

For General Release

REPORT TO:	FULL COUNCIL 7 DECEMBER 2015
AGENDA ITEM NO:	13
SUBJECT:	BUSINESS REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
LEAD OFFICER:	Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, Director of Legal and Democratic Services
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Sean Fitzsimons Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:	The constitutional requirement that Council receive a Scrutiny Business Report.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Council is asked to note the Scrutiny work programme for 2015-16 (attached) and scrutiny activity since the 10 October 2015.
- 1.2 All Members are asked to note the continuing Mini Reviews and to consider the opportunities offered by Local Action Mini Reviews and what contribution they or their constituents can make to these or to the topics selected for Scrutiny as part of the 2015-16 scrutiny work programme (see paragraph 3 of the attached report).
- 1.3 Members are asked to note the Lines of Enquiry for each review and consider whether they or their constituents may be able to contribute comments or questions for consideration and to tweet/Facebook the topics to their followers

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the report of Scrutiny and Overview Committee covering the period from 10 October to 24 November 2015 as required by the Constitution. The Constitution allows 10 minutes for this item, which includes up to 2 minutes for announcements

3. DETAILS

This report provides an account of Scrutiny activity carried out between 10 October and 24 November 2015.

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

5. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

The Council’s Constitution (Part 4a Council Procedure Rules 3.05) states that the purpose of the Scrutiny Business Report is “To update the Council on Scrutiny activity since the previous Council meeting. Also to advise on any major issues that needs to be considered by Scrutiny. Incorporating (1) written questions and (2) oral questions on the items contained in the Business Report”.

The Constitution allows 10 minutes for this item, which includes up to 2 minutes for announcements.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

ATTACHMENTS:

- Report from the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
- Scrutiny Work Programme 2015-16

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE Scrutiny and OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

10 October to 24-November 2015



**Councillor Sean Fitzsimons
Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee**

1. YOUNG PEOPLE TAKEOVER SCRUTINY!

***“I am not pregnant, I have no medical needs,
I am not leaving care. What chances
have I got of obtaining affordable
accommodation in Croydon?”***

GN describing the issues young people face

On 17th November, a group of young people from Croydon College took the reins and led the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee. They scrutinised the topic of housing provision for young people (aged 18-24) in the borough and vigorously questioned the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Alison Butler, Councillor Alisa Flemming and officers for over 2 hours.



This meeting was filmed for broadcast on the council’s internet site at:
<http://www.croydon.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

After preparatory meetings, the group had come together in early summer and chose the topic, ‘Housing for young people’, Following this choice, they met regularly with Scrutiny Officers, to practice their public speaking skills and to agree the key areas on which officers and other witnesses should be questioned.

They identified the following areas:

- What affordable housing is available to young people in Croydon?
- What is the legislative and policy framework underpinning housing provision in Croydon, and how does that impact on young people?
- What housing advice is available to young people in the borough?

- What practical support is available to help young people to manage their tenancies effectively?
- How widespread is homelessness among young people in Croydon?
- What vetting processes are in place in the borough? Can they be adapted to reflect young people's lack of work experience and financial track record?

In the event the young people researched or asked for information on a broad range of issues including:

- Work carried out to bring empty properties back into use to increase housing supply in the borough
Work done with private sector developers to provide affordable accommodation to graduates in Croydon to retain them here
- Work done with employers to provide in-kind benefits such as rent deposit schemes as they already help with buying season tickets or bicycles
- Questions on the use of licenses instead of assured shorthold tenancies for young people
- Help for young people facing eviction under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 which does not require landlords to state a reason for the eviction
- The impact of the low housing benefit rates on young people's ability to afford their rents and the possibility of enabling young people's landlords to receive housing benefits directly in order to reduce the likelihood of rent arrears
- Raising awareness of "sofa surfing" among many young people as a form of unreported homelessness
- The role of the development company in increasing supply of Housing
- Housing Ambassadors at sixth form colleges and Croydon Colleges

At the Scrutiny Committee meeting Councillors felt that the questioning had been in-depth, thoughtful and insightful and had been impressed by the confidence and articulation of the students, particularly in relation to follow up questions. Kristoff Kerr was particularly commended for his chairing skills.

The project has excited interest both locally and London wide. The success of the project has led to the Council looking to expand the project for future years. Subject to agreement by Madam Mayor, the students' achievements will be recognised at future Full Council meeting which they will be invited to attend. At the time of writing, recommendations arising from this meeting are still being considered by the students but is intended that they will be presented at the 14 December meeting of Cabinet.

2. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

2.1 Scrutiny and Overview Committee

At the Committee meeting on 3 November, representatives from Royal Mail came along to respond to the recommendations made in the **Mini Review of Royal Mail Services**. They said that they had found the mini review to be helpful and that it had noted its positive and negative comments.



