

Cabinet Agenda



To: Mayor Jason Perry (Chair)

Councillors Jeet Bains, Jason Cummings, Maria Gatland, Lynne Hale,
Yvette Hopley, Ola Kolade, Scott Roche and Andy Stranack

A meeting of the **Cabinet** which you are hereby invited to attend, will be held
**Wednesday, 22 November 2023 at 6.30 pm. Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.**

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

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AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2023 as an accurate record. [To Follow]

3. Disclosure of Interests

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and other registrable and non-registrable interests they may have in relation to any items(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. STAGE 1: Recommendations Arising from Scrutiny (Pages 3 - 10)

6. Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations (Pages 11 - 30)

7. Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022/23
(Pages 31 - 80)

8. Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022/23
(Pages 81 - 140)

9. Youth Justice Plan 2023/24 (Pages 141 - 222)

10. 2023-24 Period 5 Financial Performance Report (Pages 223 - 258)

11. Council Tax Empty & Second Home Premiums (Pages 259 - 268)

Agenda Item 5

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE	22 November 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	STAGE 1: RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM SCRUTINY	
LEAD OFFICER:	Jane West, Corporate Director for Resources Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services T: 020 8726 6000 X 62529. Email: <u>adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</u>	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Rowenna Davis Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	<p>Recommendations that have been developed from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its Sub-Committees since the last Cabinet meeting are provided in the appendices to this report. The constitution requires that an interim or full response is provided within 2 months of this Cabinet meeting.</p>	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents recommendations to the Executive Mayor from Scrutiny following the recent meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Executive Mayor has the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations contained within this report. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is asked to:
- 2.2 Receive and consider the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 26 September 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.3 To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2024

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 3.1** Part 4E of the Council’s Constitution: Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules (paragraphs 8.5 – 8.7) and Section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000 require the executive to consider and respond to a Scrutiny and Overview report within 2 months beginning with the date on which the executive receive the report or recommendation.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 26 September 2023

Item: Mayor’s Business Plan – Performance Report

- 4.1** Having reviewed the proposed performance indicators to be used to track the delivery of the Mayor’s Business Plan, the Committee agreed that it was broadly supported of the 78 indicators outlined in the report.
- 4.2** Although supportive of the 78 performance indicators included in the report, the Committee also agreed that there were some areas where additional indicators may be beneficial, such as indicators to help measure the vitality of the town centre, the performance of the housing service and waiting lists for services in Adult Social Care.
- 4.3** The Committee agreed that, wherever possible, clarity had been provided in setting out how the performance indicators would be measured and how success would be defined.
- 4.4** The Committee welcomed the use of a clearly defined RAG rating system to provide an overview on delivery, especially as it was supplemented with the provision of an appendix giving a more detailed breakdown on the delivery of each of the indicators.
- 4.5** The Committee also welcomed the use of benchmarking data, where available, as a means of comparing the Council’s performance against that of similar local authorities.
- 4.6** The Committee was supportive of the proposed approach to use qualitative feedback gathered from resident surveys to crosscheck service performance against the quantitative data used in the Performance Report.

Item: People & Cultural Transformation Strategy – Action Plan

- 4.7** Although the Committee had concern about whether the action plan contained enough SMART objectives to enable its delivery to be effectively monitored. Whilst the Committee welcomed confirmation that the action plan would be further refined to this effect, it was noted that Scrutiny and Overview had raised this concern before when it looked at the People Strategy earlier in the year.
- 4.8** The Committee commended the ongoing cocreation approach used for the People & Cultural Transformation Strategy and its accompanying action plan.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1** Scrutiny meetings do not necessarily result in any recommendations to the executive.

6 CONSULTATION / PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 6.1** The recommendations were developed from the deliberations of either the Scrutiny & Overview Committee or one of its Sub-Committees.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1** Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services:

Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice The Council must learn the lessons of past failures and embed sound governance processes to ensure that decision-making is transparent, open and honest. These must ensure effective control of our projects and programmes and encourage meaningful scrutiny and challenge.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1** The Scrutiny recommendations to the Executive may have financial implications. Following the recommendations being received at Cabinet, the Executive will identify and consider any financial implications as part of their response.
- 8.1.2** If any recommendation is subsequently progressed for consideration and decision by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, full financial (as well as legal and equalities implications) would be presented.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** Under Section 9F Local Government Act 2000 (“The Act”), Scrutiny and Overview Committee (SOC) have the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any executive and non-executive functions and to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. SOC also has the power to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority on matters, which affect the authority’s area or the inhabitants of its area.
- 8.2.2** Under Section 9FE of the Act, there is a duty on the executive to respond to the scrutiny report, indicating what (if any) action they propose to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations beginning with the date on which the executive received the report.
- 8.2.3** Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer. (25/10/2023)

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

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

8.4.2 The recommendations in the appendices to this report have equality implications and will require an EQIA as part of the development of the proposals. The implications will be explored to identify impact and mitigation utilised to negate any adverse impact where necessary.

8.4.3 Approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equality Programme Manager. (23/10/2023)

8.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.5.1 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the contents of this report, the report received recommendations from scrutiny, but no decision for recommendation.

8.6 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

8.6.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from the contents of this report, the report received recommendations from scrutiny, but no decision for recommendation.

8.7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

8.7.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

There are no Data Protection implications at this stage, but that the situation will be reviewed again at Stage 2 when Cabinet provide their response to the proposed recommendations.

HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Stage 1: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee - 26 September 2023

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 26 September 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3512&Ver=4>

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Appendix 1 – Recommendations arising from Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 26 September 2023

Item: Mayor’s Business Plan: Performance Report

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SOC.14.23/24	The Committee recommends more performance indicators to measure the vitality of the town centre be included, such as footfall, the number of empty units and business rates.	Mayor Jason Perry	Elaine Jackson - Assistant Chief Executive
SOC.15.23/24	Given the substantial transformation within the service, the Committee would recommend that additional performance indicators related to Housing are added to the Performance Report to monitor improvement for key areas, particularly void turnaround times.	Mayor Jason Perry	Elaine Jackson - Assistant Chief Executive
SOC.16.23/24	Given the increasing demand upon services within the Adult Social Care directorate, the Committee would recommend the inclusion of performance indicators to track the waiting times for residents to access services with the highest demand.	Mayor Jason Perry	Elaine Jackson - Assistant Chief Executive

Item: People & Cultural Transformation Strategy – Action Plan

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SOC.15.23/24	The Committee recommends that each of the “measures of success” in the action plan be re-evaluated so that they all contain a SMART target that is easy to monitor.	Councillor Jason Cummings	Dean Shoesmith - Chief People Officer

Agenda Item 6

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE	22 November 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Children & Young People Sub-Committee held on 27 June 2023 (Appendix 1), the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee held on 11 July 2023 (Appendices 2 & 3) and the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 25 July 2023 (Appendices 4, 5 & 6)	
LEAD OFFICER:	Jane West, Corporate Director for Resources Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services T: 020 8726 6000 X 62529. Email: adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Rowenna Davis Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	<p>The Constitution requires that in accepting a recommendation, with or without amendment, from a Scrutiny and Overview Committee or Sub-Committee, the Executive Mayor shall agree an action plan for the implementation of the agreed recommendations and shall delegate responsibility to an identified officer to report back to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or Sub-Committee, within a specified period, on the progress made in implementing the action plan.</p>	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 This report invites the Executive Mayor to approve the full response reports arising from the Stage 1 reports presented to the Cabinet meeting held on 27 September 2023, including:

- Action plans for the implementation of agreed recommendations,
- Indicating where a recommendation is already in progress, or
- Reasons for rejecting the recommendations.

and that these be reported to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or relevant Sub-Committees.

- 1.2** The Constitution requires that in accepting a recommendation, with or without amendment, from a Scrutiny and Overview Committee or Sub-Committee, the Executive Mayor shall agree an action plan for the implementation of the agreed recommendations and shall delegate responsibility to an identified officer to report back to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or Sub-Committee, within a specified period, on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** The Executive Mayor, in Cabinet, has the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendation below and is RECOMMENDED to:

- 2.1.1 Approve the responses and action plans attached to this report as Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6; and
- 2.1.2 Delegate authority to the officers identified in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 to report back to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, or relevant Sub-Committee, within the periods specified in the agreed responses and action plans, and on progress made in implementing any action plan.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 3.1** Part 4E of the Council's Constitution: Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules (paragraphs 8.5 – 8.7) and Section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000 require the Cabinet to respond to a Scrutiny and Overview report within 2 months beginning with the date on which the executive received the report.
- 3.2** Detailed reasons for individual responses and action plans recommended are contained in the appendices to this report.
- 3.3** Scrutiny and Overview Committee and relevant Sub-Committees are responsible for monitoring progress in implementation of recommendations to the Cabinet.

4 SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1** The Scrutiny recommendations are set out in the appendices to this report.
- 4.2** The detailed responses, including reasons for rejected recommendations and action plans for the implementation of agreed recommendations are also contained in these appendices.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 These are contained in the appendices to this report.

6 CONSULTATION / PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

6.1 The recommendations have been developed following the deliberations of either the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or one of its Sub-Committees.

6.2 The recommendations in the appendices to this report may involve further consultation and as each recommendation is developed, these implications will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

6.3 Some of the recommendations in the appendices to this report are the result of Pre-Decision Scrutiny.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services:

Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice The Council must learn the lessons of past failures and embed sound governance processes to ensure that decision-making is transparent, open and honest. These must ensure effective control of our projects and programmes and encourage meaningful scrutiny and challenge.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 The recommendations set out in the appendices to this report may have a financial implication and as each recommendation is developed the financial implication will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Under Section 9F Local Government Act 2000 ("The Act"), Scrutiny and Overview Committee (SOC) have the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any executive and non-executive functions and to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. SOC also has the power to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority on matters, which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of its area. To discharge this scrutiny function, SOC has appointed Scrutiny Sub-Committees, which includes Children & Young People Sub-Committee and Streets & Environment Sub-

Committee. Pursuant to the above provisions Scrutiny & Overview Committee, and its Sub-Committees, have made recommendations arising from their scrutiny of areas under their remit, which are detailed in the attached appendices.

8.2.2 Under Section 9FE of the Act, there is a duty on the executive to respond to the scrutiny reports, indicating what (if any) action they propose to take, within 2 months beginning with the date on which the executive received the report.

8.2.3 *Approved by:* Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (10/10/2023).

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 The recommendations in the appendix to this report may have a Human Resources impact and as each recommendation is developed these implications will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Section 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

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

8.4.2 The recommendations set out in the appendices of this report have equality implications and will require an EQIA as part of the development of the proposals. The implications will be explored to identify impact and mitigation utilised to negate any adverse impact where necessary.

8.4.3 Comment approved by: Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities Programme Manager, 23/10/2023.

8.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.5.1 The recommendations set out in the appendices of this report may have an Environmental impact and as each recommendation is developed, these implications will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

8.6 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 8.6.1** The recommendations set out in the appendices of this report may have a Crime and Disorder reduction impact and as each recommendation is developed, these implications will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

8.7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

8.7.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

The recommendations set out in the appendices of this report may involve the processing of 'personal data' and as each recommendation is developed, these implications will be explored and approved through appropriate decision-making routes.

8.7.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

The recommendations set out in the appendices of this report may require a DPIA and as each recommendation is developed, these implications will be explored and a DPIA carried out where necessary.

9 APPENDICES

- 9.1** Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Children & Young People Sub-Committee, Item: Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard, 27 June 2023

Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Streets and Environment Sub-Committee, Item: Parking Policy Transformation Project, 11 July 2023

Appendix 3 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Streets and Environment Sub-Committee, Item: Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, 11 July 2023

Appendix 4 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee, Item: Financial Performance Monitoring: Month 2 2023-24, 25 July 2023

Appendix 5 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee, Item: Equalities Strategy Refresh, 25 July 2023

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 Meeting of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee held on 27 June 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=167&MId=3502>

Meeting of the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee held on 11 July 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=3506>

Meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 25 July 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3511>

Appendix 1 – Item: Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard

Considered by Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 27 June 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
CYP.1.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommended that the narrative on future versions of the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard report looked to identify where indicators were linked or interdependent, to ensure Members had a fuller understanding of these.	Cllr Maria Gatland CYPE	Partially accepted It has been agreed that all red-rated indicators for the relevant period will be included in the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard report. Further clarification of the request to identify linked or interdependent indicators is required. It is proposed that an approach is modelled at the next Sub-Committee meeting to facilitate.	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director of Children, Young People & Education	N/A	November meeting of the CYP Sub-Committee	TBC

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Appendix 2 – Item: Parking Policy Transformation Project

Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July 2023

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

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

Appendix 3 – Item: Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 11 July 2023

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

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

Appendix 4 – Item: Financial Performance Monitoring: Month 2 2023-24

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 25 July 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SOC.8.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee would like to recommend that the letters sent to residents regarding Council Tax arrears are reviewed to ensure they include information about the potential availability of support schemes, such as the Council Tax Hardship Scheme.	Councillor Jason Cummings Resources	Accepted	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)	None	Implemented. The Reminder and Summons notifications now also include a link to Council Tax Hardship Scheme information , as well as promoting how to get help with the rising cost of living and getting help paying Council Tax .	TBC

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Appendix 5 – Item: Equalities Strategy Refresh

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 25 July 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SOC.9.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that there is further consideration given to how the refreshed Equalities Strategy can reflect the intersectionality between protected characteristics.	Councillor Andy Stranack ACE	<p>Partially Accepted</p> <p>This is an emerging area of focus with intersectionality between protected characteristics increasingly considered based on analysis of data that we collect both from staff and residents.</p> <p>For example, for staff, this includes looking at the workforce profile, and mapping career progression against the different characteristics.</p> <p>The new EQIA process that is being introduced as part of the roll out of the Strategy will also encourage staff to give regard to data when making decisions that are likely to have an equality impact, including looking at intersectionalities.</p> <p>The Council's staff network groups also hold joint meetings to consider issues of intersectionality.</p>	David Courcoux, Director of Policy, Programmes & Performance	N/A	Following adoption of refreshed Equality Strategy: Guidance on considering intersectional impacts to be included in the guidance notes for new EQIA process and training.	TBC
SOC.10.23/24	In order to improve accountability for the delivery of the Equalities Strategy, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that a process for holding regular challenge sessions with those officers responsible for specific actions/workstreams within the Strategy is developed	Councillor Andy Stranack ACE	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>Accountability for the monitoring of the Equality Strategy 2023-2027, lies with the EDI Internal Control Board that is co-chaired by the Chief Executive and the Head of OD and Learning, and is attended by representatives from each Directorate.</p> <p>The EDI Board will be responsible for agreeing the delivery plan following consultation with the</p>	David Courcoux, Director of Policy, Programmes & Performance	N/A	Challenge sessions with EDI Board to commence in 2024, following approval of delivery plan by EDI Board/November/December 2023.	TBC

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
	as part of the ongoing monitoring of delivery.		<p>Executive Mayor, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, and consideration by the Scrutiny & Overview Committee.</p> <p>Once the delivery plan has been socialised with Directorate Management Teams, commencing early 2024, the Board will receive regular progress updates and hold deep dive challenge sessions with action owners throughout the year. The Equality team will work with DMTs to socialise the delivery plan and provide support and guidance where appropriate.</p>				
SOC.11.23/ Page 26	<p>The Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed with the proposal of the Cabinet Member and Officers, that given its scope, the Equalities Strategy should have a longer term end date, but recommends that:</p> <p>a) key review points are built into the Strategy at appropriate intervals to allow for adjustments and the opportunity to refocus as needed.</p> <p>b) it is sufficiently dynamic to take account of any new initiatives or legislation that may arise over its lifespan.</p>	<p>Councillor Andy Stranack</p> <p>ACE</p>	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>The delivery plan for the Strategy will be designed to be sufficiently dynamic to take account of any new initiatives or legislation that may arise over its lifespan.</p> <p>Each outcome of the Strategy will be monitored by the EDI Board and challenge sessions held as appropriate throughout the year. A review of progress on delivery of the strategy will be undertaken annually by the EDI Board prior to the publication of the Equality Annual Report to ensure it remains on track. The Equality Annual Report will be considered by both Cabinet and Council.</p>	<p>David Courcoux, Director of Policy, Programmes & Performance</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Review of progress via Equality Annual Report</p> <p>Action by: EDI Board July/August 2024</p>	<p>TBC</p>

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SOC.12.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that consideration is given to embedding Equalities Champions within directorates to complement existing structures and systems within the Council aimed at promoting equalities and inclusivity.	Councillor Andy Stranack ACE	<p>Already in progress</p> <p>Croydon already has Equality Champions in place, who provide a link between each Directorate, the EDI Board and the wider organisation.</p> <p>The EDI Board periodically reviews the roles and responsibilities of Equality Champions, with the next review due to take place at an upcoming EDI Board meeting to consider how the role could be enhanced to support the delivery of the refreshed strategy.</p>	David Courcoux, Director of Policy, Programmes & Performance	N/A	October/November – Review by the EDI Board of Equality Champions' role in supporting the roll out of the refreshed Strategy.	TBC

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Appendix 6 – Item: Scrutiny Recommendations

Considered by Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 25 July 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / ALREADY IN PROGRESS / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SOC.13.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that the Mayor publishes the feedback received from the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities on the Council's bid for Levelling-Up funding.	Mayor Jason Perry SCRER	Accepted	Nick Hibberd, Corporate Director of SCRER	N/A	Phase 3 of Levelling Up Fund (if there is a phase 3)	TBC

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	22 November 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022/23	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Annette McPartland, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health	
LEAD OFFICER:	David Williams, Independent Chair, CSAB	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Yvette Hopley, Health & Social Care	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 Cabinet is asked to note the content of the Annual Report for the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board [CSAB]. The report was ratified at the CSAB on the 26 July 2023 as outlined by S43 Care Act and the Statutory Guidance. This report includes the following recommendations from the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee which took place on the 3 October.

- work is required around the accessibility for everyone to be able to read and access the document, this work has been taken forward within the local authority which includes speaking to those who can provide lived experience of reading the report in order that we are able to publish a report alongside the pdf version which will improve accessibility.
- Prevention of Future Death Report notices not included within the report. These reports are published online and since October 2021 there were only four, none of which were sent to the LB Croydon as the Coroner didn't deem them the relevant body to receive the report.
- The questions raised around the data pages including ensuring that the source of the data is stated will be actioned prior to publishing and further discussions are taking place around the accuracy of some of the figures which the Chair indicated he had already had these discussions, again this will be addressed before publication.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CABINET

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is asked to:

1. Note the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022-2023.
2. Consider whether there are any considerations or concerns of the Annual Report.
3. Give consideration as to whether the Annual Report provides sufficient reassurance on the performance and effectiveness of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board.
4. Note that the CSAB and the Local Authority will be reviewing the funding from the partners.

3 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 3.1 The report will be introduced by David Williams with the strategic partners present – Adult Social Care, Health and Police at Cabinet. It will provide an update on the multi agency work undertaken across the partnership from the 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The report covers the 2022/23 priorities demonstrating what has been achieved and the work which needs to continue throughout 2023/24. It is important to note that the remit for producing this report is that it is a public facing document.
- 3.2 The Performance and Quality Assurance sub group continues the robust work to develop the CSAB Dashboard which has improved year on year both to inform the CSAB work and to identify gaps in service across all sectors. Following the recent review by the Partners in Health & Care (LGA) we have been taking forward the recommendations and developed an Action Plan which is regularly monitored. We have already held positive meetings with both Health and Police colleagues to identify data which can be both collected and fit for purpose in relation to the CSAB's priorities.
- 3.3 Engagement and Communication across the partnership has been key to the work of the CSAB. The level of engagement is evidenced within the report with more agencies being represented on the board's sub groups along with their involvement with the process for safeguarding adult reviews. It can also be seen in both attendance at the CSAB quarterly meetings and sub groups but also at events organised by the Board.
- 3.4 Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 mandates that Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) must arrange for there to be a Safeguarding Adult Review [SAR] of a case involving an adult in its area with care and support needs (whether or not the local authority has been meeting any of these needs) if:
 - There is reasonable concern about how the SAB, partner agencies or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult AND
 - The adult died as a result of abuse or neglect (or suspected abuse or neglect) OR

- The adult experienced serious abuse or neglect.

However, the overall purpose of a Safeguarding Adult Review is to promote learning and improve practice, not to re-investigate or to apportion blame.

The CSAB has seen an increase in Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) which can be seen as a positive due to work carried out raising awareness of the work of the board. Two are included in this report as they have been published during the period for this report and full reports for Madeleine and Sylvia, along with 7 Minute briefings, can be found on the CSAB website. They were both around the theme of transitional safeguarding and the CSAB are currently in the process of organising multi agency Bitesize Training sessions like the Catherine and VB SARs sessions which proved a success.

3.5 The CSAB will continue to engage across the Croydon Partnership, regionally and nationally through meetings and networks. We are also working closely with colleagues from the Children's Partnership which will include transitional safeguarding.

3.6 CSAB Safeguarding Statistics can be found on pages 8 – 9 of the report. Page 8 shows the number of safeguarding referrals received during this time with a total of 1786 with 599 closed S42 safeguarding enquiries indicating the source of the referrals. These numbers are down from last year due to the modification of the process by the local authority, whereby there is a screening of all 'at risk' contacts on being received. This has led to the number of safeguarding concerns dropping but more importantly a timely and preventative response to a significant number of cases.

75% of closed safeguarding enquiries were located within the community which was a similar figure to the previous year (76%), 25% were located in care homes which was the same percentage in 2021/22. You can see from the data on page 9 that those asked if their desired outcomes were either fully or partially achieved saw an increase of 1% from the previous year (95%).

The data is telling us that Asian/Asian British people are underrepresented for safeguarding referrals compared to the ethnicity of Croydon's population. This is in line with national data and there has been much work undertaken in Croydon to raise awareness within the community. The CSAB Voice of the People sub group has been leading this work and examples of this can be seen from information within the report. It has continued to engage with community groups and engaged with the BME Forum and Asian Resource Centre, the Chief Executive of the BME Forum, Andrew Brown is Vice Chair of the Croydon SAB. Bespoke workshops are currently in the planning phase with the Asian Resource Centre to raise awareness around 'Keeping You Safe' for 2023/24.

3.7 The report covers work undertaken and identifies further needed to be undertaken across each of the Board's priorities and some examples have been listed below:

- a) **Prevention** [pages 16 – 19]. SARs have continued to be commissioned with requests coming into the CSAB SAR sub group from across the partnership. There

are three further SARs which are near completion and will be reported in next year's annual report. As part of the quality and improvement assurance the CSAB developed a SAR Comprehensive Action Plan which monitors the progress on the recommendations from all completed SARs. SLAM has incorporated transitional safeguarding awareness into their adult safeguarding training and also as a result of the Madeleine SAR, appointed a transitional safeguarding mental health worker within Croydon Mental Health Services and works across the health and social care sector. Work has also begun on the Safer Croydon Partnership Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy with the Violence Reduction Network presenting the work at the CSAB quarterly meeting.

- b) **Commissioning** [pages 21 – 22]. Croydon Council commissioning team developed a quality monitoring risk rating for Adult Social Care providers to ensure oversight of all regulated care providers are monitored in a timely manner. This work compliments the market oversight work of the CSAB Intelligence Sharing sub group which meets bi-monthly with representatives across a wide range of agencies including the CQC. This group has introduced a professional's feedback form in order to receive feedback on providers ahead of the Intelligence Sharing meetings. Other SABs have shown an interest in the way in which this group operates with requests to learn more about its work.
- c) **Quality & Improvement** [page 23 – 28]. The Performance and Quality Assurance sub group have continued to improve the data with the focus of collecting more robust data across all partners which tells us areas which requires further focus and identifies gaps. At Croydon's request the LGA (Partners in Health & Care) undertook a three day bespoke review of the CSAB (pages 24-26), the reviewer provided the board with recommendations and an action plan has been developed to take these forward.
- d) **Cross Sector Working** [pages 29 – 30]. The report evidences many examples of how agencies have been working together, these include working with the CSCP around transitional safeguarding, Hear Us engaged with the LGA review, Police colleagues have chaired SAR Panels and the BME Forum have undertaken many projects working with agencies across the partnership [page 35]. Also, page 6 provides examples of good practice across the partnership.
- e) **Voice of the People** [page 32]. The Voice of the People Sub group continues to grow and focus their work around producing citizen led resources with the leaflet due to be completed in September 2023. Membership now includes Advocacy for All, Hear Us, Mind in Croydon and Crisis. They provided feedback to ASC on their new online portal and was part of the LGA review process with the independent reviewer attending one of the quarterly meetings and their work mentioned in the final report. The 'Keeping you Safe' presentation continues to be shared with groups/network etc with further presentations planned for 2023/24 including the Asian Resource Centre.

- f) **Communication and Engagement** [pages 34 – 35]. There is excellent engagement with the CSAB with high attendance at meetings and events held with volunteers always keen to take part in the work of the CSAB. Strong links are in place with other SABs both regionally and nationally with Croydon being very proactive in work undertaken by these networks. The CSAB have recently taken on the role of Chairing the South West London SAB Chairs and Managers network which follows the same footprint as the SWL ICB.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The three strategic partners [Local Authority, Health and Police] along with other organisations, the voluntary sector, residents and agencies have contributed to the annual report. Resident feedback and the Lay Member comments have also been included within the report.
- 4.2 Contributions are gathered by partners completing a template and also by continuous recording of work undertaken using the CSAB meeting structure of the board and it's sub groups. This year the template included additional questions following the feedback from last year's Scrutiny, we asked agencies to provide evidence on how they measured impact on services and for residents in order to report on the effectiveness of the Board. Contributions are also sourced by attending events and workshops.
- 4.3 The Annual Report was signed off at the CSAB quarterly meeting on 26th July and was shared across the sub group meetings during the months of March – August 2023.

5 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The CSAB sets its priorities each year which are highlighted throughout the Annual Report which includes safeguarding vulnerable adults in Croydon from harm/abuse.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as all priorities within the 2022/23 Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report has been funded through the Adult Social Care budget and allocations from the statutory partners for the CSAB (Health and Police).

Approved by Mirella Peters, Head of Finance, Adults Social Care & Health on behalf of the Director of Finance. (29/09/2023)

6.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.2.1 Pursuant to Schedule 2 of the Care Act 2014, as soon as feasible after the end of each financial year, the CSAB must publish a report on:
- What it has done during the year to achieve its priorities.
 - What has been done during that year to implement its Strategic Plan.
 - What each member has done during that year to implement the strategy.
 - The findings of reviews arranged by it under section 44 (Safeguarding Adult Reviews) which have concluded that year (whether or not they began in that year).
 - What has been done during the year to implement the findings of a review arranged by it under that section.
 - Where it decides during that year not to implement a finding of a review arranged by it under that section, the reasons for its decision.
- 6.2.2 The CSAB must send a copy of the report to the Chief Executive and the Lead of the Council, the local policing body the whole or part of whose area is in the local authority's area, the Local Healthwatch organisation for the local authority's area and the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board for that area.

Comments approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 29/09/2023)

6.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.3.1 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:
- (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.
- 6.3.2 A key priority for the Council and the CSAB is ensuring we work with our partners to make Croydon a stronger and fairer place for all our communities and be a more inclusive borough free from racism and discrimination. The impact of the proposals that have been and/or will be delivered through the structures outlined in this report are expected to have a positive impact on residents with different protected characteristics, in particular the demographic groups which are underrepresented in the safeguarding data and this work has continued for the board. The 'Voice of the People' sub group has continued to develop their work raising awareness across all communities. The membership of this sub group has continued to grow which includes

Hear Us, Mind in Croydon, BME Forum, Advocacy for All etc. It continues to go out into the community sharing the 'Keeping you Safe' presentation with further visits planned for 2023/24.

6.3.2 Quality assurance data provided in the annual report is designed as a summary set of information and is provided at a high level, these are sourced from the data submitted to the Department of Health & Social Care in 2023. The dataset has also been configured to look at those safeguarding enquiries and to establish where the adults at risk experienced abuse, the type of abuse, who was suspected of abusing and the outcome. As a multi-agency board and with an independent identity the CSAB Performance Dashboard will still enable Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board to assess its impact against the Council's Equality Policy and statutory Equality Objectives. Although partner agencies cannot be held accountable to these, as statutory agencies they will have their distinctive organisational equality objectives and policies, under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmad on behalf of the Equalities Manager. (Date 28/09/2023)

6.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report. However, the information presented in this report will help to shape and influence our workforce practice, policies and procedures.

Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR, Adult Social Care and Health on behalf of the Chief People Officer.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

That the Council notes the work and effectiveness of the CSAB in ensuring the safeguarding of vulnerable adults in Croydon but also to note the planned work to take place in 2023/24.

Approved by Annette McPartland, Corporate Director, Adult, Social Care and Health

Date: 29th September 2023

7. APPENDICES

7.1 CSAB Annual Report 2022/23.

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Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board

Annual report
2022 / 2023

“Working together
safeguarding, supporting and
making services better for
adults in Croydon who are at
risk of abuse and neglect.”



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Foreword by the Independent Chair



I am pleased to introduce my first Annual Report as the Independent Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board [CSAB]. In this Report we can show you what services and the board have done well and identify what still needs to be done, with the aim to help support and protect the most vulnerable in our community. This is , despite significant challenges that services and the community face, including the continuing cost-of-living crisis as we move forward this year.

It has been a real privilege to lead this SAB and to see the effort and engagement by all members and groups in Safeguarding Adults work over this year. I would especially like to thank the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the sub-groups who helped maintain our focus on the priorities set and help drive the safeguarding agenda .



As you can see from the data on pages 7 & 8, this collection of information and narrative, has improved year on year to both inform our work and identify gaps in service across all sectors. However, we recognise as a board, we still need to improve in what information we gather , but the progress we have made would not have been possible without the tireless effort of Nick Sherlock, Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance and chair of our Performance sub-group. I offer my personal thanks to him in recognition of his commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable people in Croydon, particularly after he recently confirmed he was to retire this year after 44 years of service to the public and community.

I would also like to thank both our Lay Member, David Congdon and Nicky Selwyn who chairs the Voice of The People group. Both are there to ensure that the perspective of those with lived experience are truly represented within Croydon and play an important role in challenging and giving oversight in the decision making of the Board (page 10).

We have published 2 Safeguarding Adults Review's (see. Pages 11 & 12), both tragic cases relating to young adults, which has helped inform one of our priorities under Cross Sector Working. With these type of cases on the increase nationally and locally, I am pleased to say work is already well under way in bringing the work of the Adult Board closer to that of the Children's Partnership, with representation at Transitional Working Group in March, aiming to look at our joint response to young adults moving into adult and mental health services. We are also participating in the development of the 11-25 strategy and in February took part in a multi-agency learning event between FJC, SAB and CSCP, reviewing how we share learning and identify gaps from the various serious reviews across all sectors, with individual cases discussed monthly and learning shared.

In addition, going forward we will be represented at joint executive meetings and share the chairing between CSCP, SAB and CSP, so we can develop working relationships across all sectors and identify opportunities for joint working where necessary. As part of this engagement, we have already started to work closely with the Children's Scrutineer, Keith Makin to help share good practice.

As the work of the board grows, we continue to hold events to help inform, monitor, and improve multi-agency working, particularly in areas and themes identified from recent SAR's. So, we were very pleased to organise a Homelessness workshop in March this year, facilitated by Patrick Hopkinson, bringing together strategic leads from housing, health, social care, Crisis and community partnership, resulting in actions across all agencies, building of new contacts and insights that will help inform the ongoing Rough Sleepers and Homelessness Strategy in 2024.

In addition, the Learning and Practice Development sub-group, (formerly the Training and Development group) now takes a thematic approach, where the group focuses on areas of risk identified across various SAR's and requires agencies to provide assurance that services are responding to Learning Events and the newly created Action Plan which follows the recommendations set out in those reviews. This is part of the continued effort of the board to ensure we can evidence change and improvement in practice.

We as a Board are also keen to reflect on our own performance and effectiveness so we made our own bid to the PCH, to have the work of the Board reviewed. This was led by Fiona Bateman, an already established Board Chair, Chair of London SAB and esteemed SAR author, who spoke to both practitioners, service user groups and board members in early 2023. She completed her review which was presented and accepted by the board in March and has resulted in a thorough action plan for 23/24. (See pages 21,22 and 23).

The work of the Intelligence Subgroup, ably led by Estelene Klassen and Stephen Hopkins, has resulted, and shown a marked improvement in providers service, commissioned in Croydon (see page 22). This group shares vital information from nursing and home care services, as well as concerned family members, to ensure that providers are supported and when necessary, challenged to improve the service they offer. Part of this role includes close liaison with CQC to maintain standards of care required.

This report reflects how all SAB members, and the vital work of the sub-groups continues to focus on the needs of the public and the community they serve. Through their commitment and willingness to both challenge and support each other, they demonstrate the need to work together in strong and flexible partnerships to improve services and prevent abuse and neglect in Croydon.



Additionally, I would like to personally thank the safeguarding adults board team of Denise Snow and Lesley Weakford who have provided support and resilience to both the Board and me to keep us all on track. Although there is still more work to do, I commend this report and when you read, please reflect on everything that is happening in Croydon to make services safer and the efforts by all to continue this journey of improvement.

David Williams, CSAB Independent Chair

Voice of the People



We are very happy with the care our father is getting at XX , also very impressed with the diligent and swift follow up action you and the nursing home took following us expressing concerns. Thank you again for this and for all you do as part of the adult safeguarding team
[Feedback from a family member for S42 Social Worker]

“Yes I was listened to, got the desired outcome, invited to meetings, supported through the process. A thorough investigation was carried out and everything was brought into the open. Process took about 3 months. Keep up the good work”
[ASC S42 Safeguarding Feedback Interview]

Would like more accountability to understand the role of anyone involved in the safeguarding process
[Age UK]

We don't all have care co-ordinators or get the right support due to high caseloads and/or discharged from services too soon.
[Hear Us]

Thank you for your thorough investigation and holding the care home to account, your efforts were much appreciated. The safeguarding enquiry looked at all the aspects that the Coroner covered today.
[Family member re Social Worker]

The positive experience was that the safeguarding representative did his job in contacting the home and asking the questions of them to ensure my Mum's care and the Care home procedures were adequate. Then contacted me to let me know and I was listened to.

Support from my social worker was the best part of the process. The police were understanding, helpful and supportive and kept me informed. To improve it is important for professional networks to take into consideration the historical factors, patterns of behaviour and sharing of information and looking at the bigger picture when dealing with safeguarding issues to ensure the best possible outcome for all parties.
[S42 Service User Feedback]

Police utilising information from Streetsafe and Walk and Talks to fix ongoing problems through partnership work carrying out a you said, we did approach.

We need better supported housing, we don't want to be housed in B&Bs where risk of exploitation is higher. If we have physical or mental health issues we need more support and a more suitable environment.

What does safeguarding have to offer me?
Both professionals and service users are unclear?

The data is telling us the lack of housing or appropriate housing in Croydon contributes to risk or safety issues for vulnerable adults.
[Hear Us]

Good Practice Across the Partnership

Health and Social Care working in partnership to improve the quality of safeguarding referrals. Development of top 10 tips to aid health colleagues in the completion of detailed safeguarding referrals.

Compliment received from consultant at CUH to S42 SW around an ongoing complex s42 enquiry involving adult with complex health needs and concerns around self neglect and neglect by mother primary carer in relation to life sustaining medication, safe discharge planned and long term plan around supporting living.

“It’s been such a pleasure working with you, you have always been supportive, so I want to wish you both the best and say thank you”
[Colleague from Shirley Oaks Hospital to SWL ICB Colleague]

Page 44

NHSE introduced a case tracker to enable ICBs to identify, track, report and monitor the number of SIs that have occurred due to a safeguarding failure, & to record and capture lessons & outcomes from safeguarding reviews.

“This is great news, I agree that sounds like a suitable move for Miss A. Thanks so much for your help in getting the ball rolling with this, I think it's going to have a hugely positive impact **on Miss A's** welfare. Your input has really been invaluable

Mind in Croydon made more than 20 safeguarding alerts to Croydon Council in 2022/23.

Croydon Council Commissioning Team are undertaking resident feedback from homecare providers to ensure that the voice of our residents are heard.

Police continued to support efforts to tackle Serious Youth Violence working in Partnership with Croydon Council and the Violence Reduction Unit. The Police have and will continue to engage with local initiatives such as My Ends project this includes young people, Croydon Council, local police and head teachers. Engagement is key as the Police and Local Authority continue their commitment to working with grassroots organisations to deter young people from youth violence.

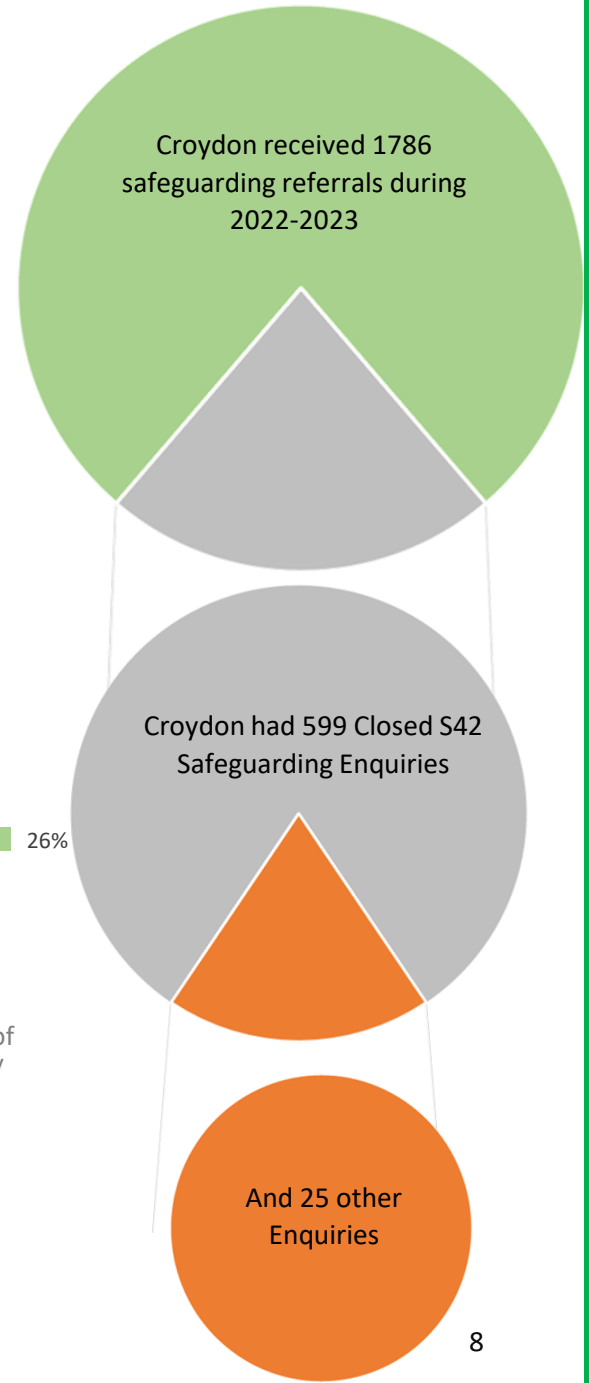
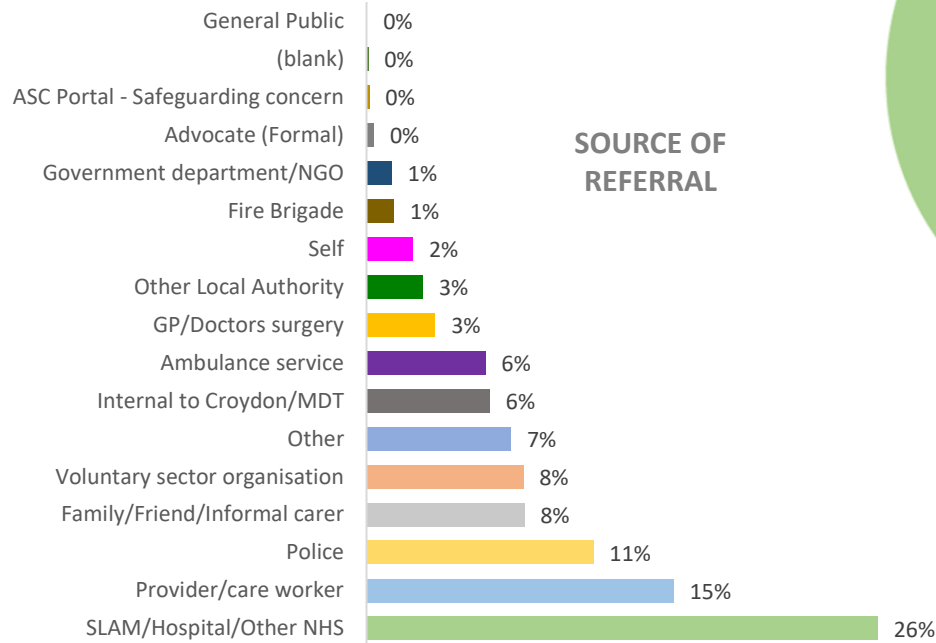
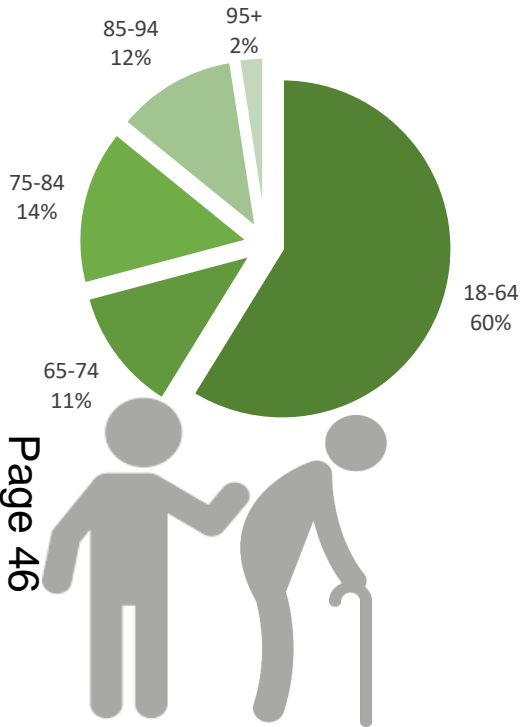
The FJC, CSCP and CSAB working together on how best to share the learning across DHRs, SARs and SPRs based on the cross cutting themes from all of these reviews. A series of learning events and the use of a shared tracker will take this work forward.

Safeguarding Statistics 2022 / 2023



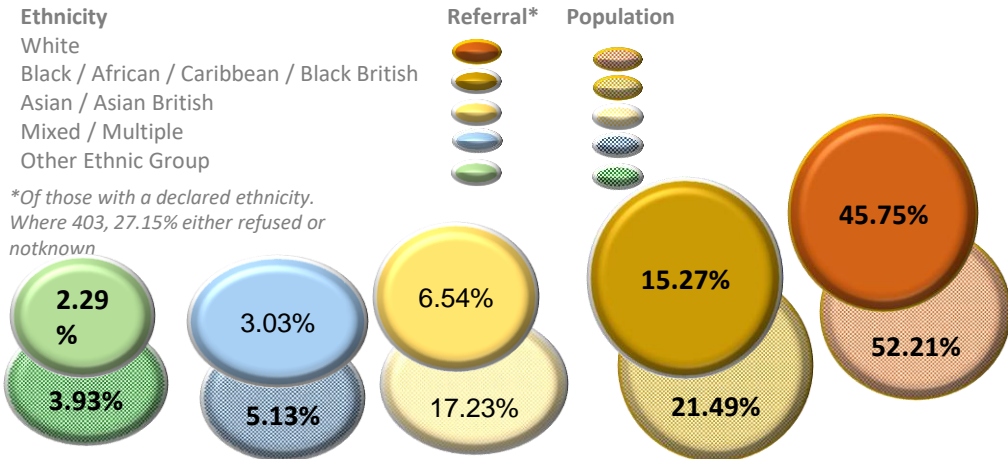


Safeguarding Referrals Received during 2022-23



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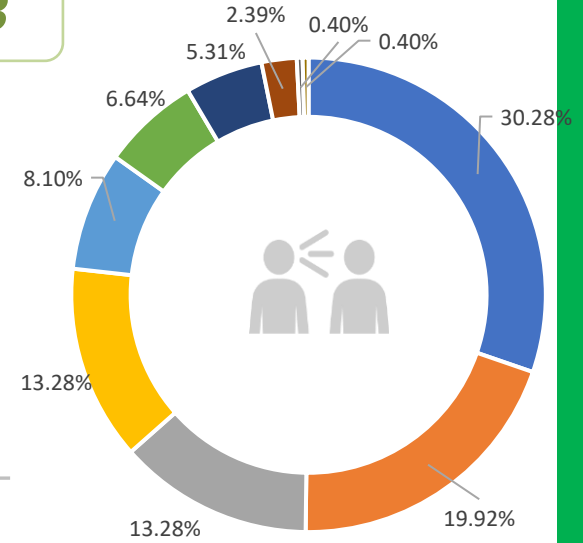
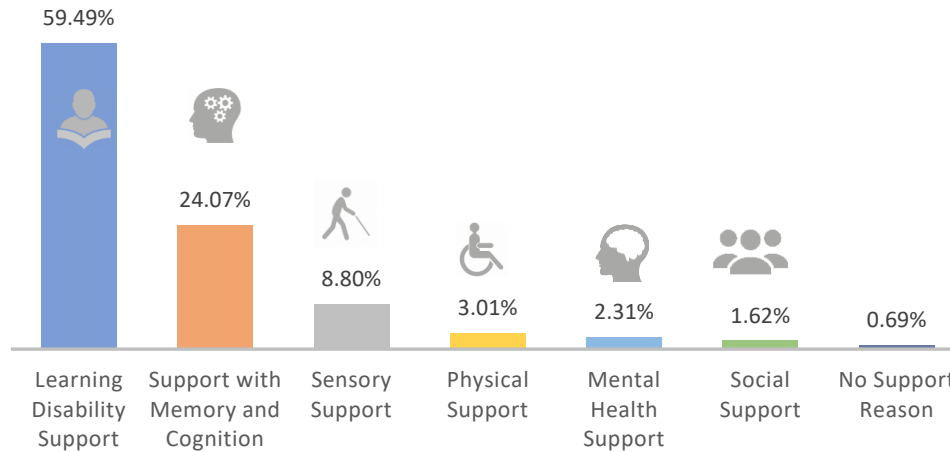
ETHNICITY OF REFERRALS vs ETHNICITY OF CROYDON POPULATION



Compared to the ethnicity of Croydon population, Asian / Asian British people are underrepresented for Safeguarding Referrals.

Safeguarding Closure which Ended during 2022-2023

Of the
599
 Safeguarding Enquiries started
 in 2022-23 (down from 698 in
 2021-22)



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Of which, 75% of closed safeguarding enquiries were located within the community (compared to 76% in 2020-2021)



Of which, 25% of closed safeguarding enquiries were located in a Care Home (same as 2021-2022)



Of which where a risk was identified, 94% resulted in risk reduction or removal (same as 2021-2022)



Of which, 98% of adults felt they lacked mental capacity but they were all supported by an advocate, family member or friend (same as 2021-2022)



Of which, those that were asked their desired outcomes, 95% were either fully or partially achieved. (up by 1% from 94% in 2021-2022)

228	Neglect & Acts of Omission
150	Financial or Material Abuse
100	Psychological Abuse
100	Physical Abuse
61	Domestic Abuse
50	Self-Neglect
40	Sexual Abuse
18	Organisational Abuse
3	Discriminatory Abuse
3	Sexual Exploitation

** the total number of abuse type will be higher than 599 as a client can have more than one abuse type**

The Role of the Lay Member

A Lay Member will act as an independent voice and offer a wider perspective that recognises the diversity of our local communities in Croydon. Croydon SAB currently has one Lay Member who provides this contribution to the Annual Report and sits on both the Board and the SAR Sub Group. Lay Members play an important role in the oversight, scrutiny, decisions and policies made by the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board.

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I am a member of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board and the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Sub group. I find the work of the SAR group very valuable, looking at some of the most challenging cases.

David Congdon

Safeguarding Adult Reviews

There are a number of common themes often involving homelessness, MH, self neglect and suicide. A significant number of SARs have been commissioned and it is vital that the lessons are incorporated into improved practice.

Not all suicides can be prevented but opportunities for positive intervention must not be missed

Croydon VOTP/London Safeguarding Voices

I currently chair the CSAB Voice of the People sub group working to deliver the workplan in line with the Board's priorities which you will find within this report. I also have the opportunity to be part of the London Safeguarding Voices Group (LSV).

The LSV group has focussed on Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) especially the public understanding of what safeguarding is and referral pathways. I was able to be part of the co-production of the LondonADASS Safeguarding Conference in 2022 and now planning the 2023 conference.



I represent Croydon on this group and we are planning presentations to SABs currently not represented to explain the work of the LSV and encourage participation.

Nicky Selwyn

My personal contributions to this work locally, regionally and nationally include:

- ❖ Expert by experience member of a Peer Review Panel for Richmond and Wandsworth.
- ❖ Sharing of 'Keeping you Safe' materials produced by the Croydon VOTP, including learning and progress of the citizen-focussed work and materials.
- ❖ Shared learning from SARs to support LSV work.
- ❖ Championed the name change from the London Safeguarding Voices Group to London Safeguarding Voices and also suggested a less onerous and more effective meeting schedule for the group which is currently being trialled.

Safeguarding Adult Reviews [SARs]



What is a SAR?

Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) as a mandatory duty under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014, must arrange for there to be a Safeguarding Adult Review of a case involving an adult in its area with care and support needs (whether or not the local authority has been meeting any of these needs) if:

- There is reasonable concern about how the SAB, partner agencies or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult AND
- The adult died as a result of abuse or neglect (or suspected abuse or neglect) OR
- The adult experienced serious abuse or neglect.

However, the overall purpose of a Safeguarding Adult Review is to promote learning and improve practice, not to re-investigate or to apportion blame.

The CSAB published two SARs during this year and the summaries for both of these reviews outlining the background and recommendations are within this Annual Report. The link below will take you to the full reports and the 7 Minute Briefings for all SARs published in Croydon.

<https://www.croydonsab.co.uk/about-us/safeguarding-adult-reviews/>

**Madeleine
Sylvia**

About Madeleine

Madeleine was of mixed ethnicity (White British/Black Nigerian), she was 18 years old when she died and was well known to many services. She had a long history of mental health (CAMHS) support from a very young age, including being an inpatient when she was 9. She was first assessed by social care services when she was 12 and at 16 she was taken into care. She experienced 8 different placements in 5 months and was then placed in secure accommodation in Scotland. Shortly before her 18th birthday she moved from there to an Independent Living placement in Croydon. Despite having reached adulthood, coordination of her care needs remained the responsibility of LB Wandsworth's Children's Social Care. On the evening of the 13 August 2020, whilst at her placement, Madeleine took Ketamine. Staff called 111 for advice. She was taken to hospital and died on 16 August 2020.

Transitions and Transitional Safeguarding

Multi-agency support was not robust in either transition planning or in mitigating Transitional Safeguarding issues. In complex cases, transition planning requires careful multi-agency working and this was lacking with Madeleine, particularly around mental health and placement provision. The Transitional Safeguarding issues across the children's and adults divide were not fully understood for her. In situations like this, practitioners should not walk away and close down involvement when support is declined which is what happened here, but should remain curious and tenacious in seeking ways to engage young people particularly where there are complexities, eg. mental health and substance misuse, which compound their experience of services. Unfortunately there were many gaps in the service that Madeleine received.

