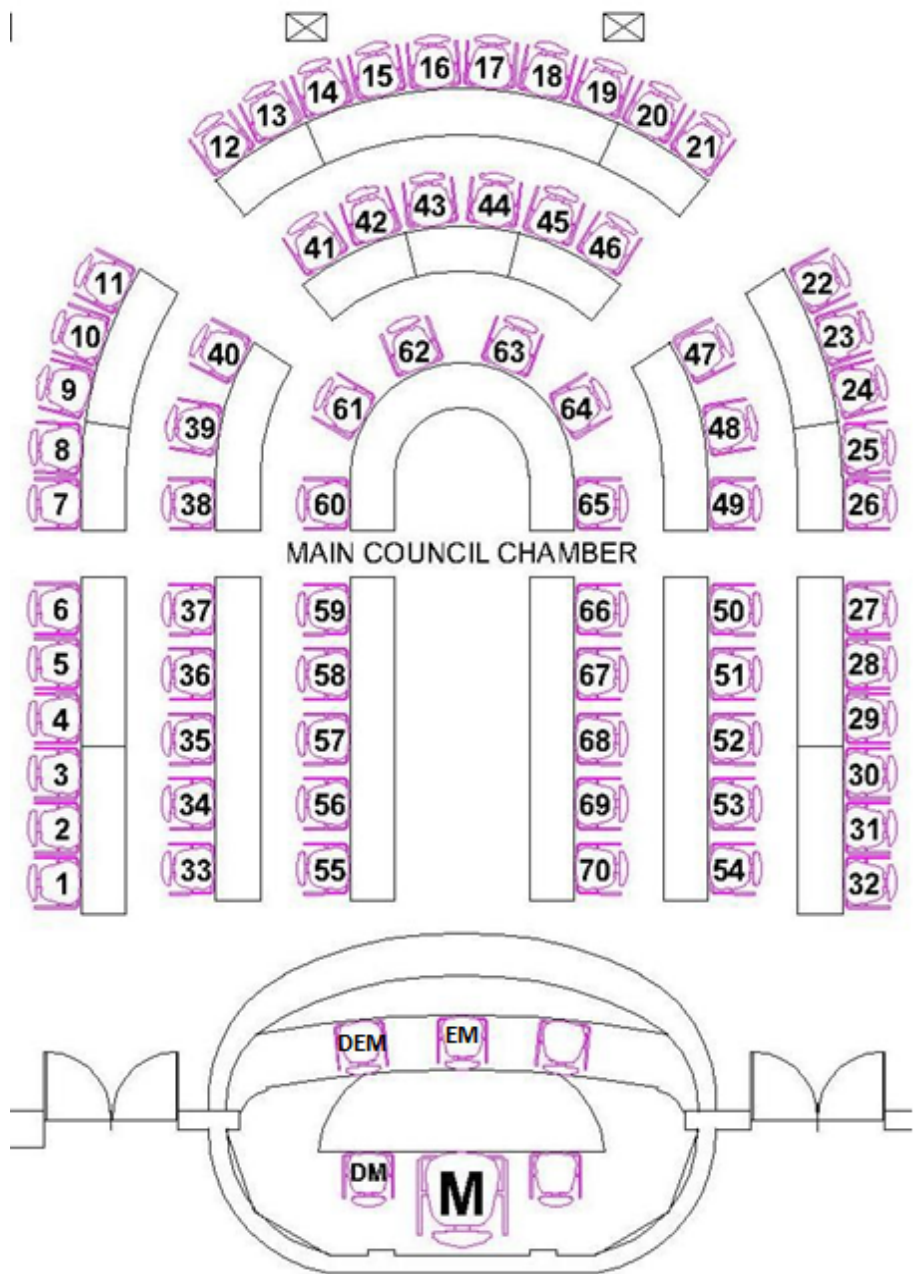




**COUNCIL  
AGENDA**  
for the meeting  
on  
13 December 2023  
at  
6.30 pm

1. Stuart Collins
2. Alisa Flemming
3. Clive Fraser
4. Mohammed Islam
5. Patsy Cummings
6. Sean Fitzsimons
7. Catherine Wilson
8. Matt Griffiths
9. Elily Ponnuthurai
10. Kola Agboola
11. Maddie Henson
12. Manju Shahul-Hameed
13. Mike Bonello
14. Humayan Kabir
15. Patricia Hay-Justice
16. Karen Jewitt
17.
18. Esther Sutton
19. Ria Patel
20.
21. Claire Bonham
22. Adele Benson
23. Sue Bennett
24. Endri Llabuti
25. Mark Johnson
26. Nikhil Sherine-Thampi
27. Helen Redfern
28. Gayle Gander
29. Simon Fox
30. Holly Ramsey
31. Samir Dwesar
32. Mario Creatura
33. Nina Degradis
34. Chris Clark



35. Enid Mollyneaux	56. Chris Herman
36. Amy Foster	57. Janet Campbell
37. Brigitte Graham	58. Callton Young
38. Leila Ben-Hassel	59. Stuart King
39. Louis Carserides	60. Rowenna Davis (Scrutiny Chair)
40. Eunice O-Dame	61. Richard Chatterjee (Scrutiny Vice-Chair)
41. Sherwan Chowdhury	62. Michael Neal
42. Stella Nabukeera	63. Andy Stranack
43. Tamar Barrett	64. Scott Roche
44.	65. Jeet Bains
45. Fatima Zaman	66. Yvette Hopley
46. Jade Appleton	67. Ola Kolade
47. Danielle Denton	68. Maria Gatland
48. Ian Parker	69. Jason Cummings
49. Simon Brew	70. Luke Shortland
50. Margaret Bird	Notes etc.
51. Joseph Lee	<b>M</b> – Civic Mayor Councillor Tony Pearson
52. Lara Fish	<b>DM</b> – Deputy Civic Mayor – Councillor Appu Srinivasan
53. Alasdair Stewart	<b>EM</b> – Executive Mayor Jason Perry
54. Robert Ward	<b>DEM</b> – Deputy Executive Mayor – Councillor Lynne Hale
55. Chrishni Reshekaron	Please note that the numbers relate to microphone numbers.

To: To All Members of the Council

Date: 5 December 2023

A meeting of the **COUNCIL** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Wednesday, 13 December 2023** at **6.30 pm** in **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense  
Monitoring Officer  
London Borough of Croydon  
Bernard Weatherill House  
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Marianna Ritchie, Democratic Services  
Democratic Services  
Marianna.ritchie@croydon.gov.uk  
[www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)  
5 December 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>

If you would like to record the meeting, we ask that you read the guidance on the recording of public meetings [here](#) before attending.

The agenda papers for all Council meetings are available on the Council website [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings)

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

## **AGENDA – PART A**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence from any Members.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 11 - 30)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 as an accurate record.

**3. Disclosure of Interests**

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) 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. Announcements**

To receive the Announcements, if any, from the Mayor, the Leader, Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer.

**6. Croydon Question Time**

**Public Questions (30 minutes)**

To receive questions from the public gallery and questions submitted by residents in advance of the meeting.

The following Public Questions will be heard at this meeting, which will be responded to. The questioners will have the opportunity to ask a supplementary question based on the answer received.

The questions are as follows:

1. As part of the modernisation of Croydon managed bus shelters those in Norbury (and other areas) were removed before the new were available for installation. Residents' are now facing a third winter without shelter. Please could you say when are the new bus shelters likely to be installed?
2. Given the number of incidences of violence against Black women and girls in the borough over recent months resulting in the death of Elianne, what plans do the Council have to safeguard this vulnerable group?
3. In late July 2023, the council issued a 21-page document, which related to the revised decision/plan to dispose of the 157 apartments at Red Clover Gardens. It described, the withdrawal of earlier offer by Notting Hill Genesis. A new offer was to be agreed by the council from Regen Capital (reg number 13389710). This involved sale of a head lease (125 years) and a subsequent issue of a sub lease to Mears Group PLC. Regen Capital is a recently incorporated, currently dormant business, with £1 issued capital. How can such a counter party, be involved in an investment?
4. Council set to make parking easier to support local businesses” Easiest parking where no payment required No point having lots of vacant spaces if parking expensive and inconvenient. Previous administration introduced One Hour free parking in District Centres – their one car-friendly policy. Why reduce this to half hour? Why make parking by phone only? Why extend hours of control? These bad anti-car policies would each be very unpopular, and each would make parking harder. My Coulsdon Survey shows no meter-feeding problem. Bays heavily occupied. High turnover of spaces. Lots of places for more bays – best way to make parking easier.
5. When can we expect the council to solve the problem of the drug addicts living (by their own choice entirely), in a tent permanently pitched on the corner of Altyre Road who are blighting the lives of hundreds of local residents by : the squalor they create (including human waste), blatant drug taking and dealing, aggressive begging, anti-social behaviour, littering and blocking off of a large section of the pavement to passers-by, as well as being in plain sight of everyone who arrives at East Croydon Railway Station thereby giving an appalling first impression of the town?
6. The Mayor of London is proposing to name the London Overground Lines. The East Surrey Transport Committee have suggested that the Overground line between Highbury and Crystal Palace and West Croydon should be named the Coleridge-Taylor line.  
After the 19th century composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor who live in South Norwood and Croydon and was a professor at the Crystal Palace school of music. He was taken ill on West Croydon station on 27 August 1912 and died at his home in Croydon a few days later.

Would Croydon Council write to the Mayor of London supporting this proposal ?

7. How many downloads have there been of the Croydon music trail app and does this represent value for money?
8. The LTN schemes are not wanted by the majority of local residents (72% & 78% against) ; they are not wanted by you ; the local councillors; the MP for Croydon North ; the Government. There appears to be no supporting data for them to be retained. Why are they not being removed?

## **7. The Croydon Debate**

For Council to receive a Public Petition and / or a Member Petition.

One Public Petition has been received. The petition has been verified and is worded as follows:

We the undersigned are asking Jason Perry, the mayor of Croydon, to find a solution for the community so that we can continue to access our Asset of Community Value which is Metropolitan Open Land. We believe that all of Croydon's green spaces should be valued for their social and natural worth. We want to see Love Lane remain open for public use and for the council to commit to keeping Metropolitan Open Land free from development.

Two Member Petitions have been received. The Petitions have been verified and are worded as follows:

1. We the undersigned of Ramsey Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 6BX are writing to call on Croydon Council to consider our proposal for new parking restrictions. We are putting forward the following parking restriction times from 09.30 to 15.00. We are also asking that the restrictions would only apply Monday through to Friday. The restrictions that are in place now are too draconian. We have elderly residents on our road who are becoming more and more isolated. We also have a resident that needs home help three-four times throughout the day.
2. We the undersigned request to have a new pedestrian crossing on Park Hill Road, between Brownlow Road. and Stanhope Road.

## 8. **Reports to Council**

### a) **Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report** (Pages 31 - 42)

To note the annual report for the Audit and Governance Committee.

Annual reports shall be received at the Annual Council meeting.

The Council procedure rules 3.70 Section 4A, states the overall time which may be devoted to questioning any Annual Reports shall be not more than ten minutes per report. The Chair of the relevant Committee (or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair) shall introduce and answer questions on the report. The Chair of the Committee shall not have more than 3 minutes speaking time to introduce the report. 3.71 For the remaining time available, the report will be open to questions. In the event that any recommendation in the report has not been reached when the overall time limit has expired, it shall be put immediately to the vote. 3.72 Any Member, except the seconder of the report, may ask the Chair or Vice-Chair (as appropriate) not more than two questions on each paragraph of the report.

### b) **Independent Member Appointment - Audit and Governance Committee** (Pages 43 - 66)

To agree the appointment of an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee.

### c) **Housing Strategy** (Pages 67 - 158)

To agree the Council's Housing Strategy 2023-28 and its accompanying delivery plan.

### d) **Youth Justice Plan** (Pages 159 - 314)

To endorse the Youth Justice plan in line with statutory obligations.

### e) **Quarterly Report on the Use of Special Urgency and General Exception Procedures** (Pages 315 - 322)

To note the use of Special Urgency for the key decisions listed at section 4.4 of this report during the period April to November 2023.

### f) **Proposed Changes to the Constitution** (Pages 323 - 360)

To approve proposed changes to the Constitution.

### g) **Independent Person Appointment - Ethics Committee** (Pages 361 - 376)

To approve the appointment of an Independent Person for the Ethics Committee.

h) **Draft Council Calendar 2024-25** (Pages 377 - 390)

To approve the Draft Council Calendar for 2024-25.

**9. Questions to Mayor and Executive**

To receive questions from Councillors. The first five minutes of this item may be used by the Mayor to make any announcements.

**10. Maiden Speeches**

For Council to receive the Maiden Speeches of the remaining newly-elected members of the May 2022 Local Election.

**11. Appointments**

For Council to note the following changes to existing appointments to committees and / or sub-committees.

**CHANGES TO NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

COMMITTEE	POSITION	REPLACE	APPOINT
Appeals Committee	Reserve	Jade Appleton	Mario Creatura
Ethics Committee	Chair Vice Chair	Mario Creatura Jade Appleton	Luke Shortland Mario Creatura
Mayoralty and Honorary Freedom Selection Committee	Reserve	Mario Creatura Jade Appleton	Luke Shortland Simon Fox
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Deputy Chair Reserve	Jade Appleton Sue Bennett	Sue Bennett Mario Creatura
Scrutiny children and Young People Committee	Reserve	Luke Shortland	Endri Llabuti
Scrutiny Streets Homes and Environment Sub-Committee	Member	Luke Shortland	Nikhil Sherine Thampil

**POLITICAL PARTY GROUP OFFICER APPOINTMENTS**

Conservative Group	Chief Whip	Mario Creatura	Luke Shortland
	Deputy Whips	Luke Shortland Samir Dwesar	Simon Fox N/A



<b>APPOINTMENTS TO ALL OTHER PANELS, WORKING GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES</b>			
Members learning and Development Panel	<b>Member</b>	Jade Appleton	Simon Fox

## **12. Council Debate Motions**

To debate any motions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rules.

The following two Motions, one from the Administration and one from the Labour Group, will be debated:

### **Conservative Group Debate Motion**

The Council **RESOLVES:**

To note the recent success of our bid for £18.5m in funding from HM Government to transform our town centre. Council notes that the funding will be spent on multiple projects that cover the South End restaurant quarter, East Croydon Station, West Croydon Station, and Old Town & Croydon Minster, as well as a new civic square for the Fairfield cultural complex, connecting Queen's Gardens and Surrey Street Market.

The success of this bid shows that Croydon is a Borough with a bright future. It also shows what can be achieved by working together in partnership across the Borough - be it the Executive Mayor, Councillors, MPs, Voluntary & Faith sectors and statutory partners such as health and the Police.

### **Labour Group Debate Motion**

The Council **RESOLVES:**

To condemn the Chancellor's decision not to extend the Household Support Fund when it expires in March 2024.

The fund has provided a lifeline to hundreds of Croydon families facing hunger and hardship and its withdrawal during an ongoing cost of living crisis will hit many households hard. We call on the Executive Mayor to write to the Chancellor to urge him to extend the Household Support Fund for a further year and to publish the chancellor's reply on the council's website.



## Council

Meeting held on Wednesday, 11 October 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

## MINUTES

**Present:** Councillor Tony Pearson (Chair);

Councillors Appu Srinivasan, Kola Agboola, Jade Appleton, Jeet Bains, Leila Ben-Hassel, Sue Bennett, Adele Benson, Margaret Bird, Claire Bonham, Mike Bonello, Simon Brew, Janet Campbell, Louis Carserides, Richard Chatterjee, Chris Clark, Sherwan Chowdhury, Mario Creatura, Jason Cummings, Patsy Cummings, Nina Degrad, Rowenna Davis, Danielle Denton, Samir Dwesar, Lara Fish, Sean Fitzsimons, Alisa Flemming, Clive Fraser, Amy Foster, Simon Fox, Gayle Gander, Maria Gatland, Brigitte Graham, Matt Griffiths, Lynne Hale, Patricia Hay-Justice, Maddie Henson, Christopher Herman, Yvette Hopley, Mohammed Islam, Karen Jewitt, Mark Johnson, Humayun Kabir, Stuart King, Ola Kolade, Joseph Lee, Endri Llabuti, Enid Mollyneaux, Stella Nabukeera, Michael Neal, Tamar Barrett, Eunice O'Dame, Ian Parker, Ria Patel, Jason Perry, Ellily Ponnuthurai, Holly Ramsey, Helen Redfern, Chrishni Reshekaron, Scott Roche, Manju Shahul-Hameed, Nikhil Sherine Thampi, Luke Shortland, Andy Stranack, Aladair Stewart, Esther Sutton, Catherine Wilson, Robert Ward, Callton Young and Fatima Zaman

**Apologies:** Councillor Stuart Collins

## PART A

### 69/21 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

### 70/21 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

### 71/21 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

72/21 **Council meeting dates**

The Civic Mayor moved that the budget and council tax meeting on 21 February 2024 be moved to 28 February to allow for negotiations with central government and a preliminary second budget meeting be scheduled on 6 March 2024.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mario Creatura, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED:**

That the budget council tax meeting on 21 February 2024 be moved to 28 February 2024 and a preliminary second budget meeting be scheduled on 6 March 2024.

73/21 **Announcements**

The Chair paid respects to the recent deaths of Bradley Hutchins on 12 September and Elieanne Andam on 27 September 2023. He stated the deaths had caused deep sadness in the community and asked for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for their lives, the loss to their families and the community.

Council then held a minute silence.

In his announcements, the Chair thanked Members for the success of the two events held to raise money for his charities. He stated that the events, a curry night at Royal Tandoori in Selsdon and a golf day at Farleigh Golf Club had cross party support and past Mayors, visiting Mayors from other Boroughs and a variety of businesses as guests. He expressed gratitude for the support and confirmed that details of future charity events, the Chinese New Year, a beer festival and a gala dinner would be circulated when finalised.

The Executive Mayor in his announcements, expressed deep shock at the recent tragic loss of young lives in the borough. He advised that significant investment had been made in community intervention programmes to guide those at risk away from violence, but it was clear more needed to be done. He advised the Council would work closely with partners to increase efforts to make Croydon a safer place for young people.

The Executive Mayor then expressed sympathy with those affected by the recent conflict between Israel and Gaza especially those anxiously awaiting news about the safety of their loved ones.

Finally, the Executive Mayor advised Members of the results of the independent review of arrangements for the election count in May 2022. He stated that the review had concluded that the election was transparent, safe, and secure, identified areas for improvement and the action plan to implement

the Panel's eleven recommendations was approved by the General Purposes Committee on 9 October 2023. The Executive Mayor then invited the Chair of the General Purposes Committee to make further comments.

Councillor Sean Fitzsimons, the Chair of the General Purposes Committee advised the independent review panel had recommended an action plan for future elections in the borough and although the report had criticised the Returning Officer (RO) and staff, it also contained many positive comments. He advised resources were needed to meet democratic requirements to ensure confidence of all stakeholders in the election and better logistics on the day of the count.

The Executive Mayor proposed to reduce the allocated time to a number of the standing items in order to ensure that the Members could conduct all of the necessary business of the meeting. The Civic Mayor moved to suspend Council procedure rules in the following:

- At Item 9a, Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report, to suspend council procedure rules (3.70-3.71 of Section 4A) to move the recommendations without questions.
- At Item 9b, Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to suspend council procedure rules (3.66 of Section 4A) to allow the Chair of Scrutiny to introduce the report on behalf of all the sub-committee chairs.
- At Item 12, Maiden Speeches (3.7 of Section 4A), to defer the item to next Council meeting.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mario Creatura, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED to reduce the time allocated to the items of business in the agenda to ensure all business of the meeting could be completed.**

#### 74/21 **Croydon Question Time**

Before the Croydon Question Time, the Chair informed Council that many residents had submitted questions about knife crime and community safety due to the recent tragic events in the Borough. He advised that in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules similar questions had been grouped together and the first question had been allocated to this topic. He advised that residents who still had questions following the response at the meeting should contact Democratic Services via the online form.

## Public Questions

1. The answer was given and printed in the agenda. The questioner had no supplementary question.
2. In response to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner asked a supplementary question about how penalty notices would be issued if the identity of the perpetrators were unknown as there were no cameras to help identify them.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, advised the NSL service had been cancelled and forcibly taken away. The Council was looking into other options such as redesigning the service, redeveloping the app, reestablishing a new team, and revisiting options the Council could financially support given its limited resources.

3. In response to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner asked if the Executive Mayor would write to the Mayor of London to ascertain if his recent strategy for transport in London would be reviewed in accordance with the national guidance and if Croydon would make any changes to its strategy as a result.

The Executive Mayor in response stated the Council was awaiting the release of the detailed guidance on the strategy and he would consult with the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment to respond accordingly.

4. In response to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner stated the problem was more about crossing the main road to get to the school. As most children were too small to see round or over the buses before crossing the road. More safety measures were needed.

Councillor Scott Roche, the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment in response stated, that the relevant officers would investigate the specific situation and respond to the questioner accordingly.

5. In response, to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner disagreed there was inclusivity and primary support for children with learning disabilities in the Borough. She detailed the difficulties face by her children such as lack of SENCO staff and suitable non-overwhelming learning environments in addition to the closure of Dyslexic society due to budget cuts as evidence the Council needed to do more primary aged early intervention for children in Croydon.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young people, Councillor Maria Gatland, advised the questioner to email her directly so she could discuss the situation with the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education.

6. It was noted that Question 7 had been withdrawn and deferred to the next meeting of Council.

7. In response, to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner asked if the Executive Mayor to write to the Department for Transport and urge them to negotiate with Rail Delivery Group and The Mayor of London as the decision to withdraw the One Day Paper Travel Card would be detrimental to public transport users in Croydon.

The Executive Mayor responded that he was happy to write to the Department of Transport.

8. In response, to the answer given and printed in the agenda, the questioner asked about the start and end date of the analysis and when specific actions would commence to increase the uptake for funded 2-year-old Early Years places in the Borough.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, advised she was uncertain of the timing but would be happy to confirm the specifics later in response to a direct email from the questioner.

## 75/21 **The Croydon Debate**

Council received a public petition for the reopening of a visitors' centre in South Norwood Country Park that achieved just over 2,500 signatures by the deadline for submission to the meeting.

Mr Will Hoyle, the lead petitioner, attended Council and made a case for how important the visitors' centre was to the community before its closure. He advised that a restored visitors' centre would present renewed education opportunities, be a base for arts activities, allow the Friends group to expand its conservation work and bring the environment garden to its full potential.

He further advised reopening the refreshment kiosk as an income stream for the park would give residents the sense their park was valued and halt the decline in recent years. He asked the Council to commit to a timeline for reopening of the visitors' centre in the park and actively lead the process of exploring funding options to finance the reopening of the centre.

The Executive Mayor thanked Mr Hoyle for bringing the petition, the Friends Group of Southern Country Park for their great work and the local residents who signed the petition. He advised that the visitor centre had been severely damaged by arson in 2020 and should have been dealt with swiftly as an insurance claim and rebuilt by the previous administration. He stated that the present administration was building a record of investing in Croydon's parks by accessing several funding options and wished more resources was available to the Council to help resolve the issues facing many parks in the borough.

Councillor Amy Foster, the Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, responded by highlighting the work of the grassroots organisations and community champions and commended their efforts with Stanley Hall and South Norwood Library. She advised the issue was about trust and not money, as backing the petition was a committed group with a wealth of expertise that had raised over £10,000 to run a pop-up visitors' centre right next to the building. She advised the Council should use this opportunity to revitalize the space as this would empower local communities and protect the Borough's assets.

Councillor Scott Roche, the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, clarified the works being carried out by the Council at the site, such as viewing platforms repair with £30,000 compensation from Thames Water, major ground works to improve the biodiversity of the site, and encourage more diverse bird population and, depending on finances, there were further plans to commence the maintenance programme and recruitment of Park Wardens. He stated the Council was committed to doing everything under very restricted circumstances to improve the park.

Councillor Christopher Herman, Shadow Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, advised that since the fire, there had been no commitment to reopen the visitors' centre or a time frame for when residents could expect anything to be done. He stated that there were legitimate concerns that without the visitors' centre the park would continue to decline and the Council needed to be transparent and provide a time frame for the reopening of the visitors' centre.

Mr Will Hoyle, the lead petitioner, stated the fact that residents understood the Council's financial problems but that this did not mean the park was not falling into disrepair. What would be welcomed was the council exploring funding opportunities and the Executive Mayor committing to meeting with residents until funding was in place.

In closing, the Executive Mayor stated that despite the financial situation, the Council had shown a commitment to the improvement of parks in the borough and empowerment of local communities. He committed to meet with local residents and the Friends Group to discuss and explore sources of external funding and future improvements in the park within the financial context of the Council.

#### Member Petition

Councillor Holly Ramsey introduced a Petition for the introduction of a weight restriction on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on Plough Lane, Purley.

Residents believed this measure would address issues such as the volume and speed of vehicles, safety concerns, road damage, and increased noise and pollution. She advised that although Plough Lane was unsuitable for HGVs due to its width and road setting; however, it was regularly being used as a cut-through for those vehicles, and this usage had increased



substantially over the years due to continuous developments and since the opening of the incinerator in Sutton.

She stated that in recent months there had been two major gas leaks requiring continuous repairs and works with obvious financial implications for the council and other bodies. In addition, residents felt endangered when HGVs had to constantly drive onto the very narrow pavements to avoid similar vehicles moving in the opposite direction, and this was a danger to pedestrians, cyclists, those using the GP surgery and the pharmacy, and the large number of John Fisher School pupils who used Plough Lane for after school sports at the playing fields. The fact that residents on the Sutton side were calling for the same restrictions demonstrated an overwhelming consensus for this issue to be resolved, so hopefully the administration and officers, working with Sutton Council, would find the best solution to this issue.

In response, Councillor Scott Roche, Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment clarified that a request was received from Sutton Council at the end of September, seeking the Council's views on the proposals to introduce a 7.5 tonne restriction on Sandy Lane, Forest Drive and Plough Lane corridor between Wallington and Perley. He explained that the length of the corridors was in Sutton, but summer Plough Lane was within Croydon. It was explained the proposals were part of Sutton Council's wider initiative to provide healthy streets and safe conditions for cyclists and pedestrians.

Councillor Scott Roche stated that whilst the objections were welcomed, an assessment on whether the proposals had the potential to displace issues to neighbouring parts of Croydon was needed so officers were asked to assess the proposals and report back.

76/21 **Reports to Council**

77/21 **Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report**

Councillor Yvette Hopley, the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care introduced the report which outlined the work of the Board with the council's key partners in both health and social care and future opportunities.

She advised the Board met five times during the year as part of its statutory duties to review strategic work and pharmaceutical needs. She stated that updates on the new integrated care systems and substructures, had played a key part in promoting integrated care across the system and the Council was currently carrying out a review of the current Health Wellbeing Board strategy. She thanked the Local Government Association for its assistance in working with the Board during initial scoping meetings.

Councillor Yvette Hopley encouraged Members to read the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment report, which was a digitally produced live document that highlighted all future health and social care needs and was published on the Croydon Observatory website. She advised that despite challenges, the achievements through the Board included developing a newly refreshed

health care plan, transforming mental health services for children, work on the government funded Discharge Fund, fulfilling the Executive Mayor's Manifesto pledge by having a mental health summit in partnership with boy and citizens.

She stated that the programme of works reflecting this year would be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board soon. She closed by thanking Councillor Janet Campbell and all Members for the cross-party support.

The Executive Mayor MOVED the recommendations.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mario Creatura, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED, to:** Note the Annual Report.

## 78/21 **Scrutiny and Overview Committee Annual Report**

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Rowenna Davis Council in moving the recommendation stated:

- Scrutiny Committee was an independent minded, cross-party group of councillors whose job was to hold the Council's executive and partners to account with the right to ask for information, robustly challenge and question those in power and make recommendations for change.
- She welcomed the renewed strength of the Scrutiny committee which had allowed it to scrutinise the council's finances to ensure the Council was making the best use of the funds provided by struggling residents. The Children's Sub-Committee had questioned how money was spent on children in the Borough; the Streets Sub-Committee had scrutinised the New Year waste contract; and the Health Sub-Committee had fought to ensure the Council obtained its fair share of funding. The Homes Sub-Committee had ensured that tenants were getting the decent service they paid for.
- Councillor Rowenna Davis advised that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee had concluded the budget was ambitious in its plans to turn around the Council's finances, but acknowledged the difficulty with the outstanding debt and was committed to relentlessly supporting the Council's efforts to broker a deal with national governments to enable Croydon to be financially independent again.

Councillor Rowenna Davis encouraged Members to read the report and highlighted the following achievements:

- The introduction of the Homes Sub-Committee had helped shine a light on those languishing in expensive temporary accommodation and ensured that the horrific conditions experienced by residents at Regina Road would not be repeated.

- The agreement by all the political groups to change the rules that allowed new Green and Liberal Democrat voices into Scrutiny.
- The changes to council tax enforcement resulting from the Scrutiny meeting with residents struggling to pay their bills. The haunting testimony of those who conceived the council to lack empathy and accessibility led to the practical recommendations rooted in their experience. Some of the changes might have seemed small, but they could offer lifelines to the council's most vulnerable.
- In response to a question about the impact of having a member of the Opposition as Chair of Scrutiny had made on the ability to hold the Mayor to account, Councillor Rowenna Davis said she welcomed the decision and the cross-party decision to allow extra spaces for Green and Liberal Democrat Councillors on the committees, and that the introduction of the new Homes Sub-Committee had strengthened scrutiny but the committee's efficiency could be further improved by reviewing timetables to ensure adequate time for consideration of reports before Cabinet meetings.
- When asked how the committee learnt about the cost of living crisis in Croydon, and how it planned to continue its work in this area, Councillor Davis responded that the committee, through meetings with faith groups, food bank leaders, community leaders and charities, was able to identify the issues with digital exclusion, council tax enforcement and debt and, due to the lack of awareness about the council tax hardship support scheme, the committee had made a recommendation to include information on the support scheme on the back of each council tax bill.
- In response to a question on the recommendations after the committee's recent review of the community safety partnership, Councillor Davis said the committee considered violence against women and girls and domestic abuse and had made recommendations such as the inclusion of victims in the process of using community partnerships to deal with domestic violence and the use of domestic violence champions in the local communities. She stated that the committee would follow up the recommendations to evaluate their impact after implementation.
- In response to a question whether the committee was planning to consider the financial impact of the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) on residents, Councillor Davis advised that though the committee was happy to consider issues suggested by Members, it was best it focused on topics such as the impact of the increase in council tax on local residents, where the Council had direct power and control and that which the Scrutiny Committee could influence or improve through recommendations.

- Councillor Rowenna Davis, in response to several questions confirmed that recommendations from Scrutiny were not based on opinions but were data driven.
- In response to a question, Councillor Ria Patel, the Chair of Streets & Environment Scrutiny sub-Committee advised that the Sub-Committee had held several discussions on what improvements could be made in future to address missed collections by looking at lessons learnt from Veolia's waste contract and service.
- In response to a question on the similarities between the Improvement and Assurance Panel and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Rowenna Davis stated that both were focused on the Council's budget. She advised that Croydon's finances remained the centrepiece of Scrutiny work and committee members were upskilling and training to equip themselves to ask the right questions about Croydon's budget and finances.
- In response to a question about the benefits of the sub-committee Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel, Chair of the Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee, stated that she welcomed the creation of the Homes Sub-Committee as it had enabled proper oversight of the Housing Transformation Programme. Having a dedicated committee focused on this was very helpful. She advised that there were challenges with finance and capacity due to the pressure of the homelessness relief duty on the budget but these issues were sector wide and not unique to Croydon.
- In response to questions, Councillor Rowenna Davis stated that Scrutiny had not scheduled a dedicated session to look into the Council's decision to invest in the property market and the disparity between acquisition and sale values of Croydon's assets. She advised she was happy to discuss the possibility with Scrutiny members.
- In conclusion, Councillor Rowenna Davis thanked officers, political leaders, and members of the community for their hard work towards the report.

Councillor Richard Chatterjee the vice-chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee seconded the motion. It was put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED, to: Note the Report.**

## 79/21 **Equalities Strategy**

The Executive Mayor, Councillor Jason Perry in moving the recommendations of the Equality Strategy Report stated:

That the Council's current equality strategy was adopted in 2021 during a period of significant transformation and change, including the impact of the

COVID 19 pandemic, shifts in working practices, and the Council's response to the 2020 Report in the Public Interest.

He explained that the strategy sought to build on the foundations laid by the original strategy and reflected the results of recent changes and initiatives introduced by the Council. It also incorporated the adoption of the George Floyd Race Matters Pledge, the Crude and Equality Pledge, New People and Cultural Transformation Strategy, the Council's work as the pilot organisation in the London Tackling Racial Inequality programme and updated the strategy by drawing on 2021 census data.

The Executive Mayor advised that the format of the strategy had been refreshed with the original four outcomes streamlined into three, all objectives redistributed accordingly, and the responsibilities for health and social care were now better reflected. He stated that he was happy to accept the amendment submitted by Councillor Stuart King which proposed that the Equality Annual Report be brought to Council to enable discussions on the progress made on delivering the Strategy.

Councillor Stuart King, Leader of the Opposition, seconded the motion and stated that:

- It was right that the Council should be addressing social inequalities as a community leader and employer and advised that the Opposition supported the adopted approach and endorsed the outcomes underpinning the strategy.
- He expressed concerns about the absence of a delivery plan alongside the strategy as the aspirations of the strategy had to be measured and monitored transparently in a meeting where all parties were represented and able to debate any progress made delivering the strategy. In closing, the Executive Mayor stated that delivery plans ensured the Council followed through on its many good strategies and he was happy to accept the amendment as Croydon was one of the most diverse boroughs in London and the strategy was designed to make Croydon as equal a place as possible and expressed gratitude for the cross-party support for the strategy.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED to:**

1. Approve the refreshed Equality Strategy 2023-2027 (Appendix A) and the updated Equality Objectives at paragraph 4.11.
2. Note the adoption on 27 September 2023 by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet of the London Local Government Anti-Racism Statement, developed by the London Councils Chief Executives London Committee (Appendix B).

3. Refer the Equality Annual Report for discussion at Full Council each year to ensure that progress delivering the strategy is visible and accountable to councillors and the community.

## 80/21 **Questions to Mayor and Executive**

Mayor Jason Perry, supported by members of the Cabinet, invited questions from Council on various topics affecting the borough. The Chair called upon councillors in turn and Mayor Perry responded that:

- The prevalence of domestic violence against women and girls was an ongoing issue and the Council was intent on tackling this. It was one of the delivery plans in the community safety strategy.
- The Council's partnerships with the police, health, and community colleagues were regularly reviewed to refresh the community safety strategy. The three delivery plans were live documents co-produced with partners and featured in the Council's budget.
- The Community Safety Strategy was reviewed, the safety delivery plans were considered by Cabinet the previous week, the Youth Justice plan was considered by Scrutiny Committee on 10 October and the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy would be coming forward in due course.
- The Community Safety Engagement Board was initiated in April 2023 at the request of local community groups.
- The Town Centre was top priority, and the council was working with partners on a renewed master plan for the Town Centre. A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was initiated in April and 130 notices within the PSPO had been issued. Also, the Safer Streets group had been reformed to support the homeless and improve the cleanliness of the Town Centre.
- Regarding Croydon Limited Partnership, the Council was currently in ongoing negotiations with Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) and firm timetables were expected towards the end of the year.
- One of the ways the Council was implementing the recommendations of the Violence Reduction Network contained in the Strategic Assessment Report 2022 was by focusing on funding community groups.

The Executive Mayor held monthly and daily meetings with the Borough Commander to discuss issues and challenges facing the borough and hold the Police to account and ensure all was being done to make Croydon's streets safe. Also, the Safer Neighbourhood Board was a public board that was in place to hold the police to account.

- The supplementary design guide (SPD) was removed in July last year. The Local Plan would be focused on design character rather than being density driven and would be agreed by Cabinet and Council.
- There was no total quantum of resources available for preventive projects but an ongoing process of funding local grassroots groups through resources drawn down from government funding in addition to council resources and advice was being sought from professional officers and professionals in the field on the best programmes to keep the Borough's young people safe.
- The Council's "blitz" clean-up campaign had successfully led to the reduction of fly tipping by 84 percent over a three-week period in Norwood and the Thornton Heath Clock Tower had been restored. The next target for the blitz cleaning was Thornton Heath.
- Cabinet approved the extension the PSPO to include Thornton Heath Ponds and the whole of Grangewood Park. The protection orders would be in place by the end of 2023. Training on what powers for use were available under the PSPO would be provided to officers.
- A public meeting with local residents to discuss violence against women and girls would be held in a few weeks to ensure the Council's plan was moving in the right direction. In addition to tackling street harassment activities in schools, there was a recognition that discussions with young people about healthy relationships was needed.

A leading UK charity, Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) was working to have interventions in schools, and the Council was working with schools and AVA to ensure those interventions were rightly targeted.

- There were measures within the delivery plan of the community safety strategy for preventing violence against women and girls to ensure the Council was setting the right targets, and that those targets were monitored and met.
- Lessons learnt in the successful Norbury blitz clean-up would be applied to the Thornton Heath blitz clean-up.
- The Youth Justice Plan was a set of priorities from central government that officers were collaborating and working hard on to address the issues, despite financial challenges to deliver the best for the Borough's young people.
- Wandle Park Café would be reopened pending resolution of the issues with the building.
- Croydon had low school pupil exclusion rates compared to other London boroughs, and it disproportionately affected black boys. However, there was intensive support from organisations such as Saffron Valley

Collegiate, grassroots community groups, and there were support mechanisms in place such as mentoring support for both excluded and managed moved children.

- Cabinet agreed the non-statutory consultation for the closure of maintained nursery schools. Five of the maintained schools already operated at a deficit; doing nothing was not an option. The consultation would enable the views of local residents to be factored into the decision.
- Officers were working hard in collaboration with the Cabinet Member for Children Services and Young people to mitigate the impact of previous budget cuts and prepare for the forthcoming youth offending service inspection.
- The ability of the Council to provide spaces for community groups had reduced significantly due to the council's debt burden and the necessary sale of assets. Officers were asked to explore the possibility of putting empty shop units into community use.
- The Council was committed to educating primary and secondary school pupils about domestic violence as part of a multi-agency approach to tackling violence and the inclusion of this approach was being drafted in the Youth Safety Plan.
- The London Borough of Culture programme's initial funding of approximately £1.5 million from the GLA was used very wisely. Officers were currently trying to use the programme to secure additional funding from the Arts Council and the Lottery Fund.
- The Council was committed to working in partnership with private enterprises in the borough.
- The first papers relating to budget setting would soon be published. The Cabinet Member for Finance was engaging with the opposition parties and preparations were being made in terms of officer support to facilitate the process next year.

At this point, in accordance with Council Procedure Rules (3.3 of Section 4A) the Civic Mayor moved that the meeting be extended for a further 30 minutes up to 10 pm to allow for Item 11, Council Debate Motions to be considered.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mario Creatura, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED, to:** Extend the guillotine for a further 30 minutes to 10 pm.

It was noted that Councillor Richard Chatterjee was unable to vote on two items due to IT issues.



### **Conservative Group Motion**

Councillor Lynne Hale in moving the Conservative Group Debate Motion, spoke in favour of the motion and argued that:

- The Council's most valuable work, in terms of potential outcomes, must be focused on the borough's diverse local communities, grassroots organisations that understood exactly what their local communities needed and could deliver better value for money and more agile solutions.
- The Council would have to do less until the finances stabilised but could still listen and empower residents to do more for themselves.
- While the events of the past few weeks have been extraordinarily distressing and difficult, it had been incredibly moving to see how so many diverse communities had pulled together.

Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel spoke to the motion on behalf of the Opposition and stated that:

- The Opposition welcomed the motion and was dedicated to ensuring that local voices were heard and all residents were treated fairly with respect and dignity and solutions provided to the issues facing residents despite the council's financial situation.
- Though the Council had not been able to help in some issues such as homelessness, but could work collectively with local residents as they were happy to get more involved but wanted to be better supported. Community groups were well resourced networks and had the ability to respond and transform local assets to meet their own needs. Also, Councillors should be fully informed of the Council's initiatives and engaged to work in partnership with the Council in putting residents first.

Councillor Ola Kolade, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, seconding the motion argued that:

- The Council was listening to its diverse communities and taking action to tackle the key issues in the borough and this meant true partnership, fostering relationships with voluntary and community groups and faith groups, listening to residents, empathizing and addressing the issues that mattered to them.
- The Council was also listening to the business community and actively seeking opportunities to support town and district centres and local businesses in areas that have been let down for too long.

- Diverse committee groups had played a key role in co-creating and co-delivering over 30 projects with over 50 schools engaged in community safety.
- The introduction of the Residence Charter and a community safety engagement board, the Blitz Clean-up campaign was evidence that the Council was listening to its diverse communities and taking action to tackle the key issues facing local residents.

Councillor Rowenna Davis, Chair of Scrutiny argued that:

- Whilst the Opposition would vote for the motion, it had no confidence in the words due to the results of past attempts. She stated that the passion expressed in the community meetings after the recent tragic events showed that residents were desperate to get involved.
- She advised that Council should have given residents opportunities to help design and lead solutions to the violence in the borough or explore examples of best practice from other London boroughs such as Islington Council's Fairness Commission on Newer Citizens Assemblies.

The motion was put to the vote, with Council voting UNANIMOUSLY in favour of the motion.

**RESOLVED, that:**

1. The Council was committed to listening to, respecting and working in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities.
2. The Council was dedicated to ensuring that local voices were heard and were at the heart of every work and that all residents were treated fairly, with respect and dignity.

The Executive Mayor speaking in response to the debate stated:

- He was grateful for the cross-party support and advised that the Residents Charter was an important living document, that demonstrated the Council's commitment to listening to residents and encouraging their involvement in the decisions which impact on their lives such as the appointment of house service repair contractors and the regeneration of Regina Road.
- The new homelessness prevention team was now up and running and the new staffing structure would be aiming to ensure that the maximum wait time for new cases would be two weeks; emergencies could be seen to within 48 hours with a new focus of preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity and ensuring that residents were treated fairly with respect and dignity.

## **Labour Group Motion**

Councillor Callton Young OBE, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance in moving the Labour Group Motion stated:

- That this year, Croydon proudly joined the nation in celebrating 'Windrush 75', marking 75 years since the Empire Windrush's arrival at Tilbury in 1948, bringing 1,027 passengers from the Caribbean including 500 from Jamaica.
- He explained that this saw the start of the 'Windrush Generation' defined as people who arrived in the UK from the Caribbean between 1948 and 1973, invited by the British government to help rebuild the mother-country after World War II. Croydon Council saluted the 'Windrush Generation,' their contribution to post-war Britain and enrichment of our borough's cultural diversity.
- Councillor Callton Young advised that as Windrush 75 was being celebrated, the country must address ongoing fallout from the 'Hostile Environment,' which had left many Windrushers still seeking fair and just compensation for the adverse impact on their lives.
- He stated that it was recognised that legacies of the past still manifested themselves today in inequitable outcomes for Windrush descendants as evidenced in the educational attainment of Black boys who were disproportionately excluded from mainstream education. These issues required robust policies to address them.
- Councillor Callton Young affirmed Croydon's commitment to becoming an anti-racist Council and apologised for past unjust Council policies, like the 'Ban on Bashment' affecting Reggae, Grime and Hip-Hop performers, that was introduced in 2008 and lasted for a decade. Croydon Council was resolute in supporting cultural expressions and committed to fostering a thriving, inclusive, night-time economy for all. He called for Windrush 75 to remind us of our shared history and our unwavering commitment to social justice and inclusivity in Croydon.

Councillor Andy Stranack, the Cabinet Member for Culture spoke in favour of the motion and stated that:

- He had agreed with the Executive Mayor that this year as the London Borough of Culture, a spotlight must be shone on the rich, diverse communities that make up Croydon. It was the reason the year started with the successful Caribbean Influences exhibition which would be on display at the National Portrait Gallery until middle of February 2024.
- Croydon had played an important role in the celebrations nationally and local events were held which celebrated the vital contribution that the Windrush generation had made to Croydon, but also did not shy away from

personal testimonies of the hostile environments that newcomers faced even before and after they arrived in the UK.

- Thankfully, so many of this first generation showed courage and perseverance through the discrimination and had created the diverse communities present today, there was a need to learn and continue to learn and shine a spotlight on their experiences to overcome existing barriers and prevent the erection of new ones.
- Over the next six months, the Borough of Culture would certainly continue to support events that highlighted and celebrated the Windrush generation.

Councillor Patsy Cummings speaking in favour of the motion argued that:

- A hostile environment policy introduced in the late 2000s to deter illegal immigration, required the Windrush generation to provide documents going back decades. Unfortunately, due to various reasons, they were unable to provide this, resulting in significant challenges to their rights and legal status.
- The consequences of these policies brought about unimaginable suffering for some people who had lived in the UK for most of their lives, who suddenly faced deportation, were wrongfully detained and denied access to health care and employment, and some lost their homes.
- The scandal that erupted in 2018 shed light on the government's mishandling of their legal status and triggered an official inquiry. The Home Office promised to resolve the situation, acknowledging that the Wind Rush Generation had been treated wrongly.
- On 22 June 2018, Croydon Council became the first local authority in the country to establish and celebrate an annual Windrush Day, in recognition of the rich diversity Commonwealth citizens had brought to the borough and the Windrush Flag was raised.
- In December 2018, Councillor Callton Young and Councillor Patsy Cummings moved a motion which was carried unanimously to call upon the Conservative Central Government not to cap compensation amounts payable to victims of the hostile environment and to continue to review by our business policies and procedures to support those affected, and to press the Prime Minister, at the time, to call an independent public inquiry into the Windrush scandal.
- Councillor Patsy Cummings in conclusion, stated that the Windrush Generation encapsulated a significant chapter in the history of recent migration in the UK, while some steps have been taken to rectify those historical wrongs, and while this local authority was playing its part, it remained essential to remember the Windrush generation, who played a pivotal role in rebuilding culture.

Councillor Joseph Lee speaking in favour of the motion stated that:

- He was a child of the Windrush Generation and was proud of the contributions they had made to enrich the UK, culturally, economically, and socially. He commended their resilience, hard work, and unwavering commitment to a better future for themselves and for the United Kingdom.
- The legacy of Windrushers was woven into the fabric of our society, and it was a legacy that should be honoured, cherished and celebrated. The fact that legacy still affected outcomes for Windrush descendants could not be ignored such as was seen in the education attainment of Black boys who were disproportionately excluded from mainstream education.
- The Council's commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation needed working together to dismantle the barriers in the way of a more equitable future that was fair, inclusive for all where everyone, regardless of their background, could thrive and contribute to the vibrant tapestry of Croydon.

Councillor Callton Young exercising his right of last reply argued that:

- The government had promised to right the wrongs done to the Windrushers but five years later, too many victims were still fighting. He advised that the finding of a public review in 2017 was that the 'Ban on Bashment' policy had been written into the Council's licensing policy for almost a decade. He stated the Council must become an anti-racist Council and never again should it be allowed to attack a cultural expression best celebrated as part of the Croydon's collective diversity.

The motion was put to the vote, with Council voting UNANIMOUSLY in favour of the motion.

**RESOLVED, to:**

1. Affirm the Council's commitment to becoming an anti-racist Council and extend apologies for past unjust Council policies, like the 'Ban on Bashment' affecting Reggae, Grime and Hip-Hop performers, that was introduced in 2008 and lasted for a decade.
2. Affirm the Council's resolution and commitment to supporting cultural expressions and fostering a thriving, inclusive, night-time economy for all.

The Executive Mayor speaking in response to the debate stated:

- That the contributions by the Windrushers to the country should be commended but many governments had mistreated them over time and those injustices should be put right. He commended Councillor Callton Young for stopping the 'Ban on Bashment' Policy in his party within those

ten years.

- The Executive Mayor stated that the Council had adopted a refreshed Equality Strategy, tonight building on the adoption of the George Floyd Race Matters pledge. Ensuring the Council had an accurate and relevant Equality Strategy that was anti-racist was pivotal to success in the provision of essential services to all London Borough of Croydon residents.
- He concluded the Council must be committed to tackling social justice, injustice and ensuring inclusivity so that all Croydon residents felt valued and respected.

82/21 **Maiden Speeches**

This item was deferred to the next Council meeting.

(Please see minute 73/21)

83/21 **Appointments**

No changes to appointments were proposed.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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# **Audit and Governance Committee**

## **Annual Report 2022/23**

## **Foreword**

It is my pleasure to present this annual report for the Audit and Governance Committee for 2022/23 to Full Council.

This report highlights the work of the Committee over the last year as provided within the Committee's 'Terms of Reference and Scope of Work'. It also includes a brief forward look into the year ahead on the Committee's work and developments. I have specific comments in the report in relation to the Council's exit strategy and expected outcomes in governance and financial control in the next few years to satisfy the requirements of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities.

I would like to thank the officers, external auditors, cabinet members, professional advisers, and of course, members of the Audit and Governance Committee for their input and support of the work of the Committee. It has been an eventful year, with the Council issuing its third S114 in January 2023, while continuing to work to implement actions arising from the Reports in the Public Interest in January 2022 and October 2020.

The Audit and Governance Committee continues to provide a robust and independent challenge to the processes, structures and arrangements surrounding the Council's audit, assurance, risk management, financial control, and governance framework. Significant focus has been given to the latter two in recent times, particularly as it concerns the risks to the Council's underlying financial sustainability, the effectiveness of its governance and assurance arrangements, and the Council's ability to deliver services to residents.

As mentioned in my last report, soon after I took on the role of the Independent Chair of the Committee, The Council remains on a journey of improvement and transformation, which may take some time to manifest in improved outcomes for the people of Croydon. It is clear, Mr Mayor that the Council is on the right track in its journey of improvement and transformation, but equally clear that there is still a long way to go to embed the required culture, control, sustained financial discipline, and fully mitigate the impact of the historical challenges.

The Committee continues to seek assurances on the effectiveness and pace of delivery of programmes to reinforce the values, discipline and culture to deliver sustained financial recovery and reporting, budgetary control, risk management and effective governance in an open and transparent environment.

The Council would recall some of the immediate actions taken in the previous year to strengthen the work of the committee, including the change in the name and terms of reference of the committee, development activities for Committee



members, strengthened relationship with the Council and other Committees, the introduction of an Action Tracker, and greater use of benchmarking, peer and best practice reviews. These were reinforced in the past year with further training and support for committee members, improved reporting by offices for the committee and the improvement of the terms of reference for an independent member with technical and financial expertise to be appointed within the next year. The Committee also plans to make greater use of benchmarking, peer reviews and best practice information. The Committee intends to spend some time reviewing its work plan for 2023/24 to ensure that it remains robust and effective in providing independent assurance across all areas within its terms of reference.

Once again, I thank my colleagues on the Committee, The Executive Mayor and his Cabinet members, the Council's Chief Executive and her team, and all members of the Council for their support of the work of the Committee during the year. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the additional time and responsiveness of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Chair of Scrutiny, Section 151 Officer, Head of Internal Audit, and the Committee's Democratic Services and Governance Officers to my challenge and frequent requests for meetings and assurance as the Independent Chair of the Committee.

The next year will be even more demanding as the Committee seeks assurance and evidence of effective budgetary controls and financial estimates by the Council, accurate assessment of its assets, liabilities and reserves, effective risk assessments, openness, transparency and capacity, capabilities and pace to deliver the required financial stability, culture transformation and learning from the various statutory and non-statutory reports on its finance, internal control and governance to deliver efficient public services to its and best value in the use of public funds. The Committee will also place additional focus on the governance arrangement to ensure the pace, trajectory and delivery of the Council's "Exit Strategy" agreed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities.

**Dr Olu Olasode PhD APSA FCCA**  
**Independent Chair**  
**Audit and Governance Committee**

## Introduction

1. The Audit and Governance Committee (the Committee) has a wide ranging brief that underpins the Council's governance processes by providing independent challenge and assurance of the adequacy of risk management, internal control including audit, anti-fraud and the financial reporting frameworks. It also deals with a limited number of matters not reserved to the Council or delegated to another Committee and related to a non-executive function. The Committee was formed in 2023, replacing the former General Purposes and Audit Committee.
2. The inaugural meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee was on 7 July 2022, with the Committee meeting six times during the year.
3. This report details the work of the Committee during 2022-23, outlining the progress in:
  - Internal Control;
  - Governance;
  - Risk management;
  - Internal Audit;
  - Anti-fraud;
  - External Audit;
  - Financial reporting
4. This report also looks forward to 2023-24 and highlights some of the changes and improvements planned.
5. Members of Committee have a wide range of skills and bring both technical and professional experience to the role. Table 1 details the Committee Members for 2022-23.

**Table 1: Members of the Audit and Governance Committee 2022-23**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Membership during 2022/23</b>
Independent Chair	Dr Olu Olasode
Vice-Chair	Councillor Matt Griffiths
Member	Councillor Claire Bonham
Member	Councillor Simon Brew
Member	Councillor Sherwan Chowdry
Member	Councillor Patricia Hay Justice
Member	Councillor Endri Llabuti

Member	From 25 July to 14 December 2022 Councillor Danielle Denton From 14 December 2022 onwards: Councillor Nikhil Sherine Thampi
Independent Member	Vacant
Reserve Members:	Councillors: Sean Fitzsimons, Simon Fox, Mark Johnson, Enid Mollyneaux and Stella Nabukeera (and one conservative member vacancy.)

6. Full Council, at the meeting held on 21 May 2022, approved amendments to the constitution, which included the removal of the General Purposes and Audit Committee and the instatement of the Audit and Governance Committee. The subsequent meeting of Full Council on 25 July 2022 amended the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee to include an additional Conservative party member, to better reflect the political balance of the Council.
7. The Committee has advertised for the vacant post of independent member, and following a shortlisting, commenced interviewing potential candidates in June 2023.
8. With a new committee, come new members. In addition, following the local elections in May 2022, some of these members were new to the Council.
9. On 1 June 2022, prior to the Committee's first meeting, all the committee members attended a learning and development session. Led by the Local Government Association, the session included:
  - Roles and responsibilities of the Committee (and officers reporting to it)
  - Understanding the control system
  - Risk management
  - Appropriate challenge and escalation.
10. The use of an 'actions tracker', initiated with the General Purposes and Audit Committee in 2021/22 was fully implemented. This helps monitor the implementation of actions arising from each Committee
11. The Committee has worked to strengthen its relationships and working relationships within the Council, for instance with the Ethics and the Scrutiny Committees, where the Chairs of this Committee and the Ethics and the Scrutiny Committees have attended a meeting each others Committee and been liaising during the course of the year.

## **The work of the Committee in 2022-23**

12. The Audit and Governance Committee has continued to provide a robust and independent challenge to the processes, structures and arrangements surrounding the Council's audit, assurance, risk management, financial control, and governance framework.
13. Significant focus was particularly given to the latter two during the last year, as these particularly impact the Council's underlying financial sustainability, the effectiveness of its governance and assurance arrangements, and the Council's ability to deliver services to residents.

### **Governance**

14. The Audit and Governance Committee continued to monitor progress in the Council delivering its various improvement action plans arising from the RIPI 1, RIPI 2, Croydon Renewal Plan, investigation and other reports. These were amalgamated in the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement presented to the Committee at the meeting held on 19 January 2023.
15. This oversight included, but was not limited to, seeking assurance and evidence of:
  - Effective risk management of executive decisions on projects.
  - Compliance with legal advice, procedures and the Council's Constitution
  - Working within delegated authority and seeking approvals where needed.
  - Governance of Strategic Developments, with clear guidance on the roles of the nominated representatives.
16. In addition, the Committee considered additional measures that should be taken to address the risk of non-compliance in future.
17. The Committee has also continued to seek to better understand and obtain assurance over the Council's financial governance, with reports being received on:
  - budget monitoring and the deficit recovery plan,
  - Oracle Fusion developments, and
  - The 'Opening the books' exercise.
18. Following the issue of the S114 notice in November 2022, the Committee obtained an update on progress at the 19 January 2023 meeting and assurance of the subsequent action plan arising from the S114 at its February 2023 meeting. The Committee continues to monitor and challenge the progress of these actions.
19. During the year, the Committee also approved the Council's whistleblowing policy and governance framework.

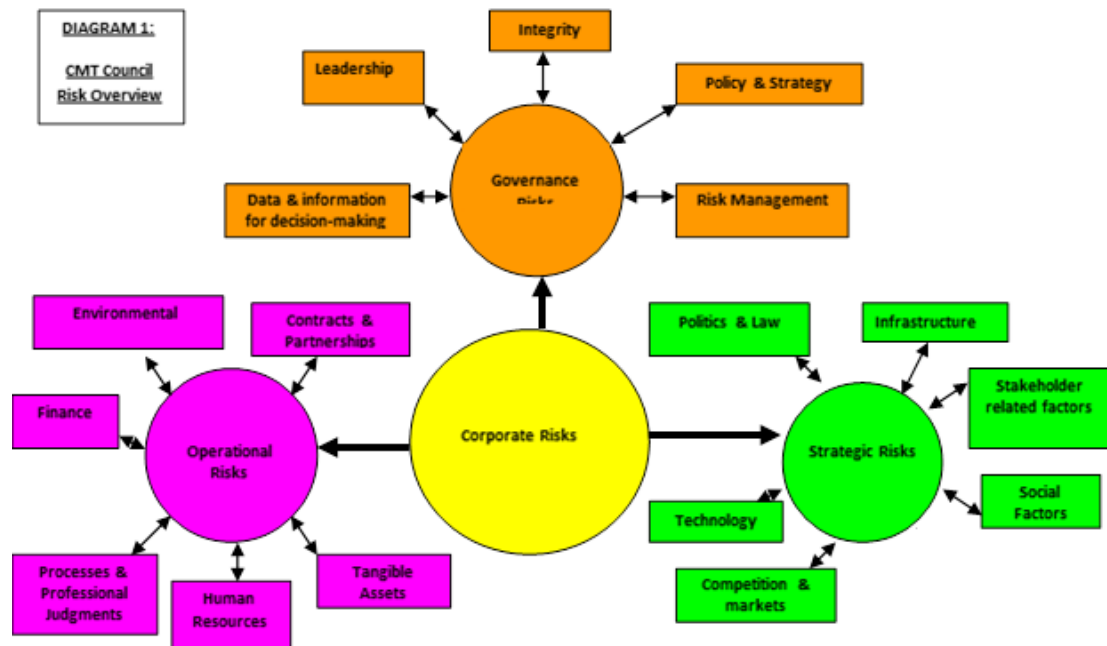
## **Internal Control**

20. A pivotal role of the Committee is its work in developing the Council's internal control and assurance processes culminating in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to review the effectiveness of its systems of internal control and publish the AGS each year alongside the financial statements. The information for the AGS is generated through the Council's Assurance framework (Appendix 1) including:
- Risk management;
  - Internal Audit;
  - Anti-Fraud;
  - External Audit.
21. The Committee leads this review by receiving, at every meeting, reports on these service areas.
22. To support its understanding of issues relating to internal control and to emphasise its commitment to a robust internal control environment, the Committee invites officers to attend its meetings to give briefings in relation to strategic risks and what is being done to mitigate these. It also invites officers to give explanations where significant issues are identified through internal audits.

## **Risk Management**

23. The Council has a formal risk management framework that is modelled on best practice activities operated within local authorities and other public sector organisations. This framework sets out the requirements and responsibilities for the management of risk for all employees and includes activities such as a formal quarterly review and reporting process for the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Department Management Teams (DMTs).
24. The Council's key strategic risks are identified, recorded and reviewed continuously to ensure integration between the risk management framework and the strategic, financial and performance management frameworks using the reporting framework detailed in Diagram 1. Work to strengthen corporate risk management this year has included:
- a. CMT formally reviewing all red risks on a monthly basis.
  - b. Every corporate risk owner, Director and Corporate Director being formally required to review and sign off their risks via the JCAD corporate risk system on a quarterly basis with a formal audit trail to assure compliance.
  - c. The commissioning of an independent 'Enterprise Risk Management Healthcheck Review and Action Plan' received by the committee at its November meeting

- d. The establishment of a new departmental risk champions network to assist risk owners with the embedding of the council's risk management framework.

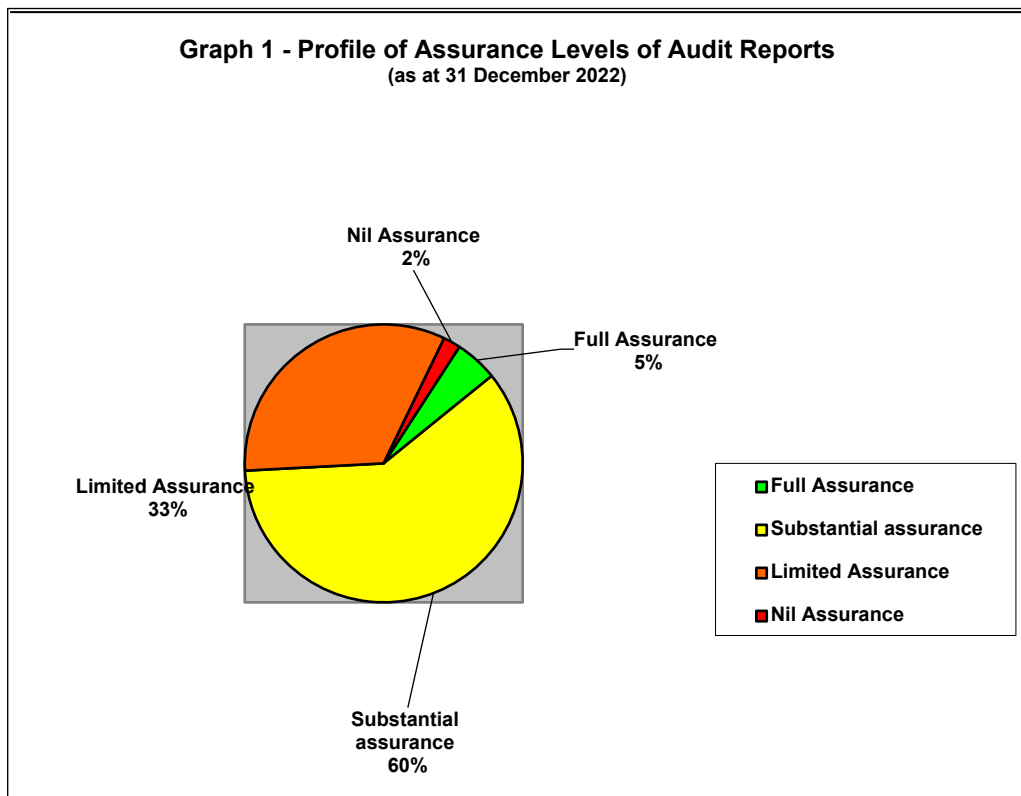


The Committee, periodically, receives a report on either corporate rated 'red' risks or a 'deep dive' on a specific identified 'high rated' risk. Committee members by reviewing the current 'high rated' risks and conducting 'in-depth' reviews of risks have sought to scrutinise and receive assurance on the application of the risk management framework in the organisation. An example of a risk register deep dive conducted by the committee was into ICT critical systems failure with a presentation given by the Chief Digital Officer & Director of Resident Access to the February 2023 meeting.

### Internal Audit

25. The Audit Charter, Audit Strategy and the Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23 were approved by the Committee on 7 July 2022.
26. During the year, the Committee received several reports from Internal Audit, updating them on Internal Audit progress against the plan and high-risk issues identified. This included the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report for 2021/22 which provided an overall annual opinion of 'Limited' assurance and drew attention to those specific areas of weakness that were carried forward into the Annual Governance Statement.
27. Internal Audit activity reports received by the Committee throughout the year continued to identify areas where control environment improvement had been identified through audits and graph 1 shows that, as per the last Internal Audit update report of results up to 31 December 2022, 65%

of audits had full or substantial assurance. This is a significant improvement on the previous year (which was 45% at 31 December 2021).



28. Although the improvement in results of formal audits completed so far and the work across the organisation since the Reports in the Public Interest were issued by the External Auditor, other indicators are suggesting that internal control still has some way to go to be properly embedded and it is anticipated that the assurance in this year's Head of Internal Audit's Report will again be limited. These other indicators include, inter alia, the implementation of issues from several organisation wide audit reports that were limited or no assurance, and external reports published during the year identifying issues with internal control, governance and good practice.
29. A key measure of the Internal Audit service's effectiveness is the implementation of agreed actions to address the issues identified in audits. The target for implementation of actions is 80% for priority 2 and 3 actions and 90% for priority 1 actions. The stringent approach to the follow up process has continued with tight timescales for follow up work linked to the level of assurance.
30. The Committee has continued to emphasise the importance of implementing Internal Audit's recommendations and has supported Internal Audit in its work to ensure control weaknesses are effectively dealt with. The Committee has received regular updates on the status of outstanding recommendations, and where appropriate has requested further information.

31. Table 2 details the performance in this area in all follow up work completed since 1 April 2017 (up to 31 December 2022).

**Table 2: Implementation of Agreed Actions to date**

	Target	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Percentage of priority one agreed actions implemented at the time of the follow up audit	90%	100%	98%	94%	69%	50%
Percentage of all agreed actions implemented at the time of the follow up audit	80%	91%	93%	90%	82%	61%

32. While there has been an improvement in the performance of actioning outstanding agreed actions, some older outstanding agreed actions have been taking longer than desirable to be actioned. This was specifically highlighted by the Committee at its February 2023 meeting, with an update on these older agreed issues requested at the March 2023 meeting. Although sufficient progress was demonstrated at the subsequent meeting, these were not all resolved and the Committee will continue to actively monitor these.

### **Anti-Fraud**

33. As part of the Committee's role of overseeing the antifraud and corruption strategy, the committee receives periodic updates on the work of the team.
34. During the year the Committee received regular updates on the counter-fraud work undertaken by the Council's Anti-fraud team and notes the continued good results concerning proactive fraud identification and reactive investigation work, namely that between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 the Anti-Fraud team had identified in total over £1,427K savings comprising 96 successful outcomes. Furthermore, that the Council has continued with its plan to improve counter-fraud awareness across the Council and to strengthen working with our partners. This has included:
- Assisting neighbouring boroughs by providing expertise in the form of staff resources where they have gaps in expertise and generating income for Croydon Council.
  - Maintaining a learning and development programme, including face to face and e-learning opportunities.
  - Maintaining fraud reporting facilities, including a fraud hotline and dedicated email reporting facility.
35. As a result of this work, high and improved levels of awareness of fraud have been achieved generally across the organisation over recent years. This has been evidenced by the level of referrals to the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team.
36. The most significant development during the year, though, has been the establishment of a formal shared service for Anti-Fraud with the London Borough of Lambeth which went live 1 January 2023. This has already



brought about a number of significant benefits for Croydon in terms of resiliency and capacity of the service and efficiencies and costs savings by being part of a larger shared service model.

37. Some of the proactive initiatives already delivered with Lambeth colleagues have included the introduction of routine vetting for all new staff, (temporary and permanent) for any concerns of fraudulent or dishonest behaviour via the *CIFAS* system.
38. In addition resources have been redeployed as appropriate to high priority areas, for example by the introduction of routine screening for all housing tenancy successions to assist the HRA with making the best use of their housing stock for those residents most in need.
39. A number of new initiatives are planned some imminently for example the introduction of a new case management system in April which will reduce costs, and improve functionality, reliability and reporting for the organisation.

### **External Audit**

40. The Council's external audit service is currently provided by Grant Thornton (GT) under a contract let on Croydon's behalf by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA). GT works in partnership with the Council ensuring its governance processes are effective and are invited to all of the Committee meetings.
41. It should be noted that both the production of accounts, and external audit timescales continued to be delayed for 2019/20, with issues relating to the accounting for Croydon Affordable Homes/Croydon Affordable Tenures still not yet resolved. This meant that the accounts were not completed by the statutory deadline of 30 November 2020 and has delayed the subsequent audits for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Committee has received regular updates on the progress in resolving the 2019/20 audit.

### **Financial Reporting**

42. The 2020/21 accounts cannot be completed until the 2019/20 Audit is completed (refer to paragraph 31 above). This has resulted in the 2020/21 accounts not being completed by the statutory deadline of 30 November 2021 and therefore these have not yet been reported to Committee. Until the issues referred to in para 32 are resolved the timing for the audit of the 2021/22 accounts cannot be firmed up.
43. The Committee has received other financial reports, such as the update report on the Implementation of the Croydon Finance Review (April 2021), the Financial Performance report in October 2021 and a verbal update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (March 2022).

### **Looking ahead to 2023/24**

44. The Audit and Governance Committee will continue to assess, challenge, test and provide independent assurance on the robustness of the arrangements surrounding the Council's financial management, internal control, governance, and the delivery of the Council's recovery plans.
45. The Committee will be working closer with the Council's Improvement and Assurance Panel. This is with the remit of the Panel changing, following the government announcement in March 2023 of extra powers being given to the Panel.
46. Further member training is scheduled:
  - Financial reporting: To provide members with an overview of financial reporting, the Council's specific issues and how to obtain assurance.
  - Assurance Mapping: To review the Committee's terms of reference and confirm that the Committee is obtaining sufficient to satisfy the requirements of all aspects of its terms of reference.
47. The quality review of the Internal Audit function will also be conducted during 2023/24, which will include the 5 yearly External Quality Assurance (EQA) check required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).
48. It is also intended that the Committee continues to look externally, through the use of benchmarking, peer and best practice reviews to improve and keep abreast of new developments, which will feed into ongoing member development sessions.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Council</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13 December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Audit and Governance Committee Independent Member Appointment</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services</b> <a href="mailto:Adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk">Adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</a>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Jason Cummings</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b> [Insert Ref. Number if a Key Decision]	<b>No</b>	REASON: N/a
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

### 1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report identifies the candidate to be appointed as an independent co-opted non-voting Member on the Audit and Governance Committee.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

**2.1 Council is asked to:**

2.1 Support the recommendation of the Audit and Governance Committee for the preferred candidate David Clarke to be appointed as an independent co-opted non-voting member of the Committee; and,

2.2 Agree that David Clarke be appointed for an initial period of 1 year, to be extended thereafter for another 3 years, and that said appointment be subject to standards of conduct which encompass the Nolan Principles.

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 The Council Constitution provides for the Audit and Governance Committee to have an non-elected non-voting independent member on the Committee. This co-opted non-voting Member can provide the Committee with outside knowledge, experience and skills that can inform the audit work of the Committee and supplement the role of Members.

3.2 The independent member position has not been filled since the Audit and Governance Committee was set up in 2022.

**4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

4.1 The membership of the Audit and Governance Committee is seven, including an independent, suitably qualified Chair; and one independent, suitably qualified co-optee (independent member). Co-opted Members will usually be invited to serve for a term of office of four years as provided for in the Council's Scheme of Co-option at Part 6D of the Constitution.

4.2 At its meeting on 7 July 2022, this committee delegated to the Chair to commence recruitment by inviting applications for the vacant post. Once a suitable candidate was identified following the interview process, this was to be reported back to the committee to enable a recommendation to be made to Council to confirm the appointment.

4.3 After advertising the role on the Council's website, in the Council's e-newsletter, 'Your Croydon', in the local press and on LinkedIn, followed by an interview process, a suitable candidate was identified.

4.4 Council is recommended to agree the appointment of David Clarke as an independent co-opted non-voting member of the Audit and Governance Committee, in relation to Audit functions only. Such appointment is to be subject to standards of conduct which encompass the Nolan Principles. David is a resident of the borough. Professionally he is a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

- 4.5 The Panel also considered the tenure of the Independent member and agreed, rather than being for 4 years, that this should be initially for a year and then thereafter extended for another 3 years.
- 4.6 In the event that Council agrees the recommendation a letter of engagement will then be sent to the successful candidate setting out details of the Nolan Principles and other standards of conduct expected together with the agreed term of office, basis upon which the appointment may be terminated and any other relevant or applicable conditions.
- 4.7 Co-opted members of the Council are also expected to declare their interests and adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct.

## **5 FINANCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1.1 Finance have been consulted and can confirm that there are no financial implications resulting from this report. The post is not a paid position.

5.1.2 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance.  
21/11/23

## **5.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that the power to co-opt persons who are not councillors onto committees appointed by the Council under section 102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the 1972 Act'), is set out in section 102(3) of the 1972 Act. A Committee appointed under section 101 of the 1972 Act, other than a committee for regulating and controlling the finance of the local authority or of their area, may subject to section 104 of the 1972 Act, include persons who are not members of the appointing authority.

5.2.2 Section 104 of the 1972 Act will apply to any proposed appointment under section 102(3) above and provides that a person who is disqualified under Part V of the 1972 Act from being elected or being a member of a local authority shall be disqualified from being a member of a committee (including a sub-committee) of that authority, or being a representative of that authority on a joint committee (including a sub-committee) of the authority and another local authority, whether the committee or joint committee are appointed under Part VI of the 1972 Act, or under any other enactment. Part V of the 1972 Act deals, in section 80 with disqualifications from serving as a member of the Council and these requirements are applied to co-optees by virtue of

Section 104 so that if any of the circumstances in Section 80 apply (or subsequently apply) to a co-optee they are disqualified from being a co-optee.

- 5.2.3 By virtue of section 13(1) of the Local Government Act 1989, any co-opted member of a committee appointed under section 102(1) of the 1972 Act shall, for all purposes, be treated as a non-voting-member of that committee.
- 5.2.4 Separately the Council's Constitution provides in Part 3: Responsibility for functions that membership of this committee will include '1 independent suitably qualified Chair who may not be a Member or officer of the Council and 1 independent suitably qualified co-optee'.
- 5.2.5 In addition, at Part 6D of the Constitution the Council has adopted a Scheme of Co-option in relation to all co-optees. The proposed appointment falls within the provisions of the Scheme.
- 5.2.6 *Approved by:* Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

### 5.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.3.1 There are no immediate HR implications arising from the content of this report.
- 5.3.2 Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives Directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. (21/11/23)

### 5.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.4.1 The Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED], as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:

eliminate discrimination,

advance equality of opportunity,

foster good relations between different people

when carrying out their activities. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the Council being exposed to costly, time consuming and reputation-damaging legal challenges.

5.4.2 Though the committee member is not a member of the council, they will be undertaking council functions and as such will be required to pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.4.3 There are no adverse impact arising from the contents of this report.

5.4.4 Approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equality Programme Manager.  
(17/11/2023)

## **5 APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Copy of ‘Audit and Governance Committee - Independent Member’ advertisement

Appendix B – Audit and Governance Committee, Minutes, 29 September 2023

## **6 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

## **7 URGENCY**

There is none.

## **Audit and Governance Committee - Independent Member**

The London Borough of Croydon is delivering a wide-ranging programme of corporate governance and financial controls improvement. As part of that commitment, in 2022 Croydon Council established an Audit & Governance Committee. Chaired by an Independent Member, the Committee provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards within the Council. The Committee's main purposes being to:

- Provide independent assurance to the Council of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment;
- Oversee internal and external audit, helping to ensure that efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place;
- Provide independent review of the Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks
- Oversee the financial reporting and annual governance processes, and;
- Provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.

There's currently a vacancy for an Independent Member to join the Committee and become part of Croydon's improvement and strengthening of good governance. Ideally the independent member would bring to the committee a wide range of skills and experience – possessing knowledge of financial controls and management, risk, and possibly have an audit background.

You cannot be considered for appointment if you:-

- Are currently a Member, Co-opted Member, or an employee or a consultant to the authority in any capacity;
- Have been either an employee or Elected Member of the Council in the last five years;
- Are related to, or are a close friend of, any Councillor or senior officer of the Council.
- In addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a Member of the Council.
- Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.



The successful applicant will be appointed for a four-year period and ideally live or work in the borough. As co-option is a way of ensuring that all voices are represented on Council committees, we particularly encourage applicants from historically underrepresented backgrounds and communities to apply.

The estimated time commitment will vary but generally will involve attendance at seven evening meetings (6:30 pm start) per year held at Croydon Town Hall. You will also need time commitment to read the agenda papers in advance of the meetings.

Please note, there's no annual allowance associated with the position. If you are interested in serving and gaining experience of local government governance and committees, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please send your CV and supporting statement outlining how your skills and experience relate to the role to: [democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk)

Deadline for applications is Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023.

### **What is audit and governance?**

The London Borough of Croydon is committed to delivering and promoting good financial control and governance. As part of that commitment, the Council has established an Audit and Governance Committee to provide independent oversight of the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of financial reporting and annual governance processes.

### **What is an independent member?**

An independent member is a member of the general public, aged 18 or over, who works alongside the six councillors and an independent chair, on the Audit and Governance Committee. They contribute to the work of the Committee by bringing specialist knowledge and skills to the process and providing an element of external challenge and support.

Ideally, the independent member should offer a range of different skills and experience. The ideal candidate will have knowledge of local government finance, experience of financial control and management, possibly with an audit background. They must also demonstrate an ability to establish good working relationships with councillors and officers. An independent member is objective and politically independent with an ability to analyse information.

An independent member is expected to attend formal meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee and to prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda papers and supporting information in order to be familiar with the issues for discussion.

## **What skills and qualities does an independent member need?**

We are looking for people who have:

- A high level of integrity and inspire public confidence.
- Ability to be objective, independent and impartial.
- Knowledge and understanding of public sector finances, risk management, corporate governance and the roles of internal and external audit.
- Good analytical skills and the ability to scrutinise financial information and processes and to challenge appropriately.
- Good communication skills and ability to contribute to discussions.
- The ability to work effectively within a team and build good relations with others in a committee setting.
- A respect for confidentiality.
- The ability to deal with issues of a sensitive nature in a diplomatic manner.
- Knowledge/experience of local government or some other aspects of the public sector and/or of large, complex organisations at a senior level.
- An awareness of the issues currently facing local government and the key priorities for the borough.

