

Cabinet

Meeting held on Monday, 22 March 2021 at 6.30 pm. This meeting was held remotely

MINUTES

- Present:** Councillor Hamida Ali, Stuart King, Muhammad Ali, Janet Campbell, Alisa Flemming, Oliver Lewis, Manju Shahul-Hameed, Callton Young and Patricia Hay-Justice
- Also Present:** Councillor Jason Cummings, Lynne Hale, Maria Gatland, Simon Hoar, Yvette Hopley, Helen Redfern, Scott Roche, Andy Stranack, Gareth Streeter, Louisa Woodley, Sean Fitzsimons, Robert Ward, Clive Fraser, Mario Creatura, Sherwan Chowdhury, Luke Clancy, Patsy Cummings, Nina Degrad, Felicity Flynn, Bernadette Khan and Shafi Khan
- Apologies:** Councillor Jason Perry
- Officers:** Doutimi Aseh (Interim Director of Law & Governance)
Chris Buss (Interim Director of Finance, Investment & Risk and Section 151 Officer)
Heather Cheesbrough (Director of Planning and Strategic Transport)
Rachel Flowers (Director of Public Health)
Sarah Hayward (Interim Executive Director Place)
Asmat Hussain (Interim Executive Director Resources)
Elaine Jackson (Interim Assistant Chief Executive)
Debbie Jones (Interim Executive Director Children, Families & Education)
Katherine Kerswell (Interim Chief Executive)
Annette McPartland (Director of Operations)
Rachel Soni (Director of Commissioning and Procurement)
Stephen Tate (Director of Growth Employment and Regeneration)

PART A

- 44/21 **Minutes of previous meetings**
- The Part A minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 18 January 2021 and 18 February 2021 were agreed.
- 45/21 **Disclosure of Interests**
- There were none.

Urgent Business (If any)

There were two items of urgent business; the Revocation of Section 114 Notice (minute no. 47/21) and Regina Road, South Norwood (minutes below).

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services (Councillor Lynne Hale) requested that an item of urgent business be considered by Cabinet in relation to the ITV News report being broadcast that evening regarding the council flats on Regina Road, South Norwood. The Shadow Cabinet Member stated the news report included shocking evidence of awful living conditions residents, including young children, have lived in during the national lockdown. It was highlighted that residents had made regular calls since 2019 and reported the damage from the leak to the council and that the situation had deteriorated significantly since December 2020.

The Shadow Cabinet Member stated that the pictures evidenced the most appalling conditions; including rooms being unusable due to the risk of electrocution. In addition, floors and furnishing had been ruined due to being saturated with excess water in the property. It was stressed that it was wholly unacceptable that families should be left to live in such conditions in the borough and concerns were raised that the damage caused by the long term ingress of water suggested negligence on part of the landlord.

Concerns were further raised that the former Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services had also been a ward councillor for South Norwood until the previous week. To this end, the Shadow Cabinet Member called for a meaningful apology to the residents and a commitment to remedy the situation as a matter of urgency.

In response, the Leader of the Council (Councillor Hamida Ali) stated that when the situation was first brought to her attention she was equally shocked at the conditions residents were living in and called for an immediate investigation to be undertaken to understand how the situation had arisen. Members were informed that the council had responded to approaches from the media, had moved residents from the flats and that immediate repairs were being undertaken with damaged furniture also being replaced. The Leader stressed that everyone was appalled by the conditions experienced and the council was doing everything it could to address and fix the situation and was seeking assurance that no other residents were living in similarly appalling conditions.

The Cabinet Member for Homes (Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice) added that the living conditions of the residents was totally unacceptable and apologised that the situation had occurred. It was confirmed that the residents had been relocated, that the damage was being addressed and that a full investigation was warranted to understand what had gone wrong and to ensure it did not reoccur. However, it was highlighted by the

Cabinet Member that the experiences were not typical of the responses received from thousands of council tenants over a number of years.

