

# Scrutiny & Overview Committee Agenda



To: Councillor Rowenna Davis (Chair), Councillor Richard Chatterjee (Vice-Chair), Leila Ben-Hassel, Jade Appleton, Simon Fox and Eunice O'Dame

Reserve Members: Sue Bennett, Louis Carserides, Amy Foster, Gayle Gander, Brigitte Graham and Joseph Lee

A meeting of the **Scrutiny & Overview Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 26 September 2023 at 6.30 pm** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**.

Katherine Kerswell  
Chief Executive  
London Borough of Croydon  
Bernard Weatherill House  
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Simon Trevaskis  
Senior Democratic Services & Governance  
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www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings  
Monday, 18 September 2023

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 Simon Trevaskis 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 - 16)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 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. Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026: Performance Report (Pages 17 - 46)**

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is presented with a report setting out the performance measures that will be used to report progress made with delivering the five outcomes within the Mayor's Business Plan. The Committee is asked to review these proposed performance measures and their alignment with the five outcomes.

### **6. Month 3 2023-24: Financial Performance Monitoring (Pages 47 - 82)**

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is presented with the latest Financial Performance Monitoring report (Month 3 – June 2023) for its information. The Committee is asked to: -

1. Review the information provided in the report on the Month 3 Financial Performance Report, and
2. Consider its conclusions on the latest budget position for 2023-24
3. Consider whether there are any recommendations to bring to the

attention of the Mayor.

**7. People & Cultural Transformation Strategy: Action Plan (Pages 83 - 120)**

The Committee is provided with a copy of a Cabinet report which gives and update on the delivery of the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy, including the accompanying action plan. The Committee is asked to: -

1. Review the information provided in the report on the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy, and
2. Decide whether there are any comments or recommendations on the scheme to bring to the attention of the Mayor during his consideration of the report.

**8. Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23 (Pages 121 - 196)**

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is presented with a draft of the Annual Scrutiny Report for its review and is asked to: -

1. Approve the draft version of the Annual Scrutiny Report for submission to Council on 11 October 2023.
2. To note that any amendments made as a result of the comments of the Committee will be agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs, to meet the timeline for delivery to the Council meeting.

**9. Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 197 - 206)**

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is asked to

1. Approve the recommendations made by its Sub-Committee's for submission to the Executive Mayor for his consideration.
2. Review the response provided by Mayor to recommendations made by the Scrutiny & Overview Committee.

**10. Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24 (Pages 207 - 226)**

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is asked to: -

1. Note the most recent version of the Scrutiny Work Programme

presented in the report.

2. Consider whether there are any other items that should be provisionally added to the work programme as a result of the discussions held during the meeting.

## **11. 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**

## Scrutiny & Overview Committee

Meeting held on Tuesday, 25 July 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillor Rowenna Davis (Chair), Councillor Richard Chatterjee (Vice-Chair), Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel (Deputy-Chair) Councillors Jade Appleton, Simon Fox and Eunice O'Dame.

**Also Present:** Councillor Jason Cummings & Andy Stranack

**Apologies:** None.

### PART A

#### 43/23 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023 were agreed as an record.

#### 44/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were no disclosures of interest made at the meeting.

#### 45/23 **Urgent Business (if any)**

The Chair highlighted the recent letter published by the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Michael Gove MP on 20 July 2023, which provided updated guidance on the statutory intervention at the London Borough of Croydon. As this was after the publication of the Committee's agenda, the Chair invited the Council's Chief Executive, Katherine Kerswell, to provide an update under 'Urgent Business' on the implications of the new guidance and to outline the next steps for the Council. Members of the Government's Improvement & Assurance Panel were in attendance at the meeting, and the Chief Executive invited the Panel Chair, Tony McArdle, to provide additional insight on behalf of the Panel as part of the update.

It was advised that the letter from DLUHC confirmed that the Council would be entering into statutory arrangements with the Improvement & Assurance Panel. Since the original letter from DLUHC about the statutory arrangements, received in March 2023, the Council and the Panel had continued to work together under the previously established arrangement, while waiting for further guidance. The letter from DLUHC highlighted three previous identified

areas of particular concern, namely finance, transformation, and housing. It was confirmed that the Council was not expecting any further guidance from DLUHC.

The ongoing role of the Improvement & Assurance Panel was to guide, challenge and advise the Council on its recovery. If the Panel felt it was needed, it also had the power to direct the Council to ensure it was meeting its best value duty. Tony McArdle would continue as Chair of the Panel, while Jon Wilson and Phil Brookes would continue in their respective roles as leads in adult social care, and commercial and asset disposal. There would be two new additions to the team, with Brian Roberts joining as financial lead and Pamela Leonce as housing lead.

It was confirmed that DLUHC had recently opened a consultation on the Best Value Duty of local authorities, a link to which would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting. This document explained what the Government meant by Best Value Duty. It was highlighted that a local authority was not expected to be perfect, but it should be working towards this and be able to deliver a sustainable budget, which the Council was not able to do until its debt issue was resolved.

Panel Chair, Tony McArdle, advised the Committee that the Panel looked forward to continuing to support the Council with its recovery. Although the Government had put statutory arrangements in place, it was not envisioned that the current relationship between the Panel and the Council would be significantly different. The Panel would remain in Croydon until 2025 and it was their role to provide reassurance to the DLUHC Secretary of State on the Council's journey towards ongoing sustainability.

A requirement of the statutory intervention was to have an exit strategy in place to set out where the Council was expected to be by the time the Panel was due to leave Croydon in 2025. Although, the Strategy was owned by the Panel and would set out their expectations for the Council on behalf of the Secretary of State, there had been conversations with the Mayor, Cabinet and officers as part of its development. It was hoped that the exit strategy would be available within a couple of months.

At the conclusion of the item, the Chair thanked the Chief Executive and Mr McArdle for the update provided.

### **Actions**

Following consideration of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed the following action to follow-up after the meeting: -

1. That the link to the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities' consultation 'Best value standards and intervention - a statutory guide for best value authorities' would be circulated to the Committee.

## Conclusions

At the conclusion of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee reached the following conclusions: -

1. It was noted that a requirement of the statutory intervention was to have in place an 'Exit Strategy', setting out a range of criteria the Council was expected to have achieved by the time the Improvement & Assurance Panel was scheduled to leave Croydon in 2025. This document was currently being prepared.
2. Although the Improvement & Assurance Panel were the owners of the 'Exit Strategy', the Scrutiny & Overview Committee welcomed the reassurance given that the Mayor, the Cabinet and council officers were engaged with the Panel on its development.

### 46/23 **Month 2 Financial Performance Monitoring**

The Committee considered a report on pages 19 to 52 of the agenda that provided an overview of the latest budget position for 2023-24 up until the end of Month 2 (May 2023). This report was included on the agenda as part of the Committee's ongoing scrutiny of the delivery of 2023-24 budget.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, Chief Executive, Katherine Kerswell, Corporate Director for Resources, Jane West, and Director of Finance, Allister Bannin were in attendance for this item at the meeting.

The first question from the Committee related to the forecast that, based on the current projection, there would be an overspend of £3.6m at year end, which would require the use of contingency funding to deliver a balanced budget. It was questioned whether it was normal accounting practice to allocate contingency funding at such an early stage in the year and whether this would discourage services from addressing any such overspends. In response, it was clarified that £3.6m figure in the report was not a current overspend, instead it was a year-end forecast, which should it crystallise by the year end, could be met from contingency funds. Where potential overspends had been highlighted within individual service budgets, there was an expectation that the specific service would proactively work to recover this over the course of the year by either addressing the cause of the overspend or through identifying alternative savings.

It was confirmed that the report included a breakdown on the underspend within the budget arising from staffing vacancies, which was broken down by directorates. It was noted that there were particular underspends forecasted on staffing within services with hard to recruit roles, such as social care and planning. There were also instances where recruitment had been held where a restructure was planned.

In response to concerns about the potential impact of staffing vacancies, it was confirmed that the risk was being actively monitored and managed. There was a specific challenge within social care, with a national shortage of trained staff to fill specialised roles. This required a wider workforce strategy and separately work was underway on overseas recruitment. As well as working on encouraging new employees to join Croydon, given the need to make significant savings, it was also important for the Council to look at how it could do things differently and more efficiently through areas such as automation.

As the next meeting of the Committee on 26 September 2023 was due to include an item on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy, it was agreed that further information on the work on recruitment and retention would be requested as part of this report.

Regarding transformation, it was confirmed that the Transformation Internal Control Board had been meeting for six months, which had helped to shape the programme. The various transformation projects were being loaded into the new Verto project management software and officers were being trained on how to use this system. Projects were underway, such as the one to improve the Council's business intelligence, which was already delivering savings through identifying where the Council was paying for services that were not needed like freedom passes or identifying council tenants sub-letting their properties. The new Director of Transformation was also due to start at the Council in mid-September and it was expected that they would be leading on the wider communication of the Council's vision for transformation and ensuring the residents voice was being captured in the improvement journey.

In response to a question about whether the Council would be putting more resources into areas such as tenancy checks, it was confirmed that it would be doing so. The Council worked in partnership with Lambeth Council on fraud and was in discussions with them about additional resource. Technology, such as data matching, would also be used to identify potential fraud and the Council had recently invested in the national fraud data hub, which was providing benefit.

It was questioned whether the Council would be able to present a full budget for transformation in 2024-25 as part of the budget setting process in early 2024. It was confirmed that this would be presented as part of the budget, as the transformation work streams were crucial to the improvement journey of the Council. The Cabinet Member for Finance emphasised the importance of transformation to the Council. The work was still at an early stage and had involved staff learning a lot of new processes, even so, it was already producing results. Outside of their normal workstreams, transformation was the largest part of the role for the Cabinet Members and needed to be looked at over a three to four year period.

It was noted that it could be challenging to engage effectively with residents and that any such communication would need to be carefully managed as transformation began to change the way services were delivered. Reassurance was given that the process for how the Council engaged with



residents on transformation was currently under consideration and if needed additional resource could be allocated for this within the transformation budget. It was highlighted that a new equalities screening tool was being used which would help to identify the projects where further consultation was needed.

In advance of the meeting, additional information had been requested by the Committee on the rate of Council tax collection and the number of applications to the new hardship scheme brought in as part of the budget to mitigate against the potential impact from the 15% Council Tax rise. It was noted that collection rate was currently 0.03% below the expected target, but it was expected that this would be recovered in the coming months.

There was surprise noted by some of the Committee that there had only been 283 applications to the Hardship Scheme and as such it was questioned whether knowledge of the scheme was reaching those in most need. In response, it was highlighted that the Hardship Scheme had been created to supplement other existing schemes that would be utilised first. When the scheme was created the level of need was not known, which was why a significant buffer was put in place. The Committee agreed that it would provide additional reassurance to confirm that information on the various support schemes available was being included with arrears letters when sent. In response to a question about whether the amount of housing benefit officers employed by the Council was being reduced, it was advised that these officers were being moved from the Housing team to the Revenue & Benefits team to maximise resources. There was no plan to make any officers redundant.

It was noted that the budget for Adult Social Care included the forecasted costs for three high cost care packages. If these care packages changed during the year, the forecast would be revised to take this into account. The increasing cost of adult social care was a national challenge, which would require long term transformation work to address. Although the Council had to meet its statutory duties to residents, it was important to ensure that best value was being provided as well.

In response to a question about planning income, it was confirmed that there had been lower activity in major applications, which if it continued would impact upon the budget. The main issue was the timing of applications being submitted which was beyond the Council's control, however the service was working on modelling the applications expected to come through the planning system to provide greater certainty.

At the conclusion of this item, the Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their attendance at the meeting.

### **Actions**

Following consideration of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed the following action to follow-up after the meeting: -

1. The Committee agreed that an item on staffing and recruitment across the Council would be added to its work programme for 2023-24 as part of its review of the action plan for the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy.
2. Although it was accepted the data would be continually fluctuating, the Committee agreed that the provision of data on the level of staff vacancies across the organisation would help it better understand the scale of the challenge with recruitment and retention. The Committee requested the provision of data on the Council's workforce, to include: -
  - a. The number of vacancies across the organisation, broken down by service areas and compared to the expected full staff complement within each area.
  - b. A breakdown on the number of permanent, temporary and agency staff in post across each service area.
  - c. Any comparison data available with statistical neighbours on vacancy rates, mix of temporary and permanent staff and full staffing complement by area.
3. The Committee agreed that it would seek to engage with the new Transformation Director, once in post, about the transformation workstream on resident engagement.
4. In light of questions raised on the impact of the 15% Council Tax rise, agreed by Council in March 2023, the Committee agreed to request data comparing the current rate of Council Tax arrears against data from previous years.

## **Conclusions**

At the conclusion of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee reached the following conclusions: -

1. The Committee welcomed the reassurance given by the Cabinet Member for Finance on progress made with the Council's Transformation Programmes and noted that the first quarterly Transformation Monitoring report was due to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 27 September 2023.
2. Although it was accepted that some of the factors involved were not unique to Croydon and were either London-wide or national challenges, the Committee concluded that the vacancy rates within certain services of the Council presented a considerable risk to the delivery of both business as usual services and transformation programmes.

## **Recommendations**

The Committee agreed to submit the following recommendation for the consideration of the Mayor: -

1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee would like to recommend that the letters sent to residents regarding Council Tax arrears are reviewed to ensure they include information about the potential availability of support schemes, such as the Council Tax Hardship Scheme.

## **47/23 Equalities Strategy Refresh**

The Committee considered a report set out in the supplementary agenda pack on the process for refreshing the Council's Equalities Strategy. The report also provided a summary of the possible areas for update for the Committee's feedback.

The Cabinet Member Communities & Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, the Council's Chief Executive, Katherine Kerswell, Head of Policy & Strategy, David Courcoux, Head of Learning & Organisational Development, Grace Addy, Equalities Manager, Denise McCausland and Senior Strategy Officer, John Montes, attended the meeting for this item.

From the introduction to the report, it was noted that the current strategy had been in place since its approval in 2021. As there had been significant changes both across the Council and nationally since then, it was felt to be timely to revisit the strategy to ensure that it remained fit for purpose. Although there had been progress made with delivering the original strategy, it had been found that it was difficult to measure its impact in some areas. As part of the refresh, there would be an opportunity to ensure the strategy was measurable and included clear accountability for delivery.

The first question from the Committee asked what term the Council would be using to describe the different ethnic groups formally known as BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic). It was confirmed that following consultation within the Council and with staff networks, the term Global Majority would be used, although the terms racialised groups and minoritised groups were also in use. The term Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic was still used when referring to statistics, but not in its shortened form.

Regarding the action plan for delivering the Equalities Strategy, it was confirmed that it was being reviewed to ensure that measurable targets were included, allowing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Board to hold officers to account on delivery. Although the current action plan contained a large amount of ambition, clarity was needed on its targets and deliverability. Work was also needed to ensure that the ambition of the Council for the Equalities Strategy could be balanced against the capacity for delivery.

The revised action plan would have a greater emphasis on statistical outcomes rather than the more narrative aims included in the current strategy. Another issue being addressed within the current action plan was the inclusion of actions aimed at the entire organisation, which had proved difficult to define how they would be delivered. It was planned that the revised Equalities Strategy would be considered by Cabinet in September, before going to Council in October for approval. The updated action plan would follow within a couple of months of the Strategy's approval. Although core accountability would be through direct line management and across directorates through the delivery of the work programmes, it was suggested that the EDI Board could be a mechanism for providing further challenge on the delivery of the strategy. It was agreed that a recommendation would be made on finding the most appropriate mechanism for regularly challenging those officers responsible for delivery.

It was questioned how the Equalities Strategy would address other protected characteristics and hard to reach groups. It was acknowledged that some characteristics were more visible than others in the original strategy and there was a need for all to be reflected in the revised strategy. Although it was intended that the term 'minoritised groups' referred to a wider range of groups, it was accepted that it needed to be made clearer which groups were included. The Council did try to ensure that there was support across all staff networks, which was reflected in the strategy, with the voice of the networks being reflected in everything the Council does. It was suggested that further consideration needed to be given to how the intersectionality between protected characteristics was reflected in the Equalities Strategy.

It was confirmed that best practice from other local authorities had been used to inform the refresh, although it was highlighted that the Council was at the cutting edge in some areas such as its menopause policy and network. It was suggested that the Employers Board at London Councils could also be a useful group to provide input into the development of the strategy.

Although the work delivered through the Equalities Strategy was welcomed, it was noted that a key challenge was to ensure that managers were taking account of training provided and whether there were any trends in the data around grievances related to protected characteristics. It was advised that the trends in the reasons for grievances tended to fluctuate. Although training was important, improvement could only be delivered in conjunction with other areas such as improved accountability and compliance. It was noted that the Council was seeing a much higher rate of disclosure from staff with protected characteristics, which had increased from 25% to almost 60%, which was a positive reflection of the changing culture.

It was questioned how the refreshed strategy would feed into the decision-making processes of the Council. In response, it was advised that once the strategy had been agreed, the Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) completed by report authors and which informed the decision-making process, would be reviewed to make it more accessible and to ensure it was more data-driven. The refreshed Equalities Strategy would also link in with the

Mayor's Priorities. A driver for the refresh was the level of upcoming transformational change required across the Council and the need to ensure that equalities was taken into account and appropriate mitigation put into place. It was also important to ensure that the completion of the EQIA was much earlier in the decision-making process, so that any decisions took proper account of any issues identified.

It was confirmed that as part of the refresh, 2021 census data would be used to update the data used in the previous version, with an objective of the strategy being to ensure that the data underpinning it was as up to date as possible.

In response to a question about how progress with delivering the strategy would be tracked, it was advised that an annual review would be undertaken. Given an annual review was built into the process, the Committee agreed that it would be reasonable to extend the life of the refreshed strategy until after the next elections in 2026, when it could be reviewed by the new Administration. If the strategy was extended until 2026, it would allow the delivery of a range of short, medium and long term actions across its lifespan.

At the conclusion of this item, the Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their attendance at the meeting.

### **Actions**

Following consideration of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed the following action to follow-up after the meeting: -

1. The Committee agreed that it would want the opportunity to scrutinise the accompanying action plan to the refreshed Equalities Strategy, once it was available.
2. The Committee requested that further information on the Equalities Screening tool is shared with them.
3. The Committee requested that the updated Equalities Impact Assessment is shared with them, once it was available.

### **Conclusions**

At the conclusion of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee reached the following conclusions: -

1. The Committee welcomed confirmation that the Equalities Impact Assessment was being refreshed and endorsed the approach of requiring the equalities implications of a decision to be assessed at an early stage in the decision-making process, rather than being left to a later stage when it could be more challenging to meaningfully take account of the potential equalities implications.

2. The Committee welcomed confirmation that the Equalities Strategy Action Plan would focus on measurable outcomes using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Time-Bound) targets, which ensure that its success could be assessed.

## **Recommendations**

The Committee agreed to submit the following recommendations for the consideration of the Mayor: -

1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that there is further consideration given to how the refreshed Equalities Strategy can reflect the intersectionality between protected characteristics.
2. In order to improve accountability for the delivery of the Equalities Strategy, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that a process for holding regular challenge sessions with those officers responsible for specific actions/workstreams within the Strategy is developed as part of the ongoing monitoring of delivery.
3. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed with the proposal of the Cabinet Member and Officers, that given its scope, the Equalities Strategy should have a longer term end date, but recommends that: -
  - a. key review points are built into the Strategy at appropriate intervals to allow for adjustments and the opportunity to refocus as needed.
  - b. it is sufficiently dynamic to take account of any new initiatives or legislation that may arise over its lifespan.
4. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that consideration is given to embedding Equalities Champions within directorates to complement existing structures and systems within the Council aimed at promoting equalities and inclusivity.

## **48/23 Scrutiny Recommendations**

The Committee considered a report set out on pages 53 to 60 of the agenda which presented recommendations proposed by the scrutiny sub-committees for sign-off ahead of submission to the Executive Mayor.

It was noted that feedback from the Government on the Council's bid for levelling up funding had been shared with the Committee by the Mayor. The Committee agreed it would make a recommendation to the Mayor to explore whether it would be possible to publish this feedback.

**Resolved:** That the recommendations made by its Sub-Committees are approved for submission to the Executive Mayor for his consideration.

## **Conclusions**

At the conclusion of this item, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee reached the following conclusion: -

1. Arising from its discussion with the Executive Mayor at previous meeting on 6 June 2023, The Scrutiny & Overview Committee welcomed the sharing of the feedback received from the Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities on the Council's bid for Levelling-Up funding and noted it reflected positively on the bid submitted.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee agreed to submit the following recommendation for the consideration of the Mayor: -

1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that the Mayor publishes the feedback received from the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities on the Council's bid for Levelling-Up funding.

### **49/23 Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24**

The Committee considered a report set out on pages 61 to 82 of the agenda which set out the draft Scrutiny Work Programme for sign-off by the Committee.

As part of this item, feedback was provided on the activity outside of formal meetings. This included: -

- The Health & Social Care Sub-Committee, visiting the Croydon University Hospital to receive a guided tour by the Chief Executive. The tour focused on the changes made to facilities to improve both the patient experience and flow through the hospital environment.
- As part of its ongoing review of health visiting, the Children & Young People Sub-Committee had arranged to meet with frontline staff to hear their experience of the delivering the service, which had informed their in-committee scrutiny of the item.

The Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee, Councillor Davis, advised that she had recently met with the Director of Community Safety & Culture to receive an update on the delivery of the Borough of Culture programme, with a view to scheduling it for scrutiny later in the year. The Chair thanked the officers involved in delivering the programme and noted that there were some concerns, including around staff capacity, that needed to be kept under review. It had been agreed that it would best for the Committee to review the Borough of Culture after six months, once the first set of evaluation data had been received.

**Resolved:** That the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023-24 is agreed.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY &amp; OVERVIEW COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>26 SEPTEMBER 2023</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 Performance report</b>
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive David Courcoux, Director of Policy, Programmes &amp; Performance</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Caroline Bruce, Head of Programmes &amp; Performance</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Mayor Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

### 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the performance measures (Appendix A) which will be used to report progress against the five outcomes (listed below), within the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 for review by Scrutiny. The Plan was approved at Cabinet in November 2022 and Full Council in December 2022.
1. The council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.
  2. Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning.
  3. Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.
  4. Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home.
  5. People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.
- 1.2 The Executive Mayor's Business plan is the Council's core strategic document setting out its objectives and priorities for the next four years. It reflects the Executive Mayor's manifesto pledges and priorities, as set out in a report to Cabinet in June 2022.
- 1.3 In January 2023 a final 'transitional' performance report, tracking progress against the corporate priorities set prior to the election of the Executive Mayor on 5 May 2022 was presented to Cabinet.
- 1.4 The measures detailed within the Appendix A of this report will be used to monitor delivery of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 which is borough wide and includes both Council and Partnerships measures. Council measures are those which

the Council is the lead in terms of delivery. Partnership measures monitor work with our partners, such as the Police and NHS who are the lead, but where the council has an important role to play in promoting partnership working. The council has no authority in setting the targets for Partnership measures.

- 1.6 The performance report in Appendix B, gives an overview of performance across each of the five outcomes within the plan. Appendix C provides detailed performance data on the Council's progress in delivering the outcomes within the Executive Mayor's Business Plan as at 31 July 2023. Please note the reports in Appendix B and C are for illustrative purposes only, full reports will be presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis starting in October 2023.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report and Appendices, The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Review the proposed performance measures in Appendix A of this report, and the alignment with the five objectives within the Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26.

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Executive Mayor has committed to seek the views of Scrutiny & Overview Committee on the proposed Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 performance measures.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1 The Executive Mayor's Business Plan was approved at Cabinet in November 2022 and Full Council in December 2022. Corporate Performance Reports will reflect progress against the Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 on both a Council and Partnership level as this is a plan for Croydon the Borough.

## **5 EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2026**

- 5.1 The Executive Mayor's Business Plan sets out the Executive Mayor's vision for Croydon. This Plan consists of five outcomes to be achieved by the Council over the next four years, with priority aims to deliver those outcomes, along with the high-level actions required. The full Business Plan can be viewed using this link <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/mayors-business-plan-2022-2026>
- 5.2 The financial challenges detailed in Section 114 Notices and the two Reports in the Public Interest in recent years have reduced the resources available to the Council, which means that it will be forced to do less in future. However, it will strive to improve the responsiveness and where possible the quality of the services it does provide. The Executive Mayor's mission is to transform the Council's way of working – balancing the budget, changing how services are run, securing maximum value for money, instilling strong governance, listening to residents' concerns and restoring pride in Croydon. The Council will work closely with partners from the business, statutory, and

voluntary sectors to bring more resources to the borough and to support and empower local communities so that together we can transform the Council and deliver services for the borough.

## **6 EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT**

- 6.1 There are currently 78 KPIs within the framework, with additional potential KPIs currently under review (see Appendix A). These have been created in consultation with service providers, taking account suitably to the outcome, accessibility to data / data confidence and what is meaningful to our residents.
- 6.2 In addition to the above, the corporate plan performance frameworks of six boroughs, Haringey, Merton, Westminster, Lambeth, Wandsworth and Sutton were all reviewed to ensure that Croydon is reporting the right things at the right time.
- 6.3 Presented alongside the covering report to Cabinet on a quarterly basis, there will be two accompanying appendices, illustrative examples of which can be viewed in Appendix B and C of this report. The first report (Appendix B) will provide a summary of performance in each of the five outcomes of the Plan by giving a RAG rating (where applicable).
- 6.4 KPI's which are at, or above target, will receive a green status, those within 10% of target an amber status and those which are operating below 10% of target a red status. Where a measure has no target as it has not yet been set, the RAG status will be shown as grey. Where a measure has either no data or target at the moment, the RAG status will be shown as black.
- 6.5 Alongside this summary a second appendix will supply the reader with a more detailed version of performance by providing graphs, trends, benchmarking where available, and where supplied, service commentary as to the actions in place to address under performance is provided to add context when reviewing. The measures are listed under the relevant outcomes of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan. An illustration of how this more detailed appendix will look is included at Appendix C.
- 6.6 The reports will differentiate between measures which are directly related to Council activity or within the Council's control, for example the number of Fols responded to on time, and those which are important contextual measures for Croydon but which are dependent on partnership action, for example the number of violence with injury offences per 1,000 of population.
- 6.7 In addition to key performance indicators, each Performance Report will include a high-level summary from the Executive Mayor of the actions and activity undertaken during that period related to the delivery of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan.
- 6.7 These reports and historical performance reports monitoring the progress against the Croydon Renewal Plan, and Corporate Priorities, presented to Cabinet can be viewed at <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/council-and-elections/freedom-information-and-corporate-performance/corporate-performance>

## 7 Report Governance

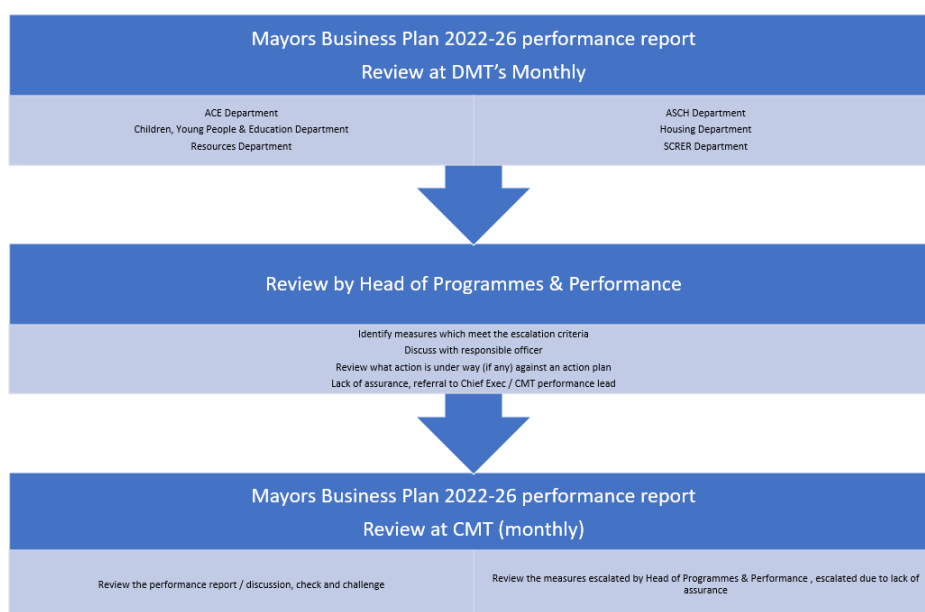
7.1 **Directorate and statutory performance reporting** – These reports continue to be presented to all Department Management Team meetings each month. Corporate Directors / Directors are responsible for discussing the contents of departmental and statutory performance reports with the relevant Cabinet Member and the Executive Mayor to ensure line of sight and accountability. The report is then presented to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on a monthly basis, to allow check and challenge. Areas of performance concern are escalated to the Mayor via regular Mayoral Briefings.

7.2 The Head of Programmes and Performance has independent oversight of all performance reports relating to the Executive Mayor’s Business Plan 2022-26 which are reviewed at DMT. Where

- DMT’s are unable to provide assurance that the action plan in place is fit for purpose / delivering improvement.
- DMT’s require investment in order that performance can be improved.
- Lack of action / speed of improvement can result in substantial risk to the organisation (special measures, fines, IAP expectation etc).
- Non delivery will have a detrimental impact on the delivery of corporate / Mayoral priorities.

The Head of Programmes & Performance together with the relevant DMT’s will escalate these issues to the Chief Executive and CMT lead for Performance following the process below. The Chief Executive / CMT performance lead, will then lead discussions with the relevant Corporate Director and CMT at the appropriate meeting where the report is reviewed.

In addition to performance reporting being discussed with Cabinet Members and the Executive Mayor, the Mayor’s Advisory Board also considers quarterly corporate performance across all Directorates.



## **8 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 None.

## **9 CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 Consultation with all Departments is currently underway to ensure that all suggested performance indicators have accessible and timely performance data available. Where this is not possible, alternative KPIs will be adopted.

## **10 CONTRIBUTIONS TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

10.1 This performance report monitor progress made against the five outcomes within the Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26

## **11 IMPLICATIONS**

### **11.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There will be financial implications associated with the delivery of the projects and actions within the Croydon Renewal and Improvement Plan which have been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The delivery of these projects and actions, and the resulting savings is essential. It is therefore critical that effective monitoring and reporting is in place.

Approved by: Ian Geary, Interim Head of Corporate Finance.

### **11.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the council as a best value authority to 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. Monitoring of performance information and acting on the findings are an important way in which that obligation can be supported.

11.2.2 For the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty arising under subsection (1) an authority must consult—  
representatives of persons liable to pay any tax, precept, or levy to or in respect of the authority, representatives of persons liable to pay non-domestic rates in respect of any area within which the authority carries out functions, representatives of persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and representatives of persons appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions.

11.2.3 In deciding how to fulfil the duty arising under section 3 (1), who to consult under section 3 (2), or the form, content, and timing of consultations under that subsection, an authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The most recent version of this guidance was published in March 2015:

11.2.4 Any legal implications arising in relation to individual actions will need to be dealt with as projects and decisions come forward for approval.  
Approved by: Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law for and on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.

### **11.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.3.1 In April 2011 the Equality Act (2010) introduced the public sector duty which extends the protected characteristics covered by the public sector equality duty to include age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief.

11.3.2 Section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

11.3.3 Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that decision makers must be able to evidence that they have taken into account any impact of the proposals under consideration on people who share the protected characteristics before decisions are taken. Equalities impact assessments will be a key part of our governance framework for the Improvement Board, with direct input from the Council's Equality & inclusion Manager.

11.3.4 The Equality Strategy 2020 – 2024 is the key performance tool for our equality deliverables. Departmental Service objectives and individual objectives are inclusive of equalities deliverables included in the Equality strategy. Organisational priorities are also inclusive of equality targets in respect of the organisation and the community.

Approved by: John Mukungunugwa, Interim Senior Equalities Officer, on behalf of Denise McCausland, Equalities Programme Manager.

### **11.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

11.4.1 Key to delivery of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan will be to retain and invest in a skilled workforce, who are enabled and engaged through a positive organisational culture. The council's People Strategy is being developed to be aligned to the Executive Mayor's Business Plan and supports building workforce skills and capacity for the future. It will be essential to create a golden thread, where all staff can see how their work links to the work of their team, their division, their directorate, the council's service plans, and the Mayor's Business Plan

11.4.2 Any planned service changes through informed review, will be subject to the council's re-organisation policy and procedure and formal consultation with staff and trade unions.

Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of Human Resources - Resources & Assistant Chief Executive

## **12 APPENDICES**

12.1 Appendix A: – Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance measures.

Appendix B: – Overview performance report for illustration purposes only.

Appendix C: Detailed Performance Report for illustration purposes only.

## **13 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

13.1 Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26

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## 1. The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Council	Monthly	M01	Variance against net budget requirement
Council	Monthly	M03	Council Tax 'In-year' Collection rate
Council	Monthly	M05	Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates) Collection rate
Council	Monthly	M06	Rent collection on General needs stock
Council	Quarterly	M07	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
Council	Quarterly	M08	% who are very or fairly satisfied with the way Croydon Council deals with repairs and maintenance
Council	Monthly	M10	Average council contact centre wait time
Council	Monthly	M11a	Staff Turnover rate (FTE who have left in the past 12 months divided by the total permanent staff)
Council	Monthly	M11b	Staff Turnover rate - enforced turnover (redundancy or other forms of dismissal)
Council	Monthly	M11c	Staff Turnover rate - natural turnover (staff leaving from resignation)
Council	Monthly	M12	Sickness - number of sick days per FTE
Council	Monthly	M13	% of residents that ended the call before we spoke to them
Council	Monthly	M14	FOI responded to on time
Council	Monthly	M15	SARs responded to on time
Council	Monthly	M16	Complaints responded to on time
Council	Quarterly	M17	Member Enquiries responded to on time
Council	Quarterly	M18	MP enquiries responded to on time

**DRAFT**

## 2. Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Partnership	Monthly	M19	% of people claiming universal credit who are in employment
Council	Monthly	M20	Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)
Council	Monthly	M21	Number of apprenticeship schemes started across the council
Partnership	Monthly	M22	Croydon unemployment rate
Council	Monthly	M23	% of care leavers in employment, education or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21
Council	Monthly	M24	Major Planning applications determined in time over a rolling 2 year period
Council	Monthly	M25	Non- Major Planning applications determined in time over a rolling 2 year period

**DRAFT**

### 3. Every child and young person in Croydon has the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Partnership	Monthly	M26	Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'
Both	Annual	M27	Permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population
Partnership	Annual	M28	EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) - Percentage of children achieving a good level of development
Partnership	Annual	M29	KS2 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics
Partnership	Annual	M30	KS4 - Average Progress 8 score per pupil
Partnership	Annual	M31	KS4 - Percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and Maths
Partnership	Annual	M32	KS5 - % of students achieving at least 2 substantial level 3 qualifications
Council	Monthly	M33	Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)
Council	Monthly	M34	Percentage of referrals to children services actioned within 2 working days
Council	Monthly	M35	Rate of children in need per 10,000 of under 18 population
Council	Monthly	M36	Number of current child protection plans lasting 2 years or more
Council	Monthly	M37	% of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (ever)
Council	Monthly	M38	Rate of local Children Looked After (CLA) per 10,000 under 18 years population
Council	Annual	M39	Number of children & young people on special educational needs & disability supported travel moving to independent travel plans (students per trainer)
Council	Monthly	M40	Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC
Council	Monthly	M41	Percentage of Care Experienced young people who were formerly UASC

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#### 4. Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough to be proud to call home

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Partnership	Monthly	M48	Violence with injury offences rate per 1,000 population
Partnership	Monthly	M49	Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds
Partnership	Monthly	M50	Knife crime with injury rolling 12 months (rate per 1,000 population)
Partnership	Monthly	M51	Knife crime with injury (victims 1-24 years old) rolling 12 months (rate per 1,000 1-24 population)
Partnership	Monthly	M52	Hate crime offences (includes Homophobic, transphobic, religious, race and disability hate crimes) rate per 1,000 population
Partnership	Monthly	M53	Domestic violence offences rate per 1,000 population
Partnership	Quarterly	M55	% of the eligible population offered an NHS Health Check who received one (% uptake)
Council	Quarterly	M57	% of children receiving 6-8 week review by health visitor
Council	Quarterly	M58	% of children who received a 2 - 2.5 year review
Partnership	Annual	M59	% of children aged 10-11 years (children in year 6) classified as obese or overweight
Partnership	Annual	M60	% of children aged 4-5 years (children in reception) classified as obese or overweight
Council	Monthly	M63	Number of residents on the housing register
Council	Monthly	M64	Total households in Temporary accommodation
Council	Monthly	M65	Number of temporary accommodation households that are in nightly let
Council	Monthly	M66	Number of temporary accommodation households that are in shared accommodation >6 weeks
Council	Monthly	M67	Number of homelessness cases prevented
Council	Monthly	M68	Number of cases where Homelessness was Relieved
Council	Monthly	M69	Number of Homeless Applications Made

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4. Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough to be proud to call home (Cont....)

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Council	Monthly	M43	% of reported flytips removed within one working day
Council	Monthly	M44	Recycling contamination rate
Council	Monthly	M45a	Household waste recycling rate
Council	Monthly	M45b	Non-recycled household waste (KG per household)
Council	Monthly	M46	% of streets swept to good standard
Council	Monthly	M47	% of household waste collected on time
Partnership	Annual	M54	% opiates and/or crack cocaine users not in treatment
Council	Annual	M61	Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions estimates within the scope of influence of Local Authorities (Emissions per km2 (kt CO2))
Partnership	Annual	M62	Affordable homes completed (measured as a % of total build)

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## 5. People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Council	Monthly	M70	% of safeguarding intervention leading to reduction / removal of risk (closed episodes)
Council	Monthly	M71	% of people who approach the council for help with adult care and that is resolved at the point of initial contact.
Council	Quarterly	M72	% of people still at home after 91 days after returning home from using reablement service
Council	Monthly	M73	Rate of clients (per 100,000) (18-64) in Long Term Care
Council	Monthly	M74	Rate of clients (per 100,000) (65+) in Long Term Care
Council	Monthly	M75	Rate of clients (per 100,000) supported to live independently (18-64) (SALT)
Council	Monthly	M76	Rate of clients (per 100,000) supported to live independently (65+) (SALT)
Council	Monthly	M77	Rate of people per 100,000 in Residential and Nursing Care (18-64)
Council	Monthly	M78	Rate of people per 100,000 in Residential and Nursing Care (65+)
Council	Monthly	M79	% of eligible adults managing their care via direct payment
Council	Monthly	M80	% of long term clients in care for more than 12+ months who have had a review in the last 12 months

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## Potential additional KPIs

Council or Partnership working	Frequency	Ref	KPI Name
Council	TBC	TBC	Average contact centre wait time (Housing call centre only)
Council	TBC	TBC	% of residents that ended the call before we spoke to them (Housing call centre only)
Council	TBC	TBC	% of Responsive Repairs completed within target times
Council	TBC	TBC	% of offensive graffiti removed within 24 hours
Council	TBC	TBC	% of non-offensive graffiti removed within 10 working days
Partnership	TBC	TBC	Footfall in Town Centre
Partnership	Monthly	TBC	Employment rate (% of 16-64 year olds in employment)
Partnership	Annual	TBC	Annual percentage change in weekly earnings (£) for employed Croydon residents.
Partnership	Annual	TBC	Percentage of 16-18 year olds completing study who go on to Sustained education, apprenticeship or employment

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## APPENDIX B

# Mayors Business Plan 2022-26 Summary Performance Report July 2023

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# UPDATE WITH MAYOR PERRY'S NARRATIVE – MAYORS OFFICE TO PROVIDE

## Mayor's foreword



In recent years, trust in our Council has been hit as the full extent of the financial mismanagement under the previous Administration has come to light. The two Reports in the Public Interest highlighted deep governance failures and the two Section 114 notices, effectively declaring the Council bankrupt, left it unable to balance its own books and reliant on £150m of government support to stay afloat. The process of 'Opening the Books' has further highlighted inherent weaknesses in income projections and budget setting processes.