## **Role description - What will you be expected to do?**

- To actively promote good governance, risk management and control in the delivery of the Council's functions.
- Attend and participate in formal committee meetings, providing external challenge, scrutiny and support in relation to reports presented to the committee.
- Prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda papers and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues under discussion and consider the questions you may wish to put to officers.
- At the meetings listen carefully and ask questions in a way which is non-judgemental and respects confidentiality.
- Keep up to date with key issues for the Council and the Borough; to develop your understanding of the key priorities and initiatives being pursued.
- Contribute to achieving open, accountable and transparent local democracy in Croydon.
- To abide by the Council's Constitution and Members' Code of Conduct.

## **What level of commitment is required?**

The successful applicant will be appointed for a four year period. The estimated time

commitment will vary but generally will involve attendance at seven evening (6:30 pm start) meetings per year. These last approximately three hours and are held in Croydon Town Hall. You will also need to read the agenda papers in advance of the meetings.

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- Provide independent assurance to the Council of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment;
- Oversee internal and external audit, helping to ensure that efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place;
- Provide independent review of the Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks
- Oversee the financial reporting and annual governance processes, and;
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- The ability to deal with issues of a sensitive nature in a diplomatic manner.
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# Public Document Pack

## Audit & Governance Committee

Meeting of held on Thursday, 21 September 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katherine Street, Croydon, CR0 1NX

### MINUTES

**Present:** Dr Olu Olasode (Independent Chair) ;  
Councillor Matt Griffiths (Vice-Chair);  
Councillor Claire Bonham, Simon Brew, Endri Llabuti and  
Nikhil Sherine Thampi

**Also Present:** Councillor Nabukeera

**Apologies:** Councillor Enid Mollyneaux  
Councillor Sean Fitzsimons

### PART A

12/22 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

13/22 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record pending the inclusion of Scrutiny Health and Social Care Sub Committee and an edit to the figure within the Financial Accounts 2019-20 item, as the capital receipt generated had been for £112 million not £75 million.

14/22 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

15/22 **Audit & Governance Committee Action Log**

Officers agreed to provide updates for due actions.

16/22 **Audit & Governance Committee Work Programme 2023-24**

Dave Philips, Head of Internal Audit advised a first draft of the assurance mapping following the assurance mapping workshop would be developed and brought to Committee for review alongside the Committee Work Programme.

The Committee requested Officers to ensure future training arrangements did not create clashes with other Committees where possible.

## Update on Cultural Transformation Programme

Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive introduced the report for members and Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer gave their People & Cultural Transformation Update presentation to the Committee. Officers agreed to share the progress pillars slides with the Committee. There had been significant activity across the organisation and a recognition of the impact previous culture and the Report in the Public Interest (RIPI) had on staff. Efforts were ongoing to ensure staff felt able to speak out on issues and to build trust from the roots of the organisation.

The Committee queried the governance arrangements in place and how it could have assurance on its effectiveness. Officers advised following the adoption of the new organisational model in July 2021 a review of the council's governance model had been undertaken. As a result the Equality Diversity and Inclusion and Workforce Internal Control Boards had been established. These encompassed staff from across the council at all levels of seniority, were chaired by the Chief Executive and reported to Corporate Management Team meetings (CMT) each month. Additionally, a Transformation Board had been established in January 2022 to oversee service delivery work programmes. The newly recruited Director of Transformation was working closely with the Chief People Officer to support the alignment of the cultural transformation and programme delivery. Officers advised their attendance and reporting to Audit and Governance Committee would provide assurance and suggested it would be beneficial for the Committee to hear directly from staff in the future.

The Committee was pleased to note best value for residents was included but queried whether any benchmarking data had been utilised. On best value, officers noted that control mechanisms such as the spending control panels were in place but advised that the council was at the beginning of a journey to embed staff ownership of best value. The council had created internal data dashboards for workforce equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) which profiled the workforce and reported to the EDI Internal Control Board. Progress towards greater representation within the workforce had been made. There had been issues with staff non-disclosure of their protected characteristic information which had now improved following internal awareness-raising campaigns. Dashboards for supporting internal data reporting on recruitment were used to monitor recruitment practice improvements. Benchmarking from London Councils which included the Human Capital Metrics datasets which covered a range of metrics e.g., staff turnover, sickness absence and staff EDI profiles analysis was used; however this did not cover all areas.

The Committee noted the presentation had not been made available to Members ahead of the Committee meeting, making it challenging to prepare for the discussion and members of the public wishing to

understand the agenda item would not have the detail of the presentation. The Committee requested officers to include a summary of presentations within their reports in future. Officers advised the presentation was internal, but a shareable version could be made available.

The Committee asked how the council was ensuring the engagement of all staff particularly those less willing to engage. Officers felt it was inevitable to have some staff who were more engaged; however all staff members were encouraged to engage and inclusivity was prioritised. The success of the culture change work was being measured by engagement, for example in staff and pulse surveys, focus groups and drop-in sessions. An upward trajectory of engagement would suggest cultural improvement, but this was anticipated to take some time. There had been targeted engagement with harder to reach staff, such as those who may not use the intranet regularly. The staff guardians programme, developed in conjunction with The Old Vic to create safe spaces for staff to discuss issues, was in place and had recently supported front line worker engagement.

The Committee asked how new transformation staff appointments were being managed when faced with the historical cultural challenges. Officers advised cultural transformation work was not happening in isolation, any new staff members were embedded and working alongside colleagues as part of teams with clear messaging on delivery plans.

The Committee queried the attendance figures of 1,535 staff at the programme development events and whether this was unique individuals. Officers advised attendance had not been mandatory and was a reasonable sample size to inform change that had been considered.

In response to questions officers advised budget monitoring training for managers had been conducted in teams with a good spread across the council and positive feedback. However, this had highlighted the need for further training. There had also been widespread Housing Revenue Account (HRA) training and following the appointment of the lead officer for Oracle change management, the training for the new system's implementation would be starting soon. It was noted that all training had been welcomed and received positively by staff.

The Committee asked if a complaint handling system and whistleblowing safety net were in place. Officers confirmed the whistleblowing process had been in place for a number of years and ensured individuals' anonymity unless their complaint was vexatious. There were several qualified assessors across the council and the Monitoring Officer's regular whistleblowing update report was due to come to October committee. There had been concerted effort to promote the whistleblowing process to staff. It was noted the ultimate whistleblowing contact was Paul Dossett, Grant Thornton, the external auditor. The Guardians network was also an early opportunity for concerns to be raised in a less formal manner.

The Committee asked officers to explain the performance management policies in place, particularly regarding managers and how non-compliance was dealt with. Officers advised the performance management system had been simplified for the current year's appraisal round. Monitoring of staff skills and accountability was sporadic across teams at present. Refresher leadership and management training would form an important part of the cultural transformation and improvement work. The performance management capability procedure was in place and utilised when needed. Staff grievance data was recorded and monitored for formal staff complaints. A workplace mediation scheme had recently been introduced as an alternative complaints resolution system based on good practice at other local authorities, and its ability to resolve complaints early and close to the point of origin. EDI data was monitored to identify any disproportionate impacts. Exit survey data from staff leavers was also monitored.

In response to questions officers confirmed the number of staff employed by the council was approximately 3,200 full time making engagement of 1,535 staff around 50%.

The Committee asked how the council's turnover and absence statistics compared with Croydon historically and with other London councils at present. Officers agreed to provide reporting on workforce data to the committee in future. Croydon was sometimes above average London turnover. However, this needed to be considered in the context of the council's financial position, subsequent reductions and enforced turnover.

In response to questions officers explained the Reciprocal Mentoring Pilot was a two-way process for staff to feedback to and receive mentoring from senior leaders.

The Committee queried the impact of Covid-19 on the development of the transformation programme. Officers advised Covid had enabled the council to realise new ways of working. However, there were also challenges with some staff being more isolated. Utilisation of MS Teams promoted greater engagement, for example in online staff 'Tea Talks'.

The Committee queried whether there had been external input and/or consideration of best practice at other local authorities. Officers advised several external organisations had supported the work including the Local Government Association (LGA), The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and London Councils, and that Croydon had partnered with culture change experts Beyond Business School (BBS) on the culture change work. The draft People and Cultural Transformation Strategy had been shared with London Councils and received input from its regional secretary who critiqued the strategy and fed into its development.

The Committee requested future reporting on the implementation of action plan, governance and benchmarking of people and workforce.

18/22

### **Annual Treasury Management Report 2022-23**

Matthew Hallett, Pension Fund Investment Manager introduced the report to the Committee. The report was based on the Treasury Management strategy set in March 2022. The Treasury Management aim was to ensure cash availability for ongoing expenditure and investment of excess balances. The report confirmed there had been no liquidity events and where investments had been made these complied with counter-party limits. On the capital programme the borrowing figure at 2022/23 year end was £1.73 billion with external borrowing at £1.345 billion, resulting in an under-borrowed position and internal borrowing (use of reserves) of £380 million. This was within the limits set by the 2022 strategy, the authorised borrowing limit was £1.674 billion and the council had averaged £1.385 billion with a maximum £1.435 billion over the year. There had been £87 million of external borrowing repaid and the effective interest rate 2.8% had been under the target set for interest payable by approximately £5 million.

The Committee queried whether there was risk attached to internal borrowing's use of reserves particularly if the council needed large expenditure in a situation such as Covid. Officers advised the Committee that the council maintained a cash balance of approximately £100 million, the council's monthly working capital was £40-50 million monthly and anything above £100 million was utilised to repay borrowing, leaving a £50 million cushion.

The Committee RESOLVED to: note the contents of the annual report on the treasury management activity for 2022/23.

19/22

### **Annual Head of Internal Audit Report**

Dave Phillips, Head of Internal Audit introduced the annual report to the Committee, noting the report was an annual requirement in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The report gave the council an overall Limited Assurance level, and highlighted the key issues based on the work undertaken by Internal Audit. Some were recurring issues and the challenge was to progress these. An update on those outstanding issues would be included in the Annual Governance Statement update report due to come to the Committee in October. Updates on the implementation of Internal Audit recommendations were also included in the report and the council had made some good progress on actioning recommendations.

The Committee noted the limited assurance level had not been a surprise in previous years but queried the higher level of nil assurance reports, indicating a downturn during the reporting period, and what this implied about the improvement environment generally.

Officers noted there were areas of improvement; for example, corporate governance had been upgraded from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. It was found while top level governance had improved, the lower levels still required improvement. Many of the previous year's reports were working through the backlog of historic recommendations which had taken some time, due to issues such as staff turnover or recommendations requiring systems change work to be completed. The Limited Assurance level had been expected due to the issues unearthed during the opening the books exercise in 2022/23 and the Section 24 recommendations and interim reports by the external auditors. Improvements in engagement with the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) process had been made across the organisation. Engagement with internal audit reports had generally improved compared with the previous year and CMT was monitoring this closely. A session with Mazars was planned to improve the process. Officers noted plans to bring the AGS to Committee before the summer in 2024 and hoped it would show assurance improvements but noted there were still areas requiring improvements such as financial and HR systems. Audit reports also tended to be backward looking, due to the nature of gathering evidence, so were not as reflective of recent improvements.

The Committee raised concerns around limited/non-engagement by teams and queried if this was due to capacity or cultural issues. The Committee asked for an approximate breakdown of slow engagement versus complete non-engagement. The Committee also queried the report citing 'further strengthening of financial internal controls have taken place' despite the assurance being down in comparison with the previous year.

Officers advised that of 80 Internal Audit reports planned there were 2 or 3 where non-engagement had been an issue. This had been raised at the CMT focus group. Staff were reluctant to engage due to capacity and a culture of teams working in silos, which was something the organisation was working to improve. Internal Audit planned to implement a calendar of audits for the year to provide greater notice to management. There was work to be done to change organisational perception of audit to something that was useful and positive. The planned workshop with CMT on engagement improvement and building relationship between Mazars and managers would support this. The Committee agreed showcasing improvements and how engagement with internal audit could be an effective tool would be useful to take forward. Officers confirmed any non-engagement was reported to CMT, which was ultimately reported to Audit and Governance Committee, which could then invite the officers to attend meetings. The Committee requested the issues raised be included in future reporting.

The Committee RESOLVED to: note the Head of Internal Audit Report 2022/23 (Appendix 1) and the overall Limited level of assurance of the Council's systems of internal control.

## **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Deficit Management Plan**

Shelley Davies, Director of Education introduced the report to the committee and explained the expectation on local authorities setting a deficit budget in relation to the dedicated schools grant to have a management plan in place, to set out the pay down of the cumulative deficit and reduce in-year spend. Croydon's overspend had been reduced from £5.4 million to £2.05 million over the past two years. Croydon's position as part of the safety valve programme required liaison with the Department for Education (DfE) and signing of a safety valve agreement which outlined how the council would reduce its in year overspend to zero and subsequently receive grant funding from central government over 3 years to pay off the culminative overspend. Croydon had received the first two tranches of payment and was working to meet the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Officers assured the committee the council was monitoring against the KPIs regularly and noted the balance of focussing both on finance and ensuring it was meeting the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Charles Quaye, Principal Accountant highlighted the success within the service of meeting the non-financial targets and noted the good performance of the deficit management plan. Last year's balance had been £15.384 million and this was expected to be £12.749 million by the end of this financial year. By 2026/27 a surplus was expected.

The Committee advised it was pleased to see the progress being made and queried whether the safety valve agreement was particular to Croydon. Officers advised a number of local authorities were part of the programme, Croydon did not have the highest deficit level in relation to its population. All safety valve agreements were bespoke and contextual to individual local authorities. The main basis for savings in Croydon was through educating children locally by ensuring enough in-borough provision was available, including post-16 years and post-19 years.

The Committee raised concerns about how unforeseen expenditure on capital or other issues would be mitigated. Officers advised any capital expenditure sat elsewhere in the budget and SEND provision was ringfenced.

The Committee queried how SEND provision for children in mainstream school settings was being managed to ensure their needs were met. Officers noted the importance of this issue and explained Croydon's implementation of Croydon Locality SEND Support (CLSS). CLSS provided specific funding for mainstream schools to provide early intervention support for children, particularly during transition from nursery to reception. This did not impact Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments which were a statutory requirement and ongoing. The CLSS initiative was for early intervention to provide support when needed more quickly. It had started in 2 locations and was now rolled out across borough, and the provision was widening to include maintained nursery

classes. Implementation and areas for improvement were being monitored and the council was working in partnership with schools and encouraging peer to peer support between schools.

The Committee asked how the services were evaluated as offering best value for money for Croydon residents, and, once in place, how the provision was reviewed during a child's education. Officers advised the council was continuously monitoring progress against the safety valve agreement plan and reporting to the Department of Education against the KPIs. Strong internal governance was in place for SEND, overseen by the SEND Board which was chaired by the Director of Children's Services with membership from families, Croydon Active Voices, Headteachers and Health and Care colleagues. The SEND Board set the strategic direction and provided challenge to safety valve KPI reporting and the internal dashboard reporting. There was also a SEND forum and delivery groups. The importance of families and children and young people's voices being heard was noted.

The Committee requested clarification on the requirement of increased capacity cited in the report. Officers advised whilst there were children known to the authority, it was not possible to predict, for example, children who would come into the borough or receive a SEND diagnosis later. There was a balance required to predict these changes in demand to ensure the support needed was made available and this risk was always highlighted to the DfE. There was budget contingency set aside for unexpected cases to mitigate this.

The Committee asked if the deficit recovery funding was taken from the general fund. Officers advised the DfE safety valve grant funding was paying off the cumulative deficit and the in-year overspend reductions were achieved through Croydon's strategic changes to provision set out in its strategy, including the increases to in-borough and post-16 SEND provision.

The Committee RESOLVED to: note

- a) The key performance targets set under the DfE Safety Valve agreement.
- b) The overall performance of the Deficit Recovery Plan against the target and challenges and risks of delivery.
- c) The impact on the accounting treatment of the DSG deficit as provided for in the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003/3146, as amended by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 and the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2022.



Dave Philips, Head of Internal Audit advised the committee of the amendment to the tenure of the appointment which had been changed to a 1 year appointment initially with a further 3 years following a review of performance.

The Committee queried the inclusion of 'audit only functions' in relation to the independent member's appointment and whether as an Audit and Governance Committee this was appropriate. Officers explained the independent member would be non-voting and the recommendation was for appointment to the Audit and Governance Committee.

Committee RESOLVED to:

- a) Support the recommendation of the recruitment panel for the preferred candidate David Clarke to be appointed as an independent co-opted non-voting member of the Committee; and
- b) Recommend to Full Council that David Clarke be appointed as an independent co-opted non-voting member of the Audit and Governance Committee for an initial period of 1 year, to be extended thereafter for another 3 years and that said appointment be subject to standards of conduct which encompass the Nolan Principles.

The Chair thanked Officers for their support in the appointment process. Officers confirmed the next step was for the Audit and Governance Committee to recommend the appointment in a report to Full Council.

The Chair thanked Members for their engagement and attendance at the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.27pm

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Housing Strategy 2023/28</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Susmita Sen, Corporate Director for Housing</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon James, Change Manager (Housing)</b>  Email: <a href="mailto:simon.james@croydon.gov.uk">simon.james@croydon.gov.uk</a>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Lynne Hale, Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Mayor</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

### 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Council's Housing Strategy 2023-28 and its accompanying delivery plan.
- 1.2 The Executive Mayor is scheduled to consider the recommendations at the Cabinet on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. If agreed, they require consideration and approval by full Council. This report and appendices summarise those decisions.
- 1.3 If the proposals are not agreed or the proposals amended at the 6<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023 Cabinet meeting, an update on the proposed recommendations will be given at this Council meeting or supplementary paper issued in advance of the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 meeting.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in this report, and the report to and the decision of the Executive Mayor in Cabinet (to be taken) on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Council is asked to agree the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 as detailed in Appendix 1.A.

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Housing strategy sets out the long-term objectives of Croydon Council in relation to how we aim to improve all housing related services including the management of our stock, homelessness and rough sleeping and the supply of affordable accommodation.
- 3.2 Together with the Housing Transformation programme agreed at Cabinet in December 2022 it sets out a pathway as to how the Council will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and improve services provided to Croydon residents.
- 3.3 The Housing Strategy 'sits above' and presents an overview of the following associated strategies, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, Asset Management and Resident Engagement.
- 3.4 Following the contraventions in the Regulator of Social Housing Standards and the importance of improving services to residents that this has identified, the production of a Housing Strategy setting out how the Council will improve all housing related services, is of paramount concern to all Members.
- 3.5 Equally, the role of the Improvement and Assurance Panel in identifying housing as a key concern, makes it appropriate that this matter is referred to full Council for consideration.

### **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1 A Cabinet report on the Housing Strategy is going for consideration and agreement at the 6<sup>th</sup> December Cabinet, and if agreed, the recommendations are being presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> December Council meeting for consideration and agreement.
- 4.2 The full background and details are detailed in the report at Appendix 1.

### **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 As detailed in the attached (Appendix 1.B Consultation Responses Report).

### **6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HOMES AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that Housing Strategy includes details of how the Council will improve the availability of priority housing for domestic abuse victims and residents from other vulnerable backgrounds. Staff should be trained to detect and tackle abuse-related issues.
- 6.2 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the following areas should be explored for inclusion in the Housing Strategy and accompanying delivery plan: (i) a simplified downsizing process; (ii) how to utilise underused garages; (iii) green energy grants;

(iv) tackling licencing problems with houses in multiple occupations; (v) overcrowding; (vi) cooperation with Education division to ensure that children placed in temporary accommodations are not excluded from education.

- 6.3. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Strategy should include more detail on the following areas: (i) energy efficiency; (ii) actions to tackle antisocial behaviour.
- 6.4. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that, given the shortage of available housing in the borough, the Housing Strategy needs to provide strategic direction on how the supply of available housing in the Borough will be increased, and supported by a delivery plan providing tangible outcomes.
- 6.5. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Residents' Complaint Process is reviewed to ensure it provides efficient resolutions to resident complaints.
- 6.6. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the delivery plan being developed to accompany the Housing Strategy must include clear timelines for delivery and SMART objectives, outline any interdependencies and indicate the key risks to deliver and how they will be mitigated.
- 6.7 The recommendations have been incorporated into the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan.

## **7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR BUSINESS PLAN**

The development and implementation of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 is key to ensuring the Council delivers against the following priorities within the Mayor's Business Plan 2022- 2026:

- Get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable.
- Become a council which listens to, respects, and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities.
- Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.
- Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.
- Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service.
- Work with partners and the VCFS to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Members are referred to the Finance Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

## **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Members are referred to the Legal Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

## **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Members are referred to the Equalities Implications as detailed in the original Cabinet report, at Appendix 1.

## **8.4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Members are referred to Implications on Crime and Disorder, Environment and Risk Management as detailed in the original Cabinet Report at Appendix 1

## **9 APPENDICES**

9.1 *Appendix 1.* - Housing Strategy Cabinet report

9.2 *Appendix 1.A-* Housing Strategy

9.3 *Appendix 1.B-* Consultation Report

9.4 *Appendix 1.C-* Equalities Report

9.5 *Appendix 1.D-* Housing Delivery Plan

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Housing Strategy 2023- 2028</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Susmita Sen, Corporate Director for Housing</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon James, Change Manager (Housing)</b> <b>Email: simon.james@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Lynne Hale, Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Mayor</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b> [Insert Ref. Number if a Key Decision]  <i>Guidance: A Key Decision reference number will be allocated upon submission of a forward plan entry to Democratic Services.</i>	<b>Yes</b> <b>8323EM</b>	<b>REASON</b>  Key Decision – Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 The current report presents a refreshed Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 to Cabinet for approval. The report details the factors driving the need for a Housing Strategy and the methodology of its development, including feedback on the draft Housing Strategy from our residents and partners.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 Consider:
  - 2.1.1 the feedback received from the Homes Scrutiny Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October,

- 2.1.2 the feedback received on the draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028 from residents and partners via the engagement and consultation process as detailed in Appendix B, and
- 2.1.3 the Equalities Impact Assessment detailed in Appendix C
- 2.1.4 The Housing Delivery Plan detailed in Appendix D
- 2.2 Delegate authority to Corporate Director to make minor amendments in conjunction with Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member prior to publication.
- 2.3 Agree the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 as detailed in Appendix A; and
- 2.4 **RECOMMEND** the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 to Full Council for adoption.

### 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Housing strategy sets out the long-term objectives of Croydon Council in relation to how we aim to improve all housing related services including the management of our stock, homelessness and rough sleeping and the supply of affordable accommodation.
- 3.2 Together with the Housing Transformation programme agreed at Cabinet in December 2022, it sets out a pathway as to how the Council will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and improve services provided to Croydon residents.
- 3.3 The Housing Strategy ‘sits above’ and presents an overview of the following associated strategies, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, Asset Management and Resident Engagement.
- 3.4 Following the contraventions of the Regulator of Social Housing Standards and the importance of improving services to residents that this has identified, the production of a Housing Strategy setting out how the Council will improve all housing related services, is of paramount concern to all Members.
- 3.5 Equally, the role of the Improvement and Assurance Panel in identifying housing as a key concern, makes it appropriate that this matter is referred to full Council for consideration.

### 4 BACKGROUND AND DETAIL

#### Drivers for developing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028

- 4.1 The Council does not have a statutory duty to produce a housing strategy for the borough, nonetheless, the adoption of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 will enable the Council to address the increasingly complex and challenging context within which we deliver housing services. The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 provides the strategic foundation for the development of forthcoming strategies including the Asset Management Strategy, Resident Engagement Strategy and Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy. The strategies demonstrate a forward-thinking and



proactive approach to shaping the future of our housing services which will provide much needed direction in these areas.

- 4.2 Following the 2017 Grenfell Fire tragedy and wider concerns regarding the conditions of social housing, the Council must adhere to a series of legislation which will improve both living conditions and building and fire safety standards for social tenants and homes. The legislation increases the accountability of social landlords, including the Council, to the Government in ensuring their social homes are safe and residents are treated with respect. The social housing legislation will also be joined by revised standards for social landlords enforced by the Regulator of Social Housing and revised Decent Homes Standards.
- 4.3 The Government has also recognised that housing conditions must also be improved for private rented sector tenants. The Council will soon be required to adhere to the Renters (Reform) Bill which will extend the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector. The socio-economic context in which we deliver housing services, such as the national cost-of-living crisis, increased interest rates and the subsequent unaffordability of the private rented sector, has increased demand for our services as more residents are unable to afford their rent. The pressures on our housing services have led to an increase in the number of residents in emergency and temporary accommodation where many residents remain for several years owing to the lack of availability of affordable homes in the private rented sector.
- 4.4 In 2021, the Regulator of Social Housing found the Council to be in breach of the Regulator's two consumer standards: the Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard. From May 2022, the Council subsequently developed the [Residents' Charter](#) and the [Housing Transformation Programme](#). The Housing Transformation Programme is a programme of individual projects which aim to improve and transform our housing services for which the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 provides the strategic framework. The Housing Transformation Programme has identified specific areas of our services which require immediate improvement whilst the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 sets out our longer-term ambitions.
- 4.5 The Improvement and Assurance Panel (IAP) was commissioned by the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities to advise and assist on the Council's financial recovery strategy and report on the progress of the Croydon renewal plan. In the remit given to the Panel, housing was identified as one of the priority areas for improvement.
- 4.5.1 The Exit Strategy (October 2023) devised by the IAP and produced in conjunction with the Council sets out the progress required by 2025. Within the document, it sets out the necessity to produce a Housing Strategy to provide necessary direction for the service.

### **Methodology for developing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028**

- 4.6 The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 has been developed in response to the resident and partner feedback and insight the Council has received following the Council's breach of the Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard. In the summer of last year, the Council held 20 vision and mission sessions with residents, tenants, leaseholders, staff, and partners to identify the long-term vision of our housing services, and what 'good' housing services looked like. The feedback from these sessions underpinned the development of the draft priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028.
- 4.7 The draft priorities and objectives also reflect feedback from tenants and leaseholders received through the consultation on rent increases that were held in December 2022. The consultation identified the following key priorities of tenants and leaseholders: keeping neighbourhoods clean and tidy, improving the repairs service, tackling anti-social behaviour, and improving neighbourhood safety.
- 4.8 The Council recognises that housing services are not the only Council services that contribute to ensuring residents have access to safe, warm, and dry homes. The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 has involved subject-matter-experts across the Council including colleagues from adult's social care, children's social care, and spatial planning. Co-production across the Council has identified key issues for our housing services including the provision of appropriate accommodation for care-experienced young people, older people, and the development of the Local Plan 2019- 2039.
- 4.9 Delivering good housing services that residents deserve requires the Council to become more outward-looking in identifying best-practice and learning from our peers. The Housing Directorate has worked closely with key colleagues from other London borough and London Councils to identify best-practice methods for co-producing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 and meaningfully consulting with our residents and partners.
- 4.10 Staff, Members, residents, and partners have shaped the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 through targeted focus group sessions and the survey consultation. The feedback received on the draft priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 through consultation and engagement with our residents and partners is detailed in Section 5.

### **Delivering the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028**

- 4.11 The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 will be underpinned by a Delivery Plan (see Appendix D) which will detail the key actions and milestones to be achieved by 2028 to ensure our strategic priorities and objectives are delivered.
- 4.12 The key milestones will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) and reviewed as part of our Housing Transformation Programme. The key milestones will align with the Council's existing key performance indicators, including the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and our performance against the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

- 4.13 The strategic priorities and objectives of our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 will be reviewed against imminent changes to legislation including the introduction of revised Consumer Standards by the Regulator of Social Housing and the revised Decent Homes Standard.

## 5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The following alternative options were considered ahead of developing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028:

- Do not produce a new housing strategy
- Delay the development of a new housing strategy

- 5.2 The alternative option of not producing a new housing strategy was rejected for the reasons listed in 3.1- 3.5. The Council rejected the option of delaying the development of a new housing strategy on the basis that the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 is key to setting the foundation for subsequent strategies which will enable the urgently required improvement and transformation of housing services.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The draft priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 went out to consultation through an online survey questionnaire. The survey asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the draft priorities. The online survey was live for seven weeks from 14<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023. The online survey consultation received 450 responses and showed broad support for all five draft priorities and underlying objectives.

- 6.2 Survey responses regarding the draft priorities and objectives are listed below; further detail is provided in Appendix Two:

- Priority One-*Listen to our residents and provide good services*- strongly agree or agree: 77.2%.
- Priority Two- *Work with our partners and residents and landlords to ensure that homes in the Borough are safe, secure and energy efficient*- strongly agree or agree: 73.6%.
- Priority Three-*Enable people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities*-strongly agree or agree: 75.9%.
- Priority Four-*Maintain the supply of affordable homes that meet the diverse needs of residents in Croydon*- strongly agree or agree: 65.3%.
- Priority Five-*Work with our partners and the local communities to make the best use of resources and manage the demand for housing related services*- strongly agree or agree: 69.9%.

- 6.3 Council staff, Members, residents, and partners were notified of the survey questionnaire via the following channels:
- Staff intranet
  - Weekly Our Croydon staff bulletin
  - Fortnightly Housing Directorate staff newsletter
  - Open House newsletter circulated to tenants and leaseholders
  - Croydon Landlord Forum Newsletter
  - Executive Mayor Perry's Your Croydon newsletter circulated to residents and partners
  - Voluntary, community, and faith sector mailing list
  - Council social media channels
  - Emails directly from the Corporate Director for Housing to Members
  - Emails directly from the Corporate Director for Housing to Croydon MPs
- 6.4 Physical copies of the survey were also made available to our residents and partners in Croydon libraries to enable responses from those without digital access. Targeted sessions were held with the following groups to ascertain more detailed feedback on our draft priorities and objectives, and suggestions as to what these should mean for our residents:
- Residents
  - Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
  - Members through an All-Member briefing on the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028
  - Voluntary, community, and faith sector partners
  - Private rented sector landlords
  - Housing associations
- 6.5 Feedback from the targeted sessions, and changes to the draft priorities and objectives following this feedback is detailed in Appendix B.
- 6.6 The Strategy has also been reviewed by the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel and the Homes Scrutiny Committee.

## **7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR BUSINESS PLAN**

- 7.1 The development and implementation of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 is key to ensuring the Council delivers against the following priorities within the Mayor's Business Plan 2022- 2026:
- Get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable.
  - Become a council which listens to, respects, and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities.
  - Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
  - Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.

- Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.
- Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service.
- Work with partners and the VCFS to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe.

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1.1 There are no direct quantifiable financial implications arising from adopting the Housing Strategy as detailed in Appendix A.
- 8.1.2 Financial implications will be considered alongside non-financial considerations as the Housing Strategy priorities are being planned and implemented to contribute to making the Council financially sustainable.
- 8.1.3 Comments approved by Sarah Attwood on behalf of the Director of Finance. 17/10/2023.

## **9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Under section 41 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, (“GLAA99”), it is a general duty of the Mayor of London to prepare and publish a London Housing Strategy. Under section 333D of GLAA99, any local housing strategy prepared by a local housing authority in Greater London must be in general conformity with the Mayor of London’s London Housing Strategy.
- 9.1.1 Under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985, local housing authorities shall consider and review on a periodical basis the housing conditions in their area and the housing needs of the area with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation.
- 9.1.2 Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 further imposes a duty on local housing authorities to keep housing conditions in their area under review.
- 9.1.3 Under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 (as amended), the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has the power to require local housing authorities to have a housing strategy and impose requirements with respect to the ends that the strategy is to be designed to achieve, the formulation of policy for the purposes of the strategy or review of the strategy. The Secretary of State also has the power to order local housing authorities to prepare statement setting out their housing strategy and other material relating to housing. To date, the Secretary of State has not formally exercised these powers. The Explanatory Notes to this Act however describe a local housing authority’s Housing Strategy as: “... the local housing authority’s vision for housing in its area. It sets out objectives and targets and policies on how the authority intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role and provides an overarching framework against which the authority considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues.”

- 9.1.4 The Secretary of State in the 2007 Green Paper “Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable” developed the reference to the local housing authority’s strategic role as follows: “The local authority strategic housing role is made up of the strategic decisions and activities associated with effective planning and delivery, to meet the housing needs of all residents across all tenures. Strong performance in this role will support effective place shaping and help ensure delivery of the wider sustainable community. This requires vision, leadership, planning and delivery at a strategic level to: - assess and plan for the current and future housing needs of the local population across all tenures; - make the best use of the existing housing stock; - plan and facilitate new supply; - plan and commission housing support services which link homes to the support and other services that people need to live in them; - work in partnership to secure effective housing and neighbourhood management on an ongoing basis”.
- 9.1.5 Section 225 of the Housing Act 2004 states that “housing” (for the purposes of carrying out the housing needs review required by section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 and for the purposes of preparing a housing strategy under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003) includes the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers residing in their area. The Housing Strategy is an overarching document, it sits above the council’s Homelessness strategy and the Housing allocation policy. More recently, the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022 and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 places obligations and conditions to improve living conditions and building safety for social landlords and the private rented sector.
- 9.1.6 The Public Sector Equalities Duty (“PSED”) set out in section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 obliges the Council in performing its functions “to have due regard to the need to: a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it”
- 9.1.7 The Housing Strategy document itself is not a formal Planning document and consequently will not form part of the statutory Development Plan. While it will be a material consideration, it will not carry significant weight in the planning development management process.
- 9.1.8 The following general principles of consultation apply: - That consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; - That the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration and response; - That adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and - That the product of consultation must be conscientiously considered in finalising any statutory proposals.
- 9.1.9 In short, to achieve the necessary degree of fairness, the obligation is to let those who have a potential interest in the subject matter know in clear terms what the proposal is and exactly why it is under positive consideration, telling them enough (which may be a good deal) to enable them to make an intelligent response. The obligation, although it may be quite onerous, goes no further than this.

9.1.10 Approval of the Housing Strategy following consultation is a function reserved to Full Council by Article 4.2. of the Council's Constitution.

9.1.11 There is no legal reason why Cabinet should not adopt the recommendations in this report.

9.1.12 Comments approved by Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 03 November 2023.)

## **10 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must evidence consideration of any potential impacts of proposals on groups who share the protected characteristics, before decisions are taken. This includes any decisions relating to how authorities act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and also how they commission and procure services from others.

10.1.2 Section 149 of the Act 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.

10.1.3 An EQIA has been carried out and shows predominantly positive impact on all protected characteristics. Extensive consultation with residents has been conducted which demonstrates strong support for the key priorities set out in the strategy. This support is coming from all the protected groups. At the implementation stage, individual delivery plans should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact.

10.1.4 Comments approved by Naseer Ahmad, Interim Senior Equalities Officer. (Date 28/09/2023)

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The Strategy alludes to the low levels of satisfaction amongst residents surveyed in relation to the Council's approach to anti-social behaviour.

11.2 The Council recognises the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on people's ability to lead healthy and independent lives and will ensure that its services are joined

up in working to prevent nuisance both in its management of Council homes but also through the support services it provides to residents who live in the private rental sector.

## **12 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 The Executive Mayor's business plan sets out the Council's commitments to reducing carbon emissions in Croydon.

12.2 These objectives are integrated into the delivery of housing services;

- Our services contracts commit our contractors to the Executive Mayor's objectives when delivering front-line housing services.
- New build housing in the Borough is subject to planning requirements around environmental sustainability.
- The Council's Asset Management Strategy will commit Croydon Council to achieving the Executive Mayor's objectives in the maintenance of its own stock.

## **13 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 Housing has been identified as an area of key concern by the Government and the progress of the Transformation Programme is monitored by the Improvement and Assurance Panel appointed by the Secretary of State. Failure to progress the Housing Strategy would therefore impact on the ability for the Borough to achieve an exit from intervention in July 2025.

13.2 The Regulator of Social Housing has put the Council in contravention of the Homes Standard and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. To achieve recognition requires delivering the improvements for Council residents and Leaseholders outlined in the Transformation programme and in the Housing Strategy.

## **14 APPENDICES**

*A Housing Strategy*

*B Housing Strategy Consultation Report*

*C Equality Information Analysis Form*

*D Delivery Plan*





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# **Housing Strategy 2023- 28**

## **1 Foreword (Councillor Hale)**

Croydon is London's largest borough, and our ambition is to provide good housing services and that residents should be able to live in safe, secure, warm and dry homes.

Croydon Council's five-year Housing Strategy 2023-2028 sets out how we intend to respond to the challenges we face in ensuring that existing housing stock in both the private and social housing sector is well-managed and safe and that those facing genuine housing need are supported by the Council and the Voluntary agencies it works with. In addition, it presents a pathway as to how we can begin to address the issues of housing supply in an environment where demand for housing is ever increasing.

As a Council, we recognise the need to improve our performance in delivering better outcomes in the management and condition of our own stock and through the development of the Resident Charter we will work closely with residents to achieve this. We are also conscious of our role in driving up the quality of housing in the private sector by working with Landlords and Property Agents and where necessary using the powers we have to make sure this happens. I also recognise the importance that Disabled Facilities Grants have in allowing many of our elderly or disabled residents to stay in their own homes.

The context in which the Council delivers housing services has changed a great deal in recent years as the financial position left by the last administration in May 2022 along with a challenging economic environment has meant that the pressures on our housing services have reached unprecedented levels.

New legislation introduced by the Government following the Grenfell Tower fire has given more responsibility to councils to improve building and fire safety for both social and private rented tenants. The Government has also introduced legislation which requires local authorities to improve conditions in social or private rented homes, particularly regarding damp and mould following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak. The increased cost-of-living and private sector rents means the Council is also seeing growing numbers of residents needing support and emergency housing. The demand for housing and homelessness services has reached unprecedented levels and the Council must focus our available resources to protect the borough's most vulnerable people and deliver core services well. Achieving this will require us to continue the wholesale transformation of our housing services and our Strategy will create housing services which listens to and empowers residents to do more for themselves. Preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity will be an important and key ambition.

The Council has spent too long disregarding the priorities of residents and our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 will build on our work to really listen to residents' needs and transform our housing services. We have co-designed our Residents' Charter to make sure our tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and our services are designed with residents' needs at their heart.

Our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 sets out our ambition to re-build and strengthen our relationship with partners, including the voluntary sector and housing associations, and bring more resources to the borough.

Access to safe, warm, and dry homes is key to ensuring our residents live healthier lives for longer. Our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 puts our residents at the heart of our housing services and sets out the Council's strategic priorities which will both bring alive and go

beyond this vision. My thanks to everyone who responded to the recent Housing Strategy consultation; your thoughts and views are invaluable to us and have been carefully built into this Strategy.

With a reputation for ignoring residents and a legacy failure to invest in homes, Croydon housing is in a poor state, and I do not underestimate the scale of the challenge. This Strategy demonstrates our commitment to creating sustainable services which support residents and provide the decent housing which our residents deserve.

## **2 Introduction (Susmita Sen)-National Context**

In recent years, Croydon has fallen short in delivering the excellent housing services that our residents deserve. This strategy sets out the Council's commitment to rebuild trust within our community by listening and responding to views about our services and providing or facilitating safe, warm and dry homes for our residents as well as offering solutions to those in housing need. Additionally, we will work to foster stronger relationships amongst housing providers including private sector landlords and housing associations as well as develop stronger partnerships in the Voluntary and Statutory sectors.

As a Council, we are faced with multiple challenges both locally and nationally. The cost-of-living situation as well as the increasing unaffordability of the private rented sector has heightened the demand for our housing and homelessness services. We have re-organised our services to ensure a much greater emphasis on the early intervention and prevention of homelessness as required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 but like all London Councils are faced with rising applications of those in housing need. The aftermath of the Grenfell tragedy and wider concerns regarding the condition of social housing has led to the Government introducing new legislation which places new demands on Councils and Social Housing Landlords. The Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022 and Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (including Awaab's Law) introduces new requirements on Landlords to improve living conditions and building and fire safety standards for social tenants and homes.


In addition, the Renters (Reform) Bill will extend the Decent Homes Standards to the private rented sector therefore aiming to improve conditions for the 26% of households in Croydon that rent their homes from private sector landlords or agents.

Rising interest rates and subsequent increases to mortgage repayments have meant higher rental costs for private rented sector tenants making properties in Croydon unaffordable to low-income households. The subsequent pressures on our homelessness services have led to increases in the number of residents placed in emergency and temporary accommodation with many likely to remain in this form of housing for years. This also heightens our responsibility as a Council to manage our stock more effectively and maximise any opportunities for new housing. Despite difficult economic circumstances, it is beholden upon us, and our housing association partners to be creative in facilitating new build opportunities and to set a longer-term plan for delivering new housing that follows on from our commitment to provide excellent new housing for the residents of Regina Road.

Finally, I am absolutely determined that the commitments we have made to Croydon tenants and leaseholders in the Residents Charter (see page 9) also apply to all those who seek housing advice and support and that we as a Council demonstrate our respect by engaging with residents of all tenures as well as partner agencies to-deliver services that truly serve the needs of our community.

By fulfilling the priorities set out in our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 over the next 5 years and beyond, we aim to place residents at the centre of our services, truly listening to them and ensuring access to appropriate housing. Through collaboration, respect, and empowerment, we hope to build a stronger, more inclusive community for all.

### **3 Local Context-**

The priorities and objectives within our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 are shaped by the Mayors Business Plan 2022 and revised Local Plan 2019- 2040. 



Our Housing Strategy provides the foundation for the development of forthcoming strategies including the Asset Management Strategy, Resident Engagement Strategy and Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy enabling the Council to take a forward-thinking, planned and proactive approach to shaping the future of our housing service. In addition, cross departmental strategies such as those dealing with anti-social behaviour, corporate parenting or care experienced young people are of similar importance.

The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 also provides the strategic framework for the **Housing Transformation Programme**, a programme of individual projects which aim to improve and transform our housing services and deliver commitments in the Mayoral Business Plan to *establish good governance, achieve financial sustainability and drive-up standards in developing a more responsive and effective housing service*. The Housing Transformation Programme has identified specific areas of our housing services, such as housing needs, voids management and repairs service, which require immediate improvement, whilst the Housing Strategy sets out our longer-term ambitions.

The Mayor's Business Plan 2022- 2026, it's linking strategies and the Housing Transformation Programme have been developed in response to the challenging context in which the Council delivers housing services.

In 2022, Croydon Council issued its third section 114 notice due to the severe ongoing financial challenges facing the authority, and the Council's inability to balance its budget for 2023/2024 financial year. The notice meant that all new non-essential spending was stopped, and a savings plan was further developed across the Council, including housing services. In response to the financial challenge, Croydon Council is reliant on a Capitalisation Direction from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Local Government and discussion with the Government regarding a long-term solution to the Council's debt.

In 2021, following the commission of an independent report into conditions at Regina Road, a high-rise Council owned block, the Regulator of Social Housing found the previous administration to be in breach of the Regulator's two consumer standards: the Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard. In May 2021, the Council committed to improving its social housing and landlord services and therefore provide a

better service to tenants and leaseholders through developing the Housing Improvement Programme. In December 2021, Croydon's independent Housing Improvement Board was established to provide evidenced, fair and honest feedback to the leadership of the previous administration on the Council's progress in delivering the Housing Improvement Programme (HIB). Since the election of the Mayor and the new Cabinet in 2022, this advisory body has continued to play a role in monitoring the delivery of the new administrations intent to improve services as outlined in the Transformation programme.

## **4 Demographic context**

Croydon is the most populous borough in London (census 2021) with approximately 390,800 residents across 152,900 households.

In terms of the national deprivation indices, Croydon is the 18<sup>th</sup> poorest out of 33 London boroughs (DCLG and Ordnance Survey (Crown Copyright)), and the 97<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority of 317 lower tier authority districts in England.

The most deprived areas in Croydon under the domain of health deprivation and disability are around the wards of Waddon, West Thornton, Selhurst, Thornton Heath, Addiscombe West, New Addington North Croydon is also the 24<sup>th</sup> most deprived out of 33 London boroughs for indoor living environment (the proportion of houses without central heating 2011) and the proportion of houses that are in a poor condition 2015 (DCLG and Ordnance Survey). According to the DCLG and Ordnance Survey (Crown Copyright), the wider barriers to housing and services also include household overcrowding, homelessness and housing affordability.

Against this backdrop, average house prices were 11.88 times average earnings (Census 2021) suggesting barriers for those wishing to pursue home ownership. Further, the number of house sales in Croydon has been decreasing every year from 2014 to 2020 (GLA Housing Sales, based on Land Registry data, October 2022) meaning the availability of homes is also problematic for those who can afford it.

In a borough which has one of the youngest populations amongst all London Councils the demand resultant from the difficulties in accessing both affordable social housing and home ownership opportunities is partially met by the Private Sector (see below). Nearly a quarter of Croydon's population are aged 17 years and under, with Croydon having the highest number of 0–19-year-olds in London pointing to the challenges we face in terms of future housing supply.

Croydon also has an ageing population: since 2011 the borough has seen a 19.6% growth in the number of residents aged 65 years and over and this is now the second highest in London. The most-recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggests that the growing older population will lead to an increase in requirements for specialist housing solutions such as housing with support and care and care-bed spaces.

The Census 2021 data also shows that 15.8% of residents in Croydon identify themselves as disabled under the Equality Act 2010). However, the Croydon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) states that only 55.1% of adults with learning disabilities and 32% of adults in contact with mental health services live in stable and appropriate accommodation, in comparison to the London averages of 77.5% and 61.0%.

## 5 The Council's strategic role in Housing

This strategy sets out the direction for housing related responsibilities and services within the Council and includes the following services.

### ***Homelessness, Rough sleeping and housing need.***

#### *Housing allocations*

As of January 2023, there are approximately 6,979 households on Croydon Council's Housing Register which represents an increase of 5.9% since January 2022.

The average wait time for a permanent offer of housing between 2016 and 2021 was five years and 11 months with one and two bedrooms subject to the most demand. Over the next few years, it is anticipated that demand for housing will continue to increase raising challenges for the Council in terms of supplying the affordable and social housing that is needed.

Over the period of the Strategy, the Council will review its Allocation Scheme which sets out the conditions which determines an applicant's priority for rehousing.

#### *Homelessness*

Between April 2021 and March 2022, 2,526 households received a homelessness assessment from Croydon Council. Over the last five years the numbers of residents housed in temporary accommodation has seldom fallen below 2,000 and it is anticipated, by London Councils that these numbers are likely to rise further. When benchmarked against other London Boroughs, a proportionately higher number of those assessed required rehousing in temporary accommodation. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 placed new requirements on Councils in terms of working to prevent homelessness occurring extending the duty to provide advice to all those threatened with losing their home within 56 days. We recognise the destabilising impact that the loss of a secure home can have on both families and single people and over the course of this Housing Strategy, the Council will fully implement this new legislation beginning with a re-organisation of the housing needs services to ensure it is fit for purpose.

The prevention of homelessness will be a priority for the new service, and we will seek to bring down the percentage of those requiring a rehousing duty to London norms during the period of this strategy.

#### *Tackling the causes of homelessness*

These changes will adapt the service we provide to work more effectively in tackling and preventing the causes of homelessness such as domestic violence, drug and alcohol problems and mental health. To achieve this will require a greater emphasis on working with both the statutory and voluntary sector as well as working effectively with both Children's and Adults Services. Our Corporate Parenting and Care Leaver Strategy outlines our key objectives to meet the needs of our care experienced young people and this includes the development of the Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Protocol for care experienced Young People. We are developing an approach towards the Joint Assessment of 16- to 17-year-olds facing homelessness and we have adopted a robust partnership approach and are targeted at ensuring that young people are accommodated. In doing so, this approach reduces the negative impact of instability on mental health and well-being associated with leaving care and provides a smoother transition into adulthood for care experienced young people



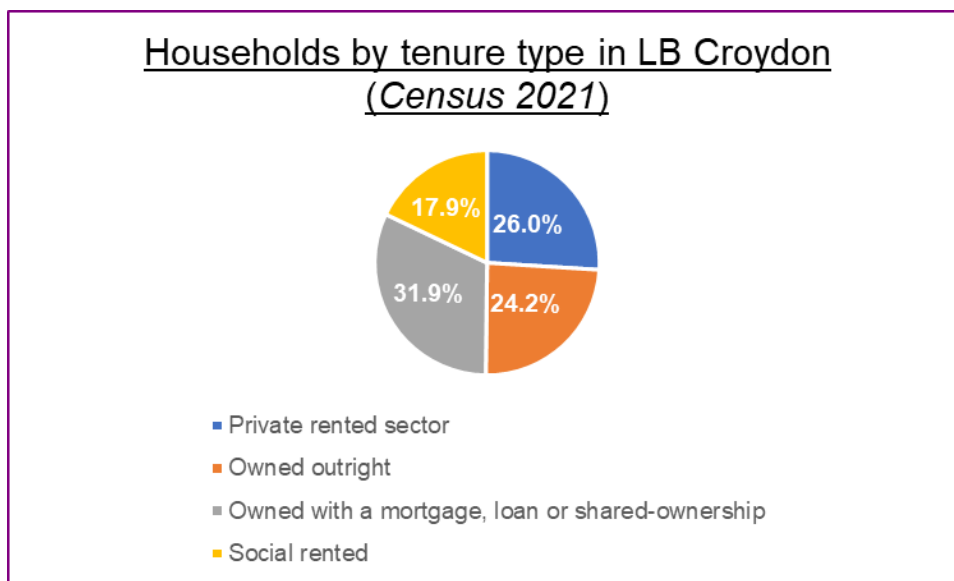
We are also aware of the traumatising impact that domestic violence can have on woman and families and will undertake to provide training for staff in all housing related services.

### *Rough Sleeping*

In Croydon, a total of 373 people were seen rough sleeping between April 2022 and March 2023 which is higher than any other outer London borough. The number of people who were recorded rough sleeping represents an increase of 22% in comparison to April 2019 to March 2020. Again, projections made by London Councils point to probable rises in rough sleeping over the next few years. Although Croydon has a good performance in ensuring that many rough sleepers do not face a 'Second night out' it is also accepted there are some people who do not want to change their lifestyle and who are regularly causing anti-social behaviour on our streets. Where this persists, our Rough Sleeping team will work with the Safer Streets Partnership and be pro-active in preventing recurrence. Rough sleeping should only be rare, brief and non-recurrent.

### **Tenure in Croydon**

The table below shows the proportion of more than 150,000 households by tenure type in Croydon.



Census 2021 data shows us that most households in LB Croydon are one-person or two-person households (57.7% of households). Approximately 18.2% of households in the borough are 3-person households, and 24.1% of households are 4+ person

### Home Ownership

Nearly 58% of residents either own their homes outright or are paying a mortgage.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019 shows that people who are elderly or who have a long-term health problem or disability are more likely to own their homes outright than the general population. It is important that these homes are adapted to meet the needs of those with long-term health problems or disabilities to prevent admission into supported housing, hospital, or residential care.

Croydon's 'Staying Put Service' helps people to remain living independently in their own home, through the provision of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) for adaptations, and Home Investment Loans for essential repairs. It also provides a Hospital Discharge Service to facilitate safe discharges, as well as a Handyperson Service for minor work. In 2022/23, the Council distributed over £3m of DFG funding to the former and nearly £100,000 in loans for home improvements.

### Our Social Housing Partners

Over 27,000 homes (17.9% of homes) are provided by the Council and its Social Housing partners. The amount of affordable housing provided has not increased as a proportion of overall households over the last 10 years. Nearly 14,000 properties are provided by Housing Associations with the largest being London and Quadrant, Hyde Housing, Clarion, Southern Housing and over 70 others, who make use of the Council's home choice register. The Council recognises that it needs to work with our social housing partners to maximise the supply of good quality affordable housing in the Borough and to ensure a consistent level of service across social housing tenures. To improve joint working and communication, the Council will set up a social housing forum which will cover all aspects of its relationship with housing associations.

Additionally, the Council will make sure the Nomination agreements it holds with Housing Associations are maintained.

### Landlord to Council homes tenants and leaseholders

Croydon's has 13,342 properties, which makes it the largest social housing provider in the Borough. The majority of Council owned homes are concentrated in the north and east and its stock is relatively small when compared with many other London councils. Of these properties, 52% are flats, 36% are houses, 10% are maisonettes and 2% are bungalows

As stated in section 3, the Housing Transformation Programme sets out the Council's approach for tackling identified weaknesses in Service delivery in its Council homes.

### *Creating responsive housing services*

Tenants who responded to our 2022/23 satisfaction survey stated the following.

- 59% said that landlord services treated them fairly and with respect
- 44% were of the view that the landlord services were easy to deal with.
- 49% were satisfied that communal areas were clean and well-maintained.
- Only 44% of residents surveyed were satisfied with the Council's approach to anti-social behaviour.

This is not good enough and we are determined to improve the quality of our services. We also recognise the need to significantly improve our response to resident complaints. Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Council's housing services received 770 complaints which is equivalent to approximately 15 complaints a week with most of these relating to the housing register, homelessness assessments and repairs.

Tackling such issues are essential if the Council is to comply with the Social Housing Regulator's Customer Care and Home standards.

### *Stock condition*

Croydon Council must address its ageing social housing stock. A substantial number of the Council's social homes were built in the 1930s and are often poorly insulated and unsuitable for tenants with accessibility needs. The Council also owns 46 high-rise (seven storeys or more) residential buildings many of which were built in the 1970s and require improvements and repairs as well as implementing safety standards set out in the Fire Safety Act.

Our performance indicators report that in March 23, 42% of tenants were satisfied with the quality of the repairs service, some way behind the 58% average reported in the National Resident Survey for the Social Housing Quality report carried out in 2020 by the Government.

As of March 2022, 0.13% of the Council's social homes do not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. Although this figure is significantly below the London average of 9%, our stock condition survey data would suggest that the number of Council social homes not likely to meet the Decent Homes Standard is higher. In addition, Office for National Statistics data indicates that the average energy efficiency of Croydon's social homes is Energy Performance Certificate Band C. (A being the most efficient, G the least).

The Asset Management Strategy 2023/8 will set out our long-term approach to managing and regenerating our housing stock effectively and safely. This will include an assessment of 13 LPS (Large Panel System) blocks where there are concerns about the long-term viability of this housing.

### *Residents Charter.*

Following the findings of the independent report at Regina Road (see Section 3), tenants and leaseholders developed the "Residents Charter" which outlined the principles by which the Council should deliver housing services to residents, tenants, and leaseholders. The Charter was not developed by the previous administration but was agreed by the Executive Mayor in June 2022. The charter's principles which emphasis respect, transparency and responsiveness are fully set out in the Resident Engagement Strategy and are fundamental not only to improvements in Landlord services but across our housing services.

### ***Regulation of the Private Sector***

Our strategy recognises that a healthy private rented sector plays a vital role in providing good homes and we will seek to work and support the many responsible landlords within our community.

Recent legislation including the Renters Reform Bill demonstrates the Government's intention to give Councils a pivotal role in maintaining standards in the private sector. Nationally, the number of private rental properties has doubled since 2004 and in Croydon now accounts for up to 26% of all tenure types according to Census 2021 data.

The Private rented sector is unaffordable to many Croydon residents, and this is increasing the demand for social homes and the pressure on the homelessness services. Rents in the sector are increasing with Croydon's average annual increase standing at 9.7% compared with the London average of 12% making it a target for other Boroughs seeking to procure temporary accommodation.

In 2019, the Council had amongst the highest number of evictions from the Private Sector in London and in 2021-22, 284 evictions took place in Croydon under Section 21 proceedings.

With the delays in implementing legislation designed to reverse no fault evictions the Council will continue to monitor the impact this has on homelessness applications.

In September 2019, Croydon Council commissioned a stock condition survey of the borough's private rental properties. The private housing stock condition and stressors report supported the assumption that poor housing conditions are prevalent in this sector, which the report estimated to consist of 58,000 households.

The report estimated that 23.7% of properties in the private sector had at least one serious hazard and in addition 27% have an E, F or G rating, the three lowest ratings within the Energy Performance Certificate system. Moreover, the report suggests that the private rented sector also faces issues with anti-social behaviour; between 2015 and 2019, 7,277 properties reported at least one ASB incident resulting in 15,746 council investigations having been conducted. The report estimated the wider resource required by the council to successfully intervene in the sector. In the same period the Council made 12,172 interventions in the Private Rental Sector with 1,307 housing and public health statutory notices being served on non-compliant Landlords.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) house some of the more vulnerable Croydon residents as this is amongst the most affordable accommodation available. The borough has over 800 HMOs that have been issued a mandatory licence. Further modelling estimates that there are in excess of 3,000 unlicensed HMOs in each of the two categories; (section 254 – with one or more shared facilities and section 257 – certain self-contained flats)

This strategy will re-iterate the Council's intention to tackle the behaviour of irresponsible Landlords and with it the high level of deprivation, disrepair and anti-social behaviour that is sometimes associated with this form of tenure. Going forward, the Council will review what is the best use of its powers it to improve the Borough's Private Rental Stock including the option of consulting upon the introduction of a discretionary (including selective and additional houses in multiple occupation) licensing scheme(s).

### ***Facilitating the supply of new housing and managing our stock effectively***

#### *London Mayoral targets*

The London Mayor has set housing targets for the delivery of 522,870 new homes between 2019/20 and 2028/29. In Croydon, the target for this period is to deliver 20,709 homes. By 2021/22, 5,965 homes had been delivered and the 5-year housing supply estimate produced in March 2023 projects the building of a further 11,893 units between April 2022 and March 2027 which puts the Borough on course to meet this target.

An analysis of tenure breakdown of new stock between 2020 and 2022 shows the following;

<i>Tenure</i>	<i>Units</i>
<i>Market for sale</i>	<i>3,400</i>
<i>Market for rent</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Affordable homes</i>	<i>703</i>

#### *Delivery of affordable and social housing by the Council and its housing association partners*

At this time the Council's financial position inherited from the previous administration as well as the difficult national environment places restrictions on its role in providing the new affordable and social housing that the Borough needs. In addition, the dissolution of 'Brick by Brick' makes it necessary for the Council to reconsider how it will facilitate the supply of affordable accommodation. In doing so, it will play a full part in setting a strategic direction

which encourages local housing providers to engage in opportunities to increase their stock and provide the affordable and social housing that is needed. Additionally, it will not miss opportunities to plan or purchase land for future development in the area if this is financially prudent and with our partners will set out a long-term vision for providing the affordable and homes that our residents need. We will develop a Regeneration and New Homes Strategy that will set out our approach to housing supply following the delivery of the Regina Road project. This will not only shape the vision to boost newbuild supply by partners and Council delivery but will also set out a rationale that embraces building safety, fire safety and the ongoing investment in existing housing.

Set out below are measures the Council will take to increase supply within the existing stock.

**Increasing Supply through more effective management.**

- *We will continue to improve upon our performance on reservicing void properties and in doing so identify properties (usually large bed street properties) for investment or disposal if not economic to pursue.*
- *Identify properties for extension/conversion or “knock throughs” to provide family accommodation.*
- *Incentives and support for those who are under-occupying their properties and wish to find smaller accommodation.*
- *Tenancy Audits to ensure that tenants are living in homes and support for vulnerable residents to sustain tenancies.*

The Council has a key role to play in articulating the boroughs housing needs, shaping development delivery plans and working with the GLA and planning authority to support the types of homes that are needed. As set out in the table below, we will work with partner Housing Associations to facilitate the delivery of new affordable and social homes and where viable deliver these homes ourselves as we have shown in our commitment to the regeneration of Regina Road.

**Supplying new housing for residents**

- *We will rehouse the residents of Regina Road in excellent new build housing*
- *The Council through the Asset Management Plan and the Housing Regeneration Strategy will consider options for investment, development or sale of HRA assets and land subject to financial viability and stakeholder consultation.*
- *We will include a review of all the Council Estates and identify land suitable for new build development and then carry out feasibility work should there be agreement to proceed further. Land holdings and surplus to requirement garages or estate facilities will be considered within the scope of our strategy.*
- *We will purchase homes including buyback schemes of ex right to buy properties and open market purchases*
- *Where viable, the Council will direct deliver schemes across all tenures but with an emphasis on providing socially rented housing.*
- *The Council will also work with those locally based housing associations of sufficient scale who have a record of building a range of social and affordable rented units as well as providing shared ownership opportunities. Where a possible scheme has been identified an appraisal process will determine whether this is best delivered by the Council or a Housing Association partner.*
- *We will maximise provision of accommodation through Section 106 planning obligations which commits developers who build more than 10 homes to an*

*affordable target of 50% of new homes with 60% being social rent and 40% intermediate subject to the financial viability of the scheme*

- *We will carry out an option appraisal of sheltered housing accommodation.*

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019 (SHMA) has determined the type of housing needed in the borough until 2029, including affordable rented homes, affordable ownership housing, and market (private) housing. The SHMA 2019 indicates that of the affordable rented housing built, the majority should be two-bed and three-bed properties (50% and 20% respectively), whilst of the affordable home ownership housing built, the majority should be one-bed and two-bed properties (30% and 40% respectively) (21). The SHMA 2019 determines that of the market housing built, the majority should be two-bed and three-bed properties (45% and 20% respectively). The Strategic Housing Market Assessment is currently being updated and will be available by early 2024.

## **Working with our residents and our partners to establish the Councils Vision**

### **Working with Residents**

Croydon Council's housing services are undergoing significant transformation to allow us to improve the experience of residents, tenants, and leaseholders.

It was important that residents, tenants, and leaseholders were able to determine the vision (what the service should look like) and mission (what we need to do to get there) of the services that they receive, and so 20 engagement sessions across 20 localities were held with residents across the borough including the following groups

- Council tenants and leaseholders
- Council tenants in temporary accommodation and hostel accommodation
- Children and young people including care experienced young people.
- Voluntary and community sector partners
- Council staff
- Croydon councillors and the Executive Mayor
- Croydon's independent Housing Improvement Board

The sessions determined the following vision and mission, as well as key actions to delivering these goals:

**Vision:** Creating great homes, places, and communities to enhance life opportunities

**Mission:** Working with residents, partners, and businesses to provide safe and warm homes in thriving, sustainable and inclusive communities.

Our Vision and Mission will be at the heart of all that we do, and we expect both our staff and our partners to work towards these goals.

### **Working with Partner organisations'**

Croydon has a large and diverse voluntary sector with the second highest number of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations (VCFS) of all outer London boroughs (23). The 657 VCFS organisations in the Borough had a total income of £162.39m between April 2019 and March 2020.

The VCFS has an excellent track record of identifying local issues and reaching out to the most vulnerable in our communities. The VCFS deliver services across the six Local

Community Partnerships (North-East, North-West, Central East, Central West, South-East and South-West).

The Council will extend partnership working in the Borough and will involve voluntary organisations in strategic decisions affecting the direction of the housing service.

## **OUR FIVE PRIORITIES**

### **PRIORITY ONE**

#### **LISTEN TO OUR RESIDENTS AND PROVIDE GOOD HOUSING SERVICES**

##### **This will include**

- Working with residents across tenures to transform their housing service and develop easy to access, modern housing services that prioritise residents.
- Transforming our Housing Needs service to ensure a responsive and tailored approach to tackling homelessness.
- Embedding the commitments made to Croydon Tenants and Leaseholders in the Residents Charter and extending these principles to all those who receive a housing service from the Council.
- We need to continuously improve upon the responsive support we provide to residents living in poor quality Private Sector accommodation using our statutory powers where necessary.
- Delivering major improvements in customer care for Council Tenants and Leaseholders so as to meet the Regulator of Housing's four consumer standards.
- Maintaining our commitments to consult with residents in the forthcoming regeneration of Regina Road.

##### **Why is this important?**

- Residents should be able to access, modern housing services which have our residents at the heart of service delivery.
- We aim to provide a variety of ways to hear resident voices and encourage involvement in service development.
- We are committed to creating inclusive communities and neighbourhoods which are safe and attractive places to live.
- We need to tackle poor conditions within the Private Sector caused by bad Landlords.
- We need to transform the quality of service provided to Croydon's tenants and leaseholders.
- Residents, tenants, and leaseholders should be kept informed through clear, honest, and accessible communication throughout their interactions with the Council.



## **PRIORITY TWO**

### ***WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS, RESIDENTS AND LANDLORDS TO ENSURE THAT HOMES IN THE BOROUGH ARE SAFE, SECURE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT***

#### ***This will include;***

- Our Asset Management strategy will set out how we plan to maintain the condition of Croydon Councils housing stock including our LPS blocks.
- We will produce an investment plan for the longer term that enables us to meet the Regulator of Social Housing's Decent Homes Standard.
- We will ensure robust contract management of our newly established repairs, heating, and voids contracts.
- We will prioritise resident safety by continuously reviewing the compliance of our social and privately rented homes with the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022.
- Where possible we will reduce the reliance on the use of temporary accommodation and carry out a boroughwide audit of these properties to assess their safety and suitability.
- We will support landlords and property agents to ensure private rented sector homes are safe, energy efficient, and meet wider regulatory standards.
- Where necessary, we will enforce policies to tackle the cumulative impact of poor Landlord management of houses in multiple occupation and will increase the number of those that are licensed.
- We will continue to be committed to the Councils Sustainability objectives as well as committing to Croydon's climate action plan.
- We will adopt a "joined-up approach" for our services and work with other Council services such as waste collection, grass cutting, anti-social behaviour and street lighting to ensure seamless service provision.

#### ***Why is this important?***

- We need to strive to ensure that homes in both the Private and Social Housing sector are warm safe and dry across all tenures.
- Improve the quality of our council housing stock and lower our maintenance costs.
- Ensure that properties in the social and private sector meet the revised decent homes standards and provide excellent core services in areas such as waste control and reacting to Anti-Social Behaviour.
- High quality responsive repairs and planned maintenance services for tenants and leaseholders which 'get it right first time'.

## **PRIORITY THREE**

### ***ENABLE PEOPLE TO LEAD HEALTHY AND INDEPENDENT LIVES IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES.***

#### ***This will include;***

- Enabling residents to remain in their own homes by effectively distributing Disabled Facilities Grant and Home Improvement Loans to assist elderly and disabled people and to ensure the signposting of all residents to the support services they require.
- To tailor all of our housing related services towards preventing the causes of homelessness such as domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse and mental health issues.
- As a Council, we will take a pro-active approach towards tenancy sustainment across all tenures and work closely with Social Services to identify those who are vulnerable in our community.
- We will work closely together with Children's Social Care and cross directorate colleagues and partners to ensure a robust development of housing options for young adults leaving care and deliver the commitments made in the Joint Working protocol with Children's Services.
- We will tackle those who cause anti-social behaviour in our community whether they are in private sector or social housing and provide support to the victims of such behaviour.
- Supporting those who are rough sleeping and delivering on the commitment that nobody should have to spend a "second night out"
- Seek secure housing options for vulnerable residents, including older people, and residents with additional needs and disabilities, which support their independence

#### ***Why is this important?***

- We need more housing for older people including housing with care and support
- We need to assist elderly or disabled people to stay in their homes.
- Homelessness can have a destabilising impact on the education prospects and life chances of young people.
- We need to tackle the causes of homelessness at the earliest stage to prevent it occurring.
- Support care experienced young people and families assessed as vulnerable into appropriate housing.
- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping occurring in our community.

## **PRIORITY FOUR**

### ***MAINTAIN THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES THAT MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS IN CROYDON***

#### ***This will include***

- We will develop a Regeneration & New Homes Programme which will set the strategic vision for borough-wide regeneration.
- Make the best use of housing assets, including vacant properties, to secure housing options that are affordable to our residents.
- Developing the skills and resources within the Council to maintain the supply of affordable homes.
- Strengthen relationships with our affordable housing providers including housing associations, developers, and investors.
- Enabling the development and delivery of the Local Plan 2019- 2040 to ensure homes built in the borough meet residents' needs.
- Effectively managing our supply of properties to minimise wait times and improve the customer experience.
- Delivering high quality housing for residents at Regina Road.

#### ***Why is this important?***

- Our projections show that there are insufficient affordable homes to house those on the housing register and that the supply of housing needs to increase
- Our Regeneration and New Homes programme will ensure that our housing stock including our high-rise blocks, are safe, fit-for-purpose and meet our net-zero targets which are detailed in the Council's Carbon Neutral Action Plan.
- We need to work with our partners in the housing association sector to facilitate the supply of new housing.
- The younger age profile of our population means that we need a long-term strategy for delivering more homes.

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## **PRIORITY FIVE**

### ***WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES AND MANAGE THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING RELATED SERVICES***

#### ***This will include***

- Strengthen collaboration with statutory, community, and voluntary sector partners to improve resident access to housing services.
- Set up a forum to develop effective links with housing associations in the Borough
- Consulting widely on our services to obtain cross community feedback and establish new links in the Community.
- Encouraging the development of Tenant and Resident organisations in Croydon Council stock.
- Leading on the running of the Landlords Forum with a view to improving conditions in the Private Sectors.
- Liaise with Partners with a view to establishing a forum to discuss homelessness
- Ensuring that Croydon's commissioned partners deliver social value and provide opportunities for Croydon residents.
- Supporting voluntary, community and faith sector in bids to bring more funding and resources into the Borough.

#### ***Why is this important?***

- A better knowledge of our community will enable us to target our resources more successfully.
- A joined-up approach between the Council and the Voluntary Sector provides better value for money and increases the chances of bringing more resources into the Borough.
- Effective Liaison is necessary to restore confidence in the Community.

## **Delivering the strategy**

Our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 will be underpinned by a Delivery Plan which will detail the key actions and milestones to be achieved by 2028 to ensure our strategic priorities and objectives are delivered.

The key milestones will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) and reviewed as part of our Housing Transformation Programme. The key milestones will align with the Council's existing key performance indicators, including the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and our performance against the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

The strategic priorities and objectives of our Housing Strategy will be reviewed against imminent changes to legislation including the introduction of revised Consumer Standards by the Regulator of Social Housing and the revised Decent Homes Standards.

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# Consultation and Engagement Report

## Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 Consultation

*August 2023*

## **Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 Consultation and Engagement Report**

The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 has been co-designed with residents and partners through targeted engagement sessions and an online survey consultation. In total, 529 people contributed to the co-design of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 including tenants, leaseholders, voluntary, community and faith sector partners, staff, and Members.

The draft priorities, objectives and accompanying narrative have been finalised to reflect the feedback from the consultation and engagement process. Changes have been made to the draft Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 where the feedback was high-level and strategic; specific, detailed feedback will be incorporated into the subsequent Delivery Plan.

### **Contents**

1. Feedback from the targeted sessions (p.3-4)
  - Resident and Partner Engagement Session
  - Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
  - Private Sector Landlord Engagement Session
  - Housing Association Engagement Session
2. Survey consultation report (p.5-9)
  - Priority One
  - Priority Two
  - Priority Three
  - Priority Four
  - Priority Five
  - Is there anything else you think the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 should include?
3. Changes to the draft priorities and objectives following consultation and engagement feedback (p.10-11)
4. Survey consultation equalities questions (p.12-16)

### **1. Feedback from the targeted sessions**

Targeted sessions were held with the following groups to ascertain detailed feedback on our draft priorities and objectives, and suggestions as to what these should mean for our residents and partners:

- Residents
- Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
- Members through an All-Member briefing
- Voluntary, community, and faith sector partners
- Private rented sector landlords
- Housing associations

The targeted sessions were attended by a total of 79 people (excluding Council staff); suggestions made at each of the targeted sessions are detailed below.



### **Resident and Partner Engagement session**

- *The Council's housing 'front-door' should be more accessible, e.g., options to contact the Council in-person or over the phone and accessibility options for those for whom English is not their first language.*
- *Guidance provided to those at risk of homelessness should not be to stay-put within the property once an eviction notice has been received.*
- *The Council should respond to residents' concerns in a timely manner.*
- *The Council should conduct an initial needs assessment when a resident applies as homeless.*
- *The Council should re-introduce the selective licensing scheme.*
- *The Council should only place homeless households in licensed Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).*
- *The Council should improve access to services for residents and landlords relating to the private rented sector.*
- *Care leavers should be prioritised in the Council's Allocation Policy.*
- *The Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy should be co-produced with residents and partners.*
- *The Council should focus on the prevention of homelessness, not just the relief of homelessness.*
- *The Council lacks accommodation for women and domestic abuse survivors*
- *The Council must improve its joint working with housing associations to ensure housing associations build the homes residents need.*
- *The role of the voluntary, community and faith sector to support residents should be recognised by the Council and the sector should be listened to.*
- *Pathways for referrals between the voluntary, community and faith sector and the Council should be formalised.*

### **Tenant and Leaseholder Panel**

- *The Residents' Charter should be adopted by all Council service, not just housing services.*

### **Private Sector Landlord Engagement Session**

- *Croydon Council should support private sector landlords in meeting new legislative requirements including financial support.*
- *Croydon Council should support private sector landlords in improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes.*
- *Croydon Council should support private sector landlords with anti-social behaviour and managing disputes between tenants.*
- *Croydon Council should support private sector landlords in addressing damp and mould.*

### **Housing Association Engagement Session**

- *Re-establish the Croydon Housing Association Group chaired by a local housing association*
- *Learn from best practice when re-establishing the Croydon Housing Association Group*

- *Croydon Council should work with housing associations to identify land suitable for development*
- *Croydon Council should improve joint-working with housing associations regarding nomination agreements, planning, and adaptations for those with disabilities*

## **2. Survey Consultation Report**

The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 consultation survey received a total of 450 responses. The majority of respondents identified as a Tenant or leaseholder of Croydon Council or 'other'.

### **Are you a...**

- Tenant or leaseholder of Croydon Council: 29.2%
- Croydon Council staff member: 6.6%
- Voluntary, community or faith sector partner: 6.8%
- Statutory partner, e.g., NHS, Metropolitan Police Service, London Fire Brigade: 1.1%
- Other: 58.3%

Of the respondents that identified as 'Other', the majority identified as either a...

- Homeowner: 5.8%
- Private landlord: 32.2%
- Croydon resident: 12.0%

The survey respondents were then asked if they agreed or disagreed with our draft priorities and objectives.

### **Priority One: Listen to our residents and provide good housing services.**

Objectives:

- Work with residents to transform the housing service and develop easy to access, modern housing services with residents at the heart of delivery.
- Effectively managing our supply of properties to minimise wait times and improve customer experience.

### **To what extent do you agree with this priority?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 77.2%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 8%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 12.7%

**To what extent do you agree with these objectives?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 70.6%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 14.5%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 14.9%

**Priority Two: Work with our partners, residents, and landlords to ensure that homes in the borough are safe, secure, and energy efficient.**

Objectives:

- Ensure our homes meet revised decent homes standards and are safe, warm, and dry
- Work with anti-social behaviour and waste collection services to make our communities and neighbourhoods cleaner, safer, and healthier places to live.
- Work in partnership with landlords and property agents to ensure private rented sector homes are safe, energy efficient, and meet wider regulatory standards.

**To what extent do you agree with this priority?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 73.6%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 13.8%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 12.5%

**To what extent do you agree with these objectives?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 73.5%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 17.9%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 8.7%

**Priority Three: Enable people to lead healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities.**

- Secure housing options for vulnerable residents, including residents with additional needs and disabilities, which support their independence.
- Support care-experienced young people and children with families assessed as vulnerable into appropriate housing.
- Enable our residents to stay safe in their homes.
- Prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

**To what extent do you agree with this priority?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 75.9%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 8.2%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 15.9%

**To what extent do you agree with these objectives?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 74.2%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 10.1%

- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 15.7%

**Priority Four: Maintain the supply of affordable homes that meets the diverse needs of residents in Croydon.**

Objectives

- Make the best use of Council assets to secure affordable housing options.
- Develop skills and resources within the Council to maintain the supply of affordable homes.
- Strengthen relationships with our affordable housing providers including housing associations, developers, and investors.

**To what extent do you agree with this priority?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 65.3%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 17.5%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 17.3%

**To what extent do you agree with these objectives?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 68.8%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 14.6%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 16.5%

**Priority Five: Work with our partners and local community to make best use of resources and manage the demand for housing related services.**

Objectives

- Collaborate with statutory, community, and voluntary sector partners to improve residents access to housing services.
- Prepare for the future to ensure our homes in the borough meet the needs of our diverse communities.

**To what extent do you agree with this priority?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 69.9%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 9.7%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 18.2%

**To what extent do you agree with these objectives?**

- Strongly agree or agree: 67.3%
- Strongly disagree or disagree: 8.1%
- Neither agree nor disagree or don't know: 23.5%

**Analysis of responses to draft priorities and objectives with low agreement**

N.B., 'low agreement' has been defined as where approximately a third or more of respondents either 'strongly disagree or disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know' in response to the draft priorities and objectives.

The survey data tells us that 34.8% of respondents either 'strongly disagree or disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know' in response to the following priority:

**Priority Four:** Maintain the supply of affordable homes that meets the diverse needs of residents in Croydon.

The survey data tells us that 31.1% of respondents either 'strongly disagree or disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know' in response to the following objectives:

- Make the best use of Council assets to secure affordable housing options.
- Develop skills and resources within the Council to maintain the supply of affordable homes.
- Strengthen relationships with our affordable housing providers including housing associations, developers, and investors.

