

Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee Agenda



To: Councillors Councillor Ria Patel (Chair), Councillor Louis Carserides (Vice-Chair), Danielle Denton, Gayle Gander, Stella Nabukeera, Ellily Ponnuthurai and Nikhil Sherine Thampi

Reserve Members: Leila Ben-Hassel, Adele Benson, Sherwan Chowdhury, Samir Dwesar, Simon Fox, Mohammed Islam and Esther Sutton

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 30 January 2024 at 6.30 pm** in **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
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Tom Downs
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www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Monday, 22 January 2024

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, or you can view the webcast both live and after the meeting has completed at <http://webcasting.croydon.gov.uk>

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If you require any assistance, please contact Tom Downs as detailed above.

AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 18)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosure of Interests

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and other registrable and non-registrable interests they may have in relation to any item(s) of business on today's agenda.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Period 7 Financial Performance Report (Pages 19 - 58)

The Sub-Committee is provided the latest Financial Performance Monitoring report, to review by exception, with a view to considering whether it is reassured about the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget.

6. Budget Scrutiny Challenge (Pages 59 - 68)

The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on three budget proposals (identified below) and reach a conclusion on the following:

1. Are the savings/growth deliverable, sustainable and not an unacceptable risk?
2. Is the impact on service users and the wider community understood?
3. Have all reasonable alternative options been explored and do no better options exist?

Budget Proposal Focuses:

- 2024-28 SAV SCRER 002 - Fees and charges - Changes to parking policy
- 2024-28 GRO SCRER 003 - SEND Transport – Student Number

Cost Driver

- 2024-28 SAV SCRER 006 - Deferral of growth in highways maintenance

7. Local Development Scheme Projects and Infrastructure Funding Statement Update (not including the Local Plan Review) (Pages 69 - 86)

For the reasons set out in the report, the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. To note this report in terms of the timings for projects set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme; and,
2. To note the content of this report regarding the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23 and the Infrastructure Funding Statement itself.

8. Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 87 - 92)

The Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee is presented with an up to date list of responses from Cabinet to recommendations made by the Sub-Committee for review.

9. Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24 (Pages 93 - 100)

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

1. Note the draft work programme for 2023-24, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

10. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

PART B

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Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee

Meeting held on Wednesday, 1 November 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Councillor Ria Patel (Chair), Councillor Louis Carserides (Vice-Chair), Danielle Denton, Gayle Gander, Stella Nabukeera, Ellily Ponnuthurai and Luke Shortland

Also Present: Councillor Jeet Bains (Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration)
Councillor Scott Roche (Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment)
Councillor Rowenna Davis (Virtually)

Apologies: None

PART A

25/23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

26/23 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

27/23 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

28/23 Period 4 Financial Performance Report

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 21 to 56 of the agenda that provided the Cabinet Report on Period 4 Financial Performance for Members to ascertain whether they are reassured about the delivery of the 2022-23 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER) Budget. The Corporate Director of SCRER introduced the item.

The Sub-Committee highlighted the predicted underachievement of income for parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offences, and asked what steps were being taken to rectify this. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that this covered a number of income streams, and that these were being constantly monitored against behavioural changes, and that there was ongoing work with utility companies on charges for street works. The consultation on the revised Parking Policy had concluded, and the outcomes of this would be coming forward over the coming months.

The Chair highlighted comments made at Cabinet around bin charges, and asked for some additional detail. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that a proposal was being prepared for Cabinet around implementing an administration charge for refuse containers, due to the current unprecedented demand; this charge would not cover recycling containers. There was currently a six-week backlog for refuse container deliveries, and as a result, resource to deliver this had been increased.

Members asked why demand for refuse containers was at the current high level, and heard that this was a mixture of wear and tear on containers, the quality of some containers and better recycling education. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that there were issues with the qualities of some bins, which were being investigated, and ongoing work on how the contractor was handling containers. The Sub-Committee asked if this learning would be fed into the procurement of the new Waste and Street Cleansing Contract, and heard that it would be, in combination with soft market testing, and resident and Member engagement groups.

Members asked about any risks to the Council resulting from the new Roads and Street Works Act, owing to delays and disputes with utility companies. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that there were processes in place to escalate slow or non-payment from utility companies, and that this could include face-to-face meetings. In some areas, the Council was working through data to find agreement on the amounts that were due, and in other areas, the Council was working with the companies to try to understand why these payments had not been made or were late. There were some historical disputes that had also led to pressures on this area of the budget.

29/23 Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028

The Sub-Committee received the presentation in the agenda supplement, concerning the Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 to allow the Sub-Committee to provide early feedback in advance of the full report to Cabinet in December 2023. The Cabinet Members for Streets and Environment introduced the item, and the Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing went through the presentation found at Appendix A in the agenda. It was highlighted that the figure on the second slide should say

that air pollution 'contributed to the premature deaths of an estimated 4,000 Londoners in 2019'.

The Chair noted that some of the papers had been late for the publication of the agenda, and highlighted the importance of receiving papers in a timely manner. The Chair also noted that this paper lacked some detail. The Corporate Director for SCRER apologised for the lateness of the papers, but noted that this was not for a lack of effort on the part of officers, who always strived to meet report deadlines. Members were informed that the full paper on the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 for Cabinet had been delayed to the January 2023 meeting, and that this report was a high-level update.

The Sub-Committee asked what the Council could do to tackle pollution that originated outside of the borough. The Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing explained there were a number of sources of pollution external to the borough, and that the aspiration of the Plan was to reduce and control pollution where possible. In response to questions on what Croydon had done previously, it was explained that Croydon was the first to implement 'airTexts', which provided text updates on pollution to those with lung and heart conditions, and to investigate and provide enforcement (where there was non-compliance) on idling vehicles. Enforcement on idling vehicles was generally undertaken around schools, but could also include where buses were idling outside of bus garages. Croydon had been the first borough to introduce standardised construction logistics plans for all construction sites to reduce emissions.

The Chair asked how Croydon's Plan would connect with the Mayor of London's air quality programmes. The Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing explained that the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) had been expanded to cover Croydon in August 2023, and was a statutory requirement.

In response to how Croydon's Plan compared with neighbours, the Pollution Team Manager explained that these Plans were standardised and so were similar to neighbours, but that Croydon's Plan also focussed on specific local issues, such as improving air quality near schools (due to the high number in Croydon), and to improve air quality around construction (due to the high number of building sites in the borough). The work around standardised construction logistics plans had been used by Transport for London across the city and fed out to other boroughs. The Sub-Committee heard that Croydon undertook joint projects with other boroughs to maximise available funding, such as a current project on wood burning. Whilst Croydon did not have the most polluted air in London, it did have the third highest when ranked for population exposure; this was a new way for reporting and monitoring air pollution, and was helpful when applying for grant funding.

The Sub-Committee asked how walking and cycling routes would factor into the Plan, and the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment explained that this featured prominently in the Mayor's Business Plan through the establishment of Healthy Neighbourhoods and School Streets. There was

ongoing work to try to get schools involved in creating walking plans with families to ensure School Streets Schemes succeeded.

Members asked if the Plan was being specifically targeted at areas with the highest air pollution. The Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing explained that pollution hotspots were generally around areas with the highest road traffic, and so measures would involve educating drivers, as well as encouraging walking and cycling over car journeys where feasible. There would also be measures to discourage bonfires and to instead increase the uptake garden waste recycling.

The Sub-Committee asked about tree planting, and the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that there was an ambition to plant more trees through ongoing work with Friends and Residents groups, to identify planting locations, empty tree pits, and 'tree streets'. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that the planting season began in November, and that a strategy for this was being developed, although there was not a large resource in this area. The Chair asked if, by relying on Friends and Residents groups, the Council was not at risk of missing areas where residents were not as engaged with the Council through these organisations. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that there was some reliance on these groups, due to the lack of resources, and the need to identify appropriate planting sites; it was highlighted that areas with high pollution were often unsuitable for tree planting, which limited the effectiveness of this as a blanket solution. The Chair highlighted the need for additional greenery in the North of the borough, and the Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing and the Pollution Team Manager highlighted work on deploying green walls to some sites, including schools, alongside work with 'Trees for Cities'. The Chair stated that there were keen to see the Council develop a full tree planting or greening strategy for the borough.

Members asked if there was scope to implement a developer levy, like Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to fund tree planting. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods stated that the Council had been successful in securing external grant funding and Section 106 monies to cover tree planting and arboriculture work. The Sub-Committee heard that almost 700 trees had been planted in 2022-23.

The Sub-Committee asked if specific targeted measures would be deployed in the worst polluted areas, and what the budget would be for implementing the Plan. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained the Air Quality budget sat at less than £30,000, excluding grant funding. As a result, there needed to be careful prioritisation of actions to achieve the best outcomes with limited resource; it was noted that this was the case in Croydon for a number of areas due to its financial situation. The Corporate Director of SCRER highlighted that a number of schemes that the Council delivered contributed to improvements in air quality, such as School Streets, but that the capital spending from these simply came from other budgets.

Members asked what grant funding was available to the Council toward implementing air quality schemes, and which grants Croydon had already applied to. The Pollution Team Manager explained that Section 106 funding was being used to fund additional air quality monitoring, and that the Council had undertaken joint bidding with other authorities; the Council had recently undertaken joint bids for Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) funding. Members highlighted that grant funding had previously been used on specific projects, and asked how the Council proposed to fund the actions in the final Plan. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that to access funding the Council needed to have strategies and plans, and that the Council would always bid for any available funding that met its corporate and strategic aims. The Sub-Committee highlighted the importance of including budget and funding stream figures in future reports.

The Chair asked about the number of monitoring sites in the borough, and the Pollution Team Manager explained that there were four continuous monitoring sites, as well as 35 passive air diffusion tube sites, alongside around 22 lamppost monitors at School Streets sites. It was highlighted that continuous monitoring sites and lamppost monitoring installations were costly, and officers tried to use joint funding, Section 106 monies and Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding to purchase or rent equipment. Members also heard that where monitoring was no longer needed, such as at established Healthy Neighbourhood sites, then it was moved to try to build as full a picture of air quality in the borough as possible.

Members asked if the Council had a current strategy around rolling out Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, and whether this was covered by the Local Plan. The Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing explained that public EV charging points sat under Strategic Transport, but that the Council was looking at EV solutions for its own fleet and was developing a Carbon Neutral Action Plan. The Corporate Director for SCRER added that 90 charging points had been installed in Croydon in 2022/23; the Council were looking to fill vacancies for roles that would be responsible for identifying appropriate EV charging point locations. It was highlighted that there were a number of funding models available for securing EV charging points, including through the government, and that the Council needed to do some more work in this area, however, charging points were often secured as part of the Development Management process.

The Sub-Committee welcomed the Council looking at EV solutions for its own fleet, and asked what work could be done to embed ambitions for zero emissions from contractors as part of the procurement process. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that the Council already asked contractors to explain how they would contribute to Net Zero and Carbon Neutral policies when bidding, but that costs and lead in times also had to be considered. The Chair asked how these considerations were weighted and was informed that this was dependent upon the contract.

The Chair asked what the awareness campaigns in the Plan would look like and what specific issues they would focus on. The Pollution Team Manager

explained that previously there had been an Air Quality Summit; meetings with schools, school governors and residents associations; as well as stands in libraries and at district centres. It was highlighted that there would be a consultation on the Air Quality Action Plan and that the Council would continue to listen to residents for the duration of the Plan, as well as ongoing efforts to communicate with residents. Officers highlighted the difficulty of getting residents to engage with an issue like air quality, but asked that Members get in contact with any engagement ideas they had. Members asked if there were any plans to work with GPs and pharmacies to display communications materials, and heard that this would be possible. The Council would continue to use events where possible to publicise the consultation, as well as initiatives like the 'smoothie bike' and work with the Council Comms team.

The Chair asked if there was scope to expand School Streets to nursery schools. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that the current focus was on schools, as there were more of these in the borough, and the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment added that there was a road safety budget that could fund some safety measures around nurseries if these were in hotspots.

The Chair asked how confident officers were that the actions in the new Plan would be achievable, and heard that officers were confident that these would be deliverable. The Corporate Director for SCRER explained that there would be fewer, but more focussed, actions aimed at a shorter period than in the previous Plan. The Plan covered a shorter period than previously so that the Council could be adaptive to change.

The Chair asked about additional plans to target idling and heard that there was proactive engagement around schools, taxi ranks and bus garages, but also reactive engagement where complaints were received. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment added that they were looking at what could be done to combine enforcement activity to address idling with things such as parking offences.

The Chair asked for some additional detail on plans to tackle wood burning in the borough, and the Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing explained that there was a possibility of extending Smoke Control Areas, encouraging the use of wood burners (which reduced particulate emission), and encouraging the use of recycling centres or garden waste collection services. The Sub-Committee asked much wood burning contributed to air pollution, and were informed that this was the second biggest source of small particulate emission in the borough.

Conclusions

The Sub-Committee welcomed that the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 would look at the expansion of Smoke Control Areas in the borough and were keen to see this enacted, subject to consultation, alongside proposed

educational campaigns for residents on the health and environmental impacts of wood burning.

Request for Information

The Sub-Committee requested that it be provided with a breakdown of the funding received from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund, the DEFRA Air Quality Grant, Section 106 Funding and Local Implementation Plan (LIP) towards the development and implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028, alongside information on which elements of the Plan each funding stream would support.

30/23 Cleaner Croydon

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 57 to 82 of the agenda, which provided an update on the Council's work on the Mayor's priority for delivering 'Cleaner Croydon' and feedback on its recommendations concerning the Waste & Recycling Contract. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment and Interim Director of Streets and Environment introduced the item and went through the presentation at Appendix A.

The Sub-Committee asked about the Council's implementation of the 'Love Clean Streets' app and asked what other methods the Council was using to ensure that reporting was taking place and ensure issues were not missed. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that the 'Love Clean Streets' app was fully integrated into Council and contractor back-office systems, but that the learning from the Norbury and Pollards Hill 'blitz' was that the value of in-person engagement with stakeholders and residents could not be understated. Members heard that engagement had already begun with residents, stakeholders and Ward Councillors for Thornton Heath (the next 'blitz' area) to gain local intelligence in advance of the clean; an initial site inspection had taken place with a small group of stakeholders to gauge their concerns and priorities.

The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that the Council had employed new Client Officers who would gain local intelligence to fill in the gaps where there was underreporting through the 'Love Clean Streets' app. Members heard that the 'blitz' approach helped officers gather detail on how well reporting through the app was working, and that work on improving and streamlining the Council's implementation of the app to make it more intuitive was ongoing. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment stated that it was being investigated if a 'Friends and Champions' section of the app could be added to give a better indication of who was reporting what, and where.

The Chair queried whether the additional data gathered by the new Client Officers and through engagement would be used to change the areas

prioritised for the 'blitz' cleans. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment responded that, whilst data from the app was a good starting point and had been used to choose the priority for the initial list, it was acknowledged that some areas were underreported. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that anecdotal data from the Client Officers and contractors would be combined with app data to gain a fuller picture on which areas would most benefit from a 'blitz' approach; it was highlighted that these cleans were in addition to normal core services. It was envisaged that the 'blitz' cleans be a rolling programme that serviced all 17 of Croydon's district centres, and did not require one clean to finish before the next one started.

The Chair commented on the 'Love Clean Streets' app, and asked what lessons were being learned from the simpler implementations in other boroughs. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that in some cases the app was not integrated with back-office systems, as it was in Croydon, and required manual processing. The Chair acknowledged this but stated that the intuitiveness for residents using the app did need to be improved.

Members asked if completed jobs reported on the app were being monitored to ensure the jobs were actually being done, and what options for reporting the Council was considering for those who were impacted by 'digital exclusion'. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that the contact centre could take reports by phone, and that reports could be made directly on the Council's website for those unable to use the app. On monitoring of completed jobs, the Council was aware of some incorrect closing of tickets and it was explained that there were opportunities in the app for residents to feedback where this was the case, and that this was monitored and picked up in contract monitoring meetings. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that there was ongoing work on the quality of responses to residents where jobs were closed down but had not been completed, and that this was also being looked at by the Deputy Cabinet Member for Contract Management. The Sub-Committee welcomed offers to engage outside of the meeting, but highlighted the importance of building robust systems so that this could be avoided and learning implemented. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods suggested that the new Client officers could be engaged in 'sampling exercises' by taking a number of reports and spot-checking for issues.

The Sub-Committee queried how enduring the effects of the 'blitz' clean in Norbury and Pollard Hill had been, and were informed that the effects so far had been lasting, and that graffiti had not so far returned. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that other preventative measures for graffiti, such as murals, were also being considered. The Sub-Committee asked if the 1,314 reports of graffiti were unique and if the Council had data on the number of these that had been successfully dealt with. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods responded that these were unique reports and that this data was being recorded; it was noted

that graffiti was only removed from public buildings and spaces outside of the 'blitz' clean programme.

Members asked whether there was data on the length of time reports remained open before being dealt with. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods responded that this data was available but highlighted that where fly-tips were reported on private land that these cases would remain open, as the Council did not have the jurisdiction or resource to deal with them. Members asked if there was a timetable for 'walkabouts' with ward councillors to look at qualitative data and gain local insights, and the Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that currently there was not. The Sub-Committee heard that four Client Officers had been recruited and completed training; these officers would now be working in four geographical areas, getting to know ward councillors, residents and friends groups. It was expected that each officer would be in each ward they were responsible for at least once per week.