At the same time, rather than listening to and serving the people of Croydon, the Council lost sight of its core purpose, preferring to play monopoly with council taxpayers' money, resulting in bailing out its own failing housing company whilst increasing debt to over £1.6bn. Residents deserve and expect better and over the coming years that is what I will deliver.

This Croydon Mayoral Business Plan sets a new direction, building on the hopes and aspirations of our residents and businesses. The Plan will transform the Council into one that delivers sound and sustainable local government services, and in so doing will transform our borough into one that Croydonians can once again be proud to call home.

Change will not happen overnight but, over the next four years, I will put the Council back on track by working through our five priority outcomes and seizing the opportunity to do things differently. I want to improve the quality and responsiveness of the services we continue to provide, whilst being prudent with every penny of taxpayers' money.

I fully recognise that the scale of the financial challenge facing Croydon is almost without precedent in local government. That's why balancing the books, resolving the outstanding financial threats facing the Council, and putting our finances on a stable, secure footing will be the most important task of my Administration in the coming years.

To do that, the Council will need to continue to reduce spending for years to come. That will mean extremely difficult decisions about the services we continue to provide to residents and businesses. Ultimately the Council has to spend less and, in so doing, will be able to do less.

My overarching priority must be to deliver a wholesale transformation of the Council's way of working, so that we balance the budget and change how services are run. The Council will work more closely with our partners from the business, statutory, and voluntary sectors to bring more resources to the borough and to support and empower our diverse communities as we transform the Council and the borough.

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## UPDATE WITH MAYOR PERRY'S NARRATIVE – MAYORS OFFICE TO PROVIDE

At the same time, I will instil strong governance to ensure the mistakes of the past can never happen again and that the Council is once again listening to our residents' concerns. At the heart of this agenda will be a steadfast commitment to seek maximum value for money from every penny the Council spends.

Alongside addressing our financial challenge, I will refocus the Council on residents' core priorities. We will work to make Croydon a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning; to ensure every child and young person in Croydon has the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential; to make Croydon a cleaner, safer and healthier place; and to support our residents to live independently while ensuring the most vulnerable people are safe. Together with our communities and partners, we will restore pride in our borough.

While some of these priorities will require new funding, much can be achieved by getting better value from the money we already spend; making good use of technology; working more closely with our partners like the Police, the NHS and local community organisations; and ensuring the Council listens to and empowers residents to do more for themselves. I will not be able to do everything our community wants, and, in many instances, the Council will have to do less until we have managed to stabilise our finances This isn't just about balancing the books. I am committed to creating a sustainable Council to support residents over the longer term.

Croydon Council has been in crisis for too long. Whilst I do not underestimate the scale of the challenge, I am confident we can and will change the Council for the better. This Business Plan sets out a positive but realistic vision of where we will be in four-years' time. A council which balances its budget, which listens to and works with residents and business, and which focuses its available resources on protecting vulnerable people and delivering core services well.

**Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon**



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# Corporate Performance Framework

## RAG Rating Key

The Corporate Performance Indicators are RAG rated by the criteria outlined in the table below.

RAG Rating Key	
Key	RAG ▲
Performance has not met target and is out by over 10% / differs from comparators by over 10%	Red
Performance has not met target but is within 10% / differs from comparators but is within 10%	Orange
Performance has met or exceeded target / has matched one or more comparators	Green
Data has been submitted, but no target has been set.	Grey
No data has been submitted.	Black

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Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance Indicators - Outcome 1 - The Council Balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services

Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M01	Variance against net budget requirement	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M03	Council Tax 'In-year' Collection rate	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M05	Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates) Collection rate	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M06	Rent collection on General needs stock	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M07	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M08	% who are very or fairly satisfied with the way Croydon Council deals with repairs and maintenance	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M10	Average council contact centre wait time	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M11a	Staff Turnover rate (FTE who have left in the past 12 months divided by the total population of staff)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M11b	Staff Turnover rate - enforced turnover (redundancy or other forms of dismissal)	Council	N/A	Monthly								
M11c	Staff Turnover rate - natural turnover (staff leaving from resignation)	Council	N/A	Monthly								
M12	Sickness - number of sick days per FTE	Council	Smaller is better	Quarterly								
M13	% of residents that ended the call before we spoke to them	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M14	FOI responded to on time	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M15	SARs responded to on time	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M16	Complaints responded to on time	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M17	Member Enquiries responded to on time	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M18	MP enquiries responded to on time	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								

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Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance Indicators - Outcome 2 - Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning

Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M19	% of people claiming universal credit who are in employment	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M20	Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M21	Number of apprenticeship schemes started across the council	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M22	Croydon unemployment rate	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M23	% of care leavers in employment, education or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M24	Major Planning applications determined in time over a rolling 2 year period	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M25	Non- Major Planning applications determined in time over a rolling 2 year period	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								

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Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance Indicators - Outcome 3 - Every child and young person in Croydon has the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential

Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M26	Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'	Partnership	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M27	Permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population	Both	Smaller is better	Annual								
M28	EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) - Percentage of children achieving a good level of development	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M29	KS2 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M30	KS4 - Average Progress 8 score per pupil	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M31	KS4 - Percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and Maths	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M32	KS5 - % of students achieving at least 2 substantial level 3 qualifications	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M33	Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M34	Percentage of referrals to children services actioned within 2 working days	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M35	Rate of children in need per 10,000 of under 18 population	Council	N/A	Monthly								
M36	Number of current child protection plans lasting 2 years of more	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M37	% of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (ever)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M38	Rate of local Children Looked After (CLA) per 10,000 under 18 years population	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M39	Number of children & young people on special educational needs & disability supported travel moving to independent travel plans (students per trainer)	Council	Bigger is better	Annual								
M40	Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M41	Percentage of Care Experienced young people who were formerly UASC	Council	Not specified	Monthly								

**PLEASE NOTE THE DATA CONTAINED WITHIN THIS REPORT IS FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY**

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Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance Indicators - Outcome 4 - Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough to be proud to call home

Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M43	% of reported flytips removed within one working day	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M44	Recycling contamination rate	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M45a	Household waste recycling rate	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M45b	Non-recycled Household Waste (kg per household)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M46	% of streets swept to good standard	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M47	% of household waste collected on time	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M48	Violence with injury offences rate per 1,000 population	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M49	Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M50	Knife crime with injury rolling 12 months (rate per 1,000 population)	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M51	Knife crime with injury (victims 1-24 years old) rolling 12 months (rate per 1,000 1-24 population)	Partnership	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M52	Hate crime offences (includes Homophobic, transphobic, religious, race and disability hate crimes) rate per 1,000 population	Partnership	N/A	Monthly								
M53	Domestic violence offences rate per 1,000 population	Partnership	N/A	Monthly								
M54	% opiates and/or crack cocaine users not in treatment	Partnership	Smaller is better	Annual								
M55	% of the eligible population offered an NHS Health Check who received one (% uptake)	Partnership	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M57	% of children receiving 6-8 week review by health visitor	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M58	% of children who received a 2 - 2.5 year review	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								

**PLEASE NOTE THE DATA CONTAINED WITHIN THIS REPORT IS FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY**

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Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M59	% of children aged 10-11 years (children in year 6) classified as obese or overweight	Partnership	Smaller is better	Annual								
M60	% of children aged 4-5 years (children in reception) classified as obese or overweight	Partnership	Smaller is better	Annual								
M61	Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions estimates within the scope of influence of Local Authorities (Emissions per km2 (kt CO2))	Council	Smaller is better	Annual								
M62	Affordable homes completed (measured as a % of total build)	Partnership	Bigger is better	Annual								
M64	Total households in Temporary accommodation	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M65	Number of temporary accommodation households that are in nightly let	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M66	Number of temporary accommodation households that are in shared accommodation >6 weeks	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M67	Number of homelessness cases prevented	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M68	Number of cases where Homelessness was Relieved	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M69	Number of Homeless Applications Made	Council	N/A	Monthly								

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Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 Performance Indicators - Outcome 5 - People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer

Ref.	Indicator	Council or partnership working	Bigger or smaller is better?	Frequency	Target	Latest date	Latest value	Previous value	Direction of travel	RAG	Benchmarking timeframe	Benchmark
M70	% of safeguarding intervention leading to reduction / removal of risk (closed episodes)	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M71	% of people who approach the council for help with adult care and that is resolved at the point of initial contact.	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M72	% of people still at home after 91 days after returning home from using reablement service	Council	Bigger is better	Quarterly								
M73	Rate of clients (per 100,000) (18-64) in Long Term Care	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M74	Rate of clients (per 100,000) (65+) in Long Term Care	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M75	Rate of clients (per 100,000) supported to live independently (18-64) (SALT)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M76	Rate of clients (per 100,000) supported to live independently (65+) (SALT)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M77	Rate of people per 100,000 in Residential and Nursing Care (18-64)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M78	Rate of people per 100,000 in Residential and Nursing Care (65+)	Council	Smaller is better	Monthly								
M79	% of eligible adults managing their care via direct payment	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								
M80	% of long term clients in care for more than 12+ months who have had a review in the last 12 months	Council	Bigger is better	Monthly								

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Appendix C  
Mayors Business Plan 2022-26  
Performance Report  
July 2023

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# Corporate Performance Framework

## RAG Rating Key

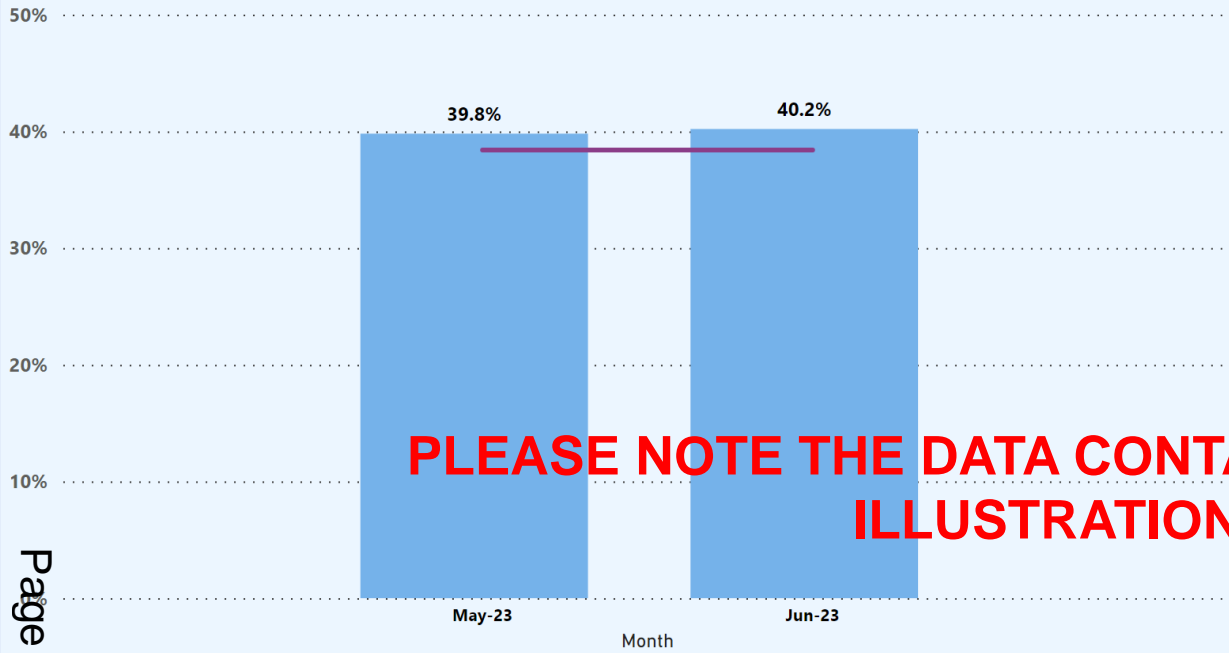
The Corporate Performance Indicators are RAG rated by the criteria outlined in the table below.

RAG Rating Key	
Key	RAG ▲
Performance has not met target and is out by over 10% / differs from comparators by over 10%	Red
Performance has not met target but is within 10% / differs from comparators but is within 10%	Orange
Performance has met or exceeded target / has matched one or more comparators	Green
Data has been submitted, but no target has been set.	Grey
No data has been submitted.	Black

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### % of people claiming universal credit who are in employment

● Indicator value — Target — Benchmark

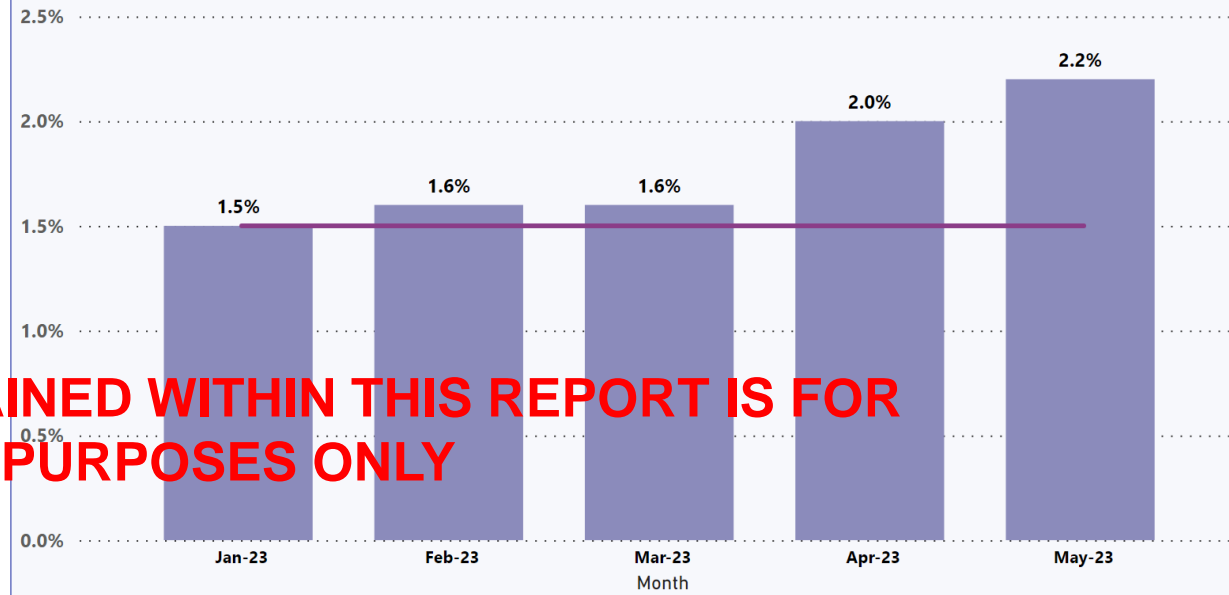


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### Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)

● Indicator value — Target — Benchmark



Indicator Ref.  
M19

Outcome 2  
Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning

Directorate  
Partnership working

RAG status - N/A

Benchmarking timeframe  
June 2023 (London average)

Comment

The employment, skills & economic development team are working with the South London Partnership and the Croydon Employment & Skills Network to provide a coordinated response to tackling in work poverty through lifelong learning and employment opportunities (Croydon Works, CALAT)

Indicator Ref.  
M20

Outcome 2  
Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning

Directorate  
Children, Young People and Education

RAG status - Green

Benchmarking timeframe  
Average of Dec 21, Jan 22 and Feb 22 (London position)

Comment

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>26 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Month 3 Financial Performance Report</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151)</b> <b>jane.west@croydon.gov.uk</b> 020 8726 6000 Ext 27320	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Jason Cummings Cabinet Member for Finance</b>	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	The attached report is presented to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee as part of its ongoing Budget Scrutiny work.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>  <i>(* See guidance)</i>	<b>No</b>	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	All	

### 1. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: MONTH 3 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 1.1. Attached at Appendix A to this cover report is the latest financial performance of the Council at the end of month 3 (June 2023).
- 1.2. The report is presented to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee as part of its ongoing scrutiny of the budget, allowing reassurance to be sought on the delivering of 2023-24 budget.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to: -
  1. Review the information provided in the report on the Month 3 Financial Performance Report, and

2. Consider its conclusions on the latest budget position for 2023-24
3. Consider whether there are any recommendations to bring to the attention of the Mayor.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer – Scrutiny

Email: [Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk)

**Appendix A: Month 3 Financial Performance Report**



# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>27 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2023-24 Period 3 Financial Performance Report</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>Jane West Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>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</b>
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Public Grounds for the exemption: N/A</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Council’s financial performance as at Period 3 (June 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	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)
Revenue Forecast (General Fund)	340.9	340.9	-
Revenue Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	-	3.8	3.8
Capital Forecast (General Fund)	144.3	141.5	(2.8)
Capital Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	33.2	37.3	4.1

## 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 3, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.5m 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 within budget inter-directorate virements from Corporate to service directorates for non-pay inflation (£20.698m) (para 4.70), economic demand pressures (£1.716m) (para 4.72), Independent Living Fund (ILF) grant now included in the Social Care Grant (£0.960m) (para 4.68), and the transfer of equal grant income and expenditure budgets for the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund and the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund (net nil budget change) (para 4.68).
- 2.3** to note the progress in MTFS savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.82.
- 2.4** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.77.
- 2.5** to note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £3.8m.
- 2.6** to note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £2.8m against the revised capital budget of £144.3m.
- 2.7** to note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £4.1m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 2.8** to note 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 regards to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.
- 2.9** to note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 2.10** 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 £4.5m 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 7.9% in the 12 months to June 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. This information is continually reviewed, updated and improved.

**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 £4.5m which is offset by utilisation 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.

**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	129.8	43.0	131.0	1.2	1.3	(0.1)
Assistant Chief Executive	40.8	1.3	40.5	(0.3)	(0.2)	(0.1)
Children, Young People and Education	92.3	18.9	97.5	5.2	3.1	2.1
Housing	15.7	3.2	15.7	-	-	-
Resources	35.5	46.0	33.9	(1.6)	(0.4)	(1.2)
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	65.6	15.2	65.6	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal Service Directorates</b>	<b>379.7</b>	<b>127.6</b>	<b>384.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Corporate Items and Funding	(38.8)	1.2	(43.3)	(4.5)	(3.8)	(0.7)
<b>Total Net Expenditure Budget</b>	<b>340.9</b>	<b>128.8</b>	<b>340.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

- 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.

## 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	111.3	38.4	112.8	1.5
Adult Strategic Commissioning, Policy & Improvement	16.7	4.1	16.6	(0.1)
Central ASCH	1.8	0.5	1.6	(0.2)
<b>Total ASCH</b>	<b>129.8</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>131.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>

- 4.13** At period 3, the ASCH directorate has a forecast overspend of £1.2m (0.9%) against a budget of £129.8m.

**4.14** 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.

**4.15** 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.

Adult Social Care Operations - Forecast overspend of £1.5m

**4.16** Staffing across this division demonstrates a forecast underspend (broken down by area below) owing to periods of vacancy above the £1m MTFS 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 (£1.6m) owing to a staffing (including agency spend) underspend of (£0.1m) and a net underspending on care costs (£1.5m).

**4.18** Working Age Adults has an overspend of £4.0m. This comprises an overspend on care of £4.3m which is partly mitigated by an underspend in staffing of (£0.3m). The overspend includes savings not yet evidenced of £1.9m, against a challenging target of £5.3m. It should also be noted that this area was overspent by £2.3m in 2022-23. The service has committed to achieving further savings which will be reflected once robust plans have been developed.

**4.19** Provider Services has a (£1.0m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.

**4.20** Mental health services have a forecast overspend of £0.1m owing to a £0.3m overspend on care packages partly mitigated by a (£0.2m) underspend on staffing. The overspend on care is owing to increasing demand and costs, work is ongoing to bring this area to a balanced budget.

Adult Social Care Policy and Improvement – Forecast underspend of (£0.1m)

**4.21** The Policy and Improvement division is forecasting an underspend of (£0.1m) owing to staffing vacancies.

Central ASCH – Forecast underspend of (£0.2m)

- 4.22** 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.

**Assistant Chief Executive (ACE)**

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Policy, Programmes and Performance	6.1	1.4	5.8	(0.3)
Croydon Digital and Resident Access	31.8	7.2	31.6	(0.2)
Chief People Officer	2.9	0.9	3.1	0.2
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine	-	(6.3)	-	-
Central ACE	-	0.3	-	-
<b>Total ACE (General Fund)</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>
<b>Public Health Grant Ringfenced Services</b>	-	<b>(2.1)</b>	-	-

- 4.23** At period 3, the ACE directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £0.3m (0.7%) against a budget of £40.8m.

Policy, Programmes & Performance Division - £0.3m forecast underspend

- 4.24** 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.

Croydon Digital and Resident Access Division - £0.2m forecast underspend

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

- 4.26** 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 – £0.2m forecast overspend

- 4.27** An overspend in payroll staffing is owing to delay in the implementation of the payroll restructure. This has impacted the delivery of the associated MTFS saving. Alternative measures are being taken to implement the restructure and other financial actions to seek to offset the overspend created from the delayed implementation.

Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine funding – breakeven position after movement in reserves

- 4.28** The Council has received Asylum Dispersal Scheme grant funding in 2023-24 of £0.9m. The unspent grant of £0.3m in 2022-23 has been carried forward to fund ongoing expenditure in 2023-24.

**4.29** The Council carried forward unspent grant under the Homes for Ukraine scheme of £5.5m, of which £1.3m is ringfenced for educational purposes. This will be used to fund ongoing expenditure in 2023-24.

Central Assistant Chief Executive – breakeven forecast

**4.30** There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Central ACE area.

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

**4.31** It is currently forecast that Public Health will contribute £3.2m to ring fenced Public Health reserves at the end of 2023-24.

**4.32** 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.

**Children, Young People and Education (CYPE)**

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Children’s Social Care	68.5	13.9	73.2	4.7
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and Care Leavers	(0.3)	3.6	(0.4)	(0.1)
Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement	6.7	(0.6)	7.3	0.6
Non-DSG Education Services	16.8	1.9	16.8	-
Central CYPE	0.6	0.1	0.6	-
<b>Total CYPE (General Fund)</b>	<b>92.3</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>97.5</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Education Services</b>	<b>82.6</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>0.7</b>

**4.33** At period 3, the CYPE directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £5.2m (5.6%) against a budget of £92.3m.

Children’s Social Care Division – forecast overspend of £4.6m (including UASC and UASC Care Leavers)

£2.7m placements overspend owing to seven high-cost placements (four Residential Education SEND (no contribution from Health), two Semi-Independent and one Secure). Three of these placements are new in 2023-24. Analysis is being undertaken on a continuous basis to review these placements with the aim to reduce spend where possible.

£1.8m 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.



£0.1m 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.

£0.1m under-achievement in income (including £0.5m unachieved 2022-23 MTFS NHS Funding savings which have been partially offset through other income).

(£0.1m) underspend on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and Care Leavers owing to additional income from the Home Office for outstanding age assessment cases.

#### **4.34 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).
- The division is producing service level agreements for reviewed HRA funding towards Youth Engagement and Youth Offending services, and these may result in a General Fund pressure of £0.8m.
- The division is also reviewing the housing accommodation charges from the Housing General Fund for Care Experienced Young People.

#### **4.35 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.
- The CYPE directorate, alongside other directorates, is actively checking that grant funding including the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) are allocated correctly against eligible expenditure and this could reduce the forecast overspend position.

#### Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement Division – forecast overspend of £0.6m

#### **4.36** The division is forecasting a staffing overspend of £0.2m from the 5% vacancy factor MTFS saving of £0.3m applied to the 2023-24 budget as a number of teams are fully staffed. The pressure may reduce during the year if there are periods of vacancy.

There is an anticipated Public Health contribution of £0.4m which never materialised. This relates to a 2022-23 MTFS saving and will be reviewed by the cross-Council Public Health funding task and finish group.

### Non-DSG Education services – forecast breakeven

**4.37** Non-DSG Education services are forecasting a breakeven position owing to an underspend from staffing vacancies which is offsetting income pressures (including £0.3m unachieved 2022-23 MTFs NHS Funding savings).

**4.38** Risk

- The £0.3m unachieved income budget within the High Needs General Fund budget poses an indirect financial risk to the Safety Valve target should other activities or resources (EHCP Coordinators) required to deliver the Safety Valve target be reduced to offset the £0.3m potential shortfall. The service is exploring all mitigating options available.

### Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services – forecast overspend of £0.655m

**4.39** The SEND High Needs forecast at Period 3 is an overspend of £0.655m against the budget of £82.566m. There is no movement from the Period 2 position which represents £0.070m 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 of 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. Following receipt of our monitoring report the DfE have approved the next Safety Valve payment of £3.290m.

**4.40** See below the key areas:

£2.174m Out of Borough and Independent – Forecast overspend due to an increase in complex cases above that expected, requiring out of borough placement to meet needs. The service is in discussions with some local providers to set up Enhanced Learning Provision during the Autumn Term.

£0.954m 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.

(£0.250m) 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 cost owing to service re-alignment to maximise savings.

(£0.620m) expected clawback from specific Resource Provision (academies) for extra funding received from DfE.

**4.41** Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services will continue to closely monitor the demands pressures in Independent and Out of Borough placement 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.

**4.42** The 2023-24 period 3 High Needs forecast outturn variance of £0.655m leads to an overall DSG deficit projection of £16.039m at the end of 2023-24 compared to the Safety Valve target of £16.080m prior to the £3.29m Deficit Recovery payment expected from the DfE as per the Safety Valve agreement. This shows that the local authority is ahead of the target.

**4.43** Risks

- The service is monitoring all the risks associated with the Safety Valve target which includes increasing complexity of needs requiring additional funding for special schools and extra out of borough placements to meet the local needs of some CYP pupils with complex needs.

## Housing

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Resident Engagement and Allocations	15.6	3.1	15.6	-
Housing Estates and Improvement	0.1	0.1	0.1	-
<b>Total Housing</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>-</b>

**4.44** At period 3, the Housing directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven against the budget of £15.7m.

Emergency Accommodation – breakeven forecast

**4.45** Breakeven forecast at period 3, following the transfer of non-pay inflationary pressures budget from corporate (as requested through this report). The number of households supported in homelessness accommodation have not increased significantly over the last year but as landlords are withdrawing accommodation from the temporary accommodation schemes more families are housed in the expensive nightly-paid bed & breakfast (B&B) and hotel accommodation.

**4.46** A top-up to Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £1.9m has been announced by DLUHC to cover homelessness pressures related 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 would also help fund any potential detriment to income collection resulting in the bad debt provision being increased at year end.

- 4.47** Forecasting costs and income has been challenging due to the changeover to the NEC software package. Some reporting information is not yet available from the new NEC system such as the number of units of various types rented and associated costs. Therefore, purchase orders receipted to date are currently being used to forecast costs.

#### Temporary Accommodation – breakeven forecast

- 4.48** Numbers of households in temporary accommodation are expected to fall slightly and steadily across the year. Inflationary cost pressures will be covered through allocation from the corporate non-pay inflation budget (requested through this report).
- 4.49** There is a potential financial risk from the fire at Sycamore House in Thornton Heath depending on the insurance claim settlement not yet finalised at period 3. 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.

#### **4.50** Risks

##### 4.50.1 Restructure

- There is currently a temporary structure within Housing, however a restructure is being carried out to strengthen the directorate.
- Pressures are expected to continue in 2023-24. The restructure for Housing Options is underway and will form the bedrock for process change and a more cohesive journey for a homeless household. An immediate switch to better practice and dramatically reduced spend on homelessness cannot be expected within 2023-24 whilst significant change is underway, and the financial benefits are expected to be realised in the longer term.

##### 4.50.2 Inflation

- 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. This is being addressed alongside a wholesale review of the forecasting process to ensure that reporting provides the full position on risk in 2023-24.
- 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.

#### 4.50.3 Reduced Supply

- There is also the issue of entering into 2 to 5 years lease deals with landlords as 39% nationally exited the market in 2022-23 and prices have dramatically increased as a result. In 2022-23 this meant a 10% increase in the use of nightly paid accommodation was seen. The strategy work currently underway in the directorate will seek to address this issue.
- 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.

#### 4.50.4 Income Collection

- Income collection rates will need to be monitored closely in 2023-24. There may be a requirement to increase the loss allowance (bad debt provision) again in 2023-24 if income collection is not significantly improved. A new housing IT system (NEC) has been implemented in June 2023 which will improve monitoring and reporting when it is fully operational later in the year.
- Forecasting income has been challenging due to the changeover to the NEC system. A delay to the interfaces between NEC and the Oracle finance system has meant that no income has been posted to Oracle since 17 May from the new NEC system.

#### 4.50.5 Temporary Accommodation Benefit Subsidy Loss

- There is a budget pressure, estimated at £1.2m for 2023-24, 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. As detailed in the Corporate Items and Funding section (para 4.73), this report is requesting a transfer of £1.2m budget from the economic demand pressures budget to Housing. The housing benefit subsidy pressure will be monitored throughout the year and mitigated where possible.
- There is a temporary accommodation cost due to the £40/week/unit management fee for TA which is paid through Housing Benefit but not

recoverable through subsidy from DWP. This forecast cost of £2.4m is covered corporately in 2023-24.

## Resources

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Commercial Investment	18.9	3.5	16.9	(2.0)
Finance ( <i>refer note 1</i> )	15.7	38.8	15.7	-
Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	2.3	1.1	2.6	0.3
Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk	0.6	2.0	0.6	-
Internal Audit Service	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1
Pensions and Treasury	0.3	0.3	0.3	-
Central Resources	(2.7)	0.1	(2.7)	-
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>(1.6)</b>

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

- 4.51** At period 3, the Resources directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £1.6m (4.5%) against a budget of £35.5m.

### Commercial Investment Division – £2m forecast underspend

- 4.52** The division is forecasting a £2m underspend owing to decreased utilities costs and improved recharging to external bodies. There are also £0.6m of staffing underspends across the division, mainly in Facilities Management due to periods of staffing vacancy, which are being offset by a forecast decrease in recharges to capital.

### Finance Division – breakeven forecast position

- 4.53** 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.
- 4.54** A cross Council working group is currently operating to mitigate Housing Benefit subsidy risks by maximising Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy income claims, increasing collection of HB overpayments and reducing costs. The actuals to date are high in the Division owing to Housing Benefits expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.
- 4.55** The Finance Division will undergo a restructure of the strategic finance service in 2023-24 and then 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 – £0.3m forecast overspend

- 4.56** There is a £0.1m forecast underspend in the Monitoring Officer service owing to staff vacancies and an underspend against the members allowances budget.
- 4.57** There is a forecast overspend in Legal Services of £0.4m mainly owing to high levels of agency staffing.
- 4.58** The Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division is reviewing usage of external legal advice, with a view to increase 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 - £0.1m forecast overspend

- 4.59** There is a £0.1m forecast overspend in Internal Audit expenditure. Within Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk a forecast overspend on insurance claims is being offset by a forecast staffing underspend due to periods of staffing vacancy.

**Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER)**

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Sustainable Communities	50.3	12.5	50.3	-
Culture and Community Safety	8.6	0.7	7.9	(0.7)
Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	6.7	3.0	7.4	0.7
Central SCRER	-	(1.0)	-	-
<b>Total SCRER</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>-</b>

- 4.60** At period 3, the SCRER directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven position against a budget of £65.6m. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offence and planning.

Sustainable Communities Division - breakeven forecast

- 4.61** There is a forecast £1.9m under-achievement in parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offence income. This is being offset through a forecast underspend of £1.4m in staffing owing to periods of vacancy and a £0.5m forecast underspend in waste services owing to reduced level of domestic waste.

**4.62** 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.
- There is a potential risk to new Roads and Street Works Act income owing to delays and disputes with utility companies. Further work is being undertaken to quantify these risks and where possible mitigate the effect.

Culture and Community Safety Division – forecast underspend of £0.7m

**4.63** The division is forecasting an underspend of £0.7m due to reduced costs on utilities in contracts (£0.6m) and periods of staffing vacancy (£0.1m).

**4.64** 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 £0.7m

**4.65** The division is forecasting an income under-achievement of £0.7m owing to lower activity levels to date in planning major applications and planning performance agreements.

**Corporate Items and Funding**

Area of Spend	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Inflation and Economic Demand Pressures	36.6	-	36.6	-
Risk Contingency Budget	5.0	-	0.5	(4.5)
Transformation Programme	10.0	-	10.0	-
Other corporate items	(90.4)	1.2	(90.4)	-
<b>Total Corporate items and Funding</b>	<b>(38.8)</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>(43.3)</b>	<b>(4.5)</b>



- 4.66** At period 3, the Corporate directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £4.5m (11.6%) against a net budget of (£38.8m). The underspend relates to the risk contingency budget which is offsetting the pressures across the service areas.
- 4.67** 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.
- 4.68** The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is requested to approve inter-directorate virements from Corporate to the Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) directorate relating to core grants. The ASCH directorate is leading on the use of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund (£1.399m) and the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund (£2.335m), in partnership working with the NHS, and therefore the equal grant income and related expenditure budgets are requested to be moved to the ASCH directorate (nil change to net budgets). The government consolidated the Independent Living Fund (ILF) grant (£0.960m) into the Social Care Grant and therefore it is requested to move £0.960m budget to ASCH to remove the separate ILF grant income budget in the directorate (all actual income will now be allocated against the Social Care Grant income budget held corporately).
- 4.69** 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.
- 4.70** The corporate area holds the central budget for pay and non-pay inflation. The requirement for directorates has been reviewed for inflation experienced on contracts and a £20.7m inter-directorate virement from the central budget is requested to be agreed by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet as detailed in the table below.

**Table showing allocations to directorates for 2023-24 non-pay inflation**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Non-pay inflation budget (£m)</b>
Adult Social Care and Health (refer note below)	7.371
Assistant Chief Executive	0.740
Children, Young People and Education	3.875
Housing	4.742
Resources	0.200
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	3.770
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.698</b>

Note: The gross inflationary requirement for Adult Social Care & Health is £12.447m. The 2023-24 budget for ASCH already included £4.119m growth relating to inflation and £0.957m of inflation has been funded through the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. Therefore the remaining budget requirement is £7.371m.

**4.71** The NJC national negotiations on the 2023-24 pay award for staff are ongoing and the resulting required budget allocation may create a pressure above the central allowance of £11m.

**4.72** There is budget of £5.5m held centrally for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon. It is requested through this report that an inter-directorate virement is agreed to allocate £1.7m budget for Housing Benefit subsidy pressures as per the following table.

**Table showing allocations to directorates for Housing Benefit subsidy pressures**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Economic demand pressures budget (£m)</b>
Adult Social Care and Health	Shared Lives Scheme	0.516
Housing	Guaranteed Rent Scheme for Care Experienced Young People	1.200
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.716</b>

**4.73** 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.

**4.74** There is £7.3m budget held in Corporate for adjustments to correct General Fund recharge budgets for recharges to the HRA, Public Health, capitalisation of salaries and corporate support (overhead) recharges. This budget will be allocated during 2023-24 as the service level agreements (SLA's) are finalised for HRA and Public Health recharges, and when the review of salary capitalisation and corporate support recharges is finalised.

**4.75** 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).

**4.76** There is borrowing cost uncertainty from interest rates (with the Bank of England currently continuing to increase the base rate) and the timing of capital receipts from asset disposals (assumed in the MTFs at circa £50m per annum).

### **Transformation Programme**

**4.77** The Transformation Programme has £14m of resources allocated to it, £4m in the 2022-23 Capital Programme and £10m in the 2023-24 revenue budget. The Transformation Programme published in November 2022 set out £5.9m of project commitments with recognition that further sums were still to be confirmed. Capital funding can only be utilised for spend that creates an asset, eg. an IT system. 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.

- 4.78** In total there is currently £9.4m of the Transformation Programme budget allocated with £4.6m 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 Capital Budget	4.049
<b>Total Transformation Funding</b>	<b>14.049</b>
Approach to Strategic Planning and Commissioning	0.290
Parking Policy Review	0.200
Community Hubs Programme	0.250
HR Transformation	0.078
Digital & Resident Access Review/Digital Workforce	0.080
SEND Review	0.240
Passenger/SEND Transport Transformation	0.100
Family Justice Service Review	0.100
S117 Project	0.178
Joint Funding Arrangements	0.110
Sustaining Demand at the Front Door	0.190
Fostering Transformation	0.286
Corporate Parenting Transformation	0.457
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	0.450
Planning & CIL Transformation	0.300
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	0.060
Strategic Operating Model Design Partner	1.134
Housing Benefit Subsidy SEA & E/TA	0.000

<b>Project</b>	<b>2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)</b>
PFI Contract Manager	0.000
VCS Review	0.000
Asset Rationalisation	0.000
Business Intelligence Review	0.000
Commercial & Income Opportunities	0.000
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Croydon Museum	0.270
Oracle Improvement Programme	0.175
Transformation PMO	1.100
<b>Total Revenue and Capital Budget Allocated to Date</b>	<b>9.424</b>
Unallocated To Date	4.625

**4.79** 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.

**4.80** The Transformation Board has agreed additional project allocations totalling £2.99m through to July 2023 and these are set out in the table below.

