

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, 6 December 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 (Pages 5 - 10)**

To approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting, 22nd November 2023

3. **Disclosure of Interests**

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider **in advance of each meeting** whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer **in good time before the meeting**.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting.

- Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.
- Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation.
- Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation. Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, section 9 of Appendix B of the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the Member to decide whether disclosure is required.

The Chair will invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3, to be recorded in the minutes.

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. **Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Homes Sub-Committee held on 24 July 2023 (Appendices 1, 2 & 3)** (Pages 11 - 22)
6. **Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools - Consultation Outcomes Report** (Pages 23 - 88)
7. **Housing Strategy 2023- 2028** (Pages 89 - 176)
8. **TRANSPORT FOR LONDON LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN HEALTHY STREETS FUNDING AND PROGRAMME 2024/25** (Pages 177 - 192)
9. **Finance 6 Period Financial Performance Report** (Pages 193 - 228)
10. **Fees and Charges 2024-25** (Pages 229 - 280)
11. **Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2023-29** (Pages 281 - 334)
12. **QUARTERLY PROCUREMENT PLAN UPDATE** (Pages 335 - 342)
13. **Progress update on tranche 1 asset disposals, seeking approval for tranche 2 of asset for disposal and approval of the update of the Community Asset Transfer Policy. Part A** (Pages 343 - 372)
14. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

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

PART B AGENDA

15. **Progress update on tranche 1 asset disposals, seeking approval for tranche 2 of asset for disposal and approval of the update of the Community Asset Transfer Policy. PART B** (Pages 373 - 378)

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Cabinet

Meeting of held on Wednesday, 22 November 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Jason Perry (Chair);

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

PART A

78/23 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

79/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

80/23 **Urgent Business (If any)**

Mayor Jason Perry announced that £18.5m of funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had been received following a successful bid. This would be used to improve the town centre and to deliver the council's vision for Croydon. Mayor Perry thanked officers and internal and external partners for their work to secure this funding.

81/23 **STAGE 1: Recommendations Arising from Scrutiny**

The Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Councillor Rowenna Davis, introduced the report to Cabinet.

The Chief Executive requested that it be put on record that the communication that had been made between the council and the residents of Cornerstone House would be provided to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

Members of Cabinet made clear that there was no proposal to sell properties with leases in tact or without proper communication.

RESOLVED to:

- 2.1 Receive and consider the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 26 September 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2024

82/23

Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations

RESOLVED 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 SubCommittee, within the periods specified in the agreed responses and action plans, and on progress made in implementing any action plan.

83/23

Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022/23

David Williams, Independent Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board, introduced the report to Cabinet.

In response to questions from members, it was explained that Core20PLUS5 was a scoring mechanism to demonstrate the level of deprivation and need in any specific area. Croydon scored highly on that level of deprivation compared to other South West London areas, and it was explained that the Board would work with public health partners to ensure that funding was secured to provide resources for those in need in Croydon.

RESOLVED 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.

84/23

Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022/23

Independent Scrutineer, Keith Makin, introduced the report to Cabinet.

In response to questions, officers explained that it was complicated to include the rates of death by suicide in the headline statistics as suicide was responded to by the service slightly differently from other safeguarding concerns.

RESOLVED to:

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.

85/23

Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and for Community Safety, assured members that the work being undertaken on preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) would be highlighted to Council, and also that a piece of work was underway on preventing Young People leaving the youth justice system from becoming NEET (those categorised as Not in Employment, Education or Training).

RESOLVED:

2.1 To recommend the Youth Justice Plan to Full Council for approval.

86/23

2023-24 Period 5 Financial Performance Report

Members noted the issue that high-cost placements of homeless families into Croydon from other borough caused for financial performance.

Members also noted that the £70m capital receipt from Croydon Affordable Homes and Croydon Affordable Tenures was spent on transformation programmes in previous years, and that the accounts would be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in a few days' time.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 To approve the budget movements between directorates to match the movement of service area responsibilities between directorates as set out in paragraph 4.13.
- 1.3 To note the progress in MTFs savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.101.
- 1.4 To note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.96.
- 1.5 To note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £12.0m.
- 1.6 To note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £14.3m against the revised capital budget of £144.7m.
- 1.7 To note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £5.7m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 1.8 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.

1.9 To note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.

1.10 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.

87/23

Council Tax Empty & Second Home Premiums

Shadow Cabinet Members expressed the desire for a progress report to Council.

Cabinet Members suggested that the Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee includes monitoring of this report to its work programme.

RESOLVED

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.

88/23

Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was not necessary to exclude the press and public from any portion of this meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.35 pm

Agenda Item 5

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE	6 December 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Homes Sub-Committee held on 24 July 2023 (Appendices 1, 2 & 3)	
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:	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.	
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 25 October 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; and
- 2.1.2 Delegate authority to the officers identified in Appendices 1, 2 & 3 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 EXECUTIVE MAYOR BUSINESS PLAN

- 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.

- 7.2** Outcome 4: Croydon is a cleaner safer and healthier place a borough we're proud to call home.

Priority 3: Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service. Council tenants and leaseholders expect warm, safe and dry homes, well-maintained by their landlord, but too often the Council has fallen well short of this basic standard. We will transform the housing service to invest in and improve standards in council homes and to put residents at the heart of decisions about the housing service. A renewed focus on tenants will ensure they are treated with respect and their issues and complaints are responded to promptly and effectively.

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 the Homes 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 the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (1/11/2023)

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 on behalf of the Equalities Manager.
(2/11/2023)

9 APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Homes Sub-Committee, Item: Housing Transformation Programme Update, 24 July 2023

Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Homes Sub-Committee, Item: Update on the Mobilisation of the Responsive Repairs Contract, 24 July 2023

Appendix 3 – Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses: Recommendations from Homes Sub-Committee, Item: Update on Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028, 24 July 2023

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 Agenda for the meeting of the Homes Sub-Committee held on 24 July 2023
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=485&MId=3691>

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Appendix 1 – Item: Housing Transformation Programme Update

Considered by Homes Sub-Committee on 24 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
HOM.1.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that in order to provide clarity on the full scope of the programme, future updates on the Housing Transformation Programme should include a full list of all projects under each workstream, as well as additional detail mapping out the customer journey.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	<p>Rejected</p> <p>Recommendation is rejected on the grounds that a full overview of the programme, with a list of projects under each workstream has been provided in the original cabinet paper (December 22)</p> <p>The customer journey project is currently underway and further details can be provided as and when is appropriate.</p>	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	TBC

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Appendix 2 – Item: Update on the Mobilisation of the Responsive Repairs Contract

Considered by Home Sub-Committee on 24 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
HOM.2.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that each of the Responsive Repair Contractors should have a dedicated team that specialised in helping vulnerable tenants with their repairs, and that sub-contractors were not used for these jobs.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Rejected We need to determine how to identify vulnerable tenants and update our databases. Additionally, we need to ascertain who is best placed to deliver the services. Contractor staff all go through safeguarding training which is regularly refreshed. Annual training plans are reviewed as part of the contract monitoring.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	TBC
HOM.3.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that there should be additional qualitative monitoring of the contracts for the initial periods of commencement, to identify and address any potential cultural issues as early as possible.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Already in Progress This monitoring will be rigorous to avoid any repeats of the past, and will look at complaints, telephone surveys and the resident engagement review. Additionally, Acuity surveys have been reengaged.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	TBC
HOM.4.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council should have oversight of the training being provided to staff of each of the new contractors, and that the Council has the ability to monitor training attendance to ensure it is completed by all contractor staff.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Already in Progress The contractor have to provide an update of their annual training plans that will be reviewed annually as part of contract monitoring and scrutiny.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	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
HOM.5.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that as a priority, automation within the NEC system is used to identify where repeated calls are being logged for the same repair to ensure that the department is not reliant on individual officers proactively identifying issues.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Already in Progress There will be a standard Power BI report that will highlight multiple repairs to the same property.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	TBC
HOM.6.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council undertake a 'Mystery Shopping' exercise on the out-of-hours responsive repairs service to provide reassurance of service quality, and to identify and mitigate any issues.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Already in Progress This will be undertaken by the Resident Repairs Contract Monitoring Group once this has been established and recruited to.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	N/A	TBC

Appendix 3 – Item: Update on Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028

Considered by Home Sub-Committee on 24 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
HOM.7.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing department deliver training on Domestic Violence to all frontline housing staff.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Accepted Housing will liaise with Learning and Development and set out how DV training can be delivered to front line staff	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	To be discussed with Learning and Development	TBC
HOM.8.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the final Housing Strategy should address the Council's relationship with the Housing Association and Registered Social Landlord sector in Croydon.	Councillor Lynne Hale Housing	Already in Progress To improve joint working and communication, the Council will set up a social housing forum which will cover all aspects of its relationship with housing associations.	Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing	N/A	Preliminary meeting with key HA's- Q3 1st meeting-4 th Quarter 23/24	TBC

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Agenda Item 6

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	6 December 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon – Consultation Outcomes report	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies, Director of Education	
LEAD OFFICER:	Denise Bushay, Head of Service – Early Years, School Place Planning and Admissions	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member Children, Young People and Education	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards.
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	N/A
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report summarises the outcomes of the informal consultation, approved by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet at its meeting of 28 June 2023, to consult on a proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via closure or amalgamation. The full consultation report is attached at Appendix 1. This consultation has arisen because the current model of Croydon's MNS is not financially sustainable.
- 1.2. The purpose of the consultation was to listen to what residents and the wider community think about the proposal, to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation, and the impact that any of the options would have on them and their family. Respondents were also given the opportunity to make suggestions of feasible and sustainable models that could be delivered in the funding allocated by central government and potential measures to address the historical deficit.
- 1.3. The informal consultation was open to anyone with an interest in, or who would be affected by, the proposal, including parents/carers who use the provision or may use it in the future, providers, and staff. The consultation outcomes report is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 1.4. The consultation document - Appendix 2 – including a questionnaire and question and answer document – Appendix 3 - were used to inform and facilitate feedback on the proposal. Different modes and methods of communication, including websites, social media, email, newsletter, press release, and face to face and virtual meetings were utilised to ensure that those with an interest were aware of the consultation, and able to respond should they wish to do so. Hard copies of the documents were made available at each MNS.
- 1.5. A total of 895 responses to the consultation have been received. This is in addition to responses from MPs, Councillors, Governing Body, and organisations. The vast majority of respondents said they did not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure or amalgamation/merger. Of the 866 online respondents, 94.9% indicated that they did not support the proposed option to reduce the number of MNS via closure; and 83.7% did not support the option to reduce the number of MNS via merger / amalgamation.
- 1.6. The Governing Bodies of a number of the MNS suggested other models and have requested that we work in partnership with them to explore if these would make MNS financially feasible. The options shared through the consultation are not included in the report to avoid predetermining the outcome of any detailed modelling of them.

- 1.7. The top three reasons given for not supporting the proposal were to do with the:
- Impact on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
 - Loss of specialist expertise - qualified staff, knowledge and experience
 - Impact on finances – affordability of private nurseries / job losses.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:
- 2.1.1. Note the benefits of listening to the community and families, who have responded on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough, via closure or amalgamation. The responses of which are included in the analysis of the feedback to the informal consultation (Appendix 1)
- 2.1.2. Note that doing nothing is not an option; but request that officers explore and carry out more detailed modelling of other options suggested as part of the consultation process, to determine if any of these are feasible and will make MNS financially viable. This is to be done in collaboration with the MNS within the next 3 months. (Noting that other options may also develop through this process)
- 2.1.3. Note, if after further exploration a sustainable model is not achievable there would be a requirement to return to the proposal within the informal consultation.
- 2.1.4. Implement any actions, that came forward as part of the consultation, that can be delivered immediately, with the MNS that have a financial deficit, so that current deficit does not increase further but reduces.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. **Doing nothing is not a viable option** as the current model of Croydon's MNS is not financially sustainable for all the settings. Without intervention their cumulative financial deficit will increase, putting MNS future at a greater risk. The proposal is about looking at the provision and considering how the council can make the best use of available resources.
- 3.2. If the decision is to proceed to formal / statutory consultation on the proposal, this will include publication of statutory notice which would start a further four-week representation period which would allow anyone who wishes to object to, support, or make comments on the proposed MNS to be closed or amalgamated.

- 3.3. As part of the consultation feedback, suggestions and new options have been suggested on other steps that could be explored to make MNS financially viable.
- 3.4. The recommendations will enable officers to take into consideration the new childcare measures within the detailed modelling of other options. This includes the provision of 30 hours a week of free childcare for 38 weeks a year, for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years. This will be rolled out in phases from April 2024 and is in addition to the 30 hours a week already provided for eligible working parents of 3 to 4-year-olds. the provision of 30 hours of free childcare for all children over the age of 9 months by September 2025.

Croydon has been allocated:

- £85766 in FY23-24 to be used to meet programme and delivery costs associated with rolling out the expanded Early Years entitlements.
- £1,030,106.57 programme and capital grant funding the financial years - 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 – to deliver the wraparound programme in their area for the wraparound programme to support families who need it to access wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm, from September 2024.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1. Local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare places to enable parents to work. These childcare places need to be accessible, affordable, and delivered flexibly in high quality settings. Currently, there is sufficient and diverse supply of early education and childcare provision available across the borough to meet demand.
- 4.2. In the statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – Opening and Closing Maintained Schools - there is presumption against the closure of nursery schools. This does not mean that a maintained nursery school will never close, but that the case for closure should be strong. Where a proposal is for the closure of a maintained nursery school, the proposer should set out:
- 4.2.1 Plans to develop alternative early years provision, clearly demonstrating that it will be at least equal in quantity to the provision provided by the nursery school with no loss of expertise and specialism.

- 4.2.2 How replacement provision is more accessible and more convenient for local parents.
- 4.3. Croydon recognises the importance of early years development and education. MNS is one of different types of early years provision within the borough. Other provision includes childminders, nursery classes in schools, and private, voluntary, and independent nurseries.
- 4.4. MNS are local authority run schools that provide early education and childcare to children under 5 during school hours, usually 9am-3.30pm, during term time and does not usually include wrap around care. They have a head teacher, governing body, delegated budget and at least one teacher with qualified teacher status. This creates an expensive delivery model, when compared to other settings. Currently MNS cannot become academies. However, one of Croydon's maintained nursery schools is run by an academy chain under a Service Level Agreement.
- 4.5. There are five Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon, of which, two have been rated by Ofsted as 'outstanding'; two graded as 'good' and one rated as 'requires improvement'. Three of the MNS are located in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough.
- 4.6. Funding for MNS comes from central government. The budget for most of the MNS are in deficit despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget. Governing Bodies have a duty to set a balanced budget each year.
- 4.7. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet agreed for consultation to take place on a proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation. Informal consultation took place from 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023. The purpose of this report is for the Executive Mayor in Cabinet to consider, the outcome of the consultation on the proposal and decide on next steps. A summary of the outcomes of the consultation are detailed in the body of this report. The consultation outcomes report is attached at Appendix 1.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. Council Officers held informal consultation meetings with the leadership team of our MNS to seek / hear their views about potential options to address the financial challenges MNS are facing and how to re-model maintained nursery school provision in Croydon in order to move them to a more financial sustainable provision.
- 5.2. Informal consultation has taken place on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation. The public consultation was open to anyone with an interest, including MNS staff, Trade Unions, and

governors, families, providers, Ward Councillors, MPs, wider school community and neighbouring boroughs.

6. OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION

- 6.1. A total of 895 were received, of which 866 were received online. Other responses were received via email or hard copy handed to MNS. The vast majority of respondents indicated that they do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.
- 6.2. Of the 866 responses received online:
- The majority of respondents (**94.9%**) **do not support** the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via **closure**.
 - The majority of respondents (**83.7%**) **do not support** the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via **merger** (amalgamation)
 - A minority of respondents (**2.5%**) neither support nor do not support the proposal.

Consultation Meetings

- 6.3. During the consultation period, face to face meeting or drop-in sessions were held at each MNS: Purley Nursery (at Christ Church School); Selhurst Nursery; Tunstall Nursery; Crosfield Nursery; and Thornton Heath. At the meetings, the background to and rationale for the proposal was explained. It was emphasised that no decision has been made and the purpose of the consultation was to hear views about how the proposal may affect family, and wider community. It was also explained that the feedback from the consultation will help inform a decision on the proposed change to MNS provision in the future.
- 6.4. Attendees at these meetings expressed strong objection to the proposal.
- 6.5. An 'All Members' meeting was held 12th October where Councillors were able to ask questions and get answers about the proposal, for example, about sufficiency of places; timeline for sustainable model; and SEND strategy.

Who responded.

- 6.6. The most respondents were: local residents, parent/carer of child at a MNS, and parent/carer of child at another school, respectively.
- 6.7. The top three reasons given for not supporting the proposal were to do with the:
- Impact on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
 - Loss of specialist expertise - qualified staff, knowledge and experience.
 - Impact on finances – affordability of private nurseries / job losses.
- 6.8. Respondents with a child at a MNS mentioned that other early years providers would not be able to provide the high quality of support, especially for children

with special educational needs and disability. Positive feedback was given about all 5 MNS.

- 6.9. MNS staff expressed concerned about their job security if the proposal goes ahead.
- 6.10. Some respondents, especially governing body, requested more time for other options to be explored.
- 6.11. Very few (2.5%) of respondents supported the proposed closure of MNS. The key reasons given by respondents for supporting the proposal were to do with:
- Financial viability – MNS not being able to run within budget and the burden to the council/taxpayers.
 - Sufficient childcare provisions available within the borough.
 - Need for further investigation.
- 6.12. In terms of support for the proposed merger (6.5%), respondents said that:
- Financial efficiencies – reducing budgets.
 - A merger should not impact quantity (available spaces) and quality of services.
 - Further investigation needs to take place before a decision can be made.
- 6.13. Respondent were asked what the council could do to address any impact(s). Their response included:
- Finding alternative approaches to address the financial deficit that don't impact children.
 - Generate finance to support the borough – invest in early years education.
 - More research to evidence benefits to children and families.
- 6.14. Respondents were asked to give suggestions on other steps could be taken to make Croydon's MNS financially sustainable, including dealing with the deficit. Suggestions included:
- Additional funding options – sponsorships etc
 - Review MNS operating/staffing model/structure – utilise qualified volunteers.
 - Bring MNS under federation.
 - A multi-agency (to include parents and MNS workers) panel/board to problem solve/create ideas.
 - Co-location with Family Hubs could also be explored to build upon the trusted relationships that many nursery staff teams have with families.'

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1. Become a council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities and businesses.
- 7.2. Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1. Financial Implications

- 8.1.1. Depending on the Executive Mayor's decision, there may be financial implications, therefore further work may be required to quantify the impact on the council's budgets.
- 8.1.2. The current financial position indicates that most of the MNS have a deficit budget, with a rising accrued deficit totalling £560,760 (as of July 2022) despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget. Should any of the MNS close, the deficit relating to that MNS will need to be funded through the Council's general fund. This would include any closure costs that will need to be added to the final deficit position, but these are unknown at this time and therefore cannot be quantified.
- 8.1.3. Any budget shortfall by the end of the closure period is the responsibility of the Council and cannot be charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This means that the Council will need to identify additional resources from its reserves and balances to support the final closing deficit position. There is also the possibility of redundancy costs.
- 8.1.4. In the Spring Budget in March of this year the government announced a series of new childcare measures, including the provision of 30 hours a week of free childcare for 38 weeks a year, for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years. This will be rolled out in phases from April 2024 and is in addition to the 30 hours a week already provided for eligible working parents of 3 to 4-year-olds. The provision of 30 hours of free childcare for all children over the age of 9 months will also be funded by September 2025. Croydon has been allocated:
 - £85,766 in 23-24 academic year to be used to meet programme and delivery costs associated with rolling out the expanded Early Years entitlements.
 - £1,030,106.57 programme and capital grant funding in the financial years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 – to deliver the wraparound

programme to support families who need it to access wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm, from September 2024.

9. Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendation

Financial Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£	£	£
Total Expenditure	3,274,186	2,913,124	3,042,122
Total Funding	2,891,886	2,941,967	2,752,985
In-Year Surplus		28,843	
In-Year Deficit	382,300		289,137
Surplus B/f	119,950		
Deficit B/f		262,350	233,507
Deficit C/f	262,350	233,507	522,644

Comments approved by Allister Bannin, Director of Finance, 27/11/2023.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1.1 The report sets out the outcome of the informal consultation on the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough and recommends that that officers explore other options for MNS suggested as part of the consultation process. Therefore, the decision on the proposals consulted on is paused to allow for further options to be considered and reported back to Executive Mayor in Cabinet.
- 10.1.2 The Council must continue to have regard to Section 15 Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 20133 (the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations). Under section 15 of EIA 2006, a local authority can propose the closure of, amongst others, a maintained nursery school. The statutory process is set out in the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations and in the statutory process section of the Opening and Closing Maintained Schools - Statutory Guidance for Proposers and Decision Maker (2023). The Council is following the consultation process referred to in the Statutory Guidance in taking forward proposals to reduce the numbers of MNS. The same should apply to any future proposals of the same effect.
- 10.1.3 As set out above section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on the Council to secure sufficient free early years provision for eligible children.
- 10.1.4 Section 8 of the Childcare Act 2006 describes the 'Powers of local authority in relation to the provision of childcare' as (3) An English local authority may not provide childcare for a particular child or group of children unless the local

authority are satisfied that (a) that no other person is willing to provide the childcare (whether in pursuance of arrangements made with the authority or otherwise), or (b) if another person is willing to do so, that in the circumstances it is appropriate for the local authority to provide the childcare. This does not affect the provision of childcare by the governing body of a maintained school, or the provision of day care for children in need in accordance with section 18 of the Children Act 1989.