Listening to the voice of those receiving services

Madeleine's voice was not heard by many of the people working with her: care planning was done about her, without her. This increased her anxiety and feelings of hopelessness. Neither were her family supported to understand her diagnosis or offered effective support to address behaviours and complex needs

Recommendations

- To review case files of young people with complex needs who require robust transition planning to protect them against harm. This must include information about how the voices of young people have been included within the care plans.
- To support practitioners in improving their legal literacy, particularly in relation to mental capacity for young people and knowledge about autism and how practitioners can make reasonable adjustments to services and care plans, in accordance with guidance and legislation.
- To improve multi-agency care planning for young people who transition into adult services and involve young people at every stage.
- To review protocols of oversight of young people with care and safety needs who are the responsibility of one local authority but placed in another.
- To provide more extensive information and guidance about the Transitional Safeguarding needs of care experienced by young people.

About Sylvia

Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board (CSAB), in collaboration with Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) and Kingston Safeguarding Adult Board (KSAB), have commissioned this Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) after Sylvia was tragically found dead in September 2021, of a suspected drug overdose. Sylvia was a 19-year-old British Sri Lankan woman who was known for her smile, charm, love of dancing, and artistic expression. Her youth worker described her as a "beautiful soul" and provided support to her throughout her youth. Sylvia and her siblings became known to Kingston's Children's Social Care in 2007 due to concerns about her lack of education since age 11, exploitation, drug use, and missing episodes. Despite a care order in 2016, suitable placements were difficult to find, leading to frequent moves and a stay in a specialist unit for young people at risk of child sexual exploitation.

What Happened?

In 2018, Sylvia was detained under the Mental Health Act 1983, due to her drug-induced psychosis, and was placed in a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) bed with the South London and Maudsley (SLaM) Mental Health Trust. She was later diagnosed with schizophrenia, emotionally unstable personality disorder, substance misuse, and a possible mild learning disability. Sylvia, who was detained in a hospital under the Mental Health Act, went missing in 2021 and was found attempting to jump into a canal. Despite being granted s17 leave on the hospital grounds, accompanied by two staff members, she managed to evade her escorts and disappeared. Tragically, she was found deceased two days later in a flat in Croydon from a suspected drug overdose.

Recommendations

- The Children's and Adult Social Care departments for each partner SAB should introduce contextual risk assessments when arranging placements for children or adults with care and support needs who are known to be at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation or substance misuse.
- To support practitioners in improving their legal literacy, particularly in relation to working with young people who have complex health, mental health and social care needs so they are fully cognisant of their duties and powers, including safeguarding responsibilities, mental capacity assessments, and S117 aftercare support.
- Family members should be seen as valued partners in the safeguarding process for young people and young people's participation should be sought, recorded, and monitored (reviewed via case file audit), when it is safe to do so.
- To raise the profile of repeated missing episodes as a safeguarding issue, to ensure front line staff understand the police response to missing episodes and promote sustainable joint responsibility for managing risk where people go missing frequently.
- To review how services are commissioned to ensure young people are supported through the transition period either by designing bespoke services for young people 16+, extending children's services post 18, or joining waiting lists for adult services pre-18.
- Partners should agree a joined-up approach across the wider partnership to improve transition planning, including for care experienced young people. This may involve setting up a transitions panel or identifying a lead practitioner to coordinate the professional network, to enable the young person's needs and choices to be met during and post-transition¹³

CSAB Priorities 2022/2023



CSAB Priorities

Prevention	Commissioning	Quality and Improvement	Cross Sector Working
<p>Ambition: Making safeguarding everybody's business. Improve awareness of safeguarding across all citizens, communities and partner organisations. Systems are in place which prevents abuse and neglect from happening.</p>	<p>Ambition: Services reflect the needs of the Croydon residents. Where abuse occurs we remove or reduce the abuse from re-occurring. To improve and sustain quality of care providers in all sectors in order to improve safeguarding practice.</p>	<p>Ambition: Data is used appropriately to understand where risk exists within the system, robust multi-agency safeguarding data which is used to inform planning and practice. We use learning to enhance practice.</p>	<p>Ambition: Vulnerable young adults are transitioning safely into adult services, including preparing for adulthood workstreams in Croydon. To work together to share the learning from SARs and other projects.</p>

What we will do

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness: types of abuse, how to keep themselves safe, how to refer. • Learning from SARs and hold learning events. • Improve professional awareness and response around the complexity of health & care needs within the homeless cohort. • To continue to proactively seek feedback from people who experience safeguarding and their carer's and this is acted upon. • Continue the work of the VOTP sub group developing leaflets and publications with the involvement of citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider market oversight from Commissioning Team and the Intelligence Sharing Group. • Oversight of initiatives across the partnership regarding integration and new ways of working. • Work with partners around unregulated services learning from planned work taking place across London. • Work in partnership developing any new strategies which will improve outcomes for care home residents. • To support providers through information sharing at forums, training and updates on policies and procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and monitor a multi-agency quarterly performance dashboard and to continue to review indicators. • Work together to make sure adult safeguarding standards keep people safe and minimise risk of harm. • Work together to make sure adult safeguarding standards keep people safe and minimise risk of harm. • Improve multi agency response to self-neglect and how to improve practice. • Commission, participate in and support SARs ensuring learning from both local and national reviews is widely shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews with the CSCP where appropriate. • Seek assurance that young people experience a safe transition to adult services. • Seek assurances that vulnerable young adults are transitioning safely into adult services, including preparing for adulthood workstreams. • CSAB to continue to engage with colleagues on a regular basis with the CSCP. • CSAB should consider providing more extensive information and guidance around Transitional Safeguarding.
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CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

PREVENTION



What has been done

- Homeless Workshop for Strategic Leads across the partnership held on 9th March 2023. This was a well attended event which produced clear recommendations and outcomes.
- Age UK have emphasised Making Safeguarding Personal throughout their training programme and all staff, volunteers and board members must attend at least one annually. The impact has been when discussions around safeguarding are taking place they are referencing the usefulness of the training.
- SLaM incorporated Transitional Safeguarding awareness into adult safeguarding training. The session requested students to reflect on how they will translate the learning into practice. A SLaM psychologist who attended the November 2022 training reported that “since attending the course I have been more aware of my responsibilities and built this into my regular conversations and supervision with staff”.
- Designated Nurse contributed to the Transitional Safeguarding work undertaken by the London Modern Slavery Leads Network, 7 minute briefing and resources shared widely through SANN.
- MPS continued to focus on domestic abuse and rape and a dedicated Risk Management Team continues to use tools available to provide DVPN (Domestic Violence Protection Orders) whilst working with partners in MARAC, This Unit has seen a number of successes this year with high harm offenders targeted and action taken to support vulnerable victims.

What needs to be done

- Age UK to include SAR cases into their training and to share more widely SAR reports across staff.
- Age UK to send offers of training relating to safeguarding to all staff.
- Age UK to continue to help the public to have a greater understanding of what abuse is, how to recognise it and how to report it across all communities.
- CHS to strengthen transitional safeguarding processes across the system, this should take a partnership approach and include adult and children services.
- Raise greater awareness among providers of the Risk & Vulnerability Multi Agency Risk Panel (RVMP).
- Need to measure the safeguarding data against other Councils and use other comparative data (public health/ deprivation / domestic violence) to look at ‘hot spots’ in order to inform the preventative agenda. To consider how we use and present data.
- Improvement in the use of data to support the preventative agenda.
- On going focus on self neglect and hoarding – the recent SARs have shown how difficult it is to intervene and manage these situations for operational staff across agencies.
- Police to continue to ensure they are capturing all learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and making sure this is disseminated across the BCU to provide tools and experience to maximise opportunities to safeguard adults.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

PREVENTION



What has been done

- MPS continued to support plan for tackling local violence against woman and girls in line with the MPS strategy. The creation of the Predatory Offenders Unit provided a valuable tool in tackling some of the high harm offenders. This unit has had some outstanding success in targeting some high harm offenders and the Unit has seen a number of successes this year with high harm offenders targeted and action taken to support vulnerable victims.
- Health recommissioned the Identification and Referrals to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme in Croydon for 12 months. Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid awarded a grant to deliver specialist domestic abuse training to clinical and non-clinical staff in all GP practices. They recruited the 2nd advocate educator in May 2023 with the train 4 trainer training provided by IRISi in May 2023. This is work in progress.
- Work began on the Safer Croydon Partnership VAWG Strategy with the Violence Reduction Network presenting the work to the CSAB quarterly meeting,



What needs to be done

- Continue to monitor and drive VAWG initiatives with the aim to eradicate VAWG in London, and for every woman and girl to be able to participate fully in life in our city without experiencing or fearing harassment, abuse or violence from men [Police].
- The Local Authority has received funding for 12 months to create a temporary S117/Personal Health Budget (PHB) Project Team. Work has commenced by beginning a desktop review of all S117 cases open to ICB/SLP, Older Adults, Transitions, Mental Health and Disabilities, ensuring that everyone to whom the Council and ICB/SLP owe a S117 aftercare duty has a care plan setting out their section 117 aftercare and when this will be reviewed.
- Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid programme to continue with the start up of the steering group meetings and the local team will then start delivering training and accept referrals from GP practices.
- The new VAWG Strategy will outline Croydon's ambition to make domestic abuse and violence against women and girls 'everyone's business' whilst implementing a co-ordinated community response to tackling the issues surrounding VAWG. Implementation of the strategy is planned for April 2024.
- LB Croydon ASC development a multi agency Self Neglect Protocol.

Prevention

The Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS England approach to inform action to reduce healthcare inequalities at both national and system levels. SWL ICB use the data to focus preventative work and highlight the most vulnerable.



REDUCING HEALTHCARE INEQUALITIES

CORE20
The most deprived **20%** of the national population as identified by the Index of Multiple Deprivation



The Core20PLUS5 approach is designed to support Integrated Care Systems to drive targeted action in healthcare inequalities improvement

PLUS
ICS-chosen population groups experiencing poorer-than-average health access, experience and/or outcomes, who may not be captured within the Core20 alone and would benefit from a tailored healthcare approach e.g. inclusion health groups

Target population

CORE20 PLUS 5



Key clinical areas of health inequalities

1



MATERNITY
ensuring continuity of care for women from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and from the most deprived groups

2



SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS (SMI)
ensuring annual health checks for **60%** of those living with SMI (bringing SMI in line with the success seen in Learning Disabilities)

3



CHRONIC RESPIRATORY DISEASE
a clear focus on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), driving up uptake of Covid, Flu and Pneumonia vaccines to reduce infective exacerbations and emergency hospital admissions due to those exacerbations

4



EARLY CANCER DIAGNOSIS
75% of cases diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 by 2028

5



HYPERTENSION CASE-FINDING
and optimal management and lipid optimal management



SMOKING CESSATION
positively impacts all 5 key clinical areas

CSAB Priorities 2021 - 2022

PREVENTION

What has been done

- CHS has increased the number of domestic abuse champions across the Acute Trust. Delivery of Elder Abuse training to the Safeguarding Adults National Network (SANN) and ICB colleagues. CHS will be evaluating training delivery and monitoring of Domestic Abuse referrals to see if there has been early intervention and support.
- ASC ongoing redesign of safeguarding processes which is shortening the times between a concern being reported and the triage process in order to decide the appropriate action.
- ASC have focussed on reducing waiting lists in Older People and Disability Services as SARs had shown how large waiting lists were. The evidence is that there has been a reduction in waiting lists.
- CHS Safeguarding teams have produced posters, information leaflets and update Think Family resources to raise awareness across Acute and Community of safeguarding. These are available on the ward, community clinics and available on the CHS intranet.
- Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism provided for health and social care staff. This is new training and is the Government's preferred training.
- Trauma Informed Practice Training held with the aim to address the need for partnership organisations to become more trauma informed. The training received extremely positive feedback asking for more sessions for this to be considered mandatory training. Future dates have been arranged for 2023..



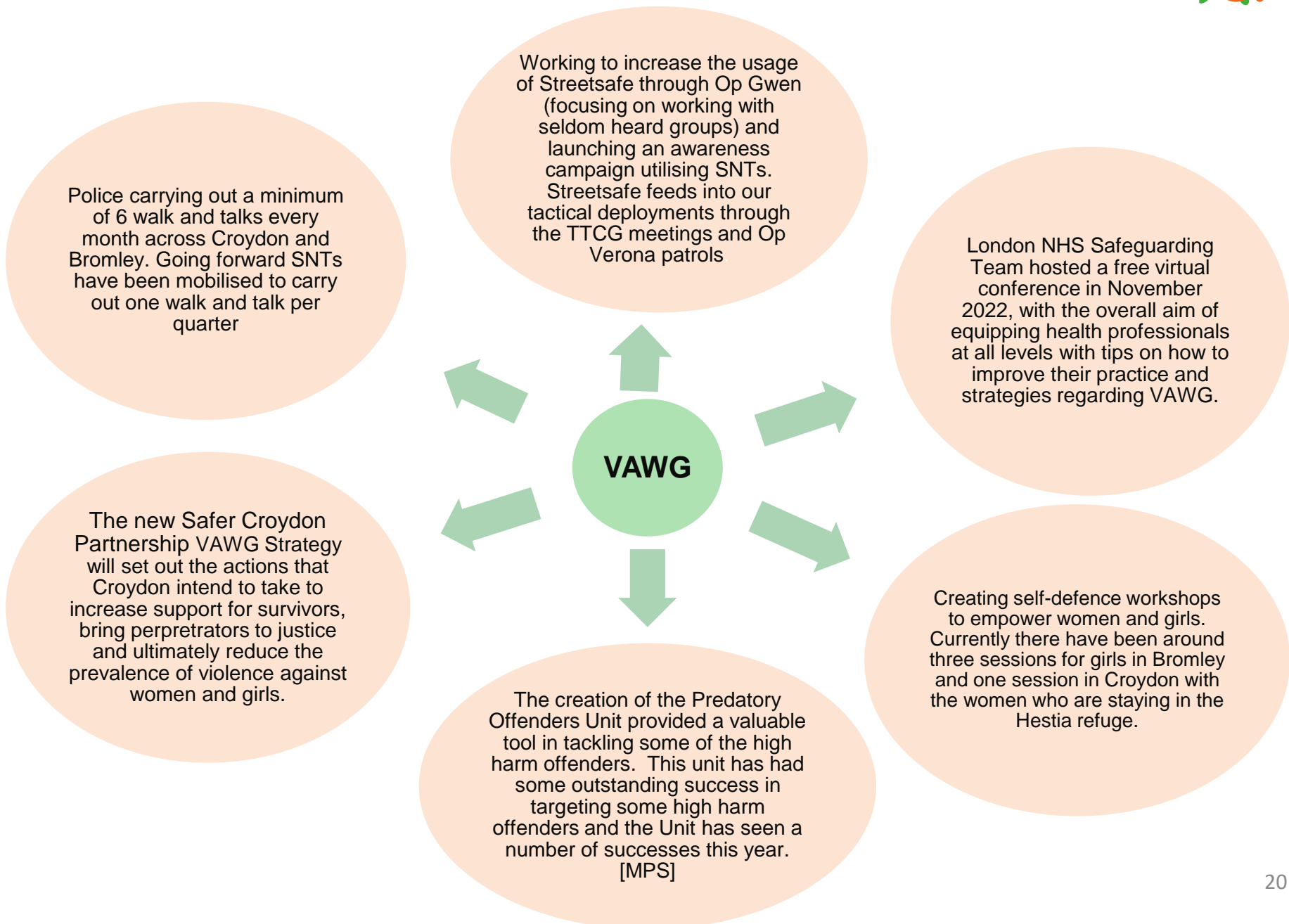
South West
London
Integrated
Care System

Integrated Care Systems [ICS] have four key purposes:

- Improving outcomes in population health and healthcare
- Tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- Enhancing productivity and value for money
- Supporting broader social and economic development

Croydon are part of the SWL ICS along with the boroughs of Sutton, Merton, Kingston, Richmond & Wandsworth.

Croydon SAB Chair and Manager meet quarterly with the SWL SABs with Croydon taking on the chairing and support for these meetings for 2023/24.



COMMISSIONING

What has been done

- A dedicated Police Mental Health Team that works with partners to provide best practice and assist in reducing calls to service and providing the best possible response. Expanded the one front door strategy to include vulnerable adults and children and reduce delays and increase the pace of information sharing between partners. Volumes and trends are monitored to make sure that Police are meeting targets in identifying harm, sharing information and identifying dedicated units to target the root cause of crime and vulnerabilities.
- Refresh of the Provider Concerns Policy. It was important to enforce the importance with regards to collaborative working between Quality Team, Complaints and Safeguarding. Also added to the Policy the introduction of non-engagement of a provider with the quality team and/or safeguarding under thresholds for Provider Concerns so this has been added to the thresholds under 'major' concerns.
- Croydon Place – Service Provision: The Two Hour Urgent Community Response (UCR) Service provides care home residents with urgent assessments, care and treatment for a short time. The service is designed to reduce preventable hospital admission and for resident to recover in their care home residence, and supporting their independence.
- MPS continued to provide support and advice to officers working with Mental Health leads to make sure officers are delivering an effective service with inputs to improve service delivery. The success is monitored by an internal mental health dashboard which is used to monitor performance, identify trends and provides input to a dedicated central improvement team to determine what training and inputs are required to assist front line staff.

What needs to be done

- Out of Borough placement monitoring due to be implemented, moving to an automated reporting of CQC rating changes if they move to 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate' for out of borough placements for early intervention with relevant host authorities.
- Croydon Council to continue improvements on the monthly provider report by adding list of CQC registered providers within Croydon that are requiring improvement or inadequate.
- Hear Us would like to see improved solutions/response to geographical barriers eg Croydon resident housed outside borough or in hospital and better communication.
- Strengthen collaboration between health and social care to drive quality improvements required for LeDER.
- Police continuation of the Crisis Assessment Team (CAT) care program on the BCU with Police and Mental health professionals working together to attend urgent crisis calls, assisting with early diversion and assessment. This will reduce the need for Police to use Section 136 Powers (a power to detain those being suspected of being mentally ill in Public places and allows them to be conveyed to a place of safety).
- Continue to develop the monitoring of the whole care market and reporting of this on a regular basis.
- Reduce the amount of providers who have Requires Improvement and Inadequate as their ratings.
- To work with CQC around the providers requiring improvement and inadequate to look at prioritising improvement work, this is especially relevant around Home Care where we need to see if they are inactive services.

What has been done by Croydon Council Commissioning:

- Reviewed the provider business failure policy to ensure that is reflective of potential risks of failure and key interventions to be put in place. A clear policy enables them to react and intervene where required. Developed quality monitoring risk rating for ASC providers to ensure oversight of all regulated care providers are monitored in a timely manner. This is evidenced via a new monthly report that is under continuous review. This compliments the work of the CSAB Intelligence Sharing meetings (ISC).
- Developed a professional's feedback form to receive feedback ahead of the bi-month ISC meeting. This has enabled early intervention by acting on feedback from multiple professionals and multiple partners which supports our residents.

Croydon Provider Ratings

Care Homes	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet inspected	Total
April 22	3	99	23	1	0	126
April 23	2	105	15	1	1	124
Homecare	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet inspected	Total
April 22	1	67	9	0	56	133
April 23	1	94	15	1	29	140
Supported Living	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet inspected	Total
April 22	0	22	1	1	11	35
April 23	0	28	6	0	6	40
TOTALS	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet inspected	Total
April 22	4	188	33	2	67	294
April 23	3	227	36	2	36	304

- Provider ratings have been improved with the Commissioning team's support, we have recently seen an inadequate provider move to a good CQC rating following support from the Quality & Market Management Team and Market Facing Safeguarding Quality Officer. Data collected shows improvements [see table above]. Lower number of providers within provider concerns due to improved intelligence of issues that are happening to support early identification of poor performance.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

QUALITY & IMPROVEMENT

What has been done

- At Croydon's request the Local Government Association [Partners in Care and Health] undertook a three day bespoke review of the CSAB in preparation for CQC inspection. The review looked at the effectiveness of the board [see pages 23-25].
- Age UK present to their Board data where they can compare their safeguarding data for Croydon with national statistics. The board are now able to see the impact they are having in relation to safeguarding as the graphics are more informative.
- SLaM have identified key data to help monitor and improve their response to safeguarding young people within adult mental health services. Focussed on collecting data on self neglect. The data is presented quarterly to the CSAB.
- The appointment of a Care Home Health Facilitator based in Croydon, Learning Disability Team. This has enabled representation for people living with LD at various forums and support to provider services caring for this cohort of people.
- Development and implementation of a new bespoke strategy meeting tool to assist partners and police in scheduling strategy. This has saved many hours of time for all agencies where strategy meetings were unable to go ahead because there were scheduling issues that meant meetings could not take place. The tool is monitored internally and shared at a multi agency improvement group, all partners have an input into the tool and its effectiveness enabling changes where necessary.

What needs to be done

- To take forward and deliver the recommendations from the Partners in Care and Health (PCH) LGA review report.
- Work on the CSAB Dashboard to continue to improve the quality of data collected across the partnership,
- Police to provide increased data sharing with partners to share information and identify opportunities to work smarter and more efficiently. This includes data on areas such as modern day slavery and child abuse with the data tailored for external partners. This will prove useful for partner initiatives around safeguarding projects including self-neglect.



Partners in Care and Health
Independent evaluation of
safeguarding practice in Croydon

Fiona Bateman



Safeguarding Circle

Key Findings

- CSAB is able to evidence that it complies with their statutory responsibilities to publish a strategic plan and annual report. These are shaped by learning from previous SARs and from their available data and discussions with partners, including citizens. The range of policy and practice guidance available to partner organisations' staff is good.
- CSAB also has effective mechanisms in place to track actions arising from SAR recommendations and report what each organisation has done to apply lesson (via their sub-groups) to the main board.
- Currently CSAB receives some relevant data to assist members undertake their responsibilities under the Care Act. Suggestions have been made how this can be improved. In particular there are too few performance indicators to demonstrate safeguarding adults activity of partner organisations. Given the upcoming CQC assurance framework, there is a significant reputational risk to the Council and partner organisations (particularly the ICB and police as statutory partners) if it isn't possible to adequately evidence that their data collection and ability to analyse their safeguarding function is robust.
- The Local Authority has mechanisms in place to ensure managerial oversight of decisions within the s42 enquiry process. Data could be collated and reported to the CSAB to demonstrate compliance with Care Act guidance. Reporting that data and expanding capacity would enable CSAB and member organisations to better understand why there continues to be a perception that feedback is not routinely provided to referrers and overcome any remaining barriers.
- CSAB would benefit from brief quarterly reports from multi-agency safeguarding panels/ forum on any notable improvements to practice and issues raised, particularly if any gaps in public awareness or partner training needs are identified.

Recommendations

- 1 The Local Authority, working with CSAB statutory partners (ICB and Police), should urgently explore and agree suitable resources to ensure CSAB have adequate insight into all key performance measures. This should be designed so that reports are accessible for CSAB members. As a minimum all Safeguarding Adults Collection ['SAC'] KPI data should be provided in table/ pie chart formats alongside the Croydon demographic profile and that indicates if data is improving or worsening.
- 2 To provide assurance that the safeguarding risks assessment guidance is utilised during referral and triage, it would be prudent to identify means by which concerns are graded against green, amber and red descriptors and report on the timeliness of response within those categories.
- 3 CSAB should receive quantitative data from closure forms completed at triage (including number of green, amber and red concerns) and at the closure of a s42 enquiry on the percentage where feedback has been provided. Consideration should also be given to strengthening the integrated scorecard so that it includes indicators from CSAB members to enable the partnership to '*hold partners to account and gain assurance of the effectiveness of its arrangements*'.
Page 64
- 4 CSAB to agree a simple reporting format for chairs of quality assurance panels and practitioner forums to report key qualitative data to the CSAB.
- 5 Whenever a new service is commissioned by the Council or ICB, especially if this is intended to provide statutory functions within the safeguarding process (e.g. advocacy), the contract of service should provide clear obligations for senior management to induct key personnel within the new services and will also need to be introduced to senior leaders and significant persons within partner agencies. Presently, CSAB has details on its website about how to raise a concern during office hours and outside of these. CSAB partners should consider providing assurance about how, within their own organisation, they maintain up to date information about key personnel.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

QUALITY & IMPROVEMENT

What has been done

- Safeguarding Adults National Network (SANN) commissioned a Task & Finish Group to collate a resource about People in Position of Trust (PiPOT) process. 7 minute briefing has been produced and shared.
- CHS reviewed MCA and Best Interest forms and amended on electronic records to improve quality assurance of DoLS compliance and the application of MCA 2005.
- CHS data is saying that there has been improved compliance with safeguarding mandatory training at all levels in line with the intercollegiate documents for adults & children and young people. Training data presented to the ICB and CHS Governance has improved.
- The safeguarding data for ASC is recorded in the national return known as the Safeguarding Adult Collection (SAC) which provides a comparison with the national and local data. The feedback and data suggests that ASC safeguarding are responding appropriately. Data is showing improvements in response for example the period between receipt of concern and triage.

What needs to be done

- Increase involvement with workstreams across adult and children services ie 11 – 25 partnership strategy & improvements in transitional safeguarding.
- CHS continue to work to improve the application of MCA 2005 and Best Interest Principles via training and learning opportunities, supervision, visible presence in clinical areas to raise awareness and support practice.
- Development of variety of robust safeguarding supervision models to support the delivery across both Acute and Community, work to be completed by the CHS Safeguarding Team in collaboration with Trust colleagues.
- Local Authority to agree and communicate a clear PiPOT process for local providers to adhere to.
- A key area to focus on within ASC Safeguarding is feedback to people, especially when it is decided to look at other ways of addressing issues other than a S42 Safeguarding Enquiry.
- ASC currently developing a Quality Assurance Frameworks to be completed shortly.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023



QUALITY & IMPROVEMENT

What has been done

- Safeguarding Practice in Older People Team following the Head of Safeguarding and QA raising concerns around open safeguarding cases before S42 around timeliness and number cases. They have now in place weekly data report from ASC performance team highlighting how many cases open to each locality team with a weekly comparison report. Cases shown as still opened a communication is sent to the Social Worker to ensure they are on track and taking the appropriate action. This has reduced the number of days cases are open so are now in a position with the handful of cases opened to email the allocated SW giving them a deadline to resolve it. This is the best way of spotting SWs who may need support from senior staff.
- Croydon Police used feedback direct from participants in schemes undertaken over the year with regards to VAWG. This information is captured on detailed quarterly returns. This is discussed at the Tactical Tasking & Coordination Group [TT&C] which is a part of the police response to operational priorities. The process enables senior managers, through this TT&C Group, to consider and agree tactical options and align resources to priorities. This means they can allocate resources effectively and make sure they are supporting victims, targeting perpetrators and having the right conversations with seldom heard groups to deliver an effective response.

What needs to be done

- Take forward the proposal to hold a workshop on referrals across the partnership covering both the S42 process and the criteria for safeguarding enquiries but also the Safeguarding Adult Review request process.
- CSAB to continue to monitor the LGA Action Plan following the recent review by the Partners in Care & Health. The work around data collection has begun and progress made however, across the partnership new initiatives are coming into place which requires further work with an example of exploring how PowerBi can be used to enhance the CSAB Dashboard and presentation of data.
- The Learning and Practice Development sub group will continue to review themes from SARs at their quarterly meetings with Mental Health being the next theme specifically around hospital discharge, Section 75 and information sharing.
- CSAB to continue to monitor the Comprehensive Action Plan for Safeguarding Adult Reviews. It has been agreed to circulate the plan widely on a monthly basis across the partnership requesting updates on the recommendations, how has the work been progressed and what has been the challenges.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

CROSS SECTOR WORKING



What has been done

- Age UK have anonymised real life cases in training which also includes SARs. This has enabled staff, volunteers and members to have a clearer understanding of SARs.
- Statutory services acknowledged that Age UK staff's 'professional judgements' to be taken more seriously with staff feeling more confident when making a referral.
- SLaM have actively engaged with CSAB in exploring and reflecting on the gaps and needs for young people transitioning into adult services. This has led to the appointment of a transitional safeguarding mental health worker within Croydon Mental Health Services and works across the health and social care sector.
- In ASC the Transitions team recruited a new Service manager and two new team managers, giving the team stability.
- MPS review incidents involving vulnerable adults and care homes, increasing the volume of SAR referrals. The police have chaired SAR Panels and are key partners in reviews.

What needs to be done

- Ongoing awareness of transitional safeguarding training (in combination with CAMHS and children's safeguarding training) to be explored with SLaM.
- Improvement of recognition and response to self neglect, improving number of referrals made in relation to self neglect, use of data on number of referrals to be audited and an action plan to be instigated to improve recognition and response.
- Data suggests we need to work in partnership to bridge the gap between referral and communicated outcomes eg referrer receiving an outcome in a timely manner. [SLaM].
- Now that Liberty Protection Safeguard (LPS) has been put on hold by the Government there is a need to refocus back on DOLS and shorten the waiting list.
- To ensure that Mental Capacity principles are embedded in the frontline practice across all agencies.
- Improvements are on their way with regards to Transitional safeguarding due to two recent Safeguarding Adult Reviews and an action plan, working across both children and adults.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023



CROSS SECTOR WORKING

What has been done

- WAVE [Welfare & Vulnerability Engagement] training has begun across the Police BCU to allow staff in licensed venues to know how to spot vulnerable people and what to do when they do. This is part of our focus on the night time economy and a resource produced by the Met Police.
- A focus by ASC on transition: a working group with Children Services to ensure there is a seamless approach to the transition and active work to reduce waiting times. There has been a reduction in the waiting list/time for transition service in ASC. It was recorded as 212 on 04th April 2022 and reduced to 11 cases on the 20th of April 2023. It is currently (as at May 2023) sitting at 10 cases.
- Hear Us took part in the PCH [LGA] review providing feedback from service users and carer perspectives which was included in the final report.

What needs to be done

- CSAB to continue engaging with work across the partnership which includes the Drug & Alcohol Related Deaths Panel, Self Harm & Suicide Prevention Strategy and BCU Death Overview Panel.
- MPS to maximise the new BCU Organisational Learning hub that has been set up to capture learning, feedback and results of reviews. This will be put into a specific format where it can be captured, evaluated and disseminated. This tracker will also mean that we can continue to monitor learning over a longer period of time and check is has been delivered in an effective manner.
- CSAB to build on the links and discussions with colleagues around Asylum Seekers and Displaced People in order to learn more around the work currently being undertaken and address how the Board can be involved.

FJC
Care and support in Croydon for those experiencing domestic abuse

You can make an appointment by contacting us on: 020 8688 0100

We are open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9am-5pm and Tuesday, Thursday 8am-7pm.

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk



Transitional Safeguarding

Working group jointly with Adult Services, Children Services and the CSCP to ensure there is seamless approach to transitions and actively work to reduce waiting times.

Take forward the recommendations from both the Madeleine and Sylvia SARs. (including joint delivery with the CSCP where appropriate)

11 – 25 Strategy group includes ASC

Learning Events

Learning events to be planned, one held in April 2023 looking at cross-cutting themes across DHRs, CSPRs and SARs.

A new VAWG workshop has been created that is being presented to schools to open the conversation with young people through the Schools team and SNTs. The workshop focuses on bystander training, Streetsafe and includes wider conversations about VAWG. [Police]

Joint Working

Commitment from Police to tackling Serious Youth Violence and ensuring violence reduction means putting communities, young people and their families at the heart of tackling the issue.

Joint Executive Meetings specifically to tackle cross cutting themes such as Transitions, Harmful Practices, Mental Health

To continue to engage and share information via regular meetings between the CSCP and CSAB Managers.

CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE



What has been done

- Adult Social Care have been working on a new online referral portal. This was presented at the VOTP sub group meeting with volunteers coming forward to test out the new online form. The feedback from the VOTP was positive, that it works and easy to use. The portal was also presented to the April CSAB meeting and after monitoring by ASC feedback will be required to a future board meeting on results in 6 months.
- The VOTP sub group have continued to expand their membership which now includes Advocacy for All.
- Hear Us accepted the invitation to the membership of the VOTP sub group. Attending these meetings has helped the Hear Us designated safeguarding lead feel more supported and confident regarding safeguarding procedures and issues within their organisation. Sharing information with staff (8) and volunteers (10).
- Police are developing a Domestic Abuse information leaflet with partners in Croydon which will be translated to ensure we are educating and reaching seldom heard communities.
- The Croydon VAWG Strategy and themes will be shaped by a comprehensive Call for Evidence on VAWG and this will include a victims and survivor survey to better understand lived experience.

What needs to be done

- Age UK to recruit more ethnic minority representatives for their Board.
- Improve number of people offered an advocate.
- To hold a Lived Experience challenge event – how do we communicate purpose and identify tangible outcomes [SLaM].
- The CSAB VOTP resources are being developed and should be designed to be as accessible as possible.
- CSAB VOTP group to continue to raise awareness of 'Keeping you Safe' by attending forums/meetings.
- VOTP group to look at undertaking a new project around transitional safeguarding.

Safeguarding Adults 'Keeping you Safe' involves helping people to protect themselves when they are experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or self-neglect.

It can help people with an age-related frailty, learning or physical disability, long term illness, mental health condition, substance dependency or another condition like this to be safe.

Some people may not be able to speak up about what is happening to them.

This leaflet gives examples of when Safeguarding Adults can help and contact details you may need.



"I'm safe because support staff know and understand me"

Help and Advice

If someone is experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or self neglect, there are people who can help.

Please note: if a person is at immediate risk of harm or danger call the police straight away on 999.

If you are worried about someone in a care home, hospital, hospice you can speak to a member of staff or the manager. You can also contact Adult Social Care

Contact Croydon Adult Social Care:

Tel: 020 8726 6500 between 8.30 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday
Out of Hours 020 8726 6500 and ask for Duty Social Worker

Email: CroydonAdultSupport@croydon.gov.uk

Supporting people to be safe in Croydon



Supporting people to be safe in Croydon

Mind in Croydon

In January 2023 we started rolling out a Peer Support InReach Project, recruited a team of Peer Support Workers with direct, lived experience of mental health issues, to work as part of in-patient wards in Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Wandsworth to provide support to people as they leave hospital and journey towards being settled in the community and living independently. The team use their lived experience to help people to build skills to manage their home and finances, connect with family and friends, pursue social and vocational interests, to get more involved in their local community and to stay healthy and mentally well. The support is person-centred and may include mentoring, coaching, facilitating access to community activities, practical support with managing bills, shopping, work or study and emotional support. The team meet people before they leave the ward, work with them to develop their own support plan and visit them at home as they transition back into the community. The project is still developing and the impact is measured in the service being offered to all inpatients across rehabilitation wards across six locations.

We have reflective practice for our staff . In some teams this is led by Consultant Clinical Psychologist, we know that the trauma that many of our client's experience can be difficult to process for the staff supporting them . We want to keep our workforce well and able to support the population of Croydon in this vital work. This is reducing staff sickness rates.

We realised that we could be doing much more to ensure that our work was truly reflective and informed by people with lived experience of mental health so sought funding to support the running of a **Lived Experience Panel**. The panel commenced in March 2023 and was able to feedback and inform on what they like about Mind in Croydon Services and where we could do things better. They were also able to help inform new ways of working and strategic direction. We hope this will make our services better and tailored to reflect the needs of Croydon residents.

We have committed to:

- use our platform to raise ideas and concerns of people with lived experience to stakeholders including mental health professionals and commissioners;
- to bring new service ideas to the panel for their consideration; and
- to feedback findings from the panel to Senior Management and Trustees of Mind in Croydon.



CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

What has been done

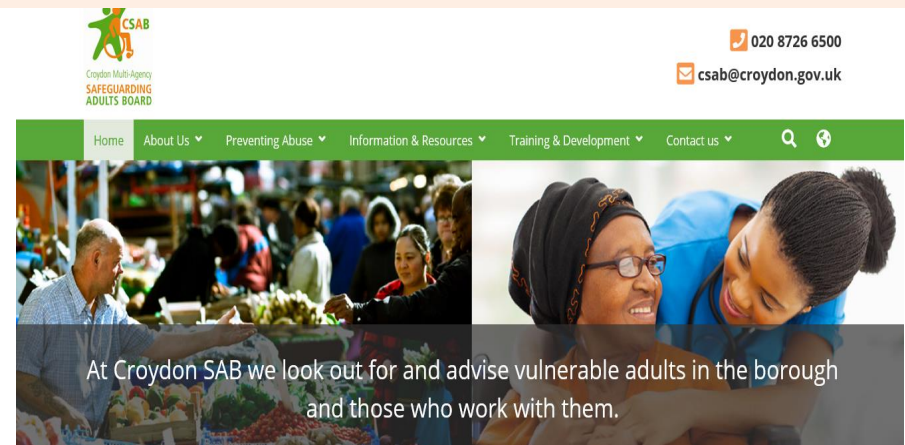
- Members of the CSAB and VOTP Chair presented 'Keeping you Safe' presentation to Hear Us at their Service User Mental Health Open Forum. Hear Us reported that mental health service users, carers and staff are now more aware of how to make a safeguarding referral and feel more confident. This was reflected in the Hear Us evaluation and feedback from attendees. 31 people attended and confirmed improved general awareness of safeguarding.
- CSAB Independent Chair and Board Manager has continued to engage in both national, regional and local networks. These include London and National SAB Chairs, London and National Board Managers, South West London Chairs and South West London Chairs and Managers group. The latter of the groups Croydon has agreed to chair and support for the next 12 months.
- Health colleague used the Madeleine SAR in a learning workshop during National Safeguarding Adults Week
- Working across Croydon, Bromley and Kingston SABs on the Sylvia SAR proved to be a valuable piece of work highlighting excellent communication and engagement. Joint working during the SAR and on publication along with planned shared learning.

What needs to be done

- ASC work on the new portals due to go live in May 2023, the portals facilitating access for the public to ASC, particularly safeguarding, have been redesigned with the full involvement of partners and people. Evidence of impact will be measured via feedback and usage of the new portals.
- CSAB to raise awareness around the Data Sharing Agreement signed by all statutory partners and Mental Health.

Healthwatch Annual Report – please see link below

<https://www.healthwatchcroydon.co.uk/about-us/annual-report-business-plan/>



CSAB Priorities 2022 - 2023

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

BME Forum Partnership Working

Off The Record, joint working and planning for the Cultural Competency training workshop with SLAM staff. We look to fulfil a total of 3/4 training sessions virtually with Off The Record.

Working in partnership with **Clear Community Web** to help the elderly in growing and developing confidence in IT skills, looking at Mobile Phone Boot Camp where we have over 25 in attendance in each session.

AGE UK, this involves working with the older community supporting their needs through mental health, wellbeing support, practical help, frailty support and advice. Supporting the mature age group, our work intertwines with the needs and demands of the elderly in the region, working in partnership

Working alongside **Dementia Action Alliance** learning and exploring how we could work together to make Croydon a Dementia Friendly Community.

BAME Domestic Abuse Partnership is a strategic meeting in working together in partnership to support and reduce domestic abuse within the Croydon Borough. We look at ways to help safeguard and support those that are affected by domestic abuse.



Andrew Brown
Chief Executive BME Forum
CSAB Vice Chair

www.Cbmeforum.org





Governance & Accountability

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Safeguarding Adult Board [SAB]
Statutory Partners are:
 Local Authority, Police, SWL CB



Core duties of the SAB

- Publish an Annual Report
- Develop and publish a Strategic Plan
- Undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews

The SAB will embed the requirements of the overarching Care Act to:

- Assure that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Act and working well across all relevant agencies.
- Prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- Provide timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect is likely or has occurred

CSAB
 Chair: David Williams
 Vice: Andrew Brown

Chairs/Vice Chairs
 Chair: David Williams
 Vice: Andrew Brown

Safeguarding Adult Review
 Chair: Dr Shade Alu – CHS
 Vice: Anna Reeves - SLaM

Performance & Quality Assurance
 Chair: Nick Sherlock - LBC
 Vice: Estelene Klaasen – SWL ICB

Voice of the People
 Chair: Nicky Selwyn
 Vice: Vicki Blinks

Learning & Practice Development
 Chair: Stuart Hart - Police
 Vice: tbc

Intelligence Sharing
 Chair: Estelene Klaasen, SWL ICB
 Vice Chair: Steve Hopkins - LBC

Task & Finish Groups
Health: Estelene Klaasen – SWL ICB
MCA/DoLS: Ernest Johnson - LBC

CSAB Sub Groups

All sub groups will have a Chair & Vice Chair agreed by the Board to ensure governance and accountability. Each Sub group develops a work plan reporting to the board on progress against the strategic priorities, themes from SARs and this will inform the Safeguarding Annual Report. Both the Health and MCA Task & Finish Groups undertake specific projects as and when required.

Chairs/Vice Chairs Sub Group

The Chairs monitor and review the CSAB Strategic Plan progress and priorities. Have oversight of the Board's work through its sub groups.

Performance & Quality Assurance

Working together to oversee, support and monitor the quality of care across the partnership in order that safeguarding standards keep people safe and minimise risk.

Safeguarding Adult Review

Considers requests which may meet the statutory criteria, to make arrangements for and oversee all SARs. Key element of the group is to seek assurance that recommendations are acted upon and learning is shared widely.

Learning & Practice Development

The group to have a clear focus around themes from SARs looking at a different theme for each meeting. How do we measure outcomes and can we evidence this and what difference has it made to practice and for our residents.

Voice of the People

Support a person centred approach and focus on demographic groups which are under represented in safeguarding data. Raise awareness of safeguarding and what it means to the resident with the voice of the resident heard and acted on.

Intelligence Sharing

Support the CSAB with regards to prevention by managing the provider market through frequent market oversight. It allows colleagues from all aspects of health and social care, including CQC representation, to share good practice and concerns.

Six Safeguarding Principles



Empowerment
Talk to me,
hear my voice

Protection
Work with me
to support me
to be safe

Prevention
Support me to
be safe now
and in the
future

Proportionality
Work with me, to
resolve my concerns
and let me move on
with my life

Partnership
Work
together with
me

Accountability
Work with me,
know you have
done all you
should

Types of Abuse

Types of Abuse	
Physical abuse	Might involve being hit, slapped, kicked, hurt in other ways, being locked in a room or held down, or misuse of medication.
Emotional abuse	When you are made to feel sad, afraid or not important. This could be by shouting at you, calling you names, making fun of you, not letting you see your family or friends or bullying you on social media.
Sexual abuse	Made to take part in a sexual activity when you don't want to. Includes sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching or being shown sexual videos or pictures when you don't want them to.
Financial or material	If someone takes something that belongs to you without asking, or makes you give them things. It might involve theft, fraud and exploitation.
Neglect	When you don't get the help you need. It might be someone not giving you your medication or not providing your care needs, not giving enough food or denying your religious or cultural needs.
Discriminatory [Hate Crime]	When someone treats you badly because you are different to them based on your age, gender, sexuality, disability, race or religious belief.
Modern slavery	Includes human trafficking and forced labour. When someone is forced to work with little or no pay, or threatened with violence if they do not work.
Self neglect	When a person is unable to care for themselves & feels unable to accept support, significantly affecting their health and wellbeing.
Organisational	If abuse is caused by an organisation
Domestic Violence/Abuse	When abuse happens between partners or by a family member

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Funding arrangements for the CSAB

The Safeguarding Board is jointly financed by contributions from partner agencies and it is acknowledged that organisations give their time and resources to support the functioning of the board. The Board has again successfully managed a balanced budget, despite there being no increase in member contributions.

Income 2022/2023

£15,000	South London & Maudsley
£21,670	South West London ICB
£21,670	Croydon Health Services
£122,666	Croydon Local Authority
£10,000	Police [includes £5k from 2021/22]
£1,000	London Fire Brigade [ends this year]
£6,838	SAR contributions from Bromley and Kingston

2022/2023 Expenditure:

£122,666	Staffing [Chair, Manager, Co-Ordinator]
£143	DBS charges/ID Charge
£943.90	Website design & support
£720	Training
£241	Premises
£990	Legal charges
£21,848	SARs
£19,000	Paid into reserves Reserves carried forward to be utilised for future SARs as the national/local picture shows a trend of commissioning SARs is increasing.

Glossary



ADASS	Association of Directors of Adult Social Services	LPS	Liberty Protection Safeguard
ASC	Adult Social Services	LSV	London Safeguarding Voices
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic	MASH	Multi agency Safeguarding Hub
SWL ICB/ICS	South West London Integrated Care Board South West London Integrated Care System	MCA	Mental Capacity Act
CHS/ CUH	Croydon Health Services/Croydon University Hospital	MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service	MSP	Making Safeguarding Personal
CSCP	Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership	PCH	Partners in Care and Health
CSAB	Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board	PIPOT	Person in position of trust
CQC	Care Quality Commission	SANN	Safeguarding Adults National Network
DASS	Director of Adult Social Services	SAR	Safeguarding Adult Review
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	SLaM	South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
DVPN	Domestic Violence Protection Orders	VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
IRIS	The Identification & Referral to Improve Safety	WAVE	Welfare & Vulnerability Engagement – a resource produced by the Met Police to spot vulnerability
LD	Learning Disabilities	VOTP	Voice of the People
LFB	London Fire Brigade [Croydon]		
LAS	London Ambulance Service		
LGA	Local Government Association/		

How to contact the CSAB

Denise Snow, Board Manager
Denise.snow@croydon.gov.uk

Lesley Weakford, CSAB Co-Ordinator
Lesley.Weakford@croydon.gov.uk

csab@croydon.gov.uk

<https://www.croydonsab.co.uk/>



020 8726 6500

csab@croydon.gov.uk



LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	22nd November 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022-23	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education	
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Keith Makin, Independent Scrutineer Fiona Martin, Detective Superintendent. Metropolitan Police Sally Innis, Associate Director Safeguarding, Croydon Heath Services	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	
KEY DECISION?	No	REASON: N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Section 16G of The Children Act 2004 requires safeguarding partners (represented by the Local Authority, Health and Police) to publish their arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also requires the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish, at least once in every 12-month period, a report on the work that they have done as a result of their arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 To note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) Annual Report for 2022-23
- 2.2 to note that the report provides robust evidence of the impact of the CSCP's activity to improve outcomes for children & families
- 2.3 to agree that the funding for the CSCP requires action to ensure the partnership is more equitable.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The burden of funding has historically fallen to the Local Authority. This is not a tenable solution.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 The CSCP Annual Report aims to answer 2 key questions.
- 4.2 1) ***Is the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership effective in discharging its duty to co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?***
- 4.3 Answer: Yes, it is effective. This is evidenced by the Independent Review which found that:
- 4.4 ***“The CSCP supports the delivery of safe multi-disciplinary practice in the Borough. Benefiting significantly from highly experienced and competent leaders, the partnership demonstrates a capability to identify and focus on those issues relevant to the needs of local children and young people”.***
- 4.5 The review also noted a lack of an overarching framework. This has since been resolved by the introduction of a New Arrangement Document which sets out how the CSCP co-ordinates local work and the expectation of agencies to engage with the format to ensure children are safeguarded.
- 4.6 2) ***Is the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership ensuring how effective the activities of local organisations are, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?***

- 4.7** Answer: Mostly. There is evidence of quality work to safeguard children and promote their welfare. However, the quantitative evidence provided by audits and data is neither embedded as a process or formatted in a way to drive improvement. There is also a wealth of initiatives and work to support children in Croydon to flourish, where their voice is influencing service provision, but we have not been able to adequately collate this other than in separate activities to promote awareness. The Business Plan for 2023-24 is addressing this.
- 4.8** The annual report covers the financial year April 2022 - March 2023. It is a public facing document which will be published on the [CSCP website](#).
- 4.9** The CSCP arrangements are set out on page 7 of the Annual Report. Key workstreams are overseen by the CSCP Executive and the Independent Scrutineer Keith Makin, via a monthly Executive Partner meeting.
- 4.10** The partnership should consist of a shared and equal duty. However, with the Local Authority providing 76.6% of the income for the year in question, there continues to be a wide disparity between the income received from partner agencies.
- 4.11** The CSCP aligns its work with other multi-agency workstreams. As a result of the strengthening of the new arrangements (implemented March 2023) there are now 2 Network Meetings where senior representatives from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB) meet twice a year to review cross cutting themes. The first such meeting took place in May 2023 and considered an early draft of the CSCP Thematic Review on Serious Youth Violence as well as how learning about transition points for children and young people could be examined and shared across our different partnership groups.
- 4.12** The diagram on page 7 shows the links with other Boards and organisations to improve the line of sight to all areas in Croydon where there is an opportunity to influence the outcomes for children and families.
- 4.13** The Safeguarding Practice Review Group conducted 4 Rapid Reviews relating to children who have died or were seriously injured; and neglect or abuse was suspected. Two were very young infants who died. Two were older children (aged 10-15) who were sexually abused. None of these cases progressed to Safeguarding Practice Reviews as the Rapid Reviews were “learning in action” sessions where multi-agency professionals agreed actions to capture and share learning from these cases where relevant. Some of these cases illuminates the fact that despite best efforts of professionals, sometimes children are harmed, often by their carers, and professionals cannot always be able to prevent it. Additionally, briefings were created to raise awareness of key issues and these cases continue to feature on the report summarising reviews which is updated and shared at every CSCP meeting throughout the year as well as shared more widely in learning events across the partnership.
- 4.14** The CSCP completed 3 Safeguarding Practice Reviews (SPR) which had been started in previous years. Two were cases where children took their own lives. The outcome of

their inquests delayed publication however they are now both published and can be found on our [website](#) (SPR Jake and SPR Chloe) ‘

4.15 SPR Cora’ relates to physical injuries inflicted on a child under 1, probably by her parents which is still awaiting the outcome of criminal process. Whilst awaiting the outcomes, the learning from these cases, as well as national cases of interest, has been shared widely in briefings, on-line and in-person events. Issues include:

- poor or inconsistent information sharing across agencies;
- lack of professional curiosity by some practitioners;
- the importance of identifying and engaging with fathers/male carers;

4.16 Notwithstanding the above, we should be mindful that the number of cases we review is very small, given the number of children in the borough. We are very similar to our statistical neighbours in both the number and subject matter of cases which we review. In all cases there are examples of excellent direct work with families, and we have not identified any catastrophic failings which have led to the poor outcomes for the children in the cases under review.

4.17 The CSCP has held a number of events to progress the ‘Thematic Safeguarding Practice Review’ relating to the serious youth violence incidents in 2021 where 5 teenagers in Croydon lost their lives in unconnected incidents.

4.18 This review focuses on 7 of the young people who were charged in connection with the deaths of 3 of those children who died.

4.19 The review has considered the following resources:

- The internal review completed by Croydon Children’s Social Care to examine the facts surrounding 5 young people who were killed in 2021.
- Multi-agency reports from all known organisations who worked with the 7 young people associated with the deaths of the 3 young people, since the age of 10.
- Responses to surveys from multi-agency professionals who worked with the 7 young people, or young people with similar life experiences.
- 3 interactive, multi-agency workshops where responses from over 60 attendees were gathered electronically in real time as well as the opportunity for facilitated conversations.
- A number of separate conversations with various partners and practitioners.
- Conversations directly between the Independent Author and parents of children associated with the deaths, and the parent of a child who was killed.

- Several multi-agency panel meetings to consider the information received and propose content/recommendations.
- A multi-agency learning event to consider the key features and learning from this review.

4.20 This review is expected to be published in December 2023, following a community meeting to seek feedback from community services and community members to ensure their voices and suggestions are included in the final version.

4.21 The community meeting held in October 2023 was an opportunity to raise awareness and seek engagement with the Youth Safety Delivery Plan. The review is likely to influence the Youth Safety Delivery Plan, with the CSCP having some oversight and scrutiny to ensure the delivery of the final action plan.

4.22 The CSCP Learning & Improvement Group align the findings from both Rapid Reviews and Safeguarding Practice Reviews with the learning events commissioned for the following year. The Annual Report provides more detail on the 5 Learning Events and 3 Practice Week sessions which took place in the year in review.