<b>Project Allocations</b>	<b>£m</b>
Fostering transformation	0.194
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	0.500
Strategic operating model design partner – project team	0.634
Corporate Parenting Transformation (New)	0.457
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Museum Transformation	0.270
Oracle Cloud Improvement (New)	0.175
<b>Total of Allocations</b>	<b>2.990</b>

**4.81** 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**

**4.82** 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
<b>Directorate</b>						
Adult Social Care & Health	12,243	-	12,243	10,368	-	1,875
Assistant Chief Executive	2,924	-	2,924	1,771	1,153	-
Children, Young People & Education	6,920	490	7,410	5,130	18	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	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,098</b>	<b>2,980</b>	<b>36,078</b>	<b>29,549</b>	<b>2,495</b>	<b>4,034</b>

## Reserves

- 4.83** 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)
<b>Balance at 1 April 2023</b>	<b>27.5</b>
Forecast Contribution to/(Drawdown from) Reserves	-
<b>Forecast Balance at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>27.5</b>

- 4.84** 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

- 4.85** 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.

- 4.86** 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.
- 4.87** 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.
- 4.88** 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)**

- 4.89** At period 3, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has a forecast overspend of £3.8m.

#### Repairs

£3.8m overspend on disrepair costs including void and repair costs, legal fees and settlement costs.

#### Tenancy and Income

Breakeven forecast at period 3. Additional budget was allocated in 2023-24 to meet known pressures.

#### Staffing and other

Breakeven forecast at period 3.

**Table showing the 2023-24 HRA forecast**

Description	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Rental Income	(82.1)	(12.1)	(82.1)	-
Service Charge Income	(4.6)	(0.7)	(4.6)	-
Other Income	(9.4)	1.0	(9.4)	-
<b>Subtotal Income</b>	<b>(96.1)</b>	<b>(11.8)</b>	<b>(96.1)</b>	-
Centralised Directorate expenditure	52.2	(0.9)	52.2	-
Responsive Repairs & Safety	20.4	4.6	24.2	3.8
Asset Planning	1.6	0.1	1.6	-
Capital Delivery (Homes & Schools)	1.5	0.1	1.5	-
Tenancy & Resident Engagement	10.3	4.6	10.3	-
Homelessness & Assessments	3.4	0.4	3.4	-
Service development and income	6.7	0.0	6.7	-
<b>Subtotal Expenditure</b>	<b>96.1</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Total HRA Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(2.9)</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>

**4.90** The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- Repairs and maintenance:
  - pressures from the exit of the current Axis repairs contract, ending 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 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.
- NEC system functionality delays:
  - Although the system has gone live in June 2023 there has not yet been feeds into the Oracle financial system. Therefore, the income & repairs forecasting could be understated and will not be known until actuals can be properly analysed.

## **Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability**

- 4.91** 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.
- 4.92** 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.
- 4.93** 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.
- 4.94** 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.
- 4.95** 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.
- 4.96** 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. Debt write-off is the Council's preferred option and, therefore, 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

**4.97** At period 3, the General Fund capital programme has a forecast underspend of £2.8m against the revised budget of £144.3m.

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

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Bereavement Services	127	(84)	127	-
My Resources Interface Enhancement	252	-	252	-
ICT	-	1	-	-
Network Refresh	348	11	348	-
Tech Refresh	132	216	864	732
Geographical Information Systems	312	-	312	-
Laptop Refresh	3,371	-	3,371	-
Cloud and DR	331	26	331	-
People ICT	-	3	-	-
Synergy Education System	1,045	-	789	(256)
NEC Housing System	2,725	(37)	2,097	(628)
Uniform ICT Upgrade	56	-	56	-
<b>Subtotal Assistant Chief Executive</b>	<b>8,699</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>8,547</b>	<b>(152)</b>
Education – Fire Safety Works	924	-	924	-
Education - Fixed Term Expansions	2,865	147	2,865	-
Education - Major Maintenance	5,866	656	5,866	-
Education - Miscellaneous	100	-	100	-
Education - Permanent Expansion	297	-	297	-
Education - SEN	6,289	189	6,289	-
Angel Lodge Children Home	329	-	329	-
<b>Subtotal CYPE</b>	<b>16,670</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>16,670</b>	<b>-</b>
Disabled Facilities Grant	4,710	208	3,000	(1,710)
Empty Homes Grants	400	-	300	(100)
<b>Subtotal Housing</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>(1,810)</b>
Asset Strategy - Stubbs Mead	500	-	500	-
Asset Strategy Programme	240	-	240	-
Clocktower Chillers	382	-	382	-
Corporate Property Maintenance Programme	2,780	430	2,780	-
Fairfield Halls - Council	625	3	625	-

<b>General Fund Capital Scheme</b>	<b>2023-24 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023-24 Actuals to Date</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast Variance</b>
	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>
Former New Addington Leisure Centre	600	-	600	-
Fieldway Cluster (Timebridge Community Centre)	248	-	248	-
Contingency	1,000	-	1,000	-
<b>Subtotal Resources</b>	<b>6,375</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>6,375</b>	<b>-</b>
Allotments	-	(14)	-	-
Growth Zone	11,245	10	11,245	-
Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	1,200	-	1,200	-
Highways	8,086	2,025	8,086	-
Highways - flood water management	404	141	404	-
Highways - bridges and highways structures	968	559	968	-
Highways - Tree works	50	26	50	-
Local Authority Tree Fund	83	10	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	-	1,031	-
Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	175	-	175	-
New Investment to South Norwood Library	520	-	520	-
Parking	1,843	11	1,843	-
Cashless Pay & Display	1,463	-	1,463	-
Play Equipment	17	28	28	11
Safety - digital upgrade of CCTV	1,540	(11)	1,540	-
Highways Road Markings/Signs (Refresh)	137	-	137	-
South Norwood Good Growth	773	9	747	(26)
Kenley Good Growth	394	(158)	394	-
Sustainability Programme	1,100	-	300	(800)
TFL - LIP	4,568	533	4,568	-
Cycle Parking	332	-	332	-
Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	1,019	-	1,019	-
Park Asset Management	700	-	700	-
Waste and Recycling Investment	2,558	-	2,558	-
<b>Subtotal SCRER</b>	<b>40,610</b>	<b>2,769</b>	<b>39,795</b>	<b>(815)</b>
Capitalisation Direction	63,000	-	63,000	-
Transformation Spend (Flexible Capital Receipts)	3,868	-	3,868	-

<b>General Fund Capital Scheme</b>	<b>2023-24 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023-24 Actuals to Date</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast Variance</b>
	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>
<b>Subtotal Corporate Items and Funding</b>	<b>66,868</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66,868</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total General Fund Capital</b>	<b>144,332</b>	<b>4,538</b>	<b>141,555</b>	<b>(2,777)</b>

#### **Table showing General Fund Capital Programme Financing**

<b>General Fund Capital Financing</b>	<b>2023-24 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast Variance</b>
	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	6,600	6,600	-
CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	3,084	2,284	(800)
Section 106	1,712	1,712	-
Grants & Other Contributions	25,832	24,096	(1,736)
Growth Zone	12,145	12,145	-
HRA Contributions	1,772	1,363	(409)
Capital Receipts	48,868	48,868	-
Borrowing	44,320	44,488	168
<b>Total GF Capital Financing</b>	<b>144,332</b>	<b>141,555</b>	<b>(2,777)</b>

**4.98** The extra forecast cost of play equipment of £11k will be funded through the application of Section 106 funding.

#### **HRA Capital Programme**

**4.99** At period 3, the HRA capital programme has a forecast overspend of £4.1m (12%) against the revised budget of £33.248m. This is owing to increased repairs and improvements activity to reduce the backlog of repairs.

#### **Table showing 2023-24 HRA Capital Programme budget and forecast**

<b>HRA Capital Scheme</b>	<b>2023-24 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023-24 Actuals to Date</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast</b>	<b>2023-24 Forecast Variance</b>
	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>	<b>(£000's)</b>
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	31,476	1,831	35,549	4,073
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	1,772	-
<b>Total HRA Capital</b>	<b>33,248</b>	<b>1,831</b>	<b>37,321</b>	<b>4,073</b>

## HRA Capital Programme Financing

HRA Capital Financing	2023-24 Proposed Revised Budget	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
MRR	16,082	16,082	-
Revenue	13,900	13,900	-
Reserves	1,148	5,221	4,073
Right To Buy (RTB) Receipts	2,118	2,118	-
<b>Total HRA Capital Financing</b>	<b>33,248</b>	<b>37,321</b>	<b>4,073</b>

**4.100** 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 This report includes the request for approval of the allocation of non-pay inflation expenditure budget and economic demand pressures expenditure budget to service directorates. These budgets were agreed as part of the 2023-24 budget approved by Council in March 2023. The budgets are initially held corporately and allocated out to applicable service directorates once the pressures are calculated and evidenced during the year, to ensure that the budgets are used to fund the expenditure purpose originally agreed by Council.

- 8.1.3** 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.
- 8.1.4** 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.
- 8.1.5** 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 regards 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** On 20th July 2023, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ("the SoS") issued Directions under Section 15(5) of the LGA to the Council on the basis that the Council was failing to comply with its Best Value Duty setting out actions to be taken by the Council to comply the duty. The SoS Directions require the Council to, amongst others, continue to address the culture of poor financial management at the Authority and to continue to restore public trust and confidence in the Authority by transforming the Authority's activities, practices, and omissions to ensure that they are compatible with the best value duty. In addition, the council is required to secure as soon as practicable that all the Authority's functions are exercised in conformity with the best value duty thereby delivering improvements in services and outcomes for the people of Croydon. This report serves to ensure the Council is effectively monitoring and managing its budgetary allocations in accordance with its Best Value Duty.
- 8.2.6** The Council's budget and policy framework procedure rules (Part 4C of the Constitution) provides that the Executive may only take decisions which are in line with the Budget Framework. The financial implications comments above provide that the recommended virement is within the budgetary envelope agreed by Full Council.
- 8.2.7** Adult Social Care Discharge Fund (Revenue) Grant Determination (2023-24) sets out the levels of grant funding for each authority for the purposes specified within the Grant. In utilising the grant funding, the Council must comply with the grant conditions, including around pooling the funding into the local Better Care Fund (BCF), making plans for health and social care spend (including mental health) which are agreed by the local authorities and Integrated Care Board Chief Executives and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board under national condition 1 of the BCF and to building additional adult social care and community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays through delivering sustainable improvements to services for individuals.
- 8.2.8** The council may not use this funding to compensate for expenditure already incurred, activities for which the local authority has already earmarked or allocated expenditure, or to fund inflationary pressures nor may it use this funding for activities which do not support the primary purpose of the grant.
- 8.2.9** The Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund ('the fund') was announced at the autumn statement in November 2022. The primary purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care services in their area, in particular to build capacity and improve market sustainability.
- 8.2.10** Under section 5 of the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to promote the efficient and effective operation of the market for adult care and support as a whole. The ambition of the Care Act 2014 is for local authorities to influence and drive the pace of change for their whole market, leading to a sustainable and diverse range

of care and support providers, continuously improving quality and choice and delivering better, innovative and cost-effective outcomes that promote the wellbeing of people who draw on care and support. The guidance on grant conditions makes clear that the additional funding is to go beyond meeting inflationary pressures and must deliver tangible improvements in adult social care services.

**8.2.11** The Market and Sustainability Fund is a ringfenced grant and must be used to create improvements in at least one of the target areas identified within the grant. These are:

- increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers in local areas
- increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention
- reducing adult social care waiting times

Comments approved by Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (01/09/23).

### **8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

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

Comments approved by Dean Shoosmith, Chief People Officer 18/8/2023.

### **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 characterises 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  
21/8/2023.

## **9. APPENDICES**

**9.1** None.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**10.1** None.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>26 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Progress update on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive and Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, Human Resources and Organisational Development	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, Human Resources and Organisational Development	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member For Finance	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	The attached report is due to be considered by the Mayor at the Cabinet on 27 September 2023. The report is provided for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee following a request to review the Action Plan for the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>  <i>(* See guidance)</i>	<b>No</b>	
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	All	

### 1. **PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE PEOPLE AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY 2022-2026 AND ACTION PLAN**

- 1.1. Attached at Appendix A to this cover report is a report scheduled to be considered by the Mayor at the Cabinet meeting on 27 September 2023. The appended report, provides an update for the Mayor, on the delivery of the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy including the accompanying action plan.
- 1.2. The report is presented to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee ahead of its consideration by the Mayor, as the opportunity to scrutinise the action plan was originally requested by the Committee following its consideration of the Strategy on 23 January 2023. By scheduling the report on the agenda, the

Committee has the opportunity to review the content and provide feedback on the recommendations before the Mayor takes the final decision.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. The Committee is asked to: -

1. Review the information provided in the report on the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy, and
2. Decide whether there are any comments or recommendations on the scheme to bring to the attention of the Mayor during his consideration of the report.

### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer – Scrutiny

Email: [Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk)

**Appendix A: Cabinet Report – Progress update on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan**

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>27 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Progress update on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive and Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, Human Resources and Organisational Development</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer Email: Dean.Shoesmith@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>CLLR JASON CUMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>		Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>		All

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the development and progress of the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and supporting Action Plan, as requested by Cabinet in January 2023. The report gives an overview of the seven pillars within the strategy, outlining the interdependencies across each pillar and how the strategy design enables activities in each pillar to deliver key transformational change as required by the Croydon Renewal and Improvement Plan and the Mayor's Business Plan.
- 1.2 It outlines activities already achieved, activities underway, alongside plans to continue to change the culture of the organisation to become a council that delivers good quality services in an open and responsive way to residents, underpinned by strong financial disciplines and effective governance. The approach embedded in the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy is predicated on high staff engagement, co-creation, behavioural change and an aligned performance management framework. Key activities in the action plan have been co-created with staff.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices] the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is RECOMMENDED:

- to receive an update on the People and Culture Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 development and action plan; and,
- to note the achievements to date, work in progress, planned actions, and the contents of the report and Action Plan

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 The Executive Mayor in Cabinet has requested an update report on the progress of the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-26 and supporting Action Plan.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

4.1 The People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 (Appendix 1) was developed in 2022 and agreed by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Pre-decision scrutiny took place via the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 and the Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee requested a future update on the strategy delivery. The purpose of the strategy and its associated action plan is to provide a framework in which the council addresses its workforce priorities over the next four years, setting out the way in which we will recruit, manage and invest in staff to achieve the transformation required by the Croydon Renewal Plan and in line with the Mayor's Business Plan priorities, to ensure that as an organisation the Council is able to deliver good quality services in a financially sustainable way.

4.2 The strategy contains seven pillars which interconnect and seek to strengthen leadership and management capabilities, get governance right, improve skills and performance, enhance our health and wellbeing opportunities as well as ensuring that our brand enables us to attract and retain excellent people who are representative of the communities that we serve.

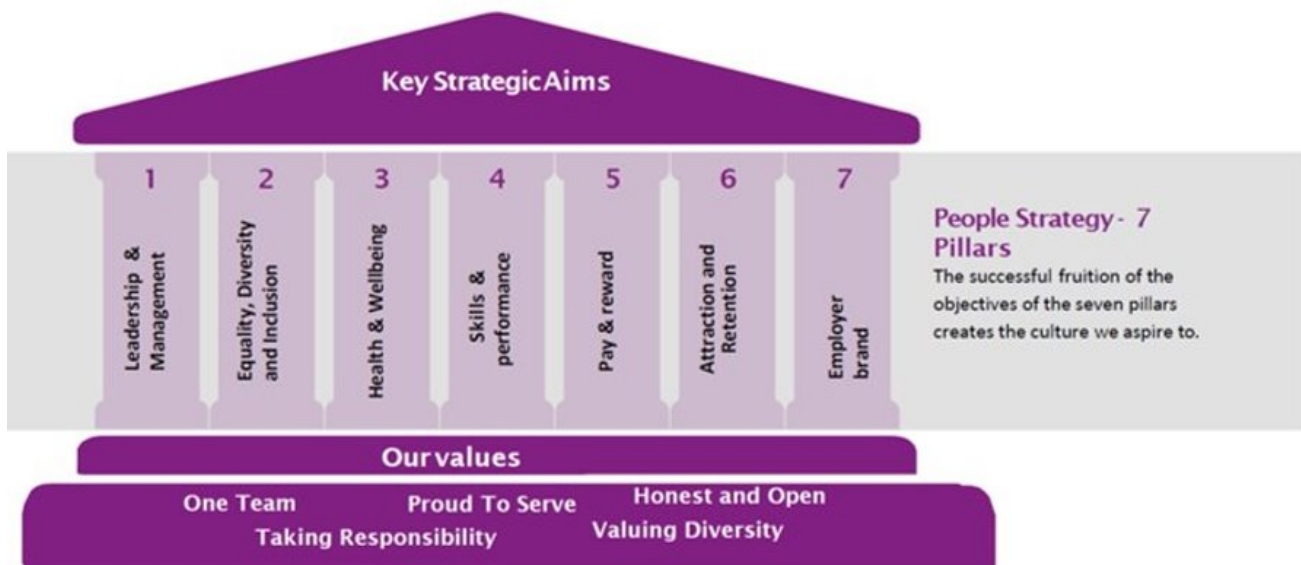
4.3 Whilst the overall owner of the strategy is the Chief People Officer, the delivery of the strategy is owned by the whole workforce. As a people-to-people business, this is to ensure we remain aligned to the wider organisation transformation journey, as well as ensuring our employees can play an active role in our cultural transformation, and our programme is inclusive ensuring that our residents and customers remain at the heart of what we do.

4.4 The Council has co-created its action plan (Appendix 2) with staff and key partners across the organisation, through active engagement and consultation to ensure that the employee voice is clearly defined. We are actively engaging with staff on activities that are underway and across the wider council to ensure that the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy is embedded.

- 4.5 Over the course of 12 sessions, more than 200 staff engaged in sharing their knowledge, experiences, and priorities to enable the council on its journey. The staff represented a cross-section of our workforce community and were representative in departments, grades, careers, and several protected characteristics.
- 4.6 A further eight focus groups with 30 attendees, and 15 Head of Service / Director 1:1s were undertaken in May 2023 to specifically shape leadership, management, and performance requirements, all with an EDI lens. Four focus groups were held to support the refresh of the Equalities Strategy, with 43 colleagues attending and further sessions to engage colleagues around core health and wellbeing actions took place in the summer, though at the time of writing the attendance and outputs were unknown.
- 4.7 The progress of the Strategy is overseen by the Workforce Internal Control Board to ensure that we continue to meet the targets outlined and regular reports are provided on our implementation.

# Our People and Cultural Transformation Strategy

Strategic objectives 2022- 2026



Seven key strategic objectives have been developed to provide a framework that addresses the council's workforce needs, enabling through organisational development the council to improve services to residents and setting in place a clear, measurable action plan for the next four years.

- 4.8 Each of our seven pillars has its own action plan, with defined milestones over the course of each of the four years of the delivery plan. However, it is important to ensure that the strategy remains adaptive, complementing the organisation position and journey and, therefore, these milestones will have some flexibility to ensure that they enable the effective delivery of the overall strategy.
- 4.9 **Pillar One** focuses on strengthening our leadership and management capabilities.
- 4.10 **Pillar Two** focuses on building an equality driven, inclusive and diverse workforce. This pillar intertwines with each of the other pillars to provide the foundations of our inclusive culture changes.
- 4.11 **Pillar Three** focuses on prioritising the health, wellbeing and resilience of our staff, where staff can thrive, are engaged and motivated to deliver positive outcomes for our diverse communities.
- 4.12 **Pillar Four** focuses on building our skills and capabilities and optimising our performance to deliver positive outcomes for Croydon's communities.
- 4.13 **Pillar Five** focuses on establishing a market leading pay and reward package.
- 4.14 **Pillar Six** focuses on attracting and retaining talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive recruitment market.
- 4.15 **Pillar Seven** focuses on developing an employer brand to attract employees who share the Council's values. There are interdependencies across all the pillars of the strategy,



and it is in the Employer Brand that we see the culmination of wider actions that together make Croydon an attractive place to work.

4.16 Our first-year achievement and priorities are set out below and our current action plan is shown at appendix 2. The action plan provides a clear overview on our approach to delivery over the next three years, including our progression from getting the basics right, to evolving and embedding our new practices and changes, as we transform how we operate and support the direction of business within the organisation.

### **Our Approach – Our First Year Priorities**

4.17 Having co-designed our action plan with our workforce, we are at different stages of delivery in the 2023/24 year, with work already in train before the Strategy was approved by Cabinet in January 2023. Some areas have already been achieved, some are in design or delivery mode, and others will roll out over the coming months. Progress updates are shown in parenthesis in the table below at 4.18.

4.18 In summary, our first year focuses on the following areas of delivery:

Leadership and Management	<p>Through working with senior officers to create a compelling new vision, purpose and target operating model which utilises skills, systems and strategies supported by data from externally verified audits, we will lay the foundations for our culture change vision, incorporating previous programmes of work such as Crossing the Threshold.</p> <p>The following initiatives will be rolled out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to the Floor sessions – visible leadership and resolutions (in design)</li> <li>• Utilising the change management framework to enhance delivery of transformation and service improvement (in progress)</li> <li>• Adopting a leadership framework (in design)</li> <li>• Rolling out core programmes on inclusive and change leadership (being commissioned)</li> <li>• Rolling out core developmental programmes for middle managers on aspiring managers, management foundations and stepping into leadership (being commissioned)</li> <li>• Promoting and utilising community of practice programmes to support embedding (at research stage)</li> </ul>
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have established an EDI Board operating from February 2021 to ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place to improve the representation of protected characteristic groups in the workforce profile to be as representative of the community we serve as possible as outlined in the refreshed our equalities strategy (achieved)</li> <li>• We have responded to feedback on our reasonable adjustments processes and put new processes in place to ensure more timely equipment is provided where needed. (in progress)</li> <li>• We continue to develop our Anti Racism Assessment approach to embed across the business (in progress)</li> <li>• We continue to deliver staff engagement sessions which allow a safe space for us to hear, support and respond to the voice of Launching positive action leadership programmes such as:</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch cohort 1 'Black on Board' programme' offered by Olmec for minoritised employees, especially colleagues in entry / front line roles (coming in from October 2023)</li> <li>• Reciprocal Mentoring Pilot with front line and operational colleagues with CMT and wider senior leaders Allyship programme for all levels of staff. (launch sessions in progress)</li> <li>• We have recruited and are training over 120 people across all Directorates to ensure we have a strong pool of diverse interview panel members (achieved)</li> </ul>
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have developed an action plan, with priorities being identified with the workforce over the summer as part of the stop, pause and re-prioritise work. Once clear on 'what will make the biggest difference to our workforce' a range of initiatives will be rolled out (achieved)</li> <li>• We have undertaken a 'make time to take time' campaign to change some of our habits and behaviours around how people work, including sharing principles to allow for better meetings, work breaks and time to think (achieved)</li> <li>• We will be reviewing our policies to ensure that they are fit for purpose (in progress – new employee relations policies to go live in September)</li> <li>• All staff will undertake mandatory e-learning in mental health and wellbeing (in progress)</li> <li>• We have established and are rolling out a health and wellbeing passport (achieved)</li> <li>• We have re-invigorated The Guardians Programme (achieved)</li> </ul>
Skills and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have created a Workforce Internal Board which provides oversight and governance.(achieved)</li> <li>• We have refreshed our induction offering and will be rolling out a new induction experience and manager experience (stage 1 online programme achieved, stage 2 in-person induction in development)</li> <li>• We have launched an interim user-friendly solution for appraisals to promote quality conversations (achieved)</li> <li>• We will be delivering core skills and base line training for all managers on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Customer service</li> <li>○ Digital skills</li> <li>○ Change management</li> <li>○ Managing diverse teams for managers (all in progress)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We have launched our 'A spotlight on ...' programme of mandatory training refreshers to ensure organisational compliance (achieved)</li> </ul>
Pay and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During our first year we will be establishing and sharing information to improve experiences in Job Evaluation, and co-creating principles in pay and reward, understanding what is important to employees, recognising that depending on your current career timeline, requirements will vary (in design)</li> <li>• Develop and raise awareness on total reward statements through a range of campaigns. And utilise this information better in our recruitment stages (initial design agreed by Workforce ICB – work in progress)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing options on informal and formal recognition programmes for staff (Staff Awards to go live April 2024 and Long Services awards in progress)</li> </ul>
Attraction and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have been actively reviewing and streamlining our recruitment processes and practices to increase our brand, promote better opportunities for our internal staff and attract new staff to join the councils (in progress)</li> <li>• We have developed recruitment videos to promote our staff voices and experience (achieved)</li> <li>• We are looking to develop our relationships with other local services and providers and work with local colleges on talent management (in progress)</li> <li>• We welcome 7 new graduates to the Council in the Autumn as part of our continued participation in the National Graduate development Programme (in progress)</li> <li>• We are developing apprenticeship and work experience opportunities for local young people by working with Palace for Life, the charitable arm of Crystal Palace Football Club</li> <li>• We are developing links with Croydon University Hospital to develop a wider public sector recruitment and attraction proposition across health and social care</li> </ul>
Employer Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising that our brand is developed based on several areas outlined above and ensuring that we actively promote the opportunities and share experiences as part of our recruitment processes (in progress, with new recruitment landing page content achieved)</li> <li>• That we retain are our London Living Wage status and progress to excellence in the Good Work Standard as well as begin our pursuit of other accreditations such as Investors in People accreditation if appropriate and cost effective (in progress – we are awaiting a decision on our ‘excellence’ application for the Good Work Standard)</li> </ul>

4.19 We recognise that the pillars have interdependencies and, therefore, some timelines will be more fluid to allow for embedding and adapting to ensure that we gain the most from the changes that we implement. In addition, we also accept that if change is required to deliver the required impact, we will adapt our approach to ensure that we support the Council’s wider vision and goals.

4.20 We ask that members receive this update of the progress on the development, design and delivery of the People and Culture Transformation Strategy and we commit to providing regular updates via other forums including the Mayors Advisory Board at regular intervals.

## 5 CONSULTATION

5.1 All employees were invited to attend workshops and presentations on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy and provide their feedback on the content to help shape and develop the overall action plan.

- 5.2 Over 200 employees and Union colleagues attended the workshop/presentations and have contributed to, and commented on, the proposals. Additional consultation has taken place on specific elements of the strategy, including leadership, management, appraisals, careers, EDI and Health & Wellbeing. Focus groups to help with the Equalities Strategy refresh were also held, with 43 colleagues contributing.
- 5.3 The People and Culture Transformation Strategy has been presented to the ACE DMT, CMT, MAB, Scrutiny, as well as to Cabinet.
- 5.4 Whilst the action plan identifies programmes for change across the council to support and underpin how we transform our service delivery, there is no public consultation requirement.
- 5.5 It is proposed to continue to involve staff representatives throughout the continued review of the action plan implementation, as well as setting up employee groups to shape and implement specific deliverables, role modelling an inclusive culture through this co-design approach.

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 No other options were considered.

## **7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 7.1 The People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 aligns to the Croydon Renewal programme and the priorities outlined in the Mayor's Business Plan, particularly Priority 5: Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1.1 Current finance implications are being met within existing budgets. Where additional resources will be required to support the delivery of some initiatives, now and in the future, funding bids will be made as appropriate following the Council's governance processes.
- 8.1.2 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 17/8/23

### **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.2.1 8.2.1 The basis of the core ethical standards expected of all public office holders including staff and councillors are set out within the 'Nolan Principles of Public Life' of Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>.

- 8.2.2 Separately, everyone employed directly or who works for or on behalf of the Council including those employed directly on a permanent, temporary or casual basis and those employed indirectly, including agency staff and consultants are bound by the Officer Code of Conduct. The Code also applies to those who are external secondees and office holders. The Code of Conduct alongside the Council's Values reflects the culture of the Council and sets out clear expectations in terms of how staff carry out their work, behave, respect and treat their colleagues and members of the public. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is mandatory, and breaches may be treated as a disciplinary offence leading to disciplinary action.
- 8.2.3 The Equality Act 2010 imposes positive duties upon the Council to promote equality and to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and as such officers are also expected to uphold the legal requirements imposed within the Equality Act 2010 section 149 to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2.4 In addition, the HR Handbook contains a range of other policies and procedures regulating amongst other things staff behaviour, conduct and performance management.
- 8.2.5 Separately, 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 and securing value for money in all spending decisions.

On 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ("the SoS") issued Directions under Section 15(5) of the LGA to the Council on the basis that the Council was failing to comply with its Best Value Duty setting out actions to be taken by the Council to comply with its Best Value Duty. Amongst other actions the SoS Directions require the Council to continue to restore public trust and confidence in the Authority by transforming the Authority's activities, practices, and omissions to ensure that they are compatible with the best value duty and thereby delivering improvements in services and outcomes for the people of Croydon. The recommendation is supportive of this action.

The Directions apply to all the governance and decision-making bodies of the Council including Full Council, Elected Mayor, and Cabinet Members (Executive) and any committee or sub-committee and are expected to remain in force until 20<sup>th</sup> July 2025 but could be amended or revoked at an earlier date by the SoS if appropriate.

*Approved by:* Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (30/08/2023)

## **8.2 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the provisions set out in Sec.149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must therefore have due regard 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.

8.3.2 The People and Cultural Transformation Strategy is key to the council's transformation and has been developed to have a positive impact on the lived experience of all staff and the improvement of services delivered to residents. This is supported by the focus on health and wellbeing in pillar 3.

8.3.3 An EQIA was produced in December 2022, which was updated in August 2023 which highlights a number of key initiatives within the seven pillars of the strategy that have a positive benefit to women, the Global Majority and other minoritised groups such as LGBT+, disabled staff and younger staff. Each intervention is based on clear evidence such as workforce data including pay gap data, staffing profiles and qualitative data such as staff co creation sessions and staff feedback from whole workforce interventions such as Crossing the Threshold.

8.3.4 Interventions outlined in relation to equality characteristics include: positive action training for the Global Majority and other racialised groups, disabled staff and women. Other positive action interventions include reciprocal mentoring and a Black on Board leadership programme to address the under-representation of Global Majority staff at grade 15, and above.

8.3.5 The strategy will also improve the lived experience of disabled staff by establishing a central budget for reasonable adjustments along with management information to support socialisation of disabled staff at work including those with neurodiverse conditions.

8.3.6 The apprenticeship strategy and the establishment of the Croydon Young Staff Network group will support the aim to encourage a younger workforce and rebalance our work profile with regard to younger employees.

8.3.7 The strategy aims to ensure that all documents are gender neutral, gender along with sex will be considered in the decision-making process when the new EQIA template is launched.

8.3.8 A recent request for volunteers to be trained to sit on recruitment panels has resulted in over an additional 100 volunteers from all protected characteristics within the council. This will support our aim to ensure that all recruitment panels are diverse.

8.3.9 The strategy will also support the work within the council to become an anti-racist organisation by ensuring that the directorate supports the development of staff and organisational knowledge and makes changes to policies and processes where appropriate along with and implementing the standards of the CELC Tackling Racial Injustice programme.

8.3.10 The strategy will also enable the directorate to consider and explore emerging equality issues such as intersectionality to identify where staff may be more likely to be impacted by plans and changes.

8.3.11 The EQIA is a live document and will be updated when further data and evidence is available.

8.3.12 Approved by Denise McCausland Equalities Programme Manager. (Date 23/08/2023)

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- The People and Cultural Transformation Strategy will have a positive impact for staff in supporting and delivering a range of transformational activities which will assist in enhancing their employee journey, improving health and wellbeing opportunities, and enabling change in connection with pay and reward and learning opportunities.
- There is no direct impact on headcount.
- Approved by: Dean Shoesmith Chief People Officer. (Date 15/08/2023)

### **8.5 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- Implementing our People and Cultural Transformation Strategy has the potential to positively impact the health of our workforce circa 60% of whom are residents of the Borough) by, for example:
  - enhancing the training and employment prospects of our workforce and local residents
  - reducing stress and anxiety whilst enabling more resilience and adaptability to change
  - strengthening control over colleague's lives and fostering empowerment

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer (Date 15/08/2023)

### **8.6 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.6.1 A Risk register is in place for the delivery of the People and Culture Transformation Strategy with any risks or issues being raised and managed via the Workforce Internal Control Board

8.6.2 Risks include the delay to the design of the Target Operating Model may impact on timelines for delivery or change the delivery dates, however contingency plans around consultation and design are in place to mitigate the risk. Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer (Date 15/08/2023)

### **8.7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.7.1 Whilst the overall programme has several components that will require the collection / holding of personal data of individuals this will be collected/held for specific purposes only and individuals will be aware of this through the workforce data privacy notice and the reasons for capturing the data and the processing that will be undertaken. Processing of any personal data or sensitive data will purely be for the delivery, monitoring and impact of the strategy and will only be undertaken in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 8.7.2 A DPIA will be considered for each individual area of work where we gather personal information and we will work with our existing policy [Workforce Data Protection Policy - Final.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer (Date 15/08/2023)

## **9 APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1** *People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026*  
**Appendix 2** *People and Cultural Transformation Strategy Action Plan*





London Borough of Croydon  
People and Cultural  
Transformation Strategy  
2022 - 2026

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## Overview

This four-year strategy aims to enable the delivery of the Mayor's Business Plan and the delivery of the strategic objective 'A transformed council listens to residents and delivers good services', specifically priority four to 'Develop a workforce which respects and delivers for our diverse communities'. We recognise that developing the right culture is essential to delivering the necessary change that sustains transformation and workforce improvement and is something that is raised repeatedly by our staff and members in focus groups, networks, general discussions and in the Crossing the Threshold program.

As part of the Council's wider Transformation programme there are a number of projects that are being developed to improve services and move

the Council to a financially sustainable organisation. As part of the success criteria of the overall Transformation programme the projects will include setting criteria to help towards improving the culture that in turn will help to attract and retain staff and drive up service improvement where necessary.

The Council is under a general duty of best value to 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 of the Local Government Act 1999) (as amended by Section 137 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007)



## Background

The council has been undertaking considerable work to make workforce improvement under the leadership of the Chief Executive since the Report in the Public Interest 2020. The culture of the council up to that point had been one where there was a lack of inclusive leadership, an organisation working in silos and where senior management was detached from the workforce, with the collective employee voice not listened to sufficiently. Issues of institutional discrimination were also considered to be barriers to equality and inclusion and rigorous efforts have been made over the last two years to address these problems and as set out below: -

- Focus groups – led by CEO/Head of OD in September/October 2020
- Croydon Renewal Plan – engagement with all staff once the plan was submitted through an extensive series of workshops
- Speak up programme working with Old Vic – Guardians’ programme offering staff support and help via a signposting service
- Tea-talks (opportunity for staff to talk directly with CMT) with all Staff Networks and new Staff Networks now set up including under 35’s, mental health and carers’ network
- All-staff webinars led by the Chief Executive with an open questions and answers format
- Crossing the Threshold, culture change programme, to reframe the employment culture to focus on delivering good services for residents and improving employee engagement and productivity. We are committed to acting on what we heard from our staff in the first phase of Crossing the Threshold workshops including senior managers being more visible to staff, with less silo working and having a ‘one team, one council approach’ which is clear feedback from staff

- How important getting this right for staff will be to make Croydon a good place to work, attract talent and retain skills
- Improved governance including internal control boards
- Assurance and delivery to move the culture to one of accountability, openness and transparency, which will improve people management with less conduct issues



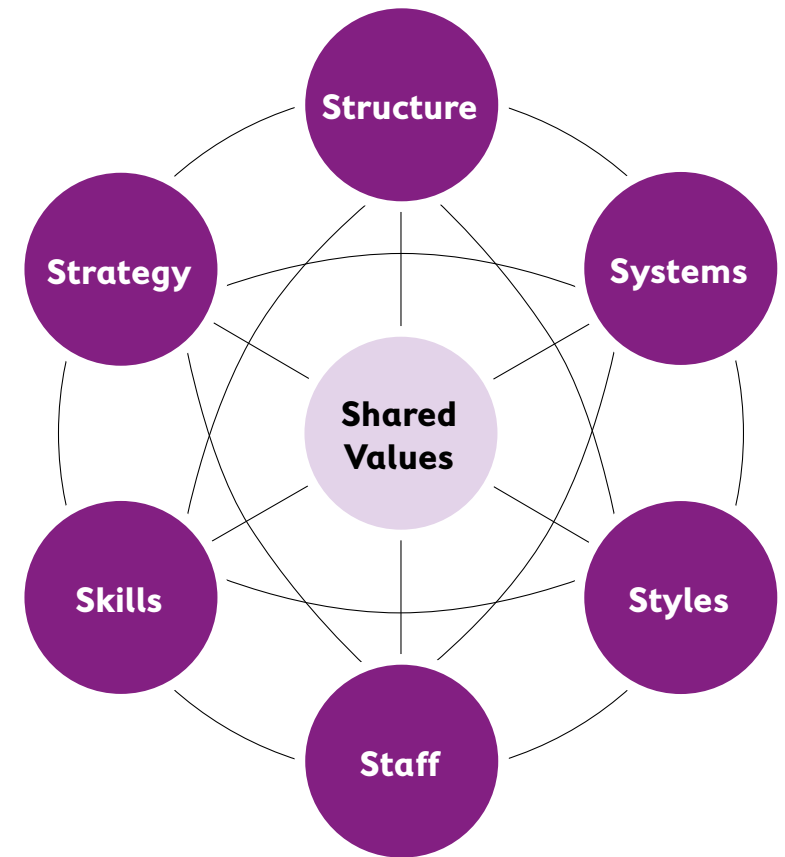
The Council has made significant changes as a result of the Corporate Restructure in 2021 (5 July 2021 Council meeting) giving focus to children’s services, adults and health, and housing. The restructure has been founded on strong people principles, with an emphasis of working as one council and how we have changed as a result of this.

Therefore, the Council has been laying foundations with design aims to ensure the Council can deliver more effectively on its business strategy, address the significant service quality improvements and workplace culture changes required by having focused and sufficient management capacity and ensuring a more consistent, corporate and effective internal control system. The organisational redesign also introduced new roles for senior and other staff to develop more cross-Council roles, role enrichment and development opportunities which this Strategy aims to build upon. Initiatives, such as the Council’s Crossing the Threshold programme, which has been initiated, and is ongoing, aims for the Council to become much more transparent, open and honest, i.e. a one-Council organisation, as set out in organisational redesign report.

Integral to talent attraction and management, the chief executive commissioned a positive action-based marketing and recruitment campaign designed to attract a diverse field of applicants as possible, and this work is to be developed and sustained in pillar 2 of this strategy.

The design has referenced the thinking behind the McKinsey “Seven S” model to guide improved ways of working, i.e., the Council must be seen as a whole system and be able to be more than the sum of its parts.

In the implementation of this People Strategy it is essential it is clearly linked and inter-dependent with the Council’s Transformation programme.