The Sub-Committee commented on the prevalence of fly tipping on private land, and asked if the Council had any plans to address this. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that ways to address this would be investigated, but a co-ordinated internal strategy would need to be developed in collaboration with other departments to make sure interventions worked long term. The Chair asked what engagement was taking place with those identified as culprits of commercial or domestic fly tipping, or with those whose land was being fly tipped on. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that it was difficult to catch commercial fly tippers for a number of reasons, and that this was an ongoing issue. Members commented on fly tipping reports on public land being closed down as being on private land, and heard that often these were in areas, such as housing estates, where the contractor could not clear it; the new Client officer team would have a roll in intervening in these cases and resolving them in a satisfactory way for residents.

The Chair commented on the length of the 'blitz' cleans, highlighting that the Norbury and Pollards Hill clean had taken four weeks. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that these cleans were in addition to normal street cleansing, with the intention being to create a big step change and restore pride in an area, whilst generating a sustained improvement. It was highlighted that the cleans were being delivered within existing resource, which meant it could take some time to complete each area. It was expected that the full programme of 'blitz' cleans would take around 18 months to complete.

Members asked how many enforcement notices had been served as part of the Norbury and Pollard Hill clean. The Sub-Committee heard that the 'blitz' cleans had a focus on education and engagement, and there had been a conscious decision not to submit enforcement notices, but to instead to give warning notices. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that there had been lessons learned on identifying pro-active businesses who could act as conduits to promote reporting and

local pride in each area, as well as around early engagement with stakeholders before the cleans and development of a tailored communications programme. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment stated that the Council would be using its relationships with Resident Associations and community groups to make the 'blitz' cleans as effective as possible and to build trust with communities.

The Sub-Committee asked if the Council had developed a strategy for incentivising businesses to keep the areas around them clean, or to implement vertical planting, and to leverage existing community and litter picking groups by providing them with resources. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that there was not a written strategy, but that the Council recognised Street Champions and community groups as valuable assets and were working with these individuals to see how best to recognise their contributions to the borough and support their work.

Members asked if the 'blitz' clean had set any expectations that the Council would be undertaking tasks on private land, and the Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that business owners had been written to twice explaining what was happening and why to manage expectations and explain that businesses would be responsible for maintaining their properties following the clean. The Sub-Committee queried whether the Council would be producing any resources to support private landowners on maintaining their properties, such as a leaflet, and heard that this suggestion would be considered and that leaflets could be provided to Street Champions in future.

In response to questions about weeding, Members heard that pesticides were only used on hard standings and highways and that it was Council policy not to use pesticides for green spaces, and not during the 'blitz' programme. The Chair asked if the Council was considering the use of signage to encourage recycling and discourage fly tipping. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods responded that this was being looked into with the Comms team, and highlighted the importance of providing as much advice and education to residents (particularly those living in flats above shops) before pursuing enforcement measures. The Chair asked what was being done to assist residents living in flats above shops with waste collection, and heard that there had been significant learning around this from the Norbury and Pollards Hill 'blitz' on providing consistent advice to these residents, and ensuring that the contractor was collecting on the correct days.

The Sub-Committee asked if the Council had made any preparations for collecting seven streams of waste, and heard that it had not as Croydon was already compliant with proposed waste legislation, and that this would be carried into the new Waste and Street Cleansing Contract.

Members asked what key improvements were expected with the commencement of the new Waste and Street Cleansing Contract. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that there

would more robust enforcement of the new contract, supported by a contract monitoring team and Client officers, and that this would be implemented over the next 18 months to ensure that this was in place when the new contract started. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment stated that they were seeking a more proactive approach, with contractors reporting fly tipping amongst other measures. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods stated that the procurement strategy had used competitive dialogue to try to get maximum financial leverage through the value of the tender; it was stated that the contract would be of a higher value, but would have a significant weighting on social value.

The Sub-Committee asked how often contract management meetings with the South London Waste Partnership (SLWP) took place, including with the Cabinet Member. The Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhoods explained that they met with SLWP colleagues on a bi-monthly basis, in addition to a monthly transformational board and a senior management group (attended by directors) quarterly. The SLWP Joint Committee met quarterly and was attended by, and currently chaired by, the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that they had regular meetings with members of the SLWP and the contract monitoring officers based in Stubbs Mead.

Conclusions

The Sub-Committee concluded that they would like to add the 'blitz clean' programme to its work programme for 2024/25, to monitor whether the programme was successful and having a sustained impact on district centres, alongside data on the number of businesses and residents engaged during the cleans.

Request for Information

1. The Sub-Committee requested that information be provided on how the 17 areas identified for 'blitz cleans' would be prioritised, as well the timeline for when these cleans would take place.
2. The Sub-Committee requested information on the total number of reports made via the 'Love Clean Streets' app, as well as data on how long reports were taking to be actioned and completed.
3. The Sub-Committee requested further information on the enforcement powers at the disposal of the Council and an update on what consideration has been given to other forms of deterrent such as 'name and shame' campaigns and engaging with private landowners where fly-tips persist.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that Members were engaged for their views on how well the 'Love Clean Streets' app was working, as well as for their input as to how the implementation of the app in Croydon could be made more accessible for residents.
2. The Sub-Committee recommended that regular walkabouts for Ward Councillors were scheduled with the new Client Officer team to identify issues and feedback local knowledge concerning street cleaning, fly tipping, weeding and graffiti.

31/23 Local Plan Review

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 83 to 94 of the agenda, which provided an update on the proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 and the publication of the Local Plan Review for a second consultation. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration introduced the item and went through a presentation summarising the report.

The Sub-Committee asked what would happen if Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS) and Brighton Main Line Upgrade did not go ahead as planned. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration responded that the Council needed to have policies in place for the scheme should it go ahead, but that the actual funding for the scheme would come from the Department for Transport. The Head of Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration explained that the Local Plan would set out how the scheme should be accommodated should it be funded. The Sub-Committee heard that the scheme was unfunded at this time, but including it in the Local Plan would mean that the Council was well placed should a Transport Works Act Order Inquiry come forward.

Members asked what work was being done to engage developers and partners in realising the ambitions of the Local Plan. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration explained that there were regular meetings with partners (including residents and developers). The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration and the Mayor regularly meet with developers to discuss major developments, as well as pre-application discussions with officers. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that development of the Local Plan was a regulated process that set out clear expectations on engagement to ensure all those affected by the Plan were able to contribute their views. There had been a large amount of engagement with residents and communities, as well as landowners (through previous consultations and calls for sites). The Council had a large database of partners and organisations to facilitate its engagement; this included the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL), Network Rail and others. Engagement work was fundamental to the development of the

Local Plan to ensuring it was fit for purpose, and had to be demonstrated when it was submitted for examination before a planning inspector.

The Sub-Committee asked if the existing local masterplans would be changed to better align with the revised Local Plan. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration responded that there was harmonisation across the various local masterplans, and the Head of Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration explained that unadopted masterplans would not be adopted until the Local Plan had been agreed, and that these would be checked to ensure that they were properly aligned. Members asked if neighbouring masterplans accounted for each other, and heard that this was the case.

Members asked about increases in 'build to rent' properties, and queried whether the Local Plan addressed this. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration explained that the Council could not restrict developers in this way; however, the Local Plan would look to put restrictions on large-scale co-living developments. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained the 'Homes' chapter of the Plan had been revised to account for changes over the last ten years, and stressed the importance of providing a variety of tenures of homes appropriate for different groups.

The Sub-Committee asked if anything was being done to bring large-scale empty commercial units back into use. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration explained that the Executive Mayor was proactively focussed on this issue to move things forward, and the Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration added that up to date policy and guidance were important to ensure that the right kind of developments for Croydon came forward.

The Chair asked for an explanation of the 'Green Grid' and the Spatial Planning Plan Making Team Leader explained that this was a network of parks and green spaces across the borough, and about recognising the linkages between these spaces. The Local Plan also addressed sustainable transport as it related to the 'Green Grid'. The Chair asked if this included 'Blue Corridors' and heard that it did.

Members acknowledged the intention to move to a 'character over density' policy approach to house building in the Local Plan, and asked how many homes the Local Plan would facilitate in delivering and whether this had led to any trade-offs in achieving targets. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration responded that housing targets would be unchanged, but the emphasis had shifted to a design and character led approach.

The Chair asked if Croydon would be adopting a tall buildings policy, and heard from the Spatial Planning Plan Making Team Leader that it would and that this was required under the London Plan.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee welcomed the inclusion of the Green Grid and Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan Review, and recommended that Blue Corridors (watercourses and natural ponds) were explicitly referenced and considered in this area of work.

32/23 Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

33/23 Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24

The Sub-Committee commented on the possibility of adding the following to its work programme:

- Vision Zero
- Road Safety, illegal parking and 20mph
- Street Lighting

The meeting ended at 9.29 p.m.

Signed:

Date:

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	30 January 2024
REPORT TITLE:	Period 7 Financial Performance Report
LEAD OFFICER:	Nick Hibberd - Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Nick Hibberd - Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery
LEAD MEMBER:	<p style="text-align: right;">Councillor Scott Roche Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Councillor Jeet Bains Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration</p>
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item is included on the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee Work Programme for 2023/24 as a standing item to be reviewed by exception.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Sub-Committee is asked to scrutinise the information provided with a view to considering whether it is reassured about the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 PERIOD 1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 1.1. The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee has asked to be provided with the most recent Cabinet Financial Performance report to review the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget
- 1.2. The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is asked to review the information on the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget contained in the Cabinet report on Period 7 Financial Performance and to consider whether Members are reassured about its delivery.

2 APPENDICES

2.1 Appendix 1 - Period 7 Financial Performance Report

3 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

3.1 None

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET		
DATE OF DECISION	31 January 2024		
REPORT TITLE:	2023-24 Period 7 Financial Performance Report		
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	Jane West Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)		
LEAD OFFICER:	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)		
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance		
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Reference number: 8623EM Reason: Key Decision – Decision incurs expenditure, or makes savings, of more than £1,000,000 or such smaller sum which the decision-taker considers is significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public Grounds for the exemption: N/A	
WARDS AFFECTED:	All		

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Council’s financial performance as at Period 7 (October 2023) for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme. The report forms part of the Council’s financial management process for publicly reporting financial performance on a monthly basis.

Financial Performance Summary Table

Financial Performance Area	2023-24 Revised Budget (£m)	2023-24 Forecast (£m)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£m)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (%)
Revenue Forecast (General Fund)	340.9	340.9	-	-
Revenue Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	-	12.0	12.0	N/A
Capital Forecast (General Fund)	144.7	126.7	(18.0)	(12.4%)
Capital Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	33.2	38.9	5.7	17.2%

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended:

- 2.1** to note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 7, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £1.5m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.
- 2.2** to approve the budget movements between directorates to match the movement of teams between directorates as set out in paragraph 4.13.
- 2.3** to approve within budget inter-directorate virements from Corporate to service directorates for pay inflation (£10.270m) (para 4.95).
- 2.4** to approve within budget inter-directorate virement of £0.698m from the Corporate economic demand pressures budget to the Children, Young People and Education directorate as set out in paragraph 4.97.
- 2.5** to approve within budget inter-directorate virements from Corporate to service directorates to correct General Fund recharge budgets relating to the HRA, Public Health, capitalisation of salaries and corporate support (overhead) recharges, and staffing and income budget corrections (£5.802m) (para 4.99).
- 2.6** to note the progress in MTFs savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.107.
- 2.7** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.102.
- 2.8** to note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £12.0m.
- 2.9** to note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £18.0m against the revised capital budget of £144.7m.
- 2.10** to note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £5.7m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 2.11** to note the Council's historic borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.

- 2.12** to note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 2.13** to note that current forecasts are based on the best available information at the time and will be subject to review and change during the financial year.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The Financial Performance Report is presented monthly to Cabinet and provides a detailed breakdown of the Council's financial position and the in-year challenges it faces. It covers the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme. The Financial Performance Report ensures there is transparency in the financial position, and enables scrutiny by the Executive Mayor, Cabinet, Scrutiny & Overview Committee and the public. It offers reassurance regarding the commitment by Chief Officers to more effective financial management and discipline.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1** The 2023-24 budget approved by Council in March 2023 set a net revenue budget of £340.9m. This required capitalisation directions from government of £63m to balance, owing to resolving historical inaccurate accounting treatments and to fund the ongoing annual servicing of debt.
- 4.2** The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.
- 4.3** The current forecast is that the Council will breakeven against the 2023-24 General Fund revenue budget, however this is following the forecast utilisation of the £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £1.5m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Cost of Living Considerations

- 4.4** There are a number of inflationary pressures that the Council, like all local authorities, is managing. The UK's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate was 4.6% in the 12 months to October 2023, remaining high albeit lower than the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting in November 2022 that the CPI hit 11.1% in October 2022. This impact goes beyond the Council as the cost of living is affecting all households and businesses.
- 4.5** These macro-economic factors are impacted by international events and, therefore, well beyond the control of Croydon Council. Despite the limitations, the Council is seeking to support households wherever possible.

- 4.6** A dedicated cost of living information hub has been established on the Council's website. This provides a single source of information, informing residents of the financial support available and signposting to further support, advice and guidance.
- 4.7** The Council provides a wide range of support for residents that may be struggling owing to cost of living pressures. These include:
- Discretionary support for residents in financial hardship, including the Household Support Fund
 - Council Tax support – for residents on a low income or in receipt of benefits, Council Tax bills could be reduced by up to 100%
 - Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax)
 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) discretionary fund targeted for tenants that are not in receipt of housing benefit
 - Benefits calculator, to ensure residents receive the support to which they are entitled
 - Energy advice, including heating and money saving options, through our Croydon Healthy Homes service
 - Free holiday activity clubs with healthy meals for children
 - Croydon Works to help residents into employment or to receive training to support them into work and funding of the voluntary sector to provide advice and guidance
- 4.8** The cost of living information hub also signposts residents to a range of support provided by other organisations in Croydon, including:
- NHS Healthy Start vouchers for families
 - Free school meals
 - Support from voluntary, community and faith sector organisations
 - Support for businesses through the London Business Hub and the British Business Bank
 - CroydonPlus credit union which offers affordable ways to manage money, including savings accounts and loans

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY

- 4.9** The General Fund revenue forecast outturn shows an overall balanced position following the forecast utilisation of the £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC. The service directorates show a forecast overspend of £1.5m which is offset by utilisation of the corporate risk contingency budget (£1.5m). It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Table showing the revenue forecasts by Directorate

Directorate	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)	Prior Month Forecast Variance (£m)	Change in Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care and Health	141.0	91.7	140.0	(1.0)	0.2	(1.2)
Assistant Chief Executive	40.8	22.1	39.9	(0.9)	(0.5)	(0.4)
Children, Young People and Education	96.2	44.0	101.6	5.4	5.8	(0.4)
Housing	21.5	19.1	21.5	-	2.2	(2.2)
Resources	35.2	91.6	33.2	(2.0)	(2.0)	-
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	70.6	37.5	70.6	-	-	-
Subtotal Service Directorates	405.3	306.0	406.8	1.5	5.7	(4.2)
Corporate Items and Funding	(64.4)	(26.4)	(65.9)	(1.5)	(5.7)	4.2
Total Net Expenditure Budget	340.9	279.6	340.9	-	-	-

- 4.10** Work will continue through to the end of the year to manage those areas with forecast overspends to ensure the Council remains within budget.
- 4.11** The Council continues to build on the improvements in financial management that were made last financial year. However, there is a considerable amount yet to do, which is fully recognised within the organisation.
- 4.12** A monthly budget assurance process and independent challenge of expenditure takes place. This is in addition to Cabinet and Scrutiny & Overview Committee review. The assurance meetings provide the Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the Chief Executive with an opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the forecast outturn, review risks and opportunities, and ensure that savings are delivered and income targets are met. The meetings ensure the Council is doing all it can to reduce overspends and deliver a balanced budget.

Budget virements to match new directorate structures

- 4.13** The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is requested to approve the following budget movements to match the movement of teams from one directorate to a different directorate. Please note that this is just a transfer of budget between directorates and does not change the total net expenditure budget of the Council or the usage of the budgets as agreed by full Council in March 2023.

Table showing budget virements between directorates

Team	Current Directorate	New Directorate	Net Expenditure Budget (£000's)
Education Capital Delivery Team	Housing	Resources	108
Support Exempt Accommodation (Housing Benefits) Team	Housing	Resources	433

DIRECTORATE VARIANCES

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH (ASCH)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care Operations	122.3	89.2	122.4	0.1
Adult Strategic Commissioning, Policy & Improvement	16.8	1.3	15.8	(1.0)
Central ASCH	1.9	1.2	1.8	(0.1)
Total ASCH	141.0	91.7	140.0	(1.0)

4.14 At period 7 the ASCH directorate has a forecast underspend of £1.0m (0.7%) against a budget of £141.0m which is an improvement of £1.2m from period 6.

4.15 The ASCH Directorate has challenging savings targets totalling circa £10m to deliver in 2023-24 on placements and care packages through demand management, commissioning and review of care packages.