- 10.1.5 Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA 2014), to keep under review educational provision, training provision and social care provision made both in and outside of their area for children and young people with SEN or a disability and for whom they are responsible.

Comments approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 28/11/2023)

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Any decisions taken that have a staffing impact on the MNS workforce will require application of the council's appropriate human resources policies, which will include meaningful consultation with the affected staff and their trade union representatives.

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 23/11/23

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. 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.

- 12.2. An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the informal consultation process which identified a positive impact across characteristics. It also identified that males and other genders are underrepresented in the children's workforce. The council will mitigate against this by identifying ways to increase representation in the workforce.

- 12.3. The equalities data from the consultation will provide a better understanding of any impact of the proposed change and whether it will promote equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination in line with the Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 12.4. Comments approved by Naseer Ahmad on behalf of the Equalities Manager. (Date 24/11/2023)

13. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. Family hubs and Start for Life services are a place-based way of joining up locally in the planning and delivery of a range of family services. They are 'one stop shops' that make it easier for families to get the support they need. The hub approach means professionals and partners working together more effectively, with a focus on supporting and strengthening the family relationships that carry us all through life. The universal Start for Life and family services are about enhancing and expanding services which seek to identify and address needs at an early stage before more specialist support is required.

14. APPENDICES

- 14.1. Appendix 1 - Consultation Outcomes report
- 14.2. Appendix 2 – Consultation document
- 14.3. Appendix 3 – Survey Questions
- 14.4. Appendix 4 – Consultation Q & A

15. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 15.1. Equality Impact Assessment

16. URGENCY

Informal consultation on the Future Options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Consultation Outcomes Report on proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools within the Borough via closure or amalgamation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Consultation document

Appendix 2 - Consultation survey questions

Appendix 3 - Consultation Q&A

Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

Executive Summary

In June 2023, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet agreed for Croydon Council to consult on a proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via closure or amalgamation. The current MNS model is not financially viable, with some MNS with a rising deficit budget.

A four-week informal consultation commenced on 19 September 2023, and concluded on 17 October 2023. The consultation sought feedback from partners, families, including the wider school communities, and public on the proposed options to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation. Respondents were asked if they 'support' or 'do not support' the proposal and the potential impact of the proposed change. Respondents were also given the opportunity to make suggestions of feasible and sustainable models that could be delivered in the funding allocated by central government and potential measures to address the historical deficit.

The consultation was conducted in a way that enabled all those with an interest to respond to the proposal. Community engagement took place through face-to-face meetings, online platforms, surveys, emails, and social media.

A quantitative and qualitative methodology was used for the consultation. A questionnaire was used to capture feedback, numerical, open-ended questions, written submissions, and feedback from meetings. A thorough analysis was undertaken of all responses received. This consultation outcome report is based on the responses received during the informal consultation period that began on 19th September 2023 and concluded on 17th October 2023.

A thematic analysis was used for the qualitative responses to give an indication of what people feel most strongly about, and the most common themes used to frame the summary, the less common views and themes have also been acknowledged.

Upon review, it was quite clear that a very emotional and passionate response has been received, as most of the individual respondents were not in favour of the proposed options, albeit some being open to further investigation and review, but are unable to make a confident, definitive response until further work has been completed. Very few respondents agreed with the proposal.

It is important to note that feedback from public consultation is prone to bias because those who choose to respond often hold strong views about the subject.

Overview of Responses

Qualitative responses

Overall, the survey results were **not** supportive of the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

The top three reasons given for not supporting the proposal were to do with the:

- Impact on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Loss of specialist expertise - qualified staff, knowledge and experience
- Impact on finances – affordability of private nurseries / job losses

Respondents also cited that MNS provide high-quality early education; support the most disadvantaged children in the Borough, including children / families whose first language is not English. The outdoor space at MNS was also mentioned, especially for families who live in flats and don't have access to garden space. Respondents with child/ren at a MNS were very concerned with the proposal as they perceived it to not be in the best interest of children as well as having concern over the high cost of private nurseries.

Some respondents acknowledged the financial difficulty faced by most MNS and suggested that more time is given to explore options that could make MNS financially sustainable.

Positive responses were given in relation to the good and outstanding features of all five MNS.

Quantitative responses

Of the 866 responses received online:

- The majority of respondents ((**94.9%**) **do not support** the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via **closure**.)
- The majority of respondents (**83.7%**) **do not support** the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via **merger** (amalgamation)
- A minority of respondents (**2.5%**) neither support nor do not support the proposal.

The cohort with the highest response rate was from female, accounting for 76.5% of online respondents; from people aged between 35 and 44 years old.

In relation to what the council can do to address potential impacts, respondents' suggestions included:

- Find alternative approaches to address the financial deficit that don't impact children.
- Generate finance to support the borough – invest in early years education.
- More research to evidence benefits to children and families.

Respondents also made suggestions about other steps that could be taken to make MNS financially sustainable, including dealing with the deficit. Some respondents, including an organisation and governing bodies, requested more time be given to explore other options.

Suggestions of what can be done to address impact(s), include:

- A multi-agency (to include parents and MNS workers) panel/board to problem solve/create ideas.
- Increase revenue – Hiring out or renting the space outside of operational hours/ paid for training offers to peers or professionals/ paid childcare.
- Link to Family Hubs
- Maximising the number of children on roll at each school / expanding the age range and hours; offer wrap-around care / holiday club.

Written submissions

In addition, written submissions have been received from;

- Chris Philp, MP who acknowledged that it may not be possible to find a sustainable model for all 5 MNS and cited reasons why he believed that there is a strong case for the retention of Purley MNS.
- Purley Partnership Federation Governing Board (including Purley Nursery School) mentioned that they do not support the proposal.
- The Board of Governors of Thornton Heath Nursery School expressed concerns about the proposal and that the school is a financially sustainable school and is not in deficit.
- The Federation of Crosfield and Selhurst Nursery Schools and Children's Centres / Governing Body's submitted a proposal to create a sustainable operating model for both schools.
- Croydon Joint Teacher Trade Unions, cited a 'Briefing Paper: a Provider Perspective' that was presented to the Croydon Schools Forum in December 2021 which outlined different approaches that could be considered.
- Early Education, a national charity asking the council to engage in further dialogue with the school leaders, governors and other interested parties to fully explore options and put in place an action plan that will give MNS the best chance to be viable.
- All the other responses received via email and handed to the MNS, did not support the proposal.

Consultation meetings

There was similarity between the responses received online and verbal feedback raised by respondents at the MNS consultation meetings. In addition, parents/carers expressed concerns about the impact of the possible closure or merger on their children, family and community. Some respondents, especially Governing Body, requested more time to consider and work collegiately with the council to come up with financially sustainable options.

An 'All Members' meeting was held 12th October where Councillors were able to ask questions about the proposal, for example, about sufficiency of places; timeline for sustainable model; and SEND strategy.

Diversity

Men were under-represented, accounting for 15.1% of responses received. Most respondents were female, local residents, followed by parent/carer of a child/children at a Croydon MNS.

Conclusion

Further details of the feedback received are provided in the body of this report, which includes graphical representation of the quantitative data in Annex A. The report is intended to capture the key themes and issues raised by respondents during the consultation period and does not represent every comment made by individuals or organisations.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Mayor in Cabinet with the outcomes, together with suggestions received, from the informal consultation on the proposal to reduce, in principle, the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is the final decision maker on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation; and will decide on next steps.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Croydon Council launched a consultation from 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023 to inform the development of future options for MNS in Croydon. Those with an interest were asked to respond to the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation, including making suggestions of alternative models that could be delivered with the funding allocated by the government to deal with the historical deficit.
- 1.2. This report provides details of the consultation process and activities, a summary of views, both quantitative and qualitative, from the consultation. Figures provided throughout this document have been rounded to the nearest whole number, which in places might result in totals being slightly different from the sum of their parts.

2. Background

- 2.1. MNS are local authority run schools that provide early education and childcare to children from 2 - 5 years old during school hours within term time, usually 8:30am-3.30pm. This does not usually include wrap around care. MNS are required to employ a headteacher, qualified teachers, a SENCO [Special Educational Needs Coordinator] and staff with level 3 qualifications.
- 2.2. Croydon recognises the importance of early years development and education and remains committed to delivering high-quality, funded, early years provision that evidence value for money.
- 2.3. MNS are one of several types of provision that we have in the borough for early years education and childcare. MNS provide valuable services and help to ensure that the council meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of early years provision across the borough.
- 2.4. There are five MNS in Croydon that offer part time places for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds: Thornton Heath, Tunstall, Purley, Crosfield and Selhurst. Three of the MNS are in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough.
- 2.5. MNS have higher costs than other early years providers, as they are required to employ qualified teachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and a headteacher and meet the same standards and requirements as other schools.
- 2.6. Early Years education and childcare are funded by the Department for Education. MNS receive funding for free early years education in the same way as other Early Years providers except that they benefit from supplementary annual funding.

- 2.7. Most of Croydon's MNS have a deficit budget and there is an urgent need to act as the current model is not financially sustainable. Council Officers have been working with, and supporting, the MNS's with deficit budgets to identify opportunities and/or alternative delivery models for savings/income in order to return to a balanced budget position. In addition, the Department for Education School Resource Management Advisers have offered free independent support to the relevant MNS to look at the underlying reasons for the deficit position and support the school to develop strategies to return the school to financial stability.
- 2.8. Nationally, MNS have had financial challenges for several years and despite transitional and supplementary funding the future sustainability of these schools is uncertain because of budget pressures. A national survey carried out in 2020 revealed that 64% of MNS were in deficit.

3. Consultation proposal

- 3.1. Croydon Council undertook a consultation on whether and, if so, how to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via closure or amalgamation. As part of the survey questions respondents were asked to suggest feasible and sustainable model that can be delivered in the funding allocated by central government and address the deficit. The consultation took place from 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023.
- 3.2. The proposal to close MNS means the discontinuation of operations by the MNS in its existing form. If the proposal goes ahead, one or more of the MNS will close, resulting in fewer MNS across the borough. The proposal to amalgamate MNS is to explore the possibility of closing one or more schools and merging it with one or more other schools.
- 3.3. It is not a statutory requirement to undertake informal consultation, however, as part of developing future options for MNS, wider engagement was carried out with partners, providers and families to obtain initial evidence and to understand the possible impact of the proposed changes.

4. Consultation rationale

- 4.1. The proposal has been developed as the current model of Croydon's MNS is not financially sustainable. The majority of the five MNS have a rising accrued deficit totalling £560,760, despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget.
- 4.2. Some of the MNS are now unable to deliver the provision on the current funding allocation and are in a deficit budget position. Without intervention, their cumulative financial deficit will increase, putting their future at a greater risk. The consultation will help to inform the development of a sustainable model for Croydon's MNS.

5. Consultation and Communication activities

- 5.1. A consultation document including a questionnaire was used as a basis of informing partners, including parents/carers, providers and local residents about the rationale for the consultation proposal to reduce, in principle, the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation, and inviting feedback on the proposed change. The consultation, questionnaire and question and answer document was publicly accessible online via www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/mns at hard copies at library and MNS. The consultation materials could be requested in hard copy, alternative formats and language – the online platform had a translate option.
- 5.2. Partners, families, and residents were given the opportunity to express their views in writing via a questionnaire, both electronically and via the hard copy attached to the consultation document, by email and post.
- 5.3. Different modes and methods of communication were used to inform and facilitate feedback from those with an interest in the proposal. Communication activities included the circulation of the consultation materials, via;
- Websites:
 - ✓ Croydon Council
 - ✓ Get Involved - consultation webpage
 - ✓ Family Information Space
 - ✓ Maintained Nursery Schools
 - Schools Bulletin / Newsletters:
 - ✓ sent to all schools within Croydon
 - ✓ Your Croydon, Our Croydon
 - Social Media:
 - ✓ Twitter
 - ✓ Facebook
 - ✓ 'Your Croydon'
 - Press release.
 - Email to MPs, Ward Councillors, Early Years providers and neighbouring boroughs.
 - Public face-to-face meetings at each MNS.
 - All members virtual meeting.
- 5.4. Face to face meeting were held at each MNS and included presentations to provide context and rationale for the proposal, question and answer sessions, and the opportunity for attendees to suggest alternative options to what was proposed. Meetings were held at:
- Purley Nursery (at Christ Church School) – 25th September
 - Selhurst Nursery – 27th September

- Tunstall Nursery – 2nd October
- Crosfield Nursery – 4th October
- Thornton Heath – 5th October

5.5. An 'All Members meeting' was held on 12 October 2023.

5.6. It is worth noting that not all respondents indicated whether they support / do not support the proposal.

6. Consultation responses / findings

Quantitative and qualitative data

6.1. The findings in this report are based on quantitative data gathered through the responses to the consultation questionnaire, as well as qualitative feedback collected through free-text comments received through the questionnaire, verbal feedback from Councillors and written submissions from MP, representative organisation, trade union and meetings.

Methodology

6.2. The consultation questionnaire was the main method used for collecting, analysing and interpreting data from those with an interest in the proposal. The completion of the questionnaire was recommended to help achieve a better response, combining email a dedicated address, postal, web-based and feedback from the consultation meetings. Respondents could also drop off their completed form at the MNS or send in the post.

6.3. The online platform had the facility to analyse the quantitative feedback to ensure the reliability and validity of data management and collection process, protecting against the loss of data and facilitated data transfer into a numerical and graphical representation.

6.4. The approach taken to analyse each of the qualitative / textual responses within the questionnaire was by using data mining/text analytics to create themes from numerous texts from individual respondents. This then enabled us to see patterns emerge from large textual responses, often pulling out numerous themes from one respondent, all of which we categorised in subjects of agreement / enquiry or challenge. Each response was then reviewed to determine whether it positively or negatively responded to question being asked and the overall consensus.

6.5. A summary of the responses to each of the options in the consultation questionnaire is set out below.

6.6 Breakdown of respondents

In total, the consultation received 895 responses. 866 of these responses were through the online platform - Get Involved. 29 were received by email or handed to the MNS.

6.7 In addition, written submissions have been received from;

6.7.1 Chris Philp, MP who acknowledged that it may not be possible to find a sustainable model for all 5 MNS but cited reasons why he believed that there is a strong case for retention of Purley MNS:

- Of the 5 MNS, Purley is the only one in the South of the borough
- It has an outstanding Ofsted rating
- It has firm plans to return to a sustainable financial position
 - It has been reducing its in-year deficit every year since 2020-21 and this year it is projecting a surplus
 - It is now generating a quarter of its income added services such as, Breakfast, After school and Holiday clubs
- Purley Nursery has a SENCO and a strong record for supporting SEN children.

6.7.1 Purley Partnership Federation Governing Board (including Purley Nursery School) cited that they do not support the proposal with one of the reasons being that they are confident that Purley Nursery School is now on a financially sustainable trajectory.

6.7.2 The Board of Governors of Thornton Heath Nursery School expressed concerns about the proposal and that the school is a financially sustainable school and is not in deficit and has not been for the past 5 years. A suggestion has been made / invitation extended invite the Executive Mayor of Croydon to consider personally visiting each of the five nursery schools in question before any decisions are made.

6.7.3 The Federation of Crosfield and Selhurst Nursery Schools and Children's Centres responded with a suggestion of the Governing Body's alternative proposal to create a sustainable operating model for both schools and an outline costing model to support the proposal, including:

- Maximising the number of children on roll at each school, in response to current and anticipated available space at both schools;
- Expanding the age range of children on roll, to include children from 1-2 (at Selhurst), in line with the DfE proposal to increase the offer of free-childcare available;

- Extending the hours the nursery is open each day e.g. from 7.30am until 6.00pm, through the offer of Breakfast and After School Clubs.

6.7.4 Croydon Joint Teacher Trade Unions, cited a 'Briefing Paper: a Provider Perspective' that was presented at a meeting of the Croydon Schools Forum in December 2021 that proposed "retaining the 5 stand-alone settings, while rationalising and integrating provision or by adopting a more radical transformative approach, moving to an amalgamation of all MNS in the LA with a number of different sites, places and opening hours across the Borough".

6.7.5 Early Education, a national charity asking the council to engage in further dialogue with the school leaders, governors and other interested parties to fully explore options and put in place an action plan that will give MNS the best chance to be viable.

6.7.6 An 'All Members' online meeting was held on 12th October. This took the form of a question-and-answer session where Members asked questions and sought clarity about the proposal, including its implications on children, families and the council. A common theme in the feedback was about sufficiency of places; timeline for sustainable model; SEND strategy and alternative funding to support MNS.

6.8 MNS meetings - Verbal feedback

6.8.1 The verbal feedback the MNS meetings mirrored what has been included in the feedback on the consultation questionnaire. MNS that were not in deficit questioned why they were included in the consultation and raised concerns about being asked to merge with school/s that is/are in deficit.

7. Summary of consultation responses

- 7.1. We provided 5 quantitative and 6 qualitative questions for respondents to answer, including, inviting suggestions of other sustainable models, plus equality and diversity questions. Graphical representation of the quantitative data can be found in Annex A.
- 7.2. Most respondents stated that they did not support the proposal to close (94.9%) or merger (83.7%) the MNS. Some of the key reasons given are around the loss of: support for children with special educational needs and disabilities; quality and expertise of teaching; and finance, for example, cost of affordable childcare in the private sector and; cost of living crisis. There were calls to for round table discussion to explore alternative options.

7.3. Key points from respondents with a child at a MNS may be characterised by the following responses:

'In a cost of living crisis, closing maintained nurseries in Croydon - an area already deprived of funding - could lead to increased child poverty as parents will not be able to work.'

'Many on Low or even medium incomes will struggle to afford independent Nursery fees and this will undoubtedly affect the development of the child/children'

'Many on Low or even medium incomes will struggle to afford independent Nursery fees and this will undoubtedly affect the development of the child/children'

'These schools provide intensive support to nurture a child's development- especially those with vulnerabilities such as emerging or profound SEND'

'Merging the different types of management and teaching styles will be detrimental to the children and I would lack confidence that my child and the children in my current nursery would receive the same level of care and learning.'

'Closure or mergers will significantly impact us. As working parents closure would mean my child would have no other means of accessing good quality nursery childcare.'

7.4. Parents/carers mentioned that other early years providers would not be able to provide the high quality of support, especially for children with special educational needs and disability.

7.5. MNS staff expressed concerned about their job if the proposal goes ahead.

- 7.6. Respondents with child at a MNS gave positive feedback about their and their child's experience:

7.6.1. Crosfield nursery

'Crosfield provides essential early years support for children with special education needs that doesn't exist anywhere else in Croydon. The local area around Crosfield includes a high number of children in the 20% most disadvantaged in England. All the expertise, resource and care at Crosfield are needed by these children.'

7.6.2. Selhurst & Crosfield nursery

'Selhurst and Crosfield are shining examples of how all early years settings should be, they offer quality and care to all children no matter their needs, race, religion, or background.'

'The SEND provision at Crosfield and Selhurst is outstanding. Private nurseries are sending their SEN applications to these settings. Also there is a shortage of 2 year places within Croydon.'

7.6.3. Purley nursery

'Purley nursery has been an invaluable asset to our family, greatly enhancing our quality of life. It has the potential to positively impact countless other families as well. We cannot afford to jeopardize the well-being of our community by reducing nursery funding or closing these vital facilities.'

7.6.4. Thornton Heath

'The Thornton Heath nursery school is a gem. They have great teachers, they offer children a variety of activities that they would not be able to access in other places, they support parents, particularly those with children with special needs.'

7.6.5. Tunstall nursery

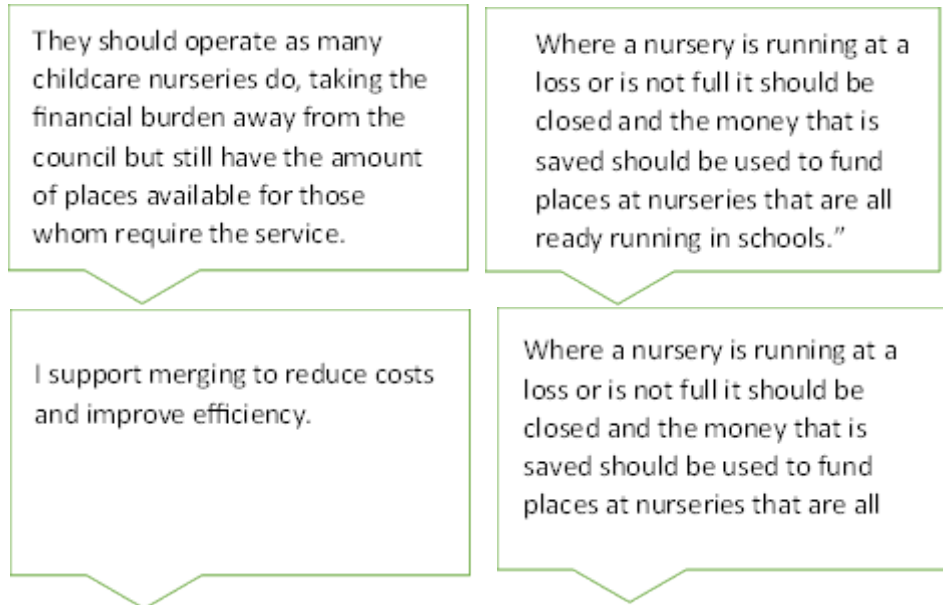
'Tunstall is one of the best nurseries in our area so we don't want it to be closed.'