## Vision statement

To enable the delivery of the Mayor's Business Plan 2022 -2026, we are committed to providing good quality services by developing our workforce to ensure they are equipped with the right skills, knowledge, and behaviours to serve our residents well. We will develop a culture of putting our residents first, embodying the council's values, which are **One Team, Proud to Serve, Taking Responsibility, Valuing Diversity and Honest and Open**, where we attract a good calibre workforce for local people to live and work. We will develop a Croydon economy making us a desired destination and employer.

Through this strategy we aim to be an employer of choice, developing a brand reputation for good service delivery, in tandem with a good employment experience, developing the skills of our people to serve our diverse residents efficiently, effectively, responsively, and courteously.

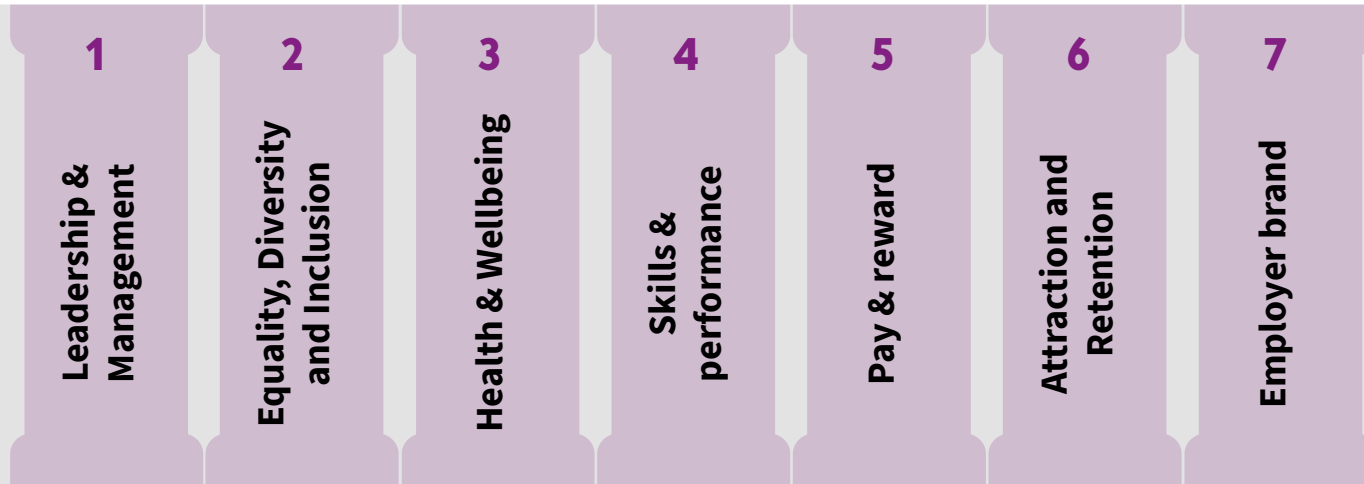
We aim to attract and retain diverse talent into the council, ensuring our workforce is as reflective as possible of the people of Croydon. This includes employing local people and ensuring our actions as an employer support local economic development and community sustainability.

We will invest in the learning and development of our workforce, equipping them with appropriate skills and solutions examples such as how to deliver good customer care, change and transformation ability, leadership and management whilst working in a digitally led environment.



# Strategic objectives 2022 - 2026

## Key Strategic Aims



### People Strategy - 7 Pillars

The successful fruition of the objectives of the seven pillars creates the culture we aspire to.

## Our Values

Taking Responsibility

One Team

Proud to Serve

Honest and Open

Valuing Diversity

Seven key strategic objectives have been developed to provide a framework that addresses the council's workforce needs, enabling through organisational development the council to improve services to residents and setting in place a clear measurable action plan for the next four years.

## (Pillar 1) Strengthen our leadership and management capabilities.

### Current position

Evidence from the staff survey December 2021 indicated that the council needs to develop and enhance our leadership and management capability.

Leaders are seen by staff as not sufficiently in touch with, and visible to, the workforce, needing to set clear direction listening to the collective employees' voice. This feedback is consistent with that from the first



phase of Crossing the Threshold (the council's workforce engagement and culture change programme). From staff survey feedback (see 3.2.1 above) we know managers' capabilities to engage staff with change, and deal with employment-related issues requires strengthening, along with managers' abilities to respond to workforce issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

### Future state

Good Leadership consists of , listening, decision making, coaching, collaboration and accountability and performance.

The council aims to develop an inclusive leadership culture, with effective workforce visibility and development of approaches that truly listen to employees' voice, which has commenced through the Crossing the Threshold programme. We will revitalise our values to demonstrate through our behaviours we are embodying those values across the whole workforce, and in serving our residents, which has been a clear message from staff through Crossing the Threshold engagement sessions. There is clear interdependence with other strategic objectives in this regard, especially objectives to:

- Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace
- Prioritise the health, wellbeing and resilience of our staff
- Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance

The action plan at appendix 1 sets out how and when the council will realise this strategic objective, together with measurement of the critical success factors.

## (Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.

### Current position

Regular analysis of the council's workforce data reveals that more work is required to ensure our staff are representative of the community we serve. Several key areas for positive action emerge as themes from the analysis of our workforce data: -

- i. Age: the council's median age is 50, with 0.2% of staff under 20, and 2.6% in the age range 18-24. This reveals an ageing workforce profile, which will manifest in future years retention and skills gap issues as the current majority of the workforce is aged between 41-59 and these colleagues will pursue retirement plans over the next 5-15 years.
- ii. Ethnicity: whilst the council's overall ethnicity profile is broadly representative of the borough's demographic, at a senior level from G15 upwards there is a marked difference in the ethnicity profile with a much lower level of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority senior managers.
- iii. Disability—whilst the council benchmarks favourably in terms of a representative disabled workforce and is in the upper quartile for London boroughs at 9.5%, this falls some way short of the borough demographic of 15%. Moreover, the lived experience of disabled staff in the workforce is another area for improvement to ensure better employee engagement.
- iv. Disclosure – the council benchmarks poorly with other London Boroughs for workforce disclosure of their protected characteristics.

The consequence of this is that without knowing the full profile of the workforce it is difficult to put in place measures that correctly align to support the equality and diversity of the workforce.

### Future state

Building on work to date, a workforce EDI dashboard will be presented to the EDI internal control board to analyse the workforce profile and to highlight areas where positive action is needed to address under-representation. The EDI Board will also put in place measures to improve the employees' lived experience when coming from a protected characteristic group working for the council, completing co-creation work with the staff network groups.

The council will develop an inclusive and distributed leadership tool which aims to improve inclusion across the council, improving employees' lived experience. This initiative also enables Pillar one, strengthening the council's leadership capability.

The council aims to develop a workforce that is increasingly representative of the community we serve, as well as enabling an inclusive leadership of the workforce where employees feel they are listened to, respected, able to develop their talents, and recognised for the work they do.

Identify and embed new behaviours and ways of working aligned to Mayoral governance and a hybrid way of working.



**(Pillar 3) Prioritise the health, wellbeing, and resilience of our staff, where staff can thrive and are engaged and motivated to deliver positive outcomes for our diverse communities.**

**Current position**

Both hard and soft data indicates that stress-related conditions are increasing across the council, with stress being the most frequent reason for sickness absence. Sickness absence has seen a steady increase across the workforce throughout 2021/22 (over nine days per head per year) and work to address this is being put in place through monthly sickness panels held at Directorate Management Team level. Over the last two years the council has put extensive work into developing initiatives supporting workforce mental health and wellbeing including Mental Health champions, a workforce health and wellbeing group (led by HR and Public Health), Mental Health Tea Talks with CMT, mental health first aiders, a mental health staff network, the Guardians’ programme, as a further source of information and support, together with the council’s employee assistance programme.

A workforce health and wellbeing strategy has been developed by a cross-section of officers based on the five ways to wellbeing (connect, give, take notice, keep learning and be active) produced by the Mental Health Foundation.

**Future state**

Through the implementation of the workforce strategy and action plan

we aim for our workforce to be happy, healthy, and supported by the best possible working environment. We are establishing a Workforce Board, led by the CEO, which will include an increased focus on managing sickness absence to ensure we are supporting staff and providing continuity of services to residents. The aim of the workforce health and wellbeing strategy is to create a safe, healthy and ‘good work’ environment which fosters a culture of positive wellbeing for all its employees.

We aspire to fulfil the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development’s best practice regarding workforce wellbeing, which is ‘to gain real benefit wellbeing must be integrated throughout the organisation, embedded in its culture, its leadership and its people management (CIPD 2019)’.



Implement initiatives to address workplace conflict, including a relaunched employee mediation scheme, seeking to resolve any conflict as close to the point of origin as possible and taking best practice from ACAS (Arbitration and Conciliation Advisory Service).

NB: Industry leads in effective employment relations

## **(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.**

### **Current position**

The December 2021 staff survey highlights a number of workforce development areas, including the ability for staff to develop themselves and their careers. The survey data is also supported by feedback from the staff network groups and in particular the Race Equality Network where Black, Asian and minoritised staff report that they are overlooked for professional development and career progression. As Black, Asian, and minoritised staff make up 37% (January 2023) of the workforce (note,



where staff have shared their protected characteristic data) this represents a sizeable proportion of the workforce where there is a need to build skills and capabilities to serve our residents.

### **Future state**

The council will invest in positive action development programmes for protected characteristic staff to ensure an equitable approach to address current and past organisational shortcomings.

We will develop clear career and skills development pathways to ensure a systemic and holistic approach to workforce development which will be aligned to business planning and the fulfilment of the Mayor's Business Plan to optimise performance for residents' benefit.

We aim to be known as an employer that invests in our workforce improving employees' wellbeing, capability, performance, and the council's reputation as an employer. We will redevelop our recruitment landing pages to provide an authentic brand image of the council as a good place to work with footage of diverse staff speaking about their experiences, including continuing professional development, to attract diverse and capable talent.

Develop and roll out a refreshed people performance management and appraisal system aiming to provide the best quality services possible to residents.

## **(Pillar 5) Acquire and retain talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive recruitment market.**

### **Current position**

The council faces significant challenges in the local, regional, and national labour markets when seeking to recruit, with spiralling pay competitiveness a common feature.

The manifestation of labour market competitiveness, is the council - in skills scarce roles - needing to apply market supplements to be able to provide sufficiency of pay to attract candidates.

The current Greater London Provincial Council job evaluation scheme has been in place for over 30 years and can present difficulties in matching the labour market going rate and modern local government operating models when it comes to pay and grade determination.



The council has two different job evaluation schemes (GPLC and Hay depending on grade seniority), over 1,000 different job descriptions, and historic complexity regrading pay, grading, and determining job value.

All of the above indicates the need for a strategic pay review, including an equality pay audit. Additionally, we need to develop a simpler, transparent pay and reward system that is more flexible and adaptive to prevailing external labour market conditions, as well as being clear and easily understood across the internal workforce.

### **Future state**

The council will conduct a strategic pay review which will seek to simplify and make transparent the approach to job value, pay and rewards. The review will aim to benchmark the council against the external labour market to ensure pay and reward is competitive, whilst also being affordable within the council's overall pay bill.

The council will align pay and grading systems and structures with skills paths and career progression to ensure a systematic approach to succession planning and talent development alongside pay and compensation, that supports effective recruitment and retention, as well as individual and organisational development.

The council will review options for simplification and modernisation of its job evaluation schemes, rationalising the mechanics of the job evaluation process and job descriptions, to unify the approach and provide improved transparency for all staff to understand how the scheme works and how job value is evaluated.

We will implement a total rewards statement to make clear Croydon's employment offer, to build our employer brand and to support effective recruitment and retention.

## **(Pillar 6) Establish a market lead pay and reward package.**

### **Current position**

The council, in common with other employers in the hyper-competitive London labour market, experiences challenges with employing several skills scarce occupations across the workforce. This includes qualified social workers (both children's and adults), approval mental health practitioners, digital and ICT specialists, legal, finance, planners, and building control.

The consequence of skills scarcity includes the council needing to take alternative measures to fill statutory services and other business critical roles including the recruitment of agency workers. In financial year 2021/22 the council spent £16m on agency workers and aims to reduce the cost and number involved. Agency staff are respected members of our workforce and approx. 90% of agency staff are filling established posts.

### **Future state**

There is close alignment and interdependency with Pillars 4, 6 and 7. The council will aim to develop a more attractive employment value proposition (employment attraction package) to ensure we can recruit and retain good calibre people.

The council will build a pipeline of new talent by developing an apprenticeships strategy, developing clear career and skills pathways to address the underrepresentation of young people in the workforce, addressing skills gaps in the workforce and improving economic

development in the borough to avoid worklessness and generate economic activity. The council will commit to creating apprenticeships through clear organisational design, agreeing annual targets across all directorates to create 'new start' apprentices, as well as apprenticeship conversions which enable the council to develop current staff and draw upon the Government's levy. The council will target Croydon residents to ensure our local population benefit and the council provides community leadership to address worklessness and skills development for residents.

We will develop a range of different resourcing methods to seek to attract diverse and high-quality candidates to work for the council. As covered under Pillar 4 above, we aim to redevelop our recruitment landing pages to provide an authentic brand and compelling package to attract the best candidates possible. We will also implement a values-based approach to recruitment to ensure candidates are assessed on their behavioural values, as well as knowledge, skills, education and aptitude. We will implement and evaluate different recruiting methods such as greater use of social media, direct sourcing (use of online platforms to make direct contact with potential candidates), candidate open days, and community outreach work, including schools and colleges to attract local people to work for the council (including apprenticeships), with the wider benefit of generating economic activity and development in the community, leveraging the council's position as a major employer in the borough.

In terms of retention there are key interdependencies with Pillar 4 and building workforce skills and capabilities. We will utilise our workforce exit data to pinpoint where we have issues of employee turnover and take targeted actions, including improving employee engagement.

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## (Pillar 7) Develop an employer brand to attract employees who share the Council's values

### Current position

Given the recent past of the council and its continuing financial difficulties, attraction and successful recruitment of candidates in several skills scarce occupations can be even more challenging, added to which we are seeking to respond to the hyper-competitive London labour market. As well as developing a four-year apprenticeships strategy (see 3.6.3 above) to attract younger people to work for the council an analysis of workforce data and pay gap reports show that there is an underrepresentation of young people (only 2 % of the workforce is under 24). In senior grades there is a shortfall of Black, Asian and minoritized staff (10% v 40% for the wider workforce).

Recruitment experts have dubbed 2022 the 'great resignation' which means

staff are much more inclined to leave their employer given external pressures such as the cost-of-living crisis, 40-year high inflation rates, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and successive lockdowns and associated economic turbulence. It essential to put clear recruitment plans in place and ensure we have effective talent management that attracts new skills into the council. We are also building social values embedded in the council's contracts

to leverage our supplier relationships to help us to work with the private sector for the wider prosperity and sustainability of the whole borough. For



example, we are working with Adecco and Croydon Works to ensure wider economic development and improved life chances for the young people of our borough.

Our staff are effective ambassadors of working for the council however we know from staff survey results and staff exit survey data not all hold a positive view and experience of working for the council. We need to address employee engagement, and this is interdependent with, and covered in, pillars 1 to 6 above to ensure our staff act as our employment advocates.

### Future state

Develop a values-based employer brand incorporating total pay and reward and external accreditations to demonstrate real progress with our employment offer and an authentic employer brand based on external assessment. Market the attraction of Croydon as a place to live and work, including:

- Fast and efficient transport infrastructure
- Affordable housing (compared with central London), which is multi cultural and diverse
- Where there is true employee voice
- Where we have hybrid working and good office accommodation
- We aim to develop defined career paths

We have external accreditations that provide independent verification of Croydon as a good employer, including issues of overall people management as well as more specifically for equality, diversity, and inclusion.

## Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

### Our people strategy and cultural transformation strategy implementation plan

We know we have lots of strengths, and the greatest of these is our staff. We are passionate about Croydon- the place and the people that we serve, a place where many of us have chosen to make our home. We have many committed, resilient, creative, and talented public servants at the Council, and - as the organisation changes and improves - those skills will be needed more than ever. We need a leadership team who can harness the ambitions of our staff, a team who is committed to Croydon; to delivering excellence in public services; to making Croydon a place to be proud of; and to improving the life chances of the people who live here. If we get this right, it will be transformative.

Our implementation plan is dynamic and often will be indicative in nature as it will need to be contextual, reflecting current and emerging needs internally and externally and aspirations; albeit most of the current plan is internally focused. A full cultural transformation would be remiss if it did not factor in the implications for our residents. We must evolve and transform, becoming a place and a community we feel proud to work and live in. It is reflective of our key priority actions translating what our staff have said, looking at the mayoral business plan and considering good common-sense planning whilst delivering within our means. The remainder of 23/24 will be a time for resetting and getting our basics in place and working. The subsequent years will see us honing our capabilities, developing a diverse and inclusive culture where our staff, our community partners and our residents feel a sense of pride and hope for the future. We need to get our priorities right and deliver as promised and this requires all hands-on deck, with no one left behind. We need to be co-creators of our future which is why we asked our staff to tell us what is important, we have listened. If we get most things right on this plan, we would have achieved a cultural transformation that is unprecedented for Croydon council. To guide our programme of work we will adopt the customised change framework designed for Croydon council and we will need to educate all staff and managers on its utility.

The following table represents the key priorities emanating from the people and cultural transformation strategy (PCTS) and does not include business as usual activities which must continue in tandem.

Activities are labelled by the following priority segmentation for 23/24 Legend(1)= Priority 1, (2)= priority 2, (3)= Priority 3

	23/24 Delivery	Lead	24/25 Delivery	Lead	25/26 Delivery	Measures of success
	GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT		EVOLVE/ADAPT		EMBED	
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	(1)Building a cultural impetus: Depict a target operating model with a compelling vision including a cultural vision, future state of Croydon, transformation road map, internal & external capabilities current and future, what we will deliver and how we will deliver services. Integrate outputs/outcomes of	CMT, Transformation office	Continue implementation /evaluation of culture development activities, processes, and integrating outputs/outcomes into mainstream business	L&OD, Transformation office	Conduct a culture audit to identify our progress against cultural vision and targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address gaps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased staff participation in engagement exercises lead by leaders</li> <li>Staff say they know the organisation's direction and they know their role in the journey</li> <li>All organisational employee performance</li> </ul>

## Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	<p>Crossing the threshold initiatives to inform the culture mapping This will set the tone and platform for all transformation work</p>					<p>indicators improve incrementally year on year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Yearly reduction of grievance claims and employment tribunal cases</li> <li>○ Yearly positive indicators on employee relations data</li> </ul>
	<p>Offer leadership and management development at all levels to foster a mindset of inclusive, distributed leadership and accountability with aligned behaviours, to include: (1) Establishing and embed a behavioural framework for inclusive and distributed leadership in all development offers, (2) Establish interactive exchanges for CMT, directors and heads of service (HoS) to aid the building of relationships, (3) review 360-degree approach and process for appraisals of CMT, directors and HoS by 2025,</p>		<p>Evolve leadership offers to respond to changes in landscape and movement in behavioural changes expected ie. Financial management</p> <p>Introduce 360-degree management development tool for appraisals of CMT, directors for performance management and development</p>	L&OD	<p>Introduce 360-degree management development tool for appraisals for Heads of Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in staff/manager grievances</li> <li>• Staff say that senior managers are more visible and accessible</li> <li>• Develop a talent pool of future leaders ready for succession</li> </ul>
	<p>(1) Deliver a variety of leadership conferences/forums for CMT/Directors/HOS/Middle managers to intentionally and proactively develop productive relationships among leadership to operational level</p>	OD+ external partner		L&OD	<p>Continue management and leadership network forum events/conferences to continue to develop/hone transformation capability</p>	
	<p>(1) Managers/Leaders to undertake back to the floor sessions with staff to</p>	OD + Directorate Corporate	<p>Directorates evolve &amp; deliver local back to the floor</p>	Directorate leadership	<p>Directorates continue to increase visibility of leaders through back to the floor</p>	



### Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	increase visibility and understand/resolve sticking	Directors & Directors	sessions with staff to increase visibility and understand/resolve sticking points.		sessions, road shows, recognition events with staff to increase visibility and build trust is leadership
Page 113	(2)Develop a leadership offer for senior managers(CMT, Directors) on inclusive management, change leadership alongside and opportunities to participate in organisational raids, commission coaching support as required Offer leadership membership ie. White hall Industry group(WIG)	L&OD	Review leadership offer for senior leaders and ensuring individual and collective needs are being addressed. Ensure all leaders have a back to the floor plan and are executing consistently	L&OD, External partner	Evaluate impact of leadership development offers and continuously improve as required to respond to transformation initiatives
	1) Establish a programme of mentoring and (2) coaching,	L&OD, External partners	Continue to build software capability to optimise mentoring and coaching offer	L&OD, External partners	Evaluate effectiveness of senior leaders via 360, and temperature checks. Review impacts of more visibility and refresh offer
	(1)Establish networking forums for Middle managers	L&OD + MSP +external partners	Review, maintain development programmes as needed	L&OD + MSP +external partners	Ensure council wide access to mentoring and coaching opportunities as a development tool
	(3)To prepare talented managers for transition into senior roles we will offer: • Stepping into Leadership	L&OD	Continue to roll out development programmes for middle managers: • Stepping into leadership	L&OD	Evaluate effectiveness of the development programmes.
(2) Explore development programmes for all staff aspiring for future managerial positions managers:	L&OD	Implement development programmes for all staff aspiring for future managerial positions		Evaluate take up and effectiveness of the development programmes.	

### Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspiring managers</li> <li>Management Foundations</li> </ul>		managers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspiring managers</li> <li>Management Foundations</li> </ul>			
Page 114	<p>Establish &amp; develop the equalities, diversity and inclusion Board as a governance body for equalities</p> <p>Introduce the role of equality champions/leads &amp; establish them for each directorate</p> <p>Establish challenge sessions with Equalities leads from all directorates to hold them to account for delivery of the equalities strategy</p>	Katherine Kerswell & Grace Addy	<p>Approval and corporate implementation of equalities strategy actions</p> <p>Ensure council wide responsibility for delivery of the equality strategy</p>	Transformation office, Equalities Board, Denise McCausland	Continue to monitor and evaluate local delivery of equality actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased representation of global majority staff in grade 15 and above roles</li> <li>Our cultural outcomes are tangible and felt by 90% of staff</li> <li>Staff actively utilise space mechanisms</li> <li>Staff say they are treated fairly and can speak truth to power without repercussions</li> <li>Our processes, policies and system ensure fairness and equity is embedded in them</li> </ul>
	(1)Establish a review process of our current Values looking at the value of Values, bench mark against other local authorities where it makes sense	L&OD	Refresh & resocialise our values embedding within all leadership, performance frameworks and strategies	L&OD	Temperature check to evaluate our adoption of our values and reinforce any gaps using a variety of levers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure values embedded into all people processes, systems including recruitment,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff feel we provide reasonable adjustments</li> <li>Staff they say we are all living our values</li> <li>Staff networks increasingly become for a for social interaction instead of advocacy groups</li> </ul>
	(1)To ensure fairer recruitment processes and reduce bias we will develop/train a pool of diverse of candidates for interview panels	HR & L&OD	Continue to refresh processes to keep recruitment skills current	HR, L&OD, Equalities	Look to evaluate the overall impact of the diverse panels and whether there has been any quantitative or qualitative data on our shortlisting and screening processes. Do staff feel our recruitment processes are fairer as a result of using the panels. Are we using	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council at grades 15-and above incrementally reflects the community we serve</li> <li>Resident satisfaction rates improve year on year</li> </ul>

Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	<p>Deliver staff engagement safe space mechanisms to hear, support &amp; respond, to the voice of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmed monthly 'Tea Breaks' for CMT to listen</li> <li>• 2 Staff temperature/ pulse checks</li> <li>• Ongoing staff Network support</li> <li>• Staff road shows</li> <li>• Local back to floor exercises</li> </ul> <p>(1) Establish a shadow CMT offer (3) Create values change champions within Directorates</p>	L&OD	<p>Deliver staff engagement safe space mechanisms to hear, support &amp; respond, to the voice of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand 'Tea Breaks' concept</li> <li>• Staff Networks</li> <li>• Staff road shows for front line staff</li> <li>• Quarterly Staff Engagement survey/, temperature /pulse checks</li> <li>• introduce a new safe space process developed by Race Equalities Matters</li> <li>• Launch a shadow CMT offer</li> <li>• Evaluate Equalities &amp; Values change champions within Directorates</li> </ul>	L&OD	<p>them consistently</p> <p>Continue to implement and evaluating effectiveness and impacts of all safe space and change agent mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver staff engagement safe space mechanisms to hear, support &amp; respond, to the voice of staff:</li> <li>• Expand 'Tea Breaks' concept</li> <li>• Staff Networks</li> <li>• Guardians programme</li> <li>• Staff road shows for front line staff</li> <li>• Deliver Quarterly Staff Engagement survey/, temperature /pulse checks</li> <li>• Launch a shadow CMT offer</li> <li>• Evaluate Equalities &amp; Values change champions within Directorates</li> </ul>	
	<p>Given a 69% female workforce and a commitment to increase representation of global majority at senior levels plus a need to address some intersectionality issues, especially for the council's lower graded staff we are</p>	L&OD, External partner	<p>Deliver Positive action leadership for racialised and minoritized and women staff expand to Disability leadership mostly at frontline level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L&amp;OD, External partner</li> </ul>	<p>Continue to offer, evaluate and expand positive action leadership programmes for global majority, women:</p> <p><b>Global majority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch cohort 3' Blacks on Board'</li> </ul>	

**Co Creation Session Feedback Summary**

<p>prioritising our positive action programmes on Global majority &amp; women.</p> <p>(1)Deliver leadership programmes for racialised minorities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch cohort 1 'Blacks on Board' programme' offered by Olmec for minoritized employees, especially colleagues in entry / front line roles</li> <li>• Implement reciprocal Mentoring Pilot</li> <li>• 'Inspiring Individuality' leadership apprenticeship L3 offered by Raising the Bar' aims to empower and inspire individuals who may be in the minoritized groups to share the pride of their ethnicity with others and learn fundamental techniques to address inclusivity for themselves and others</li> </ul> <p>(1)<b>Women's programmes</b> offered by 'Raising the Bar' to include: Women In Leadership apprenticeship programmes at L3 &amp;5 which aims to inspire, motivate, and empower current &amp; aspiring female leaders and stimulate talented women to meet their potential.</p>	<p>L&amp;OD, Raise the Bar</p>	<p>:</p> <p><b>Global majority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch cohort 2 'Blacks on Board' programme' offered by Olmec for minoritized employees, especially colleagues in entry / front line roles</li> <li>• Roll out Reciprocal Mentoring for all levels of leadership &amp; management</li> </ul> <p><b>Women in Leadership</b> Level 3 &amp; 5 apprenticeships: Launch cohort 2 apprenticeships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore an introduce Leadership offers for staff with disabilities</li> </ul> <p><b>All:</b> Participation in shadow CMT</p>		<p>programme' in partnership with Olmec for minoritized employees, especially colleagues in entry / front line roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership programmes for those with a disability</li> </ul> <p><b>Women's Leadership:</b> Level 3 &amp; 5 apprenticeships: Launch cohort 3 apprenticeships</p> <p><b>All:</b> Participate in shadow CMT</p>	
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## Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 117</p> <p><b>Health and wellbeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a health and well strategy with action plan</li> <li>H&amp;S review of Policies</li> <li>Establish council wide compliance for health and wellbeing training uptake</li> <li>Ensure council wide completion of mandatory of introductory e-learning on mental health and wellbeing course</li> <li>Establish a health and wellbeing passport             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Guardians programme relaunched</li> <li>(1) Promote, refocus the Guardian's programme as a source for confidential listening and health and wellbeing support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>L&amp;OD, Public Health,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and wellbeing actions are implemented and evaluated.</li> <li>Monitor health and wellbeing trends.</li> <li>Regularly review rate of usage of EAP</li> <li>Assess impacts of Guardian programme             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue LGC award for health and wellbeing</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ensure all managers complete the Champions health and well-being programme</li> <li>Ensure mechanisms are put in place to understand the needs of our satellite offices and areas not part of the main BWH centre</li> </ul>	<p>L&amp;OD Public health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Wellbeing passports</li> <li>Pursue London Healthy Workplace Award</li> <li>Monitor improvements of health and wellbeing-outcome 3 of our equality strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incremental reduction of short- and long-term sickness trends.</li> <li>Greater use of intelligent data to develop effective health and wellbeing policies &amp; practices</li> <li>Reduction in sickness absence</li> <li>Absence rates are consistently below the reported CIPD average for Local government.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills and Performance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on our mandatory training and recertification process and ensure baseline data is in place.</li> <li>Ensure a robust induction to</li> </ul>	<p>L&amp;OD</p>	<p>At start of financial year introduce a new performance management &amp; appraisal system</p>	<p>L&amp;OD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop skills Pathways established for all roles</li> <li>Review and refresh our Appraisal –</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff participate in regular, quality appraisals and feel results reflects their true performance outcomes.</li> <li>Skills/Career pathways</li> </ul>

## Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

Page 118	<p>the council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction – introduce basic approach then iterate over the 3 years to create induction as an experience; Manager Induction.</li> </ul> <p>Develop and rollout training to address priority skills gaps of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Digital skills</li> <li>• Change management</li> <li>• Managing diverse teams for managers</li> <li>• Managing conflict</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop/pilot skills pathways for priority and/or scarce roles</li> <li>• Increase promotion of Utilising Apprenticeship levy to support development</li> <li>• Review compliance for mandatory training for all staff and managers and monitor and report through our learning management system</li> </ul>		<p>Review/embed approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A corporate hybrid, experiential onboarding and induction programme is in place and accessible to all staff</li> </ul>	<p>are established and working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff receive regular, quality appraisals.</li> <li>• 100% completion of compliance training within induction timeframe and fulfil appropriate recertifications.</li> <li>• Staff feel they have the skills, knowledge and tools to perform well.</li> <li>• Incremental decreases in disciplinary cases</li> <li>• Improved relationships with residents to change their perception of the Council</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pay and Reward</b></p> <p><b>NB. Recognition is covered</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Job Evaluation forms to streamline</li> <li>• Create design principles for pay and reward using co-creation as a key design principle</li> <li>• Raise awareness on total pay and reward through various communications campaigns.</li> <li>• Develop and socialise a Total Reward statement and integrate as part of an attraction process</li> </ul>	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplify approach to job design</li> <li>• New Job description and person specification launched</li> </ul> <p>Recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop recognition toolkit for managers to use</li> </ul>	HR + external partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the impact of new JD on employee experience</li> <li>• Offer opportunities to celebrate our success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive pay and reward as an attraction mechanism</li> <li>• Pay is no longer a constraint in attracting the best talent</li> <li>• Staff perceive they are paid fairly</li> </ul>

### Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	<p>Recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review options for informal formal recognition programmes ie. Long service award, staff awards</li> </ul>					
Page 119	<p><b>Attraction and retention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, simplify and decrease bias in our internal and external recruitment process, implement quick wins             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Videos on our recruitment pages</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	HR	Introduce Values Based Recruitment	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce planning and succession planning is introduced</li> <li>Develop/pilot systemic approach to career development in</li> <li>Establish internal talent pipeline for succession planning</li> <li>Evaluate how we are doing on promoting talent and increasing job mobility internally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeship levy is fully utilised year on year to support in work or external apprenticeship programmes</li> <li>Attrition is less than the London average for key skills</li> <li>Increased number of internal promotions and especially among those with protected characteristics</li> </ul>
	<p>(2)Explore opportunities to address future and scarce skills gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop relationships with Croydon university hospital, Palace for Life and Croydon college as a talent management mechanism,</li> <li>Explore/agree processes, policies, practices on promoting talent and increasing job mobility internally, leveraging development in multiple ways – e.g. via secondments, apprenticeships, job</li> </ul>	HR, L&OD	<p>Establish a talent management strategy and plan and consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot systemic approach to skills/career pathing in one directorate</li> <li>(1) Establish a promote internally first principle/practice where possible</li> <li>(3) Introduce succession planning</li> <li>(1) Develop/pilot career pathways for priority and/or scarce roles</li> </ul>	HR+L&OD	<p>Embed our talent management action plans which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop/deploy talent pools to be deployed as required to meet resource needs</li> <li>Rollout career pathways across scarce roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We successfully recruit to all our advertised vacancies and measure internal promotion activity</li> </ul>

### Co Creation Session Feedback Summary

	<p>shadows, work experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to recruit to and manage the National Graduate Development Programme</li> </ul>					
	<p>(2)Research/Review talent management approaches that will support our transformation objectives</p>	HR+ L&OD	<p>Introduce Workforce planning to more accurate project future staffing and skills needs</p>	HR	<p>Continue to develop pipelines to address skills shortages</p>	
<p><b>Employer Brand</b> NB there are fewer specific actions highlighted in this pillar as our Employer Brand will be a culmination of other pillar actions</p>	<p>(2)Explore/agree options of accreditations we want to pursue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue Good Employer Assessment for Excellence in July 2023.</li> </ul> <p>(3)Establish a strategic partner relationship with REED to support us in building our brand</p>	HR	<p>Pursue organisational accreditations which develop our aspirational brand which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revamp organisational presence and experience on all marketing media</li> <li>Consider third sector to see how they can work with us to create an enabling relationship.</li> </ul>	HR		<p>Attain Good Work standard award at the 'Excellent' level as recognised by the Mayor of London                  Investors in People recognition                  London Living wage accredited employer                  Race at Work Charter progression and recognition.                  90% rating in employer promoter rating in engagement surveys</p>



## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>26 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151)</b> <b>jane.west@croydon.gov.uk</b> 020 8726 6000 Ext 27320	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services &amp; Governance Officer – Scrutiny</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Rowenna Davis,</b> <b>Chair of the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	The attached report summarises the work of Scrutiny during 2022-23 and is presented to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee for sign-off before submission for the Council meeting on 11 October 2023.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>  <i>(* See guidance)</i>	<b>No</b>	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	All	

### 1. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

- 1.1. The Council's Constitution required the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to make an annual report to Council summarising its work over the previous year.
- 1.2. A draft version of the Scrutiny Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee to review. The Committee is asked for its suggestions or amendments, which will be included in the final version of the report, which will be presented to the Council meeting on 11 October 2022.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to: -

1. Approve the draft version of the Annual Scrutiny Report for submission to Council on 11 October 2023.
2. To note that any amendments made as a result of the comments of the Committee will be agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs, to meet the timeline for delivery to the Council meeting.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. It is a requirement set out in part 4E: Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to submit an annual report on the work of itself and its sub-committees to the first full meeting of the Council of the new year.

#### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer – Scrutiny

Email: [Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk)

#### **Appendix A: Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23**

# Scrutiny

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



HOUSING  
TRANSPORT  
SAFEGUARDING  
RISK  
VITALITY  
ROAD ACCIDENTS

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## **Scrutiny Chair's Intro/Foreword**

Improving Scrutiny is essential for improving the Council. National government has been very clear that for Croydon to stand on its own two feet and remove the need for central government intervention, we must prove that we are continuously improving. The nationally appointed Improvement Panel that currently has directional powers over the Council will require this for its Exit Strategy. Rigorous scrutiny, whilst it might occasionally feel uncomfortable, is an essential part of that improvement journey. We are committed to being a critical friend to the Council to help it improve.

The Council's finances have been our key focus over the last year and will continue to be so. This is the number one issue for the Council and its residents. We have been pleased to see ambitious targets for transformations and savings over the last year, and we will continue to hold officers and members accountable for those targets. However, like the Mayor and senior council leaders, we know that Croydon can't escape its debt trap through cuts to services alone; it will require intervention from national government. Croydon Council must therefore continue its efforts to negotiate with Westminster to make sure we can become a more sustainable local authority.

As more councils face financial difficulty, national government is recognising the need to strengthen scrutiny's powers and is moving to do so. They recognise that stronger scrutiny earlier can prevent mistakes that might otherwise lead to expensive intervention later.

We are pleased to acknowledge that scrutiny is being taken more seriously in Croydon too. The Mayor has honoured his commitment to give the Chair of Scrutiny to an opposition member. That cross-party commitment has been reciprocated by the Committee, which has gone out of its way to waive normal proportional representation rules to make space for Green and Liberal Democrat voices in scrutiny. We welcome the contribution that this diversity of voices has brought to our work.

The introduction of a new scrutiny committee on Homes, also brought in with cross party support, has also helped deepen and improve our work on housing, supporting the housing department's improvement following the devastating treatment of tenants in Regina Road and those still languishing in expensive temporary accommodation.

We also want to acknowledge officers and cabinet members for their support. Officers are providing reports more quickly than the past, offering more regular briefings and answering more questions, although there is still room for improvement in timings. I also want to thank our existing team of two scrutiny officers, whose professionalism and support has been invaluable over the last year.

As scrutiny members we are also doing our bit to try and improve ourselves. We have worked hard to deepen community engagement and focus on the impact of our work. Scrutiny and Overview Committee alone has held five large public meetings and four visits in the last twelve months. The ability to listen and learn from tenants when we were scrutinising the housing repairs contract, or on foodbank and faith leaders on the cost-of-living crisis, has really enriched our work and we are very grateful to the time people have given us.

Thanks to the dedication of scrutiny members, we have managed to have a real impact over the last year. When looking at Council tax enforcement, for example, scrutiny members took the time to listen to residents struggling to pay their council tax bills who perceived the council to lack empathy and accessibility, and we made practical recommendations for changes based on their testimony. The open willingness of officers to respond to those recommendations means that residents will now be able to access information in different languages and be referred to support services where they need them.

Scrutiny will continue to push for improvement, both in our own committee and the wider Council. Chairs and vice chairs of all five of our committees now meet regularly to make sure we are reviewing our work and working together effectively. We continue to seek out new training opportunities, particularly on the budget, where all of us need to continuously upskill.

It has been an absolute privilege to work with colleagues over the last year in the service of the borough we call home. I hope that over the next year we can continue to help improve our Council, its finances, services and ability to listen, for the good of its people.

