



GRAYS TOWN BOARD - INTERIM MEETING

Notes of Grays Town Board meeting held on
Thursday, 09th January 2025 at 13:00 via Microsoft Teams.

Present:

Neil Woodbridge (Chair)	NW	CEO of Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions
Cllr John Kent	JK	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Strategic Relationships, Reputation, and Influence, and Grays Thurrock Ward Councillor.
Cllr Tony Fish	TF	Representing Grays Riverside Ward
Jayne Sheehan	JS	Vice Principal, South Essex College
Harry Briton-Watkins	HBW	Jen Craft MP's Staff (deputising for Jennifer Craft)

In Attendance:

Emma Taylor **ET** Deputy Area Lead for Essex, MHCLG

Thurrock Council

Gloria Ighodaro	GI	Chief Officer of Housing, Economic Development & Skills, Regeneration
Gregory McCullough	GM	Head of Regeneration & Place Delivery
Bernice Lim	BL	Regeneration Programme Manager
Olanrewaju Sunmola	OS	Senior Project Officer, Regeneration
Kevin Howlett	KH	Head of Communications

Apologies:

Jennifer Craft	JC	MP for Thurrock
Cllr Lee Watson	LW	Cabinet Member for Good Growth
Cllr Valerie Morris-Cook	VMC	Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships & Grays Riverside Ward Councillor.
Wendy Townsend	WT	Representative of Seabrooke Rise Community Association & Riverside Community Big Local
Abdul Bashir	AB	Director of Desi Indian Dining Club
Cebraill Kolbukn	CK	Manager of Izgara Meze Restaurant
Gregory Wilkinson	GW	Area Lead for Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, and Thames Estuary Growth Board, MHCLG

MEETING NOTES

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
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MEETING NOTES

	<p>NW welcomed Board members and other attendees to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Jen Craft (MP), Cllr Lee Watson, Cllr Valerie-Morris-Cook, Wendy Townsend and Gregory Wilkinson.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Declaration of Interest</p>	
	<p>Board members were reminded to declare interests that may affect any board decisions and the need to submit Register of Interest Form.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Project 4 Grays Beach Riverside and Kilvert's Field - Destination Attraction</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Project Adjustment Request (PAR)</u> <p>BL informed the Board that the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) to amalgamate Project 4: Grays Beach Riverside Park & Kilverts Field and Project 5: Riverfront Activities Centre into a single initiative was submitted to MHCLG on the 23rd December 2024.</p> <p>Two delivery 'expenditure' profile were presented to MHCLG; an accelerated profile with the grant fully committed by March 2026 and a preferred profile with grant commitment in May 2026.</p> <p>MHCLG is expected to respond at end January / early February 2025.</p> <p>NW and JK highlighted the Board's support and enthusiasm the project.</p> <p>BL advised that the amalgamed projects will be referred to as Project 4 Grays Beach Riverside and Kilvert's Field - Destination Attraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Proposal</u> <p>BL presented the masterplan and proposal for the Activities Centre and set out the aspirations for the new facility and Grays riverfront.</p> <p>BL explained that building layout allows the Operator to sublet the catering element another operator. It would be ideal if café/restaurant were to be operated by a commercial food service provider. A commercial food service operator prioritising profit would be focused on optimising the use of the space and catering to the needs of consumers i.e. ensuring customer satisfaction to drive repeat business, tailoring menus to diverse consumer preferences and market trends. culinary creativity, and market responsiveness.</p>	

- Activities Centre Operator

Invitation for Expressions of Interest for an Operator will be issued after MHCLG approves the PAR. The intent is to allow the market to define the precise use of the building within the parameters of it being beneficial to the community and being aligned the objectives of Grays Town Investment Plan.

The Board agreed:

- To allow the market to determine the use of the new Riverside Activities Centre whether it be cultural, recreational, leisure, educational or a combination of several uses.
- To include a provision for the Sea Cadets in the new facility i.e. use of classroom/hall 2 half days a week.
- The Chair to represent Board on the evaluation panel.

The shortlisted Operators to present their proposal to the Board and Community representative as part of the evaluation process.

- Wider Park Enhancements.

Board was invited to put forward park enhancements proposal.

Feedback from previous community consultation was share with board. This includes the proposal of park run circuit, cycle loop, outdoor gym, mini skate park, outdoor stage, inclusive cycling centre, Dr Bike Hut, intergenerational play, more inclusive play, enhanced splash pad, WC facilities near Kilverts Field and provisions to support pop-up events.

The Board to shortlist park enhancements options by May 2025. This will then be presented to the community to inform the decision-making on the final selection.

- Anti-Social Behaviour

HW conveys the local MP's support for the scheme and highlighted her concerns about the anti-social behaviour in the area. The MP suggests engaging local youths in arts and cultural activities as a strategy for reducing or preventing anti-social behaviours.

GI suggested reaching out to Lisa Ricketts, the Council's Creative and Culture Economic Development Manager, to explore opportunities to engage with the local youth.

MEETING NOTES

	BL reassured the Board that there will be greater CCTV coverage and lighting provision along the riverfront as part of the scheme.	
4.	AOB	
	None.	
5.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The Board agreed to reconvene on Thursday, 27 th February at 13:00.	