4.23 The CSCP co-ordinated the training of 5732 professionals on either face to face online or e-learning courses. There has been a stronger representation from the voluntary sector attending courses. The new insight into data relating to training has been very welcomed and is now able to shape the learning offer for 2023-24 as well as hold specific agencies to account for their relevant participation in safeguarding training.

4.24 A number of statistics relevant to the work are shown on pages 9-10 of the annual report. The CSCP uses data to understand the safeguarding landscape for children in Croydon and to provide scrutiny or challenge of partner agencies. This is an area which requires more work and now that a Project Officer is in post with a responsibility in this area, this is gaining traction for 2023-24.

4.25 **OUTCOMES** - are referenced in almost every area of the report. Some key outcomes are:

4.26 Training Impact:

- Excellent feedback from the wide range of safeguarding courses on offer across the borough
- New content, co-delivered with London South Bank University - Expanding Cultural Competences (empowering professionals working with LGBTQ+ young people who are also at risk of suicide and self-harm)
- Training 22 more professionals in the use of the Graded Care Profile 2 Tool (Neglect Tool).
- Inset Training (Youth Justice Service) - promotes a child first approach and ensures the child's voice is heard.

- Respect training in Early Help has made fathers more visible and challenged perpetrator behaviour.
- Quality Briefings & Learning Events based on Safeguarding Practice Reviews and National Learning which are well received by the wider partnership who value the content, opportunity to reflect and supportive learning environment in which they are delivered.

4.27 The impact from specific agencies or teams which have included:

- Police – Every Child Every Time meeting.
- Parents In Partnership – Asylum seeking/displaced families have a safe space away from their hotel accommodation to seek parenting support.
- Virtual School – securing college places for 2 young people experiencing severe mental health challenges.
- Zero fixed term exclusions for primary school children.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – Transitions Panel – to support young people turning 18 and accessing adult mental health services.
- CSCP Executive letter to schools to encourage Operation Encompass engagement.
- Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy – the CSCP continues to influence the draft content and offer space to collaborate.
- Suicide & Self Harm Strategy includes a CSCP case study.
- CSCP challenge on Section 11 compliance and safeguarding for residents of a specific council housing provision saw improvements in both the accommodation and fundamental changes in how Housing approaches safeguarding.
- MASH Transformation – the CSCP has brokered conversations and meetings with the wider partnership agencies to ensure they are engaged and consulted on the new portal referral system which is instrumental in improving the quality of referrals into MASH.

4.28 The value of the opportunity for ad-hoc conversations with CSCP Members who are seen as “experts in safeguarding” and their ability to influence workstreams outside of the CSCP core business cannot be under-estimated.

4.29 Key themes for the CSCP Business Plan for 2023-24 are:

- Asylum Seekers
- Child Victims of Domestic Abuse

- Professional Curiosity/working with resistant families
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Serious Youth Violence/Extra Familial Harm
- Evidence of traction on the Audit Programme
- Evidence of traction on the voice of the child
- More creative use of data

4.30 The key themes may be adjusted in the year dependent on emerging risk.

4.31 Themes are tracked via the CSCP Business Plan which is a live document, with quarterly updates to the CSCP Executive Officers.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 *There are no alternative options*

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The three statutory partners (Local Authority, Health and Police) along with other CSCP member organisations including the voluntary sector have contributed to the annual report. The Independent Scrutineer has also provided his own reflections.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The work of the CSCP supports the council priorities and Executive Mayor's business plan in the following areas:

7.2 Children and young people 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.
- Make Croydon safer for young people.
- Work closely with health services, Police and the VCFS to keep vulnerable children and young people safe from harm.

7.3 Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as it is retrospective. The CSCP operates within a budget which partner agencies contribute to. However, consideration should be given to how future budgets are set, in particular how other partners can contribute a more equal share.

8.1.2 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendation

Not required

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Section 16E of the Children Act 2004 requires the safeguarding partners for a local authority area in England to work together to exercise their functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area. The safeguarding partners include the local authority.

8.2.2 Section 16G of the Children Act 2004 requires the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish a report at least every 12 months on what the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies have done because of the children's safeguarding arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

8.2.3 There is also statutory guidance on the working of local safeguarding arrangements in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

8.2.4 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.

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 The role of the CSCP is to safeguard all children and promote their welfare. The CSCP has played a leading role in challenging inequalities and in safeguarding those children who have/are at risk related to their ethnicity and gender. For example, the work to provide LGBGTQ+ training for professionals working with young people who are self-harming or at risk of suicide.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.4 None

8.4.1 Approved by: *Debbie Jones – Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education*

9. APPENDICES

9.1 A The Croydon Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2022-23

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 None

10. URGENCY

10.1 None

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CROYDON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

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**PART 1
THE WHAT?** →

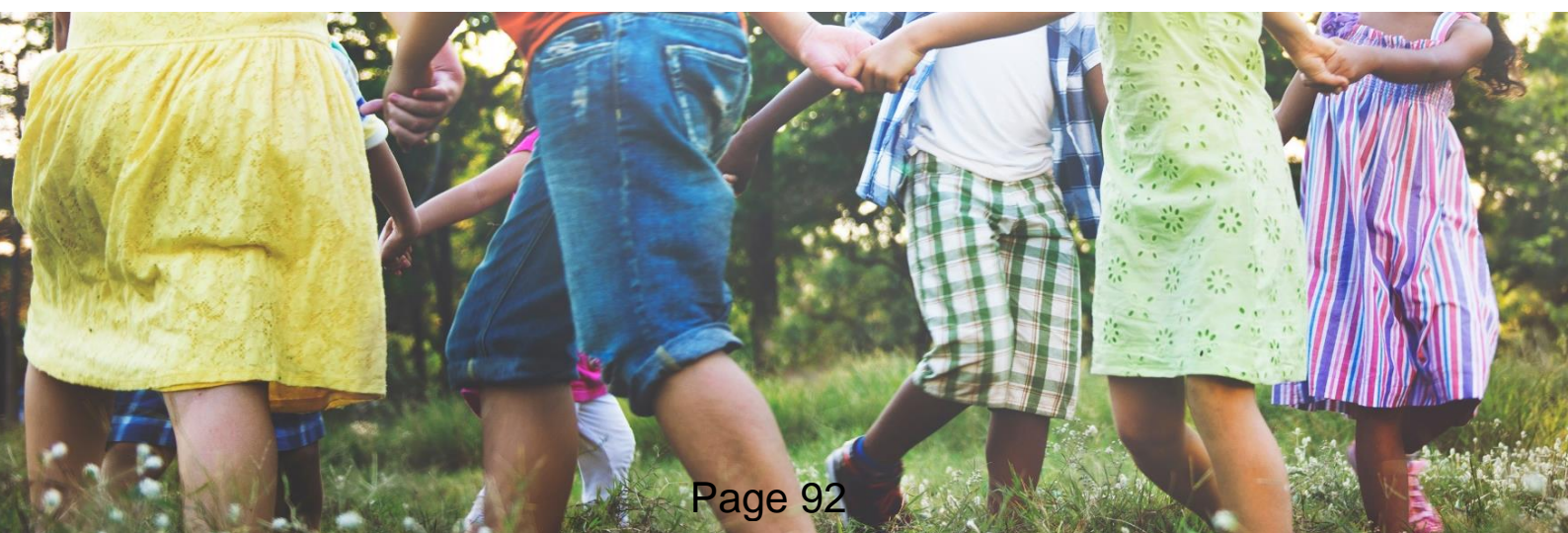
**PART 2
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FOREWORD FROM CSCP EXECUTIVE

Croydon has seen both local and national influences on its Child Protection system in the year in review. Child Q, the responses to the Star & Arthur Review (including the implications of the Care Review) and our own reviews (Jake, Chloe), have given all professionals a lot to reflect on. The CSCP has worked hard to ensure the learning from these key reports is embedded in local practice.

The CSCP also shone the mirror on itself, with its independent review led by Steve Hart. More detail is in the report; however it is good to note we are fundamentally sound and our reports and briefings are considered high quality and effective. We are pleased to see the level of engagement and commitment by the wider partnership to the Thematic Review on Serious Youth Violence. As with the original [VAR60](#), this Croydon resource is likely to receive national attention when we publish toward the end of 2023.

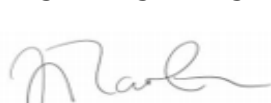
Police in Croydon have been working hard to reduce violent crime, with strong partnerships between the council, police and community groups playing a key role. The Police have and will continue to engage with local initiatives such as the My Ends project, Palace for Life, Project for Youth Empowerment, Play Place and Lives Not Knives and work with groups that include young people, Croydon Council, the Community Safety Partnership, Red Thread, and head teachers.

Through meetings, shared intelligence and tactical groups, Police will continue to target Gangs, County Lines Networks and the most prolific offenders and habitual knife carriers who they continuously work to identify and arrest. Police are also key partners in the Croydon Youth Safety Plan and continue to work with and engage the community through forums and Community Engagement plans.

South West London Clinical Commissioning Group (SWLCCG) became South West London Integrated Care Board (SWLICB) in July 2022. Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) are statutory organisations that are responsible for developing a plan to meet the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget, and arranging provision of health services within a geographical area.

ICBs have a statutory responsibility to make sure the organisations they commission services from have arrangements in place to effectively safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect. To this end, the SWLICB safeguarding team fulfil a number of duties to ensure statutory duties are incorporated in the day-to-day functions of provider services.

This includes supporting Croydon practitioners in maintaining a good level of safeguarding knowledge, competence, and skills alongside more strategic functions such as oversight of safeguarding in contracts (through involvement with procurement and commissioning processes), oversight of provider safeguarding arrangements and robust reporting via agreed governance structures.



Fiona Martin

**Detective
Superintendent**
South Borough
Command Unit



Debbie Jones

LBC Corporate Director
Children Families &
Education



Elaine Clancy

Chief Nurse
Croydon Health Service
& NHS Croydon Place
(SWL Integrated Care)

CSCP EXECUTIVES

MESSAGE FROM THE INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER



I was appointed as the new Independent Scrutineer for the safeguarding partnership in January 2023, taking over from Eleanor Brazil who had held the role previously. Eleanor has been a strong supporter and “critical friend” to the partners in the partnership and I hope to be able to offer a similar focus to her on steady and achievable service improvement. The position of Independent Scrutineer is in place to achieve several connected things:

- offering a commentary on practice
- bringing in knowledge of other partnerships in London and beyond
- chairing the Quality Improvement Group (QIG) and the Safeguarding Partnership Review Group (SPRG) as well as Rapid Reviews when these are necessary.

Essentially, I hold a mirror up to the statutory partners to help them in assessing how strong the partnership is.

I have been really impressed by the commitment and energy of the people I have met with in these first few months of being in role, from staff in the various agencies and the wider community groups, including the vibrant and extremely important voluntary sector in the borough. Croydon offers some complex challenges in terms of safeguarding children and my initial assessment is that the partnership is well placed to meet those challenges.

The Executive Group, which oversees and guides the partnership, meets regularly and is not afraid of tackling issues as they arise, with lively debates being a feature of the way it operates. The Executive Group includes the Education sector as an equal strategic partner and this positions the partnership well in terms of the changes that will be required under the new statutory guidance (Working Together 2023). An observation is that the partnership as a whole will benefit from having closer ties with other partnerships (the Adult Safeguarding Board, Safer Croydon Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board) and steps are being taken to achieve this closer working.

There is a good use of data and evidence to help to ascertain whether the priority aims of the partnership are being met, but this is something that needs to be further developed and this is referenced in the Annual Report. The links between the various audits (single agency, multi-agency, thematic reviews and Section 11 audits) and the analysis of the data sets needs to be strengthened and, again, work is underway to ensure this is achieved.

A key area for development is that of hearing the voices of children and young people in the borough, linking their experiences of life in the borough with the work of the partnership in a more systematic way. There is a terrific amount of engagement with children and young people in Croydon, but this is not fully reflected in how the partnership operates. For example, this Annual Report will, in future, be based a lot more on the direct messages coming from the children and young people in the Borough, with real life examples of the lived experiences of those young people being threaded throughout.

I have met with a lot of people in the borough and will continue to widen this scope. Croydon is a lively place with a real community spirit, and I look forward to learning more about the place and the people in it and to offering what help I can to the safeguarding partnership on its improvement journey.

Keith Makin
Independent
Scrutineer

INTRODUCTION

This annual report covers the period April 2022 - March 2023. It seeks to address the questions:

- 1) Is the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership effective in discharging its duty to co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?
- 2) Is the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership ensuring how effective the activities of local organisations are, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?

Our submission would conclude that:

Q1: **Yes** - there is a robust offer for partnership agencies including:

- A new arrangements document to set out how the CSCP operates in response to working Together 2018
- A framework of meetings
- A business plan.
- Activities and access to quality learning resources
- Advice, guidance, and support to enable partners to work independently and collectively to safeguard children and young people.

Q2: **Mostly** - there is evidence of quality work to safeguard children and promote their welfare, however the quantitative evidence usually provided by audits and data is neither embedded as a CSCP process, or yet fully formatted in a way to enable the CSCP to drive improvement. This has been due to capacity in the team co-ordinating this work (CSCP Business Team), or where partner agencies have been unable to provide the content requested. Sometimes this is because the data is not available in an accessible format, sometimes it is due to capacity of partners to respond in time to meet deadlines. Due to recruitment to the CSCP Business Team and the new arrangement document, we are already seeing improvement in this area for 2023-24.

There is also a wealth of initiatives and work happening with Croydon children where their voice is influencing service provision, but we have not been able to adequately collate this in a way which could be shared meaningfully with the wider partnership. It has been shared as independent pieces of work or newsletter briefings, however the 'so-what factor' of this workstream still needs some attention. The input from the Independent Scrutineer appointed in January 2023 is starting to have some influence in this area.

There is a glossary at the end of the report to explain the various acronyms used.

The following **Five Parts** provide the evidence behind the responses to the 2 questions asked above:

PART 1

- What have we done as a result of the arrangements, (including following Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews) - and how effective have these arrangements been in practice?

PART 2

- Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to children looked after and care leavers.

PART 3

- An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities.

PART 4

- A record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the reporting period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements.

PART 5

- Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

CSCP ARRANGEMENTS 2022-23

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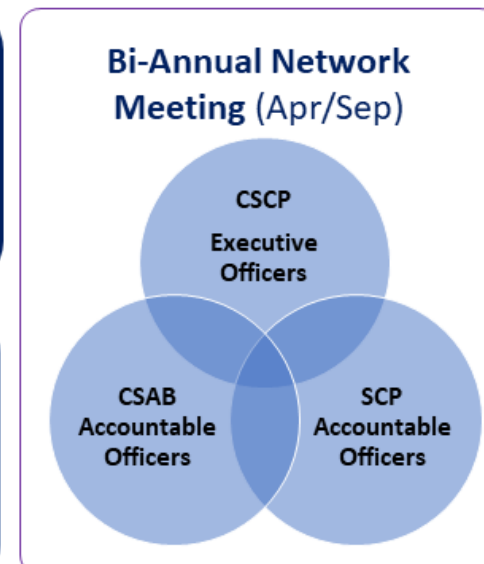
Lead Accountable Officers

Local Authority Chief Executive (Katherine Kerswell) Delegated to Debbie Jones	Chief Executive & Place Based Leader for Health (Matthew Kershaw) Delegated to Elaine Clancy	Chief Officer of Police (Andy Brittain - Borough Commander) Delegated to Fiona Martin
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Croydon Safeguarding Partnership Executive Group x monthly

Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Local Authority Debbie Jones Corporate Director CYPE	Health (Croydon) Elaine Clancy Chief Nurse	Met Police Fiona Martin Det Ch Supt	+	Education Shelley Davies LA Director of Education	Independent Scrutineer Keith Makin
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CSCP Sub groups

- Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG)**
x bi-monthly
- Quality Improvement Group (QIG)** x monthly
(incl. multi-agency audit and performance management)
- Learning & Improvement Group (LIG)**
x bi-monthly

Links with other Strategic Partnerships

- Child Death Overview Panel (SW London CDOP)
- Early Help Partnership Board
- Corporate Parenting Panel
- MASH Operational Group
- Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Board
- Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board
- Safer Croydon Partnership
- SEND Board
- Asylum Seeker/Hotel Safeguarding Group
- Health & Wellbeing Board

Published Work

- Annual Report / Newsletters
- Safeguarding Reviews (SPRs)
- Briefings

Quarterly Learning Events

Apr/Jul/Oct/Feb

CSCP Annual Meeting

broad multi-agency membership – meets to review the Annual Report

CSCP BUDGET & EXPENDITURE

2022/23

Working Together 2018 describes a 'shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area'.

However, the income received has always fallen to the local authority to make up the shortfall between the partner contributions (which have not increased since at least 2014) and the final expenditure.

INCOME	£	%	EXPENDITURE	£
SOUTH LONDON AND MAUDSLEY NHS	£13,540	3.6%	STAFF & RELATED COSTS	£241,364
MET POLICE	£5,000	1.3%	AGENCY COSTS	£79,508
CROYDON CCG / ICB	£33,850	9%	INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER COSTS	£17,990
CROYDON HEALTH SERVICE	£33,850	9%	SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS	£13,639
NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE	£2,000	0.5%	CSCP TRAINING PROVIDED	£16,460
LB CROYDON	£288,201	76.6%	AUDIT	£5,142
TOTAL INCOME	£376,441		MAILROOM, STATIONERY, SUPPLIES	£513
			MEMBERSHIP (TASP)	£825
			WEBSITE	£1,000
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£376,441

Pressure is being applied to secure additional funding, particularly from the Police, however as this is centrally allocated by MOPAC, it would be unusual for a separate local decision to be made.

Additionally, the CSCP is considering ways it can generate more income. For example, our learning resources and events attract out of borough interest, and interest from commercial organisations, who could pay for what is usually free content to organisations working in Croydon.

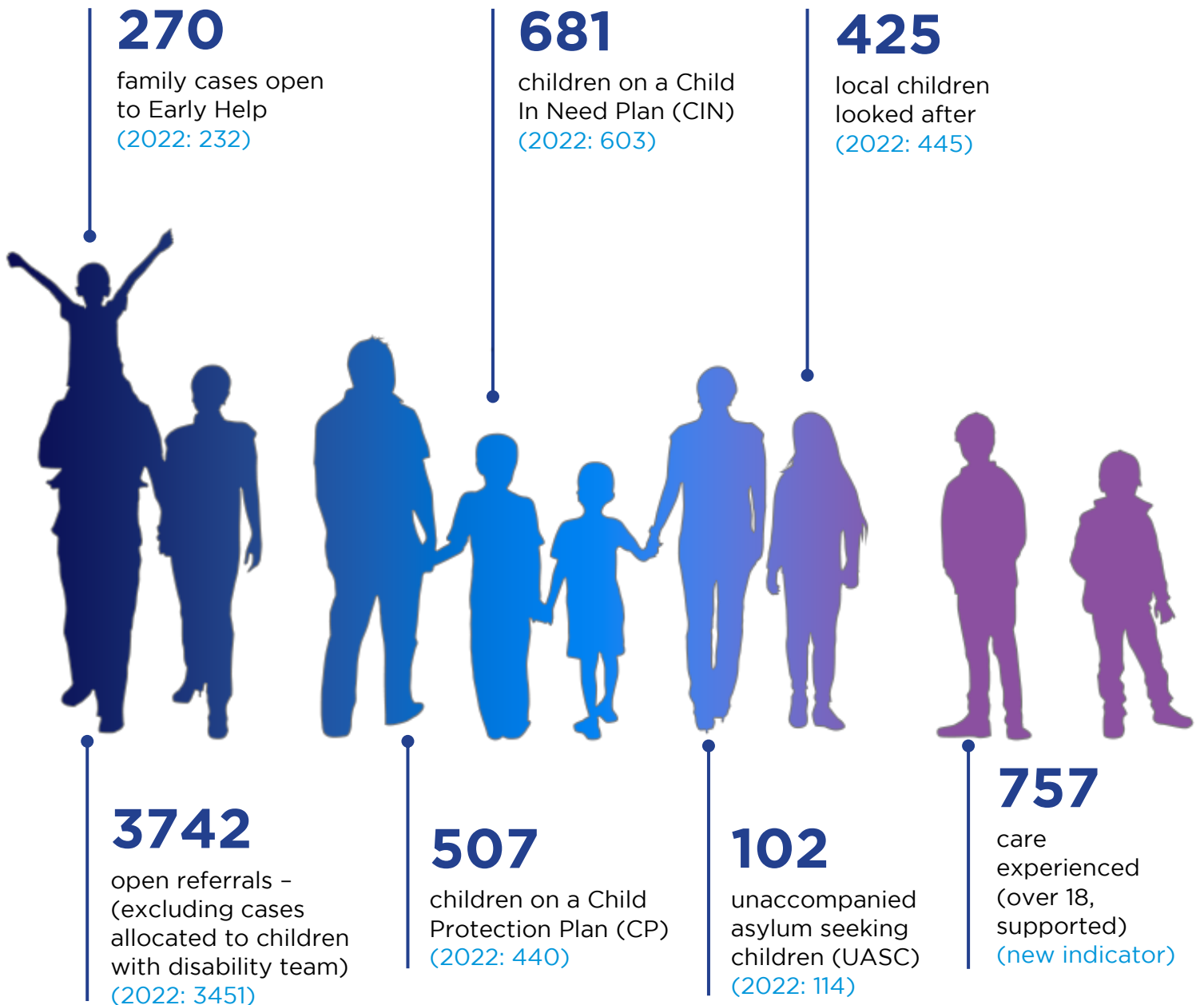
We are also planning to implement a 'no show fee' for training booked by people who then do not attend without reasonable notice. This will also improve training completion rates and free up spaces on popular courses which have been blocked by a person who then doesn't attend.

SAFEGUARDING STATISTICS 2022/23

The CSCP regularly reviews data and performance figures. Increasingly we have been pressing for the join up of separate data sources across partnership agencies to provide data more likely to identify vulnerable cohorts and direct resources to support them. This is a national challenge that it is hoped will be helped by the formation of a central government data strategy due to be published by the end of 2023, in response to the [‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’](#) Government consultation Response.

We are also working with South West London Safeguarding Partnerships to consider how we can join up more localised data and indicators, to ensure where appropriate, a reduction in when and how partner agencies submit data and how it is analysed.

Unless otherwise specified, data relates to the figure as at year end: 31/3/2023



Number of children in Croydon aged under 18:

95,309

almost 25% of the Croydon population.

Rate of open cases, per 10,000 of the under 18 population was:

416.6

This is an increase of 15% on last year which was lower at 362.1.

(For comparison in 2021-22 London was 347 and our statistical neighbour was 355)

9069

number of contacts to the 'Front Door' where the reason was a referral to CSC (18,157 SPOC forms)

Number of referrals into Early Help

1831

1740

missing episodes recorded in the year. (For comparison in 2021-22 there were 2067)

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25

number of child death notifications (any cause) - a return to pre-covid levels. (For comparison in 2021-22 there were 18)

The rate of children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 of the under 18 population was

56.2

This is an increase 21% on last year which was lower at 46.2

(For comparison in 2021-22 London was 37.5 and our statistical neighbour was 38.5)

0

number of children who died from Serious Youth Violence (For comparison in 2021-22 there were 4)

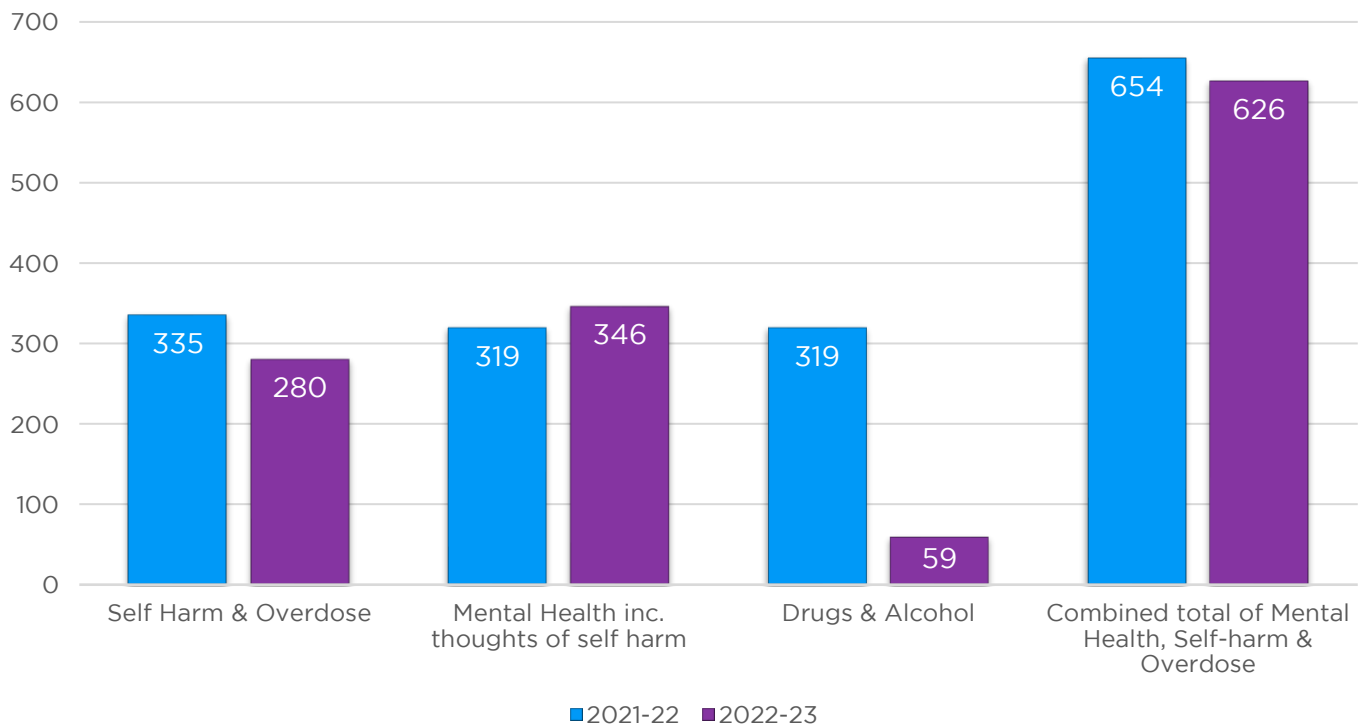
The number of children (under 18) injured as a result of Serious Youth Violence

111

This is a decrease of 15% on last year which was higher at 131.

Number of children attending Emergency Departments (ED) as a result of a deterioration in mental health.

ED Attendances Year Comparison



2819

The number of referrals to CAHMS (2021-22 2841)

73

Number of children on MACE as of 31 March 2023



PART 1: THE WHAT?

What have we done because of the arrangements in Working Together 2018, (including action following Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews) - and how effective have these arrangements been in practice?

INDEPENDENT REVIEW

The CSCP recognised that it had not taken the opportunity to reflect on how the changes to Working Together in 2018 had impacted its work. The CSCP Executive Officers commissioned an independent review in November 2022, to test the effectiveness of their current arrangements. It concluded that:

The CSCP supports the delivery of safe multi-disciplinary practice in the borough. Benefiting significantly from highly experienced and competent leaders, the partnership demonstrates a capability to identify and focus on those issues relevant to the needs of local children and young people.

It also recognised that:

- The lack of a well understood Partnership Framework is a risk, which would be exacerbated by the loss of the experience noted above.
- The products of the priority groups (Vulnerable Adolescents and Mental Health) are of a high standard and have significantly influenced practice, operational and strategic management.
- There is no systematic representation of the voice of children and young people.
- Groups are led well, however some contributions are less forthcoming from some members. Development of shared values and accountabilities would strengthen the functionality.
- The CSCP proactively involves wider community members to build and sustain relationships with their global majority and vulnerable communities.
- The CSCP would benefit from improving the quality assurance circle to ensure new initiatives are evaluated and the CSCP was stronger in strategic intent.
- The CSCP is not formally connected to other partnership boards, relying on relationships to ensure a working knowledge of activities elsewhere is achieved.

As a result, a revised [CSCP Arrangements](#) document and new business plan was compiled from multi-agency feedback. It was agreed by the CSCP

Executive in March 2023 and has been implemented from April 2023. The CSCP Arrangements graphic on page 8 of this Annual report reflects the revised working arrangements.

Since January 2023 a new Independent Scrutineer has been appointed (Keith Makin). His role is to have independent oversight of the CSCP and be a 'critical friend' to ensure challenge to the pace and impact of the work of the CSCP.

The CSCP Business Team has also benefited from the permanent appointment of a Business Manager (November 2022), a Project Officer to focus on the delivery, analysis

and impact of Learning & Development activities, including those related to Safeguarding Practice Reviews (November 2022) and a Project Officer to focus of the Quality Assurance and Audit activity (February 2023). This uplift in resource has already had significant benefits such as more structure to the business plan, a focus on the assurance of safeguarding arrangements for the community and other partners, insightful data and analysis of the CSCP training offer and attendance as well as innovative ways to evidence the voice of children and families for 2023-24.

SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS

Croydon Reviews

We have developed this trends map. This has helped us to have a better understanding of the features of cases of both Rapid Review and Safeguarding Practice Reviews in Croydon over time and has influenced our learning events.

Safeguarding Practice Review & Rapid Review TRENDS MAP

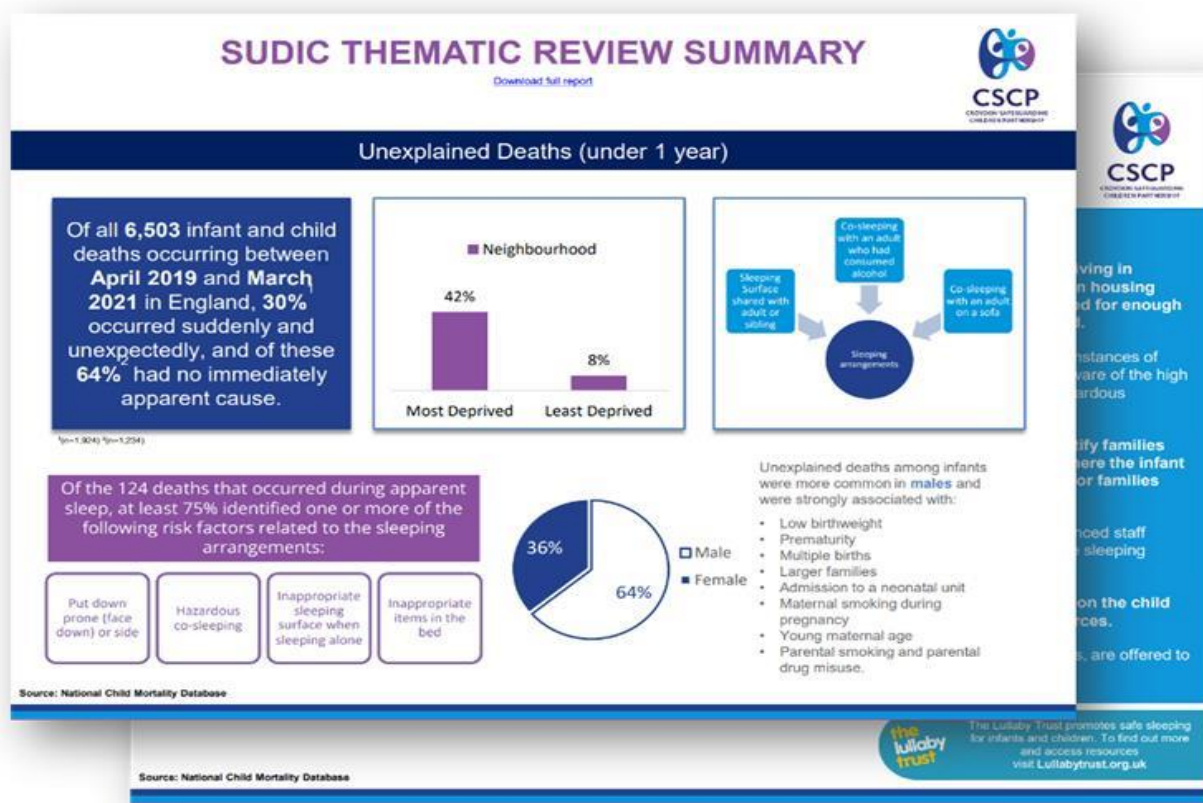
Trends that are in bold are to highlight the highest number of instances.

AGE GROUP	SERVICE AREA INVOLVED	HOME & FAMILY	DEVELOPMENT	HARM	WIDER FACTORS
UNDER 2s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSC (CIN) CHS CLA Early Help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental Mental Health Parental Substance Misuse 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic abuse NAI CSE Neglect Infant Death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple moves (housing) Multiple contact with Police Multiple Hospital Admissions
CHILD: 2-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSC (CIN/CP) CHS Early Help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental Mental Health Parental Substance Misuse Missing episodes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor school attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coercive control Domestic abuse CSA Exposure to violence Contextual safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Trafficking indicators
ADOLESCENT: 13 - 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLA CAMHS Early Help CSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No contact with Fathers Parental Mental Health Housing Missing episodes Domestic Abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACES Challenging behaviour difficulties Poor mental health Missing from education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual safeguarding Substance Misuse Suicide or Suicide Ideation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School exclusions Multiple contact with Police Challenging behaviour Gang affiliations Parental Consent Trusted relationships

In the year in review, we have conducted four Rapid Reviews. These take place when a child dies or is seriously harmed, and neglect or abuse is suspected.

Two of the reviews related to very young infants who died. In both cases the mother's poor mental health was a factor. These cases resonated with the national [SUDIC Report](#) on key features and findings in *Sudden and Unexplained Deaths in Infants and Children*. The CSCP produced a 2-page briefing to support embedding the learning from this report. This was also provided to Housing officers to help them appreciate some of the risks in temporary accommodation for very small babies.

The SUDIC Report has also altered the way that the Police and Partners work together locally in dealing with incidents that are both sensitive and traumatic. Detective Inspector Paul Smith has been working on a number of ways to improve initial police response by working with local hospitals.



The Lullaby Trust promotes safe sleeping for infants and children. To find out more and access resources visit Lullabytrust.org.uk

DI Smith has made contact with bereavement teams across the Borough Command Unit (Police Area) working in the various relevant hospitals, and identified single points of contact at each so that: -

- 1) Where circumstances allow, have a bereavement team on arrival at hospital to support family members alongside the Family Liaison Officer process.
- 2) Have a more streamlined process for the entire child death process.

- 3) Provide enhanced assistance to staff on both sides of the partnership, especially for trauma support.

This approach has led to a joined-up method of training with police attending sessions at Croydon University Hospital (CUH) for new nurses and a session planned for paediatric consultants. Bereavement teams have attended a Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) training session to hear first-hand the issues around trauma and seek ways to limit how this affects staff.

Having a single point of contact (DI Paul Smith) means that the entire child death procedures are quality assured and any identified barriers to working are quickly eliminated where feasible. DI Smith has developed a working relationship with the paediatric teams at all three sites which assures a quick response to serious injuries and deaths.

The other two Rapid reviews related to children aged between 10-12 who were victims of sexual abuse. Themes included neglect and some insufficient professional curiosity which continues to be a wicked issue seen in many cases of abuse regardless of the age of the victim. We created a briefing to support learning from these cases. These were produced very soon after the incidents and have been shared widely. Unlike with full Safeguarding

Learning from Rapid Reviews: Intra-familial CSA

Introduction
 This briefing aims to provide an overview of key findings and recommendations from a rapid review case involving Intra-Familial Child Sexual Abuse. Rapid Review meetings are held to ascertain the facts of the case prior to the critical incident and identify immediate multi-agency learning.

Case Summary
 Features of this case were subject to a rapid review for the following:

- Reoccurring sexual abuse both within and outside of the family
- Poor mental health within the family
- Historical domestic abuse
- Poor school attendance
- Strong indicators of neglect
- Lack of parental boundaries
- Sibling violence and abuse

References
<https://learning.npscc.org.uk/media/7355/summary-iccs-final-report-government-response-caspar-briefing.pdf>
<https://learning.npscc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse>
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1162740/Improving-multi-agency-information-sharing-print-ready-version.pdf

the trauma of and memory,
 establishing can result in mental health
 to overcome
 ask a sensitive might consider:
 victim's
 effects of support the
 professionals, tive services, wide a onse?
 financing fill legal intervention?
 support to ing with the tra-familial

the schools, before referral to MASH may have strengthened the Early Help response and contributed to a more robust referral.

Read CSCP guidance for Information Sharing

Practice Reviews (which sometimes take years to conclude or publish) this enables us to share the key messages much more rapidly.

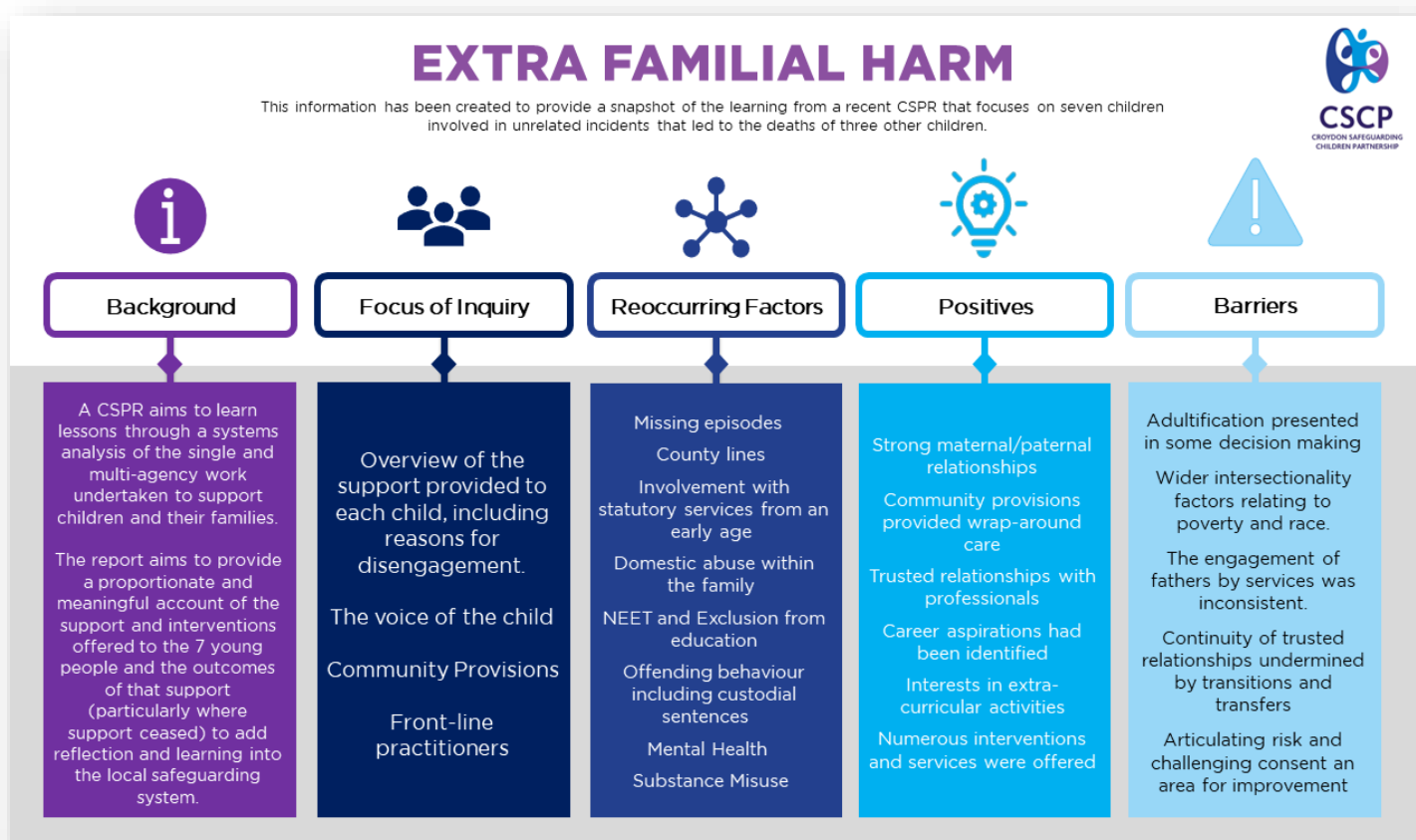
Additionally, we finalised three [Safeguarding Practice Reviews](#) which had been started in a previous year. Two related to suicide, both young people who were children looked after to Croydon (Jake and Chloe). Cora is an infant who suffered injuries whilst being cared for by her parents.

- [Jake](#) – published July 2023
- [Chloe](#) – published October 2023
- Cora – awaiting inquest/criminal proceedings before we can publish

We also introduced the concept of a “Case of Concern” – where cases do not reach the threshold for a Rapid Review, but still have relevant learning for the multi-agency partnership. We have completed 2 Cases of Concern. Both concerning young people suffering from poor mental health.

Thematic Review – Serious Youth Violence

In 2021 there were 5 deaths of teenagers in Croydon as a result of serious youth violence. 4 of these young people were under 18. We commissioned a Child Safeguarding Practice Review to consider 7 young people charged with offences in relation to the unconnected deaths of 3 of those victims.



The CSCP recognises the fragility between being a victim of serious youth violence or a person involved in the incident and as a result, are not using the term ‘perpetrator’ in its report.

This review has taken longer than usual to complete due to the necessity to wait until the criminal cases are concluded.

Most reviews conducted by the CSCP seek input from family members, but not routinely, from the community. The reason this review is different is because the deaths affected people in the community deeply. There were 30 deaths of young people in London in 2021. Five (the most in any single borough) took place in Croydon. Community groups and statutory organisations responded quickly to both support those affected and also, to create meetings and events to call the wider community and professionals together, to take action to tackle serious youth violence in Croydon. It would be remiss to fail to seek a community perspective on the review, its findings, whether the recommendations are appropriate and likely to be effective. It is important to do this work before the report is completed so their views form part of the final report.

As the learning has been discovered, we have been promoting these messages to the workforce. We have provided a 1-page briefing to raise awareness of the rationale for the report and the initial findings, as well as a full learning session dedicated to the report which took place in July 2023.

Whilst the report is still in progress - prevention and early identification is viewed as part of the solution. Some of the initiatives described below (Turnaround & Engage) will support improvements in this area.

National Reviews

We utilised a number of national reviews and resources to highlight learning and influence practice changes. We created Croydon specific resources and asked for feedback at CSCP meetings to capture where and how they had been used across the partnership. For Example:

Child Q - Hackney


The case of a 15-year-old schoolgirl who was ‘strip searched’ by police whilst at school and without her parent being informed.

[Child Q: Hackney](#)

The review to concluded that Child Q should never have been strip searched.

Across many of the professionals involved that day, there was an absence of a safeguarding first approach to their practice. There were other ways that this incident could and should have been managed.

Whilst school staff were right to respond to their concerns, the intervention that followed was disproportionate and ultimately harmful to Child Q.



The CSCP has co-commissioned some specific training on Adultification for key staff.

The learning has been woven into reports and briefings delivered to a number of forums including DSL Forums and Learning from CSCP Review sessions.

National Panel Guidance on Non-Mobile Babies & National Panel Guidance on Domestic Abuse

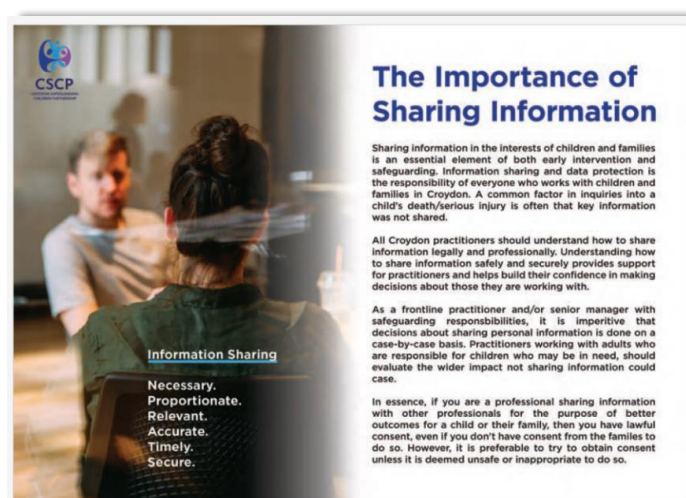
These were widely circulated in both CSCP Meetings and in wider communications and sparked lively conversations, especially relating to the different agency perspectives. The Non-Mobile Babies Guidance linked with the CSCP audit on referrals for children under 2 with a head injury.

CSCP Briefings

CSCP Briefings have been re-developed to be more impactful so the learning from reviews and cases can be consumed in a more succinct way. These briefings are well received by partner agencies.

Sometimes briefings are specific to themes such as [information sharing](#).

Others relate to specific Rapid Reviews or themes and are a useful resource to share learning and improve practice. For example, our briefings on Sudden [Unexplained Deaths in Infants & Children](#) or our briefing on [Inter-familial sexual abuse](#).



Examples of Partnership Responses to Reviews

We have seen many agencies take further action to embed key themes and messages:

Youth Justice Service & Police

In response to Child Q, the Youth Justice Service and Police jointly provided a 'Stop & Search' program for the youth justice cohort.

Police

Policing both at a national level and more local level here in Croydon has been influenced by national and local reviews including training around Non-Accidental Injuries (NAI's) and also increased data sharing. The independent review of children's social care also has recommendations which will be significant in terms of Policing. The MPS also maintained the commitment to London's Police and Crime Plan 2022-25.

In terms of training there has been an increased focus on training around NAI's, this has been a major drive based on the national reviews. Training inputs now include the following:

- Police officers working in Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAIT) attend Specialist Child Abuse Investigator Development program courses and have access to a new CAIT handbook. These are referenced and incorporated in the new CAIT induction training days being offered to all new joiners to the CAIT teams from across the MPS commencing in September 2022.
- Specific one day inputs have been developed which are mandatory for CAIT teams. These day inputs have centred on training for non-accidental injuries with delivery from Kings college hospital and various experts. The will include inputs from consultant paediatricians and their teams from Kings College Hospital and the National Crime Agency regarding investigative/medical support they're able to provide. There is also training around guidance when preparing investigations into incidents of this nature and legal inputs regarding disclosure challenges with parallel family court proceedings. The course highlights the importance of the partnership approach in dealing with injuries and gaining best early evidence.
- Police are being encouraged to attend all child protection medicals in order to engage with health professionals involved and hear the initial accounts from parents. This is being monitored centrally.
- There is also a drive to push all LSCP training events and these are widely shared to relevant police teams with a variety of levels of training for practitioners and managers alike.

Police are active members of the CSCP and have also implemented a new local Organisational Learning Hub. This learning hub means that the local learning reviews and CSCR's are reviewed and submitted both to the MPS central Police team and also disseminated and monitored locally to ensure that recommendations are accepted and actioned.

This is vitally important at local level to continue to support and improve on both the single and multi-agency work being undertaken to support children and families. It also offers the opportunity for Police to take advantage of more local directed training for its frontline staff, which is especially important for Police where there is the challenge of officers moving roles frequently and new recruits being posted into frontline roles.

CSCP Briefings & Learning Events are also disseminated to officers across the Borough Command Unit (BCU) to ensure that all officers are aware and given the opportunity to attend.

It is vitally important that there are information sharing agreements and protocols across the local partnership which are timely and detailed to support professionals working with children and their families. The MPS has a London wide information sharing agreement put in place in 2020 which

addresses the necessary process. It is also supported by the relevant sections of the London Safeguarding Children Procedures and Working Together 2018. As part of the Police and Crime Plan 2022-25 there is a commitment to increased data sharing. The MPS now offers data tools to share with partners around Child Abuse Investigations and Modern-Day Slavery. There will also be a new release of a Child Exploitation tool. This data will be shared with the intention of overlaying this data with data from partners to provide a clearer and more detailed overview of who are the most vulnerable and what action is required to improve their protection.

In 2022 there was also a local Police review of strategy meetings and the timeliness of these. A new digital strategy meeting tool was put in place to make sure that Strategy Meetings occur within the required timescales. It also means that agencies outside the Police have access to the relevant investigation teams and can share urgent information that protects children at risk from significant harm.

Education

In response to Child Q, Education organised Head Teacher events to share the learning specific to this case. They also had a focus on reducing exclusions and improving transitions. Education have committed a resource to co-produce learning materials with other LSCPs in SW London specifically about Adulthood.

The Schools Weekly Newsletter continued to feature safeguarding, with a full focus on the topic in June 2022.

Croydon's response to OFSTED's review of sexual abuse in schools included links and resources for schools as well as data collated from the section 11 safeguarding audit in 2021. It showed that in the previous academic year (2020-21) we identified 223 incidents of sexual harassment and violence within Croydon schools. Data collated identified nearly double the number in 2021-22. This tells us three things,

1. There is an identifiable problem of sexual harassment/abuse in our schools which needs addressing through direct preventative and reactive work with our children and young people.
2. Staff in our schools have progressed in understanding, identifying, and reporting on incidents of sexual harassment/abuse, and
3. Children and young people in Croydon schools are more confident in speaking up and disclosing incidences that have occurred in school/college.

Education have started a healthy relationship advisory forum for schools to discuss cases of concern. The aim being to reduce ongoing risks to students and provide relevant support for intervention in schools. The panel is attended by FJC, education safeguarding, school improvement, prevent lead (with links to incidents of hate and misogyny), and attendance inclusion.

They have worked closely with the safer school's team to develop a clear flowchart for school procedures when students are searched. This is in line

with the DfE guidance for schools. They have also continued weekly meetings with police to discuss a range of current themes related to education. This has also allowed open discussion and challenge where students were arrested in school by officers.

'[Talk Consent](#)' have presented at Designated Safeguarding Leads check-in meetings where several schools have reached out for additional support.

Work is occurring in collaboration with the Hate Crime Board and LGBTQ+ first health needs assessment group which is widening knowledge and understanding of different groups within the community.

Challenge in schools around language used to describe children and young people as well as exploring and identifying schools where suspensions and/or exclusions are primarily linked to children and young people of colour, especially boys.

A number of schools have received training on domestic abuse and sexual violence and within this, it is highlighted that children are victims and should be treated as child victims in their own right.

Health

Health have taken conscious steps in their response to the findings from safeguarding practice reviews (SPRs).

Safeguarding processes have been developed across Croydon Health Services (CHS) including the review and updating of policies and procedures. This has further strengthened the responses to cases of concern, supported early identification of risk and improved inter-agency discussions. The safeguarding children's team (including Children Looked After) work collaboratively with adult and maternity colleagues and take an 'all generation approach'. This enhances early intervention processes and support to vulnerable and/or at-risk young people who are transitioning to adulthood.

Information sharing approaches have been improved and include the development of leaflets and posters. These contain details of the wider support that is available to all, alongside an explanation of safeguarding processes. They can be found across Croydon University Hospital and community sites.

Transitional safeguarding has been increasingly recognised as an area of concern not only from SPRs but also frontline practice. Work has been undertaken to improve understanding of relevant issues including the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma Informed Practice.

In response to the increased concerns relating to domestic abuse both locally and nationally, Croydon Health Service (CHS) has further developed its services to support this agenda. This includes the short-term recruitment of a Domestic Abuse Support Worker, the recruitment of CHS Domestic Abuse Champions and awareness raising across Acute and Community sites.

Training programmes have been developed to reflect legislation and increase confidence in this area of practice.