Assurances were provided by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning (Councillor Alisa Flemming) that contact had been made to ensure the affected young people had the support they required, particularly in relation to schooling.

47/21

Revocation of Section 114 Notice

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Hamida Ali) noted that the report did not contain any recommendations for Cabinet to approve but requested that Cabinet recommend to Council to note the report. The report contained the Interim Section 151 Officer's (Chris Buss) opinion that following the agreement for two capitalisation directions that the Section 114 Notice be lifted.

It was stressed that the budget earlier in March 2021 had been based on retaining some of the controls the council had put in place as part of the Section 114 Notice; in particular the Spending Control Panel; which would support the council in meeting its budget. There were notable exceptions to the controls which had been outlined within the paper.

The Leader highlighted that the report reminded Members that the capitalisation directions, and the opinion that the Section 114 Notice could be lifted, were both conditional on meeting the terms of the capitalisation direction; which was to achieve the identified savings and deliver the budget. Should those conditions not be met, the Interim Section 151 Officer stated within his report that a new Section 114 Notice would likely be required.

The Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal (Councillor Stuart King) highlighted that it was essential that the Spending Control Panel conditions remained in place and that this was a position which both Members and officers agreed was integral to delivering the budget. Paragraph 3.6 of the report was brought to Members attention which stated that the Interim Section 151 Officer was clear that it was of the utmost importance that the council met the conditions of the capitalisation direction, including greater financial rigour and discipline.

The Cabinet Member for Culture & Regeneration (Councillor Oliver Lewis) welcomed the lifting of the Section 114 Notice and the continued financial discipline with which the Administration sought to enable the council to conduct its business.

It was noted by the Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance (Councillor Callton Young) that the council had come a long way since the initial days of the Section 114 Notice but that it was integral that spending controls remained in place to support delivery for Croydon.

It was stressed by the Cabinet Member that the Administration was committed to keeping those controls in place.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon (Councillor Muhammad Ali) reiterated that the lifting of the Section 114 Notice was an important milestone in the recovery of the council but that the milestone should not take away from the importance of rigour and financial resilience which was required in the coming year. Concerns were raised that the council would need to continue to manage the economic uncertainty in response to Covid-19; as such, it was stressed that financial resilience was integral to ensure the council continued on the road to recovery.

It was highlighted by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young & Learning that the majority of spend within local government, and Croydon, was around social care. Work was continuing within the council in terms of commissioning intentions to ensure that the right amount was being paid and the right level of service was being provided. Benchmarking with neighbouring boroughs was being undertaken to understand the right levels of service and cost of packages whilst ensuring the most vulnerable in the borough continued to be protected.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services (Councillor Lynne Hale) noted that while the report was an important and welcome step in the right direction in the recovery of the council; the letter from the Improvement & Assurance Panel to the Secretary of State in February 2021 stated that there was more to do for the council to become a properly functioning local authority. The Shadow Cabinet Member queried what the realistic timeframe was for the council to be a properly functioning local authority once more.

In response, the Leader of the Council noted that the previous five months had been spent reflecting on the issues originally raised within the Report in the Public Interest as well as other reviews and in preparing the Croydon Renewal Improvement Plan which would enable the council to set a budget. Alongside the budget, the Leader highlighted that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had been agreed which ran until March 2024. The Administration, it was stated, was working to fully stabilise the council's finances and to live within its means, but that it was understood by all that it would take more than a year to achieve that goal. Whilst much of the work had been done to identify savings within the MTFS, it was recognised that more work was required and further savings needed to be identified, along with an overall cultural change.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that it note that the Statutory Chief Finance officer is of the view that following the receipt of the Capitalisation Directions for 2020/21 and 2021/22 that the previously issued letter under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act

1988, no longer applies as the Council has sufficient resources to meet likely revenue costs in 2020/1 and has a balanced budget for 2021/22.