When respondents were asked why they strongly disagreed or disagreed, the following responses were provided:

- *We need genuinely affordable homes*
- *Affordable must mean something*
- *There is not enough family sized accommodation*
- *All new builds I've seen are not affordable at all*
- *There are not enough affordable homes for people on low incomes*
- *To maintain the supply of affordable homes in Croydon [this] requires slowing down the exodus of private landlords*
- *Maintaining is not going to be enough...you need to actively work to increase the supply of affordable housing for everyone.*
- *There are many properties that lie empty...*
- *We need affordable homes but not at the expense of quality*

The survey data tells us that 31.6% of respondents either 'strongly disagree or disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know' in response to the following objectives:

#### *Priority Five*

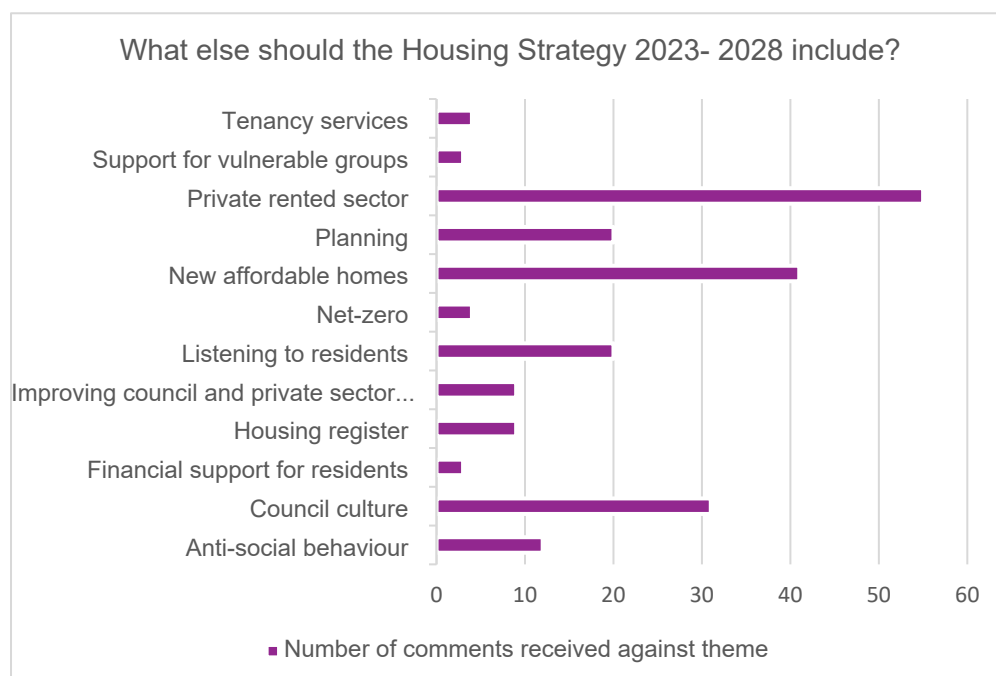
- Collaborate with statutory, community, and voluntary sector partners to improve residents access to housing services.
- Prepare for the future to ensure our homes in the borough meet the needs of our diverse communities.

When respondents were asked why they strongly disagreed or disagreed, the following responses were provided:

- *Over-development has blighted the area with inappropriately sized developments on quiet residential streets...*
- *...the council should work with socially-aware/value organisations such as housing associations...*
- *I am not sure what managing demand means*
- *Instruct statutory, community and voluntary sector partners to improve residents access to housing services*
- *I'm not really sure what diverse communities has to do with meeting building regulations and ensuring housing is built to current standards*

### Is there anything else you think Croydon Council's Housing Strategy 2023-2028 should include?

Survey respondents were asked if there was anything else the draft priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 should include. The responses have been grouped into 12 themes; the majority of comments related to the private rented sector, new affordable homes and improvement to the Council's culture.



Respondents have highlighted a number of issues to be addressed as part of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 against the key themes below.

#### Private rented sector

- *Grants to landlords to meet the latest Decent Homes standards*
- *Incentives to private sector landlords to provide affordable and compliant homes*

- *Make it easy for private landlords to supply good quality housing*
- *Design policies to make tenants take more responsibility*
- *Better help and advice to private landlords which supports landlords to stay as landlords*

#### New affordable homes

- *Houses not flats*
- *Work with Community Land Trusts and explore community-based housing options*
- *Ensure that the elderly are given suitable accommodation*
- *More affordable homes 2- to 4-bedroom size*
- *Utilise vacant homes and buildings to increase affordable housing*

#### Council culture

- *Ensure all departments within the council stop working in silos*
- *More meaningful communication with residents*
- *Make sure phone calls are answered promptly*
- *Managers and staff who really care about the needs of residents*
- *Honesty*

### **3. Changes to the draft priorities and objectives following engagement and consultation feedback**

The draft priorities and objectives have been finalised to reflect the feedback from the consultation and engagement process. Amends to the priorities, objectives and accompanying narrative have been highlighted in red.

#### **Priority One:** Listen to our residents and provide good housing services

- Work with residents **across tenures** to transform the housing service and develop easy to access, modern housing services with residents at the heart.
- **Transforming our Housing Needs service to ensure a responsive and tailored approach to tackling homelessness.**
- **Embedding the commitments made to Croydon Tenants and Leaseholders in the Residents Charter and extending these principles to all those who receive a housing service from the Council.**
- **We need to continuously improve upon the responsive support we provide to residents living in poor quality Private Sector accommodation using our statutory powers where necessary**
- Effectively manage our supply of properties to minimise wait times and improve the customer experience-are now in **Priority Four**.

**Priority Two:** Work with our partners, residents, and landlords to ensure that homes in the borough are safe, secure, and energy efficient

- Ensure our homes meet revised decent homes standards and are safe, warm, and dry.
- **We will support** ~~Work in partnership with~~ landlords and property agents to ensure private rented sector homes are safe, energy efficient, and meet wider regulatory standards.
- **We will adopt a “joined-up approach” for our services and work with other Council services such as waste collection, grass cutting, anti-social behaviour and street lighting to ensure seamless service provision**
- **We will support landlords and property agents to ensure private rented sector homes are safe, energy efficient, and meet wider regulatory standards**

**Priority Three:** Enable people to lead healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities

- **Secure housing options for vulnerable residents, including older people, and residents with additional needs and disabilities, which support their independence**
- **To tailor all of our housing related services towards preventing the causes of homelessness such as domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse and mental health issues.**
- **We will work closely together with Children’s Social Care and cross directorate colleagues and partners to ensure a robust development of housing options for young adults leaving care and deliver the commitments made in the Joint Working protocol with Children’s Services.**
- **Enable our residents to live independently ~~stay safe~~ in their own homes by effectively distributing Disabled Facilities Grant and Home Improvement Loans to assist elderly and disabled people.**

**Priority Four:** Maintain the supply of affordable homes that meets the diverse needs of residents in Croydon.

- We will develop a Regeneration & New Home Programme which will set the strategic vision for borough-wide regeneration.**
- Make the best use of housing assets, including vacant properties, to secure housing options that are affordable to our residents.**
- Developing the skills and resources within the Council to maintain the supply of affordable homes.**
- Strengthen relationships with our affordable housing providers including housing associations, developers, and investors.**
- Enabling the development and delivery of the Local Plan 2019- 2040 to ensure homes built in the borough meet residents’ needs.**



**Priority Five:** Work with our partners and the local community to make best use of resources and manage the demand for housing related services.

- **Strengthen collaboration** collaborate with statutory, community, and voluntary sector partners to improve resident access to housing services.
- **Improving links with representative groups who ‘speak’ for the community we serve.**
- **Set up a forum to develop effective links with housing associations in the Borough**
- **Consulting widely on our services to obtain cross community feedback and establish new links in the Community.**
- **Encouraging the development of Tenant and Resident organisations in Croydon Council stock.**
- **Leading on the running of the Landlords Forum with a view to improving conditions in the Private Sectors.**
- **Liaise with Partners with a view to establishing a forum to discuss homelessness**

#### **4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HOMES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

- 4.1 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that Housing Strategy includes details of how the Council will improve the availability of priority housing for domestic abuse victims and residents from other vulnerable backgrounds. Staff should be trained to detect and tackle abuse-related issues.
- 4.2 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the following areas should be explored for inclusion in the Housing Strategy and accompanying delivery plan: (i) a simplified downsizing process; (ii) how to utilise underused garages; (iii) green energy grants; (iv) tackling licencing problems with houses in multiple occupations; (v) overcrowding; (vi) cooperation with Education division to ensure that children placed in temporary accommodations are not excluded from education.
- 4.3. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Strategy should include more detail on the following areas: (i) energy efficiency; (ii) actions to tackle antisocial behaviour.
- 4.4. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that, given the shortage of available housing in the borough, the Housing Strategy needs to provide strategic direction on how the supply of available housing in the Borough will be increased, and supported by a delivery plan providing tangible outcomes.
- 4.5. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Residents’ Complaint Process is reviewed to ensure it provides efficient resolutions to resident complaints.

- 4.6. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the delivery plan being developed to accompany the Housing Strategy must include clear timelines for delivery and SMART objectives, outline any interdependencies and indicate the key risks to deliver and how they will be mitigated.

## **5. Survey Consultation Equalities Questions**

### **What is your sex?**

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by sex.

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Survey respondents</b>	<b>Census 2021</b>
No response	2.9%	0.0%
Female	43.1%	52.0%
Male	40.2%	48.0%
Prefer not to say	13.8%	0.0%

### **What age range are you in?**

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that respondents between the ages of 16 and 34 are underrepresented in the survey.

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Survey respondents</b>	<b>Census 2021</b>
No response	2.2%	0.0%
16- 19	0.0%	11.3%
20- 24	0.2%	
25- 34	3.1%	
35- 44	10.4%	15.3%
45- 54	21.1%	13.6%
55- 64	27.1%	11.8%
65- 74	14.9%	7.4%
75- 84	5.8%	6.2%

85+	0.7%	
Prefer not to say	14.4%	0.0%

### Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by gender identity.

Gender identity	Survey respondents	Census 2021
No response	8.2%	7.5%
Yes	77.8%	91.6%
Prefer not to say	12.9%	0.0%
No	1.1%	0.9%

### Are you married or in a civil partnership?

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by legal partnership status, however, residents who identified as 'never married and never registered in a civil partnership' are underrepresented in the survey.

Legal partnership status	Survey respondents	Census 2021
No response	2.7%	0.0%
Never married and never registered in a civil partnership	14.9%	42.9%
Married	51.6%	41.6%
In a registered civil partnership	0.4%	0.3%
Separated, but still legally married	1.1%	2.6%
Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership	0.2%	0.0%
Divorced	6.4%	8.1%
Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	0.0%	0.0%
Widowed	2.9%	4.7%
Surviving partner from a registered civil partnership	0.0%	0.0%
Prefer not to say	19.8%	0.0%

### How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by ethnic group, however, residents who identified as 'Black African', 'Pakistani' or 'Any other Black background' are significantly underrepresented in the survey.

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Survey respondents %</b>	<b>Census 2021 %</b>
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	46.5	37.4
Prefer not to say	22.4	0
Indian	7.6	7.6
Any other White background	4.3	9.3
Black Caribbean	4.3	9.2
Any other Asian background	2.7	4.1
Black African	2.7	10.3
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	1.6	2.3
Chinese	1.4	1
Other	1.4	3.3
White Irish	0.9	1.3
White and Black Caribbean	0.9	2.7
White and Black African	0.9	1
Pakistani	0.9	3.9
White and Asian	0.7	1.5
Any other Black background	0.5	3.1
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.2	0.4
Bangladeshi	0.0	0.9
Arab	0.0	0.6

### What is your religion?

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by religion, however, residents who identified as 'Muslim' are significantly underrepresented in the survey.

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Survey respondents</b>	<b>Census 2021</b>
Baha'i	0.0%	0.0%
Buddhist	0.7%	0.6%
Christian	34.8%	48.9%
Hindu	4.1%	5.9%
Jain	0.7%	0.0%
Jewish	1.1%	0.2%
Muslim	2.5%	10.4%
Sikh	0.7%	0.4%
Any other religion	0.7%	0.8%
No religion	29.5%	25.9%
Prefer not to say	23.8%	0.0%
Other (please specify)	1.4%	0.0%
No response	3.0%	6.9%

## Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Comparison of our survey data with Census 2021 data indicates that our respondents are broadly representative of Croydon's population by disability status.

Disability	Survey respondents	Census 2021
No response	3.1%	0.0%
Yes	12.2%	14.4%
No	69.3%	85.5%
Prefer not to say	15.3%	0.0%

Analysis has been undertaken to identify issues or themes raised by the following protected characteristic groups underrepresented in the survey:

- Never married and never registered in a civil partnership
- Black African
- Pakistani
- Any other Black background
- Muslim
- Aged 16- 34

The below details the percentage of those responding 'strongly agree or agree' by group. The analysis shows that for all underrepresented groups, excluding those identifying as 'Muslim', the percentage of those responding 'strongly agree or agree' was higher than across all respondents. In contrast, a lower percentage of those identifying as 'Muslim' responded 'strongly agree or agree' to the five draft priorities. Analysis of the eleven respondents identifying as 'Muslim' to the five draft priorities does not highlight reasons for not responding 'strongly agree or agree' shared by the eleven respondents.

% of respondents responding 'Strongly agree or agree' by group							
	All respondents	Never married or never registered in a civil partnership	Black African	Any other Black background	Pakistani	16- 34 y/o	Muslim
Priority One	77.2%	77.6%	83.4%	100.0%	100.0%	80.0%	54.6%
Priority Two	73.6%	76.1%	91.6%	100.0%	75.0%	80.0%	45.5%
Priority Three	75.9%	79.9%	91.7%	100.0%	75.0%	80.0%	45.5%
Priority Four	65.3%	71.6%	75.0%	100.0%	100.0%	73.4%	54.6%
Priority Five	69.9%	71.7%	83.4%	100.0%	66.6%	80.0%	40.0%

No. of respondents by group	450 respondents	67 respondents	12 respondents	2 respondents	4 respondents	15 respondents	11 respondents
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# Equality Analysis Form

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

The council has an important role in creating a fair society through the services we provide, the people we employ and the money we spend. Equality is integral to everything the council does. We are committed to making Croydon a stronger, fairer borough where no community or individual is held back.

Undertaking an Equality Analysis helps to determine whether a proposed change will have a positive, negative, or no impact on groups that share a protected characteristic. Conclusions drawn from Equality Analyses helps us to better understand the needs of all our communities, enable us to target services and budgets more effectively and also helps us to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

An equality analysis must be completed as early as possible during the planning stages of any proposed change to ensure information gained from the process is incorporated in any decisions made.

In practice, the term '**proposed change**' broadly covers the following:-

- Policies, strategies and plans;
- Projects and programmes;
- Commissioning (including re-commissioning and de-commissioning);
- Service review;
- Budget allocation/analysis;
- Staff restructures (including outsourcing);
- Business transformation programmes;
- Organisational change programmes;
- Processes (for example thresholds, eligibility, entitlements, and access criteria).

## 2. Proposed change

Directorate	Housing
Title of proposed change	Housing Strategy 2023-2028
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Velvet Dibley

### 2.1 Purpose of proposed change (see 1.1 above for examples of proposed changes)

Briefly summarise the proposed change and why it is being considered/anticipated outcomes. What is meant to achieve and how is it seeking to achieve this? Please also state if it is an amendment to an existing arrangement or a new proposal.

**The Housing Strategy intends to set the strategic priorities and objectives of the Housing Directorate for the next 5 years. A delivery plan will sit underneath.**

The aim of our Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 is to deliver the following objectives detailed in the [Mayor's Business Plan 2022- 2026](#):

- Get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable.
- Become a council which listens to, respects, and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities and businesses.
- Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.
- Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.
- Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential
- Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home
- Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service
- People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer

The Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 provides the strategic framework for the **Housing Transformation Programme**, a programme of individual projects which aim to improve and transform our housing services. The Housing Transformation Programme has identified specific areas of our housing services, such as void property management and our repairs service, which require immediate improvement, whilst the Housing Strategy sets out our longer-term ambitions.

## 3. Impact of the proposed change

**Important Note:** It is necessary to determine how each of the protected groups could be impacted by the proposed change. Who benefits and how (and who, therefore doesn't and why?) Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic.

Where an impact is unknown, state so. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports,

complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

### 3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

**Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact**

For each protected characteristic group show whether the impact of the proposed change on service users and/or staff is positive or negative by briefly outlining the nature of the impact in the appropriate column. . If it is decided that analysis is not relevant to some groups, this should be recorded and explained. In all circumstances you should list the source of the evidence used to make this judgement where possible.

**The creation of the Housing Strategy will be accompanied by the development of equalities impact assessments at a project level, where necessary, which will be developed in conversation with the Equalities Programme Manager. The project managers responsible for the delivery of projects within the delivery plan will ensure the EQIAs produced accurately assess the potential impact on vulnerable groups, and groups that share protected characteristics. All EQIAs produced will be treated as living documents and will be updated when data becomes available and new equality objectives identified where appropriate.**

**We also recognise that we don't currently collect useful or accurate data on our residents, work is underway to consider how we can better capture and collect data of our residents to ensure that changes to our services are data driven.**

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
Age	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision-making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.</p> <p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any</p>	None	<p>Census 2021 data shows the LB Croydon is the most populous borough in London with approximately 390,800 residents.</p> <p>The data tells us that there are approximately 80,321 residents aged 15 and under, 257,325 residents aged 16 to 64 years old, and 53,072 residents aged 65 years and older.</p> <p>The data shows that Croydon has the highest number of 0–19-year-olds in London.</p>

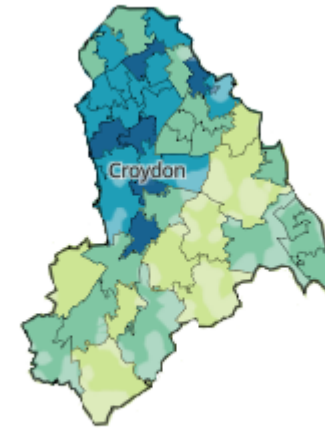
	changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.		<p>Since 2011, Croydon has seen an ageing population, with a 19.6% growth in 65+ year olds (Census 2021).</p> <p>Croydon's projected growth from 2022-2041 is predicted to be 7.9% (GLA 2020 based housing led projections).</p>															
Disability	<p>Residents with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities may be treated more favourably than others in relation to housing improvements. This will not amount to discrimination in relation to the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>	<b>None</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Disability</th> <th>Survey respondents</th> <th>Census 2021</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No response</td> <td>3.1%</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>12.2%</td> <td>14.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>69.3%</td> <td>85.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>15.3%</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Disability	Survey respondents	Census 2021	No response	3.1%	0.0%	Yes	12.2%	14.4%	No	69.3%	85.5%	Prefer not to say	15.3%	0.0%
Disability	Survey respondents	Census 2021																
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Yes	12.2%	14.4%																
No	69.3%	85.5%																
Prefer not to say	15.3%	0.0%																
Sex	The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will	<b>None</b>	<p>From that data 0.89% of Croydon residents identify as a gender different from sex registered at birth.</p> <p>With higher populations in Central Croydon and North Croydon, area to note are Broad Green &amp; Waddon (1.86%), Purely North (1.56%), Selhurst South &amp; West Croydon (1.49%) and Thornton Heath North West (1.48%).</p>															

consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.

Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.

This can be seen from the map shown below.

Gender Identity Different from Birth



0.02% 0.43% 0.82% 1.39% 2.73% 8.12%

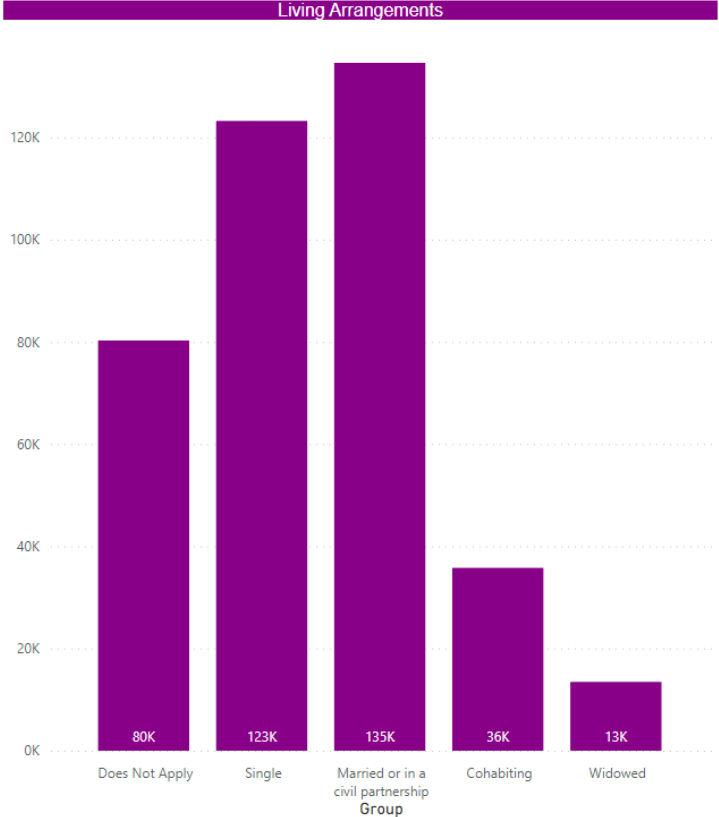
Gender

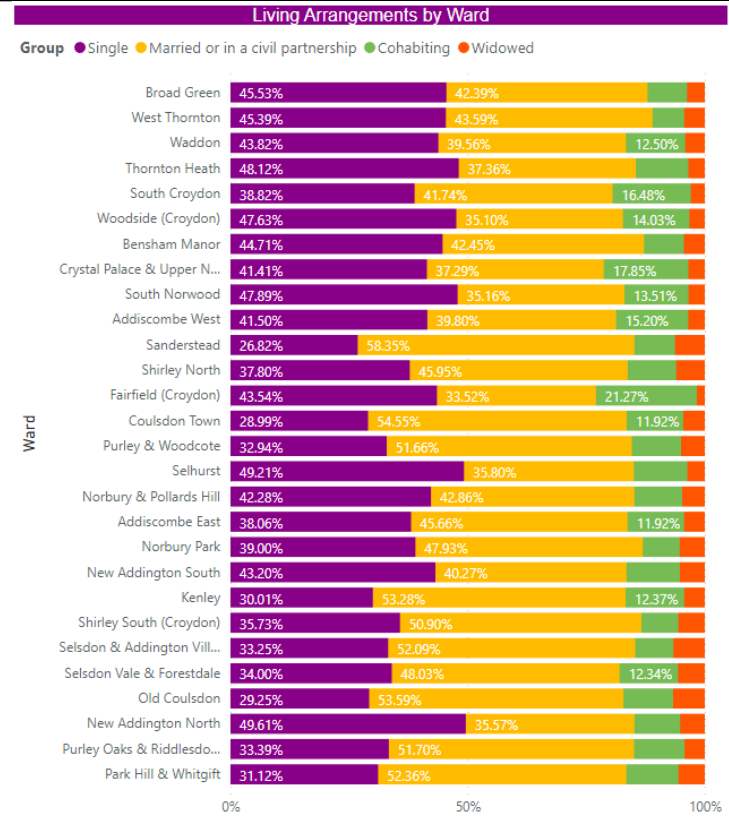
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Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any

None

Sex	Survey respondents	Census 2021
No response	2.9%	0.0%
Female	43.1%	52.0%
Male	40.2%	48.0%
Prefer not to say	13.8%	0.0%

	<p>changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>														
<p>Marriage or Civil Partnership</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.</p> <p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>	<p><b>None</b></p>	<p>From the below it can be seen that the majority of Croydon residents are married, in civil partnerships or co-habiting.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Living Arrangements</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Living Arrangement</th> <th>Number of Residents</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Does Not Apply</td> <td>80K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>123K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Married or in a civil partnership Group</td> <td>135K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohabiting</td> <td>36K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Widowed</td> <td>13K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Broken into wards and excluding those that answered the census “do not apply”, it can be seen that there are high rates of single living arrangements in Fairfield, Thornton Heath, Selhurst and New Addington</p>	Living Arrangement	Number of Residents	Does Not Apply	80K	Single	123K	Married or in a civil partnership Group	135K	Cohabiting	36K	Widowed	13K
Living Arrangement	Number of Residents														
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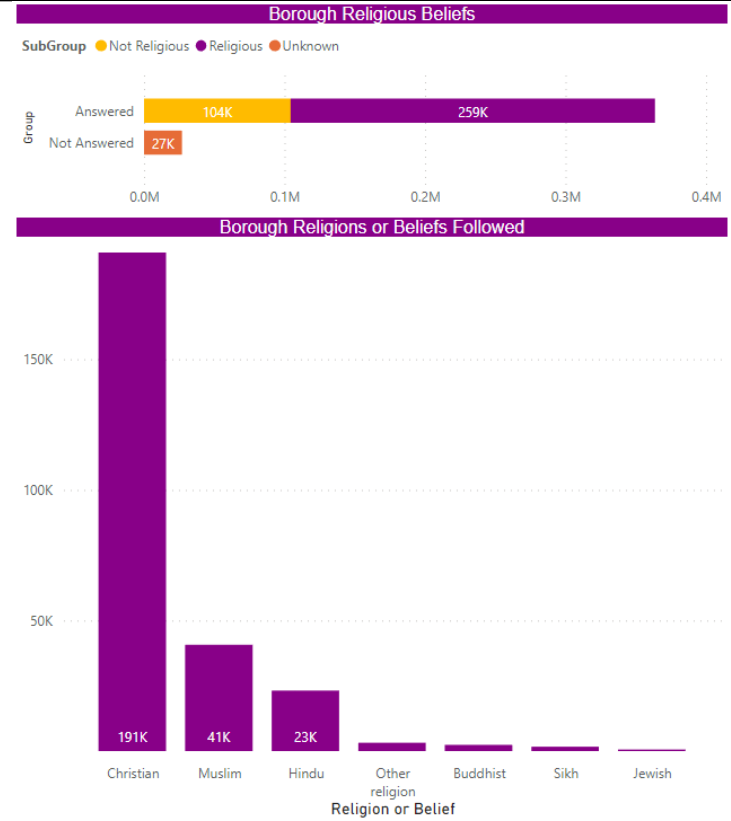




			<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Household Composition</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Household Composition Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>43K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couple</td> <td>28K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single With Children Group</td> <td>25K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couple With Children</td> <td>55K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Family Composition</td> <td>2K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Breaking this down to borough wards the areas of high singles without children, are Fairfield, Selhurst and South Norwood.</p>	Category	Count	Single	43K	Couple	28K	Single With Children Group	25K	Couple With Children	55K	Other Family Composition	2K
Category	Count														
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Single With Children Group	25K														
Couple With Children	55K														
Other Family Composition	2K														
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected</p>	<p><b>None</b></p>	<p>29% of Croydon residents have declared they are not religious. Compared with 71% (259k) of residents stating they do hold a religious belief. The chart below shows that breakdown and what religion or belief those that answered follow.</p>												

characteristics before any decision is made.

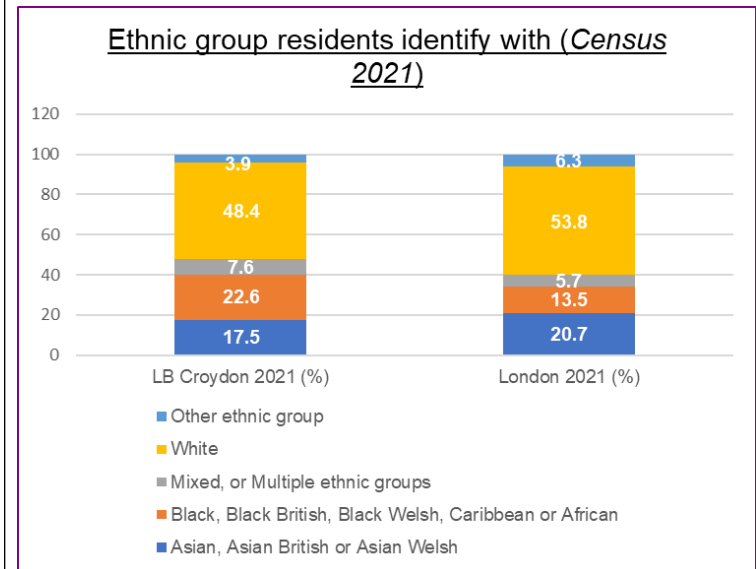
Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.

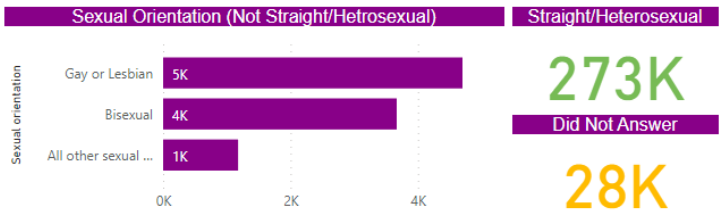


Race

The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.

None



	<p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>														
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.</p> <p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>	<p><b>None</b></p>	<p>The ONS Census from 2021 is the available data for Croydon on sexual orientation.</p> <p>From this data a summary of Croydon is as follows:</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sexual Orientation</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Gay or Lesbian</td> <td>5K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bisexual</td> <td>4K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All other sexual ...</td> <td>1K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Straight/Heterosexual</td> <td>273K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Did Not Answer</td> <td>28K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sexual Orientation	Count	Gay or Lesbian	5K	Bisexual	4K	All other sexual ...	1K	Straight/Heterosexual	273K	Did Not Answer	28K
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Straight/Heterosexual	273K														
Did Not Answer	28K														
<p>Pregnancy or Maternity</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.</p>	<p><b>None</b></p>													

Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.

**Important note:** You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.

When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics. **Please use table 4 to record actions that will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact**

### 3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

**Table 2 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change**

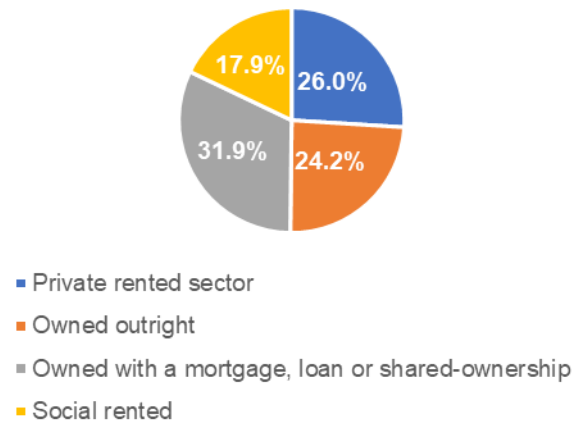
If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:

Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consultation Findings</b></p> <p>The survey was responded to by the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant or leaseholder of Croydon Council: 29.2% (128)</li> <li>• Croydon Council Staff Member: 6.6% (29)</li> <li>• Voluntary, community or faith sector partner: 6.8% (30)</li> <li>• Statutory: 1.1% (5)</li> <li>• Other: 58.3% (256).</li> </ul> <p><b>Feedback on draft priorities</b></p> <p>**Priority One: Listen to our residents and provide good housing services: <b>77.2%</b> strongly agree or agree.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Housing Strategy Consultation</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>02.08.2023</b></p>

<p><b>**Priority Two:</b> Work with our partners, residents, and landlords to ensure that homes in the borough are safe, secure, and energy efficient: <b>73.6%</b> strongly agree or agree</p> <p><b>**Priority Three:</b> Enable people to lead healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities: <b>75.9%</b> strongly agree or agree</p> <p><b>**Priority Four:</b> Maintain the supply of affordable homes that meets the diverse needs of residents in Croydon: <b>65.3%</b> strongly agree or agree</p> <p><b>**Priority Five:</b> Work with our partners and the local community to make best use of resources and manage the demand for housing related services: <b>69.9%</b> strongly agree or agree</p> <p>“Is there anything else you think Croydon Council’s Housing Strategy should include?”, see the number of comments made against each theme below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-social behaviour:</li> <li>• <b>Council culture: 29 comments</b></li> <li>• Council tax: 2 comments</li> <li>• Financial support for residents: 3 comments</li> <li>• Housing register: 9 comments</li> <li>• Improving council and private sector homes: 9 comments</li> <li>• <b>Listening to residents: 20 comments</b></li> <li>• Net-zero: 4 comments</li> <li>• <b>New affordable homes: 41 comments</b></li> <li>• <b>Planning: 20 comments</b></li> <li>• <b>Private rented sector: 55 comments</b></li> <li>• Support for protected characteristic groups: 3 comments</li> <li>• Tenancy services: 4 comments</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Further research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Croydon has the highest number of households in London, 152,900 (Census 2021).</li> <li>• Census 2021 data shows us that most households in LB Croydon are one-person or two-person households (57.7% of households).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mixed – Census 2021 / GLA Rents Map / ONS / PRS</b></p>	

- Approximately 18.2% of households in the borough are 3-person households, and 24.1% of households are 4+ persons.
- In Croydon, average house prices were 11.88 times average earnings (Census 2021).
- Census 2021 data tell us that most households in Croydon own their own homes.
- Figure 3 provides a breakdown of households by tenure type.
- The data shows that 17.9% of households are in social rented homes.

Households by tenure type in LB Croydon  
(Census 2021)



- The majority of homes in Croydon are whole houses or bungalows (60.2%) whilst 39.7% of homes are flats, maisonettes, or apartments (Census 2021).
- A significant majority (63.3%) of homes have either two or three bedrooms (Census 2021).

- Census 2021 tells us that the majority of homes in LB Croydon are under-occupied (53.7%) compared to 10.4% of homes that are overcrowded.

### *Social homes*

Croydon Council has a total of 13,440 social homes for social housing tenants. Croydon Council's social homes can be broken down into the following property types:

- Homes: 4,820
- Bungalows: 231
- Flats: 7,007
- Maisonettes: 1,382

Of the 13,440 social homes, 1,233 are supported housing units (RSH LARP look-up tool 2020). Croydon Council also has a total of 2545 leaseholders in addition to the 13,440 social homes.

### *Private rented sector homes*

The monthly rent of a private rented sector (PRS) home is increasing across the country, nonetheless, cost increases are impacting Londoners more severely.

Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) states that tenants renting in London may have faced higher price rises between February 2022 and

February 2023 compared with other regions. The average increase between February 2022 and February 2023 was 12.0% in London compared to the England average of 9.7%.

The average PRS rent is lower in LB Croydon than the London average. Between January to December 2022, the average monthly rent prices are detailed in *Table 1* (GLA London Rents Map):

Property type	LB Croydon average	London average
Room	£537	£625
Studio	£878	£980
One-bedroom	£975	£1,250
Two-bedroom	£1,250	£1,500
Three-bedroom	£1,500	£1,800
4+ bedrooms	£2,000	£2,500

In contrast, the median annual pay for employees in Croydon (£34,226) was higher than the London average (£33,970) in 2022 (ONS 2022).

#### *Home Ownership*



As detailed in Figure 3, Census 2021 data tells us that the majority of residents in LB Croydon own their homes (56.1%).

ONS data tells us that in 2022, the median price house price in LB Croydon was £417,000 which was lower than the London average of £586,000.

The median house prices in LB Croydon by property type for 2022 are detailed in Table 2 below:

Property type	LB Croydon 2022
Median price paid for all property types	£417,000
Median price paid for detached houses	£775,000
Median price paid for semi-detached houses	£547,250
Median price paid for terraced houses	£435,000
Median price paid for flats and maisonettes	£285,000

### *Housing need*

As of January 2023, there are approximately 6,979 households on Croydon Council's Housing Register

which represents an increase of 5.9% since January 2022.

The average wait time for a Croydon Council property between 2016 and 2021 was five years and 11 months. The majority of households on the housing register are waiting for one-bedroom and two-bedroom properties.

### *Rough sleeping*

In 2020/2021, 271 people were seen rough sleeping in LB Croydon. Of the 271 people, 176 had not been seen rough sleeping prior to 2021/2022 (CHAIN Outer London Boroughs).

Table 3 details the number of rough sleepers seen in LB Croydon since April 2018:

Time period	Rough sleepers seen in LB Croydon
2018/19	274
2019/20	306
2020/21	322
2021/22	271
Change between 2020/21 and 2021/22	-51
Change between 2018/19 and 2021/22	-3

### 3.3 Impact scores

#### Example

If we are going to reduce parking provision in a particular location, officers will need to assess the equality impact as follows;

1. Determine the Likelihood of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the likelihood of impact score is 2 (likely to impact)
2. Determine the Severity of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the Severity of impact score is also 2 (likely to impact )
3. Calculate the equality impact score using table 4 below and the formula **Likelihood x Severity** and record it in table 5, for the purpose of this example - **Likelihood (2) x Severity (2) = 4**

**Table 4 – Equality Impact Score**

5				
---	--	--	--	--

	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
<b>Likelihood of Impact</b>				

**Key**

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
6 – 9	High
3 – 5	Medium
1 – 3	Low

# Equality Analysis

Table 3 – Impact scores

<b>Column 1</b>  <b>PROTECTED GROUP</b>	<b>Column 2</b>  <b>LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT SCORE</b>  Use the key below to <b>score</b> the <b>likelihood</b> of the proposed change impacting each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.  <b>1 = Unlikely to impact</b> <b>2 = Likely to impact</b> <b>3 = Certain to impact</b>	<b>Column 3</b>  <b>SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCORE</b>  Use the key below to <b>score</b> the <b>severity</b> of impact of the proposed change on each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.  <b>1 = Unlikely to impact</b> <b>2 = Likely to impact</b> <b>3 = Certain to impact</b>	<b>Column 4</b>  <b>EQUALITY IMPACT SCORE</b>  Calculate the <b>equality impact score</b> for each protected group by multiplying scores in column 2 by scores in column 3. Enter the results below against each protected group.  <b>Equality impact score = likelihood of impact score x severity of impact score.</b>
Age	3	2	6
Disability	3	2	6
Gender	3	2	6
Gender reassignment	3	2	6
Marriage / Civil Partnership	3	2	6
Race	3	2	6
Religion or belief	3	2	6
Sexual Orientation	3	2	6
Pregnancy or Maternity	3	2	6

# Equality Analysis

## 4. Statutory duties

### 4.1 Public Sector Duties

Tick the relevant box(es) to indicate whether the proposed change will adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties in the Equality Act 2010 set out below.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

**Important note:** If the proposed change adversely impacts the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out above, mitigating actions must be outlined in the Action Plan in section 5 below.

## 5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

**Important note:** Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact identified in Table 1. Attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc:

**Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts**

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.				
Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability		Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact		
Race		Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact		

## Equality Analysis

		<b>analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Sex (gender)		<b>Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Gender reassignment		<b>Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Sexual orientation		<b>Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Age		<b>Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Religion or belief		<b>Individual delivery plan should have a more detailed impact analysis due to likelihood of having direct impact</b>		
Pregnancy or maternity				
Marriage/civil partnership				

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### 6. Decision on the proposed change

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter **X** in column 3 (**Conclusion**) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.

## Equality Analysis

Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. <b>If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.</b>	X
Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. <b>If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form</b>	
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. <b>If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.</b>	
Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet		Meeting title: Cabinet Date: 27.09.2023

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## 7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision	
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## Equality Analysis

<b>Equalities Lead</b>	<b>Name: Denise McCausland</b> <b>Date:</b> <b>Position:</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Name: Lara Ashley</b> <b>Date:</b> <b>Position:</b>

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## HOUSING STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2028 YEAR ONE/TWO JAN 23-APRIL 25

### TARGETS FOR YEAR ONE -TWO

#### KEY THEMES

<i>PRIORITY 1</i>	LISTEN TO OUR RESIDENTS AND PROVIDE GOOD HOUSING SERVICES
<i>PRIORITY 2</i>	WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS, RESIDENTS AND LANDLORDS TO ENSURE THAT HOMES IN THE BOROUGH ARE SAFE, SECURE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT
<i>PRIORITY 3</i>	ENABLE PEOPLE TO LEAD HEALTHY AND INDEPENDENT LIVES IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES
<i>PRIORITY 4</i>	MAINTAIN THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES THAT MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS IN CROYDON
<i>PRIORITY 5</i>	WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES AND MANAGE THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING RELATED SERVICES

Service area	Task	Target/Action	Lead	Theme	RAG	Progress
<b>1. ALL COUNCIL</b>						
<b>Data Collection</b>	Collect information that records the diverse needs of tenants and leaseholders.	Improve collection of profiling data by 5% annually	ML	1,3		
		Carry out EIA on 1 service area based on profiling information	LA	1,3		
	Improve upon accuracy of performance information	DLUHC stats are credible by Q3 24/25	DM/BCT	1,3		
		KPI's compare with medians in Housemark and London Council standards	LA	1,2		
	Providing benchmark info from DLUHC ,Housemark and London Councils	Quarterly London wide reporting from key services	LA	1,2		
<b>Complaints and learning</b>	Improve Complaints service and tackle backlog.	Improve satisfaction with handling complaints to 27% by September 2024	LA/SR	1		
	Improve turnaround time of complaints in line with Housing Ombudsmen Complaint Handling Code	TBA	LA/SR	1		
	Carry out annual quality assurance audit of complaints	Annually	LA.SR	1		
	Demonstrate learning from complaints embedded into service improvement	Complaints Learning reviews -Quarterly	LA.SR	1		

	Carry out customer journey exercise on key services	Rent payment Q4 23/24	ML	1		
<b><i>Council and Voluntary Partnerships</i></b>	Partnership with Housing Association	Set up a Housing Association Group liaison group Q4 24/25	DB/SJ	1,4		
	Liaison with Private Sector Landlords	Landlord Forum-to be run 3 times a year	DB/SJ	1,4		
	Liaison with Voluntary, Community and faith sectors	Bi-annual	BCT/HK/SJ	1,3,5		
	Liaison with specialist sectors	Develop bi-annual sub-groups to the homelessness forum which concentrate on best practice in Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol, Domestic Violence and Young People and Carers	BCT/HK/SJ	1,3,5		
<b><i>Anti-Social Behaviour and Domestic Violence</i></b>	Tackle ASB in our community in liaison with Community Safety	Satisfaction with the Landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour-60% by 2024	ML, SSP/Com Safety	1,5		
	Develop a Landlord ASB policy.	Q4 23/24	ML	1,3,5		
	Tackle Domestic Violence by working in partnership with the Family Justice Centre	Satisfaction with the Service		1,3		
	Develop a Landlord Domestic Violence Policy	Q4 23/24	FJC, Hsg			
<b><i>Inter-departmental working</i></b>	Work with Social Services in delivering	Deliver the objectives set out in the protocol-Annual review	CS/BCT	1,3,5		

	JointChildrens Safeguarding protocol					
	Work with Public Health Adult Social Services and Education.	Liaison meetings TBA	TBA	3,5		
<b>Review the operating model of the housing directorate</b>	Review the operating model of the housing directorate	Agree a new structure by Q4 24/25	LA	1		
	Consult with Staff, residents and Members on service requirements	Consultation events By Q2/3 24/25	ML	1		
<b>Contribute to achieving Mayor's objective to lead action to reduce carbon emissions in Croydon</b>	Ensure Council's housing contractors comply with Mayor's net zero objectives	To be determined	JA	1,2		
	Retrofit of existing homes comply with sustainability objectives	To be confirmed		2		
	Carry out greening initiatives on Council estates	To be confirmed	ML	1,3		
	EPC performance in Private and Social Housing Sector.	C or better by 2028	KH	2		
<b>Customer services and Communication</b>	Review Website and Housing Comms	Q4 24/25	KE	1		
	Explore digital solutions for key services	Review with proposals by Q4 24/25	DM	1		
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target/Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Progress</b>

<b>2) HOUSING REGENERATION AND NEW BUILD</b>						
<i>Supplying new homes</i>	Achieve London Mayoral targets 2019 to 2028	2,079 per year /20,790 over 10 years	Planning	4		
		Maximise affordable homes above 16%-22/23 figures.	Housing /Planning	4		
<i>Supply new affordable and social housing for Croydon residents</i>	Regeneration of Regina Road on target.	First completions in Q4 26/27	RB	4		
	Carry out audit and Option appraisal of Council land including garage sites	Q2 25/26	DB	4		
	Prepare a Regeneration and New Homes Policy	Q3/4 24/25	DB	4		
	Prepare a New Build programme post Regina Road.	Q4 25/26	DB	4		
	RTB buyback scheme	TBA	DB	4		
	Review/Option Appraisal of Sheltered Accommodation	Q4 24/25	DB/SJ	4		
<i>Managing homes more effectively</i>						
	Carry out tenancy audits of Social and Temporary Housing and increase recovery action against fraud	Council tenancies 10% a year	ML	1,4		
		Temporary Housing- 100% by Q2 24/25	EK	4		

	Prioritise those seeking to move and are under-occupation	Review in allocations scheme/Under occupation policy Q3 24/25	HK/SJ	1,4		
		Comms campaign Q3 24/25	KE	1,4		
	Tenancy Sustainment	Vulnerable persons visits to Council homes	ML	1,4		
		Private Sector referrals via social services	NGL	4		
	Identify Council properties for extension or knock through.	For review Q4 24/25	KH/DB	4		
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target/Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>3 PRIVATE SECTOR</b>						
	Update financial penalties policy	Q1 24/25	NGL	1		
	Update policy on issuing HMO licenses.	Q3 24/25	NGL	1		
	Update of enforcement policy	Q4 24/25	NGL	1		
	Carry out stock condition survey of Private Rental Sector properties	1,000 properties by Q3 24/25	NGL	1,2		
	Inspections of Licensed HMO's.	----- Per annum	NGL	1,2		
	Recruit to expand team to 14 including Fire safety and Building Safety Officer Post	Q2 24/25	NGL	1		
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target/Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>4 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING</b>						



<b>Customer services</b>	Agree a Customer Service promise for service users	Q4 24/25	HK/SJ	1		
<b>Housing Allocations</b>	Agree new Housing Allocations Scheme and review the situation of families who are over-crowded.	Q3 24/25	HK	1		
	Croydon CBL charges in place for HA nominations	Q4 24/25	HK	1		
<b>Homelessness</b>	To reduce the % of those being accommodated as a portion of overall homelessness applications to London norms.	Q 4 25/26	BCT/HK	1,3		
	To complete the reorganisation of housing needs	Q1 24/25	BCT/HK	1		
	To deliver the benefits of the dynamic purchasing system for procuring temporary housing	Q1 24/25	1BCT/HK	1		
	To produce the new homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy and agree at Cabinet	Q1 24/25	BCT/SJ	1.3		
	To produce a new Temporary Housing Strategy	Q4 24/25	HK	1,3		
	Review of supported housing	Q\$ 24/25	BCT	1,3		
	Deliver preventative approach to vulnerable residents	DULUC figures improve to London norms in terms of prevention. DULUC data available with regards to mental	BCT, HK	1,3		

		health, DV, Drugs and Alcohol				
<b><i>Rough Sleeping</i></b>	Reprocure Rough Sleeping Contracts	Q2 24/25	BCT/LF	1,3		
	Maintain performance on No 2 <sup>nd</sup> Night Out	80% No 2 <sup>nd</sup> night out	BCT/LF	1,3		
	Work with Safer Street Partnership in reducing the 15% who leave their accommodation and return to the Streets.		BCT/LF	1,3		
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target/Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>5 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE</b>						
<b><i>Statutory and Legislation</i></b>	To comply with the Regulators Health and Safety Quality Standard	September 25	NOR/KH/	2		
	To implement the Fire Safety Act	Q4 24/25	NOR	2		
	To implement the Building Safety Act	Q4 24/25	NOR/KH	2		
	To complete surveys of the LPS blocks	Q3 24/25	NOR	2		
<b><i>Stock condition</i></b>	To conduct a rolling programme of stock condition surveys	Q3 23/24	KH	2		
	To complete the Asset Management Strategy	Q1 24/25	KH	2		
	To set out a Cyclical and Planned Maintenance programme	Q1 26/27	KH-NOR	2		
	Respond to Damp and Mould reports	100% responded to in 6 days. Category 1 in 24 hours	JA	2		

<b>Reducing the backlog</b>	Resetting the Repairs and Maintenance budget to include inflationary increases since 2013	Q1 24/25	JA	2		
	To reduce disrepair claims against the Council	Clear 350 cases in 2 years	JA	2		
<b>KPIs</b>	To improve resident satisfaction with repairs	Achieve 70%- by –Sept 2024	KT/JA	1,2		
	Appointments made and kept	80% by March 25	JA	1,2		
	Key Maintenance indicators on gas safety and fire safety	100% on gas safety- Sept 24 100% on Fire Safety Checks Q4 24/25	KT/NOR	1,2		
<b>Social Value</b>	Work with contractors and residents to deliver the Mayor’s Social Value commitments on Croydon estates	Wates, Mears and K and T to deliver 22 projects annually which seek to provide diversionary activities to young people becoming involved in crime	GS	1,5		
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Target/Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>6 HOUSING MANAGEMENT</b>						
<b>Statutory and Legislation</b>	Prepare a strategy to respond to the requirements of professionalisation of housing services	Q4 23/24	ML/LA	1,2		
	Ensure that RSH four consumer standards are met	Q2 24/25	ML/LA	1,2		

<b>Income Collection</b>	Rental income	95% Rent collected as % of rent due including arrears	ML	1,		
	Service Charge income	Collect 96 % of service charge income by 23/24	ML	1,		
	Hardship fund	Distribute 100% in financial year	ML	1,		
<b>Void</b>	Average relet time for all properties	40 days September 2024	ML	1,2		
	Reduce backlog by 2024 -- --	TBC	ML	1,2		
<b>Estate Management</b>	Regular Estate Inspections inc resident attendance	-Inspections on schedule	ML	1		
<b>KPI's</b>	Satisfaction that the Landlord keeps communal areas safe and clean	65% by March 25	ML	1		
	Satisfaction with the Landlords approach to handling ASB	48% to 65% March 2025	ML	1		
	Satisfaction that the Landlord listens to tenants' views and acts upon them	50% by March 2025	ML	1		
Resident engagement	Encourage greater resident participation in Croydon Housing	Develop a menu of consultation options for tenants and leaseholders.	ML	1		
		Develop new Tenant and Leaseholder TRAs	ML	1,4		
		Embed resident engagement and consultation in all service and strategic development which impact on residents	All/LA	1		



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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>COUNCIL MEETING</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Youth Justice Plan 2023/24 Approval</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR Debbie Jones</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR – Róisín Madden</b>  <b>HEAD OF SERVICE: Vicki Wiltshire,</b>  <b>SERVICE MANAGER: Emma Carter</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children &amp; Young People</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>	This is not a key decision as does not meet Financial or Community Impact Criteria.
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>NO</b>	
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	The Youth Justice Plan is relevant for all wards.	

### 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory obligation upon each Local Authority to create a local Youth Justice Team, whose primary aim is to prevent and reduce the offending behaviour of children (aged 10–18-year-olds) alongside key partners. A further obligation is placed upon each local Team to create a yearly Youth Justice Plan setting out strategic and operational objectives for the forthcoming 12 months.
- 1.2** The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires each plan to have Council approval and endorsement. Historically this endorsement has been sighted and governed through the local Youth Justice Crime Board, however the Ministry of Justice has reverted to the Act and has requested that given the public nature of this document such plans are approved at Council. Youth justice plans must be signed off by the full council in

accordance with Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices], the following is recommended:

- 2.1** For the Council to endorse the Youth Justice plan in line with statutory obligations detailed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1** To comply with legal expectations as defined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and in accordance with conditions of the Youth Justice Grant.
- 3.2** The Youth Justice Plan went to Cabinet on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 where the Executive Mayor in Cabinet recommended the Youth Justice Plan goes to Full Council for endorsement.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1** The Youth Justice Grant, a funding stream issued to each Local Authority to help with the delivery of Services requires the creation of a Youth Justice Plan to be submitted to Council as part of the grant conditions. The condition of the grant is that the devised plan, which is created in partnership, has to be endorsed by full council. Failure to endorse could result in funding loss.
- 4.2** The Youth Justice Plan has 26 sub-sections – the template is a prescribed template issued by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to ensure all aspects of the Youth Justice Service's functions are fully considered and critiqued. The Plan is aimed at the previous year marking achievements and challenges whilst looking forward and setting a plan for the forthcoming year.
- 4.3** The plan begins by noting the Youth Justice Service's vision – to ensure all children known to the Service are provided with the best possible opportunities through the offer of holistic services to desist from future contact with the Criminal Justice System. This principle is in line with a Child First Approach which is core to Youth Justice delivery and included within Section 3 of the plan. Subsequently, section 4 of the plan details 'voice participation' and ensures the plan considers the voice of those who access the Service(s).



- 4.4** The plan provides local context (pages 5-9) detailing the overall Youth Population within the borough and the number of children who access the Service. Gender, ethnicity, religion, social care status, locality and education are all reported on providing local context of the children known and providing data on protective characteristics.
- 4.5** The plan also provides the number of children it receives from other Local Authorities and those placed in the borough via temporary arrangements, often with relatives. It also notes how many Croydon children are placed outside of the borough. When this occurs there is case management guidance issued by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice that provides expectations on both the home local authority and the host local authority. To note the area in which the child resides is identified as being the Youth Justice area responsible for delivery of interventions with the home local authority retaining key decision making (such as enforcement action when statutory orders are not complied with).
- 4.6** The plan sets out the Governance arrangements for the Youth Justice Service including frequency of these arrangements (Pages 11-14) and details additional scrutiny arrangements to ensure the Service is meeting with both national and local expectations and Key Performance Indicators.
- 4.7** Pages 14-21 of the Plan looks back at the previous year 2022/23 looking at the objectives set, and progress made. The objectives for 2022/23 included: addressing the ongoing issue of disproportionately and the creation of a Disproportionately Action Plan detailing the Service's commitment in all practice areas to challenge and influence over-representation, the Service's contribution to reducing Serious Youth Violence with Partners, evolving the Service's Health Offer for Children known to the Service, Diverting Children away from the System using Prevention Projects and Interventions, The services contribution to safeguarding frameworks – specifically contextual safeguarding and county-lines, reducing re-offending, reducing NEET numbers, widening the resettlement offer for those being released from custody and ensuring the Service is victim centric.
- 4.8** The plan continues to outline resources and performance for 2022/23 as measured by key performance indicators. Further sections look at over-representation in finer detail confirming that boys from Black and mixed backgrounds are more represented than other groups but also confirming that there is an over-representation of children known to social care within the cohort particularly children with a looked after status, inclusive of children placed in the borough by other Local Authorities. The plan provides descriptive information and data on a number of areas: Prevention offer, Diversion, Education, Restorative Approaches, Custody (including information related to detention in Police Custody) and constructive use of resettlement.
- 4.9** The plan looks at Standards for the Youth Justice System and provides data and comparative data with other local areas, in addition to providing an analysis of workforce development and how practice is underpinned by evidence-based practice.

- 4.10** The report finishes with a reflection on the learnings from 2022/23 and integrates this into a new plan for the year 2023/24. Effectively the plan has similar strategic headings with the adding of one new priority this being worked related to domestic abuse and extra-familiar harm. (Pages 61-65). The plan details the identified challenges and risks posed to achieve all priorities and objectives and efforts to overcome these.
- 4.11** Croydon Youth Justice Service is due to be inspected during the year 2024. The Youth Justice Plan identifies the Service's strengths and priorities for the forthcoming year to ensure practice standards are being met in accordance with Inspectorate Guidance.
- 4.12** The Youth Justice Plan has been created synergistically with the Council's Youth Safety Plan, which details how the partnership is currently and intends to address serious youth violence. The Youth Justice Plan contributes to and is informed by the Youth Safety Plan to ensure a joined-up, co-ordinated approach to tackling serious youth violence across partner agencies in Croydon.
- 4.13** Alongside the Youth Justice Plan the Safer Croydon Partnership are developing a high-level three-year plan to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG). The plan will set out a clear multi-agency, long-term approach to tackling and preventing VAWG. Croydon Council are listening to the views and ideas from the full range of our residents, communities, and partners. All women and girls should feel safe in Croydon and the Council's aim is to work with the Police, our partners, and women and girls to make Croydon safer. The plan will be in place in 2024.

The partnership is also focusing on delivering specific female outreach in the town centre. The aim is to work with women and girls at risk. This will work in partnership with the female only sessions that are currently delivered across the borough by the voluntary sector, Croydon Social Care, Youth Engagement and Youth Justice Service. The Youth Justice Service has an established partnership with the Family Justice Centre which the strategy serves to enhance. The Council aims to work collaboratively with key partners including, Police, Housing, Probation, Schools, Health and the voluntary sector.

## **5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1** There are no other practical options as approach is required as part of Grant Funding and legislation.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1** The Youth Justice Plan has had the input of all primary partners as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Police, Social Care, Health, Probation and Education. The plan has also had input from Youth Justice Practitioners, Children known to the Service, Voluntary Community Sector, Community Safety.

- 6.2** The Youth Justice Plan was presented to the Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 10th October 2023. Members enquired as to the progress from the prior year’s plan, the reasons behind the slight increase in females within the YJS cohort and sought clarification on the meaning of ‘unique vulnerabilities’. Members heard clarifying detail as to the interventions provided to young women by the service and the interface with other council and voluntary sector services. Members enquired as to the extent of the partnership contribution to the plan and heard about the role of the Youth Crime Board in holding all partners to account for the partnership. The role of the Youth Justice Board was discussed, both regional and nationally. The use of data and qualitative reports to understand the quality of practice was also discussed. Members enquired further as to the impact of the disproportionality action plan given the unequal representation of black and other global majority children in the YJS cohort. Members questioned officers regarding the evident voice of children, parents and carers in the plan and the work of the service; officers described co-production activities with young people and accepted that more work could be done to involve parents and carers.
- 6.3** The sub-committee recommended that there should be greater involvement of parents and carers in the development of the next Youth Justice Plan for 24/25 [Minutes details on public web site](#).

## 7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1** The Youth Justice Plan aligns itself with other strategies including the Community Safety Strategy and the Executive Mayor’s Business Plan priorities – Children and young in Croydon have the change to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.

## 8 IMPLICATIONS

### 8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

	Current Year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3-year forecast		
	2023/24 £’000	2024/25 £’000	2025/26 £’000	2026/27 £’000
<b>Revenue Budget Available</b>				
Expenditure	£2,171	£2,171	£2,171	£2,171
Income	(£1,021)	(£1,021)	(£1,021)	(£1,021)
<b>Net budget</b>	<b>£1,150</b>	<b>£1,150</b>	<b>£1,150</b>	<b>£1,150</b>

8.1.1 The Youth Justice Team is a statutory service funded by various statutory partners. The net budget is not expected to reduce significantly over the next three years.

8.1.2 Comments approved by Maiyani Henry-Hercules, Head of Finance on behalf of the Director of Finance. (Date 08/08/2023)

## **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.2.1 Local Authorities are legally required to form a youth offending team with the statutory partners named in the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

8.2.2 Under s.40 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the relevant persons and bodies, to formulate and implement a youth justice plan each year setting out how youth justice services are to be provided and funded in their area, and how the youth offending team will be composed and funded. The Youth Justice Plan 2023 meets these legal obligations.

8.2.3 The Youth Justice Plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework under Article 4 of the Constitution and must be adopted or approved by Full Council. In addition, the adoption or approval of plans and strategies comprising the Policy Framework must comply with the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in Part 4.C of the Constitution

Comments approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 08/09/23)

## **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.3.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must evidence consideration of any potential impacts of proposals on groups who share the protected characteristics, before decisions are taken. This includes any decisions relating to how authorities act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and also how they commission and procure services from others.

8.3.2 Section 149 of the Act 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.

8.3.3 The Youth Justice Plan specifically highlights ongoing overrepresentation of specific groups – children from Black and mixed heritage backgrounds

predominately males but also females. Data contained within the Plan also confirms that this overrepresentation becomes more stark within the custody and higher tier statutory order cohort. The Youth Justice Plan contains an appendix 3 titled 'Disproportionately Action Plan' which details the Service(s) commitment in all areas of practice to ensure challenge is made to other parts of the Criminal Justice System and delivery of Service is culturally and gender sensitive. This challenge supports our aim outlined in the George Floyd Race Matters Pledge to work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation by embedding this in our strategies, actions and behaviours and by making a difference to the lived experience of our communities.

8.3.4 Comments approved by Denise McCausland Equalities Programme Manager 26/07/23.

## **9 APPENDICES**

9.1 Appendix A - Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

## **10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

10.1 None

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# Annex A - Youth Justice Plan

<b>Service</b>	Croydon Youth Justice Service
<b>Service Manager/ Lead</b>	Emma Carter
<b>Chair of YJS Board</b>	Debbie Jones – Corporate Director; Children, Young People and Education.

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7. [Progress on previous plan](#)
8. [Resources and services](#)
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10. [National Key Performance Indicators & local performance](#)
11. [Children from groups which are over-represented](#)
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16. Serious Violence and Exploitation
17. Detention in Police Custody
18. Remands
19. Custody Constructive Resettlement Standards for Children within the Youth Justice System
20. Workforce Development
21. Evidence Based Practice and Innovation
22. Evaluation
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26. Sign off, submission and approval



[Appendix 1](#) – Break down of cohort residency by ward for 2022/23

[Appendix 2](#) - Staffing Structure

[Appendix 3](#) – Disproportionately Action Plan (DAP) (separate document)

[Appendix 4](#) – Reparation Projects

[Appendix 5](#) – Croydon YJS Quality Assurance Framework (separate document)

[Appendix 6](#) – Youth Justice Crime Board Terms of Reference (separate document)

[Appendix 7](#) – Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan (Separate document)

[Appendix 8](#) – Croydon Youth Justice Prevention and Diversion Strategy (separate document)

[Appendix 9](#) – Croydon Youth Justice Service and Social Care Joint Protocol (separate document)

## 1. Introduction, vision, and strategy

The Croydon Youth Justice Service's (YJS) Youth Justice Plan is directed by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for the year 2023/24. It sets out priorities for the Youth Justice Service and its Statutory partners whilst reflecting and learning from both achievements and areas of improvement, observed in the year 2022/23. The plan will outline the current functions of the Service, how these functions are funded, detailing current strengths in addition to practice improvement requirements, informed by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (National Measurements/Standards) and Local Standards.

The Plan considers wider strategic plans that are interlinked and relevant to Youth Justice and its primary objectives: to prevent and reduce offending, whilst offering a narrative of the local context and needs of the children and young people open to the Service. The Plan is directly linked to the Mayor's Business Plan – specifically the objective 'Children in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential: Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.' The Youth Justice Plan is also referenced in the boroughs Community Safety Strategy.

Over the past 12 months further work has been undertaken to enhance joined up work between Croydon Social Care and YJS, recognising that many children are open to both Services and are some of the most vulnerable children within the borough. The work has focused on integrated planning for those subject to Child in Need Plans, Child Protection Plans and those in Care. A revised protocol setting out the joint work was completed in 2023 (appendix 9). The necessity for oversight of this work led to the development of a revised quality assurance framework that combines YJS and Social Care Managers jointly auditing across systems. Additionally, the implementation of joint supervision has been welcomed to improve practice and subsequently outcomes for children.

Consequently, this plan has been devised collaboratively in discussion with The Board, Partners (both statutory and third sector), staff and children and young people to ensure its delivery is inclusive.

\*Note: Statutory Partners refers to: Police, Children's Social Care, Education, Health, National Probation Service, Violence Reduction Unit.

### Vision

The vision of the Youth Justice Service continues to be that children and young people known to the Service will be safe, happy, and healthy and will aspire to be the best they can be avoiding further contact with the system. A vision that promotes opportunities based on individuality and personal need, recognising, and embracing diversity.

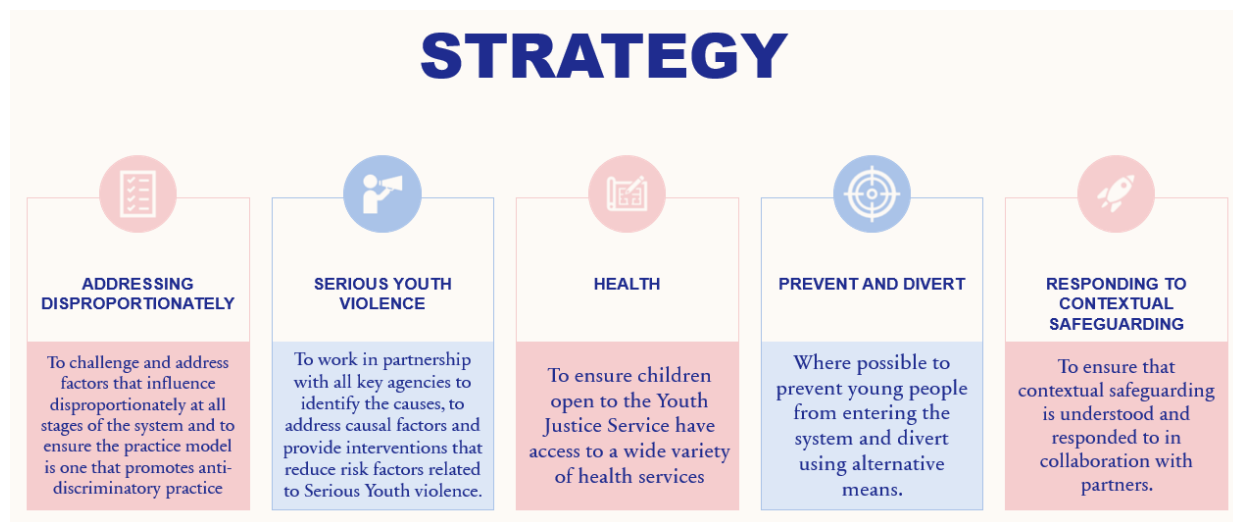
This vision is underpinned by a child-centred ethos that recognises and challenges factors that contribute to a child/young person's entry into the Criminal Justice System. The vision

requires a workforce that is representative of the community it serves, whose knowledge and expertise embed the principles of trauma-informed practice, a relational approach that is non-judgemental and promotes anti-discriminatory practice. A workforce that is committed to enhancing outcomes for children to be their best versions of themselves.

The vision recognises the importance of Restorative Justice and protecting victims, ensuring the public holds confidence in the Service. The vision recognises that often young people are the victims, both known and unknown and accepts that it has a dual role in its delivery to protect and consider these individuals and potential victims.

## Strategy

The strategy will continue to focus on the following areas:



## 2. Local context

Croydon is a London borough located in South London with a population of 386,710 people, the largest population of any London Authority, and is the largest London borough in London. It is estimated that 93,000 under 18-year-olds live in the borough subsequently giving the borough the largest youth population in London. There are 99 primary schools & 34 secondary schools. Statistically, Croydon YJS has a high throughput of under 18s making it one of the busiest in London. In 2022/23 Croydon Youth Justice Service worked with 281 children on various disposals including: Out of court triages and cautions in addition to post court statutory sentences. 63 children of the 281 were placed in borough either through other Local Authorities (placements provided by Social Care) or private arrangements with relatives. In these instances national case management guidance dictates that the area the child resides is the Youth Justice area will deliver statutory sentences/interventions and deliver out of court disposals. This process is called 'care-taking' and the receiving Youth Justice area is viewed as a 'host' with the home local authority being viewed as a 'home Youth Justice area' who retain overall case-management decision making. Conversely, 34 Croydon children were either placed out of area or temporarily residing with relatives out of area, often to reduce risk. Whilst these children may not be in the locality it is national practice for them to retain an identified 'home' Youth Justice Practitioner to liaise with the host area, write any required reports and where necessary to take enforcement action.

Disposals and Orders can last for a minimum of 3 months up to 18 months and on average there are 120+ children open to YJS at any given time. In 2022/23 158 of the 281 were deemed First Time Entrants (entering the system for the first time).

The Youth Justice Service sits within the Division of Children's Social Care, with the Service Manager of YJS also responsible for the Youth Engagement Team to ensure there is a targeted and focused prevention and diversion offer that diverts children away from criminality and anti-social behaviour at the earliest opportunity by providing holistic interventions that support children in their development.

The Local Authority recognises the uniqueness of the development stage '*adolescence*' and risks associated with this age therefore has a specialist Social Care Service called 'Young Croydon' focused on Contextual Safeguarding/extra familial harm (risks posed outside the family home) which is risk for many of the children the Youth Justice Service works with. The alignment of the two Services in the management of risk is integral to the overall Youth Justice strategy and drive to keep young people safe and to promote positive outcomes.

Social Care context: Croydon Children's Social Care data confirms that at the end of March 2023 991 Children were subject to Child in Need Plans. 507 Children were subject to Child Protection Plans and there were 527 Children Looked After, 102 Children were UASC. Of the children YJS worked with in 2022/23 the number of children known to YJS who were deemed Looked After included 89 (17%) current and 13 children who had previously been looked after. Children subject to CIN Plans totalled 62 (6%) of those open to Social Care and 32 young people subject to Child Protection Plans (6% of overall number).

Furthermore, the borough reports high levels of involvement with county-lines and is deemed to have the highest numbers in London (Rescue and Response, 2023).

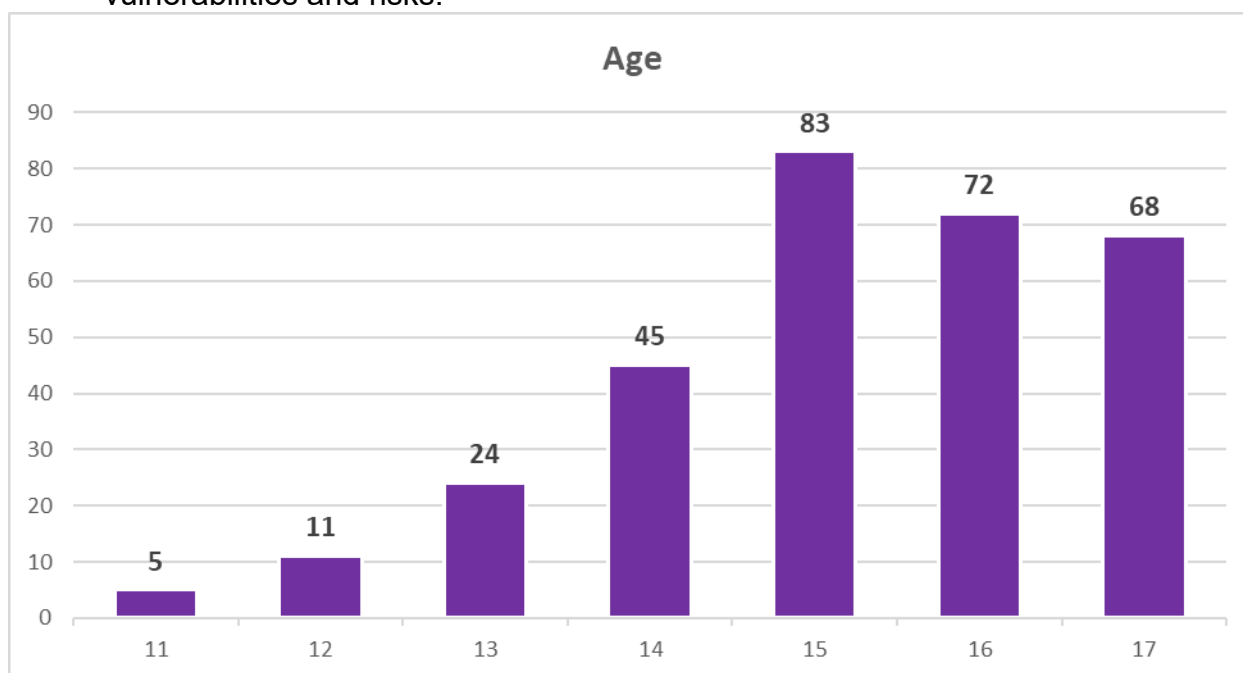
County-lines and Serious Youth Violence are often interlinked and bring with them evidence of exploitation and subsequent contextual safeguarding concerns for a child. The risk is often complex, where YJS and partners are dealing with a child's own victimisation in addition to potential risk they pose to others, primarily peers and their contact with the Criminal Justice System.

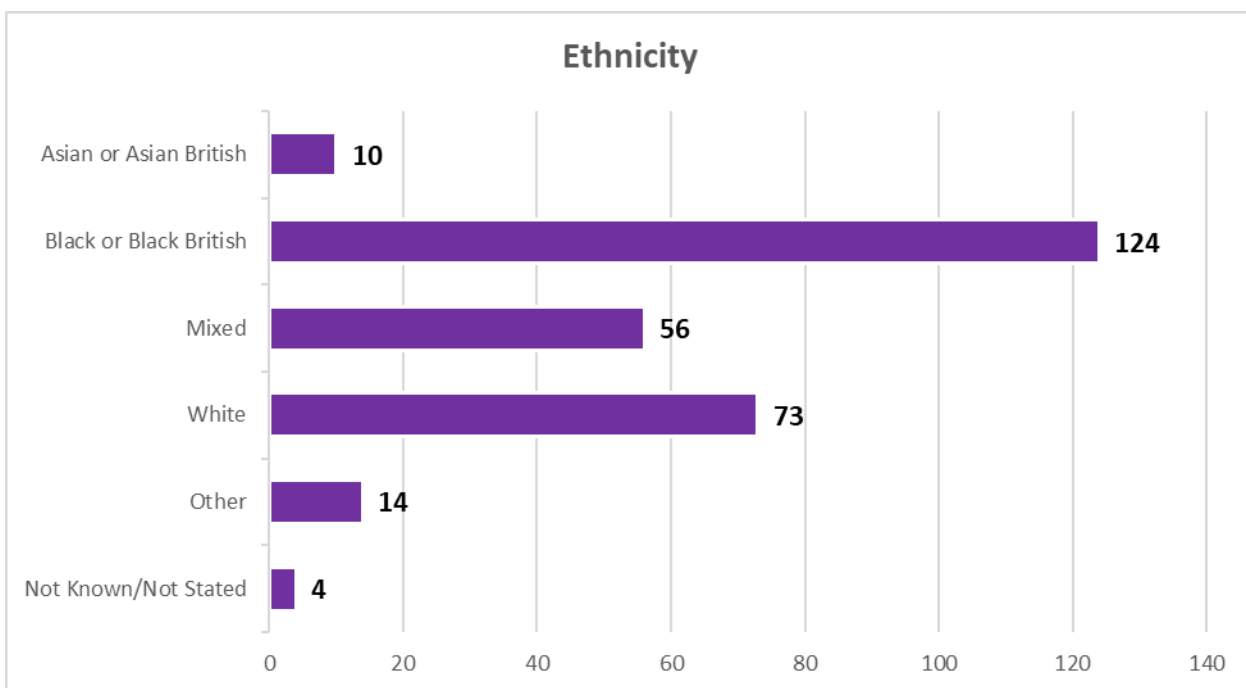
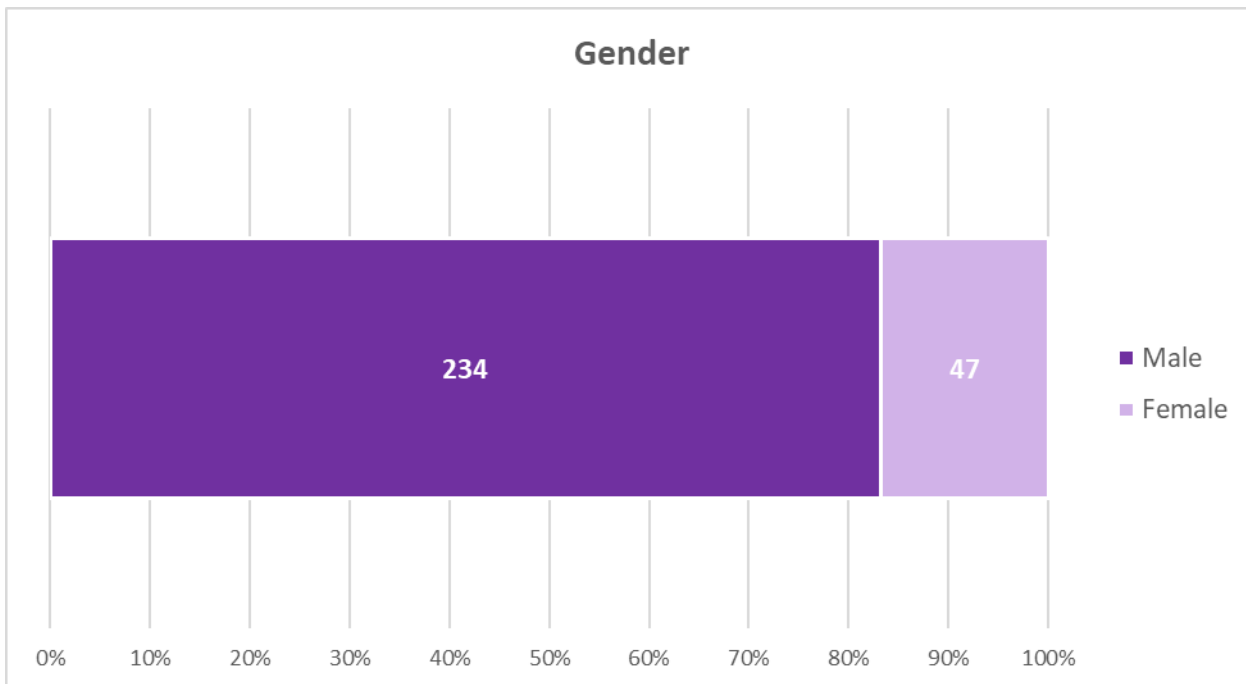
The Local Authority holds a weekly panel titled 'Complex Adolescent Panel' which oversees children where there is known or suspected Criminal and/or Sexual Exploitation. The panel's workings include application of the MACE Protocol and Pan London Child Protection Procedures. These documents provide professional guidance on how to effectively safeguard children who are suspected or at risk of exploitation. The Local Authority has an established Missing Children protocol in recognition that missing episodes are often linked to exploitation. This document sets out the process for partners and practitioners when responding to a child's missing episode. The Panel chaired by a Senior Social Care Manager jointly with the Police as Vice Chair, also attended by Health, Housing, Education, Red-Thread, Rescue and Response, Barnardo(s), Child Protection Chair and Youth Justice. An analyst supports the panel by use of analytical data and mapping exercises. The Panel also oversees children subject to National Referral Mechanism (NRM) processes. At the time of writing the plan (June 2023) 42 open to YJS had an NRM referral based on concerns related to exploitation (24.41%). In March 2023 Croydon were successful in their bid to the Home Office and are now part of a two year pilot, which means positive grounds decisions can be made by the partnership within the Council, which is completed in approx. one month rather than over a year, as it was taking the Home Office to process, this has resulted in Croydon young people getting the support they need as victims. This has already resulted in 13 conclusive grounds of positive grounds decisions since the pilot went live.