CHS responded to the intention to introduce Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) including the development of a business case which took into account 16- and 17-year-olds. LPS has since been paused but work is on-going to further strengthen appropriate responses to this cohort of young people who fall within the remit of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Youth Justice Service (YJS)

Youth Justice Service staff are represented at many core multi-agency panels including Complex Adolescent Panel (CAP) and have jointly worked with Social Care staff on National Referral Mechanism Referrals for children at risk of exploitation through means such as county-lines. Additional training has been given to Youth Justice Managers to ensure they understand the frameworks surrounding extra familial harm and contextual safeguarding. The Youth Justice Service retains an internal panel to review safeguarding concerns ensuring any identification of harm is escalated accordingly. Joint work remains integral and at the time of writing joint supervision between Youth Justice Practitioners and Social Care was being formulated when children are open to both services. Co-location has also improved practice and communication, Youth Justice Service staff are based jointly with Early Help and the Specialist Adolescent Service.

The reviews also highlighted the need for early identification and diversion for those at risk of contextual safeguarding. In January 2023 two new initiatives were implemented; the first a programme titled 'Turnaround' for children who may encounter on the spot cautions from Police or who are believed to be of concern to professionals. The programme is based on the Early Help strengthening families model and aims to work with families to ensure young people are kept safe and have opportunities to divert away from criminality and exploitation. At the time of writing the programme was in its infancy but a full evaluation will be carried out.

The second programme is custody suite youth work. If a child is arrested without charge the Engage Project will ensure that the child is screened and provided with details of universal services that can assist in diverting them away from future contact. This is also a means to identify any safeguarding concerns and to refer accordingly.

The Youth Justice Service recognises that it cannot work in isolation and whilst joint working with other statutory agencies is of importance, a relationship with the community, the home of its children, is vital. The Youth Justice Service consequently became a stakeholder within the My Ends Project a community led youth work offer designed to address Serious Youth Violence. The partnership has promoted involvement of interventions for children open to Youth Justice, with various offers delivered within the community where the children reside. Such examples including a mentoring offer for first time entrants, outreach project work delivering activities to locations deemed as 'hot spots', and music programmes for children with SEND needs who find verbal expression and engagement difficult. The

innovative and collaborative work has seen many positive outcomes for the children in question and the Youth Justice Service has seen improved reduced re-offending rates in addition to reduced NEET rates across the cohort.

Education is viewed as an essential desistance factor – in 2022/23 the Youth Justice Service continued to offer an employability programme by the name of Skill Mill and a 16+ Education Outreach offer where staff fully support children into further education and employment by ensuring they are equipped and ready. The Youth Justice Service has also been awarded with an accredited SEND marker demonstrating high standards of practice when working with children who have additional needs.

CAMHS

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service shares learning via academic slots and or group supervision. They take a similar approach to briefings and audit activity, using the findings to learn and improve their practice.

CHILD DEATH OVERVIEW PANEL (CDOP)

Child Deaths are co-ordinated and reported separately via the South West London Child Death Overview Panel. Their annual report is reviewed by the CSCP and published on the website. The panel commenced reporting on feedback activity with the SW London Patient Safety Surveillance group in 2022-23 based on shared learning from SW London Child Death Overview Panel reviews as part of the CDOP's contribution to the organisational response to child deaths in the integrated care system (ICS).

As part of the upcoming National Patient Safety Strategy, the purpose of this is to provide professionals with a resource of learning and recommendations from child death reviews. Child death reviews can contribute to collaborative learning, for better health, public health, social care, and safety provision during the reporting year to reduce child deaths.

As of 1st April 2023, there were 64 new notifications of child death and 97 open cases. Child death notifications have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels of child deaths per annum. In 2021-22 there was a reduction of 16 deaths which was attributed to the social distancing and public health measures implemented by the regulations of the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- There were fifty-four local Child Death Review Meetings completed at SW London Hospitals, three at other tertiary level hospitals outside the local area, and eight Child Death Overview Panel Meetings under the new working arrangements for Child Death Reviews.
- In 2022-23, 81 % of child deaths had no modifiable concerns which was more than the previous year at 78% of child deaths in SW London.

- For deaths notified across SW London during the 2022 - 23 reporting year, twenty-six Joint Agency Response (JAR) meetings were initiated for local SW London
- 48% of child death reviews were completed in six months, with 52% completed up to 12 months from notification. As a result of delays in obtaining post-mortem reports and coroners' inquests, 20% were over one year old at the time of review.
- In South-West London, 63% of all child deaths represented are of Black, Asian, and Mixed Minority ethnicity, with mixed ethnicities increasing to 13% of child deaths as a category.

As of 1st April 2023, of 97 open cases, 47% have coronial involvement. It is noted all local coronial offices (South London, West London, and Inner West London) have backlogs with concluding inquests due to staffing and court resource issues. Adult and child inquests are amalgamated and there is no priority list for child inquests as they are listed as of the date of death. The SW London ICS Quality Directorate was informed delays were anticipated in completing child death reviews while cases await inquests to be concluded.

COMPLEX ADOLESCENT PANEL (CAP)

More girls are being presented at CAP: younger teenage girls where emerging risks included exploitation. CAP members reflected that they needed to challenge their thinking and the lens they were using when assessing exploitation. This has resulted in interventions shaped by those working with the girls – The Starz and Sisterz group was set up specifically to address issues facing girls who are exploited, and their work continues to develop.

The NRM Pilot went live in February 2023 and more Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) discussed at CAP. The pilot is raising awareness of exploitation.

Changes in how CAP operate now ensure that case direction discussions are now supported outside of CAP by the use of group supervisions. This allows more focus on Victims, Offenders, Themes and Locations. However, in 22/23, there was no way of tracking this, impact and disruption work. The Contextual Safeguarding module is now being built to address this.

LEARNING EVENTS

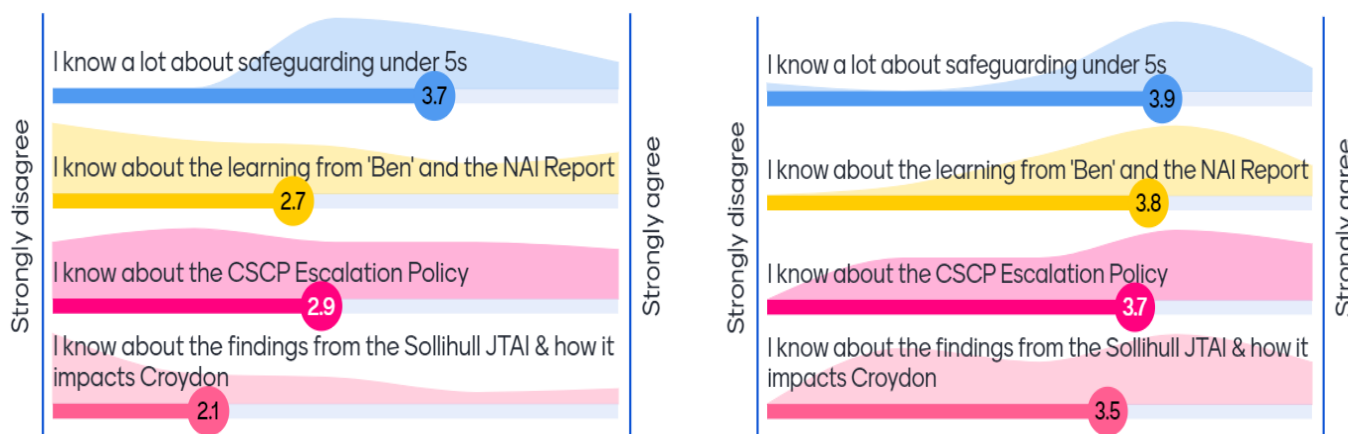
The CSCP delivered 5 Learning Events in the year in review:

May 2022 - Safeguarding the Under 5s.

Included tools and resources to support professionals and an opportunity to raise awareness of the findings in the Lewisham JTAI and how it resonated with Croydon. We evaluated the 'before and after' session knowledge which showed good take up of the learning from attendees:

June 2022 – Star & Arthur, Ben & Cora

Learning from the National Panel Report (Star & Arthur) as well as learning from the Croydon cases of Ben and Cora. Co-delivered with FJC colleagues to promote the work of MARAC and the Drive Project to reduce risk in domestic violence cases. Included the National Panels work on The Myth of Invisible Men.



October 2022 – Suicide & Self Harm

A focus on the learning from Jake and Chloe SPRs and co delivered with Adult Safeguarding colleagues to share the learning from their SAR Madeleine. The theme of LGBTQ+ being present in a disproportionate number of suicides was discussed as well as the provision of some resources to promote confidence in this domain.

January 2023 – Information Sharing

Co-delivered session with the Police. Case studies were used to show how and why the ‘golden rules’ are applied.

March 2023 – Cross Cutting Themes

A co-produced event to look at the similar themes across Childrens Safeguarding Reviews, Adults Safeguarding Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews.

Additionally, the CSCP were specifically requested to present at a National Event – NHS Digital Community User Research Away Day in January 2023. This was co-delivered with NHS Digital and SLaM colleagues.

This was an opportunity to raise safeguarding awareness for researchers who were commissioned to visit people in the community who were Mental Health Services users. The feedback was really positive, citing the usefulness of not only the training and available resources, but also served to raise awareness of the corporate responsibility in the NHS to ensure broader staff groups are considered for appropriate safeguarding training.

September 2022 Practice Week – exploring multi-agency working.

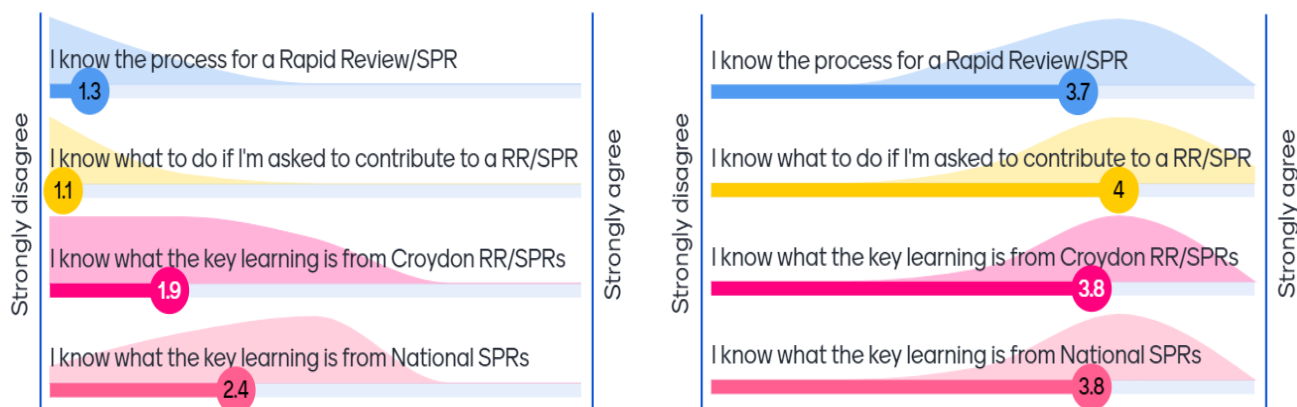
The CSCP have also provided safeguarding sessions for Practice Week, which is coordinated by Children’s Social Care to look at key themes.

Dilemmas and Solutions for multi-agency working.

Co-delivered with Police and Health colleagues via case studies and included the newly published London Safeguarding resources to promote better information sharing. The session was rated Excellent by 100% of participants.

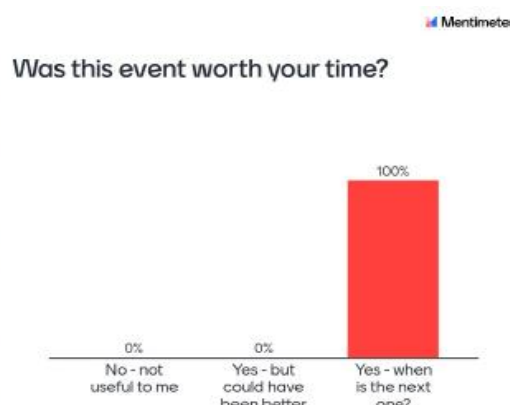
Learning from Rapid Reviews & Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Updates from CSCP and National reviews, including guidance on what to do if asked to contribute to a review. We evaluated the ‘before and after’ session knowledge which showed good take up of the learning from attendees:



March 2023 Practice Week – Diversity, Working with Difference: LGBTQ+ and how it features in SPRs.

Supporting professionals with understanding terminology, raising awareness of how LGBTQ+ has featured in reviews and some practical tips to avoid barriers and what works to overcome them. Feedback included:



We have also continued to provide ad hoc sessions to various teams and agencies to help raise awareness of the work we do and the key messages from reviews, this includes Schools, GPs and Social Work Teams

Examples of Partnership Responses to CSCP Learning Events

Police, Health, Children's Social Care and Family Justice Centre colleagues have provided case studies and offered personal reflection of their work in recent co-delivered learning events, where a specific theme is reviewed, for example, the January 2023 event was specific to sharing information.

Police

Information captured from CSCP learning events has been disseminated across the BCU (roughly 1600 officers) to make sure that there is awareness of the issues and learning that affect Croydon and where the Police can have maximum impact on delivery. This is often delivered locally when Front Line Teams parade for duty and inputs are given by Senior Staff, CAIT Teams and MASH to highlight the importance of themes and good practice where Police can give the best level of service. Partners have been invited to Police training days to give inputs and take part in tabletop exercises to provide a different perspective on managing incidents and the subsequent information sharing.

There is a regular Every Child Every Time meeting in which Police locally have developed an audit process to quality assure the Police response to procedures in dealing with children who come to notice. This meeting is open to partners and provides the transparency and reassurance that there is a drive to improve and ensure the best outcomes for children and families. Inputs from partners have also assisted with tools and guides used locally by officers in Croydon to capture the right information at the right time and make sure that it is shared in a format that enables other agencies to take action.

There has been an increase in the use of seven-minute briefings which has been a useful tool in dissemination of information and an increased drive from Police to attend learning events. This will continue into 2023/24

Youth Justice Service

Practitioners and Managers in Youth Justice, whilst managing criminal behaviour and reducing risk, often find safeguarding overlaps within their work. Subsequently a training analysis was completed ensuring the workforce is fully trained in all aspects of safeguarding as a starting point to ensure the best outcomes for children are achieved. Staff have received training in mental health first aid, cultural competency, contextual safeguarding, trauma informed practice and child protection procedures. Planned training to ensure staff are familiar with MARAC processes and working with domestic abuse is planned for 2023/24. Conversely, Youth Justice Service staff have delivered training across the department ensuring agencies have knowledge and understanding of youth justice roles.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

In line with the pan-London Competence Still Matters framework, the CSCP takes great pride in delivering a comprehensive learning and development training programme. Central to our efforts is the provision of safeguarding training, ensuring the safety and well-being of children in the vibrant community of Croydon.

Safeguarding training is a crucial aspect of our programme and not only available for all our staff members in Croydon but also offered to volunteers who contribute their time to work with children and young people in the area. Our courses are bespoke to Croydon because they have been designed to reflect learning from our safeguarding practice reviews. The training also covers the minimum required training content for both single and multi-agency staff, ensuring a well-rounded learning experience.

It is important to emphasise that our multi-agency safeguarding training is intended to complement single-agency training, rather than replacing it. We believe in fostering collaboration and cooperation between different agencies to create a unified approach towards safeguarding children. This approach strengthens our collective capacity to safeguard the children and young people of Croydon, promoting a safe and nurturing environment for their growth and development.

Training is delivered as classroom based and e-learning courses. Classroom based courses are mainly delivered online using video conferencing tools MS Teams and Zoom. While, this mode of delivery is still popular, there is now an emerging need for training to be in-person. To meet this need we have worked with training providers to adopt a more flexible approach, which provides the option of attending in person or online.

Safeguarding Training Evaluation for 2022-2023

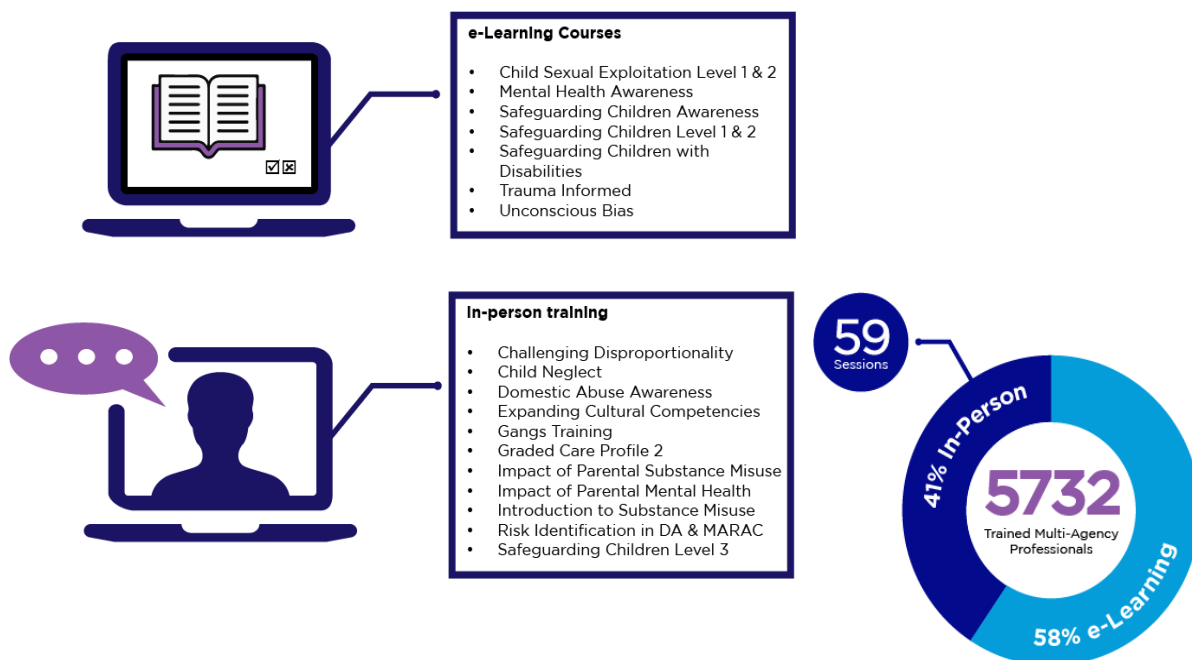
Throughout the past year, our commitment to excellence in learning and development has remained steadfast. The resounding positive feedback received from attendees consistently highlights the remarkable impact of our training programmes has had on their day-to-day practice. This learning experience empowers them to provide the right care and unwavering support to the children and young people we are dedicated to serving. As we move forward, we are further refining our training initiatives to meet the evolving needs of our community and ensure a brighter future for the children of Croydon.

Feedback from Gangs Training

“I now possess the knowledge and skills to support and identify signs in our children's older siblings, as well as detect changes in their behaviour. Additionally, I had a meaningful conversation with my son about gangs in our area and learned about their names.

During in-house training, I spoke to my team about a few notes I had taken down and learned a staff member's son was groomed by one and they had to move his school. Sharing [this] information regarding the local gangs also supported them with what to look for and what a gang really is. I think this training needs to be advertised in schools for parents to sign up.”

Training over the last year has been well attended with an even spread of practitioners from different sectors, with a strong presence from Children's Social Care. This demonstrates training as a consistent priority in supporting and addressing issues related to children and young people. Attendance data also highlights the presence of multiple voluntary organisations and agencies which is a positive indicator that there is a collaborative effort to tackle safeguarding challenges.

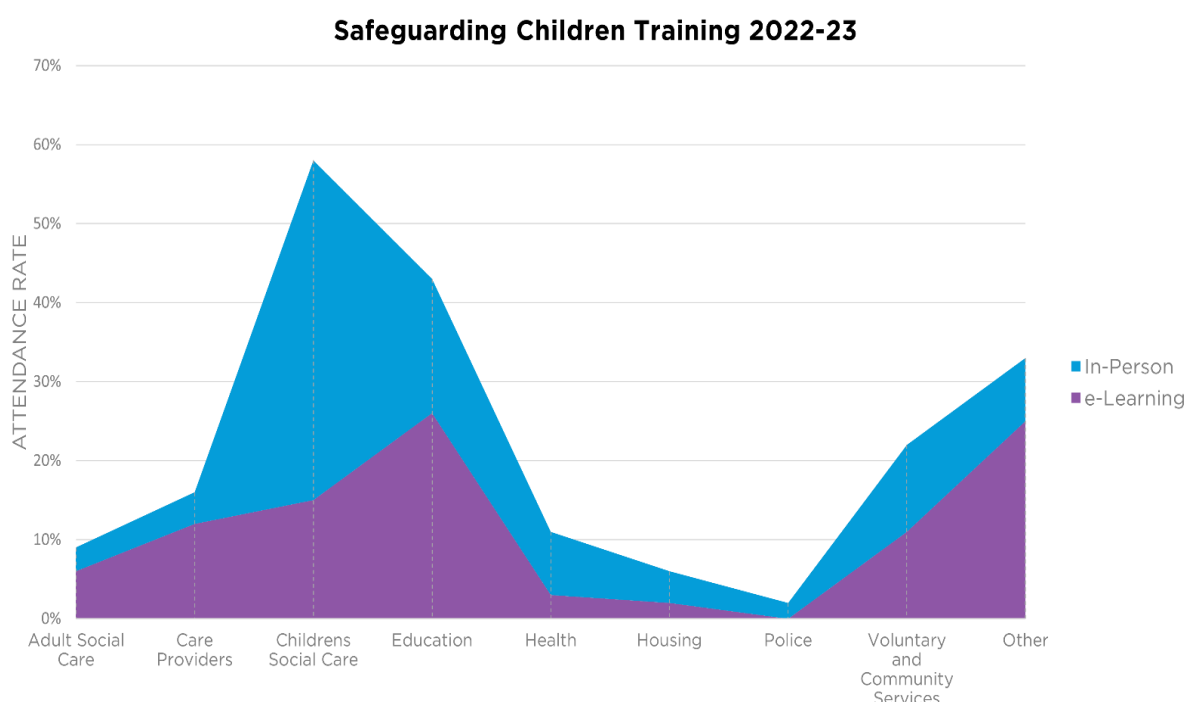


The strongest performing courses are Challenging Disproportionality, Child Neglect, Graded Care Profile 2 and Level 3 Safeguarding Children. These courses not only improve understanding by using case studies and practical

advice, they also provide a space for practitioners to reflect on their own practice and share ideas with other professionals.

During the 2022-2023 period, the CSCP effectively coordinated training sessions for a total of 5732 multi-agency professionals. E-Learning was particularly popular with the education sector, particularly those engaged in Early Years care provision.

Conversely, in-person training sessions witnessed strong participation from Social Care practitioners as well as members belonging to the Voluntary and Community Sector. The introduction of novel systems and processes, spearheaded by the recently appointed L&D coordinator, has yielded substantial enhancements in data utilisation for the identification of emerging trends.



This data-centric approach is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the learning and development strategies for the upcoming year, 2023-24. A detailed analysis of attendance based on agencies underscores a concerning lack of participation in multi-agency training, from the Health, Housing and Police sectors. Health and Police are likely to have sourced their training in-house, however in the months ahead, the CSCP will actively investigate the factors contributing to this trend.

PART 2: THE SO WHAT?

Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to children looked-after and care leavers.

TRAINING IMPACT

Expanding Cultural Competencies

In response to a recognised requirement, a training initiative was designed to empower safeguarding professionals assisting LGBTQ+ young people who were also at risk of self-harm or suicide. In collaboration with London Southbank University (LSBU), two half-day training sessions were developed to foster confidence in LGBTQ+ support, along with resource packs for ongoing learning. Evaluation surveys were administered before and after each session, with 90 participants enrolled. 30 Croydon practitioners attended both days. Initial confidence levels stood below 50%, significantly improved by 18.2% (day 1) and 25.0% (day 2) after training. The training substantially met participants' needs (67.1% and 72.0%), reducing perceived training necessity by 6.4% (day 1) and 13.3% (day 2). While successful, there remains a continued need for training in supporting young LGBTQ+ for safeguarding staff.

The impact stemming from the collaborative efforts between the CSCP and London South Bank University (LSBU) to enhance professional practices when working with LGBTQ+ youth vulnerable to self-harm has transcended national borders.

An illustrative example of this influence is evident in a recent incident involving Brandon School Division (BSD) in Manitoba, Canada. The BSD was presented with a proposal that sought to prohibit books containing information about trans and non-binary individuals, along with other deemed sensitive topics. The justification for this proposal revolved around safeguarding children from potential threats such as "paedophiles" and "grooming."

Leveraging the wealth of knowledge, insights, and resources cultivated during our collaborative initiative, LSBU crafted a comprehensive response to counter the aforementioned proposal. This response played a pivotal role in shaping the overall BSD Trustee response. Through an extensive 4-hour deliberation, the proposition to review and eliminate books that educate children about trans and non-binary perspectives was resoundingly defeated.

Graded Care Profile 2 and Neglect

To date CSCP has trained 292 practitioners, 22 in the last year who are licenced to use the GCP2 tool in their assessments to help identify Neglect. This tool is an evidence-based resource, which helps professionals identify the area of neglect and work with the family to reduce the impact. [There is more detail on our website.](#)

Examples of Training Impact from the Partnership

Health

Training is continuously reviewed and updated to reflect new legislation and findings from SPRs.

The SWLICB safeguarding team continue to deliver a comprehensive package of learning and development to Primary Care (GPs). This includes:

-

- Formal level 3 training offer in line with the Adult and Children's Intercollegiate Guidance requirements is available on a quarterly basis
- GP Safeguarding Forum for Safeguarding Leads
- Newsletter and electronic updates.

In addition, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) team provide advice across the partnership on health matters that relate to safeguarding.

Croydon Health Services has reviewed its safeguarding training offer to be more flexible in its approach and improving the opportunities for staff to have access to learning and development (L&D).

L&D includes more than formal statutory training programmes and includes opportunistic and organised support to frontline practitioners through 'bitesize' sessions, case discussion, advice and guidance. Information is shared electronically across the organisation and Patient Story's/Case Studies are presented at various meetings and forums including Croydon Cares. This also includes learning from statutory reviews and reference to local and national safeguarding updates and initiatives.

Voluntary Sector

Tailormade Training represent Croydon Voluntary Action on our Learning & Improvement Group. They took the following action to encourage appropriate take up of the Trauma Informed Training:



"In terms of Trauma Informed training, we circulated the dates to the Young Londoners Fund Network (Croydon and Sutton) list, that brings together community organisations working with young people in the two boroughs.

We forwarded the opportunity to the co-ordinator of the MyEnds programme in Croydon. We sent out a Tweet on our @CroydonVA twitter account (1/6/2022), which has 4,500+ followers."

We know from the evaluation of this training that there was excellent take up in the community. The company delivering the training commended the CSCP for its proactive approach to ensuring the right people benefited from this training.

Early Help

The contribution to Early Help and Childrens Social Care of RESPECT, a specialist provider that has supported challenging perpetrator behaviour - has made fathers more visible in the family.

Working with perpetrators training? delivered by Respect - increased confidence to assess and address how perpetrator behaviour interferes with family functioning/ parenting, increase in joint case consultations with Respect, leading to better practice around aligning with survivors and holding perpetrators to account.

LGBTQ+ - workshop delivered by Metro on gender and sexual identity. Particularly noticed an increase in referrals for parents/ carers whose children are questioning their gender/ sexual identity and / or are in the process of transitioning. Increased confidence from practitioners to be curious about how children/young people understand and define their gender and sexuality, and support parents/ carers to have sensitive and respectful conversations with their children about this.

Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service has benefited from the offer provided by CSCP but also the external offer provided by the Youth Justice Board (Inset training) which has promoted the concept and application of a Child First Approach. The Service has subsequently adapted and reshaped to ensure that the child's voice is heard within interventions and how the service operates at every level. Much of the training received has also been extended via the Youth Justice Service to other Criminal Justice agencies and the YJS have delivered training sessions to both the Judiciary and Police particularly on the topic of cultural competency. The Youth Justice Service has devised a Disproportionately Action Plan to measure its own work in this area jointly with key partners and this is regularly reviewed. All learning has also featured in the Youth Justice Plan 2022/23 and will continue to be evident in 2023/24 plan. This plan sets out all key objectives for the Youth Justice Service and this is very much focused on outcomes for children in partnership.

There is still some way to go however, and recent audits continue to conclude that domestic abuse is a feature (either historically or currently) in much of the Youth Justice casework. As such training to staff and development in process and policy in this area will be a focus for 2023/24.

Examples of Quality Partnership Work

As well as relevant engagement in meetings, partnership agencies have a key role in disseminating learning from both national and local safeguarding reviews. See [Examples](#) of how CSCP members have achieved this.

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

There are a number of joint partnership meetings, including strategy discussions with police colleagues where excellent work to safeguard children in a timely manner occurs.

The MASH transformation program has created a new Early Help triage level which has increased capacity to provide Early Help at the right time.

MASH has led on and continues to support the improvement of [Operation Encompass](#). The CSCP Executive Partners wrote to every school in Croydon to encourage sign up which led to greater understanding of the barriers and continued engagement with Operation Encompass stakeholders to improve multi-agency response.

SEND

In February 2022 Minister Quince wrote to Croydon to congratulate them on the findings of the Ofsted & CQC Joint area SEND Inspection which showed practice in Croydon to be strong. Representatives from other local authorities have visited Croydon to seek information on the SEND locality pilot that has proven to have reduced vulnerabilities and the number of EHCPs.

Community

Facilitated by the MyEnds initiative, there has been greater collaboration with the Police, the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and the community. As well as a community led approach to planning and delivering content for these meetings, the enthusiasm and straight-talking approach to community problems has inspired a number of other initiatives. Counsellors and agency representatives have engaged in discussions leading to direct community impact.

Police

There have been key inputs to staff through online training modules and presentations on non-accidental injuries to children and joint training with health partners around child death procedures.

Feedback from the partnership and Every Child Every Time meeting has meant there has been an increased drive to capture the voice of the child by frontline staff. This is quite key where there are instances of DA where interacting with the child has seen a particular push in 2022/2023. This has led to localised training delivered by MASH staff to frontline staff around data quality and why the information captured is important in child referrals.

A monthly Child Protection partnership improvement group has identified areas where immediate learning has been identified. Areas such as strategy meetings and Police Protection have been identified as areas where partners could learn from each other through operational experiences. As a result, Strategy meeting training and documents have been delivered internally in the Police locally and to partners around an online scheduling calendar. This is based on feedback from Service Level Managers at the local authority around capturing what went well and what needs improving. Escalation processes have also been developed around Police protection issues where there is learning from delays and extended periods of children being in Police Protection.

Police are working to secure effective engagement from all partners with a commitment to working with grassroots organisations to deter young people from youth violence. The Schools Policing Team regularly attend schools and other educational establishments to provide training and guidance on subjects such as knife crime, cyber-crime, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). There is also an initiative currently running in schools called Inspiring Futures. It provides a reality check of what it is like to lose a loved one through knife crime, the consequences of picking up a knife and the journey one would take if convicted of a violent crime or murder.

SLAM/CAMHS (Mental Health Assessment & Treatment Provider)

CAMHS have established a Transitions Panel to ensure young people who require a mental health service beyond 18 receive continuity of care into adulthood.

CAMHS have a range of initiatives to begin to reduce the issues of inequality of access to mental health services including Race Workshops for staff and partnering with the BME Forum, Black service users and carers and community groups to jointly develop the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework.

Childrens Centres, PIP & Parenting Support

The service aims to support healthy child development and parent-child relationships, operating across three separate strands:

Children's Centres: Children's Centres provide universal support to families with children under the age of 5. Services are aimed at promoting good child and parent health and well-being, effective parenting as well as supporting children's school readiness and overall development. In addition to universal sessions, families can access more targeted family support with a view to building family resilience.

PIP: PIP offer family's therapeutic interventions and support to develop a secure attachment within the parent-infant relationship, focusing on the first 1001 critical days (conception to age 2). For asylum-seeking/displaced families, mothers, fathers and their infants have access to a safe space away from their hotel accommodation. They can talk to other parents and find out about support and community services in Croydon.

Support and Interventions: The Support and Interventions team provide both group-based and targeted parenting support to families of children aged 0-18, promoting parental self-efficacy and strength-based, positive parenting.

Staff training and work across domestic violence and serious youth violence forums has led to a greater understanding of how we can effectively work with fathers. Where fathers perpetrate violence, causing disruption to family function, staff are more confident in addressing and challenging this. Early intervention delivered via parental support has enabled young parents to tell their story, to be

heard and receive support to have an understanding of the learning developmental needs of their baby.

The Virtual School

The virtual school provides its report based on the academic year; therefore, this report shows 2021/2022 data.

Networking and partnership working have been paramount in the team's success. Through strong partnership working with the Education Psychologist, the team was able to ensure that 2 young people who were experiencing severe mental health challenges were successfully supported through the EHCP application process. Both young people have secured college places for September (2022).

99 fewer children were included in the Children Looked After cohort. This was partly due to changes in how the Home Office processed Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.

24% of children looked after achieved 5 or more GCSEs (including English & Maths). This was up from 18% in the previous year.

There were no permanent exclusions in primary schools during 2021/22

Fixed term exclusions in primary schools were significantly reduced, partly due to the Reach2Teach inclusion tool which was rolled out across 30 primary schools.

There was one permanent exclusion in secondary schools (a reduction from 3 in the previous year)

Following Virtual School intervention, 3 permanent exclusions were rescinded by Headteachers (all out of borough children). In 2 of the cases, EHCPs have been secured via support and recommendation from Croydon Virtual School.

Robust networking and working relationships have been developed with other Virtual Schools. By sharing good practice and resources, the specific focus has been raising attendance and reducing the NEET cohort.

CSCP Meetings have been used to present and promote Education initiatives such as the Social Work in Schools program. This has enabled both Education to promote its work and the wider partnership to be informed, and offer scrutiny and challenge.

Joint Work with The Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB)

There has always been connection between the two Business Managers who have led on joint work, however the New Arrangements includes two 'Network Meetings' each year where Executives and Key Officers from CSCP, CSAB and the Safer Croydon Partnership meet jointly to discuss cross cutting themes.



Partnership Working – Adults and Children



Transitional Safeguarding

Working group jointly with Adult Services, Children Services and the CSCP to ensure there is seamless approach to transitions and actively work to reduce waiting times.

Take forward the recommendations from both the Madeleine and Sylvia SARs. (including joint delivery with the CSCP where appropriate)

11 – 25 Strategy group includes ASC

Learning Events

Learning events to be planned, one held in April 2023 looking at cross-cutting themes across DHRs, CSPRs and SARs.

A new VAWG workshop has been created that is being presented to schools to open the conversation with young people through the Schools team and SNTs. The workshop focuses on bystander training, Streetsafe and includes wider conversations about VAWG. [Police]

Joint Working

Commitment from Police to tackling Serious Youth Violence and ensuring violence reduction means putting communities, young people and their families at the heart of tackling the issue.

Joint Executive Meetings specifically to tackle cross cutting themes such as Transitions, Harmful Practices, Mental Health

To continue to engage and share information via regular meetings between the CSCP and CSAB Managers.

LAST YEAR WE SAID.....

Our 2021-22 annual report identified the following areas for attention in 2022-23. Here is what we have achieved in those specific areas:

Impact Of Training

Moving to a more analytical framework, so we can measure the impact of our training.

Despite the L&D Officer only coming into post in November 2022, this has been achieved.

Safeguarding Asylum Seekers

The CSCP to seek assurance of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for these potentially vulnerable people.

The Corporate Director for Children, Families & Education (and CSCP Executive Officer for the LA) leads on specific work to ensure Asylum Seekers and Displaced People are supported in Croydon. There is a specific Safeguarding Hotels/Asylum Seekers subgroup which has key CSCP members on it. The new CSCP QA Officer (came to post Feb 2023) is sighted on this, and work is embedded in the business plan. The Independent Scrutineer intends to visit the hotels (achieved in August 2023).

Early Help Transformation

The wider partnership is sighted on, and involved in, the Early Help Transformation work.

The CSCP have promoted the significant work occurring to bring Family Hubs to Croydon. We have advocated the use of CSCP L&D resources for the Workforce Development workstream and ensured the 'Competence Matters' Framework is adopted. CSCP agencies are members of the various workstreams associated with Family Hubs and bring relevant updates to the wider partnership.

The CSCP Business Manager co-chairs the MASH Operational Group. This has broadened both the scope and engagement of partnership priorities in this work. When the new portal system for referrals was being developed, the CSCP articulated the need for appropriate partner engagement, leading to a comprehensive campaign by the LA to engage partners on a one to one basis to both raise awareness of the need to change to a portal system and to gather feedback to ensure the partnership were appropriately sighted on this important improvement to ensure children at risk are identified early and offered the right support.

Partnership Communication Strategy

Refreshing the terms of reference for the Partnership to ensure continued understanding of the roles and responsibilities as well provide a framework for partners and their organisations to work within.

Whilst this work is happening as part of the systems within CSCP business processes, (there are now regular newsletters produced for both L&D opportunities and a monthly CSCP news and guidance) there is still work to be done to understand the reach and impact of CSCP communications and as a result of that understanding, specific work to agree a CSCP Communication Strategy.

Domestic Abuse

How can we be assured that the incidence and impact of domestic abuse where children are present is fully understood.

Croydon continues to see domestic abuse featuring frequently in all types of referrals, whether as a current concern or part of the history that children coming to notice of services experience. The learning events co-delivered with the police and FJC have helped to raise awareness of the tools and support available, but we still need to evidence the impact. The ongoing collaboration with both the DASV and CSAB is supporting assurance, but still needs more evidence.

Child Sexual Abuse

Data and an understanding of CSA needs work, including empowering professionals to have conversations to reduce risk of intra-familial CSA.

We have taken advantage of the work being driven by the SW London NHS (Enhancing Sexual Abuse Pathways) and shared their resources and used their training.

Independent Review of the CSCP

Commission a review of the effectiveness of the partnership

This was achieved in November 2022 (see Part 1)

THIS YEAR WE HAVE INFLUENCED....

In addition to activity described in this report, the CSCP have had specific influence on the following:

VAWG Strategy

Croydon is refreshing the Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy in line with the Mayors Priorities and central government guidance. This work is led by the Safer Croydon Partnership. The CSCP has ensured scoping sessions have taken place in CSCP meeting spaces (January 2023 QIG) and influenced the scope to ensure adequate reference to Child Sexual Exploitation is included. Partner agencies have been encouraged to collaborate on the new document, which will be reviewed at regular intervals before the final version is agreed.

Suicide & Self Harm Strategy

Croydon's draft strategy, compiled by Public Health has been heavily influenced by the support of the CSCP. They have used our *Expanding Cultural Competencies: working with LGBTQ+ who are also at risk of suicide & self-harm* training as a case study to support the action plan to reduce suicide among young people. The CSCP were successful in securing additional funding to co-produce this training with the London Southbank University (Croydon Campus). Two courses were delivered in the year in review. Future courses secured for October 2023 and January 2024.

Housing Safeguarding Standards

The CSCP has provided robust Section 11 challenge, influenced welfare checks for residents in Windsor House and provided resources, such as the SUDIC briefing to raise awareness of potential safeguarding concerns and expected action. Housing are being supported to complete a comprehensive Section 11 action plan. The scrutiny of the CSCP has led to fundamental

changes in the way Housing approaches safeguarding as well as the agreement to recruit to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator in Housing and the appointment of a Head of Service from Housing attending both QIG and the MASH Operations Group.

MASH Transformation

The audit findings in both the under 2s audit and the JTAI benchmarking have influenced the comprehensive work to transform the MASH. The CSCP has also brokered conversations and meetings with partnership agencies to ensure they are sighted, engaged and consulted on the changes, particularly as the transformation includes the implementation of a “portal only” referral system. This is very much welcomed by the CSCP who see it as instrumental in improving the quality of referrals into MASH.

PART 3: THE WHY NOT?

An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities.

SLAM/CAMHS

Challenges recruiting and retaining staff continue to affect their waiting lists. However, the most vulnerable continued to receive a service as a matter of urgency and some neuro-developmental assessments were outsourced to address the waitlist.

On-line Safety

There is little evidence of the understanding, scope, and impact of on-line abuse in Croydon. The CSCP continues to promote free courses to support multi-agency awareness in this area.

An online Safety group was set up and presented to the CSCP Quality Improvement Group but was impacted by both partner capacity and local authority austerity measures. In July 2023, a subgroup was re-established to explore priorities. Education are leading this relaunched sub-group which is pulling together information from a variety of sources to create a resource and information handbook for schools.

The schools safeguarding audit is showing the increasing concerns from schools around online bullying and exploitation. It also evidences though, an increase in staff training and parent workshops to try and address this.

Harmful Practices Group

CSCP recognises this work has stalled due to MOPAC deleting the post which held the responsibility for co-ordinating the Harmful Practices Group. It is recognised that understanding of the prevalence, scope and impact of Harmful Practices (FGM, Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage etc) needs to be strengthened. The DASV Group is looking for funding streams which will enable a community-based group to lead on co-ordinating this work.

Website

Significant work was undertaken in the year to update the CSCP website. Due to launch in the financial year 2022-23, this was delayed (has since been launched in August 2023).

The delays were due to the CSCP being the trial site for new software and capacity issues in the team delivering the website. However, the original website was fully functional in the meantime. The new website has significantly improved user access to training courses and is providing a much easier way of navigating the website for the benefit of professionals and parents looking for safeguarding support and information.

The CSCP have been a key stakeholder for the Early Help Directory which, when it comes online, will enable the CSCP website to encourage users to consider appropriate community options before making a referral to Childrens Social Care.

Audits

The following table shows the agreed areas for audit activity. This work commenced in May 2022 and is expected to gather pace now it is project managed by the QA Officer. There were a number of audit tasks, held in different areas of work (QIG, LIG and as a result of SPRs). These have now been transferred to one audit tracker held in QIG where this work can be progressed more effectively.

Audit	Methodology
Serious Youth Violence	Three voluntary organisations (Gloves not Guns, P4YE, Playplace) have received funding to support vulnerable young people. Video evidence will be gathered from the organisations and young people to evidence the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and impact on young people as a result of the campaign
Child Victims of DA	Based on SPR Cora
Asylum Seekers	Assurance via Asylum Seekers/Hotels Safeguarding Group (will link to Border Force Section 11)
CSA - Intra/Extra Familial	Linking with SW London Child Sexual Abuse work
Audits Actions Resulting from SPRs	There are 11 recommendations which suggest some audit activity.
Practitioner Survey	Evidence of engagement with CSCP learning, briefings, newsletters etc

AUDIT ACTIVITY COMPLETED

Under 2s Audit

This audit was undertaken via the MASH Operational Group to look at 30 children who were under 2 at the time of the referral. This was in response to an action from the Ben SPR, where it was recognised that very young children are often hidden from view and multi-agency decision making needs to be robust to ensure those at risk of harm are

recognised and helped. This audit also aligned with the National Panels findings in the “Myths of Invisible Men” report.

3 Key Findings:

- The use of a number of referral methods negatively impacts the quality/timeliness of referrals.
- Failing to obtain/record consent at an early opportunity (poor information sharing).
- Inadequate MASH checks impact quality decision making.

The introduction of the new electronic portal for all referrals (and therefore the use of a standard referral form) will support better practice in this area.

As well as sharing the findings from this audit, the CSCP had a focus on information sharing, specifically referencing consent. We produced a 2-page briefing resource to dispel some of the myths about information sharing.

Section 11 Progress

The Section 11 ([Safeguarding Standards Assurance](#)) has been revitalised by the new QA Officer, who has implemented innovative methods to collect feedback and monitor progress. One of these methods is Mentimeter, an online tool that allows participants to share their opinions and ideas in real time during workshops. The new QA Officer has also developed more appropriate questions to assess the safeguarding practices of community-based organisations and is providing them with guidance and support.

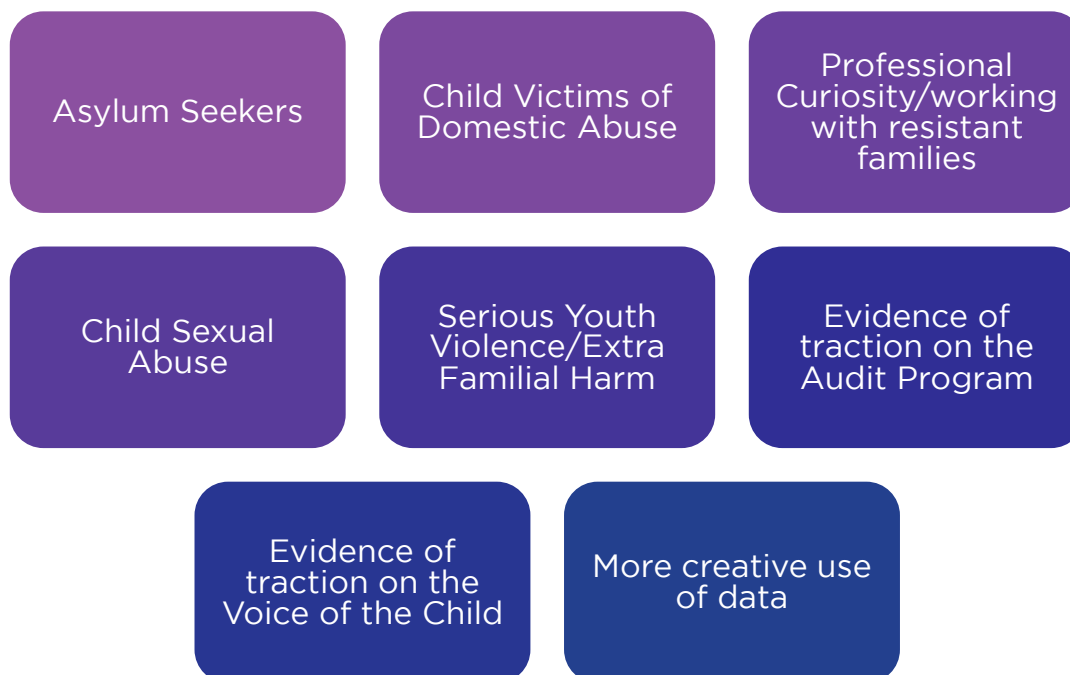
Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) Benchmarking

Following on from the JTAs completed for Solihull and Lewisham, we looked at the key themes and applied them to Croydon. This work was carried out as part of the MASH Operational Group, but key questions were also asked in broader CSCP meetings and the QIG.

PART 4: THE WHAT NEXT?

A record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the reporting period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements.

Key themes for the CSCP for 2023-24



These objectives will be tracked via the CSCP Business Plan. The CSCP Business Plan is a document that monitors the progress and performance of the CSCP. It is updated every three months and shared with the CSCP Executive partners. The document contains the objectives, actions, outcomes and indicators of the CSCP's work.

Quality data to enhance the identification of those at risk continues to be in isolation. MASH, YJS, Police, Schools and Health all have data of interest, but we do not currently join it up and act on the intelligence in a coordinated manner. The Local Authority has invested in significant training available to the wider partnership to start to co-ordinate how this data is captured.

PART 5: THE VOICE OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

Saffron Valley Collegiate

This is what we have done:

- Had an initial meeting of senior leaders to audit all the points within a young person's journey through the PRU where we already write down their views.
- Made a simple change to our record keeping portal so that it flags up where we are recording a child's views.
- Decided we want to do some more work on the following questions:
 - How do we allow pupils to express their thoughts and feelings when words are not their most comfortable medium? How are these captured?
 - How do we ensure that we are responding to the voice of our children?
- Committed to some theory of change work in the spring term, that will be led by an external facilitator, to focus on capturing the voice of the child.

Youth Justice Service

- Created a Voice participation policy.
- Ran a number of surveys asking direct questions on the quality of service children and families felt they received.
- Held voice participation groups for children to talk about what could be improved for them.
- Created a compliments folder to remind ourselves on what we are doing right.
- Asked children to redesign our reception area and logo.
- Worked with EMPIRE to ensure the voices of Children Looked After are jointly considered when connected to our service.

In 2023/24 the Youth Justice Service plan on doing more work with the parents and carers to ascertain their feedback and views.

Feedback from a mother who received targeted one to one support to help her manage her teenage daughter's behaviour and rebuild the parent-child relationship:

"Thank you so much for helping us work through a lot of our issues. You have truly been an angel with all the support. Being taught how to think like (my daughter) has made a huge change in our daily lives. It is much more positive and less stressful. Also knowing it's ok for me not to expect things from (my daughter) and for me to do them if they bother me which means I don't have so much anxiety over things and learning not to expect too much of her has also helped with being much calmer."

Feedback from a mother attending the Stepping Stones programme for parents of children with SEND

"No words can express the kind of knowledge, confidence, ideas, strategies, boundaries, negotiations, etc that you planted in me to raise my children successfully without any physical and emotional harm I can now say the course has built my self-confidence as a mother. Finally, I wish all mothers can find this course in order to gain insight of this as I did because of the different backgrounds, culture and beliefs of our upbringing and parenting."

J has settled in very well at Alverston Gardens. He is a keen footballer and through our connections with Palace For Life, J is now a regular attendee of a session run at the Brit school by Palace For Life. He is also representing Palace in football tournaments. J was known for not engaging at his previous mainstream school and regularly refusing to attend. Since putting interventions in place to support J he has engaged in most, if not all lessons. He takes part in our after-school activities. His attendance at his previous provision was 39.05%

C started with us at the beginning of year 10 and has done exceptionally well with minimal behavioural incidents. He has achieved a level 1 functional skills qualification in English and is undertaking other functional skills exams in July. He is studying for his GCSE's next year. His attitude and effort levels are consistently good. C has spoken to me about returning to mainstream, which we will explore next year.

S has done exceptionally well at Alverston Gardens. He has gone through some very traumatic experiences but through his hard work and dedication he has made progress and achieved qualifications in core subjects. We recently applied for a EHCP for S and we are delighted that this has been accepted. He has said that he would like to continue his post-16 here at Beckmead college and will transfer to Tennison Road site undertaking the construction pathway.

Feedback from a father who received support through the Family Transitions programme (for parents going through divorce and separation):

The past 3 years have been extremely challenging for me as a father. I have had minimal contact with my daughter who I love and miss very much, however I have been following the process through and as a result have been in contact with many different professionals ranging from CAFCASS, to contact centre supervisors, as well as local authority Social Workers. In that time, I have had to share my story in terms of my struggles with seeing (my daughter) and have not always had a positive experience, often having to repeat information which can often cause distress and upset. It is only since being referred to L (worker), that I have truly felt heard for the first time. I have thoroughly enjoyed all of the sessions with L and will honestly miss the opportunity to talk with her. From the very first session she has shown empathy and understanding and taken great care to navigate a complex and sometimes challenging case due to the significant conflict between myself and my daughter's mother.

One of our biggest successes, L came over from a mainstream school. L was known to the school for not following instructions, refusing to cooperate in lessons, threatening staff and being regularly on his phone in lessons. Since starting at Alverston Gardens, L has been a pleasure to all staff, always polite and respectful. He has not had any behavioural incidents during his time with us. He has worked hard throughout his studies making great progress in passing level 2 functional skills qualification and also sitting multiple GCSE's. Recently L was accepted onto a paid apprenticeship with Kwik Fit.

This case is a great example of a successful Early Help case. X relocated into the borough with there being significant concerns regarding his safety due to contextual risks and concerns regarding his access to education. The keyworker has successfully been able to link X in with a local PRU whereby he has completed his GCSE's with him now having a plan for his education for September. There appears no ongoing risk in terms of X's safety in the local area, and preventative / deterrent support has been offered to help reduce the risk of this in the future. In addition, a referral has been made to CAMHS to request support in understanding X's emotional presentation.

It is a credit to the keyworker that both the parent and young person's feedback is that they would like the support offered to continue. By linking X in with local services and an education setting this has enabled X to have a sense of stability in the area and allowed him to progress towards reaching his goals and aspirations. Signposting has also been offered to local activities of which X is aware he can access at a time he feels comfortable in doing so.

