

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 September 2015 at 7.00 pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Brian Little (Chair), Martin Kerin (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Steve Liddiard and Peter Smith

**Apologies:** Councillors Robert Gledhill

**In attendance:** Councillor Gerrish, Portfolio holder for Transport  
Ann Osola, Head of Highways  
John Pope, Public Transport Manager  
Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration  
Stephen Taylor, Programmes and Projects Manager  
Jessica Feeney, 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.

### **8. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 29 July 2015, were approved as a correct record.

### **9. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **10. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **11. Heritage, Arts and Culture Ambitions in Thurrock**

The Programmes and Projects Manager introduced the report to the Committee. It was explained that Cabinet received the 'Unleashing Creative Ambition' report in December 2013 which re-aligned the approach to arts, culture and heritage with the Council's vision and priorities. Since then a number of initiatives had been developed including the Thurrock Trailblazers Programme and the Village Beach Festival held in July, which celebrated the work of local artists, musicians and historians. The approach was formalised into an emerging Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy which was aligned with Council priorities and would be used to outline a clear direction of travel in the coming years to stakeholders and potential funders.

The Programmes and Projects Manager outlined the four ambitions and gave examples of the key proposals for the first phase of implementation;

- Creating fantastic locations - Identifying and developing opportunities to enhance and create performance, visual art and heritage hubs as part of the Growth Programme in Purfleet, Grays and Tilbury/ East Tilbury
- Growing the appetite for culture and heritage - Supporting the creation of new workspace for artists and creative businesses in Thurrock
- Developing the sector – Mapping existing creative and heritage based activities and events across the borough
- Exciting events and activities - Delivery of the Thurrock Trailblazers Programme with local schools and creative industries

Councillor Kerin requested more information regarding the types of jobs that would be created and how Thurrock residents could occupy them. The Committee was informed that colleges had been looking into what courses were required to enable residents to fulfil the jobs; one example given was a degree in costume design that was available in Thurrock which enabled job opportunities at the Royal Opera House Costume Centre.

Councillor Smith questioned officers regarding the expenditure figures for the Village Beach Festival; officers informed the Committee that the Village Beach Festival was a free admission event and if proved successful tickets could possibly be introduced in the future. Councillors expressed that ticket prices should be affordable so that no residents were excluded. Officers agreed with the Councillors and explained that a report was being created regarding the expenditure of the Festival in October.

Councillor Liddiard suggested that Tilbury Fort was a good location to hold events for the public, and explained that young people performing was a great way to demonstrate Arts and Culture ambitions in Thurrock.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Members were invited to review the emerging strategy, to approve the direction and the developing priorities.**
- 2. For Members to receive an update report on the expenditure of the Village Beach Festival.**

**12. Feedback from the Fobbing and Horndon on the Hill Site Visit on the 12 September 2015**

The chair of the Committee thanked Councillor Gerrish, Councillor Stewart and residents from both villages for taking their time out to attend the site visit on the 12 September.

The Committee was informed that the site visit started at Gifford's Cross Road car park. The following observations were noted whilst on the site visit at Fobbing:

- Gifford Cross car park was the closest bus stop to Fobbing and was also the closest Doctors, ATM and Chemist.

- The location was a significant distance from Fobbing and had a steep hill.
- It was noted that pathways were overgrown and drains were blocked.
- The seven bus stops on the Fobbing route was a good indicator of the topography and distance.
- Elderly and vulnerable people living in Fobbing felt that the bus was their only means of transport to the hospital, doctors and shopping as taxi prices were seen to be too expensive.
- The walking distance from Fobbing to the Five Bells roundabout was very long and the crossing of the road towards Basildon was seen as dangerous.
- The 374 and 100 bus service used the same route to Basildon from this area and the 200 uses part of the route; both bus routes were run by different companies. The chair of the Committee was also informed that buses would race each other to get ahead and pick up the passengers waiting, leaving the remaining bus with no passengers.

The chair explained that the site visit then moved on to Horndon on the Hill and the following notes were made:

- Two people had left the village as they could not use the current bus service.
- Residents felt the 265 service was not fit for purpose as the first bus left at 9:30am and there was no service on a Saturday.
- It was hard to identify that there was a bus stop, this confused residents.
- The 265 was unsuitable for those disabled but not in a wheelchair as the steps on the bus were too high.
- There was no access from Horndon on the Hill to Orsett Hospital via bus.
- The walk to the nearest bus stop was long and hilly and the footbridge was difficult for the elderly or infirmed.

The chair informed the Committee that the annual parking report was on the agenda for the Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny this municipal year, it was added that the Civil Parking enforcement made a profit of £182,000 and that this was likely to continue as it had a business-like approach in place. The chair explained that the use of any surplus income from Civil Enforcement is restricted to transport related issues like the operation of public passenger transport services. It was commended that the Civil Parking Enforcement surplus income and monies from other departments who spent money on travel costs in rural areas be utilised by the Transport department to assist the rural bus provision.

The Committee urged that the issues were looked into holistically. Councillor Gerrish thanked the chair and agreed to look into the proposed comments.

The chair suggested that every other hour one bus from the 100 service diverted into Fobbing, it was added that a similar programme would also work for Horndon on the Hill. The Public Transport Manager explained that the 100

and 200 bus service was managed by a commercial company and that they would not reroute.

Councillor Kerin requested to see an objective measurable way to address the priority of the bus services, officers confirmed that this would be provided.

**Resolved:**

- 1. That the Portfolio Holder and Officers note the comments made regarding the Fobbing and Horndon on the Hill Site Visit. The chair of the committee thanked Cllr Gerrish, Cllr Stewart and Residents from both villages for taking their time out on Saturday to attend the site visit.**

**13. Work Programme**

The Committee requested that the following items were added to the work programme.

- Lakeside progress update
- Traveller transitional sites and permanent sites
- Tilbury Update

**The meeting finished at 7.50 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

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Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**