They also informed the Committee that the Royal Mail was reviewing the opportunities for a collection point in the town centre or at East Croydon station as part of a national strategy relating to parcel collections, and locally, in response to local demand.

Royal Mail gave a commitment that should a national programme of city centre collection points be introduced, Croydon would be among the first to be considered due to the strength of local feeling on this matter which had been recorded in the mini review report. Members agreed that a follow-up item should be included on the scrutiny work programme 2016-17 and resolved to seek an update on the level of complaints about parcel collections in Croydon (including year on year comparison data) from the Royal Mail in 12 months. The Committee also undertook to seek an update on the situation relating to parcel collection points in the town centre and in New Addington in 12 months and to ask the Royal Mail to include Croydon in any pilot scheme for town centre collection points in the future.

At the same meeting, Councillor Timothy Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport attended a **Question Time** session on the successes of the past 12 months and future pressures facing his portfolio. The Cabinet Member provided the Committee with information on matters as diverse as the forthcoming Parks Review including the use of redundant buildings, improving access to venues and spaces around the borough, funding issues, the Book Fund and libraries and the provision of sport, music and cultural activities for young people.

The Committee asked the Cabinet Member to return next year and requested that his presentation then focuses on access to facilities and fair funding including the potential for community involvement and what needs to be done to make progress on this.

Councillor Simon Hall, Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury and the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Resources) were present for an item on **Capital Budgets**. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury informed the Committee that the allocation of funding will be prioritised according to statutory needs and the ambitious strategy and themes in the manifesto. Members asked questions on a number of issues including those relating to the education estate, highways, late delivery of new housing contracts, using modular and temporary solutions to deliver projects in response to demand and the level of borrowing required.

The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that the Community Income Levy (CIL) is an income stream that will help reduced the amount the council needs to borrow to deliver capital projects. Members of the Committee expressed concern about the allocation of CIL funding and the apparent move to focus this on the 6 regeneration areas rather than across the borough.

In response to this concern, the Committee resolved to **make recommendations to** Cabinet on the allocation of s106 and CIL funds for projects in their wards and that it consult the Scrutiny and Overview Committee before a decision about the allocation of the CIL '*Local Meaningful Proportion*' is made, specifically with

regard to the suggestion that the original allocation through the 16 places of Croydon be refined to reflect allocation through a smaller number of place regeneration plans. The Committee has also asked Cabinet to provide Members of the Committee with an update of the s106 summary balance sheet and allocation (as in appendix 2 of the report) in 12 months (in autumn 2016). The Committee expects a response from Cabinet on these matters in the New Year.



At the meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 9 November, Members considered a **Call-in: Collage Green Cultural and Educational Quarter**. This decision, taken by Cabinet on 20 October would see Fairfield Halls close for 2 years from the summer of 2016 while a £30 million redevelopment of the area takes place.

Despite the belief that parts of the Mott McDonald report, which was referenced at the Cabinet meeting, had not been forwarded to the Committee in time for the meeting, the scrutiny process revealed a considerable amount of information which had not been available previously.

The Committee heard from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Councillor Alison Butler, the Executive Director Place and other officers and the Chief Executive, Fairfield (Croydon) Limited. Much of the focus of the meeting related to the funding of the project and the Committee received an undertaking from the Cabinet Member and Executive Director Place that the council would forward fund the project ensuring that a transformed Fairfield Halls would reopen in 2018 alongside a new Croydon College. Only then, the Committee was assured, would flats be built on the old college site to pay the council back for the redevelopment.

The Committee also probed for information on the transition arrangements relating to full closure of Fairfield Halls, the potential damage to the brand and the potential loss of audiences and skilled staff. The Committee was anxious to learn more about possible future operating models that may or may not involve Fairfield (Croydon) Limited to deliver the programme at the venue and the implications this may have in relation to the level of subsidy in the future.

In reaching its conclusions the Committee:

- 1) Expressed concern about the impact of full closure on the staff and asked the council to work with Fairfield (Croydon) Limited to develop a strong plan to support staff during the closure period
- 2) Would like to see more information on how the closure will be managed and will monitor the process
- 3) Is keen to understand the operating model and the level of subsidy and community outreach elements of the model going forward and aims to monitor this through scrutiny in the future

- 4) Would like the council to take into account the long history Fairfield (Croydon) Limited has in delivering the programme at Fairfield Halls and the support network it has developed when it considers the future operating model

The Committee voted to reject the proposal to rescind the decision and therefore resolved that no further action was necessary in respect of the decisions taken by Cabinet on 20 October 2015 in relation to College Green Cultural and Education Quarter and confirmed that the decisions could now be implemented.