Adult Social Care Operations - Forecast overspend of £0.1m

4.16 Staffing across this division demonstrates a forecast underspend (broken down by area below) owing to periods of vacancy above the £1m MTF5 5% vacancy factor saving applied to staffing budgets in 2023-24. There is a national shortage of both social workers and occupational therapists and recruitment to many roles is proving challenging. The periods of vacancy are a barrier to achieving savings as staff are focused on statutory delivery rather than delivering transformation to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.

4.17 Localities & LIFE have an underspend of (£1.8m) owing to a net underspending on care and staffing costs. This is a net improvement of (£0.3m) from Period 6 comprising £0.1m pressure owing to the transfer of the equipment service from Policy and Improvement, and a reduction in the care forecast owing to lower than anticipated demand (£0.4m).

4.18 Working Age Adults and Transitions has an overspend of £3.7m, an improvement of (£0.4m) from period 6. This comprises a reduced overspend on care of £3.8m (owing to clients with increased care needs) which is partly mitigated by an underspend in staffing of (£0.1m). Work to calculate a managing demand positive impact on the forecast has been undertaken, the figure is estimated to be circa £2.0m and this will be reviewed monthly going forward. The managing demand work

reduces pressures coming into the service. The service is now on target to achieve savings of £5.3m. It should also be noted that this area was overspent by £2.3m in 2022-23. The service area has committed to achieving further savings to offset the budget pressure.

- 4.19 Provider Services has a (£1.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.20 Safeguarding service has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies across the service.
- 4.21 Business Compliance and Early Intervention has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.22 Mental health services have a (£0.5m) forecast underspend owing to the application of external discharge funding.

Adult Social Care Policy and Improvement – Forecast underspend of (£1.0m)

- 4.23 The Policy and Improvement division is forecasting an underspend of (£1.0m) owing to staffing vacancies and minor contract underspends. This is an improvement of (£0.5m) owing to the transfer of the Equipment Service to Localities of (£0.1m), delay in commissioning contracts including those supporting service reviews (£0.3m) and minor works in PFI being less than expected (£0.1m).

Central ASCH – Forecast underspend of (£0.1m)

- 4.24 The underspend is a result of the delays in recruitment to fixed term and temporary positions to provide additional capacity to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.

4.25 Risks

- Risks continue in the provider market from inflation including higher fuel, labour and property costs which may result in claims for increased fees and/or financial instability with the potential for 'handing back' contracts. The potential reprovisioning costs if providers exit the market could be significant. It should be noted that this risk is already materialising. Providers are requesting increases in costs for existing care packages and new placements are increasing in costs. These are included in the forecast and are hardest felt in the working age adult cohort.

4.26 Opportunities

- Savings achievement is improving and will support the forecast going forward for the ASCH directorate.

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ACE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Policy, Programmes and Performance	4.7	2.8	4.3	(0.4)
Elections Service	0.3	0.1	0.3	-
Croydon Digital and Resident Access	32.2	16.6	31.7	(0.5)
Chief People Officer	3.5	2.0	3.5	-
Central ACE	0.1	0.5	0.1	-
Covid Grants	-	0.1	-	-
Total ACE (General Fund)	40.8	22.1	39.9	(0.9)
Public Health Grant Ringfenced Services	-	5.0	-	-

4.27 At period 7, the Assistant Chief Executive directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £0.9m (2.2%) against a budget of £40.8m.

Policy, Programmes & Performance Division - £0.4m forecast underspend

4.28 Recruitment is continuing into the new staffing structure for the Policy, Programmes and Performance Division. The forecast underspend is owing to periods of vacancy of some posts in the new structure. The budget has reduced by £1.2m from Period 5 owing to the movement of the Coroner's Service and Resilience Team to the SCRER directorate.

Elections Service - breakeven position

4.29 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Council's core Elections Service.

Croydon Digital and Resident Access Division - £0.5m forecast underspend

4.30 Underspends in Concessionary Travel are forecast owing to staff vacancies and a favourable final concessionary travel settlement for the year.

4.31 The Digital and Resident Access Division is undergoing a review to assess the achievability of in-year MTFS savings for staffing and IT contracts.

Chief People Officer Division - breakeven position

4.32 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Chief People Officer Division.

Central Assistant Chief Executive – breakeven position

4.33 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for Central Assistant Chief Executive.

Public Health Division – breakeven position in ringfenced grant after movement in reserves

4.34 It is currently forecast that Public Health will contribute £3.7m to ring fenced Public Health reserves at the end of 2023-24.

4.35 A Council wide task and finish group has been set up to address underspends in the Public Health Grant (for the current year and the accumulated balance on the balance sheet as an earmarked Public Health reserve from underspends in previous years) by identifying appropriate commissioning opportunities. The movement from the previous period (£1.3m) is a direct result of the work of the group, as it reviews and identifies new funding opportunities and reshapes delivery opportunities.

4.36 Risks

Elections

The majority of the costs of administering the London Assembly, Mayor of London, and a potential General Election, in 2024 will be reclaimed from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the UK Government’s Consolidated Fund. As the criteria for reclaiming costs have not yet been set, there is a risk that the Council may incur costs which cannot be reclaimed which would need to be funded corporately. It is likely that any such costs will fall in the 2024-25 financial year.

Croydon Digital & Resident Access – Digital Operations

Savings relating to the End User Service transformation (£0.5m) and the workforce review (£0.55m) are likely to slip into the 2024-25 financial year. This has already been reflected in the forecast.

4.37 Opportunities

There are no opportunities to report on at this time for the ACE directorate.

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION (CYPE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Children’s Social Care	72.4	36.4	77.1	4.7
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and UASC Care Leavers	(0.3)	5.7	-	0.3
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine	-	(6.5)	-	-
Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement	6.8	1.7	7.3	0.5
Non-DSG Education Services	16.8	6.4	16.7	(0.1)
Central CYPE	0.5	0.3	0.5	-
Total CYPE (General Fund)	96.2	44.0	101.6	5.4
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Education Services	82.0	50.0	82.7	0.7
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Early Years Block	31.1	22.8	31.1	-

4.38 At period 7, the CYPE directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £5.4m (5.6%) against a budget of £96.2m. This is a favourable movement of £0.4m since period 6.

If the budget adjustments are agreed as per this report, the forecast overspend will reduce to £4.2m.

Children's Social Care Division – forecast overspend of £5.0m (including UASC and UASC Care Leavers)

£2.8m placements overspend owing to five active high-cost placements including residential, semi-independent and one secure. Three of these high-cost placements are new in 2023-24.

Analysis is being undertaken on a continuous basis to review all high-cost placements with the aim to reduce spend where possible. Senior officers are engaging robustly with neighbouring councils who have placed children and families with complex needs in the borough in temporary accommodation. Where this provision does not meet the family's specialist needs, Croydon's placement costs can be up to £1m per annum.

£1.5m staffing overspend, which includes a pension budget shortfall of £0.8m since 2020-21. This was previously fully offset by underspends owing to vacancies and delays in recruitment however this cannot be accommodated in 2023-24.

£0.3m under-achievement in income (including £0.5m unachieved 2022-23 MTFS NHS Funding savings which have been partially offset through other income).

£0.1m potential overspend on Adopt London South, over and above the agreed budget owing to interagency fees and staffing costs across the consortium calculated at year end.

£0.3m overspend in the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) budget because of the disproportionate number of care experienced young people who were formerly unaccompanied children. At 18 years old the grant provided by the Home Office to the Council for young people's care and support reduces significantly.

Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement Division – forecast overspend of £0.5m

4.39 The division is forecasting a staffing overspend of £0.3m from the 5% vacancy factor MTFS saving of £0.3m applied to the 2023-24 budget (as several teams are fully staffed) plus the impact of increased quality assurance activity to track the impact of the pandemic on outcomes for children. The pressure may reduce during the year if there are periods of vacancy.

4.40 An anticipated Public Health contribution income budget of £0.4m, which relates to a 2022-23 MTFS saving, has been reviewed to rectify as part of the budget correction exercise in this report.

Non-DSG Education services – forecast underspend of £0.1m

- 4.41** Non-DSG Education services are still forecasting an underspend of £0.1m at Period 7, with staffing vacancies offsetting income pressures in other parts of the service.
- 4.42** £0.3m unachieved 2022-23 MTFs NHS Funding savings are being mitigated by underspends in other areas of the service.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services – forecast overspend of £0.678m

- 4.43** The SEND High Needs forecast at period 7 is an overspend of £0.678m against the budget of £82.059m. There is no movement from the period 6 position after the September intake of pupils was agreed with schools.
- 4.44** The overall variance at Period 7 represents £0.047m favourable variance from the expected overspend of £0.725m submitted to the Department of Education (DfE) Safety Valve Team as part of the approved Deficit Recovery Plan. The service is delivering all the savings strategies as set out in the Safety Valve (SV) agreement including the use of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) to help deliver more local schools places as well as improve existing provisions to meet the increasing placement demands for complex needs pupils. The service will be submitting the 2023-24 Quarter 3 High Needs monitoring reports to the DfE Safety Valve team by the set deadline.
- 4.45** See below the key areas:

£2.199m Out of Borough and Independent – Forecast overspend due to an increase in complex cases above that expected, requiring out of borough placements to meet needs. The service is in discussions with some local providers to set up Enhanced Learning Provision during the Autumn Term.

£1.110m overspend due to increased placements in Mainstream Education provision exceeding the budgeted allocation. This forms part of the invest to save SEND strategy in year 2.

(£0.406m) underspend in Early Years provision.

(£0.250m) underspend in top up funding related to delayed implementation of the proposed expansion of Enhanced Learning Provision across a few schools.

(£0.953m) underspend in the Service Transformation budget set up to support the DSG Deficit Recovery strategy.

(£0.400m) underspend in funding related to staffing cost in therapies and support services owing to service re-alignment to maximise savings.

(£0.622m) expected clawback from specific Resource Provision (academies) for extra funding received from DfE.

4.46 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services will continue to closely monitor the demands pressures in Independent and Out of Borough placements owing to cost implications. Addington Valley Academy, St Nicholas, Coulsdon College Croydon, and Waddon Youth Disability Services are increasing placement numbers, which is reducing high-cost placements out of borough.

4.47 The 2023-24 period 7 High Needs forecast outturn variance of £0.678m leads to an overall DSG deficit projection of £16.062m at the end of 2023-24 compared to the Safety Valve target of £16.080m prior to the £3.290m Deficit Recovery payment from the DfE as per the Safety Valve agreement. This demonstrates that the Council is still ahead of the DfE target.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Early Years Block – forecast breakeven position

4.48 The Department for Education (DfE) provides six key funding streams for the Early Years Block. The budget allocation for 2023-24 is £31.088m and a breakeven position is forecast. The government recently announced an additional grant (Supplementary funding) of £2.507m for Croydon covering the period from September 2023 to March 2024. The DfE operational guide directs local authorities to “pass-through” 100% of the allocation to the sector and the Council is on target to meet the DfE requirements. Schools Forum was recently provided with updates on the payment to date.

4.49 Risks

- The Children’s Social Care Division is monitoring placement and care package expenditure during the year. Pressure on placement spend is due to the sufficiency challenges both locally and nationally. The introduction of regulation for supported accommodation is predicted to increase charges as providers seek to pass on costs to Local Authorities. “Costs of new Ofsted regulation and inspection regime for semi-independent placement provision could be nine times higher than government funding, whilst one in five care beds could be withdrawn”, report warns – London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA).
- Services previously funded by the HRA have been reviewed for eligibility which may result in a General Fund pressure of £0.9m.
- The service is also reviewing the housing accommodation charges from the Housing General Fund for Care Experienced Young People.
- The £0.3m unachieved income budget within the High Needs General Fund budget poses an indirect financial risk to the Safety Valve target should there be a need to offset the £0.3m potential shortfall to support activities or resources (EHCP Coordinators) within the SEND service. The service is exploring all mitigating options available.
- The service is monitoring all of the risks associated with the Safety Valve target which includes increasing complexity of needs requiring additional funding for special schools, increasing placement costs and extra out of borough placements to meet the local needs of some CYP pupils with complex needs.

4.50 Opportunities:

- There could be some staffing underspends from periods of vacancy.
- Potential underspend of £0.3m in legal costs, if the lower numbers of care proceedings and UASC age assessment challenges continue.

HOUSING

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Resident Engagement and Allocations	21.4	18.9	21.4	-
Housing Estates and Improvement	0.1	0.2	0.1	-
Total Housing	21.5	19.1	21.5	-

- 4.51** At period 7, the Housing directorate has a General Fund breakeven forecast against the budget of £21.5m. At period 6 it was agreed that £2.2m budget would be transferred to the Housing directorate from the Corporate economic demand pressures budget to cover emergency accommodation pressures resulting from evictions and accelerated Home Office decision making which is increasing the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees requiring housing in the borough.
- 4.52** An allocation of £1.234m has been agreed from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) grant, with £1m supporting homelessness costs and £0.234m supporting the clearing of the homelessness casework backlog.
- 4.53** There is a crisis within the London housing market that is creating significant demand for services, and it is difficult to predict how far or fast demand will continue to grow. The data available following the changeover of rent account systems to the new NEC IT system is now improving although further improvements to forecasting accuracy can be expected as data quality is addressed, reporting is developed further, and more data analysis is performed.
- 4.54** Current financial modelling of a worst case scenario for emergency and temporary accommodation indicates that the 2023-24 overspend could increase up to circa £4m and this will be monitored closely over the remaining months of the financial year to check whether levels of new temporary accommodation placements continue at the current higher level or return to being in line with longer term historical trends. The pressures experienced by Croydon are also being experienced across London and nationally and therefore central government may provide in-year funding such as through a potential winter pressure top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant (which has not been announced to date, but was provided in recent years).
- 4.55** The emergency and temporary accommodation budgets were increased by £4.8m in 2023-24 from the corporate non-pay inflationary pressures budget to mitigate inflation pressures, however demand pressures remain above this.

4.56 A top-up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £1.9m has been announced by DLUHC to cover homelessness pressures relating to Ukrainian refugees. This funding may also be used to fund wider homelessness pressures and reporting requirements are in line with the existing HPG requirements. The grant top-up could also help offset any potential detriment to income collection resulting in the bad debt provision being increased at year end.

Emergency Accommodation

4.57 There are a number of factors that impact expenditure against this budget. Firstly, there has been a demand rise in the number of households that have been placed into Emergency Accommodation. The factors that have pushed up demand include:

- The large number of bailiffs warrants from the private sector being issued as the courts are catching up with the backlog of cases since the Covid amnesty. Restrictions were lifted in 2021 but there has been a long backlog through the courts for these cases hence the delayed impact on the homelessness service.
- The number of asylum-seeking households which is adding a pressure on available affordable accommodation. There are over 1,000 asylum seekers currently in hotel accommodation and government have pledged to close around 100 hotels this year and bring in a streamlined assessment process. As a result, from August 2023 the Home Office accelerated their decision making for asylum claims and give very short notice when people are to be evicted from their accommodation, this could be as short as 7 days. This is an additional pressure as the Council does not receive any financial assistance for these households.
- Family evictions are also increasing, potentially linked to the decrease in availability of affordable housing in the private rented sector (PRS) and the increase in evictions detailed above and subsequent short-term arrangements breaking down.

4.58 Additional to the increase in demand the service discovered a backlog of circa 2,000 cases and appointments following the implementation of the Housing Needs Service structure. As the backlog team deal with these cases there are now additional placements in EA.

4.59 There is a shortage of suitable Emergency Accommodation to meet the increasing demand, so the Council is relying on expensive commercial hotels and the cost can be expected to increase.

Temporary Accommodation

4.60 Numbers of households in temporary accommodation are expected to fall slightly and steadily across the year (in contrast to nightly paid accommodation) and is adding to the pressure on emergency accommodation as properties are being moved away from Council access in the private rental sector by landlords who are impacted by the economic situation.

Risks

- 4.61** The implementation of the new NEC IT system experienced a delay in setting up the interfaces between NEC and the Oracle finance system. The income interface is now posting income from the NEC system into the Oracle finance system, however there are reconciliations still being carried out. There may be a requirement to increase the loss allowance (bad debt provision) at the end of 2023-24 depending on the level of income collection achieved in year.
- 4.62** The Housing Directorate continues to be impacted by the rapidly worsening housing market within London as private sector landlords are increasing rents or leaving the market, and tenants are struggling with cost of living pressures. The challenge for Croydon in dealing with such rapid inflation has multiple strands. There are forecasting difficulties in predicting how much prices are expected to move and at what pace.
- 4.63** There are difficulties in negotiating and approving price rises without losing properties or fuelling the rises further. Regular meetings with neighbouring boroughs are being held to ensure collective agreements are being made with the larger providers of emergency accommodation.
- 4.64** There has been a concerted effort to hold homelessness accommodation costs down across London through partnerships with organisations like Capital Letters and via the agreed Pan-London temporary accommodation rates. The rates can no longer be contained though as demand outweighs available affordable supply. At a Pan London meeting, all boroughs confirmed that they are no longer paying the agreed Pan London rates to ensure they meet their demand challenges. A combination of all these factors has led to an increase in both the average cost of emergency and temporary accommodation that Croydon can secure to meet demand, as well as an increase in the use of nightly paid emergency accommodation to compensate for the loss of some longer-term leased accommodation because of landlords leaving the market.
- 4.65** There is a potential financial risk from the fire at Sycamore House in Thornton Heath depending on the insurance claim settlement not yet finalised. This risk was considered in closing the 2022-23 accounts and so any difference in the estimated income of 70% of costs from the insurers will either be a charge or a benefit in the 2023-24 accounts.
- 4.66** There is a potential budget pressure, above the currently estimated £1.2m for 2023-24 which has been funded through the economic demand pressures budget transfer agreed in Period 3, in relation to housing benefit subsidies for the Guaranteed Rent Scheme for Care Experienced Young People. The pressure impacts the Housing Directorate as it forms part of the cost of temporary accommodation. The housing benefit subsidy pressure will be monitored throughout the year and mitigated where possible.
- 4.67** There is another potential pressure on the housing budget due to temporary accommodation management fees of £40/week/unit paid through Housing Benefit and not recoverable through subsidy from DWP. From 1 April 2017, in line with the

government announcement in the 2015 spending review, funding was devolved to Local Authorities through the Homelessness Prevention Grant with the aim of allowing Councils to better manage their temporary accommodation pressures. Following the government change, this cost was not allocated to the Housing Service and has been a pressure within the Resources directorate but in 2023-24 could be a pressure on the Housing budget. This will depend on the outcome of the ongoing Housing Benefit review project work.