48/21

Delivering the Croydon Growth Zone

The Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal (Councillor Stuart King) drew Members attention to the budget which had been agreed by Council on 8 March and which had included the capital programme. The agreed capital programme had included a number of changes to the Growth Zone funding for the forthcoming year and the report, included within the Cabinet agenda, set out the preliminary headline proposals for the re-profiled scheme.

It was stated that the report reflected the Report in the Public Interest and the work by PwC; and addressed the relevant recommendations. The report, the Cabinet Member stated, also reflected the financial challenges faced by the council and a number of partners, including Transport for London (TfL). It was noted that the Growth Zone delivery was dependent on the town centre economy which had been dramatically impacted during the preceding 12 months due to the pandemic. With that in mind, the Cabinet Member stated that it felt it was timely and prudent to further review the programme to ensure it responded to the current circumstances.

The Cabinet Member highlighted to Members that the report set out that a number of additional reports would be considered by Cabinet at future meetings to consider the proposals in more detail.

It was noted that the town centre economy, and its ability to recover following the pandemic, was critical to the council and the Cabinet Member welcomed the presentation from the Director of Planning & Strategic Transport (Heather Cheesbrough) which set out the council's emerging vision for the town centre. A copy of the presentation can be viewed [online](#).

It was noted by the Director that the historic Growth Zone vision had focussed on two key sites in the town centre; the Whitgift Centre and Ruskin Square; which were important in terms of how the Growth Zone would work in generating business rates going forward. It was noted that the Ruskin Square site was proceeding well with a new public sector building in development and ongoing positive conversations with the developers. The Whitgift site had, however, been more challenging. It was stated that the Planning Policy Framework had reflected the predicted housing targets, jobs and construction activity from the two schemes.

The changing model of retail had been taking place over a number of years, however, it was noted that the pandemic had accelerated the changes. It was suggested that the changes in retail had led Croydon Limited Partnership (CLP) to review its proposals in 2019/20 alongside the drive for sustainable development.

The Director of Planning & Strategic Transport highlighted the impact of the pandemic on the Growth Zone assumptions and whilst the impact of Covid-19 continued there remained uncertainty as to the long term impact on the town centre. Members were advised that the number of major planning applications submitted to the council had greatly reduced in the last year, particularly applications pertaining to the town centre. This reduction impacted the business rate forecast which underpinned the predicted growth.

Discussions were taking place as to where people may wish to live going forward, with some people wishing to move to the country. However, Members were informed that this migration may provide opportunities for young people who had previously been priced out of town centres.

It was highlighted that the decline in retail had been substantial with a number of businesses closing in recent years and likely, it was suggested, many more would close following the easing of lockdown restrictions. This impact, Members were advised, would also be felt within the hospitality sector as many operators would no longer have a viable business model.

In terms of office space, it was noted that discussions were ongoing as to the amount of physical office space businesses would require in the future but, at the time of the meeting, there was no certainty as to what the office environment would look like in the coming years.

In terms of the night-time economy, it was noted that this had been disrupted by the lockdown restrictions of the pandemic and whilst there were a number of people who were keen to enjoy the evening economy again, uncertainties remained as how it will work and the long term impact restrictions would have on this sector of the economy.

Despite the challenges highlighted by the Director, it was recognised that during the previous year there had been increased recognition of local traders, community networks and the value of open spaces. A number of walking and cycling projects had been implemented in the last year. It was recognised that some of those projects had been controversial, but the schemes had shown there were different ways to use the town centres.

Furthermore, the Director highlighted the location of Croydon, being between the Kent and Sussex hinterlands and central London gave rise to the opportunity for those who wanted to work from home a few days a week and go into an office a couple of days a week, but did not want to travel into central London. It was suggested that the location of Croydon was an opportunity which needed to be exploited as the town centre was accessible and had good transport links.

In the short term, Members were advised that the Director of Growth, Employment & Regeneration (Stephen Tate) and his team were working to facilitate and support town centre partners to distribute the

Discretionary Business Grants. Furthermore, officers were undertaking work to ensure eating and drinking facilities had the correct licences in place ahead of reopening and a large amount of communications work was underway to advertise that the town centre was open but with a focus on safety.