Feedback from a father who received support through the Family Transitions programme (for parents going through divorce and separation)

“The past 3 years have been extremely challenging for me as a father. I have had minimal contact with my daughter who I love and miss very much, however I have been following the process through and as a result have been in contact with many different professionals ranging from CAFCASS, to contact centre supervisors, as well as local authority Social Workers. In that time, I have had to share my story in terms of my struggles with seeing (my daughter) and have not always had a positive experience, often having to repeat information which can often cause distress and upset. It is only since being referred to L (worker), that I have truly felt heard for the first time. I have thoroughly enjoyed all of the sessions with L and will honestly miss the opportunity to talk with her. From the very first session she has shown empathy and understanding and taken great care to navigate a complex and sometimes challenging case due to the significant conflict between myself and my daughter's mother.”

GLOSSARY

A&E	Accident and Emergency
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
BCU	Borough Command Unit (Police)
BME Forum	Black, Minority Ethnic Forum
BSD	Brandon School Division
CAIT	Child Abuse Investigation Team (Police)
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CAP	Complex Adolescent Panel
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CHS	Croydon Health Services
CIN	Child in Need
CLA	Child(ren) Looked After
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSAB	Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board
CSCP	Croydon Safeguarding Children Board
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSPR	Croydon Safeguarding Practice Review
CYPE	Children, Young People and Education
DA	Domestic Abuse
DASV	Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
DfE	Department of Education
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
ED	Emergency Department
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan
EHWB	Education, Health and Wellbeing
EMPIRE	Empowerment, Memories, Positivity, Interesting, Respect and Educational
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FJC	Family Justice Centre
GCP2	Graded Care Profile (2)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GP	General Practitioner
ICB	Integrated Care Board
JAR	Joint Agency Response
JTAI	Joint Targeted Area Inspection
L3	Level 3

L&D	Learning and Development
LA	Local Authority
LBC	London borough of Croydon
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (persons)
LIG	Learning and Improvement Group
LPS	Liberty Protection Standards
LSBU	London South Bank University
LSCP	London Safeguarding Children Partnerships
MACE	Multi-agency Child Exploitation
MARAC	Multi-agency risk assessment conference
MASH	Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
NAI	Non Accidental Injury
NHS	National Health Service
NEET	not in Education, Employment or Training
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PIP	Parents in Partnership
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
QA	Quality Assurance
QIG	Quality Improvement Group
RR	Rapid Review
SAR	Safeguarding Adults Review
SCP	Safer Croydon Partnership
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SLAM	South London and Maudsley
SPRG	Safeguarding Practice Review Group
SUDIC	Sudden Unexplained Deaths in Childhood
SWLCCG	South-west London Clinical Commissioning Group
SWLICB	South-west London Integrated Care Board
SW	South-west (London)
TASP	The Association of Safeguarding Partners
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
YJS	Youth Justice Service
YP	Young People

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET MEETING	
DATE OF DECISION	22nd NOVEMBER 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Youth Justice Plan 2023/24	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	CORPORATE DIRECTOR Debbie Jones	
LEAD OFFICER:	DIRECTOR – Róisín Madden HEAD OF SERVICE: Leana Ebanks SERVICE MANAGER: Emma Carter	
LEAD MEMBER:	Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	
KEY DECISION?	NO	This is not a key decision as does not meet Financial or Community Impact Criteria.
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

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 Full Council. Youth justice plans must be signed off by 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** Executive Mayor recommends the Youth Justice Plan to Full Council for approval.

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.

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-familial 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.

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
Revenue Budget Available				
Expenditure	£2,171	£2,171	£2,171	£2,171
Income	(£1,021)	(£1,021)	(£1,021)	(£1,021)
Net budget	£1,150	£1,150	£1,150	£1,150

- 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 Equality Strategy, which includes the equality objectives, 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

Annex A - Youth Justice Plan

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

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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
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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.

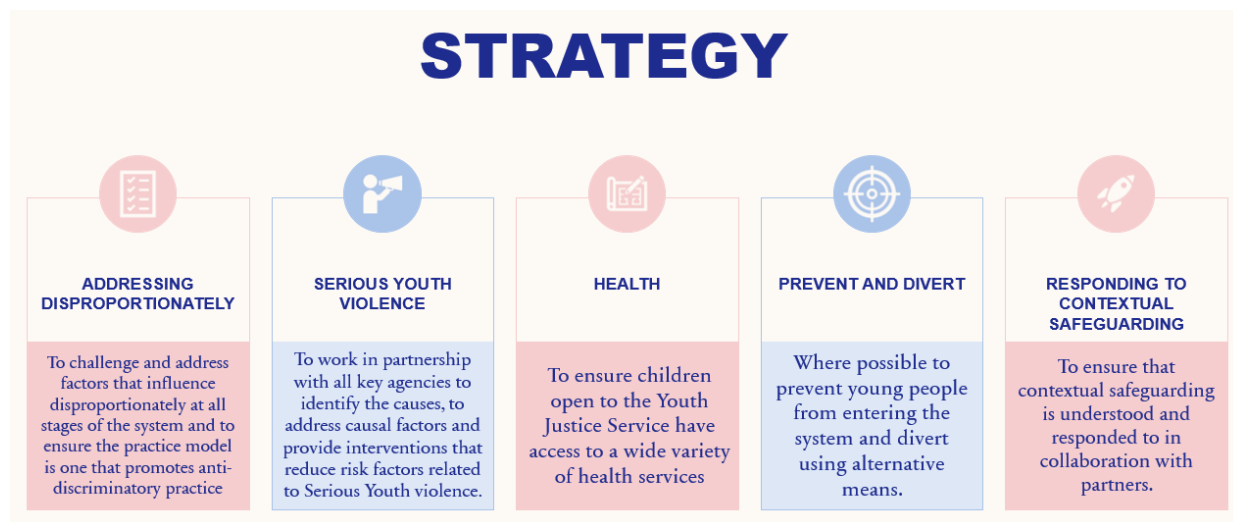
This vision is underpinned by a child-centred ethos that recognises and challenges factors that contribute to a child/young person's entry into the Criminal Justice System. The vision

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).

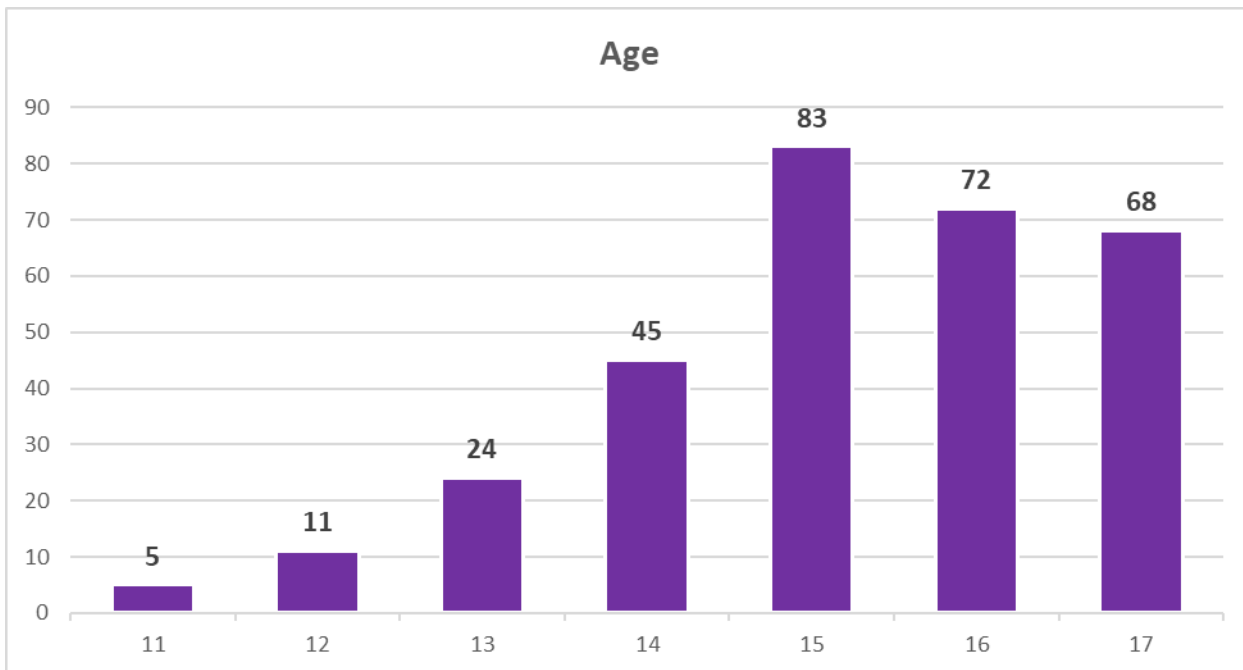
County-lines and Serious Youth Violence are often interlinked and bring with them evidence of exploitation and subsequent contextual safeguarding concerns for a child. The risk is often complex, where YJS and partners are dealing with a child's own victimisation in addition to potential risk they pose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

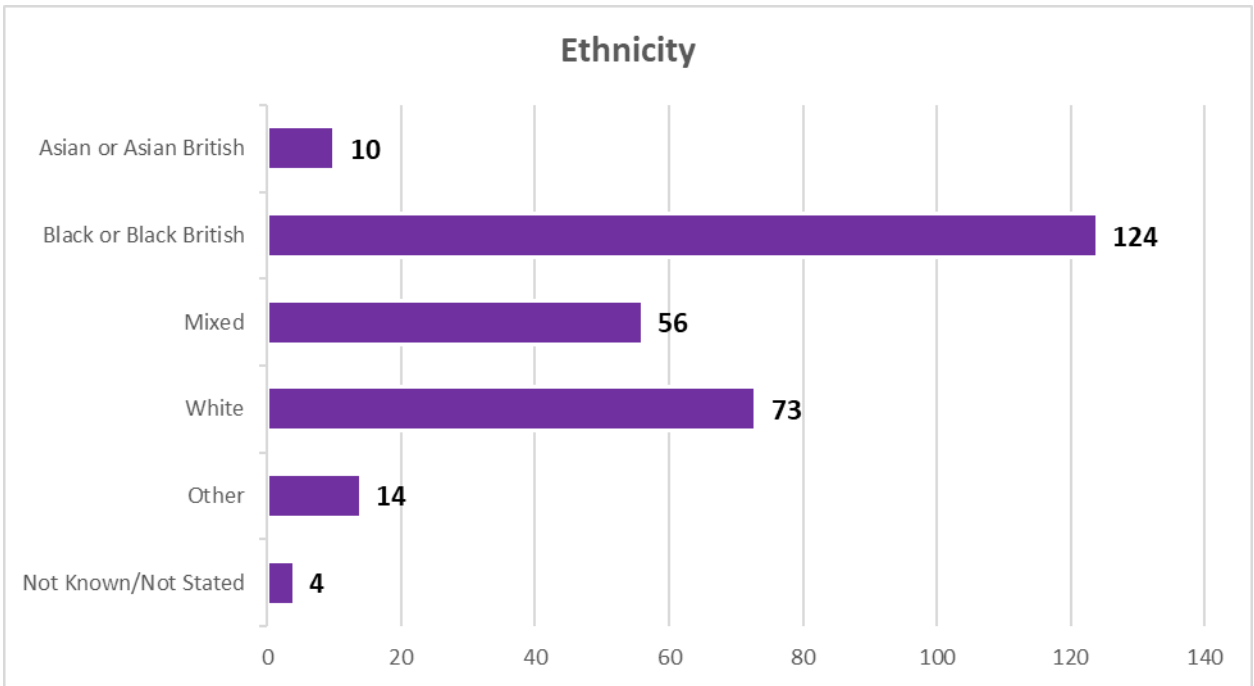
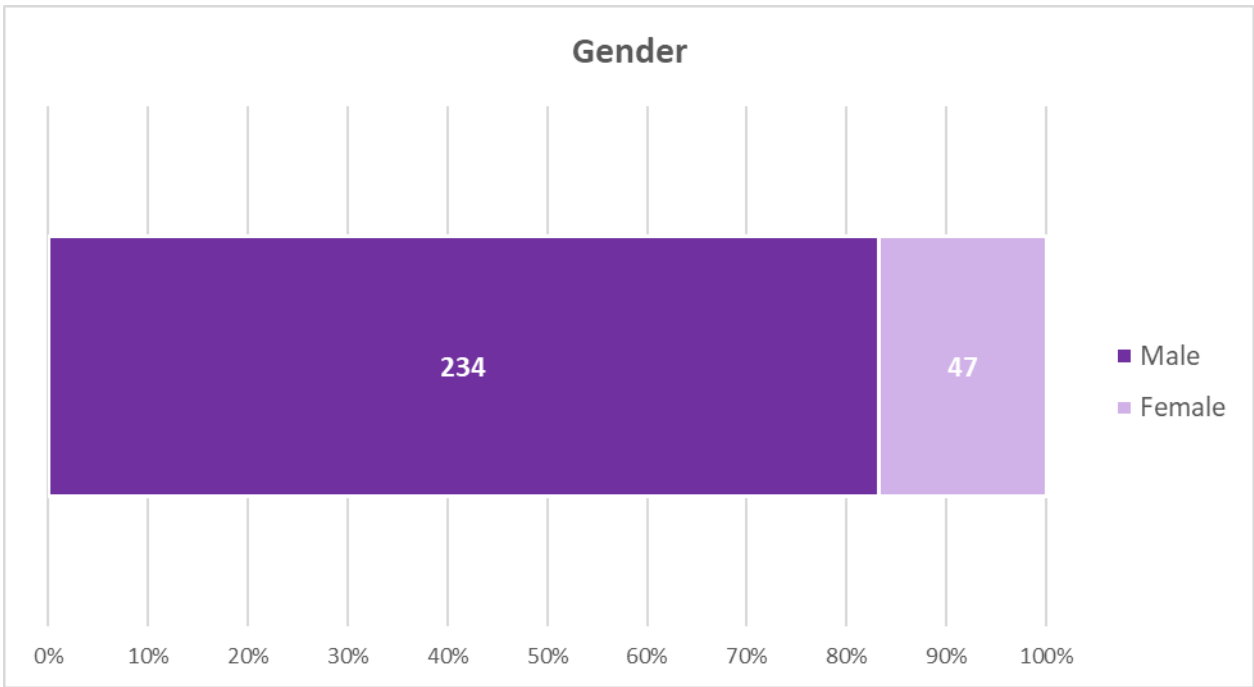
The Local Authority holds a weekly panel titled 'Complex Adolescent Panel' which oversees children where there is known or suspected Criminal and/or Sexual Exploitation. The panel's workings include application of the MACE Protocol and Pan London Child Protection Procedures. These documents provide professional 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.

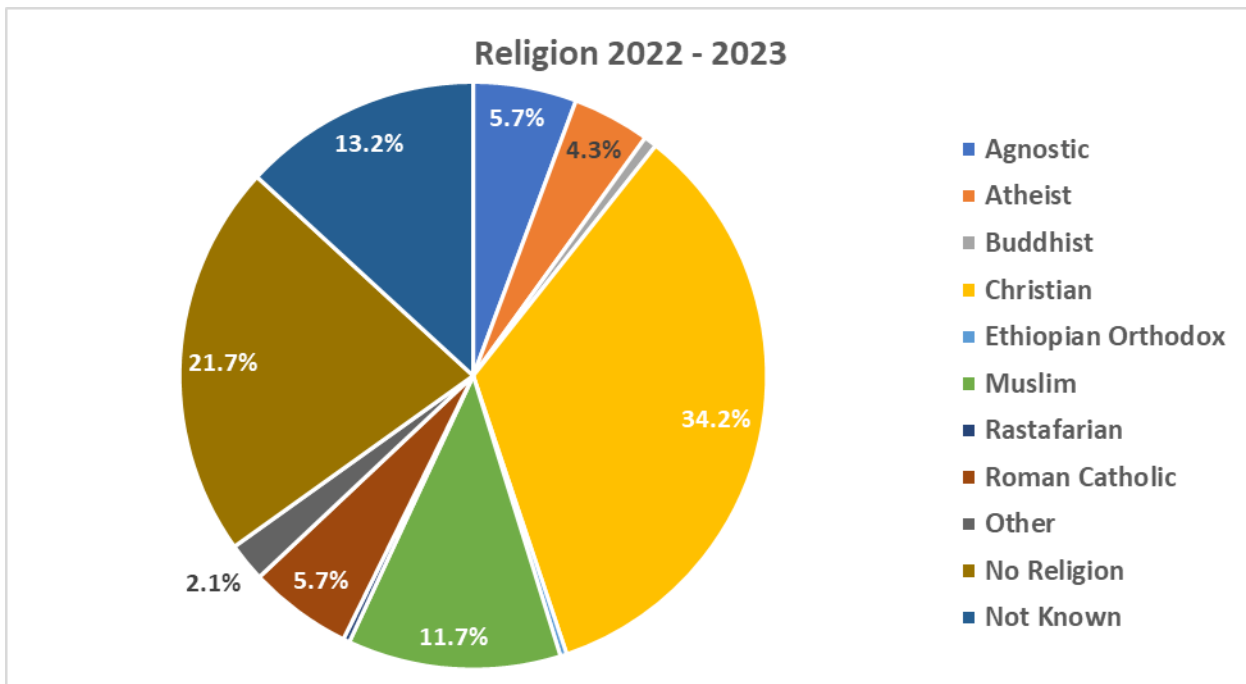
Demographics: Data shows that many of the young people known to YJS typically reside in the north part of the borough and this information correlates with the MET Police identification of 'hot spots' for crime and stop and search data, thus increased contact with the population. Please see appendix 1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



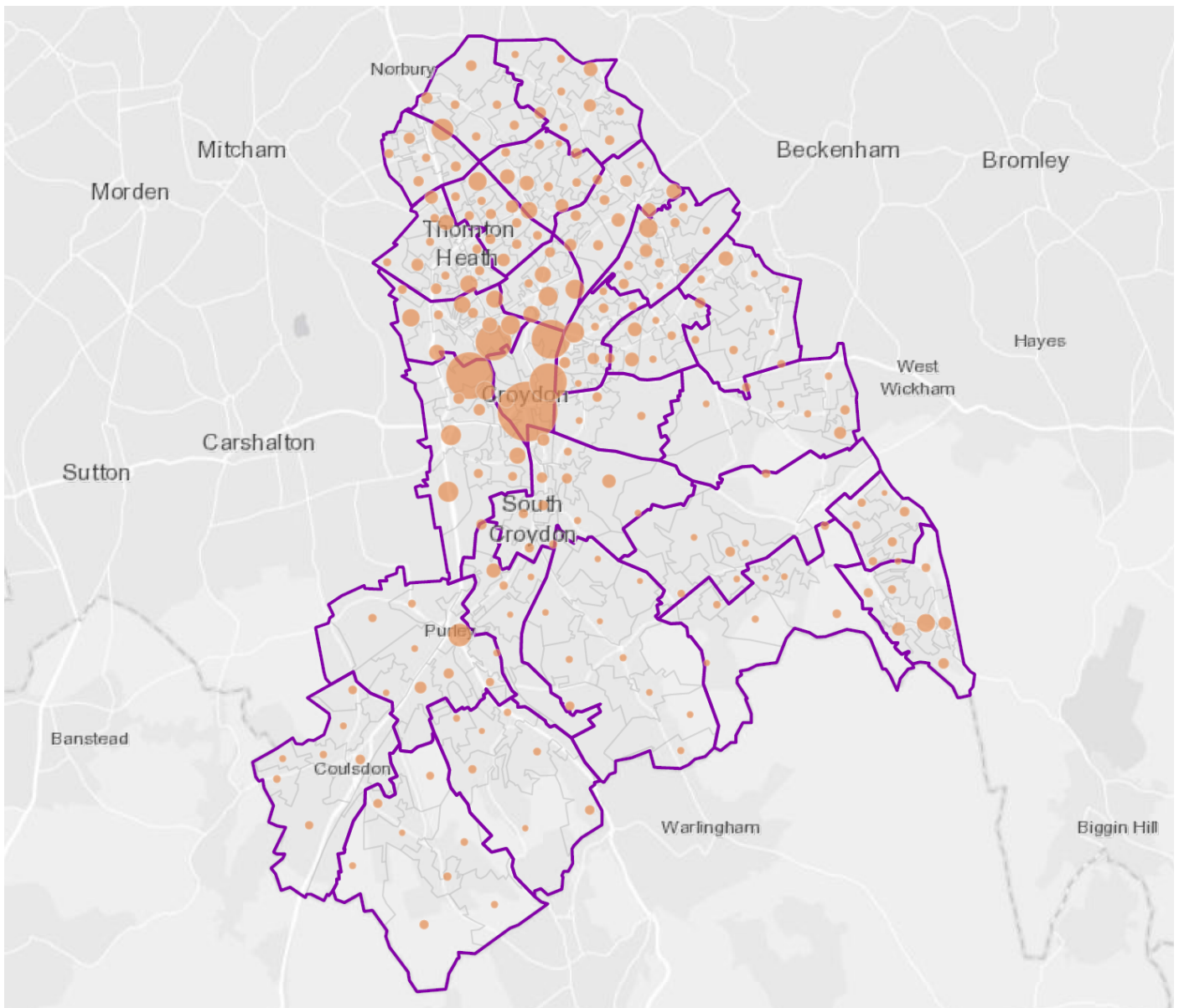




Community Safety data shows that the borough has high levels of Serious Violence – Serious Youth Violence being defined by the MET as a count of any victim for any offence of the most serious violence, gun, or knife crime where the victim is 1-19.

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.

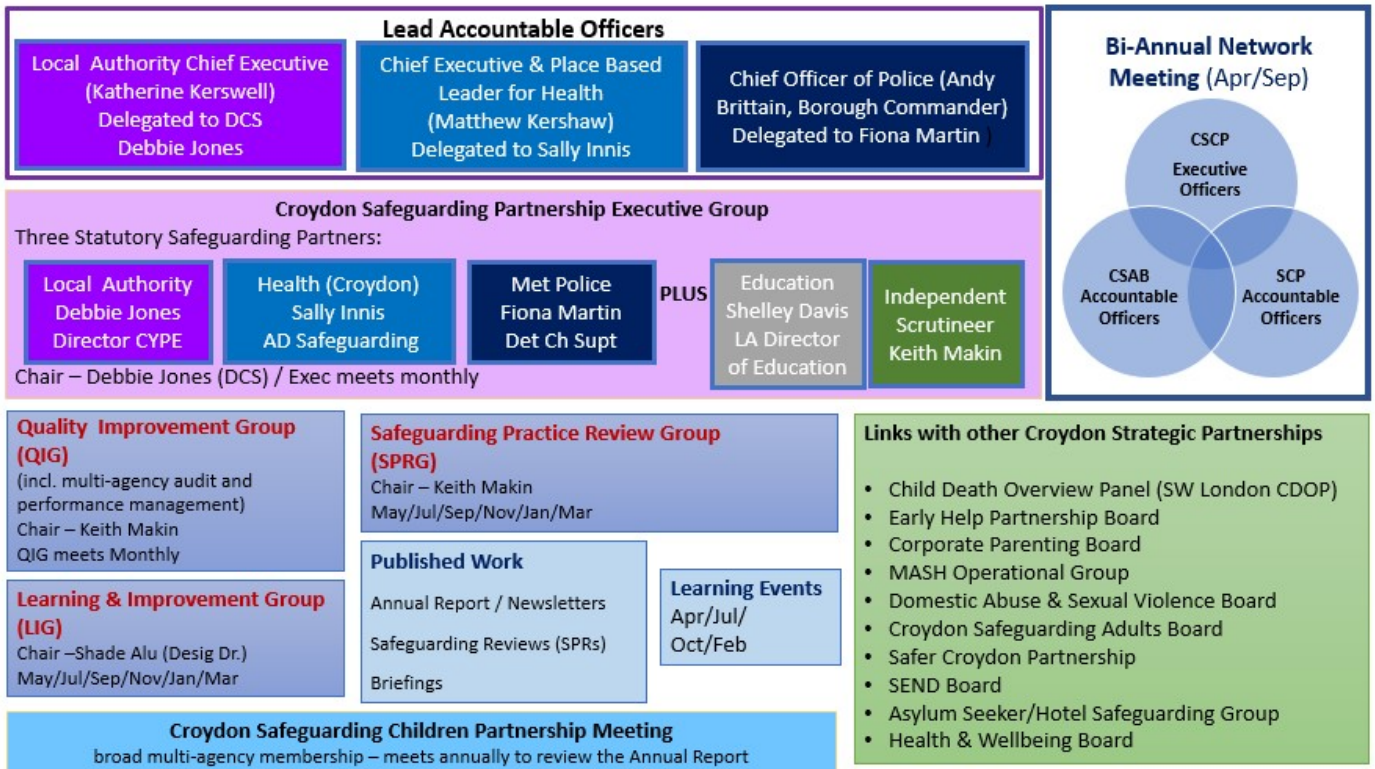
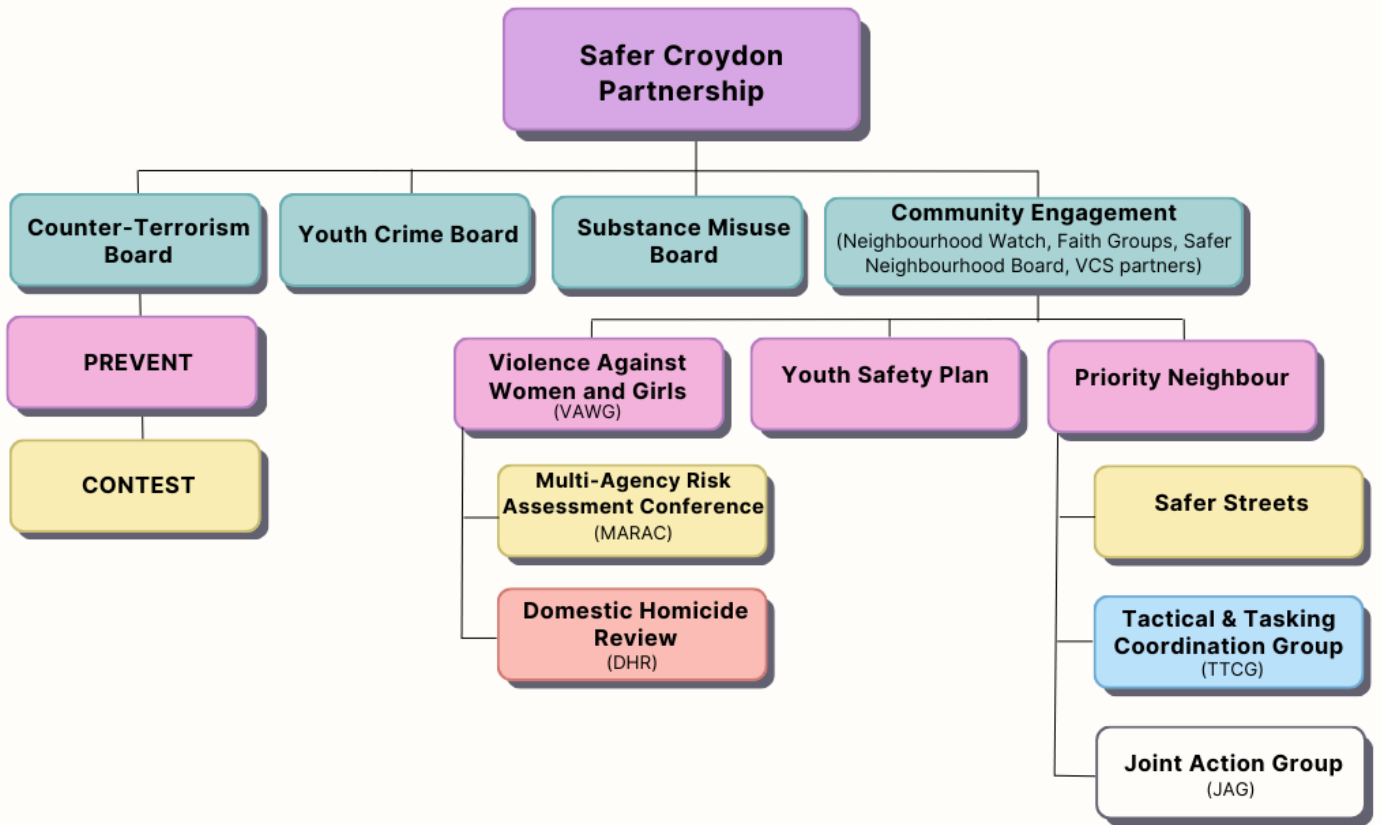
The Board must ensure they understand the characteristics of the children held within the cohort and in advance of the Board, a detailed performance report is supplied to members outlining performance for the quarter in accordance with Key Performance Indicators and other local measures of data specially 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"> To ensure where possible children and young people from BME communities are diverted away from the system. To mark the overrepresentation of young black males in custody and ensure they receive a sophisticated resettlement offer. To ensure all key partners have an awareness of the YJS disproportionately data and to assist to address including Police and Education. To mark the overrepresentation of Looked After children by way of joint working with the CLA 0-15 & Young People's Services. To promote opportunities and Service, which are culturally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor progress on DAP. Embed protocol with Children's Social Care Further training with the Judiciary Work with Education Team on exclusions and ethnicity linked to YJS. Continue to co-locate with PRU to promote support in education. Ensure appropriate resource is given to diversions taking account of Stop and Search data – including the development of voluntary support offer. Promote opportunities by using VCS. Deliver specific service to girls. Continue to run Positive male's project.

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

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

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

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

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural Programme being run on identified part of the cohort. • All staff trained in Sexual Health by NHS • NHS Sexual Health Team undertaking monthly visits to assist cohort. • All staff trained in Mental Health First Aid • Continued work with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health (FCAMHS) • All staff trained in trauma informed practice. • Continued partnership with Off the Record providing counselling Services to children who do not meet mental health thresholds.
<p>Diverting Children away from the Criminal Justice System (reducing first time entrants)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Turnaround Project to work with children who receive Community Resolutions or No Further Action by the Police. • 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. • 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. • Continued partner within the My Endz programme – offering or programmes and mentoring via the Voluntary Community Sector.
<p>Responding to County-lines and contextual safeguarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Complex Adolescent Panel – Chaired by Social Care attended by Partnership including representation from Rescue and Response, Barnardo(s) • Joint work with Specialist Adolescence Service (Young Croydon). • Completion of jointly created Safety Plans with Social Care
<p>Reduce Re-offending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the reasons that a child is offending are understood by way of assessment. • Applying child centric interventions that are focused on strengths and opportunities which

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

8. Resources:

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

2023-24 Budgeted Funding Streams (Staffing & Non-Staffing)				
Agency	Budget	Payments in Kind - Revenue	Other Delegated Funds	Total
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
Total	2,171,000			2,171,000

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

2023/24 Additional Income (Unbudgeted)				
Agency	Income	Payments in Kind - Revenue	Other Delegated Funds	Total
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
Total	329,974			339,974

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:

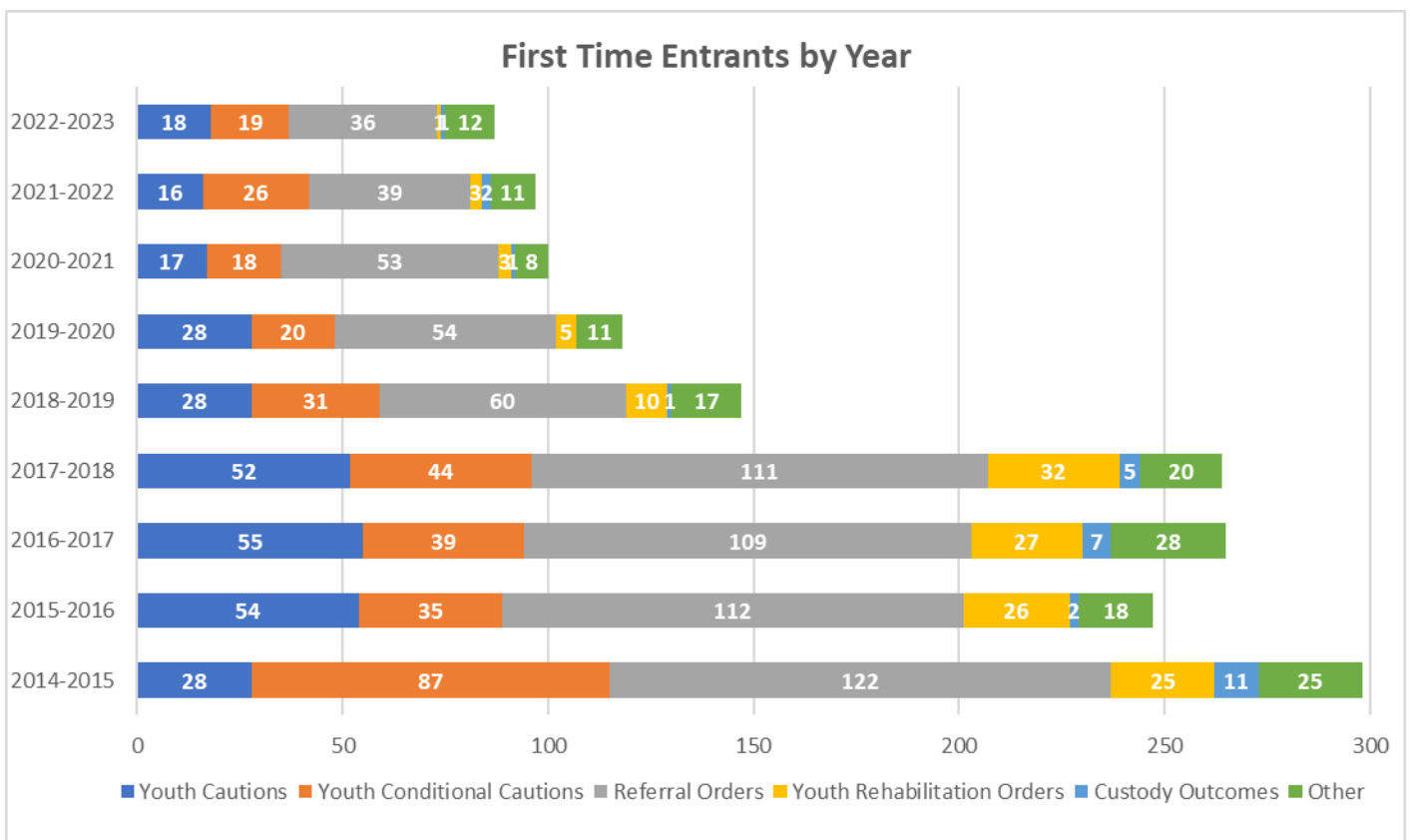
- Reduction in re-offending
- Reduction in the use of custody
- Reduction in the number of first-time entrants
- Effective Safeguarding
- Effective Public Protection
- Improving the Safety and wellbeing and outcomes for children within the system.

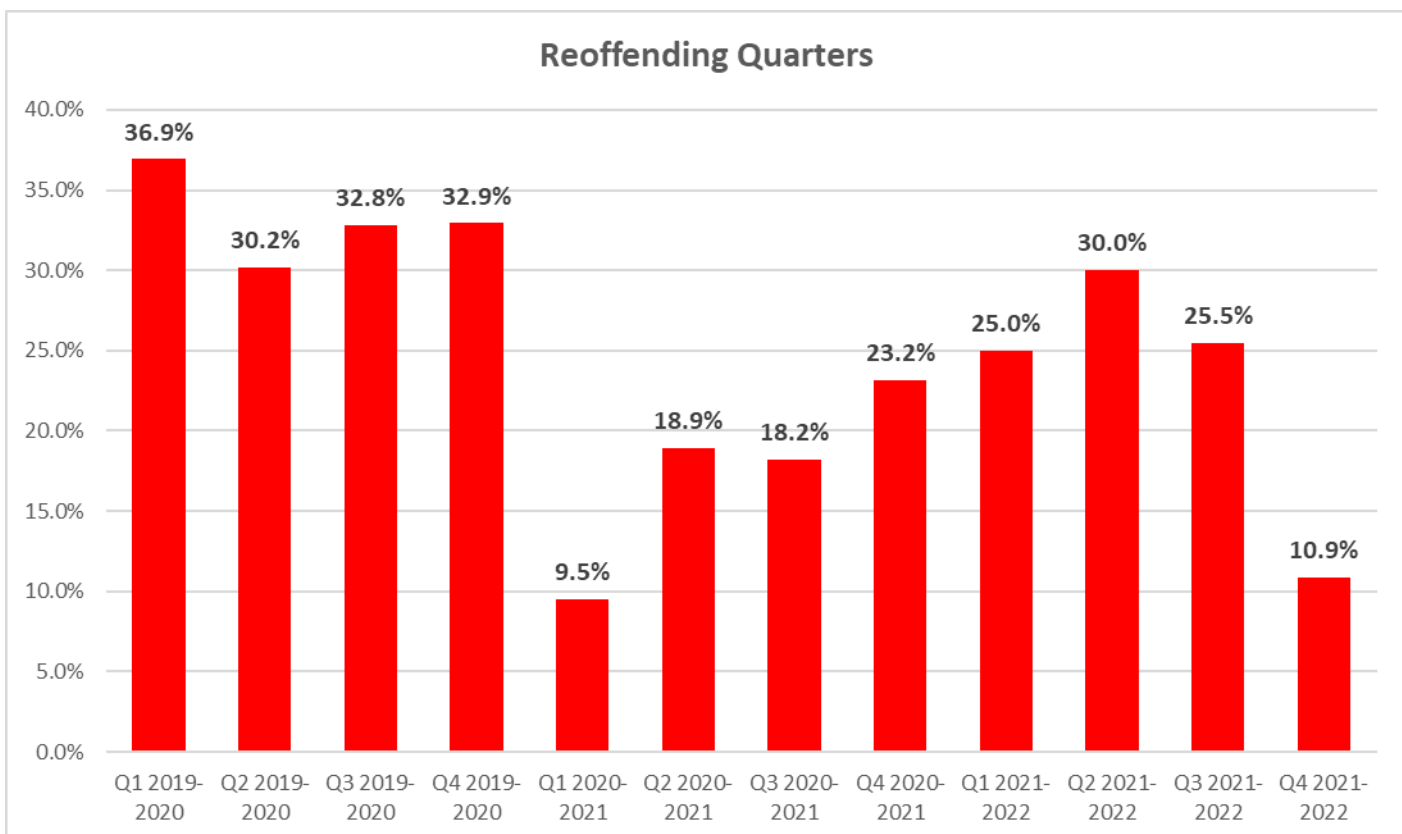
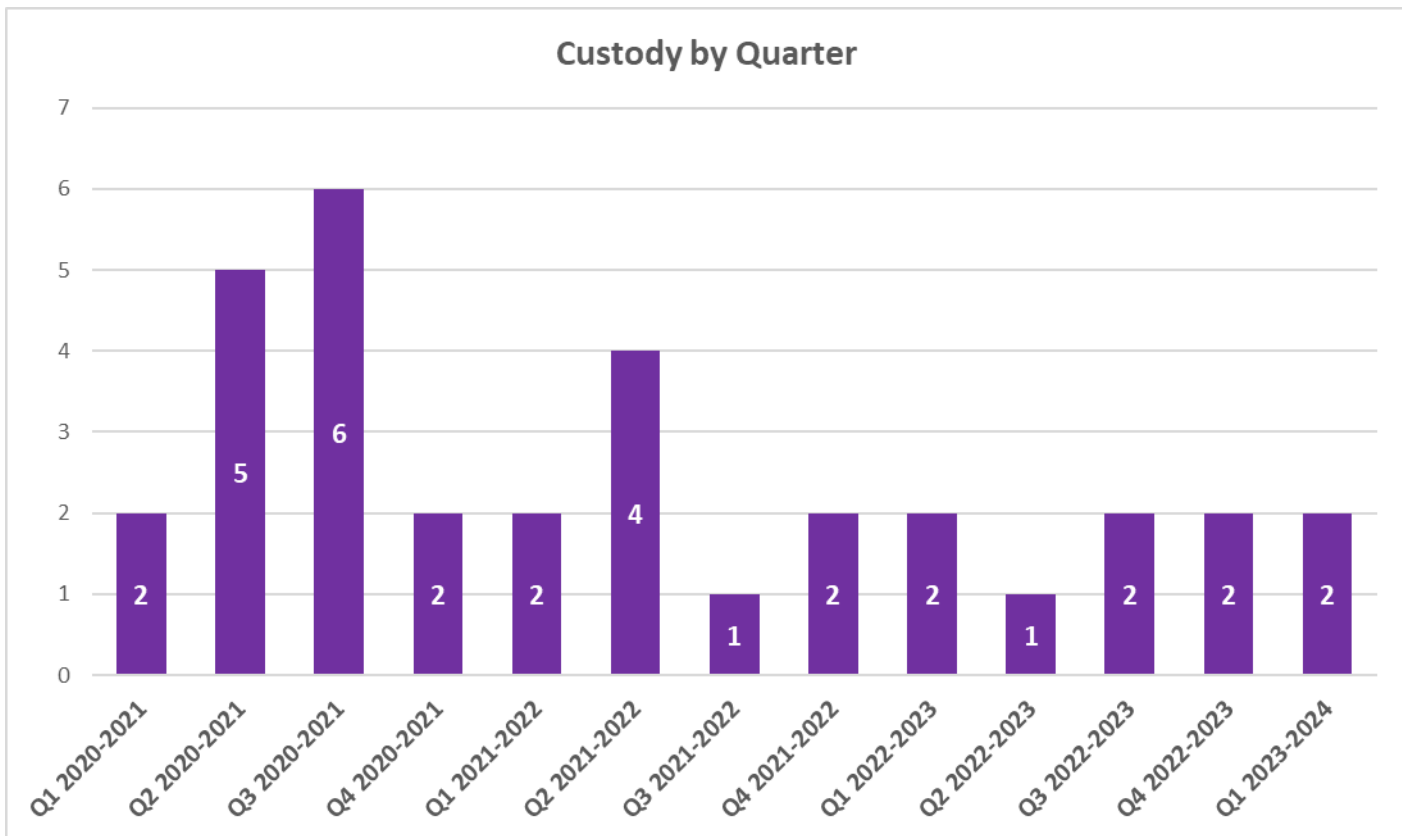
Post Description	Budgeted Grade	FTE 2023/24	Unit Cost £	Full Year Forecast
		8		
Operational Manager (Out of Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Operational Manager (Post Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Practise Manager (Out of Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Practise Manager (Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Restorative Justice 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
Total	0	1	1	3	9	24	1	4	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	55
Disabled	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

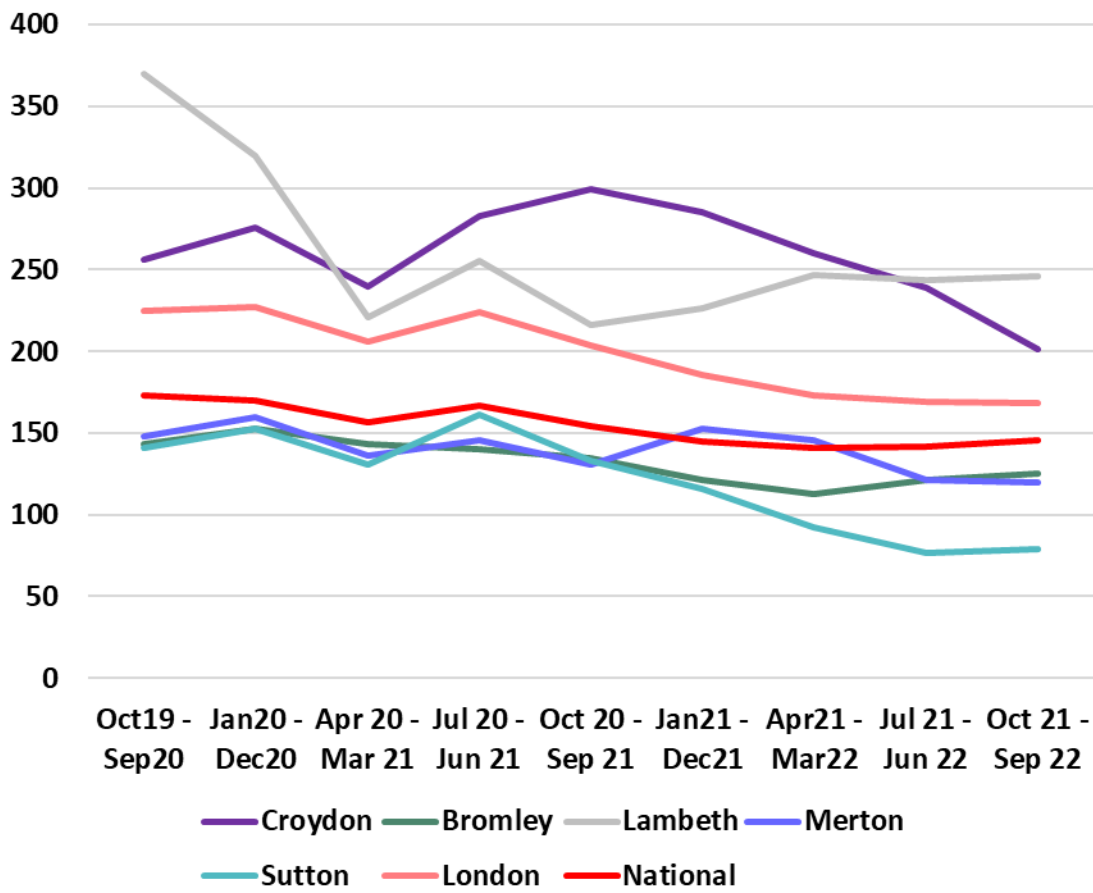
9. Performance

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

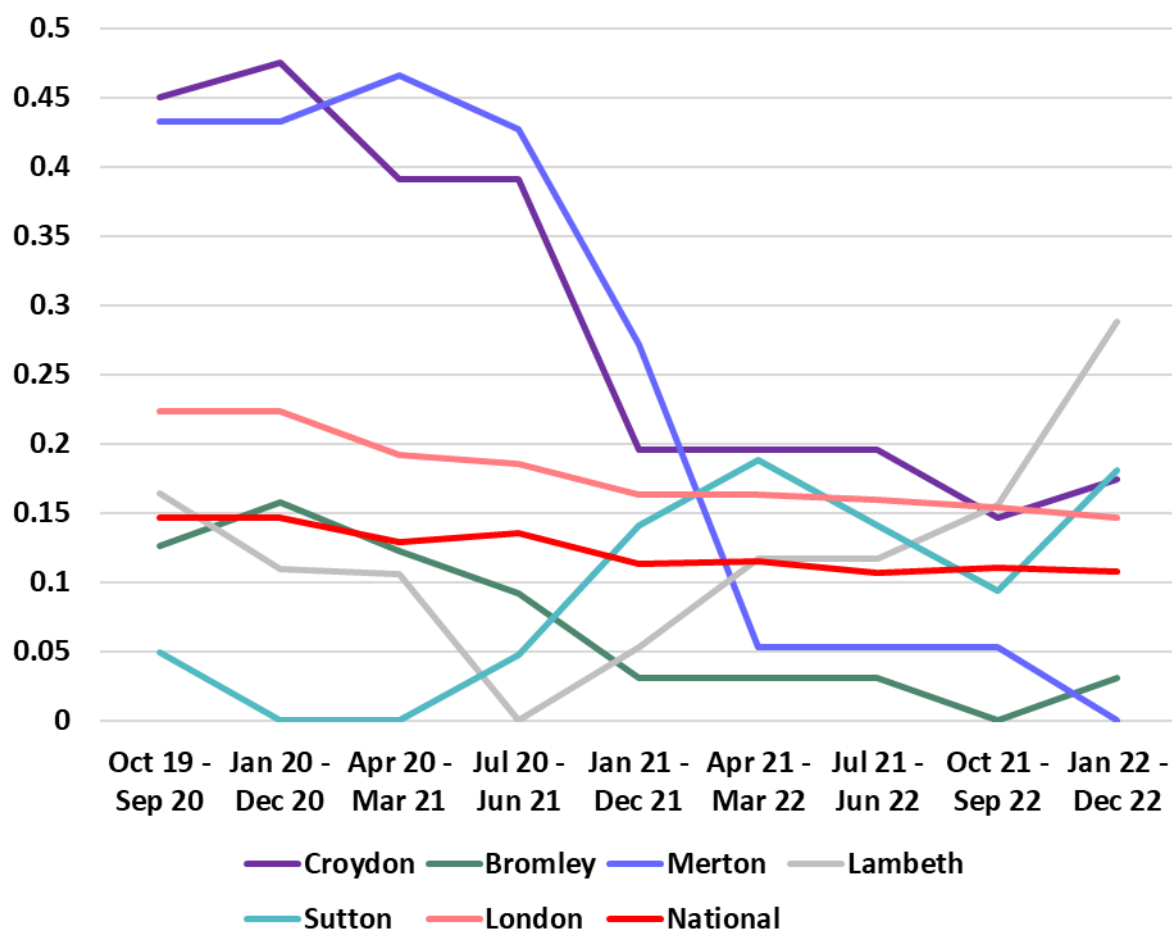




First Time Entrants – Rates per 100,000 population



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:

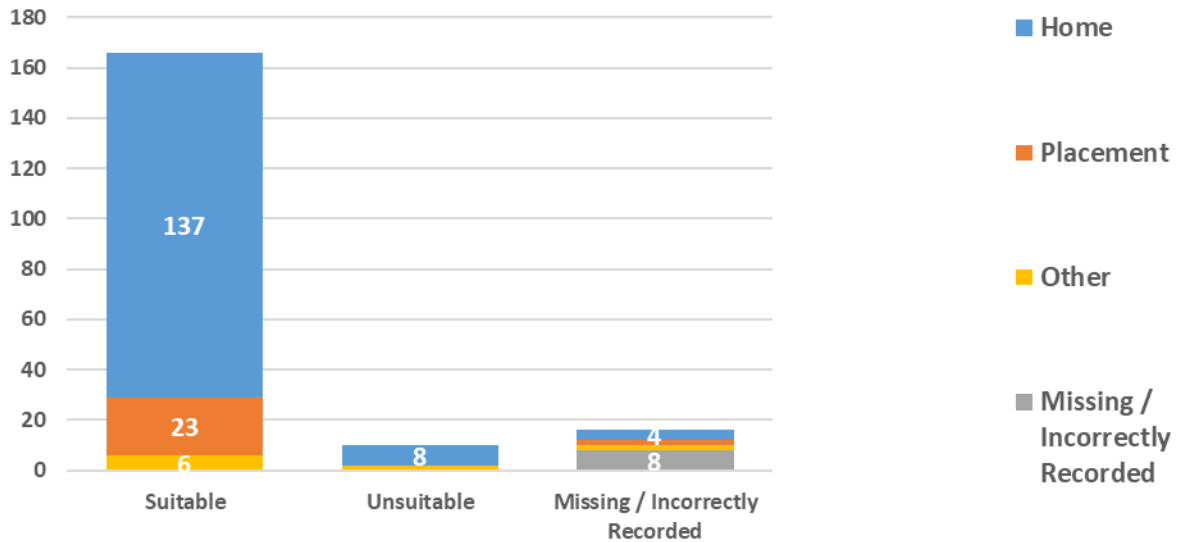
As from the 1st of April 2023 10 new Key Performance Indicators were issued to Youth Justice Services nationally. These include:

- 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.