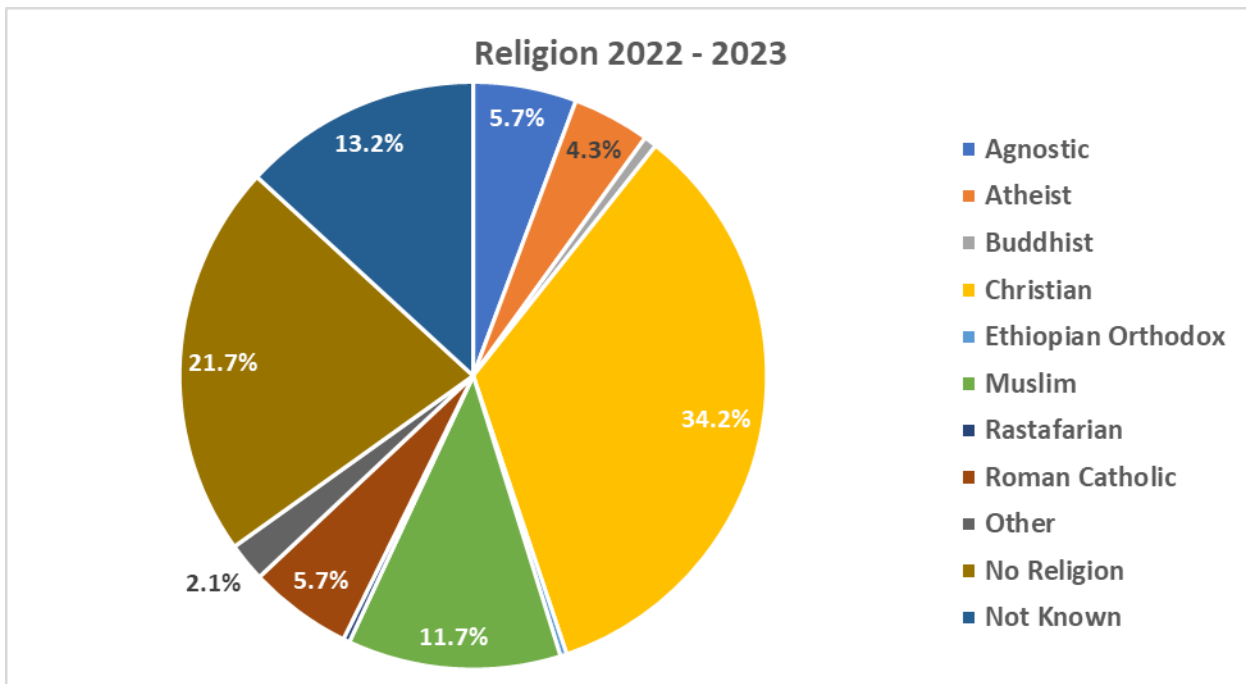
Demographics: Data shows that many of the young people known to YJS typically reside in the north part of the borough and this information correlates with the MET Police identification of 'hot spots' for crime and stop and search data, thus increased contact with the population. Please see appendix 1 that provides an overview of 2022/23 children and in which ward they reside.

Education: Many young people, prior to contact with YJS, have experienced instability within the mainstream education setting and are attending alternative provisions such as Pupil Referral Units. The Youth Justice Service is measured on how many statutory school children are in provisions and how many 16+ children are in further education or employment. At the time of writing, the Service held 7 NEET children of Statutory School age not attending a provision. 4 of the NEET were male and 3 were females. The ethnicity of these children included 4 black children, 1 mixed heritage and 2 white.

Characteristics: Age and ethnicity break-down of the 2022/23 cohort is detailed below. The YJS continues to see an overrepresentation of ethnically diverse males, albeit there was a reduction during this period. Girls remain to be less representative within the cohort but are often younger in age (13-14 whereby the average age for males 15-17). Whilst the female cohort is low, the number is significant with females presenting with their own unique vulnerabilities and risks.



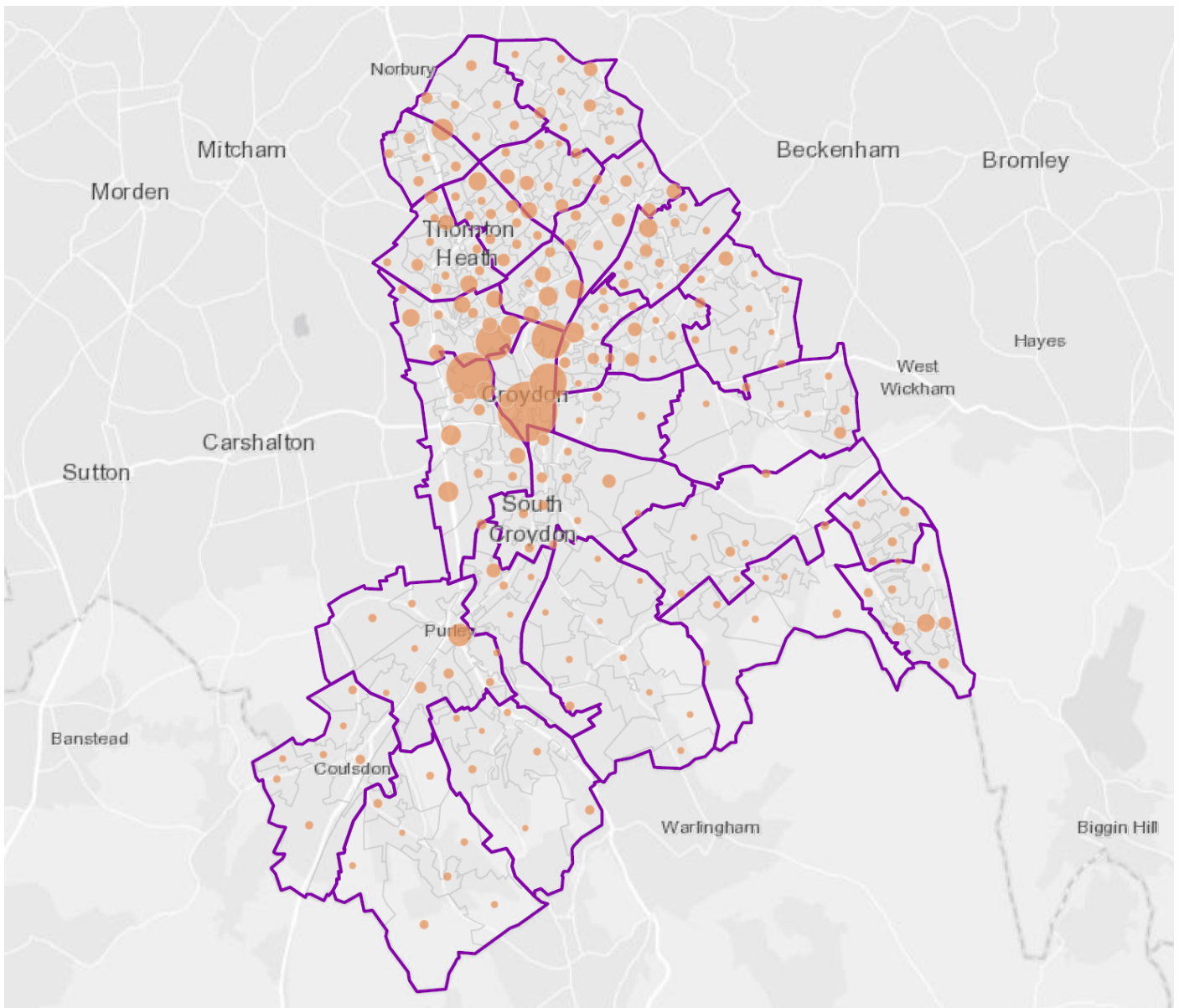




Community Safety data shows that the borough has high levels of Serious Violence – Serious Youth Violence being defined by the MET as a count of any victim for any offence of the most serious violence, gun, or knife crime where the victim is 1-19.

The levels of violence have required a multi-agency approach, this approach is detailed within the Community Safety Strategy 2023/24 and for youth specifically, the Local Violence and Vulnerability action plan and risk register. The Council is developing a Youth Safety Strategy in partnership and co-production with residents, young people and partners agencies. Data provided by the Violence Reduction Unit shows there is a clear correlation with non-domestic violence and the night-time economy that is more prevalent in certain parts of the borough and a clear correlation with ‘after school’ hours particularly in the town centre.

The YJS includes use of new initiatives Turnaround Project and Engage which provides bespoke prevention interventions for children on the periphery of the criminal justice system and for those of greater concern interventions connected to statutory orders and disposals including use of requirements where necessary: exclusions/curfews/non-associations/supervision/activities/group-work/mentoring. The Youth Engagement Service offers an Outreach Service in response to serious incidents to provide public reassurance and to engage with children and young people within the locality.



### 3. Child First

Croydon Youth Justice Service & Partners have adopted the Child First Approach principles as detailed in research completed by Loughborough University and accepted by the Youth Justice Board. The approach applies four tenets:

- See children as Children.
- Adopt a pro-social identity for positive child outcomes.
- Collaboration with children
- Promote diversion.

The Youth Justice Service embeds and applies a culture that promotes the interests of children taking account of personal need and capacities. Service delivery is developmentally informed and takes account of systemic disadvantages experienced by children known. In line with the above principles and vision, it recognises potential of all children known to the Service and encourages all partners to apply the same ethos.



YJS practice applies a strength-based model where the future is a focus, and it aims to increase protective factors. The YJS holds an array of events to ensure the voice of the child is heard and helps devise a child-friendly approach that accounts for the views and feelings of young people. This includes use of questionnaires/surveys, group discussions/forums and involvement in design of the environment, recruitment, and policies. The YJS ensures these voices are heard by Croydon's Senior Leaders including the governing Youth Justice Crime board who oversee the YJS performance and partners contributions, to YJS delivery, by way of inviting young people to forums where they are present or presenting findings from information submitted or discussed. Additionally, CYPE Practice and Performance Board is a cross directorate approach to governing outcomes for children.

Finally, the YJS where possible strives to divert away from the system. The newly implemented initiatives such as Engage and Turnaround provides a response to young people coming into contact with the system at the earliest opportunity (arrest or concern) and offers children and families accessibility to an array of interventions to divert further contact. These projects work closely with the Voluntary Community Sector, to provide activities and interventions to reduce risk of offending, within the child's own locality to promote community inclusive and positive pursuits.

#### 4. Voice of the child

The voice of the child is integrated at all stages of the Service from assessment, planning to delivery of intervention and ongoing evaluation and feedback.

Within the assessment tool (ASSET+) used by the Youth Justice Service there is a self-assessment completed by both young person and the young person's relevant adult. These are audited to identify themes. The assessment tool is reviewed every 3 months following a formal review meeting chaired by the relevant overseeing Manager, the YJS Officer, young person and their relevant adult and any other significant professionals. The Manager is responsible for completing a review document where again views of young people are logged. These are communicated with the Service Manager.

Separate to the above processes, the YJS has been involved in ascertaining the views of young people in varying forms including use of surveys and specifically designed forums. To provide impartiality, the Youth Engagement Team leads on such forums on behalf of the Youth Justice Service and the YJS has also worked with Leaders Unlocked, a charity who engage young people who have had contact with the Criminal Justice, to voice how they feel the system could improve. The aim is for young people to be part of the change and the offer involves providing training to young people to use their voice.

The YJS also regularly evaluates its own processes and completes a questionnaire for all young people subject to the Court Order 'Referral Orders'. The Referral Order is unique as it is underpinned by Restorative principles and the detail of intervention is created in contact with a Youth Panel made up of community representatives rather than Criminal Justice led.

The YJS has also worked to include children's thoughts on other operational aspects of the Service, for example in 2022 it was decided to change the Service's name from Youth Offending to Youth Justice and young people were asked on their opinion. Consequently, the change led to a change of logo whereby young people were also asked to help with the design. Young people have also been involved in re-designing the reception area of the Service, to ensure it is welcoming, informative, and compliant with health & safety

requirements. Also helping devise plans and policies including the YJS Disproportionately Action Plan that looks at ways the YJS can address overrepresentation and work with other parts of the Criminal Justice System to address factors that may cause disparities.

In 2023/24 the Youth Justice Service via the Youth Crime Board intends on looking much more deeply at overrepresentation. There is much reported research on other parts of the Criminal Justice system and discrimination and whilst some reports have been published on Youth Justice this has not been a local picture. An anonymous survey will be provided to children to answer questions specifically on discrimination and the Service's level of cultural understanding. Currently all staff are trained in cultural competency and the ethos of the Service is to ensure Practitioners and Managers gain understanding of the various cultural backgrounds they may encounter but gaining individual insight as to how the service is perceived will help determine area for improvement. For further detail please see Disproportionately Action Plan (Appendix 3). Croydon's practice framework is to work systemically emphasising the value of relationships; with many staff and all managers trained in systemic practice. The concept of systemic practice is not to view the child in isolation and consider delivery of interventions to extend to families and carers.

## 5. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The Youth Justice Service sits within the Local Authority's Division of Children's Social Care. The Service Manager for the Youth Justice Service is also responsible for the Youth Engagement Team and reports to the Head of Service for Access, Support & Intervention. As noted above YJS sits alongside 'Young Croydon' which is focused on work with vulnerable adolescents within Children's Social Care.

The Youth Justice Service operationally reports to the Head of Service's 'Practice and Performance Forum' which is also attended by other senior leaders, including Quality Assurance, Data Analysts and Transformation leads. The focus of this forum is to provide high challenge and high support environment to drive improvements, whilst focusing on the YJS overall performance using Key Performance Indicators and National Standards as measures. The YJS Service Manager alongside the Team Manager's report to this forum monthly and provide context of the YJS operationally, including cases of concern and areas of strength as well as the challenges that YJS face. The division has an overarching Service Priorities Plan, the YJS is contained within this plan and the objectives are heavily focused on joined up work with Social Care and Young Croydon specifically.

The Youth Justice Service is also subject to Quality Assurance Scrutiny and a newly devised framework has been created to ensure that there is oversight of YJS case management outside of the Service whilst auditing across the continuum of service delivery for young people who are open to both YJS and Social Care, which will provide us a clearly understanding of the impact being delivered through multiple plans. Please see Appendix 7 for further detail.

### Youth Crime Board

Strategically the YJS is governed by the Youth Crime Board, a statutory board that is held quarterly, chaired by the Corporate Director CYPE, and attended by all statutory key Senior Partners as outlined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Police/National Probation Service/Social Care/Health/Education. Additional non-statutory partners such as the Victim Liaison Unit/Voluntary Community Sector/Commissioning/Court/Violence Reduction Unit

also form an integral part of the Board. For full details of membership please see Appendix 8 – Youth Crime Board Terms of Reference.

The statutory role of the Board is to ensure that all partners are contributing to the overall delivery of the Youth Justice Service, the Youth Justice plan which outlines the partnership strategy for the year, and any additional plans related to the operational running of the YJS, in accordance with statutory duties, including addressing disproportionately. The Board members must ensure they have sound knowledge of the YJS operational functions and vision. The Board is regularly attended by Practitioners and Managers to present on specific areas within the Youth Justice portfolio. Such presentations have included: Working with Children who have committed Serious Youth Violence/Resettlement/Out of Court work/Restorative Justice/Voice of the Child/Referral Order panels/Working with Over-represented young people/Turnaround Project/Victims.

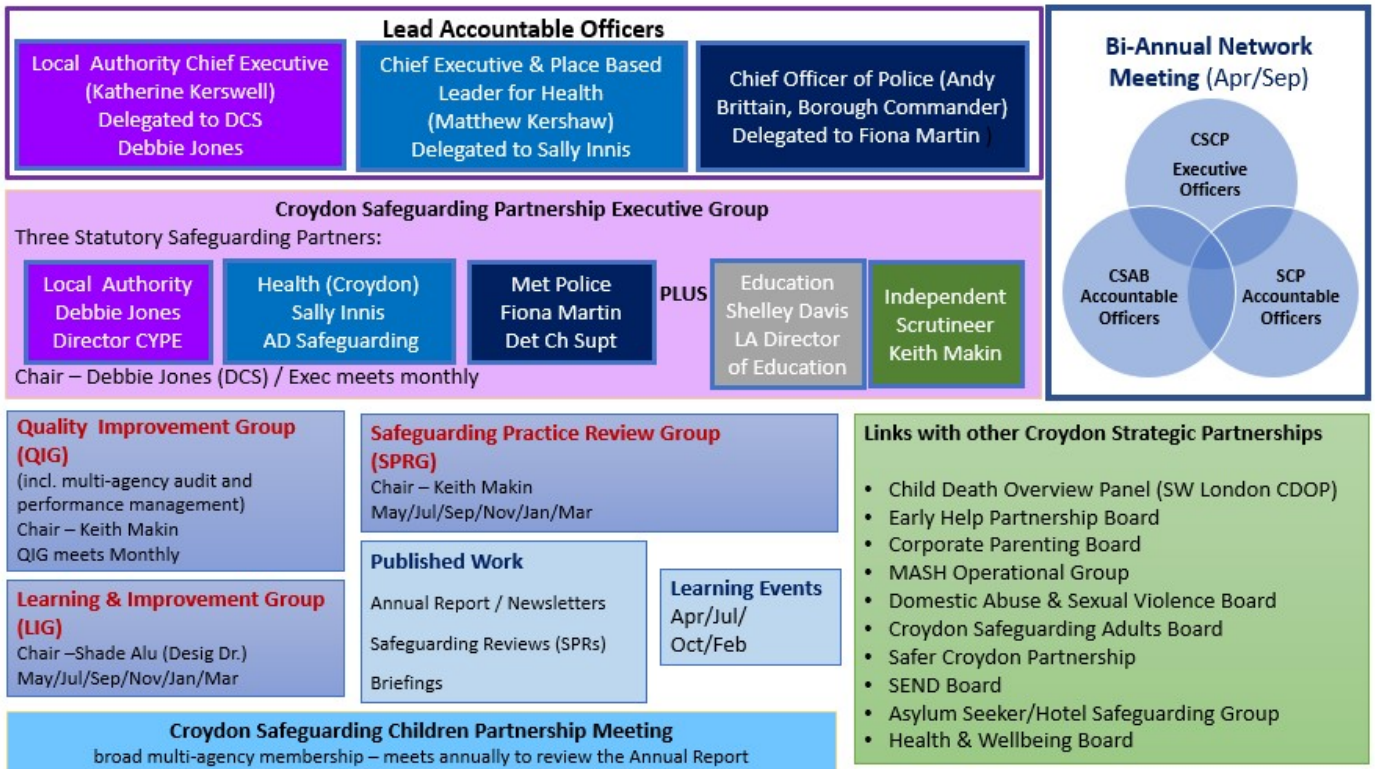
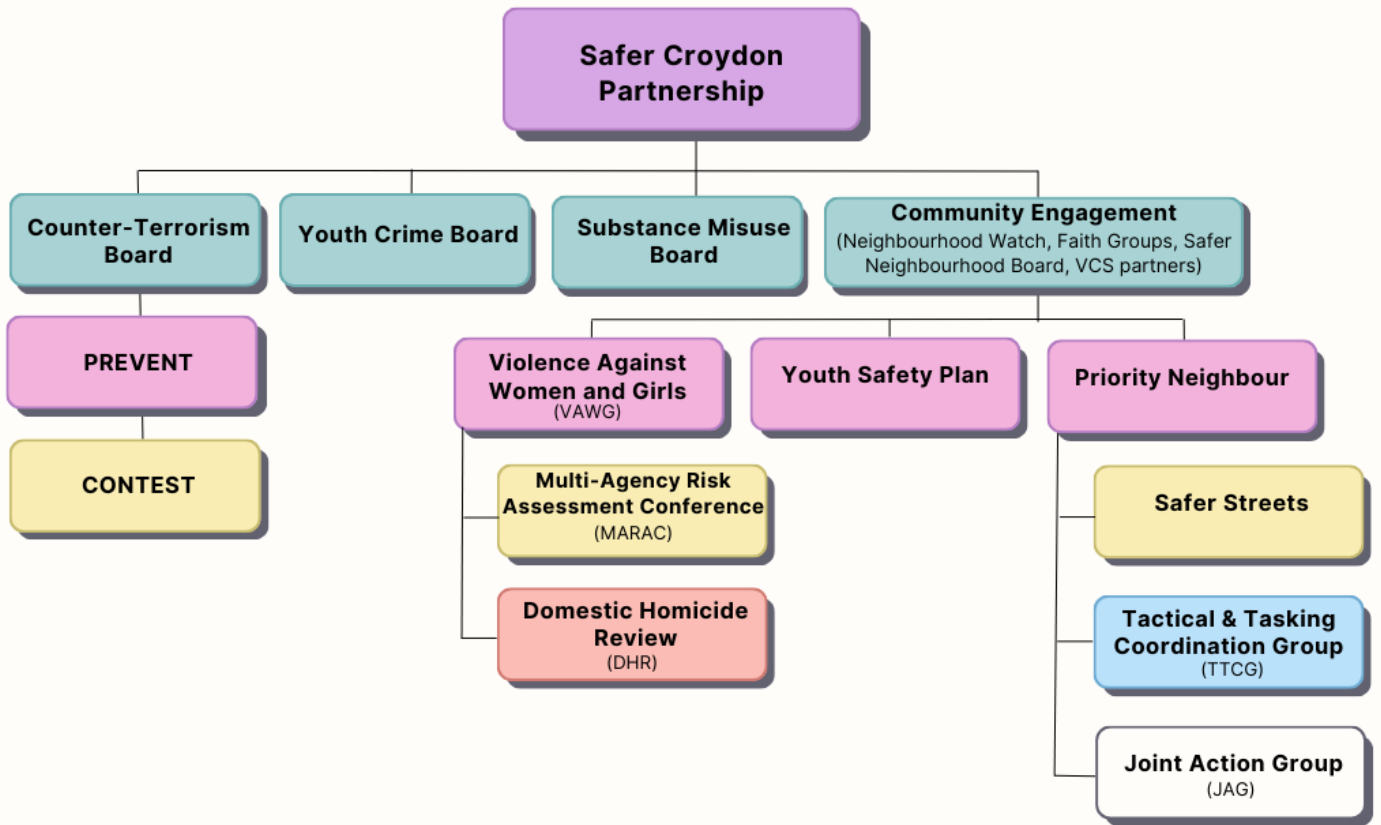
The Board must ensure they understand the characteristics of the children held within the cohort and in advance of the Board, a detailed performance report is supplied to members outlining performance for the quarter in accordance with Key Performance Indicators and other local measures of data specially detailed including: age/race/ethnicity/religion/demographics. The characteristics also contain information which is now viewed as a new key performance indicator including children subject to Child in Need Plans, Child Protection Plans, Children Looked After and Children with a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) (Positive grounds for exploitation). The report requires Board members to scrutinise at data, patterns, and themes.

A specific focus on disproportionately of ethnically diverse children is routinely discussed within the Board and overall oversight of the Youth Justice Service's devised Disproportionately Action Plan provided (Appendix 3).

The Board coordinates the partnership to ensure the Youth Justice Service are providing good quality interventions resulting in positive outcomes for our young people, identifying focus areas for improvements, whilst ensuring resourcing issues are resolved. A recent example of this, has been the developments around the physical health offer. The Board ensures that all findings from Inspections or Thematic Inspections are considered and remedied. It will also ensure oversight of all financial aspects of the Youth Justice Service.

To summarise the Board must ensure that it has effective Leadership and Oversight of Youth Justice Services for children, that the delivery contributes to local multiagency strategies and local and national criminal justice organisations and there is oversight on the safeguarding of children who receive Youth Justice Services.

The Youth Justice Crime Board is one of several Boards that feeds into Safer Croydon Partnership Board (board structure provided below).



Whilst governance sits with the Youth Crime Board, the YJS and its work is also reviewed within the strategic arrangements related to safeguarding and the YJS are representative at Boards detailed above.

## 6. Board Development

[The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) sets out the minimum statutory requirements for YJS as detailed above. However, the Board contains members from various organisations and overtime membership can change. It is therefore important that each Board member is inducted including a meeting with the YJS Management Team and attendance at the YJS office in addition to the introduction to the wider Team and young people. It is also important that the Board attends workshops/development days. In April 2023 a workshop was held that provided Board members the opportunity to visit the YJS Office and meet with the Team, young people also presented on a project and the time permitted wider discussion on new Key Performance Indicators and the current needs of the Youth Justice Service. In preparation of the workshop Board members were asked to complete a survey to identify their understand but also to inform the vision and plan; the information and discussions has enabled us to focus the Youth Crime Board agenda for the forthcoming year, with partnership spotlights agreed. This workshop will be repeated annually to drive improvements and identify plans and oversight required for the year ahead.

## 7. Progress on previous plan

Detailed below are the Youth Justice Plan priorities for 2022/23 in addition to a table below outlining progress to date and should be read in conjunction with the Service’s Workforce Development Plan (appendix 7) detailing training available to staff to ensure the workforce, inclusive of Managers, has knowledge of current research and practice to ensure the delivery of the plan is applied effectively. Last year we aimed to:

Priorities 2022/23	Outcomes	Actions
Addressing Disproportionately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure where possible children and young people from BME communities are diverted away from the system.</li> <li>To mark the overrepresentation of young black males in custody and ensure they receive a sophisticated resettlement offer.</li> <li>To ensure all key partners have an awareness of the YJS disproportionately data and to assist to address including Police and Education.</li> <li>To mark the overrepresentation of Looked After children by way of joint working with the CLA 0-15 &amp; Young People’s Services.</li> <li>To promote opportunities and Service, which are culturally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor progress on DAP.</li> <li>Embed protocol with Children’s Social Care</li> <li>Further training with the Judiciary</li> <li>Work with Education Team on exclusions and ethnicity linked to YJS.</li> <li>Continue to co-locate with PRU to promote support in education.</li> <li>Ensure appropriate resource is given to diversions taking account of Stop and Search data – including the development of voluntary support offer.</li> <li>Promote opportunities by using VCS.</li> <li>Deliver specific service to girls.</li> <li>Continue to run Positive male’s project.</li> </ul>

	<p>appropriate, to groups that are over-representation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure interventions are specific to diversity needs of an individual</li> </ul>	
<p>Serious Youth Crime Inclusive of Knife Crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a systemic approach to address Serious Youth Violence collaboratively with all partners including the community.</li> <li>• To ensure the voice of the community, families and young people are heard in response to Serious Youth Violence.</li> <li>• To ensure workforce has sound understanding of the contributing factors related to Serious Youth Violence and delivers a trauma informed approach that recognises young people are often victims as well as perpetrators of crime.</li> <li>• To ensure where risk is identified procedures are followed and risk is responded to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure staff learn from Serious Practice Reviews completed &amp; engage in learning reviews across the partnership.</li> <li>• Improved analysis of data to ensure the picture is clear and partners can direct services accordingly.</li> <li>• To continue to contribute to the Community Safety Strategy in this area.</li> <li>• Development of a Youth Safety Plan</li> <li>• Continue to be representative at CAP panel.</li> <li>• To work collaboratively with the community via the intelligence hub to ensure services are targeted and responses take account of community feeling.</li> <li>• To provide young people with education and employment opportunities to promote desistance incorporating the Youth Safety Plan.</li> <li>• To oversee those of concern at relevant panels including Gangs/IOM/RVMP</li> <li>• Joint supervision with Social Care</li> <li>• Joint planning with Social Care of those who are at risk and pose risk to others</li> </ul>
<p>Health Offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To offer a physical health offer that screens and signposts children into services.</li> <li>• To have an in-house mental health offer where children are screened and provided with commensurate treatment and support.</li> <li>• Staff able to work jointly with health professionals to support children with neurodiverse conditions.</li> <li>• To ensure children have easy accessibility into counselling services.</li> <li>• To offer a specialist service for children who sexually harm.</li> <li>• To education and offers services related to Sexual health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Health offer is delivered weekly to YJS children and young people.</li> <li>• Young People are getting the help they need.</li> <li>• Sexual Health Nurse will be delivering outreach services from Turnaround building.</li> <li>• Mental Health Provision is identified and recruited into.</li> <li>• Continued work and partnership occur with local counselling providers.</li> <li>• Staff complete mental health first aide training and relevant training on SALT and neurodiverse conditions.</li> <li>• Staff are trained in the delivery of sexual health education.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are AIM trained and able to deliver interventions in partnership with specialist services for children who sexually harm.</li> </ul>
Diverting Children away from the Criminal Justice System (reducing first time entrants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce First Time Entrants and divert children away from the Youth Justice System providing alternative services that are community led and promote protective factors.</li> <li>• To continue to use community resolutions and monitor their impact.</li> <li>• To continue to work with the Voluntary Community Sector to assist in diversion of young people from the system by offer of constructive pursuits and educational opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS to contribute to the setup of Engage – service(s) offered at custody suite to divert children away.</li> <li>• To continue to oversee Community Resolutions</li> <li>• To continue to promote the use of VCS organisations who are embedded in the communities' children reside.</li> <li>• To ensure Out of Court Offer provides a variety of services and opportunities to reduce recidivism e.g., activities etc.</li> <li>• To offer children known to have received two RUIs a voluntary service via CLIP (Youth Engagement Team).</li> </ul>
Responding to County-lines and contextual safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team is trained and experienced responding to safeguarding risks linked to this area.</li> <li>• NRM data is collated and used to understand picture.</li> <li>• Contribute to CAP and subsequent safety planning of children at risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved joint working with Young Croydon – Adolescent Social Work</li> <li>• Continue to collate NRM data.</li> <li>• NRM processes brought in-house to reduce time delay.</li> <li>• Continue to refer and work with Barnardo's and Rescue and Response</li> <li>• Ensure YJS keeps up to date with all national and local progress in this area via knowledge of law/policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Collaboration with Police Services locally and national as appropriate.</li> <li>• Utilising the Health Offer to identify and respond to health impacts of extra familial harm.</li> </ul>
Reduce Re-offending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular use of re-offending toolkit to ensure identification of those escalating is sighted and responded to.</li> <li>• To ensure YJS Offer meets with individuals needs and capacities.</li> <li>• To use partnership panels to promote outcomes for children and young people such as RVMP/CAP/Edge of Care.</li> <li>• To ensure reasons a young person is offending are addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly use of toolkit with Manager to have oversight of those escalating or those at high risk of offending.</li> <li>• For those identified tailored, robust interventions are offered jointly with partners.</li> <li>• Continued collaboration and joint work with VCS to offer interventions and YJS having extensive knowledge of community offer.</li> <li>• Factors linked to offending behaviour are raised at board to consider strategic response to pertinent factors.</li> </ul>

Reducing NEET numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of those NEET and offer of individualised programmes based on aspirations and personal goals provided.</li> <li>• Additional coaching and mentoring services offered to help children and young people obtain goals.</li> <li>• Continue to work with the local Pupil Referral Unit, particularly with those in year 11 and transitioning into year 12.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume Joint ETE Panel for those identified as NEET – to be co-chaired with YJS/Croydon Works</li> <li>• Coaching/mentoring offer to be provided to those who are subject to employability project.</li> <li>• Increased joint meetings with Education Manager and Service Manager to ensure development in partnerships and provision remains a focus.</li> <li>• Regularly discussed at Board so wider partnership has oversight.</li> </ul>
Widening Resettlement Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resettlement Panel to maintain partner attendance and to consider all relevant areas to promote desistance upon release.</li> <li>• To ensure accommodation is sought in a timely, well-planned manner that take into account this can be an anxiety provoking time for young people.</li> <li>• To ensure offer is of cultural relevance and accounts for the individuals specific needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of resettlement forum to oversee delivery of service both in custody and planning for a return to the community.</li> <li>• Service Manager to raise issue of accommodation with Senior Management Team</li> <li>• To ensure VCS is included in resettlement offer.</li> </ul>
Ensuring Service is Victim centric in its approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS continues to offer service to victims and where possible promote the use of restorative processes.</li> <li>• Continues evaluation of services ensuring the victims voice is heard and embedded into principles of YJS work.</li> <li>• To understand that many young people known to are service are also victims of crime and to widen our understanding on how the two correlate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure this is featured within all staff appraisals to press the importance of this work.</li> <li>• To continue to deliver interventions that are specific to victim awareness and consideration.</li> <li>• To remain up to date with research and practice developments in this area (Restorative Justice).</li> </ul>

Priority	Progress on 2022/23 Plan to date:
Addressing Disproportionately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS completed own Disproportionately Action Plan in line with specific practice areas.</li> <li>• Plan devised in consultation with Local Authorities Equalities Officer/BME Forum/Staff and Young people.</li> <li>• Plan defines a need for a Champion within the Team to lead on its delivery.</li> <li>• Plan discussed with practitioners frequently at Reflective Practice Forum.</li> <li>• YJS delivered training to the Courts on cultural competency.</li> <li>• All YJS staff trained in cultural competency by the Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Forum</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger partnership with the BME Forum (VCS) and attendance at their events.</li> <li>• Twice yearly scrutiny Panel held on Out of Court Disposals to look at decision making – taking account of diversity factors.</li> <li>• YJS include detail of structural inequalities within Pre-sentence Reports.</li> <li>• Positive Males Group carried out each quarter. Invite successful local black males to deliver their testimony on their achievements.</li> <li>• Forming of partnership with Aspiring Young Women (AYW) to co-design work with females, particularly young black females who are over-represented within the cohort.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement that there is an overrepresentation of Child Looked After within the cohort and consideration on how to improve practice for this group.</li> <li>• Significant percentage of cohort with educational health care plans consequently Service was awarded a practice marker in this area.</li> <li>• Overrepresentation of black females within the cohort – bespoke group work and mentoring offer.</li> </ul>
<p>Serious Youth Crime Inclusive of Knife Crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the community led intelligence hub to work with YJS and Police to assist intelligence led responses.</li> <li>• Continuation of Weapons Awareness programme including first aide training.</li> <li>• Continuation of Integrated Offender Management model co-run with Community Safety and Police and Education.</li> <li>• Continued representation from YJS at Complex Adolescent Panel to ensure safeguarding factors related to Serious Youth Violence are addressed via a partnership response.</li> <li>• Use of YJS Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel to discuss Multi-Agency Public Protection (MAPPA) referrals and work, children released on licence and imposition of external controls, addressing vulnerability and where necessary using the panel to escalate in line with YJS and LA escalation policy.</li> </ul>
<p>Health Offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Health Nurse now in place screening all children open to the cohort.</li> <li>• Clinical Team embedded to Service providing consultation sessions and casework and sitting on the RMVP to enhance assessments, planning and intervention.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural Programme being run on identified part of the cohort.</li> <li>• All staff trained in Sexual Health by NHS</li> <li>• NHS Sexual Health Team undertaking monthly visits to assist cohort.</li> <li>• All staff trained in Mental Health First Aid</li> <li>• Continued work with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health (FCAMHS)</li> <li>• All staff trained in trauma informed practice.</li> <li>• Continued partnership with Off the Record providing counselling Services to children who do not meet mental health thresholds.</li> </ul>
<p>Diverting Children away from the Criminal Justice System (reducing first time entrants)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Turnaround Project to work with children who receive Community Resolutions or No Further Action by the Police.</li> <li>• Revised Youth Engagement Offer to complete low level case work, using an Early Help Framework for children displaying early signs of criminality or anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Introduction and implementation of Engage – Police Custody Suite engagement of young people who are arrested without charge to provide support at the earliest possible opportunity to steer away from future contact with Authorities.</li> <li>• Continued partner within the My Endz programme – offering or programmes and mentoring via the Voluntary Community Sector.</li> </ul>
<p>Responding to County-lines and contextual safeguarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly established pilot to support the National Referral Mechanism (NRMs) moving decision making from Home Office to the Council and partners, resulting in much quicker positive grounds decisions reducing from over one year to one month meaning our young people are recognised as victims and supported across the partnership appropriately.</li> <li>• Complex Adolescent Panel – Chaired by Social Care attended by Partnership including representation from Rescue and Response, Barnardo(s)</li> <li>• Joint work with Specialist Adolescence Service (Young Croydon).</li> <li>• Completion of jointly created Safety Plans with Social Care</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce Re-offending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the reasons that a child is offending are understood by way of assessment.</li> <li>• Applying child centric interventions that are focused on strengths and opportunities which</li> </ul>

	<p>research indicates is the most effective way to reduce further offending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of re-offending toolkit to ensure resource led interventions are being targeted at those deemed prolific and children escalating. Oversighted by Management.</li> <li>• Co-managed Integrated Offender Management with Police – monitoring young people who pose the highest risk.</li> <li>• Use of Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel Chaired by YJS Service Manager to ensure all measures are taken to prevent and reduce further offending.</li> <li>• Clinical discussions on children with behaviours that are potentially linked to mental health needs.</li> <li>• Use of forums and consultations with MARAC/MAPPA/Chanel to ensure public protection is oversights when the risk meets eligibility.</li> <li>• Partnership work including offer of mentoring and work experience with approved organisations.</li> <li>• Enhanced 16+ Education and Employment Support</li> </ul>
Reducing NEET numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated ETE worker for 16+</li> <li>• Employability course via Skills Mill delivered.</li> <li>• Strong partnerships with Education and employment providers and provisions – Palace for Life, Croydon College, Legacy Youth Club.</li> <li>• Offer of mentoring and coaching to support young people in this area – Mentivity, Reaching Higher, P4YE.</li> <li>• Work with Catch 22 to assist Children in ETE and equipment that may be required.</li> <li>• Monthly ‘readiness’ workshop delivered to assist young people with CV/Interview Skills.</li> <li>• Service awarded accreditation for joint work with SEND (Lead marker).</li> </ul>
Ensuring Service is Victim centric in its approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation already set up for Victims to provide feedback.</li> <li>• Established/experienced victim worker who provides a range of restorative practices based on evidence-based research.</li> <li>• In-house training on victim awareness</li> <li>• Delivery of VRAP programme delivered to all young people.</li> <li>• Victim work included in all YJS staff's appraisals</li> </ul>

8. Resources:

The Youth Justice Service is made up of various funding streams. Below is a table providing detail of the contributions made:

<b>2023-24 Budgeted Funding Streams (Staffing &amp; Non-Staffing)</b>				
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Payments in Kind - Revenue</b>	<b>Other Delegated Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
LB Croydon	1,150,000			1,150,000
YJB Grant	535,000			535,000
Other HRA (Housing)	91,000			91,000
Unaccompanied Minors Grant	81,000			81,000
Community Safety	52,000			52,000
MOPAC	262,000			262,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,171,000</b>			<b>2,171,000</b>

Other contributions are made up of staffing/seconded staff as detailed below.

<b>2023/24 Additional Income (Unbudgeted)</b>				
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Payments in Kind - Revenue</b>	<b>Other Delegated Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
MET Police	130,000			130,000
DFE (Pupil Referral Unit)	28,224			28,224
National Probation Service	23,750		5,000	28,750
Health Service	110,000		5,000	115,000
Skill Mill Ltd	38,000			38,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>329,974</b>			<b>339,974</b>

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places an obligation upon statutory partners to contribute to the delivery of Youth Justice this can be in the form of staffing or financial contributions.

The MET Police is a statutory partner, and the contribution provides internal Police Officers assigned to YJS and Out of Court work.

The National Probation Service is a statutory partner, and they provide a 0.3 post for a seconded Probation Officer.

Department for Education (Pupil Referral Unit) currently the DFE are funding a pilot for YJS staff to be placed on site at the local Pupil Referral Unit as a form of multiagency working this cost contributes to the cost of one Youth Offending Officer.

The Health Cost is inclusive of the Liaison and Diversion Health Worker/Crisis Team who currently is based at Croydon Custody suite to assess health needs of children when arrested. A separate form of funding contributes to the Speech and Language Worker.

Unaccompanied Minors fund accounts for the Local Authorities location with the Home Office and therefore an increased number of children who are applying for asylum.

Skills Mill Project is an employment project the YJS runs these funds are received for assistance with the costing of staff for this project.

Community Safety – 52k contributes to the Operational Management of Gangs, IOM, and Youth Engagement (targeted Services).

MOPAC – Young Adult(s) Gang Work (18-25), ETE Post 16 worker, Gangs/Serious Youth Violence Analyst and Disproportionately Lead in the Out of Court Team. Monies received also partly funds a mentoring programme offered to those in the Out of Court Team.

MOJ – The Ministry of Justice of Justice is currently funding a 3-year project titled 'Turnaround' aimed at children at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. The role of the project is to divert children away from the System, whilst this project is linked to Youth Justice the model delivered is based on Early Help principles and systemic practice (working with the entire family).

The remaining revenue received from the Local Authority pays for all other staffing costs and the day today running of the Youth Justice Service.

The Youth Justice Board grant is issued each year to assist the YJS in the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan. The grant is based on a formula which measures throughput for each area. The total for the year of 2022/23 was £535,424.00 The grant continues to provide necessary managerial oversight in all key areas of work delivered by YJS including Restorative responses (inclusive of victim work) and education in addition to funding 1 Youth Offending Officer post. The purpose of the grant as defined by 'Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (amendment of functions) Order 2015' notes monies is offered to achieve the following outcomes:

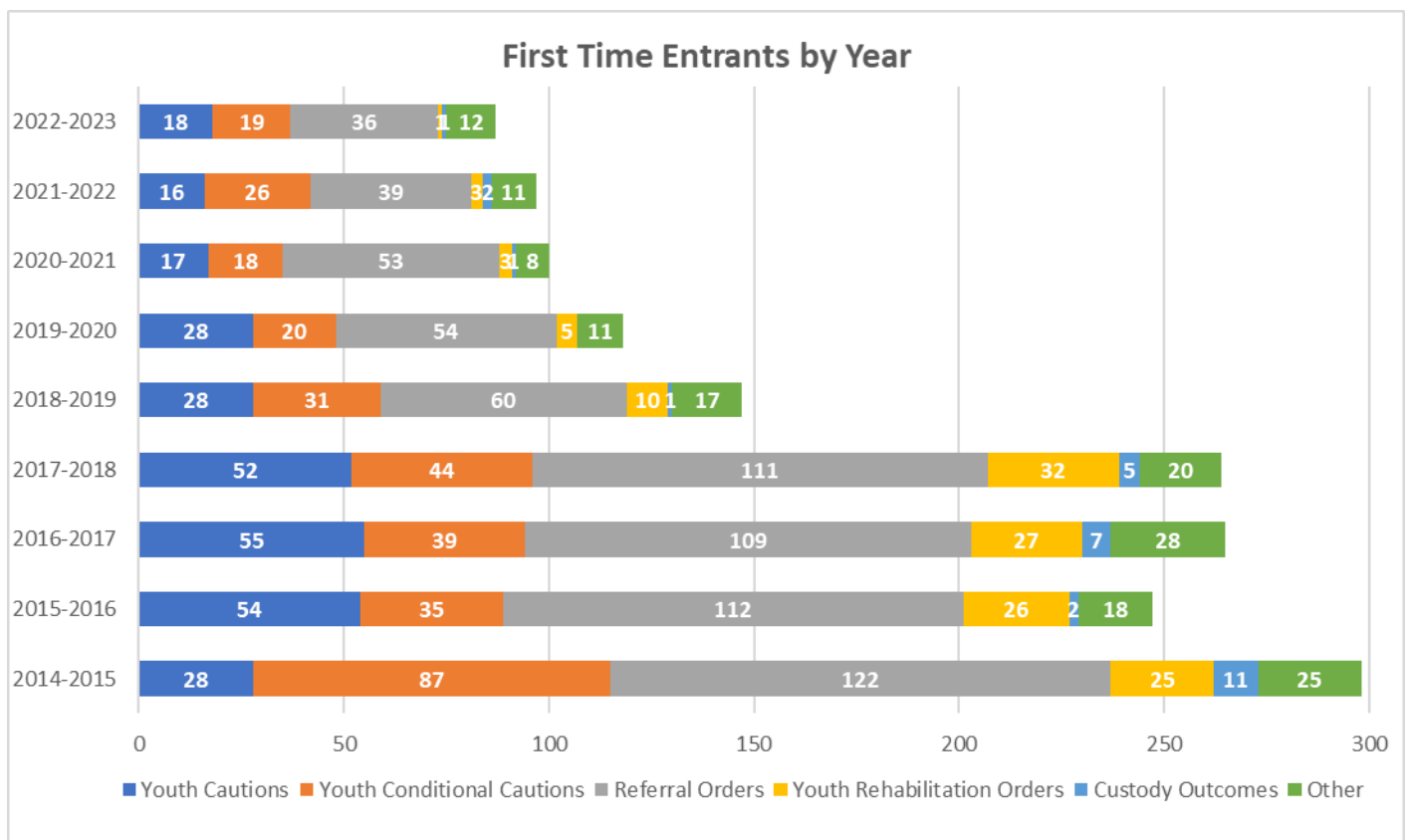
- Reduction in re-offending
- Reduction in the use of custody
- Reduction in the number of first-time entrants
- Effective Safeguarding
- Effective Public Protection
- Improving the Safety and wellbeing and outcomes for children within the system.

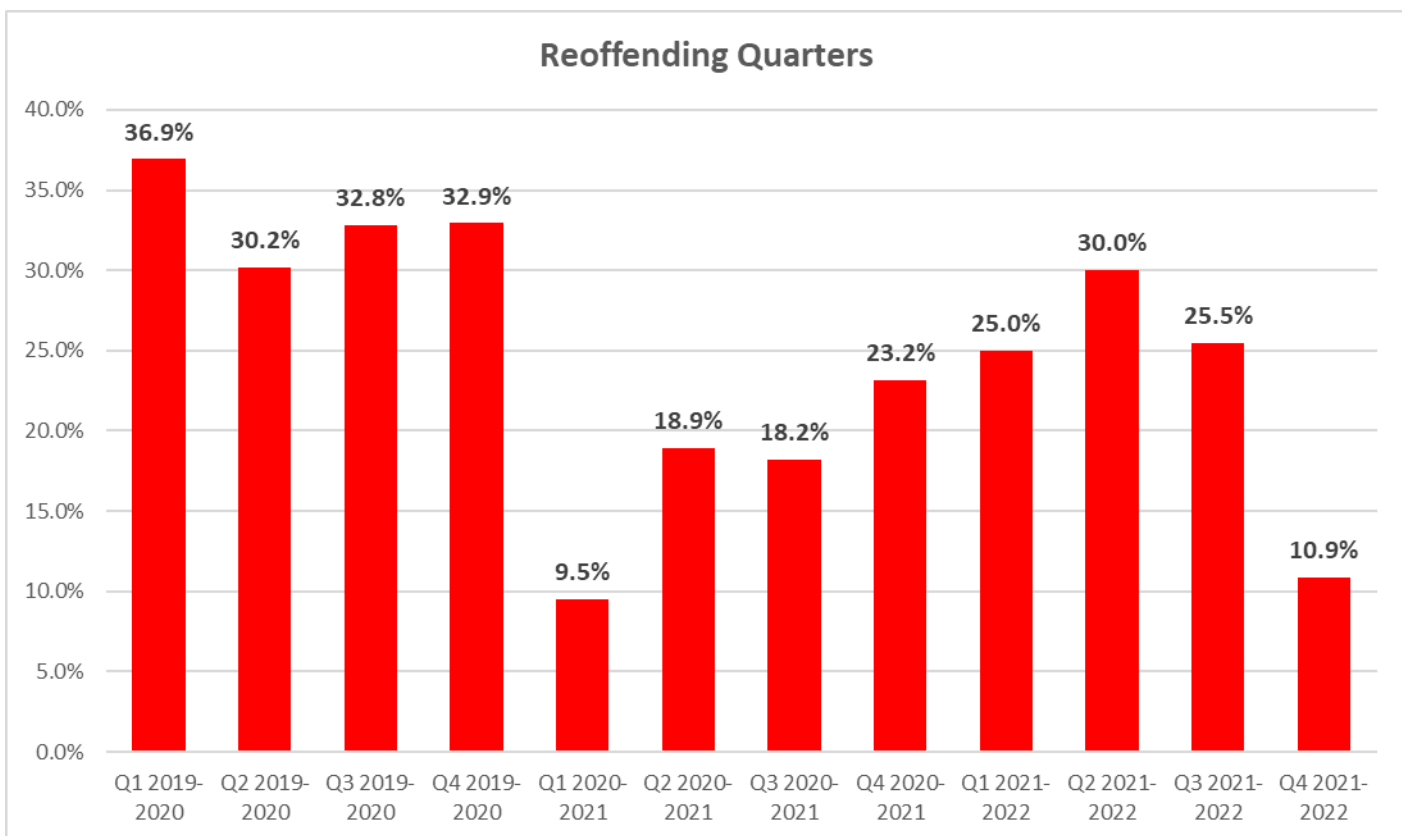
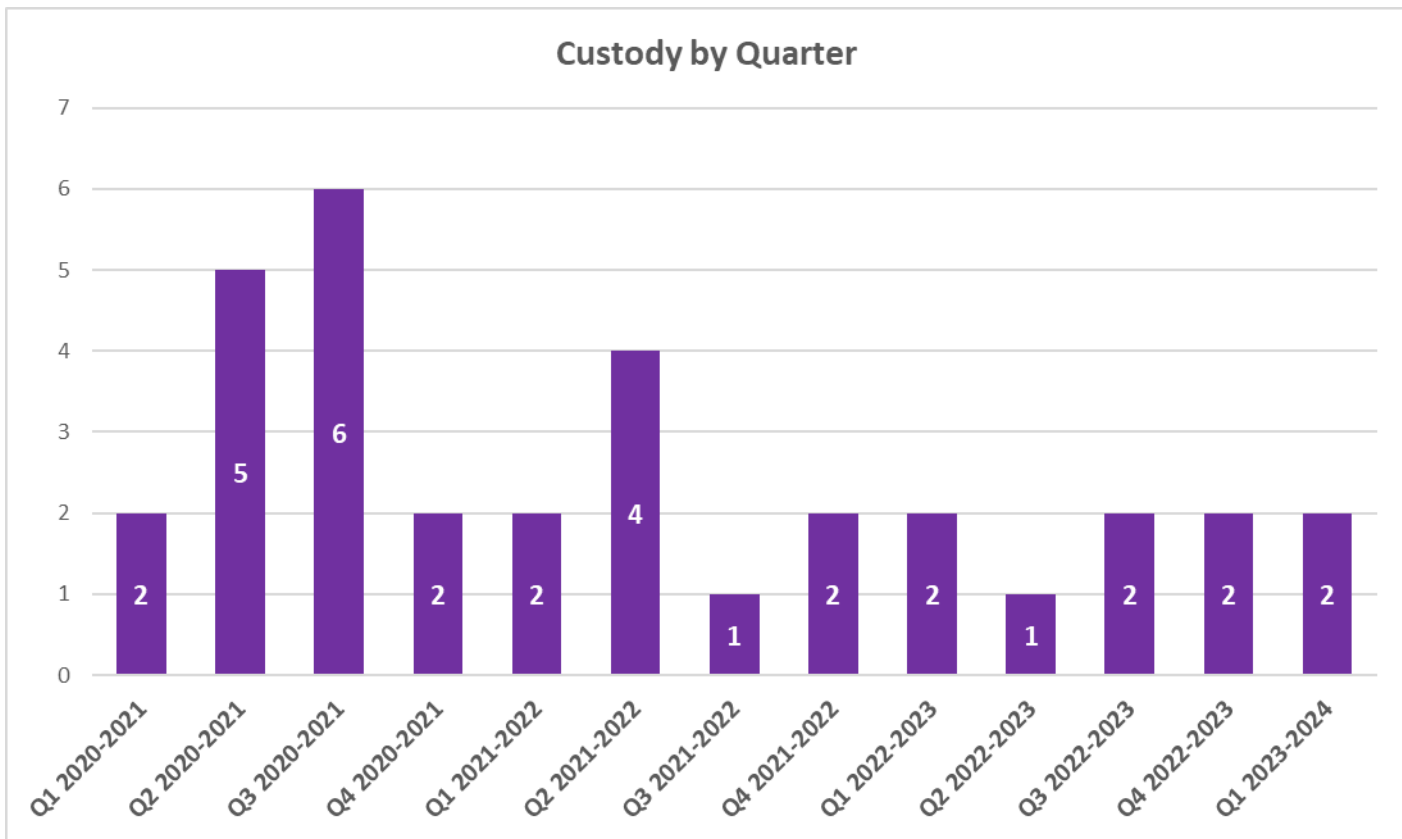
Post Description	Budgeted Grade	FTE 2023/24	Unit Cost £	Full Year Forecast
		<b>8</b>		
Operational Manager (Out of Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Operational Manager (Post Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Practise Manager (Out of Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Practise Manager (Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Restorative Justice Coordinator	12	1	46,857	56,228.40
Restorative Justice Worker	8	1	37,038	44,445.60
Education Practice Manager	12	1	46,857	56,228.40
Youth Justice Service Officer	11	1	43,815	52,578

	Strategic Manager		Operational Manager(s)		Practitioner		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other - Volunteer		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Black	0	0	0	2	5	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	23
Mixed	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
White	0	1	1	1	3	11	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	25
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not known	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	0	1	1	3	9	24	1	4	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	<b>55</b>
Disabled	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

## 9. Performance

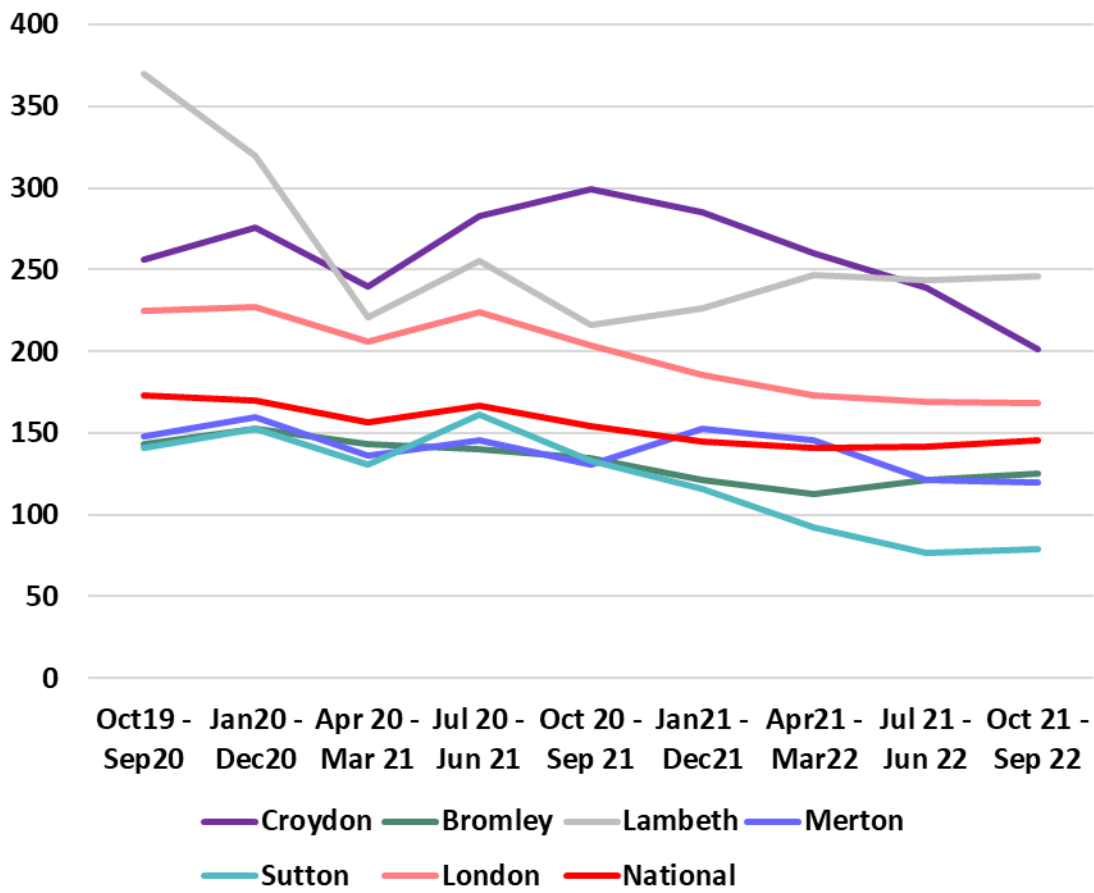
Detailed below are graphs related to 2022/23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure the Youth Justice Service.



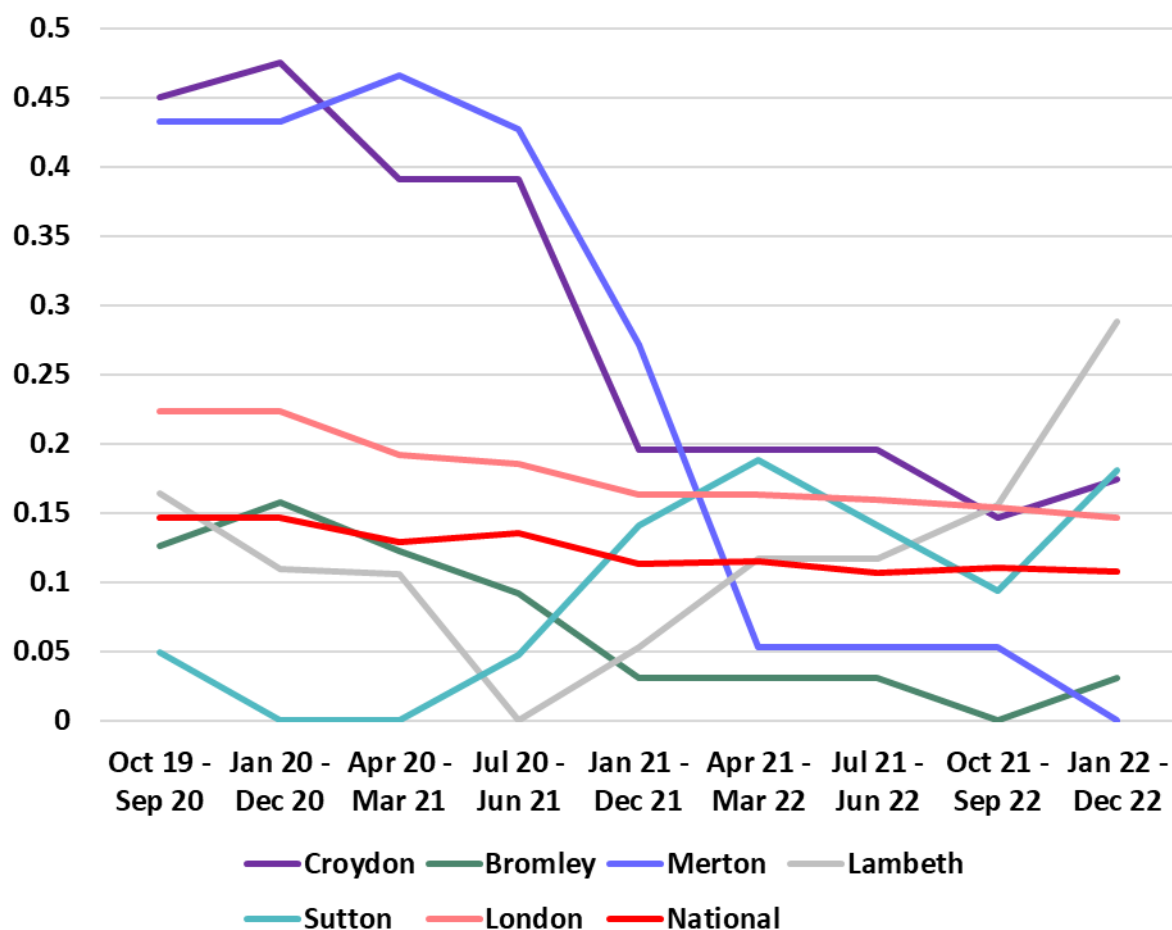




### First Time Entrants – Rates per 100,000 population



### Custodial rates per 100,000 population



**1. First Time Entrants:** Whilst Croydon Youth Justice Service remains to have high numbers of First Time Entrants in comparison to neighbouring boroughs the numbers have significantly reduced ( over what period of time ) and the trajectory is to be in line with the London average. Contextually, Croydon has a much larger youth population than other boroughs so this is a promising and positive picture. Whilst in part the reduction can be attributed to COVID 19 pandemic, and the introduction of Community Resolutions efforts have been made to continue to divert young people away from the system with a number of projects and community sector interventions offered. As noted earlier within the plan, Youth Community Resolutions have been in effect since October 2021, aimed at Children 16+ in possession of small amount of cannabis being dealt with by way of education as an alternative to criminalisation. As noted above this is also a Corporate objective and one the YJS is monitored on, not only as a KPI. To date YJS has met the target corporately on reducing First Time Entrants.

**2. Re-offending rates** – re-offending has also seen a reduction since 2020 . Re-offending is measured not solely by a return to the system but frequency and number of offending/offences. Notably, less young people have come through the system, however the YJS continues to evaluate and modify its interventions and services to assist young people in this area. It uses evidence based approaches as detailed in research to increase protective factors for desistance to reduce recidivism.

**3. Minimising the use of Custody** – Custody rates have seen a decline nationally. In 2006 the National number for children and young people in custody was 2,832. In 2020/21 the

Ministry of Justice reported 560 children in custody. In 2022 450 children were known to be in custody (figure not published) providing a picture of a continued decline in the use of custody. What remains however is a national picture of the overrepresentation of certain groups in custody and for Croydon this is the case. The above graph shows a welcomed reduction of the use of custody, with knowledge that this outcome was being over-used in previous years when robust alternatives were available for certain offence types. At the time of writing all children subject to custody (remanded or sentenced) had been accused or convicted of serious offences, reflective of the borough's issues with Serious Youth Violence. The Youth Justice Service remains to advocate for alternatives to custody and has become sophisticated in its design of robust substitutes and re-submissions of bail packages if initially refused in discussion with partners. The Youth Justice Team's relationship with the local Court is also important, and the Service has worked hard to ensure there is confidence in the Service's ability to manage risk whilst addressing criminogenic factors relative to a young person's contact with the system. Conversely, the YJS has delivered training in May 2023 to the Judiciary on Cultural Competency and the use of custody, particularly for young black males, which received positive feedback. The Court was also part of the Youth Justice Crime Board's workshop and dialogue is continuous.

## 10. National Key Performance Indicators & local performance

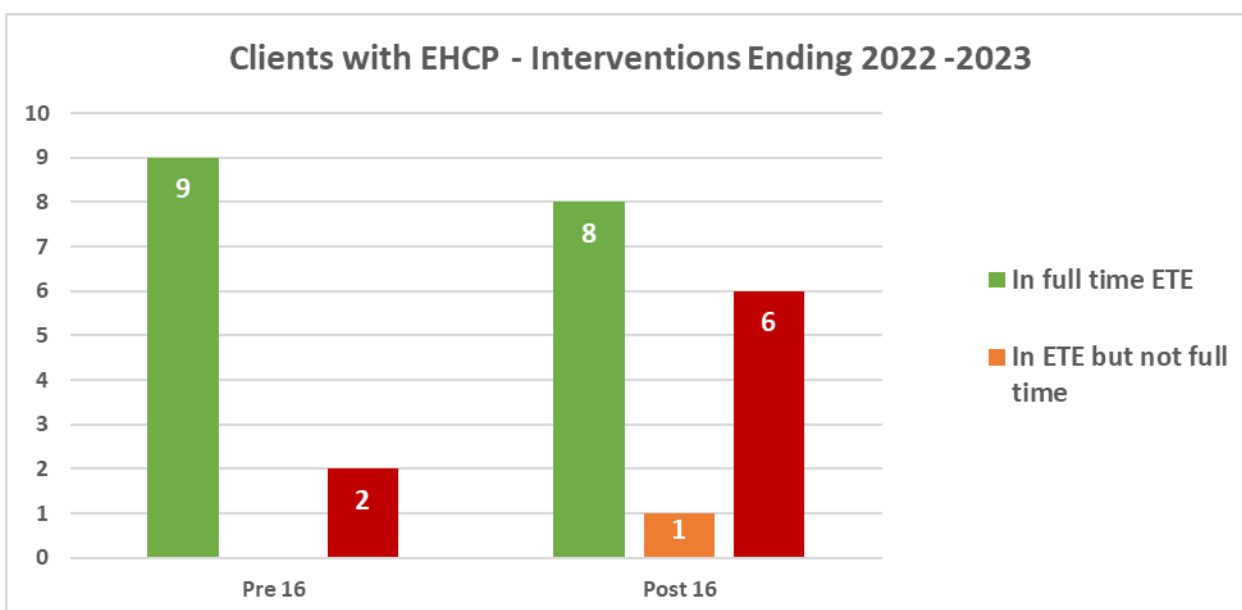
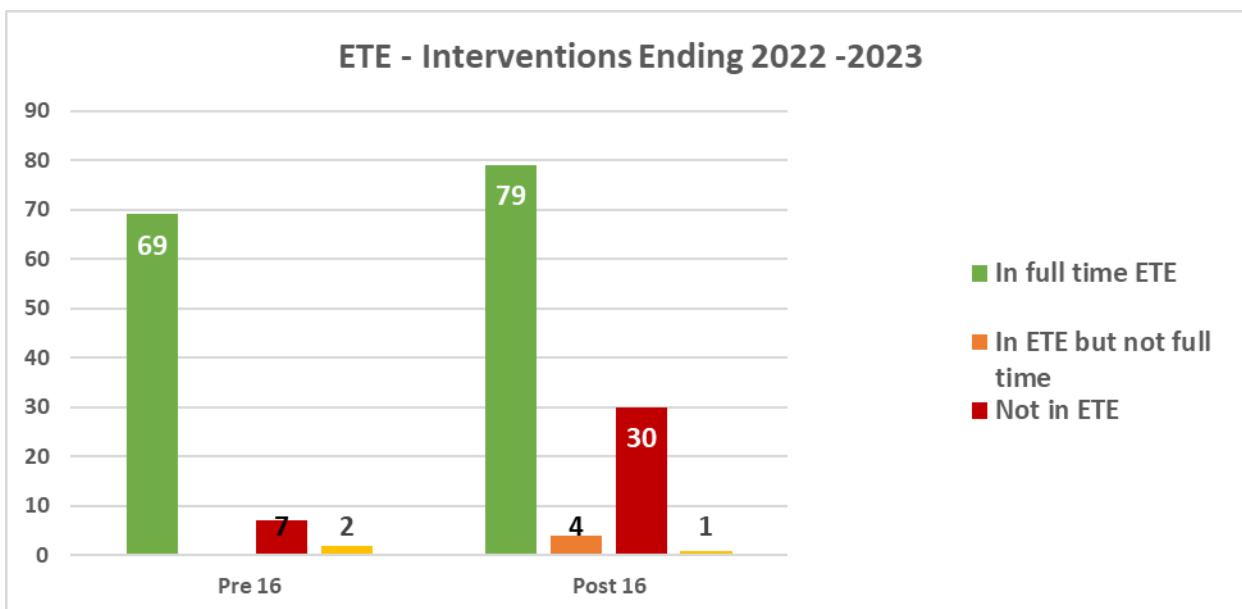
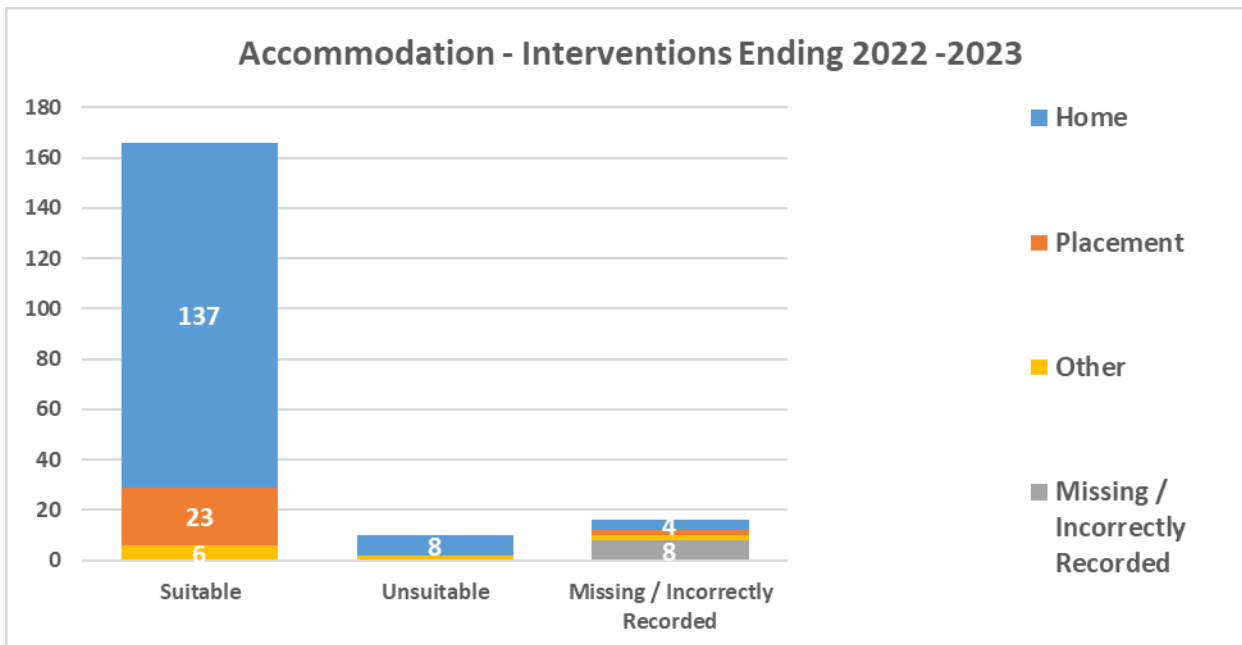
### **Performance Indicators:**

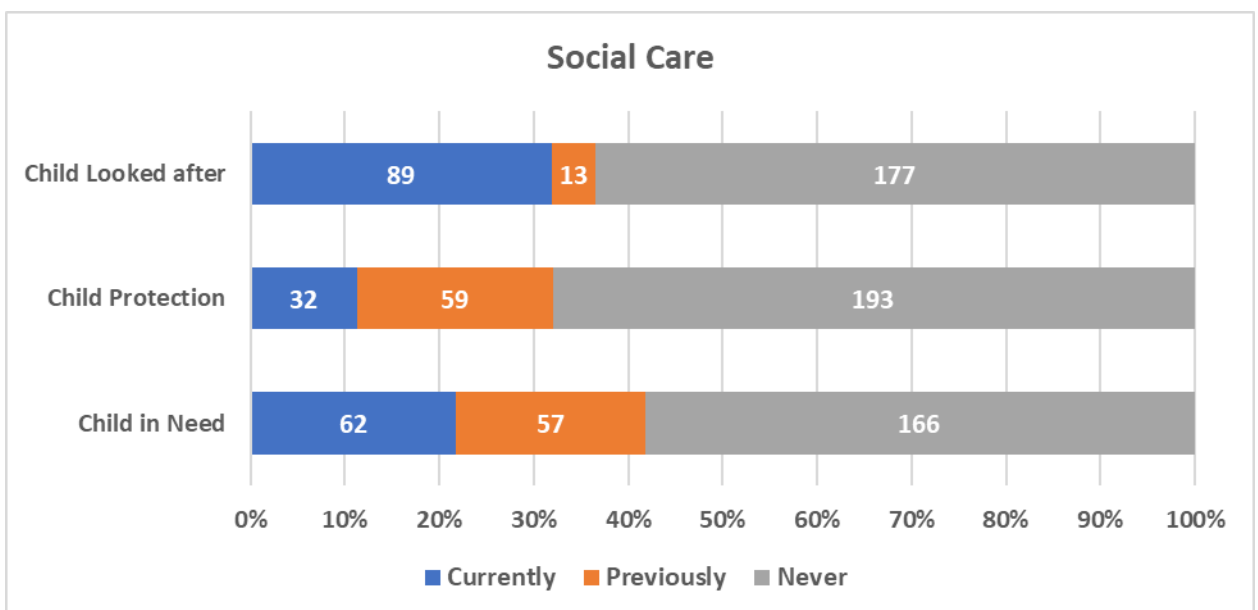
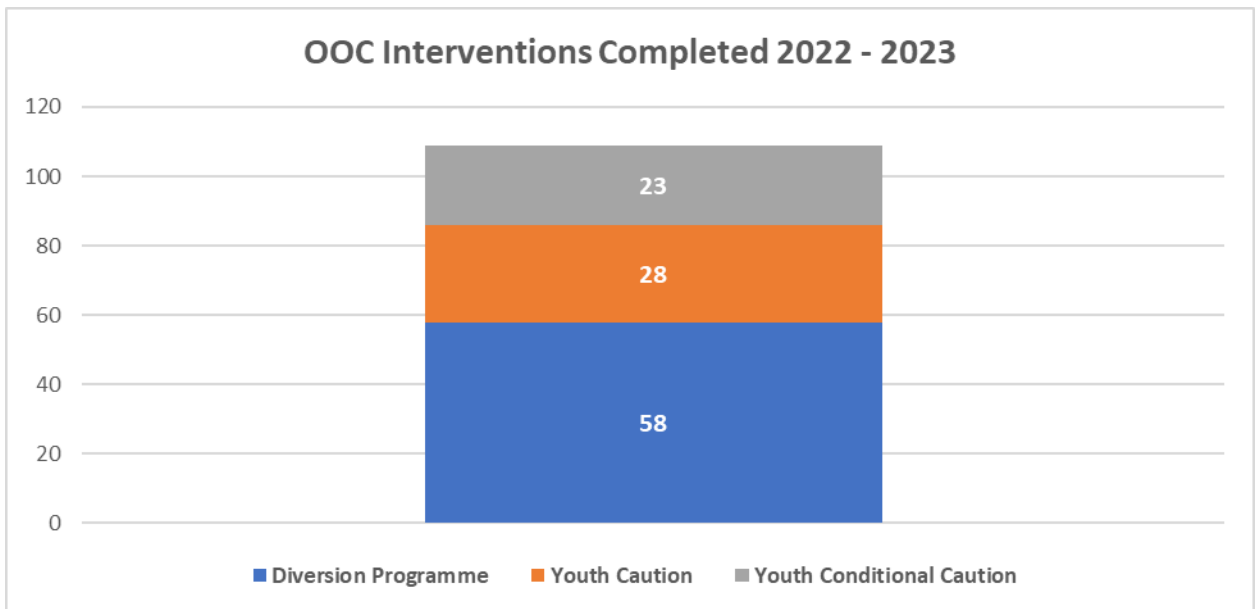
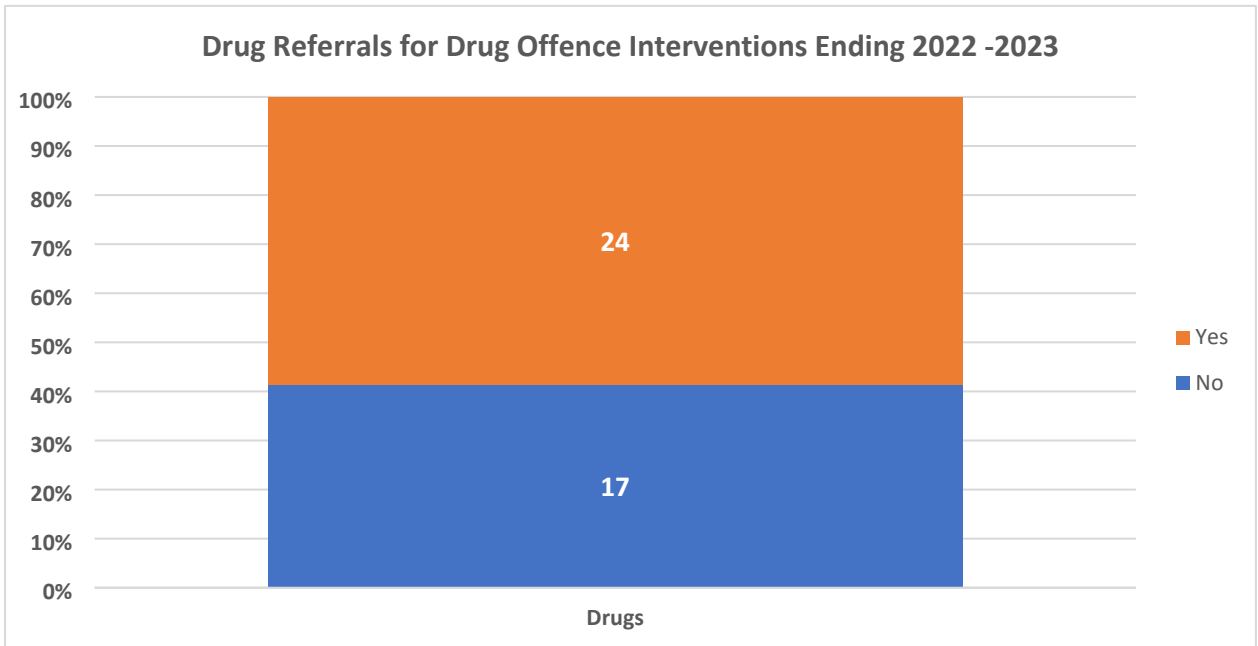
As from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2023 10 new Key Performance Indicators were issued to Youth Justice Services nationally. These include:

- Accommodation - % of children deemed to be in suitable accommodation.
- ETE - % of children in education or employment
- SEND – number of children with Education Health Care Plans
- Emotional Wellbeing - % of children deemed to have a need and the % of children provided with an intervention.
- Substance Misuse - % of children assessed as having a need and % of children provided with an intervention.
- Out of Court – number of children who receive Triage, Cautions, or conditional cautions.
- Youth Justice Crime Board attendance – register of partners attendance.
- Wider Services – number of children open on a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan or a Child Looked After
- Serious Youth Violence – number of children who have committed specific offence types including weapon related offending.
- Victims – number of victims who have given consent and the number who received a Service.