In terms of the vision for Croydon Town Centre, it was reported that officers had been looking at greater flexibility in conjunction with incremental change. The Local Plan had a whole chapter of the town centre which had to be rewritten to include a focus on flexibility as the previous vision for the town centre had been predicated on evidence which had dated back to the noughties, when retail was a lot stronger. The new chapter, Members were advised, would focus on incremental change and phased approached to redevelopment with increased level of piloting different uses with meanwhile and pop up schemes.

Discussions were continuing to take place with key stakeholders; developers, landowners, the Business Improvement District, London South Bank University and the council to create stakeholder panel to facilitate further discussions and offer support to enable stakeholders to maximise their combined leverage and funding. It was felt by the Director of Planning & Strategic Transport that there was an important role for community leadership as the town had a number of good businesses which needed to be part of the town centre going forward and were involved in shaping the future of the town centre to create an area which was uniquely Croydon.

It was noted that London South Bank was due to open a campus in Croydon from September 2021 which would provide a higher education provision within the borough and would hopefully attract inward investment to Croydon with a new range of high quality jobs.

The Director concluded that the new vision for the town centre reflected the changing economic environment and would take time to progress and develop, however, within the short to medium term there would be a focus on activation programming and meanwhile uses and Members were advised that the council was in discussion with partners to facilitate this going forward.

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety & Business Recovery (Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed) noted that one of the services previously supported by the Growth Zone had been Croydon Works, however, due to the council's financial position this had been paused. Funding from the Department for Work & Pensions had been received and Croydon Works would continue to provide support.

It was highlighted that the Economic Development team had been working closely with the business community during the pandemic and were continuing to distribute lockdown business grants and additional restriction grants. The night-time economy grant had also been introduced

following concerns raised in relation to the hospitality and night-time economy; for which there had been almost 500 applications submitted. Members were informed that the council continued to work closely with partners and the Cabinet Member stated that she had met with Amy Lamé (Night Czar) to discuss the Night-time Economy Strategy, the London Night-time Data Observatory and the findings from the Night-time Enterprise pilot.

Members were informed that the High Street for All Challenge had been launched by the GLA during the preceding week which invited local partnerships to co-design innovative high street recovery strategies. The Cabinet Member felt that this fund was an opportunity to deliver enhanced public spaces and to utilise underused buildings, and so would look to develop a grant proposal with partners. It was stressed that partnership working would be really important going forward to leverage funds into the borough and to provide new opportunities within the town centre.

The Cabinet Member for Culture & Regeneration (Councillor Oliver Lewis) thanked the Director of Planning & Strategic Transport for her presentation and stated that he felt it was right that the Growth Zone was reassessed to respond to the huge economic challenges facing town centres nationally. It was noted that Britain had been hardest hit in terms of the health impact of Covid-19 and would be hardest hit economically; and, with that context, it was right that the council reassessed and re-profiled the Growth Zone. Going forward, the Cabinet Member stated that it was important that the council continued to support growth and development and it would continue to work with partners to achieve the redevelopment of the town centre.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon (Councillor Muhammad Ali) also stressed that it was important that the council reacted to changes in the environment; whether financial challenges or the pandemic. It was noted that a recent report by the Centre for Cities highlighted that whilst Covid-19 had many downsides, there were opportunities for towns and cities to reimagine their futures and integrate sustainability and climate change resilience into future growth.

The draft recommendations from the Climate Change Commission were noted by the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon; particularly the need for local independent businesses and for larger businesses to be supported to create more green jobs in the local area. It was suggested that when the draft recommendations were to be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet, there would be cross Cabinet Member portfolio awareness regarding the need to enact the recommendations, as sustainable development was not only an environmental concern, but also an economic and social one, and required the support and joint working of partners to ensure a sustainable town centre for all.

