not believe the Green Belt assessment was not adequate.
- Cllr Speight asked officers when they believed the Lower Thames Crossing would be complete.
  - Decision expected 20th June 2024, construction start 2026, completion 2032 at the earliest.
- Cllr Speight noted there was not a date for the building of the pedestrian crossing.
  - Officers informed the Task Force that the document stated the pedestrian crossing would be constructed no later than 2026, there was nothing to suggest it could not be delivered sooner.
- The Chair asked for an explanation on inadequate legacy provisions.
  - Of 22/23 items on legacy proposed by the Council only 5/6 were agreed by National Highways.
- The Chair asked if there was any new information regarding emergency services.
  - All material before the Examining Authority.
- The officers informed the committee the recommendations on the 20th March is not published until the Secretary of State's decision.
- Cllr Speight asked what would happen if a General Election was called in mid-2024.
  - If an election would be called a decision would be made after the election.

- Co-Opted member Robert Quick noted there was a lot of work to do for the Local Authority to be a positive force for the residents.

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

[Lower Thames Crossing Task Force - Monday 22 January 2024, 6:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

**The meeting finished at 7.03 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](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**