- 7.7. Very few (2.5%) of respondents supported the proposed closure of MNS. The key reasons given by respondents for supporting the proposal were to do with:

- Financial viability – not being able to run within budget and the burden to the council/tax payers.
- Sufficient childcare provisions within the borough.
- Need for further investigation.

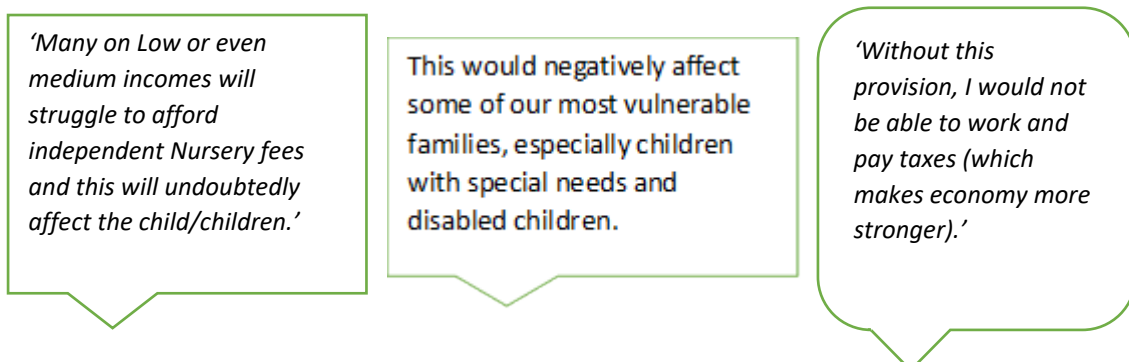
- 7.8. Respondents who supported the proposed merger (6.5%), said they did so for reasons such as:

- Financial efficiencies – reducing budgets.
- A merger should not impact quantity (available spaces) and quality of services.
- Further investigation needs to take place before a decision can be made.



7.9. Feedback from respondents about how they would be negatively impacted by the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or mergers, included impacts on:

- Finances
- Children with SEND
- Areas of deprivation
- The mental health and well-being of families and staff.



'Cutting funding of early years care is a complete false economy that prioritises short term finances over long term costs (and of course comes at great personal costs

The staff are family and their support and advice alleviates pressures on other services: GP, health visitor...etc. Closing this would cause a bulge elsewhere in the 'system'.

7.10. Respondents also mentioned that MNS buildings are purpose built, making them accessible for people with SEND. By contrast, some other early years providers buildings are not accessible. In addition, there were strong views about whether sufficient early years places would be available considering the Chancellor's budget announcement regarding investment in childcare. Some respondents raised concerns about the proposals impact on working families and their ability to continue or take up new employment. There were calls for a meeting with the Executive Mayor to hear first-hand stories about MNS from families.

7.11. Respondent were asked what can the council do to address any impact(s) that they have mentioned? Responses included:

- Find alternative approaches to address the financial deficit that don't impact children.
- Generate finance to support the borough – invest in early years education.
- More research to evidence benefits to children and families.

'I would like to see work being done to evaluate the long term cost of losing these schools to our borough.

7.12. Respondents requested all 5 nurseries to be kept open, due to the quality of education, care and support provided to the community.

7.13. Examples of support for individual MNS are listed below.

7.13.1. Crosfield nursery

'Keep Crosfield open! Nothing more nothing less! Crosfield is often forgotten about and it should be an example of the boroughs inclusion for all!'

7.13.2. Purely nursery

'Keep Purley nursery school open, open further locations to increase provision'

7.13.3. Selhurst

'For me personally the Selhurst Nursery staying as it is, would be perfect.'

7.13.4. Thornton Heath nursery

'Keep Thornton Heath Nursery School open !!! Don't close! Don't merge !!!'

7.13.5. Tunstall nursery

'Keep Tunstall Nursery School open, it is outstanding and is not in deficit. It is a very good model of a sustainable nursery school.'

7.14. Respondents were asked to give suggestions on what other steps could be taken to make Croydon's MNS financially sustainable, including dealing with the deficit. Suggestions included:

- Additional funding options – sponsorships etc.
- Review MNS operating/staffing model/structure – utilise qualified volunteers.
- Bring MNS under federation.
- A multi-agency (to include parents and MNS workers) panel/board to problem solve/create ideas.
- Co-location with Family Hubs could also be explored to build upon the trusted relationships that many nursery staff teams have with families.'

'Centralise some of the services to reduce costs'

'Having paid childcare and raising income streams from this'

'Having paid childcare and raising income streams from this.'

8. Equality and Diversity Monitoring

8.1. As part of the consultation process, respondents were asked to complete an equality and diversity questionnaire, looking at Gender, Age, Ethnicity and Disability. The information collected will help identify any special requirements and promote equality and diversity.

8.2. There was good representation across adult age groups, particularly in people aged between 35 and 44, who made up 42.5% of respondents. People aged 45-54 accounted for 16.8% of respondents. People aged

25- 34 accounted for 14.6% of survey responses. The age group of survey respondents is demonstrated in figure 4.

9. Equalities Impacts Assessment

- 9.1. An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) was undertaken as part of the consultation process which found no negative impact on protected groups. Another EQIA will be undertaken if the proposal proceeds to the next stage. The Equality analysis will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of the proposed change on families, children, providers and local residents.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. This report summarises the engagement methods and feedback received during the consultation period from 19th September 2023 to 17th October 2023.
- 10.2. In total throughout the consultation process:
- 895 responses were received, of which:
 - 866 online, and
 - 29 via email, and hard copy
 - Approximately 95 people participated in face-to-face meetings
- 10.3. Overall, the survey results and submissions on the proposal indicated a significant lack of support for the options to reduce the number of MNS via closure and amalgamation. Some respondents requested an extension to the consultation period to explore other options.
- 10.4. It is important to note that feedback from public consultation is prone to bias because those who choose to respond often hold strong views about the subject.
- 10.5. The Council would like to thank everyone that responded to the consultation and attended / participated in the public meetings. We are pleased with the broad range of respondents and offer of support to work with the council and key partners to explore a sustainable model for MNS. All contributions received will be considered and helped to shape the future of MNS within the borough.

11. Next Steps

- 11.1. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet will consider the results from the consultation and decide how to proceed. A decision notice will be published.
- 11.2. The consultation outcomes report will be published on the Get Involved and Council websites.

END

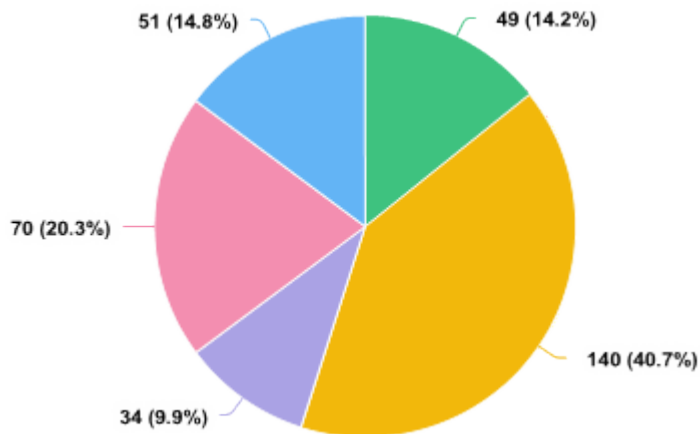
Annex A

Survey Questions

Do you currently have a child/children at one of our Maintained Nursery Schools? If so, please select which one:

Question options

● Crosfield ● Purley ● Selhurst ● Thornton Heath ● Tunstall

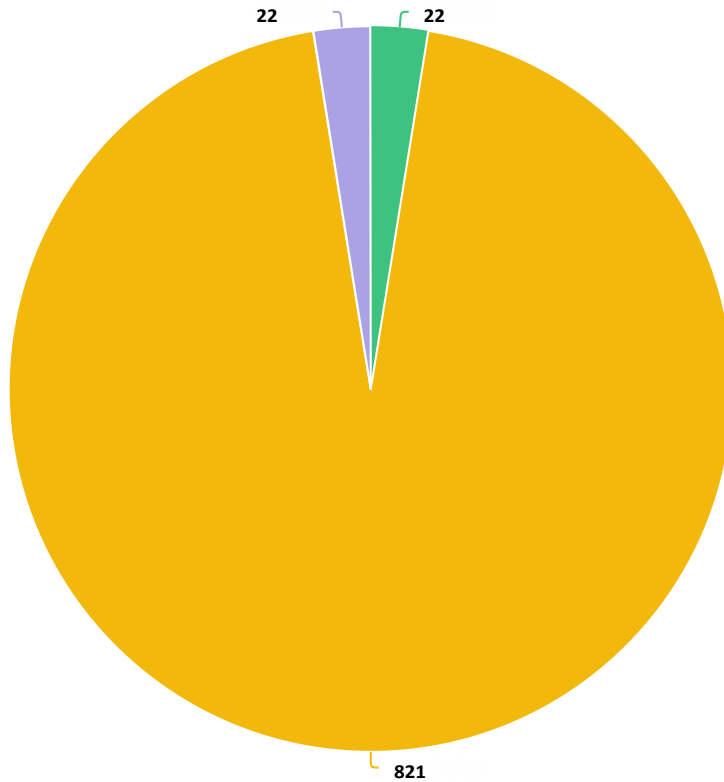


The above figure shows that the majority of respondents have a child/ren at one of the MNS, with Purley nursery accounting for over 40% of responses.

Please tell us whether you support or do not support the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via closure:

Question options

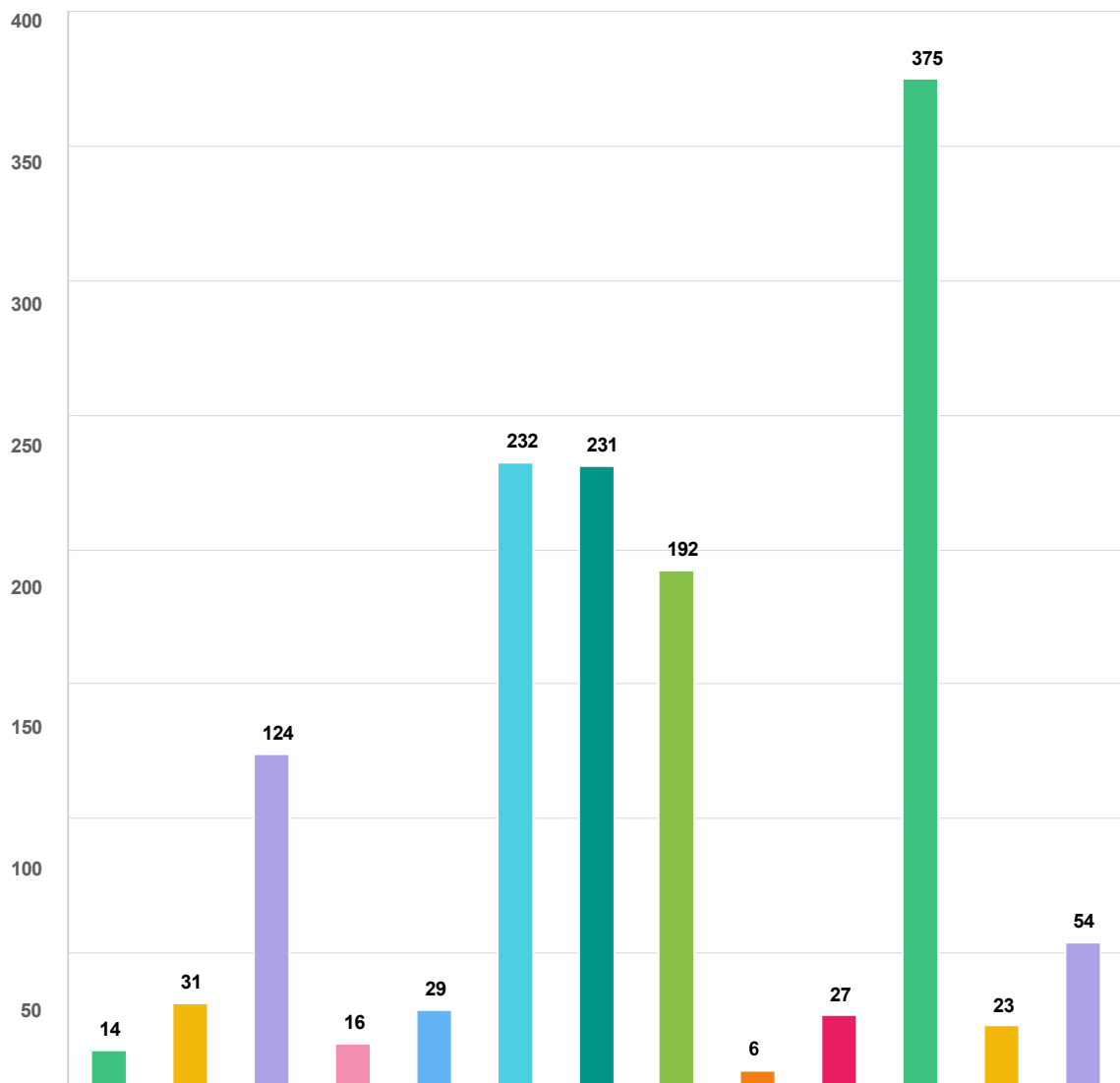
- I support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure
- I do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure
- I neither support nor do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure



This figure shows the number of online respondents who supported (22), do not support (821) and who neither support or do not support (22) the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure.

The vast majority of online respondents (821) do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure.

Please tell us who you are - select as many that apply:

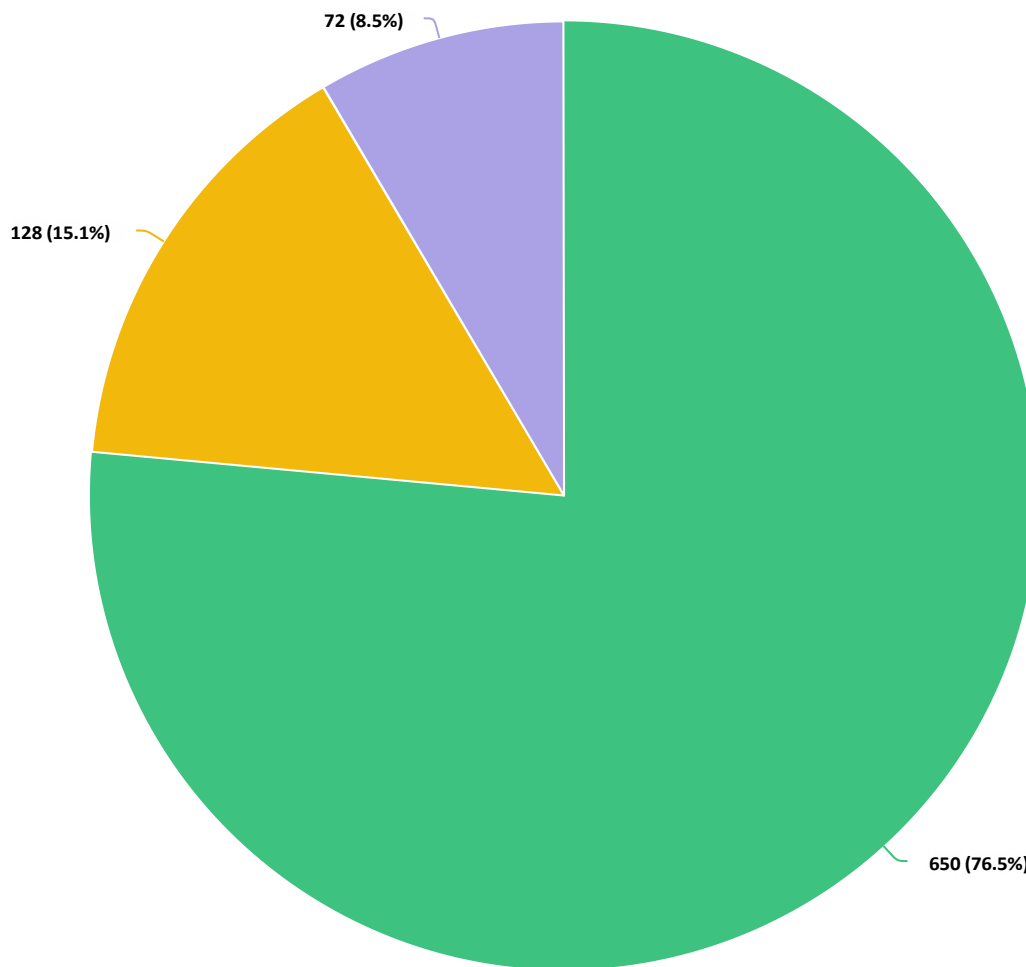


Question options

- MP/ward councillor
 ● Member of staff at a Croydon MNS
 ● Member of staff at another school
- School governor at a Croydon MNS
 ● School governor at another school
- Parent/carer of a child/children at a Croydon MNS
 ● Parent/carer of child/children at another school
- Parent/carer of child/children who attended a Croydon MNS
 ● Pupil of another school
 ● Ex-pupil of MNS
- Local resident
 ● Private, voluntary or independent provider
 ● Prefer not to say

- The figure above shows that the majority of respondents (375) were local residents. 232 respondents were a parent/carer of a child/children at a Croydon MNS.

What is your sex? (a question about gender identity will follow if you are aged 16 or over)

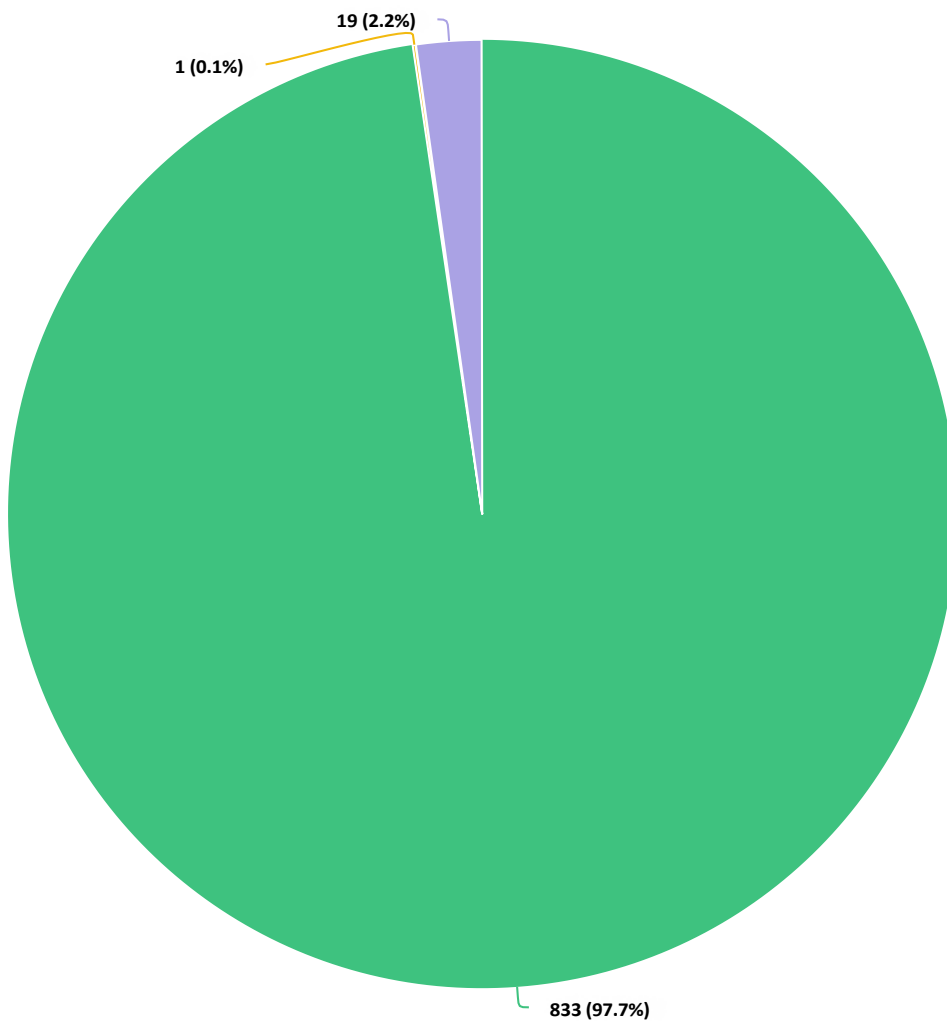


Question options

● Female ● Male ● Prefer not to say

- The figure above shows that 76.5% of respondents were female, 15.1% were male and 8.5% preferred not to state their sex.

Are you aged 16 or over?