Opportunities

- 4.68** Housing will continue to ensure that the use of ringfenced Household Support Fund and Rough Sleeping initiative grants is used both within the grant terms and to maximise the mitigating effect on the general fund spend, e.g. by targeting households in rent arrears for support.
- 4.69** DLUHC have in the prior two financial years issued a winter pressures top-up grant amount to the Homelessness Prevention Grant. This has not been confirmed or ruled-out for 2023-24.
- 4.70** The Council is reviewing asylum seeker and refugee grant funding for allocation to related homelessness costs.
- 4.71** There are opportunities from accommodation that is coming on stream for placing homelessness clients, which will provide alternative temporary accommodation and reduce the use of expensive nightly paid accommodation.
- 4.72** The restructure for Housing Needs has been implemented and will form the bedrock for process change and a more cohesive journey for a homeless household. The financial benefits are expected to be realised in the longer term from better practice resulting in reduced spend on homelessness.

RESOURCES

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Commercial Investment	18.5	7.0	16.4	(2.1)
Finance (<i>refer note 1</i>)	15.5	78.4	15.5	-
Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	2.3	3.0	2.4	0.1
Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk	0.6	1.9	0.5	(0.1)
Internal Audit Service	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1
Pensions and Treasury	0.3	0.9	0.3	-
Central Resources	(2.4)	0.2	(2.4)	-
Total Resources	35.2	91.6	33.2	(2.0)

Note 1: The actuals to date are high in the Finance Division owing to Housing Benefits expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.

- 4.73** At period 7, the Resources directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £2.0m (5.7%) against a budget of £35.2m.

Commercial Investment Division – £2.1m forecast underspend

- 4.74** The division continues to forecast decreased utilities costs and improved recharging to external bodies. There are also £0.5m of staffing underspends across the division, mainly in Facilities Management owing to periods of staffing vacancy, which are being offset by a forecast decrease in recharges to capital.

Finance Division – breakeven forecast position

- 4.75** There is a breakeven forecast position for the Finance Division. The Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt Service is forecasting a staffing underspend owing to staffing vacancies and increased court costs income, but these are being offset by decreased Land Charges income and temporarily increased agency staffing in strategic finance to work through historic accounting issues including the prior years' accounts.
- 4.76** A cross Council working group is currently operating to mitigate Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy risks by maximising HB subsidy income claims, increasing collection of HB overpayments and reducing costs. The actuals to date are high in the Division owing to HB expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.
- 4.77** The Finance Division has undergone a restructure of the strategic finance service and will now commence recruitment into roles which are currently covered by agency staffing. The capacity and skills levels required in the strategic finance service have been reviewed and extra funding from growth and/or reserves has been requested for 2024-25.

Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division – £0.1m forecast overspend

- 4.78** There is a £0.1m forecast underspend in the Monitoring Officer service owing to staff vacancies and an underspend against the members allowances budget.
- 4.79** There is a forecast overspend in Legal Services of £0.2m mainly owing to high levels of agency staffing.
- 4.80** The Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division is reviewing usage of external legal advice, with a view to increasing the inhouse staffing structure (moving budget from external legal expenditure in directorates) to provide more legal services internally and therefore reduce overall legal expenditure for the Council.

Other Service Areas and Central Resources - breakeven forecast position

- 4.81** There is a £0.1m forecast overspend in Internal Audit expenditure. This is offset by small underspends across Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk, Pensions and Treasury, and Central Resources.

Risks

- 4.82** There is a risk in the Commercial Investment Division as work continues to identify the net impact of asset disposals including the full cost of property related expenditure and loss of income streams.
- 4.83** There is a risk in the Finance Division in relation to Housing Benefit subsidies including the potential impact of the roll out of universal credit on the collection of overpayments.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY (SCRER)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Sustainable Communities	54.1	37.5	54.3	0.2
Culture and Community Safety	9.8	0.4	9.0	(0.8)
Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	6.7	0.7	7.3	0.6
Central SCRER	-	(1.1)	-	-
Total SCRER	70.6	37.5	70.6	-

- 4.84** At period 7, the SCRER directorate has a General Fund forecast of a breakeven position against a budget of £70.6m. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offence and planning.

Sustainable Communities Division - forecast overspend of £0.2m

- 4.85** There is a forecast £1.0m pressure for SEND home to school transport due to increased demand and a forecast £0.8m income pressure in New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) coring inspections. The pressures are being partially offset through a forecast underspend of £1.3m in staffing owing to periods of vacancy and £0.3m forecast underspend in waste services owing to reduced level of green and food waste.

Culture and Community Safety Division – forecast underspend of £0.8m

- 4.86** The division is forecasting an underspend of £0.8m owing to reduced utility costs in contracts (£0.3m), periods of staffing vacancy (£0.4m) and underspends across the libraries service while the service is under redesign (£0.1m). The Coroners service is projected to underspend by (£0.1m), this will be transferred to reserves to support the service in future years.
- 4.87** The Culture and Community Safety Division leads on the London Borough of Culture 2023 activities, funded through external funding sources. This is a year-long celebration of Croydon's unique identity, diverse communities and rich heritage, culture and creativity. The programme for "This is Croydon" showcases Croydon to the world.

It includes major events with international headliners performing alongside emerging home-grown talent, plus hundreds of cultural activities from our communities.

Planning and Sustainable Regeneration Division – forecast overspend of £0.6m

4.88 The division is forecasting an income under-achievement of £0.8m owing to lower activity levels to date in planning major applications and planning performance agreements. This is being partially offset by a forecast staffing underspend of £0.2m owing to periods of vacancy in the Growth and Regeneration Team.

4.89 The reduction in planning major applications is being experienced across the country and the GLA is reporting the reduction across London. It is these applications which bring in the most significant fees. The reduction in major applications can be attributed to several factors, which include:

- Economic factors such as increased building and material costs and increased interest rates.
- Uncertainty relating to the emerging Building Safety Bill – impacts on design and when a second staircase is required.
- Uncertainty in relation to emerging planning legislation. Implementation details are unknown and could be impacted by when the next general election will take place.

4.90 Risks

- Demand for parking services has not returned to pre-pandemic levels and this is affecting all areas of parking which includes Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), pay and display and on-street parking.
- Parking Services have had delays in connection with the roll out of new ANPR cameras which affect the income levels within the service.
- The Environment Act 2021 operates as the UK's new framework of environmental protection. Given that the UK has left the EU, new laws that relate to nature protection, water quality, clean air, as well as additional environmental protections that originally came from Brussels, needed to be established. The Act is a vehicle for a number of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) different environmental policies and sets out the legal framework for significant reforms to local authority waste and recycling services, as well as creating new statutory duties for local authorities on nature recovery. The government has stated that additional burdens funding will be provided to local authorities for the new requirements as they come into force, however the Council will need to monitor closely the extra costs involved.
- Waste services are demand led which represents a potential risk to the current forecast. Levels of tonnage are monitored on a monthly basis and the forecast will be updated throughout the year.

- The previously stated risk to New Roads and Street Works Act income owing to delays and disputes with utility companies has now been realised as a pressure. Further work is being undertaken to mitigate these pressures where possible.
- Within the Violence Reduction Network a further Domestic Homicide Review has been initiated.

4.91 Opportunities

- The SCRER directorate is actively pursuing several grant applications to further improve the financial position:
 - The Culture and Community Safety division have successfully secured grant funding from Sport England for swimming pool costs.
 - Further communications are being held with public health regarding enhancing the borough's community safety offer with direct funding.
 - Within Development Management a bid is in progress for the Planning Skills Delivery Fund which will assist the service in clearing the backlog of planning applications.
- There are several major schemes that are in development that should generate large fees - however these should not be submitted prematurely as this could result in significant costs.
- There could be further staffing underspends across the directorate depending on the timing, and success, of recruitment into posts.

CORPORATE ITEMS AND FUNDING

Area of Spend	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Inflation and Economic Demand Pressures	12.0	-	12.0	-
Risk Contingency Budget	5.0	-	3.5	(1.5)
Transformation Programme	10.0	-	10.0	-
Other corporate items	(91.4)	(26.4)	(91.4)	-
Total Corporate Items and Funding	(64.4)	(26.4)	(65.9)	(1.5)

4.92 At period 7, the Corporate directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £1.5m (2.3%) against a net budget of (£64.4m). The underspend relates to the risk contingency budget offsetting £1.5m of the pressures across the other directorates.

4.93 The corporate area holds funding streams such as Council Tax, retained share of Business Rates and Core Grants. The corporate budget also holds the Council-wide risk contingency budget (£5m) and the budgets for borrowing and interest received.

- 4.94** The corporate area funds redundancy, severance and pension strain costs which contribute to achieving General Fund MTFs savings. There may be a pressure in 2023-24 from this area of costs owing to the implementation of staffing savings.
- 4.95** The NJC national negotiations on the 2023-24 pay award for staff have concluded. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is requested to approve the inter-directorate virement to transfer the related pay inflation budget currently held in corporate to the service directorates as detailed in the table below. Please note that the pay award has been agreed on very similar terms to 2022-23 and is within the £11.2m pay inflation budget allowed for in the 2023-24 budget agreed by full Council in March 2023.

Table showing allocations to directorates for 2023-24 pay inflation

Directorate	Pay inflation budget (£m)
Adult Social Care and Health	1.820
Assistant Chief Executive	1.040
Children, Young People and Education	3.037
Housing	0.737
Resources	1.271
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	2.365
Total	10.270

- 4.96** There is currently budget of £1.6m held centrally (of the original £5.5m agreed by full Council) for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon after the allocation of £1.7m budget in Period 3 (Housing Benefit subsidy pressures) and £2.2m budget in Period 6 (emergency accommodation pressures).
- 4.97** This report is requesting the transfer of £0.698m budget from the Corporate economic demand pressures budget to the Children, Young People and Education directorate to take account of increased contact demand which is creating high social worker caseloads in the Family Assessment Service. This is just a budget transfer within directorates, not a change to overall budget, and is in line with the intended purpose of the budget agreed at full Council in March 2023.
- 4.98** The corporate area also holds the 2023-24 Transformation budget of £10m, which will fund work carried out in directorates and cross-Council to achieve MTFs savings and improve services for local residents and businesses. The Transformation budget reduces to £5m from 2024-25.
- 4.99** There is £7.276m budget held in Corporate for adjustments to correct General Fund recharge budgets relating to the HRA, Public Health, capitalisation of salaries and corporate support (overhead) recharges, and salary and income budget corrections. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is requested to approve the inter-directorate virement to transfer £5.802m of the budget currently held in corporate to the service directorates as detailed in the table below. Please note that this is a transfer within directorates (not a change to total budget) and is in line with the purposes of the budget agreed by full Council in March 2023. This virement removes service recharge income budgets where these duplicate with corporate support (SERCOP) charges, however further work is continuing to calculate up to date recharges to non-General Fund areas and

the remaining budget of £1.474m is being held in corporate to align these once finalised.

Table showing allocations to directorates for budget corrections

Directorate	HRA recharge related (£m)	PH recharge related (£m)	Capitalisation related (£m)	Staffing & on-costs related (£m)	Income related (£m)	Overhead (SERCOP) recharge related (£m)	Total (£m)
ASCH	-	0.065	-	-	-	-	0.065
ACE	1.007	-	-	0.150	0.362	0.439	1.958
CYPE	0.210	0.400	-	0.842	-	-	1.452
Housing	-	-	-	-	0.041	-	0.041
Resources	0.245	-	0.268	0.093	0.063	0.538	1.207
SCRER	0.893	-	-	0.095	0.091	-	1.079
Total	2.355	0.465	0.268	1.180	0.557	0.977	5.802

4.100 There is a funding risk in the Collection Fund if cost of living pressures impact the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates income. The impact of the Council Tax increase is partially mitigated through the Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax).

4.101 There is borrowing cost uncertainty from interest rates and the timing of capital receipts from asset disposals (assumed in the MTFs at circa £50m per annum).

Transformation Programme

4.102 The Transformation Programme has £14m of resources allocated to it, consisting of £10m base revenue budget and £4m earmarked reserve.

4.103 In total there is currently £10.7m of the Transformation Programme budget allocated with £3.3m unallocated to date. The Transformation Programme will provide a return on investment through service improvement benefits and the identification and delivery of savings for the medium term financial strategy, providing a significant level of savings towards the £20m per annum savings required from 2025-26 onwards.

Transformation Programme Allocations

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Transformation Revenue Budget	10.000
Transformation Reserve Funding	4.000
Total Transformation Funding	14.000
Approach to Strategic Planning and Commissioning	0.290
Parking Policy Review	0.200
Community Hubs Programme	0.250
HR Transformation	0.093
Digital & Resident Access Review/Digital Workforce	0.080
SEND Review	0.240
Passenger/SEND Transport Transformation	0.100

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Family Justice Service Review	0.000
S117 Project	0.178
Joint Funding Arrangements	0.110
Sustaining Demand at the Front Door	0.190
Corporate Parenting Transformation	0.743
Dynamic Purchasing System	0.092
Callydown Transformation	0.134
Income & Debt Review	0.050
Outcomes Based Domiciliary Care Model	0.110
Transition Commissioning Care Model	0.082
Croydon Campus	0.250
Customer Access Review	0.200
Building Control Transformation	0.696
Planning & CIL Transformation	0.450
CALAT	0.050
Housing Needs Restructure	0.060
Temporary Accommodation Case Review	0.291
Housing Occupancy Checks	0.291
Rent Accounts and Data Cleanse	0.026
Housing Association Recharges	0.059
Supported Housing Review	0.080
Adult Social Care Transformation	1.100
Review of Social Care Placements	0.461
Reablement & Hospital Discharge	0.000
Strategic Operating Model Design Partner for Adult Social Care and Health	1.194
Housing Benefit Subsidy SEA & EA/TA	0.000
PFI Contract Manager	0.000
VCS Review	0.000
Asset Rationalisation	0.124
Business Intelligence Review	0.025
Commercial & Income Opportunities	0.000
Community Equipment Service	0.090
Croydon Museum	0.270
Oracle Improvement Programme	0.915
Transformation PMO	1.100
Total Revenue Budget and Reserves Allocated to Date	10.674
Unallocated To Date	3.326

- 4.104** The Transformation Programme published in November 2022 set out £5.9m of project commitments with recognition that further sums were still to be confirmed. Please note that project plans are under development and following review of these project plans the draft budget allocations to projects as listed above could change through the year.
- 4.105** The Transformation Board has agreed additional project allocations totalling £4.239m through to September 2023, with no further allocations made in October 2023. The allocations are set out in the table below.

Project Allocations	£m
Business Intelligence Review	0.025
Sustaining demand at the front door	0.080
Callydown transformation	0.134
Review of Social Care Placements	0.456
CALAT (New)	0.050
Strategic operating model design partner for ASCH	1.194
HR Transformation	0.015
Planning & Building Control projects – project delivery support	0.396
Corporate Parenting Transformation (New and subsumes Fostering Transformation Project)	0.650
Community Equipment Service	0.090
Museum Transformation	0.270
Oracle Cloud Improvement (New)	0.915
Asset Rationalisation	0.124
Reablement & Hospital Discharge - transfer to Strategic operating model design partner for ASCH	-0.060
Family Justice Service Review	-0.100
Total of Allocations	4.239

4.106 The ‘Review of Social Care Placements’ project has secured £600,000 alternative funding from the Market Sustainability Grant thereby reducing the funding required from the Transformation budget. The revenue budget also funds the costs of the transformation Programme Management Office currently estimated at £1.1m.

Savings

4.107 The 2023-24 budgets include a challenging new savings target of £33.1m. Progress in achieving savings is being monitored throughout the year. Directorates are identifying any risks to achievement of individual savings and making plans to mitigate these risks where possible or identify alternative savings as required.