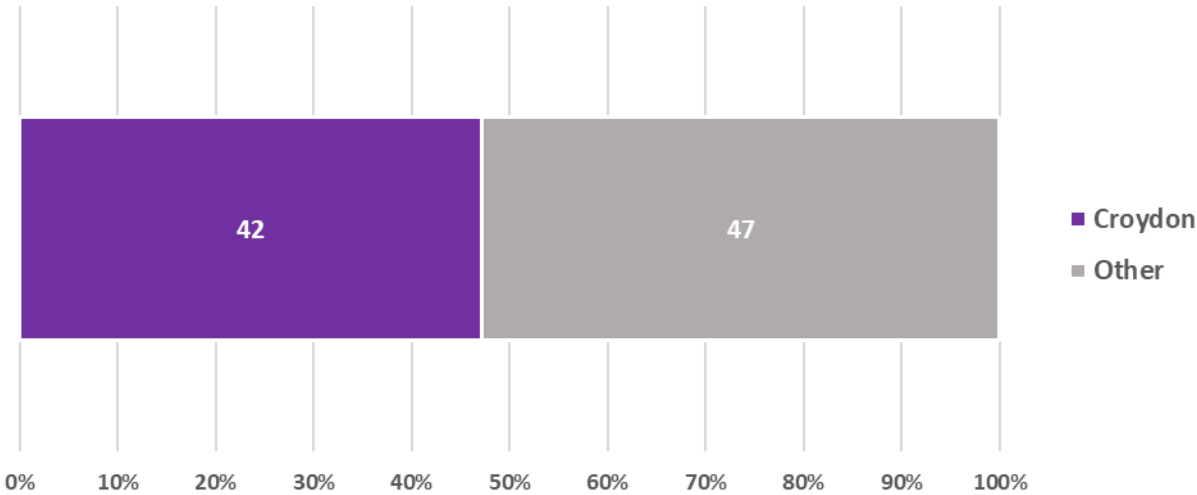
Croydon Youth Justice Service has historically reported on the above as local indicators, consequently the service is familiar with collating the above information to ensure that it has oversight on performance related to each area and is therefore able to measure partnership contributions to ensure areas of practice overcome any difficulties.

Whilst the new Indicators will not be reported on until August 2023 the picture on each new KPI for 2022/23 is detailed below:

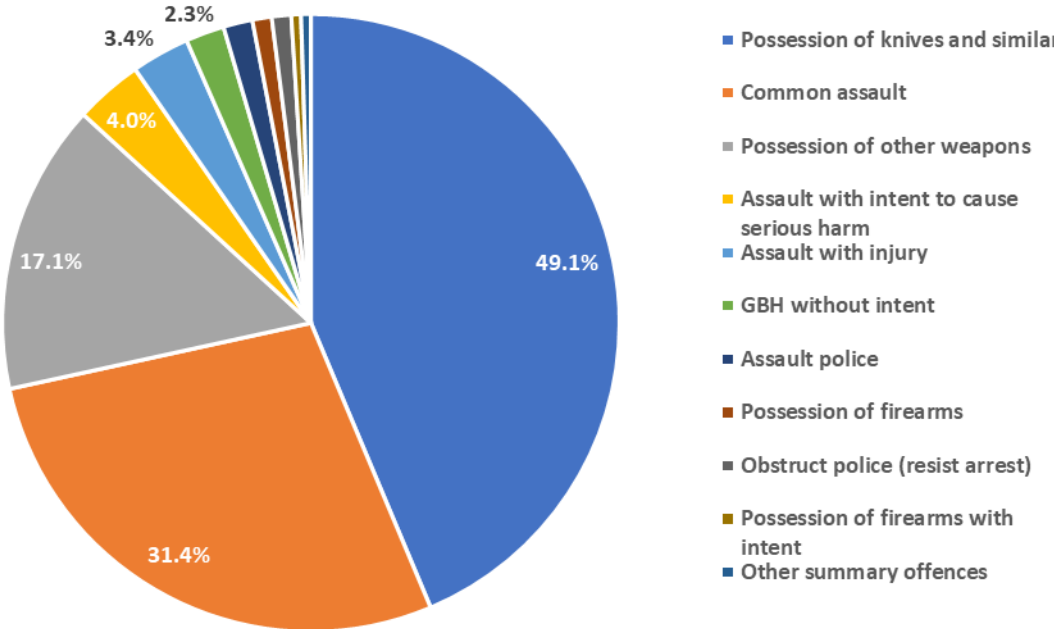


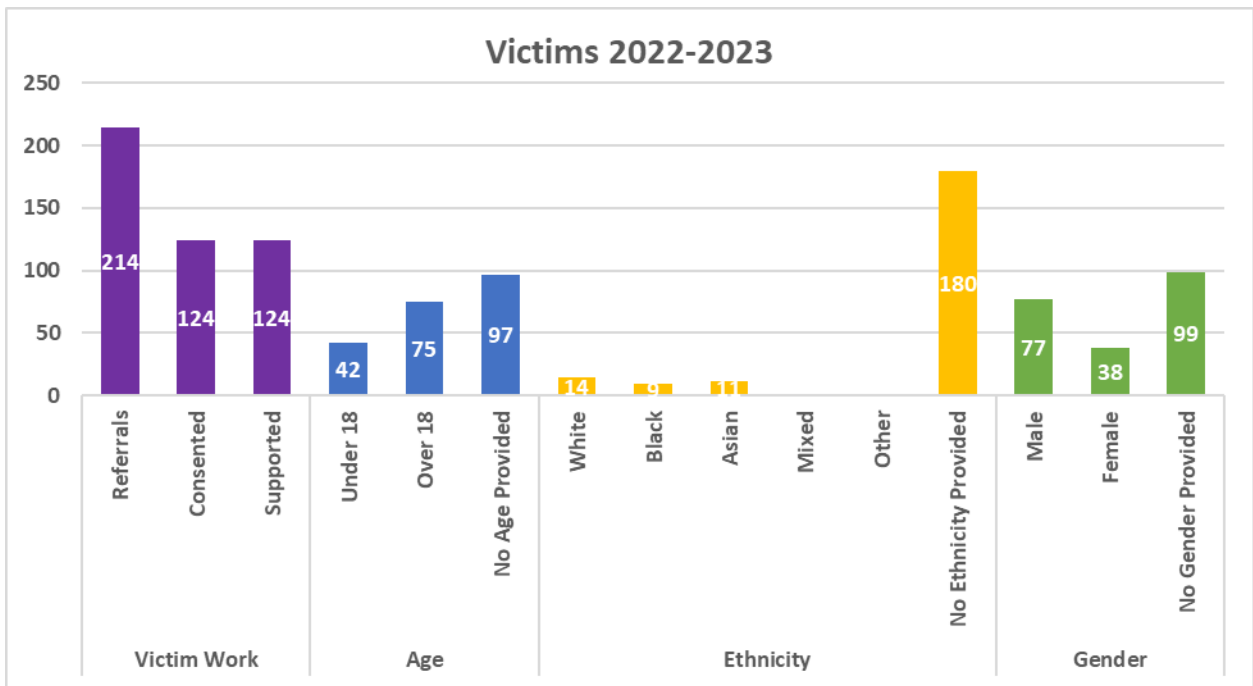


### Child Looked After Locality



### Youth Violence 2022 - 2023





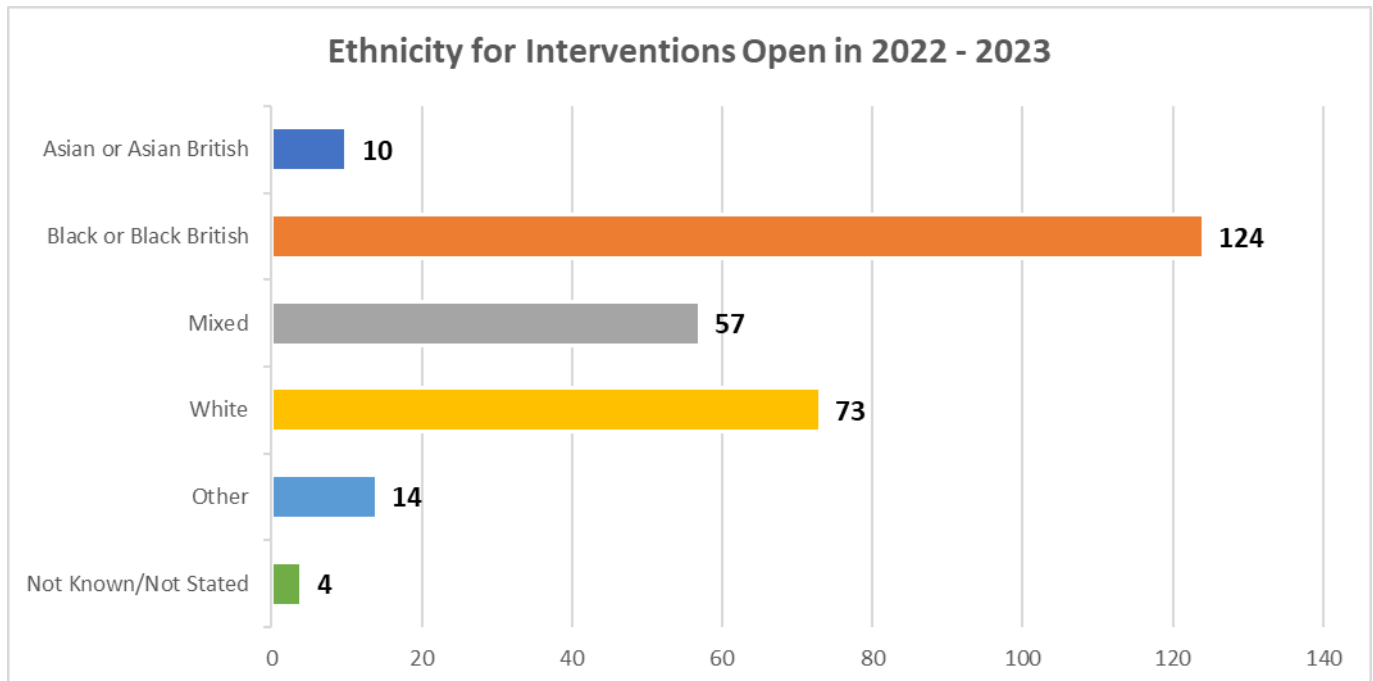
Separate to Key Performance Indicators, the Youth Justice Service is measured against 'Standards for children in the Youth Justice System (2019)'. The government produced standard expectations which sets out clear guidance on the delivery of core Youth Justice work – Out of Court work, Court work, Court disposals, Secure settings and transitions and resettlement. Weekly to monthly reports are produced for the YJS Management Team to have oversight on achieving these standards. In addition to reports, monthly audits are undertaken to ensure all aspects of work are to a high quality and meeting timeframes. All this work is scrutinised further by Senior Management within the Local Authority, including information being provided at the Services Performance Forums and again governed and referenced at the Youth Justice Crime Board.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1115435/Standards\\_for\\_children\\_in\\_youth\\_justice\\_services\\_2019.doc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1115435/Standards_for_children_in_youth_justice_services_2019.doc.pdf)

## 11. Children from groups which are over-represented

Reducing the over representation of certain groups within the Youth Justice Service is a key priority. The YJS uses data to view characteristics of children known – characteristics include a child’s ethnicity, age, religion, gender, Social care status, demographis (where they reside) and where they attend school to provide insight.

Detailed below is a break-down of ethnicities of children open to the YJS during the year of 2022/23. \*



Disproportionality or the over-representation of specific groups has caused long-standing concern within the Criminal Justice System. Croydon Youth Justice Service in consultation with the BME Forum and Equalities Team, Young People and Staff have devised a Disproportionately Action Plan (appendix 3), which is renewed each year, the plan is aimed at reflectively looking at each area of practice within the Service and how over-representation can be challenged, addressed and to ensure practice is bespoke and culturally sensitive. The plan delivers on wider strategic aims that can be sighted in the Boroughs George Filloyd Race Equality Pledge and Equalities Strategy, Croydon Community Safety Strategy and nationally the Youth Justice Board Strategy. The plan also ensures that the workforce are trained in cultural competency and a committed to anti-racism forms part of the organisation’s culture. The plan looks at how the Service can advocate for children, including challenge to Courts and Police, in some instances acting as a ‘gatekeeper’ for fairness by avoiding escalating children unnecessarily through the system. The Service has played a role in supporting the induction of new Police Officers and delivered training to the Judiciary inclusive of data where disparity is evident. All reports produced for Court also mark protected characteristics and draw awareness to the over-representation of specific groups with sentencers, particularly where custody is being considered.

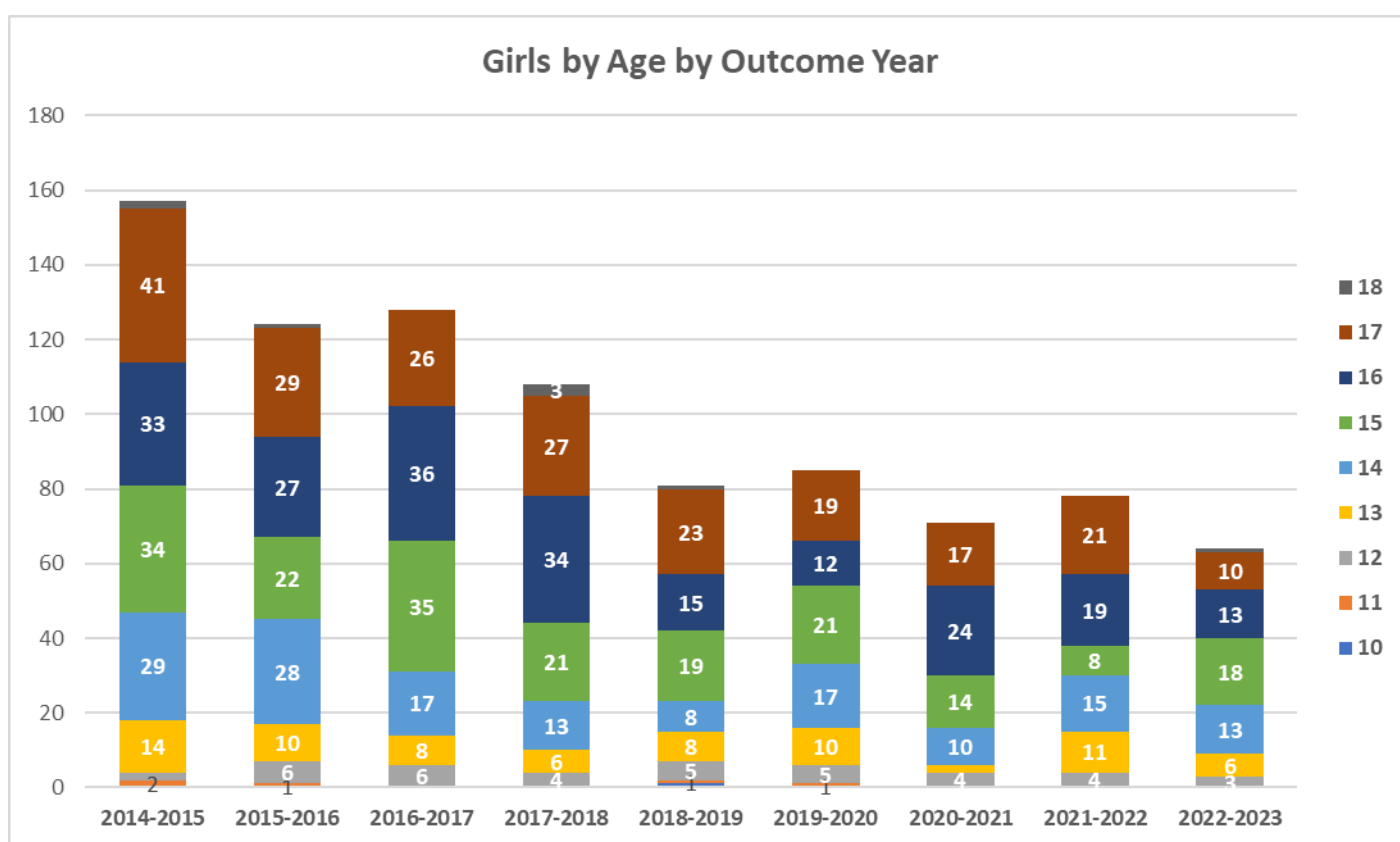


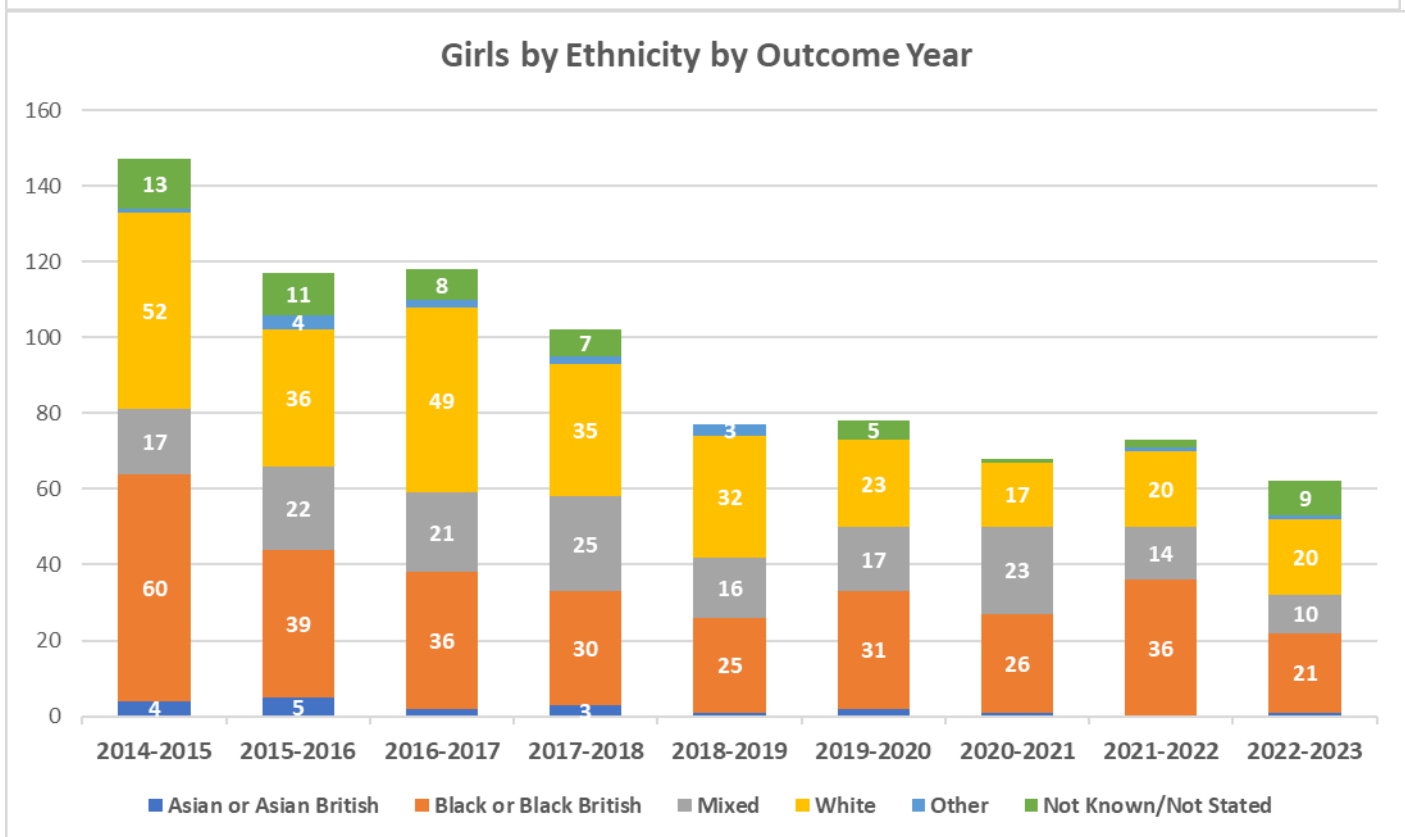
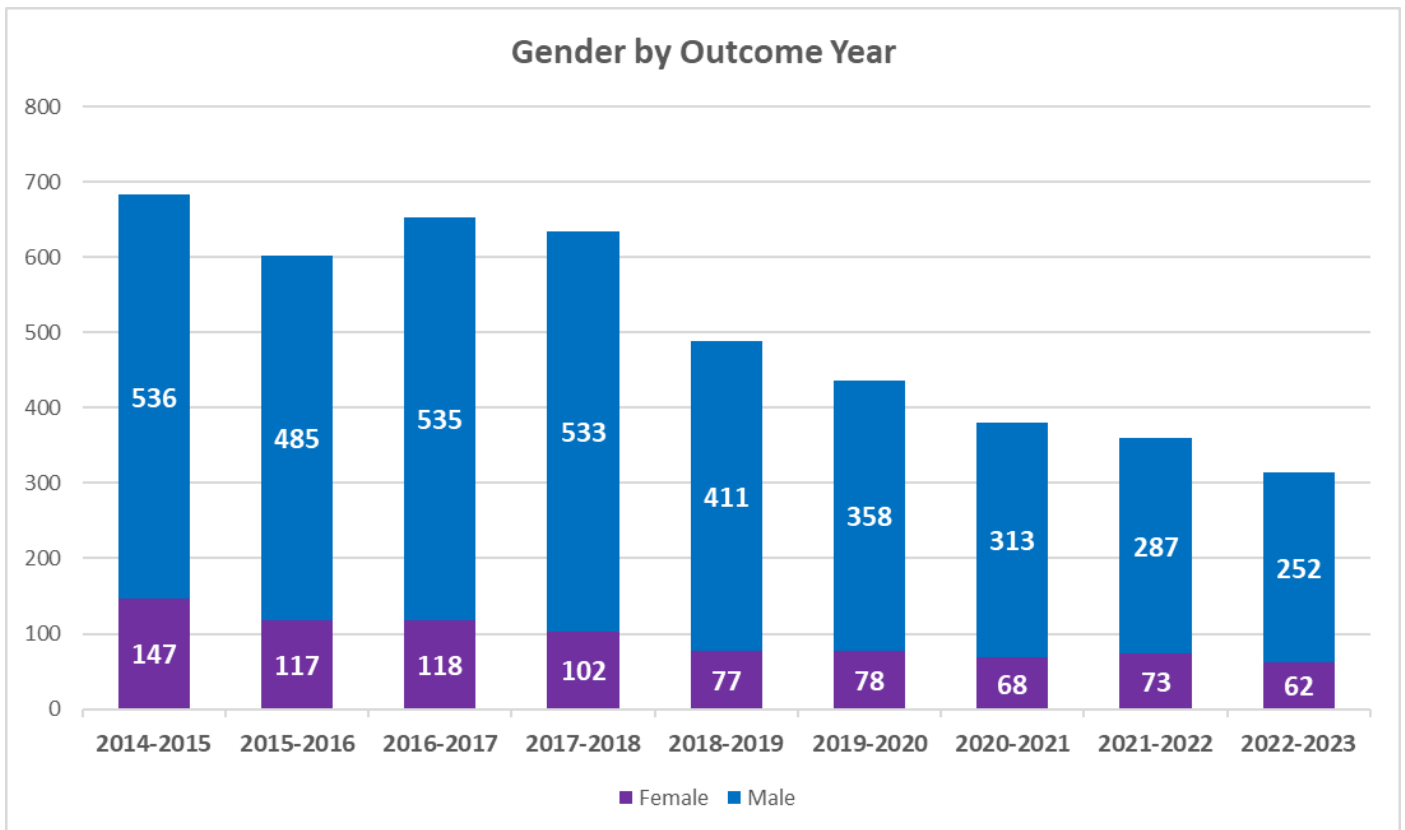
In 2022/23 the Service began exploring the use of Stop and Search within specific parts of the community that ultimately impacted upon over-representation within the Service, subsequently a programme was delivered that enabled young people to understand their rights but also explored with them their experiences of discrimination.

2022/23 saw a decrease in young black males of 30% (97), this group are statistically disadvantaged in several areas including education and therefore understanding the challenges for this group are important when consider the most appropriate way to intervene.

The Service has continued to see a reduction in females within the system but there has been considerable attention on those at risk of entering the system and the YJS has played a role looking at intelligence available with partners and contributing to the diversion offer by way of bespoke mentoring via the community sector and a group work offer delivered by the Youth Engagement Team.

Below details the female population ethnicity and age break-down for the year 2022-23. \*





Data provided above shows a reduction in black and mixed female representation where white representation has remained at the same number.

Another group that present highly in the YJS data is Children Looked After. Data detailed earlier shows a high number of young people also placed in the borough by other Local Authorities. This can bring a number of challenges – placements can be temporary meaning interventions can be difficult to start, in some instances children are placed in local crime hot

spots which is in contradiction to their own vulnerabilities, this group of children can often go missing due to the lack of connection with the locality which raises issues of enforcement and safeguarding. The Local Authority works within the National protocol to reduce the Criminalisation of Looked After Children. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-protocol-on-reducing-criminalisation-of-looked-after-children>

Looking at our practice(s) for this group will be a priority for 2023/24.

It is integral for YJS practitioners and Managers to understand other structural inequalities and experiences certain groups are more exposed to. Stop and Search data provided by the Local Authorities Violence Reduction Unit shows significant disparity with the use of this Power for certain groups and exclusion data also shows differences. National research looking at all areas of the Criminal Justice system show differences in outcomes for minority ethnic groups (Ethnic Disproportionately in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system 2021). Tackling overrepresentation therefore is for the YJS and partners to jointly challenge in addition to wider central government policy.

## 12. Prevention

The Local Authority retains an Early Help Offer for those who do not meet statutory thresholds but for families in need or where some moderate concern related to anti-social behaviour or growing links to criminality pose. The Youth Justice Service maintains a close working relationship with Early Help Services, often with the role of referring into the Service or working with when a family is known to both Services.

The introduction of the Turnaround Project in December 2022 has provided a further Early Help offer that is specifically aimed at children who are presenting early signs of criminality having been issued a Community Resolution or arrested with no further action or released under investigation. The Project is underpinned by Early Help Principles and Practice Standards and consequently the post holders are located alongside Early Help Triage and MASH to ensure referrals are identified at the earliest opportunity, screened and where appropriate allocated. Whilst the Project sits within the YJS structure there is a clear distinction that children accessing interventions through this project are not within the Criminal Justice System. The Project has seen high numbers of referrals, concluding there is a demand for specialist work in this area. The Project works within a systemic framework – meaning the practitioners consider services for the family including parents and siblings.

Since starting in December 2022 the Project has received 118 referrals indicative of a need in this area. The Project is funded to work with 47 families during 2023/24. The Project is voluntary and to date (May 2023) 18 families have progressed to assessment and intervention. Most referrals received have been driven by Community Resolutions (on the spot cautions) – 41 of the 118 referrals have been via this route.

The Service Manager for the Youth Justice Service also oversees the Youth Engagement Offer (Targetted EH Service) and subsequently prevention is a primary focus via projects such as CLIP (1:1 short term intervention for those who are presenting with concerns within their localities) and Engage (based at Croydon Police Station – meeting young people who have been arrested without charge and signposting services to prevent further contact). Areas of delivery include:

- 1:1 case work for those who present with some moderate concern
- Intervention/Project Delivery – attendance in Schools and Community Provisions to deliver educational workshops on topics such as peer pressure/resilience/personal safety/Empowerment related to self-esteem/Every Choice Matters – giving information on county-lines and knife crime/Exploitation and how to keep safe.
- Youth hub delivery in wards that feature high in MET and YJS data
- Youth hub for 8-12 year olds on the Shrubland Estate
- Youth Participation – providing platforms for young people to speak out about their experiences living in the borough and what would help improve the lived experiences of young people particularly in relation to safety.
- Outreach Work – Outreach Team accessing hard to reach young people where reports of anti-social behaviour or reported concerns related to groups has been expressed. The team will engage young people and make them aware of services available across the borough. Work is targetted around intelligence reports and critical incidents. Local Authority's local presence following serious incidents and reports back to Council on local feelings and concerns.
- Partnership Work with Community Sector including Palace for Life, Gloves not Guns and Legacy Youth Club to run activities for local children and young people.
- Delivery of sessions in the hubs around education of substance misuse.
- Joint work with Street Doctors teaching young people how to administer first aid.

The above runs in parallel with the Community Offer and the YJS has built close partnerships with the following providers: BME Forum, Legacy Youth Club, Palace for Life, Gloves not Guns, Reaching Higher, Croydon Voluntary Action and more widely the My Endz Project and its partners.

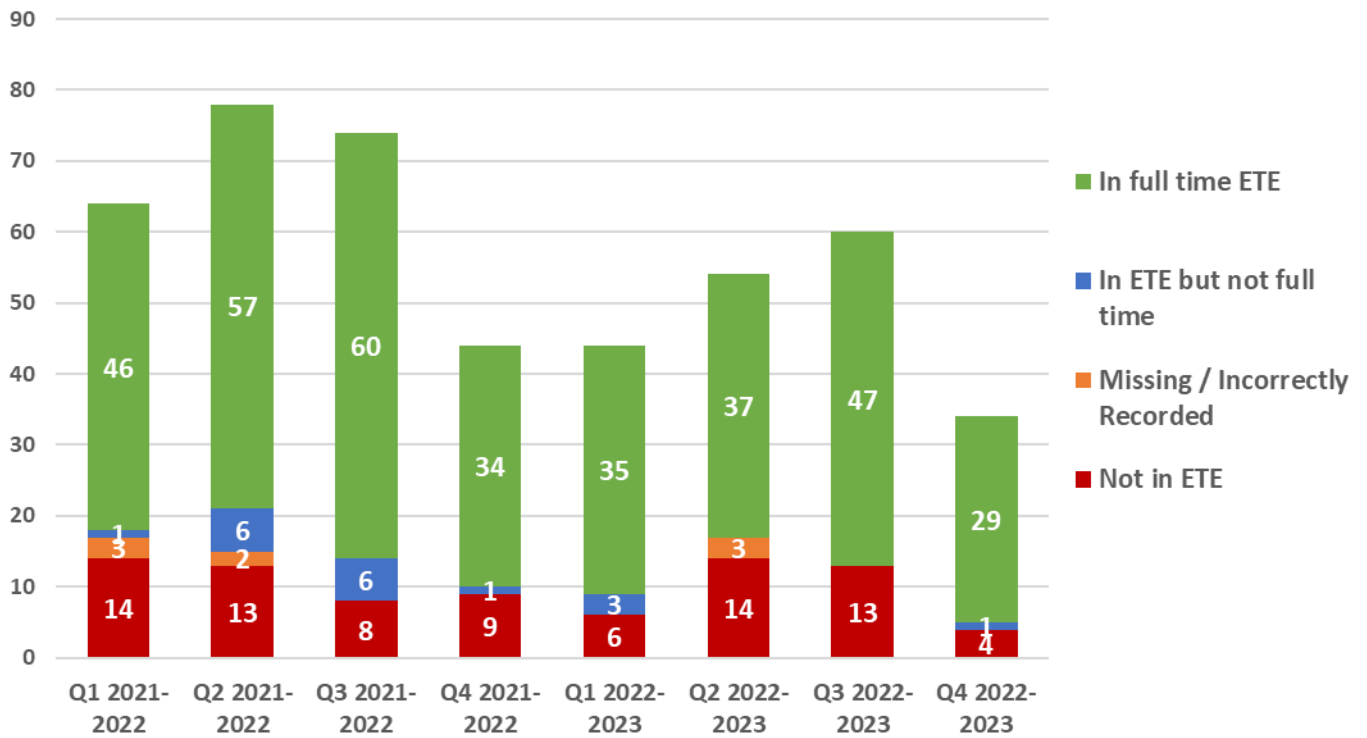
### 13. Diversion

Full detail of the Youth Justice diversion offer is captured in the Croydon Youth Justice Prevention and Diversion Strategy 2023/24. (Appendix 8).

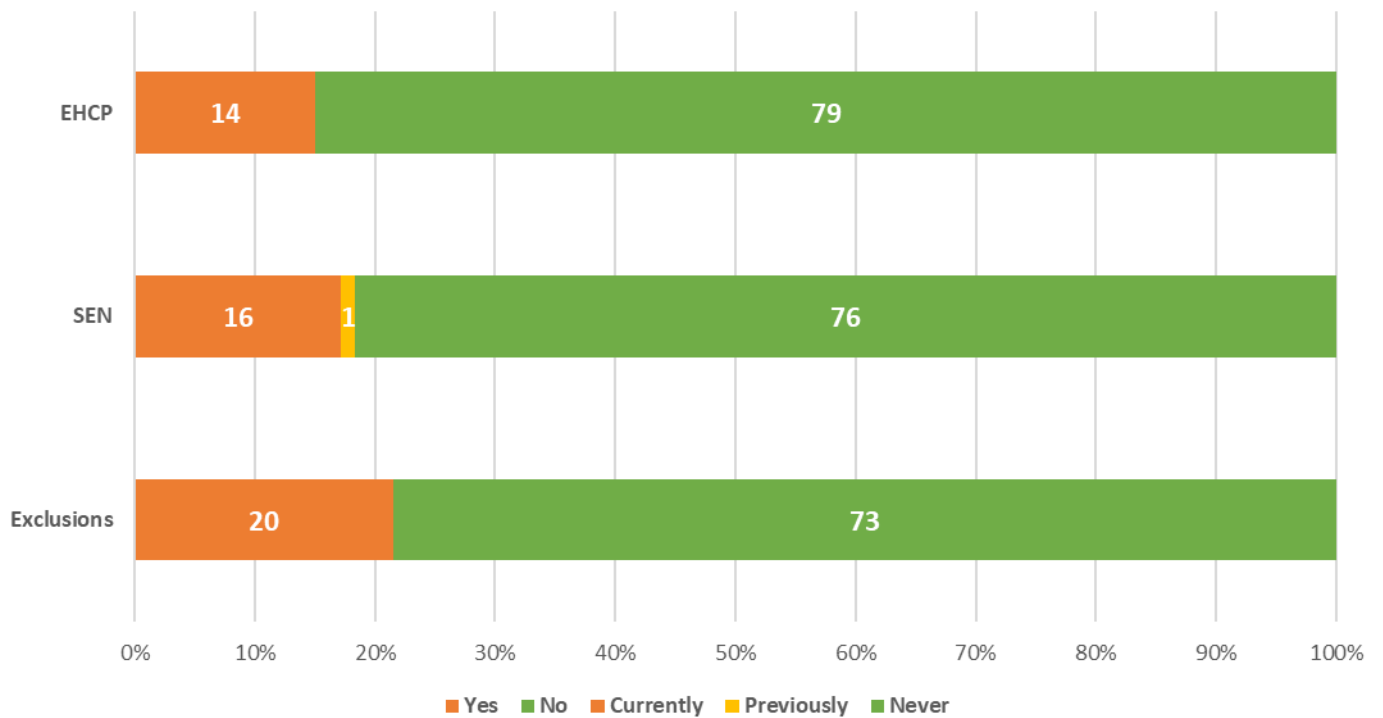
The strategy details the prevention offer as above but also provides summary of the Engage Project, a Project based at the Custody Suite to greet young people who have been arrested without charge. The aim of the project is to ensure all children coming into contact with the Criminal Justice System are screened and assisted to access services that reduce future risk of contact if unknown. Interventions are short-term and will be diverted into projects that provide longer term contact if required.

The use of Community Resolutions remains to form part of the diversionary offer, coming into the system and use of Out of Court triage and cautions remains to avoid young people entering the formal Court System. Croydon Youth Justice Service remains to have a Team dedicated to this area of work, whose purpose is to screen all young people to ensure they are kept (where possible) away from the statutory Court system.

**ETE - Interventions Ending by Quarter**



**EHCP, SEN, Exclusions - Current Interventions**



## 14. Education

Education, Further education and/or Employment are viewed as a significant means of desistance and reducing offending behaviour. Croydon Youth Justice Service has an Education Practice Manager who ensures all children of statutory school age are in education or alternative provision and in receipt of adequate hours and to ensure all 16+ children are attending further education or finding employment. This role requires close partnership work and attendance at panels to advocate for children known to YJS. The role also requires local knowledge of provisions for 16+ and forming partnerships with providers. The target rate is for 95% of statutory school children to be in provision and for 85% of 16+ to be in provision.

There is a dedicated 16+ ETE worker who is assigned to all children deemed NEET, whose role is, to assess young people's readiness and assist them in areas such as application completion, CV formation, intervention techniques and to work towards matching young people in accordance to their strengths and aspirations. The work undertaken in this area is linked to key partners including: local colleges, Catch 22, Sutton and District, Croydon Works and the Employment Sector. The model offered is focused on an outreach offer where the practitioner visits young people in the community to promote opportunities.

The Service also provides its own employability scheme using a Social Enterprise Project called Skill Mill. Every six months the Service interviews and appoints 4 young people to work on various different projects to gain direct work experience with the intention on finding work at the end of the period. Young people open to the Project are provided with training opportunities such as health and safety and first aid and are assisted to job search. Training includes health and safety, CSCS cards for construction, first aid training and job search support.

The Youth Justice Service often finds young people known to the Service have experienced inconsistent education history and in some instances learning needs have been undetected until full screenings have been completed by the Service. Many young people known to the Service are attending alternative provisions such as the local Pupil Referral Unit during their statutory period in education. The YJS has seconded a member of staff as part of a pilot 'Serious Youth Violence Task-Force' offered by the Department of Education to be based within the local Pupil Referral Unit. The role of this practitioner is to bring YJS expertise to the provision and engage those known to both services, whilst supporting the individual within the educational setting with the intention of playing a role in the task-force that offers bespoke services to young people at risk or involved in Serious Youth Violence. To date this has proven a successful partnership with positive outcomes for the children in receipt of this support.

The Youth Justice Service Education Practice Manager collates data on all children and as from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 this is now a Key Performance Indicator:

- How many children in the cohort have been excluded?
- How many are subject to part-time tables?
- How many children are home school elected?
- How many Educational Health Care Plans & open to SEN?
- How many children following SALT screening during each quarter required follow up?
- How many children are school refusers?
- Ethnicity of children linked to above.
- Care status of those questions above.

## Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status Redesignation with Child First Commendation

On 9 March 2023, Croydon YJS were awarded the Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status Redesignation with Child First Commendation.

The Youth Justice SEND Quality Award developed an award for the practice with children in the youth justice system with special educational needs and disability (SEND). The Youth Justice Quality Lead offered, in partnership with Microlink PC recognises consistently high levels of work between YJS and SEND in the working in the best interest of young people with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) who are under the supervision of Croydon YJS. Croydon YJS and SEND have achieved the highest marker which is the 'Lead' in recognition of the partnership work between the two Teams including sharing relevant information to improve outcomes for young people with an EHCP and SEND and considering these children when in custody. This award is valid for 3 years. Croydon is one of 8 London boroughs who has been award the Quality Lead marker.

Education and addressing NEET levels is an ongoing priority for 2023/24.

The Youth Justice Service works with many schools, alternative providers and colleges both locally and across London. Reports list a number of provisions and the service has worked hard to form strong partnerships with those most frequently used. As detailed above the Service has a member of staff located within Saffron Valley a provision where a high % of children known to the Service attend. Similarly the Service works closely with Croydon College. Representation at key educational panels means direct access to schools and providers and the Service ensures accessibility to ensure information is shared, particularly when risk is factor.

### 15. Restorative Approaches and Victims

Croydon YJS Restorative Team (part of the Youth Justice Service) aim to contact all victims harmed by the young people they work with as a Service. The Service offers a wide range of direct and indirect restorative interventions that enable communication between the young person and those they have harmed. These include formal and informal restorative conferences, shuttle mediation, apology letters and videos. This is to ensure that those harmed can be heard and their needs are addressed. YJS Practice is victim-led, and the Service adheres to the Victim Code of Practice, therefore offering victims updates on the progress made by the young person as well as referrals to relevant support services, such as Victim Support. When the victim is not willing to engage, we complete individual restorative work with the young person to ensure they are given the opportunity to reflect on the harm caused. This can also be achieved through surrogate sessions with the YJS Police when the person harmed is an emergency worker and he/she is unable to participate. YJS Police are restoratively trained and use this space to also challenge pre-conceived perceptions of Police amongst the cohort.

To encourage young people's participation in restorative processes, we have developed a double AQA accredited Victim Restorative Awareness Programme (VRAP), which includes Restorative Justice theories, principles of neuroscience and trauma informed practice as well as interactive videos and live sessions with real life victims.

Using a Child First approach, the YJS is creative about mediums of communication used by including some elements of Art Therapy, Play Therapy as well as visual aids, and collaborate

with the SALT team to ensure any intervention matches the needs of the young people involved.

The Team takes a multi-agency approach, working in partnership with the Police and British Transport Police (BTP) to obtain consent for the details of people harmed by crime. The YJS Victim Team also coordinate victim contacts with other boroughs as well as Probation when there are several co-defendants or when the young person is about to become an adult to ensure consistency. There is a feedback system to ensure victims are given the opportunity to shape the service we provide. All the members of the Croydon YJS RJ Team are accredited/registered practitioners with the Restorative Justice Council (RJC) as well as experienced trainers and provide regular restorative justice training sessions to colleagues and partner agencies. When there is not a direct victim, we work closely with local communities to address indirect harm. For example, we have gained impact statements from shop workers to enable a AQA accredited programme around the consequences of shoplifting and have created reparation opportunities within the local communities often jointly with the Voluntary Community Sector such as Croydon Voluntary Action. The Service has also developed an AQA accredited intervention that draws on feedback from local communities around the wider impact of knife crime.

The Croydon RJ Team always discusses safety during the initial contact with victims and then raises any specific requests around non-contact or exclusion zones with the wider professional network. Any concern is then discussed at our regular multi-agency meetings such as the Resettlement Panel, New Case Panel, Joint Discussion Meeting and RVMP with the aim to create an accurate safety plan. The RJ Team has delivered specific training around victim safety and developed a visual victim mapping tool to support case managers in their assessment and planning of interventions.

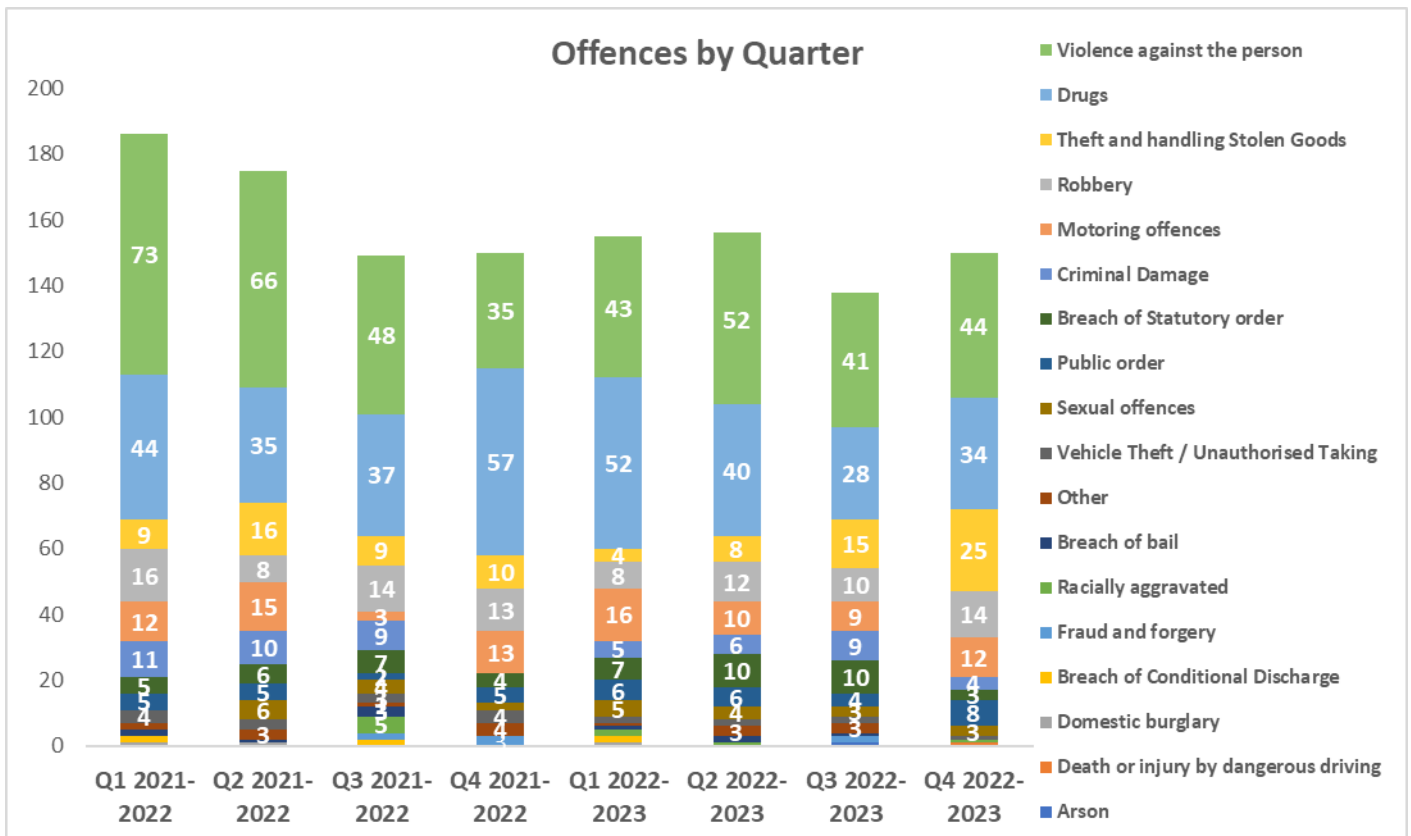
Ensuring the entire Service is victim centric and to promote the voice of the victim is an ongoing practice priority for YJS. Internal and national data shows us that males of a specific age are most likely to become victims and the Service data shows us that many of the victims known (40%) are under 18. Conversely, many of the young people known to YJS have experienced their own victimisation – particularly under the category of Serious Youth Violence.

## 16. Serious Violence and Exploitation:

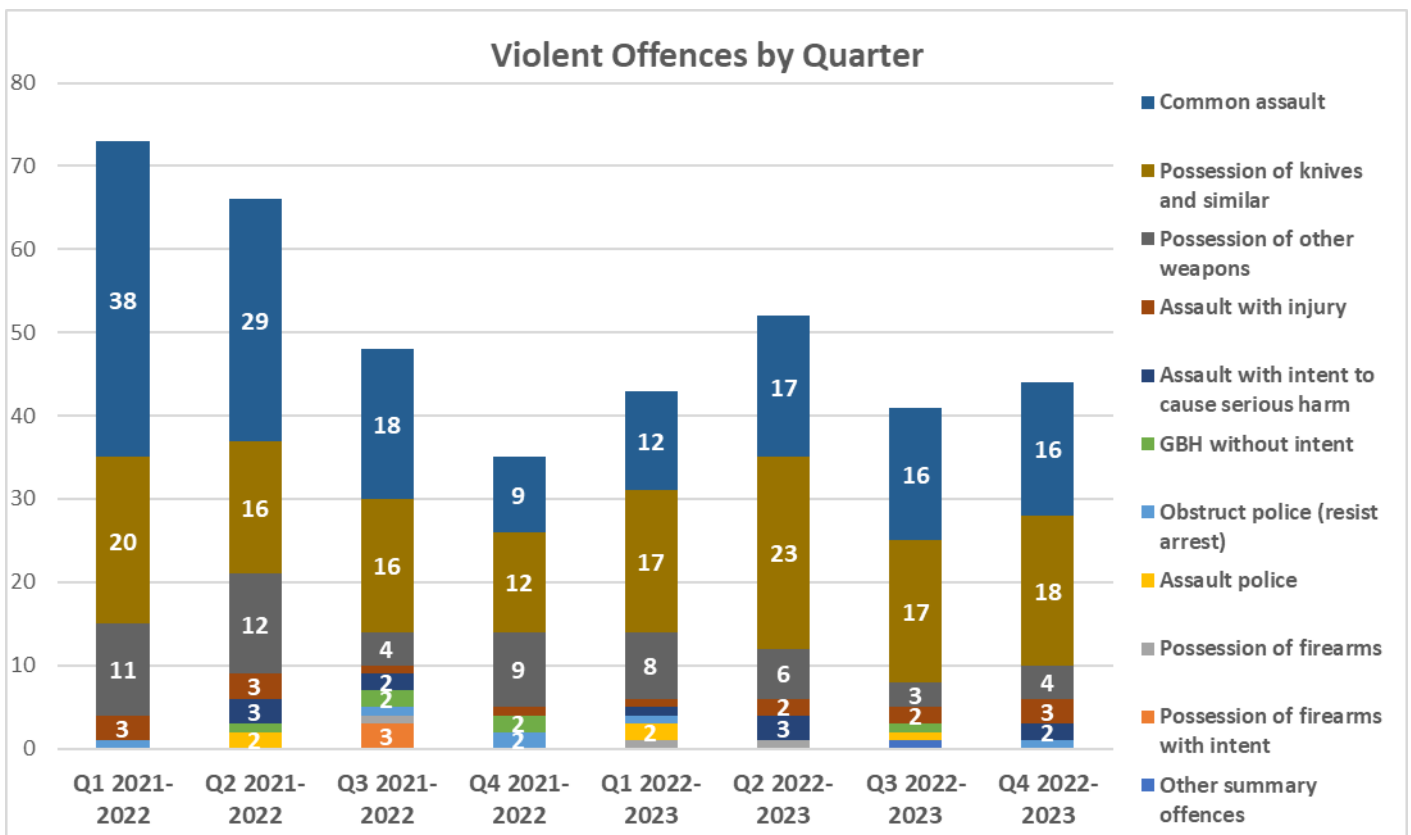
Using the Youth Justice Board's Definition "Serious Violence is violence against the person (which encompasses homicide and weapon offences), Robbery and drug offences with a gravity score of 5 and above" The offence type data is set out below:

Table below details offence types per quarter since 2021.

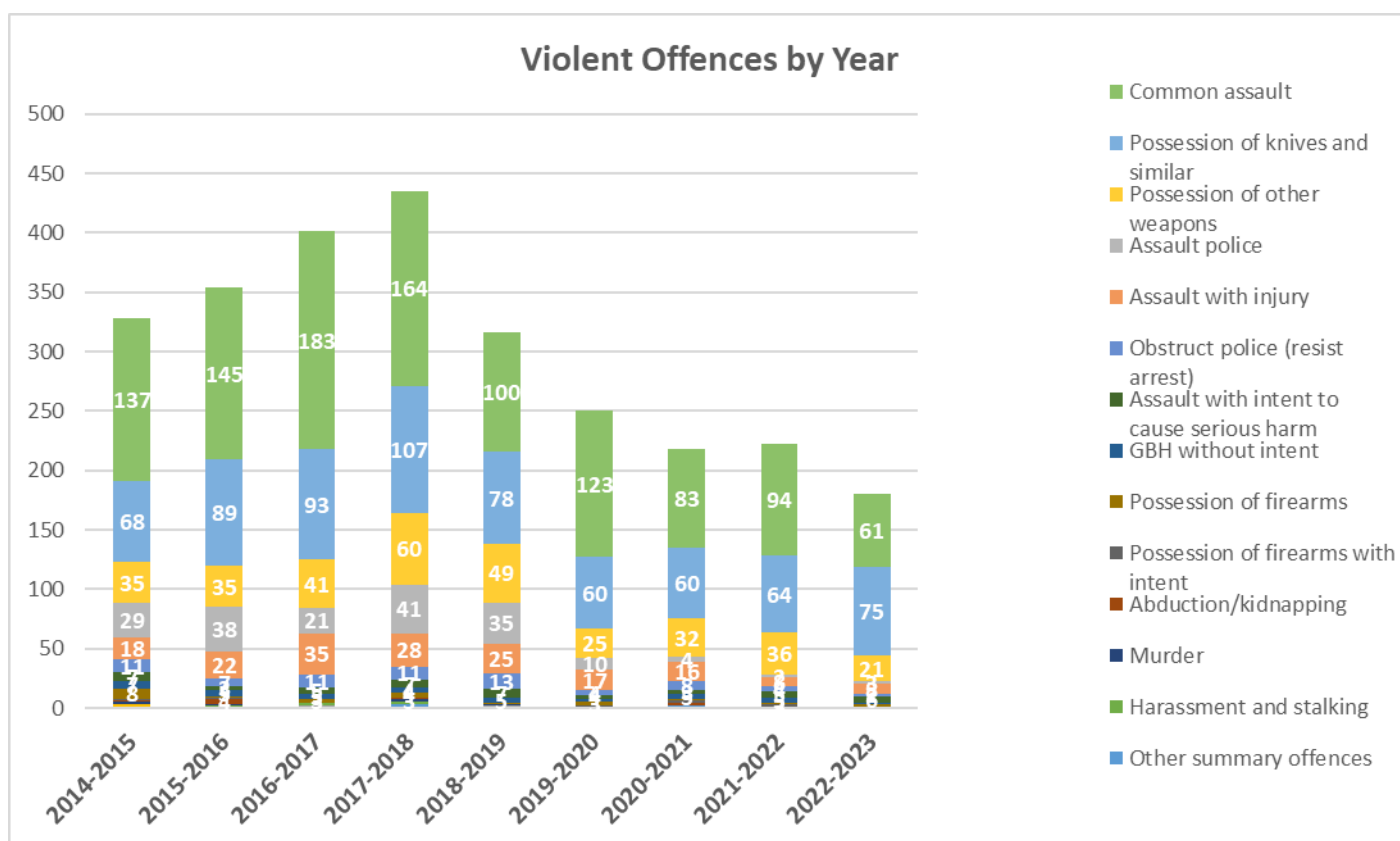




The above confirms that 'violence against the person' in addition to drug related offending dominates offence types within the Croydon cohort. Typically 'Violence Against the Person' is indicative of weapon related offending. Further detail of violent offences is outlined below.



Combining the weapon related offences concludes that this is currently the highest offence type that Croydon Youth Justice Service intervenes with. There has been a reduction since 2018 that has seen a gradual reduction for those under 18 year olds in this category..

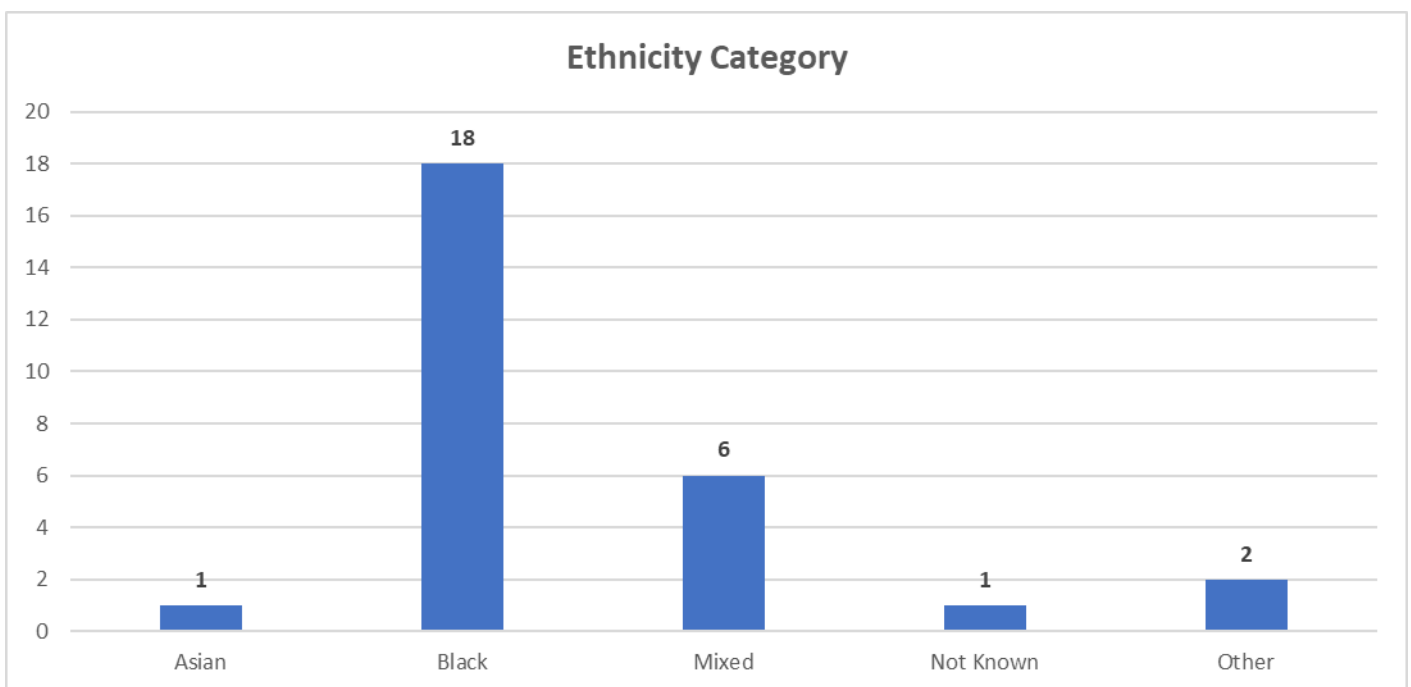
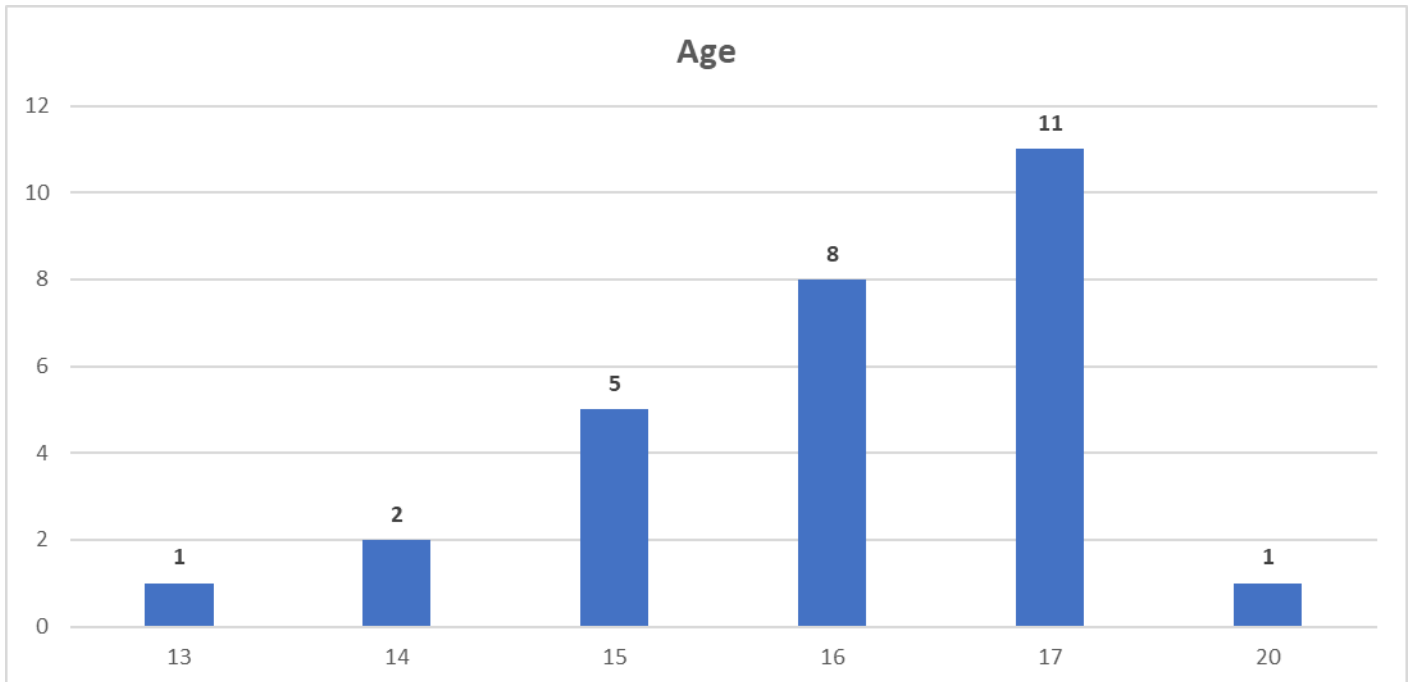


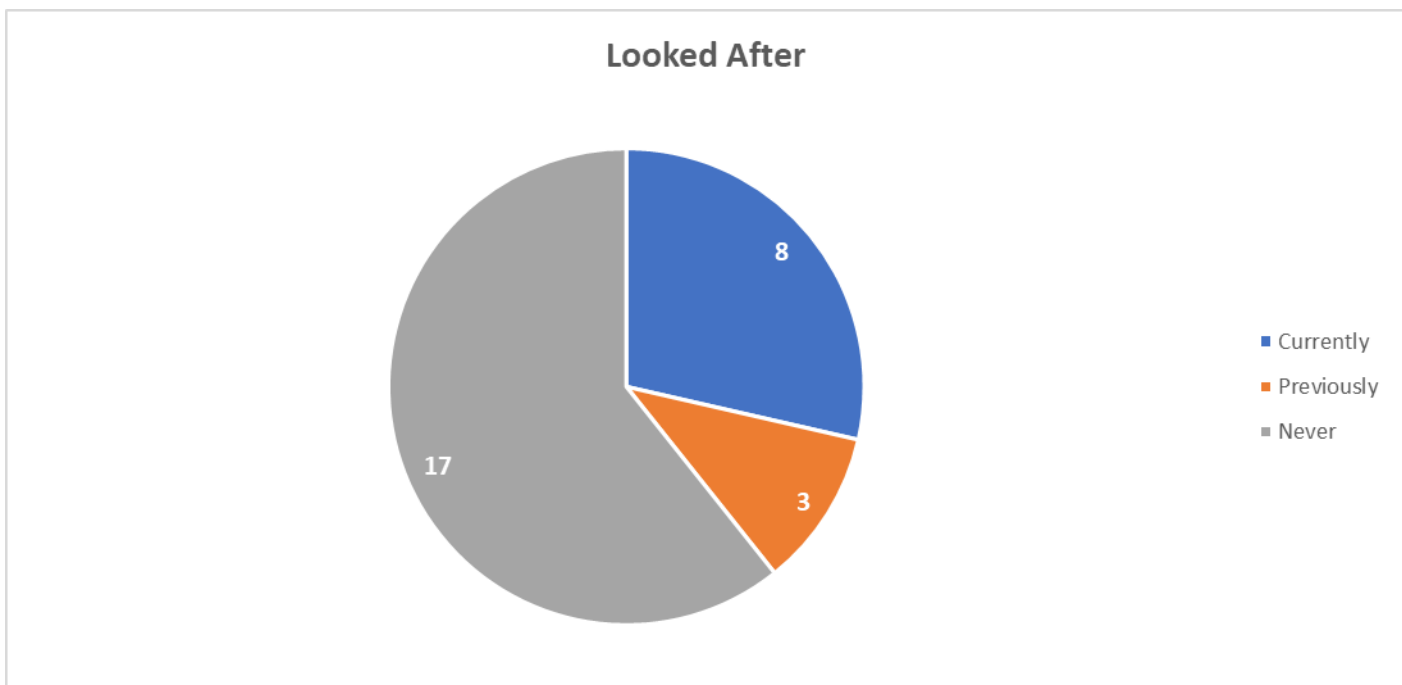
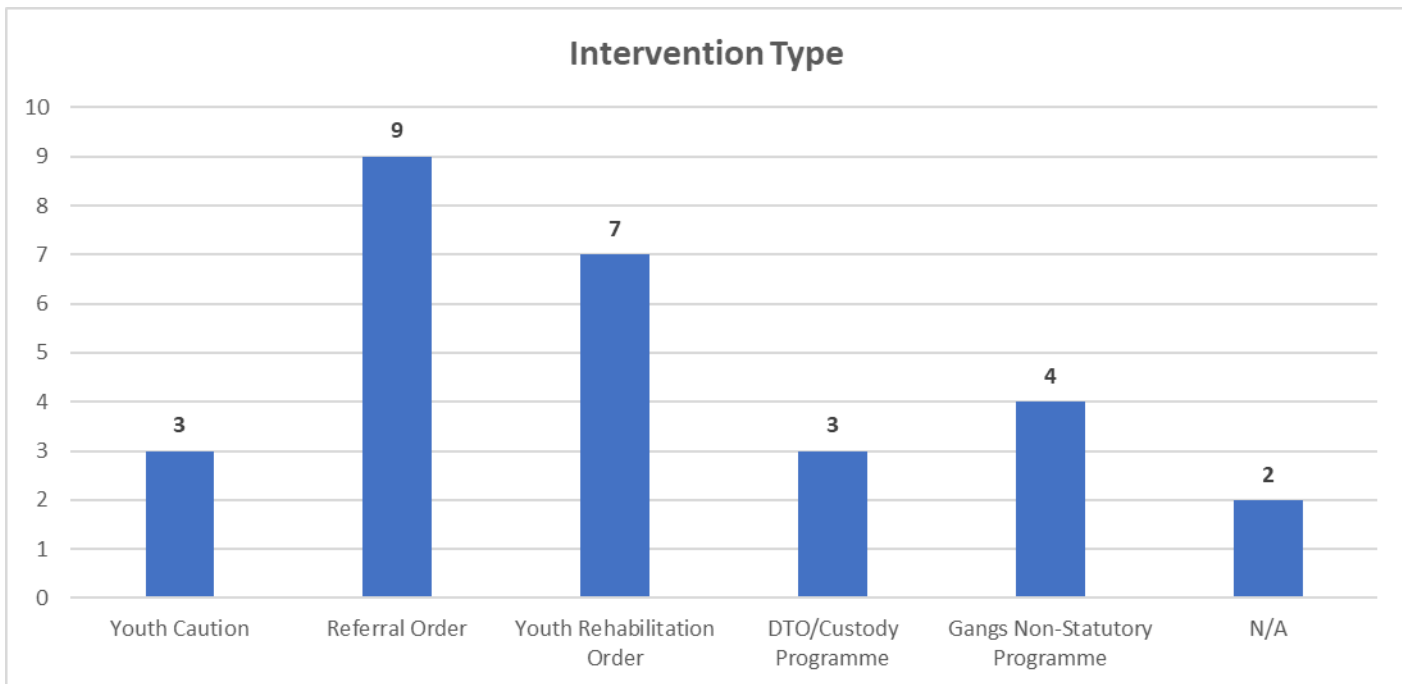
The overarching strategy to address Serious Youth Violence is detailed in the borough's Community Safety Strategy that identifies partnership roles to target Serious Youth Crime and actions are carried forward in the Local Violence and Vulnerability Action Plan.

Operational Oversight – For children who are known to pose risk of Serious Youth Violence, they are overseen by internal processes jointly with the Police, Community Safety and Education.

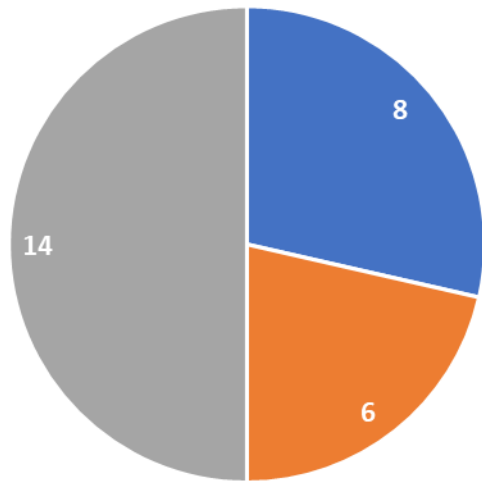
1. **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)** – Where there is known risk YJS Practitioners will refer into IOM. The referral is processed by the Police to provide intelligence. Referrals are reviewed monthly and if accepted all agencies heighten their level of monitoring of the child in question and the dosage of intervention is increased to ensure agencies have regular contact with the child and their family/carers. Children are rated red (being the most concerning), amber (of concern) and green (reduced concern). A child who remains green will be deselected from the process.
2. **Gangs Matrix** – the matrix is a Police led system that identifies children and adults who offend in groups and where there is known group identity. The children's matrix is much smaller than the adults, which is indicative that much of the Boroughs Serious Youth Violence is committed by 18-25 year olds. At the time of writing there was 1 under 18 and 12 over 18's on the matrix. However, those on the Matrix are discussed weekly to ensure there is joint monitoring between the Police and Youth Justice Service. At the time of writing this form of monitoring was being disbanded by the MET Police hence the numbers provided.
3. **Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel** – Chaired by the Service Manager of the YJS the panel provides a forum for Practitioners to discuss risk posed to and from a child. The purpose of the panel is to ensure that all reasonable actions have been taken to safeguard the child in question or/and to protect the public within the scope of the YJS. The panel is

multi-faceted, as it looks at the use of licences for those children coming out of custody, it ensures where eligible and risk thresholds met Children are escalated into processes such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), it ensures children are being referred into IOM where additional Policing and YJS input is required to manage risk, it also looks at how bail and sentence proposals can reduce and manage risk.



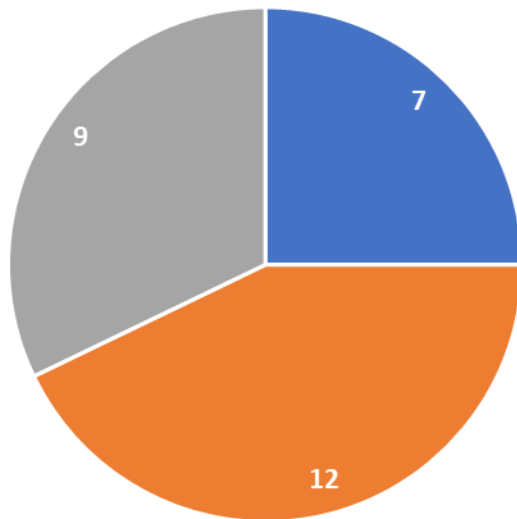


### Child Protection Plan



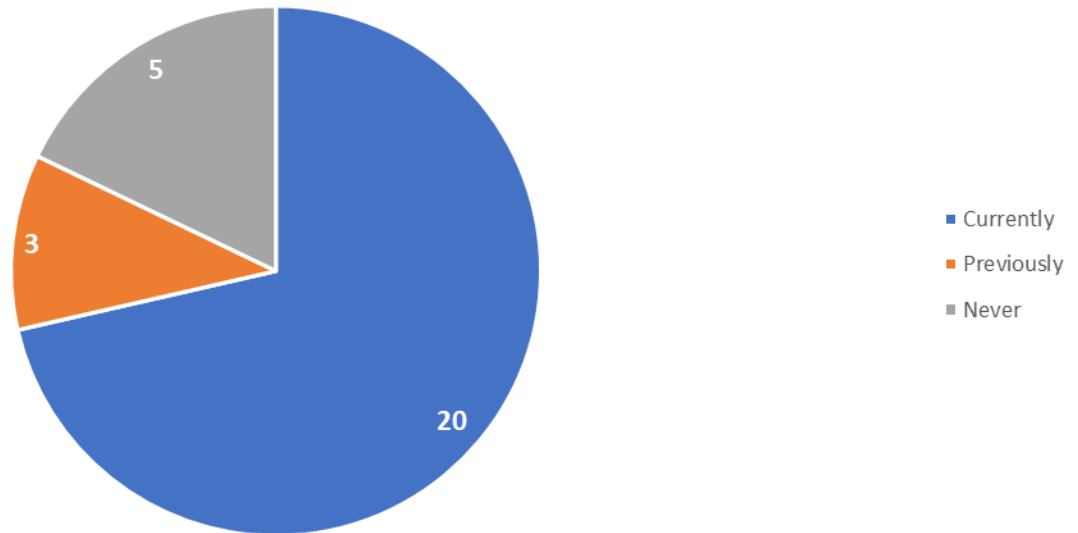
- Currently
- Previously
- Never

### Child in Need Plan



- Currently
- Previously
- Never

### Social Care Involvement



Factors related to Serious Youth Violence, are believed to stem much earlier within a child's development and linked to their own adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) alongside exposure to exploitation and contextual safeguarding. Issues such as county-lines and consequently drug related offending has seen a drastic increase within Croydon YJS offence types and it is estimated that 4000 children across London are known to have been involved in county-lines and therefore exploited. Data is suggestive that Croydon is currently ranked as number 1 for identification of children involved (Rescue and Response 2023). The issue therefore of addressing Serious Youth Violence therefore becomes a wider task than detection and enforcement but one where prevention is required and safeguarding children a necessity. There is a clear correlation between county-lines and Serious Youth Violence, often children arming themselves as a form of protection from posed risk associated.

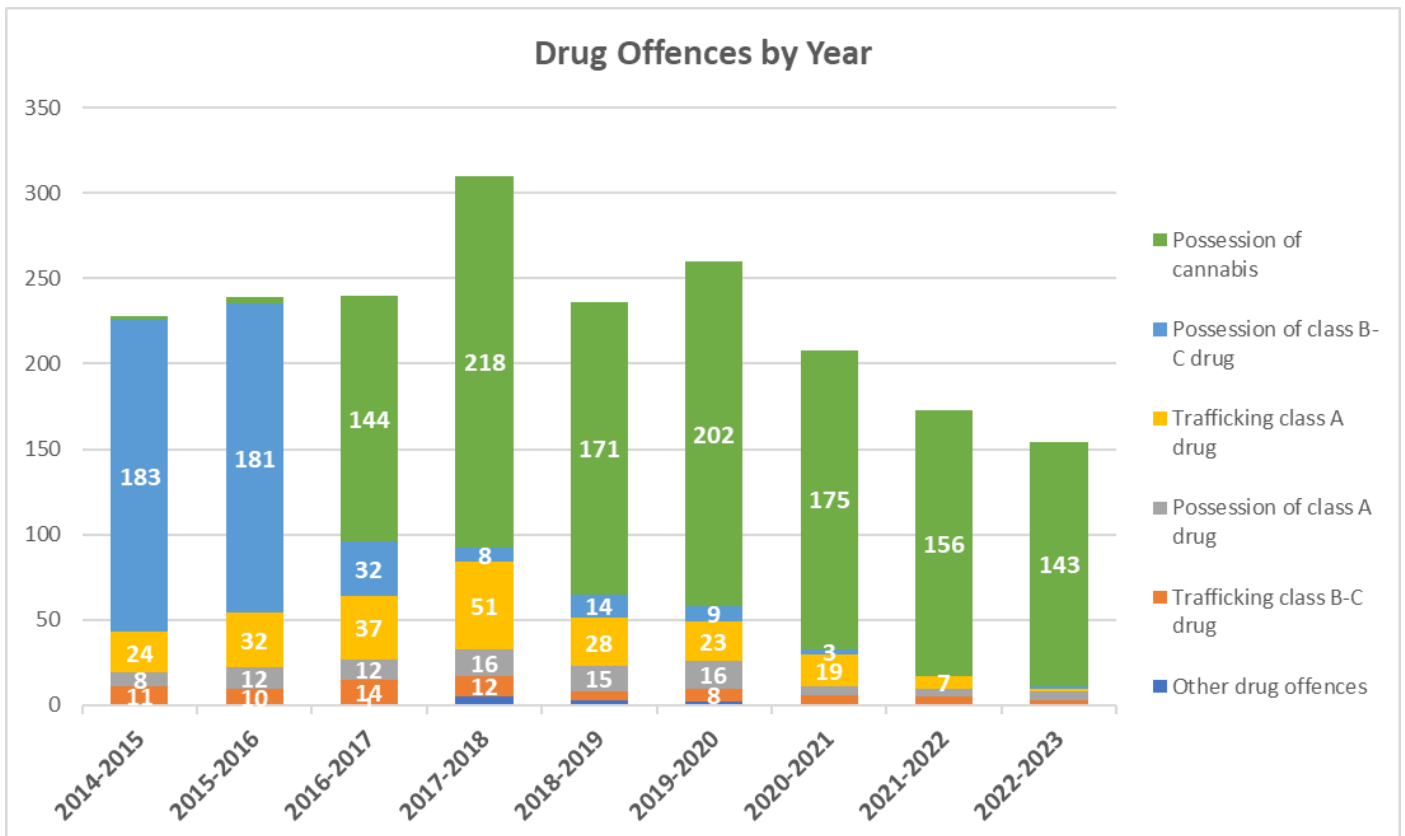
The YJS works with all service areas within Croydon Social Care, and wider council as well as the Police to address Contextual Safeguarding concerns. Panels such as Complex Adolescent Panel (CAP) as mentioned earlier, is represented by an array of Partnership panel members both statutory services and third sector. The expertise and knowledge provides oversight on children involved with Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.

The Local Authorities response to county-lines follows the Pan London Safeguarding Procedures and the borough's Missing Protocol (May 2022).

<https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/>

Where a child is open to the YJS and Social Care practitioners and managers jointly complete a Safety Plan ensuring that the safety of the child is paramount.

