

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **CABINET** held on Wednesday, 6 July 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

Present: Executive Mayor Jason Perry (Chair)

Councillors Maria Gatland, Lynne Hale (Statutory) Deputy Executive Mayor, Yvette Hopley, Scott Roche and Andy Stranack

Also Present: Councillor

**Apologies for
Absence:** Councillors Jeet Bains and Ola Kolade

PART A

33/22 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were no disclosures of interests received from Members.

34/22 **Urgent Business (If any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

35/22 **Order of Business**

The Executive Mayor announced that Agenda Item No.6 (Fees and Charges) stood deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet, scheduled to be held on 14 September 2022.

36/22 **Scrutiny Stages 1 and 2**

Cabinet considered a report, which detailed recommendations that had been received from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its Sub-Committees since the last Cabinet meeting (Appendix A).

It was reported that the recommendation from the Children and Young People Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 March 2022, were related to the findings of a Task and Finish Group of the Sub-Committee, which had conducted a review on the removal from roll and off-rolling of pupils in Croydon's Schools.

A copy of the Task and Finish Group report was attached at Appendix B to provide Members with context for the recommendations received.

It was noted that the Constitution required that an interim or full response be provided within two months from the date of this meeting of the Cabinet.

The Executive Mayor had the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations contained within the report.

RESOLVED:

The Executive Mayor noted the recommendations and agreed that Cabinet would provide a substantive response to these at the next meeting of the Cabinet, scheduled to be held on 14 September 2022.

37/22

Opening the Books - Returning the Council to Financial Sustainability (2023/24 Budget Update, MTFS and savings proposals, Period 1 /2 and outturn report)

Cabinet considered a report, which launched the next stage in providing a step change improvement in transparency in relation to the Council's finances, which was the Executive Mayor's initiative to 'Open the Books' of the Council.

It was reported that the Council's finances would be scrutinised over the next six months through a review of its balance sheet, its capital financing arrangements, all reconciliations and the financial relationships with the Council's companies.

It was noted that this project would provide a firm base position from which to achieve financial sustainability by 2024/25, in line with the plan reviewed by the Improvement and Assurance Panel, which had been established by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to oversee Croydon's recovery.

It was further reported that the 'Opening the Books' review would further improve the Council's understanding of its financial risks and would develop additional plans to mitigate them. It was noted that these plans would contribute to the next stage in the development of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The Executive Mayor said that this exercise would help the Council to be sure that it knew the true shape and scale of the financial mess, which had been left to his Administration to mend.

RESOLVED that the following be noted:

1. The launch of the Executive Mayor's initiative to 'Open the Books' of the Council.
2. A report on the results of the 'Open the Books' review would be reported to Cabinet no later than January 2023.
3. The General Fund was projecting a £18.3m service overspend at the end of Period 1 for 2022/23, but that £9.4m of in-year risk and contingency provisions were held corporately that may be used to

partially offset that forecast and reduce the projected overspend to £8.9m.

4. That in-year savings would need to be identified for the General Fund to offset the projected overspend of £8.9m to deliver a balanced budget by 31 March 2023.
5. That the budget gap for 2023/24 had initially been identified as £27.4m plus a further £8.7m in the following year but that these gaps have risen to £42.9m and £15.7m respectively based on current known pressures.
6. That further work would be done over the year to identify significant savings to balance the gap in 2023/24 and reduce the gaps in the later years.
7. The timetable for both financial reporting and developing the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24-2025/26.
8. That an allocation of up to £500k would be made from contingency for project support and external specialist advice for the Opening the Books project, in order to undertake a review of its balance sheet, review its capital financing arrangements, oversee the application of the capitalisation directions, undertake a range of reconciliations and review the financial relationships with the Council's companies.
9. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was not projecting a revenue budget variance at the end of Period 1.

38/22

Fees and Charges

In accordance with Minute No.35/22 above (Order of Business), this matter stood deferred until the next meeting of the Cabinet, scheduled to be held on 14 September 2022.