Table showing 2023-24 forecast savings achievement by directorate

	2023-24					
	Savings target £'000	Slippage from previous year £'000	Revised Savings target £'000	Forecast savings achievable £'000	Savings slippage £'000	Not yet evidenced or (over delivery) £'000
Directorate						
Adult Social Care & Health	12,243	-	12,243	12,972	-	(729)
Assistant Chief Executive	2,924	-	2,924	1,521	1,403	-
Children, Young People & Education	6,920	490	7,410	5,148	-	2,262
Housing	2,305	-	2,305	1,309	1,099	(103)
Resources	6,347	-	6,347	6,347	-	-
Sustainable Communities (SCRER)	1,859	2,490	4,349	4,124	225	-
Cross-Directorate / Corporate	500	-	500	-	500	-
Total	33,098	2,980	36,078	31,421	3,227	1,430

Reserves

- 4.108** There are no budgeted contributions to, or drawdowns from, the General Fund balances of £27.5m in 2023-24. The current breakeven forecast for 2023-24 maintains this reserve.

General Fund Balances	Forecast (£m)
Balance at 1 April 2023	27.5
Forecast Contribution to/(Drawdown from) Reserves	-
Forecast Balance at 31 March 2024	27.5

- 4.109** The General Fund balances serve as a cushion should any overspend materialise by the end of 2023-24. The use of reserves to support the budget is not a permanent solution and reserves must be replenished back to a prudent level in subsequent years if used.

Unresolved Issues

- 4.110** The Council's overall financial position is still subject to a number of unresolved historic legacy issues. The latest position on these was set out in the 22 February 2023 Cabinet report titled 'Revenue Budget and Council Tax Levels 2023-24' which incorporated the findings of the 'Opening the Books' review undertaken in 2022-23. The report stated that a request has also been made of government to provide the Council with a Capitalisation Direction of £161.6m to cover the historic finance issues that have been revealed through the 'Opening the Books' programme.
- 4.111** The Council needs to correct a range of misstatements in its legacy accounts from 2019-20 which are currently still not fully closed. This was more than the £74.6m previously identified in the MTFs Update report to Cabinet in November 2022.
- 4.112** The Council's Provision for Bad Debt was found to be understated by £46m rather than the £20m previously assumed and a prudent decision was made to include the potential £70m gap in the accounts caused by incorrect accounting for Croydon Affordable Homes and Tenures, instead of the £9m previously assumed.
- 4.113** With four years of accounts still open, there remains a risk that further legacy issues will be uncovered. The Capital Programme for 2022-23 included the £161.6m Capitalisation Direction requested, which was in addition to the £25m capitalisation direction previously approved.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 4.114** At period 7, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast remains at a revenue overspend of £12.0m owing to resolving a backlog of historic legacy repair work, reducing voids and resolving issues experienced nationally including damp and mould and fire safety. The HRA has a reserve of circa £50m as at the end of 2022-23 and this reserve will fund the 2023-24 overspend, however the HRA budget for 2024-25 will need to take account of ongoing pressures and priorities.
- 4.115** At Period 5 we set out how the legacy of repairs, disrepair works and the commissioned works on damp and mould accounts for £8.6m of the pressure against the existing budget. This pressure is a direct result of the significant under-investment over decades in our housing stock which has resulted in the backlogs the teams are now tackling. The implementation of the three new repairs contracts and the commitment to ensuring we are meeting our requirements as a landlord are driving this ongoing pressure. As a result, we will seek to rebase our responsive repairs budget at this mid-point of the budget year to reflect the position. Where underspends in other areas are insufficient to cover the pressures outlined above, we will be required to draw down from the HRA reserves into the revenue budgets.
- 4.116** The 2024-25 budget will require significant work to ensure that we are capturing and managing ongoing pressure areas within the repairs service. Stock conditions surveys have been commissioned to identify the level of major repairs and maintenance to be programmed into the future years' budgets and these capital improvements should reduce the level of responsive repairs over the medium term.
- 4.117** The remaining £3.4m pressure is attributed to disrepair and reflects the volume of historic legacy disrepair cases being cleared and the legal costs and settlements that have been the outcome.

Repairs

- 4.118** The Period 7 position of £12.0m overspend is made up of £8.6m responsive repairs costs pressure and £3.4m on disrepair costs, legal fees and settlements.
- 4.119** The overspend on responsive repairs is a result of the significant increase in volumes of repairs that have been received from tenants as a consequence of the historical under-investment in the stock including insufficient growth in responsive repair budgets as well as historic legacy issues identified since the implementation of the new contracts in August 2023.
- 4.120** In addition, there has been significant work done to tackle our response to reports of damp and mould, treating the appearances of spores and carrying out works to address the issues.

- 4.121** The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 will enable a rigorous new regime that holds all landlords to account for the decency of their homes and the service they provide. This includes changes from 'Awaab's Law' which follows the death of 2 year old Awaab Ishak in 2020 due to damp and mould exposure in his Rochdale home following repair requests and complaints having been repeatedly ignored. Legislation includes provisions which will require the Council to investigate hazards and fix repairs including damp and mould in their properties within strict new time limits or rehouse residents where a home cannot be made safe. The new rules will form part of the tenancy agreement, so residents can hold landlords to account if they fail to provide a 'decent' home.
- 4.122** The tackling of the legacy voids has had a significant impact due to the state of disrepair in these properties and the subsequent lack of asset renewal. 599 voids have been completed so far this year. The backlog and managing the ongoing weekly voids is contributing to the cost pressures.
- 4.123** Legal disrepair historic legacy demand continues to be a pressure. Work is ongoing to tackle the circa 550 disrepair cases in our backlog. The service has set a plan to clear the backlog in 18 months. This financial year the team have progressed circa 283 cases to completion, however there are typically 7 new cases per week logged. The latest government £2m advertising campaign directed at residents to encourage the reporting of issues is likely to increase the pressure on this budget.
- 4.124** The service has introduced controls to manage, monitor and provide assurance on ongoing responsive repairs costs:
- The NEC system allows us to manage the budget per individual line of activity with a budget set on NEC that cannot be exceeded and no payments can be made without any increase to the budget prior to any new orders being raised. Manager approval is required to increase a budget.
 - A Review Panel has been established since September. Any quotes for works over a value of £5,000 must be presented to the panel and approval sought prior to the works order being raised.
 - A review and approval from the Housing Directorate Management Team (DMT) will be sought for works on an individual property in excess of £40,000 to allow consideration of value for money and to ensure that there is a link being made to regeneration projects and any other cross-Council projects.

Tenancy and Income

- 4.125** A breakeven forecast position at period 7 as we continue to work with the NEC implementation team to validate the rent and rent loss through voids data, we expect this to be completed for period 8 reporting.

Staffing and other

4.126 A breakeven forecast position at period 7 reflects that additional budget was allocated in 2023-24 to meet known pressures while structural changes are being implemented.

Table showing the 2023-24 HRA forecast

Description	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Rental Income	(82.1)	(50.2)	(82.1)	-
Service Charge Income	(4.6)	(2.8)	(4.6)	-
Concorde, Sycamore & Windsor (rental income for Temporary Accommodation provision)	(3.4)	(1.2)	(3.4)	-
Other Income	(6.0)	(2.0)	(6.0)	-
Subtotal Income	(96.1)	(56.2)	(96.1)	-
Housing Capital Charges	40.9	-	40.9	-
Responsive Repairs & Safety	20.4	15.3	32.4	12.0
Centralised Directorate expenditure	11.3	0.9	11.3	-
Tenancy & Resident Engagement	10.3	3.3	10.3	-
Tenant Support Services	6.7	3.2	6.7	-
Concorde, Sycamore & Windsor expenditure	3.4	2.0	3.4	-
Asset Planning	1.6	0.9	1.6	-
Capital Delivery (Homes & Schools)	1.5	0.7	1.5	-
Subtotal Expenditure	96.1	26.3	108.1	12.0
Total HRA Net Expenditure	-	(29.9)*	12.0	12.0

* Note that no actuals for Housing Capital Charges have been posted as these journals are carried out at financial year end.

4.127 The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- NEC system functionality delays:
 - Although the system went live in June 2023, we are yet to use the system to its full capacity including full reporting functionality. The repairs and income forecasting may yet be impacted once the full integration and functionality is available.
- Repairs and maintenance:
 - pressures from the exit of the Axis repairs contract that ended in August 2023.
 - extra expenditure to deal with the backlog of repairs and maintenance.
 - void and disrepair costs carried out by specialist contractors to reduce void losses and minimise future disrepair claims.
 - settlement of disrepair cases and related legal fees, including those relating to Regina Road.

- Tenancy and income:
 - the impact of cost of living pressures on rent collection (including a potential increase in bad debt cost).
 - loss of income owing to void (empty) residential properties.
 - loss of income owing to voids including void garages.

- Recharge review:
 - General Fund services are producing service level agreements (SLA's) to evidence recharges of costs to the HRA, which could result in increased charges to the HRA.

Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability

- 4.128** The Capital strategy and programme was approved by Council in March 2023. This recognised the complex and challenging financial and operational circumstances in which the Council continues to operate. It showed a 2023-24 Capital Programme that is reduced in scale and cost compared to previous years. With circa £1.3bn of General Fund debt and an environment of rising interest rates, the delivery of an effective Asset Management Plan and an ambitious Asset Disposal Strategy, including reducing the number of buildings used by the Council, will be essential to mitigate rising cost pressures, reduce the overall debt burden and help the Council balance its books.
- 4.129** The strategy reflected the progress made to date by the Council to improve the governance and financial management of the Capital Programme following recommendations from the two Reports in the Public Interest (RIPI). The Council understands that the initial improvements put in place are the foundations of good practice and is focused on building upon these over the coming months and years.
- 4.130** Concerns were highlighted regarding value for money and investment decisions as the Council has incurred debt in investing in assets which have not retained their value and, therefore, the level of debt exceeds the value of the investment assets. In the three years between 2017-20 the Council borrowed £545m with no focused debt management plan in place. The majority of this debt comprises short-term borrowings which has left the Council exposed to current higher interest rates. The debt is anticipated to be refinanced from 2023 onwards and therefore likely to drive significant increases in annual repayment levels.
- 4.131** An estimated circa £66m is required to service this debt from the General Fund which represents around 19% of the Council's net budget. The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden has, therefore, become critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.
- 4.132** The Council has concluded that the expenditure it is anticipated to incur in each year of the period of 2023-27 is likely to exceed the financial resources available and that reaching financial and operational sustainability without further government assistance will not be possible. The Council's 2023-24 budget required capitalisation

directions from government of £63m to balance and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) demonstrated an ongoing estimated budget gap of £38m per annum from 2024-25.

- 4.133** Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of historic legacy indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services. It must be noted that annual capitalisation directions (transferring revenue cost into capital cost which must be funded over 20 years) increases the Council's debt burden. Also capital receipts from the Asset Disposal Strategy are being used to fund the ongoing capitalisation directions and therefore the Council is not able to reduce its existing historic debt (a situation of "treading water").
- 4.134** Therefore, debt write-off is the Council's preferred option and a request was made to DLUHC in January 2023 for government funding to write-off £540m of the Council's General Fund debt. DLUHC has subsequently asked the Council to propose a wider range of options, and these are currently being worked on.

General Fund Capital Programme

- 4.135** At period 7, the General Fund capital programme has a forecast underspend of £18.0m (12.4%) against the budget of £144.7m.

Table showing 2023-24 General Fund Capital Programme budget and forecast

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Bereavement Services	127	(23)	127	-
My Resources Interface Enhancement	252	58	169	(83)
ICT	-	1	-	-
Network Refresh	348	11	152	(196)
Tech Refresh	132	637	285	153
Geographical Information Systems	312	-	312	-
Laptop Refresh	3,371	-	1030	(2,341)
Cloud and DR	331	26	174	(157)
People ICT	-	3	-	-
Synergy Education System	1,045	11	746	(299)
NEC Housing System	2,725	8	2,280	(445)
Uniform ICT Upgrade	56	-	56	-
Subtotal Assistant Chief Executive	8,699	732	5,331	(3,368)
Children Home DFE	329	-	329	-
Subtotal CYPE	329	-	329	-

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Disabled Facilities Grant	4,710	1,054	3,000	(1,710)
Empty Homes Grants	400	39	200	(200)
Subtotal Housing	5,110	1,093	3,200	(1,910)
Asset Strategy - Stubbs Mead	500	-	500	-
Asset Strategy Programme	240	-	240	-
Clocktower Chillers	382	-	10	(372)
Corporate Property Maintenance Programme	2,780	1,181	2,664	(116)
Fairfield Halls - Council	625	3	625	-
Former New Addington Leisure Centre	600	-	600	-
Fieldway Cluster (Timebridge Community Centre)	248	-	248	-
Contingency	1,000	-	1,000	-
Education - Fire Safety	924	4	450	(474)
Education - Fixed Term Expansions	2,865	180	225	(2,640)
Education - Major Maintenance	5,866	3,237	3,321	(2,545)
Education - Miscellaneous	100	143	100	-
Education - Permanent Expansion	297	-	297	-
Education - SEN	6,289	584	6,289	-
Subtotal Resources	22,716	5,332	16,569	(6,147)
Allotments	-	3	3	3
Growth Zone	15,844	274	15,844	-
Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	1,200	-	1,200	-
Highways	8,260	4,431	8,260	-
Highways - flood water management	404	388	404	-
Highways - bridges and highways structures	1,641	1,292	1,641	-
Highways - Tree works	50	6	50	-
Local Authority Tree Fund	83	136	83	-
Trees Sponsorship	42	10	42	-
Leisure centres equipment contractual agreement	139	(410)	139	-
Tennis Court Upgrade	75	-	75	-
Leisure Equipment Upgrade	148	-	148	-
Libraries Investment - General	1,031	1	224	(807)
Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	175	-	-	(175)
New Investment to South Norwood Library	520	-	-	(520)
Parking	1,843	772	1,843	-
Cashless Pay & Display	1,463	-	485	(978)
Play Equipment	17	236	219	202
Safety - digital upgrade of CCTV	1,540	(11)	1,540	-
Highway Road Markings/Signs (Refresh)	137	-	137	-
South Norwood Good Growth	773	11	168	(605)
Kenley Good Growth	394	(147)	306	(88)

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Sustainability Programme	1,100	-	300	(800)
LIP	4,568	686	1,735	(2,833)
Cycle Parking	106	-	135	29
Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	3	-	43	40
Park Asset Management	700	-	700	-
Waste and Recycling Investment	2,558	-	2,558	-
Subtotal SCRER	44,814	7,678	38,282	(6,532)
Capitalisation Direction	63,000	-	63,000	-
Subtotal Corporate Items and Funding	63,000	-	63,000	-
TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL	144,668	14,835	126,711	(17,957)

Table showing General Fund Capital Programme Financing

General Fund Capital Financing	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	6,600	6,600	-
CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	3,084	1,477	(1,607)
Section 106	1,190	242	(948)
Grants & Other Contributions	25,430	16,302	(9,128)
Growth Zone	16,744	15,844	(900)
HRA Contributions	1,772	1,459	(313)
Capital Receipts	45,000	45,000	-
Borrowing	44,849	39,787	(5,062)
Total General Fund Financing	144,668	126,711	(17,957)

4.136 The extra forecast cost of the play equipment, cycle parking projects and electric vehicle charging points are expected to be funded through the application of Section 106 funding.

HRA Capital Programme

4.137 At period 7, the HRA capital programme has a forecast overspend of £5.7m (17.2%) against the budget of £33.2m. The HRA has a reserve of circa £50m as at the end of 2022-23 and this reserve will likely be the source of financing the 2023-24 capital overspend.

The HRA budget for 2024-25 and the HRA business plan will need to take account of ongoing pressures and priorities. Stock conditions surveys have been commissioned to identify the level of historic legacy major repairs and maintenance to be

programmed into the future years' budgets and these capital improvements should reduce the level of responsive repairs over the medium to long term.

Spend on damp and mould related repairs are in the early stages and are unbudgeted and will largely appear as a pressure in the capital budget as many of the works are for substantial amounts that relate to significant property improvements.

Similarly, there are works underway due to historic legacy legal disrepair and void cases where significant updating to properties is resulting in unbudgeted capitalisation of repairs spend.

Table showing 2023-24 HRA Capital Programme budget and forecast

HRA Capital Scheme	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	31,476	5,847	37,180	5,704
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	1,772	-
Total HRA Capital	33,248	5,847	38,952	5,704

HRA Capital Programme Financing

HRA Capital Financing	2023-24 Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)	16,082	16,082	-
Revenue	13,900	13,900	-
Other Reserves	1,148	6,852	5,704
Right To Buy (RTB) Receipts	2,118	2,118	-
Total HRA Capital Financing	33,248	38,952	5,704

4.138 It is currently assumed that the forecast overspend in the Major Repairs and Improvements Programme will be financed through HRA reserves, however the source of HRA financing is still to be finalised.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1** The monthly financial performance report supports the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 objective one "The council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services".

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1** Finance comments have been provided throughout this report.
- 8.1.2** The Council continues to operate with internal spending controls to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained. A new financial management culture is being implemented across the organisation through increased communication on financial issues and training for budget managers.
- 8.1.3** The Council currently has a General Fund Reserve of £27.5m which serves as a cushion should any overspend materialise by the end of 2023-24. The use of reserves to support the budget is not a permanent solution and reserves must be replenished back to a prudent level in subsequent years if used.
- 8.1.4** The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regard to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.