Drug related offending by year is detailed in the chart below:



### Extremism & Radicalisation

Whilst extremely rare, violence related to radicalisation or extremism is addressed via the Prevent Strategy as outlined by the Home Office. There is a statutory duty upon all agencies, including YJS to make necessary referrals where any form of extremism/radicalisation is detected. Extremism/Radicalisation is defined as: *The process by which one adopts extremist views, usually a non-linear and personalised journey*

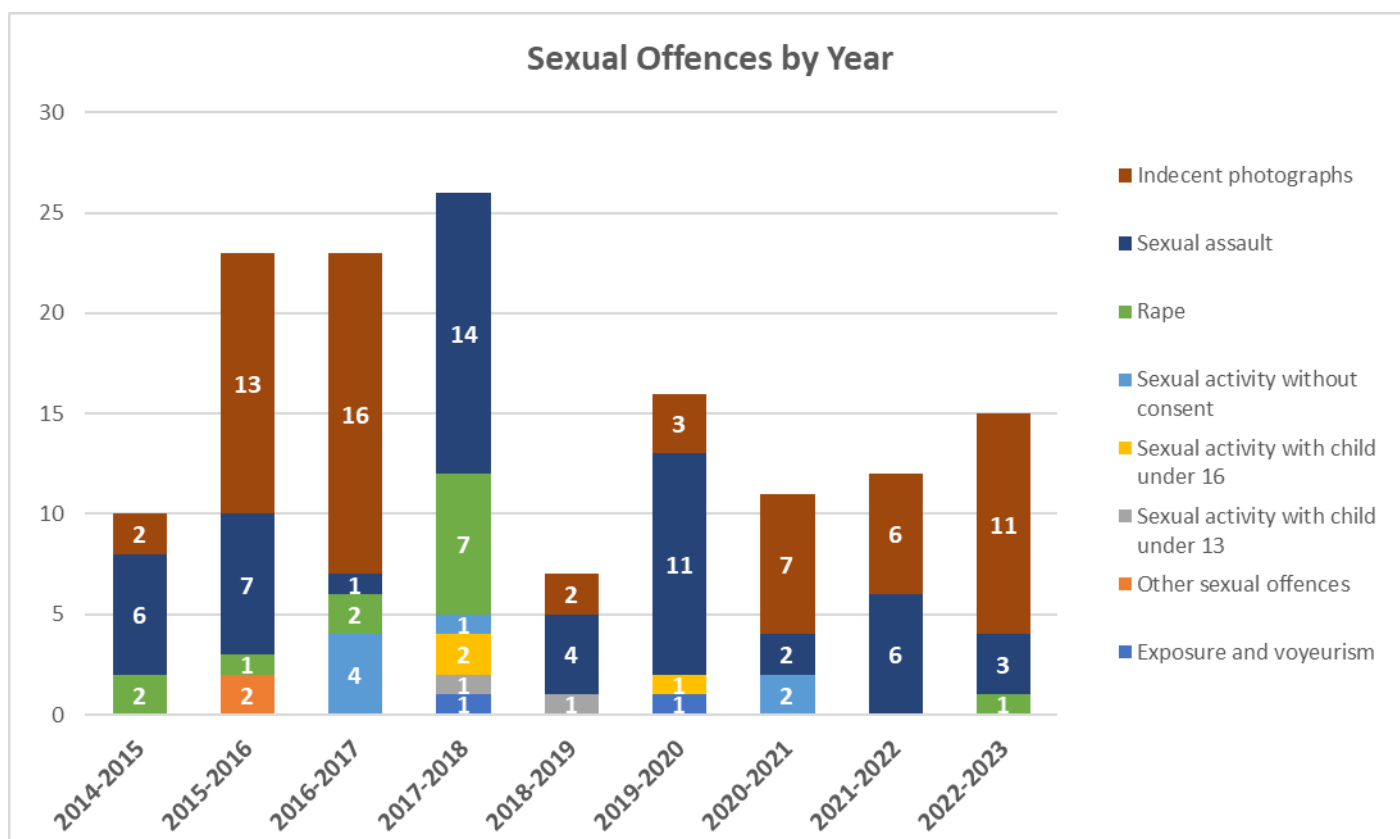
Referrals are received by the Channel Panel and where evidence is found the Prevent Panel will discuss and offer interventions on a voluntary basis. Croydon has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest referral rates in London, but it is very rare for Croydon YJS to have concerns in this area. However, the YJS is in a position of detection and staff are trained in indicators related to this area the most recent training on process being held in 2023.

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/community-and-safety/safety/prevent-strategy>

### Other violent behaviours - Sexually Harmful behaviour:

Below is a chart showing sexually harmful offences open to YJS by year. Specialist assessments and interventions are offered to children and young people who sexually harm and we co-work with Health Services to ensure the level of intervention is appropriate and responsive to all needs. Many Staff are AIM trained (an assessment tool specifically designed to assess children and young people who sexually harm) and we look to professional experts in this field to direct or co-manage this work. Such partnerships include joint work with the Lucy Faithful Foundation who have also trained YJS staff (including Manager's) beyond assessment but the delivery of interventions. Joint work with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health Services is also common. However, whilst the data would allude to low numbers sexually harmful behaviours can be identified without conviction and staff will respond to any identified risk in this area regardless of sentence/conviction type. Such work includes 1:1 delivery of healthy relationships and sex and the law. As noted in the information contained in the table below there has been a rise in those convicted of indecent

photographs and educational sessions are offered to children and parents on the use of Social media and what is illegal content.



### Domestic Abuse & Extra Familial Harm

The borough has seen an increase in the reports of domestic Abuse. In 2019 a scoping exercise was completed on YJS young people which confirmed suspicions that a high proportion (95%) had experienced domestic Abuse and in some instances extra familiar harm, where the young person was inflicting violence towards parents or siblings or within relationships. Whilst often not presented in the form of a conviction, the YJS works closely with Social Care, Police, and the Family Justice Centre to address these harms. There is a multitude of literature and research which concludes a child’s exposure to domestic abuse can have several adverse and damaging outcomes for a child including poor mental health, development difficulties and a poor understanding of what healthy relationships look like. The Drive Programme is a specific Domestic Abuse perpetrator intervention and the Family Justice Centre project lead on the programme alongside Rise Mutual. The YJS can refer a young person to this programme. The YJS is also familiar with the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARAC is a meeting where information is shared on victims at the highest risk of serious harm or murder because of domestic abuse Training is currently being completed on practitioners understanding the risk assessment (DASH RIC) checklist under this risk category.

### Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA)

Where a young person has been subject to 12 months custody for a violent or sexual offence or there is significant concern related to violent and sexual offending the YJS has a statutory duty to comply with the above processes. Each eligible case is screened and triaged at the YJS Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel overseen by the Service Manager – where



risk is felt manageable at a local level the YJS will retain oversight jointly with partners including policing partners (MAPPA level 1), where the risk is felt to be beyond the capacities of the YJS a Level 2 referral will be made to gain expert advice on the risk management necessary. MAPPA Level 2 is a Panel co-chaired by a Senior Probation Officer and Senior Police Officer. The panel consists of all key partners including Victim Liaison, Health, Social Care LADO, Housing. The YJS presents the risk to this panel where the Panel will give guidance, escalate specific concerns and in some instances provide additional resourcing such as Police monitoring etc MAPPA Level 3 is reserved for the most enhanced level(s) of risk management including oversight of convicted terrorists or where there is significant public/media interest. This Level is extremely rare within Youth Justice.

The YJS has a clear process surrounding any child or young person eligible under these arrangements and enhanced oversight is given via the YJS internal panels.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance>

In 2022/23 two children were identified as meeting the eligibility and were categorised as MAPPA nominals. 1 child was deemed Level 2 and 1 deemed as meeting the most severe risk category and categorised as Level 3.

## 17. Detention in Police Custody

Children arrested and presented at the Police Station are entitled to legal advice under Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Where a parent or carer is not available to act as an appropriate adult (AA) the child is provided with an approved appropriate adult, at the time of writing The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS) were commissioned to provide such services. The scheme is reported to run well and Police Officers are familiar with the processes that all children must have an adult that can assist a young person during their processes.

Operational Harbinger (2021), of which Croydon is a selected borough, has tightened communication between the Police and the Local Authority reporting on children who are in custody. The process requires Officers to contact MASH and the Out of Hours Team (Emergency Duty Team – EDT) to notify Social Care. Separately but in line with the process all arrests are reporting via reports known as ‘Merlins’, both Social Care and Youth Justice receive these reports.

A child in the custody suite also has access to the Liaison and Diversion Health Worker (delivered by the Crisis Team connected to Child Adolescent Mental Health Team) where a child is presenting with emotional health concerns. A child in need can be screened and this information will also be shared with both Social Care and Youth Justice and any follow up advised.

In instances where the Police Custody Sergeant views an overnight remand necessary given the nature of the offence, the Police will contact Social Care to provide a placement, avoiding Children staying at the Police station.

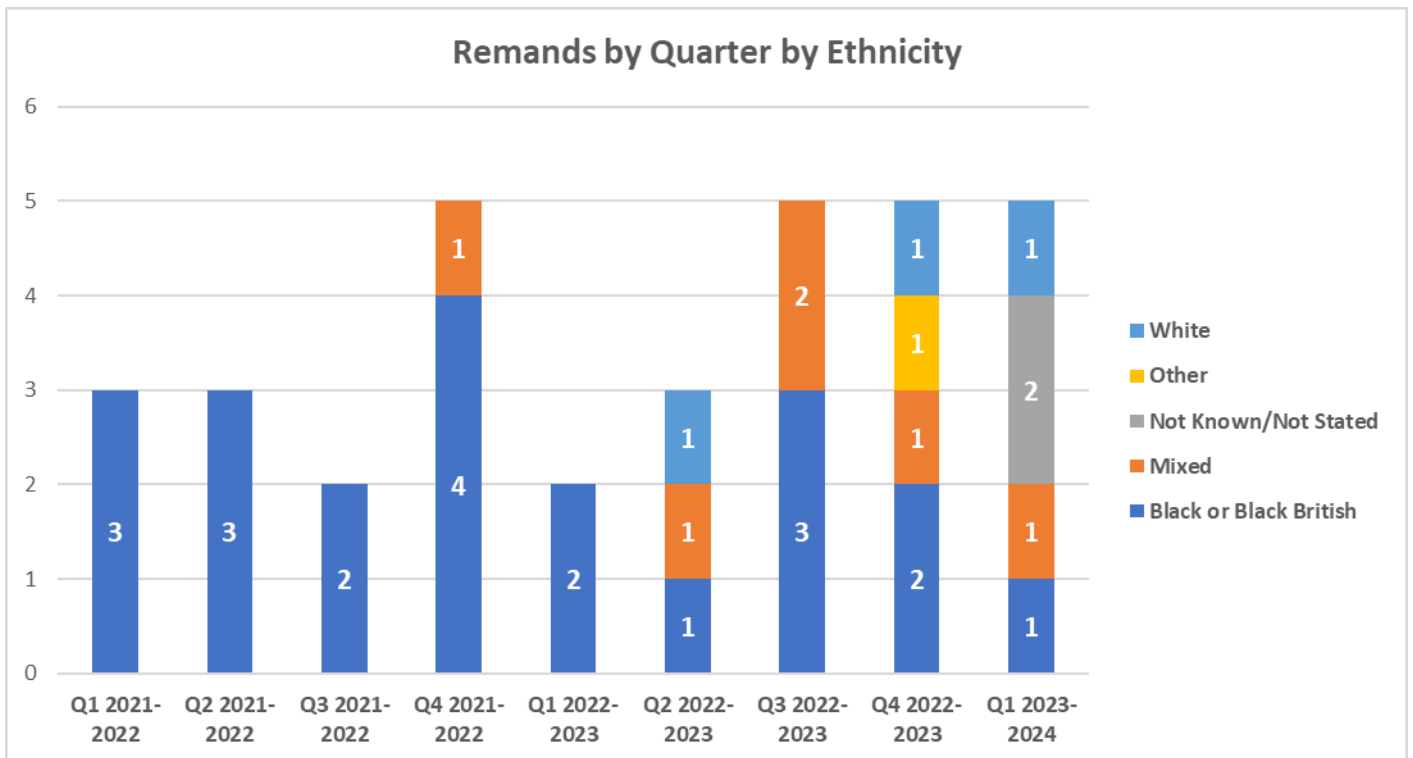
## 18. Remands

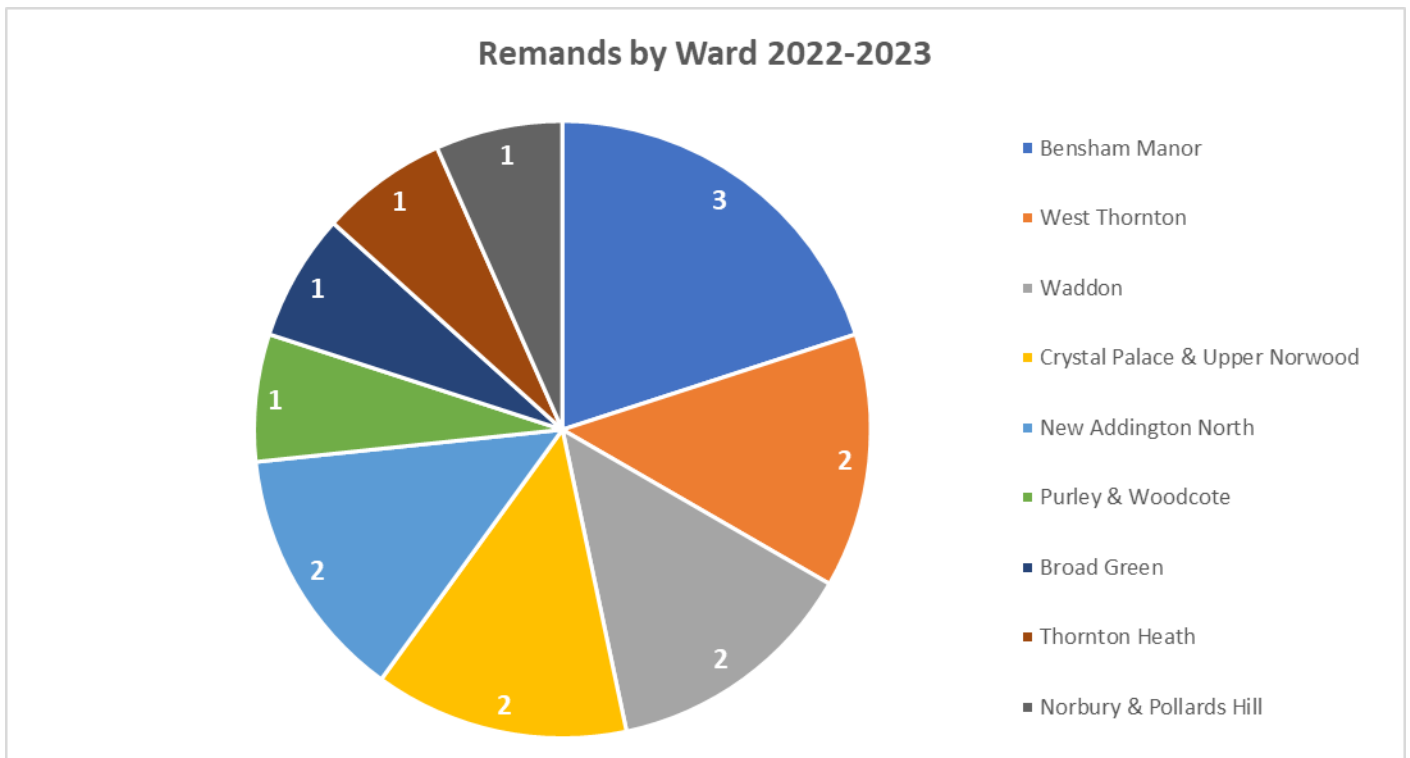
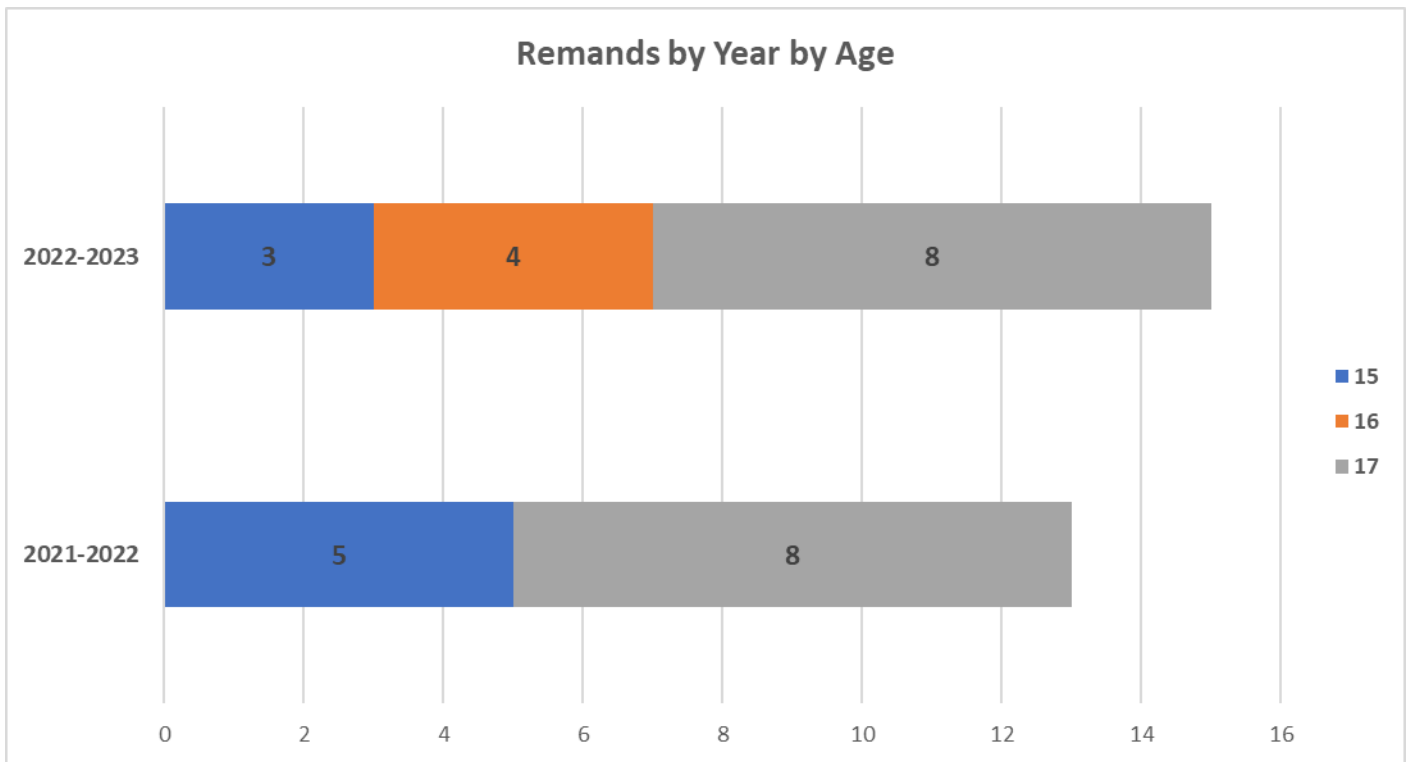
Under the Legal Aid Sentencing Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 provides the Court with powers to remand a young person – the Court can remand into:

- Local Authority
- Into Secure Training Centre
- Into Youth Detention (Young Offenders Institute)

In 2023/23 15 children were remanded for varying periods. At the time of writing 8 children were remanded. Below details ethnicity break down of those remanded in 2022/23 but also alleged offence type.

Please see details below providing remand numbers and ethnicity breakdowns:





The pie-chart above details wards young people who were remanded during 2022/23 resided. At the time of writing in June 2023 there are 8 remands.

**Reducing Remands** – Croydon YJS acknowledges that remands should be a last resort and is therefore driven to keeping young people out of custody whilst retaining public confidence and playing a role contributing to public protection. The use of bespoke bail packages that are responsive to risk are presented to Courts as an alternative were assessed as appropriate to do so. Recommendations can/may include the following:

- Victim considerations including no-contact clauses.

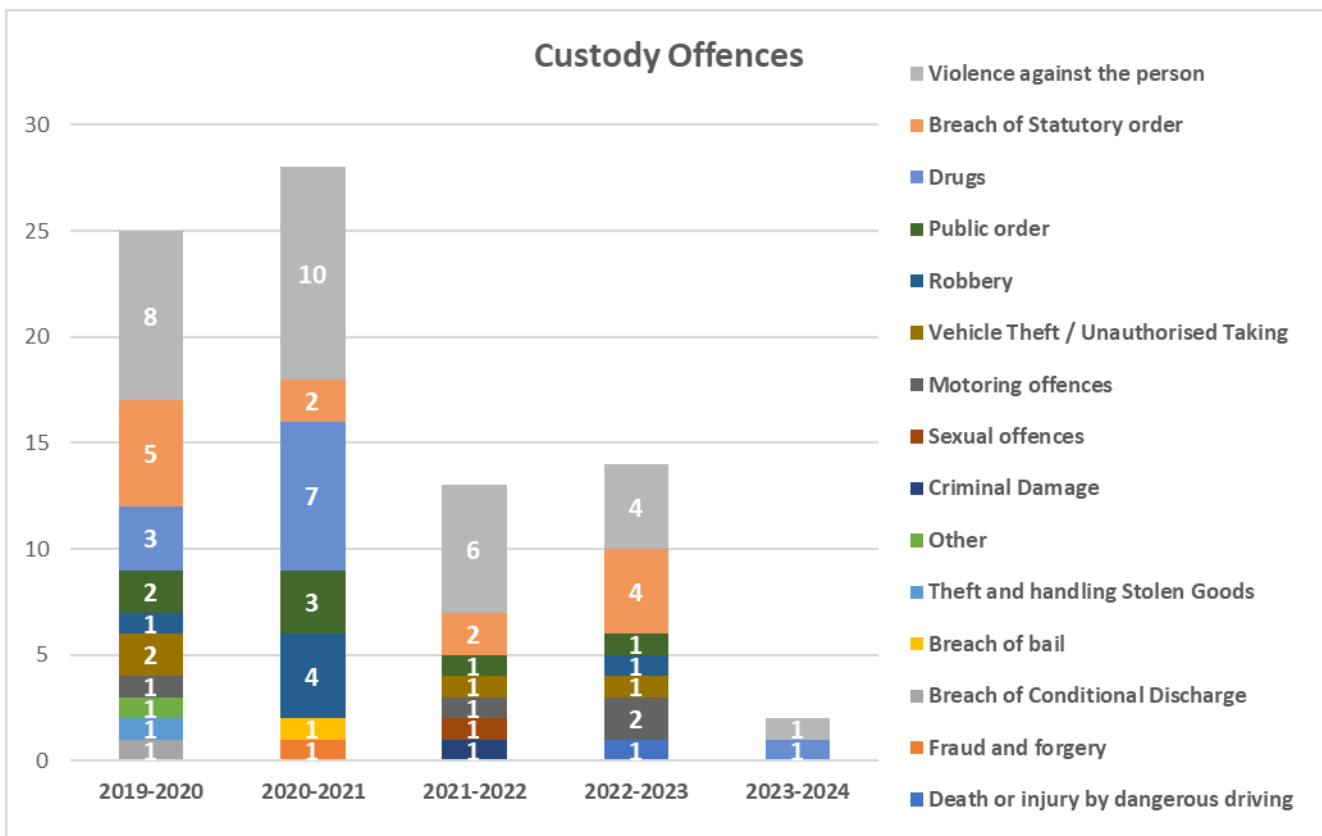
- Exclusions from specific areas
- Prohibited activities (e.g., not to travel on specific bus route or to attend a specific premise such as a school)
- Curfews (electronic)
- Non-association with co-defendants
- Reporting requirements to the YJS and following of all reasonable requests from YJS (e.g., to attend education or an activity)
- Reporting requirements to the Police
- To reside at a specific address
- Where risk is significant the consideration of the use of Intensive Supervision Surveillance (daily contact with the YJS and other means to account for a young person and how they use their time).

Practice in this area is driven by working collaboratively with statutory and third sector agencies to provide bail packages that address risk and need to promote confidence with courts to use community disposals over custody, ensure the bail packages are child focused, subject to a high level of monitoring and continuous evaluation, ensure enforcement is completed in a timely manner, when necessary, sanctions are proportionate with the breach.

## 19. Use of Custody

In 2022 there was an average of 560 children (under 18 year olds) in custody (both remands and sentenced) nationally. This population has continued to decrease during 2023 to a reported average of 450 children.

The national decline in the use of custody has been seen by Croydon Youth Justice Service. In the year 2022/23 Croydon Youth Justice Service saw 7 children sentenced to custody. A chart detailing the offences for which they were in custody is provided below:



## 20. Constructive Resettlement

At the time of writing there were seven young people in custody, three 18-year-olds, three 17-year-olds, one 15-year-old, all male, six of the seven identified as Black British and one of mixed background. Croydon YJS are committed to reducing re-offending rates amongst those leaving custody given research by the national youth justice data for 2019/2020 states that they are the highest of any group. Challenges children are faced with when leaving custody include often being the most detached from ETE, most likely to be misusing drugs and alcohol, have mental health issues, high exposure to familial or peer criminality and issues surrounding accommodation and risk. Therefore, the YJS applies a holistic approach involving multi-disciplinary assistance to address the needs of those children departing the secure estate and details of this are found in our resettlement policy which sets out our objectives in obtaining positive outcomes for this group of young people.

Croydon YJS Resettlement procedures follow the Youth Justice Service practice guidance Custody and resettlement: Section 7 case management guidance (2022). In terms of service delivery Croydon YJS standards follow National Standard 4 (in secure settings) and National Standard 5 (on Transition and Resettlement) as detailed in Standards for children in youth justice services 2019 - Addressing the Seven pathways to Resettlement.

Croydon YJS are committed to providing effective resettlement, one that focusses on the process of enabling a shift from a pro-offending towards a pro-social identity, whilst ensuring personal and structural support mechanisms are put in place. To achieve this Croydon YJS, implement the principles and best practice of: Beyond Youth Custody Effective Resettlement of young people (2015) and the London Resettlement Pathfinder - Constructive Resettlement.

#### Key Partnership work:

**HMPS**– lead agency in custody, responsible for providing Children with a safe, secure, and rehabilitative regime, case management to complete referrals and coordinating services, Resettlement planning,

**Prison Education** (Nova) to complete Education plans and deliver 25 hours education including maths and English, liaising with community agencies to ensure information is shared with community ETE providers,

**NHS** – to provide Physical health and Mental health services both in custody and the community,

**MAPPA** – Multi agency panel, lead agencies are probation and police, risk management planning for children assessed a high risk of harm and re-offending:

**Local Authority Children’s services including Leaving Care Team** – Children and young adults subject to social care support,

**Courts** for sentencing and enforcement,

#### Community Partnerships agencies.

**Substance Misuse:** To provide information to support staff and to follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Forensic Psychology:** To provide information to support staff in relation to screening, agree on suitability for a more in-depth consultation with a view to identify further interventions. To provide advocacy on ways of working with young people who have diagnosis such as conduct disorder, trauma, ADHD etc.

**YJS Education:** To provide information to support staff and to follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Virtual School:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Educational Health Care Plan Coordinator:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Restorative Justice Coordinator:** Attend each meeting to help inform the assessments in terms of victim considerations and to encourage victim input into any ensuing plan.

**DIZ Housing:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Additional Staff as required:** Case managers can invite any relevant staff to the meeting who they feel have a significant contribution to make to the resettlement of the young person.

Whilst we have yet to complete a need analysis on these subject to custody, we refer to research on the custody and remand cohort provided by the London Resettlement Pathfinder which provides detailed insight into the needs of those in custody.

We work to the following principles resettlement –

**Risk classification:** Resources follow risk, our custody cohort who are often deemed our most high risk of re-offending with high support needs.

**Criminogenic need:** Assessment is important for planning and delivery - custody cohort often have complex needs, subject to multiple assessments – to avoid duplication this information needs to be shared between custody and the community, continuity of care is important, so we avoid changes in worker where possible.

**Dosage:** Scaled approach ensures that intervention is proportionate to risk and need and reporting requirements must reflect this, professional discretion is permitted where there is learning difficulties, mental health, Croydon YJS as per YJB National Standards have clear procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality, providing supportive supervision, clear lines of communication amongst relevant case workers, facilitate parental input to encourage compliance, hold regular review to monitor the child's progress.

**Responsivity:** To meet the learning style of the child Croydon YJS employ a full time Speech and Language Therapist for assessment, advice, and intervention – recommendations are shared with YJS Practitioners to improve service delivery, workers utilise a child's learning style and Self-Assessment Questionnaires to improve the child's engagement with the intervention plan, several learning tools are available to YOS workers including written, visual, and technological based.

**Community based:** Croydon YJS ensure that every child sentenced to custody is considered for 'release on temporary licence (ROTL) to support resettlement, and that ROTL placements are meaningful to support resettlement back into the community. Evidence suggests that programmes in the community have more effective outcomes than those in custody or segregated settings- Croydon YJS is a multi-agency teams, including offence focused, Restorative Justice, substance misuse, gangs' intervention, paid ETE via Skill Mill, ETE support for school children and post 16 etc.

**Intervention modality:** Croydon YJS offer group and one to one offending behaviour programmes that are skills based and emphasize problem solving within a cognitive behaviour framework, There are a range of complex interventions to address ETE, parental/carers support, purposeful activity that rely on a range of providers from other agencies.

**Programme integrity:** To ensure that programmes have a clear rationale Croydon YJS ensure that all stakeholders are clear about the programmes rationale and the role and responsibility of each worker within it, a child must be matched up with the appropriate programmes, and in terms of service delivery Croydon YJS ensure coherence and continuity

in programme components, interventions are tailored to young people needs - Croydon YOS have a data analyst to monitor performance and reports and data are provided to the Youth Crime Board who have strategic oversight.

## 21. Standards for children in Youth Justice

In early 2020 the Youth Justice Service completed a self-assessment National Standards audit. The audit focused on the following areas:

- Out of Court work
- Court work
- Community work
- Secure settings
- Transition into adulthood.

Each area was broken down using the above practice areas to measure standards and given an overall grade. The audit was subsequently turned into an action plan that has been continuously revisited. A further self-assessment is planned for 2023. Following the last self-assessment subsequent monthly audits have been completed to look at practice in more details within specific themes chosen each month. In the past 12 months this has include the following: Out of Court/Working with Girls/Children who have Weapon related offending/Use of Referral Orders and Processes/Children in Custody/Victim work. Additionally, peer audits have been completed with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham that found 70% of those assessed were assessed as a good standard and above and an External Consultant has also reviewed files during May 2023. The Service also uses thematic inspections and inspection reports by HMPI to measure its overall standards.

In summary **Out of Court Work** received criticism in the 2019 HMPI inspection and consequently the Out of Court offer was renewed including a refined assessment tool that considers risk (risk of re-offending, risk to self, risk to others). Planning has become more inclusive of families and children and interventions are offered once a week and extended where there is a need. In an audit carried out in 2022, auditors found that in almost all instances' processes had been followed and were child centric. Audits found that often children subject to these forms of disposals can present with higher risk than the disposal and therefore the dosage of intervention and support may have to consequently be increased. The audits also found that in most instances there was clear consideration for exit strategies including the use of Early Help, Social care, or the community sector to deliver work, to remove children from the criminal justice system. The introduction of Community Resolutions for low level offending and small amounts of cannabis, has

**Court work** is one of Croydon Youth Justices strongest areas of work, with a presence at the local Youth Court 6 days a week, the Team boasts a strong relationship with Court staff, which enables staff to feel confident in advising Courts on the best possible outcomes for children and victims. Staff regularly meet with the Court and deliver annual training on topics such a race and restorative justice. Within the self-assessment framework, the measures are linked to report writing (pre-sentence report) – Croydon Youth Justice Service often receives compliments for the detailed reports they produce including use and input from a Speech and Language Therapist, drawing awareness to Adverse Childhood experiences including discrimination and measured sentence proposals that are bespoke to the child in question and importantly victim considerations both actual and potential. The role of YJS Court staff is to also ensure all children produced from Police custody are assessed including their wellbeing, putting together bail packages as alternatives to remands and consequently



liaising with the wider professional network that may surround a child. They are also responsible for processing a remand if one arises by ensuring the child and their family are communicated with on arrangements and any risk related to suggested placements is communicated with the Youth Custody Service. They complete paperwork to ensure the secure setting receiving the young person has all relevant information including medication information and details on emotional presentation, any religious or dietary considerations or risk known to others including staff. Each Court appearance of a child is recorded and where the child is known to another local authority information is shared securely. In instances where the child receives a community order – the Court staff will ensure the child and their families/carers understand what is being directed by the Court and that a first appointment is offered with the Service. Where a young person cannot be seen at the Service's Office, alternative arrangements will be made using a sister-site to ensure the child feels safe when engaging with the Service.

**Community work** – During the last HMPI Inspection in 2019 the Service was assessed as 'good' in the delivery of their oversight of Community Statutory Orders on behalf of the Court. This rating was reinstated during the self- assessment completed in 2020 and has continuously been reviewed via the auditing framework in place. The timeliness of completing assessments is a continued area for improvement, ensuring inclusivity of young people within their Youth Justice Plans and enhancing victim consideration remain ongoing focus areas. Weekly reports are sent to Managers to ensure that there is monitoring processes and audits on victim work and training in this area provides continued focus for Practitioners.

**Custody** –Those who enter custody are often some of the most vulnerable yet high risk children within the cohort and therefore joint work with the Secure Estate is essential. The YJS see a young person in custody as outlined in national standard expectations but will sustain contact through telephone calls and in some instances welfare visits outside of these expectations. The YJS and Secure estate share a joint portal YJAF, each Practitioner and Manager is expected to have log in details to this site to ensure there is readily available access to records. Croydon Youth Justice Service also has a designated member of staff attend and work regularly from YOI Cookham Wood, permitted accessibility to children within this establishment. Wider issues related to specific establishments including segregation, frequent incidents of violence, not accessing 30 hours education continue to be challenged by the YJS via safeguarding leads and where necessary direct communication with Governors. The YJS Resettlement Manager is also co-located within YOI Cookham Wood weekly to ensure there is direct accessibility to children within this establishment and communication between the two agencies is strong.

**Transitions** – For those young people open to the Youth Justice Service, who have their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday nearing, there is the potential that they will be transferred to Probation being deemed a young adult. The YJS uses National Probation Service guidance on transfers and has its own local framework to ensure that children are aware of the transition and as much preparation occurs, beginning 6 months prior to any transfer. In some instances where there is less than 6 months remaining on an Order, or the young person is subject to a Referral Order (specifically devised for Youth Justice) or there is specific vulnerability or need, the YJS will retain the supervision of 18-year-olds. In 2022/23 14 young people were transferred and 43 postponed remaining with the Youth Justice Service. Reasons for remaining with the Service could include sentence type, time period left of sentence, young person's vulnerability, or other transition considerations. During the self-assessment in 2020 transfers were deemed as 'requiring improvement'. Often a young person will be transitioning in other ways e.g., if in care leaving care to pursue independent living, transferring from Child mental health services into adult etc It is therefore important to consider transitions more widely and to ensure that preparation combines all elements of the young person's transitioning. The

improvements observed included the National Probation Service allocating in a timely way and follow up of the transition once transfer has been completed being embedded.

## 22. Workforce Development

It is important that Croydon Youth Justice Service has a well-trained and experienced Team to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved for children and their families and victims.

The Youth Justice Service utilises a variety of courses to ensure staff have knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their practice and/or know where to gain information. Training includes use of the Youth Justice Board INSET Training, Internal training delivering courses on safeguarding particularly contextual safeguarding which is often sighted within the cohort. Specific external/bespoke courses are also offered including Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate, Systemic Practice Training, Trauma Informed Practice, Counselling, Management Courses. A training analysis for 2023 has been completed and both analysis and plan are shared with the Board to ensure the workforce is adequately trained within the specialism of Youth Justice.

The Youth Justice Service Management Team has also delivered a number of workshops during 2023 on practice areas including: ASSET+ (assessment tool), Desistance, Future Behaviours, Planning and Sequencing, Out of Court work, Court work, Restorative Justice, Serious Youth Violence and the IOM process, Contingency Planning, Speech and Language training, Referring to Social Care, National Referral Mechanism, Serious Incident Thematic feedback, Use of Resettlement, MAPPA training (inclusive of MAPPA admin), Pre-Sentence Report writing, Court work the creation of a bail packages

Bi-weekly Team and monthly Service Meetings provide a platform for guest speakers to present and the last six months has welcomed: Prevent and Chanel Manager to discuss radicalisation and processes when identification is made, Red Thread – Youth Workers in the emergency duty department of hospitals who meet with young people who have been the victims of violence of exploitation, Suicide Prevention Services, Barnardo's, Croydon Safeguarding Partnership Manager, Family Justice Centre Operations Manager, Palace for Life detailing local projects running in the North of the Borough via Crystal Palace Football Club.

For further detail please sight Appendix 7 (Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan).

## 23. Evidence Based Practice and Innovation

There are a number of approaches that research findings have found to be the most effective when working with young people within a Criminal Justice context. Primarily, a strength-based approach, utilising young people's aspirations and interests in addition to promoting their potential, this supported by a 'Child First' approach, where children are treated like children, has been found to be the most successful way of reducing/preventing offending behaviour. It is important for all partners to adopt these principles and to look at ways to enhance protective factors and support young people by providing opportunity to entice desistance. A relational approach is therefore important to provide trust in the Service and to ensure young people have confidence in the Youth Justice System. Survey(s) and Youth Participation Forums undertaken in 2023 have found young people known to the system view the Organisation positively and saw staff had their interests at heart to make change and aspire to a future away from the system.

Research also supports the use of community re-integration. The YJS has strong established relationships with the Voluntary Community Sector, to promote social inclusion and opportunity within the communities' children and young people reside. This work has brought with it local expertise and knowledge, delivered by those people, children and young people identify and resonate with as the local population. The My Ends Project is an example of statutory and community collaboration where the Local Authority works with the community to enhance outcomes for children and young people. The Project delivers a variety of projects aimed at different sub-sections of the community and includes parental and school-based work. This work has brought with it open dialogue on need and creative solutions. The networking within this group means resource and support is often found and tailored to individual need quickly. Police, YJS, violence Reduction Unit and Education dept. are the Statutory partners but there is a directory of VCS providers that play a role in this project's delivery which is overseen by the Croydon Voluntary Action Team.

## 24. Evaluation

The YJS has an audit framework that was integrated and revised during 2023 to align with a wider Social Care auditing programme 'Windows into Practice'. The revised framework extended audits to Manager's across the department inclusive of QA Managers and Social Care Managers with the addition of peer moderators alongside a moderation panel to support consistency of gradings.

The YJS continues to audit cases each month, typically with a YJS theme and a presentation is given by each auditor on the findings answering key questions under each theme and using a specific tool influenced by HMPI inspection criteria. Audits have included: work with girls, work with those in custody, out of court work, referral order work, work on disproportionately. The auditor spends time with the Practitioner and Line Manger detailing both strengths and improvements designed to improve practice. Findings have led to practice improvements including a performance oversight section within the YJS Management meeting to look at National Standards including assessment timeliness, formation of the girl's group and mentoring offer, delivery of practice workshops on all key areas of YJS practice, Managers training as Inspectors (Local assessor) to enhance their auditing knowledge, training analysis, creation of the Stop of Search programme along with the Positive Male group.

At the time of writing Croydon YJS had also partaken in a peer audit with Hammersmith and Fulham the focus on disproportionately and its consideration in practice.

## 25. Service Development Plan

Croydon Youth Justice Plan for 2023/24 should be read in conjunction with the Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan 2021-2024 [YJB Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan provides an overall framework for national objectives within the sector, which Croydon YJS aspires and work towards. The Youth Justice Board is a central governing body attached to the Ministry of Justice who has oversight of the sector by ways of monitoring and providing practice support.

The Youth Justice Plan has also been devised in reference to existing and linked strategies within the borough including the Community Safety Strategy 2021-24.

## 26. Service Development

Priorities 2023/2024	Aim	Actions
Addressing over-representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To address the stark over-representation of black and mixed heritage males within the cohort of children known to the Service</li> <li>To consider practice with Children in Care and known to Youth Justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise Disproportionately Action Plan for 2023/24</li> <li>Continue to look at other areas where children are disadvantaged where the YJS can advocate for children – Police and Court training, work with education and advocacy related to exclusions.</li> <li>Continue to work with the Voluntary Community Sector to ensure the communities children reside play an integral role assisting children to avoid further contact with the System.</li> <li>Deliver spoke interventions such as the Positive Male Group and Girls Group</li> <li>Offering mentoring where young people can resonate and engage with their mentors through appropriate cultural matching.</li> <li>Continue to promote the rights of children e.g., Stop and Search group – empowering children with knowledge on the law.</li> <li>Enhance our practice when working with children in Care – joined up work with the Children in Care Council.</li> <li>Ensuring that we provide robust bail packages as an alternative to custody recognising this is an</li> </ul>
Prevent and Respond to Serious Youth Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contribute as part of a wider partnership to address the causes of Serious Youth Violence and be responsive to Serious Youth Violence when it emerges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on high priority neighbourhoods by offering bespoke interventions for specific areas jointly with the VCS.</li> <li>Youth Engagement Outreach Team to show a presence following SYV incidents to provide support and advice to</li> </ul>

		<p>the children and communities it impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS has a lead role in the creation and delivery of the Council's Youth Safety Plan which is currently in development as a co-production activity.</li> <li>• Co-chair with Adolescent Service (Young Croydon) locality discussions jointly with partners to discuss children of concern to ensure appropriate services are in place.</li> <li>• Continue to manage and oversee children open to the YJS, for SYV, via internal processes such as IOM, RVMP, CAP.</li> <li>• To enhance factors for desistance by way of specialist interventions being offered – counselling/bespoke interventions/mentoring/Speech and Language/constructive activities/support with ETE.</li> <li>• Where jointly open with Social Care joint supervision to be delivered.</li> </ul>
Contribute as part of a wider partnership to tackle domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note that domestic abuse is prevalent within our cohort both as children being victims but in some instances the perpetrator and to ensure procedures are followed and staff are trained in this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff and Managers to adhere to safeguarding processes in this area.</li> <li>• All staff to be trained in risk assessment screenings linked to MARAC processes.</li> <li>• All staff to have knowledge of the Family Justice Centre (FJC) and programmes offered.</li> <li>• Staff to ensure they are consulting with the FJC where domestic abuse is evident and where necessary</li> </ul>
Health Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure there is a holistic health offer for children known to Youth Justice – inclusive of Speech and Language, Substance Misuse, Physical Health (including Sexual Health), Counselling Services and Mental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit into SALT vacancy</li> <li>• Increase number of staff trained in AIM (assessment tool linked to sexually harmful behaviour) (accounting for the increase in incident images convictions seen in data)</li> <li>• Continue to deliver Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural</li> </ul>

	and Forensic Health Services.	<p>Programme jointly with the support of the clinical team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide staff with Clinical support through reflective practice and case consultations.</li> <li>• Mental Health Offer to be reviewed by partnership.</li> <li>• Enhance FCAMHS offer within the Service.</li> </ul>
Prevent and divert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that children at risk or on the periphery of criminality are offered services at the earliest opportunity and to divert children away from the Criminal Justice System using alternative platforms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to evolve newly implemented Projects - Turnaround and Engage</li> <li>• To obtain data on new projects to analyse patterns &amp; themes.</li> <li>• To continue to link with key partners to prevent and divert children from the system including Police, Education, Health, Social Care and VCS.</li> <li>• Staff to continue to be based in MASH and continue to improve joint work at earliest possible stages.</li> </ul>
Responding to Contextual Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the workforce has a sound understanding of contextual safeguarding (risks outside of the home) and extra familial harm ensuring that their practice in this area is collaborative with key partners including Social Care, Police, Education and Health in addition to the Voluntary Community Sector. Overall aim is to ensure children are safe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to NRM processes are understood by Team.</li> <li>• All Managers to attend Decision Making Training</li> <li>• All YJS staff to jointly attend NRM decision making panel.</li> <li>• To improve quality of NRM data held on YJS children and this data is analysed.</li> <li>• To ensure plans surrounding children with positive NRMS are jointly held with Social Care</li> <li>• All staff to be trained on Contextual Safeguarding</li> <li>• YJS to continue to be representative at CAP</li> </ul>
Reduce the number of Children identified as NEET (Not in Education or Employment or Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure all reasonable attempts are made to provide opportunities to children open to Croydon Youth Justice Service that are deemed NEET</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work closely with Croydon Works to ensure training and employment opportunities are promoted.</li> <li>• Remain to run Skill Mill employability project.</li> <li>• 16+ Worker to continue to provide readiness sessions to</li> </ul>

	<p>and help them in their readiness within this area.</p>	<p>support young people to get ready to enter the employment sector or further training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership to be regularly briefed on employment and training challenges in borough.</li> <li>• Continue to work on relationships with providers and employment sector to create directory of offer.</li> <li>• Continue to be representative at all key panels including Fair Access Panel to ensure exclusions are minimalised for our cohort.</li> <li>• To continue to provide a staff member to the local Pupil Referral Unit to form part of their Task-force inclusive of YJS expertise.</li> </ul>
Victim Centric Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that Croydon YJS is victim centric, and victims are at the centre of the work we deliver by way of restorative processes and ensuring their voices are heard to influence practice and manage risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff to have an appraisal target to be victim centric.</li> <li>• To ensure all children open to YJS have access to restorative justice provisions taking account of victim wishes.</li> <li>• For all staff to be trauma informed trained and to acknowledge that many of the cohort are themselves victims.</li> <li>• To ensure the victim(s) voice is heard and applied in our practice.</li> <li>• To consider potential victims as part of our risk management.</li> </ul>
Resettlement Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that there is a holistic resettlement offer that promotes recidivism by ensuring suitable accommodation is available, education and health services are offered. Offer to consider cultural relevance and to promote child-first principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS Resettlement Forum to continue to oversee children in custody ensuring that all their basic needs are being met and plans for release are considered at earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• Where issues of accommodation occur for these to be escalated at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>• Create of ROTL policy and ensuring ROTL is considered where eligible as part of resettlement offer</li> </ul>

## 27. Challenges, Risks, and Issues

1. **Addressing Disproportionately** – The Youth Justice System does not determine who enters the system by way of arrest, the role the Service does play is ensuring advocacy is used to divert children away from unnecessary escalation and to ensure processes are fair. The Service is familiar with escalating with Criminal Justice Partners and drawing attention to structural racism that creates disadvantage for specific groups.

**Response** – The Youth Justice Service is committed to equality and anti-racist policy that ensures practice is fair. The creation of the Disproportionately Action Plan is intended to look at all areas of the practice model to ensure reflection and consideration is given to all aspects of practice. The work varies from training other Criminal Justice agencies to ensure our young people are heard and interventions are bespoke to the children they are intended for. Cultural sensitivity and awareness is promoted as part of the organisational culture.

2. **Serious Youth Violence** – As detailed above, Serious Youth Violence and its contributing factors remains a significant concern to the YJS. Whilst fatalities have reduced, stabbings and other forms of Serious Youth Violence, including weapon related offending remains high. The YJS alone cannot address all factors related to Serious Youth Violence, which includes poverty/inadequate housing, education/exclusions, exposure, and risk of exploitation and managing contextual safeguarding risk, detection, disruption, and enforcement action against those exploiting children. Adequate access to services and opportunities, environmental factors, discrimination, and structural inequalities have a significant impact. It is therefore the role of all services and partners to contribute to the reduction of Serious Youth Violence and an outline of such a response can be found in the Community Safety Strategy alongside the Youth Safety Plan and child / adult safeguarding protocols.

**Response** – The YJS continues to work with key Statutory Partners and the voluntary sector as a collaborative response to Serious Youth Violence. One success in 2021/22 was the implementation of a community led intelligence hub where key representatives known to the local community sector can voice concerns with the YJS and Police – this forum remains. This permits a connection with statutory services and those who know their communities and the current risks, in addition for the community sector to influence responses and approaches that are locally informed. The work in this area however continues to evolve. The YJS Service Manager, since 2021 oversees the Youth Engagement team to address concerns much earlier on to avoid entry into the Youth Justice System. This work will continue to provide children with opportunity and education, to divert away from the system and will include a voluntary offer for those released under investigation for a second time. Research indicates that prevention is key to ensure children and families receive services earlier on to divert away from criminalisation. The introduction to the Turnaround and Engage Project adds additional resource in this capacity. Both projects deliver bespoke interventions with a strong emphasis upon community involvement and delivery.

3. **Domestic Abuse** – a significant percentage of children known to the Youth Justice Service have been exposed to domestic violence/abuse. Conversely, the Youth Justice Service has a number of children who through their own experiences and trauma, normalise violence and coercion and having been victimised begin to perpetrate. Violence against parents or partners is not uncommon and often these risks are in addition to the offending behaviour for which they are known. The Youth Justice Service is responsive to these risks and will liaise with Croydon Social Care and the Family Justice Centre (FJC) to ensure these risks are adequately considered and managed. YJS Practitioners and Managers attend Multi-agency



Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) where there is concern of domestic violence. In rare instances, the YJS will also contribute to the management of restraining orders imposed and ensure that this is considered as part of the monitoring role the YJS has as one of its many functions. YJS will liaise with the Police, Social Care and FJC to ensure risk management is considered in full and information is shared to safeguard others.

**Response** – Ensuring the entire workforce is appropriately trained in this area of work and has full understanding of safeguarding processes and MARAC is essential. Whilst there are some programmes available to refer into (locally) the YJS continues to evolve their joint work with the Family Justice Centre.

4. **Health** – The current provision of health services is delivered through the established roles with both permanent and locum staff, the aim would be in 2023 to ensure that health roles are filled on a permanent basis to provide consistency and stability for our young people.

**Response** – There has been significant progress within the domain of Health – implementation of a Physical Health Nurse who screens all children open to the YJS ensuring they are signposted into appropriate health services and advocated for, implementation of monthly Sexual Health Clinic to ensure adolescents are readily accessing support in this area, inclusion of Clinical Team within the YJS, providing consultation and bespoke case-work, implementation of Your Choice Programme a Cognitive Behavioural Programme for a specific part of the cohort, continuation of commissioned counselling services such as Off the Record and Croydon Drop In inclusive of services for bereavement. Whilst the Health Offer has expanded work specific to acute mental health need poses challenge and lengthy waiting lists. The Service has a well-formed relationship with FCAMHS, and a Liaison and Diversion Service based at the Custody Suite. The Speech and Language Post is also vacant and there have been challenges recruiting which is a picture seen London wide. Staff however are trained in Mental Health First aid and trauma informed practice.

5. **Prevent and Divert** – New projects funded by the Ministry of Justice and MOPAC has enhanced the Offer of early intervention and there is a now a framework provided for children identified at risk of criminality. The framework permits an offer for children Released Under Investigation, Bailed and/or NFA'd in addition to those subject to on-the-spot cautions also known as Community Resolutions. Work delivered from the custody suite in addition to projects that ensure all children encountering the Criminal Justice System are offered services and variants of intervention dependant on need. The risk and challenge are the demand. Whilst fewer children are entering the Youth Justice Service or formal Criminal Justice System, data shows that high numbers of children still coming into contact with Police. Other factors are also at play including lengthy bail periods and release under investigation drift.

6. **Responding to Contextual Safeguarding** – Linked to Serious Youth Violence is the issue of county-lines and contextual safeguarding (risks posed outside the home). Croydon is statistically rated as number 1 in London for children's involvement in county-lines (Rescue and Response, 2023).

The YJS continues to see high levels of out of area drug related offences which is often linked to the child's own victimisation and exploitation. Whilst YJS and services attempt to safeguard children and work with specialist services such as Barnardo's and Rescue and Response, challenge remains around the policing of those exploiting children. Joint work with Social Care, Police and Housing has led to several families being moved out of area to protect the young people in question, often families report a desperation and a sense that they have lost

all control over their children. The YJS remains to use its statutory tools in effort to assist in the safeguarding of children, yet the issues are complex and require multi agency responses.

**Response** – Earlier interventions to support families, strategic responses from Police are required. The YJS understand the complex context in which it works and addresses this area by advocating services and support to protect the children and young people known to its service. Positively, the implemented National Referral Mechanism pilot has been localised ensuring children are correctly identified as victims at the earliest opportunity without delay. This has reduced the time taken to confirm a child is being exploited leading to reduced criminalisation and fast access to bespoke and targeted work by specialist services such as Barnardo's.

- 7. Not in Education or Employment Training (NEET)** – Children within the YJS cohort have often had difficult experiences within the education system. Data tells us that many, when they arrive at the system, have experienced managed moves, exclusions or have been enrolled in Alternative Provision. Information also tells us that many have not consistently been in education regardless of enrolment and many have Education Health & Care Plans. The application of the Speech and Language work has also provided the Service with insight that some young people have needs that have not been detected such as communication difficulties and understanding but also neuro-diverse conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorder. Children known to Youth Justice face several additional challenges particularly when considering further education and employment and often there is a need to assist a young person with 'readiness'. Children within the cohort are often without key pieces of documentation such as ID and bank accounts, struggle with concepts such as time or do not have routines that support attendance in addition to holding a criminal record and the challenges this brings. Children can be unfamiliar with leaving the borough or due to risk unable to attend certain localities. Appropriate provisions for children with these challenges are also in short.

**Response** – The Youth Crime Board has played particular focus to this area, which was raised in the Inspection 2019. The Partnership has continued to pull together to source provisions and support advocacy for these children. The YJS has also obtained a SEND accreditation for joint work with the SEND department and recruited into an Outreach 16+ worker that offers 1:1 support in this area.

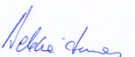
- 8. Victim(s)** – Victims are an important part of the Youth Justice Service function and ensuring they have a voice in the work we deliver. Current challenges are linked to consent being obtained for contact. The YJS has a Victim Worker designated to this area of work and is working closely with the Police to improve consent and information supplied by the Police.
- 9. Custody & Resettlement** – Croydon has seen a significant decline in the use of custody and whilst this has been seen nationally, the reduction has placed Croydon in line with the London average. Custody is reserved for the most serious offences and the children from the cohort presently in custody are there following sentence or remand for incidents of severe violence including murder. Croydon Youth Justice Service recognises that there are times when custody is warranted, when a crime is so grave that protection of the public is required, but fundamentally the use of custody is non-conducive to a young person's development and chances of rehabilitation. Inspection reports detailing environments that enable violence, segregation, limited access to services remind the Service why all efforts should be made to provide alternatives such as the use of bespoke bail packages that consider risk, or community orders that manage risk with the use of requirements are promoted. For those

who do enter the secure estate the statutory role of the YJS is to ensure that whilst there their wellbeing is considered and that they access all necessary services.

Planning for a young person returning to the community takes time and one difficulty many Youth Justice Services report is the difficulty in finding accommodation prior to release. Youth Justice Services work closely with Children's Social Care & Housing to identify accommodation. There are significant, well known and researched, local and national challenges in finding suitable placements however we continue to work together in addressing these challenges to identify placements that are safe and meet the young people's needs. This can be an anxious time for our children, YJS and Social Care will work together to reassure and plan the transition for the children. National Placement shortages and relocations can indirectly place pressure on resettlement plans, particularly when the young person is placed into a new area. Any delays in securing placements can compromise risk management; we work tirelessly to ensure services are available upon release, so the transition is a positive one.

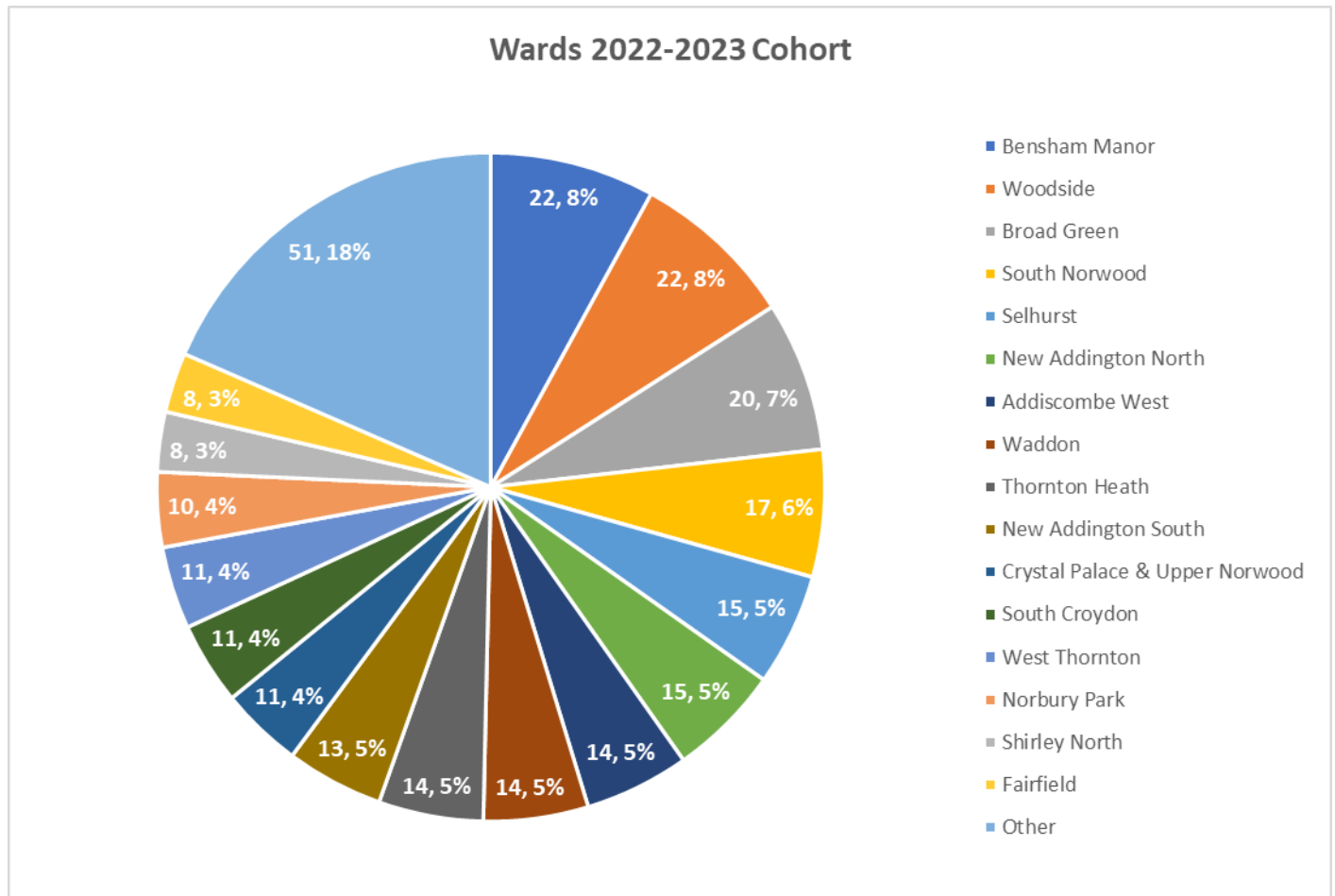
**Response** – Any challenges with accommodation are escalated for Head of Service oversight and the challenges regarding accommodation has been raised with Partners at the Board informing our sufficiency strategy and commissioning plans.

27. sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board - name	Debbie Jones
Signature	
Date	13.07.23

## Appendix 1

Wards 2022 – 2023 cohort

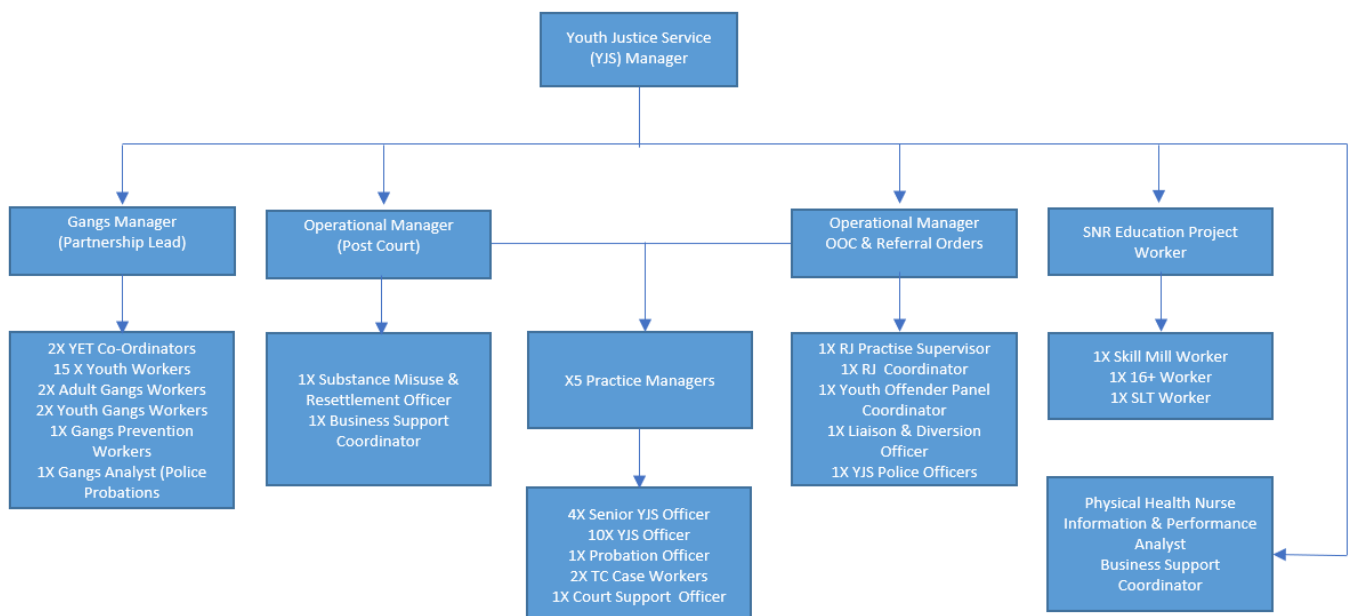


Bensham Manor - 22  
 Woodside - 22  
 Broad Green - 20  
 South Norwood - 17  
 Selhurst - 15  
 New Addington North - 15  
 Addiscombe West - 14  
 Waddon - 14  
 Thornton Heath - 14  
 New Addington South - 13  
 West Thornton - 12  
 South Croydon - 11  
 Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood - 11  
 Norbury Park - 11  
 Fairfield - 8  
 Shirley North - 8  
 Shirley South - 7  
 Addiscombe East - 7  
 Sanderstead - 6  
 Norbury & Pollards Hill - 5  
 Selsdon & Addington Village - 5  
 Coulsdon Town - 4

- Selsdon Vale & Forestdale - 4
- Purley & Woodcote - 3
- Old Coulsdon - 2
- Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown - 2
- Withyham - 1
- Seven Kings - 1
- Sitwell - 1
- Carshalton Central - 1
- Ravensbury - 1
- Beddington South - 1
- Longthornton - 1
- Streatham Wells - 1
- Herne Hill - 1

## Appendix 2

### Staffing Structure



**Appendix 3** - Disproportionality Action Plan (DAP) 2023-24

**Appendix 4** - Reparation Projects

**Appendix 5** - Croydon YJS Quality Assurance Framework

**Appendix 6** - Youth Justice Crime Board Terms of Reference

**Appendix 7** - Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan

**Appendix 8** – Prevention Strategy

**Appendix 9** – Joint Working Protocol

**Common youth justice terms**  
Please add any locally used terminology

<b>ACE</b>	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long-lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
<b>AIM 2 and 3</b>	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
<b>ASB</b>	Anti-social behaviour
<b>AssetPlus</b>	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and adolescent mental health services
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
<b>Children</b>	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
<b>Child First</b>	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
<b>Child looked-after</b>	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
<b>CME</b>	Child Missing Education
<b>Constructive resettlement</b>	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
<b>Community resolution</b>	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
<b>EHCP</b>	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health, and social care needs of a child with additional needs
<b>ETE</b>	Education, training, or employment
<b>EHE</b>	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting

<b>FTE</b>	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
<b>JAC</b>	Junior Attendance Centre
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi agency public protection arrangements
<b>MFH</b>	Missing from Home
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery to gain help to support and protect them
<b>OOCD</b>	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
<b>Outcome 22/21</b>	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
<b>Over-represented children</b>	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
<b>RHI</b>	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language, and communication needs
<b>STC</b>	Secure training centre
<b>SCH</b>	Secure children's home
<b>Young adult</b>	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
<b>YOI</b>	Young offender institution

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# Disproportionality Action Plan 2023/24

## Introduction:

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) works with children from a range of backgrounds. It is therefore necessary for the YJS to understand the Social Graces of children and young people open to the Service and work in a way that is culturally and individually sensitive, tailoring interventions to account for the individual needs of children, young people and their families.

It is also important to note that the YJS cohort has consistently seen disproportionately more male Black and Mixed heritage young people. Therefore staff and Manager(s) need to have a wider systemic understanding of the experiences of children and young people they work with and their entry into the Criminal Justice System, which can be underpinned by discrimination, racism and disadvantage.

Croydon YJS have been using the YJB Summary Ethnic Disproportionality Toolkit, as well as internal data collection and analysis, to research the issues locally to understand disproportionality. It found that children from minoritized ethnic group backgrounds were overrepresented in the youth justice system, more likely to enter the youth justice system at a higher level, and more likely to receive harsher sentences including custodial sentences. Consequently, our initial 2022/23 plan highlighted the ways the YJS can influence parts of the system to make a change and address racism and disproportionality with partners.

This 2023/24 Disproportionality Action Plan has been streamlined to reflect specific areas of disproportionality and has led to the establishment of a separate YJS Diversity and Inclusion Policy. This 2023/24 DAP places accountability upon staff and Manager's to utilise their position in the Service to challenge racism and discrimination but also to reflect on ways of working with specific groups and individuals and where possible promote opportunities to remedy disadvantage. The YJS will do this by considering the accessibility and suitability of services that promote positive outcomes.

The YJS now has a Diversity Equality and Inclusion Champion who ensures that disproportionality is discussed Team wide and that discussions are presented to Managers to discuss strategically and operationally. There is however an expectation on all members of the Team that we actively identify areas of discrimination, including racism and challenge accordingly as well as reflect on our own bias and practice(s). This plan is reviewed quarterly and is a part of the Council(s) wider strategic plan when considering equality and anti-discriminatory practice.

Priority Actions:						
	Target	How	Lead	Timescales	Actions/ What	Progress
	<p><b>All members of the Team to actively identify areas of discrimination, including racism and challenge accordingly as well as reflect on our own bias and practice(s).</b></p>	<p>A cohort of YJS Officers and Specialists to attend 6 weekly meetings to discuss the diverse needs of both the Team and cohort and to ensure this is feedback to Management to action.</p> <p>Management Team and YJS Officers to engage with monthly Critical Reflection groups, specifically designed to deconstruct matters reflected on to consider the impact that power and social graces have on our decision-making.</p> <p>Discussions that may require strategic and operational delivery to be raised at the Youth Crime Board and Diversity Lead to regularly attend</p>	<p>Kristel – Lead on Critical Reflective Practice</p> <p>Malini – YJS Champion for Diversity Equality and Inclusion.</p>	Continuous	<p>Regular circulation of diversity dates and events issued to Team to bring awareness and entice discussion.</p> <p>Critical Reflection to be evidenced in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managers Meeting minutes</li> <li>- Supervision</li> <li>- evidenced in assessments</li> <li>- evidenced in reports</li> </ul> <p>to be awarded Race Equality Network Trailblazer award</p> <p>To champion a local Anti-Racist Policy</p> <p>To develop and champion Partnership Principles.</p> <p>Consider YJS young people being eligible for an Independent Advocate.</p> <p>Work with CSC to provide appropriate care packages for black and mixed raced young people in care and in custody i.e. specific hair and skin products.</p>	<p><b>2021/22</b> Sinead (previous YJS Champion for Diversity Equality and Inclusion) has attended and presented to the Youth Crime Board.</p> <p><b>2022/23</b></p>

		<p>Youth Crime Board (twice yearly) to raise considerations.</p> <p>To be recognised by our partners as a Team that actively identifies areas of discrimination, including racism and challenges accordingly</p>				
	<p><b>Education</b></p> <p><b>To develop well-informed learning programmes to reduce the number of young people from minoritized ethnic groups who are not in education, employment and training</b></p>	<p>Deliver appropriate cultural competence training to educators.</p> <p>To develop appropriate “well-informed” programs for young people in the YJS Cohort.</p> <p>To advocate for minoritized ethnic groups who are not in education, employment and training</p>	Marina	Continuous	<p>Evidence of decisions made at the Fair Access Panel being appropriately challenged.</p> <p>Delivery of Skills Mill employment programme w/Deandra</p> <p>Post 16+ support W/Baron a focus on 16+ NEET and seeking opportunities for those who may be deemed disadvantaged. SALT</p> <p>Alternative appropriate ETE-information and updates provided to YJS Officers via e-mail</p> <p>Work in Partnership with PRUs/Schools and SEND Team to ensure we are challenging any identified areas of</p>	<p><b>2021/22</b> Marina regularly attends FAP Skill Mill is being delivered NEET numbers have reduced Regularly circulation of opportunities Strong partnership work with all main partners</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p>

					<p>disproportionately related to exclusions or poor access to provisions.</p> <p>ETE data is updated weekly. EHCP/SEN Checks YJS ETE data shared with SEND, Virtual School, Learning Access Team; Post 16 NEET Manager; NHS Health for CLA</p> <p>Ensure SEND marker remains up to date and recorded action taken.</p>	
<p><b>Data</b></p> <p><b>To have data that reflects an accurate picture of the types of offences and corresponding Criminal Justice outcomes for minoritized ethnic groups</b></p> <p><b>Ensure data looks at ways in which we can prevent or/and reduce young people coming back into the Criminal Justice System.</b></p> <p><b>Ensure we consider the most appropriate</b></p>	<p>Ryan to devise appropriate data reports</p>	<p>Ryan/Ops. Managers</p>	<p>To be shared at Joint Team Meeting (monthly)</p>	<p>Re-offending tracker to be shared with YJS Officers at the Joint Team Meeting to highlight re-offending rates per ethnicity on their caseloads.</p> <p>YJS officers and Line Managers to note consideration of specific appropriate action and intervention required for specific case status on re-offending tracker and corresponding ethnicity.</p> <p>Relevant cases to be heard at RVMP and Group Critical Reflection to unpick possible bespoke methods of intervention.</p>	<p><b>2022/23</b> Ryan/Ops. Managers</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p>	

	<p><b>intervention for presenting specific ethnic groups in YJS.</b></p>					
	<p><b>Interventions</b></p> <p><b>Group and 1:1 Interventions and group work take into account individual and group experiences by virtue of being overrepresented in the CJS.</b></p> <p><b>Minoritized ethnic groups in the YJS to have access to health services</b></p> <p><b>Minoritized ethnic groups in the YJS to be empowered to have their views heard by Leaders and Senior Managers within the LA.</b></p>	<p>Staff to engage in Critical Reflection on self and cases to equip themselves to provide specific group and 121 interventions for minoritized ethnic group.</p> <p>All young people in the YJS to be assessed by SALT and if appropriate a Forensic Psychologist/ Clinical Team and Nurse.</p> <p>YJS to partner with specialist Youth Empowerment service – Leaders Unlocked to x</p> <p>YJS officers to refer young people in the YJS to be assessed by substance misuse specialist if appropriate</p>	<p>Youth Engagement Team/Gangs &amp; IOM Team.</p> <p>Youth Engagement</p> <p>Forensic Psychological</p> <p>SALT</p> <p>Substance Misuse</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Young males group to be run quarterly</p> <p>YJS Youth Participation Group to be held quarterly</p> <p>To ensure the health needs of individuals are promptly identified and actioned advocating for accessibility to health provisions which may not have otherwise been identified.</p> <p>w/support from SALT worker and Forensic Psych to promote accessibility to health provisions for disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Girls Group to be run quarterly by Youth Engagement on behalf of YJS.</p> <p>For trauma informed and systemic interventions to consider the impact of racial trauma on children and families.</p>	<p><b>2022/23</b> Occurring – groups running.</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p>

	<p><b>Court work and Court user group</b></p> <p><b>For the impact of social influences beyond their control on overrepresented young people in the YJS at Court.</b></p> <p><b>For Court users to be culturally aware and mindful of unconscious bias when making decisions through critical reflections</b></p>	<p>Quarterly training delivered to DJs and Mags.</p> <p>Training/ presentations to be made to Court users at the Court Users Forum.</p>	Kristel	Continuous	<p>To ensure all Court lists are closely examined and where identified children who should have been subject to Out of Court Disposals are advocated for appropriately.</p> <p>Programme to be developed to bridge the gap between Court and Y/P.</p> <p>Scrutiny panel- comparison of sentencing outcomes for Y/P across ethnic groups (e.g. similar offences and sentencing outcomes).</p> <p>Pre-sentence Report template circulated to staff to address overrepresentation with Court(s) – to be reviewed.</p> <p>Sentencing feedback sheets to be asking how sentencers considered disproportionality in sentencing.</p> <p>For the impact of racial trauma on children and families to be explored in assessments and reports.</p>	<p><b>2022/23</b></p> <p>Weekly meetings held and challenge were necessary – evidence available.</p> <p>PSRs have been revised and include communication passports for children who have communication difficulties and might not be able to address the Court with confidence.</p> <p>One training session completed further session scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022.</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p> <p><b>Kristel to sit on the South London CPS Scrutiny Panel</b></p>
	<b>Police</b>	Police to be trauma-informed	YOS Police	30.6.21	Training with Police and Solicitors around providing ‘no evidence	

	<p><b>Joint analysis with police and community safety - impact of S60, stop and search etc and delivery of seeking to reduce FTE whilst addressing overrepresentation in earlier stages of the Criminal Justice System.</b></p>		Johanna/Corryne		<p>comments' which then leads to not being suitable for OOC. Fits in with induction of New Officers and our offer to those Officers.</p> <p>Interactive video that can be distributed to local solicitors to provide them with information around OOC.</p> <p>Use of diversion cannabis pilot.</p> <p>Set up of DIVERT programme to promote universal services with partners inclusive of community sector for those arrested and NFAAd</p> <p>Training to be delivered as arranged by Brooke on Stop and Search and rights.</p> <p>YJS to sit on the Bi-annual Police scrutiny Panel.</p>	
	<p><b>Work with the Community Sector</b></p> <p><b>The YJS to work with the community sector to provide early intervention and prevention programs that address the root causes of offending,</b></p>	<p>Joint work linked to projects such as My Endz that specifically target the prevention and reduction of crime with community groups in the London Road area,</p>	<p>Managers/YOS Officers</p>	<p>YOS/Youth Engagement/Gangs and IOM Team</p>	<p>To ensure representation at all local community forums such as My Endz and New Addington and Thornton Heath equivalent forums.</p> <p>YJS to operate as active stakeholder of MyEnds</p> <p>YJS to attend monthly Community Hub meetings to share intel from</p>	<p><b>2022/23</b></p> <p>Occurring – evidence available. BME have also delivered cultural competency training to all staff.</p> <p>Mentivity – mentoring</p>

<p><b>such as poverty, lack of education, and mental health issues for minoritized ethnic groups</b></p> <p><b>The YJS to work with the community sector to provide programs that divert minoritized ethnic groups away from the criminal justice system and into alternative programs that address their needs, such as mentoring, counselling, or education programs. This can reduce the likelihood of minoritized ethnic groups reoffending and being further entrenched in the criminal justice system.</b></p> <p><b>Support/ partner with the community sector to implement community-based initiatives that involve minoritized ethnic groups in positive activities with a view to</b></p>	<p>which has a diverse community.</p>			<p>and with the local community groups.</p> <p>To link in with organisations such as the Refugee Council and other organisations that offer expertise when working with specific and overrepresented groups within YOS.</p>	<p>Reaching Higher – Mentoring Forever Fitness – Summer Project</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p>
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	<p><b>help build positive relationships and connections within the community, reduce social isolation and disengagement, and promote a sense of belonging and inclusion.</b></p>					
	<p>SYV/ IOM Team</p>	<p>To offer training to partners such as the SYV &amp; IOM Police to address disproportionality and unconscious bias.</p>	<p>Cliff</p>	<p>SYV and IOM Team</p>	<p>To ensure consideration is given to the overrepresentation present on SYV/ IOM list and to use forums such as Tasking to discuss and where necessary challenge partners for any unconscious bias. - <b>evidence</b></p> <p>To ensure that all 1:1 work meaningfully permits discussions of discrimination and overrepresentation.</p>	<p><b>2022/23</b> Cliff</p> <p><b>2023/24</b></p>

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	Project	Location	Task(s)	Time	Hours
	YJS logo	TC	Young people to work with a local graphic designer to design a new YJS logo	Flexible	
C O M M U N I T Y	<b>Beckenham Crematorium</b> <i>Maintenance and office work</i>  <b>ACTIVE</b>	Beckenham Crematorium	Beckenham Crematorium today is keen to get young people helping- this can be outdoors doing gardening, helping with flowers, getting taught how to preserve memorials, shadowing the vicar do a service or helping with admin tasks in the office	Flexible	flexible
C O M M U N I T Y	<b>Positive Art Messages</b>  <b>ACTIVE</b>	Turnaround Centre	The idea for this project came from one of our CPMs. Young people will design and create canvases with positive messages to be displayed on the ground floor at the TC.	flexible	1-2 hours p/session
C O M M U N I T Y	<b>Torchlight Ministries</b> <b>Cook a meal for the local community</b>  <b>on hold due to health and safety</b>	Holy Innocent Church 192a Selhurst Road SE25 6XX (next door to the SCTC)	The Torchlight Ministries is hosting an afternoon of worship followed by a cooked meal for the local community every Wednesday afternoon. Young people will be helping the local community cooks to prepare a hot meal for those attending. Young people will have the opportunity to stay and enjoy a free meal and see other people eating what they have cooked on the day. Parents/ Carers are welcome to attend to enjoy a meal cooked by their young person	<b>Wednesdays 6.30-8pm</b>	1.5 HOURS
C O M M U N	<b>Nightwatch</b>  Cook a meal for the homeless	Turnaround Centre 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor Kitchen	Nightwatch is a charity that has been supporting homeless people in Croydon since 1976.  Young people will be supported to cook hot meals for homeless people in Croydon. The meals will be cooked at the Turnaround Centre (3 <sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen) and then delivered to the Nightwatch co-	Flexible by arrangement	2

I T Y	people of Croydon  ACTIVE		ordinator who will distribute the meals to those who attend their evening sessions.		
C O M M U N I T Y	<b>Art and Craft CARD and BADGES MAKING</b>  ACTIVE	Turnaround Centre	Young people will meet at the TC to create cards for different occasions. The cards will be donated to local charity shops and care homes.  Young people can also make badges using a specific tool. These badges will then be donated to local organisations.	Flexible by arrangement	1-2 hours
C O M M U N I T Y	<b>YJS Engagement Forum Youth Voices</b>  ACTIVE	TC	<b>Young people are expected to attend</b> meetings at the Turnaround Centre every 3 Month and opportunities for young people to become young advisors either locally or nationally. Young people who need support with engaging will be offered the opportunity to attend a citizenship / motivational session with Helena / Amania beforehand	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> of July Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> of October	4.30-5.30pm
	<b>Podcast of Culture</b>  ACTIVE	Various locations	Young people can be interviewed and talk about their community and what's it like to live in Croydon or alternatively support with behind-the-scenes jobs such as recording, filming etc.	Flexible -Running throughout the year- running throughout 2023 as Croydon is the London Borough of Culture.	Varies

	<b>Bikes project</b>  <b>ACTIVE</b>	Playplace New Addington	AQA accredited sessions at Play Place in New Addington  Learning about pedal-bike maintenance – includes practical bike maintenance	6 sessions and transport provided from the TC and back	After school times
	<b>Reception revamp- art project</b>  Due to start ASAP	Turnaround Centre	Young people are invited to help re-vamp the reception area- ideas welcome for how to make the space child-friendly- Includes making art, being part of discussions around the use of space in the reception area, colour schemes etc.	ASAP	Flexible
<b>O N L I N E</b>	<b>Art Refuge</b>  <b>HAPPENING NOW!</b>	<b>Online</b>	The Art Refuge has created an online platform and is inviting people to participate in the making of a virtual quilt - The Corona Quilt! The idea is to bring people together through art within the context of a global pandemic.  Young people can use different media (paint, collage, photography collage text sewing etc) to create a square that will be uploaded on their website and Instagram to be part of the Coronaquilt! The theme is 'Rituals of the Everyday'. Ideally it would be on a piece of fabric but it can be paper or another material as well as it is going to be virtual.  More info below:  <a href="https://www.coronaquilt.org/">https://www.coronaquilt.org/</a>	Anytime	Varies
<b>O N L I N E</b>	<b>Red Cross First Aid session</b>  <b>Ongoing</b>	Online via Zoom	The session is mainly around first aid and therefore can be counted towards reparation. They will need to have access to Zoom. This would be ideal for young people who are carrying weapons but not only One off session	Next session:  TBC	1 hour

O N L I N E	<b>Empathy Museum Project</b>	At home	Young person listens to one or more stories narrated by people who have English as an additional language and then complete the survey in response to that. Can be used with young people to develop further empathy <a href="#">Empathy Museum –Empathy Museum</a>	Anytime	2 hours per story	
	INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS	<b>Helping your local community / family members</b>	<b>At home / in young person's community</b>	Young person to help members of the family and/or community. For example, young person offers to go out and buy groceries for elderly/ vulnerable people/ offers help with gardening. Supporting siblings with school work/ activities, cook a family meal, etc.	Anytime	Depending on activity
		<b>Random acts of kindness</b>	At home / in young person's community	Young person takes action and carries out a random act of kindness for someone else. The young person can choose from a list that is provided or think of their own acts of kindness. Young person must provide evidence (make a note somewhere of what they have done and also make a note of a random act of kindness someone does for the young person)	Anytime	Depending on activity
		<b>Individual art project</b>	At home	Young person completes a piece of art work around the offence, Lockdown, public health or another topic (to discuss and agree topic with YOS officer). Young person could create: a poem, drawing, graffiti, collage, poster, painting, card making, an appreciation poster for key workers, a piece of music. Young person must provide evidence.	Anytime	Depending on activity
		<b>Individual Painting/ Decorating project</b>	<b>At home</b>	<b>Young person assist with decorating/ painting/ clearing/ organising rooms – as agreed with parent/carer and YOS. Young person must provide visual evidence.</b>	Anytime	Depending on activity
		<b>Individual Gardening</b>	At home	Young person assist with tasks at home such as, grounds maintenance, gardening, clearing litter, planting seeds, weeding, etc. To be agreed with parent/carer and YOS. Young person must provide visual evidence.	Anytime	Depending on activity

## **Proposal for YJS/CSC Quality Assurance Framework**

### **Context**

The YJS has an audit tool that is well established. It has been reviewed by an external expert, who considers that is an excellent, comprehensive tool. The audits were also considered, and the independent person felt they were of good quality. They are currently conducted by the management team within the YJS, who have the relevant expertise to audit the children and young people's files and the interventions that they are offered using the HMPI framework.