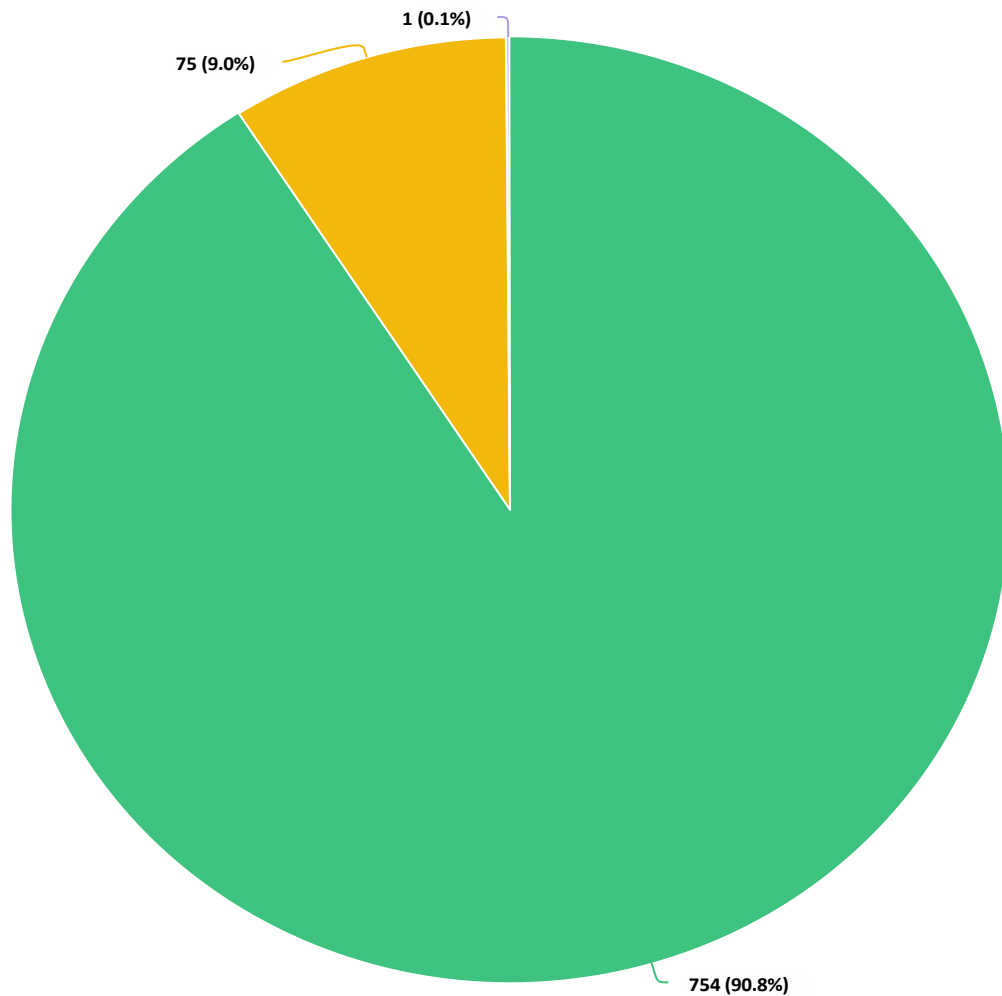


Question options

● Yes ● No ● Prefer not to say

- The figure above shows that 97.7% of respondents were over 16 years of age. 2.2% of respondents preferred not to say if they were over 16.

This question is for respondents aged 16 and over: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? (this question is voluntary)

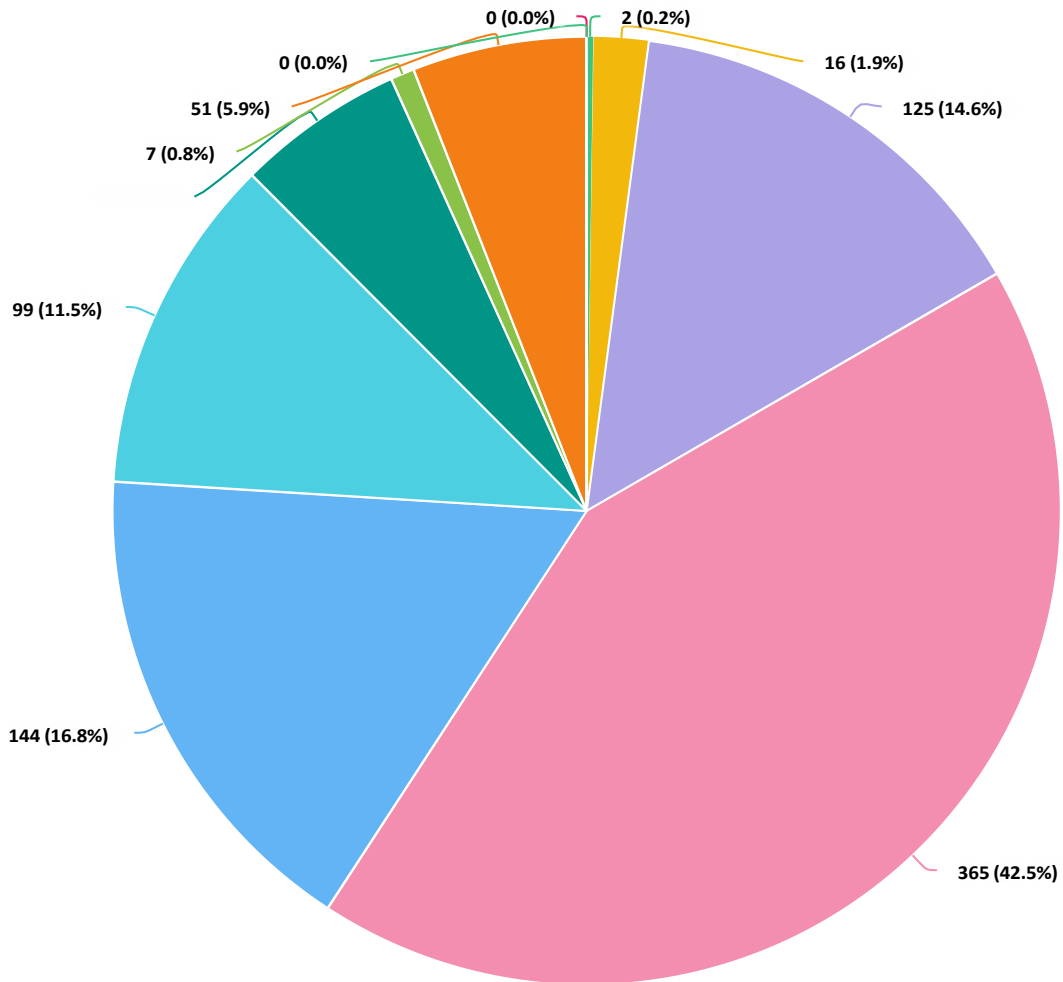


Question options

- Yes
- Prefer not to say
- No - write in identity

- The figure above shows that 90.8% of respondents who were over the age of 16, identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. 9% of respondents preferred not to say.

Which age range are you in?

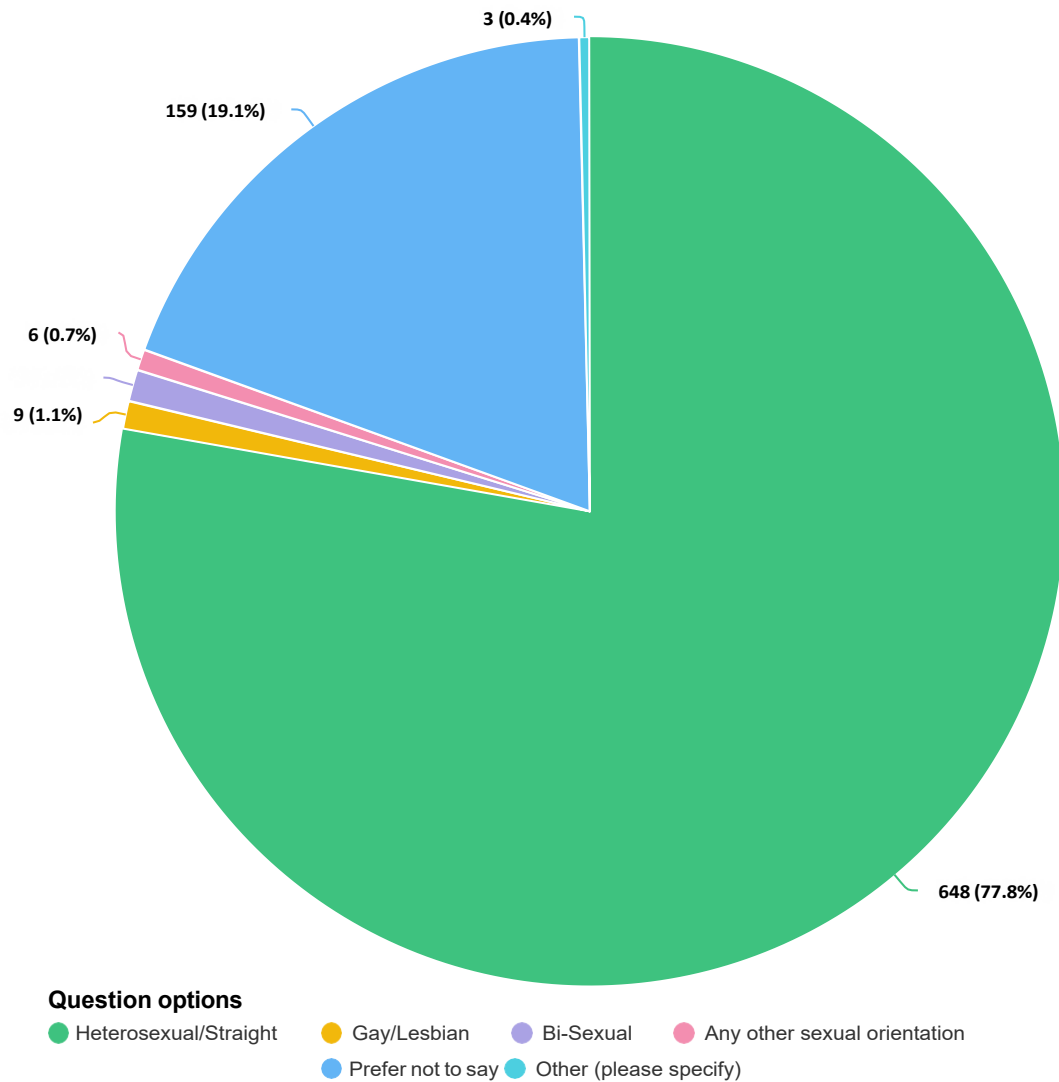


Question options

- 16 - 19
- 20 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- Prefer not to say
- Under 16
- 85+

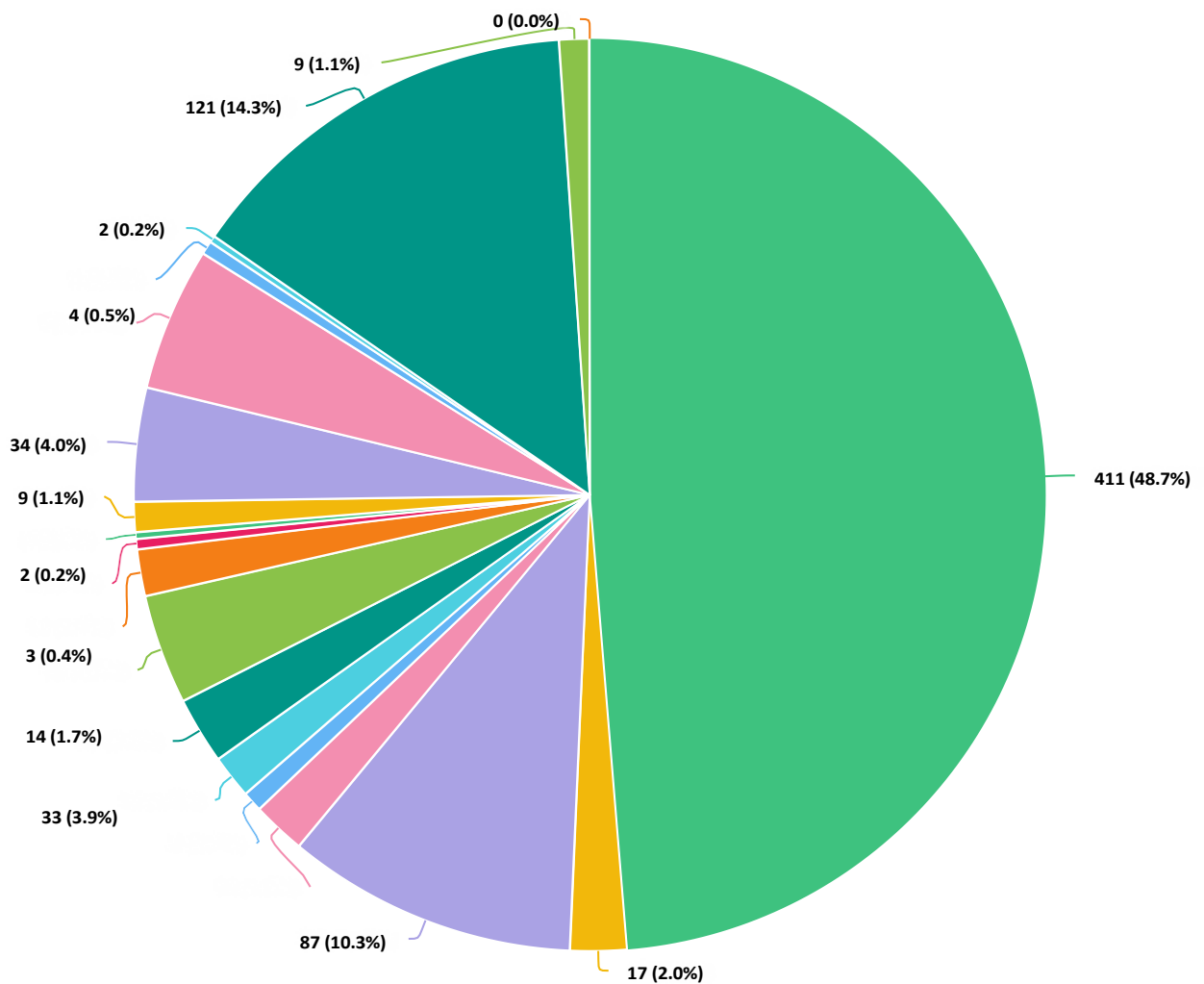
- The figure above shows that the majority of respondents (42.5%) were between 35-44 years of age. 16.8% of respondents were between 45-54 years old and 14.6% of respondents were 25-34 years old.

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?



- The figure above shows that 77.8% of respondents described their sexual orientation as straight. 19.1% of respondents preferred not to say. 1.1% described themselves as being Gay/Lesbian.

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

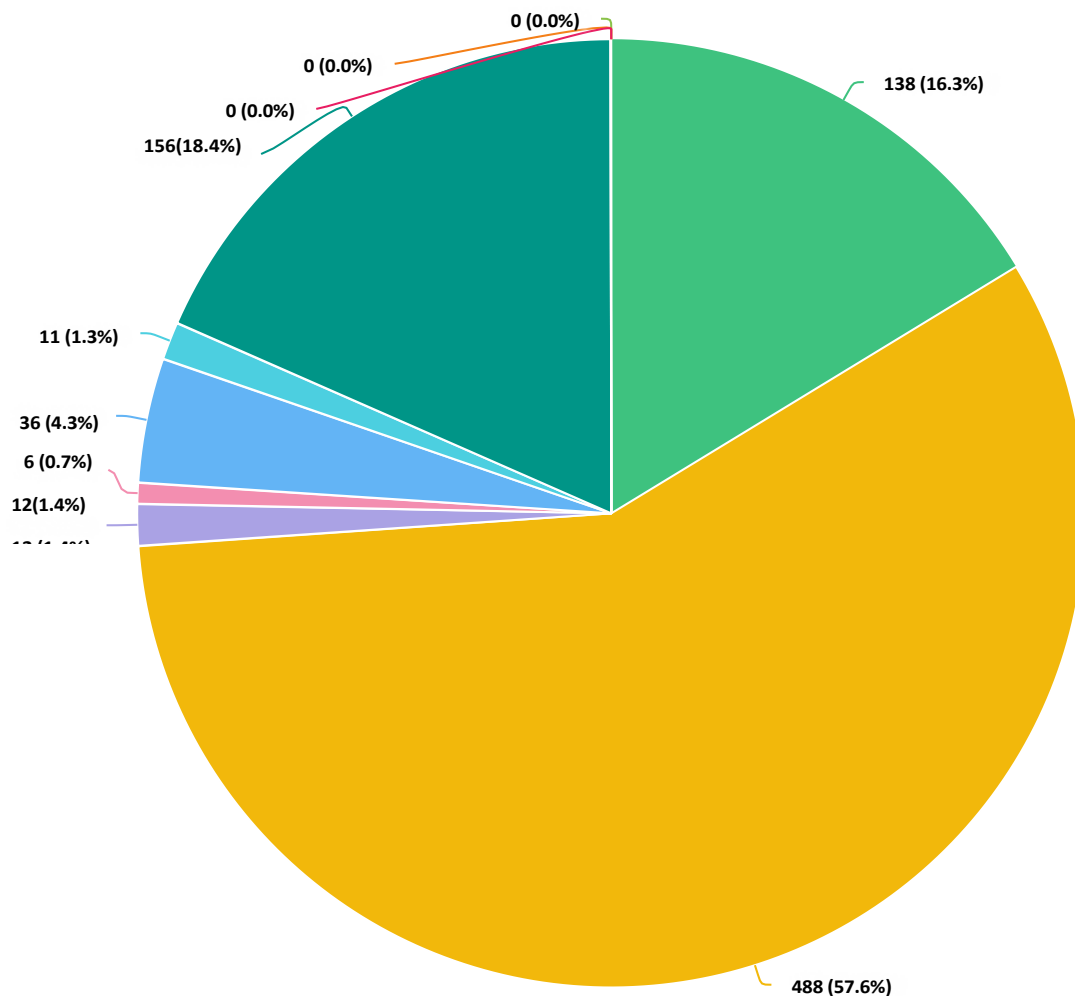


Question options

- White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
 ● White Irish
 ● Any other White background
- White and Black Caribbean
 ● White and Black African
 ● White and Asian
- Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background
 ● Indian
 ● Pakistani
 ● Bangladeshi
 ● Chinese
- Any other Asian background
 ● Black African
 ● Black Caribbean
 ● Any other Black background
 ● Arab
- Prefer not to say
 ● Other (please specify)
 ● White Gypsy or Irish Traveller

- The figure above shows that the majority, 48.7%, of respondents described their ethnic origin as white English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British.

Currently, what is your legal marital or registered civil partnership status?

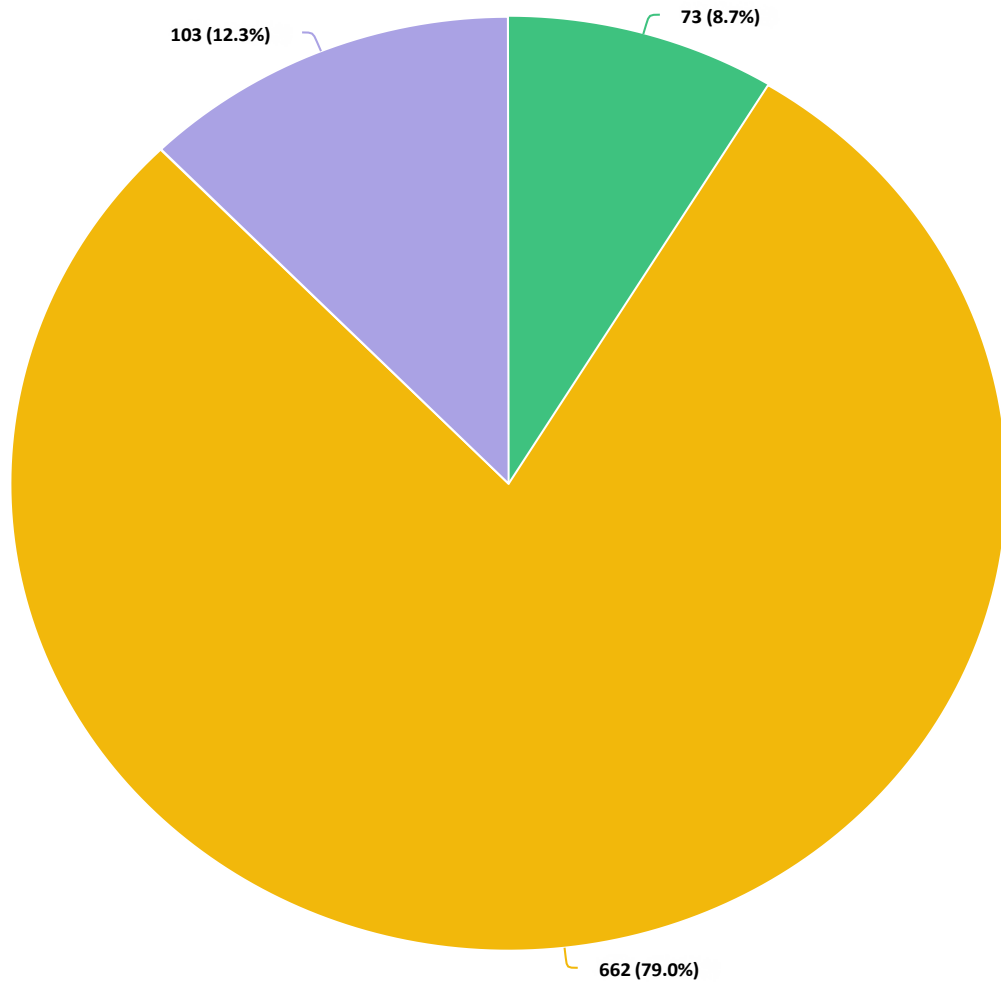


Question options

- Never married and never registered a civil partnership
- Married
- In a registered civil partnership
- Separated, but still legally married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Prefer not to say
- Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
- Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- Surviving partner from a registered civil partnership

- The figure above shows that 57.6% of respondents were married. 16.3% had never been married or in a civil partnership and 4.3% were divorced. 18.4% preferred not to say.