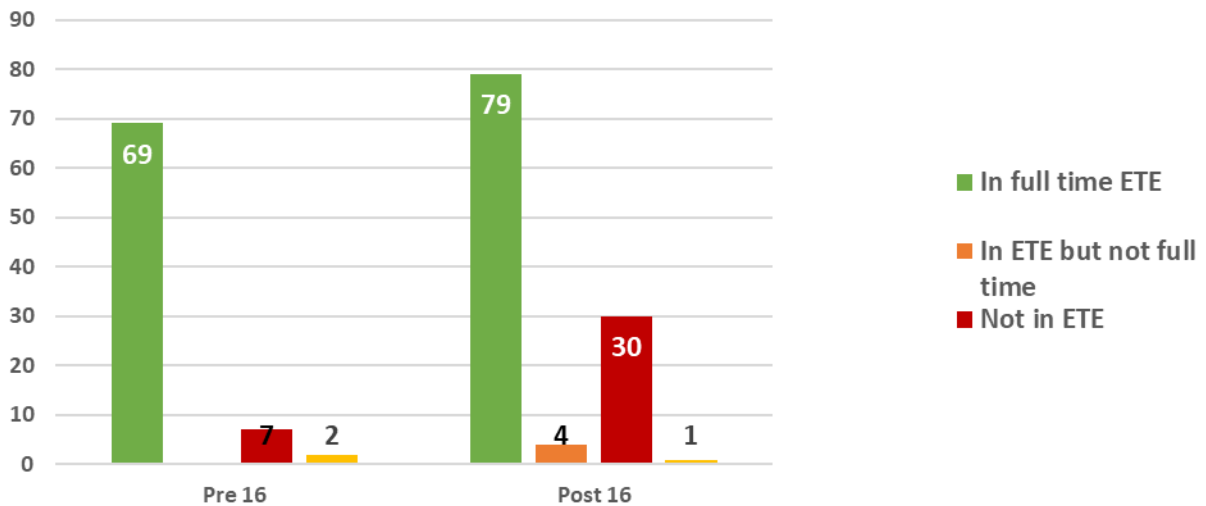
Croydon Youth Justice Service has historically reported on the above as local indicators, consequently the service is familiar with collating the above information to ensure that it has oversight on performance related to each area and is therefore able to measure partnership contributions to ensure 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:

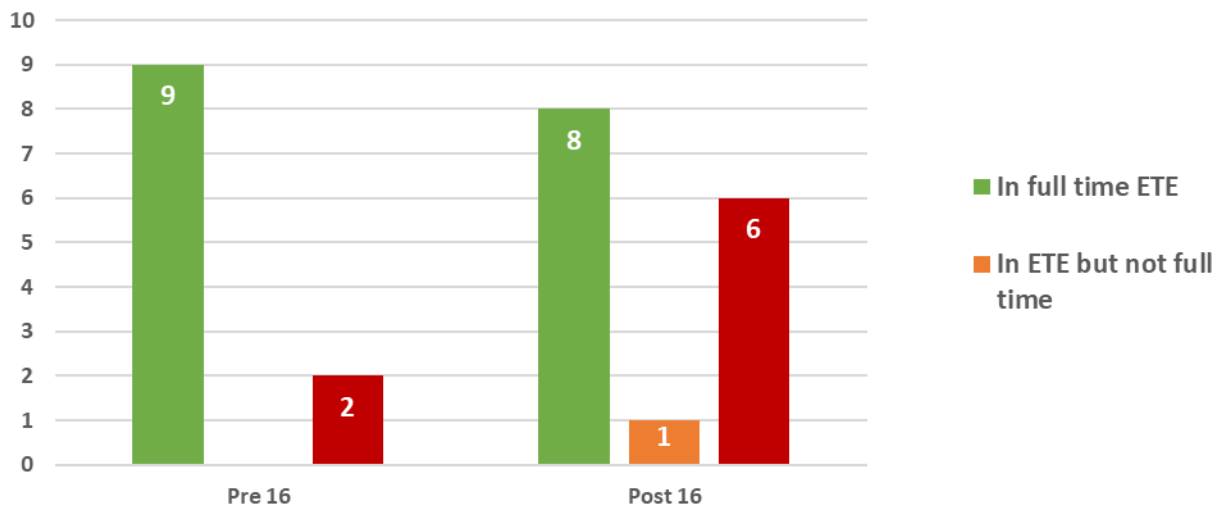
Accommodation - Interventions Ending 2022 -2023

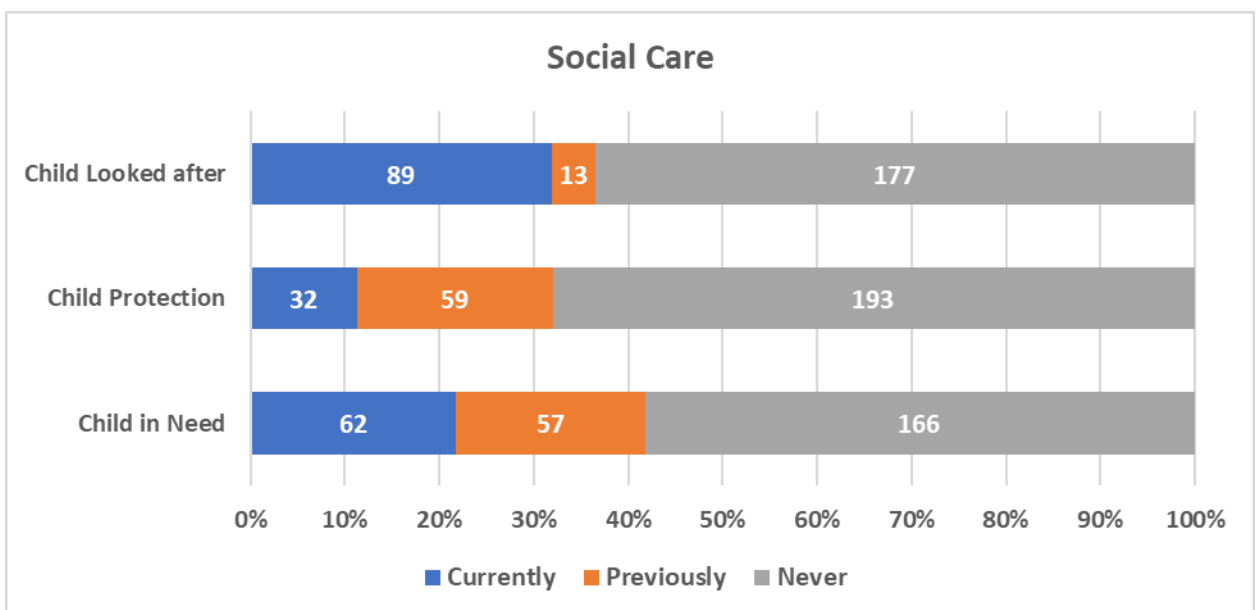
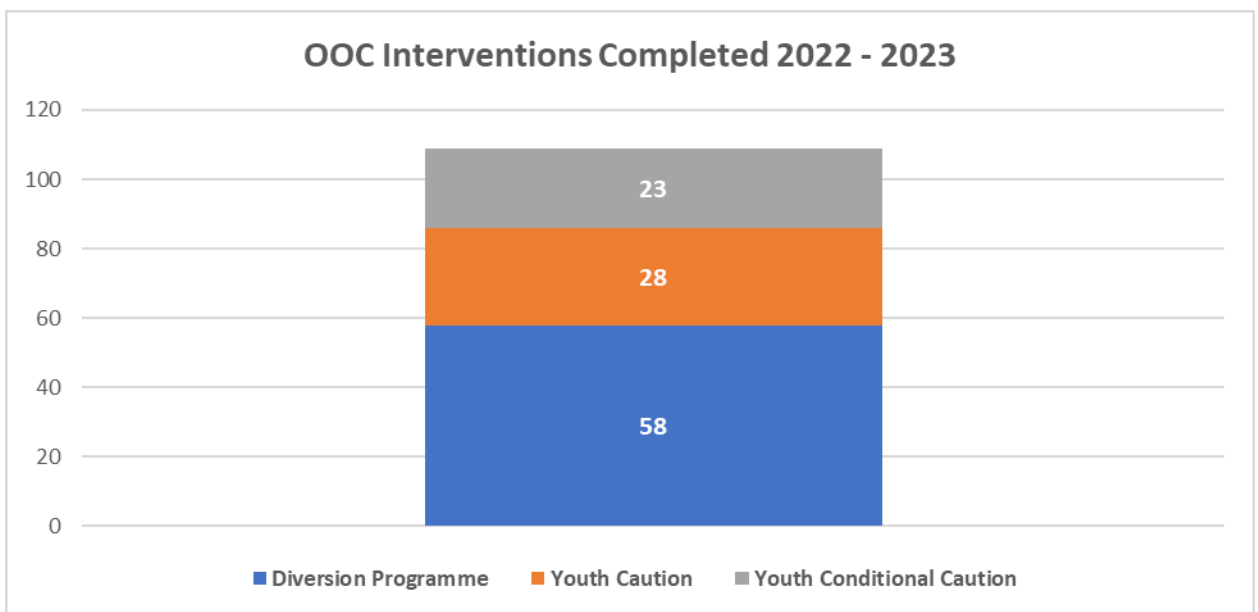
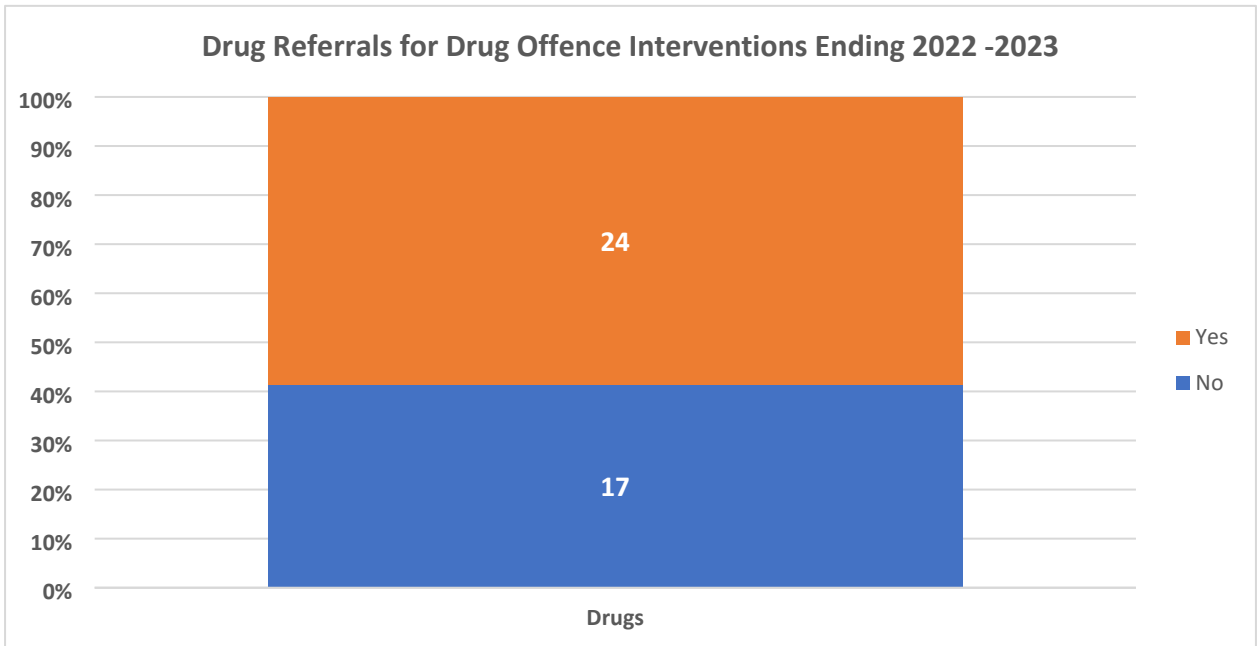


ETE - Interventions Ending 2022 -2023

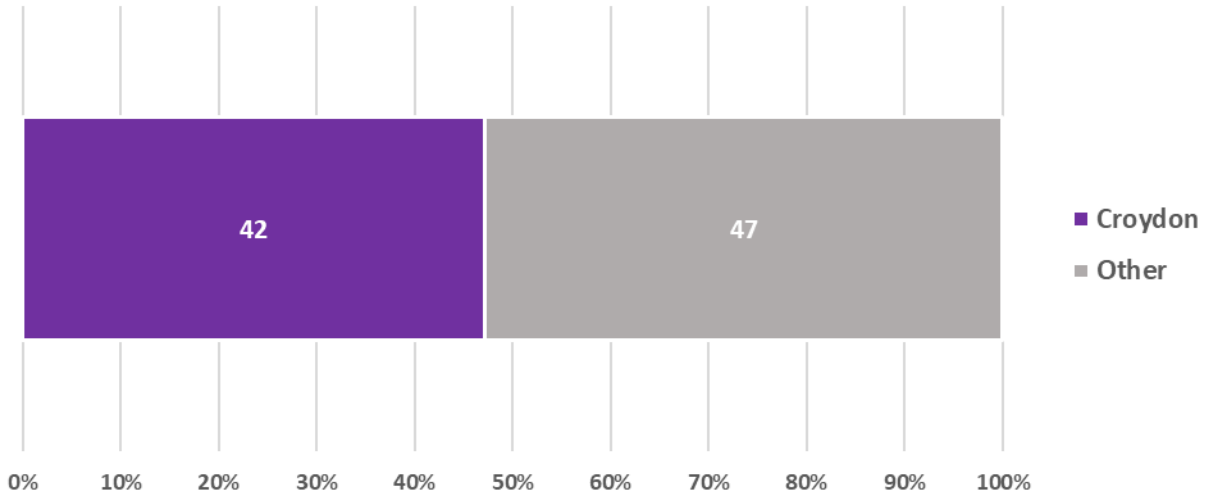


Clients with EHCP - Interventions Ending 2022 -2023

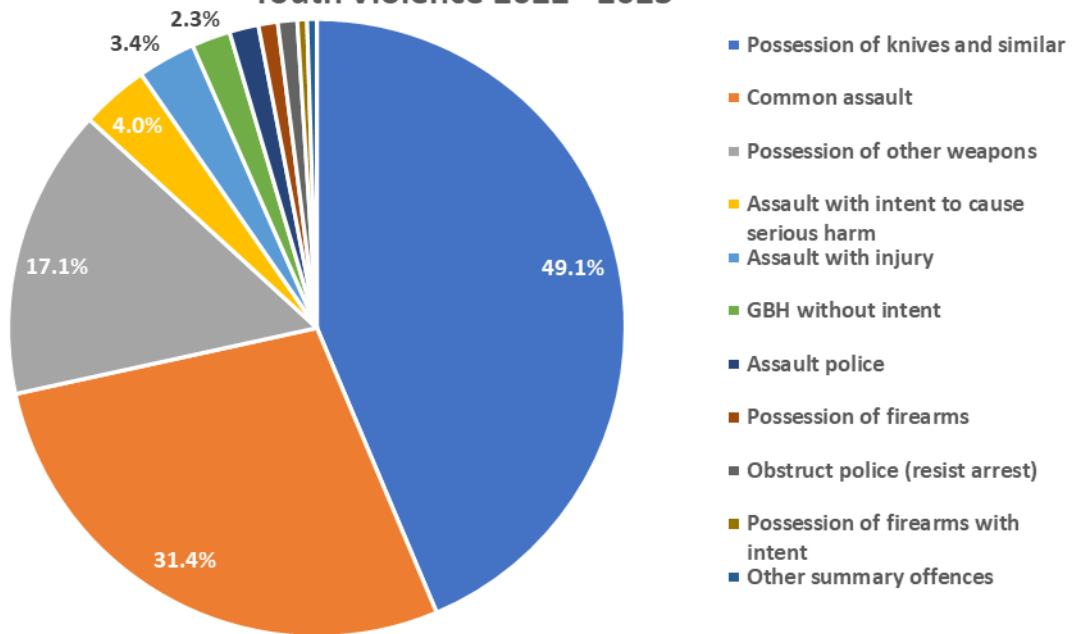


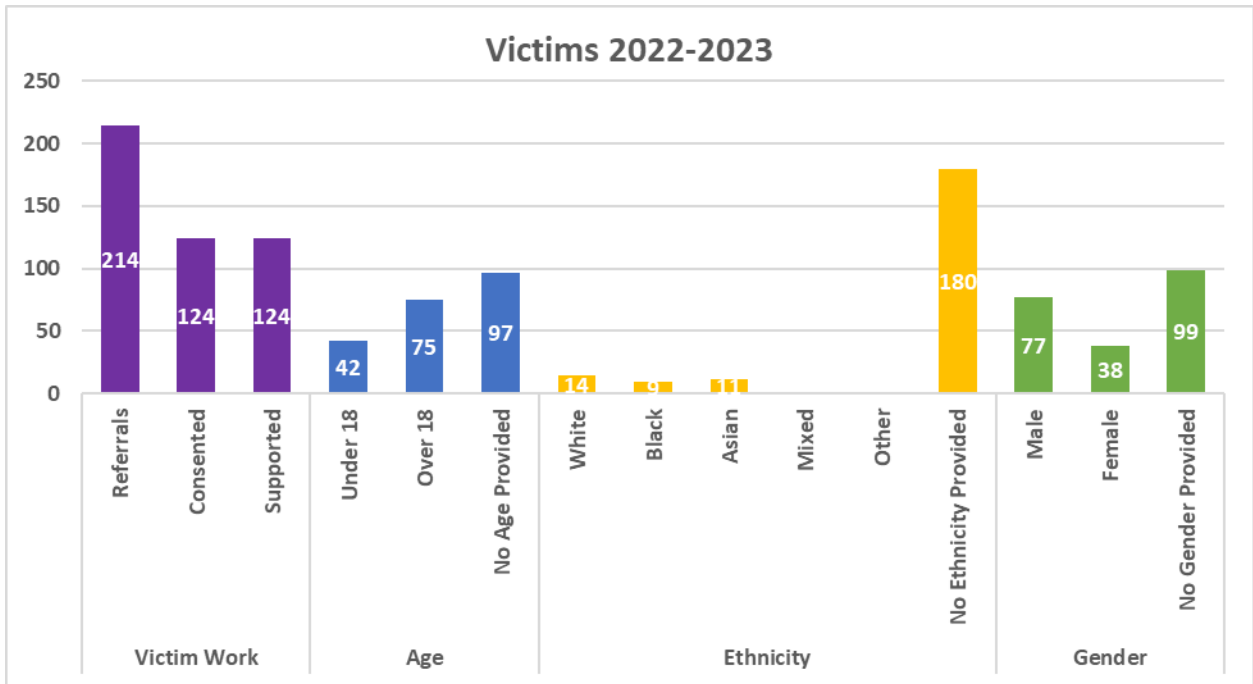


Child Looked After Locality



Youth Violence 2022 - 2023





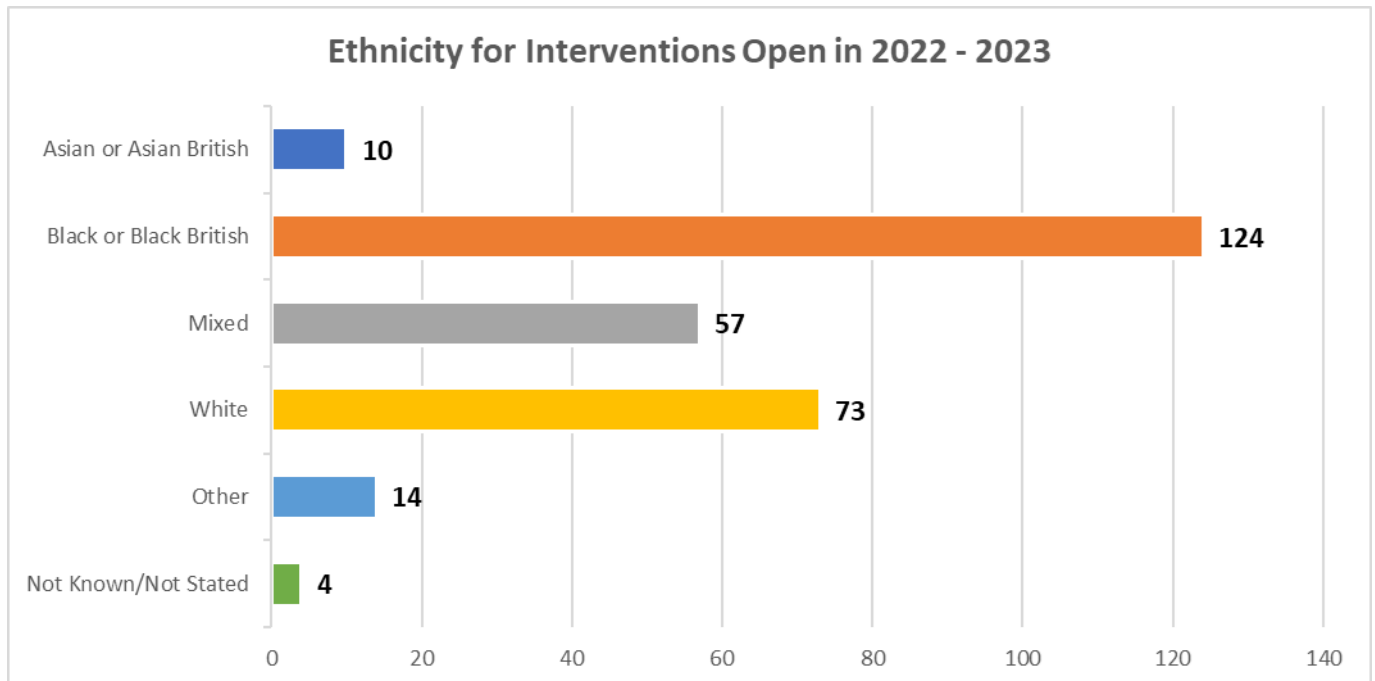
Separate to Key Performance Indicators, the Youth Justice Service is measured against 'Standards for children in the Youth Justice System (2019)'. The government produced standard expectations which sets out clear guidance on the delivery of core Youth Justice work – Out of Court work, Court work, Court 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

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. *



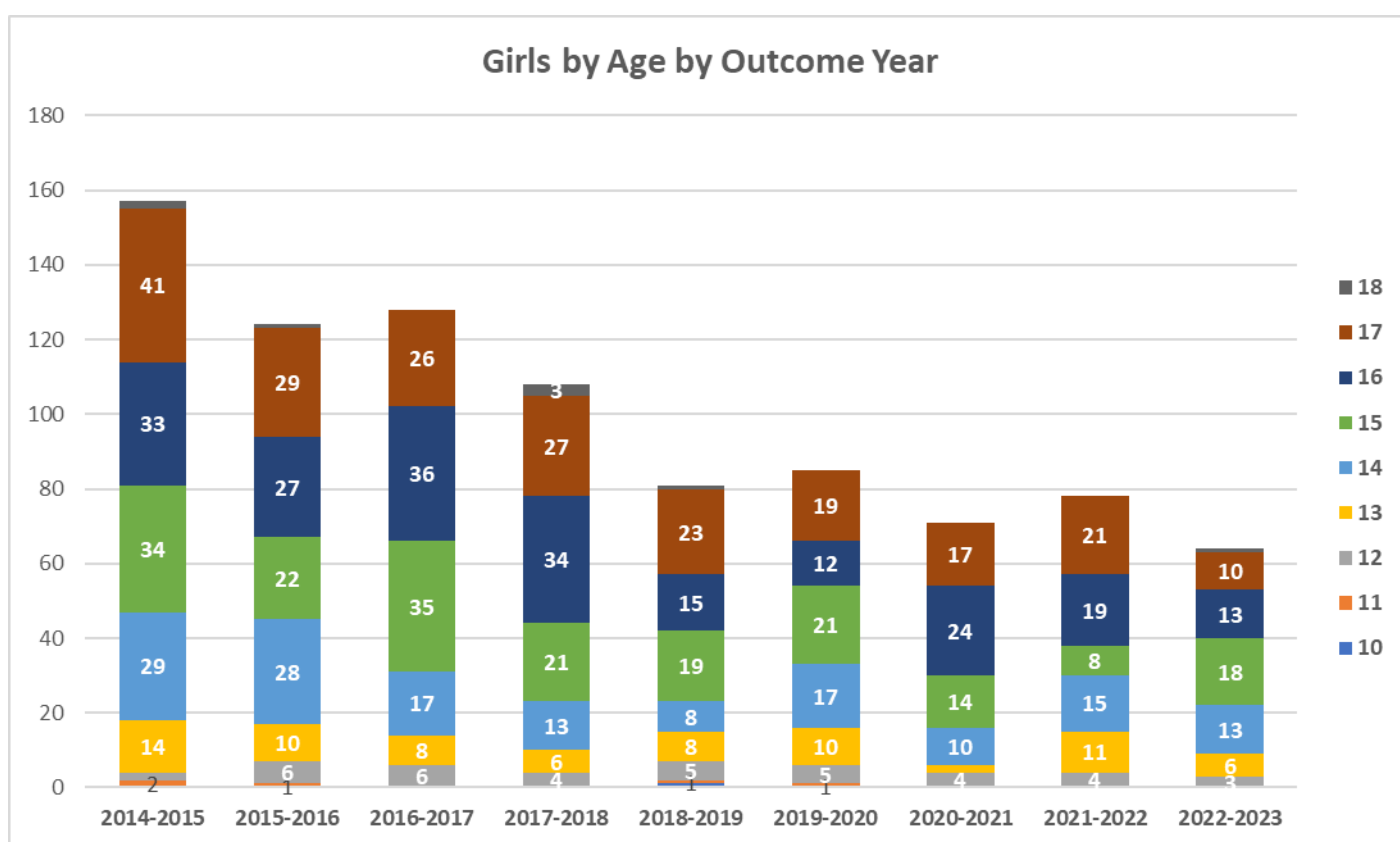
Disproportionality or the over-representation of specific groups has caused long-standing concern within the Criminal Justice System. Croydon Youth Justice Service in consultation with the BME Forum and Equalities Team, Young People and Staff have devised a Disproportionately Action Plan (appendix 3), 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.

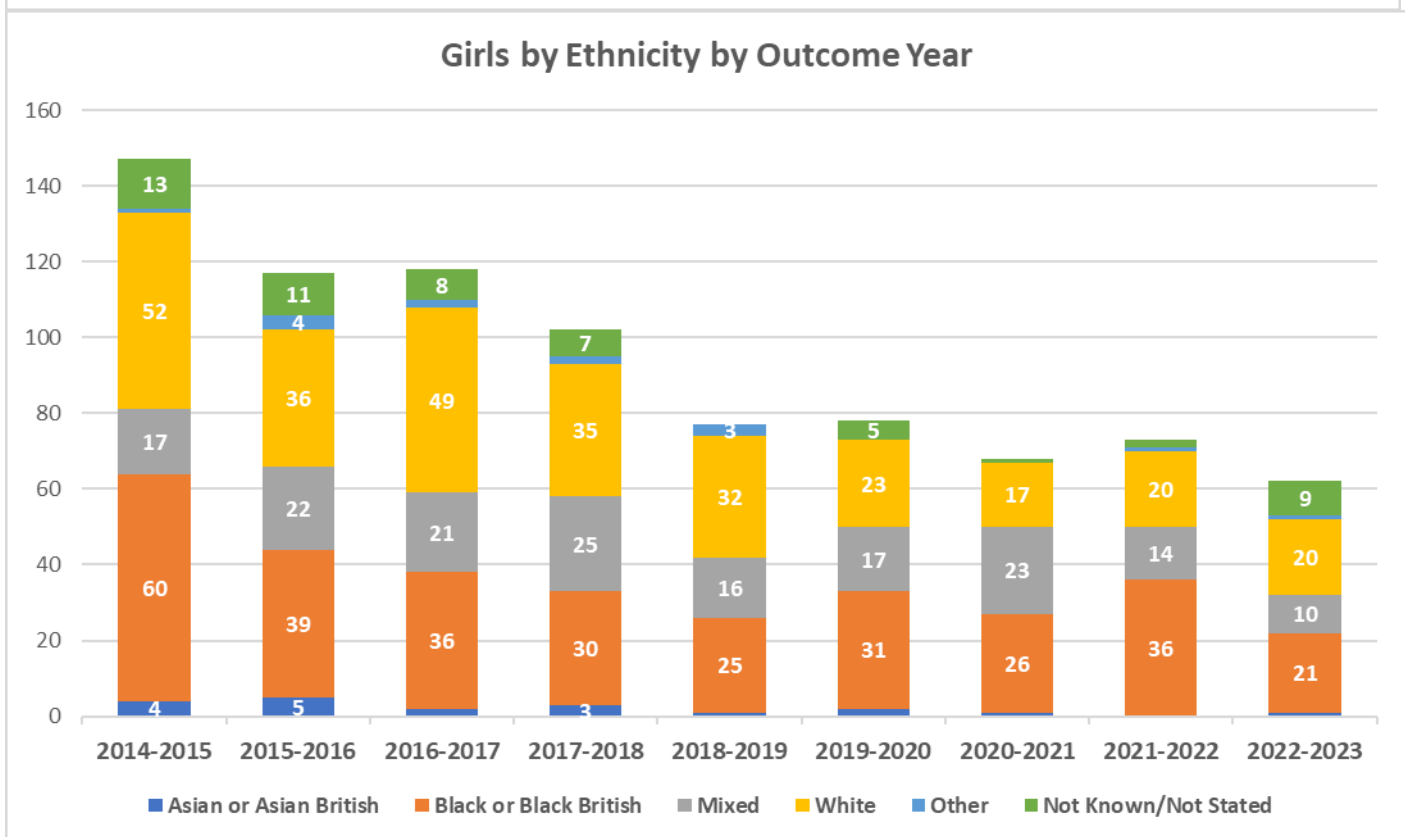
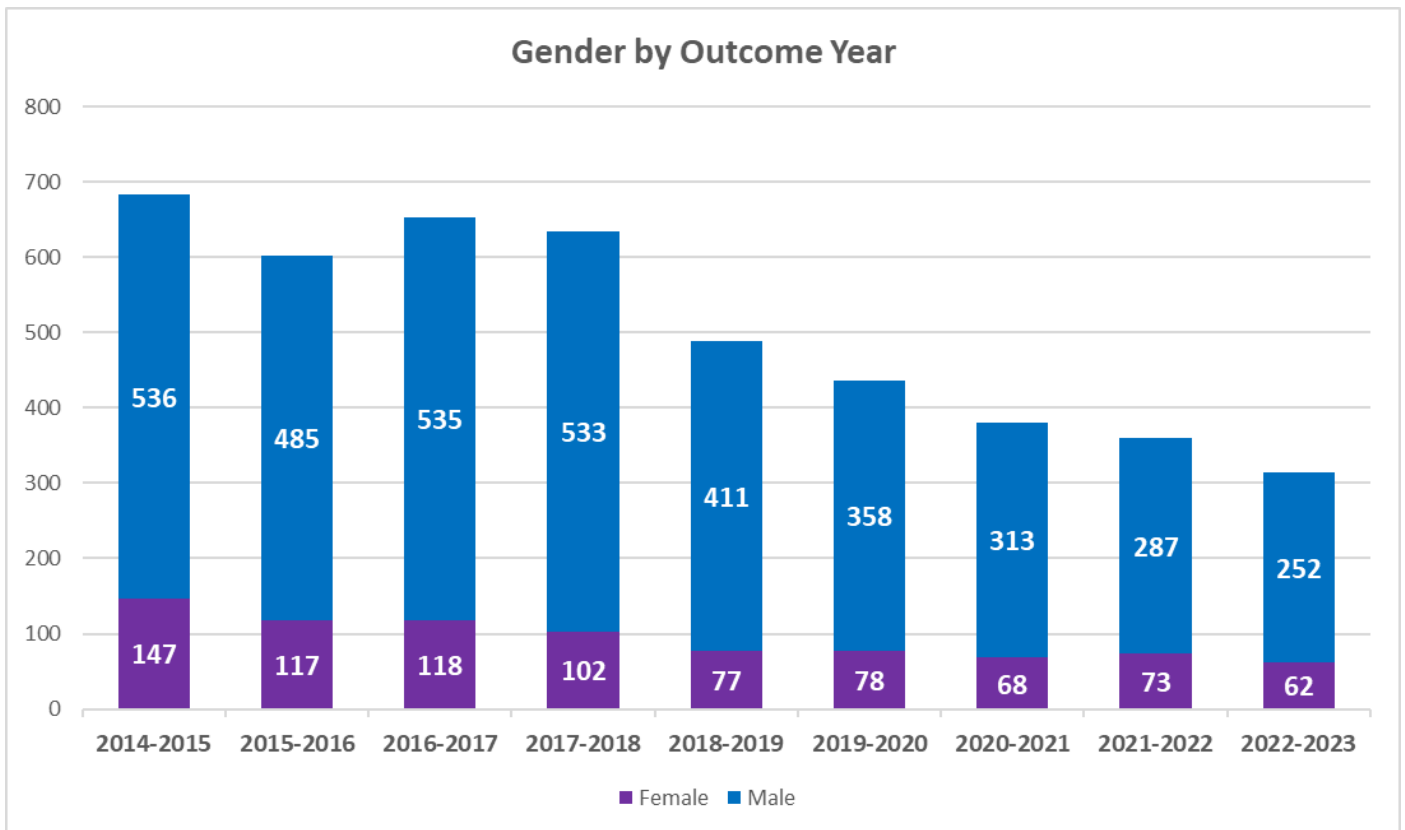
In 2022/23 the Service began exploring the use of Stop and Search within specific parts of the community that ultimately impacted upon over-representation within the Service, subsequently a programme was delivered that enabled young people to understand their rights but also explored with them their 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.

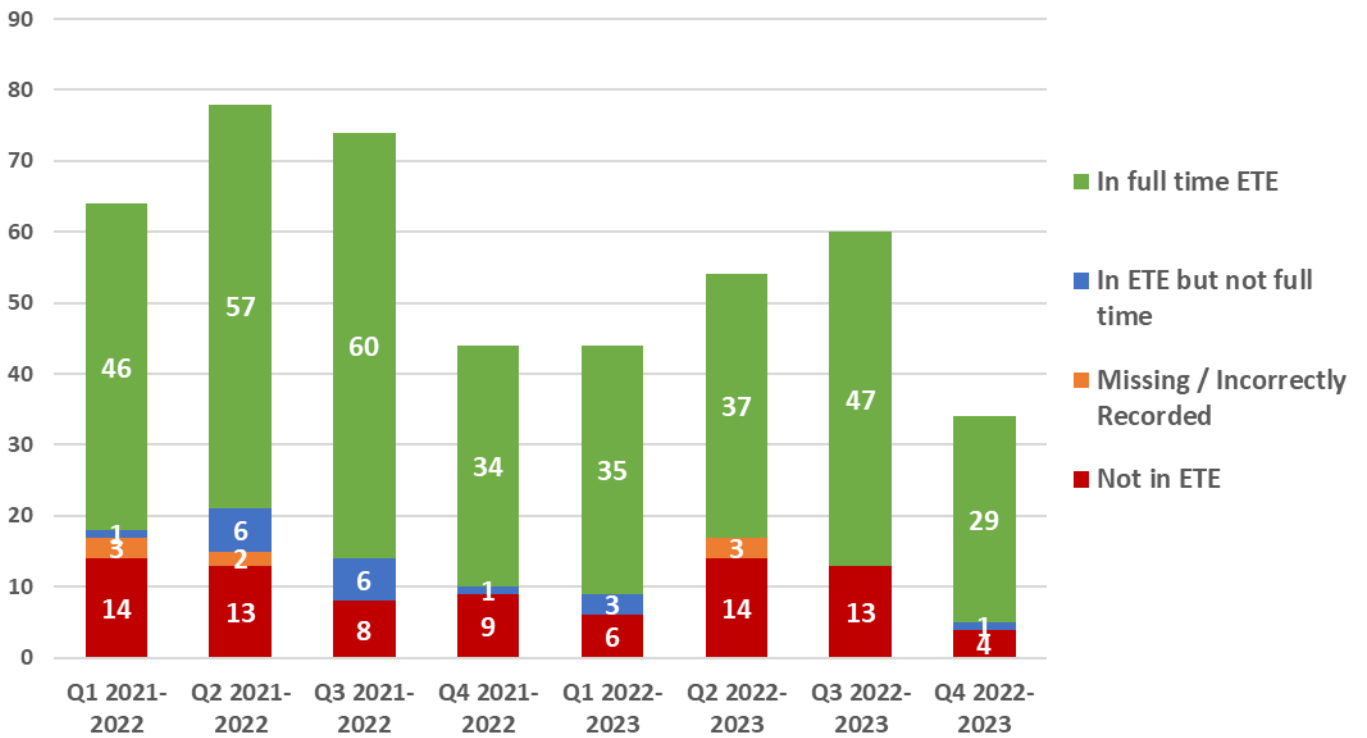
13. Diversion

Full detail of the Youth Justice diversion offer is captured in the Croydon Youth Justice Prevention and Diversion Strategy 2023/24. (Appendix 8).

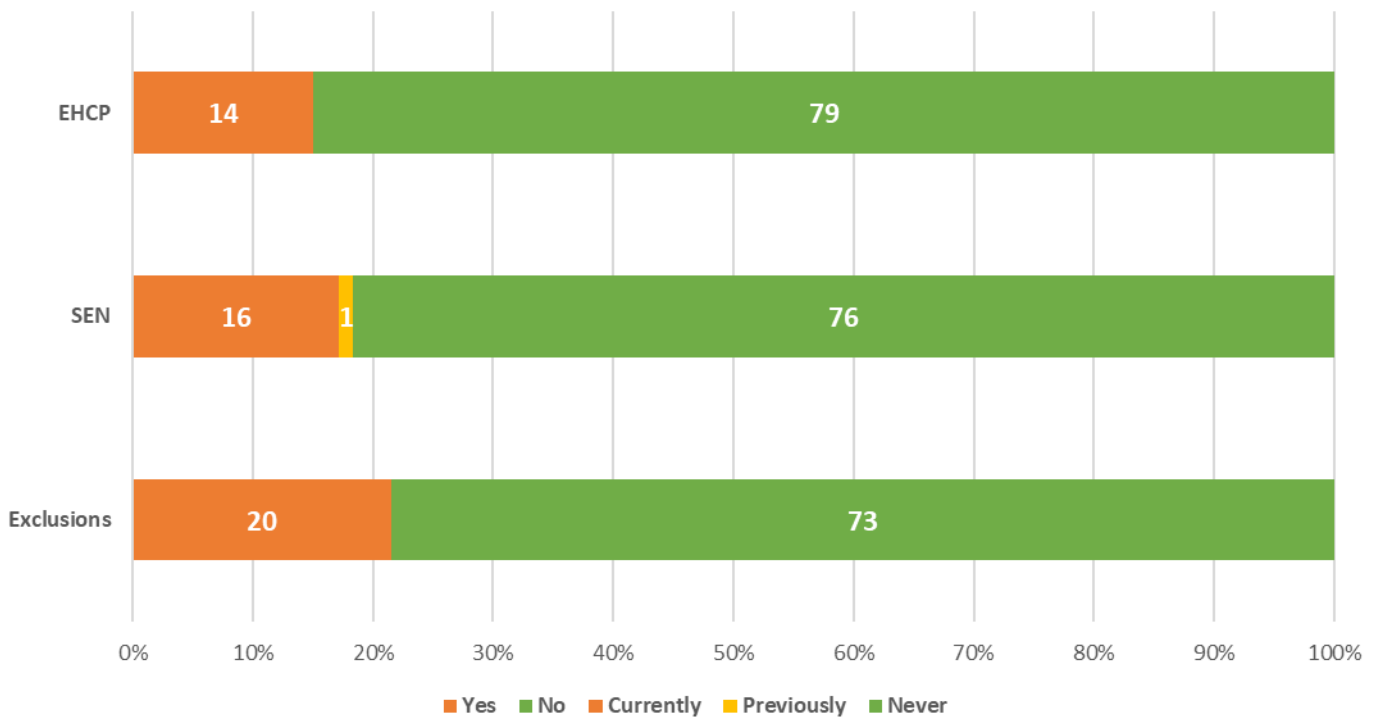
The strategy details the prevention offer as above but also provides summary of the Engage Project, a Project based at the Custody Suite to greet young people who have been arrested without charge. The aim of the project is to ensure all children coming into contact with the Criminal Justice System are 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 1st 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.

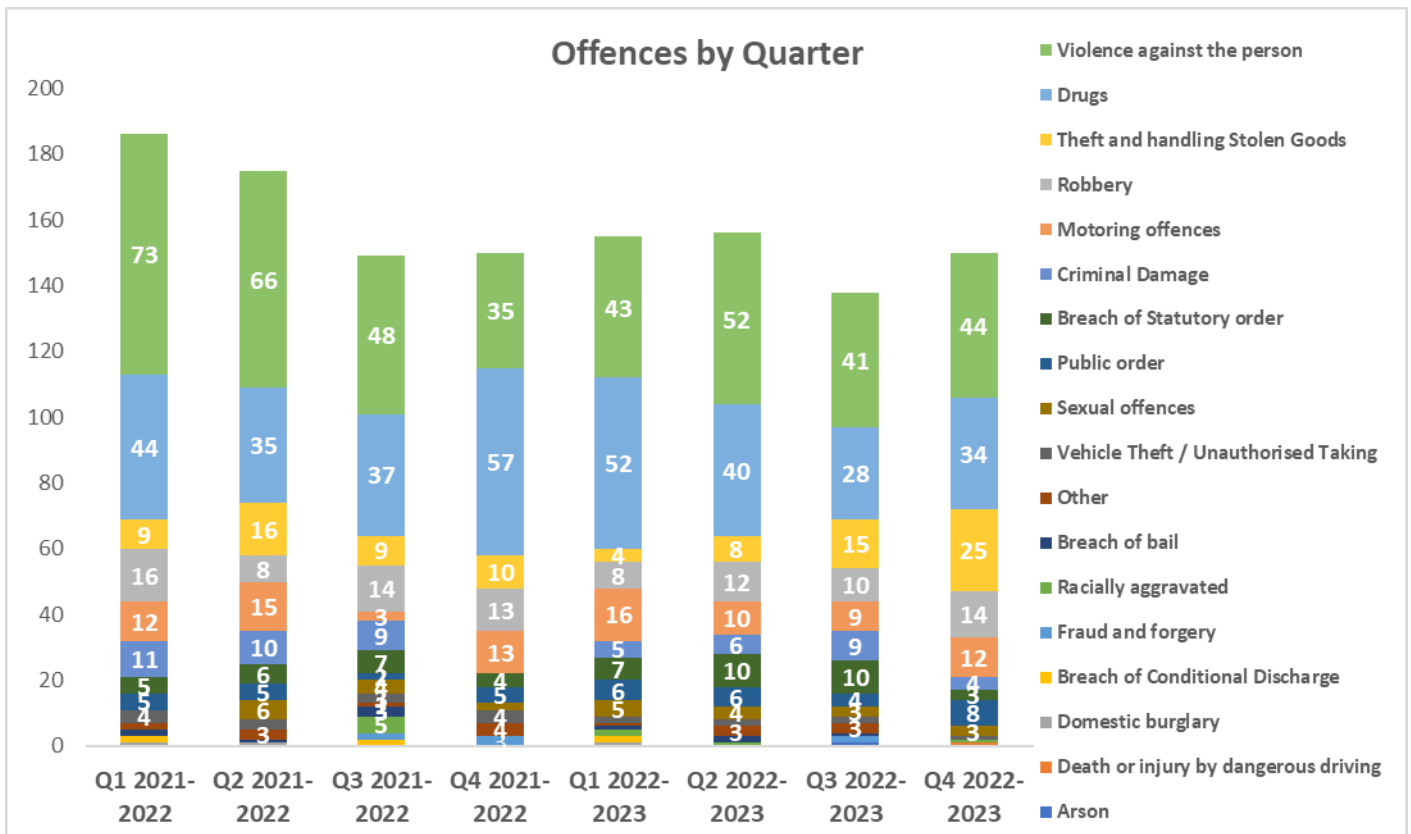
The Croydon RJ Team always discusses safety during the initial contact with victims and then raises any specific requests around non-contact or exclusion zones with the wider professional network. Any concern is then discussed at our regular multi-agency meetings such as the Resettlement Panel, New Case 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.

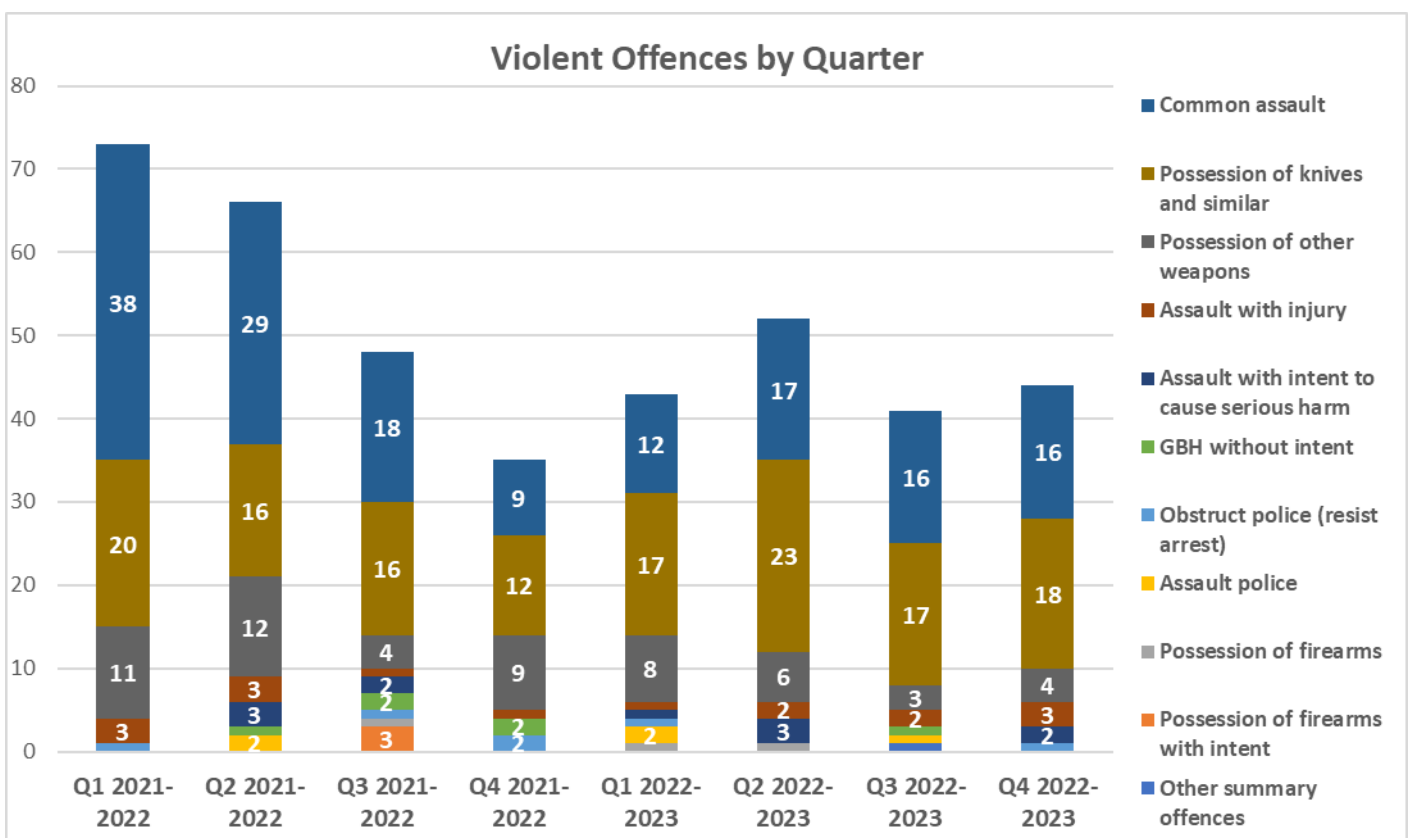
16. Serious Violence and Exploitation:

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:

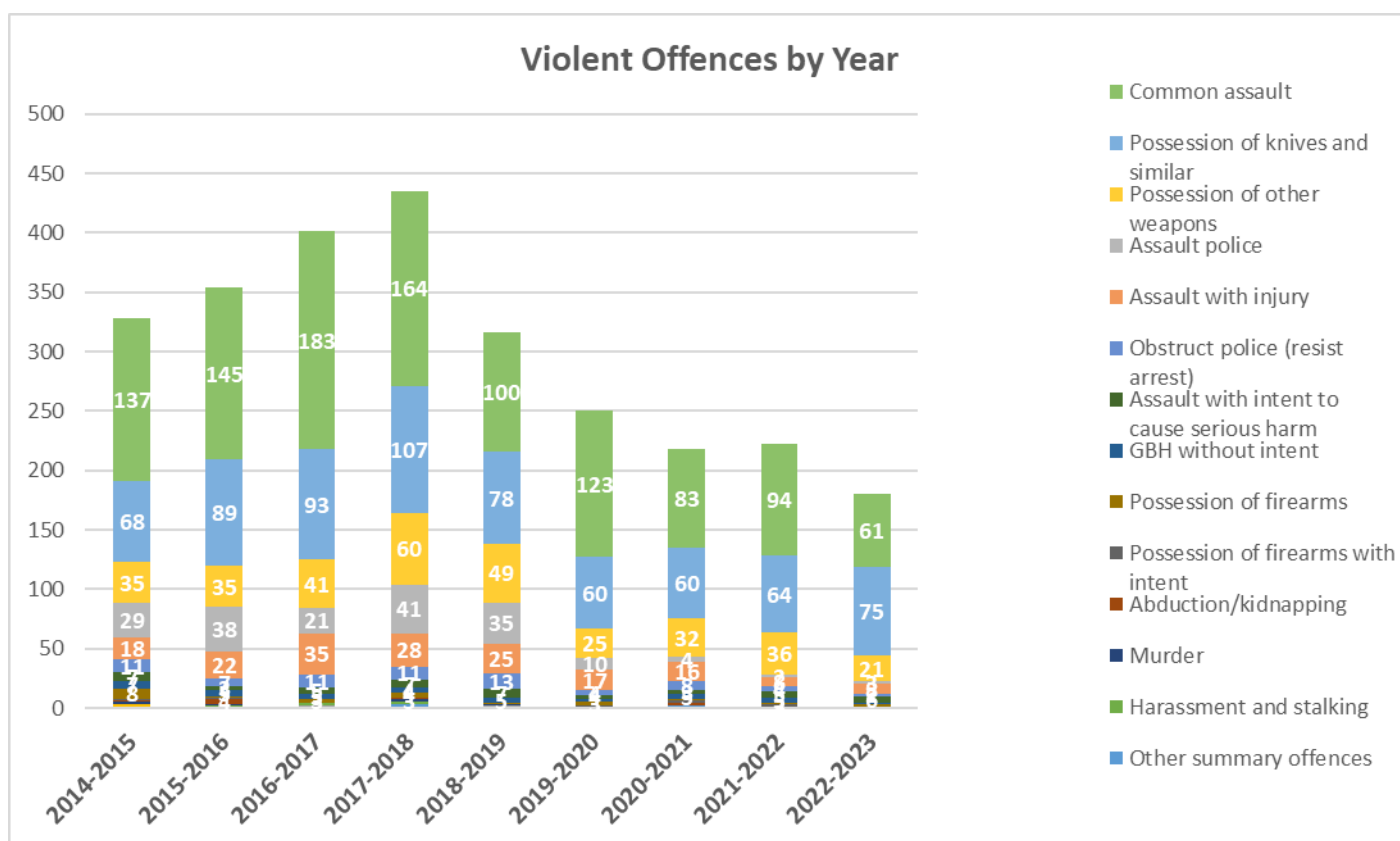
Table below details offence types per quarter since 2021.



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..

