



# Purfleet-on-Thames Community Forum

*For ease of reference topics appear as separate subjects rather than in the order discussed. Items do not appear in any order of priority, and may appear under an unlinked agenda item (e.g. AOB)*

## **Meeting Minutes 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

Venue: St Stephen's Church Hall, London Road, Purfleet-on-Thames RM19 1QD

Time: 19:30

### **1. Welcome, Meeting Etiquette and Apologies**

Adrian Hilsum, Gail Lawson-Phillips.

### **2. Agree Minutes from 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Minutes were agreed.

### **3. Guest Speaker Thames Freeport – John Stasi [john.stasi@thamesfreeport.com](mailto:john.stasi@thamesfreeport.com)**

#### *Area Covered*

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Thurrock.

#### *Purpose*

To connect local people and communities to new sustainable growth by developing a plan with councils to attract companies into certain areas, being Ford, DP World and Tilbury Port.

#### *Funding*

Companies pay business rates but there is a central government agreement these rates can be retained by the local council for 20 years.

#### *Benefits to Businesses*

0% employer national insurance for the first 3 years

0% stamp duty land tax

100% business rates relief at Thames Freeport for the first 5 years

40% of rent equivalent saved for the first 5 years

10% enhanced structures and buildings allowance per year over 10 years

Lean customs arrangements

#### *Activities*

Recruited 30 ambassadors to connect with local people with the aim to address direct community concerns.

Secured the opening of Tilbury library, conditional on the site providing links into jobs, skills and abilities.

Investment in adult training (skills programmes), support of apprentices – would like feedback as to what hinders attendance on courses.

School competitions:

Design what your area will look like in 2035

The idea behind this is to seek how problems in the area can be fixed, e.g. there is a pilot running January-March with a mobile health bus being funded to carry out check for blood pressure and diabetes with the aim to attract new technology onto the bus and bring regular support to residents.

Frame the future film competition to showcase stories and ideas.

A masterplan is being developed for the 3 boroughs, and they are collaborating with Young Foundation and EY and will work to attract investment in line with the masterplan.

Hearing about the lack of community buildings Thames Freeport has invested into the Youth Zone in Tilbury and are also retrofitting people's homes to test if newer technology can make homes warmer.

Why is our local CRO Port not part of the group?

It was understood that central government has placed a limit of 3 ports within a freeport.

Have you identified skills?

Most skills programmes, being Level 3 and above, are all connected to the sectors Thames Freeport is focused on.

Ports bring traffic, are you doing anything to improve the road infrastructure?

Transport is a key concern, but the value of this region is river access so they are looking at light freight moving onto the river.

An electric charging hub for businesses around the port of Tilbury is opening 25<sup>th</sup> February. Potholes are the responsibility of the local council.

Do you offer training and employment for people without any qualifications?

They offer support to organisations such as One Community Trust and Headstart to Employment (whose focus is on long term unemployed, or sick or ex-prisoners).

#### **4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes and Updates**

Google Data Site

The planning application is on hold due to a rare plant identified on site.

Heritage Centre

The Heritage Centre is going from strength to strength. They have received many high-grade cabinets and other items of furniture; thanks were offered to the council for their donations; art students have been on site and various large props are being installed in readiness for the reopening on 1<sup>st</sup> March.

Thanks were given to the centre for providing volunteering opportunities.

Police

x2 officers from the Grays Neighbourhood Policing Team attended and asked if there were any issues:

Young people on motorbikes, antisocial behaviour, riding on the green.

Response:

Op Sculptor tackles antisocial driving, and that the Lakeside car cruising had been addressed. Police were informed the car cruising and racing continues and is picking up, both mid-week and weekend, with video evidence being provided.

Electric motorbikes

Response:

2 persons involved in tool thefts had been caught very recently.

Police are not allowed to chase if riders are without helmets and in fact riders with helmets remove them if being pursued.

Parking by Harris Academy and Purfleet Primary

Response:

Police can only ticket cars parked on zigzags.

Cllr Green proceeded to email a request to Enforcement to attend for 3-4 days.

Harris Academy

Students exit in huge numbers and walk in the road due to the narrow pavements, plus Police had been seen attending an incident recently where a student had come off his pedal bike from a failed wheelie.

Response:

It is up to the council to request the school to stagger finish times.

Cllr Green proceeded to email a request to meet with the school.

A request for the local police team email addresses

Residents were told that the best way to report something was via the Essex Police website as there was no guarantee that a member of the local police team would be on duty to read any email.

It was confirmed that, unless due to operational reasons, the Police will attend the forum's bi-monthly meetings and will bring stats for this ward.

Cllr Aaron Green

*Litter Pick*

Tue 17th February 11am-12.30pm, starting at Purfleet Pantry.

*Christmas Toy Collection*

50 children's presents were handed out across the ward.

*Purfleet Pantry*

Reopen in 2 weeks following a refurbishment with the help of Start Thurrock and Aveley Men's Shed

*Lorry Park*

The Park has requested a visit but legal advice is being sought by the councillors due to enforcement action and a planning application which may constitute a conflict of interest.

*Collapsed Wall*

The area has been secured with Heras fencing whilst the ownership of the wall remains unclear with differing information; the council continues to push for a resolution.

Council Sold Land Behind Medical Centre/Tank Hill Road

Due to fly tipping the council are trying to make contact with the owner, who lives in Germany. If this is not possible a litter pick will be considered.

Questions Asked:

Why had Mark Bradbury visited the area with a group of people?

Both Homes England and the director of Muse wanted a site visit to look at area of the regeneration, particularly the station, to gain a better idea of the site and its scale.

Due diligence work on figures is currently being undertaken.

Can you use S106 money to deal with cracks in the road?

No but will ask Highways, a reactive service, to check the road from the lorry park through to Caspian Way.

## **5. Any Other Business**

Old Chapel Site

Enforcement visits the site weekly to check on the listed building since the granting of planning permission back in November to clean up the site.

It was reported there is no notice to say this is a construction site/danger/do not enter.

Cllr Watson to follow up on this.

## **6. Next Meeting**

19:30 on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

Council Speaker - Michael Dineen, Assistant Director for Community Protection and Enforcement Services (CPE)

If there is a topic you would like included at a future meeting or would like the forum to invite a specific speaker or Council representative, please email giving as much notice as possible