Have you or your partner had a baby in the last 12 months?

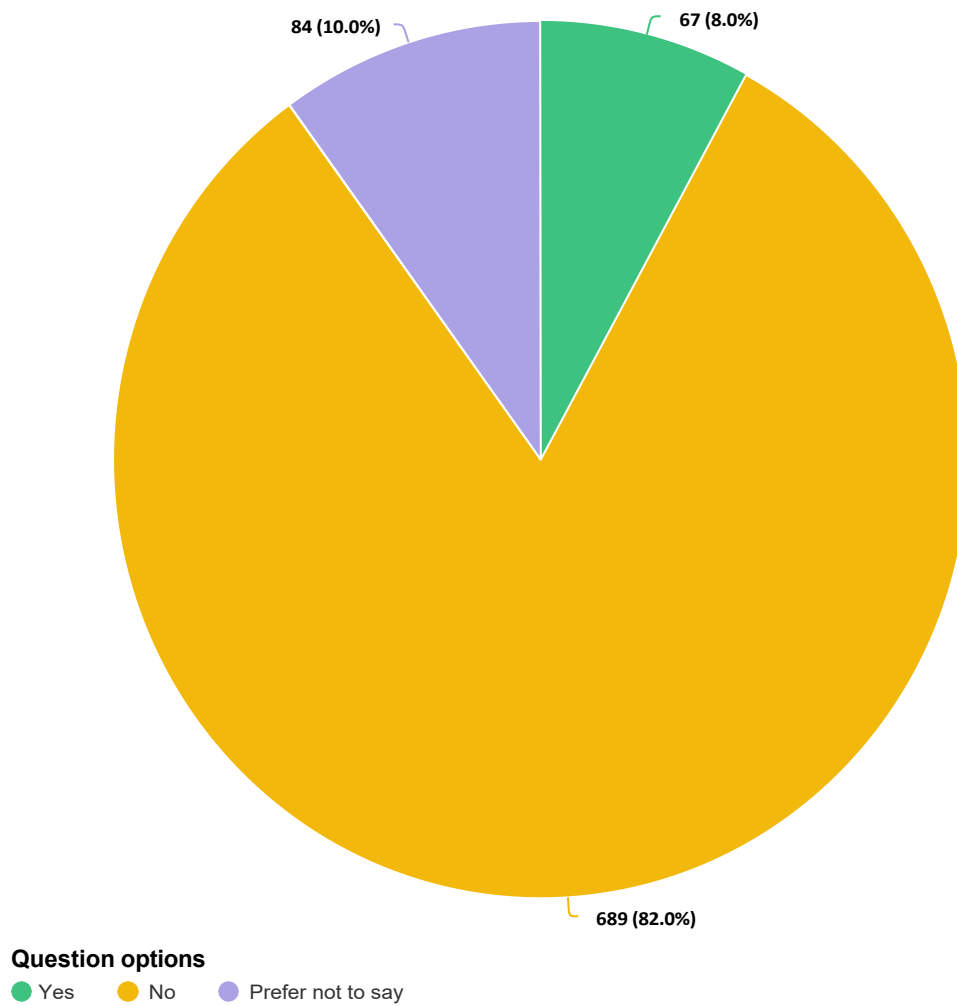


Question options

● Yes ● No ● Prefer not to say

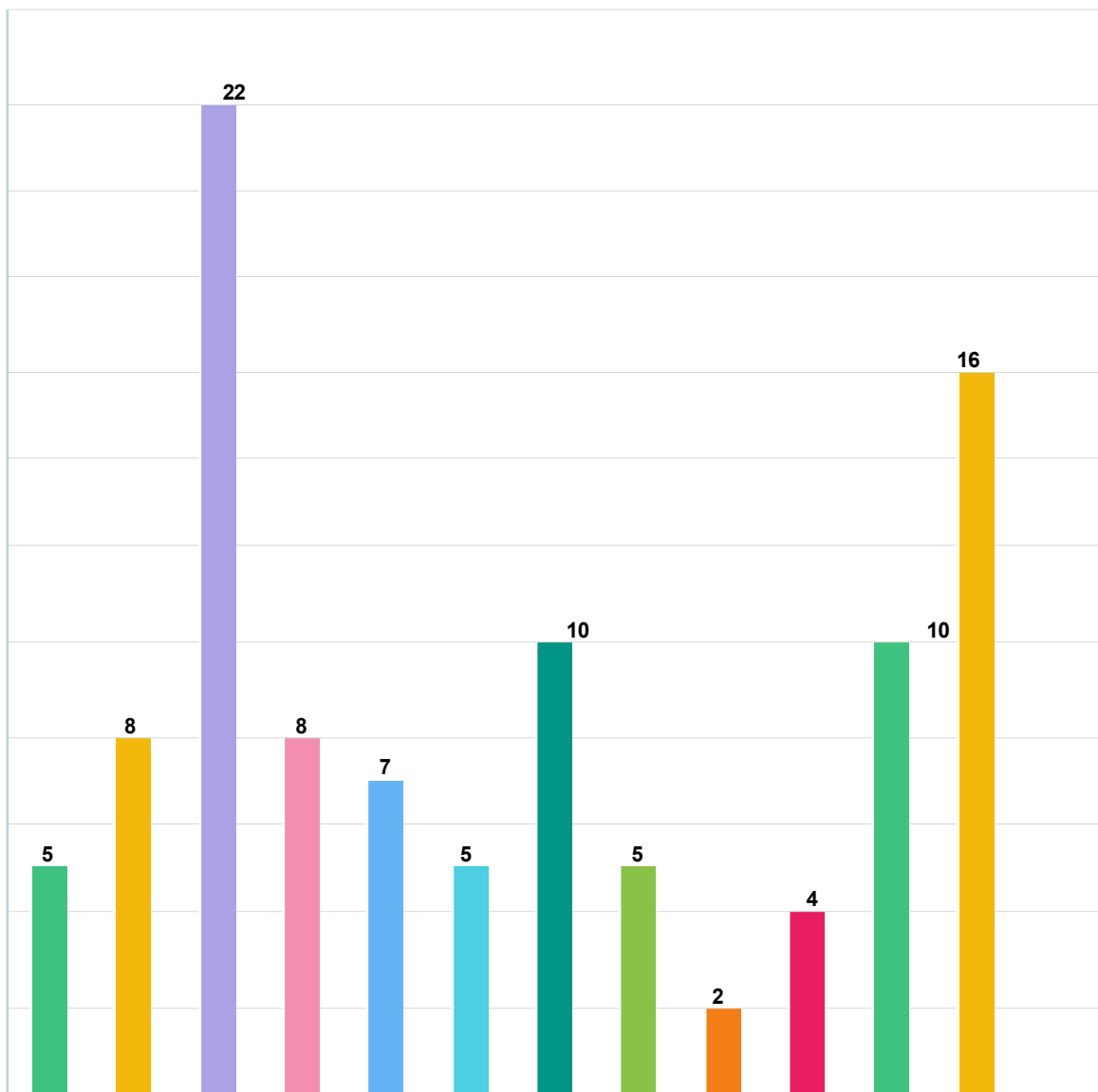
- The figure above shows that 8.7% of respondents had a baby in the last 12 months and 79% of respondents had not.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



- The figure above shows that 82% of respondents did not consider themselves to have a disability, and 8% did. 10% of respondents chose not to say.

Please select the disability(ies) you consider yourself to have:

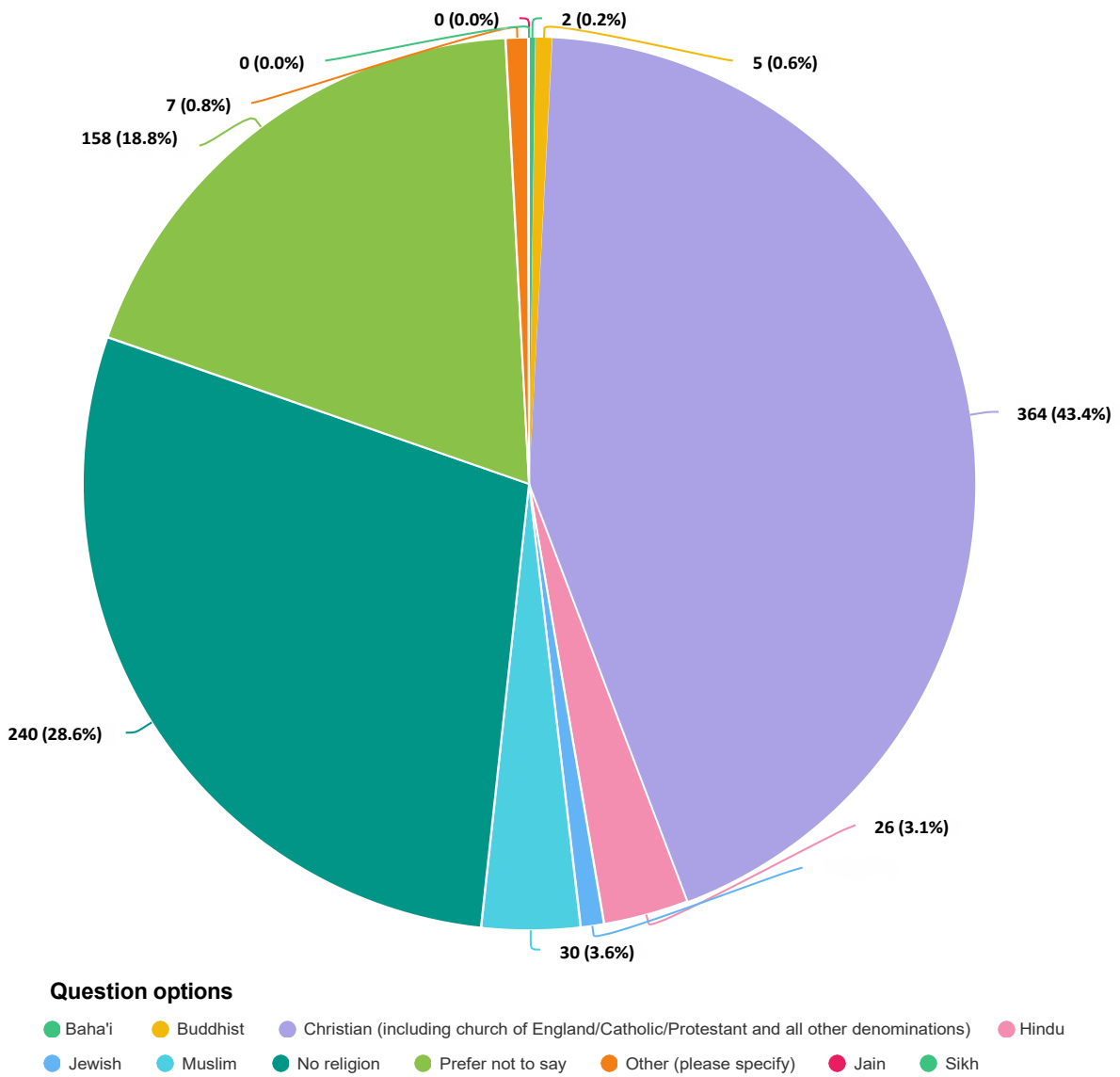


Question options

- Visually Impaired ● Hearing Impaired ● Mobility disability ● Learning disability ● Communication difficulty
- Hidden disability: autism (ASD) ● Hidden disability: ADHD ● Hidden disability: Asthma ● Hidden disability: Epilepsy
- Hidden disability: Diabetes ● Prefer not to say ● Other (please specify) ● Hidden disability: Sickle cell

- The figure above shows that, of the respondents that did consider themselves to have a disability, 22 had a mobility disability, 10 had a hidden disability and 16 had another form of disability that was not specified.

What is your religion?



- The figure above shows that 43.4% of respondents were Christian and 28.6% had no religion.

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Informal consultation on the Future for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Consultation period: 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023

Croydon Council is consulting on whether and, if so, how to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

1. Overview

- 1.1 Croydon Council is consulting on a proposal to reduce the number of its Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) via closure or amalgamation following an agreement by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet. The consultation was approved at the council's cabinet meeting on 28th June 2023. The report presented at the meeting can be accessed at:
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/s47769/MNS%20cabinet%20report%20200623.pdf>
- 1.2 The proposal has been developed as the majority of its five MNS have a rising accrued deficit totalling £560,760 despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget. Without intervention, their cumulative financial debt will increase, putting their future at a greater risk.
- 1.3 Council Officers have had informal consultation meetings with the leadership team of all five MNS to seek / hear their views about potential options to address the financial challenges and re-model MNS provision in Croydon to move to a more financial sustainable provision. All respondents agreed that to 'do nothing' is not a viable option and runs the risk of losing all schools with a deficit and having a bigger cumulative financial debt.
- 1.4 On this basis, we are consulting partners, including residents, families, providers, and anyone with an interest, on the proposal to reduce the number of its MNS via closure or amalgamation.
- 1.5 Full details of the proposal are included in this document, and a questionnaire and question and answer document is available at
www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/mns
- 1.6 You can share your views and comments on the proposal and any sustainable model for consideration that deals with the deficit. Please respond by 17 October 2023.
- 1.7 Please note that no decision has been made about the proposal. At the end of the consultation period, the responses will be analysed and a consultation outcomes report will be written and submitted by council officers to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet for a decision on the proposal to reduce the number of its MNS via closure or amalgamation. Even then, if it is decided, in principle, to explore the proposal further, more specific proposal will be

published and will be the subject of another but this time statutory consultation process.

1.8 The Executive Mayor in Cabinet will carefully consider the outcome of that consultation before making a final decision on whether or not to implement any specific proposal.

1.9 The results of this consultation will be published on the council's website.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Council is inviting responses to the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools within the borough via closure or amalgamation. Your responses will help the Executive Mayor in Cabinet to make an informed decision on the proposal. We are also inviting suggestions of feasible and sustainable model that can be delivered in the funding allocated by central government and how to deal with the deficit. It is important to note that doing nothing is not an option, we need to ensure that have a sustainable MNS model within the DfE funding available.

2.2 Please note that at this stage of the process, **no decision has been made on the proposal**. This consultation document sets out background and relevant information about the proposal and how you can express your views. There will also be meetings with senior Council officers at which the proposal will be explained in more detail, and you will be able to attend and ask questions.

3. Background

3.1 Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS)

MNS are local authority run schools that provide early education and childcare to children from 2 to 5 years old during school hours, usually 8:30am-3.30pm, during term time and does not usually include wrap around care. MNS are required to employ a headteacher, qualified teachers, a SENCO [Special Educational Needs Coordinator] and staff with level 3 qualifications.

3.2 MNS are an important part of the early years sector, provide valuable services, and help to ensure that the council meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of early years provision across the borough. The Council remains committed to deliver high quality funded early years provision that evidence value for money.

3.3 Statutory requirements

The statutory requirements concerning the closure of schools are set out in Section 15 Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 (the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations). Under section 15 of EIA 2006, a local authority can propose the closure of, amongst others, a MNS. The statutory process is set out in the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations and in the 'Opening and Closing Maintained

Schools - Statutory Guidance for Proposers and Decision Makers (January 2023).

- 3.4 Under the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare Act 2016, a local authority has several duties relating to early education and childcare, including to secure sufficient childcare for working parents in their area; and early years provision free of charge for qualifying children.
- 3.5 Currently, all families with three and four-year-olds qualify for 15 hours of free childcare a week, over 38 weeks. Households can qualify for 30 hours of free childcare if parents earn the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the national minimum or living wage. Some families can get free childcare for their 2-year-old if they are living on low income or claiming income-based benefits.
- 3.6 In the Spring budget, the Chancellor announced 30 hours of free childcare for every child over the age of 9 months, with support being phased in until eligible working parent of under 5s gets this support by September 2025. We are awaiting government guidance for the implementation of the new measures.
- 3.7 In the statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – Opening and closing maintained schools, January 2023, there is a presumption against the closure of nursery schools. However, this does not mean that a maintained nursery school will never close, but that the case for closure should be strong.
- 3.8 Council's Cabinet
On 28th June 2023, The Executive Mayor in Cabinet agreed to the recommendation to move to informal consultation and publicity on the proposal: to agree to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation. This will give partners, residents, including the wider school communities and public the opportunity to comment on the proposal and to suggest viable future options.
- 3.9 Nationally, MNS have had financial challenges for several years and despite transitional and supplementary funding the future sustainability of these schools is uncertain because of budget pressures. Governing Bodies have a duty to set a balanced budget each year, however, a national survey carried out in 2020 revealed that 64% of MNS were in deficit.
- 3.10 Currently, there is not an option for a MNS to become an academy.
- 3.11 The five MNS in Croydon offer part time places for 2, 3 and 4 year-old: Thornton Heath (144 places), Tunstall (142 places), Purley (140 places), Crosfield (83 places) and Selhurst (88 places). Two of these schools have been graded by Ofsted as 'outstanding'; two graded as 'good' and one graded as 'requires improvement'. Three of the MNS are in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough. All the sites are owned by the council.

3.12 Over the 10-year period to 2019, the number of births in Croydon has averaged around 5,600 a year. The last 3 years have seen a reduction in the number of births from 5,761 to 5,304. Not all children born in the borough will take up early years provision. As a result, numbers within some MNS have also seen a decline.

3.13 Other Early Years provision

Croydon recognises the importance of early years development and education. A MNS is one of several types of provision that we have in the borough for early years education. In total, including the five MNS, there are 576 early years childcare providers in Croydon, of which 345 are registered to deliver funded places. All 576 providers offer a maximum of 10,165 full time equivalent early years childcare places.

Table 1 - The data in this table was correct in November 2022

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Number of registered places</i>
Childminders*	360	900
Nursery classes in schools	43	1297
Maintained nursery schools	5	281
Private, voluntary, and independent nurseries (PVI)s	168	7,687

**Childminders usually have 2 or 3 early years aged children. For the purpose of this table, an average of 2.5 children has been assumed.*

3.14 Funding

In England, most of the Government funding for early years providers is delivered via three childcare entitlements:

- 15 hours universal entitlement for all three and four-year-olds.
- 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours entitlement for three and four-year-olds of eligible working parents.

3.15 Funding for the entitlements is included in the Early Years Block of each local authority's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Additional Government funding for disadvantaged children (Early Years Pupil Premium) and children with additional needs (Disability Access Fund) is also included in the Early Years Block, along with supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools.

3.16 MNS have higher costs than other early years providers, as they are required to employ qualified teachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and a headteacher and meet the same standards and requirements as other schools. To address the higher costs faced by MNS, the Government provided supplementary funding per annum to local authorities in respect of MNS.

3.17 Some of five of Croydon's MNS are now unable to deliver the provision on the current funding allocation and are in a deficit budget position. The leadership team of these nursery schools have taken steps to reduce their outgoings via

restructure and reorganisation of their school to ensure that the school's budget was balanced. However, due to increasing costs, the current government funding allocation, falling numbers, some are no longer able to set a balanced budget. The cumulative deficit across the MNS estate is £560,760 (as of end of previous year).

- 3.18 Council Officers have been working with and supporting the MNS with deficit budget to identify opportunities and/or alternative delivery models for savings/income to return to a balanced budget position. In addition, the Department for Education School Resource Management Advisers have offered free independent support to the relevant MNS to look at the underlying reasons for the deficit position and support the school to develop strategies to return the school to financial stability.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1 To consider whether to reduce, in principle, the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

- 4.2 This would, if taken forward following a statutory consultation and publicity process and a final decision, reduce the number of MNS within the borough, however, ensuring a sustainable model and enough provision but over a smaller number of sites.

4.3 What do we mean by the proposal to close MNS?

Under section 15 of EIA 2006, a local authority can propose the closure of MNS.

MNS closing means the discontinuation of operations by the MNS in its existing form. If the proposal goes ahead, one or more of the MNS will close, resulting in fewer MNS across the borough.

- 4.4 There is a statutory requirement to consult partners / stakeholders on the specific proposal, setting out details of the MNS to be closed which can be commented on or objected to during the statutory representation period. At this stage, no decision has been made on whether or not to close MNS even in principle. The purpose of this consultation is to help inform that decision.

4.5 What do we mean by the proposal to amalgamate a MNS?

There are a number of ways to amalgamate two, or more, schools. What we mean by the proposal to amalgamate MNS is explore the possibility of closing one or more schools and merging it with one or more other schools (following the statutory process).

- 4.6 If the proposal to close or amalgamate MNS is approved by the Executive Mayor, in principle, as no MNS has been specified/identified for closure or amalgamation in this consultation document, in accordance with statutory requirements, the Council would issue a statutory notice with the name of the MNS proposed to be closed / amalgamated. This notice would be open for a four-week period during which further representations can be made by those already consulted and a wider cohort of interested people. Following further consultation, the council would submit another report to the Executive Mayor

in order for a final decision to be made on whether to implement the amalgamation or closure proposal.

- 4.7 If the proposal to close or amalgamate MNS is approved, checks would be carried out to ensure alternative and sufficiency of early years provision.