## Scrutiny and Overview Committee

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee directs the performance of all overview and scrutiny functions at the Council, including the development of procedures governing the operation of both the Committee and its Sub-Committees. It also has responsibility for scrutinising crime and disorder matters and flood risk management within the borough. The Committee will consider any call-in of Cabinet decisions other than those relating to education matters, which are heard by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this committee by clicking on the link: [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

### 2022-23 Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee



**Cllr  
Rowenna  
Davis (C)**



**Cllr  
Richard  
Chatterjee  
(VC)**



**Cllr Leila  
Ben Hassel  
(DC)**



**Cllr Jade  
Appleton**



**Cllr Sean  
Fitzsimons**



**Cllr Simon  
Fox**

## Chairs Introduction

Scrutiny is committed to improving itself to help improve the Council. Throughout all the topics we've addressed this year, we've been guided by two principles. First, the need to increase community engagement and, second, to focus on the impact we can have on helping the executive improve Croydon for its residents. Holding five large community meetings and four visits this year in Scrutiny and Overview Committee alone has really enriched both the questioning and the recommendations we've been able to make.

## Budget Scrutiny

Although the Scrutiny & Overview Committee first considered a report on the Mayor's savings proposals and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at its meeting on 6 December 2022 when they were first provided by the executive, the Committee had prioritised monitoring the delivery of 2022-23 in-year budget throughout the year. This included the Finance Monitoring Reports prepared for Cabinet being scheduled for review at meetings of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee whenever possible. This allowed the Committee to identify areas of risk, such as transformation, that it wished to scrutinise in greater detail and provided reassurance on the financial controls of the Council.

The Committee recognised the Mayor's 'Opening the Books' review as an opportunity for the new administration to gain a more complete understanding of its financial position and increase its ability to manage potential risks. However, there was concern about whether the Fusion Oracle financial software was being optimised fully by the Council and given its importance to the management of the budget, recommended a project be established to maximise its functionality.

In advance of the first budget scrutiny meeting on 6 December, Scrutiny members received two training sessions, the first delivered by the Local Government Association, which provided an overview of scrutiny's role in the budget setting process. The second session was delivered by the Centre for Governance for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee and focussed specifically on reviewing and understanding budget reports. On 29 November 2022, the Committee also received a briefing from the Council's Section 151 Officer on the key budget principles and the approach to setting the budget.

At the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 6 December consideration was given to the 2023-24 Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Savings Proposals. From the discussion of the Committee, the approach of the Mayor to move towards a more transformation based approach to savings was welcomed, although caution was raised about the capacity within the organisation to deliver sustainable transformation without sufficient resources both in terms of staff time and financial investment, being allocated to the process. The Committee also raised concern about the budget being largely created using MS Word and Excel documents. However, it was encouraged by the confirmation that a project was being established to increase the integration of the Fusion finance system across the Council to ensure its potential benefits to the organisation were being maximised.

At its meeting on the 30 January 2023, the Committee conducted a deep dive on two specific areas of concern it had highlighted through the budget scrutiny process. These areas were Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector support, and the 2023-24 Transformation Programme. From its discussion of the support available for the voluntary, community and faith sector, the Committee welcomed confirmation from both the Council and Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) of their commitment to building a deeper relationship between the Council and the important voluntary, community and faith sector in the borough. The commitment given to looking at creative ways of providing support to the sector, particularly reviewing the use of social value in contract arrangements was also welcomed.

After consulting with a range of community groups in the borough, the Committee did raise concern about the potential impact of the move to new ways of working with the voluntary, community and faith sector, particularly whether these would be in place in time to support organisations through the transition away from the funding currently provided by the Community Fund, when it ended in March 2023. Given there was a risk that some community groups may not be able to adapt to the new arrangements



in time, the Committee suggested that there was a need to implement a tangible support plan as a priority to mitigate the risk of services and activities being lost.

By scheduling a deep dive on the transformation programme, it enabled the Committee to have an early look at the development of the programme for 2023-24. The Committee agreed, along with executives, that more work needed to be done to flesh out exactly what and how the list of transformation projects provided would actually work. Confirmation that the Council was introducing new project management software across the organisation was welcomed as a step in the right direction towards improving the Council's ability to successfully track and deliver transformation. Given the importance of transformation programme to the delivery of savings, the Committee agreed that it would monitor the delivery of the programme in 2023-24.

The Committee meeting on 16 February 2023 was the culmination of the budget scrutiny process and the work conducted by the Committee. Scrutiny and Overview Committee worked closely with the sub-committees and shared and referred items to each other for maximum impact. The Sub-Committee Chair's fed back their findings from their deep dives into specific savings within their respective service areas.

Prior to the meeting the Committee held an online meeting, open to members of the public, giving them the opportunity to ask questions on the budget proposals. From the discussion held at this meeting, which was well attended and oversubscribed, it allowed the Committee to identify areas of questioning at the meeting on 16 February, particularly around the reasons for the 15% Council Tax rise and the support available for those who may be unable to afford the increased payments. This was clearly an emotive subject with residents expressing high levels of concern about the impact of any council tax rise on finances already stretched by a cost of living crisis, but all residents and financial leads at the Council conducted the meeting with real respect.

At the conclusion of the final Budget Scrutiny meeting on 16 February 2023, the Committee reached a range of conclusions on the Mayor's Budget. There was a reasonable level of reassurance that the budget had been set using a prudent set of assumptions and that it was reasonable to conclude that it was deliverable. However, the cost of servicing the Council's debt was a significant challenge to the delivery of a balanced budget and until a solution was found it would be difficult to achieve long term sustainability as a local authority. Whilst the Committee were encouraged to hear of the ongoing commitment of the Mayor and council officers to engage with the government to find a solution, Scrutiny members were concerned that there is currently no precedent for this kind of intervention from national government, nor any commitment from Westminster to deliver one.

Another key area of discussion for the Committee was the 15% Council Tax increase, with differing views on this proposal. Half of the Committee, including the Chair, thought that insufficient justification had been provided for such a high

increase, particularly given no other local authorities in similar financial situations had faced this rise. The other half of the Committee believed that the increase was needed to ensure a balanced budget. Everyone agreed that no other viable alternatives had been identified by the Council.

The Committee welcomed the introduction of the £2m Hardship Fund to mitigate against the potential impact of the Council Tax rise and at its meeting on 28 March 2023 had the opportunity to review the criteria for the scheme before its approval by the Mayor. From its review of the scheme, the Committee was reassured that its development had been based upon a data led approach and that a robust monitoring system was being put in place to ensure the scheme was reaching those most in need. As a further safeguard, the Committee suggested the sharing of data on the distribution of the fund with Members to identify potential anomalies.

### **Cost of Living Crisis**

The impact of the cost of living crisis upon residents was a theme revisited by the Committee throughout the year, particularly through the above mentioned budget scrutiny process. As part of this work, in July the Committee met with representatives from the voluntary & community sector (VCS) including leaders of food banks, faith groups, advisory services and charities, to listen to their experience of working with residents who were being directly impacted by cost of living rises. This meeting raised several concerns, related to residents' ability to engage with the Council, which included factors such as digital exclusion, and both financial and general illiteracy.

Other issues raised included the Council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector and the use of Council Tax enforcement. As a result of the discussion, it was agreed that these specific issues would be scheduled for review during the year. The Council relationship with the voluntary and community sector was picked up as part of the Budget Scrutiny process (see above) and at the meeting on 11 October 2023 Council Tax collection, recovery and enforcement was reviewed.

To inform their scrutiny of this item, the Committee organised a meeting of residents and representatives from the voluntary and community sector to hear about their experience of Council Tax collection and enforcement. While the evidence provided in this session was often challenging as many residents related huge financial pressures and often a perceived lack of empathy and accessibility from the Council, it did provide valuable insight for the Committee into the experience of residents, which helped to shape their questioning. As with the earlier cost of living meeting, the Committee identified a number of potential improvements to recommend for the consideration of the Mayor related to how the Council interacted with its residents, such as the wording used in Council Tax enforcement letters, offering translation services and training to officers to be able to support and refer residents to local support groups and legal advice services, as well as ensuring that information was

provided on the website in an easily understandable format. Following the meeting, the Committee commended the Council Tax team for the way they engaged with the issues raised by residents and their swift adoption of many of the solutions proposed.

### **Safer Croydon Partnership**

At its meeting on 6 September 2022, the Committee had the opportunity to review the performance of the Safer Croydon Partnership including a draft version of the Strategic Assessment. From its discussion of the item, the Committee were supportive of a proposed campaign to de-normalise low level sexual harassment against women but recognised that its success would be impacted without sufficient funding being allocated for delivery. It was also suggested that the possibility of partnering with the voluntary and community sector on this campaign should be explored.

In preparation for the meeting, the Committee visited the Family Justice Centre, which highlighted the high rates of domestic violence in Croydon. Although reassurance was provided through hearing about the great work that was being done at the Centre, there was a concern that cost of living pressures may put further stress on families leading to even higher rates. From questioning officers on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on the levels of domestic violence in the borough, the Committee was encouraged that there was work underway to understand the impact of the cost of living crisis, and that through good communication between council officers and the Family Justice Centre, the level of demand would be monitored and managed accordingly.

The Committee welcomed confirmation that a new town centre Public Space Protection Order would focus on recording offences to provide the evidence base required to support the scheme. However, there was concern about whether there was sufficient coordination of information between the Council and Police, which would need to be revisited at a later date to provide further reassurance that there was effective data sharing. There were also questions about potential displacement and the follow up support given to those who were moved on, which officers said would be reviewed.

Another area of questioning asked whether there was any link between anti-social behaviour and areas with high levels of private rented accommodation. It was accepted that as residents living within this type of accommodation tended to be more transient, it could be difficult to understand the challenges faced by these residents. The Committee raised concern that residents living in the private rented sector may not receive the same level of support as those living in social rented housing and as such suggested that data gathering should be undertaken to gain a better understanding of the potential challenges.

### **Borough of Culture**

At the meeting held on 6 December 2022, the Committee reviewed the preparations for the year-long Borough of Culture event that was due to start in April 2023. From the discussion, there were concerns raised about whether the programme would reach across the whole borough or involve under-represented communities and seldom heard groups. However, the Committee was largely reassured by the commitment of the organisers to delivering diversity in the programme and ensuring the Borough of Culture had as large a reach as possible. Members particularly welcomed officers' commitment to embrace as wide a definition of culture as possible, which they felt would be more inclusive and deliver a more exciting programme.

The Committee was also reassured by the responses received to their questions on the distribution of the available funding for the programme, particularly that it would be closely monitored to ensure it was delivered within budget and also the availability of the Ignite Fund, which was targeted towards local groups and organisations in the borough.

Overall, the Committee commended the team for the work to date on the Borough of Culture programme, with many of their initial concerns being addressed. It was agreed that the Committee would review the Borough of Culture at a later date to ensure that it was achieving its original aims.

### **People & Cultural Transformation Strategy (Jan 2023)**

At the meeting on 23 January 2023 the Committee had the opportunity to review a draft of the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy before its consideration by the Mayor. The Committee was keen to scrutinise the strategy, as it was seen as part of the ongoing improvement journey of the Council and provided an opportunity to assess the progress made with changing the culture of the organisation.

The Committee invited members of staff to the meeting who had been engaged in the creation of the strategy, which provided reassurance it had been created with staff buy-in, increasing the likelihood of successful delivery. The plan to engage with staff on the co-design of the action plan to accompany the strategy was also commended by the Committee.

Although there was general agreement with the aims of the strategy, the Committee agreed that it could not be reassured about its delivery without having sight of the action plan. As such it was agreed that the item would be revisited later in the year, once the action plan had been prepared, to seek additional reassurance. This would also allow the opportunity to review the key performance indicators that would be used to measure the success of the strategy.

Confirmation that work was ongoing to improve the data captured on the Council's workforce was welcomed by the Committee who had concerns about whether the

current level of data collected was sufficient to inform key performance indicators which could be used to monitor the delivery of the strategy.

## **Town Centre**

At the meeting held on 23 January 2023, the Committee had the opportunity to consider the 'Whitgift Indemnity and Land Transfer Agreement (ILTA Remedy' report ahead of its consideration by the Mayor in Cabinet. This report set out the opportunity for the Council to seek a remedy from the Croydon Limited Partnership (CLP) for having progressed the redevelopment of the Whitgift Centre.

This item provided the Committee the opportunity to review the proposed decision and also question the current status of the town centre redevelopment. From the discussion, the Committee welcomed the use of the ILTA remedy, as it would deliver improvement work to the North End area of the town centre to the value of £4m, including work to activate the Alders site, improvements to the Whitgift Centre and the provision of a consultation space to inform the development of the Town Centre Masterplan.

The Committee noted that the Mayor had asked officers to start work on creating a vision for the town centre which was likely to be completed later in the year. Separately, it would be the responsibility of CLP to lead on the development of a masterplan and a planning application. It was advised that it would typically take approximately twelve months to deliver a masterplan document. Given the years of inactivity surrounding the redevelopment of the Town Centre, the Committee was disappointed to hear that it was likely to be at least a further twelve months before a planning application was submitted.

The Committee was disappointing to learn that the Council had not been successful in its bid for levelling-up funding, however having subsequently reviewed the feedback provided by the Government on the bid, felt that it reflected positively on its quality and as such recommended that it should be published.

## **Support provided by the Council to asylum seekers, those seeking refuge under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children**

At its meeting on 30 January 2023, the Committee reviewed the support provided by the Council to asylum seekers, including those seeking refuge under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. This report had been requested for the meeting to provide an overview of the Council's role and responsibilities in supporting asylum seekers in accomodation in the borough.

In preparation for the item, members of the Committee visited a hotel in the north of the borough that was being used by the Home Office to accommodate asylum seekers while their claims were processed. The visit was extremely moving and led

to the Committee raising concern with the representatives from the Home Office in attendance at the meeting, about the potential risks of mixed cohort accommodation, residents having to share single rooms for long periods and the level of service being provided by Migrant Help.

The Committee agreed that the delay in processing asylum applications which resulted in people staying for months in hotels not intended for long term habitation was putting unsustainable and unacceptable pressure on vulnerable people and impacting upon the Council's resources. Confirmation that the Mayor was picking up many of the concerns raised at the meeting with the Home Office and other partners was welcomed.

### **Establishment of Homes Sub-Committee**

At its first meeting of the year on 14 June 2022, the Committee had the opportunity to review the work undertaken by Council officers to re-procure the responsive repairs contract. Scrutiny of this report allowed the Committee to seek assurance that a robust process was being used and that the process was open, transparent and informed by residents.

In preparation for the item, site visits had been conducted to three Council blocks located across the borough to speak to residents and get an understanding of their views on the Responsive Repairs service. Finally, an online meeting was arranged on 13 June 2022 to give residents the opportunity to discuss the service, which provided excellent feedback to inform the questions of the Committee.

Following discussion of the item, the Committee recognised that an extensive amount of hard work had been invested into the re-procurement process to ensure that the best possible outcome was reached for residents. However, given the historic issues relating to the level of service provided in the responsive repairs contract, the Committee recommended exploring the possibility of including a clause within the new contracts to provide compensation for residents should below standard service be provided.

As a result of the discussion at the meeting and with cross party support, it was agreed that the remit of the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee should be split to create a separate stand-alone Homes Sub-Committee to provide additional capacity to scrutinise the Council's Housing Service in light of the wide ranging Transformation Programme arising from the ARK report and the housing conditions at Regina Road. This Sub-Committee was set up at the Committee meeting on 11 October 2023, initially until the end of the municipal year, and has subsequently been renewed for a further two years.

## Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee scrutinises key issues affecting children and young people in the borough as well as the services provided by the Council and its partners. It has the power to scrutinise the functions of the Council as a Local Education Authority and examine the Dedicated Schools Grant on a yearly basis.

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this Sub-Committee by clicking on the link: [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

### 2022-23 Members of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee



**Councillor  
Richard  
Chatterjee  
(Chair)**



**Councillor  
Maddie  
Henson (Vice-  
Chair)**



**Councillor Sue  
Bennett**



**Councillor  
Gayle Gander**



**Councillor  
Eunice  
O'Dame**



**Councillor  
Helen Redfern**



**Councillor  
Manju Shahul-  
Hameed**



**Councillor  
Catherine  
Wilson**



**Josephine  
Copeland  
Teacher Rep**



**Elaine Jones  
Catholic  
Diocesan Rep**



**Paul O'Donnell  
Parent  
Governor Rep**

### Chair of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee Councillor Richard Chatterjee

The 2022-23 year brought a permanent return to face-to-face meetings, following the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the financial circumstances of the Council is another constraint which is pervasive and on-going.

The scope of work is as important as ever so the challenge of choice of subjects and how to deal with them means we have tried to remain disciplined and focused. It is clear that looked after children will remain of the highest importance, and this has been helped by some overlap in membership of this Sub-Committee and that of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

We have tried, where possible, to chime with themes across the other Scrutiny Committees, such as the Residents' Voice - an example of this is the visit we made to staff of the Health Visiting team to hear direct what their concerns and perspective

were. There has also been some coordination with the Scrutiny & Overview Committee in terms of work which could be better dealt with at that level. There have been many useful insights from the Sub-Committee and particularly the coopted members (representatives of the Teachers Union, the Catholic Diocese and Governors) which was especially helpful given the slender overlap in councillor membership from the preceding CYP Sub-Committee.

I would like to thank all the members of the sub-committee and the officers who have supported us this past year, both within the Council and of the NHS and other services such as the police, and of the other groups representatives which have attended and assisted the Sub-Committee.

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A summary of the items considered by the Children and Young People Sub-Committee in 2022-23 can be found below. Members also received the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard each meeting to ensure that they were reassured about the performance of the Children, Young People and Education Directorate across a number of different areas. The Sub-Committee received an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting at its meeting on 1st November 2022 and concluded that quarterly commissioning data on Health Visiting would be included alongside the Dashboard, when available.

### **Tuesday 21 June 2022**

#### Children, Young People and Education Directorate Overview

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an overview of the Children, Young People and Education Directorate to inform the development of the Sub-Committee's work programme for 2022/23.

The Sub-Committee asked questions about a number of areas that fell under their remit and had useful discussions which helped to inform the work that they would carry out for the rest of the municipal year. Members also stated their aspiration to engage in outreach work with children and young people in Croydon, as well of those in charge of delivering services.

### **Tuesday 27 September 2022**

#### Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report 2021-22

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2021-22. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education introduced the item and the Independent Scrutineer, Eleanor Brazil, to the Sub-Committee. It was noted that the Independent Scrutineer would be leaving the role soon and had served Croydon in many roles over a number of years; officers and Members thanked her for her hard work.



The Partnership had identified a number of themes throughout the year, and these were: the importance of Fathers/Male Carers; Professional Curiosity; Information Sharing; Safeguarding Supervision; Extra-Familial Harm. These themes had been used to influence the training offer for the following year. The Sub-Committee heard that an independent review of the Partnership had been commissioned to identify any areas of learning to inform the work and priorities of the Partnership in the coming year. The following had already been identified: Safeguarding Asylum Seekers; Early Help Transformation; Partnership Communication Strategy; Domestic Abuse; Sexual Abuse (inter and extra familial abuse).

The Chair noted the absence of a police representative and expressed the disappointment of the Sub-Committee. The Independent Scrutineer and Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained the commitment of the Police to the work of the Partnership and suggested the necessary change of dates may have led to their non-attendance. The Sub-Committee queried the disparity of proactivity and funding from some partners and the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education responded that there had been huge pressures for all partners and there had been significant work over the last 12 years to improve frontline availability and engagement on children's' safeguarding from the Police.

Members asked how recommendations were implemented and tracked across the partners. The CSCP Quality Assurance & Development Officer explained that this responsibility sat within the Safeguarding Practice Review Group, which tracked key partners involvement and regularly looked at key themes across the reviews that came in. Key people involved in reviews often attended the Safeguarding Practice Review Group to monitor how actions were being implemented and how effective they had been. Whilst sometimes reports could take time to publish, learning from these was implemented and shared between the partners to ensure this was not delayed.

The Sub-Committee asked about the challenges of Safeguarding Education Standards and the Director of Education responded that schools shared safeguarding audits which were reviewed to identify best practice and gaps. Where gaps were identified, or audits were not completed, schools were helped to find how to close these gaps and, where significant safeguarding concerns were identified, visits would take place and an action plan would be developed. Audits would be shared with and signed off by Governors to ensure safeguarding was a key focus for school leaderships. Serious concerns were not often identified in education provision, but should they be, they would be discussed within the Partnership and with OFSTED where necessary. Members asked how the challenge differed for the Police and Health Safeguarding Standards and the Chief Nurse Croydon CCG/CHS explained that the auditing and reviewing was similar. The Independent Scrutineer explained that reports on auditing came to the Quality Improvement Group who provided further challenge.

The Sub-Committee asked how the experience of children and young people was used to inform the practices of the Partnership. The Head of Social Work with Families & Children with Disabilities 0-17 Services explained that this information was captured through direct work with children, multi-agency meetings, family

surveys, complaints and direct interactions with frontline workers and managers. Often feedback was good, and it was recognised that positive outcomes could sometimes not be as visible. There were a number of avenues used to collate this information, but it was recognised that more work needed to be done in this area and this was a part of all improvement plans across the Partnership. There would be a Practice Week in early October 2022 which would involve practitioners spending time talking to young people, children and carers to hear what they would like to see improved. Carers often attended social service meetings to discuss what was being done well and what could be done differently to allow social workers to reflect on their work.

### Insourcing of the South Locality Children's Centre Delivery

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Children's Centre Contract award for North and Central, and the insourcing of the South Locality Children's Centre Delivery.

The Sub-Committee asked why the Council was not able to find a provider for the South Locality but were able to for the North and Central Localities. The Director of Education explained that this was largely due to the funding envelope available, concern around Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE), a lack of clarity around building costs and issues with the internal capacity of the bidders. After the first round of commissioning, bidders had been asked to provide the reasons for not bidding and a warming exercise has been conducted. The provider for the North and Central Localities had not been able to take on the South Locality due to a lack of capacity.

Members asked if there were any lessons that could be learnt as a result of the failure to commission for the South Locality. The Director for Education explained that learning had been taken into account after the first round and had led to conducting a warming exercise, but this had not been enough to result in a successful bid. Members heard that unfortunately some things could not be changed, such as the funding envelope and the services the Council needed to be provided, TUPE and lack of clarity around the maintenance costs of buildings. Members heard that there was always an attempt to develop learning after any commissioning exercise. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance added that these were small providers, and the unknown costs were bigger risks for them than a larger business.

Members asked how existing services users were being supported into the new model, with some families having to travel further which would affect families without cars. The Director of Education explained this had been looked at during the consultation and that bus routes had also been considered and made available to families. It was acknowledged that the service had been reduced but that services would be signposted to families. There had been a long consultation on this strategy, but ultimately services had needed to be reduced in line with budget reduction. The Hub and Spoke Model was not just about Children's Centres and also focuses on delivering health services and more with partners.

**Tuesday 1 November 2022**

Update on Antenatal and Health Visiting Visits

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting in Croydon. The Sub-Committee thanked Elaine Clancy (Chief Nurse at Croydon Health Services) for commissioning the two independent and external reviews into the services, and asked about 'New Birth Visits' and whether these were being targeted at the most vulnerable families. The Head of Public Health Nursing explained that the aim was to visit all new mothers within 10-14 days, but this was not always possible due to workforce challenges, and so prioritisation of visits was assessed based on the levels of need or where there were mental health challenges identified through partnership working and intelligence sharing.

Members asked how they could be reassured that those needing help were not being missed. The Head of Public Health Nursing explained that monthly data had to be provided to the commissioners on the visits that had taken place, and where they had not, why not; this data was also reported nationally by the Local Authority. Health Visiting services were accessible by phone, and the number was shared by practitioners and through other groups. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance stated that monthly monitoring of the service was robust and that intelligence was being shared between the Council and Croydon Health Services to ensure those that needed help received it.

The Sub-Committee asked for reassurance that the service was improving in the context of health visiting in Croydon underperforming over a number of years; in particular, poor retention and recruitment were highlighted as problems facing Croydon to a greater extent than other local authorities. The Deputy Director of Nursing explained that some local authorities provided health visiting services and were able to pay Health Visitors more; the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust provided services to multiple boroughs and were able to pay an inner London weighting regardless of where the services were being provided. Members heard that Lewisham, Greenwich and Bromley all provided recruitment retention bonuses and this, combined with other factors, led to stronger recruitment and retention in other areas, and to people leaving Croydon to work for other providers. The Deputy Director of Nursing stated that there were plans to address these issues by providing a more flexible work offer and by making remuneration of Health Visitors more in line with neighbouring employers alongside the improvement plans detailed in the report. The Director of Public Health added that services were already improving and that organisational and developmental changes were just as important to recruitment and retention as competitive remuneration. The Sub-Committee raised a strong challenge about the consequences of the service not improving for Croydon Health Services and the Council. Members heard that the Director of Public Health reported regularly to the Secretary of State on Health Visiting and that improving the service was a high priority. The Chief Nurse expounded on the commitment and passion of the Health Visiting team and explained how seriously they took their role to the residents of Croydon. The Associate Director of Operations added that governance processes were strong in monitoring month on month performance and that there was a monthly meeting of an

Improvement Board, chaired by the Chief Nurse, to provide additional internal challenge.

The Vice-Chair asked about the timeframes involved in the improvement journey and how priority of need was identified. The Head of Public Health Nursing explained that that an 'assessment of need' was undertaken on first contact with families and this determined the particular care pathway required; once need had been assessed, referrals could be made, or other services engaged, if required. Members heard that the level of risk was always taken into account, and where this presented the possibility of safeguarding risks or harm to the individual, an action plan would be developed and enacted and this could take place at any part of the process. The Chief Nurse explained that the two independent reviews of the service had been undertaken to identify areas for improvement and ways to mitigate shortfalls in the numbers of Health Visitors; many of the mitigation and improvement measures would take time to embed and to dramatically improve the service.

### Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which provided the report approved by the Executive Mayor at Cabinet on 21st September 2022 on the Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy. Members asked about the criteria for the success of the Strategy and heard this this would be a key part of what would be developed as part of the delivery plan. Key indicators that the Strategy had been successful would be families knowing where they could access services and further indicators would be developed in conversation with parents, carers and schools. Responding to questions on the timeline for the Strategy, the Director for Education explained that this was a three-year strategy that would begin to be embedded following the completion of the delivery plan.

The Sub-Committee asked about funding for the Strategy and heard that this would be implemented using existing funding streams in Education, the Croydon Partnership and Public Health. There would be significant extra funding available for Family Hubs over a three-year period and this would help very young children, children up to the age of 19 and children with special needs and disabilities. The Family Hub model would look at priorities across education, health and children's social care to focus all of these aims into a single strategy document.

The Sub-Committee noted the key risk identified in the Children, Families & Education Delivery Plan 2021 – 2024 of the reduction in Children's centre service delivery impacting early identification, intervention and prevention support within the community for vulnerable children and families, particularly delivery of universal service through centres; Members asked if this was recognised in delivering the Strategy. The Director for Education confirmed that it was and explained that they understood the importance of maintaining Children's Centres in the borough delivering services, but it was acknowledged the offer was now narrower with a reduced budget.

The Vice-Chair welcomed the Strategy and asked about the engagement and consultation process. The Director of Education explained that they had already identified gaps in those who had not been engaged in the initial round of

consultation, and these groups would be targeted for the next round of engagement. The Sub-Committee asked about measuring the success of the strategy once it was implemented and heard that this would be evidenced by families knowing where they could find support and the implementation of a strong Family Hub model.

## **Tuesday 17 January 2023**

### Budget Scrutiny Challenge

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided identified budget proposals for 2023/24.

#### *Review of Front Door Services*

The Sub-Committee asked whether there was staff capacity to meet current demand, and the Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention explained that the service had been designed to meet current demand and needs and thought had gone into who the best teams were to respond to any given query. There was a significant number of staff in the MASH team with increased capacity through the Early Help triage team.

Members asked about the limited funding for the Social Workers in Schools (SWIS) programme and the future of the programme. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that schools participating in the programme saw significant benefits, and that SWIS was 80% funded by the Department for Education and 20% by the local authority and schools. Members heard that in an ideal world with no funding restrictions early help schemes designed to work with families where they were often were the most effective; schemes such as SWIS added significant costs due to having to operate from multiple locations. The Sub-Committee heard that in response to the financial challenges of Croydon and the challenge in recruiting qualified social workers, there had been a shift in approach to ensure that non-social worker roles could deal with cases, where appropriate, to free up qualified social worker capacity. This approach was supported by the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership, and had not been decided in isolation.

The Sub-Committee asked how demand on the Front Door compared with neighbouring boroughs. The Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention explained that meetings with neighbouring boroughs and police colleagues were regular but, as they were smaller than Croydon, demand was significantly less. Not all enquiries to the Front Door led to referrals into the Children's Social Care system and partnership working was important to ensure that other interventions and services in the Croydon community were tried first; this approach was embedded in current MASH transformation activity. Members asked if data was compared with statistical neighbours, and were informed that this was the case and was done on a regular basis through a monthly dashboard.

The Sub-Committee asked how the effectiveness of the new structure would be measured. The Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention explained that practise would be considered within a quality assurance framework to look at the

outcomes that were being achieved for children and an evidence based performance framework would be used to look at and scrutinise data across the different service areas. Members heard that a live dashboard was currently in development to support MASH activity, and would show data on the number of contacts coming in to the Front Door and the number of open cases. Soft data from service user feedback would continue to be collected throughout interventions as part of the quality assurance framework.

Members asked about efficiencies that had been identified from process improvements, and the Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention provided the example of consistent management oversight for cases for their duration, which allowed for decisions to be made in a more efficient and effective way that was safer for children. In response to questions about whether efficiencies were about service improvement or saving money, the Director of Children's Social Care explained that it was both but that safeguarding children and responding to urgent referrals was always the priority. The introduction of contact and referral officers meant that qualified social workers had additional capacity, as they would not need to focus on administrative tasks, such as requests for information from the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS). The Early Help Triage was led by social workers who were experts in this area, and this meant that families were offered solutions quicker, which led to greater take up and reduced demand on social work services.

#### *The impact of the reduction in spend on the adolescent service*

The Sub-Committee asked about the Integrated Care Board funded roles and it was explained that these officers would work collaboratively with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) to decide the best plans for immediate follow-up intervention for children.

Members asked about disproportionality in safeguarding and whether officers were confident that early intervention was effective in reducing the number of young people in crisis. The Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention explained that there was a positive offer in Croydon across Young Croydon and Youth Justice Services with a wide variety of targeted early interventions across the continuum of need. Work was ongoing with Community Safety colleagues on identifying contextualised risk and to identify hotspot areas and provide youth interventions to tackle risk factors in the community. In response to questions on how the effectiveness of this would be measured, the Sub-Committee heard that the quality assurance framework went across Children's Services and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for individual services were scrutinised on a regular basis.

The Sub-Committee commended the thought that had gone into the transformation of the service. Members asked how the voice of the service user had been incorporated into transformation and whether complaints had increased. The Head of Service, Access Support and Intervention responded that complaints were used to assess how well services were working, but that none had been received on the reconfiguration of the services specifically; relations with children and parents were overall good, with complaints managed largely at the stage one and two level. Service user engagement was more developed in the Youth Justice Service, and Young Croydon were working with the service to further develop this.

*The review of care packages for children with disabilities aged 0-17*

The Sub-Committee asked how many children were catered for by Calleydown Residential Home, and heard that currently there were 55 children who received overnight respite, and 10-15 children who received daytime respite. There were two children who were on the waiting list, but these children would begin receiving care later in the month. The capacity was seven children a night, but this fluctuated based on the needs of the individual children. Members heard that there were always at least four members of staff on site at any given time, but this also varied based on the needs of the individual children.

The Sub-Committee asked about joint funding arrangements and were informed that a monthly Joint Funding Panel, chaired by the Director of Children's Social Care, reviewed and challenged joint funding arrangements with Health. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that this was challenging and required a culture shift, but that partners were being engaged on multiple levels. Horizon scanning for opportunities through the South West London Integrated Care Board and Partnership were ongoing. The Sub-Committee asked, whether when service users were transferring between Children and Adults services, if it was seen that service users were eligible under the Adults framework when they had not been under the Children's framework. The Head of Service, Social Work with Families and Children with Disabilities responded that this was not something that had been noticed, but would be looked into outside of the meeting.

The Sub-Committee considered the case studies in the report and asked what happened when care packages were reduced. Members heard that officers had been unable to find an example of this happening in the last four months. It was thought that there may have been some reductions in care packages at the beginning of the review in 2021, but now as circumstances changed this needed to be looked at in the context of what else was available to the service user; for example, there may have been a decrease in domiciliary care, but this could have been supplemented by an increase in respite care. The Head of Service, Social Work with Families and Children with Disabilities explained that the impact on the individuals and families was always considered, explained and mitigated.

The Director of Children's Social Care explained that transformation funding would be used to fund an expert in house development to look at possible alterations or extensions that could provide additional bedrooms or the possibility of a self-contained flat on the grounds through the conversion of a garage. It was highlighted that these changes would require a number of approvals and capital expenditure.

Members asked about the use of data in the transformation of services and what this would mean for service users with the inherent risks of trying to maintain service levels with reduced resource. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that transformation of practise sat alongside data driven monitoring but that there was a difference between transformation of services and transformation funding.

Transformation funding was limited, and looked to enable changes to a system or service to provide better outcomes in the long term. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that the biggest risk to the Council was the possibility of increased

demand, which was not within the control of services and could lead to higher levels of risk held in families as a bottom line was reached. Members heard that this could lead to overspending as interventions that are more expensive are required.

### Education Estates Strategy

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which provided a report due for consideration at Cabinet on 25 January 2023 on the Education Estates Strategy for Pre-Decision Scrutiny.

The Sub-Committee asked about plans to deal with surplus school places and what powers the Council had to deal with this with a large number of academy schools in the borough. The Director of Education explained that the local authority was responsible for school place planning; the Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning and Admission explained that the Council was working with all schools through meetings with schools with the highest surpluses, and through locality clusters, to discuss and plan work on school place planning. A School Organisation Advisory Board is being set up and would be representative of all partners; this would look at the criteria of how the Council would need to work with schools to reduce places. Work had already been done with a number of schools to manage their surplus spaces, with the main route being a reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN). Members heard from the Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning and Admissions that the Council was still mindful of schools' overheads in terms of maintaining necessary surplus and were exploring ways to harness this spare capacity through provision of enhanced learning units, early years provision or community based activities. There were a number of other options that would be considered such as federation mergers, reductions in class sizes or reorganisation of schools.

The Head of Education Services explained that they worked with Local Authority (LA) Maintained Schools who were in or at risk of budget deficit; surplus places was a common issue for these schools. All LA Maintained Schools submitted a yearly budget forecast, and those predicting a deficit submitted monthly returns that were scrutinised. Members heard that termly meetings were held with the leadership teams of these schools to explore solutions. Additional support was also offered including using a Department for Education financial advisor, looking at class sizes and other possible efficiencies. Common issues with school finances were managing surplus places, rising energy costs, rising staff costs and managing staff absences. There was an escalating model of support that was used to ensure schools received the help they needed. The Director of Education explained that the picture in Croydon on surplus places largely reflected the national situation and that London authorities were in dialogue on this issue.

Members asked about the work with school clusters to look at surplus spaces and heard that these discussions were taking place on a locality basis and schools were looking to come up with additional solutions. Schools had come up with lists of things that could be done which took into account their own individual circumstances and collective solutions with other schools. The Sub-Committee asked about the methodology of working out surplus spaces, and noted predictions from last year had increased a large amount. The Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning



and Admission explained that these numbers were kept under review, and the Greater London Authority (GLA) had been commissioned to produce the predictions used in the report; these numbers were likely to change again next year as new data was made available. Members heard that surplus places were highest in the North of the borough and much lower in the South.

The Sub-Committee asked about children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and issues with delayed assessments as well as the number of available SEND school places. The Director of Education explained that assessments were now 80% taking place within target timeframes, which had been a huge improvement; Members heard that support was also available to children awaiting assessments. Special school places had increased in a number of schools within the borough across all age ranges. The SEND Strategy priority is to educate children with special needs within borough, and where possible and appropriate, in mainstream schools. Data quality had improved which had allowed special school place planning to be much more effective, but parental choice is key in deciding provision and in, for some children and young people, suitable provision is out of borough.

### Education Standards 2022

The Sub-Committee considered a paper set which provided a report due for consideration at Cabinet on 25 January 2023 on Education Standards 2022 for Pre-Decision Scrutiny. The Sub-Committee heard that an Education Partnership Board had first been proposed to schools in 2020 to a positive reception. The Board would be made up of schools and key partners who would work to agree what local priorities were and enable greater school-to-school support and collaborative working. A draft terms of reference had been drawn up with a working group made up from representatives from a number of different schools and school types. Soft engagement with key partners had begun with those schools which were thought would be most difficult to reach and engage with the work of the Board, and the response had been encouraging. The Board would be launched in spring 2023, ready for being operational from the commencement of the new academic year.

Members commended plans for the Council to encourage schools to work together through the Education Partnership Board, and asked how schools had been engaged, noting the heavy workloads of Head Teachers. The Head of Education Services explained that Head Teachers had been engaged, but this had been alongside Business Managers, HR leads and governors. The Sub-Committee heard that engagement with schools had improved over the pandemic as the Council had been offering additional support. The Director of Education explained that a weekly newsletter to schools had been started during the pandemic, and the appetite had been for this to continue; this included information on lots of areas and helped to maintain an open conversation with Head Teachers.

Members asked how many schools would be needed to buy into the work of the Education Partnership Board for it to be effective, and the Director of Education explained that it was important that all schools felt represented on the Board. The Education Partnership Board set up costs would be initially Council funded, and possibly, the Council could continue to contribute funding for the first year or two

years; this was contrary to other areas where schools were required to pay into the model from its inception.

The Sub-Committee asked about young people who were not making expected progress from some specific groups. Members heard that some of these cohorts were very small, while others were very school and setting specific. The Head of Education Services explained that work was done with schools to identify cohorts of children who were underperforming to develop improvement action plans, to pair schools for peer support and to encourage collaborative solutions.

The Sub-Committee asked about high numbers of persistent absences from education, and asked who was responsible for reducing this, any available targets that could be shared, and how it was known that these children were safe. Members heard that this was a historic national issue, and that Croydon performed better than the national average. Central Government had identified this as an issue and a cross party national committee would be looking at this, but ultimately it was the schools responsibility to monitor this through welfare officers or commissioned services. The Director of Education explained that every school had a designated safeguarding lead and that the Education department worked closely with social services on children missing from education. The Director of Education explained that attendance proposals in the withdrawn White Paper were likely to return in new legislation at some point in the future. A monthly virtual attendance surgery would be rolled out in the coming year to assist schools with improving attendance.

## **Tuesday 28 February 2023**

### Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Update

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which provided a summary of the activity of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) services for children and young people residing and receiving education in Croydon. The report also provided an update on the position with current waiting times, access and performance.