The Cabinet Member for Homes (Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice) stated that the report and presentation had been encouraging and had given an

indication of what the town centre will look like going forward. Whilst it was recognised that the current retail offer was not at the desired level, it was planned that there would be a retail offer and the council was looking at alternative options to open the town centre, including aspects of the night-time economy. Safety was highlighted, particularly around women walking alone at night, and the Cabinet Member welcomed a more vibrant night-time economy with more venues open later and more people walking around the town centre. A move to more engineering and technological ideas was further welcomed along with the partnership with the London South Bank University.

The Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal stated that he felt everyone would recognise that the local economy had suffered significantly over the preceding 12 months due to the pandemic. Whilst he was confident that the council would successfully support businesses as restrictions were lifted, he felt it was timely and important that the council looked at how it could influence the resilience and recovery of the town centre over the following 24 months.

The opening of the London South Bank University campus in September 2021 was particularly welcomed by the Cabinet Member as it would introduce a new dynamic to the town centre which would positively impact the daytime and night-time economies. It was noted that the night-time economy was particularly an area of value as during the restrictions people had missed going out; whether planned celebrations with friends and family or informal after-work drinks. The Cabinet Member felt that supporting the economy was an area of focus for the council and the local community whether that be shopping or eating and drinking when the regulations allowed.

It was highlighted by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning (Councillor Alisa Flemming) that it was important that the town centre was developed to meet the needs of whole families; throughout the day, evening and night. By incorporating the needs of all the town centre would be a vibrant place which all could enjoy and feel safe in.

It was reported by the Leader of the Council (Councillor Hamida Ali) that she regularly met with the representative the CLP and that they had stressed their continued commitment to Croydon and the ongoing to work to consider their future proposals for the redevelopment of the town centre. That commitment, it was stated, was really important and valuable in light of the shifts in the economy and the impact on the retail industry.

It was noted by the Leader that all local partners wanted and expected meaningful and sustainable redevelopment of the town centre. It was further recognised that there was understandable and growing impatience for that sustainable development to take place and in direct response, the Leader stressed that the council had done everything it could do to discharge its responsibilities as a planning authority, and would continue

to do so. The Leader stated the conversations would remain ongoing with the CLP to support the bringing forward of the proposal.

The proposals to redevelop the town centre were important but the Leader further noted that in the short and medium term it was imperative that Croydon took advantage of the opportunities that would arise alongside the easing of lockdown restrictions, to support the local economy to respond to the impact of the previous year. It was felt that the stakeholder panel, mentioned within the presentation, would be important in order to support that work.

It was stressed that it was important that the council supported the whole business community to respond to the shifting nature of the local economy as the borough recovers from the pandemic; including the Restaurant and Knowledge Quarters.

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance (Councillor Callton Young) noted that the presentation had mentioned utilising meanwhile schemes as the borough came out the restrictions but queried whether there were examples of other boroughs which had done similar schemes on a large scale and what could be learnt from their experiences.

In response, the Director of Planning & Strategic Transport advised that officers were working on ensuring meanwhile uses were brought forward as there were a number of vacant units within the Whitgift Centre and it was felt that this strategy would support piloting usages which could become permanent additions to the town centre long term. The meanwhile strategy was being developed by the CLP and the council was working alongside them to ensure there was confidence in the strategy.

In terms of examples of large scale meanwhile schemes, the Director highlighted Gabriel's Wharf on the South Bank which had been in place for over 30 years and was a popular destination for retail and food and drink. Further examples, such as the railway arches in Peckham and 1960s shopping centres in the Netherlands were also highlighted as examples of successful meanwhile uses. However, it was noted by the Director that creativity and innovation were key elements and so the council were working closely with the CLP to ensure it was the right scheme for Croydon which celebrated both the creative and entrepreneurial spirit of the borough.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance (Councillor Simon Hoar) stated that it seemed that the council was solely blaming Covid-19 for the state of the town centre, whereas he felt that the town centre had been struggling for a number of years and that this had been a failure of the administration. He stated that he felt that there was a lack of responsibility and awareness for the position faced by the town centre. Concerns were raised that the Growth Zone had been reduced to £4 million and did not include any investment in economy and skills,

furthermore it was stated that the jobs and economic development teams had been made redundant. The Shadow Cabinet Member queried what message was being sent to residents and businesses as it he felt that it appeared that the Administration did not value jobs, skills and economic development.