5. Reason for proposal

There are five MNS in Croydon: Thornton Heath, Tunstall, Purley, Crosfield and Selhurst. Three of the MNS are located in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough.

- 5.1 The current model of Croydon's MNS is not financially sustainable. The budget deficit of some of the MNS provision will continue to increase. Some of Croydon's five MNS are now unable to deliver the provision on the current funding allocation and are in a deficit budget position.

- 5.2 There have been historical discussions about the provision and funding for MNS but no agreed action has been taken and now we are at a critical stage due to the increasing deficit position of most of our MNS. There seems to be no realistic prospect of all our MNS having a balanced budget and being able to reduce the cumulative deficits in the near future without intervention which may include an alternative delivery model.

- 5.3 The proposal has been made to ensure we find the most sustainable model to ensure the MNS are financially viable now and in the future and avoid any deficits increasing whilst continuing to positively support children and their families. Do nothing is not an option.

- 5.4 The proposal provides an opportunity for the council / MNS to pool resources and implement a sustainable business model for early years provision across the borough.

- 5.5 The council therefore need to consult and work collaboratively with partners to find a sustainable model to ensure MNS are financially viable and avoid any deficits increasing whilst ensuring that we retain enough provision for this age group.

- 5.6 There is sufficient and diverse alternative early years provision across the borough to accommodate any displaced children. In total, there are 576 years childcare providers in Croydon, of which 345 are registered to deliver funded places.

5.7 Who we are consulting?

The statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers (Opening and closing maintained schools) outlines the key stakeholders who should be consulted with as part of this process:

- the governing body
- pupils at the school;
- teachers and other staff at the school;

- any local authority likely to be affected by the proposal, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils;
- the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected;
- parents of any pupils at other schools who may be affected by the proposal including, where appropriate, families of pupils at feeder primary schools;
- any trade unions who represent staff at the school, and representatives of any trade union of staff at other schools who may be affected by the proposal; and
- MPs whose constituencies include the school that is the subject of the proposal or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposal.

5.8 The list is not exclusive, and the council is consulting the local community and anyone that will be affected by the proposed change, including all non-maintained registered nursery / early years education providers across the borough.

5.9 The key partners that will be concerned about this proposed change are children, families and parents/carers accessing pre-school nursery provision. Staff at the MNS will also be concerned.

5.10 Why are we consulting you?

The council is thinking about making changes to MNS and before deciding in principle whether and how to proceed, it is first seeking the views of partners / stakeholders, including parents/carers, staff, providers, and other interested parties. If the decision is to proceed, a legal process will be followed including formally consulting on a specific proposal and making a final decision before any changes are made.

5.11 The consultation process represents an opportunity for partners, including parents/carers, residents, providers, and anyone affected by or have an interest in the proposed change to learn about the proposal, seek clarification and express their views verbally and in writing. A combination of online and face to face consultation methods will ensure those most directly affected by the proposed change are able to contribute to the decision-making process and Council officers will be available to explain the proposal in more detail and answer any questions.

5.12 When will a decision be made?

It is worth noting that a decision will only be made on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure or amalgamation after the consultation period, which will take place from 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023. After which the council will analyse the responses to the proposed change to help inform the decision-making process regarding the future options for MNS. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet will consider the findings and decide on whether to go ahead with the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure or amalgamation.

6. Proposed consultation timeline.

NOTE: This timeline may be subject to change.

Table 2: Consultation Timetable

Date	Action
19 September 2023	Start of consultation period
17 October 2023	End of consultation period
15 December 2023	Executive Mayor's decision on the consultation outcome

Further information will be provided if required following the outcome decision

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

An equality impact assessment has been carried out to ensure decisions, practices and policies are fair and do not discriminate against any protected group.

7.1 Subject to approval of the proposal, another EqIA will be undertaken to consider the impact of the proposed change.

8. **What happens next?**

At the end of the consultation period, all responses will be analysed and used to construct the consultation outcomes report. This report will be published and submitted to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet for a decision on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

8.1 Subject to approval of the above proposal, another formal statutory consultation will be carried out with the name of the MNS proposed to be closed or amalgamated. Partners, including families, providers and the wider community will have the opportunity to make representations about the proposed change. The Executive Mayor will then consider representations made and decide on the proposal to close or amalgamate the MNS.

8.2 This report was prepared after consultation with the council's:

- Corporate Management Team
- Director Management Team
- Education Senior Management Team
- HR Team

- Finance Team
- Communications Team; and the
- Senior Leadership Team, including Headteacher and Chair of Governors of the five MNS:
 - Thornton Heath
 - Tunstall
 - Purley
 - Crosfield, and
 - Selhurst

9. How to give your views

Should you require this document in any other format or language, please contact the council using the details below.

9.1 This consultation period allows anyone with an interest to comment or object the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation by:

- Completing the online questionnaire at www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/mns
- Request a paper copy questionnaire and return to:
Croydon Council
Early Years and School Place Planning Team
4th Floor Zone D
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk
Croydon CR0 1EA
- Email: CHILD.CARE@croydon.gov.uk

10. What happens next?

After the closing date of 17 October 2023, responses will be analysed and a formal consultation outcomes report will be written. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is the final decision maker on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation. A consultation outcomes report will be produced and submitted to the Executive Mayor as part of a cabinet report.

10.1 The results of the consultation will be published on the council's website.

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Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Have your say on future options for Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) in Croydon

Q1. Do you currently have a child/children at one of our Maintained Nursery Schools? If so, please select which one:

(Choose any one option)

- Crosfield
- Purley
- Selhurst
- Thornton Heath
- Tunstall

Q2. Please tell us whether you support or do not support the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via **closure**:

(Choose any one option)

- I support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure
- I do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure
- I neither support nor do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via closure

Q3. If you support the proposed change, please tell us why:

Q4. If you do not support the proposed change, please tell us why:

Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Q5. Please tell us whether you support or do not support the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via **mergers** - where two or more schools come together to form one.

(Choose any one option)

- I support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via mergers
- I do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via mergers
- I neither support nor do not support the proposal to reduce the number of MNS via mergers

Q.6 If you support the proposed change, please tell us why:

Q.7 If you do not support the proposed change, please tell us why:

Q.8 We are keen to understand how the proposed changes may affect you. Please use this space to tell us if you are impacted by the proposal to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools within the borough via **closure** or **mergers** - where two or more schools come together to form one.

Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Q.9 What can we do to address any impact(s) you may have mentioned?

Q.10 We welcome your suggestions on what other steps could be taken to make Croydon's Maintained Nursery Schools financially sustainable, including dealing with the debt. Please type your suggestions below:

About you

Please tell us a little bit about yourself. You do not have to answer these questions if you do not wish to, but if you do, it will be very helpful for us to understand which diverse groups and communities we are hearing from.

Q.11 Please tell us who you are - select as many that apply:

(Choose all that apply)

- MP/ward councillor
- Member of staff at a Croydon MNS
- Member of staff at another school
- School governor at a Croydon MNS
- School governor at another school
- Parent/carer of a child/children at a Croydon MNS
- Parent/carer of child/children at another school
- Parent/carer of child/children who attended a Croydon MNS
- Pupil of another school
- Ex-pupil of MNS
- Local resident
- Private, voluntary or independent provider
- Prefer not to say

Q.12 What is your sex? (a question about gender identity will follow if you are aged 16 or over)

(Choose any one option)

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Q.13 Are you aged 16 or over?

(Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Q.14 This question is for respondents aged 16 and over: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? (this question is voluntary)

(Choose any one option)

- Yes
- Prefer not to say
- No - write in identity

Q.15 Which age range are you in?

(Choose any one option)

- Under 16
- 16 - 19
- 20 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85+
- Prefer not to say

Q.16 Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

(Choose any one option)

- Heterosexual/Straight
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bi-Sexual
- Any other sexual orientation
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Q.17 How would you describe your ethnic origin?

(Choose any one option)

- White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- White Irish
- White Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background
- Black African
- Black Caribbean
- Any other Black background
- Arab
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Q.18 Currently, what is your legal marital or registered civil partnership status?

(Choose any one option)

- Never married and never registered a civil partnership
- Married
- In a registered civil partnership
- Separated, but still legally married
- Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
- Divorced
- Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- Widowed
- Surviving partner from a registered civil partnership
- Prefer not to say

Q.19 Have you or your partner had a baby in the last 12 months?

(Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines someone as a disabled person if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

A disability may include progressive conditions such as HIV and cancer, mobility, sight or hearing impairments or mental health issues such as depression.

In considering whether you have a disability you should not take into account the effect of any medication or treatments used or adaptations made which reduce the effects of an impairments (other than glasses or contact lenses used to correct a visual impairment)

Q.20 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

(Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Q.21 Please select the disability(ies) you consider yourself to have:

(Choose all that apply)

- Visually Impaired
- Hearing Impaired
- Mobility disability
- Learning disability
- Communication difficulty
- Hidden disability: autism (ASD)
- Hidden disability: ADHD
- Hidden disability: Asthma
- Hidden disability: Epilepsy
- Hidden disability: Diabetes
- Hidden disability: Sickle cell
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Have your say – future options for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Get Involved Croydon

Q.22 What is your religion?

(Choose any one option)

- Baha'i
- Buddhist
- Christian (including church of England/Catholic/Protestant and all other denominations)
- Hindu
- Jain
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- No religion
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Informal consultation on the Future for Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon

Consultation period: 19 September 2023 to 17 October 2023

Questions and answers (Q & As)

Q1 - What is the consultation about?

To consider whether to reduce, in principle, the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

Q2 - What is the aim of the consultation?

The aim of the consultation is to tell you about the proposed change under consideration and to hear your views about how it may affect you, your family, or friends. The feedback gathered throughout the consultation will help inform decision on the proposed change to MNS provision in the future.

Q3 - What is the rationale for the proposal?

The proposal has been developed as the majority of its five MNS have a rising accrued deficit totalling £560,760 despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget. Without intervention, their cumulative financial debt will increase, putting their future at a greater risk.

Q4 - Have you taken into account the presumption against the closure of MNS?

Yes. In the statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – Opening and closing maintained schools, January 2023, there is a presumption against the closure of nursery schools. However, this does not mean that a maintained nursery school will never close, but that the case for closure should be strong.

At this stage, the council is only thinking about making changes to the MNS and before deciding in principle whether and how to proceed, it is first seeking the views of partners / stakeholders, including parents/carers, staff, providers and other interested parties. If it decides to proceed, a legal process will be followed including formally consulting on specific proposals and making a final decision before any changes are made.

Q5 - Have you considered the potential impact of the Chancellor's Spring budget announcement, including the extension of the free childcare for working parents of two-year-olds from April 2024?

Currently we have diverse and sufficient early years provision. We are currently looking at data to get an indication of the impact of these changes in terms of supply and demand.

The measures announced by the Chancellor do not resolve the issue of the historical deficit.

Q6 - Where can I find information about the MNS finances?

The financial information for the nurseries is publicly accessible via [Schools Financial Benchmarking – GOV.UK \(schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk\)](https://schoolsfinancialbenchmarking.service.gov.uk)- external site

Q7 - Why don't the MNS have enough money?

Funding for MNS comes from central government. MNS have higher costs than other early years providers, as they are required to employ qualified teachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and a headteacher and meet the same standards and requirements as other schools. To address the higher costs faced by MNS, the Government provided supplementary funding per annum to local authorities in respect of MNS. However, the funding the MNS receives has not been sufficient to cover their costs. This has resulted in a cumulative budget deficit which has been increasing year on year for most of MNS This an issue which has existed for a number of years

Q8 - Are you thinking about making changes to save money?

Most of the MNS have a deficit budget and there is an urgent need to act as the current model is not financially sustainable.

The reason why the council is thinking about making changes to MNS is because doing nothing is not a viable option and runs the risk of increasing debt burdens and unmanaged school closures.

The proposal is about looking at the provision and considering how the council can make the best use of available resources.

Q9 - Why hasn't more been done to make the MNS financially viable?

Council Officers have been and will continue to work with and support the MNS with deficit budget to identify opportunities and/or alternative delivery models for savings/income to return to a balanced budget position. In addition, the Department for Education School Resource Management Advisers have offered free independent support to the relevant MNS to look at the underlying reasons for the deficit position and support the school to develop strategies to return the school to financial stability. However, the budgets for most of the MNS are still in deficit.

Q10 - Why not ask central government for more money?

A lot of lobbying government have been done over the years which has resulted in more funding. However, it is still not enough to make the current model of MNS sustainable and does not deal with the historical deficit.

Q11 - Have alternative options to closure or amalgamation been considered?

Yes, the council have considered other options for the future of its MNS, including Federate the Maintained Nursery Schools under one leadership model; and reprovision of one MNS into Early Years SEND setting. Although these options would bring benefits, these options have not been deemed feasible as they would not address the historical deficit.

Q12 - Can I make alternative suggestions for consideration?

Yes. We welcome your suggestions or new ideas on what other steps could be taken

to make MNS financially viable, including how to deal with the historical deficit as part of this consultation. But do nothing is not an option.

Q13- Who is being consulted?

We welcome views from anyone with an interest in or will be affected by the proposal, including parents/carers who use the service or may use it in the future, providers, and staff. The consultation is public and therefore open to anyone to respond.

Q14 - Will you be running consultation events and what format will these take?

Yes. We are planning to hold consultation events – face to face – and online. The events will be open to everyone. We will inform those with an interest in advance of the dates and locations of the events.

At each event there will be a short presentation about the rationale for the proposal. Attendees will be given the opportunity to ask questions, make comments / suggestions.

The virtual event will provide the same information and opportunity to ask questions, but through an online format.

Q15 - What is the closing date for the consultation?

The closing date for responding to consultation is **17 October 2023**.

Q16 - Do I need to find an alternative nursery provision for my child now?

No. There is no need to find an alternative nursery for your child now as this is an informal consultation on whether and, if so, how to reduce the number of MNS within the borough and there are no specific proposals about individual schools. . If there is a decision in principle to explore the proposal further, specific proposals will be published and will be the subject of another but this time statutory consultation process.

Q17 - How do I know that my views have been taken into consideration?

We would value your views on the proposal to reduce the MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation; and any other feasible option/s that you may wish to suggest for the future sustainability of the MNS, and how to deal with the historical deficit. All feedback will form part of the consultation outcomes report to help with the decision-making process.

Any decision will be made based on feedback from the public consultation and all other relevant information will also be considered.

Q18- Will responses to the questionnaire be anonymised?

Yes. All responses are anonymous. Your comments / feedback may be included in the consultation outcomes report. Please let us know if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Q19 - What if most of the respondents to the consultation object to the proposed change?

The consultation is not a vote, it is about listening to what residents think about the proposal and the impact that any of the options would have on them and their family.

The analysis of the consultation responses is primarily a qualitative rather than a quantitative exercise. The value of this feedback will not be measured by the volume of responses, but rather against assessment criteria, for example, any provision must be deliverable in the funding provided by central government and take care of the deficit. All views will be taken into consideration as part of the decision-making process. This will also help inform what plans the council need to put in place to help lessen any negative impact that any final decision may have on our residents and partners.

Q20 - What happens at the end of the consultation?

At the end of this consultation period, all feedback will be collated and analysed. A consultation outcomes report will be produced which will be published on the council's website. This report will form part of a report to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet which will decide on whether to proceed to the next stage – identification of and consultation on the proposed MNS to be closed or amalgamated.

If the decision is to proceed to the next stage, a statutory notice will be published in the local newspaper which will start an additional four-week representation period which allows anyone who wishes to object to, supportive of, or make comments on the proposal MNS to be closed or amalgamated.

Q21 - Which of the MNS is proposed to be closed or amalgamated?

None of the five MNS have been identified for amalgamation or closure at this stage.

The council is only consulting on whether to reduce, in principle, the number of MNS via closure or amalgamation. If the proposal is agreed, a statutory notice will be published which will start another four-week representation period when the MNS proposed to be closed or amalgamated will be named.

At the end of the representation period the outcome will be considered by the Council – the Executive Mayor in Cabinet - which will make the final decision on the proposal within 2 months of the end of the representation period.

Q22 - Is it possible that one or more of the MNS will not be affected by the outcome of this consultation?

We are seeking views on the proposed change as well as suggestions of possible alternative solutions. It might be that suggestions come forward for one or more of the MNS that could make them viable. Do nothing is not an option.

Q23 - Has a date been set when the decision will be made on this proposal?

No. A decision on whether to explore the proposal further will not be made until after the consultation has concluded; responses analysed and an outcome report drafted and submitted to the Executive Mayor to decide on next steps. However, we are working towards December 2023 for the initial decision on the proposal. Subject to the Executive Mayor's approval, another period of consultation will take place in 2024.

Q24 - Who is the decision maker on the proposed change?

Croydon Council's Executive Mayor is responsible for deciding on the proposed change following the consultation period subject to consultation responses.

Q25 - How will I be informed about the decision?

A report will be available on the council's website once the responses have been analysed and a decision made.

Q26 - When will a final decision be made?

It is difficult to provide a time estimate for this at this stage as it will be subject to the Executive Mayor's in principle decision on whether to proceed to the next stage. However, if the decision is to undertake another period of consultation, a decision must be made within 2 months of the end of the consultation period, or the proposal must be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

Q27 - How do I respond to the consultation?

We welcome your views on whether and, if so, how to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit: www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/mns to submit your response.

If for exceptional reasons you are unable to use the online system, you can request a Word document version of the form and email or post it.

Or, if you require the consultation in a different format, please contact us:

By email: CHILD.CARE@croydon.gov.uk

By post: Croydon Council, School Place Planning Team, 2nd Floor Zone D, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA.

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of this consultation, you can contact the team at: CHILD.CARE@croydon.gov.uk

Q28 – What is the deadline to respond to the consultation?

The consultation closes at 11.59pm on 17 October 2023.

Thank you for providing your views on the proposal to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

All responses will be considered after the consultation ends.

Q29 – What do we mean by financially sustainable?

Where the Maintained Nursery Schools can provide a high quality service, balance their books and not incur debt.

We will continue to add to this thread, so keep checking back.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

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

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

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

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

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

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAIL

Drivers for developing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028

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

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

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

Methodology for developing the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028

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

Delivering the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028

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

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

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

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

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

6 CONSULTATION

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

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

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

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

7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR BUSINESS PLAN

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

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

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

10 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

10.1.2 Section 149 of the Act requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

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

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

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

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

11 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

12 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

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

13 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

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

14 APPENDICES

A Housing Strategy

B Housing Strategy Consultation Report

C Equality Information Analysis Form

D Delivery Plan

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Housing Strategy 2023- 28

1 Foreword (Councillor Hale)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2 Introduction (Susmita Sen)-National Context

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

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


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

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

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

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

3 Local Context-

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

4 Demographic context

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5 The Council's strategic role in Housing

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

Homelessness, Rough sleeping and housing need.

Housing allocations

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

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

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

Homelessness

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

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

Tackling the causes of homelessness

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

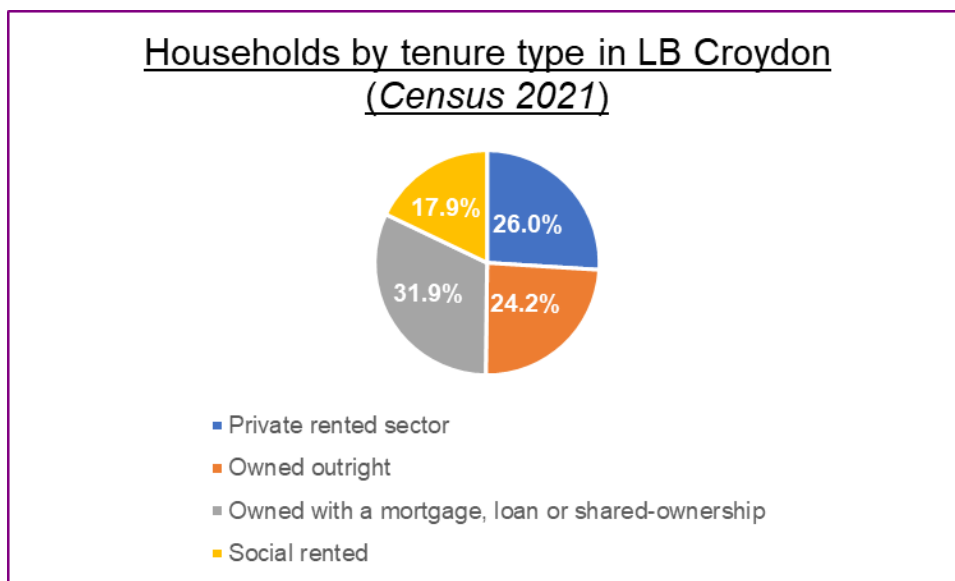
We are also aware of the traumatising impact that domestic violence can have on woman and families and will undertake to provide training for staff in all housing related services.

Rough Sleeping

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

Tenure in Croydon

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



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

Home Ownership

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

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

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

Our Social Housing Partners

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

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

Landlord to Council homes tenants and leaseholders

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

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

Creating responsive housing services

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

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

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

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

Stock condition

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

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

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

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

Residents Charter.

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

Regulation of the Private Sector

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Facilitating the supply of new housing and managing our stock effectively

London Mayoral targets

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Increasing Supply through more effective management.