The Vice-Chair asked if practitioners felt there were gaps in the current service offer and heard from the Chief Executive for Off the Record that there had been a large increase in demand for services since the pandemic; as a result of this, the length of counselling had been shortened to a standard offer of six. The Sub-Committee heard that young people and practitioners had identified that there were gaps for those in need of more substantial support, but who did not meet the threshold for CAMHS services. The Chief Executive of Croydon Drop-In explained that Off the Record were trialling the 'First Contact Method', 'Waiting List Groups' and carer helplines, but ultimately these were not substitutes for one-to-one support and did not reduce waiting lists. Members heard that there was good partnership working across the groups to try to identify and mitigate gaps in the offer where possible. The Service Director of CAMHS explained that NHS funding for CAMHS was around 1% of the total NHS budget, and it was known that this was often not sufficient to meet current need; many services had seen a doubling or more in the level of demand since the pandemic. The Sub-Committee heard there were gaps in a lot of the services being

offered, but that in-patient care was meeting current demand. It was stated that while the gaps were known, and a national issue, work was being done to target resources where they could do the most good to meet local priorities whilst utilising hotspot and equalities data.

Members asked about the Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHSTS) programme and heard that 45 schools in Croydon were receiving this service, jointly delivered by SLaM, Off the Record and Croydon Drop-In in different waves focussing on different areas. The SLaM wave focussed on School Exclusions, Off the Record and Croydon Drop-In jointly delivered a wave focussed on serious youth violence and a new wave had been introduced focussed on COVID recovery. The Sub-Committee heard that practitioners were based in the schools for a day a week for secondary schools, and for half a day for primary schools. Kooth, an online resource, was available for the schools who were not in the MHSTS programme.

Members asked about the long waiting times for assessments, and how long it took from assessment to receiving services. The Service Director of CAMHS explained that the majority of the longest waits were around the neurodevelopmental pathway and that this was linked to the work being done to change the Autism diagnosis pathway. The Sub-Committee heard that an Autism diagnosis would lead to a number of support packages and was not a mental health condition for which there was a treatment pathway. To reduce Autism diagnosis wait times, work was being done to look at how the system should operate and how it could cope with the current demand, and then to see what was in place to deal with the backlog. Members heard that CAMHS had been working with a private sector company called 'Clinical Partners' to increase capacity, reduce the longest waits and ensure a system was in place to manage ongoing demand. On the mental health pathway, waiting lists were being managed with dynamic reviews of risk to ensure the most acute needs were met as a priority; there was a single point of contact that triaged service users to ensure individuals were directed to the correct services through partnership working. The Service Director of CAMHS explained that they were seeking to increase the use of apps and virtual waiting lists so that, once individuals were registered, they could be signposted to services and receive some support whilst they were on waiting lists.

The Sub-Committee asked if there was a knock on effect to Children's Social Care from CAMHS not having as much capacity as would be desired. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that there were higher levels of mental health distress since COVID, both nationally and locally, which was a feature in safeguarding referrals. Members heard that this was a challenging aspect of safeguarding and required strong partnership working; where needs were acute the Director of Children's Social Care often met with Service Director of CAMHS to review cases to see where fast-tracking access to acute provision was needed. The Sub-Committee heard there was a need for every professional and parent to learn to recognise signs of mental distress and to upskill workers in contact with children to provide interventions. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that there was a Clinical Practice Team and qualified therapists in Croydon who worked directly with families and looked after children; there was also ongoing work focussing on suicidal ideation.

Members asked what was available for young people whilst they were waiting for assessments. The Service Director of CAMHS, SLaM explained that there was not a lot that was offered for these individuals but that there were attempts to make it clear how long people would be on the waiting lists, however, there were not sufficient resources in place to do much more. The Sub-Committee asked if it was possible to capture the impact of long waiting times on young people and heard that it was clear longer wait times often led to an increased cost of intervention at a later stage. The Chief Executive for Off the Record explained that they had set up a 'First Contact Team' to try and quickly meet with, assess and provide short term interventions for young people, and it was found that this had reduced counselling waiting lists. The Chief Executive of Croydon Drop-In explained that there were welfare check-ins for those on the waiting list for counselling that took place roughly every four weeks.

The Sub-Committee asked what the financial impact was to the Council as a result of unmet mental health needs leading to increased social care demand. The Director of Children's Social Care responded that this was very hard to quantify, but that there was a specific support offer to families awaiting Autism assessments. Members heard that mental health issues for young people with Autism were often a result of operating in a world that did not account for neurodivergence, which could cause significant stress and difficulty. The Corporate Director for Children and Young People highlighted the huge pressures on social care and mental health services and the importance of being transparent about this between partners.

Members asked about the pressures on services following the wind down of the Community Fund in 2023 in a context of existing funding pressures for services. The Sub-Committee heard that this would reduce the capacity of services, and that the 'Talk Bus' would likely see 1500 less young people than in previous years. The picture was difficult nationally and it was increasingly hard to bring in additional grant funding to supplement Council funding; the NHS were being looked at to supplement reduced funding from other areas. The Sub-Committee asked about the future of the 'Talk Bus' post March 2023, and heard the funding bids to continue this work had been developed over the previous 12 months. The Chief Executive of Croydon Drop-In explained that money had been saved over a number of years to replace the 'Talk Bus' with a more eco-friendly bus, and this had now been ordered; this was a shared community resource and every effort to continue funding it would be made. The Director of Performance and Partnerships, SLaM explained that all the organisations represented at the meeting worked together in partnership to deliver services and unlock resources to direct them where they were needed. The Chief Executive of Croydon Drop-In explained that they had received funding from the National Lottery to build a 'sensory room' for neurodiverse young people to use before counselling sessions. Members heard that a joint project between Drop-In, Off the Record and CAMHS on custody suites would be undertaken to provide counselling to young people.

#### Police Representation and Multi-Agency Working

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which explained the partnership between the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate, specifically Children's Social Care, and Police colleagues.

Members asked about the Youth Integrated Offender Management Partnership, and heard that the young people worked with were generally in the age range of 18-25. The Head of Service Access, Support and Intervention explained that police analysts had been integrated into this work, and that applying this intelligence had significantly reduced numbers of young people in the programme.

The Sub-Committee asked what was being done to increase trust amongst communities who had lost confidence in the police. Inspector Morteo responded that the new Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, Sir Mark Rowley, had launched a 'Turnaround Plan' featuring nine priorities, and that he was very open on trust and confidence. The Sub-Committee heard that there was a commitment to removing 'bad officers' and eliminating misconduct, and that there was more work happening with community groups than ever before. Members heard that it was thought that current methods of measuring trust and confidence were not sufficient, and needed to be improved. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety explained that the Youth Safety Plan was in development at the Council, and increasing trust amongst young people in the police was key to this being successful. Members heard that the Cabinet Member for Community Safety had been working closely with the police and local communities and that open conversations had been key in responding to an incident where the Central Police Team had conducted a Stop and Search where a young person had been put to the ground. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety explained that a new initiative had started that saw community members providing training to the police, to try to build trust between communities and the police. The Detective Inspector added that there were weekly meetings with partners to discuss 'every child every time' and what was being done by the police on a daily basis to increase police transparency. The Head of Service Access, Support and Intervention explained that the 'Complex Adolescents Panel' was a partnership group that met a weekly basis and considered exploitation within individual children's cases; the police co-chaired the Panel to enable shared accountability in developing and driving child safety plans. Members commended the role the police were playing in partnership working but recommended that the police do more to inform the wider community about the work they were doing.

The Sub-Committee asked about hotspot areas where children were more at risk and how this was monitored and mitigated. The Inspector explained that these hotspots moved depending on the time of year, school terms and what assets the police put into certain areas. Members heard that these hotspots were identified and monitored through intelligence sharing and crime reports. There had been a three-week operation focussed around Church Street to tackle schoolchild robbery, as levels of this offence were heightened in Croydon and across London. Neighbourhood Safety Officers were often deployed to hotspots and, where needed, central assets could be requested to Croydon to provide additional resource. The Inspector stated that work with other statutory organisations, such as the Council, was the best they had seen it. Members heard that there were 16 Schools Officers in priority schools who performed high visibility patrols and had been involved in the Church Street operation. The Head of Service Access, Support and Intervention explained that they had been working closely with the Violence Reduction Network and police to develop a locality based response model that recognised emerging needs and provided intervention and support to children and young people in these hotspot areas; it was recognised that intelligence sharing with the police was vital in

targeting support and intervention where it was most needed. The Youth Engagement team had been engaged in Church Street to try to minimise anti-social behaviour and risk.

Members commented on the need for more joined up thinking in the way that young people were dealt with to acknowledge their previous experiences and trauma. The Director of Children's Social Care agreed and explained that the Youth Engagement Team were very skilled at engaging young people to create teachable and reachable moments where valuable conversations could happen to change the perception and experience of the police for young people. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that there was a lot of joined up working that happened during 'Complex Strategy Meetings' that considered groups of young people whilst looking at 'places and spaces' as a focus for that work. It was acknowledged that this was a very difficult, fluid and complex area of work in the child protection landscape, where the focus on moving from prevention, to intervention, to arrest was happening simultaneously around different groups. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety commented on the complex relationship between being an observer, victim and perpetrator of violence. The Sub-Committee heard that the government had launched the 'Serious Violence Duty' that made links between youth violence and domestic abuse; the Safer Croydon Partnership would be developing a risk profile followed by a strategy and action plan for Croydon that brought these elements together. The Council is developing a Youth Safety Plan, and would be developing a Domestic Abuse Strategy, and the Cabinet Member explained that they were cognisant of linking in all of these elements to ensure the safety of children and young people.

#### Update on Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children in Education

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which provided information on the support available for children arriving in the borough on asylum schemes; information on access to education; and information to demonstrate that schools were being properly funded for taking in Ukrainian refugees as per national government support schemes.

Members asked how concerns that children could be behind, due to missing years of schooling, could be addressed and noted that this could present a barrier to integration,. The Director of Education explained that children who came to the country at a young age picked up English much more quickly than older children did. The Sub-Committee heard that the interim provision had been provided to develop English-speaking skills to aid in the transition to mainstream schools, and it was being looked at whether this would be reintroduced. The Sub-Committee heard that, whilst this was challenging, schools in Croydon were very open and welcoming, and it was more likely that children's experiences and trauma would create barriers; because of this it was important that support for children's mental health and wellbeing was in place.

The Sub-Committee asked how confident the Council was that all the available funding was being received to support Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children. The Director of Education confirmed that this was the case, and work was being done to pass this funding on to schools directly. Members heard from Co-optee Josephine

Copeland that integration had been successful at their school, but it was important that 'English as a Second Language' was a focus to ensure that lessons accounted for all of the children. Members heard that funding could be an issue as it did stretch resources with the example given of increased mental health needs. The Director of Education explained that the per-pupil funding was lagged, and that children arriving and leaving between census days could lead to a situation where funding was not received for these children. Members heard that this could create challenges but that support was provided wherever possible, however, school funding was complicated and sometimes did not account for pupil movement. The Director of Education stated that the Department for Education notified Local Authorities of available funding streams. The Early Help Service Manager explained that there had been a small grants funding process in late 2022 for voluntary sector organisations to provide additional services to, and activities for, the asylum-seeking community to provide opportunities outside of their accommodation.

Members asked how spending time outside of their main school setting affected the ability of children and young people to integrate. The Director of Education stated that this depended on each individual child, but that the idea of the interim provision had been to provide a short-term placement until the child was able to enrol at a mainstream school; this had also been to help the development of English skills. The provision had been located in St. Andrews School and a number of children had ultimately transitioned onto mainstream schooling at St. Andrews, which had been positive, as many had already integrated with their peers.

## **Tuesday 18 April 2023**

### Exclusions Update

The Sub-Committee considered a paper, which provided an update on Exclusions and Suspensions in Croydon. The Sub-Committee asked about challenge where patterns of disproportionality with exclusions were identified, and what training opportunities were provided to Head Teachers. The Head of Access to Education explained that there were training opportunities available, but these were at the discretion of Head Teacher to attend. Representatives from every school in Croydon had attended a training session on 'Adultification' in the 2021/22 academic year; this had been followed by other ongoing training sessions for which the Council held attendance logs. Academies held their own training and reported these sessions to the Council. The Head of Access to Education explained that the Council did undertake Section 11 statutory audits of safeguarding which included scrutiny of the training schools were providing. Members asked if training had been effective in reducing disproportionality for black children and the Head of Access to Education explained that it was effective on an individual basis and that strong challenge was being made on the basis of race, which would be reflected in this year's exclusions figure. The Head of Access to Education acknowledged that systemic change would take a much longer time to embed.

Members asked about the independent review of exclusions decisions and the Director of Education explained that every permanent exclusion went through an independent review panel that was usually convened by the school's governing

body. The Sub-Committee asked about Croydon's adoption of a 'Public Health' approach to crime, and whether there was a correlation between exclusions and youth crime. The Director of Education explained that there was a known link that had been identified through the Vulnerable Adolescents Review. Members heard that sometimes young people 'self-exclude' by taking a decision not to attend school and that this could impact on their outcomes. Members heard that Saffron Valley Collegiate, the Council's Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), have been involved in the AP 'taskforce' project and that pupils within the PRU were receiving support that extended beyond their education and incorporated a 'trauma informed' approach.

The Vice-Chair asked about scenarios where exclusions would or would not be challenged by the Council. The Head of Access to Education explained that there was always an initial challenge and conversation with a Head Teacher from the Exclusions Lead, followed by scrutiny of the exclusions paperwork. Members heard that the Council would investigate whether there had been a lack of effort or intervention with the child prior to the exclusion, and if there was any evidence of discrimination or unfair treatment. The only circumstances where the Council would not challenge is when the paperwork and evidence for the Exclusion were 'watertight', but this was extremely rare. The Vice-Chair asked how confident officers were that the advice and support being provided to parents by schools was good and relevant. The Director of Education responded that the Council worked closely with Head Teachers, and that they were confident that Head Teachers had a strong understanding of the exclusions process and their statutory responsibilities.

Members asked about disproportionality with regards to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), and whether there was best practice in regards to reducing disproportionality for Black Caribbean students. The Director of Education explained that children with Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) were not excluded from schools, and that any concerns were picked up in the annual review process. Members heard the reducing disproportionality for Black Caribbean students was a priority and that work with Head Teachers was ongoing, but that the Local Authorities' power here was limited. The Education Partnership would have representatives from all schools and would set priorities across Croydon; the Director of Education would be suggesting that inclusion and the reduction of disproportionality be a priority for the Partnership. The Head of Access to Education explained that where serious concerns around disproportionality were identified, the Council could intervene under safeguarding legislation; this had happened a few times in the last year and had resulted in visits from the Director for Education and members of the Exclusions Team to conduct in depth reviews of the school's practices.

The Vice-Chair asked about the increase in primary exclusions and the Head of Access to Education explained that there two trends that had been acknowledged. The first was increased numbers of children in nursery with complex needs, SEN and EHCP applications; this was impacting on the ability of schools to meet the needs of some very young children coming into schools. The second was children who had missed significant amounts of nursery and reception schooling during the pandemic. Long wait times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the complex diagnosis pathway for Autism and ADHD was also acknowledged as a contributing factor. The Director for Education explained that



Croydon Locality SEND support was providing funding into primary and secondary schools to support early interventions for students; this would be rolled out to Early Years settings in the near future to pick up on the needs of children at an earlier stage.

Members commented on the need for school governors to be trained and aware of best practice to ensure they were best able to scrutinise the decisions of Head Teachers. The Director of Education agreed and explained that the Council did provide training to governing bodies and that the best training did include examples of best practice. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to have experienced chairs of governing bodies talk at these training events and that this would be something considered in the future.

### Elective Home Education

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which provided a briefing on Elective Home Education (EHE) in Croydon, including the data showing the number of Children and Young people receiving EHE.

The Sub-Committee asked what the Council could do to address children who fell significantly behind in EHE. The Director for Education explained it was expected that any child with a special need was in a school that could meet their needs, but where families had chosen to EHE, they would be responsible for meeting these needs without resources from the Council. The Corporate Director for Children, Young People & Education explained that there was very little power for the Council to intervene over issues that could not be in the child's best educational interest, but that forthcoming legislation may change this. The Sub-Committee heard the Council was supportive of this legislation changing. The Sub-Committee asked how many SEN children were being home educated and heard that currently there were seven in Croydon with an EHCP, but some parents may be in the process of applying for EHCP, or have less substantial needs. The Head of Access to Education explained that families were responsible for delivering the EHCP should they chose to EHE.

The Sub-Committee asked if the Council knew how many 'not known' EHE students were in Croydon, and whether there were any processes to try to identify these children. The Director for Education explained that families did not have to register with the Council to notify of EHE, but the Council would know if the child had previously been on a school roll. The Vice-Chair asked how an EHCP process would be conducted for a child receiving an EHE. The Director of Education explained that a parent or GP could submit an application for an EHCP assessment. Members asked about the increase in parents not providing a reason for EHE and heard that this was not known but that possibly this was because it was the first year that this option had been included as a 'tick box' on the notification form.

The Sub-Committee asked about the most common obstacles facing children in receipt of EHE. The Head of Access to Education explained that many families delivering EHE did so very successfully. Challenges were referred on to the 'Children Missing Education' team, and referrals for EHE were only accepted when the family wanted to EHE; if this were found not to be the case, then the school would be challenged and this could lead to a referral to Children's Social Care. Members

asked if the Council tried to intervene with students and families who taken the EHE route as a result of bullying. The Head of Access to Education explained that this was the case and that there would be an immediate conversation with the school. It was likely that these cases would not sit under the EHE team for very long and would be passed on to the 'Children Missing Education' team to work with the family alongside inclusion officers where a number of options could be considered, including a move to a different school.

The Sub-Committee highlighted families who had wanted to move to EHE who were involved with Children's Social Care or were on child protection plans. Members noted that the report stated that this had been challenged robustly and asked how it was ensure that these children were still attending school. The Director of Education explained that the Council would monitor attendance for these children in conjunction with Social Care; a social worker would be assigned to each of these families. Members asked if pupils who received EHE disproportionality went on to become 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs)'; the Head of Access to Education explained that this was difficult to benchmark for a number of reasons.

### Experience of Care Leavers

The Sub-Committee considered a paper which outlined the position of Care Experienced young people in Croydon as assessed by Officers in the Annual Self-Assessment and Improvement plans and a recent review and recommendations by Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers, at the Department for Education (DfE). The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People explained that this report was a very early response to the recent review and recommendations by Mark Riddell, and that a full report would be coming forward through Cabinet and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Members asked about the housing offers available to Care Leavers, and whether there was effective support from the Council Housing department. The Corporate Director for Children, Young People & Education explained that significant work with Housing colleagues was already underway, but the scale of the challenge in this area was not being underestimated. A full Cabinet paper would be forthcoming on the housing responsibilities to Care Experienced Young People that would be a collaboration between the Housing department, Deputy Mayor, Children, Young People and Education department and Cabinet Member for Children & Young People. The Corporate Director for Children, Young People & Education agreed with the Sub-Committee that a 'whole Council' approach was needed in addition to good partnership working.

The Chair asked what housing support and options were offered to Care Leavers. The Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers responded that a large number of Care Leavers had 'stay put' arrangements where they were able to stay with their foster carers. Some young people did not want to do this and wished to live independently, but housing waiting lists for those who wished to move on could be long, and often other alternatives had to be sought in the private rental market, rent guarantee schemes or supported living where appropriate. The Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers stated there was an aspiration for more supported housing to be available. Members heard that there were a number of wraparound

services that were available and work had begun on developing these further to provide some additional support. The Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers explained that Housing colleagues were on-board with further developing housing pathways for Care Leavers.

The Sub-Committee asked about KPIs and monitoring of the service. The Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers explained that a number of KPIs were received by and monitored by the Corporate Parenting Panel who would also be receiving the full action plan once completed; in addition to this, the department also had a number of internal KPIs. The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People highlighted the work happening on the Corporate Parenting Strategy that it was hoped would be launched in September 2023. The Corporate Director for Children, Young People & Education explained that this report was an introduction and overview to the next phase of a significant improvement plan; it was recognised that this work would involve the whole of the Council and its partners.

## Health & Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee scrutinises the work of local healthcare organisations and social care services provided to adult residents of the borough. It also, in conjunction with neighbouring local authorities, investigates and responds to emerging health and social care issues and changes affecting more than one borough.

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this Sub-Committee by clicking on the link: [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

### 2022-23 Membership of the Health & Social Care Sub-Committee



**Councillor Sean  
Fitzsimons**  
(Chair)



**Councillor Sherwan  
Chowdhury**  
(Vice-Chair)



**Councillor Adele  
Benson**



**Councillor Patsy  
Cummings**



**Councillor Robert  
Ward**

**Councillor Fatima  
Zaman**

**Gordon Kay**  
Healthwatch Croydon  
(Non-Voting)

**Yusuf Osman**  
Croydon Adult Social  
Services User Panel  
(Non-Voting)

### Chair of the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee Councillor Sean Fitzsimons

**TBC**

A summary of the items considered by the Health & Social Care Sub-Committee in 2022-23 can be found below. Members also received an update from Healthwatch Croydon at each meeting.

### Tuesday 28 June 2022

#### Health & Social Care Overview

The Sub-Committee considered a series of reports which provided an overview from the Social Care, Public Health and Healthcare partners on their priorities for the year

ahead. The updates were provided at the meeting to help the Sub-Committee with setting its work programme for 2022/23

It was agreed that consultation on the redesign of Sexual Health services would be added to the Sub-Committee work programme in the coming year. It was also agreed that the work of the Public Health team on childhood obesity may also be considered for scheduling in the work programme should there be capacity.

In response to a question about mental health support for menopausal women, it was explained that there were specialist hormone intervention clinics, but this was delivered by a small service. It was acknowledged that there was further work that could be done in this area, which may benefit from a whole system approach. The Sub-Committee agreed that this may be an area to revisit as part of its work programme, along with looking at the issue from a workforce perspective and the support available for staff.

It was noted that the level of referrals for older people to mental health services had decreased during the pandemic and as such it was questioned whether the local performance had been benchmarked with data from other areas. It was advised that work on this had been conducted as part of the South West London Mental Health Strategy, but there was a need to review the support available for older people across the system, including building capacity within the community and voluntary sector. It was agreed that mental health provision for older people would also be considered for the work programme.

Members questioned whether the identified savings in Adult Social Care were being kept under review to check that they were still deliverable. Reassurance was given that savings were tracked monthly and had been reviewed by the Government appointed Improvement and Assurance Panel. The delivery of savings was on track, but should this change, there were processes built into the system to flag this. It was agreed that the delivery of the Adult Social Care budget would be a standing item at each meeting of the Sub-Committee to seek continued reassurance that it remained on track.

It was highlighted that there was concern within the local community about the possible impact from savings upon vulnerable residents and as such it was questioned how reassurance was being provided to those affected. It was advised that the aim of the savings programme was to enable people to lead an independent life and would be managed through engaging with residents on an individual basis. Work was underway to ensure the voice of people was being heard and used to co-produce services. It was important that the level of service provided was flexible to ensure it could be increased or reduced as needed. There was a statutory role for the Director of Adult Social Services to ensure that both the quality and safety of services was maintained, and a Challenge Panel was in place should there be concern about the fairness of any changes delivered. The Sub-Committee agreed

that it would continue to look for assurance on the maintenance of safety throughout the year ahead.

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

### South West London Integrated Care System Update

The Sub-Committee considered a presentation which provided an update on the delivery of the South West London Integrated Care System. An introduction was provided to the Sub-Committee by the Croydon Health Services Chief Executive and Place-Based Leader for Health, Matthew Kershaw.

Members noted the close work between the ICS and Healthwatch and heard that funding had been received by Healthwatch for an executive lead to coordinate the six Healthwatch groups in the ICS areas. The Sub-Committee asked about the complexity and pace of implementation in the ICS. The Croydon Health Services Chief Executive explained that so far responses had been timely and effective; an example of this was given on securing funding for health inequalities that had been granted for Croydon at higher levels due to quick responses, as a result of strong and effective relationships in the borough, that demonstrated Croydon's higher levels of need.

The Chair asked about place-based accountability for the ICS and what would be done to keep the Sub-Committee abreast of upcoming workstreams. The Croydon Health Services Chief Executive responded that he was a representative of Croydon at the ICS, and was responsible for ensuring that Members remained sighted on workstreams at the Croydon and South West London level. The ICS were committed to providing good forewarning of upcoming work and it was highlighted that early work on shifting commissioning responsibility for dentistry to the ICS level was being undertaken following enquiries from the Chair. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care added that all Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs were included in the ICS and also met separately. The Chair welcomed the support of both the Croydon Health Services Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care in ensuring Croydon was well considered by the ICS.

### Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board (CSAB) Annual Report 2021/22

The Sub-Committee considered the Annual Report for 2021-22 from the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board, with a view to reassuring itself on the performance of the Board, prior to the report's consideration by the Cabinet. The Independent Chair of the Board, David Williams, introduced the report.

The Chair asked about the effectiveness and key strengths and weaknesses of the Partnership. The Corporate Director Adult Social Care & Health stated that the commitment of the partners was a particular strength, with strong participation across many sub-groups from the partners; it was recognised, however, that data

collection and the building of the scorecard still required additional work. The Detective Superintendent for Public Protection commented on the willingness of the partners to learn from each other and to engage with the action plans resulting from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) but felt that transitions between the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards could be strengthened and would be a key area of focus for the partnership going forward. Members heard that increasing inequality and vulnerability in Croydon, and nationally, remained a key challenge. The Independent Chair explained that the engagement and commitment of partners were key to the success of the partnership, and that work to improve data collection would be prioritised.

Members asked about referrals to safeguarding and the suggestions that these had decreased, in part, due to the Croydon Adult Support Team having been able to divert people to other services where safeguarding was not needed. The Sub-Committee asked if the training the Croydon Adult Support Team had received allowed them to properly pick up on safeguarding issues, and if there were any figures for those who had been directed away from safeguarding services in error. The Corporate Director Adult Social Care & Health explained that the 'front door' had changed to include experienced staff and social workers to perform triaging on the referrals that were coming into the safeguarding service. There was a daily meeting with the Section 42 Team to review cases to see if they required a full Section 42 enquiry or an alternative service or assessment. The Corporate Director Adult Social Care & Health stated that they were confident in the training staff had received and that robust processes were in place with experienced staff at the 'front door'.

In response to questions about what training was provided by the Partnership on mental health, Members heard that the Metropolitan Police had an internal mental health team that provided training to other officers and that this included training on neurodivergence and autism. The Corporate Director Adult Social Care explained that there was a full multiagency training programme on safeguarding in Croydon, that was open to professionals and the voluntary sector; data on attendance could be provided to Members at a later date. The Independent Chair explained that there had been extensive conversations with the chair of the Training and Development Sub-Group about measuring training outcomes.

### Adult Social Care Budget & Reforms

The Sub-Committee considered a report on Adult Social Care Budget and social care reform with a view to reassuring itself about the delivery of the 2022-23 Adult Social Care Budget and to understanding of the implications for Croydon from the Government's social care reforms. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care & Health provided an introduction to the report.

The Chair asked about any emerging risks or changes that had been identified since the report was written and heard that Adult Social Care was still predicted to come in on budget and that forecasting for peaks in demand in the winter had been

undertaken. Pressures on Croydon University Hospital had been high throughout the year and there were a number of workstreams focussed on this, including hospital discharge and prevention work. Members heard that the department was working closely with partners, such as Virtual Wards, GPs and the voluntary sector, to mitigate and prevent hospitalisation. The NHS backlog and long waiting lists could lead residents to have contact with Adult Social Care who would normally not have. Members heard that increased isolation over the last two years as a result of the pandemic had also likely led to declines in the mental health of some individuals which had increased demands on the service. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care & Health stated that the priorities of Adult Social Care were to meet statutory requirements, to manage demand, complete reviews in a timely way and to manage contracts and the market well. The importance with hearing the voice of every individual the service worked with was highlighted.

The Sub-Committee asked about the at-risk savings identified under the Medium Term Financial Strategy and service user and staff involvement in the deep dive analysis of the budgets in Transitions, Disability Services, Older Peoples Services and Mental Health. The Head of Improvement explained that due to a lack of staff resource, efficiencies from case and waiting list reviews were not possible. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care & Health explained that there were regular meetings with the CEO, Section 151 officers and lead finance officers and that staff were regularly involved, but as this was more around accounting, service users and residents were not involved.

The Sub-Committee asked how the individual would be considered in work to mitigate the Cost of Living Crisis. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care & Health stated that there had been a small uplift in Personal Independence Payments but acknowledged that this was a very difficult time nationwide for staff and service users.

## **Tuesday 28 November 2022**

### Update on proposed health facilities in Coulsdon and New Addington

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the provision of new health facilities in Coulsdon and New Addington by Croydon Health Service NHS Trust (CHS). This update had been included on the agenda to inform the Sub-Committee of the reasons for the delay in delivering these projects.

Regarding the timeframe for the negotiations with the developer, it was confirmed that CHS was looking to resolve the outstanding issues by the end of March 2023 as a longer delay would impact upon the funding provided by NHS England requiring an extension to be negotiated. It was expected that negotiations with the developer should be concluded within six to nine months. There was a commitment from both CHS and the developer to work together on this site, but if the outcome from the



negotiation meant it was not viable to proceed, then other options would need to be considered.

It was confirmed that neither the Coulsdon nor New Addington developments were reliant on the other to proceed. The same developer had been appointed for both sites, but they could be developed separately if needed. Given the delay to the provision of health facilities on the Coulsdon site, it was highlighted that the Purley War Memorial Hospital was the hub for the south of the borough. CHS was looking at improving both the surgical and diagnostic services available from this site.

In response to a question about feedback from the local community on the delays, it was highlighted that the health service had been managing without these facilities and would continue to do so. There had been conversations with patient groups throughout the process and information had been shared at the Healthwatch Croydon AGM. CHS would continue to share information wherever possible.

### Balancing Adult Social Care Legislative Duties with the Available Financial Resource

The Sub-Committee considered a report which explained how the Adult Social Care service maintained its statutory requirements in the face of delivering its budget savings targets. This report had been requested to allow the Sub-Committee to seek reassurance that there were sufficient safeguards in place to ensure that any changes to individual care provision was managed safely.

Members questioned whether staffing was a particular issue exacerbating patient flow through the system. It was confirmed that staffing was always one of the contributing factors to patient flow through the system. Although the hospital was doing well in terms of nursing staff, the availability of therapists along with shortages in social care were creating issues. There was also staffing hotspots in other areas across the system that had an impact. The Government had announced new funding to help health and social care services manage the impact of winter pressures. Croydon had been given the biggest allocation in South West London, which equated to £2.5m for the borough. 60% of this would be allocated to health care services and 40% to social care.

Given it was recognised that health and social care services nationally were going through a challenging time, it was questioned whether there was sufficient capacity within the system to manage any unexpected issues that may occur. It was advised that contingency plans were in place to manage the demand for services over the winter, but it was expected to be a very demanding period. The Service worked with Public Health colleagues to encourage the take up of vaccinations to prevent the possibility of a flu or covid-19 spike. Longer term plans were being made to ensure a sustainable social care system was in place going forward, which focussed on keeping people fit and well by working across the health and care system.

Further information was requested on the support being provided for the care market in the borough. It was highlighted that there were two care networks aimed at supporting the market to ensure it was managing the pressures from risks such as the cost of living crisis and increased energy costs. Only one care home in the borough had closed in the past year, but that was due to the provider not wanting to continue in the sector. The Service was looking at how best to support care homes with inflation and specific pots of money such as those available through the Government's Fair Cost of Care provision had been distributed. The care home market in the borough was sustainable and the Council continued to be able to buy beds as needed.

Officers were asked to explain how they were reassuring themselves that the Service was keeping people as safe as possible when going into or leaving hospital. It was advised that there was a Life team in place to support people leaving the hospital environment, with a virtual ward system set up to monitor people outside of hospital to the same level as would be the case on a ward. People are first visited within 24 hours of leaving hospital and all cases are reviewed within four weeks to ensure the resident continued to be safe and was receiving the required level of care. Although there was confidence in the system to support vulnerable residents, it was acknowledged that sometimes things did go wrong and when this happened, there was a robust safeguarding process in place to review any such case.

It was questioned whether there would be any impact upon the services provided by non-statutory partners in the community and voluntary sector from the discontinuation of the Community Fund. In response it was highlighted that many of the contracts in the Community Fund were naturally coming to an end in March 2023. The Adult Social Care service worked with voluntary sector providers to access the various pots of money that were available for different services, such as the previously mentioned services to help alleviate winter pressures. The carers contract was due to be reprocured in the New Year and work would continue with the voluntary sector on the provision of Personal Independence Coordinators.

It was confirmed that the Service was in the second year of a three year transformation journey, with the first year's targets met last year. The Service was also on track to deliver the second year's targets this year. A key part of the role for the Statutory Director of Adult Services was to ensure that the transformation programme was being delivered both properly and safely. There were risks around areas such as transitions and the workforce which were being actively managed, with a combined health, care and education approach being used to ensure the best outcomes for the young people supported by the Transitions service.

It was questioned how conversations with service users and residents had shaped the service. As previously mentioned, the Voice of the People Group had recently been set up to provide direct feedback, with the most recent meeting held earlier in the day to discuss the budget. The Service had worked with the National Team for Inclusion to ensure that service users felt that they were part of the solution. The

immediate focus was on managing demand, pathways and ensuring they reflected lived experience. The membership of the group was fluid to ensure it focussed on residents with lived experience. It was acknowledged that there will always be people who are hard to reach, but it was about finding ways to communicate such as through representative groups. There was also a need to create connections with other groups such as local Community Partnerships.

## **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

### Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022

The Sub-Committee considered the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2022. The report focused on how circumstances and experiences can impact on people's health outcomes and spotlighted how these influences impact people unequally. The report discussed what can be done to reduce health inequalities across the life course and highlighted the work already happening around the borough to address them.

The Sub-Committee asked about the recommendations in the report, the budget for delivering these and how they would be prioritised. The Director of Public Health explained that this was not an action plan that this is an Independent report providing a compendium of health information for Croydon, and that Health Inequalities were not something that could be resolved by the local authority or NHS alone. The Director of Public Health explained that the report made a number of recommendations that reflected her view on measures that could be considered to reduce Health Inequalities that could be used by a number of organisations. Members heard that the Public Health budget was £22 million, but the content of the Annual Report was a separate statutory function to commissioning public health services with this ring-fenced funding, another statutory function of the Director of Public Health.

The Chair welcomed the content of the Annual report and stated that they hoped that Health partners in Croydon read and engaged with the recommendations. The Sub-Committee noted the report and thanked the Director of Public Health for taking the suggestions of Members into account for future Annual Reports.

### Responding to Urgent and Emergency Care Pressures

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update from Croydon Health Service NHS Trust on Urgent and Emergency Care Pressures. The Chief Executive of Croydon Health Service NHS Trust and Place Based Lead for Health introduced the item and summarised the key points of the report.

The Sub-Committee asked about patient pathways and anecdotal evidence of patients presenting at A&E instead of GPs, due to long waiting times, and pressures caused by part-time GP working. Members asked what was being done to address

this, manage demand and drive residents to enrol at GPs. Members heard that capacity in hospitals, community services and primary care was greater than ever before, and that there were now double the number of GPs at the front of A&E to divert appropriate cases. The Chief Executive of Croydon Health Service NHS Trust explained that as quickly as capacity was being created, this capacity was being used due to increased demand and the slowing down of the flow of patients through services. Members heard that it was crucial to look at expanding capacity and how this capacity was used at the same time to ensure services were efficient. This was being done in conjunction with colleagues in Health and Social Care and a national pilot to integrate services was due to start in Croydon called the Frontrunner programme.

The Chair commented on mental health as a topic on the work programme, and the prevalence of long-term hospital stays on mental health grounds. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health explained that there was work happening with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and the Bethlem Royal Hospital to support hospital discharge and that it was vital that support services and placements were available in the community for these patients.

In response to questions on follow up community support and reduced funding for these services, the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health explained that the authority had encouraged local partners to bid for the Innovation Fund to deliver 'Pathway Zero'; this had been successful for the bids submitted by Age UK, the Red Cross and Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association. This was short-term funding until the end of March 2023, which would be monitored to see how this effected the flow of patients through the hospital, and whether 'Patient Zero' would be funded long-term. The Chief Executive of Croydon Health Service NHS Trust added that the Social Care Discharge Fund would be replicated next year.

The Chair welcomed the government's increase in short-term funding and the signs of good partnership working in Croydon. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that certainty and long term funding would be significant challenges that were largely not in the hands of the partners and needed to be addressed by central government. The Sub-Committee were of the view that certainty and proper funding were essential in making services work properly.

#### Adult Social Care & Health Directorate - Budget & Performance

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided the 2022/23 Period 7 (October 2022) budget and savings position, 2023/24 indicative savings and benchmarked key performance indicators for the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health introduced the item and summarised the report.

The Chair asked about the Period 7 Financial Monitoring figures. It was noted that an underspend was predicted for 2022/23, and it was asked why savings had not been achieved in some areas. The Director of Adult Social Care Operations highlighted

the area of Disability Transitions; it was noted that significant savings had been made but that there had been difficulties in meeting the targets that had been set. The department was looking to address this through increased recruitment of staff to conduct reviews, as it was acknowledged that reviewing capacity was not sufficient; whilst there had been constant recruitment there had still been a shortfall in staffing. There had been better management of costs in the market since the start of the Director of Adult Social Care Policy & Improvement, by looking at ways to ensure the market remained resilient and was developed to provide better and more cost effective solutions.

The Director of Adult Social Care Policy & Improvement explained that there had been issues with recruiting to Commissioning inside of Adult Social Care, and that good strategic commissioning was vital to delivering savings targets through a partnership approach with Operations. Commissioning capacity was now in place, it was thought that the department was in a much better place moving into 2023/24 to deliver a greater pace around reviews which it was hoped would make savings targets achievable. The importance of supporting staff who had been under significant pressure for an extended period was noted, and failure to do this properly was highlighted as a risk.

The Sub-Committee commented on concerns about compromising on the safety and quality of care packages in delivering savings and asked for reassurance that this was not the case. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health stated that this was not happening, and that all individuals were assessed to ensure that their care needs were met in the most cost-effective way that could deliver the best outcomes for the service user; it was also important that reviews were carried out in a timely manner. Members heard that the department was going through assurance and would be inspected to verify that this was the case.

Members asked about the risk of burnout for social workers with high caseloads. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health explained that those doing overtime on reviews were being monitored closely, as were caseloads to ensure that these remained manageable. The Director of Adult Social Care Operations added that the quality of work was also being monitored, and that Heads of Service and Team Managers were watching caseloads to ensure the quality of work remained high. Outstanding reviews had been organised by the age of the cases to ensure these were tackled in an appropriate order.