Comments approved by Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer).

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that it maintains a balanced budget and to take any remedial action as required in year.
- 8.2.2** Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that the Council is under a statutory duty to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends. This could include action to reduce spending, income generation or other measures to bring budget pressures under control for the rest of the year. The Council must act reasonably and in accordance with its statutory

duties and responsibilities when taking the necessary action to reduce the overspend.

8.2.3 In addition, the Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council's Chief Finance Officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council's proper financial administration. These include procedures for budgetary control. It is consistent with these arrangements for Cabinet to receive information about the revenue and capital budgets as set out in this report.

8.2.4 The monitoring of financial information is also a significant contributor to meeting the Council's Best Value legal duty. The Council as a best value authority "must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Section 3 Local Government Act (LGA) 1999). The Best Value Duty applies to all functions of the Council including delivering and setting a balanced budget, providing statutory services such as adult social care and children's services and securing value for money in all spending decisions.

8.2.5 The Council is the subject of Directions from the Secretary of State requiring the Council to, amongst others, improve on the management of its finances. This report serves to ensure the Council is effectively monitoring and managing its budgetary allocations in accordance with its Best Value Duty.

Comments approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, 28/11/2023.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no immediate workforce implications arising from the content of this report, albeit there is potential for a number of the proposals to have an impact on staffing. Any mitigation of budget implications that may have direct effect on staffing will be managed in accordance with relevant human resources policies and, where necessary, consultation with the recognised trade unions.

8.3.2 The Council is aware that many staff may also be impacted by the increase in cost of living. Many staff are also Croydon residents and may seek support from the Council including via the cost of living hub on the intranet. The Council offers support through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and staff may seek help via and be signposted to the EAP, the Guardians' programme, and other appropriate sources of assistance and advice on the Council's intranet, including the trade unions.

Comments approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 27/11/2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must therefore have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.4.2 In setting the Council's budget for 2023-2024, all savings proposals must complete an Equality Impact Assessment. As Officers deliver against the approved budget, including the savings within it, they will continue to monitor for any unanticipated equality impacts. If any impacts arise, officers will offer mitigation to minimise any unintended impact.

8.4.3 This report sets out a number of proposals that will change the services and provisions we provide for residents across Croydon. These proposals are subject to further work decisions.

8.4.4 The Council must, therefore, ensure that we have considered any equality implications. The Council has an established Equality Impact Assessment [EqIA] process, with clear guidance, templates and training for managers to use whenever new policies or services changes are being considered. This approach ensures that proposals are checked in relation to the impact on people with protected characteristics under Equality Act 2010.

8.4.5 Assessing the impact of proposed changes to policies, procedures, services and organisational change is not just something the law requires; it is a positive opportunity for the council to ensure it makes better decisions, based on robust evidence.

8.4.6 Our approach is to ensure the equality impact assessments are data led, using user information, demographic data and forecasts, as well as service specific data and national evidence to fully understand the impact of each savings proposal. This enables the Council to have proper regard to its statutory equality duties.

8.4.7 We have a large number of vulnerable children and asylum seekers who are in need of our services. We have also been faced with the rise of costs of the provision of adult social care, which has been exasperated following the pandemic. Alongside this our residents are dealing with the increased cost of living. We have supported residents by providing mitigation for changes where possible and signposting to other support organisations in the borough who can provide support.

We will continue to seek mitigation during the equality analysis process where possible.

8.4.8 Our initial data suggests that residents across all equality characteristics may be affected by changes. National and local data highlights that this may have a greater impact on race, disabilities, sex, pregnancy and maternity and age. We will continue to assess the impact and strive to improve our evidence and data collection, to enable us to make informed decisions.

8.4.9 Where consultations take place, we will ensure that we make it accessible for all characteristics including those with disabilities including neurodiversity by ensuring that we adopt Disability standards in our consultation platform. Notwithstanding those residents who are digitally excluded. We will also consult using plain English to support our residents who do not have English as a first language.

8.4.10 With regard to potential staff redundancies, as a diverse borough we will undertake equality analysis and seek mitigation for staff by offering redeployment and employability support. We will also assess the impact of job losses on protected characteristics. We will also ensure that disabled staff are treated more favourably during restructure in that they will be required to meet the minimum standard prior to being offered an interview.

8.4.11 Research from existing EQIAs identifies that rising costs impact on some Disabled groups, communities from the Global Majority, African, Asian, African Caribbean households, young people, some people aged 15 – 64 and some people in the pregnancy/maternity characteristic. Research also indicates that there is an intersectional impact on young people from the Global Majority and both Disabled and Dual Heritage communities. Deprivation in borough is largely focused in the north and the east where the Global Majority of residents from the African, African Caribbean and Asian communities reside.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmed for Equalities Programme Manager, 28/11/2023.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	SCRUTINY STREETS & ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE	
DATE OF DECISION	30 January 2024	
REPORT TITLE:	Budget Scrutiny Challenge – Streets & Environment	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Nick Hibberd Corporate Director Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	
LEAD OFFICER:	Karen Agbabiaka Director of Streets & Environment karen.agbabiaka@croydon.gov.uk Heather Cheesbrough Director of Sustainable Planning & Regeneration heather.cheesbrough@croydon.gov.uk	
LEAD MEMBER:	CLLR SCOTT ROCHE Cabinet Member Streets & Environment CLLR JEET BAINS Cabinet Member Planning & Regeneration	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 As part of its assurance process on the 2024-25 Council Budget, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee has asked the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee to identify and scrutinise specific budget proposals. This report provides the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee with information on the following 2024/25 budget areas:-

1. 2024-28 SAV SCRER 002. Parking Services - Fees and Charges and changes to parking policy. The sub-committee have requested information on the process that will be followed to amending fees and charges and to achieve these savings.
2. 2024-28 GRO SCRER 003. SEND Transport – growth proposal. The sub committee have requested information on student numbers and cost drivers related to this proposal.
3. 2024-28 SAV SCRER 006 - Deferral of growth in highways maintenance revenue budget.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee consider the information contained in the report as part of the budget scrutiny challenge process.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As part of its assurance process on the 2024-25 Council Budget, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee has asked the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee to identify and scrutinise specific budget proposals.
- 3.2 This report provides the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee with information to support the Budget Scrutiny Challenge process. The report covers the areas identified for focus, which are Parking Policy, Planning Service and Building control.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

Overview of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget

- 4.1 The Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER) has a 2023/24 general fund budget of £65.621m with a gross expenditure budget of £128.149m. The directorate generates significant levels of income, particularly within the Planning and Strategic Transport and Sustainable Communities divisions. The socio-economic conditions post COVID, alongside inflationary pressures and the cost of living crisis have created an more uncertain environment on which these income levels are predicated with fewer major planning applications, declining town centres and high streets, and a reduction in commuting. This has led to some budget pressures across income generating teams during 2023/24.
- 4.2 At Month 6, SCRER was projecting a General Fund forecast breakeven position for 2023-24. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offences and planning.
- 4.3 As part of the 23 October 2023 Cabinet report *2024-28 Medium Term Financial Strategy Update* the forward financial forecast for 2024-25 to 2027-28 (2024-28) was outlined with an update given on the key budget assumptions. A budget deficit, before allowance for savings, efficiencies and any further government support, of £75m is forecast for 2024-25, increasing to £137m by 2027-28. The SCRER directorate have proposed savings of £1.353m in 2024/25.
- 4.4 Croydon's financial challenge is compounded by significant, and independently well documented local historic legacy (governance, financial, service delivery and structural) issues. Legacy budget corrections of £49m were made in 2023-24 following the launch of the Opening the Books exercise by the Executive Mayor in July 2022. This has more clearly established the Council's underlying financial position.

Areas of focus identified by the sub-committee:

2024-28 SAV SCRER 002. Parking Services - Fees and Charges and changes to parking policy.

- 4.5 2024-28 SAV SCRER 002 proposes to generate £0.951m of income from parking. The sub-committee have requested information on the process that will be followed to amending fees and charges and to achieve these savings.
- 4.6 Parking Services budget is made up of six separate income streams which generate income from both parking and moving traffic offences. The overall income assumed in the 2023/24 budget was £26.186m.

Table 1. Parking and ANPR income streams

Income stream	23/24 Budget
Parking Permits	£1.913m
Pay & Display / Pay by Phone	£7.857m
Suspension payments (income from filming, utility companies, special events)	£0.734m
Penalty Charge Notice (PCN income) – on street	£5.562m
Income from existing ANPR cameras	£2.538m
Income from new ANPR camera schemes	£7.582m
Total	£26.186m

- 4.7 The 2024-28 SAV SCRER 002 proposal is linked to the parking policy transformation. Consultation on the draft parking policy took place from 22 September to 31 October 2023. Changes to the parking fees and charges will be proposed in a separate report to Cabinet following the outcome of the consultation process and evaluation of feedback from that consultation.
- 4.8 The way that the council manages its parking and balances the competing uses of its limited roadside space is vitally important to the vibrancy and vitality of the town, district and local centres. The successful and safe movement of people and goods is critical to the borough including residents, businesses and visitors. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives the council power to introduce and operate parking schemes and the opportunity for the public to engage with the council on proposals.
- 4.9 The 26 July 2023 Cabinet report sets out a new parking policy to play its part in transforming the council into one that delivers sound and sustainable local government services, and in so doing will transform our borough into one that residents can once again be proud to call home. The policy will support efforts for our town centre and high street recovery. The draft policies ambition is underpinned by four policy drivers, to ensure that it supports the Executive Mayor’s Businesses Plan:
- Fair – parking which will be provided to benefit our users, robustly enforcing blue badge fraud and targeted enforcement in non-compliant areas.
 - Supportive – Providing free limited stay parking in our district and local centres.

- Efficient – managing the parking service effectively and putting the customer at the forefront of everything we do and introducing virtual permits and technologies to aid our customers.
- Transparent – communicating openly with our customers, making fair assessment of footway parking across the Borough and introducing transparent parking tariffs.

This new draft policy replaces the current policy 2019–22 and this report presents this council's approach to the Parking Policy and to ensure that it meets the needs of residents, businesses and partners. Consultation on the draft policy took place over the summer of 2023.

4.10 The Parking Policy is framed around five specific policies to deliver on these ambitions by:

- supporting our local economy
- appropriate parking management
- supporting our disabled residents
- efficient service management
- Intelligence led enforcement.

Consultation on the draft policy

4.11 The importance of community feedback is recognised and to ensure we are listening to the community and that the policy is addressing both their needs and supporting the objectives set out in the Executive Mayor's Business Plan, a public consultation exercise was undertaken during the summer of 2023. To maximise the engagement with the community, the consultation took place across multiple channels, including the council's website and social media and included 10 community workshops.

4.12 The proposed actions included within the draft Parking Policy included the following which are related to the delivery of the 2024-2028 SCRER 02 budget proposal:

- **Review of free short stay parking provision.** The council's current free parking arrangements in town centres and high streets supports local businesses but we need to ensure turnover of available spaces to encourage vibrancy of these businesses. It is proposed that the current free period will be reviewed to maximise spaces for short-term visits and provide consistency across the borough.
- **Review of operational hours of on-street controls.** For consistency, fairness, and to help support local businesses, a review of existing hours of control within areas of controlled parking will be undertaken. Many existing parking controls and zones have been in place unchanged for decades, so it is appropriate to review those to ensure they remain the most appropriate hours of operation for the area. This is particularly relevant in light of changing work patterns, commuter behaviours etc.
- **Review of Pay & Display machine provision across the borough.** As part of the budget setting process, at Budget Council on 7 March 2022, a savings proposal was ratified as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) proposal (2022/23 MTFS Saving COR Sav13x) for removal of Pay and Display Machines. The proposal identified a saving of £300,000 associated with the removal of the 683 Pay & Display machines across the borough. Also, the mobile communication technology within the Pay & Display machines is impacted by the mobile providers 3G sunset clause, where the phasing out of the 3G network will mean that machines would require

upgrading so that they could operate on the 5G network. With the increasing demand for cashless transactions, post Covid, and a decrease in Pay & Display usage and the acceptance new technologies, we are developing a phased programme for the removal of Pay & Display machines across the borough.

- **Update and simplification of parking fees and charges.** The council will review parking fees and charges and parking permit products, simplifying the structures and improving the fairness of the tariffs. The updated fees and charges will be established in a way that simplifies the charging levels. This will help those parking with more transparent information to understand the tariff rates and make more informed decisions about when, where and how long they park.

4.13 In support of the council's ambitions for supporting the economic vibrancy of town centres and high streets, the council has been trialling plans to improve parking availability in South Croydon, New Addington, Purley, and Addiscombe. The council is pleased to offer limited stay free parking within our town centres and high streets, as it is vital to encourage the community to support local businesses. Limited short-stay parking encourages regular turnover, by making spaces close to shops available for short durations suitable for shopping. The trials have involved switching off the 'pay and display' machines, so they do not dispense tickets. Instead, motorists have used the RingGo cashless parking app on their smartphones or have called RingGo on 0203 046 0010 or alternatively visit a local PayPoint location. Croydon Council's existing 'pay and display' machines are reaching the end of their operation as they rely upon 3G connectivity, which is currently being shut down by network providers. The trial will enable the council to understand the impact of moving to phone payment and explore ways of addressing any issues that users experience during the trials.

4.14 Following the completion and analysis of the cashless parking trials and the analysis of the feedback from the Parking Policy consultation, new fee tariffs will be developed with the aim of delivering the SAV SCRER 002 income proposal. All changes to parking tariffs will be subject to the statutory consultation process prior to implementation.

2024-28 GRO SCRER 003. SEND Transport – growth proposal.

4.15 The intention of this growth bid is to consider the continuing student number increases within the Home to School SEND Transport cohort which is a direct consequence of legislative changes from the Children and Families Act 2014 (which increased the educational age to 25 and also implemented the Education and Health Care Plan process (EHCP)). The sub-committee have requested information on student numbers and cost drivers related to this proposal.

4.16 The council has a statutory responsibility to facilitate access to schooling and education for students 5-25. The growth proposal of £0.620m represents a 5% increase in line with average annual student number increases over the last 7 years. The overall SEND Transport budget for 2023/24 is £16.341m. At period 6 there was a forecast pressure of £0.3m for SEND home to school transport due to increased demand. However, since period 6 the numbers of students with an EHCP who require transport has continued to increase, with a 14% increase between January and November 2023 which has generated additional pressure.

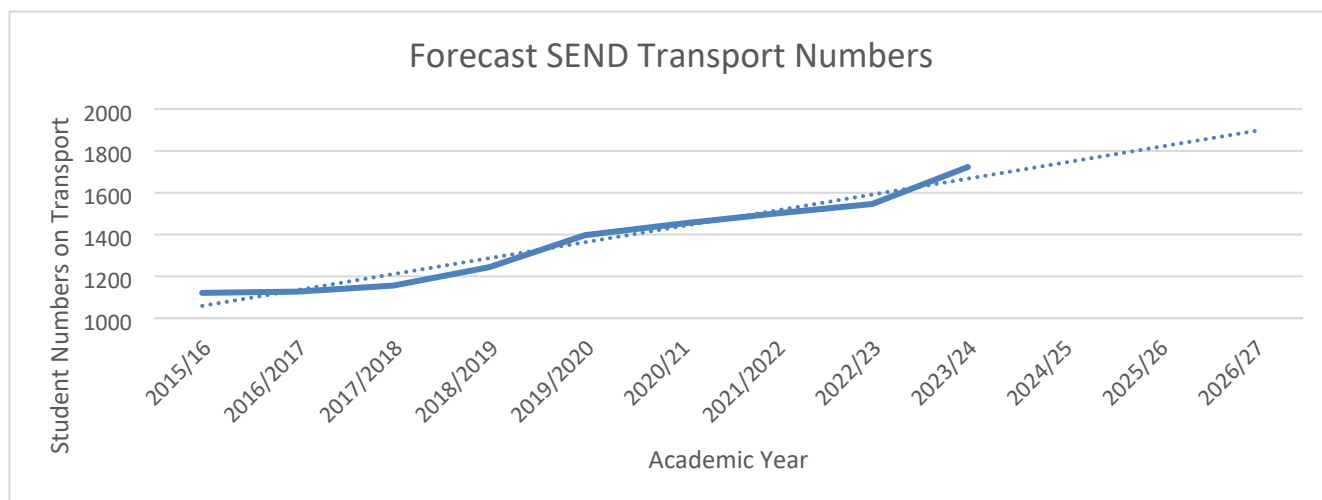
- 4.17 The council provides home-to-school/college travel support for children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), and home-to care provision travel support for vulnerable adults, in accordance with its statutory obligations and published eligibility policies. Travel support takes many forms, including the provision of independent travel training to enable clients to travel independently on public transport, and personal travel budgets and direct payments to enable clients to make their own travel arrangements. Nevertheless, the direct provision of passenger transport is still the most common provision for eligible clients. The government refreshed the SEND Transport guidance in July 2023: [Travel to school for children of compulsory school age \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142117/SEND-Transport-Guidance-2023.pdf)
- 4.18 There is consistent growth in SEN Travel numbers, this is in line with the increase in the number of EHCP (Education Health and Care Plans) which have also seen a consistent growth. From 1325 in 2010 to 4570 in March 2023. In addition, in-Borough SEND placement provision is also being increased, to provide a more local provision within Croydon, which is also increasing with numbers of students. Whilst the service continues to work hard in ensuring adherence to the Travel Assistance Policy (the percentage of EHCP students receiving transport is reducing), there is still a substantial increase in both the overall number of students in receipt of an EHCP, and the consequential increase in the number of students on transport.