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

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

Supplying new housing for residents

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

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

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

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

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

Working with Residents

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Working with Partner organisations'

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

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

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

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

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES

PRIORITY ONE

LISTEN TO OUR RESIDENTS AND PROVIDE GOOD HOUSING SERVICES

This will include

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

Why is this important?

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

PRIORITY TWO

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

This will include;

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

Why is this important?

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

PRIORITY THREE

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

This will include;

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

Why is this important?

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

PRIORITY FOUR

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

This will include

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

Why is this important?

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

PRIORITY FIVE

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

This will include

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

Why is this important?

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

Delivering the strategy

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

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

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

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Consultation and Engagement Report

Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 Consultation

August 2023

Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 Consultation and Engagement Report

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

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

Contents

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

1. Feedback from the targeted sessions

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

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

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

Resident and Partner Engagement session

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

Tenant and Leaseholder Panel

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

Private Sector Landlord Engagement Session

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

Housing Association Engagement Session

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

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

2. Survey Consultation Report

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

Are you a...

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

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

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

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

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

Objectives:

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

To what extent do you agree with this priority?

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

To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

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

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

Objectives:

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

To what extent do you agree with this priority?

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

To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

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

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

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

To what extent do you agree with this priority?

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

To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

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

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

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

Objectives

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

To what extent do you agree with this priority?

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

To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

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

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

Objectives

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

To what extent do you agree with this priority?

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

To what extent do you agree with these objectives?

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

Analysis of responses to draft priorities and objectives with low agreement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority Five

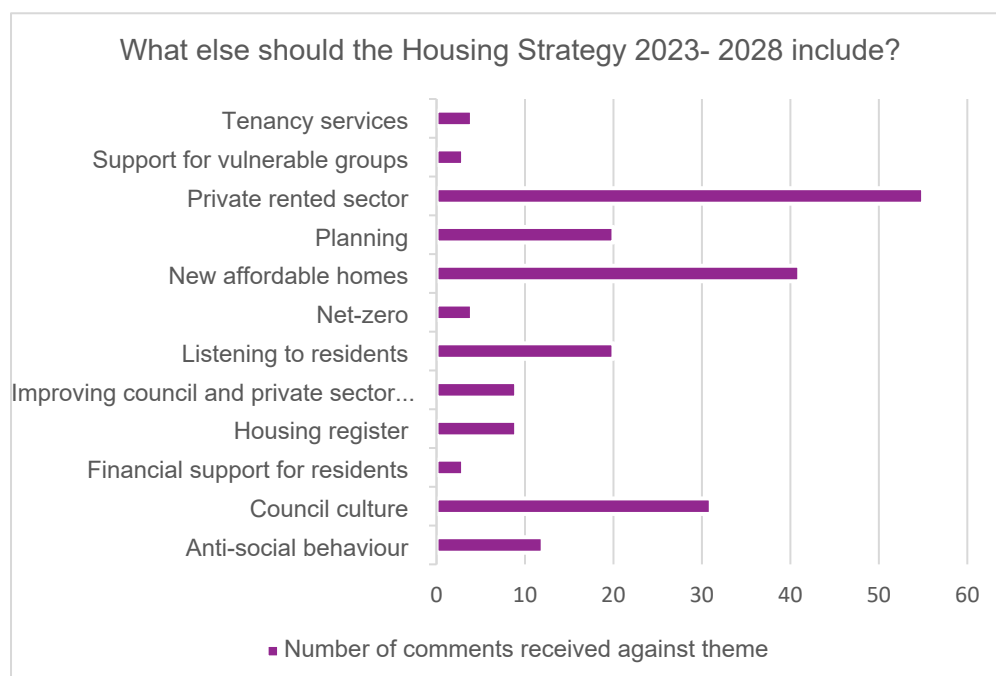
- Collaborate with statutory, community, and voluntary sector partners to improve residents access to housing services.
- Prepare for the future to ensure our homes in the borough meet the needs of our diverse communities.

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

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

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

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



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

Private rented sector

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

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

New affordable homes

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

Council culture

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HOMES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

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

5. Survey Consultation Equalities Questions

What is your sex?

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

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

What age range are you in?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Are you married or in a civil partnership?

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

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

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

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

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

What is your religion?

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

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

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

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

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

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

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

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

2. Proposed change

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Impact of the proposed change

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

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

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

3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact

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

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

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

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

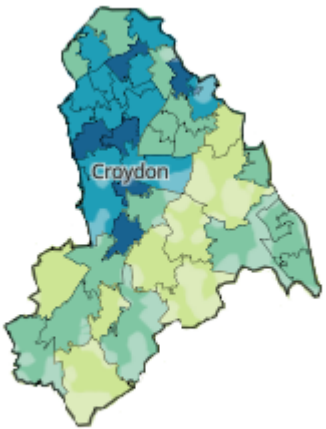
	changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.		<p>Since 2011, Croydon has seen an ageing population, with a 19.6% growth in 65+ year olds (Census 2021).</p> <p>Croydon's projected growth from 2022-2041 is predicted to be 7.9% (GLA 2020 based housing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

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

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

This can be seen from the map shown below.

Gender Identity Different from Birth



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

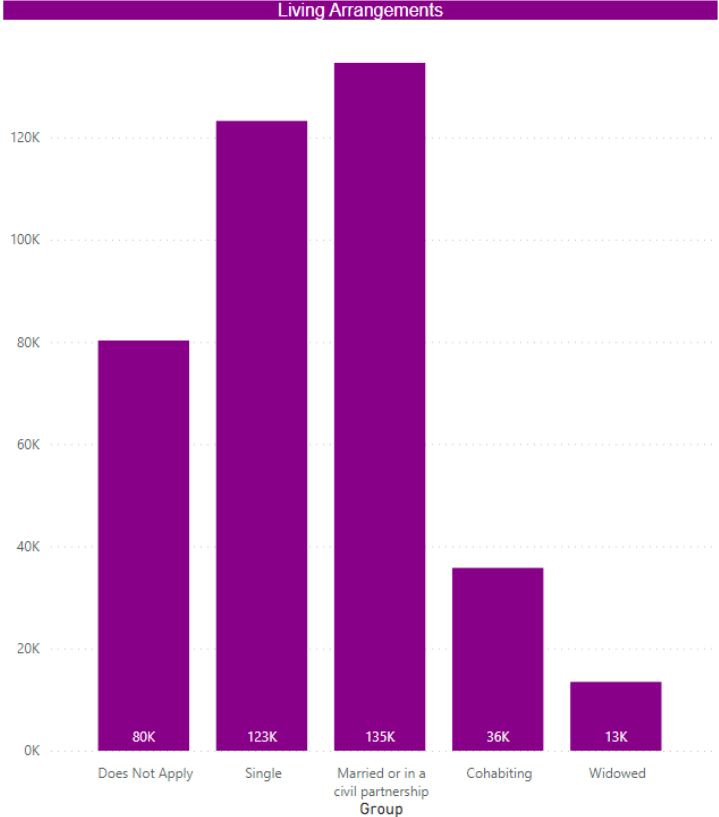
Gender

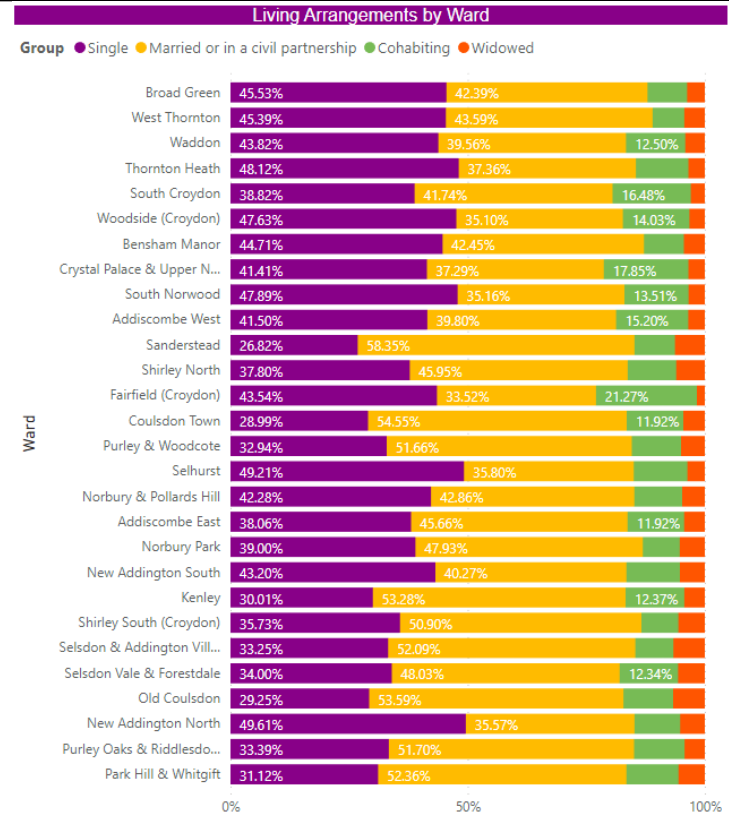
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Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any

None

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

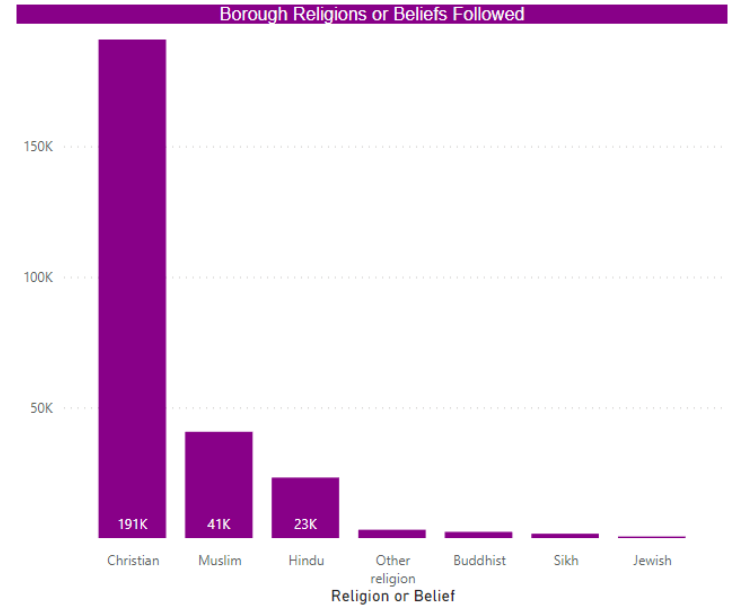
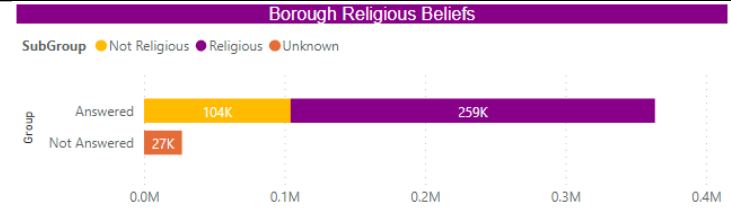
	<p>changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>														
<p>Marriage or Civil Partnership</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected characteristics before any decision is made.</p> <p>Individual delivery plans will have more in-depth consideration of the impact any changes or actions will have on the protected characteristics as it will be clearly the likely impact.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>From the below it can be seen that the majority of Croydon residents are married, in civil partnerships or co-habiting.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Living Arrangements</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Living Arrangement</th> <th>Number of Residents</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Does Not Apply</td> <td>80K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>123K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Married or in a civil partnership Group</td> <td>135K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohabiting</td> <td>36K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Widowed</td> <td>13K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Broken into wards and excluding those that answered the census “do not apply”, it can be seen that there are high rates of single living arrangements in Fairfield, Thornton Heath, Selhurst and New Addington</p>	Living Arrangement	Number of Residents	Does Not Apply	80K	Single	123K	Married or in a civil partnership Group	135K	Cohabiting	36K	Widowed	13K
Living Arrangement	Number of Residents														
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			<p style="text-align: center;">Household Composition</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Household Composition Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>43K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couple</td> <td>28K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single With Children Group</td> <td>25K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couple With Children</td> <td>55K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Family Composition</td> <td>2K</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Breaking this down to borough wards the areas of high singles without children, are Fairfield, Selhurst and South Norwood.</p>	Category	Count	Single	43K	Couple	28K	Single With Children Group	25K	Couple With Children	55K	Other Family Composition	2K
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Other Family Composition	2K														
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy will aim to focus on the needs of the population but will not directly impact on this characteristic. However, it will have due regard for the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. Any decision will consider the impact on people who share the protected</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>29% of Croydon residents have declared they are not religious. Compared with 71% (259k) of residents stating they do hold a religious belief. The chart below shows that breakdown and what religion or belief those that answered follow.</p>												

characteristics before any decision is made.

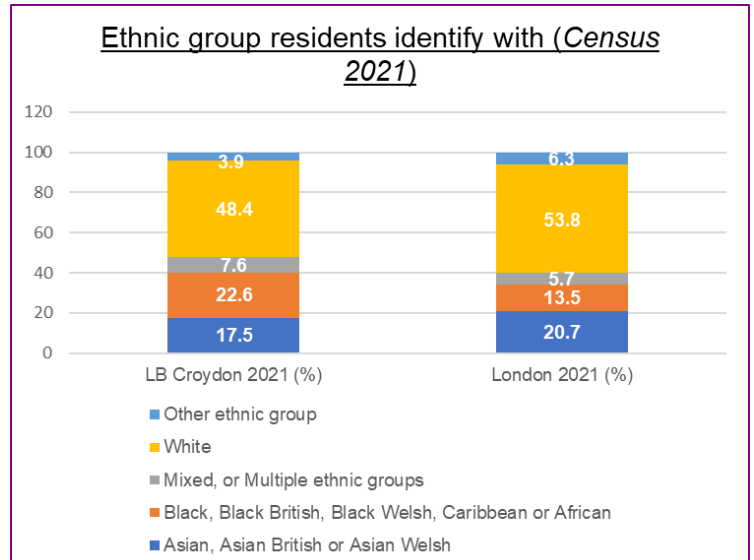
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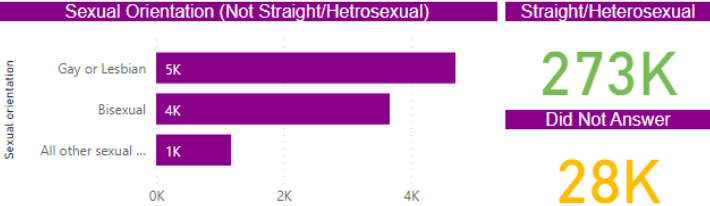


Race

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

None



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

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

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

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

3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

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

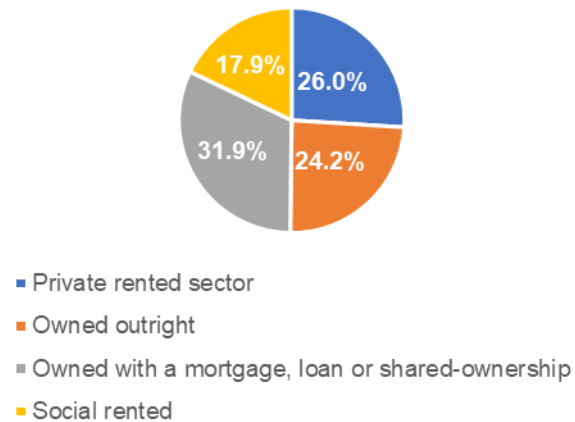
If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please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

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

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

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

Households by tenure type in LB Croydon
(Census 2021)



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

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

Social homes

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

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

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

Private rented sector homes

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

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

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

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

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

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

Home Ownership

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

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

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

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

Housing need

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

which represents an increase of 5.9% since January 2022.

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

Rough sleeping

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

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

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

3.3 Impact scores

Example

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

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

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

5	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
Likelihood of Impact				

Key

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

Equality Analysis

Table 3 – Impact scores

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

Equality Analysis

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

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

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

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

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

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

Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts

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

Equality Analysis

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

6. Decision on the proposed change

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

Equality Analysis

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

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7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision	
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Equality Analysis

Equalities Lead	Name: Denise McCausland	Date:
	Position:	
Director	Name: Lara Ashley	Date:
	Position:	

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

TARGETS FOR YEAR ONE -TWO

KEY THEMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	6th DECEMBER 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	TRANSPORT FOR LONDON LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN HEALTHY STREETS FUNDING AND PROGRAMME 2024/25	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	NICK HIBBERD, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY HEATHER CHEESBROUGH, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION KAREN AGBABIKA, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF STREETS & ENVIRONMENT	
LEAD OFFICER:	IAN PLOWRIGHT, HEAD OF STRATEGIC TRANSPORT	
LEAD MEMBER:	COUNCILLOR SCOTT ROCHE, CABINET MEMBER FOR STREETS & ENVIRONMENT	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Key Decision reference: REASON: Decision incurs expenditure of more than £1,000,000
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 This report recommends the 2024/25 Local Implementation (Transport) Plan (LIP) delivery programme to be submitted to Transport for London to release Safe and Healthy Streets Funding (formally known as LIP Funding). The report is an update to that considered by the Mayor in Cabinet in January 2023, and recommends a revised delivery programme forming the third year of the current Delivery Plan of the LIP. The recommended programme continues the focus on the Town Centre and its regeneration. It would be funded through TfL Safer and Healthy Streets Funding, Croydon Growth Zone Funding, Developer Planning Obligation S106 Funding and Council Capital Funding.

1.2 The recommended programme helps further several of the Mayor's Business Plan aims, including:

- Support the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres, seeking inward investment and grants;
- Lead action to reduce carbon emissions in Croydon;
- Make Croydon safer and more inviting for all Croydon residents and visitors;
- Work with partners and the voluntary, community, and faith sector to promote independence, health and wellbeing.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

2.1 To agree the Local Implementation Plan delivery programme for 2024/25 including:

- Central Croydon (£1,800,000)
- Corridors (£1,025,000)
- Neighbourhoods (£375,000)
- School Streets (£250,000)
- Road Safety (£200,000)
- Active Travel (£394,000)
- Bus Priority (£550,000)
- Cycle Parking (£100,000)
- Cycle Training (£130,000)

as set out at in the Appendix A to this report and forming the third year of the Local Implementation Plan Delivery Plan to be submitted to Transport for London to release Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Funding for 2024/25.

2.2 To agree that the Corporate Director, Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery (in consultation with the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment) finalise and approve the Local Implementation Plan 2024/25 delivery programme for submission to Transport for London, making any necessary adjustments to the programme prior to and post submission.

2.3 To agree the expenditure in 2024/25 set out in this report and Appendix A, subject to funds having been confirmed and allocated by external funders and Council funding agreed by Budget Council.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Recommendation 2.1 is to approve the 2024/25 delivery programme, that programme having been adjusted since previously considered by the Mayor in Cabinet in January 2023, and TfL having now indicated LIP Funding allocations for London for 2024/25. Based on the London wide allocations, the funding ask to Transport for London is an ambitious one, not all requests for project funding are likely to be met in full.

- 3.2 The 2024/25 delivery programme is to be submitted to Transport for London for its comment then approval. The delegation in Recommendation 2.2 is to allow the programme to be adjusted in the light of feedback from Transport for London and the actual funding settlement provided by Transport for London. It is also to allow adjustment during delivery (subject to the agreement of Transport for London).

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 All London local authorities are required (GLA Act 1999 S145(1)) to make LIPs to implement the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy within their respective areas. Transport for London requires LIPs to contain a Delivery Plan covering a three-year period. The current LIP was agreed in outline by Cabinet October 2018 with an indicative programme of investment for the three years from 2019/20 up to 2021/22. The LIP lasts as long as the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy – i.e. up to 2041, unless the Strategy is reviewed or remade before then.
- 4.2 Transport for London has traditionally chosen to provide funding to support local authorities to deliver measures within each LIP Delivery Plan. After an extended period during and beyond the Covid Pandemic (when Transport for London funding to local authorities was severely curtailed and highly erratic), Transport for London published (October 2022) updated guidance covering submissions to be made to release Local Implementation Plan funding to support implementation of LIP Delivery Plans.
- 4.3 Additional impetus for the programme had come from Statutory Guidance on 'Traffic Management Act 2004: network management to support active travel'.¹ The Guidance explained that it provides advice, 'In particular, it may guide authorities to help meet the ambitions set out in 'Gear Change,' The Statutory Guidance was withdrawn as the Plan for Drivers² was being published by central government. 'Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking'³ remains in place as the Cycling and Walking Plan for England and appears to have equivalent status to The Plan for Drivers.
- 4.4 In January 2023, the Mayor in Cabinet considered the report 'Local Implementation Plan Healthy Streets funding: 2022/23 – 2024/25', agreeing the programme to form the basis of the draft Local Implementation Plan Delivery Plan 2023/24-2024/25. This report and recommendations revise the 2024/25 programme.

¹ [\[Withdrawn\] Traffic Management Act 2004: network management to support active travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/681117/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-to-support-active-travel.pdf)

² [The plan for drivers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/681117/the-plan-for-drivers.pdf)

³ [Cycling and walking plan for England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/681117/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england.pdf)

4.5 The recommended 2024/25 programme:

- Maintains the focus on the Mayor's Business Plan aim '*Support the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres*'.
- Enables each scheme to be well planned. It moves away from the hurried nature of delivery instigated in response to the Covid Pandemic.
- Provides the time for stronger engagement with residents and ward councillors of development and delivery.
- Seeks to achieve (over time) a demonstrable improvement to the public realm and general environment – rather than simply an intervention on the highway (such as introducing a cycle lane or a bus lane). The programme generally (and the intended ongoing programme) aims to deliver improvements to the public realm and general environmental improvements alongside transport and highways measures.