WIP audit cycle is well established within CSC. There are revisions currently underway, and the cycle does not currently have a multi-disciplinary component. This is an opportunity to strengthen our understanding of our children's experience in the context of a broader service provision offered by Croydon – particularly those known to both Services.

### **Objective**

To utilise the quality assurance processes between both YJS and CSC to assure ourselves that the operational social care teams and the YJS are working collaboratively ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and young people accessing these services in Croydon. This requires sharing of information, good communication and an understanding of how the services roles both differ and overlap.

A combined audit provides the opportunity to cross-reference activity, acknowledging there are different systems used by the Services, enhance a deeper understanding for each Service, of the other and to jointly consider how practice can be improved.

### **Proposal**

There are currently 7 YJS auditors. The suggestion of bi-monthly, during the WIP month, a Youth justice and social care auditor will be allocated the same child, who will be accessing both YJS and CSC records. They will essentially be each other's 'buddies'. The expectation will be that the auditors complete their respective audit forms together and collaboratively, alongside the relevant social work and youth justice worker. One additional section will be added to each tool, entitled 'Quality of Youth Justice and Social Care Joint working', with some prompts added around what to consider.

This approach will support youth justice and children's social care managers and practitioners to gain a greater understanding of each other's roles and systems. It will enable us to understand where we are working well together and where there are opportunities to strengthen our collaboration.

Each of the youth justice and children's social care audits will be considered together at the moderation panel, further strengthening a shared understanding of roles and providing additional assurance around a shared view of 'what good looks like'.

This approach will mean that we audit approximately 42 children accessing both services every 12 months. 2022-23 saw 284 children access youth justice services, of which approximately 40% (110-120) were also accessing CSC. As such, this would mean approximate 33% of children accessing both services concurrently over the year, would be audited and would give us a very good representative sample.

### **Pilot**

We can pilot this in the July audit cycle with the additional 'box' being captured as a case note and being added into the revised form from September onwards, if the pilot is successful. The combined audit would integrate into the WIP and moderation/scrutiny would also be applicable.

### **YJS Audit Framework**

The YJS Manager's would continue to audit outside of this framework – remaining to use their existing tool and to consider themes. The Service Manager would compile a report summarising practice and performance themes for the Youth Justice Board chaired by the Corporate Director and Practice & Performance Forum, chaired by the Head of Service.

Areas of focus would include:

- Yearly audit on custody work
- Yearly audit on the delivery of Out of Court work
- Yearly audit working with girls
- Yearly audit on Sentence Delivery
- Yearly audit on work with victims
- Yearly audit on Anti-Discriminatory Practice
- Yearly audit on habitual knife carriers (knife Crime rated the highest offence type in the cohort).



# Youth Justice Management Board

## Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference contained within this document are in reference to 'Youth Justice Service Governance and Leadership' published by the Youth Justice Board on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and defined by the Crime Disorder Act 1998.

### **Principles:**

To harness the commitment and involvement of all participating agencies both statutorily and non-statutory (as identified within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) providing services to young people and families known the Youth Justice System within the London Borough of Croydon. In addition to comply with the Local Authorities statutory obligation contained within Paragraph 7(b) Section 2 of the Children Act 1989

It's aim(s):

- Ensure communication between partner agencies is maintained in identifying and resolving issues that might affect the success of implementing the Strategy to reduce and prevent youth crime;
- Ensure that strategy development and implementation is inclusive and responsive to the needs of Croydon's diverse community and addresses disproportionately;
- Encourage community engagement and consultation with young people to ensure the needs and perspectives of those within the Youth Justice serves are heard.
- To consider the welfare and safeguarding of children known to the Youth Justice System.
- To address the needs of victims
- To protect the public under the domain and guidance of Multi-Agency Public Protection framework.

### **Meeting frequency:**

The meeting is held quarterly.

### **Chair and membership:**

The meeting is chaired by the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education.

Please see bottom page for full list of agencies and personnel for membership details.

### **Agenda Support:**

Circulation of agenda, minutes and supplement documents are sent by the Executive Officer in addition to the task of all minute taking.

## **Links to other Groups**

Safer Croydon Partnership  
Children's Safeguarding Partnership

## **Key Responsibilities:**

### **The Youth Justice Service will:**

- Ensure a clear vision is embedded for children known or at risk, to the Criminal Justice System, and that high quality services are delivered to prevent and reduce offending.
- Monitor and report on key performance indicators and targets, contained in the strategy in accordance with the guidance 'Standards for Children within the Youth Justice System' published by the Youth Justice Board;
- To determine the staffing and funding of the YJS in accordance with YJB requirements and guidance in addition to grant obligations;
- To ensure the YJS meet any new requirements from either legislation or regulation or due to emerging local need;
- Lead on the development and yearly revision of the Youth Justice Plan in accordance with Youth Justice Board's expectations;
- To oversee and ensure there is appropriate engagement of the YOS with partner agencies;
- Support and assist in the co-ordination of the delivery of services provided by the YJS and produce accurate reports on the operation and performance of the service.
- Ensure that disproportionately is considered and addressed and all agencies are playing a proactive part as outlined by the Youth Justice Service Disproportionately Action Plan.
- Provide the Board with details of characteristic(s) of children entering the system and identification of where services can be targeted outside of Youth Justice.

### **The Youth Justice Management Board:**

This board has delegated responsibility on behalf of the Safer Croydon Partnership Board, Its purpose is to coordinate the delivery of actions that will support the strategic aim of the partnership to improve the safety of children and young people within the borough. This will include:

- Sound knowledge of the Youth Justice System and its functions and responsibilities;
- Monitoring the delivery of the borough's 'Serious Youth Violence' action plan;
- Coordinating the activity of the borough's multi-agency Gangs and Integrated Offender Management programme
- Responsibility of for the delivery of any other youth crime priorities identified within the Safer Croydon Strategy including tackling: Domestic violence/Exploitation and Modern Day Slavery.

## **The board is also expected to:**

- Have a dedicated, evidence based action plan, that details the activity that will be delivered throughout the year, informed by partnership analytical product (e.g. the annual strategic assessment) and interventions best to tackle identified issues. Action plans to be inclusive of any inspection or thematic inspection actions that may have been identified;
- To scrutinise and monitor performance against targets and indicators set by the Board, approving remedial plans and escalating issues where appropriate.
- To act as the partnership's expert group on the priorities tasked to the group by the board and evaluating the outcomes of key projects in order to identify, collate and share best practice.
- To scrutinise and monitor the expenditure of any grant funding allocated to the group's action plan(s) to ensure effective and efficient use of finance.
- To ensure that resources, including information, are shared effectively in order to support the Partnership's strategic priorities.
- To ensure that risks to the delivery of the action plan are captured effectively and ensure that processes are in place to mitigate them appropriately.
- To identify and escalate emerging risks and unresolved or cross cutting issues to the Safer Croydon Board.
- The Board will be accountable to the Safer Croydon Partnership Board for the effective scrutiny and monitoring of delivery against, annual action plans, indicators and targets.
- The Board Chair will attend, report and be held to account by the Safer Croydon Partnership Board on the
  - Progress of on the delivery of the programme action plan(s), on a by exception basis. This is to occur at least once per financial year.
  - delivery of agreed performance indicators (see appendix 2)
- All chairs of the case management and operational groups linked to the programme board in the partnership structure chart (Appendix 1), will be held accountable by the programme board for the delivery of activity supporting the outcomes of the programme board action plan and supporting management information.

## **Information sharing**

- Members of the programme board must adhere at all times to the information sharing and storage regulations as set out in: General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018, and SCP Information Sharing Protocol.

- Personal information and data may be shared amongst the membership of the Board as set out in the borough's Information Sharing Protocol under Sections 17 and 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- All members must take responsibility for the collection, storage and/or destruction of their confidential documents at the end of each meeting. No document is to be shared and any breach reported to: [data.breach@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:data.breach@croydon.gov.uk)

### Membership:

Membership is drawn from Senior Management within the Council and external organisations. Agencies who are of a senior strategic position and able to advise and take responsibility for the development, direction and implementation of youth crime prevention strategy and to make the links with other related service plans.

Membership is defined by the Crime and Disorder Act as being statutory (mandatorily have to attend) and Voluntary.

### Statutory:

- Metropolitan Police
- Education
- Health
- Children's Social Care
- HM Courts
- Probation
- Housing

### Voluntary:

- Community Sector

Organisation	Name	Role	Contact Details
Croydon Council	Debbie Jones	Chair of the Board	<a href="mailto:Debbie.Jones@Croydon.gov.uk">Debbie.Jones@Croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Kristian Aspinall	Director of Culture and Community Safety	<a href="mailto:Kristian.Aspinall@croydon.gov.uk">Kristian.Aspinall@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Emma Carter	Service Manager YJS	<a href="mailto:Emma.Carter@croydon.gov.uk">Emma.Carter@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Police	Dan Smith	Detective Superintendent	<a href="mailto:Daniel.d.smith@met.pnn.police.uk">Daniel.d.smith@met.pnn.police.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Roisin Madden	Director Children's Social Care	<a href="mailto:Roisin.Madden@croydon.gov.uk">Roisin.Madden@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Vicki Wilshire	Head of Service Access	<a href="mailto:Vicki.wiltshire@croydon.gov.uk">Vicki.wiltshire@croydon.gov.uk</a>

		Support and Intervention	
Croydon Council	Cliff Hilderly	Youth Engagement Service Manager	<a href="mailto:Cliff.Hilderly@croydon.gov.uk">Cliff.Hilderly@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Shelley Davies	Director of Education	<a href="mailto:Shelley.Davies@croydon.gov.uk">Shelley.Davies@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Mary Larbie	Director of Housing Resident Engagement and Allocations	<a href="mailto:Mary.Larbie@croydon.gov.uk">Mary.Larbie@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Croydon Council	Shelley Prince	Head of Service – Commissioning	<a href="mailto:Shelley.Prince@croydon.gov.uk">Shelley.Prince@croydon.gov.uk</a>
Probation Service	Selene Grandison	Head of Probation	<a href="mailto:Selene.Grandison@justice.gov.uk">Selene.Grandison@justice.gov.uk</a>
HMCTS	Kirstin Khan	Court Manager	<a href="mailto:Kirstin.Khan@justice.gov.uk">Kirstin.Khan@justice.gov.uk</a>
NHS-CCG	Connie Ikhifa	Senior Commissioning Manager	<a href="mailto:Connie.Ikhifa@swlondon.nhs.uk">Connie.Ikhifa@swlondon.nhs.uk</a>
Victim Liaison Unit	Sharon Morris	Victim Liaison Officer	<a href="mailto:Sharon.Morris@justice.gov.uk">Sharon.Morris@justice.gov.uk</a>
<b>Community / Voluntary</b>			
Community Sector	Andrew Brown	BME Forum Manager	<a href="mailto:andrew@bmeforum.org">andrew@bmeforum.org</a>
CAYSH	Ann Tighe	Chief Executive	<a href="mailto:Ann.Tighe@caysh.org">Ann.Tighe@caysh.org</a>
CVA	Steve Phaure	Chief Executive	<a href="mailto:Steve.Phaure@cvalive.org.uk">Steve.Phaure@cvalive.org.uk</a>

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# Croydon YJS – Workforce Development Plan

Croydon Youth Justice Service is committed to the development of staff and in an ever evolving system with multi-complexities understands that the up-to-date training in an array of areas is vital for both staff and Management. This Development Plan details 2023-24 training offer both internally and externally – specifically highlighting the needs and challenges faced by the Service and consequently training areas relevant to these specifics.

This plan is outlined but not defined by strategic objectives contained within the Youth Justice Plan 2022-23. The Youth Justice Plan highlights Service priorities.

Objective/Training Need	Training Offer	Priority	Start	Completion
<p>Objectives of the in person training workshops are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand notions of vulnerability and childhood and how these are applied to some children more than others</li> <li>• Understand the broad concepts of intersectionality and adultification</li> <li>• Identify ways to guard against</li> </ul>	<p>The London Accommodation and Resettlement Pathfinders (LARP) are working in partnership with Listen Up Research to commission adultification training for Youth Justice organisations across London. We recognise that the adultification of children, particularly young black males, within the youth justice system can lead to a variety of negative outcomes and inequalities</p>		<p>19.04.23, 21.04.23, 24.04.23</p>	

<p>adultification in practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing findings from serious case reviews relating to child criminal exploitation</li> </ul> <p>Please note that the webinar and in person training offers are free to join and has been fully funded by the LARP.</p>	<p>Objectives of the in person training workshops are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand notions of vulnerability and childhood and how these are applied to some children more than others</li> <li>• Understand the broad concepts of intersectionality and adultification</li> <li>• Identify ways to guard against adultification in practice</li> <li>• Reviewing findings from serious case reviews relating to child criminal exploitation</li> </ul>			
<p>Ministry of Defence: How MOD Safeguarding is Structured and works with local Authorities &amp; Partnerships</p>	<p>Safeguarding Policy Team in the MOD join us to explain how MOD safeguarding is structured, what the Welfare Services look like and what the implications are for families</p>		<p>27.03.23 from 4 – 5.15pm</p>	



	going abroad and/or being left behind. They will also cover their Domestic Abuse Programme and explain how they work as a conduit for information between the Local Authority and the MOD.			
<p><b>1.Effective risk practice to promote the safety of young people and others</b></p> <p><b>For Practitioners and Managers</b></p> <p>Delivered by Lyla Ward Wardell Associates</p>	<p><b>The course will cover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding “Risk” and the relationship between safety and wellbeing and harm to others.</li> <li>• Assessment: Evidencing our journey to the professional judgments</li> <li>• Linking assessments with our plans including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priorities and links with desistance practice</li> <li>○ External controls and actions</li> <li>○ Dealing with changed circumstances</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p><b>April 20 (9.15am – 1pm)</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>October 6<sup>th</sup></b></p> <p><b>On TEAMS. Half day.</b></p> <p><b>£80</b></p>	
<b>2. Social media and</b>	<b>The course will explore</b>		<p><b>April 25 (9.15-4pm)</b></p> <p><b>IN PERSON. FULL DAY</b></p>	

<p><b>Young People – Risks, Safeguarding and Challenges</b></p> <p>Delivered by Steven Gowen Researcher, Information and Analysis Team Hackney Integrated Gangs Unit</p> <p>For Practitioners and Managers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of the internet and social media platforms</li> <li>• legal, risk and safeguarding issues</li> <li>• how intelligence can be gathered and used to map gang activity specifically</li> <li>• how to capture, share and use information appropriately</li> <li>• setting up staff roles, equipment and protocols</li> <li>• how a young person's <b>actions in the virtual world can lead to serious consequences in the real world</b></li> </ul>			
<p><b>3.TRM Aware -Trauma Recovery Model</b></p> <p>The Trauma Recovery Model is a roadmap to help professionals care for and guide troubled children, towards recovery and resilience.</p> <p>The model combines theories of child development, attachment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trauma Recovery Model and underlying principles</li> <li>• Common shortcomings of standard assessment processes and how to do better</li> <li>• The importance of sequencing interventions to the development of the child</li> </ul>		<p><b>A 3 day course delivered via TEAMS.</b></p> <p><b>You must be able to attend all 3 dates.</b></p> <p><b>May 22,23 and 26<sup>th</sup> 2023</b></p> <p><b>9.30am- 4pm</b></p>	

<p>and neuroscience with hands-on practitioner skills</p> <p>A 3 day course for Practitioners and Managers</p> <p>Delivered by TRM Academy  <a href="https://www.trmacademy.com">https://www.trmacademy.com</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key practice principles to guide how we care for and manage troubled children</li> <li>• Applying the TRM in practice</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Improving Reviews</b></p> <p><b>For Managers</b></p> <p>Delivered by Lyla Ward Wardell Associates</p> <p><b>Please have access to an Assetplus in progress that you can look at during the course (either for completion or countersignature). Screens cannot be shared due to data protection.</b></p>	<p><b>The course will cover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing practice in how teams do purposeful reviews to support positive outcomes</li> <li>• HMIP expectations</li> <li>• Practical methodologies for significant change and scheduled reviews / case closures</li> </ul> <p>Quality Assuring reviews and case closures</p>		<p><b>May 9 (9.15am- 1pm)</b></p> <p><b>ON TEAMS. HALF DAY</b></p>	
<p><b>5. AssetPlus Quality Assurance</b></p>	<p><b>Through active participation in the course learners will focus on</b></p>		<p>8 June (9.15-1pm)</p> <p><b>OR</b></p>	

<p><b>Fast &amp; Effective QA of AssetPlus Stages</b></p> <p><b>For Managers or Senior Practitioners</b></p> <p>Delivered by Duncan Hodgson Silver Bullet training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key points to look for (in line with inspection standards) when quality assuring an initial stage</li> <li>• Apply and practice this approach using a QA checklist and case example</li> <li>• Identify different levels of quality of assurance</li> </ul>		<p>16 November (9.15-1pm)</p> <p><b>ON TEAMS.HALF DAY</b></p>	
<p><b>6.Working with Young People who display Sexually Harmful Behaviour (SHB)</b></p> <p><b>AIM3 training- Assessment and Intervention modules</b></p> <p>This course is targeted at professionals from Social Care, Youth Offending and Specialist providers, who should have a basic understanding of harmful sexual behaviours, gained either through relevant practice experience or training such as the AIM Awareness of HSB training or HSB foundation courses from other providers, and must also have practice experience of complex</p>	<p>A 4 day AIM3&amp; AIM Intervention training course</p> <p><b>Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p><u>AIM3:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to analyse the relevant information to develop a profile of the young person, their family and context using the AIM3 model</li> <li>• Have confidence in developing safety and intervention plans responsive to the AIM3 assessment profile</li> </ul>		<p><b>A 4 day course</b></p> <p><b>ON TEAMS</b></p> <p>June 15, 16 AIM3 module</p> <p>September 28, 29 Interventions module</p> <p><b>9.15am -4.30pm</b></p> <p><b>You need to be able to do all 4 dates</b></p>	

<p>assessment work and/or experience in working with or looking after young people with complex needs and who are currently working with or looking after young people presenting with problematic or harmful sexual behaviours (HSB).</p> <p>The course includes a competency test. An approval certificate (valid for 3 years) will be awarded on successful completion.</p> <p>15/16 June (AIM3) with Karen Martin</p> <p>28/29 Sept (Interventions) with Christine McCarlie</p>	<p><u>AIM Intervention:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop confidence and competence in using the AIM Intervention Framework to develop an intervention plan bespoke to the individual needs of the young person</li> <li>• Have been provided with examples of exercises for use in practice and the opportunity to try these out</li> </ul>			
<p><b>7. AIM3 for Supervisors Supervising HSB Practice</b></p> <p><b>For Managers</b></p> <p>This course is targeted at experienced professionals who are supervising staff who are working with children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours (HSB).</p> <p>Participants should have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviours, either gained through</p>	<p><b>By the end of the workshop participants will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an overview of supervision, it's purpose and importance</li> <li>• Understand factors which are relevant to HSB assessment and intervention in relation to AIM3 assessment and interventions</li> <li>• Learn the importance</li> </ul>		<p><b>A 2 day course</b></p> <p><b>ON TEAMS</b></p> <p><b>22 and 23 June (9.15am - 4.30pm)</b></p> <p><b>You must be able to attend both dates</b></p>	

<p>attendance at AIM3 assessment model training or through relevant practice experience.</p> <p>Due to the subject matter, a safe space in which to undertake this training with minimal interruptions, where possible, is required. This is pertinent to those working from home, particularly with children present</p> <p>Delivered by Karen Martin</p>	<p>of critically reflective supervision and developing staff resilience and supporting staff welfare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the opportunity to rehearse core supervisory skills in relation to HSB</li> </ul>			
<p><b>8. Working with Girls affected by violence and exploitation</b></p> <p>An introduction to understanding the specific needs of girls and young women who are affected by violence and exploitation including criminal and sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Delivered by Safer London</p>	<p>The course aims to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase understanding and awareness of girls and young women's experiences and the needs that arise</li> <li>• Explore how young women's experience of harm in may be overlooked, misunderstood and/or impacted by victim blaming, stereotyping and bias.</li> <li>• Provide guidance on identifying,</li> </ul>		<p><b>July 7<sup>th</sup></b>  <b>(10.30am – 5.00pm)</b>  <b>IN PERSON. FULL DAY</b></p>	

	<p>responding to and supporting young women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase confidence in applying learning in practice</li> </ul>			
<p><b>9.Effective risk practice to promote the safety of young people and others</b></p> <p><b>For Practitioners and Managers</b></p> <p>Delivered by Lyla Ward Wardell Associates</p>	<p><b>The course will cover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding “Risk” and the relationship between safety and wellbeing and harm to others.</li> <li>• Assessment: Evidencing our journey to the professional judgments</li> <li>• Linking assessments with our plans including             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priorities and links with desistance practice</li> <li>○ External controls and actions</li> <li>○ Dealing with changed circumstances</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p><b>October 6 (9.15am – 1pm)</b></p> <p><b>On TEAMS. Half day</b></p>	

<p><b>10. Looking After Number One</b></p> <p><b>A practical course to improve your wellbeing and help avoid burnout.</b> For Practitioners and Managers</p> <p>Delivered by Jonny Mathew TRM Academy <a href="https://www.trmacademy.com">https://www.trmacademy.com</a></p>	<p><b>The course will cover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking stock: understanding our challenges and how these can relate to burnout, vicarious trauma &amp; compassion fatigue</li> <li>• Recognising the danger signs</li> <li>• Practical ways to use your precious time for self-care.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to help Re-boot, Re-charge and Reflect.</p>		<p><b>October 24 and 25<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Run over two mornings.</b></p> <p><b>You need to be able to do both sessions.</b></p> <p><b>On TEAMS</b></p> <p><b>9.15-1pm</b></p>	
<p><b>11. Coaching for Managers</b></p> <p><b>A course for Managers</b></p> <p>Delivered by <a href="http://www.masterclass.co.uk">http://www.masterclass.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Coaching is about helping others to <i>learn</i> rather than directing or telling. A practical course to give Managers tools they can use, immediately.</p> <p>After attending the session Managers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear on what makes an effective coaching conversation and the core skills required</li> <li>• Appreciate the importance of getting commitment to actions from the</li> </ul>		<p><b>November 10<sup>th</sup> (9.15-4pm)</b></p> <p><b>IN PERSON.FULL DAY</b></p>	



	<p>individual being coached</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to resist the temptation to ‘tell’ rather than coach</li> <li>• Use reflective practice to enhance support and effective supervision</li> </ul>			
<p><b>12. AssetPlus Quality Assurance</b></p> <p><b>Fast &amp; Effective QA of AssetPlus Stages</b></p> <p><b>For Managers or Senior Practitioners</b></p> <p>Delivered by Duncan Hodgson Silver Bullet training</p>	<p><b>Through active participation in the course learners will focus on</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key points to look for (in line with inspection standards) when quality assuring an initial stage</li> <li>• Apply and practice this approach using a QA checklist and case example</li> <li>• Identify different levels of quality of assurance</li> </ul>		<p><b>16 November (9.15-1pm)</b></p> <p><b>ON TEAMS.HALF DAY</b></p>	
<p><b>13. Children and young people using violence and abuse in close relationships.</b></p> <p>An introductory course to increase participants’ awareness of the</p>	<p>The course will enable participants to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an understanding of the causal factors of Child and Adolescent to</li> </ol>		<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b></p> <p><b>ON TEAMS.HALF DAY</b></p> <p><b>9.15am – 1pm</b></p>	

<p>dynamics of adolescent to parent abuse and relationship abuse between young people.</p> <p>Delivered by Respect</p>	<p>Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Provide tools to support parents and carers to assess risk and identify potential trigger points for abuse to enable a safer parental response</li> <li>3. To explore the subject of relationship abuse with between young people</li> <li>4. Support children and young people to respond to conflict situations without using violence or abuse.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>14. Unconscious Bias and Youth Justice</b></p> <p>Exploring the challenges of disproportionality in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The course will cover Examine the reasons &amp; evidence-based research</b></li> </ul>		<p><b>IN PERSON FULL DAY</b>  <b>9.15am- 4pm</b></p> <p><b>January 11th 2024</b></p>	

<p><b>the Youth Justice system</b></p> <p><b>For Practitioners and Managers</b></p> <p><b>Delivered by Wipers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support practitioners to identify their own UB, associated triggers and drivers</b></li> <li>• <b>Develop strategies and practical steps towards better and bias-free decision-making processes</b></li> <li>• <b>Inform effective practice</b></li> <li>• <b>Apply bias-reducing strategies to practical tasks such as writing PSRs and risk assessments</b></li> <li>• <b>Develop a greater sense of self-awareness in working with young people within the YJS</b></li> </ul>			
CSCP Training Updates	The CSCP is committed to providing multi-agency safeguarding training for those working with children and families in Croydon. All training is free and can be booked via Croydon Learning as when required.		March & April 2023 (All details are in separate folder with links)	
MHFA Training (Mental Health First Aid)	Mental health First Aid Training		Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> & 25 <sup>th</sup> April – must attend 2 full days.	

Asset+ refresher workshops	Internally facilitated workshops focusing on specific areas of Asset+:  -			
CAPA Training	Professional Training on children using harmful behaviours to a parent		Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 9.30-12.30pm	
Social Work Teaching Partnership	Teaching partnership Trauma informed practice training Level 1.		May, June, July 2023 (all details and links are in separate folder)	
Deputy Consultant social Worker	Role Guide document			
Early Help & Children's Social Care Academy	Upcoming Courses and development opportunities		Available June and July (all details and links are in separate folder)	
Non Violent Resistance Training	<p>Non Violent Resistance (NVR) is a parenting approach to address controlling, harmful and self-destructive behaviour in children and young people.</p> <p><b>Development opportunity: NVR Foundation Level training</b> (3 day) - Aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand core principles of NVR</li> <li>• Support parents with de-escalation and reparation techniques to strengthen parent-child relationships</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of aggression and externalising behaviour in children and young people</li> </ul>		<p>Expressions of interest should be submitted by 19.06.23</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> July in person. 5<sup>th</sup> September (accreditation date, virtual event)</p>	

Epsiodes, ETE & KPI Recording, SALT & Asset, Resettlement & Custody , Desistance, Future Behaviours, RJ Page on Asset and Proceses, PSR Writing, Intervention Plans, Sequencing & Prioritising, Continency Plans, Serious Youth Violence/IOM/Gangs, Bail & Remand, Probations & Transitions	Various Training in house for staff.		Every Tuesday afternoon for 1 hour. (Feb – July)	

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# **Prevention Strategy**

## **(Croydon Youth Justice Service and Youth Engagement Team)**

### **DRAFT**

#### **Summary:**

In compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Youth Justice Team has a duty to prevent and reduce offending behaviour. In line with this core statutory duty this document sets out the prevention strategy applied in the London Borough of Croydon detailing operationally the prevention offer in collaboration with the Youth Engagement Team and the Voluntary Community Sector in addition to Primary Partners such as Education, Police, Health and Croydon Social Care.

#### **Definition of prevention and diversion (as set out by the Youth Justice board)**

##### **What is prevention?**

Prevention is support and intervention with children (and their parents/carers) who may be displaying behaviours which may indicate underlying needs or vulnerability. In practice this involves a tiered approach of early and targeted prevention. The aim being to address unmet needs, safeguard, promote positive outcomes and stop children entering the formal youth justice system.

##### **What is diversion?**

Diversion is where children with a linked offence receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation. This may involve the YJS delivering support / intervention that may or may not be voluntary and/or signposting children (and parent/carers) into relevant services. All support should be proportionate, aimed at addressing unmet needs and supporting prosocial life choices.

#### **Aims and objectives of the Prevention and Diversion programmes and projects**

The Croydon Youth Justice Service, in partnership with the Youth Engagement Team, aims to stop children from entering the youth justice system, and for young people who enter the youth justice system, to minimise occurrences of re-offending.

This is achieved through the child first approach which focuses on treating young people as children (rather than like adult offenders), empowering young people to develop their individual strengths and capacities, and to develop a pro-social identity. We also promote supportive diversion and try to minimise the stigma that stems from being involved with the youth justice system. Lastly, we aim to meaningfully involve young people in the decision making around the programmes we offer, ensuring that the work we do is tailored to the needs of the specific young people we work with, which encourages their engagement and social inclusion.

We do this by capturing the voice of the young people in regular quarterly consultation events, where young people who we work with are invited to take part and give us feedback on the work we do and the programmes we provide. We also provide questionnaire versions of the consultation, for young people who are unable to attend the consultation events.

Young people who take part in the consultation events, are then invited to represent the views of their peers in the Croydon Youth Assembly meetings.

### **Prevention programmes delivered in Schools and community:**

- **Safe and Well:**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to one of the following reasons:

- Had at least one fixed term exclusion or are approaching this
- Are displaying ASB in their local community and/or school
- Families have been affected by knife crime

The six-week programme focuses on building resilience in students alongside helping them identify and understand risky situations within their communities. The aim of the programme is designed to provide each student with a range of strategies to support and equip them to be their best self and identify problematic situations. A classroom with tables and chairs will be required.

Some specific areas of focus will include:

- Safety within and around the community
- Identifying different types of risky situations
- Behaviour
- Social skills and peer relationships

The programme is designed to be reflective and engaging with developing new skills, teaching students to learn about themselves being the foundation of the programme.

- **Exploitation Programme:**

This programme is used to create awareness around exploitation, in order to prevent and also help young people who are already victims or are at risk or becoming victims of domestic violence and or sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation (Grooming).

This programme will use different tools and resources to create awareness for young people and to identify if young people may need additional help if they are going through any of the issues mentioned or related issues.

This programme is delivered in mainstream schools, PRU's and youth provisions, such as the youth clubs, after school clubs and many other settings.

This programme is also delivered to young people who have been identified to be in the justice system, whereby young people can attend these sessions as part of their probation order.

This programme is aimed at young people between the ages of 11 – 18



- **Transition Programme:**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to schools concerns about making a successful transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

The programme is focused on increasing confidence and reducing anxiety in relation to moving from Year 6 to Year 7.

The Transition programme focuses on several areas for consideration linked to safety and wellbeing and also looks to inspire young people with the benefits they will gain for their future ambitions through secondary school and how the Youth Engagement Team and its partners can provide engagement outside of school.

- **Empower Me**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to one of the following reasons:

- At risk of being excluded
- Not being able to control their behaviour or manage their emotions effectively

The programme will empower young people and help them to be able to reflect on their emotions , look at how to channel negative emotions in positive ones and changing the meaning to the behaviour that is being displayed. It will also help them to be able to communicate effectively based on their emotional regulation.

- **Safe and Well**

Every Choice Matters was a schools workshops programme developed over several years in Wandsworth and was updated for Croydon in 2017. An MPS Commendation was awarded for this work and seen as best practice by the Youth Justice Board.

**The Aims are as follows:**

- To raise awareness of the consequences of SYV/ offending and harm related to this.
- To consider the impact on the victim, the perpetrator, family and community.
- To highlight the influence of social media on offending and offer strategies to deal with this.

**What is it and how does it work?**

- A workshop tool to prevent young people offending.
- The resource. One hour workshop. A short film, on screen questions and answers and interviews. Scripts written by young people, they act in it and it is filmed in their community.
- Outline- To be used as a discursive tool, to raise awareness of the consequences of offending.

Appropriate for young people aged 10 upwards. **Themes include: Knife Crime, Victim, Robbery, Moped enabled theft, Stop and Sear, Drug dealing, County Lines, Gangs, Sexual bullying, Homophobia, Social Media.**

- **Outreach and detached.**
- **Hubs**

## **Diversion Projects:**

- **Engage**

### **Turnaround Project**

The Turnaround Programme aims to provide early intervention to prevent and divert children aged 10-17 on the cusp of entering the youth justice system by improving outcomes for them. The programme is based on the Early Help model and uses a holistic and systemic approach.

The overall aims of the Turnaround programme are to: achieve positive outcomes to prevent young people going on to offend; ensure all young people on the cusp of the youth justice system are consistently offered a needs assessment and the opportunity for support; improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children.

### **What the Programme Offers**

- In line with the early help assessment processes, we complete a holistic assessment of the family within 30 days, create a plan, and hold Team Around the Family meetings. We will also complete a child friendly plan with the young people we are working with. We case record on CRS – Early Help module.
- Provides support to the family for up to 12-months.
- Work with parents and provide one to one intervention for young people around topics such: weapons awareness, victim awareness, consequential thinking, and exploitation.
- Signpost to appropriate services within the Council (in line with early help processes) i.e., parenting courses.
- Links to external services which we can utilise, such as education, training and employment opportunities, youth club/activities in the area, mentoring (Crystal Palace and Mentivity), substance use services and emotional well-being services.
- Referrals to the Education, Employment and Training Adviser and Speech and Language Therapist who sit within the YOS.
- Work with CLIP/Gangs team to organise workshops for our young people, including a Young Men's Group which includes intervention around identity.

### **Eligibility criteria:**

- Interviewed under caution following arrest or subject to a criminal investigation attending a voluntary interview.
- Subject to No Further Action (NFA) decision (including Outcome 22).
- Issued with a Community Resolution (Outcome 8).
- Receiving a first-time youth caution, not including conditional caution.

- Released under investigation (RUI) or those subject to pre-charge bail (PCB).
- Those discharged by a court.
- those acquitted at court; and/or those fined by a court.
- In receipt of Community Protection Orders (CPO), Civil Orders and/or Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) for anti-social behaviour.

**Referral Process:**

Referrals must be made within three months of a child meeting the eligibility criteria. Children referred to the Turnaround Programme are not eligible if they have an Early Help plan or another existing multi-agency programme of support. YOT's have the discretion to use Turnaround funding to fund interventions for cases that are open as children in need (CIN).

Children open to child protection plans and looked after children are ineligible for the Turnaround Programme. Children referred to Turnaround Programme are not eligible if they have previously been on the YJS statutory caseload or have received intervention from the Programme in the past.

**The programme receives referrals through:**

- Croydon Children's Social Care – MASH.
- Police send Merlin's regarding young people who have received Community Resolutions or have been arrested.
- If a young person is open on a Child In Need Plan, Social Workers can send a referral form to [YJSTurnaroundProgramme@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:YJSTurnaroundProgramme@croydon.gov.uk).

- **CLIP**
- **Service request**
- **Hubs**

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# Joint Working Protocol Children Social Care & Youth Justice Services



## Introduction

The vision of both Children's Social Care and the Youth Justice Service is to ensure that children are at the centre of practice and the practice model is underpinned by the application of a Child First Approach. A Child First Approach ensures that practitioners and managers deliver practice that promotes positive outcomes for children and where children are open to both services this is undertaken collaboratively.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets a legal framework that requires both Children's Social Care (CSC) and the Youth Justice Service (YJS), as a part of Children's Services to work together to prevent and reduce offending. Equally the Children Act 2004 requires us to work together to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people who we are responsible for. Recognising that the welfare of children and young people is a shared responsibility, all involved must aim for a consistent, continuous service underpinned by strong partnership working - within which resources are effectively managed. This protocol promotes best practice and provides a framework for its delivery.

Croydon Youth Justice Service is a specialist service within Croydon Children Social Care. This protocol operates within the YJS and other Children's Social Care Services. This protocol applies all Social Care teams including Early Help. The purpose of this protocol is to identify the framework within which the YJS and CSC jointly manage their respective responsibilities for children and young people involved in the Criminal Justice System and those at risk of offending by pooling resources, knowledge, and skills. The protocol does not override the statutory duties and responsibilities of services but seeks to clarify the roles and responsibilities to enhance effective partnership working.

### Working together, our goals are:

- To recognise that the young people we are working with are likely to have experienced significant trauma and adverse childhood experiences including domestic abuse and violence. Therefore, staff from both services will approach our joint work via a **systemic** and **trauma informed approach** that places the child at the centre of practice.
- To ensure children and young people at risk of entering, or already within, the Youth Justice System are as **safe as possible and to reduce the risk of further offending**, risk to self and risk to others within in the context of their own vulnerabilities. When increased vulnerabilities / risks are identified, they are jointly addressed without delay taking account of safety planning and contingency planning.
- To **reduce the likelihood of young people entering the youth justice system** or reoffending.
- To support young people to develop resilience and enable them to make safer choices and reach their potential.

The interests of children and young people open to both services will always be a priority. There are some children and young people who need to be given additional resource and support. As such, it is even more important that the local authority and

key partners take extra care to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of young people who are Children Looked After and those who are Care Experienced. Evidence and research show that these groups of young people are over-represented in the criminal justice system at a national level, and this needs to be tackled and addressed directly. Additionally, both Services should recognise that young black males and children of a mixed heritage are overrepresented within the Criminal Justice System and therefore this must also be considered and addressed in partnership.

### **Key Principles**

CSC and YJS staff will work to achieve these goals by:

- Working collaboratively to achieve the very best outcomes for our Children and young people by sharing our experience, knowledge, and skills to achieve positive outcomes.
- Working in the best interests of children and young people, ensuring they are not lost in transition between services or professional disputes.
- Taking joint responsibility in working collaboratively with children and young people using a relationship, child-first, and trauma informed approach.
- Recognising the impact of the young people's experiences, particularly in relation to separation, loss, trauma, transitions, and harm outside the home on their presentation and emotional needs.
- Ensuring that all forms of exploitation and serious youth violence are treated as safeguarding matters and utilising the London Child Protection Procedures and relevant local processes such as YJS Risk and Vulnerability Panel, Complex Adolescent Panel and Vulnerable and Safety Planning case discussions for 16+.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities, to ensure an effective multi-agency team around the child/ young person that complies with statutory responsibilities and best practice.
- Holding each other to account, to ensure young people get the right services at the right time taking into account their individual and diverse needs.
- Providing a targeted and joined up service to Children in Care and Black and other minorised groups who are recognised as being at greater risk of entering the Criminal Justice System.<sup>1 2</sup>

### **Legislation**

This protocol is underpinned by a range of legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Crime and Disorder Act (1998)**, section 17<sup>3</sup>, requires both CSC and YJS to work together to prevent offending and reduce reoffending and the appropriate sharing of information.

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### **Lammy Review**

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/section/17>

- **Children Act (2004)**<sup>4</sup> requires the YJS to work with CSC to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.
- **Children and Young Person Act (2008)**<sup>5</sup>
- **Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LAPSO, 2012)**<sup>6</sup> requires that children who are remanded into secure accommodation either by way of secure training centre or YOI or remanded into local authority care receive LAC status.
- **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.**
- The Statutory Guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**<sup>7</sup> emphasises the necessity for interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System (2019) from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.**

### Joint working and Information sharing

Professionals working with children and young people should share information as necessary and in accordance with agreed protocols.

#### **YJS and CSC workers should:**

- Work together to ensure that children and young people have meaningful plans that children and young people contribute to, are clear about outcomes, reflect the roles of all professionals involved and the range of support services being offered and that they avoid duplication and include sequencing.
- Hold joint supervision regularly (**at least every 2 months and more regularly in complex cases**), to reflect together on effective practice, and areas of practice development, reducing duplication where possible whilst working jointly to provide the most effective support to the young person. The aim to gain shared understanding and to apply solution focused methods to reach best outcomes for children and young people.

Work together effectively to manage the young person's needs through joint visits as necessary, invitation to and attendance at all relevant meetings and statutory reviews and supporting each other in ensuring effective analysis of risk and care and sentence planning.

- Record joint working and decision making in all assessments, records, and plans, on both information sharing systems, demonstrating the collaborative working and information sharing, and ensuring effective shared management of risk and safeguarding need is identified.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/23/contents>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/contents/enacted>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/592101/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children\\_20170213.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf)



- Agree how any risks will be managed, what escalated vulnerability and/or risk might look like and what the contingency plan is to address this, should it emerge.
- Ensure it is clear on the child's case notes what other services are working with the child and the named case worker from those other services and inform each other of any changes in workers.
- Only close the young person's case in consultation with all services involved. If there is any disagreement about this decision, then Service Managers should be consulted in line with Section 3.1 of this policy. For independent views to be ascertained where necessary from Safeguarding and Quality Assurance as directed by the Head of this Service
- Share information in a timely way that demonstrates an escalation of risk or significant change in circumstances, and contribute to each other's risk assessments, interventions or decisions being made.

### **Relationship management between CSC and YJS**

#### **Conflict resolution and escalation where there is a disagreement or case concern between Services.**

Where there are concerns about service delivery or disagreements about practice which can happen when views may differ, the aim should be to resolve these matters at the lowest possible level, and initially escalate via line managers as necessary. The aim is to resolve matters at a practice level, ensuring that the child(s) best interests are fundamental. Where issues are more complex these should be raised with respective Service Managers. In the unlikely event that resolution cannot be sought at this level the matter should be escalated to Heads of Service for overall decision making.

For further detail on escalation Practitioners and Managers should refer to:



SQA Resolution  
Framework January

### **Role of Managers**

**Team Managers** – in each service a designated Team Manager will champion Youth Justice and Social Care partnership work.

The YJS/CSC Champions will ensure:

- relevant updates are shared across the teams, including practice and policy updates.
- Lead in the implementation of this protocol.
- Be the point of contact within the service area on YJS issues and the fostering of partnership working.
- Tracking and supporting joint supervision and information sharing.

- Our Champion's will lead on raising awareness of and where relevant challenging disproportionality in the criminal justice system and our response and challenge.

**Service Managers will:**

- Service Managers have a key role in supporting their respective CSC/YJS Team Manager champions in ensuring effective partnership working across services. This includes supporting in the escalation of concerns and embedding this protocol into practice.
- Arranging and attending quarterly Practice and Partnership updates including Service Managers and CSC/YJS champions.
- The YJS Service Manager will attend Heads of Service Meetings as required to provide updates to be communication to respective service areas and YJS will also regularly attend Service Meetings to provide updates including the Induction meeting for new staff.

**The Head of Service, will:**

- Act as the designated lead for ensuring that the services are working together effectively to achieve the best outcomes for children known to Youth Justice.
- Strategically resolve issues that impact on the ability to comply with statutory responsibilities and best practice, affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of joint working.

**Roles and Responsibilities when there is YJS/CSC involvement.**

<b>Worried about a safeguarding concern in relation to a child</b>
<b>YJS role and actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow safeguarding procedures, ensuring workers inform their line manager immediately.</li> <li>• Contact Children's MASH immediately if the child is not already known to CSC.</li> <li>• If the child is known to CSC, contact the young person's allocated social worker or in their absence Line Manager and Duty Worker. This should be done by phone if urgent and followed up by email.</li> <li>• Provide information in line with best practice.</li> <li>• Attend strategy meetings, child protection conferences, core group meetings and children in need meetings where appropriate. If it is not possible for the case worker to attend, their line manager should attend in their place. Where no worker or manager is available to attend, the YJS Service Manager should be notified, and a written report must be signed off by YJS Team Manager and submitted.</li> <li>• Attend Team Around the Family Meetings when young people are support by Early Help services.</li> </ul>

- Invite the social worker to attend compliance panels, resettlement meetings, Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel and other important meetings that influence the plan around the child.

#### **CSC role and Action**

- Keep the YJS worker updated on decision making and any outcomes.
- Organise Strategy Meetings and s47 child protection enquiries, in accordance with Pan London Child Protection Procedures when required.
- Invite all relevant professionals including YJS and relevant professionals working with children and young people, to all multi-agency meetings.
- Where Serious Violence occurs ensure a Strategy meeting is held within 72 hours of incident (aim to be within 24 hours i.e., as soon as possible).

### **What to do when a young person is arrested including arrangement for an Appropriate Adult to attend the police station**

#### **YJS role and actions**

- Police will notify Social Care and YJS and where an appropriate adult cannot be identified will contact commissioned Service the Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS)
- The child's parent/carer or a trusted member of the extended family network will be invited to attend as the first point of call, if appropriate to do so.
- If the child is looked after by the Local Authority and their foster carer or residential keyworker should attend
- In the event that the parent/carer/residential worker is unable to attend and/or are the victims of the offence, the allocated Social Worker should attend as the appropriate adult where possible.
- If the child is a looked after child and placed out of borough, and the carer/keyworker is unable to attend, the Police will also contact TAAS and notify YJS and CSC.
- In the event an Appropriate Adult is required out of hours and a parent/carer/keyworker is unable to attend then the Police can rely on TAAS.

#### **CSC role and Actions**

- Police will Inform Social Care that the young person has been arrested if there isn't an allocated worker by way of Police Report (Merlin Form 78)
- Where allocated, the Social Worker should attempt to visit the young person at the Police Station or arrange for the most appropriate person to visit in accordance with the young person's needs.

- The Social Worker will liaise with the YJS and police to ensure that the young person's needs are being met and that appropriate plans are being made for when they leave the police station or attend Court.

## Court Hearings

### YJS role and Actions

YJS staff cannot act in 'loco parentis' when a child appears in court or at point of arrest. The child/ young person should be accompanied by their parent, carer or residential keyworker.

YJS staff will:

- Liaise closely with the allocated social worker and/or Social Care as soon as a court date is set to ensure the Social Worker is aware of the court date, venue, and time.
- Attend court and provide information as requested by the court.
- Liaise with the local YJS representative if the child appears in a court outside of the borough to ensure they have all the relevant information to support the hearing.
- In cases where bail support is required, the YJS case manager should liaise with the parents/carers and allocated SW regarding suitability of addresses, the engagement of family with any current plan to support recommendations of conditions to the bench. The YJS Worker will also discuss management of risk with Social Care including any safeguarding concerns to consider that may implicate bail decisions/conditions.

### CSC role and Action

For children who are **CIN or CP**, their Social Worker is expected to:

- Prioritise attending court hearings, particularly in cases at Crown Court or where child protection procedures are likely to be initiated.

For children who are **CLA**, their Social Worker is expected to:

- Prioritise attending all court hearings especially where the Child is subject to a Full Care Order.
- Always attend court hearings as corporate parent for any children looked after under s31<sup>8</sup> or s38 of Children Act 1989
- Always accompany a child to a hearing in Crown Court

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/31>

- Where the social worker/foster carer may be the victim of the crime or in other exceptional circumstances, the social worker's line manager should attend with the child or alternative Social Worker (Duty Worker).
- Provide YOS court staff with up to date and relevant information.
- Liaise with the carer/residential worker to arrange transport to and from the court and ensure that legal aid has been arranged.
- Notify YJS where a child has received a sentence outcome outside of the borough and has not previously been known to the YJS

**Provision of Accommodation under Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) If the police believe that between the child's arrest and attendance at Court there is sufficient risk within s38(1) PACE 1984, the police can ask for Local Authority accommodation or in exceptional circumstances Secure Accommodation**

#### **YJS role and Actions**

- The allocated worker should provide all relevant assessments and risk information to assist in identifying an appropriate placement. All staff should work in accordance with the ethos that children should not be in police custody overnight whether they meet the criteria of Concordat or not.
- The PACE champion should conduct quality assurance of the circumstance that led a child to be kept in custody overnight and challenge CSC and other agencies if necessary for future learning. The Croydon PACE champion is the YJS Service Manager.

#### **CSC role and Action**

- The allocated Social Worker or duty Social Worker should liaise with the police about the type of accommodation that they are requesting. The Social Worker should gain a detailed rationale of why the young person cannot have bail, return home or be placed in non-secure accommodation overnight.
- If the police are requesting Secure Accommodation, the Social Worker should establish the risk of serious harm that the officer has identified as the reason for making such a request.
- The Social Worker needs to follow practice guidance in relation to decisions for children to become Looked After i.e., discussions with the child, family and line management.
- In normal working hours the Social Worker should liaise with the placements service about ensuring that a referral is completed for appropriate placement searches to be undertaken.
- For out of hours requests, the EDT Social Worker should liaise with suitable accommodation providers, including where appropriate Secure

Accommodation provisions. The on-call Senior CSC Manager should be contacted.

- All children who have become Looked After without advance notice and planning need to be presented to Care Panel as soon as possible.
- The PACE champion should conduct quality assurance of the circumstance that led a child to be kept in custody overnight and challenge YOS and other agencies if necessary for future learning.

### **Croydon Child Looked After who offends and lives out of borough**

#### **YJS role and Actions**

##### **YJS case manager should:**

- Oversee the transfer/caretake of the case to the out of Borough (Host YJS) counterparts and manage the caretaking request.
- In instances where the child is looked after by the Local Authority, Croydon YJS will retain overall responsibility for the case, including any enforcement action and Court report requests.
- Provide support, advice and consultation to the allocated social worker.
- Liaise with the local host YJS (if required) to ensure clear communication, clarity of roles and plan of support for the child.
- Provide any information held regarding the child to the host YOS as required inform the allocated social worker of agreed care taking provision out of borough.
- Notify local Police that the young person/child is in their locality supplying all relevant information in relation to status/needs/risk.

##### **The Social Worker/Young Person's Adviser must:**

- Notify Croydon YJS if a child placed out of borough is involved in offending behaviour, as soon as possible after they become aware to ensure Croydon YJS liaises with local/host YJS.
- Notify YJS as soon as they become aware that a pre-sentence report is required for a CLA placed out of borough.
- Attend all relevant meetings and court hearing as they would if the young person was placed within the borough

### **Out of Court Disposals**

#### **YJS role and Actions**

- Seek to utilise the range of out of court disposal options for child (particularly children looked after) who commit low gravity offences and admit guilt.

- Seek to offer restorative mediation in appropriate cases to divert entry to the criminal justice service.
- Liaise with the young person's allocated Social Worker for pre panel checks and once an out of court disposal has been decided upon.
- Inform allocated Social Worker of outcome and provide details of intended work, noting any existing plans that are in place by social care to avoid duplication or conflict with objectives.

#### **CSC role and Action**

- Alert YJS to cases where Croydon Children and young people who are Looked After and placed out of the Borough are arrested so that all opportunities can be taken to support appropriate disposals and sentencing at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest level, so that out of court disposals are achieved wherever possible in order to reduce the criminalisation of our young people.
- Ensure an appropriate adult attends the out of court disposal meeting with the child. If this is a child Looked After it will be their carer, residential keyworker or social worker. If the child is in need (CIN) or in need of protection this should be the child's parent or carer or another appropriate adult in the child's network. In exceptional circumstances the CIN social worker will attend.

### **Community Orders**

#### **YJS role and Actions**

- To ensure Social Worker is informed of involvement and provided with copy of sentence paperwork and where available assessment and pre-sentence report.
- To share a copy of YJS Plan and to ensure it accounts for any pre-existing plans and avoids conflict or duplication.
- To regularly share information on attendance, engagement, content.
- To notify Social Care with any safeguarding concerns or disclosures.
- To attend meetings as required and requested on allocated young person.

To ensure Social Care are embedded within YJS processes including discussions around enforcement should it arise.

Where required to undertake joint home visits.

To work together to promote the best interests of the child

#### **CSC role and action**

- To ensure information is shared and updates are provided.
- To ensure YJS has a copy of all relevant and active plans in place.
- To attend YJS meetings as requested including compliance panels.
- To invite YJS to all relevant Social Care meetings held on a child known.
- To work together to promote the best interested of the child.

### **Child made subject to Remand in Local Authority Accommodation (RILAA)**

RILAA decisions are made in court are often after the YJS has enquired and confirmed there are no other suitable family addresses for the child to reside for bail purposes and where remand to custody is the likely alternative. The Court may use this form of remand where they feel home or suggested alternative arrangements are not suitable.

#### **YJS role and Actions**

YJS Court Manager or Case Manager should:

- Put forward a range of bail packages in an attempt to divert from a child needing to be RILAA.
- Notify CSC (or the child's allocated Social Worker if they have one) and the Placements Team at the earliest opportunity to notify there could be a potential Remand to LA
- If RILAA is granted inform Social Worker and Placements Team
- Provide CSC with timely information to inform the search for an appropriate placement, including any current assessments on the range of risk concerns, behaviors and protective factors to support identification of suitable placements Ensure Crown Prosecution Summary is shared when available.
- Discuss possible remand condition recommendations with the Social Worker
- Send the remand information (including conditions) and a copy of the bail assessment to Social Worker via secure email.
- If the child already has a YJS case manager, they should accompany the child and the Social Worker to the placement, particularly where the child does not have an allocated Social Worker at the point of remand.
- Social Care to complete an assessment and pathway plan for the child during the remand period. In the event that the child is placed outside the borough for the duration of the remand, liaise with the YJS in the borough in which the child is placed to ensure the child receives the services required as part of their conditions of remand. This will be managed in line with Pan London YJS Protocol and agreements regarding care taking between YJS's.
- In some instances, the RILAA is not accompanied by a requirement to engage with YJS. In these situations, the YJS will still allocate the case to ensure there is YJS oversight and where there is attached conditions the YJS will ensure that appointments are being held and national standards are followed.

**For CIN children, YJS staff should:**

- Liaise with Social Worker to identify if there are any other suitable address options for the child to reside.
- Notify the Social Worker, deputy and team manager.



- Notify the Social Worker of any conditions of the remand and explain what the YJS role (if any) will be.
- Notify the Social Worker of the next court appearance.
- Ensure all relevant information is shared with the Placements Team

### **CSC role and Action**

If the young person is already allocated as CIN, the Social Worker should:

- Notify the Children's placements team and complete the placement request form by triggering the Becoming Looked After (BLA) process on CRS.
- Notify the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team within 24 hours as an IRO will need to be allocated.
- Facilitate a transfer to CLA if the remand period is to be greater than 12 weeks. Otherwise, CIN will remain responsible for this looked after period and follow CLA procedures.

If child is not known to CSC should:

- YJS to make contact with MASH and complete referral paperwork.

### **CIN/CLA allocated, or duty Social Worker must:**

- Collect the child from court and transport them to their placement.
- Comply with care planning regulations.
- Assess the placement required, involving YJS in this planning – the responsibility for final placement decision rests with CSC. Complete the placement specification form and submit to the placements team.
- Involve YJS if any proposed change to placement during the remand period, especially in consideration of increased risk of reoffending. This is essential where there are conditions attached to the RILAA to engage in YJS packages.
- Consult with Croydon YJS if there are gang or Serious Youth Violence concerns and it is deemed necessary in safeguarding the child or others, to request a police officer check on any proposed new placement addresses.
- Arrange and where necessary fund escorts for the transportation to the placement and future court hearings when the child is subject to RILAA.
- Carry out a children and family assessment to consider the needs during and beyond the end of the remand period and complete the **Care Plan** and **Placement Plan** within 5 working days of the child being remanded.
  - Where the child is Looked After only by reason of being RILAA, the Care Plan does not need to include the plan for permanence/long term plan for the child's upbringing. Otherwise, the care planning arrangements are the same as for all other looked after children.

- Review the Care Plan in line with procedures for all children looked after.
- [Please see Croydon's Children's Services Procedures Manual](#)

**Child made subject to remand into Youth Detention Accommodation – often referred to as the Secure Estate - (YDA) where the child was NOT already looked after**

**YJS role and actions**

- Notify CSC (or the child's allocated Social Worker if they have one) as soon as a remand into the Secure Estate looks likely to be considered or is made and confirm details of secure estate.
- YJS Court Support to notify Social Care of remand to update status on system and to ensure the financial element is accounted for.
- Provide CSC with timely information to inform their assessments, including any current YOS assessments on the range of risk concerns, behaviours and protective factors.
- Send the remand to YDA information (including conditions) and a copy of the bail assessment to CSC or SW via secure email. Also email any other relevant information to CSC if the child is already known to YJS.
- Send all up-to-date paperwork to the Youth Custody Service (YCS) regarding risks, safety and needs.
- Make clear and defensible recommendations regarding placements in the secure estate via the Youth Justice Placements Team.
- Attend the initial review remand meetings chaired by the secure establishment and notify and invite the social worker to attend within 10 working days.
- Coincide YJS visits with Children's Social Care CLA meetings (e.g., CLA Reviews, Pathway Plan reviews) wherever appropriate. On occasions when the YOS case manager is unable to attend and meetings their line manager should attend in their absence.
- Produce and submit a written report for all remand and CLA reviews.
- Provide information about subsequent court appearances and other relevant information to the allocated social worker as soon as the information is available to assist planning.
- Liaise closely with the social worker regarding potential sentence outcomes and what support will be offered (if any) following remand to inform defensible sentencing recommendations in addition to any potential bail applications.

<b>CSC role and Action</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team within 24 hours, for allocation of an IRO by triggering the BLA (Becoming Looked After Process on Information System). A Placement Request must also be completed.</li> <li>• Complete a child and family assessment considering the needs both during the period of remand to YDA and following the Court hearing, unless completed within the preceding 12 weeks in which case it will be updated via a Looked After Child Review.</li> <li>• Visit the child within 5 working days and whenever reasonably requested to do so by the Governor, Director, or Registered Manager of the Youth Detention Accommodation.</li> <li>• Prepare a <b>Detention Placement Plan</b> (DPP) within 10 working days of the remand. Please</li> </ul>

<b>Child made subject to remand into the Youth Detention Accommodation - where the child is already looked after</b>
<b>YJS role and Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send the remand information (including conditions and details of secure estate) and a copy of the bail assessment to the SW via secure email. Also email any other relevant information to if the child is already known to YJS.</li> <li>• Send all up-to-date paperwork to the YJB regarding risks, safety and needs.</li> <li>• Make clear and defensible recommendations regarding placements in the secure estate via the Youth Justice Board.</li> <li>• Attend the initial and review remand meetings chaired by the secure establishment and notify and invite the social worker to attend.</li> <li>• Coincide YJS visits with Children’s Social Care CLA meetings (e.g., CLA Reviews, Pathway Plan reviews) wherever appropriate. On occasions when the YJS case manager is unable to attend their line manager should attend.</li> <li>• Produce and submit a written report for all reviews.</li> <li>• Provide information about subsequent court appearances and other relevant information to the allocated social worker as soon as the information is available to assist planning.</li> <li>• Liaise closely with the social worker regarding potential sentence outcomes and what support will be offered (if any) following remand to inform defensible sentencing recommendations.</li> </ul>
<b>CSC role and Action</b>

- Ensure change of circumstance is recorded onto system and that the Independent Reviewing Officer is notified including placement details.
- Ensure Looked after reviews are organized and YJS are notified of intended dates.
- Prepare a **Detention Placement Plan (DPP)** within 10 working days of the remand. The DPP will replace the Placement Plan. ensure the DPP is agreed, and signed by, the Governor, Director or Registered Manager in the secure estate.
- Ensure that the child is provided with appropriate health care services, in accordance with the DPP, including mental and dental care and treatment, and advice and guidance on health, personal care and health promotional issues. This information should be submitted to the designated doctor for looked after children. NB. The provisions as to Health Assessments do not apply.

<b>Custodial Sentences</b>
<b>YJS role and actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Social Care are informed of sentence details and location.</li> <li>• Ensure that Social Care are added to contacts within the secure estate.</li> <li>• To ensure that Social Care are aware of planned visits.</li> <li>• To invite Social Care to planning review meetings chaired by the secure estate where discussions on resettlement are had.</li> <li>• To ensure that Social Care are invited to RVMP and/or the Resettlement Panel to discuss release and licence conditions.</li> <li>• To ensure that all resettlement plans are jointly worked upon and agreed.</li> </ul>
<b>CSC role and Action</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at YJS and Secure Estate meetings.</li> <li>• To ensure that plans are made for release at earliest opportunity in consultation with the YJS.</li> <li>• Where the young person is CLA to ensure that allowances are provided or saved for, and the basic needs of the young person are considered both whilst in custody and as part of resettlement.</li> <li>• Please see Croydon Children’s Services Procedures Manual  <a href="https://www.proceduresonline.com/croydon/cs/p_rem_la_yth_det_accomm.htm">https://www.proceduresonline.com/croydon/cs/p_rem_la_yth_det_accomm.htm</a>   </li> </ul>

<b>Resettlement</b>
<b>YJS role and actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To jointly plan with Social Care at the earliest opportunity release plans particularly where accommodation may be a difficulty.</li> <li>• Ensure there is a joined-up approach with risk management and other aspects of release support planning.</li> </ul>

- To ensure that young people are consulted with on their resettlement plans, using a strength-based approach and plans are clearly communicated with young people in advance of their departure from the secure estate.
- To ensure that children exiting custody are provided with follow up appointments in areas such as health and education.

### **CSC role and Action**

- To liaise with YJS on placement referrals and considerations including location
- To work jointly with YJS to devise the license and consider resettlement plans, in consultation with the young person.

### **Court Sentences**

<b>Court Outcome</b>	<b>YOS Actions</b>	<b>CSC Actions</b>
<p><b>Community Sentence</b> where the Child is CLA to Croydon but placed outside of the borough.</p> <p>Where a Child who is Looked After is placed outside of the borough and is sentenced to a community-based youth order, Croydon YJS remain responsible for that young person as the 'home' YJS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and track the child's progress and compliance with that order and record this on the YJS database.</li> <li>• Liaise with the allocated social worker periodically on any potential placement changes, progress or further reoffending.</li> <li>• Prosecute any breach, in line with YJS breaching protocol, in the event the child breaches that order.</li> <li>• Prepare a pre-sentence report for any further offending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with the allocated YJS case worker in the local area and be involved in a plan of support to prevent further offending.</li> <li>• Notify home YJS worker of any breakdown in placements or further concerns.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Referral Orders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make every effort to convene the panel in accordance with National Standards at a time and place convenient for the child and their representative, although the wishes and needs of the victim take priority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event that a CLA under s31/s38 is sentenced to a Referral Order the court will direct a representative from CSC (SW or carer) to attend the Referral Order Panel alongside the parent if appropriate. For a</li> </ul>

		<p>child under s20 or a child is CIN a parent must attend alongside the carer or social worker where appropriate.</p>
<p>Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO) – Residence Requirement The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 introduced the YRO. The YRO contains up to 18 requirements, three of which relate directly to joint work between YOS and CSC. The residence requirement (for 16- and 17-year-olds) and local authority residence requirement can be made by the Court on the recommendation of the YJS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an assessment.</li> <li>• Liaise with the allocated Social Work team or CSCT to ensure that a referral for a placement is identified at the earliest possible stage.</li> <li>• Consult fully with the allocated social worker regarding any recommendation for Local Authority Residence Requirement.</li> <li>• Be responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of the Requirement.</li> <li>• In the situation that a Local Authority Residence Requirement is put in place, then the young person will be considered a Looked After child for the duration of the Requirement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the child with a CLA Service when they are subject to an YRO with a Local Authority Residence Requirement, as the young person will be considered a Looked After Child for the duration of the Requirement and whilst the young person is in a placement.</li> <li>• The Social Worker must therefore follow all procedures for Children Looked After.</li> <li>• Identify suitable accommodation for the child and inform the YJS of the address.</li> <li>• Under s23 CA 1989, the Local Authority has a duty to assess the young person's needs, create a plan and then review the young person's ongoing care and accommodation for the duration of the order.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child not CLA - assessment decision to continue support as a CiN case</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Social Worker will:</li> <li>• Visit the child every 4 weekly.</li> <li>• Work with the child and family on a CIN basis and provide intervention, support</li> </ul>

		<p>and planning in line with CIN procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>liaise with criminal justice services to support the young person emotionally, practically, and financially whilst in custody.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child is not CLA – assessment decision to end support</b></p>	<p>YJS case manager should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a referral to Social Care if there are concerns during the child’s custodial sentence where there are safeguarding concerns that require a reassessment of need.</li> <li>Refer the young person to MASH 6 weeks prior to the end of the sentence to enable a threshold decision around services to be made.</li> <li>Refer relevant qualifying cases to MAPPA 6 months prior to release, notify CSC and ensure they are invited to attend.</li> </ul>	<p>Service Manager for CIN/CLA/should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree any recommendation not to continue to offer support.</li> <li>If continuing support will not be provided, the designated CSC Team Manager will inform the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the child’s case manager in the YJS.</li> <li>the Governor or Manager of the custodial establishment.</li> <li>the child/young person</li> <li>their parents and others with parental responsibility</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Custodial Sentence – expectations by child’s status</b></p> <p>Child Protection Plan or Child in Need</p>		<p>When a child on a <u>Child Protection Plan</u> enters custody, <b>the SW should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring forward their Review Child Protection Conference date to a date agreed with the CP Coordinator</li> <li>Complete an updated C&amp;F assessment that complies with the regulations.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Review Child Protection Conference will decide whether to continue the Child Protection Plan or whether it should end.</li> <li>• If a child was on a <u>Child in Need Plan</u>, <b>the SW should:</b></li> <li>• Complete an updated C&amp;F assessment.</li> <li>• Organise a Child in Need Meeting within 4 weeks to decide as to whether the CIN Plan will continue or end</li> </ul>
<b>Custodial Sentence – Care Order</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the child is subject to a care order s/he remains looked after and care planning and review will continue whilst the young person is in custody.</li> </ul>
<b>Custodial Sentence - 'Relevant'<sup>9</sup> and Former Relevant<sup>10</sup> children (See Appendix E)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those children who become 'relevant' children on receiving a custodial sentence will receive services in accordance with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. This includes the period whilst the child has been on remand.</li> <li>• It is required that continuing leaving care support is available to relevant</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Relevant child - YP aged 16 or 17 no longer looked after, who were looked after for a total of 13 weeks after reaching the age of 14, including at least 1 day while they were 16 or 17.

<sup>10</sup> Former Relevant - YP aged 18-21 who has been an eligible and/or relevant child in care.



		<p>or former relevant children if they are convicted and sentenced to a community sentence, or imprisonment.</p>
<p>Custodial Sentence – Qualifying Children <sup>11</sup> (See Appendix E)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a child becomes looked after for a period after the age of 16 as a result of being remanded and then receives a custodial sentence before they become an Eligible<sup>12</sup> child, they are likely to become a Qualifying child.</li> <li>• The CLA team responsible for supporting the child during the remand period will need to follow the provisions of the Visits to Former Looked After Children in Detention Regulations (2010). As part of the assessment the <b>SW should:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider whether the child (if not relevant) may need further support. If required, the child should be referred to IF for support as a Qualifying child.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Children not deemed as 'Relevant' on being sentence to custody. (See Appendix E)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the child was accommodated under s20 or was RILAA s/he ceases to be looked after on</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Qualifying YP – YP who has been looked after at any time after reaching the age of 16 but was not looked after for 13 weeks or more, so neither Eligible nor Relevant.

<sup>12</sup> Eligible child is a child still in care aged 16 and 17 who has been looked after for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14.

		<p>being sentenced to custody. However, regardless of how long the child was a CLA prior to the sentence, the Former Looked After Children in Detention (England) Regulations (Nov 2010) apply.</p> <p><b>The Social Worker must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit the child within 10 working days to assess their needs.</li> <li>• Make recommendations about any appropriate advice, support and assistance the child needs which, where necessary, could include arranging for their accommodation on release, which might involve planning for them to be Looked After again.</li> </ul>
<p>On release from prison Resettlement planning within the custodial estate will commence at the start of sentence.</p>	<p>YJS Team Manager should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call a Resettlement Planning Meeting (in the community) three months prior to release.</li> <li>• Ensure the meeting follows the 7 pathways to resettlement as per best practice guidance (see separate policy on resettlement). This will seek to explore licence conditions, and the plan for release to enable a smooth transition. A review of the YJS</li> </ul>	<p>Social Worker (and Placements Team where appropriate) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend the Resettlement Planning Meeting and reviews hosted by Secure Estate and YJS</li> <li>• In the case of Relevant and Former Relevant care leavers, the Social Worker should inform a care leaver no later than 14 days before release, notifying them of who is collecting them;</li> </ul>

	<p>pathway plan should take place followed by the resettlement planning meeting in order to give sufficient time. Effective planning should take place to ensure the young person is able to move into suitable accommodation.</p>	<p>where they will be living; the reporting arrangements; sources of community support; arrangements for education and employment and meeting their health needs and finances. The Social Worker should inform them when they will next see their Social Worker and the roles and responsibilities of the respective leaving care and YJS/Probation staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange a joint meeting with the young person and supervising YJS/Probation officer to share information and ensure the young person receives an integrated service.</li> <li>• Ensure that where accommodation is a consideration a placement referral is completed in timely advance of release.</li> </ul>
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### **Risk Management and Safety Planning Panels**

The relevant YJS or CSC worker (or their manager) should attend relevant **Panels** (e.g., RVMP and MAPP). Where cases are jointly held across CSC and YOS both workers may be required to attend.

<b>Meeting Name and Purpose</b>	<b>YJS workers roles and responsibilities</b>	<b>Allocated Social Worker's roles and responsibilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Vulnerability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite social worker from Social Care to attend RVMP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend RVMP where a child on their caseload is</li> </ul>

<p>Management Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a YJS Panel to ensure multi agency oversight of children on a YJS order or disposal to ensure effective management and monitoring where risks are identified as high.</li> </ul>	<p>meetings where their child is being discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance and contributions</li> </ul>	<p>being discussed, to feed into the process for ensuring that any risks to the child or risks the child poses to others are being effectively managed and monitored. If in exceptional circumstances the SW cannot attend, their line manager should attend, and a written update should be submitted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements MAPPA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure MAPPA are notified within 5 working days following sentence where eligibility is met (any young person made subject to custody for a period of 12 months or more for a sexual or violent offence).</li> <li>To ensure all eligible cases are brought to RVMP 6 months prior to release.</li> <li>To complete all screening paperwork to consider the MAPPA Level (Level 1 is retained by YJS)</li> <li>To notify MAPPA admin that we are agreed to retain risk management where level 1 is endorsed.</li> <li>Where MAPPA Level 2 or 3 is agreed to complete referral paperwork and notify the MAPPA admin or our decision</li> </ul>	<p>Social Worker should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To co-attend RVMP to jointly screen for MAPPA levels.</li> <li>Where MAPPA level 2 or 3 is decided to ensure attendance at all MAPPA hearings and to ensure preparation has been completed.</li> </ul> <p>CSC Deputy or Team Managers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend all Level 3 MAPPA meetings (highest risk – typically cases where there is imminent risk to public or media coverage).</li> <li>Attend Level 2 meetings if possible.</li> <li>To ensure all MAPPA attendance and minutes are recorded onto Social Care IT system.</li> </ul>

	<p>requesting a case hearing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1 cases will remain to be oversighted via RVMP.</li> <li>• Level 2 and above will be coordinated by the probation and police – the police will chair at MAPPAs and only removed when risk is viewed as reduced. In these instances, MAPPAs will notify YJS that a decision has been made for them to resume risk management at Level 1.</li> <li>• YJS Staff and YJS MAPPAs Lead to ensure that there is attendance at all young people’s hearings at MAPPAs and that preparation has been completed.</li> <li>• To ensure in all MAPPAs eligible cases the Victim Liaison Unit is notified of agreed MAPPAs levels, suggestion licence conditions.</li> <li>• To ensure MAPPAs attendance and minutes are recorded onto YJS system.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex Case Panel (CAP)</li> <li>• Social Care led panel: Reviewing children where sexual and/or Criminal Exploitation is</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there is no duplication of discussion at RVMP.</li> <li>• To send information held by YJS in advance of weekly panel.</li> <li>• To ensure there is YJS Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW to refer into CAP and notify YJS Officer</li> <li>• Consult with YJs on NRM</li> <li>• Jointly attend CAP with YJS to present joint work</li> </ul>

evident and making decisions on National Mechanism Referrals (NRM) for children criminal exploited via county-lines	representative at Panel to provide Operational updates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure YJS staff attend discussions if known.</li> <li>Ensure all minutes are transferred to YJS IT system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Actions are clearly assigned between SW and YJS Officer</li> </ul>
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### Key Contacts

#### **Youth Justice:**

Direct telephone number: 020 8404 5800

Generic email address: [croydonYJS@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:croydonYJS@croydon.gov.uk)

Secure email - [croydonyos@croydon.gov.uk.cjism.net](mailto:croydonyos@croydon.gov.uk.cjism.net)

YJS Court number: 0208 255 2777

#### **MASH:**

Direct telephone numbers: 020 8255 2888

Generic email address: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

#### **Placements:**

Direct telephone number:

Generic email address: [ChildrenPlacementsTeam@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrenPlacementsTeam@croydon.gov.uk)

**Croydon Council main number:** 0208726 6000

Version	Author	Name	Approved By	Name	Date	Review Date
1	Service Managers YJS & 16+ Young Peoples Services	Emma Carter & James Moore	Director Children's Social Care	Róisín Madden	July 2023	July 2025

## **Appendix A: Legal and Policy Framework**

This Protocol is informed by: -

- Children Act 1989
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Guidance for Youth Offending Teams on Information Sharing (Youth Justice Board 2000)
- Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children Act 2004
- Common Assessment Framework. Department for Children, Schools, and Families 2004
- Every Child Matters. Department for Children, Schools, and Families 2005
- Sharing Personal and Sensitive Personal Information on Children and Young People at Risk of Offending (Youth Justice Board (2005)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children Department for Children, Schools, and Families (2013)
- Court - Ordered Secure Remands and Remands to Prison Custody Guidance note to youth offending teams and Secure Establishments (*Youth Justice board 2008*)
- Information Sharing: Further guidance on legal issues Department for Children, Schools, and Families
- HMIP Core Case Inspection Criteria 2009
- Former Looked After Children in Detention (England) Regulations (Nov 2010)
- London Child Protection Procedures (Dec 2010)
- Placement and Case Review
- Care Planning Regulations 2010/ 2013
- Planning transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers
- Statutory Guidance on Care Leavers Regulations 2010
- National Standards for Youth Justice Services, 2022
- YJB Case Management Guidance October 2022

## **Appendix B: Detention Placement Plans**

The Detention Placement Plan must:

Set out how the Youth Detention Accommodation will contribute to meeting the child's needs.

Include the address of the Youth Detention Accommodation.

Be agreed with, and signed by, the Governor, Director, or Registered Manager of the Youth Detention Accommodation.