39/22

Re-opening Purley Pool and Leisure Centre - Next Steps

Cabinet considered a report, which outlined the different methods the Council could take to reopen Purley Pool and Leisure Centre.

It was reported that Purley Pool and Leisure Centre was currently closed following a decision made by the previous administration and the closure was reaffirmed by the previous Cabinet when, at its meeting held on 24 January 2022, it confirmed that the facility would not be reopened.

Since his election to office in May 2022, the Executive Mayor had committed to re-opening the closed facility and had asked officers to how this could be achieved as soon as possible and with the best use of public money.

It was reported that an independent assessment by professional specialists in leisure and swimming facilities was needed for budgets to be assigned, and a detailed timeline of the refurbishment and rebuilding confirmed.

It was noted that a follow-up report would be presented to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet with recommendations on the best way to reopen a pool and leisure facility in Purley swiftly and cost effectively. It was further noted that once such recommendations had been agreed, the Council would begin work to deliver the pool and leisure facility.

The Executive mayor reaffirmed his commitment to reopening Purley Pool and Leisure Centre as soon as was possible, for all the community to enjoy.

Accordingly, it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. An independent report be commissioned into the different options available for a swift, cost-effective reopening of Purley Pool and Leisure Centre.
2. The recommendations on how best to reopen Purley Pool and Leisure Centre, along with funding and timescales, being reported to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet as soon as possible after the independent options report was complete, be noted.

40/22

Update on Housing Improvement Plan

Cabinet considered a report, which provided an update on the proposed strengthening of the Council's Housing Improvement Plan in response to the Housing Improvement Board's March 2022 report and Executive Mayor Perry's mandate to strengthen the Plan.

It was reported that, following the coverage of poor housing conditions at Regina Road, the Council's previous administration had committed to the creation of the Housing Improvement Board and the development and implementation of the Housing Improvement Plan in May 2021.

The then Cabinet had agreed that the purpose of the Plan would be to address the failings of the housing service highlighted in the ARK Consultancy Investigation into Conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood.

It was noted that, since July 2021, the Council's Housing Service had developed and begun to deliver the Housing Improvement Plan, however, improvements to the Council's housing service had since remained a concern of the Government-appointed Improvement and Assurance Panel in that the housing directorate's improvement planning must provide a path to compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing's Home Standard and Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

It was further noted that, in March 2022, the Council's previous administration had agreed the content of the Plan and had delegated authority to further amend the Plan to the Corporate Director for Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes.

The Executive Mayor said that he looked forward to seeing real improvements in the Council's Housing Service, improved relationships with residents and key partners and treating the Borough's residents with respect.

Accordingly, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note and agree:

1. The review and strengthening of the Housing Improvement Plan.
2. The proposed next steps to strengthen the Housing Improvement Plan.

41/22

Progression of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Identified Priority Neighbourhoods

Cabinet considered a report, which sought the Executive Mayor's approval to authorise consultation with members of the public and partners on implementing a PSPO in the Town Centre and surrounding areas.

It was reported that, on 20 October 2014, the Antisocial Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 had come into force and introduced several tools and powers for use by local authorities and the police to address antisocial behaviour (ASB) in their local areas. These tools, which replaced and streamlined a number of previous measures, had been brought in as part of a government commitment to put victims at the centre of approaches to tackling ASB, which focussed on the impact behaviour could have on both communities and individuals, particularly on the most vulnerable.

It was noted that the Act had introduced the powers available to the police and local authorities to deal with antisocial behaviour, which included the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO).

It was further reported that, on 18 December 2017, Croydon had implemented a PSPO that covered the Town Centre and had remained in force for a period of three years. The PSPO had been used by members of the Safer Croydon Partnership to tackle antisocial behaviour and street drinking in the Town Centre.

It was noted that the original PSPO had lapsed in 2020 due to a perceived reduction in ASB and a lack of recorded evidence that it was being used at the time.