The Chair related a question from Selhurst Ward Councillors about plans in the 2023/24 budget for closing the Whitehorse Day Centre and Cherry Orchard Garden Centre, both of which catered to residents with learning disabilities. It was asked if the impacts of these closures had been properly assessed, whether there had been sufficient consultation with service users and if the proposed savings were significant. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health explained that they would be meeting with Ward Councillors to discuss this in January 2023; the Whitehorse Day Centre service would not be closed, but there was work to find

alternative buildings to provide efficiencies. The Sub-Committee heard that service users of both sites were being engaged on the plans, and that no decisions had been taken on either site. The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health stated that an Equality Impact assessment on the proposals had been completed. Members heard that all provisions in the directorate had been looked at through the lens of statutory provision, which running a garden centre was not, however use of the Cherry Orchard Garden Centre featured on the care plans of 11 service users, all of which would need to be looked at closely should it close to find alternative provision. In addition to this, there were nine volunteers who worked at the Centre who would also be carefully considered for alternative provision. The decision on these sites would ultimately be made by Members and it was acknowledged that the potential savings were not large in and of themselves but contributed to wider financial figures. A comprehensive report considering all factors would be provided to support any decision that was made. The Whitehorse Day Centre supported 65 people on average and work was ongoing with these individuals, their families and staff; none of the staff or care packages for service users were at risk, as a new location for these services was being investigated. It was highlighted that both sites required ongoing investment, should they be retained, and that services were moving to an 'Active Lives' approach to ensure that people were engaged in the community, as opposed to building based services.

## **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

### Croydon's Mental Health Transformation

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the transformation journey of mental health services in Croydon. The update had been included on the agenda for the Sub-Committee to review the provision of mental health services in the borough and would be used to identify possible areas for a future deep dive.

At the start of the meeting, thanks were given by the members of the Sub-Committee for their visit to the Bethlem Royal Hospital on 21 March, to view the facilities provided by the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM) at the site and presented with an overview of mental health services delivered by partners in the borough.

The Sub-Committee asked whether the pathways to accessing mental health services in the borough could be easily understood by the public, and what were the strengths and weaknesses in the current approach. It was acknowledged that the routes into secondary mental health services were not necessarily clear or straightforward, with multiple pathways available. Further work was needed to map out the various pathway to ensure it was as clear as possible without making it too linear for multiple entries into the system. It was suggested by the Sub-Committee that the present system was confusing, especially for friends and family members who may be looking for additional support for an individual. It was agreed that a

simple 1-page communication should be created for use by partners such as the Police or Housing Officers, who may encounter individuals in crisis, to ensure they were aware of the best routes for support. A request was made for this document to also be shared with Councillors, once it was available.

A new pathway, a Health and Wellbeing Hub in the Whitgift Centre, had recently opened to provide walk-in access to mental health support, and it was planned that similar hubs would be rolled out in other locations across the borough. Other existing pathways include through GP referral, or through emergency access in the Accident & Emergency (A&E) department at the Croydon University Hospital.

It was highlighted that there was a significant level of unmet demand for mental healthcare services within the borough, and as such, it was questioned whether resources were being focussed effectively and how assumptions on the service delivery were tested. It was advised that using a population health approach would be key to developing future services. The basis of this approach was to use data to identify areas of need, which would enable the production of a more targeted offer. It was acknowledged that this approach was not fully optimised at the present time, but it was the direction of travel for the commissioning of services moving forwards.

It was highlighted that there seemed to be an almost infinite demand for early intervention mental health support, and as such it was questioned how the process was being managed to ensure the support was prioritised towards those in most need. It was advised that the Social Care team had increased capacity at the front door of the service with the employment of a mental health wellbeing assessor. Training was also provided to staff to enable them to signpost residents to available support. There were also performance indicators linked to the front door of the service which would help to provide an explanation of the reasons for the high demand for mental health support. The representatives from SLAM advised that demand management also needed to have a focus upon supporting communities through a multi-layered approach. For instance, the Health and Wellbeing Centre had a clinical psychologist located within the service which helped free up clinical time elsewhere within the mental healthcare system. It was important to enable staff to work in a targeted way to ensure that the system operated efficiently. Another programme highlighted was the Ethnicity Mental Health Improvement Programme which was targeted towards upskilling faith leaders on early stage support and to help identify where support was most needed.

In response to a question about how the patient experience was monitored regarding safeguarding, it was highlighted that the Council produced a range of data on safeguarding. The use of restraint at the Bethlem Royal Hospital was monitored at a service level and by the SLAM Trust Board. There was a target to reduce the use of restraint including a zero level use of prone (face down) restraint. SLAM had also embarked on a refreshed approach to managing patient distress and the use of restraint, but there was still work to do in Croydon to embed best practice. It was confirmed that data on the use of restraint could be broken down by ethnicity.

There was concern amongst the members of the Sub-Committee about the level of support provided to residents in social housing and whether there was sufficient engagement with social housing providers on how to support residents with mental health needs. It was agreed that housing placements needed to be carefully considered to ensure that residents were being placed in the right type of accommodation for their needs. It was agreed that this topic would be flagged as a potential area for review in conjunction with the Homes Sub-Committee for 2023-24.

It was questioned whether there was sufficient data available to demonstrate whether services were performing effectively. In response, it was advised that there was a significant amount of data for established programmes, but further work was required to produce data for new or transformed services. This included setting baseline data and identifying the performance indicators to be monitored. The Sub-Committee agreed that it was important to have as much data as possible to available in the public domain to ensure there was transparency over performance and how the data was being used to transform services.

## **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

### Croydon Health Services NHS Trust - Quality Account 2022/23

The Sub-Committee considered a report which set out a draft version of the 2022-23 Quality Account for Croydon Health Service NHS Trust (CHS). A draft of the Quality Account had been provided for the comment of the Sub-Committee, which would be taken into consideration by CHS in preparing the final version of the document. The Chief Executive of the Croydon Health Service NHS Trust (CHS) and Croydon's place based leader for health, Matthew Kershaw attended the meeting for this item, to provide an introduction and answer questions arising.

The first comment on the Quality Account highlighted that the report mentioned Croydon being the youngest borough in London but did not acknowledge it also had the ninth highest number of people aged over 60 as well. It was agreed that this would be picked up and reflected in the report. It was suggested that it may be helpful include graphs or diagrammatical indicators within the Quality Account to better help demonstrate performance.

The importance of the workforce upon the delivery of services was highlighted, with it questioned whether workforce issues had impacted upon the performance of CHS. It was advised that staff had been required to work through a tough set of issues including going through the pandemic, ongoing industrial action, and a high level of vacancies. Targeted work had reduced the number of vacancies in the nursing workforce, with CHS having a lower level of vacancies than had in recent years. Both the health and wellbeing, and the support of and engagement with staff would continue to remain a top priority. It was confirmed that CHS had undertaken local, national, and international recruitment campaigns for staff, with a lead in place



helping to support staff from overseas to acclimatise. This had helped the Trust to reduce the use of agency staff and lowered vacancy rates. The recruitment of physio and occupational therapists remained a challenge, with avenues such as apprenticeships being explored.

CHS was congratulated on its maternity services achieving a good rating by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The hospital was one of only two maternity units in London that achieved a good rating on the safe care and well led aspects in the CQC inspection. CHS had a new Director of Midwifery in place who was leading the ongoing improvement work and had connected well with both staff and patients. It was important for CHS not to become complacent on the performance of the service, as the provision of midwifery was a tough challenge across the country, requiring a continued focussed. In response to a question about the stroke facilities in the borough, it was advised that these had been reorganised several years ago, with St George's University Hospital in Tooting becoming the local unit for specialised stroke care. Clinical evidence indicated that having specialised urgent care services for stroke patients located in one hospital improved patient outcomes. The stroke facilities available in Croydon provided rehabilitative support for patients in their recovery post-stroke, once they no longer required the urgent care provided by St Georges

Given the priority for hospital acquired infection had not been achieved, it was questioned whether this should be a worry for residents. It was acknowledged that the risk of infection was a significant concern for patients, but the historic performance of CHS in this area was good and the hospital had good infection control processes. It was hoped that there would a reduction in the number of infections in the forthcoming year.

It was highlighted that there was a national issue within maternity services, with BME patients facing worse outcomes. As such it was questioned whether CHS could provide data on the performance at Croydon University Hospital. It was confirmed that this was a core issue in Croydon due to the diverse population with the Health Equity and Racial Disparity in Maternity (HEARD) campaign targeting improvement in this area. It was confirmed that metrics from the HEARD campaign and the core maternity service could be shared with the Sub-Committee. It was suggested that this may be an area of scrutiny to schedule in the forthcoming year.

Regarding patient complaints, it was acknowledged that there had been a slower level of response following the pandemic, which had created a backlog that was being addressed. In the past two to three months CHS had brought in additional capacity to help respond to complaints, which was getting on top of the backlog, with responses sent to most of the outstanding complaints from 2022.

It was agreed that health visiting was an important issue and although some progress had been made, it remained a massive challenge. New birth visits had been prioritised for improvement as these were a crucial point of assessment for the

early identification of potential issues. It had been included in the Quality Account to ensure there was a greater level of focus on the Trust's performance in this area. It was suggested that it may be helpful to share the work plan for the service with the Children & Young People Sub-Committee.

## **Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

(formerly the Streets, Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee)

The Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee has a broad remit. It investigates services and issues relating to public and private transport, Croydon's highways, waste management and environmental issues. In all its work, the Sub-Committee seeks to promote sustainability and to promote the health and wellbeing of Croydon's residents.

At the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 18th October 2022, it was agreed that the remit of the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee would be divided through the formation of a separate Homes Sub-Committee until the end of 2022-23 Council year.

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this Sub-Committee by clicking on the link: [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

### **2022-23 Membership of the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee**



**Councillor Ria Patel (Chair)**



**Councillor Amy Foster (Vice-Chair)**



**Councillor Simon Brew**



**Councillor Danielle Denton**



**Councillor Christopher Herman**



**Councillor Mohammed Islam**



**Councillor Luke Shortland**

### **Chair of the Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee Councillor Ria Patel**

As Chair of the Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee from October 2022, the focus of this committee has been scrutinising key services in the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER) Directorate, like the transformation plan for the planning department, as well as the procurement of the next Waste Collection and Street Cleansing contract. Prior to the change in Chair and split of Sub-Committees, the Sub-Committee also scrutinised items like the revocation of the Croydon suburban design guide supplementary planning document (SPD2) and the Housing Transformation Plan.

At each meeting the department's finances have also been scrutinised, through the Financial Performance Monitoring report, as well as in January via the Budget paper, asking questions on the determination of savings during the budget-setting process, the shortfall in income from parking services, the transformation of the planning service, and risks from future building control legislation.

A key consideration has been investigating the robustness of savings targets and ability to deliver efficiencies, with a context of increasing workloads, scarcer resources, and inflationary pressures, as well as monitoring the impact of these savings on the quality of services to our residents. Throughout the year we emphasised the importance of using data collected to inform an evidence-led approach. We raised concerns at the slow pace in workforce recruitment, as well as the minimal progress on a coherent climate and environmental strategy.

I would like to thank the members of the Sub-Committee for their hard work, particularly Councillor Amy Foster, the Vice Chair. Thank you to all the officers in SCRER, and Tom Downs, the Sub-Committee's Scrutiny Officer, who supported us so well over the past year. Finally thank you to Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel, the previous Chair of the Streets, Environment & Housing Sub-Committee.

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A summary of the items considered by the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee in 2022-23 can be found below. Members also received the Financial Performance Monitoring report from the most recent Cabinet meeting to ensure that they were reassured about the delivery of the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery Directorate budget.

### **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

#### Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Directorate Overview

The Sub-Committee considered a report that provided an overview of the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER) Directorate to inform the development of the Committee's work programme for the year. The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment went through their initial priorities in post including Graffiti Removal, working with community groups, residents' associations, and parks Friends Groups. This work was to identify these groups' priorities and to rebuild trust and relationships with the Council. Members heard that work had begun on 'Clean Up Croydon' and the Veolia contract to identify issues and develop plans with officers.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration explained that they were looking at improvements that could be made in the Planning Service with the Planning Advisory Service review due to be published imminently. The Sub-Committee heard that the Town Centre Regeneration plan was being updated to bring it in line with current circumstances.

## Housing Directorate Overview

The Sub-Committee considered a report that provided an overview of the Housing Directorate to inform the development of the Committee's work programme for the coming year. The Cabinet Member for Homes introduced the paper with a short summary adding that close work with residents to deliver quality and value for money services would be their priority. The Sub-Committee were informed that this would be a process that took time but that a new Corporate Director was in place to bring stability and leadership to the directorate. Work was underway on re-procurement of the Responsive Repairs Contract, which had been reported to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee before approval by the Mayor at Cabinet; the Residents' Charter had also been approved at Cabinet. There had been detailed discussions with the Housing Improvement Board regarding the Housing Improvement Plan which would be reshaped and reinvigorated incorporating the views of residents.

The Sub-Committee asked about previous poor service provided to residents and asked whether there had been consideration of compensating residents; the Cabinet Member for Housing reminded Members that this had been a recommendation of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and was awaiting a response from the Mayor.

Members highlighted the burden on residents of private sector rents and poor-quality private housing and asked about licensing in the private rented sector. The Sub-Committee heard that the previous landlord licensing scheme renewal had been rejected by the Secretary of State as it was not backed by enough data and as there was not a housing strategy in place. The Cabinet Member for Housing stated that any new scheme would take time to develop and emphasised the importance of the private sector providing quality affordable housing. Members heard that there were examples of the Council prosecuting rogue landlords under other legislation and encouraged any known issues to be reported.

The Sub-Committee asked about plans to address backlogs of complaints that had been reported by tenants. The Cabinet Member for Housing explained work to catch up on complaints was ongoing but that the department was currently overstretched, demoralised and with a large number of vacancies. Progress was being made alongside development of key performance indicators (KPIs) which would also be reported to the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel. The Head of Homelessness & Assessments informed Members that, on the homelessness side, it was known that there were common complaints, and these were being looked at to improve the strategies being used. It was explained that a different kind of service was required and there needed to be greater openness with residents about what was and was not possible.

## Revocation of Croydon Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2 (SPD2)

The Sub-Committee considered a report which had been approved by the Executive Mayor at Cabinet and recommended the revocation of the Croydon suburban design guide supplementary planning document (SPD2) to Council. The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration by way of a short presentation prepared by the Head of Spatial Planning and Interim Head of Growth Zone and Regeneration.

In response to questions from the Sub-Committee it was clarified that identification of areas of gentle intensification were designated within the Local Plan and not SPD2, even though the desire to move away from density driven targets was identified in the report as a reason for the proposed revocation.

The Sub-Committee queried why revocation was proposed before replacement supplementary planning documentation on residential extensions and alterations was ready to take its place, as was thought to be plan making best practice and carried reduced risk of poor quality residential extension and alterations. It was further asked whether this alternative approach was considered. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration stated that once the political decision had been taken to fulfil this election promise, this was the best way to achieve it in the view of the Executive.

The Sub-Committee understood that since the SPD2 had been adopted in 2019, there had been a number of planning policy changes and that alterations to the document were needed. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration informed the Sub-Committee that legal advice had been that a partial revocation was not possible. Members were advised that new guidance on residential extensions and alterations would be written as soon as possible, taking into account planning policy changes on design codes and design guidance. The Sub-Committee were informed that policy on residential extensions and alterations was in place before SPD2 would now be the fall back position (including local planning policy and the London Plan) should SPD2 be revoked. The Head of Spatial Planning restated that there was still a development plan and guidance at a national and London Plan level in place that could be used in the absence of SPD2 to determine applications.

The Sub-Committee requested that the fall-back guidance, on the London Plan and national level, that would be used in the absence of SPD2 be shared noting that reasons for application refusals often referenced SPD2. It was stated that without this it was very difficult to ascertain what risk residents would be faced with if SPD2 was revoked without new residential extensions and alterations guidance to take its place. Members were advised that this risk had not been assessed but were reassured by the Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration that policy to determine applications was in place in the event that SPD2 was revoked. The Committee were informed that there had been a period of time, before the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018 and of the SPD2 in 2019, when determinations on residential extensions or alterations had been made using other planning guidance including the National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan, Croydon masterplans and Croydon Planning Policy Framework.

Members highlighted significant upcoming changes in the planning sector with the new London Plan and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (expected early 2023). The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration clarified that upcoming planning

changes in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill looked at building on the existing planning system rather than revolutionary change and would provide for transitional arrangements. The Chair asked the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration whether now was the right time for producing new planning guidance when this could result in abortive costs as the draft Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill could result in SPDs becoming redundant. An additional consequence could be the waste of officer capacity that is already under strain. The Chair also highlighted that the cost of producing the document would be met by reserves earmarked for the Local Development Framework / Local Plan review and asked how risky this approach was, as it could leave the work needed to bring the new Local Plan to adoption under-resourced. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration stated they felt there was a political mandate for the revocation of SPD2 but and that, in their opinion, there were equal risks to maintaining the SPD2 document and revoking it.

## **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October**

### Housing Needs Transformation Plan

The Sub-Committee considered a report that provided an update on the development of the Housing Needs Transformation Plan. The Sub-Committee asked about the suggestion in the report that the service was not currently 'customer centric' and heard that the number of entry points to the service led to an inconsistent quality of advice and service for vulnerable people and that this needed to be addressed to ensure they were treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

The Sub-Committee asked about a court case the Council was appealing, referenced within the paper, and asked if it would have been cheaper not to appeal it. The Head of Homelessness & Assessments explained that the Council had lost a High Court case which determined that anyone in unsuitable accommodation must jump the housing queue and be provided a permanent home within weeks; the decision also implied that the financial situation of a council would no longer be considered. Local Authorities across the country were very concerned about the implications of this case as it could lead to significant issues and it was regarded as a test mark case nationally.

The Chair asked why the report did not provide any financial information on the stated work streams. The Head of Temporary Accommodation explained that the starting position was to achieve savings of £1.8 million in the next financial year; some plans had been developed and some were still at early stages. It was noted that homelessness demand was likely to increase alongside the cost-of-living crisis which would provide some additional budget pressures.

Members asked about how vulnerable people in private accommodation were helped and the Head of Homelessness & Assessments stated that currently the service was the last port of call but that the intention was to adopt an early intervention approach so that support could be provided to these individuals through a strategic, comprehensive, and multi-agency response to reduce the risk of homelessness. The Sub-Committee asked about how the needs of vulnerable people were being considered when being placed into temporary or emergency accommodation. Members heard that there was a statutory test for vulnerability and that this had a high

threshold. Data on needs was now being collected at a person's first contact with the service to try to ensure the best choice, advice, and outcomes for customers.

The Chair asked about residents who had been turned away from the service for not having an eviction notice and highlighted that this was contrary to the early intervention approach set out in the report; it was also noted that there was a lack of follow up from the Council when residents had been in touch with the service and it was asked how this culture would be changed. The Head of Homelessness & Assessments acknowledged that staff were still working with antiquated systems and explained that there would be cultural change through workshops and various forms of training. The lack of training had been identified as a barrier to adopting early intervention which needed to be changed to ensure staff were proactive and could work with residents before eviction notices had been issued. The new service looked to ensure that residents met an officer on the day they came to the Council, who would remain assigned to their case and develop a personal housing plan.

The Sub-Committee raised concerns about the quality of private sector temporary accommodation and asked how this could be improved. Members heard that the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) would allow temporary accommodation to be procured from specific vetted suppliers, who would sign up to a framework, and would help manage these relationships by monitoring certifications and stock checks. This would hopefully unlock capacity for staff to inspect sites where complaints had been received to gather evidence.

The Sub-Committee asked how the Transformation Plan managed the risk of increased pressures on the service from the cost-of-living crisis. The Head of Homelessness & Assessments explained that there was also additional pressure from Ukrainian and Afghan refugees and that this would be very difficult to manage. It was expected that the new system would be more flexible to try to mitigate challenging circumstances for customers. The Chair asked if there were earmarked reserves and the Head of Temporary Accommodation confirmed that these were in place to deal with additional demand to the value of around £970k, and that meetings with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and other authorities to horizon scan were ongoing.

#### Healthy Streets and Active Travel (including Healthy Neighbourhoods, School Streets, Vision Zero, Cycling and Walking Strategy) Update

The Sub-Committee considered a report that provided an update on the Healthy Streets / Active Travel Programme including (Healthy Neighbourhoods, School Streets, Vision Zero, Cycling and Walking Strategy). The Chair explained the background of this item and stated that a briefing on the implementation and monitoring framework of Healthy Neighbourhood schemes had been held before the meeting.

The Chair asked the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment about the manifesto commitment of the Mayor to review Healthy Neighbourhood schemes and the appearance that this had not undertaken. The Cabinet Members for Streets and Environment responded that a review of the original Traffic Management Advisory Committee decision had been undertaken and these were being implemented due to



financial implications for the budget but with amended signage and road markings. The Sub-Committee asked whether this was contrary to the Mayor's manifesto and heard that the Council was going above and beyond in its engagement with residents to ensure schemes were sensitive. The Head of Strategic Transport explained the process that needed to be followed at the end of the Experimental Traffic Management Orders (ETMOs) and explained that this would be running alongside extensive engagement including independent polling, receipt of objections, street audits and drop-in sessions. A comprehensive review of Healthy Neighbourhood schemes would be presented to Cabinet after 12 months with suggested next steps at the end of the ETMOs.

The Chair explained that the engagement approach did not necessarily mean that schemes would be removed as the default position in national policy was that unless significant harm from schemes could be proven then they would be retained. The Head of Strategic Transport explained that whilst there was a presumption that schemes would be retained, officers would need to draw together all material factors in the final report to Cabinet about whether schemes should be removed or made permanent. Officers would use their professional judgement to form these recommendations alongside the results of monitoring, ministerial guidance and resident engagement.

Members noted that data was being collected on schemes now but asked what data had been collected before schemes were implemented to evaluate how well schemes had performed. The Head of Strategic Transport explained that TfL had encouraged very quick implementation during the pandemic which had restricted advance data gather. As a result, other data had been used to form the picture pre-implementation of schemes, and these included traffic flow information and TfL databases including IBus data.

The Sub-Committee asked what the key lessons were for ensuring that residents understood schemes that had been learnt from the implementation of the first tranche of School Streets. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that for the second tranche of School Streets, discussions had been held with school leaderships to ensure proposals were in line with what was wanted by schools before engagement went out to the wider community. The Chair asked if any other lessons had been learnt and Members heard that the need for advanced signage was vital. The Sub-Committee heard that for the first tranche of School Streets, informal consultation had been undertaken, and the results of this would be reported to Cabinet in October 2022; dependant on that decision it would then be decided whether to proceed with ETMOs. The Chair asked about how School Streets would be monitored and heard that work was being done with a third-party supplier and that monitoring would be installed on the schemes implemented by ETMOs in April 2022. Approval was being sought at Cabinet in October 2022 to continue this monitoring and to install air quality traffic monitors in the local areas of these schools.

The Sub-Committee asked about how Active Travel and Healthy Streets linked to wider policies around reducing traffic and road fatalities. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that additional funding had been offered from TfL for Croydon's third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) and that this would include the implementation of road safety schemes. The Chair commented on current uncertainty until TfL funding settlements were known and asked how a more integrated approach

could be adopted that told the story of these policies to residents. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that it was always their aim to link up these policies as part of a coherent strategic approach, but that there was often a tension between achieving this and responding to disjointed funding offers to implement schemes. The Corporate Director of SCRER acknowledged that more could be done to bring these policies together but that there were always efforts to link schemes to a wider strategic picture. The Chair acknowledged this and highlighted the importance of taking the emotion out of the picture and presenting the benefits of policies to residents as a cohesive narrative.

## **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

### Waste Contract Performance Paper

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the performance of the Council's waste collection and street cleansing contract and identified areas of service improvement and management of known and emerging risks to the service. The Director of Sustainable Communities introduced the item and Scott Edgell (Veolia General Manager for South London & South) and Andrea Lowe (Veolia Senior Contract Manager) who went through a short presentation (Appendix 1).

Members asked about consistent underperformance from Veolia and what the Council were doing to assist in improving this, and how Veolia had adapted services as a consequence. The Chair noted that the Council had served a Service Improvement Notice to Veolia in February 2022, and that there had been three contract management meetings held since May 2022. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the contract contained a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with a required minimum level; there was a Performance Bond paid to the Council by Veolia, which was paid back when KPIs were achieved to a minimum level. The Council had not been satisfied with Veolia's performance and had served a Service Improvement Notice due to performance against three main areas; these were missed collections, repeat missed collections and container delivery. Veolia had produced a plan in response to the Service Improvement Notice to rectify missed collections and repeat missed collections; discussions on container delivery were ongoing. Members heard that contract monitoring was multifaceted and that there were daily and weekly operational meetings, as well as structured monthly performance meetings that were fed back to the SLWP.

The Chair asked about Croydon's recycling rate, and the suggestion in the report that it was on track to reaching the Mayor of London's target for 50% recycling by 2025. The Director of Sustainable Communities stated that Croydon had been at a near 50% rate before the pandemic, but that behaviour changes had led to a downward trend in recycling rates. For the current period, the provisional recycling rate was at around 46%.

The Sub-Committee asked about weed and moss clearance on Council Estates and collection of communal waste from new buildings. Members heard that a lot of this was dependant on the developers and managing agents being proactive, but that it

was a challenging area with crews taking many keys and fobs, as well as having to remember a large number of access codes, to ensure all communal waste could be collected. Consistency in crews was important in ensuring missed collections were minimised, but Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) driver and crew shortages had made this difficult to maintain. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that communal waste access was a challenge and some standard advice on this had been put together for new developments. One of the big challenges of the contract was the contamination of waste on estates across the borough.

The Vice-Chair asked about enforcement and the strategy for tackling fly tipping hotspots identified through the 'Love Clean Streets' app. The Director of Sustainable Communities acknowledged that there was some reliance on public reporting, but that this would not be the case in a perfect world. The Council and Veolia were aware of fly tipping hotspots in the borough but had limited resources to do as much as they would like on tackling this; targeted clear ups did happen, alongside evidence gathering where possible. The Director of Sustainable Communities noted that there was a national trend in increased fly tipping and there was not a single solution to tackling this.

The Chair asked about the lapse in performance following an initial improvement after the Service Improvement Notice was delivered in February 2022. The Veolia Senior Contract Manager explained that peak annual leave times leading to greater agency and temporary staff use had contributed to this. There were efforts to increase recruitment to rectify this and keep a consistent service and performance levels. There had been some success in the recruitment of HGV drivers but this remained a significant challenge in a very competitive market. Veolia were offering HGV training to all staff, had run radio adverts, and were working with local job centres and linking in with First Military Recruitment to increase recruitment.

Members asked about the distribution of fly tips in the borough and what actions the Cabinet Member would take to incentivise proper disposal of waste and to crack down on fly tippers. The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment explained that they were gathering data currently, and looking at creating better education through the SLWP and the Council website, as well as being more proactive with hotspot data and relationships with Friends and Residents groups. There would be a campaign on fly tipping in early 2023 and a ward-by-ward approach to clean problem locations that was still being developed. The Director of Sustainable Communities added that there was a bulky waste collection service and three recycling centres open seven days a week; making sure residents were aware of these facilities would be a key part of the campaign to reduce fly tipping.

#### Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract

The Sub-Committee considered a Cabinet Report on the Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract for Pre-Decision Scrutiny. The Vice-Chair noted about the Mayoral Pledge to pursue the recommendation in the report and asked for reassurance that the recommendation was driven by evidence and data. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the recommendation not to extend the contract had been reached in collaboration with the other Partners in the SLWP and with legal advice taken on Veolia's proposed contract extension. The provision to extend the contract

by mutual agreement is contained within the contract, and the decision not to extend would only take effect in March 2025, which left extensive time to work on a re-procurement process and to conduct consultation with the Greater London Authority (GLA), which was required. Members heard that a large amount of soft market testing had taken place to look at options, and this had been fed into the information contained within the report and Appendix 2.

On the development of a future contract, the report contained a commissioning timeline for a process of consultation and engagement on its development before a future report would be submitted to Cabinet in March 2023 with a recommendation on the commissioning model and procurement strategy. The Chair and Vice-Chair emphasised the strong feeling on waste issues from residents in Croydon and asked about the opportunities for Member and resident engagement. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the Mayor and Cabinet had already been engaged on the recommendation not to extend the contract, and consultation with Members on any new contract would be a part of its development. Resident feedback from the SLWP triennial survey results had been received and Croydon officers would be briefed on this in November 2022; details of this could be shared once they had been compiled. There would be a dedicated resident engagement piece, which the SLWP would lead on across the partner boroughs, once the Mayor had accepted the recommendation not to extend the contract.

The Vice-Chair asked how confident officers were that the decision not to extend the contract would lead to good outcomes for Croydon residents, and heard that officers were confident that it would help to protect Croydon from possible legal challenge. The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment stressed that a new contract could also lead to improved services and KPIs. The Chair asked about the risk of a reduced market and a number of authorities looking to retender for waste contracts at the same time. The Director of Sustainable Communities highlighted the importance of due diligence and explained that soft testing of the market had been ongoing for some time, alongside discussions with other boroughs, to try to mitigate these risks.

Members asked about whether the Council's current financial position might put off potential providers and heard that it was unlikely that this would be the case. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the contract was of significant value and that they were keen to explore any options that might provide employment opportunities to Croydon residents and maximise social value.

The Sub-Committee asked whether the Council had talked to other authorities about the benefits and challenges of developing an in house provision. The Sub-Committee heard that this was the case and that these discussions were ongoing.

Members went on to discuss confidential aspects of the paper in Part B session.

**Tuesday 31 January 2023**

Budget Scrutiny Challenge

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided specific proposals on the following 2023/24 budget areas: Parking Services; Planning Services; and Building Control. The Sub-Committee went on to review these proposals to determine whether they were resilient and sustainable, and whether they had been fairly prioritised. The findings of the Sub-Committee were reported to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee as part of the overall scrutiny of the 2023/24 budget.

### Parking Services

Members noted the revised 23/24 budget figures for parking and asked how these had been calculated. The Director for Sustainable Communities informed Members that analysis had been carried out, alongside benchmarking activities on income streams with neighbouring boroughs, to ascertain the correct figures to right size the budget. The Sub-Committee asked specifically about Automatic Number Plate Recognitions (ANPR) cameras and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), and the possibility that residents were better complying with regulations in the current economic environment. Members heard that resident behaviour had changed significantly over COVID and this had been studied to identify trends, which had been fed into the budget setting process. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that there was a detailed model to track the issuing of PCNs across the borough; this had identified a downturn in numbers, which had informed the revised budget figures.

The Sub-Committee asked if there were currently an appropriate number of Civil Enforcement Officers to maximise parking income and enforce traffic regulations. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that it was currently difficult to recruit to Civil Enforcement Officer posts, and agency workers were being used to fill gaps in the service; other London boroughs were being engaged to see if this was a wider trend and to ascertain if there were different options to tackle the recruitment shortfall. Members asked if ANPR schemes were working as predicted and if they were making predicted income targets. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that there had been delays to the implementation of these schemes over the last 18 months that had affected income collections; there had been two elections over this period that had caused delays to decision making, in addition there has been some delays in the mobilisation of the contracts and with getting the functionality of the cameras in place. The Director of Sustainable Communities added that Transport for London (TfL) funding arrangements had been chaotic over the COVID period, which had caused delays to delivery of the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) programme; it was stated that confirmation of funding for 2022/23 had only been received in October 2022.

The Sub-Committee asked how much of the borough was covered by Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), and how this compared with other London boroughs. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that around 34% of the borough was covered by CPZs; data on this was submitted to TfL on an annual basis, but data from 2021/21 covering other boroughs had not yet been collated by TfL and provided for analysis. Members heard that the Parking Transformation policy would be looking at how effectively CPZs were managing the kerbside and whether further measures were needed in areas of intensified development.

The Chair asked how confident officers were that the adjusted budget figures for 2023/24 were resilient. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that they felt the figures were based on strong analysis of data, but that there were always risks with parking budgets, as they needed to reflect resident behaviours, which had changed and could change again, and macro-economic conditions. There had previously been assumptions that parking accounts could be increased with inflation year-on-year, but this had been dispelled across all local authorities.

The Vice-Chair commented that they felt robust resident engagement was absent in the current Parking Policy, and asked what was being done to embed this in the new policy. The Director of Sustainable Communities stated that consultation with communities was important, and that consultation and engagement on the new policy would take place. Members heard that there was a clear requirement in the Road Traffic Act for consultation and engagement on any new Parking Policy. The Vice-Chair asked about wider communications with residents, for example on Healthy Neighbourhoods, and how this could be done better. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that often the pace of implementation as directed by other organisations, such as the Department for Transport and TfL, often made conducting the expected level of engagement difficult, but it was understood how important this was for any future schemes.

### Planning Service

Members asked if the fall in major planning applications was a local or national issue. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that there were some suggestions that this was a national issue, but it was currently hard to say and depended on Inner or Outer London location; it was suggested that this likely was a result of the economic environment and rising construction costs.

The Sub-Committee asked how the Planning Service would tackle the backlog of applications, and heard that work on this had been ongoing for 12 months. Members heard that resources had been increased with additional officers and increased productivity through 'clearance weeks'. Officers had been refocussed on determining applications over and above other duties, as this was a statutory function, and this had been effective in significantly reducing the backlog and officer caseloads. As the backlog was reduced, a careful balance would be struck between determination of applications and engagement with the wider public and applicants.

Members asked why the 2022/23 fee income target had been set at a level that was unlikely to be achieved. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that budgets were set before year-end, and often required adjustment. The Sub-Committee heard that there was often the inclination to increase fee income targets based on inflation that could lead to a mismatch between the target set and income achieved. Members asked what work was being done to ensure that fee income targets for 2023/24 were achievable, and the Corporate Director of SCRER explained that a piece of work, looking at current fee income, was being undertaken and was finding that that income was continuing to decrease due to reduced applications; work was being done to ascertain if further adjustments to budgets would be necessary.

The Sub-Committee asked if there was a staffing shortage in Planning Services. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that this was a difficult question to answer, as application quantum changed all the time, and this was why the department was staffed by a balance of agency and permanent workers to respond to changes in demand. The backlog of applications was being tackled, but additional officers were always welcome as more time could be devoted to working on planning policy as well as engaging with applicants, the public and customers. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration stated that they felt the department currently had the correct number of case officers in light of the downward trajectory of applications, but that this would be kept under constant review. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration explained that additional staff would always be welcomed, but efficiency, improvements to processes and IT resources also needed to be correct and would be addressed through the Planning Transformation Programme to ensure the department was effective.

The Chair asked about the timeline of the workstreams in the Planning Transformation Programme. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that there would be a detailed Cabinet report on this and on the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review of the service; the workstreams were identified in the paper at 4.21 and the Cabinet Report would include an action plan and timeframes. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration explained that the Transformation Plan did not sit in isolation, and ran alongside the rest of the transformation work in the Council. Members heard that the PAS review was extremely helpful as it gave specific points of improvement that were needed in the Planning Service. Much of the transformation programme would be delivered over the next 12-24 months with the aim to deliver savings from 2024/25

The Chair asked about any other key risks in the Planning Service and what mitigations were planned, or in place. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that an uncertain external environment could lead to a further decline in applications and reduced income; work to ensure income targets and budgets were aligned to demand were ongoing to ensure that these remained achievable, but still presented risk. The Planning Transformation Programme was highlighted as a big opportunity for operational and reputational improvement, but it was explained that the possibility that this failed was a risk. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that planning was highly political at both a local and national level; there was a changing national policy and legislative environment, and failure to adapt and respond to this was a key risk. Members heard that planning was becoming increasingly litigious, with increasing numbers of Judicial Reviews, which also presented reputational and financial risks.

### Building Control

The Sub-Committee asked how pan-London collaboration could impact the borough if other authorities turned to Croydon, who was already struggling. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that Croydon was one of the few boroughs who was engaging neighbours to understand their resiliency as new proposals would likely require more collaboration. Members heard that it was important this was also done at a pan-London level through London Councils, to ensure there was resilience and collaboration across London in light of new

proposals. The Sub-Committee were informed that there were proposals through the Local Authority Building Control and London District Surveyors' Association to ensure that London rose to the challenges of the Building Safety Act, but it was too early to say if the right pan-London approach would be put in place. A number of final proposals were still awaited from the Building Safety Regulator to see how this would work. Croydon was seeking to position itself to ensure it had the correct level of surveyors and expertise in place.

The Chair asked how vacancies in the service would be filled, and whether the three new trainee staff would be sufficient, given they were not qualified surveyors. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that the Council was always looking for surveyors, but this was very difficult given the disparity in pay and conditions between the public and private sector; market supplements, flexible working and strong training and development offers were being used to make Building Control positions attractive. Members learned there would now be five trainees instead of five, who would effectively be undertaking an apprenticeship; this was seen as a very positive effort to bring new people into the industry and rise to the challenge of the Building Safety Act.

The Vice-Chair asked about corporate risks of not having a resilient Building Control service. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained not having a resilient Building Control service was a key risk that commissioning of the iESE study and the Transformation work sought to manage and mitigate. The Chair asked about the three options considered in the report and whether one had been chosen. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that these were all still being considered in more detail to decide on the most appropriate option for Building Control in the context of current restraints to recruitment and the new responsibilities in the Building Safety Act.

Members asked how the £300k savings figure from transformation had been calculated. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that this was a target and was difficult to estimate as a delivery model had not yet been chosen; these figures would not be built in to budgets until a model had been decided, and were for 2024/25.

The Chair asked how the workloads, resiliency and wellbeing of officers was being considered. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that considerations of these aspects was a core workstream in the Planning Service Transformation. The Corporate Director of SCRER highlighted that the People Strategy had been approved at Cabinet in January 2023 and included detail on how all staff were supported through their employment at the Council. It was highlighted to Members that senior officers were conscious of the challenging environment for local government officers, with long days and high workloads. The Corporate Director of SCRER stated that a number of ways to support officers were in place, but this did not mean that it was not still a challenging environment.

**Tuesday 14 March 2023**

Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification



The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification. The Director of Sustainable Communities introduced the item and went through the presentation at Appendix A.

The Chair highlighted the 'Options Appraisal' and asked whether any options had been disregarded at this stage. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the only option that had been discounted was that of extending the current contract past 2025; delivery of services by in-house provision, re-procurement or Local Authority Trading Company were still on the table for consideration. The Chair asked if there had been consideration of delivering different elements of the service through a mix of these options and the Sub-Committee heard that this was still a possibility.