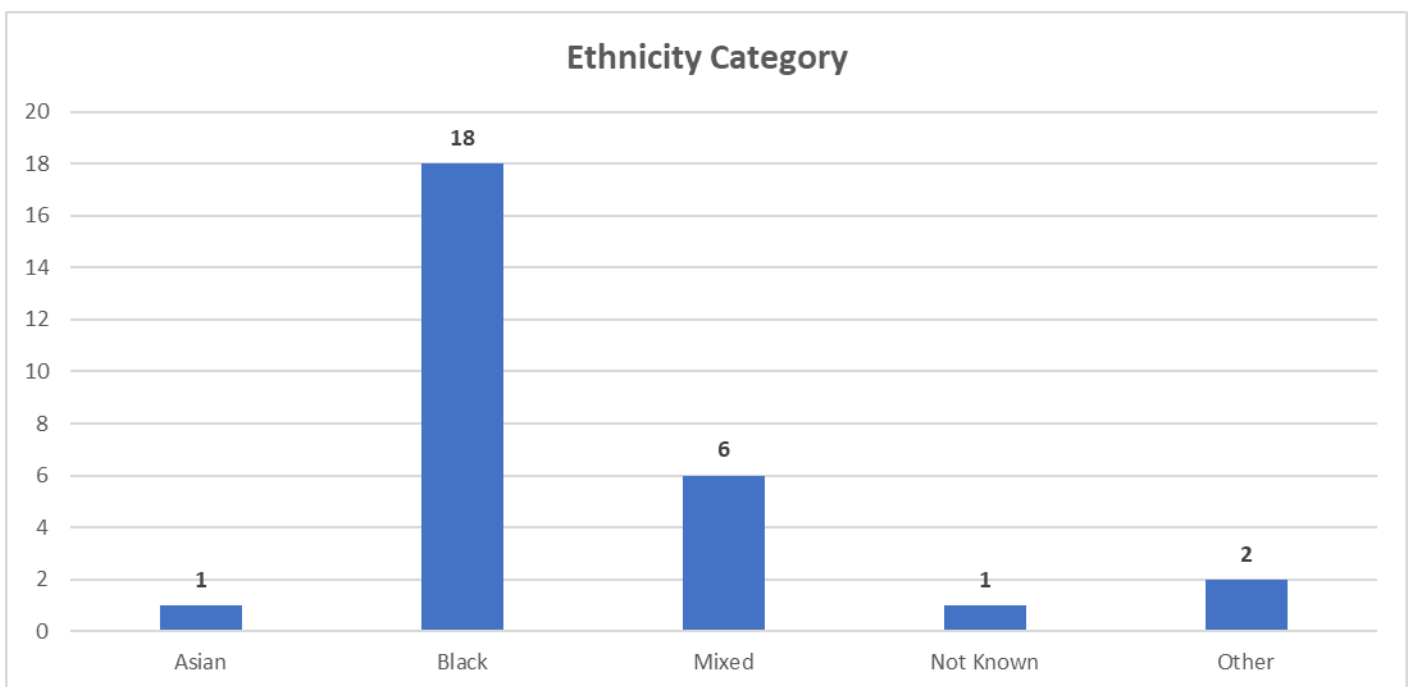
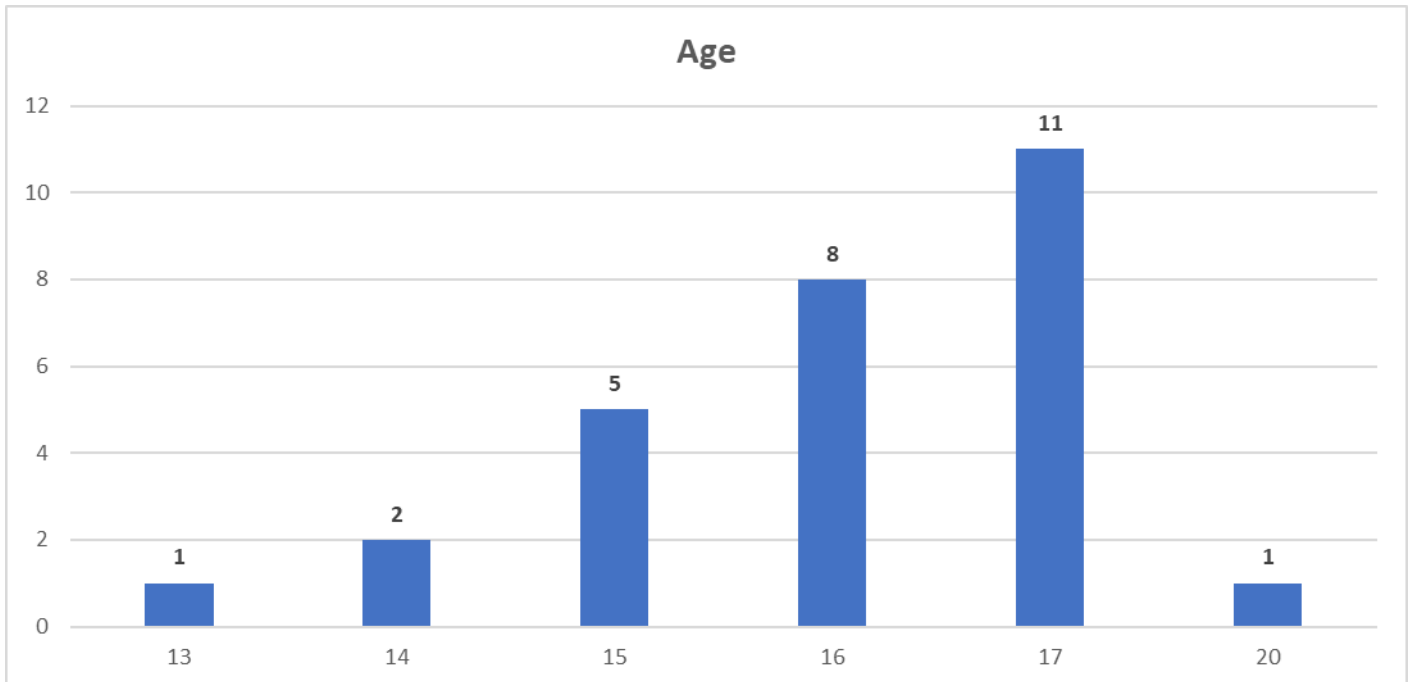


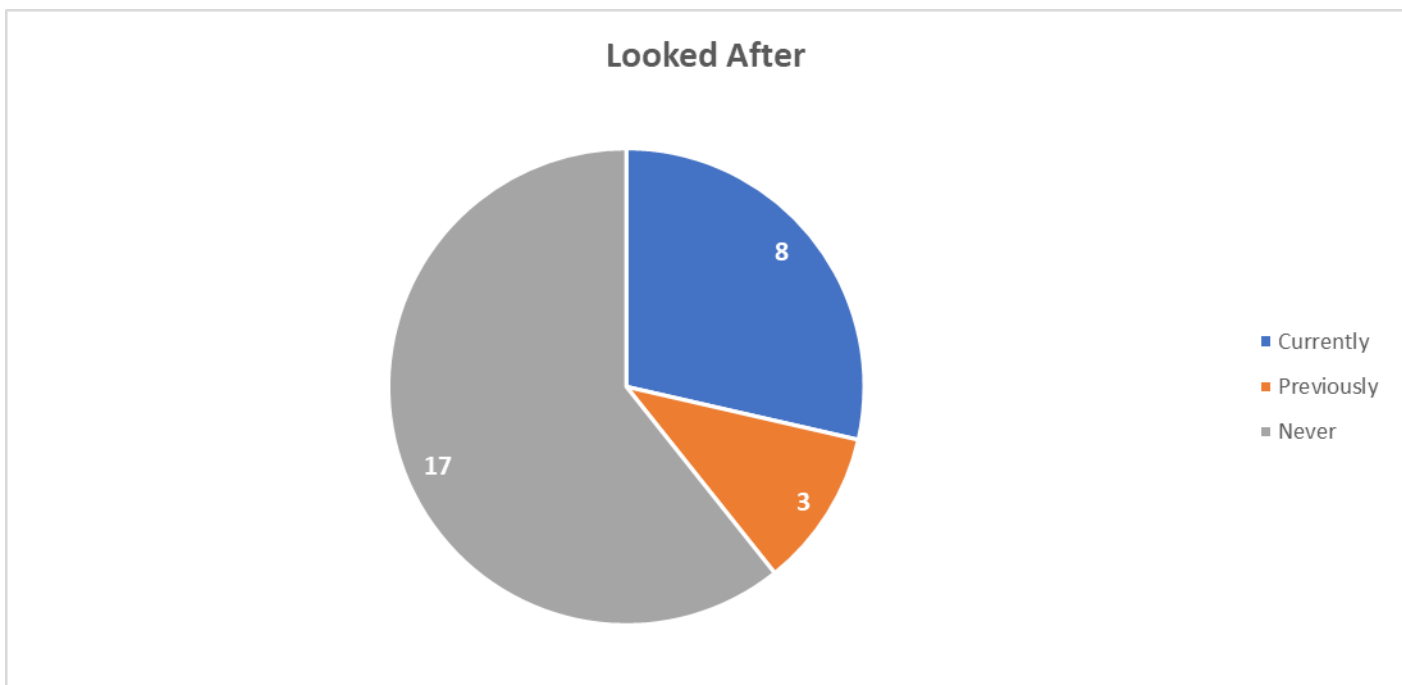
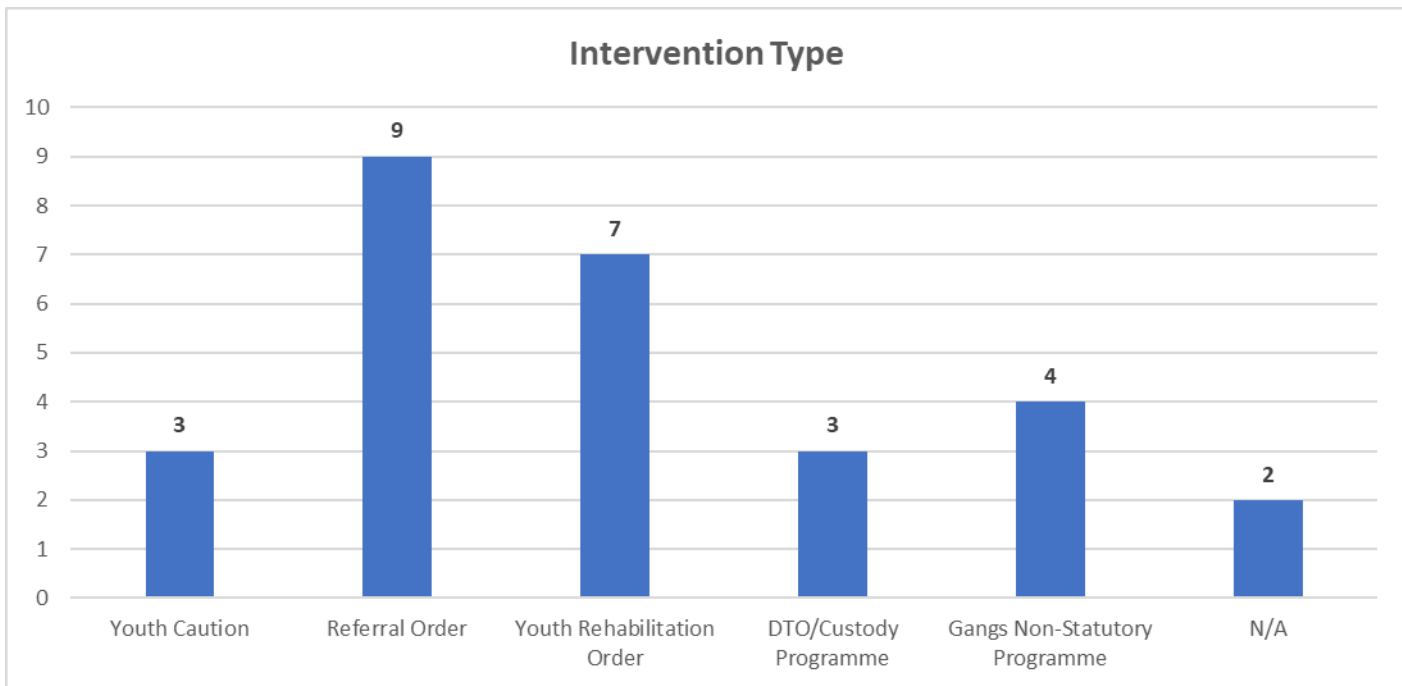
The overarching strategy to address Serious Youth Violence is detailed in the borough's Community Safety Strategy that identifies partnership roles to target Serious Youth Crime and actions are carried forward in the Local Violence and Vulnerability Action Plan.

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.

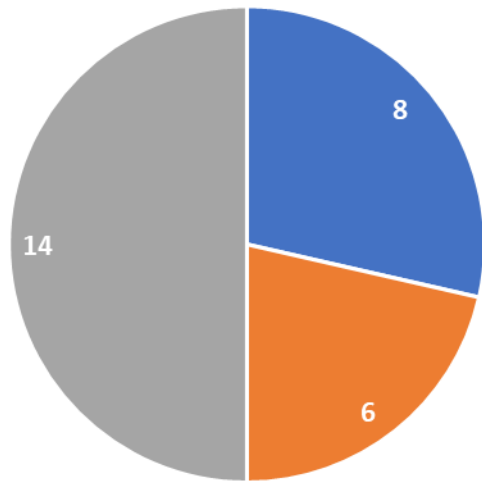
1. **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)** – Where there is known risk YJS Practitioners will refer into IOM. The referral is processed by the Police to provide intelligence. Referrals are reviewed monthly and if accepted all agencies heighten their level of monitoring of the child in question and the 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.



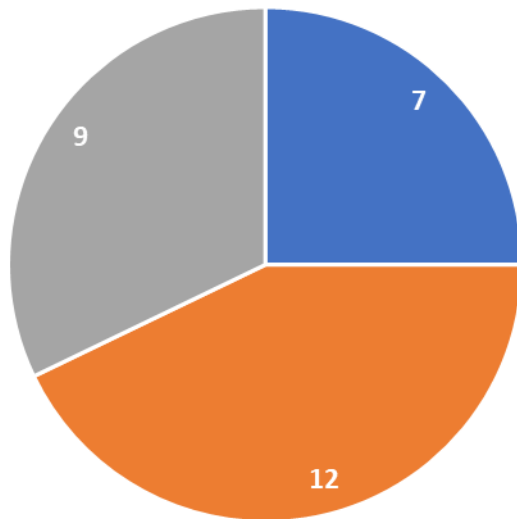


Child Protection Plan



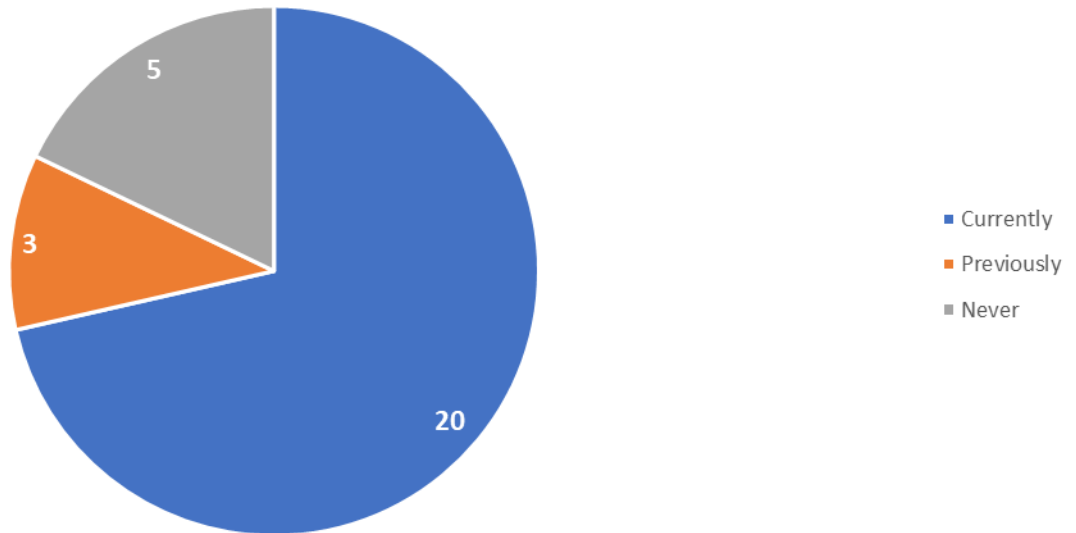
- Currently
- Previously
- Never

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.

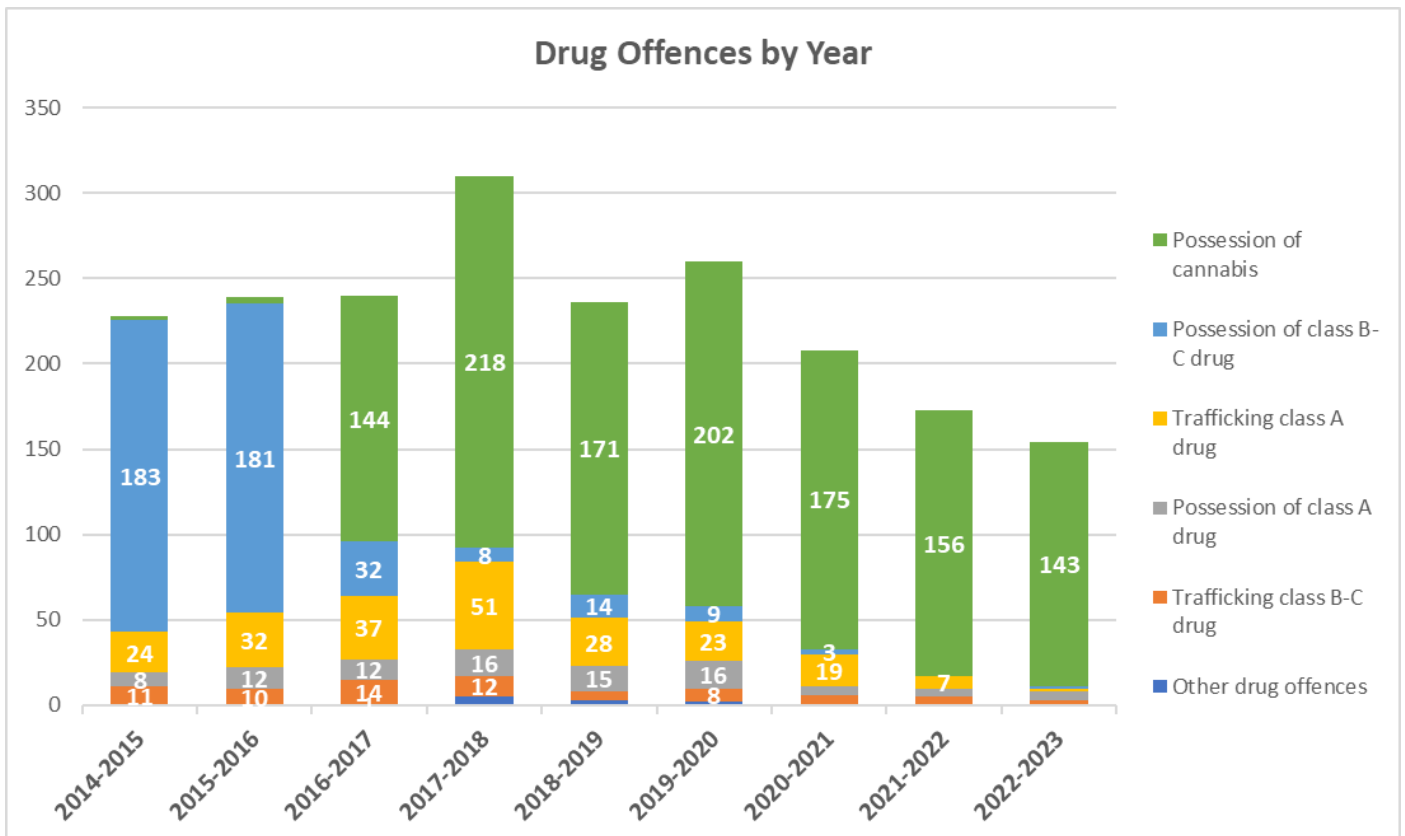
The YJS works with all service areas within Croydon Social Care, and wider council as well as the Police to address Contextual Safeguarding concerns. Panels such as Complex Adolescent Panel (CAP) as mentioned earlier, is represented by an array of Partnership panel members both statutory services and 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*

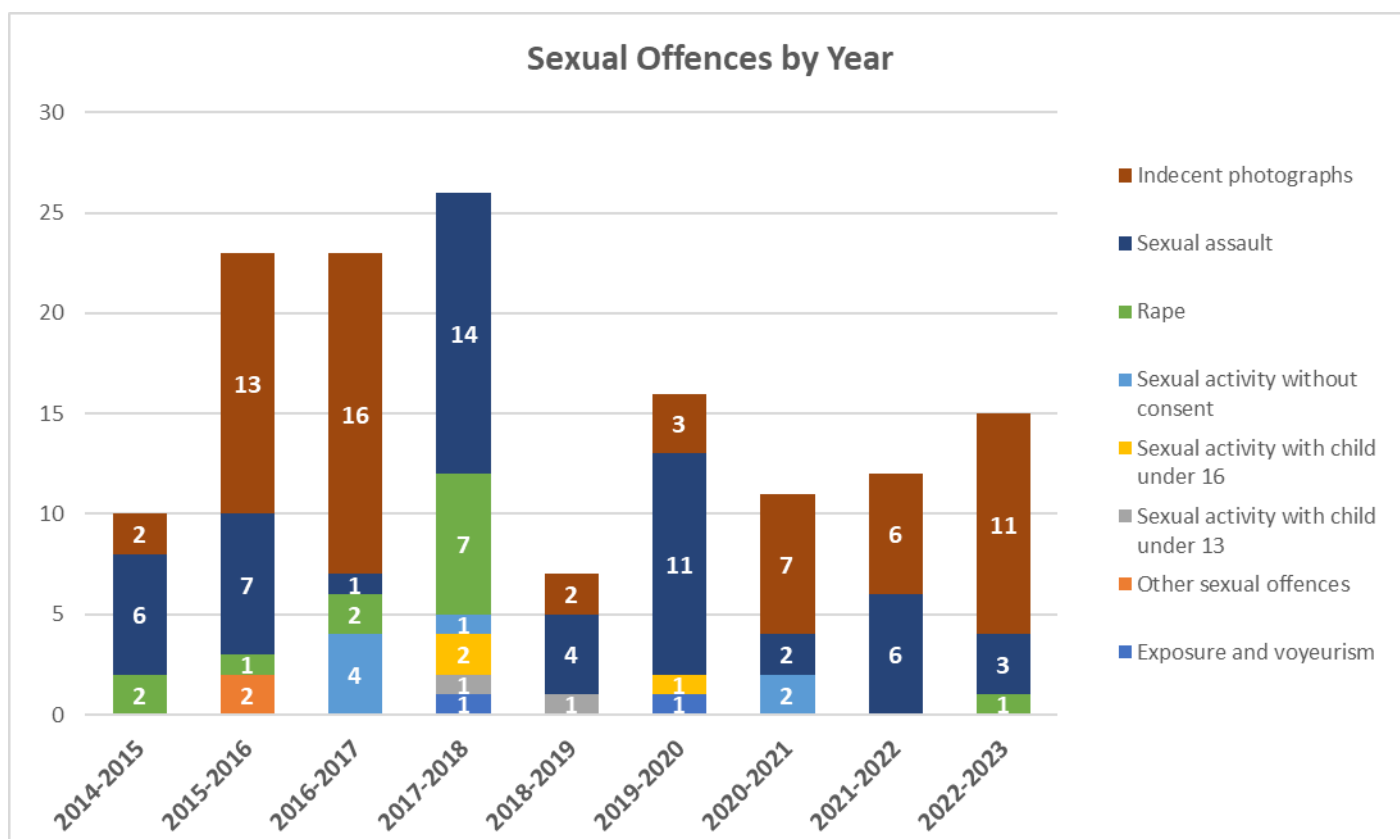
Referrals are received by the Channel Panel and where evidence is found the Prevent Panel will discuss and offer interventions on a voluntary basis. Croydon has the 2nd highest referral rates in London, but it is very rare for Croydon YJS to have concerns in this area. However, the YJS is in a position 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.

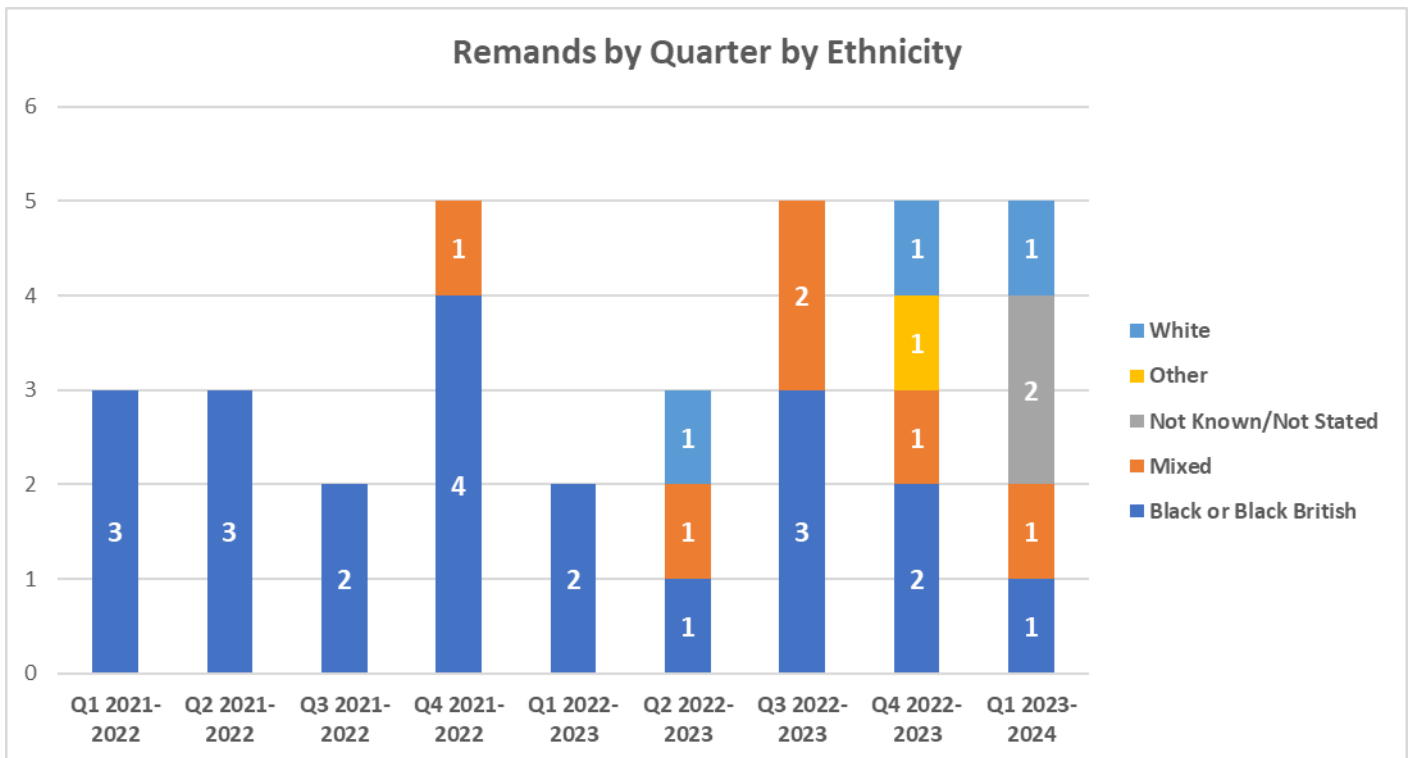
18. Remands

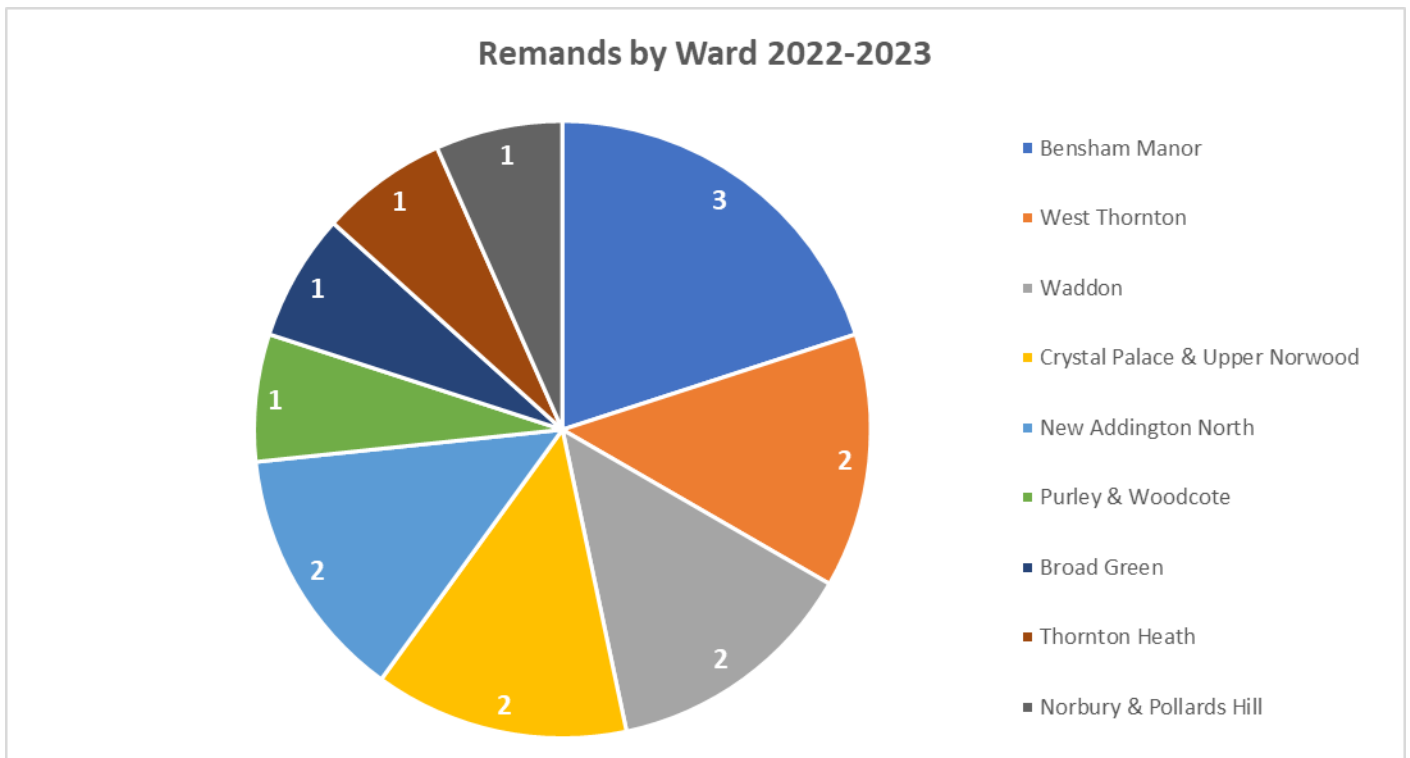
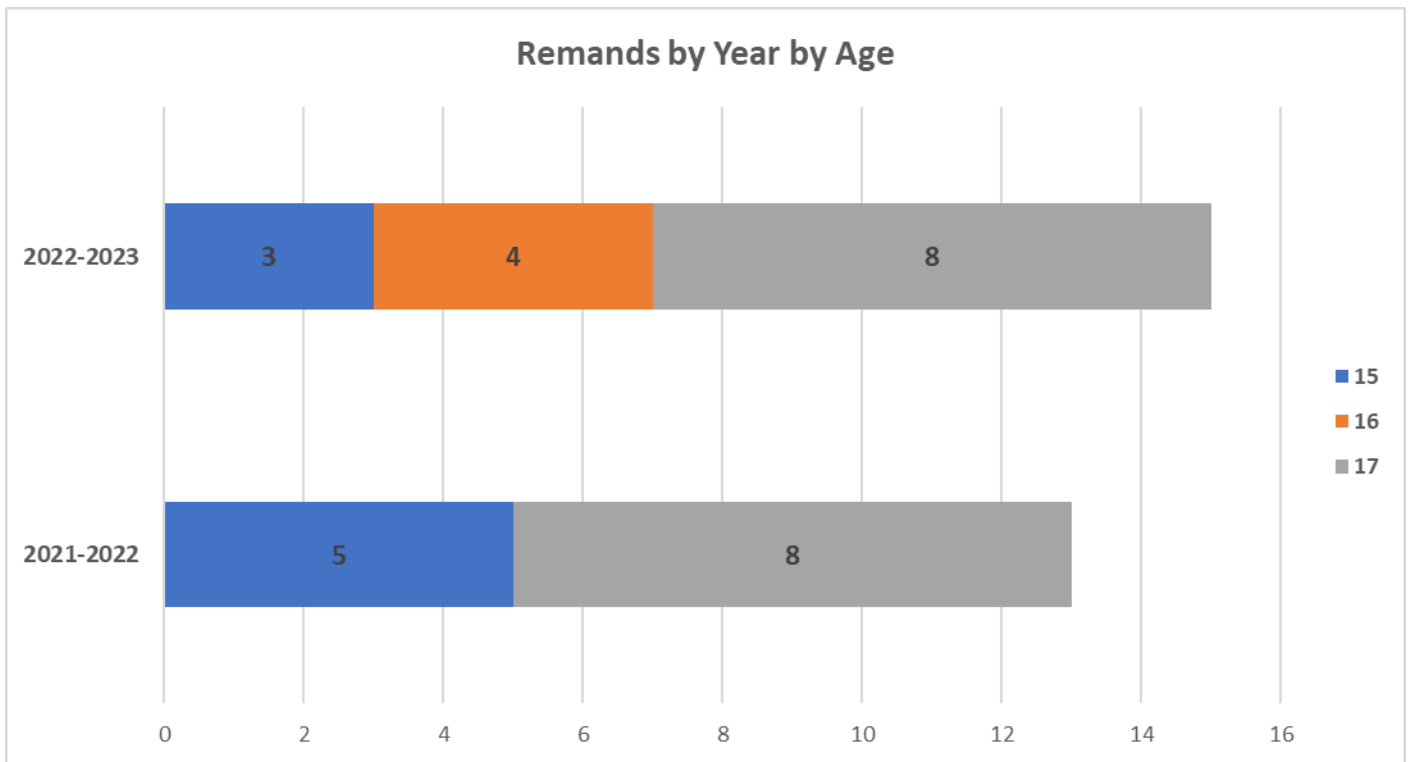
Under the Legal Aid Sentencing Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 provides the Court with powers to remand a young person – the Court can remand into:

- 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.

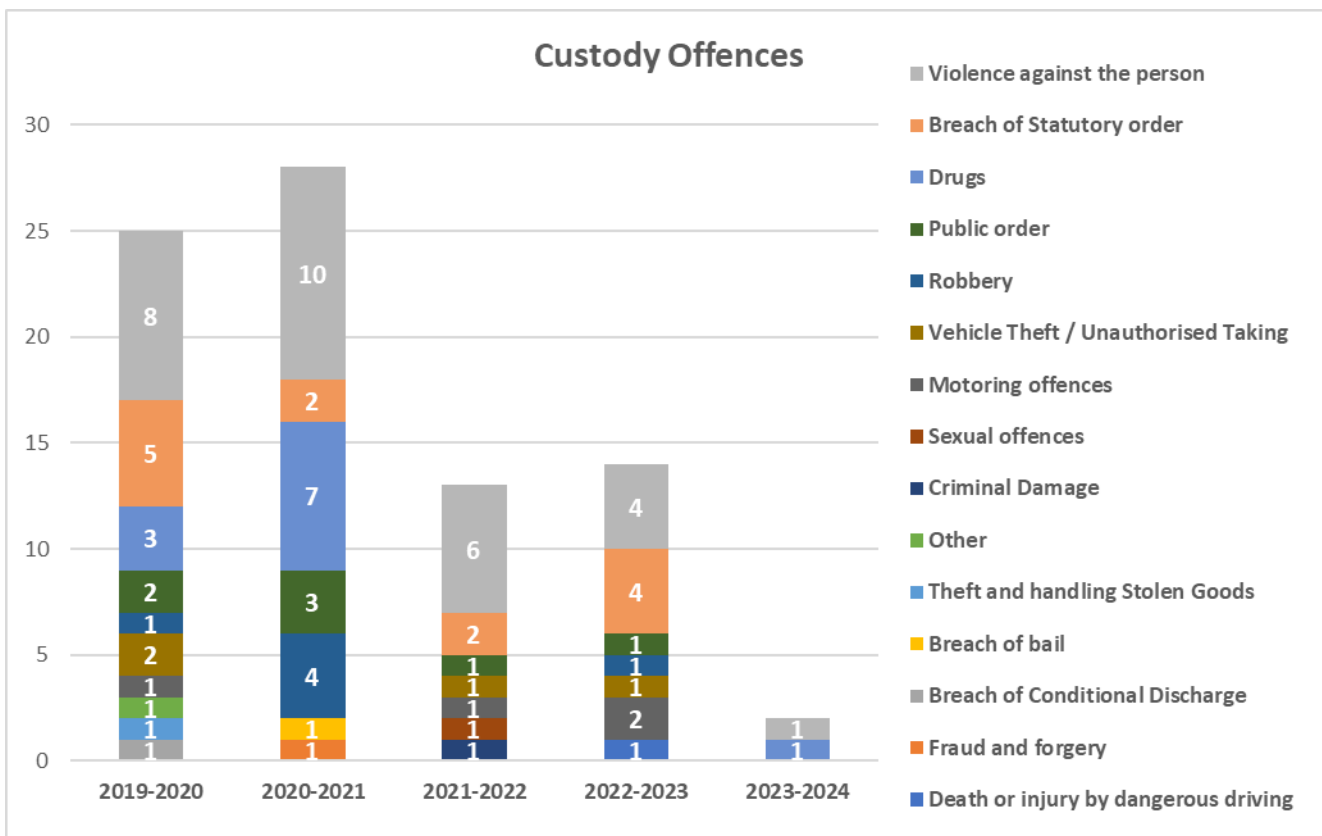
- Exclusions from specific areas
- Prohibited activities (e.g., not to travel on specific bus route or to attend a specific premise such as a school)
- Curfews (electronic)
- Non-association with co-defendants
- Reporting requirements to the YJS and following of all reasonable requests from YJS (e.g., 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 18th 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/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115444/yjb-strategic-plan-2021-2024.pdf)

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"> To address the stark over-representation of black and mixed heritage males within the cohort of children known to the Service To consider practice with Children in Care and known to Youth Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Disproportionately Action Plan for 2023/24 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. 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. Deliver spoke interventions such as the Positive Male Group and Girls Group Offering mentoring where young people can resonate and engage with their mentors through appropriate cultural matching. Continue to promote the rights of children e.g., Stop and Search group – empowering children with knowledge on the law. Enhance our practice when working with children in Care – joined up work with the Children in Care Council. Ensuring that we provide robust bail packages as an alternative to custody recognising this is an
Prevent and Respond to Serious Youth Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on high priority neighbourhoods by offering bespoke interventions for specific areas jointly with the VCS. Youth Engagement Outreach Team to show a presence following SYV incidents to provide support and advice to

		<p>the children and communities it impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Co-chair with Adolescent Service (Young Croydon) locality discussions jointly with partners to discuss children of concern to ensure appropriate services are in place. • Continue to manage and oversee children open to the YJS, for SYV, via internal processes such as IOM, RVMP, CAP. • To enhance factors for desistance by way of specialist interventions being offered – counselling/bespoke interventions/mentoring/Speech and Language/constructive activities/support with ETE. • Where jointly open with Social Care joint supervision to be delivered.
Contribute as part of a wider partnership to tackle domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and Managers to adhere to safeguarding processes in this area. • All staff to be trained in risk assessment screenings linked to MARAC processes. • All staff to have knowledge of the Family Justice Centre (FJC) and programmes offered. • Staff to ensure they are consulting with the FJC where domestic abuse is evident and where necessary
Health Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit into SALT vacancy • 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) • Continue to deliver Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural

	and Forensic Health Services.	<p>Programme jointly with the support of the clinical team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide staff with Clinical support through reflective practice and case consultations. • Mental Health Offer to be reviewed by partnership. • Enhance FCAMHS offer within the Service.
Prevent and divert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to evolve newly implemented Projects - Turnaround and Engage • To obtain data on new projects to analyse patterns & themes. • To continue to link with key partners to prevent and divert children from the system including Police, Education, Health, Social Care and VCS. • Staff to continue to be based in MASH and continue to improve joint work at earliest possible stages.
Responding to Contextual Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to NRM processes are understood by Team. • All Managers to attend Decision Making Training • All YJS staff to jointly attend NRM decision making panel. • To improve quality of NRM data held on YJS children and this data is analysed. • To ensure plans surrounding children with positive NRMS are jointly held with Social Care • All staff to be trained on Contextual Safeguarding • YJS to continue to be representative at CAP
Reduce the number of Children identified as NEET (Not in Education or Employment or Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure all reasonable attempts are made to provide opportunities to children open to Croydon Youth Justice Service that are deemed NEET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work closely with Croydon Works to ensure training and employment opportunities are promoted. • Remain to run Skill Mill employability project. • 16+ Worker to continue to provide readiness sessions to

	<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"> • Partnership to be regularly briefed on employment and training challenges in borough. • Continue to work on relationships with providers and employment sector to create directory of offer. • Continue to be representative at all key panels including Fair Access Panel to ensure exclusions are minimalised for our cohort. • To continue to provide a staff member to the local Pupil Referral Unit to form part of their Task-force inclusive of YJS expertise.
Victim Centric Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff to have an appraisal target to be victim centric. • To ensure all children open to YJS have access to restorative justice provisions taking account of victim wishes. • For all staff to be trauma informed trained and to acknowledge that many of the cohort are themselves victims. • To ensure the victim(s) voice is heard and applied in our practice. • To consider potential victims as part of our risk management.
Resettlement Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Where issues of accommodation occur for these to be escalated at the earliest opportunity • Create of ROTL policy and ensuring ROTL is considered where eligible as part of resettlement offer

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.

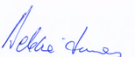
- 8. Victim(s)** – Victims are an important part of the Youth Justice Service function and ensuring they have a voice in the work we deliver. Current challenges are linked to consent being obtained for contact. The YJS has a Victim Worker designated to this area of work and is working closely with the 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.

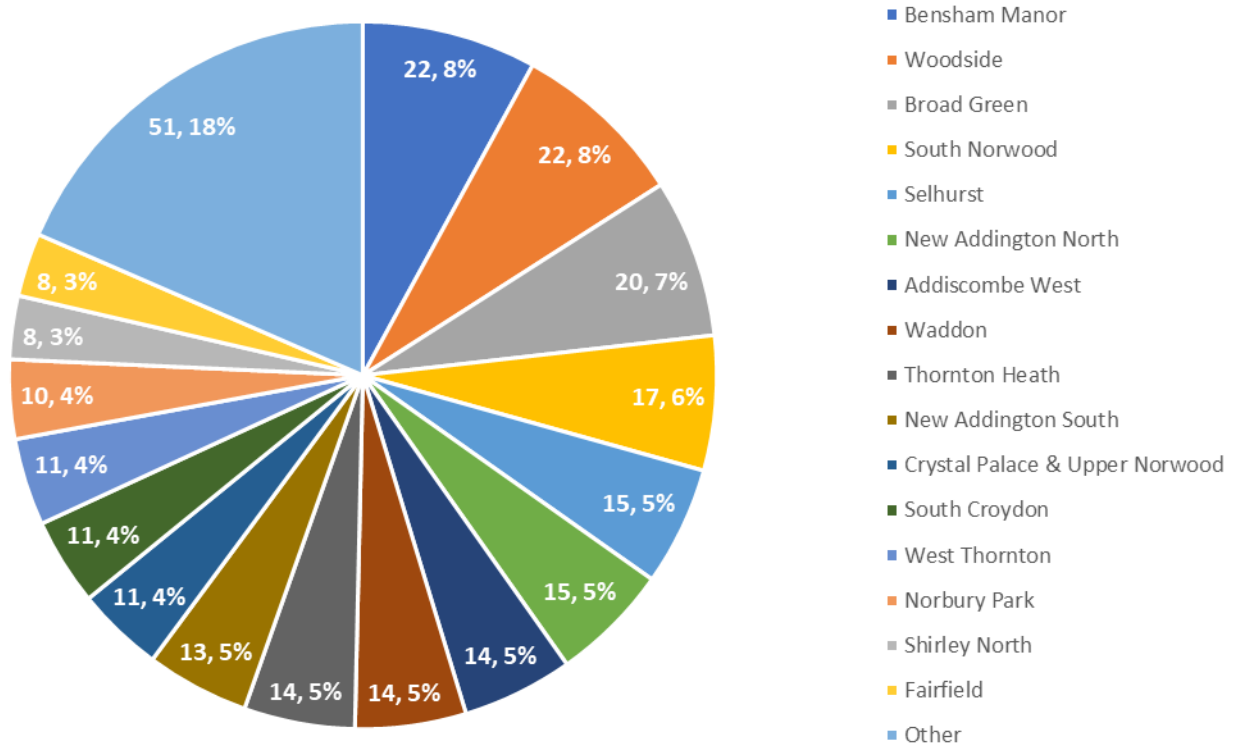
27. sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board - name	Debbie Jones
Signature	
Date	13.07.23

Appendix 1

Wards 2022 – 2023 cohort

Wards 2022-2023 Cohort

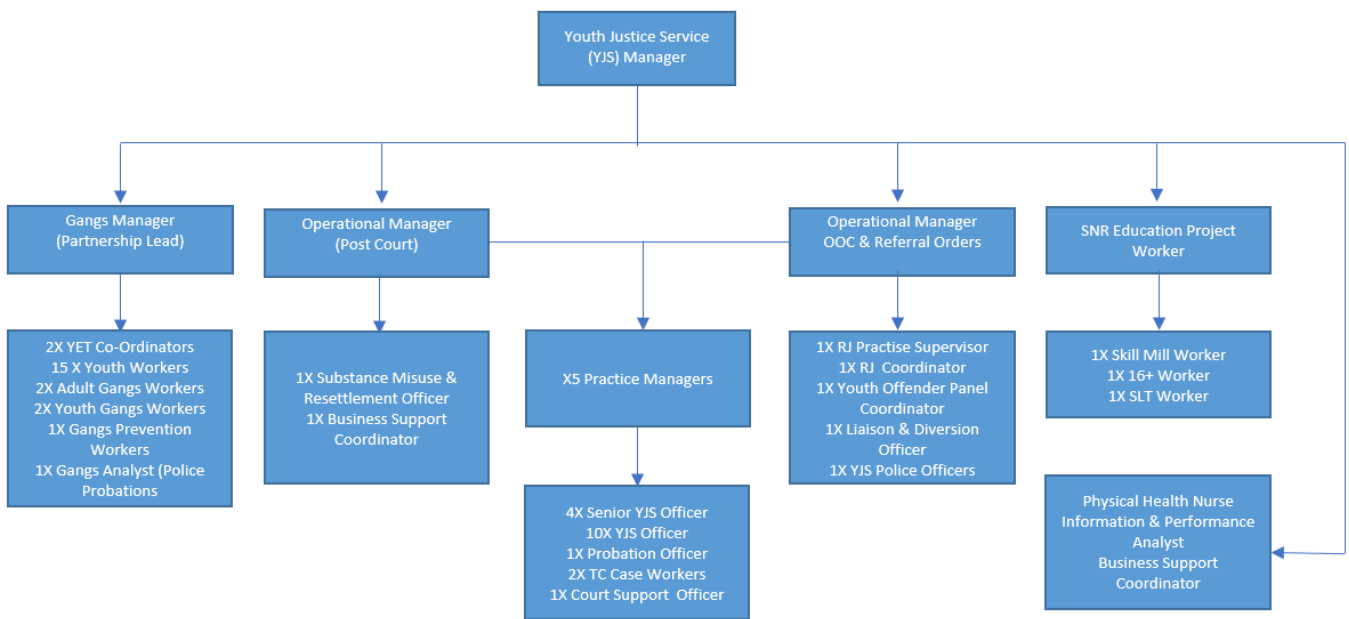


- Bensham Manor - 22
- Woodside - 22
- Broad Green - 20
- South Norwood - 17
- Selhurst - 15
- New Addington North - 15
- Addiscombe West - 14
- Waddon - 14
- Thornton Heath - 14
- New Addington South - 13
- West Thornton - 12
- South Croydon - 11
- Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood - 11
- Norbury Park - 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



Disproportionality
Action Plan 2023-24.d

Appendix 4

Reparation Projects



Available Reparation
Projects June 2023.do

Appendix 5

Croydon YJS Quality Assurance Framework



YJS CSC QA
proposal.docx

Appendix 6

Youth Justice Crime Board Terms of Reference



YCPYJS Board TOR
2023.doc

Appendix 7

Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan



Workforce
Development Plan (Tr.

Appendix 8



Prevention
Strategy.docx

Appendix 9



Joint Working
Protocol

Common youth justice terms
Please add any locally used terminology

ACE	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long-lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	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.
Child First	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
Child looked-after	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health, and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training, or employment
EHE	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting

FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPP	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
Outcome 22/21	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
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
SLCN	Speech, Language, and communication needs
STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
Young adult	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.
YJS	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
YOI	Young offender institution

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET		
DATE OF DECISION	22 November 2023		
REPORT TITLE:	2023-24 Period 5 Financial Performance Report		
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	Jane West Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)		
LEAD OFFICER:	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)		
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance		
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Reason: Key Decision – Decision incurs expenditure, or makes savings, of more than £1,000,000 or such smaller sum which the decision-taker considers is significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public Grounds for the exemption: N/A	
WARDS AFFECTED:	All		

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Council’s financial performance as at Period 5 (August 2023) for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme. The report forms part of the Council’s financial management process for publicly reporting financial performance on a monthly basis.

Financial Performance Summary Table

Financial Performance Area	2023-24 Revised Budget (£m)	2023-24 Forecast (£m)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£m)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (%)
Revenue Forecast (General Fund)	340.9	340.9	-	-
Revenue Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	-	12.0	12.0	N/A
Capital Forecast (General Fund)	144.7	130.4	(14.3)	(9.9%)
Capital Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	33.2	38.9	5.7	17.2%

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1** to note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 5, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.1m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.
- 2.2** to approve the budget movements between directorates to match the movement of service area responsibilities between directorates as set out in paragraph 4.13.
- 2.3** to note the progress in MTFS savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.101.
- 2.4** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.96.
- 2.5** to note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £12.0m.
- 2.6** to note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £14.3m against the revised capital budget of £144.7m.
- 2.7** to note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £5.7m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 2.8** to note the Council's historic borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.
- 2.9** to note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 2.10** to note that current forecasts are based on the best available information at the time and will be subject to review and change during the financial year.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

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

Cost of Living Considerations

- 4.4** There are a number of inflationary pressures that the Council, like all local authorities, is managing. The UK's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate was 6.7% in the 12 months to August 2023, remaining high albeit lower than the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting in November 2022 that the CPI hit 11.1% in October 2022. This impact goes beyond the Council as the cost of living is affecting all households and businesses.
- 4.5** These macro-economic factors are impacted by international events and, therefore, well beyond the control of Croydon Council. Despite the limitations, the Council is seeking to support households wherever possible.
- 4.6** A dedicated cost of living information hub has been established on the Council's website. This provides a single source of information, informing residents of the financial support available and signposting to further support, advice and guidance.