2.2 Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee



Representatives from Southern GTR returned to the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 24 November to give Members an update on its contingency plans and communications campaign in relation to the **Christmas blockade** which will see essential engineering works close the line between East Croydon, Purley and Redhill and seriously affect access to Gatwick.

Members were reassured by the information provided in relation to works overruns, bus replacement services and additional staff to provide passengers with assistance and the progress being made on the delivery of a co-ordinated communications, engagement and publicity campaign.

Members of the Sub-Committee also considered an item on the **Croydon Local Plan Consultation** which is taking place until Friday 18 December. The Sub-Committee considered in detail aspects relating to:

- Housing Supply sources for 31,750 new homes by 2036, Affordable Housing, Vacant Homes and the provision of housing suitable for young people
- The Character of Areas and the 16 places of Croydon including area redesignations and the identification of windfall sites
- Employment Areas, the Office Retention policy, the redevelopment of industrial or warehouse sites and the regeneration of district centres as well as the metropolitan centre
- Parking standards, the impact of zero parking developments and the potential to reallocate some cycle storage provision in new developments to an allocation for motorbikes or scooters
- Planning considerations in respect of travellers and the needs assessment which indicated that 39 pitches would be needed over the next 20 years

The Committee had been received written representations and a number of members of the public were present at the meeting. The representations received will be accepted as responses to the consultation and will be responded to within the consultation process. In reaching its conclusions, the Committee urged anyone with concerns or views on aspects of the Partial Review, the detailed Policies and Proposals or the Policies Map Changes to feed these into the consultation before it ends on 18 December.

2.3 Health, Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Health, Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee held a well-attended meeting in New Addington on 10 November 2015. The **Question Time** housing presentations that the Cabinet Member, Councillor Alison Butler delivered, gave the Committee a flavour of what homes will look like in the context of regeneration across Croydon. Councillor Butler responded to housing repairs concerns shared by the Committee at ward level and could reply to questions previously submitted by the public

Adult Safeguarding and the work of the board were also subject to scrutiny. The independent Chair Jane Lawson reported that the Board was for the first time going to deliver an in year report which the Committee would have sight of prior to completion and this was well received by Members.

The CCG gave the greatly anticipated presentation outlining **outcome based commissioning** and though not mentioned, how this would deliver the better care fund.

The Sub-Committee bid Steve Davidson, Service Director for SLaM a fond farewell as he embarked on his retirement at the end of November.

On 23 November 2015 a special meeting was held to discuss the **outcomes of the CQC Inspection of Croydon NHS Health Services**. The Chair of Croydon NHS Trust was in attendance, along with the Medical Director and Director of Nursing. Overall there had been significant improvement since the last inspection, in particular with regards to “Caring” and staff engagement.

The Sub-Committee focussed attention on Surgery due to the “Inadequate” rating on one of the categories. Members were informed that this inadequate rating in the “Well-Led” category was due to management turnover issues which had now been addressed and stability within the leadership was being prioritised.

Whilst the overall rating of the Inspection was “Needs Improvement”, it was noted that 64% of categories were rated as Good, and if the CQC returned within the next 12 months, officers present were confident an overall rating of Good would be secured.

This Sub-Committee would like to urge Members to continue their vigilance on the series of “engagements” being conducted by the CCG. The CCG continues to insist that these are not “consultations” but “engagement” exercises. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer has arranged a meeting with CCG officers to try and explore a protocol for working together on “consultations” relating to significant variations in services.

This Sub-Committee meets at various locations in the Borough. The use of Social Media and conventional media to publicise meetings has been producing results in terms of encouraging new faces at the meetings in community venues.

Croydon health scrutiny representatives will attend a meeting on 1 December of the **South West London JHOSC** when the main agenda item will be the series of outcome based commissioning initiatives across the sector.

2.4 Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee

At the 13 October meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee, the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Learning, the Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB), the Executive director of People and the Director of Children and Family Early Intervention and Children's Social Care were in attendance to answer Members' questions on **children's safeguarding**.

The Chair of the CSCB highlighted the greatest challenges to the Board:

- Recording action being taken
- Strengthening partnership work
- Holding all relevant parties, groups and services to account
- Community engagement with child safeguarding issues

Officers were asked whether the balance of resources was correctly allocated across age ranges. They replied that it was important to give all children a good early start, hence the investment in the "Best Start" programme. However, they acknowledged that children and young people presented problems at different phases of their lives, such as the transition between primary to secondary school and teenage years. In addition, they stressed it was important to offer early intervention for families in crisis to avoid spiralling escalations and emergencies, with the trauma that these left in their wake.

Officers highlighted the challenges presented by large numbers of looked after children living in the borough. Members questioned officers regarding the cost of providing services to looked-after children from other boroughs. They were advised that other boroughs paid for placements but that other costs such as health, education, youth offending supervision, etc. could not be recharged to the borough of origin. One cost that these boroughs could be recharged for was work carried out on "return home interviews" after children had run away from their placement and come back.