In response, the Leader stated that she did not feel that anyone would recognise the suggestion made by the Shadow Cabinet Member. It was stated that there had been discussions held nationally in relation to the catastrophic impact of the pandemic on high streets. The situation faced by Croydon town centre, it was stated, was similar to that faced by high streets across the country. Furthermore, the Leader noted that there had been a well-documented shift in consumer habits with online and out of town shopping which was impacting high streets nationwide. However, despite the challenges faced the Leader stressed that the council was doing all it could to support the businesses of the borough.

The Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal confirmed that the scale and pace of the Growth Zone delivery had always been predicated on the economic circumstance of the town centre. It was noted that development within the town centre had been restricted due to the impact of the pandemic. In terms of concerns in relation to the reduction in the Growth, the Cabinet Member quoted the report by PwC which stated "Given the current economic uncertainty, the steps the Council have taken to review and revise down the investment plan for the Growth Zone are sensible". With that in mind, the Cabinet Member said that it was in his view that the recommendations contained within the report should be supported.

In response to the concerns raised by the Shadow Cabinet Member in relation to the reduced capacity of council officers, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety & Business Recovery stated that she had attended a conference earlier that day organised by London Councils. At the conference, lead members for business and skills across London had discussed the impact of Covid-19 on local economies and how the council could provide support without external funding from organisations such as the Greater London Authority (GLA). It was stated that boroughs were looking to align economic recovery plans.

The Cabinet Member expressed surprise in relation to the Shadow Cabinet Members comments as she reported the council had distributed over £60 million of grants to businesses; work of which, had been led on by the Economic Development team. The team, it was stated, was working tirelessly to ensure businesses were supported and the Cabinet Member thanked officers for their work in ensuring businesses felt supported and would have the best chance of financially recovering from the pandemic.

It was stated by the Shadow Cabinet Member for Culture & Regeneration (Councillor Gareth Streeter) that it was hard to not feel deflated when considering the report when only a decade before there had been

optimism in terms of Croydon town centre. It was suggested by the Shadow Cabinet Member that the council had mismanaged the relationship with the CLP following the administration change in 2014, and had that not happened, the Cabinet would have been considering a very different report as a new shopping centre would have been constructed in preparation for the Bank of England's predicted consumer boom.

Concerns were raised that due to the financial situation of the council that it would no longer be able to fund the employment and skills programme. In relation to those concerns, that Shadow Cabinet Member queried what the council's plans were in relation to funding over the coming years. Further queries were raised in terms of how the council would work with the CLP to not only bring forward the development, but to ensure jobs were created for the young people of the borough.

In response, the Leader stressed that the Shadow Cabinet Member's statement was a mischaracterisation of the situation as the council had continued to work constructively with the CLP to facilitate bringing important proposals forward. Despite this, the Leader stressed that it was for the Partnership to bring forward development proposals and for the planning authority to be ready to consider and facilitate the development.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning stressed that it was important that residents were not misled. It was felt that the new proposals were important and that skills and training would continue as part of the local education offer. The council worked closely with both Croydon College and John Ruskin College, particularly in terms of construction skills. It was further highlighted that work continued to ensure the young people of Croydon were job ready and it was noted that the council had won an award for its Choose Your Future scheme. The Cabinet Member stressed there were opportunities for all young people being supported by the council and the colleges in the borough.

It was stated by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Business Recovery that there had been a very successful apprenticeship programme; 100 apprentices in 100 days, which had brought together a number of partners and provided numerous opportunities for 124 apprentices. Despite the financial pressures faced by the council, the Cabinet Member stated that work was being continued by partnering with training providers and colleges to continue to support those looking for job opportunities.