The Chair asked if officers were confident that the Council was within the timeline for delivering the possible options that had been set out, noting the need to account for the Greater London Authority (GLA) Collection Conformity assessment. The Sub-Committee heard that the GLA only looked at the collection element of the service and that the current provision already met the requirements of the GLA. Members heard that the GLA submission had already been undertaken, and that approval could take up to 108 days, which sat within the proposed timeline for the final officer recommendation to Cabinet. On the procurement pack, Members heard that officers were running activity for all options in parallel, and it was acknowledged that the timelines were tight but achievable. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that, if it were decided to go out to the market, then conversations would be consolidated where possible. The aim was for any contract to be awarded by early 2024, if this was the option that was chosen, to ensure there were 12 months for a contractor to purchase vehicles and be ready to deliver services.

The Sub-Committee asked how it was possible to ensure that any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the new contract would be achievable, and how these would compare to other similar boroughs. The Director for Sustainable Communities acknowledged that the KPIs in the current contract had been set at a level that was too ambitious when compared to neighbours. Members heard that benchmarking with other authorities would take place to inform the setting of KPIs for the new contract, as well as incorporating industry standards; realistic targets would be set, with ambitious stretch targets to incentivise good performance. The Vice-Chair asked what outcomes were being sought as a part of the new contract, and whether these would be realistic given potential costs. Members heard that there was a desire to maintain the current frequency of collections, which conformed to the standards set out by the Mayor of London, and to improve collections for flats above shops.

The Chair invited Councillor Ben-Hassel to ask a question relating to Environmental Enforcement. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained any option would consider how the service provider would deal with fly-tipping as a first contact to check whether there was any evidence that could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice; this was a provision in the current contract. Members heard that evidence of this kind was relatively rare, but there were aspirations that the new specification sought a proactive approach to fly-tipping that was not just reactive to reports. Councillor Ben-Hassel asked if it had been considered that there be better join up between reporting

and investigating systems for fly-tipping. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that this was an aspiration for the future service and would be included in the method statement for this element.

The Chair asked how data sharing between contractor and Council systems would work for the future service. The Director for Sustainable Communities explained the current system had fully automated integration between the two systems that allowed for data analysis on fly-tipping hotspots and areas of repeated missed collections. Members heard that this would be continued in the future delivery of the service, but that consideration needed to be given as to what was required to tighten this up further.

The Vice-Chair asked what collaboration was taking place with the Housing department on collections for estates. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that they had recently attended the Tenants and Leaseholder Panel to speak about the Council's Housing Stock, and that it was understood that a Housing Waste Infrastructure review was needed to understand what had changed to ensure adequate bin provision; this would then feed into the future service delivery.

Members raised concerns about inflationary pressures on wages that had come close to causing industrial disputes under the current contract. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that indexation and inflation would be important aspects of any new contract that these elements would be up to date with best industry practice. Members heard that cost of delivering the service was discussed during annual reviews under the current contract, which could lead to elements being renegotiated, and it was important that any new service delivery made similar allowances.

The Vice-Chair asked about how communication and engagement with residents could be improved. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that there was a South London Waste Partnership communication and engagement plan, but that there needed to be a consideration of targeted communications on what was needed for Croydon. It was highlighted that the Residual Composition Analysis suggested that there needed to be better engagement and education on recycling, which could help with communal waste collections to maximise the collection of recyclates and resultant income.

Members asked about assisted bin collections and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that a review of assisted collections had taken place recently to understand where these were still required. The review had reduced the number of assisted collections and going forward it was hoped this would be undertaken every couple of years as this had not been the case previously. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that they had undertaken walkabouts with crews and assisted collections had been identified as an issue due to the large number that had accrued before the review. The Sub-Committee suggested that those who only needed the service for a short time should be able to state this when they applied for it.

The Vice-Chair asked about resident awareness of the bulky waste collection service and whether better awareness, or reduced charges, could result in lower levels of fly-

tipping. The Director of Sustainable Communities acknowledged that there were probably some residents who were not aware of the service; having been through periods when the service was free and charged, as it was currently, had not shown an impact on the levels of fly-tipping in the borough. The Chair asked about cases where fly-tips had been reported, and then moved on to private land by contractors; the Director of Sustainable Communities responded that this was not acceptable and that they would look into this personally.

The Chair asked how Members would be able to collaboratively feed into the process going forward, in lieu of a cross party working group. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the Resident Survey results would be used, alongside the points raised at Sub-Committee meetings to inform the development of the contract. It was explained that a holistic approach was preferred over Member focus groups as it was felt that this would provide more representative data from a larger set of Croydon residents that also included Councillors. Preliminary feedback from the Resident Survey had only just been received, and focus groups with residents would be meeting to discuss issues raised in the survey alongside telephone interviews; this would be combined into a report that would be completed in April 2023.

#### Local Planning Authority Service Transformation

The Sub-Committee considered a Cabinet report on Local Planning Authority Service Transformation. The Chair asked how the workstreams would be managed and prioritised. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained this was still in its very early stages, but that there would be a project plan for each workstream. Members heard that the appointment of the Planning Improvement Manager was key and would follow building capacity for transformation into the service. Once the Planning Improvement Manager was in post, the workstreams, project plans and programme would be established; as part of this, how to monitor and report on progress would be considered. The Chair asked if every recommendation from the PAS review would be addressed, and the Corporate Director of SCRER explained that the review was a snapshot of the service and that the recommendations would need to be prioritised, with most of them directly addressed.

The Vice-Chair queried the Planning Department's current strategy and asked how resources would be prioritised over the coming months. The Chair enquired how the tensions between the budget, delivery of services and transformation would be managed. The Corporate Director of SCRER responded that there had been reductions in the number of staff and shortfalls in income generated by planning applications, which had made it difficult to resource the service and address capacity issues. There had been a budget correction of £1 million in recognition that income targets had been less than what had been achieved. Members heard that there was a continuing risk of reduced income from a downturn in planning applications.

Members asked what checks and balances were being put in place to ensure the department remained resilient. The Corporate Director of SCRER highlighted the importance of correctly resourcing the department, and noted the particular pressures that had been felt during the pandemic. Members heard that improvements to efficiencies, processes and IT were important to make workloads

more manageable for staff. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration explained that the PAS review, Mayor's Business Plan and National Policy changes would all be used to inform transformation plans. The Cabinet Member highlighted the strong governance structures in place for the programme and importance of workforce development in ensuring it was a success.

The Vice-Chair asked how different the service was now in comparison to when the PAS review was conducted, and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration explained that the department was on an improvement journey, and was making good progress. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that recruitment to planning roles was a national challenge, particularly in London, and that work to clear the backlog of planning applications was ongoing, but that progress was being made. The Chair asked how well the backlog was being managed, and the Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that headway had been made in reducing the backlog from roughly 1800 to below 1000 over the last 12 months. Members heard that around 800 live applications was thought to be a manageable amount. The backlog had been reviewed to ascertain the age of applications and it had been found around 2/3 were 'out of time', with around 1/3 'in time'; the Sub-Committee heard that the aspiration was to flip these ratios. Clearance weeks were taking place roughly once a month to help reduce the backlog, and recently had also been used to also review the 'out of time' applications to analyse why these had not yet been determined. Members heard this had been successful in making progress for these older applications and that learning from each clearance week was taken forward to improve processes. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration highlighted the digitalisation workstream and explained that it was hoped this would further help with prioritising applications for determination in future.

The Vice-Chair highlighted the loss of retail units on highstreets where conversions to HMOs took place. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that there had not been a great deal of this kind of Permitted Development in Croydon Town Centre, but acknowledged that this was a concern for District Centres. An Article 4 had been considered for Croydon, but Members heard that the Government had set the bar for this at such a high level that it was thought not to be achievable; an Article 4 also required sign off from the Secretary of State. The Sub-Committee heard that other London authorities had applied for Article 4s and that these had been curtailed dramatically or rejected entirely. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration stated that they would keep an eye on this area, but that in their opinion applying for an Article 4 was not a wise use of resources at this time.

The Chair asked if there was sufficient resource had been allocated to tackle the six workstreams in the transformation programme. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that greater capacity was always desirable, but that funding had been allocated to the programme and was currently sufficient. Members heard that some aspects of the programme, particularly digitalisation, might require more funding than had currently been allocated; if there was a business case to do so, it may be the case that transformation funding from other areas could be redirected to the Planning transformation programme. In response to questions on how the Review of the Local Plan would be funded, the Sub-Committee heard that an earmarked reserve for this was built into the budget.

Members asked about the deployment of temporary staff to address the enforcement backlog. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that temporary staff in enforcement only covered for vacant positions, and highlighted the national difficulties in recruiting to enforcement posts. Members heard that there was ongoing work to revise the job description for the 'Deputy Team Leader' post to turn this into a 'Team Leader' post, so that a permanent staff member could be recruited. Recruitment had been ongoing, with a permanent member of staff due to fill the last open vacancy soon. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that agency staff were helping to manage current caseloads and reduce the backlog by participating in clearance weeks, and closing down cases where possible. The Corporate Director of SCRER highlighted the busy nature of planning in Croydon, and the importance of ensuring enforcement officers prioritised cases. In response to questions about the size of the enforcement department, the Corporate Director of SCRER explained that the service was small for the size of the borough. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration highlighted the importance of providing development opportunities for enforcement staff going forward.

The Vice-Chair asked about the planned actions for Q1 2023/24 under 'Review the Resourcing of the Planning Service' on page 107 of the agenda, and raised concerns that these had not yet commenced. The Corporate Director of SCRER explained that the backlog had already been reduced without additional resource. Members heard that the Planning Improvement Manager would be looking at programme management, workstreams and ensuring that progress was taking place; budget for this had already been approved and the recruitment process had begun. The budget correction that had taken place did not provide additional resource to the service, and it was acknowledged that it would be a challenge for the department to deliver transformation with the small amount of transformation funding and existing resources it had. The Chair asked if this was reasonable and whether transformation could be delivered within current resource. The Corporate Director of SCRER responded that greater capacity and resourcing was desirable, but that a great deal was possible with the existing resources of the department. Members heard that the Government was consulting on planning fees, which could potentially increase the resources available should these increase. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that better IT implementation and efficiencies would speed up determinations and increase officer productivity. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration highlighted a number of quick wins in digitalisation that were attainable for the service.

The Chair highlighted the importance of staff welfare and Members asked how frequently staff were working overtime, and whether they were compensated or given time in lieu. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that a great number of staff worked beyond their contracted hours, and that it was important to set boundaries to ensure staff were not overburdening themselves; staff were provided compensation or time in lieu as appropriate for overtime. The Chair asked about staff turnover, and heard that this had been higher over the last couple of years, but that there were many staff members who had been in Croydon for significant periods of time, and staff who had left and come back. The PAS review had acknowledged comradery between officers in the department, and the Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration acknowledged the importance of developing

officers and providing a compelling offer to keep staff in Croydon; Members heard that this would be a focus of the transformation programme.

The Chair asked about the implication of national policy changes for Croydon. The Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration explained that national policy changes were always being considered by Government, and that the department kept abreast of proposed changes, making changes to respond to new policy where required. The Government were keen to encourage digitalisation, which formed a workstream in the transformation programme, but there were no large changes to national policy on the horizon.

## Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee has a broad remit, albeit focused on the specific housing issues arising in the borough. It scrutinises services and issues relating to housing policies and needs, Housing Improvement Plan, homelessness and rough sleeping, temporary and emergency accommodation, housing associations in the borough, social housing and Housing Revenue Account.

The responsibility for the scrutiny of housing related issues used to fall within the remit of the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee. However, at the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 18th October 2022, it was agreed that the remit of the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee would be divided through the formation of a Homes Sub-Committee until the end of 2022-23 Council year. Subsequently, at the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, it was agreed to extend the separation of these Scrutiny Sub-Committees until the end of 2024-25 municipal year.

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this Sub-Committee by clicking on the link: [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

## 2022-2023 Membership of the Homes Sub-Committee



**Councillor  
Leila Ben-  
Hassel (Chair)**



**Councillor  
Joseph Lee  
(Vice-Chair)**



**Councillor  
Adele Benson**



**Councillor  
Kola Agboola**



**Councillor  
Danielle Denton**



**Councillor  
Claire Bonham**



**Councillor  
Ellily  
Ponnuthurai**

## Chair of the Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee

**Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel**

**Chair's Introduction TBC**

A summary of the items considered by the Homes Sub-Committee in 2022-23 can be found below.

## **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2022**

### Updating the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

The Sub-Committee conducted pre-decision scrutiny on a Cabinet report that provided an update on the Council's approach to revising the existing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Plan for 2023/2024, following guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DHLUC), and for undertaking a comprehensive review of homelessness in the Borough in developing a three-year strategy from 2024/2025.

The Sub-Committee concluded that (1) the department were taking the right approach by not rushing into producing a new Strategy and extending the current strategy with an updated Action Plan and members were reassured that DHLUC were on board with the approach; (2) trend data for homelessness should be included in future reports for Croydon and comparable boroughs; (3) should central government grant funding for Croydon be reduced, then the plan to address this should be shared with Members; (4) officers considered historic policy data concerning 'Fairbnb' in Croydon and that this was reviewed and considered as an additional housing prevention pipeline. The Sub-Committee were of the view that under occupancy of registered social landlord properties should be investigated to see if this could provide additional Temporary and Emergency Accommodation capacity. Additionally, Members were encouraged that additional resource and expertise was being sought to address substance misuse.

The Sub-Committee recommended that (1) the Action Plan is updated to show (i) overall timeline of the action plan, key milestones, deliverables for each workstream and that interdependencies and associated risks be highlighted and included in the Action Plan; (ii) that the Occupancy Checks workstream covered both the remit of ensuring the accommodation is occupied by homeless households placed by the Council to meet housing duty and of monitoring how long new clients were staying in Temporary or Emergency accommodation; (2) Occupancy Checks proactively looked to see that accommodation was still meeting the needs of clients that had been placed there and that this was supported by appropriate staff training to empower them to anticipate and identify changing needs; (3) that suitable policy or guidance is in place once Occupancy Checks started, to ensure those who had left accommodation were not penalised if they had done so for legitimate reasons; (4) that the Executive Mayor write to the DHLUC to lobby for additional homelessness funding for Croydon, recognising the homelessness situation is acute in Croydon on a par with inner London boroughs.

### Distribution of the Household Support Fund Grant

The Sub-Committee conducted pre-decision scrutiny on a Cabinet report on the Council's approach to the distribution of the Household Support Fund of



£3,013,689.49, as allocated by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP), covering the period 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023.

From its consideration of the report, the Sub-Committee (1) requested that simplified information on grant eligibility be provided to Members and residents; (2) concluded that Members should be involved in helping to identify possible allocation for the Fund.

Members recommended that publicity be clear on the criteria and exceptions relating to the distribution of the discretionary part of the fund and that consideration be given to using social media advertising to proactively publicise the Fund. It was further recommended that all councillors are provided with the information in a timely manner so they can promote the availability of the fund through community networks and other social media channels. The Sub-Committee also recommended that a provision for emergency situations be investigated for the discretionary element of the Fund.

### **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2022**

#### Update on the Re-Procurement of the Repairs/Void and Heating Contracts

The Sub-Committee considered a report, which provided an update on the process to re-procure the repairs/voids and heating contracts for the Council's housing stock. The report had been included on the agenda to allow the Sub-Committee to seek reassurance that the re-procurement had followed the process agreed by the Mayor in June 2022. It would also help inform the Sub-Committee's consideration of the Cabinet report on the outcome of the re-procurement process at its next meeting on 27 February 2023.

As it was recognised that the re-procurement process had produced a lot of good practice, it was questioned how this learning could be fed into other transformation projects across the Council. It was advised that delivery of the re-procurement of the repairs/voids and heating contracts had not solely been the responsibility of the Housing service, with the Procurement and Finance teams also involved along with project support from the Programme Management Office. A lessons learnt exercise had been run half-way through the procurement process to check that nothing had been missed and to record what had gone well. It was highlighted that the high level of resident involvement in the project had made a fundamental difference and once the new contracts were implemented there would be further engagement with residents on the delivery of the contract.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the project remaining on track was a positive indicator that the culture of the organisation was improving. Going forward it was essential that the experience and learning from the re-procurement process was used to inform the wider corporate learning on project management.

The Sub-Committee was happy that the level of tenant and residents' involvement reflected what was set out in the original tender strategy and agreed that the level of engagement should be seen as an example of best practice by the wider organisation.

The Sub-Committee welcomed confirmation on several areas, including (i) the contracts being split to provide an opportunity for smaller contractors to bid; and (ii) financial penalties being included in the contract.

Given that prior feedback from tenants and leaseholders had raised significant concerns about staff culture, the Sub-Committee welcomed acknowledgment of this issue and confirmation that steps would be taken to define and provide training on the expected staff culture going forward during the mobilisation period.

The Sub-Committee agreed that there was a risk of there being a significant backlog of work outstanding at the end of the current contract and welcomed confirmation that officers were working with the contractor to understand this and put appropriate mitigation in place.

#### Update on the Housing Revenue Account and Housing General Fund Budget

The Sub-Committee considered a report, which provided an update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the current in-year budget position for the Housing General Fund and proposals for 2023-2024 budget. The report had been included on the agenda as part of the Budget Scrutiny process to allow the Sub-Committee to reach a conclusion on the deliverability of the budget which would be reported to the next meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 16 February 2023.

From the meeting on 6 February, the Sub-Committee concluded that there was insufficient budgetary detail provided in the report to enable it to reach a decision on whether it was reassured on the deliverability of the budget.

As such, it was agreed that a briefing would be agreed for the Sub-Committee to seek further assurance on the budget. The outcome from this session would be reported to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 16 February 2023, to inform its consideration of the wider Council budget.

#### **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2022**

#### Update on the Re-Procurement of the Repairs/Void and Heating Contracts

The Sub-Committee considered a Cabinet report on the re-procurement of the responsive repairs contract, which included recommendations on the contract award for decision by the Mayor. The report had been included on the agenda to allow the Sub-Committee to review the content prior to the decision being taken, providing the opportunity to flag any recommendations for the consideration of the Mayor as part of the decision.

The Sub-Committee commended the team for the hard work it had invested into managing the procurement process up to this date, particularly when it had been delivered within a relatively short time frame.

Although there was concern that the procurement had been opened for bids over the summer of 2022, it was accepted that the results of soft market testing provided a reasonable level of reassurance that a good range of bids had been received.

It was seen as a positive move that a dedicated team was being set up to manage the mobilisation process, but concern remained about the overall capacity within the Housing service to deliver the mobilisation process within the timescales available.

The Sub-Committee noted that key risks to the success of the new contracts included the integration between the Council's new NEC system and those of the contractors, and the ongoing work to improve the culture within the Housing service. As such these projects needed to be properly resourced to give them the best chance of being successfully delivered.

The involvement of residents throughout the procurement process was commended and the plans for ongoing engagement with residents on the delivery of the new contracts was seen as essential to rebuilding the trust of residents.

#### Update on the Housing Transformation Programme

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the delivery of the Housing Transformation Programme. The report has been included in the delivery of the programme and to flag any areas of concern.

The Sub-Committee extended its thanks to the officers involved in developing the Housing Transformation Programme, which was agreed to be well balanced, noting that a significant amount of work had been invested in its development.

There was concern about whether there was sufficient resource available within the Housing service to deliver the programme or whether there was sufficient investment available to increase the level of resource if needed. It was important that these factors were kept under review going forward.

It was important that a system was put in place to ensure that any learning arising out of the programme was recorded and implemented, as an ongoing mechanism for driving continuous improvement.

#### Update on the Regina Road Project

The Sub-Committee considered a report, which provided an update on the Regina Road Project and the consultation with the residents on the future options for their homes.

The Sub-Committee welcomed the ongoing work to engage with residents of Regina Road on the future options for their homes. Confirmation that engagement with Ward Councillors was planned was also welcomed by the Sub-Committee.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny and Overview Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>26 September 2023</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Recommendations</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon Trevaskis – Senior Democratic Services &amp; Governance Officer - Scrutiny</b>
<b>PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:</b>	<b>Councillor Rowenna Davis – Chair of the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>
<b>ORIGIN OF ITEM:</b>	<p>The Scrutiny &amp; Overview Procedure Rules in the Council’s Constitution requires recommendations from Scrutiny Sub-Committee’s to be submitted to the Committee for its comment and consideration, before approving their submission to the appropriate decision maker.</p> <p>The Cabinet response to recommendations made by the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee is provided for the Committee’s information.</p>
<b>BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:</b>	<p>The Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee is asked to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the recommendations made by its Sub-Committee’s for submission to the Executive Mayor for his consideration.</li> <li>2. Review the response provided by Mayor to recommendations made by the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee.</li> </ol>
<b>PUBLIC/EXEMPT:</b>	<b>Public</b>

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report sets out for the consideration of the Committee the recommendations arising from recent meetings of its Sub-Committee. These are presented in accordance with the Council’s Constitution for approval by the Committee for submission to the appropriate decision maker.
- 1.2. This report also sets out the response from the Mayor in Cabinet to recommendations made by the Scrutiny & Overview Committee. This is provided for the information of the Committee.

## **2 APPENDICES**

### **2.1. Appendices 1: Recommendations from Scrutiny Sub-Committees**

Appendix 2 & 3: Cabinet Response to Recommendations made by the Scrutiny & Overview Committee.

## **3 SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1. Paragraph 1.5 (iii & iv) of Part 4E – Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules of the Council’s Constitution sets out the requirement that recommendations made by Scrutiny Sub-Committees should be submitted for the consideration of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee, to approve their submission to the relevant decision maker.

3.2 The exception to this requirement is for specific powers delegated to Sub-Committee relating to the scrutiny of Health Services and the duties and functions of the Council as an Education Authority. For these matters, the relevant Sub-Committee can make direct recommendations.

3.3 Set out in Appendix 1 is the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Homes Sub-Committee on 24 July 2023.

3.4 The Committee is asked to review this recommendation and confirm its approval for them to be submitted to the next available meeting of the Cabinet for consideration.

## **4 CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 To ensure the Committee can monitor the response given to its recommendations, this report will be included as a standing item on each agenda, setting out in Appendices 2 and 3, the response from the Cabinet to the recommendations of the Committee.

4.4 The Committee is asked to note the responses given.

## Appendix 1 – Recommendations arising from Homes Sub-Committee, 24 July 2023

### Item: Housing Transformation Programme Update

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
HOM.1.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that in order to provide clarity on the full scope of the programme, future updates on the Housing Transformation Programme should include a full list of all projects under each workstream, as well as additional detail mapping out the customer journey.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen

### Item: Housing Transformation Programme Update

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
HOM.2.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that each of the Responsive Repair Contractors should have a dedicated team that specialised in helping vulnerable tenants with their repairs, and that sub-contractors were not used for these jobs.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen

HOM.3.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that there should be additional qualitative monitoring of the contracts for the initial periods of commencement, to identify and address any potential cultural issues as early as possible.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen
HOM.4.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council should have oversight of the training being provided to staff of each of the new contractors, and that the Council has the ability to monitor training attendance to ensure it is completed by all contractor staff.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen
HOM.5.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that as a priority, automation within the NEC system is used to identify where repeated calls are being logged for the same repair to ensure that the department is not reliant on individual officers proactively identifying issues.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen
HOM.6.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council undertake a 'Mystery Shopping' exercise on the out-of-hours responsive repairs service to provide reassurance of service quality, and to identify and mitigate any issues.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen

**Item: Update on Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028**

<b>Recommendation Number</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Political Lead</b>	<b>Officer Lead</b>
HOM.7.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing department deliver training on Domestic Violence to all frontline housing staff.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen



HOM.8.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the final Housing Strategy should address the Council's relationship with the Housing Association and Registered Social Landlord sector in Croydon.	Cllr Lynne Hale	Susmita Sen
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**Appendix 2 – Item: Financial Performance Monitoring – Month 9**

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 28 March 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / 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
1.	<p>To ensure there is both clarity of purpose and transparency, the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee recommends that reporting on the Transformation Programme should: -</p> <p>a. Cover all transformation projects, including those delivered through the Housing Revenue Account and any delivered in partnership with external bodies such as local healthcare providers.</p> <p>b. Set out the intended outcomes for individual transformation projects to ensure there is clarity of purpose and enable the relative success of each project to be easily assessed. For example, where savings are targeted, any reporting should include the cost of delivering a service before and after the conclusion of a transformation project as well as the project spend to date.</p>	<p>Councilor Jason Cummings</p> <p>Resources</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p> <p>The monthly Financial Performance report will include a section on Transformation Funding agreed for projects and spend to date, and progress on savings achieved will be reported through the savings tracker.</p> <p>Progress on individual transformation projects will be monitored through the Transformation Board but it is not expected to be detailed within the financial performance report (which concentrates on overall financial performance and risks, rather than individual project delivery).</p> <p>Transformation Programme delivery will be picked up in a quarterly Transformation report to Cabinet.</p>	<p>Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources &amp; S151 Officer</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Information will be included in the 2023-24 monthly financial performance reports.</p> <p>Quarterly Transformation report to Cabinet – 27 September 2023.</p>	<p>Reported monthly as part of the financial performance report.</p> <p>26 September 2023</p>

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**Appendix 3 – Item: Council Tax Hardship Scheme 2023-24**

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 28 March 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / 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
1.	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends, as a method of testing the effectiveness of the Council Tax Hardship Scheme, that once a sufficient level of base data is available, ward level data on the distribution of the fund is shared with Ward Councillors. This will allow any potential discrepancies in the volume of applications to be highlighted and appropriate action taken to target any areas of concern.	Councillor Jason Cummings  Resources	Accepted	Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources & S151 Officer	None	Ward level data to be distributed to Ward Councillors by September 2023.	TBC

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>26 September 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon Trevaskis Senior Democratic Services &amp; Governance Officer - Scrutiny</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Rowenna Davis - Chair of the Scrutiny &amp; Overview Committee</b>	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	In accordance with paragraph 6.7 (vi) of Part 4E - Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules, in the Council's Constitution, the Committee should receive an update on the work programme at each meeting.	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	N/A	

### 1. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

- 1.1. This report sets out for the information of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee the most recent version of the work programmes for the Committee and its Sub-Committees.
- 1.2. This follows on from a report considered by the Committee at its previous meeting on 25 July 2023, which agreed that the financial sustainability of the Council would be a key focus. It was also agreed that the following principles would be used as the basis for the work programme:-
1. **The Public's Money.** Scrutiny wants reassurance that taxpayers' money is put to best use. At a time when the Council is making cuts to balance the books, it has no money to waste. In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, every pound of public money should be valued. Scrutiny will aim to look at the impact of any financial decisions on the public and the Council's finances, including knock-on effects. We will aim to research best practice and to provide suggestions as well as criticism.
  2. **The Public's Services.** Scrutiny wants reassurance that services are improving. This is about leadership, culture and organisation as much as it is about budgets.

We will seek reassurance that even in difficult financial circumstances, we are still meeting our duty of care to the most vulnerable. Scrutiny will listen and learn from the public's experiences of service performance to guide its work on Croydon's transformation.

3. **The Public's Voice.** Scrutiny wants to make sure that the Council is transparent, open and engaging with the people it exists to serve. Scrutiny will monitor the planned improvements in governance for Croydon's local democracy, as well as inviting public voices into the Scrutiny process itself. The Mayor was elected on a mandate to "listen to Croydon" and Scrutiny will hold the executive to account for this pledge.

- 1.3. Any changes made to the work programme during the year, should reflect these agreed priorities.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is asked to: -

1. To note the most recent version of the Work Programme.
2. Consider whether there are any other items that should be provisionally added to the work programme as a result of the discussions held during the meeting.

## **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. Setting a work programme to guide Scrutiny throughout the year is a requirement in the Council's Constitution and considered to be best practice. Adjustments can be made to the work programme throughout the year and are agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs, in line with the arrangements in the Constitution, and an update provided at each Committee meeting.

## **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None. It is a requirement in the Council's Constitution for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to have a clearly defined work programme for itself and its sub-committees at the start of each municipal year.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Each of the sub-committee's has had the opportunity to review their respective work programmes at each meeting. Scrutiny Chairs will also meet regularly with officers to review the programme.

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 This report contributes to priority 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.

## **7. APPENDICES**





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## Scrutiny & Overview Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
22 May 2023	Annual Asset Disposal Strategy		
	Waste & Street Cleansing Contract		
	Month 11 2023-23 FPM Report		
6 June 2023	Executive Mayor of Croydon – Scrutiny Update	The Mayor to provide an overview of his key achievements over the past year and outline his priorities for the year ahead to include: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How they will be delivered</li> <li>- The main risks to delivery and how these are being managed.</li> </ul>	Assistant Chief Executive Directorate David Courcoux
	Scrutiny Work Programme & Annual Report	The Committee to agree the work programme for itself and its Sub-Committees for the year ahead and agree the Scrutiny Annual Report for submission to Council.	Resources Simon Trevaskis
25 July 2023	Month 2 2023-24 FPM Report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of 2023-24 budget.	Allister Bannin Resources

	Equalities Strategy	Pre-decision discussion on the principles for the forthcoming refresh of the Council's Equalities Strategy.	David Courcoux Assistant Chief Executive
26 September 2023	People & Cultural Transformation Strategy	The Committee has requested to review the action plan created to guide the delivery of the Strategy, along with the performance measures that will be used to determine the success of the strategy. The report will also include a specific focus on measures to improve recruitment and retention at the Council.	Dean Shoemith Assistant Chief Executive
	Mayor Business Plan 2022-26 quarterly performance report	This report is provided for the Committee to review and comment upon the proposed performance indicators to be used to monitor the delivery of the Mayor's Business Plan.	Caroline Bruce Assistant Chief Executive
	P3 financial performance report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of 2023-24 budget.	Allister Bannin Resources
21 November 2023	MTFS & Budget Proposals	To scrutinise the update MTFS and Budget Proposals of the Administration, as set out in 25 October 2023 Cabinet report.	Jane West Resources
	P5 financial performance report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of 2023-24 budget.	Allister Bannin Resources
	Crime & Disorder Item	To review the Community Safety Strategic Assessment	Christopher Rowney SCRE
	Annual Complaints Report	The Committee will be presented with the Annual Complaints report for the Council for its information	Kim Hyland Assistant Chief Executive
	Exit Strategy	To consider the Improvement & Assurance Panel's Exit Strategy for Croydon	Katherine Kerswell

			Chief Executive
	Quarterly Transformation Report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of the Council's transformation programmes and to identify projects for a potential deep dive later in the year.	Alan Layton Resources
16 January 2024	Budget Scrutiny Deep Dives	To Subjects to be confirmed.	
	P7 financial performance report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of 2023-24 budget.	Allister Bannin Resources
6 February 2024	Final Budget Scrutiny Session	To review the final Budget Report ahead of finalising Scrutiny's views on the budget proposals.	Jane West Resources
	P8 financial performance report	This report is provided for the Committee to seek assurance on the delivery of 2023-24 budget.	Allister Bannin Resources
22 April 2024	Contracts & Procurement	A review learning lessons from previous Council contracts.	

### Items of Interest

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but are highlighted areas of further scrutiny during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Notes
Customer Service Journey	

Climate Change Scrutiny	
Contracts & Procurement	A review learning lessons from previous Council contracts.
Town Centre	To review plans for the town centre
Electoral Administration	To review plans for the delivery of 2024 London Mayoral Elections

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## Children & Young People Sub-Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
27 June 2023	Update on Antenatal and Health Visiting Visits	To receive an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting.	Children, Young People, Education and Health  Jane McAllister
	<b>Cabinet Report - Maintained Nursery Schools Report</b>	To receive the upcoming June Cabinet Report outlining the current position in relation to Croydon's Maintained Nursery Schools and options for the future provision of this in Croydon. The report sets out why this is required as a result of decreasing funding for Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) and the impact that this is having on the budget situation for all of the Council's MNS settings.	Children, Young People, Education and Health  Shelley Davies
14 November 2023	Croydon Safeguarding Children Board - Annual Report 2022-23	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to: -  1. Note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2022-2023  2. Consider whether there are any considerations or concerns it may wish to submit to the Cabinet during its consideration of the Annual Report.	Children, Young People & Education  Debbie Jones

		3. In particular, give consideration as to whether the Annual Report provides sufficient reassurance on the performance and effectiveness of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board.	
	<b>TBC</b> Youth Justice Plan 23/24	To scrutinise the Council's statutory Youth Justice Plan for 2023/24.	Children, Young People & Education Róisín Madden
	<b>TBC</b> Youth Safety Delivery Plan	To scrutinise the Cabinet report scheduled for September 2023, looking at the Council's work over the previous 12 month period to deliver on the Mayor's commitment to making Croydon's streets safer for young people, the plan for the next three years of action, and the commitments to partnership working with the voluntary sector and community to tackle violence.	Children, Young People & Education Debbie Jones
23 January 2023	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on three budget proposals (to be identified) and reach a conclusion on the following:-  1. Are the savings 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.	Children, Young People & Education Debbie Jones
	Cabinet Report - Education Estates Strategy	For the Sub-Committee to consider whether there are any considerations or concerns it may wish to submit to the Cabinet during its consideration of the Strategy.	Children, Young People & Education Shelley Davies



	Cabinet Report - Education Standards 2022	For the Sub-Committee to receive the summarised performance of children and young people in Croydon schools for the academic year 21/22.	Children, Young People & Education Shelley Davies
19 March 2023	Update on Antenatal and Health Visiting Visits	To receive an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting.	Children, Young People, Education and Health Jane McAllister
	TBC		

### Standing Items:

**Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard & Health Visiting KPI Data** - To receive the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard and quarterly Health Visiting KPI Data.

### 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	Notes
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Recruitment and Retention	<p>To review Staff Caseloads, AYSE Caseload Sharing and the number of supervisions carried out.</p> <p>To receive a breakdown of vacancies and caseloads by individual teams and to look at London Councils best practise for recruitment and retention.</p> <p>To undertake direct engagement with social workers</p> <p>To look at how feedback from exit interviews can be incorporated into retention strategies</p>
Apprenticeships & Youth Unemployment	To look at the offer of available apprenticeships in the borough and data on youth unemployment.
OFSTED Reports	To review any OFSTED reports as and when they are available.
Delivery of Early Years Strategy	To review the delivery and implementation plan of the Early Years Strategy
SEND Strategy	To review the implementation of the SEND Strategy
Surplus Schools Places	To review the Surplus Schools Places report
Free School Meal offer in Croydon	To scrutinise the provision of free school meals in the borough through the Mayor of London scheme.
Cabinet Report – Maintained Nursery Schools	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the Cabinet Report following the public consultation on Maintained Nursery Schools.

## Health & Social Care Sub-Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Health & Social Care Sub-Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
20 June 2023	Front Runner Pilot Scheme	The Health & Social Care Sub-Committee is presented with a report on the Discharge Integration Frontrunner programme, which aims to bring together transformation efforts from across Croydon to develop an effective, integrated system across hospital, social and community care.	Adults Richard Eyre
	HSC Work Programme	To discuss areas of scrutiny for inclusion in the Sub-Committee work programme in 2023-24	
3 October 2023	Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board – Annual Report	To review and comment upon the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board annual report ahead of its consideration by the Mayor in Cabinet	Adult Safeguarding Denise Snow
	Transformation Update	To receive an update on the delivery of the three-year transformation programme in Adult Social Care.	Adults Richard Eyre
30 January 2024	ASC Budget deep-dive	The Health and Social Care Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on budget proposals.	Adults Richard Eyre
12 March 2024	CQC Assurance	To receive an update on the CQC Assurance process.	Adults Richard Eyre

## Areas to schedule

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but have been previously identified as areas of scrutiny to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Notes
A review of the cost of out of borough placements	Arising from the discussion on mental health provision in the borough
Commissioning for Community Sexual Health Services	To feed into the commissioning process of community sexual health services by the Public Health team.
Dementia Strategy	
CAMHS & SLAM	A review of the mental health services available for young people focusing on the transition between services.
Menopausal Health Services	To review the availability of menopausal services in the borough
Integrated Care System	To review the impact of the new ICS approach to services in the borough.
Dental Services	To review the provision of dental services in the borough.
Prostate Cancer Services	

## Homes Sub-Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Health & Social Care Sub-Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
24 July 2023	Housing Transformation Programme	To receive an update on the delivery of the Housing Transformation Programme	Lara Ashley
	Housing Strategy	Pre-Decision – To have an early discussion on the principles underlying the forthcoming Housing Strategy	Lara Ashley
	Mobilisation of the Responsive Repairs Contracts	To receive an update on the de-mobilisation/mobilisation of the response repair contracts.	Jerry Austin
17 October 2023	Update on the Development of the HRA Business Plan	To provide the Sub-Committee with the opportunity to comment on the principles underlying the development of the forthcoming Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. This will include an update on the Asset Management Strategy.	
	Residents Engagement Strategy	To provide the Sub-Committee with the opportunity to feed into the develop of the Residents Engagement Strategy.	
	Rent Increases	A paper setting out the options for Council rent increases for the comment of the Sub-Committee.	
29 January	HRA Business Plan & Budget 2023-24		

2024	Temporary/Emergency Accommodation Budget Deep Dive		
16 April 2024	Consumer Regulation		
	Review of the Culture Change	To review the culture change workstreams within the Housing Transformation Programme.	

### Areas to schedule

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but have been previously identified as areas of scrutiny to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Notes
Regina Road	
Update on the implementation of NEC system	Potential briefing
Update on savings delivery	Standard item on each agenda.

## Streets & Environment Sub-Committee

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
10 October 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
30 January 2023	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on three budget proposals (to be identified) and reach a conclusion on the following:-  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the savings deliverable, sustainable and not an unacceptable risk.</li> <li>2. Is the impact on service users and the wider community understood.</li> <li>3. Have all reasonable alternative options been explored and do no better options exist.</li> </ol>	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd
	Local Plan Review	To scrutinise the review of the Local Plan 2023/24, as well as early pre-decision scrutiny on the CIL charging schedule adoption and Planning obligations SPD adoption.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Heather Cheesbrough, Steve Dennington



2 April 2023	Climate Change Action Plan	To review and provide feedback on the Council's Climate Action Plan.	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

#### 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

Biodiversity Strategy	To review the upcoming Biodiversity Strategy once written.
Implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill	To review the possible implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill
Review of the Waste Contract	To review the progress on the review of the Waste Contract.
Environmental Enforcement	To review the Environmental Enforcement service.
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.
Transport, Active Transport & 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
Habitat Action Plan	To review and provide feedback on the Council's Habitat Action Plan.