Table 2. Growth in the SEND Travel numbers and EHCPs

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Nov 2023
Number of students on transport	1121	1127	1156	1244	1397	1452	1501	1546	1723*
% Change Transport		0.5%	2.6%	7.6%	12.3%	3.9%	3.4%	3.0%	11.4%
Number of EHCPs	2217	2491	2693	2999	3161	3394	3556	4018	4570*
% change EHCP		12.4%	8.1%	11.4%	5.4%	7.4%	4.8%	13.0%	13.7%

**Transport figure given as July (end of academic year)
EHCP figure (generally) given as Jan each year, (SEN2 Annual Data submission to DfE)**

Graph 1. Actual and projected growth in the SEND Travel numbers



- 4.19 Work continues to take place to ensure that the service is achieving value for money and is optimised efficiently. For example, in 2022/23, 57/157 schools had only 1 student on the school that required transport which limits opportunities for optimisation. However, by December this is now down to 43 schools/149 establishments served.
- 4.20 The SEND Transport Transformation programme is also reviewing the service to explore ways of reducing costs in increasing efficiency. Phase 1 of the transformation programme was completed in August 2023 and a review of the processes within the service and explore options for income generation and closer working with the VCS.
- Vehicle utilisation for income generation explored with Education to look at supporting a food bank project.
 - Meetings held with VCS provider (CAT) to encourage them to bid for work (bus and taxi) to try and provide competitive pricing into the market.
- 4.21 Phase 2 of the transformation programme is underway and will explore opportunities for rationalisation of transport routes through the creation of muster points and telemetry analysis of routes. A review of the procurement strategy will also form part of phase 2.
- 4.22 To account for the increased age range on education under the Children & Families Act 2014 (which has not seen the secondary legislation relating to home to school travel obligations revised, hence creating a funding gap), the Council reviewed its post-16 Travel Policy to ensure value for money by creating a hierarchy of offer for post-16 students, which is designed to provide cost mitigation. Therefore, the Council first offers a Personal Travel Budget to parents/carers (£0.60/mile) before offering home to school transport where it is more cost effective to the Council to do so. Personal Travel Budgets are offered to the parents/carers where it is more cost effective to the Council to do so on a case-by-case basis. Travel training is provided, and this mitigates against more expensive costs.

Table 2. Personal Travel Budgets

	2021/22	2022/23	2023 to November
Number in receipt of PTB	126	174	189
Total (financial year)	£405 290	£460,759	£295,189 (£461,000 forecast)

2024-28 SAV SCRER 006 - Deferral of growth in highways maintenance revenue budget.

- 4.23 2024-28 SAV SCRER 006 proposes to defer the £1m of growth in the highways maintenance budget that was agreed during 2021/22 budget setting process. This growth in the budget was also deferred in 2023/24. It is important to note that the proposal is not to cut the existing revenue budget, but to defer the growth in the budget for a further year. This deferral of the proposed budget growth is being proposed in the context of the difficult choices that the council has to make given its extremely challenging financial position and the need to develop a balanced budget for 2024/25.
- 4.24 The deferral of the growth of £1M can be achieved by postponing some of the reactive work for the 2023/24 year. The focus will be upon undertaking works which maintain the safety of the highway. Highways maintenance requests will be triaged to ensure that work that relates to safety and other critical work is prioritised – rather than undertaking work based on aesthetics. Maintaining condition using capital funds avoids increases in reactive defects (and thus revenue spend), so where possible the capital budget will be used to minimise the need for revenue expenditure. The is feasible because the proposal is for the growth in the budget to be deferred for one year only.
- 4.25 The Prime Minister’s Network North announcement on 4 October 2023 included a commitment to an additional £8.3 billion for local highway maintenance from 2023/24 - 2033/34, over and above what local authorities were expecting to receive. In December 2023 Croydon received its allocation for this additional funding – totalling £0.382m. Croydon Council will receive the same level of funding of £0.382m in 2024/25. This additional funding can be spent on the resurfacing of carriageways, cycleways, and footways to prevent potholes and other road defects from occurring, as well as tackling other asset management priorities, such as keeping local bridges and other highway structures open and safe. The funding will mitigate the impact of deferring the growth in the highways maintenance budget. This funding is in addition to local transport funding from the last Spending Review and in addition to what LAs were expecting in future.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The 23 October 2023 MTFs update report proposed that a public consultation and engagement programme is launched with residents, businesses, partners, the voluntary and community sector and other interested parties on the revenue budget and capital programme proposals set out in that report.
- 5.2 The 23 October 2023 MTFs update report commenced the Budget Consultation and Engagement. The results of the consultation and engagement will inform the final proposals for Council Tax Setting to be presented to the Mayor in Cabinet and Full Council in February and March 2024.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The executive Mayor's Business Plan overarching priority is to deliver a wholesale transformation of the Council's way of working, so that we balance the budget and change how services are run.
- 6.2 The budgets and transformation proposals for Parking, SEND Transport and Highways Maintenance are identified within the medium term financial strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28 update support the delivery of the following outcomes within the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026.
- Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.
 - Outcome 2: Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning.
 - Outcome 4: Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.1 The financial implications of this report are described in the main body of the report.
- 7.1.2 Insert at the end of the section: Comments approved by Darrell Jones Acting Head of Finance on behalf of the Director of Finance. 23rd January 2023

7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.2.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.3.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. Equalities impact assessments will be undertaken as part of the delivery of the transformation programmes as appropriate.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 8.1 23rd October Cabinet report on 2024-2028 Medium Term Financial Strategy
[MTFS Report Final.pdf \(croydon.gov.uk\)](#)
 - 8.2 26th July Cabinet report on draft Parking Policy 2023
[Parking Policy - Cabinet -.pdf \(croydon.gov.uk\)](#)
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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	STREETS AND ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE
DATE OF DECISION	30 January 2024
REPORT TITLE:	Local Development Scheme Projects and Infrastructure Funding Statement Update (not including the Local Plan Review)
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Nick Hibberd, Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Heather Cheesbrough, Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration
LEAD OFFICER:	Julia Dawe - Plan Making Team Leader - Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration Steve Dennington – Service Head for Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration Email: Julia.dawe@croydon.gov.uk Steve.Dennington@croydon.gov.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jeet Bains, Cabinet member for Planning and Regeneration
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out to update members of the Street and Environment Sub-Committee of the progress of projects set out in the Council approved Local Development Scheme (LDS) (other than the on-going Local Plan Review) together with a summary of the 2022/23 Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

- 1.2 The LDS a public project plan which communicates the expected timetable for future changes to the Development Plan i.e. The Croydon Local Plan Review and other work streams that are a part of the Local Development Framework and planning policy framework for the Borough. These include timetables to produce Conservation Area Management Plans, the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, Statement of Community Involvement and the Householder and Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document.

- 1.3** Following the election of the Executive Mayor there was a pause in the work on the Local Plan Review and a need to include certain changes that are in the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026, most notably the removal of the existing and previously proposed intensification areas. For this reason, a new LDS timetable was produced and approved by Cabinet on 31 March 2023 that sets out an updated programme for the Local Plan Review and the other work streams listed above.
- 1.4** Members will be aware that work has been on-going in terms of the Local Plan Review, which is a statutory function and important in terms of the borough having an up-to-date Development Plan in place for planning applications to be determined.
- 1.5** Members of this Committee considered the progress of the Local Plan Review at the meeting held on the 1 November 2023 and welcomed the inclusion of the Green Grid and Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan Review and recommended "that Blue Corridors (watercourses and natural ponds) were explicitly referenced and considered in this area of work." This has subsequently been addressed and is now included in the Local Plan Review.

Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

- 1.6** The Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement primarily indicates the amount of borough Community Infrastructure Levy and financial contributions collected through Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings and assigned in 2022/2023.
- 1.7** It is a statutory requirement under s216 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 to prepare an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement for the 2022/23 financial year, and to publish this statement no later than the 31 December 2023.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** For the reasons set out in the report, the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee is recommended:
1. To note this report in terms of the timings for projects set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme; and,
 2. To note the content of this report regarding the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23 and the Infrastructure Funding Statement itself.

3 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

The Local Development Scheme

- 3.1** A Local Development Scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). This must specify (among other

matters) the development plan documents (i.e., local plans) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. Local planning authorities are encouraged to include details of other documents which form (or will form) part of the development plan for the area. The Local Development Scheme must be published and made publicly available.

3.2 The latest LDS was approved by Cabinet on the 31 March 2023 and as previously set out above was required following the pause in the Local Plan Review until after the election of the Executive Mayor. As well as the Local Plan Review the LDS sets out the timetable for a number of other supporting documents as follows:

- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Review
- Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Householder and Residential Extensions SPD
- Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans (CAAMP)
 - Webb Estate and Upper Woodcote Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

The LDS sets out the status of each of the documents i.e., whether it is a Development Plan Document or a Supplementary Planning Document, the Geographical coverage i.e., the whole of the Borough or part, the subject matter of the document and who is preparing the document i.e., just the Council or in partnership with other bodies.

3.3 Whilst work has commenced on all of the documents listed in paragraph 3.2 above, priority has been given to progressing the Local Plan Review. As a result, the timetable for completion of the documents in the current LDS is challenged, but priority has been given to completion of the Householder and Residential Extensions SPD, the CIL Charging Schedule and the Webb Estate and Upper Woodcote Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. It is envisaged that revised timetables will be prepared once the Local Plan Review has been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, anticipated to be during the summer of 2024.

Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Review

3.3 The CIL Charging Schedule is being reviewed on the instruction of the Mayor and is to be taken forward as a priority. The Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 sets out the priorities which can be funded through CIL, supporting infrastructure provision throughout the borough. Consultants were appointed and have commenced the review and are gathering evidence to inform the production a draft Charging Schedule.

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

3.4 The Council currently has non-statutory guidance published in November 2019 which sets out the relationship between monies collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy and contributions collected through planning obligations (Section 106 agreements). The guidance contains the formulas used for calculating the

contributions required for certain types of development. The collection of contributions through Sections 106 agreements should be guided through an approach that is transparent and is better able to be defended if this has been through a statutory preparation and adoption process such as a Supplementary Planning Document. Work on this has commenced but is currently on hold until the Local Plan Review has been completed.

Householder and Residential Extensions SPD

- 3.5** The purpose of this SPD is to provide planning guidance on the policies in the Local Plan related to the development of householder proposals and residential extensions. The document is intended as a guide as to best practice in terms of design and construction, and whilst no general guidance will cover every situation, the intention is to set out and show potentially acceptable solutions. Work on preparing the draft SPD has reached the internal circulation milestone. These comments are currently being analysed and further work will be carried out as a matter of priority once the review of the Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State.

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans (CAAMP's)

- 3.6** A CAAMP's is proposed for the Webb Estate and the Upper Woodcote Village Conservation Areas in the first instance, followed by the Bradmore Green Conservation Area. Appraisals of the Conservation Areas will be undertaken in the first instance which will identify the special qualities of the Conservation Area and the current condition and threats. This will be followed by the Management Plan which will address the issues raised in the Appraisal and provide area specific development guidelines to supplement those provided in Croydon's Conservation Area General Guidance. Potential enhancement schemes will also be explored.
- 3.7** Work has commenced on the review of the Webb Estate and the Upper Woodcote Village Conservation Areas CAAMP. An online survey was carried out between 26 June and 7 August 2023 followed by a "Walk and Talk Tour" on 18 October 2023. All feedback is now being analysed and a draft CAAMP will be prepared which will be published for public consultation at the beginning of July 2024. At the current time no work has commenced on the Broadmore Green Conservation Area CAAMP.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.8** The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document that explains the process by which a local authority involves the community and other stakeholders in two key processes that affect the spatial development of an area: the formulation of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications. Legislation requires the SCI to be updated every five years. The current SCI was adopted 21 January 2019. It has been reviewed to ensure it meets any national regulations, the needs of the community and our corporate objectives. A public consultation on a revised version of the SCI will take place for 6 weeks. Once the consultation period is complete, responses are analysed and consideration given to what changes may be needed to the draft SCI then this will be adopted.

The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

3.9 The IFS for the financial year 2022-2023 was published on the 31 December 2023 as required under s216 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.

3.10 The IFS is required to:

- set out how much CIL was unspent from previous financial years, raised in the last financial year, or spent/allocated in 2022/23;
- include a report about planning obligations secured under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) that sets out how much was raised in financial terms through planning obligations in the previous financial year, what infrastructure was funded during the previous financial year, and how much money remains available to support further infrastructure in future years; and
- contain details of affordable housing and school places secured through planning obligations under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) during the last financial year.

3.11 The statement sets out the following in terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy:

- a) A total of £6,654,255 was received from April 2022- March 2023.
- b) A total of £5,323,404 of CIL (not including the Local Meaningful Proportion) was unspent at the start of 2022/23.
- c) During 2022/23, £6,400,000 of Borough CIL was spent on the projects and infrastructure types on the Council's Infrastructure List and borough's capital programme, which supports to mitigate the impact of development outlined in the Local Plan 2018 and reduces the council's borrowing to support the borough's capital programme.
- d) A total of £957,582 was spent under the CIL Local Meaningful Proportion.
- e) During 2022/23 a total of £394,622 of CIL was spent on administration of the Borough's CIL charging authority function.

3.12 The statement sets out the following in terms of planning obligations secured under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

- a) A total of money under any planning obligations which was received prior 2022/23 which has not been allocated is £4,418,550.29
- b) A total of £24,944.51 of money secured under s106 agreements was allocated to specific projects during 2022/23 but has not yet been spent.
- c) During 2022/23 a total of £1,242,187 of money secured under s106 agreements was spent on specific projects across the borough.
- d) 115 new affordable homes were secured through s106 agreements in 2022/23.
- e) A total of £4,910,582.99 was received from developers in 2022/23 who had previously entered into a s106 agreement with the council.

3.13 A copy of the IFS is appended to this report.

4 APPENDICES

4.1 Appendix A - Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022-23

Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23



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Introduction

This Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement is published by Croydon Council under Regulation 9 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.

The Statement reports on the 2022/23 financial year and includes the following:

- A statement (“the infrastructure list”) of the infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure which the charging authority intends will be, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL (other than projects or infrastructure funded by the Local Meaningful Proportion);
- A report, in relation to the previous financial year (2022/23) that sets out how much CIL was unspent from previous financial years, or spent/allocated in 2022/23;
- A report regarding planning obligations secured under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) that sets out how much was raised in financial terms through planning obligations in 2022/23, what infrastructure was funded during 2022/23, and how much money remains available to support further infrastructure in future years; and
- Details of affordable housing and school places secured through planning obligations under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) during 2022/23.

The Annual Infrastructure Statement does not include details of CIL collected on behalf of the Mayor of London (the Mayoral CIL). A separate Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement is prepared by the Greater London Authority and Transport for London that sets out details of how the Mayoral CIL has been spent.

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/make-planning-application-developer/community-infrastructure-levy-cil-and>

The Infrastructure List

The table below sets out the infrastructure projects or types that the London Borough of Croydon intends will, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL.

The following infrastructure projects or types will, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL:

- Provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of:
 - Education Facilities
 - Health Care Facilities
 - Public Open Space
 - Public Sports and Leisure
 - Highways
 - Sustainable Transport
 - Community Facilities (as defined by the Croydon Local Plan 2018)
- Planning obligations will still be required in accordance with Regulation 122 (Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011 and 2012)) for obligations relating to infrastructure not listed above.

CIL Summary

The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 set out the information that must be provided in an Annual Infrastructure Statement.

The table below shows how much CIL was unspent from previous financial years, raised, spent or allocated in 2022/23:

Type of Project or Amount ¹	2022/23	Notes (Where applicable)
a) Total value of CIL set out in demand notices	£8,695,793.81	From 101 CIL demand notices
b) Total CIL receipts	£6,654,255.00	
c) CIL receipts collected before April 2022 and has not been allocated	£17,499,282.00	This is the sum total of CIL collected before 1st April 2022 that had not been spent or allocated as of 31st March 2023
d) CIL receipts collected before April 2022 and has been allocated	£6,400,000.00	
e) Total CIL expenditure for 2022/23	£7,752,204.00	Details of what CIL was spent on can be found in Rows g, i, l and m of this table
f) CIL receipts collected at any time and allocated but not spent during 2022/23	£nil	
g) Summary details of Borough CIL expenditure: items or type of infrastructure & amount of borough CIL	*See below Table 1 Total £6,400,000.00	These are the infrastructure types and projects funded in full, or in part, by the borough CIL

¹ References refer to CIL Regulations Schedule 2(1)

h) Amount of CIL spent on repaying money borrowed	£nil	
i) Amount of CIL spent on administrative expenses	£394,622	
j) CIL receipts collected any time to which regulation 59E or 59F applied during the reported year that were allocated but not spent during 2022/23	£1,316,140	See table 2
k) Amount of CIL passed to any parish council under regulation 59A or 59B	£nil	
l) Summary details of receipt & expenditure of CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	£998,138 (receipt) £957,582 (expenditure)	
m) CIL LMP projects & amounts allocated or spent for 2022/23		See below Table 2
n) Summary details of any notices served in accordance with regulation 59E	N/A	This only applies to the recovery of unspent CIL that has been passed to a parish council under the Local Meaningful Proportion – as there are no parish councils in Croydon it does not apply
o) Total amount of CIL receipts for 2022/23 retained at the end of 2022/23 not inclusive of regulation 59E or 59F (CIL LMP) applied	£5,323,404.00	

p) Total amount of CIL receipts prior 2022/23 retained at the end of 2022/23 not inclusive of regulation 59E or 59F (CIL LMP) applied	£3,427,099	
q) The total amount of CIL receipts for the reported year to which regulation 59E or 59F applied retained at the end of the reported year	£998,138.00	
r) The total amount of CIL receipts from previous years to which regulation 59E or 59F applied retained at the end of the reported year.	£3,354,644	

Table 1 – Summary details of Borough CIL expenditure: projects or types of infrastructure funded in full, or in part, by borough CIL (CIL q above).