In addition, it was noted that work continued with Croydon University Hospital and its training providers to support bridging the skills gap in health and social care; a key aspect being London South Bank University starting a nursing course from September 2021 with over 400 students already signed up. It was felt by the Cabinet Member that this work was providing opportunities for Croydon residents and young people. It was reported that the council was also working with the University to develop a digital lab which supported the provision of engineering and tech skills

within the borough. Furthermore, Members were informed that the council was looking at shared workspaces for employees in South London, which it also hoped could provide opportunities to develop skills provision in the borough.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning (Councillor Helen Redfern) expressed concern that the vision for the town centre had been to reduce car usage but concerns had also been highlighted in relation to the safety of women walking home at night. The Shadow Cabinet Member raised concerns that by reducing transport choices, it would reduce access to the town centre for many vulnerable residents as it was often suggested that the safest way to go home after an evening out was to drive home.

In response, the Leader stated that she did not feel that the only safe option for members of the community, and in particular women, was to not use public transport. She felt that the borough should be a safe space for everyone, including women who faced significant levels of violence from men. The Leader stressed that the Administration had prioritised to tackle violence against women.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon felt that the concerns raised by the Shadow Cabinet Member were valid but were misplaced, as he stated that there was no evidence that the delivery of healthy neighbourhoods and streets impacted the safety of residents. The implementation of the schemes, it was suggested, would make the capital more accessible with the combination of public transport, walking and cycling opportunities. The Cabinet Member continued to state that it was important to assess the evidence as to the impact of the implemented schemes on safety.

Further concerns were raised by the Shadow Cabinet Member that the lived experiences of women were not being taken into consideration.

In response to these concerns, the Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal stated that it appeared that the Shadow Cabinet Member felt that choice, such as driving home, had been removed whereas it was noted that a large proportion of Croydon residents did not actually have access to a private vehicle. It was the Cabinet Member's opinion that it was an important responsibility to make the streets safer for everyone; including those without access to a car and it was necessary to tackle the cause of individuals who had unfortunately passed away at a rate of over 200 people per year as a result of air pollution and associated conditions.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Approve the amended funding profile for Growth Zone projects as detailed in section 6 of this report; and
2. Subject to the requirement to comply with the provisions of Part 4G of the Constitution in taking delegated decisions, and the parameters previously approved in the February 2020 Cabinet report 'Delivering the Growth Zone' delegate to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151), the Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance, the Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal, the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery & Skills and the Cabinet Member for Culture and Regeneration authority to make necessary changes to the funding and phasing of the approved Growth Zone projects list. Any such changes will be reported to Cabinet.

49/21

Stage 1: Recommendation arising from Scrutiny

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To receive the recommendations arising from meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 16 February 2021, and to provide a substantive response within two months (i.e. at the next available Cabinet meeting on 4 May 2021).

50/21

Stage 2: Responses to Recommendations arising from Children & Young People Scrutiny Sub Committee on 19 January 2021 and Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 4 February 2021

The Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee (Councillor Robert Ward) thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for the constructive responses received. The Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee (Councillor Sean Fitzsimons) added that that he welcomed the responses to recommendations and the explanation as to why some recommendations had not been agreed due to resourcing constraints.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To approve the response and action plans attached to this report at Appendix A of the report and that these be reported to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or relevant Sub-Committees.

51/21

Investing in our Borough

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance (Councillor Callton Young) highlighted that with the scheduling of an additional Cabinet meeting in April 2021, recommendation 1.1.2 of the report was no

longer required. Cabinet noted that this recommendation was no longer required.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Approve the Substance Misuse procurement strategy which will result in contract awards for a maximum term of 7 years as set out at agenda item 8a, and section 5.1.1 of the report.
2. Note the list of delegated award decisions made by the Director of Commissioning and Procurement, between 26/01/2021 – 25/02/2021, as set out in section 5.2.1 of the report.