Following his election to office, the Executive Mayor had committed to working with the Police to tackle Crime and Disorder across the Borough, it was proposed that a consultation be undertaken on bringing this PSPO back into effect across a wider area than before, which would provide another tool for Police and Council Officers to make the Borough's public spaces free from antisocial behaviour and to stop ongoing harassment and disorder.

The PSPO was one part of the Council's wider plan to make Croydon's Town Centre safer and more welcoming as part of the Executive Mayor's commitment to tackling crime and disorder in Croydon and supporting the Police in their work in Croydon.

Accordingly, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the process for implementing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in the priority neighbourhoods
2. Authorise consultation with members of the public and partners on implementing a PSPO in the Town Centre and surrounding areas
3. Receive further reports on proposed PSPOs for other hotspot areas, including New Addington, following the Crime and Disorder Strategic Needs Assessment later in 2022.

42/22

Town Centre Regeneration and Levelling Up Fund

Cabinet considered a report, which summarised Croydon's Levelling Up Fund bid that was submitted on 6 July 2022 and which aimed to realise long-term held ambitions to actualise infrastructure investment, regeneration and placemaking in the town centre.

It was reported that Croydon's Levelling Up Fund bid sought to bring external funding that would deliver infrastructure investment that would help in the wider regeneration of Croydon's Town Centre (this supported the Executive Mayor's manifesto commitment to put the Town Centre development back on track, and to bring in much needed investment to provide a mixed use of jobs, homes, retail, education and culture.)

It was recognised that Croydon Town Centre continued to face one of the most challenging periods in its economic history and, despite Croydon's many strengths, the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) and the national decline in retail destination shopping, had contributed towards a failure to deliver major redevelopments like that proposed for the Whitgift Centre and had led to a decline in footfall and resident satisfaction in the Town Centre.

The report highlighted a need to secure investment in the Town Centre, which would realise long-term held ambitions to create a vibrant town centre that matched the needs of Croydon residents and businesses.

The Executive Mayor acknowledged that the Levelling Up Fund was a great opportunity to bring in funding for Croydon Town Centre and had a wealth of support behind it from the Borough's business community. He encouraged all Members across the Chamber to get behind the plans.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED** that:

1. The submission of a Croydon Levelling Up Fund bid, following the announcement of Round 2 on 23 March 2022, be noted (the outcome of the bid would be reported directly to the Executive Mayor when announced.)
2. Subject to a successful bid, the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery be authorised to enter into any relevant funding agreement with the Government, in consultation with the Director of Legal Services and Croydon's Section 151 Officer.
3. Subject to a successful bid, the implementation of all projects within the Levelling Up Fund programme as summarised in item 3 and Appendix 1, be agreed.
4. The implementation of projects would be subject to the Council's assurance framework, including the Growth Zone Board and approved by the Corporate Director for Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with Croydon's Executive Mayor, the Council's S151 Officer and the Corporate Management Team.

43/22

South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) - Boundary Change and Adoption of Supplementary Planning Document

Cabinet considered a report, which highlighted that the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan 2021 and Local Planning Policy required Local Authorities to consider designating areas of architectural and historic interest as conservation areas, and to preserve and enhance those areas through identifying their special characteristics and outlining how these could be managed for the future. In addition, Historic England recommended that every conservation area had its own Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP).

It was reported that Croydon Council was in the process of producing or updating CAAMPs for all 21 conservation areas currently designated in Croydon. The existing CAAMP for South Norwood had been adopted in

2007 and was considered dated as it did not reflect the current condition of the area nor provide sufficient guidance to preserve and enhance its special character.

It was noted that the new South Norwood CAAMP would provide an up-to-date assessment of the area and detailed guidance relating to the management of South Norwood in line with current best practice.