Organisation/Description	Amount of CIL received
New Burial Ground for Croydon residents Landscaping/development of new cemetery extension at Greenlawn Memorial Park	£1,648,241.29
Highways	£2,934,579.59
Flood Water Management	£617,179.12
Higher Drive Bridge maintenance	£1,200,000
Total	£6,400,000

Table 2 CIL Local Meaningful Proportion projects & amounts allocated or spent for 2022/23 (CIL I above)

Category	Amount Allocated	Amount Spent
CIL LMP - Sustainability Programme 2022/23 & 2023/24	550,000 (£1,100,000.00 (2022/23 & 2023/24))	£0.00
CIL LMP - Library Self-Service Kiosks	£200,000.00	£198,074.96
Community Rent Subsidy	£245,000.00	£208,147.18
Community Fund Project	£400,122.00	£400,000.00
CCTV	£200,000.00	£0.00
Grounds Maintenance	£300,000.00	£0.00
Grange Park Perimeter Path	£28,600.00	£0.00
CIL LMP - Libraries Stock Fund	£300,000.00	£151,359.69
Totals	£2,273,722	£957,581.83

Section 106

How much was raised in financial terms through planning obligations (under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in the year 2022/23, what infrastructure was funded during 2022/23 year, and how much money remains available to support further infrastructure in future years?

Type of Spending on planning obligations in Croydon (through Section 106 legal agreements or others)	Amount
a) The total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during 2022/23	£1,062,498.50
b) The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during 2022/23	£4,910,582.99
c) The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received prior 2022/23 which has not been allocated	£4,418,550.29
d) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was allocated but not spent during 2022/23 for funding infrastructure	£24,944.51***
e) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was spent by the authority (including transferring it to another person to spend)	£1,242,187
f) Summary details of infrastructure (project name and amount) that has been allocated but not spent during 2022/23	*See below Table 3 Total £24,944.51
g) In relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was spent by the authority during the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend), summary details of the items of infrastructure on which that money (received under planning obligations) was spent, and the amount spent on each item	*See below Table 4 Total £1,242,187
h) In relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was spent by the authority during the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend), summary details of the amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part)	£nil (All spending of money received under planning obligations was spent on the direct provision of infrastructure with the exception of money

Type of Spending on planning obligations in Croydon (through Section 106 legal agreements or others)	Amount
	spent on monitoring fees as shown in Row i)
i) In relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was spent by the authority during the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend), summary details of the amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent in respect of monitoring (including reporting under regulation 121A) in relation to the delivery of planning obligations	£nil
j) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) during any year which was retained at the end of the reported year, and where any of the retained money has been allocated for the purposes of longer-term maintenance (“commuted sums”), also identify separately the total amount of commuted sums held.	£4,428,861.00

Table 3 – Summary details of infrastructure (project name and amount) that has been allocated but not spent during 2022/23 (Sec 106 F above)

Project	Funding pot	Ward	Amount allocated but not spent
Source London - Vehicle Charging Points	Sustainable Transport	Various	£24,944.51
		Total	£24,944.51

Table 4 – Items of infrastructure on which that money (received under planning obligations) was spent, and the amount spent on each item.

IFG NUMBER	PROJECT	AMOUNT
257	Primary and Community Estate Programme CCG	£676,514
289	Cherry Orchard Road, cycle connections northeast of the Borough into Addiscombe Road	£2,814.00
290	College Road (including George Street Crossing) connecting cycle track in front of the College and Fairfield Hall along College Road and across George Street to Dingwall Road	£18,901.00
292	On Street Secure Cycle Hangers	£2,024.00
294	Priority Homes Initiative	£432,800.00
300	Sanderstead Bus Priority	£11,723.00
301	Wickham Road Bus Priority	£16,006.00
303	Addington Road Selsdon, scheme for localised road safety, public transport and active travel improvements.	£1,466.00
304	Central Croydon Bus Priority	£11,135.00
306	Cane Hill Area Bus Priority	£11,608.00
307	Church Road & South Norwood Hill Bus Priority	£10,228.00
311	West Croydon Station Capacity Enhancements	£8,160.00
173	Source London Electrical Vehicle Charging Point	£24,945.00
174	Fairfield Cycle Route	£8,637.00
316	Croydon Urban Room	£5,226.00
	Total	£1,242,185

Affordable housing and school places secured through planning obligations under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) during 2022/23

A total of 115 new affordable homes were secured through planning obligations agreed in 2022/23 under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

No school places were secured through planning obligations as school places are included on the Infrastructure List and funding arising as a result of developments being granted planning permission comes through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

****As far as possible the information has been collated using records monitored and managed by the CIL & Section 106 team. There may be projects where funds have been allocated but not yet spent but this information has not been captured at this stage. Likewise funds that are now available as they were not spent cannot be identified for the same reason except for record held by the CIL & Section 106 Team.*

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	30 January 2024
REPORT TITLE:	Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July 2023.
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny T:020 8726 6000 x 63779
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Cabinet response to recommendations made by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is provided for the Sub-Committee's information.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is asked to note the response given by the Cabinet to recommendations made by the Sub-Committee and consider whether any further action is necessary.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The rights of scrutiny to make recommendations to the Cabinet, Council, non-Executive Committee, Partner Agency or Partnership Board is set out in Section 8 of Part 4E – Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution.
- 1.2 When making a recommendation to the Cabinet, a response needs to be given within two months to confirm whether the recommendation has been accepted or not. If accepted, this response should include how the recommendation will be implemented.
- 1.3 To ensure the Sub-Committee can monitor the response given to its recommendations, this report will be included as a standing item on each agenda, setting out in Appendix A the response from the Cabinet to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee.
- 1.4 The Sub-Committee is asked to review the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

3 SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Scrutiny recommendations are contained in the schedule in the appendix to this report.
- 3.2 The detailed responses, including reasons for rejected recommendations and action plans for the implementation of agreed recommendations are also contained in the appendix.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1 Appendix 1: Scrutiny Stage 2 Response - Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 Report to Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July 2023
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=3506>
- 5.2 Report to Cabinet on 27 September 2023
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=183&MId=3576&Ver=4>

Appendix 1 – Item: Parking Policy Transformation Project Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.5.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that 'Letter Drops', or similar targeted communications, on Parking Policy are undertaken in District Centres that had not already been engaged or are not being actively engaged through local Business Improvement Districts before any changes to Parking Policy are enacted.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Already in Progress Whilst we are actively engaging with the established Business Improvement District teams, we recognise the importance of listening to all our businesses and traders. To ensure we are capturing the views of district centre businesses, the project team are scheduled to visit these businesses and provide information on how they can engage with the public consultation exercise.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	The cost to undertake this is included as part of the consultation programme.	Week ending Friday 20 October 2023	TBC
SE.6.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that an improved parking map is developed for the Council website, which included Controlled Parking Zones and Restricted Parking Areas.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Accepted Policy 4 of the Draft Parking Policy is efficient service management. As part of this we will consider further digitisation of parking information and data, including any mapping, and we will ensure that this data is accessible to the public, thereby increasing transparency of the Parking service and its data.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	There will be additional cost to digitise aspects of the service, but these will be offset by longer term savings in service operations.	End of 2024/25 financial year	TBC

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.7.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommended that a Task Group was established for engaging with disabled residents and disabled-led organisations (such as Transport for All) on parking policy, to ensure that disabled parking bays were best placed on the road for users and that roads and footways were accessible, as part of the work for Policy three - 'Supporting our Disabled Residents'.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Already in Progress As part of the parking consultation during October 2023 we are reaching out to specialist interest groups, including those that represent disabled residents.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	The cost to undertake this is included as part of the consultation programme	31 October 2023	TBC
SE.8.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that a process is put in place to provide follow-up communication on the outcome, to residents who reported parking for enforcement action through the parking hotline or 'Love Clean Streets' app.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Accepted Parking Services are working with the digital team to further automate the reports received via Love Clean Streets to ensure that reports made by customers are responded to with the reported outcome	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	N/A	End Quarter 3 2023/24	TBC
SE.9.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that there is comprehensive communications planned with residents should areas transition from parking meters to cashless parking, including a full publicity campaign and video walk-through.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Already in Progress If parking payment goes cashless we will have a communication plan and work with our third party provider, RingGo, to ensure that we promote both the RingGo app and alternative payments. We have included displays and leaflets on cashless payment methods as part of the ongoing Parking Policy consultation.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	The contract with RingGo includes requirements for cashless campaigns	Subject to outcome of Parking Policy consultation	TBC

Appendix 2 – Item: Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July

2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.10.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that steps be taken to publish the Flood Risk Register on the Council's website to ensure that this was transparent and accessible to residents.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Rejected Flood risk data is already available online. Residents can visit the GOV.UK website to check the long-term flood risk for their area.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	N/A	The data is already available online.	TBC
SE.11.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends the implementation of a publicly accessible Geographic Information System (GIS) for Croydon.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Accepted This will be investigated as part of the actions on the Action Plan for the Strategy	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	The retender project is funded by Capital.	There is an active project to retender for a new Corporate GIS platform, which includes the capability to publish spatial information publicly. The tender is being prepared now with a target implementation date of May 24	TBC
SE.12.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the expertise of an arborist be sought, to feed into the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, and that more thought should be put into how 'Blue and Green corridors' can be expanded, alongside other nature based solutions, to provide additional flood prevention measures using existing grant funding available to the Council.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Accepted The LLFA will work closely with the Trees & Woodlands Team, to take this recommendation forward.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	There is no financial implication to the Council as the works would be undertaken by existing staff.	The discussions will commence immediately once the Strategy has been adopted and then ongoing at the Internal Flood Group quarterly meetings.	TBC

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.13.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council implement a year-round publicity campaign on flood prevention, as it felt that beginning publicity in the winter would reduce its effectiveness.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Already in Progress Educating the public on their flood risk responsibility is an action in the Action Plan for the Strategy.	Jayne Rusbatch, Head of Highways & Parking Services	There is no financial implication to the Council, as existing platforms will be used.	The work will commence immediately once the Strategy has been adopted and will be ongoing.	TBC

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	30 January 2024
REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny T:020 8726 6000 x 63779
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Work Programme is scheduled for consideration at every ordinary meeting of the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To consider any additions, amendments, or changes to the draft work programme for the Committee in 2023/24.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This agenda item details the Sub-Committee's draft work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee has the opportunity to discuss any amendments or additions that it wishes to make to the work programme.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee is able to propose changes to its work programme, but in line with Constitution, the final decision on any changes to any of the Committee/Sub-Committee work programmes rests with the Chairs & Vice-Chairs Group, following consultation with officers.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the draft work programme for 2023-24, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2.2 Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

3 WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 The work programme

The proposed work programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members are asked to note that the lines of enquiry for some items have yet to be confirmed and that there are opportunities to add further items to the work programme.

3.2 Additional Scrutiny Topics

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to suggest any other items that they consider appropriate for the Work Programme. However, due to the time limitations at Sub-Committee meetings, it is suggested that no proposed agenda contain more than two items of substantive business in order to allow effective scrutiny of items already listed.

3.3 Participation in Scrutiny

Members of the Sub-Committee are also requested to give consideration to any persons that it wishes to attend future meetings to assist in the consideration of agenda items. This may include Cabinet Members, Council or other public agency officers or representatives of relevant communities.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1** Appendix 1: Draft Work Programme 2023/24 for the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1** None

Streets & Environment

The below table sets out the working version of the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee work programme.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
11 July 2023	Pre-Decision: Parking Policy Transformation Project	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the upcoming Cabinet report covering the Parking Policy Transformation Project.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Steve Iles
	Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	To receive a presentation on the forthcoming consultation on updating the Council's Flood Risk Plan, so that the Sub-Committee can provide feedback and input into its development.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd

1 November 2023	Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028	To receive a presentation on the Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 to allow the Sub-Committee to provide early feedback in advance of the full report to Cabinet in December 2023.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd
	Cleaner Croydon	To receive an update on the Council's work on the Mayor's priority for delivering 'Cleaner Croydon'. The Sub-Committee will also receive feedback on its recommendations concerning the Waste & Recycling Contract.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Karen Agbabiaka
	Local Plan Review	For the Sub-Committee to receive a detailed presentation on the review of the Local Plan 2023/24, to facilitate Members to influence the content of the Local Plan Review ahead of its journey on to Cabinet and Council.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Steve Dennington

30 January 2024	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	<p>The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on three budget proposals (identified below) and reach a conclusion on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the savings/growth deliverable, sustainable and not an unacceptable risk. 2. Is the impact on service users and the wider community understood. 3. Have all reasonable alternative options been explored and do no better options exist. <p>Areas for deep dives in the above report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024-28 SAV SCRER 002 - Fees and charges - Changes to parking policy – <i>(Information on process being followed to achieve these savings)</i> • 2024-28 GRO SCRER 003 - SEND Transport – Student Number Cost Driver • 2024-28 SAV SCRER 006 - Deferral of growth in highways maintenance 	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd
	Local Development Scheme and Infrastructure Funding Statement	To scrutinise any outstanding Local Plan issues not covered in the November Sub-Committee, the Local Development Scheme and Infrastructure Funding Statement.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Heather Cheesbrough, Steve Dennington

2 April 2024	Climate Change Action Plan	To review and provide feedback on the Council's Climate Action Plan & Biodiversity Strategy	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd
	Waste contract procurement award - May 2024	To scrutinise the Waste contract procurement award.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Karen Agbabiaka
	Air Quality Action Plan Update	To receive an update on the development of the Air Quality Action Plan 2024-28.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Micheal Goddard

Standing Items:

Work Programme Item	Notes
Financial Monitoring for SCRER	Standing Item tracking progress with the delivery of 2023/24 Budget using the latest Cabinet Financial Performance report (To review by exception).

Items of Interest

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but are highlighted as potential items of interest to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Scrutiny Officer Notes
Environment Bill Responsibilities	To review the additional responsibilities that will fall upon the Council following the adoption of the Environment Bill.
Implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill	To review the possible implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill
Protection of green spaces and parks	To look at the protection of parks and green spaces in the borough, including the support fund and Council strategy.
Clean Water and Sewage (Thames Water)	To look at the water quality in the borough and the risks of contamination from sewerage.
Public Transport, Active Transport, Road Safety & School Streets	To look at the strategy for Transport, Active Transport, Healthy Streets & School Streets in the borough, alongside Road Fatalities & Speed Limits
Transformation of Independent Travel	To review the transformation of the Independent Travel Service – End of 2023/24.
Climate Action Plan/Vision Zero	To scrutinise the Council’s plans around Climate Change and achieving Vision Zero.
Enforcement Policy & Planning Enforcement (Provisional June 2024)	To inform the Sub-Committee on the Enforcement powers available to the Council, as well as information on how enforcement is being undertaken and resourced.
Bus Shelters (Provisional June 2024) & Street Lighting	Further scoping needed
Cleaner Croydon/Blitz Clean Update	To receive an update on work towards achieving the Mayor’s priority for delivering ‘Cleaner Croydon’, and to monitor whether the blitz clean programme

	was successful and having a sustained impact on district centres, alongside data on the number of businesses and residents engaged during the cleans.
Cabinet Report - Building Control Transformation Report	To scrutinise the upcoming Cabinet Report on Building Control Transformation, following the Sub-Committee's deep dive on the Building Control budget in January 2023, and to examine whether the department is operationally resilient, but also financially viable, sustainable, and efficient.
Cabinet Report – Future of Experimental Healthy Neighbourhoods (plus short update on Cycle Lanes & Schools Streets)	To receive and scrutinise the Cabinet report on the future Experimental Healthy Neighbourhood schemes, alongside a short update on Cycle Lanes & Schools Streets.
Cabinet Report - Croydon Town Centre Regeneration Programme and Growth Zone annual budget and programme FY 24/25	For the Sub-Committee to receive the report updating Members on the status of the current and upcoming Croydon Town Centre regeneration programme, and to scrutinise the proposed annual Growth Zone budget and high-level programme for 2024/25 and evaluate whether this will achieve the required additional funding to positively contribute to the Council's financial position.
Update on Air Quality Action Plan	To receive an update on the Air Quality Action Plan considered by the Sub-Committee in November 2023.