52/21

Integrated Drug & Alcohol Treatment Service

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance (Councillor Callton Young) noted that Cabinet was being asked to approve the procurement strategy for the Integrated Drug & Alcohol Treatment Service which would result in a single contract with an estimated value of £2.98 million per annum. Members were advised that the cost of the contract would be met by the Public Health grant.

Leanne Bobb (Strategic Category Manager) provided the meeting with a presentation in relation to the procurement of the drug and alcohol service. A copy of the presentation can be viewed [online](#).

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance requested information of the savings that had arisen from investment, as outlined within paragraph 3.6 of the report.

In response, the Strategic Category Manager noted that the procurement for this service was complex and there a number of elements of care which were individually costed. At the present time, there was a core service for drug and alcohol treatment and additionally there was service provision for young people. The aim was to maintain the budgets for the provision and the additional primary care elements through subcontracting or another avenue that the lead provider would choose. This would result in a maximum contract value for the provision and it would be up to the provider to ensure delivery of care closer to home for residents across the borough. In previous experience of using direct contracting, only certain providers had come forward, however, it was hoped the new model would encourage new providers of care.

The Strategy would put an onus on improving the care which was delivered and would avoid silo delivery. The Strategy Category Manager suggested that the model would lead to a tertiary triangle of services which worked towards a collaborative delivery within the community. It

was stressed by the Cabinet Member that the council was making savings in the longer term by investing in the service.

The Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care (Councillor Janet Campbell) confirmed that she was content with the Strategy and for moving locality delivery as it married up with the work of the council. It was noted that the service had continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic with group work and one to ones taking place in safe environments; and those involved were thanked for their work.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care (Councillor Yvette Hopley) thanked officers and the Director of Public Health, Rachel Flowers, who had worked on the contract. The additional elements of the needle exchange, share care, early help, the family unit and digital platform were welcomed. The Shadow Cabinet Member noted that she had raised concerns that during the pandemic there had been too much of a shift to digital platforms, however she had received assurances from the Director of Public Health that in addition to virtual services a number of other sessions were also made available.

The additional services were welcomed and it was felt by the Shadow Cabinet Member that it was sensible to move from 20 contracts to one overarching contract, however it was queried whether there was any risk involved regarding bringing the contracts together under one contract. In particular, it was queried what the governance arrangements would be and how it would be ensure that service delivery remained at a good level.

In response, the Strategic Category Manager advised Members that the council was working closely with the Local Medical Council and Local Pharmaceutical Committee to manage the transition of services. Expressions of interests would be sought from both organisations which already had contracts and those which may be interested in being awarded a contract. By working with GPs the service would be available locally for people and would ensure partnerships worked effectively across the drug and alcohol treatment service.

The Director of Public Health (Rachel Flowers) noted that when she first started as the Director of Public Health, the Shadow Cabinet Member had serious concerns in relation to the service and it was made prominent by her comments that evening that progress had been made to improve the service, even during the pandemic. It was highlighted that it was important that needs assessments took place with service users to ensure the support they required was provided as there were often complex needs involved.

It was reiterated by the Director of Public Health that by spending money on the treatment service, public money was being invested and saved. Progress on the delivery of service had been made to provide an integrated service and it was felt that the new commissioning strategy would support further improvements.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Approve the procurement strategy identified in this report for a single stage procurement that will result in a single contract to deliver an integrated, Adults and Young People's Community Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service, for an estimated contract value of £2,984,360 per annum (£20,890,520 for a maximum seven year term)
2. Note the proposal to bring additional elements into the scope of the tendered service, currently contracted separately. This includes pharmacy needle exchange provision; pharmacy supervised administration provision and GP Shared Care, with a phased approach to transition to the new contractual arrangements.

53/21

Exclusion of the Press and Public

This item was not required.

54/21

Minutes of a previous meeting

The Part B minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 18 February 2021 were agreed.

The meeting ended at 8.21 pm