It was further reported that South Norwood Conservation Area was on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register because of its current poor condition. The area had been selected, in 2020, as one of Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zones (HSHAZ) – a grant funded scheme that sought to reinforce the High Street as the vibrant commercial, community and cultural heart of South Norwood through celebrating local heritage and improving the area's physical appearance. The South Norwood CAAMP was a key part of the HSHAZ programme and production of the CAAMP by heritage consultants Place Services had been funded through the HSHAZ.

The updated CAAMP was an important measure to address the risks to the conservation area and it would support delivery of the rest of the HSHAZ programme, which would build on the findings and recommendations in the CAAMP.

The Executive Mayor said it was important to preserve and enhance the Borough's conservation areas and the recommendations in the report were an important tool in protecting the character of Croydon's conservation areas.

Accordingly, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Consultation Statement for the South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) (Appendix 2), including the list of comments, responses and (where applicable) amendments at Appendix 1, noted.
2. **COUNCIL** be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) 2022 (Appendix 2) as a Supplementary Planning Document in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, particularly regulation 14.
3. **COUNCIL** be **RECOMMENDED** to agree changes to the South Norwood Conservation Area boundary as set out in this report and in the South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) (Appendix 2); and,
4. **COUNCIL** be **RECOMMENDED** to revoke South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) 2007 (Appendix 3) in accordance with The Town and Country

Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, particularly regulation 15(3).

5. That the Director of Planning and Sustainable Regeneration, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, be authorised to make minor factual, editorial and image changes to the South Norwood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) (Appendix 2) prior to adoption.

44/22

Care and Support Provision for Older People - Procurement Strategy

Cabinet considered a report, which set out the proposed procurement strategy for the recommissioning of care and support provision at three Croydon residential and nursing homes - Heavers Court, Langley Oaks, and Addington Heights – and at one extra care facility at Fellows Court.

It was reported that three of the sites were owned by the London Borough of Croydon pursuant to a PFI contract which concluded in 2038, at which point would be returned to full ownership of the Council. It was noted that there was the option to own the remaining site if a final payment was made at the end of the contract term (the PFI contract was separate to the care and support contract.)

It was further reported that the current nursing and residential care and support contract was due to end in March 2023 with initial demand and capacity analysis indicating additional nursing, support for challenging behaviour, and intermediate care bed-based capacity was required due to supply issues in the external market.

The approved contract term for the extra care provision ended in May 2021 and there was a gap in the audit trail regarding extension following this date. The incumbent provider had continued to deliver and had engaged with the commissioning team recently to discuss future plans.

In addition to the care and support recommissioning, it was noted that a review was currently underway of the contractual arrangements in relation to the PFI provision to ensure the London Borough of Croydon was maximising its investment and that it was delivering the best outcomes for the people of Croydon.

The Executive Mayor said that, having committed to putting the service users at the heart of the Council's policy making, he was pleased to note that Council colleagues were listening to residents, friends and families and seeking the views of the homes' residents throughout the re-procurement process.

Accordingly, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, **RESOLVED** to approve the commissioning intentions and procurement strategy detailed in the report for the recommissioning of residential and nursing care provision in Addington Heights, Heavers Court and Langley Oaks and extra care

provision at Fellows Court, for a period of 5 years with an option to extend for up to 10 years in two 5-year periods for a maximum estimated value of £113,455,000.

45/22

Investing in our Borough

Cabinet considered a standing report, which was presented for information, at every scheduled Cabinet meeting to update Members on any contract decisions that had been taken since the last Cabinet meeting.

Cabinet noted that the decisions listed in 5.3.2 to the report, had been initiated under the previous administration.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note:

1. The revenue and capital consequences of contract award decisions taken by the Executive Mayor, as set out in Section 5.2.1 to the report.
2. The delegated decisions made by the Director of Commercial Investment for procurement strategies up to £5 million, contract awards between £177,898 and £500,000 and contract extension(s) previously approved as part of the original contract award and contract variations as set out in Section 5.3.1 to the report.

46/22

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The motion to exclude any members of the press and public was not required.

The meeting ended at 7.58 pm