Include:

- How, on a day-to-day basis, the child will be cared for, and the child's welfare, will be safeguarded and promoted.
- Any arrangements made for contact between the child and parents/persons with Parental Responsibility/[Connected Persons](#) including, if appropriate, the reasons why contact would not be reasonably practicable or would not be consistent with the child's welfare; details of any orders made under sections 8 or 34 of the Children Act 1989;
- The arrangements made for the child's health (including physical, emotional, and mental health) and dental care including any arrangements for the giving or withholding of consent to medical or dental examination or treatment.
- The arrangements made for the child's education and training.
- The arrangements made for social worker visits, the frequency of visits and the arrangements made for advice, support and assistance to be available to the child between visits.
- If an [Independent Visitor](#) is appointed, the arrangements made for them to visit the child
- The child's personal history, religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background, and racial origin.
- The name and contact details of:
  - The [Independent Reviewing Officer](#);
  - The Independent Visitor (if one is appointed).
  - The social worker.
  - The [Personal Adviser](#) appointed if the child is an [Eligible](#) child;
- The responsible authority must ensure:
  - That the child's wishes and feelings have been ascertained and given due consideration.
- New Reg 39.

In any case where young person is not in the care of the responsible authority and is not likely to be an eligible child when the local authority cease to look after him, the care plan (or where regulation 47B(4) applies, the detention placement plan) must include details of the advice, assistance and support that the responsible authority intend to provide for the young person when they are no longer looked after by them



## **Appendix C: Initial Sentence Planning Meeting**

The Initial Sentence Planning Meeting takes place within **10 days of sentence**. It looks at the support the child requires during the sentence and sets targets for successful resettlement.

### **YJS case manager should:**

- Arrange with the case manager at the secure establishment the date of the Initial Sentence Planning Meeting
- Ensure the allocated social worker and parents (if appropriate) are invited.
- Attend the Initial Sentence Planning Meeting

### **SW should:**

- Attend the Initial Sentence Planning Meeting

The Initial Sentence Planning Meeting will cover the following areas:

- Is there a risk of self harm?
- What is the child's emotional state?
- Does the child need money, clothes, books or other practical support?
- Are education staff aware of, and able to meet, the child's educational needs, including any special needs or abilities?
- Are the health unit and wing staff aware of, and able to meet, the child's health needs?
- Are staff aware of, and able to meet, the child's religious and cultural needs?
- Is the child worried about anything? If so, what? Does the child understand how they can access advocacy and other services to express any concerns and make their views known?
- Are the child's parents able to fulfil their parental responsibility to the child whilst in custody?
- Has there been a change in the parents' capacity to enable them to resume care of the child on his release in a way that will meet the child's needs? If not, might additional support be provided to enable the parents to be able to resume care of the child?
- If it is not appropriate for the child to return home or to become looked after again, what alternative arrangements need to be made?
- The wishes and feelings of the child's parents', or others with parental responsibility, must be sought.

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<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13 DECEMBER 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>REPORT ON THE USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY FOR KEY DECISIONS AND EXEMPTION FROM CALL-IN APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2023</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>JANE WEST</b>  <b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>STEPHEN LAWRENCE-ORUMWENSE</b>  <b>DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND MONITORING OFFICER</b>  Email: <a href="mailto:stephen.lawrence-orumwense@croydon.gov.uk">stephen.lawrence-orumwense@croydon.gov.uk</a>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>MAYOR JASON PERRY</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	REASON: N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>PUBLIC</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	

### 1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. In accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules (Part 4B of the Constitution), the Executive Mayor is required to submit a report to Council on the use of Special Urgency for key decisions.
- 1.2. This report details the cases where Special Urgency has been used between April and November 2023.
- 1.3. In accordance with the Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules (Part 4E of the Constitution) the Executive Mayor is also required to submit a report to Council on the use of the exemption from call-in powers agreed by the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee at least annually.
- 1.4. Therefore this report also details the cases where Exemption from call-in powers have been used between April and November 2023.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. For the reasons set out in the report Council is recommended:

1. To note the use of Special Urgency for the key decisions listed at section 4.4 of this report during the period April to November 2023.

2. To note the use of Exemption from Call-in for the key decisions listed at section 5.3 of this report during the period April to November 2023.

### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As noted in paragraph 1.1, there is a requirement within the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution that Council will receive a quarterly report on decisions taken under Special Urgency provisions.
- 3.2 As noted in paragraph 1.3, there is a requirement within the Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution that Council must receive a report at least annually on the use of the Exemption from call-in powers.

### 4 SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS

- 4.1 The proposed making of a key decision requires the giving of 28 days' prior public notice. Where the giving of such notice is impracticable the Constitution provides both General Exception and Special Urgency provisions. The General Exception provisions require, amongst other things, a period of five clear working days' notice to be given. Where compliance with the General Exception principle is impractical the decision can be taken under the Special Urgency provisions. In cases of Special Urgency the decision may only be made where the decision maker has obtained agreement that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred from:

- a) The Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee; or
- b) If there is not such person, or if the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee is unable to act, the Chair of the Council; or
- c) Where there is no Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee or Chair of the Council, the Deputy Chair of the Council.

- 4.2 There has been six cases of the use of Special Urgency procedures during this period which the Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee approved after consideration.
- 4.3 Following the approval of the Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee six notices were published and circulated to all Members of the Council stating the decision had been made and included the report upon which the decision was based.
- 4.4 During this period the provision of Special Urgency has been used for the following:

Decision Title	Decision number	Decision maker	Reason for Special Urgency	Date SU notice published	Date decision notice published
<a href="#">Acquisition of Land sites, Regina Road and Malton</a>	0423RES	Corporate Director of Resources	The acquisition of these two sites was included within a Report to Cabinet on 30th November 2022 where the	27 March 2023	27 March 2023

<a href="#">House, from Brick by Brick Croydon Ltd</a>			<p>decision to delegate the authority to the Corporate Director Resources in consultation with the Cabinet members for Finance and Housing was taken.</p> <p>The terms for the purchase have only just been agreed and there is urgency due to the time constraints within the existing Option Agreements.</p> <p>Individually the two purchases are less than £1m but it has been decided that as they are linked to the same scheme, they should be combined for transparency thereby making this a key decision.</p> <p>Due to the time restrictions within the Option Agreement</p>		
<a href="#">Increasing Housing Supply - purchase of Brick by Brick Trellis Mews (Avenue Road)</a>	0523RES	Corporate Director of Resources	The purchase needs to complete by the 28 March 2023 to secure the £1.2m GLA funding.	27 March 2023	27 March 2023
<a href="#">Council Tax Hardship Scheme</a>	2223EM	Executive Mayor	<p>The government have only recently given Croydon council permission to increase council tax above the national limit without seeking a referendum.</p> <p>The decision to make available a Council Tax Hardship Scheme must be taken urgently to support residents in financial hardship.</p> <p>This decision cannot wait as the annual Council Tax bills including the 14.99% increase have already been issued to Croydon residents.</p>	6 April 2023	6 April 2023
<a href="#">Heating Services</a>	4623EM	Executive Mayor in Cabinet	Any delay to taking this decision reduces the mobilisation period for the new Heating Contractor which will increase the	24 May 2023	24 May 2023

<a href="#">Procurement - Revised Award</a>			chances of disruption for residents when the new contract commences on 1 August 2023. In the event there was no new contract in place by 1 August 2023 there would be further disruption for residents and potentially a period with no service provision.		
<a href="#">Parking Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Camera Contract exit</a>	1823SCRE	Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	The Council is exiting an existing contract early.  Negotiated exit requiring timely agreement in order to appoint a new supplier.  Accordingly, the Settlement must be signed by both parties urgently.	18 July 2023	19 July 2023
<a href="#">The Colonnades, 619 Purley Way, Croydon CR0 4RQ – Asset Disposal</a>	7523F	Corporate Director of Resources	An administrative error setting the decision status to 'Abandoned' has given need for the decision to be republished on the Forward Plan under Special Urgency procedures.  The decision is time sensitive as legals have been agreed by both parties and the council is now in a position to exchange.	10 October 2023	10 October 2023

4.5 More detail on each decision is available by clicking on the links in the table above or by visiting the website at: [Decisions](#)

4.6 Members will note that Council agreed at its meeting on 23 March 2022 to amend the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in Part 4B of the Constitution. One of the agreed amendments, set out in rule 34.1 of Part 4B was to increase the frequency of any future reports to Council by the Executive Mayor on the use of Special Urgency from annually to quarterly. Reports are now presented to full Council on a quarterly basis by the Executive Mayor containing details of each executive decision taken during the period since the last report was submitted to Council where the making of the decision was agreed as urgent in accordance with Special Urgency requirements set out in rule 32.

## 5. EXEMPTION FROM CALL-IN PROCEDURES

5.1. There are instances when although 28 day notice has been given, it is not practicable for a key decision to be subject to the call-in process. This would be on the grounds that in the decision-maker's opinion any delay to implementation of the decision would

have an undue impact on delivery and would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interests. Tis the When such a decision is proposed, it is within the power of the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to agree that the proposed decision cannot be reasonably deferred and that it is urgent on this basis, in which case it will be exempt from the call-in process. The record of the decision and the notice by which it is made public must state if it is urgent on this basis, and therefore not subject to the call-in process.

5.2. In the period since the last report to Council there has been one decision which the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee has agreed could be exempt from the call-in process due on the grounds of urgency.

5.3. During this period the exemption from the Call-In Process has been used for the following:

Decision Title	Decision number	Decision maker	Reason for exemption from Call-in process	Date decision notice published
<a href="#">Contract Award ANPR Camera Supply, Installation and Support (Maintenance)</a>	1223SCREER	Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	The decision is urgent because it will ensure an expeditious reversal of an ongoing loss of income to the Council by providing new ANPR cameras in a timely manner.	28 July 2023

## 6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1. It is a constitutional requirement to present Council with a quarterly update on decisions taken under Special Urgency. As such, there are no other options to consider.

## 7. CONSULTATION

7.1. The process for agreeing the use of special urgency and exemption from call-in both require consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee.

## 8. IMPLICATIONS

### 8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 There are no direct financial consequences of this report. Each decision taken under the special urgency framework was supported by a report that set out the financial implications of that decision and was subject to financial review as part of the decision making process.

8.1.2 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 06/1/23

## 8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that the statutory definition of a 'key decision' is set out in regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as a decision which is likely:

- a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.

8.2.2 Guidance issued under the Local Government Act 2000 section 38 provides that the council shall agree as a full council limits above which items are 'significant' and publish those limits which the council has done via its Constitution.

8.2.3 The Constitution defines a "key decision" as defined in Article 13.2(d) namely an executive decision, which is likely to—

- a) result in the Council incurring expenditure, or making 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; or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the Borough.

8.2.4 The Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4B of the Constitution paragraphs 31 and 32 set out specific requirements including publicity in relation to the taking of 'key decisions' and in particular exceptions to the usual publicity requirements on the grounds of General Exception and cases of Special Urgency. Paragraph 34 makes specific provision for a quarterly report on the use of the Special Urgency provisions to be made to full council.

8.2.5 Separately the Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules in

Part 4E of the Constitution provide at paragraph 11.19 that the referral call-in procedure shall not apply in respect of urgent decisions. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the referral process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The record of the decision and the notice by which it is made public shall state if the decision is urgent and therefore not subject to the referral process. The Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee must agree that the decision proposed cannot be reasonably deferred and that it is urgent. In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair's consent shall be required. In the absence of both the Chair and Deputy Chair, the Mayor's consent shall be required. Any such urgent decisions must be reported at least annually in a report to Council from the



Mayor.

*Approved by:* Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law for and on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (02/11/2023).

### **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, 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 There are no direct equalities implications from this report. Each decision taken under special urgency provision was supported by a report that set out the equalities impact of that decision and was subject to an equality analysis as part of the decision-making process. This is in line with the Equality Strategy 2023-2027 which states that all key decisions should be supported by an equality impact assessment and that equality impact assessments must be data driven.

8.3.3 Comment approved by Naseer Ahmad for Equality Programme Manager (Date 01/11/2023)

### **8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

8.4.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report. Should any workforce implications arise, these will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's HR policies and procedures.

8.4.2 Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of HR, Resources and Assistant Chief Executives on behalf of the Chief People Officer.

## **9. APPENDICES**

9.1 There are no appendices to this report.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Council</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13 December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Proposed Changes to the Constitution</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer Jane West</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Sean Fitzsimons Chair General Purposes Committee</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 contains proposed changes to the Council's Constitution relating to:

1.1.1. The number of substitutes that can be appointed to the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee. More specifically, it is proposed that the substitution pool is tripled. The changes were recommended by the Constitution Working Group (CWG) following their consideration and deliberations on 16 November 2023 and approved and recommended to Council by the General Purposes Committee on 28 November 2023.

1.1.2. Pension Matters. The changes are recommended by the Constitution Working Group (CWG) following their consideration and deliberations on 19 September 2023 and approved and recommended to Council by the General Purposes Committee on 9 October 2023.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices], the following is recommended:

- 2.1** For Council to consider and approve the proposed changes to the Constitution as set out in the report and appendices.

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.2** The aim of the proposed changes for the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee is to improve decision making by providing for more flexible substitution arrangements.
- 2.3** Following external governance reviews of the London Borough of Croydon Pension Fund carried out by Aon (Pension Fund governance advisers) and meetings of the Pension Committee and the Pension Board, a number of changes to the Constitution are proposed.

## **3 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

### **Pension Committee and Board**

- 3.1** Following external governance reviews of the London Borough of Croydon Pension Fund carried out by Aon (Pension Fund governance advisers) and meetings of the Pension Committee and the Pension Board, a number of changes to the Constitution are proposed.
- 3.2** The governance reviews highlighted three key issues:
  - 3.2.1** Non-councillor representation on the Pension Committee and associated voting rights;
  - 3.2.2** Pension Board member allowances; and
  - 3.3.3** Current London CIV (Collective Investment Vehicle) structures being reflected in the Constitution.
- 3.3** Generally, the function of making appointments to Council committees (both regular and substitute members) is reserved to full Council. Political groups make nominations to full Council, but cannot themselves decide the membership of committees. However, full Council is required to exercise its power so as to give effect to the wishes of the relevant political group.

## Appointments and Disciplinary Committee

**3.4** The Constitution currently makes provision for the appointment of substitute or reserve members as follows:

*“2.7 For all non-Executive Committees, the Council will appoint the same number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee.” (Part 4A - Council Procedure Rules)*

**3.5** According to the Constitution, the Council’s Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 and established practice, among other things, the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee (ADC) has the delegated power to carry out interviews and approve or recommend the approval (as appropriate) of appointments at director level and above.

**3.6** ADC also has the power to approve the grading and conditions of service of officers subject to the JNC Chief Executive and JNC Chief Officer conditions of service.

## 4 PROPOSALS

### Pension Committee and Board

**4.1** In basic outline, and as recorded in the Constitution, the Pension Committee (PC) discharges the functions of the Council relating to pensions matters with the support of the Pension Board (PB).

**4.2** The current membership of the PC is 8 members (4 Conservative and 4 Labour) plus:

- 1 staff side non-voting co-opted member;
- 1 pensioner side **voting** co-opted member; and
- 1 pensioner side non-voting co-opted member.

**4.3** As an exception to the general rule, section 13 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 allows co-opted members of the PC to have voting rights.

**4.4** To achieve a more balanced representation of other stakeholders on the PC which reflects better the membership of the Pension Fund it is proposed that:

- A non-Council employer **voting** co-opted member be appointed; and
- The staff-side co-opted member be given **voting rights**.

**4.5** As set out below, it is also proposed that textual improvements be made to the terms of reference of the PC.

The PB is not constituted as a committee or sub-committee of the Council but is a statutory non-decision making body. More specifically, it is established under section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended). The PB assists the Council in its role

as scheme manager of the Pension Fund and to secure legal and regulatory compliance and good governance and administration of the Pension Fund.

- 4.6 The payment of an allowance to those members of the PB who otherwise act on an unpaid basis form part of the costs of the administration of the Pension Fund and is therefore a matter for the PC. The allowance recognises the time commitment the role demands as well as the experience, knowledge and skills requirements.
- 4.7 There is a section of the Constitution dedicated to the PB i.e. Part 4M – Local Pension Board Procedure Rules. There are other references to the PB in the Constitution but as explained below there is some duplication and confusion which the proposed changes address.
- 4.8 Running through the Constitution, the proposed direct, incidental and consequential changes to the Constitution are set out in the three appendices attached to this report.

### **Appointments and Disciplinary Committee**

- 4.9 In the main, one substitute for each regular member of a committee works well but is problematic for ADC.
- 4.10 Six members are appointed to ADC: three Conservative and three Labour. Both the regular and substitute Conservative members of ADC are Cabinet members.
- 4.11 However, as there are nine members of Cabinet (including the Executive Mayor), it is not currently possible to ensure that every Cabinet member is able to consider, for example, approving the appointment of an officer at director level and above even if the appointment relates to their portfolio.
- 4.12 Greater flexibility is required for ADC and it is proposed that the Constitution is amended so as to increase (by tripling) the pool of substitutes for ADC. This would then allow full Council to appoint the three other Cabinet members to ADC and thereby making it possible for a regular member of ADC to allow the relevant Cabinet member to substitute for them.
- 4.13 Of course, it affords the same flexibility to the Labour group too in relation to Shadow Cabinet membership. CWG recommended tripling (as opposed to merely doubling) the substitution pool to afford political groups the greater flexibility of appointing non-Cabinet/Shadow Cabinet members as substitutes too.
- 4.14 It is proposed that the Constitution is amended as follows:

*“2.7 For all non-Executive Committees, other than the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee, the Council will appoint the same number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee. For the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee, the Council will appoint the triple the number*

*of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee.”*

## **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

### **Pension Committee and Board**

4.1 The proposed changes are informed by external reviews and have been developed over a period of time in discussion with the PC, PB and Pension Fund advisers. At various stages of the decision making process, if considered appropriate and relevant, alternative options were considered.

### **Appointments and Disciplinary Committee**

4.2 This is a common issue for councils. The solution some councils have adopted is to appoint a standing main committee and then allow that committee to appoint a sub-committee for each appointment in order to ensure that the membership of the sub-committee matches, for example, the appointment in hand.

4.3 On balance, however, that is not the preferred option because in practice it often creates as many problems as it is intended to solve. It means that for each relevant decision there has to be two separate meetings which is not an effective use of the time of members and officers and is an inefficient use of limited Council resources. Requiring some members to attend two meetings in close succession can also create availability issues.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Consultation on the proposals for each has been with the relevant committees, the Constitution Working Group, the Executive Mayor, and the General Purposes Committee.

## **6 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

6.1 Outcome 1; Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1.1** There are no material financial implications related to the proposals. The payment of allowances to the Chair and certain other members of the PB give rise to a relatively small additional cost to the Pension Fund.

## **7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.2.1 The law relevant to the proposed changes has been referenced in the body of the report.

7.2.2 Adopting changes to the Council's Constitution is a non-executive function reserved to full Council which is why the Committee is asked to consider the proposed changes and make a recommendation.

7.2.3 According to s9P of the Local Government Act 2000 the Council must keep its Constitution up to date.

## **7.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

7.3.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from the proposed changes.

## **7.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.4.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality duty. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

7.4.2 "Due regard" is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. The weight to be attached to each need is a matter for the Council. As long as the Council is properly aware of the effects and has taken them into account, the duty is discharged.

7.4.3 There are no equalities impacts directly arising from the proposed changes.

## **8 APPENDICES**

- Appendix A - Report, General Purposes Committee - ADC Substitution Pool Changes
- Appendix B - Report, General Purposes Committee on Pension Changes
- Appendix B1 - Various Pensions Related Proposed Changes
- Appendix B2- Part 4M Local Pension Board Procedure Rules
- Appendix B3 - PART 4N Pension Committee Terms of Reference



## **9 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

9.1 None

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## APPENDIX A

### LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	General Purposes Committee	
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	28 November 2023	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Proposed Changes to the Constitution – Increasing the size of the substitution pool for the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Cllr Sean Fitzsimons	
<b>DECISION TAKER:</b>	Full Council following consideration by the General Purposes Committee	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	The terms of reference of the General Purposes Committee (see Part 3 of the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions) allow it to conduct periodic reviews of the Constitution and consider changes to the Constitution recommended by the Constitution Working Group and to refer any proposals to full Council for approval.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No	N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	No	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	All	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** This report contains proposed changes to the Council’s Constitution relating to the number of substitutes that can be appointed to the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee. More specifically, it is proposed that the substitution pool is tripled. The changes are recommended by the Constitution Working Group (CWG) following their consideration and deliberations on 16 November 2023.
- 1.2** The purpose of this report is for the General Purposes Committee to consider the proposals and make recommendations to full Council for final approval.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1** For the reasons set out in the report, the General Purposes Committee is recommended:

2.1.1 To consider the proposed changes to the Constitution discussed in the report; and

2.1.2 To recommend to full Council the proposed changes to the Constitution set out at paragraph 5.6.

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

**3.1** The aim of the proposed changes is to improve decision making by providing for more flexible substitution arrangements for the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

**4.1** Generally, the function of making appointments to Council committees (both regular and substitute members) is reserved to full Council. Political groups make nominations to full Council, but cannot themselves decide the membership of committees. However, full Council is required to exercise its power so as to give effect to the wishes of the relevant political group.

**4.2** The Constitution currently makes provision for the appointment of substitute or reserve members as follows:

*“2.7 For all non-Executive Committees, the Council will appoint the same number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee.” (Part 4A - Council Procedure Rules)*

**4.3** According to the Constitution, the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 and established practice, among other things, the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee (ADC) has the delegated power to carry out interviews and approve or recommend the approval (as appropriate) of appointments at director level and above.

**4.4** ADC also has the power to approve the grading and conditions of service of officers subject to the JNC Chief Executive and JNC Chief Officer conditions of service.

## **5 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1** In the main, one substitute for each regular member of a committee works well but is problematic for ADC.
- 5.2** Six members are appointed to ADC: three Conservative and three Labour. Both the regular and substitute Conservative members of ADC are Cabinet members.
- 5.3** However, as there are nine members of Cabinet (including the Executive Mayor), it is not currently possible to ensure that every Cabinet member is able to consider, for example, approving the appointment of an officer at director level and above even if the appointment relates to their portfolio.
- 5.4** Greater flexibility is required for ADC and it is proposed that the Constitution is amended so as to increase (by tripling) the pool of substitutes for ADC. This would then allow full Council to appoint the three other Cabinet members to ADC and thereby making it possible for a regular member of ADC to allow the relevant Cabinet member to substitute for them.
- 5.5** Of course, it affords the same flexibility to the Labour group too in relation to Shadow Cabinet membership. CWG recommended tripling (as opposed to merely doubling) the substitution pool to afford political groups the greater flexibility of appointing non-Cabinet/Shadow Cabinet members as substitutes too.
- 5.6** It is proposed that the Constitution is amended as follows:

*“2.7 For all non-Executive Committees, other than the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee, the Council will appoint the same number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee. For the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee, the Council will appoint the triple the number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that Committee.”*

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 6.1** This is a common issue for councils. The solution some councils have adopted is to appoint a standing main committee and then allow that committee to appoint a sub-committee for each appointment in order to ensure that the membership of the sub-committee matches, for example, the appointment in hand.
- 6.2** On balance, however, that is not the preferred option because in practice it often creates as many problems as it is intended to solve. It means that for each relevant decision there has to be two separate meetings which is not an effective use of the time of members and officers and is an inefficient use of limited Council resources. Requiring some members to attend two meetings in close succession can also create availability issues.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 Consultation on the proposals has been with the Executive Mayor and CWG.

## **8 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

8.1 Outcome 1; Priority 4:

Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **9 IMPLICATIONS**

### **9.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposed changes.

### **9.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.2.1 The law relevant to the proposed changes has been referenced in the body of the report.

9.2.2 Adopting changes to the Council's Constitution is a non-executive function reserved to full Council which is why the Committee is asked to consider the proposed changes and make a recommendation.

9.2.3 According to s9P of the Local Government Act 2000 the Council must keep its Constitution up to date.

### **9.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

9.3.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from the proposed changes.

9.3.2 All members of ADC (including appointed substitutes) will receive training on relevant HR matters in early 2024.

### **9.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.4.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct

prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality duty. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9.4.2 “Due regard” is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. The weight to be attached to each need is a matter for the Council. As long as the Council is properly aware of the effects and has taken them into account, the duty is discharged.

9.4.3 There are no equalities impacts directly arising from the proposed changes.

## **10 APPENDICES**

**10.1** None.

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## APPENDIX B

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	General Purposes Committee	
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	9 October 2023	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Proposed Changes to the Constitution Relating to Pensions Matters	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Matthew Hallett, Acting Head of Pensions and Treasury	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Sean Fitzsimons	
<b>DECISION TAKER:</b>	Full Council following Consideration by General Purposes Committee	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	The terms of reference of the General Purposes Committee (see Part 3 of the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions) allow it to conduct periodic reviews of the Constitution and consider changes to the Constitution recommended by the Constitution Working Group and to refer any proposals to full Council for approval.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No	N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	No	Public
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	All	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** This report contains proposed changes to the Constitution of the London Borough of Croydon relating to pensions matters. The changes are recommended by the Constitution Working Group (CWG) following their consideration and deliberations on 19 September 2023.
- 1.2** The proposals have been developed in consultation with the Pension Committee, Pension Board and Aon (the Pension Fund governance advisers) to improve governance and other arrangements and to update the Constitution.

- 1.3** The purpose of this report is for the General Purposes Committee to consider the proposals and make recommendations to full Council for final approval.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1** For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices, the General Purposes Committee is recommended:

2.1.1 To review and comment on the proposed changes to the Constitution relating to pensions matters as detailed in the report and its appendices; and

2.1.2 To recommend to full Council the adoption of the proposed changes.

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1** The aim of the proposed changes is to improve governance and other arrangements and to update the Constitution.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1** Following external governance reviews of the London Borough of Croydon Pension Fund carried out by Aon (Pension Fund governance advisers) and meetings of the Pension Committee and the Pension Board, a number of changes to the Constitution are proposed.

- 4.2** The governance reviews highlighted three key issues:

**4.2.1** Non-councillor representation on the Pension Committee and associated voting rights;

**4.2.2** Pension Board member allowances; and

**4.2.3** Current London CIV (Collective Investment Vehicle) structures being reflected in the Constitution.

## **5 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1** In basic outline, and as recorded in the Constitution, the Pension Committee (PC) discharges the functions of the Council relating to pensions matters with the support of the Pension Board (PB).

- 5.2** The current membership of the PC is 8 members (4 Conservative and 4 Labour) plus:

- 1 staff side non-voting co-opted member;
- 1 pensioner side **voting** co-opted member; and
- 1 pensioner side non-voting co-opted member.

- 5.3** As an exception to the general rule, section 13 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 allows co-opted members of the PC to have voting rights.
- 5.4** To achieve a more balanced representation of other stakeholders on the PC which reflects better the membership of the Pension Fund it is proposed that:
- A non-Council employer **voting** co-opted member be appointed; and
  - The staff-side co-opted member be given **voting rights**.
- 5.5** As set out below, it is also proposed that textual improvements be made to the terms of reference of the PC.
- 5.6** The PB is not constituted as a committee or sub-committee of the Council but is a statutory non-decision making body. More specifically, it is established under section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended). The PB assists the Council in its role as scheme manager of the Pension Fund and to secure legal and regulatory compliance and good governance and administration of the Pension Fund.
- 5.7** The payment of an allowance to those members of the PB who otherwise act on an unpaid basis form part of the costs of the administration of the Pension Fund and is therefore a matter for the PC. The allowance recognises the time commitment the role demands as well as the experience, knowledge and skills requirements.
- 5.8** There is a section of the Constitution dedicated to the PB i.e. Part 4M – Local Pension Board Procedure Rules. There are other references to the PB in the Constitution but as explained below there is some duplication and confusion which the proposed changes address.
- 5.9** Running through the Constitution, the proposed direct, incidental and consequential changes to the Constitution are set out in the three appendices attached to this report.

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 6.1** The proposed changes are informed by external reviews and have been developed over a period of time in discussion with the PC, PB and Pension Fund advisers. At various stages of the decision making process, if considered appropriate and relevant, alternative options were considered.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 Consultation on the proposals has been with the PC, PB and CWG.

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

7.1 Outcome 1; Priority 4:

Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1.1 There are no material financial implications related to the proposals. The payment of allowances to the Chair and certain other members of the PB give rise to a relatively small additional cost to the Pension Fund.

### **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.2.1 The law relevant to the proposed changes has been referenced in the body of the report.

8.2.2 Adopting changes to the Council's Constitution is a non-executive function reserved to Full Council which is why the Committee is asked to consider the proposed changes and make a recommendation.

8.2.3 According to s9P of the Local Government Act 2000 the Council must keep its Constitution up to date.

### **8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

8.3.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from the proposed changes.

### **8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.4.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality duty. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

**8.4.2** “Due regard” is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. The weight to be attached to each need is a matter for the Council. As long as the Council is properly aware of the effects and has taken them into account, the duty is discharged.

**8.4.3** There are no equalities impacts directly arising from the proposed changes.

## **9. APPENDICES**

**9.1 Appendix 1:** Various proposed changes to the Constitution relating to Pensions matters.

**9.2 Appendix 2:** Part 4M of the Constitution – Local Pension Board Procedure Rules (with tracked changes).

**9.2 Appendix 3:** Part 4N of the Constitution – Pension Committee Terms of Reference (with tracked changes).

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## Appendix 1

### Various proposed changes to the Constitution relating to Pensions matters

#### Part 2, Article 8 Non-Executive Committees

The PB is erroneously listed as a non-executive committee of the council. It is proposed that the reference to the PB be deleted.

It is also proposed to make the following change to the reference to the membership of the PC.

Pension Committee	8 Members + <u>13</u> voting co-optee and <u>12</u> non-voting co-optees
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#### Part 2, Article 11 Joint Committees – Schedule 1

The reference to the London CIV needs to be updated as follows:

##### **The Pensions Collective Investment Vehicle (CIV) – London CIV Sectoral Joint Committee**

~~Hosted by London Councils, the joint committee is established under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 with a view to pooling pension investments and with functions necessary for the proper functioning of the Authorised Contractual Scheme (ACS) Operator (which is the company that would manage the ACS), including the effective oversight of the ACS Operator.~~

The Pension Fund makes some investments through the London LGPS CIV Limited (London CIV) which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The London CIV manages London Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) assets. It is one of a number of UK LGPS asset pooling companies. The London Boroughs and City of London are the shareholders. The governance structure includes Shareholder General Meetings and a Shareholder Committee, comprising Leaders and Treasurers of twelve of the London Boroughs, and a Board made up of executive and non-executive directors all of whom must meet FCA fitness to serve requirements.

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#### Part 3, Responsibility for Functions

Once again, at 2.9 the PB is erroneously listed as a non-executive committee of the council. It is proposed that the reference to the PB be deleted.

At 2.10, it is proposed that the reference to the membership of the PC is updated and that the additional information be deleted to avoid unnecessary duplication.

**2.10 Pension Committee** (Membership 8, plus 1 Staff ~~s~~Side ~~non~~-voting co-opted member nominated by the unions, 1 Non-Council Employer side voting co-opted member nominated by the other Pension Fund employers and 2 Pensioner sSide co-opted ~~m~~Members (1 voting co-opted member and one non- voting co-opted member) appointed following an election by ballot of Pension Fund pensioners. The Staff side Pensioners' side co-opted member is are appointed on an annual basis

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~~following consultation with the Staff side and Pensioners of the Pension Fund. The non-Council Employer side co-opted member is appointed normally for a term of four years. The Pensioners' side co-opted members are appointed in keeping with the outcome of an election by ballot of Pensioners of the Fund, normally for a term of four years. Terms of Reference are set out at Part 4N. Functions of the Pensions Committee are:-~~

~~2.10.1 To ensure that the Fund is properly operated in accordance with the Local Government Pensions Scheme Regulations ("the Regulations") all other relevant legislation and best practice as advised by the Pensions Regulator, including financial, governance and administrative matters.-~~

~~2.10.2 To adopt Fund specific policies concerning the administration of the Fund, investing of Fund monies and the management of the Fund's solvency level. In addition, the Committee is responsible for compliance with all financial and regulatory requirements of the Fund.-~~

~~2.10.3 To discharge its fiduciary responsibility in the best interest of the Fund, in particular:-~~

- ~~a. To set the investment policy and review the performance of the Fund's investment managers, pooling operators, scheme administration, and external advisors;-~~
- ~~b. To make arrangements for the triennial actuarial valuation;-~~
- ~~c. To determine the Pension Administration Strategy;-~~
- ~~d. To approve and monitor compliance of statutory statements and policies required under the Regulations;-~~
- ~~e. To approve the Fund's Statements of Accounts and annual report;-~~
- ~~f. To ensure that the Council discharges its obligation, as administrating authority for the local government pension scheme, to other scheme employers;-~~
- ~~g. To make representations to government as appropriate concerning any proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme; and-~~
- ~~h. To keep these terms of reference under review.-~~

### **Part 6D – Scheme of Co-option**

The Council's Scheme of Co-option states that it applies to "all Co-opted Members" and that "The scheme covers the co-option of voting and non-voting co-opted Members onto current Committees as detailed in sections 2-10 below". At section 7 reference is made to "the Pensions Board Members".

Once again, this appears to represent the PB as a committee of the council and PB members as co-optees. Part 4M of the Constitution (as per **Appendix 2**) regulates the conduct of members of the PB by, among other things, applying the Members' Conduct of Conduct save for the provisions relating to interests, gifts and hospitality and complaints handling.

There are other aspects of the Scheme of Co-option which clash or overlap with Part 4M and it is proposed that section 7 relating to the PB be deleted.

The Scheme of Co-option also has a section on the PC. It is proposed that paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 be updated to reflect the proposed change in the membership of the PC as follows:

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8.1 The Pensions committee includes 1 Staff ~~s~~Side ~~non~~-voting co-opted member nominated by the unions, 1 Non-Council Employer side voting co-opted member nominated by the other Pension Fund employers -and 2 Pensioner ~~s~~Side co-opted ~~m~~Members (~~one~~<sup>4</sup> of whom is a voting co-opted member and one of whom is a non-voting co-opted member) appointed following an election by ballot of Pension Fund pensioners.

8.2 The Staff side co-opted and Pensioners' side member is ~~is~~ ~~are~~ appointed on an annual basis. The non-Council Employer side co-opted member is appointed normally for a term of four years, following consultation with the Staff side and Pensioners of the Pension Fund.

The Pensioner side co-opted members are appointed normally for a term of four years.

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# **Appendix 2**

## **CONSTITUTION OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON**

### **PART 4.M – Local Pension Board Procedure Rules**

#### **1. Definitions**

“Advisers” means those provided for in paragraph 11 of these Terms of Reference;

“Administering Authority” means the Council which is a body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 3 of the Scheme Regulations who maintains a fund within the LGPS;

“Board” means the members of the Local Pension Board as appointed by the Pension Committee;

“Chair” means the suitably qualified individual who is selected and appointed by the Scheme Manager who has responsibility of ensuring the Board acts appropriately in accordance with these Terms of Reference;

“Employer Representative” means persons appointed to the Board for the purpose of representing employers of the Scheme and any connected Scheme;

“Fund” means the Croydon Council Pension Fund that is run by Croydon Council and is part of the National Local Government Pension Scheme for England and Wales;

“Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure” means the Local Pension Board’s internal dispute resolution procedure as set out in a separate document titled “Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure”;

“LGPS” means the Local Government Pension Scheme;

“Local Pension Board” (LBS) means the board established under section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended). The LBS is not constituted as a committee or sub-committee of the council but is a statutory non-decision making body;

“Member Representative” means persons appointed to the Board for the purpose of representing members of the Scheme and any connected Scheme;

“Members” means the Employer and Member Representatives collectively;

“Pensions Regulator” means the UK regulator of work-based pensions whose powers derive from the Pensions Act 2004 (as amended) and its powers inherited from the Occupational

Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA) from 6 April 2005;

“Scheme” means the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales;

“Scheme Manager” means the Council acting in its capacity as Administering Authority of the Fund ;

“Scheme Regulations” means the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009 and other relevant and any subsequent legislation made in relation to the LGPS;

## **2. Introduction**

- a. The purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference for the Local Pension Board (“LPB”) of the Fund, and to set out the rules of procedure of the LPB.

## **3. Role of the Local Pension Board**

- 3.1 The role and responsibilities of the LPB, as defined by section 5(1) and (2) of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and regulations 106 and 108 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, is to assist the Administering Authority in its role as a Scheme Manager of the Scheme in relation to the following matters:
  - a. securing compliance with the Scheme Regulations and any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS;
  - b. securing compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the LGPS by the Pensions Regulator;
  - c. such other matters as the Scheme Regulations may specify; and
  - d. ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the LGPS; and
  - e. providing the Scheme Manager with such information as is required to ensure any member of the LBP or person to be appointed to the LPB does not have a conflict of interest.
- 3.2 The LPB will ensure it effectively and efficiently complies with any code of practice on the governance and administration of public service schemes issued by the Pension Regulator.
- 3.3 The LPB shall meet sufficiently regularly to discharge its duties and responsibilities effectively.

## **4. Establishment**

- 4.1 The LPB was established on 1 April 2015 subsequent to recommendation by the Pension Committee to the General Purposes and Audit Committee on 24 March 2015.

## **5. Appointment of members of the Local Pension Board**

5.1 The process for the selection and appointment of members of the LPB is set out below, with all appointments being made by the Scheme Manager.

5.2 The LPB shall consist of 6 voting members constituted as follows:

- a. 3 Employer Representatives;
- b. 3 Member Representatives;

5.3 The LPB Board shall be an equal number of voting Employer representatives and voting Member Representatives. No person shall be a representative on both the Pension Committee and LPB.

### Employer Representatives

5.4 Employer Representatives shall be office holders or senior employees of employers of the Fund or have experience of representing scheme employers in a similar capacity. No officer or elected member of Council who is responsible for the discharge of any function of the Council under the Scheme Regulations may serve as a member of the LPB.

5.5 Employer Representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to represent the employers. This will be in relation to attending and completing the necessary preparation for meetings and participating in training as and when required.

5.6 Substitutes for Employer Representatives shall be appointed by the same process as Member and Employer Representatives. This will be limited to one (1) substitute per Employer Representative. Where appointed, substitutes should be named and must undertake the same training as full members.

5.7 Each Employer Representative shall serve for a fixed 2 year term which may be extended by the Scheme Manager for further periods subject to their renomination. Such appointments will be determined following an expression of interest and then a shortlist and interview process.

5.8 Employer Representatives shall endeavour to attend all Board meetings during each year.

### Member Representatives

- 5.9 Member Representatives shall either be Scheme members or have capacity to represent Scheme members of the Fund.
- 5.10 Member Representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as and when required.
- 5.11 Substitutes shall be appointed by the same process as Member and Employer Representatives. This will be limited to one (1) substitute per Member Representative. Where appointed substitutes should be named and must undertake the same training as full members
- 5.12 Each Member Representative shall serve for a fixed 2 year term which may be extended by the Scheme Manager for further periods subject to their renomination.
- 5.13 Member Representatives shall endeavour to attend all Board meetings during each year.

**6. Suspension/Termination/Removal of Employer Representatives, Member Representatives and Substitutes ( referred to as Representative(s)) and the Chair**

- 6.1 A Representative's (including substitute's) or Chair's term of office may be suspended or come to an end prior to the end of the term of office in any of the following circumstances:
- a. death;
  - b. Incapacity because of illness or injury;
  - c. In the absence of reasonable excuse (to be decided by the Scheme Manager), fails to attend two consecutive meetings;
  - d. Resignation – a notice period of 4 weeks is required to be given to the Scheme Manager;
  - e. A Representative ceases to represent their constituency, for example if an employer representative leaves the employment of their employer and therefore ceases to have the capacity to represent the Fund's employers;
  - f. A conflict of interest which cannot be managed in accordance with the conflicts of interest policy current at the time;
  - g. Conduct in breach of the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.
- 6.2 The Scheme Manager may suspend the Chair and a Representative whilst investigations into (but not limited to) the above are conducted. Upon the conclusion of any investigation the Scheme Manager may either approve their return to his/her role or can terminate their appointment and secure a replacement.

## **7. The Chair**

7.1 The Chair of the LPB will be a suitably qualified person who is selected and appointed by the Scheme Manager for a fixed term of office to be determined by the Scheme Manager. It will be the role of the Chair to ensure that all Members show due respect for process, that all views are fully heard and considered and to determine when consensus has been met.

7.2 The Chair shall:

- a. Ensure the LPB delivers its purpose as set out in these Terms of Reference;
- b. Ensure that meetings are productive and effective and that opportunity is provided for the views of all Members to be expressed and considered; and
- c. Seek to reach consensus and ensure that decisions are properly put to a vote when it cannot be reached. Instances of a failure to reach a consensus position will be recorded and published;
- d. Be non-voting.

## **8. Quorum**

8.1 The LPB shall have a quorum of three (3) Members (which does not include the Chair). If a meeting is inquorate it will be re-scheduled for as soon as is reasonably practicable.

8.2 Advisers do not count towards the quorum.

## **9. Conflicts of Interest**

9.1 Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with a policy and, if applicable, other procedures applied by the Administering Authority.

## **10. Board Review Process**

10.1 The Board will undertake a formal review process during June of each year to assess how well it and the voting and non-voting members are performing with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the Board's performance.

## **11. Advisers to the Board**

11.1 The Board may be supported in its role and responsibilities by Council officers and by External Advisers appointed by the Pension Committee. Subject to any applicable regulation and legislation from time to time in force, the LPB may consult with Advisers including but not limited to:

- a. Governance Adviser
- b. The Fund's Actuary;
- c. The Fund's Legal Adviser
- d. The Fund's Investment Managers(s)
- e. The Fund's Investment Advisers
- f. The Fund's Employer Covenant Adviser
- g. The Scheme Manager.

11.2 The LPB shall ensure that the performance of all Advisers who are appointed are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the Board Review Process.

## **12 Knowledge and Skills**

12.1 The Chair and the Employer and Member Representatives (including substitutes) of the LPB must be conversant with –

- a. The legislation, Scheme Regulations and associated guidance of the LGPS;
- b. Any document recording policy about the administration of the LGPS (which is for the time being adopted by the Fund).

12.2 All members of the LPB must have a working knowledge and understanding of –

- a. The law relating to pensions, and
- b. Any other matters which are prescribed in Scheme Regulations.

12.3 It is for the Scheme Manager to be satisfied that those seeking to be appointed have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the LPB.

12.4 In line with the duties under their role, the Chair and Members are required to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date on anything that would fall within the remit of their role. The Chair and Members are therefore required to maintain a written record of all relevant training and development (whether internal or external) they have undertaken. In the event that the Chair and Members wish to attend an external course/training event prior approval must be sought from the Scheme Manager. All information in relation to training and development of the Chair and Members shall be made available to the LPB as part of the LPB review process. In addition, the Scheme Manager may, at any



time request to inspect such records upon providing the Chair and Member with a written request which must be adhered to within 7 days of receipt of such a request.

- 12.5 The Chair and Members will undertake an annual personal training needs analysis and regularly review their skills, competencies and knowledge to identify gaps or weaknesses as well as mandatory training that the LPB or Scheme Manager considers is required to ensure the LPB operates as effectively as possible. The Chair and Members will comply with the Scheme Manager's training policy current at the time.

### **13 Board Meetings – Notice, Agendas, Minutes, Timings and Location**

- 13.1 The Scheme Manager shall give 5 days' written notice, by email, to the Chair and to all Employer and Member Representatives of every meeting of the LPB. The Scheme Manager shall ensure that formal minutes of all LPB meetings are maintained. Following the approval of the minutes by the Chair they shall be circulated by email to all members within 14 days of the meeting date and then published in accordance with paragraph 17.
- 13.2 There will be a minimum of 4 LPB meetings each year. The dates of such meetings are to be agreed in June of each year by the LPB, taking into account the dates of scheduled Pension Committee meetings which will then provide the LPB with the opportunity to effectively review the work of the Pensions Committee.
- 13.3 All LPB meetings will be held in the Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon, CR0 1NX at 2pm, unless stated otherwise in the notice for the meetings.

### **14 Remit of the Board**

- 14.1 The role of the LPB will be determined by the relevant Scheme Regulations. The LPB will assist the Scheme Manager with such other matters as any relevant Scheme Regulations may specify.

### **15 Standards of Conduct of Members**

- 15.1 The role of LPB members requires the highest standards of conduct and therefore the "seven principles of public life" embodied in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct will be applied to the Chair and the Members. These are –
- a. Selflessness
  - b. Integrity
  - c. Objectivity
  - d. Accountability
  - e. Openness
  - f. Honesty
  - g. Leadership

15.2 The Chair and Members are required to sign-up to the Council's Members' Code of Conduct (current at the time) as soon as reasonably practicable on being appointed, but in any case before attending their first meeting of the LPB. In any event, the Council's Members' Code of Conduct will, subject to paragraph 15.3 below, apply to the Chair and Members immediately on exercising their role and responsibilities in relation to the LPB.

15.3 Paragraphs 9 (Interests) and 10 (Gifts and hospitality) of the Council's Members' Code of Conduct will not apply to the Chair and Members. In addition, complaints or allegations of breach of the Council's Members' Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the Administering Authority in accordance with its own arrangements.

## **16 Decision making**

16.1 All Employer Representatives and Member Representatives of the LPB will have an individual voting right but it is expected the LPB's decisions (in so far as is possible) will be reached by consensus.

## **17 Publication of Local Pension Board Information**

17.1 Scheme members and other interested parties will want to know that the Fund is being efficiently and effectively managed. They will also want to be confident that the LPB is properly constituted, trained and competent in order to comply with Scheme Regulations, the governance and administration of the Scheme and requirements of the Pension Regulator.

17.2 To this end information will be posted on the Fund website showing:

- a. The names and biographies about the LPB members
- b. How the Scheme and employer members are represented on the LPB
- c. The responsibilities of the LPB as a whole
- d. The full terms of reference and policies of the LPB and how they operate
- e. The LPB appointment process
- f. Who each individual LPB member represents
- g. Any specific roles and responsibilities of individual LPB members.

17.3 LPB agendas and minutes of meetings will be published on the Council's website. These may be published in redacted form at the discretion of the Scheme Manager to exclude exempt information as specified in Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or for some other legal reason. The Scheme Manager will also consider requests for additional information to be published or made available to individual Scheme members to encourage Scheme member engagement and promote a culture of openness and transparency. However, the final decision as regards the release of information rests with the Scheme Manager.

## **18 Accountability**

18.1 The LPB will be collectively and individually accountable to the Scheme Manager and must also report annually to the Secretary of State, as provided in the Scheme Regulations.

## **19 Allowance**

19.1 At the discretion of the Administering Authority, the Chair and certain Members of the LPB may receive an allowance in recognition of the time commitment their role demands as well as the experience, knowledge and skills requirements.

19.2 .

## **20 Reporting Breaches**

20.1 Any reported breach in connection with the administration of the LGPS, whether potential, or actual, brought to the attention of the LPB shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in a separate policy document titled "Local Pension Board Reporting Breaches Policy". For the purposes of this policy a breach is considered to include any statutory responsibilities/obligations that have not been performed as and when required.

## **21 Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure**

21.1 The LPB's Internal Dispute Resolution is set out in a separate policy document titled "Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) System Employees' Guide."

## **22 Complaints**

22.1 Any complaint received in relation to the LPB will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy, which is set out in a separate document titled "Local Pension Board Complaints Procedure".

## **23 Budget**

23.1 The LPB must seek approval from the Administering Authority's s151 Officer or Deputy s151 Officer for any expenditure it wishes to incur in line with its responsibilities. Until a written decision has been communicated to the LPB by the relevant officer, the LPB is not authorised to make any financial commitment to a third party and any expenditure must be in accordance with the requirements, conditions and limitations set out in the decision

23.2 .

## **24 Review of Terms of Reference**

24.1 These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed:-

- a. on the making of any material change to those part of the Scheme Regulations; and

- b. annually.

## **25 Interpretation**

- 25.1 Any uncertainty or ambiguity or interpretation required relating to any matters contained in this document shall be determined by the Scheme Manager.

## Appendix 3

# CONSTITUTION OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

## PART 4.N – Pension Committee Terms of Reference

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Without prejudice to the Non-Executive Committee Procedure Rules, Part 4.F of the Constitution, the purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference for the Pension Committee (“the Committee”), to discharge the responsibilities for Croydon Council in its role as ~~lead authority for the~~ administrative authority of the Croydon Pension Fund (“the Fund”) /Local Government Pension Scheme (“the Scheme”).

### 2. Role of the Committee

2.1 To exercise the Council’s pensions functions including but not limited to the functions set out in 2.2 to 2.4 below.

2.2.2 To ensure that the Fund is properly operated in accordance with the Local Government Pensions Scheme Regulations (“the Regulations”) and all other relevant legislation, codes, guidance and best practice as advised by the Pensions Regulator, including financial, governance and administrative matters.

2.2.3 To adopt Fund specific policies concerning the administration of the Fund, investing of Fund monies and the management of the Fund’s solvency level. In addition, the Committee is responsible for compliance with all financial and regulatory requirements of the Fund.

2.3.4 To discharge its fiduciary responsibility in the best interest of the Fund, in particular:

- a) To set the investment policy and review the performance of the Fund’s investment managers, pooling arrangements, Scheme administration, and external advisors;
- b) To make arrangements for the triennial actuarial valuation;
- c) To determine the Pension Administration Strategy;
- d) To approve and monitor compliance of statutory statements and policies required under the Regulations;
- e) To approve the Fund’s Statements of Accounts and annual report;
- f) To ensure that the Council discharges its obligation, as administering authority for the ~~local government pension s~~ Scheme, to other scheme employers;
- g) To make representations to government as appropriate concerning any proposed changes to the ~~Local Government Pension~~ Scheme; and
- h) To keep these terms of reference under review.

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### 3. Delegations

3.1 Unless otherwise reserved for this Committee or Full Council by law or the Constitution, this Committee hereby delegates all Fund matters to the Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer. As appropriate the Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer ~~may will~~ delegate aspects of the role to other officers of the Council including the Head of Pensions and Treasury, and ~~may appoint to~~ professional advisors within the scope of the Regulations.

### 4. Structure

4.1 In accordance with those recommendations made by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Myners Principles and notwithstanding resignations etc. the Committee will comprise the following members:

- a) 8 elected voting Members (plus ~~86~~ substitutes) ~~at a ratio of 5 majority Members to three minority Members;~~
- b) Two representatives of Pensioners of the Fund elected by ballot of Pensioners of the Fund, one of whom shall be a voting ~~co-opted~~ member and one of whom shall be a non-voting ~~co-opted~~ member. The representative with the most votes following the ballot of Pensioners of the Fund shall be the voting member. The other representative of the Pensioners of the Fund shall be non-voting ~~howeverbut~~ is permitted to exercise a vote ~~only~~ in the absence of, and on behalf of, the voting representative;
- ~~b)c)~~ One non-Council Employer representative nominated by the other Fund employers who shall be a voting ~~co-opted~~ member; and
- ~~c)d)~~ One ~~non-voting Trade Union Staff r~~ Representative nominated by the ~~three~~ Trade Unions who shall be a voting ~~co-opted~~ member.

4.2 There will be a minimum of three meetings ~~in public~~ a year of the Committee. ~~Informal meetings will be arranged as required. The outcomes of informal meetings will be reported at formal Committee meetings.~~

### 5. Quorum

5.1 Three ~~elected~~ voting ~~M~~members (i.e. excluding ~~co-opted~~ members).

### 6. Local Pensions Board

6.1 As part of good governance of the ~~S~~scheme, the Committee will work with, receive and consider reports from the Local Pensions Board. The Board is not a decision making body and it will be for the Committee to ensure that the appropriate actions are undertaken as required.

### 7. Knowledge and Understanding

7.1 Members ~~and co-opted members~~ of the Committee are expected to continually demonstrate their own personal commitment to training and to ensure that governance objectives are met. To assist in achieving these objectives training sessions will be organised to ensure Committee ~~Members and co-opted~~ members are familiar with the rules of the Fund ~~and~~ with relevant legislation.

### 8. Review of Terms of Reference Policy

8.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Council</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13 December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Appointments of Independent Person</b>	
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal &amp; Governance</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	No	<b>N/A</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

### 1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. The Ethics Committee, on the 19 April 2023, due to a vacancy which had arisen, agreed to commence a recruitment process under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 to ensure a sufficient pool of Independent Persons.
- 1.2. Advertisements for the position were advertised on the Jobs section of the council's website, in the Croydon council newsletter, via email to the council's voluntary and community sector subscribers, via the Democratic Services Newsletter, and via email to residents currently volunteering elsewhere in the council. Councillors were also written to by email to encourage their contacts who are keen to be involved in the voluntary life of the council to apply.
- 1.3 The listings were live for a period of two weeks. Following short-listing, and a successful interview, Zuisa Zingone has been agreed by the Member Interview Panel and is being recommended by the Ethics Committee to Council for an Independent Person appointment.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons given in this report, the Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 To agree to appoint Luisa Zingone Independent Person as recommended by the Ethics Committee for the duration of 2 years, with a possible extension of 2 years; and,
- 2.2 To note that another appointment is due to be made by the Ethics Committee in March 2024 as a second vacancy arose after the first application round (due to resignation by an Independent Person).

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

3.1 The recommendations ensure that the Council has sufficient Independent Persons to continue to perform its statutory functions under the Localism Act 2011 in respect of the Ethics Functions of the Authority and under Part 4J of the Council's Constitution (Staff Employment Procedure Rules) in respect of disciplinary matters pertaining to Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer.

### **4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

4.1 Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") imposes a duty upon the Council to 'promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the Council'. The Council is required to adopt a Code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and Co-opted Members of the Council when they are acting in that capacity. In addition, under Section 28(6) and (7) of the Act, the Council must have in place "arrangements" under which allegations that a Member or co-opted Member of the authority, or of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the authority, has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct can be investigated and decisions made on such allegations. For Members' information, the arrangements as adopted by Full Council, can be accessed [here](#) <sup>1</sup>.

4.2 Such arrangements must provide for the authority to appoint at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought and taken into account by the authority before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided shall be investigated, and whose views can be sought by the authority at any other stage, or by a Member or co-opted Member against whom an allegation has been made.

4.3 In addition, the Council's arrangements provide that the Monitoring Officer may consult an Independent Person when considering, at assessment stage, whether or not an allegation ought to be referred for investigation. In other words to avoid the potential conflict of the same Independent Person having to advise different persons/bodies on the same matter, up to four Independent Persons might be involved in providing advice at different stages of and to different parties in the Ethics Process – one to advise the Member complained about, one who may advise the Monitoring Officer at Assessment Stage, one who might be consulted by the Authority at any other stage in the process and one whose views must be sought and taken into account by the Council before it takes any final decision on an allegation of breach of the Code which is the subject of investigation.

4.4 The Council has delegated to the Ethics Committee the function of investigating and determining any allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Committee comprises six elected Members of the Council and the Independent Persons who are not committee members but attend in a non-voting advisory

capacity at Committee and are involved at other stages of the process as detailed above.

4.5 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which amend the earlier 2001 Regulations, make specific provision for the involvement of Independent Persons in relation to Disciplinary Action taken against Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer, or Monitoring Officer.

4.6 Part 4J of the Constitution which incorporates the requirements of the Regulations provides that consideration of disciplinary action which could result in dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer will be the responsibility of the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee. In addition, an Independent Panel constituting at least two Independent Persons (who are appointed pursuant to the Localism Act 2011) will advise the Council on any recommendation from Appointments and Disciplinary Committee to dismiss Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer, or the Monitoring Officer. Following any disciplinary hearing the outcome of which is a proposal to dismiss, the Independent Panel’s views must be reflected specifically in the Report to full Council setting out the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee’s recommendations. The full Council shall have regard to and take into account the recommendations of Appointments and Disciplinary Committee and the Independent Panel in reaching its decision on the matter.

4.7 7 The Committee, 19 April 2023, agreed to commence a recruitment and selection process to ensure a sufficient pool of Independent Persons to carry out statutory duties including in relation to any disciplinary matters described in the body of this report above. A Selection Panel consisting of 3 Members (supported by an Independent Members in an advisory capacity) was agreed. Following changes to the Ethics Committee membership at the Annual Council on 17 May 2023, Cllr Ben-Hassel was appointed chair of the Selection Panel at a subsequent meeting of the Ethics Committee on 5 July 2023, along Cllr Brigitte Graham as a member of the panel.

4.8 Due to Cllr Creatura stepping down as a member of the Ethics Committee in October 2023 the committee agreed in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, to appoint Cllr Luke Shortland in his place.

4.9 The maximum pool of Independent Persons is currently five. The Council currently has 3 Independent Persons - Jennifer Gordon, Alan Malarkey, and Ashok Kumar.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 No other options considered as the Selection Panel needs to be comprised of existing members of the Ethics Committee.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Localism Act requires that the recruitment process will involve a public advertisement and formal application process, which took place from 20 October to 2 November 2023.

6.2 The views of the current Independent Persons will be sought prior to the appointment.

## **7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

7.1 Mayor's Business Plan - Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.1.1** No allowance is payable for the role of Independent Person. There are no employee costs arising from these appointments, and recruitment costs are minimal and can be funded from operational budgets.

**8.1.2** Finance have been consulted and can conclude that there are no financial implications within this report that cannot be met from within existing budgets.

**8.1.3** Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance.  
04/12/23

### **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.2.1** The Council has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority and in discharging this duty, the Council must adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

**8.2.2** The Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations of breaches of the Code can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations can be made.

**8.2.3** These arrangements must include provision for the appointment by the Council of at least one independent person—

- a) whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and
- b) whose views may be sought—
- c) by the authority in relation to an allegation in circumstances not within paragraph (a),
- d) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation.

- 8.2.4** For these purposes a person is not independent if the person is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority or a relative, or close friend, of a person who is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.
- 8.2.5** A person may not be appointed as an Independent Person if at any time during the 5 years ending with the appointment the person was a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.
- 8.2.6** Finally, a person may not be appointed unless the vacancy for an independent person has been advertised in such manner as the authority considers is likely to bring it to the attention of the public, the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy to the authority, and the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the authority.
- 8.2.7** The relevant legal requirements in relation to the involvement of Independent Persons in disciplinary action taken against the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer, and the Monitoring Officer are set out within the body of this report.
- 8.2.8** *Approved by:* Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (02/11/23).

### **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.3.1** The Equality Act 2011(section 149) places a public sector equality duty (section 146) on the Council. The duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.3.2** Having “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 8.3.3** The law requires that the vacancy for an independent Person is advertised in such a manner as the Council consider is likely to bring it to the attention of the public. Subject to the statutory restrictions around applicant's demonstrating ‘independence’ the vacancy would be available to all.
- 8.3.4** Comments approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities manager. (04/12/2023)

### **8.4 HR IMPLICATIONS**

**8.4.1** There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report. Should any matters arise these will be managed through the appropriate Council processes and procedures.

**8.4.2** Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executive's directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. 05/12/23

9. **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Report to Ethics Committee and associated appendix

**10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>ETHICS COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>15 November 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Appointments of Independent Person/s</b>	
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense</b> <b>Director of Legal &amp; Governance</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services</b> <b>adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Part Exempt</b> <b>To exclude the press and public, under Section 100(4) A of the Local Government Act 1972, from part of the meeting due to the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended:</b> <b>1. Information relating to any individual</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

### **1 SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Ethics Committee, on the 19 April 2023, due to a vacancy which had arisen, agreed to commence a recruitment process under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 to ensure a sufficient pool of Independent Persons.
- 1.2 Since the meeting an additional vacancy has arisen and so the Ethics Committee is asked to appoint two Independent Persons to the Council.
- 1.3 Advertisements for the positions were advertised on the Jobs section of the council's website, in the Croydon council newsletter, via email to the council's voluntary and community sector subscribers, via the Democratic Services Newsletter, and via email to residents currently volunteering elsewhere in the council. Councillors were also written to by email to encourage their contacts who are keen to be involved in the voluntary life of the council to apply.

- 1.4 The listings were live for a period of two weeks and applications were received from one person.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons given in this report, the Ethics Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Exclude the Press and Public from a portion of the meeting to discuss and agree the appointment of an Independent Person on the basis it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of information which is exempt under Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 1, Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to any individual;
- 2.2 To note the resignation of one of the Independent Persons as of October 2023;
- 2.3 To agree to appoint one Independent Person as recommended by the Selection Panel for the duration of 2 years, with a possible extension of 2 years;
- 2.4 To recommend the appointment be made formally by Council on 13 December 2023; and
- 2.5 To agree to hold a second round of applications in the coming weeks.

## 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations ensure that the Council has sufficient Independent Persons to continue to perform its statutory functions under the Localism Act 2011 in respect of the Ethics Functions of the Authority and under Part 4J of the Council's Constitution (Staff Employment Procedure Rules) in respect of disciplinary matters pertaining to Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer.

## 4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") imposes a duty upon the Council to 'promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the Council'. The Council is required to adopt a Code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and Co-opted Members of the Council when they are acting in that capacity. In addition, under Section 28(6) and (7) of the Act, the Council must have in place "arrangements" under which allegations that a Member or co-opted Member of the authority, or of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the authority, has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct can be investigated and decisions made on such allegations. For Members' information, the arrangements as adopted by Full Council, can be accessed [here](#)<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.2 Such arrangements must provide for the authority to appoint at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought and taken into account by the authority before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided shall be investigated, and whose

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[https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Arrangements%20under%20the%20Localism%20Act%202011\\_July%202012.pdf](https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Arrangements%20under%20the%20Localism%20Act%202011_July%202012.pdf)



views can be sought by the authority at any other stage, or by a Member or co-opted Member against whom an allegation has been made.

- 4.3 In addition, the Council's arrangements provide that the Monitoring Officer may consult an Independent Person when considering, at assessment stage, whether or not an allegation ought to be referred for investigation. In other words to avoid the potential conflict of the same Independent Person having to advise different persons/bodies on the same matter, up to four Independent Persons might be involved in providing advice at different stages of and to different parties in the Ethics Process – one to advise the Member complained about, one who may advise the Monitoring Officer at Assessment Stage, one who might be consulted by the Authority at any other stage in the process and one whose views must be sought and taken into account by the Council before it takes any final decision on an allegation of breach of the Code which is the subject of investigation.
- 4.4 The Council has delegated to the Ethics Committee the function of investigating and determining any allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Committee comprises six elected Members of the Council and the Independent Persons who are not committee members but attend in a non-voting advisory capacity at Committee and are involved at other stages of the process as detailed above.
- 4.5 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which amend the earlier 2001 Regulations, make specific provision for the involvement of Independent Persons in relation to Disciplinary Action taken against Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer, or Monitoring Officer.
- 4.6 Part 4J of the Constitution which incorporates the requirements of the Regulations provides that consideration of disciplinary action which could result in dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer will be the responsibility of the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee. In addition, an Independent Panel constituting at least two Independent Persons (who are appointed pursuant to the Localism Act 2011) will advise the Council on any recommendation from Appointments and Disciplinary Committee to dismiss Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer, or the Monitoring Officer. Following any disciplinary hearing the outcome of which is a proposal to dismiss, the Independent Panel's views must be reflected specifically in the Report to full Council setting out the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee's recommendations. The full Council shall have regard to and take into account the recommendations of Appointments and Disciplinary Committee and the Independent Panel in reaching its decision on the matter.
- 4.7 The Committee, 19 April 2023, agreed to commence a recruitment and selection process to ensure a sufficient pool of Independent Persons to carry out statutory duties including in relation to any disciplinary matters described in the body of this report above. A Selection Panel consisting of 3 Members (supported by an Independent Members in an advisory capacity) was agreed. The Committee appointed three Committee Members (Cllr Carserides, as Chair and Cllr Creatura and Cllr Fraser).

- 4.8 Following Annual Council on 17 May 2023, the Chair of Ethics Committee stood down and was replaced by Cllr Leila Ben-Hassel. Cllr Ben-Hassel was appointed chair of the Selection Panel at a subsequent meeting of the Ethics Committee on 5 July 2023. At the same meeting, Cllr Fraser stepped down from their position on the committee, and was replaced by Cllr Brigitte Graham, who then also took up the position on the Selection Panel, as agreed by the committee at the same meeting.
- 4.9 Following the resignation of Cllr Creatura as a member of the Ethics Committee in October 2023 and subsequently, the Selection Panel, the committee also agreed in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, to appoint Cllr Luke Shortland in his place.
- 4.10 The maximum pool of Independent Persons is currently five. The Council currently has 3 Independent Persons - Jennifer Gordon, Alan Malarkey, and Ashok Kumar.
- 4.11 The outcome of the Selection Panel shall be reported by this Committee for onward recommendation to Full Council for a proposed appointment of an additional Independent Person for a term of 2 years with a possible extension of 2 years, whilst noting that appointment within that term does ordinarily take place annually by Council.

## **5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 No other options considered as the Selection Panel needs to be comprised of existing members of the Ethics Committee.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Localism Act requires that the recruitment process will involve a public advertisement and formal application process, which took place from 20 October to 2 November 2023.
- 6.2 The views of the current Independent Persons will be sought prior to the appointment.

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

- 7.1 Mayor's Business Plan - Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1.1 No allowance is payable for the role of Independent Person. There are no employee costs arising from these appointments, and recruitment costs are minimal and can be funded from operational budgets.
- 8.1.2 Finance have been consulted and can conclude that there are no financial implications within this report that cannot be met from within existing budgets.

8.1.3 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 30/10/23

## 8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority and in discharging this duty, the Council must adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

8.2.2 The Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations of breaches of the Code can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations can be made.

8.2.3 These arrangements must include provision for the appointment by the Council of at least one independent person—

(a) whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and

(b) whose views may be sought—

(i) by the authority in relation to an allegation in circumstances not within paragraph (a),

(ii) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation.

8.2.4 For these purposes a person is not independent if the person is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority or a relative, or close friend, of a person who is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.

8.2.5 A person may not be appointed as an Independent Person if at any time during the 5 years ending with the appointment the person was a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.

8.2.6 Finally, a person may not be appointed unless the vacancy for an independent person has been advertised in such manner as the authority considers is likely to bring it to the attention of the public, the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy to the authority, and the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the authority.

8.2.7 The relevant legal requirements in relation to the involvement of Independent Persons in disciplinary action taken against the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer, and the Monitoring Officer are set out within the body of this report.

8.2.8 *Approved by:* Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (05/12/23).

## 8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1 The Equality Act 2011(section 149) places a public sector equality duty (section 146) on the Council. The duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.3.2 Having “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 8.3.3 The law requires that the vacancy for an independent Person is advertised in such a manner as the Council consider is likely to bring it to the attention of the public. Subject to the statutory restrictions around applicant’s demonstrating ‘independence’ the vacancy would be available to all.
- 8.3.4 Comments approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities manager. (31/10/2023)

#### **8.4 HR IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.4.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report. Should any matters arise these will be managed through the appropriate Council processes and procedures.
- 8.4.2 Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executive’s directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. 02/11/23

#### **9. APPENDICES**

- Appendix A – Appointment of Independent Persons
- Appendix B – Part B recommendations

#### **10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>ETHICS COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>15 November 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Recommendations to the Ethics Committee</b>	
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense</b> <b>Director of Legal &amp; Governance</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services</b> <b>adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

### 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Selection Panel shortlisted one candidate for the second stage of application (interview with the Panel), and the interview is yet to be held. A supplementary item will be published to the agenda following the decision of the Panel on Wednesday, 8 November 2023.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons given in this report, the Ethics Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Appoint to the position of a Non-Elected Independent Person for Ethics Committee following the interview on Wednesday, 8 November 2023.

### 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations ensure that the selection process verified that the appointed candidates met the selection criteria and are eligible to be Independent Persons.

## **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The Selection Panel will interview one candidates and based on the independently set criteria will decide that the recommended candidates would be the most suitable for the role of an Independent Person.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The appointment process is required to be confidential. However, an Independent Person will be consulted to advise on the recruitment process and provide guidance to the members of the Selection Panel.

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

- 7.1 Mayor's Business Plan - Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1.1 No allowance is payable for the role of Independent Person. There are no employee costs arising from these appointments, and recruitment costs are minimal and can be funded from operational budgets.
- 8.1.2 Finance have been consulted and can conclude that there are no financial implications within this report that cannot be met from within existing budgets.
- 8.1.3 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 30/10/23

### **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority and in discharging this duty, the Council must adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.
- 8.2.2 The Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations of breaches of the Code can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations can be made.
- 8.2.3 These arrangements must include provision for the appointment by the Council of at least one independent person—  
(a) whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and

- (b) whose views may be sought—
  - (i) by the authority in relation to an allegation in circumstances not within paragraph (a),
  - (ii) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation.

**8.2.4** For these purposes a person is not independent if the person is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority or a relative, or close friend, of a person who is a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.

**8.2.5** A person may not be appointed as an Independent Person if at any time during the 5 years ending with the appointment the person was a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the authority.

**8.2.6** Finally, a person may not be appointed unless the vacancy for an independent person has been advertised in such manner as the authority considers is likely to bring it to the attention of the public, the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy to the authority, and the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the authority.

**8.2.7** The relevant legal requirements in relation to the involvement of Independent Persons in disciplinary action taken against the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer are set out within the body of this report.

**8.2.8** *Approved by:* Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (02/11/23).

### **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

**8.3.1** The Equality Act 2011(section 149) places a public sector equality duty (section 146) on the Council. The duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**8.3.2** Having “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

**8.3.3** The law requires that the vacancy for an independent Person is advertised in such a manner as the Council consider is likely to bring it to the attention of the public. Subject to the statutory restrictions around applicant's demonstrating ‘independence’ the vacancy would be available to all.

**8.3.4** Comments approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities manager. (31/10/2023)

## **8.4 HR IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.4.1** There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report. Should any matters arise these will be managed through the appropriate Council processes and procedures.
- 8.4.2** Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executive's directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. 02/11/23

## **10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None



## LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Council</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>13 December 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Council and Committee Meetings - Municipal Year Calendar 2024-25</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May Interim Head of Democratic Services</b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:</b>	Part 4A of the Constitution of the London Borough of Croydon states that the General Purposes Committee will determine the dates on which Council will meet for each municipal year and full Council approve the full schedule of Committee meeting dates for the municipal year.	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	N/A
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<i>All</i>	

## **1 SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The dates for Council meetings are to be agreed by the General Purposes Committee and then submitted to Council along with the full schedule of council and committee meeting for the municipal year 2024-25 for agreement.
- 1.2 Before consideration at this Council meeting, GPC was asked to make any comments and amendments, which have been reflected in the proposed calendar for decision. Council is now expected to approve the full schedule of meetings for the next municipal year.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report Council is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the full schedule of council meetings for the municipal year 2024-25 (Appendices A & B); and,
- 2.2 To note the dates of Council approved by the General Purposes Committee

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Early drafting and agreement of the Council Calendar of meetings for the next municipal year will enable better planning of Council business and give timely notice of meetings to the membership and attendees.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1 This is the final version of the calendar which has been approved by the General Purposes Committee in consultation with the political group leads.
- 4.2 This version of the calendar has been circulated to lead officers, Croydon's Corporate Management Team, and the General Purposes Committee ahead of this meeting.
- 4.3 Public and school holidays, religious observations, and other national events have been considered and where possible avoided for meeting dates.

## **5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 This calendar has been drafted in consultation with lead officers across the council and consultation with groups.

**5.2** Amendments should only be proposed if there is no possibility of avoiding a clash by other means; however, where it arises that any meeting dates are not possible for good reason it can be amended by the committee Chairs.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

**6.1** Lead officers for all council committees, CMT, the Monitoring Officer, the GPC, and political groups have been approached for comment and informed the proposed calendar.

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

**7.1** The calendar is produced early enough that good forward planning of council business may take place, which contributes to the Mayor's Business Plan, Priority Four (of Outcome One) which supports openness and transparency in decision-making.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1.1 No financial implications have been identified as a result of this decision.

**8.1.1** Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 20/9/23

### **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.2.1** Council Procedure Rule 3.1 provides "Seven meetings of the Council, including the Annual and Council Tax Meetings, shall be scheduled to be held at the Town Hall, Croydon, on such dates as the General Purposes Committee may agree on behalf of the Council and occasionally as the Chair shall direct during each Council Year"

**8.2.2** Paragraph 6.1 of the Non-Executive Committee Procedure Rules provides "The dates of scheduled meetings with the exception of those for the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee and Licensing Sub-Committees shall be as printed in the Council diary".

**8.2.3** Comments approved by Comments approved by Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation & Corporate Law & Deputy Monitoring Officer. Date: 13.09.2023

### **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

**8.3.1** The Council should pay due regard to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when exercising their functions. This includes having due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty as detailed:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. (Section 149(1)(a))

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. (Section 149(1)(b))
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. (Section 149(1)(c))

**8.3.2** There are no breaches of this duty or further equalities impacts arising from the recommendations in this report.

**8.3.3** Comments to be approved by Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities Programme Manager. (Date 06/11/2023)

## **8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

8.4.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report.

8.4.2 Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. 19.10.23

## **9. APPENDICES**

**9.1** Appendix A Draft Council Calendar of meetings by committee

Appendix B Draft Council Calendar of meetings by date

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**10.1** None

## Draft Council Calendar 2024-25 by Committee

Regulatory Committees and Boards (Other bodies meeting dates not agreed at Council).

2024	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
<b>Audit &amp; Governance Committee</b>		27			19	31	28		30		13	24	
<b>Cabinet</b>		26	24		25	16	20	4	22	12 (Budget)	26	23	
<b>Council</b>	15 (Annual)		17			9		11		26 (Budget)		16	14 (Annual)
<b>Ethics Committee</b>			10				13				5		
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b>		19				16			29		12		
<b>Licensing Committee</b>			8		2					3		28	
<b>Pension Board</b>			25			17			16			10	
<b>Pension Committee</b>		11			17			10			18		
<b>Planning Committee &amp; Planning Sub-Committee</b>	23	13	4, 25	15	5, 26	17	7	5, 19	16	27	20	10	8
<b>Scrutiny and Overview</b>		4	23		24		19		21	11 (Budget)	25	22	
<b>Scrutiny Children and Young People</b>		25			10				20		18		
<b>Scrutiny Health and Social Care</b>		18				15			27		11		
<b>Scrutiny Homes</b>			16			28				4		14	
<b>Scrutiny Streets, Environment</b>			9			8			28			1	
<b>General Purposes Committee</b>		10					5		14			29	
<b>Constitution Working Group</b>		6	11		18	24	14	12	23	13	6	3	

The remaining statutory committees and boards, due to their roles and responsibilities will be called as and when required:

- Appointments & Disciplinary Committee
- Civic Mayoralty & Honorary Freedom Committee

**Draft Council Calendar 2024-25 by Date**

Regulatory Committees and Boards (Other bodies meeting dates not agreed at Council).

<b>May</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Council (Annual)		
<b>May</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>May</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>June</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee		Constitution Working Group	
<b>June</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Committee</b>	General Purposes Committee	Pension Committee		Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>June</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Health and Social Care Sub-Committee	Health and Wellbeing Board		
<b>June</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Children and Young People Sub-Committee	Cabinet	Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>July</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>July</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Licensing Committee	Scrutiny Streets, Environment Sub-Committee	Ethics Committee	Constitution Working Group	
<b>July</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee	Council		
<b>July</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet	Pension Board	
				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>July / August</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>August</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>August</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>August</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>August</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Committee</b>					



<b>September</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Licensing Committee			Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>September</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Children and Young People Sub-Committee			
<b>September</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Pension Committee	Constitution Working Group	Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>September</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet	Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>September/October</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>October</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Streets, Environment Sub-Committee	Council		
<b>October</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Health and Social Care Sub-Committee	Health and Wellbeing Board	Pension Board	
			Cabinet	Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	

<b>October</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Constitution Working Group	
<b>October / November</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee			Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>November</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Committee</b>		General Purposes Committee		Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>November</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Ethics Committee	Constitution Working Group	
<b>November</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet		
<b>November</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>December</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Cabinet	Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>December</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Pension Committee	Council	Constitution Working Group	

<b>December</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>December</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>December/January</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>January</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Committee</b>					
<b>January</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Committee</b>		General Purposes Committee		Pension Board	
				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>January</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Scrutiny Children and Young People Sub-Committee	Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet	Constitution Working Group	
<b>January</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Scrutiny Health and Social Care Sub-Committee	Scrutiny Streets, Environment Sub-Committee	Health and Wellbeing Board	Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Licensing Committee	Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee		Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	

<b>February</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee (Budget)	Cabinet (Budget)	Constitution Working Group	
<b>February</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
<b>February</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Council (Budget)		
<b>March</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Ethics Committee	Constitution Working Group	
<b>March</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Health and Social Care Sub-Committee	Health and Wellbeing Board	Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>March</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Pension Committee		Planning Committee & Planning Sub-Committee	
		Scrutiny Children and Young People Sub-Committee			
<b>March</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet		

<b>March/April</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny Streets, Environment Sub- Committee		Constitution Working Group	
<b>April</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
				Pension Board	
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub- Committee	
<b>April</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee		Council		
<b>April</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Committee</b>		Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cabinet	Audit and Governance Committee	
<b>April / May</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Licensing Committee	General Purposes Committee			
<b>May</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Committee</b>				Planning Committee & Planning Sub- Committee	
<b>May</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Committee</b>			Council (Annual)		
<b>May</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Committee</b>					

<b>May</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Committee</b>					

The remaining statutory committees and boards, due to their roles and responsibilities will be called as and when required:

- Appointments & Disciplinary Committee
- Civic Mayoralty & Honorary Freedom Committee