The Chair of the CSCB paid tribute to the work and efforts of talented staff to improve services to safeguard children and young people in the borough and to build their aspiration.

3. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The 2015-16 scrutiny work programme continues to be developed and an "at a glance" summary is attached. Scrutiny Chairs discuss and agree the lines of enquiry for topics in the 2015-16 programmes with their Committee Members and would welcome suggestions from all Members for existing or potential topics for scrutiny to cover.

3.1 Mini Reviews in progress

There are currently two Mini Reviews in progress:

- Councillor Kyeremeh is leading a Mini Review on Exclusions
- Councillor Rendle is leading a Mini Review on Travellers

3.2 Past and future Mini Reviews

The response to recommendations to Cabinet and the Royal Mail as part of the Mini Review on Royal Mail services is reported at paragraph 2.1 above.

The Mini Review on Employability and Brokerage for Young People was reported to Cabinet on 20 October 2015 and the recommendations were accepted “subject to ESF bids”.

A Mini Review to be led by Councillor Fitzsimons on Surrey Street Market is in process of being scoped but is subject to availability of officer resources.

All Members from all parties are urged to consider the success of the Mini Review process and to consider leading a Review on a topic of their choice.

Attached: At a glance scrutiny work programme 2015/16

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16¹ - as at 24 November 2015

SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE (SOC)	9 June 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Leader & CX (post-election impact) - Work programme - Terms of reference 	8 September 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QT: Finance and Treasury • Overview of Council Contracts • FM procurement contract update 	3 November 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QT: Culture, Leisure and Sport • Capital budgets • Cabinet response to scrutiny recommendations 	15 December 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QT: Leader and CX • Budget 2016/17 and performance 	19 January 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QT: Economy and Jobs • Revitalising the evening economy in Croydon (inc. policing and licensing) 	22 March 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QT: Communities, Safety & Justice • Safer Croydon Partnership (repeat offending & criminal justice system) • Stronger Communities Partnership (update) • Scrutiny Annual report (draft) 	12 April 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics for 2016/17 • Digital inclusion • Financial inclusion 	
HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE (HSCH)	23 June 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - Terms of reference - Co-option Healthwatch rep - The work of the CCG 	15 September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for People Living with Chronic conditions - London Ambulance service - Reprourement of Urgent Care (CCG) 	22 September <u>JOINT MEETING WITH CYP SUB</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAMHS - Children affected by domestic violence 	10 November 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Homes, Regeneration & Planning - Outcome Based Commissioning (CCG) - Mental health Review (CCG) - Adult safeguarding - Housing repairs 	8 December 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GP Performance including (instances of Immunisation) - Professions allied to medicine 	26 January 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Families, Health & Social Care - Better Care Fund - Croydon Health Services NHS Trust - PH Annual Report (themes 2016) 	8 March 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLAM (and CAMHS) - HWBB (including sexual health) - Review of the Work Programme 	10 May 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics for 2016/17 - Quality Accounts
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUB-COMMITTEE (CYP)	16 June 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School places - Estates strategy - Work programme - Terms of reference 	14 July 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fostering Services and Adoption Services - Cabinet response report & action plan re. children's safeguarding recommendations 	22 September 15 <u>JOINT MEETING WITH HEALTH SUB</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAMHS - Children affected by domestic violence 	13 October 15 (extra meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding/ Council social care - The work of the Children's Safeguarding Board and its Annual Report 	17 November 15 YOUNG PEOPLE'S TAKEOVER MEETING Topic = Housing	12 January 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Children, Young People & Learning - School standards and inclusion - The Budget 2016/17 - Review of the Work Programme - Cabinet response to recommendations 	15 March 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home schooling - Transition from children's social care to adult social care - Topics for 2016/17 	
STREETS AND ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE (S&E)	30 June 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - Terms of reference - Scene setting from stakeholders re. Croydon Transport Vision 	7 September 15 (extra meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norbury Avenue Experimental Road Closure 	29 September 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Transport & Environment - Network Rail 	24 November 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Croydon Local Plan - Cabinet response to scrutiny recommendations 	2 February 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QT: Green and Clean - Village style street cleaning and waste collection - Street lighting PFI contract 	1 March 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metropolitan centre co-ordination and delivery inc. Public Realm Design Guide - Plus: Construction Management Plans & School Travel Plans - Review of the Work Programme 	5 April 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rail services inc. Performance, Accessibility and South London Metro Services - Sustainability update - Topics for 2016/17 	

¹ This is an at a glance programme. For full details consult the full work programme. Some lines of enquiry have still to be developed by Members