4.7 The Council provides a wide range of support for residents that may be struggling owing to cost of living pressures. These include:

- Discretionary support for residents in financial hardship, including the Household Support Fund
- Council Tax support – for residents on a low income or in receipt of benefits, Council Tax bills could be reduced by up to 100%
- Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax)
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) discretionary fund targeted for tenants that are not in receipt of housing benefit
- Benefits calculator, to ensure residents receive the support to which they are entitled
- Energy advice, including heating and money saving options, through our Croydon Healthy Homes service
- Free holiday activity clubs with healthy meals for children
- Croydon Works to help residents into employment or to receive training to support them into work and funding of the voluntary sector to provide advice and guidance

4.8 The cost of living information hub also signposts residents to a range of support provided by other organisations in Croydon, including:

- NHS Healthy Start vouchers for families
- Free school meals
- Support from voluntary, community and faith sector organisations
- Support for businesses through the London Business Hub and the British Business Bank
- CroydonPlus credit union which offers affordable ways to manage money, including savings accounts and loans

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY

4.9 The General Fund revenue forecast outturn shows an overall balanced position following the forecast utilisation of the £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC. The service directorates show a forecast overspend of £4.1m which is offset by utilisation of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Table showing the revenue forecasts by Directorate

Directorate	Net Budget	Actuals to Date	Forecast	Forecast Variance	Prior Month Forecast Variance	Change in Forecast Variance
	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)
Adult Social Care and Health	138.7	72.2	140.1	1.4	1.4	-
Assistant Chief Executive	42.0	11.7	41.4	(0.6)	(0.6)	-
Children, Young People and Education	96.2	43.3	101.6	5.4	5.4	-
Housing	21.6	17.5	21.6	-	-	-
Resources	35.2	67.9	33.1	(2.1)	(2.1)	-
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	69.4	26.0	69.4	-	-	-
Subtotal Service Directorates	403.1	238.6	407.2	4.1	4.1	-
Corporate Items and Funding	(62.2)	(26.4)	(66.3)	(4.1)	(4.1)	-
Total Net Expenditure Budget	340.9	212.2	340.9	-	-	-

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

Budget virements to match new directorate structures

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

Table showing budget virements between directorates

Service Area	Current Directorate	New Directorate	Net Expenditure Budget (£000's)
Coroner's Service	ACE	SCRER	811
Resilience Team (Emergency Planning)	ACE	SCRER	362
No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	Housing	ASCH	2,321
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine*	ACE	CYPE	-

*Please note that the Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine service has nil net expenditure budget owing to equal expenditure budgets and government grant income budgets.

DIRECTORATE VARIANCES

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH (ASCH)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care Operations	118.6	62.6	120.5	1.9
Adult Strategic Commissioning, Policy & Improvement	18.2	8.8	17.9	(0.3)
Central ASCH	1.9	0.8	1.7	(0.2)
Total ASCH	138.7	72.2	140.1	1.4

4.14 At period 5 the ASCH directorate has a forecast overspend of £1.4m (1.0%) against a budget of £138.7m which demonstrates no overall change from period 4.

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

Adult Social Care Operations - Forecast overspend of £1.9m

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

4.17 Localities & LIFE have an underspend of (£1.4m) owing to a net underspending on care and staffing costs.

- 4.18** Working Age Adults has an overspend of £4.3m. This comprises an overspend on care of £4.4m (owing to clients with increased care needs) which is partly mitigated by an underspend in staffing of (£0.1m). The overspend includes care package savings not yet evidenced of £1.4m (this has reduced from £1.5m at Period 4), against a challenging target of £5.3m. It should also be noted that this area was overspent by £2.3m in 2022-23. The directorate has committed to achieving further savings to offset the budget pressure.
- 4.19** Provider Services has a (£0.9m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.20** Safeguarding service has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies across the division.

Adult Social Care Policy and Improvement – Forecast underspend of (£0.3m)

- 4.21** The Policy and Improvement division is forecasting an underspend of (£0.3m) owing to staffing vacancies.

Central ASCH – Forecast underspend of (£0.2m)

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

4.23 Risks

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

4.24 Opportunities

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

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ACE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Policy, Programmes and Performance	5.3	1.9	5.0	(0.3)
Elections Service	0.9	0.1	0.9	-
Croydon Digital and Resident Access	31.9	13.9	31.7	(0.2)
Chief People Officer	3.5	1.3	3.5	-
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine	-	(5.9)	-	-
Central ACE	0.4	0.4	0.3	(0.1)
Total ACE (General Fund)	42.0	11.7	41.4	(0.6)
Public Health Grant Ringfenced Services	-	2.9	-	-

4.25 At period 5, the ACE directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £0.6m (1.4%) against a budget of £42.0m.

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

4.26 Recruitment is continuing into the new staffing structure for the Policy, Programmes and Performance Division. The forecast underspend is owing to periods of vacancy of some posts in the new structure.

Elections Service - breakeven position

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

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

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

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

Chief People Officer Division - breakeven position

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

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

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

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

Central Assistant Chief Executive - £0.1m forecast underspend

4.33 Underspends owing to periods of staff vacancies and lower than expected running expenses.

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

4.34 It is currently forecast that Public Health will contribute £4.0m to ring fenced Public Health reserves at the end of 2023-24.

4.35 A Council wide task and finish group has been set up to address underspends in the Public Health Grant (for the current year and the accumulated balance on the balance sheet as an earmarked Public Health reserve from underspends in previous years) by identifying appropriate commissioning opportunities.

4.36 Risks

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

4.37 Opportunities

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

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION (CYPE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Children's Social Care	72.4	24.4	76.9	4.5
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and UASC Care Leavers	(0.3)	1.8	-	0.3
Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement	6.7	(0.3)	7.4	0.7
Non-DSG Education Services	16.9	17.1	16.8	(0.1)
Central CYPE	0.5	0.2	0.5	-
Total CYPE (General Fund)	96.2	43.3	101.6	5.4
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Education Services	82.0	43.2	82.7	0.7

4.38 At period 5, the CYPE directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £5.4m (5.6%) against a budget of £96.2m. The overall reported position remains unchanged from the period 4 position.

Children's Social Care Division – forecast overspend of £4.8m (including UASC and UASC Care Leavers)

£2.1m placements overspend owing to seven high-cost placements including residential, semi-independent and one secure. Three of these high-cost placements are new in 2023-24.

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

£2.1m staffing overspend, which includes a pension budget shortfall of £0.8m since 2020-21. This was previously fully offset by underspends owing to vacancies and delays in recruitment however this cannot be accommodated in 2023-24.

£0.2m under-achievement in income (including £0.5m unachieved 2022-23 MTFS NHS Funding savings which have been partially offset through other income).

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

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

Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement Division – forecast overspend of £0.7m

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

4.40 An anticipated Public Health contribution of £0.4m, which relates to a 2022-23 MTFS saving, is being reviewed by the cross-Council Public Health funding task and finish group.

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

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

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services – forecast overspend of £0.680m

- 4.42** The SEND High Needs forecast at Period 5 is an overspend of £0.680m against the budget of £82.059m. There is no overall movement from the Period 4 position.

- 4.43** The overall variance at Period 5 represents £0.045m favourable variance from the expected overspend of £0.725m submitted to the Department of Education (DfE) Safety Valve Team as part of the approved Deficit Recovery Plan. The service is delivering all the savings strategies as set out in the Safety Valve (SV) agreement including the use of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) to help deliver more local schools places as well as improve existing provisions to meet the increasing placement demands for complex needs pupils. The service submitted the 2023-24 Quarter 2 High Needs monitoring reports to the DfE Safety Valve team by the set deadline.

- 4.44** See below the key areas:

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

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

(£0.406m) underspend in Early Years provision.

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

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

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

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

- 4.45** Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services will continue to closely monitor the demand pressures in Independent and Out of Borough placements owing to cost implications. Addington Valley Academy, St Nicholas, Coulsdon College

Croydon, and Waddon Youth Disability Services are increasing placement numbers, which is reducing high-cost placements out of borough.

4.46 The 2023-24 period 5 High Needs forecast outturn variance of £0.680m leads to an overall DSG deficit projection of £16.064m at the end of 2023-24 compared to the Safety Valve target of £16.080m prior to the £3.290m Deficit Recovery payment from the DfE as per the Safety Valve agreement. This demonstrates that the Council is ahead of the target.

4.47 Risks

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

4.48 Opportunities

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

HOUSING

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Resident Engagement and Allocations	21.5	17.3*	21.5	-
Housing Estates and Improvement	0.1	0.2	0.1	-
Total Housing	21.6	17.5	21.6	-

**Owing to the implementation of the new NEC IT system, no rental income is showing in the actuals between June and August but will be available at Period 6.*

- 4.49** At period 5, the Housing directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven against the budget of £21.6m. There is a crisis within the London housing market that is creating significant demand for services, and it is difficult to predict how far or fast demand will continue to grow. To monitor the effects as they come through, we will improve our data analysis of activity levels, rent billing and debt collection, and ensure that all purchase card spend has been recorded and projected as this payment method has increased dramatically during August.
- 4.50** The emergency and temporary accommodation budgets were increased by £4.8m in 2023-24 from the corporate non-pay inflationary pressures budget to mitigate inflation pressures however there are demand pressures, experienced across London and nationally, which are being modelled through best case and worst case scenarios to inform the likely overspend position for Period 6.
- 4.51** A top-up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £1.9m has been announced by DLUHC to cover homelessness pressures relating to Ukrainian refugees. This funding may also be used to fund wider homelessness pressures and reporting requirements are in line with the existing HPG requirements. The grant top-up could also help offset any potential detriment to income collection resulting in the bad debt provision being increased at year end.

Emergency Accommodation

- 4.52** There are a number of factors that impact expenditure against this budget. Firstly, there has been a demand rise in the number of households that have been placed into Emergency Accommodation. The factors that have pushed up demand include:
- The large number of bailiffs warrants from the private sector being issued as the courts are catching up with the backlog of cases since the Covid amnesty. Restrictions were lifted in 2021 but there has been a long backlog through the courts for these cases hence the delayed impact on the homelessness service.
 - The number of asylum-seeking households which is adding a pressure on available affordable accommodation. There are over 1,000 asylum seekers currently in hotel accommodation and government have pledged to close around 100 hotels this year and bring in a streamlined assessment process. As a result, from August 2023 the

Home Office accelerated their decision making for asylum claims and give very short notice when people are to be evicted from their accommodation, this could be as short as 7 days. This is an additional pressure as the Council does not receive any financial assistance for these households.

- Family evictions are also increasing, potentially linked to the decrease in availability of housing in the private rented sector (PRS) and the increase in evictions detailed above and subsequent short-term arrangements breaking down.

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

4.54 There is a shortage of suitable Emergency Accommodation to meet the increasing demand, so the Council is relying on expensive commercial hotels and the cost can be expected to increase. Purchase cards have been the only method of payment whilst alternative arrangements are sought and the reconciliation of those cards has yet to be fully realised. Recording of the purchase card spend can have a lag period as officers categorise spend. The Council is setting up a direct debit facility with one of the local commercial hotels to reduce use of purchase cards going forward.

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

Temporary Accommodation

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

Risks

4.57 The implementation of the new NEC IT system has experienced a delay in setting up the interfaces between NEC and the Oracle finance system. This has impacted the ability to use the system to easily forecast expenditure and income. However, purchase orders have been used to update expenditure forecasts and historical information and trends to inform income forecasts. Demand pressures are being modelled to provide best and worst case scenarios to inform the likely overspend position for Period 6.

4.58 The Housing Directorate continues to be impacted by the rapidly worsening housing market within London as private sector landlords are increasing rents or leaving the market, and tenants are struggling with cost of living pressures. The challenge for Croydon in dealing with such rapid inflation has multiple strands. There are forecasting

difficulties in predicting how much prices are expected to move and at what pace. This is being addressed alongside a wholesale review of the forecasting process to ensure that reporting provides the full position on risk in 2023-24.

- 4.59** There are difficulties in negotiating and approving price rises without losing properties or fuelling the rises further. Regular meetings with neighbouring boroughs are being held to ensure collective agreements are being made with the larger providers of emergency accommodation.
- 4.60** There has been a concerted effort to hold homelessness accommodation costs down across London through partnerships with organisations like Capital Letters and via the agreed Pan-London temporary accommodation rates. The rates can no longer be contained though as demand outweighs available affordable supply. At a Pan London meeting, all boroughs confirmed that they are no longer paying the agreed Pan London rates to ensure they meet their demand challenges. A combination of all these factors has led to an increase in both the average cost of emergency and temporary accommodation that Croydon can secure to meet demand, as well as an increase in the use of nightly paid emergency accommodation to compensate for the loss of some longer-term leased accommodation because of landlords leaving the market.
- 4.61** There is a potential financial risk from the fire at Sycamore House in Thornton Heath depending on the insurance claim settlement not yet finalised. This risk was considered in closing the 2022-23 accounts and so any difference in the estimated income of 70% of costs from the insurers will either be a charge or a benefit in the 2023-24 accounts.
- 4.62** There has been difficulty in gathering income collection data as NEC has been implemented. There may be a requirement to increase the loss allowance (bad debt provision) at the end of 2023-24 depending on the level of income collection achieved in year.
- 4.63** There is a potential budget pressure, above the currently estimated £1.2m for 2023-24 which has been funded through the economic demand pressures budget transfer agreed in Period 3, in relation to housing benefit subsidies for the Guaranteed Rent Scheme for Care Experienced Young People. The pressure impacts the Housing Directorate as it forms part of the cost of temporary accommodation. The housing benefit subsidy pressure will be monitored throughout the year and mitigated where possible.
- 4.64** There is another potential pressure on the housing budget which is due to temporary accommodation management fees of £40/week/unit paid through Housing Benefit and not recoverable through subsidy from DWP. From 1 April 2017, in line with the government announcement in the 2015 spending review, funding was devolved to Local Authorities through the Homelessness Prevention Grant with the aim of allowing Councils to better manage their temporary accommodation pressures. Following the government change, this cost was not allocated to the Housing Service and has been a pressure within the Resources directorate but in 2023-24 could be a pressure on the Housing budget. This will depend on the outcome of the ongoing Housing Benefit review project work.

Opportunities

- 4.65** Housing will continue to ensure that the use of ringfenced Household Support Fund and Rough Sleeping initiative grants is used both within the grant terms and to maximise the mitigating effect on the general fund spend eg by targeting households in rent arrears for support.
- 4.66** DLUHC have in the prior two financial years issued a winter pressures top-up grant amount to the Homelessness Prevention Grant. This has not been confirmed or ruled-out for 2023-24.
- 4.67** The restructure for Housing Needs has been implemented and will form the bedrock for process change and a more cohesive journey for a homeless household. The financial benefits are expected to be realised in the longer term from better practice resulting in reduced spend on homelessness.

RESOURCES

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Commercial Investment	18.6	6.0	16.4	(2.2)
Finance (<i>refer note 1</i>)	15.7	56.7	15.7	-
Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	2.3	2.1	2.4	0.1
Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk	0.6	2.2	0.5	(0.1)
Internal Audit Service	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1
Pensions and Treasury	0.3	0.6	0.3	-
Central Resources	(2.7)	0.1	(2.7)	-
Total Resources	35.2	67.9	33.1	(2.1)

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

- 4.68** At period 5, the Resources directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £2.1m (6.0%) against a budget of £35.2m.

Commercial Investment Division – £2.2m forecast underspend

- 4.69** The division is forecasting a £2.2m underspend owing to decreased utilities costs and improved recharging to external bodies. There are also £0.6m of staffing underspends across the division, mainly in Facilities Management owing to periods of staffing vacancy, which are being offset by a forecast decrease in recharges to capital.

Finance Division – breakeven forecast position

- 4.70** There is a breakeven forecast position for the Finance Division. The Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt Service is forecasting a staffing underspend owing to staffing vacancies and increased court costs income, but these are being offset by

decreased Land Charges income and temporarily increased agency staffing in strategic finance to work through historic accounting issues including the prior years' accounts.

- 4.71** A cross Council working group is currently operating to mitigate Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy risks by maximising HB subsidy income claims, increasing collection of HB overpayments and reducing costs. The actuals to date are high in the Division owing to HB expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.
- 4.72** The Finance Division has undergone a restructure of the strategic finance service and will now commence recruitment into roles which are currently covered by agency staffing. The capacity and skills levels required in the strategic finance service have been reviewed and extra funding from growth and/or reserves has been requested for 2024-25.

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

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

Other Service Areas and Central Resources - breakeven forecast position

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

Risks

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

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY (SCRER)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Sustainable Communities	54.1	24.9	54.2	0.1
Culture and Community Safety	8.6	2.3	7.9	(0.7)
Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	6.7	(0.1)	7.3	0.6
Central SCRER	-	(1.1)	-	-
Total SCRER	69.4	26.0	69.4	-

4.79 At period 5, the SCRER directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven position against a budget of £69.4m. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offence and planning.

Sustainable Communities Division - forecast overspend of £0.1m

4.80 There is a forecast £1.5m under-achievement in parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offence income. This is being offset through a forecast underspend of £1.3m in staffing owing to periods of vacancy and a £0.1m forecast underspend in waste services owing to reduced level of green and food waste.

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

4.81 The division is forecasting an underspend of £0.7m owing to reduced utility costs in contracts (£0.6m) and periods of staffing vacancy (£0.1m).

4.82 The Culture and Community Safety Division leads on the London Borough of Culture 2023 activities, funded through external funding sources. This is a year-long celebration of Croydon’s unique identity, diverse communities and rich heritage, culture and creativity. The programme for “This is Croydon” showcases Croydon to the world. It includes major events with international headliners performing alongside emerging home-grown talent, plus hundreds of cultural activities from our communities.

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

4.83 The division is forecasting an income under-achievement of £0.6m owing to lower activity levels to date in planning major applications and planning performance agreements.

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

- Economic factors such as increased building and material costs and increased interest rates.

- Uncertainty relating to the emerging Building Safety Bill – impacts on design and when a second staircase is required.
- Uncertainty in relation to emerging planning legislation. Implementation details are unknown and could be impacted by when the next general election will take place.

4.85 Risks

- Demand for parking services has not returned to pre-pandemic levels and this is affecting all areas of parking which includes Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), pay and display and on-street parking.
- Parking Services have had delays in connection with the roll out of new ANPR cameras which affect the income levels within the service.
- The Environment Act 2021 operates as the UK's new framework of environmental protection. Given that the UK has left the EU, new laws that relate to nature protection, water quality, clean air, as well as additional environmental protections that originally came from Brussels, needed to be established. The Act is a vehicle for a number of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) different environmental policies and sets out the legal framework for significant reforms to local authority waste and recycling services, as well as creating new statutory duties for local authorities on nature recovery. The government has stated that additional burdens funding will be provided to local authorities for the new requirements as they come into force, however the Council will need to monitor closely the extra costs involved.
- Waste services are demand led which represents a potential risk to the current forecast. Levels of tonnage are monitored on a monthly basis and the forecast will be updated throughout the year.
- There is a pressure on the Street Lighting PFI contract due to an increase in the energy unit cost caused by wider inflationary pressures upon energy prices.
- There is a potential risk to new Roads and Street Works Act income owing to delays and disputes with utility companies. Further work is being undertaken to quantify these risks and where possible mitigate the effect.

4.86 Opportunities

- The SCRER directorate is actively pursuing a number of grant applications to further improve the financial position. Currently the Culture and Community Safety division are in the final stages of securing grant funding from Sport England for swimming pool costs.

- There could be further staffing underspends across the directorate depending on the timing, and success, of recruitment into posts.

CORPORATE ITEMS AND FUNDING

Area of Spend	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Inflation and Economic Demand Pressures	14.2	-	14.2	-
Risk Contingency Budget	5.0	-	0.9	(4.1)
Transformation Programme	10.0	-	10.0	-
Other corporate items	(91.4)	(26.4)	(91.4)	-
Total Corporate Items and Funding	(62.2)	(26.4)	(66.3)	(4.1)

- 4.87** At period 5, the Corporate directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £4.1m (6.6%) against a net budget of (£62.2m). The underspend relates to the risk contingency budget which is offsetting the pressures across the service areas.
- 4.88** The corporate area holds funding streams such as Council Tax, retained share of Business Rates and Core Grants. The corporate budget also holds the Council-wide risk contingency budget (£5m) and the budgets for borrowing and interest received.
- 4.89** The corporate area funds redundancy, severance and pension strain costs which contribute to achieving General Fund MTFs savings. There may be a pressure in 2023-24 from this area of costs owing to the implementation of staffing savings.
- 4.90** The NJC national negotiations on the 2023-24 pay award for staff are ongoing and the resulting required budget allocation may create a pressure above the central allowance of £10.4m.
- 4.91** There is budget of £3.8m still held centrally for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon after the allocation of £1.7m budget agreed in Period 3 for Housing Benefit subsidy pressures.
- 4.92** The corporate area also holds the 2023-24 Transformation budget of £10m, which will fund work carried out in directorates and cross-Council to achieve MTFs savings and improve services for local residents and businesses. The Transformation budget reduces to £5m from 2024-25.
- 4.93** There is £7.3m budget held in Corporate for adjustments to correct General Fund recharge budgets for recharges to the HRA, Public Health, capitalisation of salaries and corporate support (overhead) recharges. This budget will be allocated during 2023-24 as the service level agreements (SLA's) are finalised for HRA and Public Health recharges, and when the review of salary capitalisation and corporate support recharges is finalised.
- 4.94** There is a funding risk in the Collection Fund if cost of living pressures impact the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates income. The impact of the Council Tax

increase is partially mitigated through the Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax).

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

Transformation Programme

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

- 4.97** In total there is currently £9.4m of the Transformation Programme budget allocated with £4.6m unallocated to date. The Transformation Programme will provide a return on investment through service improvement benefits and the identification and delivery of savings for the medium term financial strategy, providing a significant level of savings towards the £20m per annum savings required from 2025-26 onwards.

Transformation Programme Allocations

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Transformation Revenue Budget	10.000
Transformation Reserve Funding	4.000
Total Transformation Funding	14.000
Approach to Strategic Planning and Commissioning	0.290
Parking Policy Review	0.200
Community Hubs Programme	0.250
HR Transformation	0.078
Digital & Resident Access Review/Digital Workforce	0.080
SEND Review	0.240
Passenger/SEND Transport Transformation	0.100
Family Justice Service Review	0.100
S117 Project	0.178
Joint Funding Arrangements	0.110
Sustaining Demand at the Front Door	0.190
Fostering Transformation	0.286
Corporate Parenting Transformation	0.457
Dynamic Purchasing System	0.092
Callydown Transformation	0.134
Income & Debt Review	0.050
Outcomes Based Domiciliary Care Model	0.110
Transition Commissioning Care Model	0.082
Croydon Campus	0.250
Customer Access Review	0.200
Building Control Transformation	0.450
Planning & CIL Transformation	0.300
CALAT	0.050
Housing Needs Restructure	0.060

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Temporary Accommodation Case Review	0.291
Housing Occupancy Checks	0.291
Rent Accounts and Data Cleanse	0.026
Housing Association Recharges	0.059
Supported Housing Review	0.080
Adult Social Care Transformation	1.100
Review of Social Care Placements	0.461
Reablement & Hospital Discharge	0.060
Strategic Operating Model Design Partner for Adult Social Care and Health	1.134
Housing Benefit Subsidy SEA & E/TA	0.000
PFI Contract Manager	0.000
VCS Review	0.000
Asset Rationalisation	0.000
Business Intelligence Review	0.000
Commercial & Income Opportunities	0.000
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Croydon Museum	0.270
Oracle Improvement Programme	0.175
Transformation PMO	1.100
Total Revenue Budget and Reserves Allocated to Date	9.424
Unallocated To Date	4.576

4.98 The Transformation Programme published in November 2022 set out £5.9m of project commitments with recognition that further sums were still to be confirmed. Please note that project plans are under development and following review of these project plans the draft budget allocations to projects as listed above could change through the year.

4.99 The Transformation Board has agreed additional project allocations totalling £2.990m through to July 2023 and these are set out in the table below.

Project Allocations	£m
Fostering transformation	0.194
Sustaining demand at the front door	0.080
Callydown transformation	0.134
Review of Social Care Placements	0.456
CALAT (New)	0.050
Strategic operating model design partner	0.500
Strategic operating model design partner – project team	0.634
Corporate Parenting Transformation (New)	0.457
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Museum Transformation	0.270
Oracle Cloud Improvement (New)	0.175
Total of Allocations	2.990

4.100 The ‘Review of Social Care Placements’ project has secured £600,000 alternative funding from the Market Sustainability Grant thereby reducing the funding required

from the Transformation budget. The revenue budget also funds the costs of the transformation Programme Management Office currently estimated at £1.1m.

Savings

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

Table showing 2023-24 forecast savings achievement by directorate

Directorate	2023-24					
	Savings target	Slippage from previous year	Revised Savings target	Forecast savings achievable	Savings slippage	Not yet evidenced or (over delivery)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care & Health	12,243	-	12,243	10,821	-	1,422
Assistant Chief Executive	2,924	-	2,924	1,771	1,153	-
Children, Young People & Education	6,920	490	7,410	5,130	18	2,262
Housing	2,305	-	2,305	1,309	1,099	(103)
Resources	6,347	-	6,347	6,347	-	-
Sustainable Communities (SCRER)	1,859	2,490	4,349	4,124	225	-
Cross-Directorate / Corporate	500	-	500	500	-	-
Total	33,098	2,980	36,078	30,002	2,495	3,581

Reserves

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

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

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

Unresolved Issues

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

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 4.108** At period 5, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has a forecast overspend of £12.0m owing to resolving a backlog of historic legacy repair work, reducing voids and resolving issues experienced nationally including damp and mould and fire safety. The HRA has a reserve of circa £50m as at the end of 2022-23 and this reserve will fund the 2023-24 overspend, however the HRA budget for 2024-25 will need to take account of ongoing pressures and priorities. Stock conditions surveys have been commissioned to identify the level of major repairs and maintenance to be programmed into the future years' budgets and these capital improvements should reduce the level of responsive repairs over the medium to long term.

- 4.109** It was raised in the Period 4 report that work is underway on a deep dive of the repairs prompted by the work required for the new NEC IT system and the forecast overspend would increase as a result. This work is ongoing to ensure that the commissioned works on repairs, damp and mould and voids currently estimated to result in a £8.6m pressure is fully audited. It should be noted that there has been significant under-investment over decades in our housing stock and this forecast pressure is a reflection of the clearing of a backlog of works which has arisen, including some serious problems that have been raised by the Housing Ombudsman.
- 4.110** The remaining £3.4m pressure is a direct result of the volume of historic legacy disrepair cases being cleared and related legal costs and settlements.

Repairs

- 4.111** The Period 5 position of £11.96m overspend is made up of £8.6m responsive repairs costs pressure and £3.4m on disrepair costs, legal fees and settlements.
- 4.112** The overspend on responsive repairs is a result of the significant increase in volumes of repairs that have been received from tenants following the Housing Ombudsman encouraging residents to report issues and as a result of untapped demand due to historic legacy issues identified since the implementation of the new contracts in August 2023.
- 4.113** In addition, there has been significant work done to tackle our response to reports of damp and mould, treating the appearances of spores and carrying out works to address the issues. The Social Housing Regulation Bill will enable a rigorous new regime that holds all landlords to account for the decency of their homes and the service they provide. This includes changes from 'Awaab's Law' which follows the death of 2 year old Awaab Ishak in 2020 due to damp and mould exposure in his Rochdale home following repair requests and complaints having been repeatedly ignored. Legislation includes provisions which will require the Council to investigate hazards and fix repairs including damp and mould in their properties within strict new time limits or rehouse residents where a home cannot be made safe. The new rules will form part of the tenancy agreement, so residents can hold landlords to account if they fail to provide a 'decent' home.
- 4.114** Voids backlogs have also been tackled with over 350 being cleared and on average an additional 12 new voids per week being managed.
- 4.115** Legal disrepair historic legacy demand continues to be a pressure. Work is ongoing to tackle the circa 550 disrepair cases in our backlog. The service has set a plan to clear the backlog in 18 months. This financial year the team have progressed circa 130 cases to completion, however there are typically 7 new cases per week logged. The latest government £2m advertising campaign directed at residents to encourage the reporting of issues is likely to increase the pressure on this budget.

4.116 The NEC system reporting is still being developed which will improve control on the expenditure and the resulting budget pressures are being measured and managed. There is also ongoing data cleansing work which may result in further changes to the forecast pressures.

Tenancy and Income

4.117 A breakeven forecast position at period 5 as we continue to work with the NEC implementation team to generate data into our financial system that would allow for reports to be run on actuals to date.

Staffing and other

4.118 A breakeven forecast position at period 5 reflects that additional budget was allocated in 2023-24 to meet known pressures while structural changes are being implemented.

Table showing the 2023-24 HRA forecast

Description	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Rental Income	(82.1)	(12.1)	(82.1)	-
Service Charge Income	(4.6)	(0.7)	(4.6)	-
Other Income	(9.4)	1.0	(9.4)	-
Subtotal Income	(96.1)	(11.8)	(96.1)	-
Centralised Directorate expenditure	52.2	(0.9)	52.2	-
Responsive Repairs & Safety	20.4	4.6	32.4	12.0
Asset Planning	1.6	0.1	1.6	-
Capital Delivery (Homes & Schools)	1.5	0.1	1.5	-
Tenancy & Resident Engagement	10.3	4.6	10.3	-
Homelessness & Assessments	3.4	0.4	3.4	-
Service development and income	6.7	-	6.7	-
Subtotal Expenditure	96.1	8.9	108.1	12.0
Total HRA Net Expenditure	-	(2.9)	12.0	12.0

4.119 The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- NEC IT system functionality delays:
 - Although the system has gone live in June 2023 there are not yet interface feeds for all expenditure and income types into the Oracle financial system. Therefore, actuals to date are understated and purchase orders are being used to support expenditure forecasting.

- Repairs and maintenance:
 - pressures from the exit of the current Axis repairs contract, ending in August 2023.
 - extra expenditure to deal with the backlog of repairs and maintenance.
 - void and disrepair costs carried out by specialist contractors to reduce void losses and minimise future disrepair claims.
 - settlement of disrepair cases and related legal fees, including those relating to Regina Road.

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

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

Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability

- 4.120** The Capital strategy and programme was approved by Council in March 2023. This recognised the complex and challenging financial and operational circumstances in which the Council continues to operate. It showed a 2023-24 Capital Programme that is reduced in scale and cost compared to previous years. With circa £1.3bn of General Fund debt and an environment of rising interest rates, the delivery of an effective Asset Management Plan and an ambitious Asset Disposal Strategy, including reducing the number of buildings used by the Council, will be essential to mitigate rising cost pressures, reduce the overall debt burden and help the Council balance its books.
- 4.121** The strategy reflected the progress made to date by the Council to improve the governance and financial management of the Capital Programme following recommendations from the two Reports in the Public Interest (RIPI). The Council understands that the initial improvements put in place are the foundations of good practice and is focused on building upon these over the coming months and years.
- 4.122** Concerns were highlighted regarding value for money and investment decisions as the Council has incurred debt in investing in assets which have not retained their value and, therefore, the level of debt exceeds the value of the investment assets. In the three years between 2017-20 the Council borrowed £545m with no focused debt management plan in place. The majority of this debt comprises short-term borrowings which has left the Council exposed to current higher interest rates. The debt is anticipated to be refinanced from 2023 onwards and therefore likely to drive significant increases in annual repayment levels.

- 4.123** An estimated circa £66m is required to service this debt from the General Fund which represents around 19% of the Council’s net budget. The Council’s historic legacy borrowing and debt burden has, therefore, become critical to the sustainability of the Council’s revenue budget.
- 4.124** The Council has concluded that the expenditure it is anticipated to incur in each year of the period of 2023-27 is likely to exceed the financial resources available and that reaching financial and operational sustainability without further government assistance will not be possible. The Council’s 2023-24 budget required capitalisation directions from government of £63m to balance and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) demonstrated an ongoing estimated budget gap of £38m per annum from 2024-25.
- 4.125** Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of historic legacy indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services. It must be noted that annual capitalisation directions (transferring revenue cost into capital cost which must be funded over 20 years) increases the Council’s debt burden. Also capital receipts from the Asset Disposal Strategy are being used to fund the ongoing capitalisation directions and therefore the Council is not able to reduce its existing historic debt (a situation of “treading water”).
- 4.126** Therefore, debt write-off is the Council’s preferred option and a request was made to DLUHC in January 2023 for government funding to write-off £540m of the Council’s General Fund debt. DLUHC has subsequently asked the Council to propose a wider range of options, and these are currently being worked on.

General Fund Capital Programme

- 4.127** At period 5, the General Fund capital programme has a forecast underspend of £14.3m against the revised budget of £144.7m.

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

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget	2023-24 Actuals to Date	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000’s)	(£000’s)	(£000’s)	(£000’s)
Bereavement Services	127	(45)	127	-
My Resources Interface Enhancement	252	-	252	-
ICT	-	1	-	-
Network Refresh	348	11	348	-
Tech Refresh	132	289	864	732
Geographical Information Systems	312	-	312	-
Laptop Refresh	3,371	-	3,371	-

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget	2023-24 Actuals to Date	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
Cloud and DR	331	26	331	-
People ICT	-	3	-	-
Synergy Education System	1,045	8	789	(256)
NEC Housing System	2,725	(2)	2,097	(628)
Uniform ICT Upgrade	56	-	56	-
Subtotal Assistant Chief Executive	8,699	291	8,547	(152)
Education - Fire Safety	924	4	450	(474)
Education - Fixed Term Expansions	2,865	149	225	(2,640)
Education - Major Maintenance	5,866	1,747	3,321	(2,545)
Education - Miscellaneous	100	142	100	-
Education - Permanent Expansion	297	-	297	-
Education - SEN	6,289	480	6,289	-
Children Home DFE	329	-	329	-
Subtotal CYPE	16,670	2,522	11,011	(5,659)
Disabled Facilities Grant	4,710	541	3,000	(1,710)
Empty Homes Grants	400	33	200	(200)
Subtotal Housing	5,110	574	3,200	(1,910)
Asset Strategy - Stubbs Mead	500	-	500	-
Asset Strategy Programme	240	-	240	-
Clocktower Chillers	382	-	382	-
Corporate Property Maintenance Programme	2,780	861	2,780	-
Fairfield Halls - Council	625	3	625	-
Former New Addington Leisure Centre	600	-	600	-
Fieldway Cluster (Timebridge Community Centre)	248	-	248	-
Contingency	1,000	-	1,000	-
Subtotal Resources	6,375	864	6,375	-
Allotments	-	3	3	3
Growth Zone	15,844	207	15,844	-
Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	1,200	-	1,200	-
Highways	8,260	3,973	8,260	-
Highways - flood water management	404	163	404	-
Highways - bridges and highways structures	1,641	579	1,641	-
Highways - Tree works	50	6	50	-
Local Authority Tree Fund	83	122	83	-
Trees Sponsorship	42	10	42	-
Leisure centres equipment Contractual Agr	139	(410)	139	-
Tennis Court Upgrade	75	-	75	-
Leisure Equipment Upgrade	148	-	148	-
Libraries Investment - General	1,031	1	224	(807)
Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	175	-	-	(175)

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget	2023-24 Actuals to Date	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
New Investment to South Norwood Library	520	-	520	-
Parking	1,843	(807)	1,843	-
Cashless Pay & Display	1,463	-	485	(978)
Play Equipment	17	49	49	32
Safety - digital upgrade of CCTV	1,540	(11)	1,540	-
HIGHWAY Road Markings/Signs (Refresh)	137	-	137	-
South Norwood Good Growth	773	11	511	(262)
Kenley Good Growth	394	(147)	394	-
Sustainability Programme	1,100	-	300	(800)
LIP	4,568	472	1,100	(3,468)
Cycle Parking	106	-	-	(106)
Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	3	-	-	(3)
Park Asset Management	700	-	700	-
Waste and Recycling Investment	2,558	-	2,558	-
Subtotal SCRER	44,814	4,221	38,250	(6,564)
Capitalisation Direction	63,000	-	63,000	-
Subtotal Corporate Items and Funding	63,000	-	63,000	-
TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL	144,668	8,472	130,383	(14,285)

Table showing General Fund Capital Programme Financing

General Fund Capital Financing	2023-24 Revised Budget	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	6,600	6,600	0
CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	3,084	1,477	(1,607)
Section 106	1,190	233	(957)
Grants & Other Contributions	25,430	15,929	(9,501)
Growth Zone	15,844	15,844	0
HRA Contributions	1,772	1,363	(409)
Capital Receipts	45,000	45,000	0
Borrowing	45,749	43,937	(1,811)
Total General Fund Financing	144,668	130,383	(14,285)

4.128 The extra forecast cost of play equipment of £32k will be funded through the application of Section 106 funding.

HRA Capital Programme

4.129 At period 5, the HRA capital programme has a forecast overspend of £5.704m (17%) against the revised budget of £33.248m. The HRA has a reserve of circa £50m as at the end of 2022-23 and this reserve will likely be the source of financing the 2023-24 capital overspend.

The HRA budget for 2024-25 and the HRA business plan will need to take account of ongoing pressures and priorities. Stock conditions surveys have been commissioned to identify the level of historic legacy major repairs and maintenance to be programmed into the future years' budgets and these capital improvements should reduce the level of responsive repairs over the medium to long term.

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

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

Table showing 2023-24 HRA Capital Programme budget and forecast

HRA Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget	2023-24 Actuals to Date	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	31,476	5,752	37,180	5,704
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	1,772	-
Total HRA Capital	33,248	5,752	38,952	5,704

HRA Capital Programme Financing

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

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

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

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

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 Finance comments have been provided throughout this report.

8.1.2 The Council continues to operate with internal spending controls to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained. A new financial management culture is being implemented across the organisation through increased communication on financial issues and training for budget managers.

8.1.3 The Council currently has a General Fund Reserve of £27.5m which serves as a cushion should any overspend materialise by the end of 2023-24. The use of reserves to support the budget is not a permanent solution and reserves must be replenished back to a prudent level in subsequent years if used.

8.1.4 The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government regarding its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.

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

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that it maintains a balanced budget and to take any remedial action as required in year.
- 8.2.2** Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that the Council is under a statutory duty to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends. This could include action to reduce spending, income generation or other measures to bring budget pressures under control for the rest of the year. The Council must act reasonably and in accordance with its statutory duties and responsibilities when taking the necessary action to reduce the overspend.
- 8.2.3** In addition, the Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council's Chief Finance Officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council's proper financial administration. These include procedures for budgetary control. It is consistent with these arrangements for Cabinet to receive information about the revenue and capital budgets as set out in this report.
- 8.2.4** The monitoring of financial information is also a significant contributor to meeting the Council's Best Value legal duty. The Council as a best value authority "must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Section 3 Local Government Act (LGA) 1999). The Best Value Duty applies to all functions of the Council including delivering and setting a balanced budget, providing statutory services such as adult social care and children's services and securing value for money in all spending decisions.
- 8.2.5** The Council is the subject of Directions from the Secretary of State requiring the Council to, amongst others, improve on the management of its finances. This report serves to ensure the Council is effectively monitoring and managing its budgetary allocations in accordance with its Best Value Duty.

Comments approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, 05/10/2023

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

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

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

Comments approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 4/10/2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 8.4.6** Our approach is to ensure the equality impact assessments are data led, using user information, demographic data and forecasts, as well as service specific data and national evidence to fully understand the impact of each savings proposal. This enables the Council to have proper regard to its statutory equality duties.
- 8.4.7** We have a large number of vulnerable children and asylum seekers who are in need of our services. We have also been faced with the rise of costs of the provision of adult social care, which has been exasperated following the pandemic. Alongside this our residents are dealing with the increased cost of living. We have supported residents by providing mitigation for changes where possible and signposting to other support organisations in the borough who can provide support. We will continue to seek mitigation during the equality analysis process where possible.
- 8.4.8** Our initial data suggests that residents across all equality characteristics may be affected by changes. National and local data highlights that this may have a greater impact on race, disabilities, sex, pregnancy and maternity and age. We will continue to assess the impact and strive to improve our evidence and data collection, to enable us to make informed decisions.
- 8.4.9** Where consultations take place, we will ensure that we make it accessible for all characteristics including those with disabilities including neurodiversity by ensuring that we adopt Disability standards in our consultation platform. Notwithstanding those residents who are digitally excluded. We will also consult using plain English to support our residents who do not have English as a first language.
- 8.4.10** With regard to potential staff redundancies, as a diverse borough we will undertake equality analysis and seek mitigation for staff by offering redeployment and employability support. We will also assess the impact of job losses on protected characteristics. We will also ensure that disabled staff are treated more favourably during restructure in that they will be required to meet the minimum standard prior to being offered an interview.
- 8.4.11** Research from existing EQIAs identifies that rising costs impact on some Disabled groups, communities from the Global Majority, African, Asian, African Caribbean households, young people, some people aged 15 – 64 and some people in the pregnancy/maternity characteristic. Research also indicates that there is an intersectional impact on young people from the Global Majority and both Disabled and Dual Heritage communities. Deprivation in borough is largely focused in the north and the east where the Global Majority of residents from the African, African Caribbean and Asian communities reside.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmed for Equalities Programme Manager, Date: 05/10/2023.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET
DATE OF DECISION	22 November 2023
REPORT TITLE:	Council Tax Empty & Second Home Premiums
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer)
LEAD OFFICER:	Catherine Black, Head of Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt Email: catherine.black@croydon.gov.uk Telephone: 27193
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance
KEY DECISION?	No
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the history of charging Council Tax premiums for empty properties and the current situation.
- 1.2 This report details the proposed options to change the timeframe for applying empty property premiums and the introduction of premiums on second homes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 To recommend to Full Council, that Full Council make the necessary determinations as billing authority under Section 11B for financial year 2024-2025 to the effect that where permitted, for dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period of at least one year the amount of Council Tax will be increased by 100% where the period is less than 5 years, by 200% where the period

is at least 5 years but less than 10 years, and by 300% where the period is at least 10 years, and that the discount under Section 11(2)(a) shall not apply. .

- 2.2** To recommend to Full Council, that Full Council make the necessary determinations under Section 11C as billing authority for financial year 2025-2026 to the effect that where permitted, for dwellings where there is no resident of the dwelling and the dwelling is substantially furnished, the amount of Council Tax will be increased by 100%, and the discount under Section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The long-term empty homes premium is designed to encourage more empty homes into productive use, therefore, assisting with the current housing pressure in the borough.
- 3.2** The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 is enabling councils to raise and retain additional revenue to support local services and keep Council Tax down for residents.
- 3.3** Implementing the change from 2 years to 1 would allow the council to encourage use of properties at an earlier stage and to generate greater income earlier on those properties where the owner wishes them to remain empty.
- 3.4** The second homes premium would allow the council to collect a premium on empty furnished properties which includes those that are actively being used as a second home as well as those which are vacant but furnished.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1** The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 achieved Royal Assent on 26 October 2023. The intention of this act is to speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes.
- 4.2** One of the governments measures in this act is to rebalance the housing and land markets, giving local councils the power to increase Council Tax on empty homes.
- 4.3** This act recognises the impact that high levels of second home ownership can have in some areas and will introduce a new discretionary Council Tax premium on second homes of up to 100%.
- 4.4** It will also allow councils to apply a Council Tax premium of up to 100% on homes which have been empty for longer than one year (rather than the two years currently in place).
- 4.5** The premium for second homes can only be implemented with at least 12 months' notice before the start of the financial year to which it relates, meaning the earliest the second home premium can be implemented is the 1 April 2025, providing the decision to implement the premium is taken before 1 April 2024.

- 4.6** It is worth noting that the 12-month lead time is for any initial decision to implement a second home premium. Therefore, if we choose not to implement a premium from 1st April 2025, a decision made after 1st April 2024 can only be effective from 1st April 2026.
- 4.7** The change to long term empty premium can be implemented from 1st April 2024, in accordance with S11B Local Government Finance Act 1992, which allows for a decision to be varied or revoked providing the decision is taken before the start of the financial year.
- 4.8** Both the premiums for long term empty and second homes are in respect of a “financial year” which means the premiums cannot be implemented part way through a year.
- 4.9** Data used for the October CTB1 2023 return shows 828 properties were long term empty and unfurnished between 1 and 2 years, it is likely that a high percentage of these would be for sale, rent or occupied but have not yet informed the council.
- 4.10** The October CTB1 2023 return has 367 properties listed as empty and furnished (second homes). As this would be a new scheme there is likely to be a change in these numbers as owners inform us that these properties are occupied or advertised for sale or rent.

Summary

- 4.11** The Local Government Finance Act 2012 (LGFA 2012) made provision for Local Authorities to technically reform Council Tax discounts and exemption with effect from 1st April 2013. Sections 10,11, and 12 of the LGFA 2012 contained provisions for changes that were agreed by Cabinet in December 2012, and those changes included:
- - Reducing the discount on 2nd homes to nil.
 - Class A and Class C exemption were abolished and replaced by discounts which the Council had the discretion to reduce the discount to nil.
 - Where a discount replaced a Class A exemption, and the discount was not nil, the discount could be limited to 12 months.
 - Where a discount replaced a Class C exemption, and that discount was not nil, the discount could be limited to 12 months.
 - The Council has the discretion to add a “premium” of up to 50% on long term empty properties which has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than 2 years.
- 4.12** In 2019 The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 further enabled a council to increase the premium charged for properties that have been empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years from 50% to 100%. From 2020 a further 100% premium on properties empty and unfurnished for more than 5 years was implemented increasing the premium to 200%. From 2021 a further 100% premium on properties empty and unfurnished for more than 10 years was implemented increasing the premium to 200%.
- 4.13** This premium applies to the property, so a change of ownership or tenancy will not affect the premium. If when purchased or leased the property has already been empty and unfurnished for two years or more, the new owner will be liable to pay the additional premium.

4.14 The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, describe which classes of dwellings could not be included in the reduced discounts and additional premiums, these are:-

- No premium can be added on a dwelling which is exempt (see Appendix 1 for list of exemptions)
- No premium can be added on a dwelling which is genuinely on the market for sale or letting:
- No premium can be added on a dwelling which is the sole or main residence of a member of the armed forces, who is absent from the property as a result of such service
- No premium can be added on an annex deemed unoccupied, because it is treated by the occupier of the main dwelling as part of the main dwelling.
- We provide a 6 month exemption from the premium for properties that are undergoing works to bring the property back into use.

4.15 The October CTB1 2023 return showed 400 properties are currently charged premiums which result in an additional Council Tax liability of £1,181k.

	100% premium	200% premium	300% premium	Total additional liability from premiums
Number of Properties	283	81	36	400
Croydon Council Tax	£433,785	£239,305	£164,655	£837,745
Croydon adult social care precept	£59,295	£32,711	£22,507	£114,513
GLA precept	£118,568	£65,410	£45,006	£228,984
Overall Council Tax premium liability	£611,648	£337,426	£232,168	£1,181,242

Considerations & Challenges

4.16 Determining the difference between a second home, a vacant furnished property and a vacant unfurnished property has always proved complicated.

4.17 Collection of premiums is more difficult with a lower percentage collection rate. It is important to remember that in all cases this is a person's second home so there is always the option to bring the property back into use or to sell the property.

4.18 Monitoring properties that are "genuinely" for sale & those undergoing building work can pose a problem.

4.19 Although the changes to the unfurnished premium can be implemented from 1 April 2024 the Council would look to provide reasonable notice to owners, so it is important that a decision to implement these changes is made as soon as reasonably practicable and prior to the start of the financial year.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The report relates to discretionary premiums the only two options are to implement the changes to empty premiums and second home premiums or to leave the current premiums in place.

- 5.2 If we were to take the option to leave things as they are currently:
- There would be less incentive for the owners of furnished empty properties to bring them into permanent use.
 - The incentive for unfurnished properties to be brought into use would not take effect until a year later.
 - The opportunity to collect additional income on empty properties would be reduced.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) have confirmed that there is nothing in the LGFA 2012 that suggests Local Authorities should consult on this matter, as such a consultation is not required.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The proposal contributes to the Mayors business plan outcomes 1, getting our finances right and outcome 2 a place of opportunity as detailed below.

7.2 Encouraging owners to bring properties increases the availability of housing in the borough.

7.3 Empty properties if not maintained can become in a state of disrepair and can become an eyesore on the local area

7.4 If owners decide to leave a property empty the council will be able to collect additional income to support local services and keep Council Tax down for local residents.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 The table below shows the annual value of the premium if all properties currently empty and unfurnished remain so. It is likely that a proportion will be brought back into use, and others will be up for sale or rent, therefore the actual number of properties that will have the premium applied will be significantly lower. It is anticipated that between 25% and 50% would have the premium applied.

	All properties	50%	25%
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Number of properties	828	414	207
Croydon Council Tax	£1,332,768	£666,384	£333,192
Croydon adult social care precept	£182,180	£91,090	£45,545
GLA precept	£364,291	£182,146	£91,073
Overall tax 2023/24	£1,879,239	£939,620	£469,810

8.1.2 The liability generated using current figures would be between £470k and £940k.

8.1.3 Below is a table showing the possible premium liability for second homes. Those empty for under and over a year have been separated as those over a year are far more likely to be liable for the premium. It is unlikely that more than 50% of those recorded as second homes for over a year and 30% of those under would end up having the premium applied.

		(A)		(B)	(A + B)
	2 nd homes over 1 year	2 nd homes over 1 year (assume 50%)	2 nd homes under 1 year	2 nd homes under 1 year (assume 30%)	Total (over 1 year 50% under 1 year 30%)
Number of properties	268	134	99	30	164
Croydon Council Tax	£405,901	£202,951	£157,066	£47,120	£250,071
Croydon adult social care precept	£55,484	£27,742	£21,470	£6,441	£34,183
GLA precept	£110,947	£55,473	£42,932	£12,879	£68,352
Overall tax 2023/24	£572,332	£286,166	£221,468	£66,440	£352,606

8.1.4 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 09/11/23

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Under Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the function of making a determination under Section 11B in relation to long-term empty dwellings as recommended in this report, or under the new Section 11C in relation to dwellings occupied periodically as recommended in this report, must be discharged only by Full Council.

8.2.2 If Full Council makes the recommended determination under Section 11B, notice of it must be published in at least one local newspaper before the end of a 21 day

period starting with the date of the determination. Likewise, a similar notice must be published if full Council makes the recommended determination under the new Section 11C. A billing authority's first determination under the new Section 11C must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

8.2.3 The increases proposed in this report are the maximum by which Council Tax can be increased under Section 11B and the new Section 11C. Billing authorities are required to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in exercising their functions under Section 11B and Section 11C. Insert at the end of the legal section: Comments approved by the Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 7/11/2023)

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 Given the nature of empty properties, it is hard to capture any diversity data of the owners. Properties could be empty for a range of different reasons, ranging from owner's death to property being own by charities and has been left empty. It is clear from the EQIA that the Council only has information about the owner's name and address and is in no position to collect any further data. For this reason, the EQIA is unable to provide any information about the likely impact on any groups due to lack of data.

8.3.3 Comments by Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities Manager. (13/11/2023)

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Unoccupied Property Exemptions

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

10.1 N/A

11. URGENCY

11.1 N/A

Appendix 1 - Unoccupied Property Exemptions

Below is a list of empty property exemptions. If these exemptions are relevant to a property the premium is not applied:

- the owner or tenant has died
- the owner or tenant is in prison
- the owner or tenant is a long-term hospital in-patient
- the owner or tenant lives in a nursing home, care home or certain type of hostel
- the owner is a student in the UK who is living elsewhere for their studies
- the owner has been made bankrupt and the property is in the hands of the trustees in bankruptcy
- the owner or tenant has moved out in order to provide personal care for another person or to receive personal care themselves
- it is a self-contained unit that forms part of a larger property and the occupier is a dependent relative of the person living in the other part of the property
- the property is an annex that cannot be let separately from the main property because of planning restrictions
- the property is an empty caravan pitch or houseboat mooring
- occupation of the property is prohibited by law
- the property is in the hands of the executor or administrator of the estate (either probate has yet to be granted or it is less than six months since probate was granted)
- the property has been repossessed by the mortgage lender
- the property is owned by a charity and has been empty for less than six months

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