4.6 As well as delivering Croydon Mayor and Council aims, the programme supports those of Transport for London and London's Transport Strategy. Transport for London's Guidance on Healthy Streets funding highlights several focus areas for Healthy Streets delivery (with a preference for schemes contributing to multiple objectives and deliverables). These deliverables include active travel, enhancing and expanding bus priority and Vision Zero (no killed or seriously injured road casualties).

4.7 The Council was informed by DLUHC on Monday 20th November that it has been provisionally awarded up to £18,498,777 for its Levelling Up Fund Bid under Round 3 of the programme. The Bid called 'Reconnected Croydon' is for a range of public realm, active travel and greening improvements which include the closure of several subways with the provision of surface level crossings within the town centre. The proposed 2024/25 LIP programme as set out in this report contain some elements from some of these Bid projects in their initial phases. Further work on the LUF programme will be undertaken in coming weeks to confirm its final content in view of the Bid having been submitted over a year ago, with the need to adjust for inflation and other delivery factors. It will however, allow the acceleration of many substantial projects which meet transport and movement objectives in the town centre and so further its regeneration.

4.8 Appendix A provides a breakdown of the total recommended funding amounts in 2024/25. The projects summarised below along with the proposed total funding for 2024/25.

4.9 Central Croydon (£1,800,000)

4.9.1 This element of the Delivery Plan is focussed on creating a demonstrable improvement to the quality of the public realm and the general environment in Central Croydon (alongside improvements to connectivity to and across a walkable (and cyclable) Town Centre). Improvements to bus priority, road safety, waiting and loading are also envisaged as part of a more integrated approach to LIP and other Town Centre regeneration projects. There will also be stronger engagement with residents, businesses, and ward councillors at each stage of development and delivery. This includes:

- Further improvements to the High Street and Dingwall Road.
- New schemes on College Road / George Street, Reeves Corner, and Poplar Walk / North End are also proposed.

4.9.2 The projects will continue to promote public transport and active travel and will help improve connectivity by fixing missing links in the public realm and cycle network. As envisaged in the Opportunity Area Planning Framework, this will increase the accessibility and viability of existing commercial space and help unlock sites for development. The development potential of several key regeneration sites could be unlocked by improvements to their surrounding public realm, making areas more attractive for new businesses or residents by providing a high-quality setting that will attract investment and places that people will want to spend time in.

4.10 Corridors (£1,025,000)

4.10.1 Croydon has identified key ‘movement’ corridors serving Croydon Town Centre and the surrounding area. Substantial development, improved transport links, and public realm improvements are expected to deliver major changes to these corridors. It is essential that for any changes to their design, that the priority afforded to each transport mode is balanced, responding appropriately to the future needs of Croydon Town Centre, whilst also taking into account localised priorities.

- For Wellesley Road we will change the character of the corridor. This is to help knit the public realm of the Croydon Opportunity Area back together and improve the quality of the public realm. The proposal is to replace the pedestrian underpass with a surface level crossing to reduce the severance the road creates.
- London Road and Brighton Road corridors are both of a more traditional ‘High Street character. The recommended 2024/25 programme proposes that these projects will review and assess interventions to date, engage with the community through co-design and seek to balance the different modes as part of a more integrated approach to these projects. Improvements to bus priority, road safety, waiting and loading, parking for local traders, active travel and public realm are envisaged. Key to this will be a process of stronger engagement with residents, businesses, and ward councillors at each stage of development and delivery.

4.11 Neighbourhoods (£375,000)

4.11.1 Improving our neighbourhoods is a key part of creating cleaner, safer and healthier places. This responds to the Mayor of Croydon’s Business Plan’s aim to make Croydon a borough we’re proud to call home. In line with the Mayor’s listening to Croydon pledge, we will work with the local community to develop and deliver a shared vision for each neighbourhood scheme.

4.11.2 It is envisaged that any retained neighbourhood schemes and any new schemes will continue to promote active travel benefits, the benefits will be evidenced based. Improvements to bus priority, road safety, waiting, and loading are also envisaged as part of a more integrated approach to such projects. We will also work with the community groups through community street audits to identify and implement localised public realm improvements. All proposed improvements would be subject to engagement with residents, businesses, and ward councillors at each stage of

development and delivery. There would be a focus on tree planting and other greening creating a 'garden city' environment to help clean our air and support the health and wellbeing of residents.

4.11.3 In the area east of the Town Centre at Addiscombe West/East, feasibility work is underway with the local community to develop proposals for a neighbourhood scheme which has community support and TfL approvals, with delivery planned for 2024/25.

4.11.4 The assessment of the legacy experimental 'Healthy' Neighbourhoods is to be concluded shortly, and recommendation on their future made. Where schemes continue, we would seek input from the local community on how to improve these schemes further, including identifying opportunities to create more balanced schemes and to improve the public realm within these neighbourhoods. These schemes are:

- Holmesdale Road Area
- Albert Road Area
- Dalmally Road Area
- Elmers Road Area
- Kemerton Road Area
- Parsons Mead Area
- Sutherland Road Area

4.11.5 Further projects in other neighbourhood areas are not included in the recommended and reduced programme for 2024/25, as part of seeking to ensure a better delivered, sharper focused programme.

4.12 School Streets (£250,000)

4.12.1 The January 2023 Cabinet report included feasibility work continuing to identify other potential School Street schemes and complementary measures where community support and the potential benefits of schemes are clearly identified. School Streets Groups 2-4 are being implemented in 2023-24.

4.12.2 It is proposed to continue in 2024-25 with the feasibility and implementation of School Streets Group 5 onwards. We are engaging with 6 schools this year. It is likely 4 of these will be taken forward as experiments, next year. The reduced scope of the recommended programme for 2024/25, is part of seeking to ensure a better delivered sharper focused programme.

4.13 Road Safety (£200,000)

4.13.1 The January 2023 Cabinet report included work to develop a road safety programme. This element of programme is continuing to be developed in 2024/5. The reduced scope of the recommended investment for 2024/25, is a result of seeking to ensure a better delivered sharper focused programme. Collision data has been analysed and Stage 1 reviews to include the top 30 clusters in the borough being conducted. Where possible road safety projects will be integrated into other projects within the LIP. An anticipated 10 road safety schemes would be taken forward in 2024/25.

4.14 Active Travel (£394,000)

- 4.14.1 Where possible active travel (walking, cycling and wheeling) projects will be integrated into other projects within the LIP (Croydon Town Centre, Corridors, and Neighbourhoods) as part of seeking to ensure a better delivered sharper focused programme.
- 4.14.2 Engagement with Members has identified opportunities to implement cycling routes through wider 'quietways' network away from more heavily used parts of the Highway network. This would require investment in well considered cycle infrastructure adjacent to the tram system in 2024/25 and investigation in quieter streets.
- 4.15 Bus Priority (£550,000)
- 4.15.1 Where possible Bus Priority projects will be integrated into other projects within the LIP programme as part of seeking to ensure a better delivered sharper focused programme (primarily Croydon Town Centre and Corridors projects).
- 4.15.2 The 2024/25 delivery programme proposes the implementation of the A2022 Kent Gate Way/Lodge Lane Roundabout, Addington Village scheme as a freestanding bus priority project. This project will create a new right-hand turn into interchange off Lodge Lane into Addington Village Interchange.
- 4.16 Cycle Parking (£100,000)
- 4.16.1 Transport for London typically supplements 'Safe Corridors and Neighbourhoods' funding with 'Cycle Parking' funding, where cycle parking projects will be delivered in accordance with criteria set by Transport for London. The value of this allocation in 2024/25 is not currently known and is agreed in consultation with TfL. The reduced scope of the recommended programme for 2024/25, is part of seeking to ensure a better delivered sharper focused programme.
- 4.17 Cycle Training (£130,000)
- 4.17.1 Cycle Training funding has been allocated by TfL in previous years and for 2024/25 to ensure cycle training is available to adults and children.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not applying for LIP Healthy Streets funding was an option considered. The funding is there to support LIP measures which are to deliver the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy objectives locally. However, the LIP funding enables delivery of objectives important to Croydon.
- 5.2 Additionally, Section 152 of the GLA Act 1999 provides that if the Mayor of London considers that a council has not carried out any proposal in its LIP satisfactorily and according to the timetable in the plan, he will be able to exercise the appropriate powers of the council, at their expense, in order to fulfil the strategy.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The consultation draft LIP was published in December 2018. Consultation on the draft LIP included an online questionnaire to which there were just under one thousand responses. Summary findings were:

- 86% of respondents agreed that traffic levels are too high in Croydon.
- 44% of respondents agreed that traffic speeds are too high, with 37% disagreeing, 19% were not sure.
- Less than 5% agreed that the street environment encouraged them to cycle, whilst 77% disagreed, with over 52% disagreeing strongly.
- Over 55% agreed that children should be able to play in residential streets, 26% disagreeing.
- 74% stated that they are concerned about air quality.
- 72% agreed that traffic levels need to be lower.
- 64% stated they would use public transport more if it was convenient.
- 61% would travel by car less if the alternatives were better.
- 78% agreed that less vehicles would mean better air quality.

6.2 This consultation occurred in a very different time for Croydon. The projects within this report / within the recommended the Delivery Plan / Programme, will each be the subject of new consultation and / or other engagement. In line with the Mayor of Croydon's Priority to become a council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities and businesses we will work to increase opportunities for residents to get involved in decisions and improvements that affect their lives and put local voices at the heart of the Council's work. We will ensure that all residents are treated fairly, with respect and dignity. Engagement will also happen via the newly established Forum on Active, Sustainable and Accessible Transport.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 As well as implementing proposals supporting the Croydon LIP, the recommended Delivery Plan / Programme supports achievement of objectives of the Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework, and Town Centre Master Plans, especially the West Croydon and Old Town Masterplans. It supports Priorities of the Mayor's Business Plan including 'Support the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres, seeking inward investment and grants' and 'Lead action to reduce carbon emissions in Croydon'.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 The Delivery Plan recommended to the Mayor in Cabinet is in part an application to release funding from TfL (matched with other grant funding) to invest in the transport network in Croydon. Funding from TfL comes with some financial risk arising from an allocation process in recent years which has lacked certainty and consistent timings. Committed funding can also be subject to TfL claw back if TfL consider that outputs and outcomes are not in alignment with their requirements, even when the work has been

committed. However, if a borough does not prepare and implement a LIP, TfL can step in and undertake this requirement at the borough's expense.

- 8.1.2 Spend will be subject to the advice of the Corporate Director of Resources and Spending Control Panel approvals. Allocations of Croydon Council funds are indicative until recommendations have been agreed by Budget Council this year. Uncertainty regarding exact levels of external grant funding in future years may necessitate adjustments to the programme to match spend with available funding.
- 8.1.3 Funding has also been allocated to the programme from the Council's Growth Zone, Section 106 contributions, and from the Council's Capital Borrowing. Funding from LIP, Growth Zone and Section 106, will always be used before Capital Borrowing to minimise Council Borrowing. Given the uncertainty regarding exact levels of external grant funding in future years, lower funding will necessitate adjustments to the programme to match spend with available funding.
- 8.1.4 If agreed, the recommendations will permit (subject to advice of the Corporate Director of Resources) the spending of external funding provided to the Council with which to deliver elements of the Mayor of Croydon's business plan through the continued implementation of the LIP. This includes improving our public realm, supporting regeneration, securing inward investment, reducing carbon emissions.
- 8.1.5 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendation**

	Current Year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Revenue Budget	Available	Proposed		
Expenditure (TfL)	110	130	110	110
Income (TfL)	110	130	110	110
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure (TfL)		130		
Income (TfL)		130		
Remaining Budget	0	0	0	0
Capital Budget	Available	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed
Expenditure	4569	4694	4050	4050
Income (TfL)	2162	3194	2350	2350
Income (Growth Zone)	900	1150	900	900
Income (S106)	1007	25	300	300
	500	325	500	500

Income (Capital Borrowing)				
Remaining Budget	0	0	0	0

8.1.6 Comments approved by Nish Narendran, Finance Manager on behalf of the Director of Finance. (Date 09/10/2023)

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Mayor’s Transport Strategy (MTS) provides the framework for the development of Local Implementation Plans (LIPs) by London boroughs; it also provides the basis for the assessment of grant applications. Under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (GLA Act) Section 145, each London borough council must prepare a Local Implementation Plan (LIP) containing its proposals for implementing the MTS.

8.2.2 Under the GLA Act, the Mayor is empowered, through TfL, to provide grants to London Boroughs to assist with the implementation of the Transport Strategy. TfL are charged with responsibility of ensuring that the key rationale for allocating grants is the delivery of the MTS. In addition, the Mayor has “default” powers under Section 147-152 of the GLA Act, which broadly permit the Mayor to prepare a LIP or a revised LIP if a London Borough Council fails to do so, and permit the Mayor to implement a LIP if a London Borough Council fails to do so at that Council’s expense.

8.2.3 The Climate Change Act 2008 requires the Secretary of State to ensure the net UK carbon account for 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline.

8.2.4 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 1984) provides powers to regulate use of the highway. In exercising powers under the RTRA 1984, Section 122 (1) imposes a duty on the Council to exercise its functions under the Act so far as practicable to secure the “expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway”. Decisions by the Courts show that this duty needs to be balanced in substance against the factors which may point in favour of imposing a restriction on that movement specified in Section 122(2). Broadly, these factors are, the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises, the effect on the amenities of any locality affected, including the importance of regulating and restricting heavy commercial vehicles, the national air quality strategy, the importance of facilitating public service vehicles, and the safety and convenience of people using or wanting to use such vehicles, and any other matters appearing to the authority to be relevant.

8.2.5 Section 9 of the RTRA 1984 enables the Council, as the relevant traffic authority for the area, to make experimental traffic orders which can continue in operation for a maximum of 18 months. Section 10 of the RTRA 1984 makes provision for experimental traffic orders to be modified if necessary. Section 6 of the RTRA enables the Council to make permanent orders.

8.2.6 The Local Authorities’ Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 prescribe the procedure to be followed in making these types of orders.

- 8.2.7 Each of the projects within the LIP Delivery Programme have been or will be the subject of separate reports, which will set out any relevant legal implications.

Comments approved by the Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 05/10/2023)

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1 The Council, must in carrying out their functions, give due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 which are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- 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 Each project within this report will be the subject of a further report / recommendation at project or programme level. The programmes within this report such as the Healthy Schools Streets and Healthy Neighbourhood programmes, will also be the subject of Equalities Analysis with the findings included within the reports. The reports to confirm Traffic Orders will outline equality implications on protected characteristics including mitigation where applicable.

- 8.3.3 Comments approved by Naseer Ahmad on behalf of the Equalities Manager. (Date 16/11/2023)

9 APPENDICES

- 9.1 **Appendix A Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Proposed Delivery Programme 2024/25**

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1.1 [Mayor of Croydon's business plan: 2022 to 2026](#)
- 10.1.2 [Croydon's Third Local Implementation Plan](#)
- 10.1.3 ['Guidance on developing Borough Healthy Streets Delivery Plans 2023/24-24/25', TfL, October 2022](#)
- 10.1.4 'Borough Healthy Streets 2024/25 programmes' letter from Penny Rees, Transport for London Head of Safe and Healthy Streets, 13 September 2023.

Appendix A Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Proposed Delivery Programme 2024/25

Proposed Expenditure

TfL Project Number	LBC Project Number	Project	TfL Proposed Spend in 2024/25	Proposed Match Spend in 2024/25	Phases to be Delivered	Notes
Central Croydon			£925,000.00	£875,000.00		
CRO050	ST0010 CMC West S1	High Street	£275,000.00	£275,000.00	Design and Build Design £50k Build £500k	Prioritisation exercise: Scarbrook Rd south stepped track with loading bay Resurface from Fell Rd to Scarbrook Rd junction Public realm improvements: Based on footway and c/way areas/SUDS and using different materials
CRO051	ST0016 CMC East S3	Dingwall Road	£275,000.00	£275,000.00	Design and Build Design £50k Build £500k	Stepped track on Dingwall Road south Public realm improvements: Based on footway and c/way areas/SUDS and using different materials
CRO057	ST0010 CMC West S3	Poplar Walk / North End	£50,000.00		Design & Consult	Next stages from Gateway 2 Link with North End Quarter via Regen Team
CRO053	ST0016 CMC East S2/3	College Road / George Street	£275,000.00	£275,000.00	Design and Build	George St crossing and delineated cycle space in 101 George St space plus design in College Road
CRO060	ST1004 Old Town LN 3b?	Old Town	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	Design and Consult	Footway level cycle track Reeves Corner Build in 2025-26
Corridors			£560,000.00	£465,000.00		
CRO061	ST3003 S8	Wellesley Road Crossing	£150,000.00	£175,000.00	Design and Consult	Wellesley Crossing: TfL traffic modelling to be completed Highways design to be started Subway infill design to be started Stats relocations Trams engagement and design consideration
CRO049	ST1001 S2	Brighton Road	£100,000.00	£50,000.00	Design, engagement, amendments to ETRO	Scheme to be reviewed back to GW1 design stage: Riddlesdown jct redesign Opportunities for parking to support retail Waiting/loading/bus stops Public Realm improvement
CRO066	ST3022 ???	Brighton Road north	£60,000.00	£40,000.00	Design and model and build crossing	Crossing at Whitgift Residential Home modelling work for the Southbridge Road bus priority
CRO052	ST1002 S2??	London Road	£250,000.00	£200,000.00	Design and build	Co Design exercise/engagement Side road parking Public realm improvement

						Additional zebra crossings
Neighbourhoods			£375,000.00			
CRO001		Holmesdale Road Area	£100,000.00			If made permanent, cost of doing so and small improvements following on from the Community Street Audit, plus further engagement
CRO002		Albert Road Area	£10,000.00			Funding to make permanent or to remove. If made permanent, then start engagement on further improvement.
CRO003		Elmers Road Area	£10,000.00			
CRO004		Dalmally Road Area	£10,000.00			
CRO005		Davidson Road / Kemerton Road Area	£10,000.00			
CRO006		Parsons Mead Area	£25,000.00			
CRO007		Sutherland Road Area	£10,000.00			
CRO010		Addiscombe East / West Area	£200,000.00			
School Streets						
CRO012		School Streets Implementation (Group 5 onwards)	£125,000.00	£125,000.00		Engaging with 6 schools this year. Likely 4 of these will be taken forward as experiments.
Road Safety						
CRO038		Road Safety Feasibility and Implementation	£200,000.00			10 Vision Zero Schemes
Active Travel			£359,000.00	£35,000.00		

CRO039	ST0008 NCN232 S1c	Mitcham Common to Wandle Park	£279,000.00		Design and Build	Section south of Ampere Way, a) Ikea Toucan crossing, b) woodland path / the bund Ampere Way to Waddon Marsh Tram Stop detailed design and build of the easier sections Design further sections and construct S1c
CRO054	ST0008 NCN232 S2a-b	Lloyd Park to Addington Park	£80,000.00		Design	Path along / adjacent to Coombe Road, designed in outline Work through design stages via Gateway process
CRO058		Lloyd Park to South Norwood Country Park (NB other improvements in SNCP)		£35,000.00	Design	Development of concept designs. Work through design stages via Gateway process
Bus Priority						
CRO067	ST3008 AVI	Addington Village Interchange	£550,000.00		Build	Project to shorten the route buses take to enter the interchange. Very high benefit cost ration. TfL proposed project from several years ago Build as long as all design and approvals complete in FY23/24 and Q1 FY24/25
Cycle Parking						
CRO082		Cycle Parking	£100,000.00			Installation of 20 Cycle Hangars
Cycle Training						
CRO083		Cycle Training	£130,000.00			
Highways Maintenance						
		Principal Road Maintenance	TBC			
TOTAL			£3,324,000	£1,500,000		

Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Proposed Funding for 2024/25

Proposed Funding

Funding Source	TfL Proposed Spend in 2024/25	Proposed Match Spend in 2024/25
TfL Corridors and Neighbourhoods	£1,385,000.00	
TfL Bus Priority	£550,000.00	
TfL Borough Cycling	£1,159,000.00	
TfL Cycle Parking	£100,000.00	
TfL Cycle Training	£130,000.00	
Growth Zone		£1,150,000
Croydon Capital CAP 50		£200,000
Croydon Capital CAP39		£125,000
Section 106 Projects		£25,000

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET		
DATE OF DECISION	6 December 2023		
REPORT TITLE:	2023-24 Period 6 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 6 (September 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	127.1	(17.6)	(12.2%)
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 6, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC, £3.5m of the corporate risk contingency budget and £2.2m of the corporate economic demand pressures 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 movement of £2.2m economic demand pressures budget from Corporate to the Housing directorate as set out in paragraph 4.95. This is a budget transfer within directorates, not a change to overall budget, and is in line with the intended purpose of the £5.5m economic demand pressures budget agreed at full Council in March 2023.
- 2.3** to note the progress in MTFs savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.105.
- 2.4** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.100.
- 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 £17.6m 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, £3.5m of the corporate risk contingency budget and £2.2m of the corporate economic demand pressures 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 September 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 £5.7m which is offset by utilisation of the corporate risk contingency budget (£3.5m) and corporate economic demand pressures budget (£2.2m). It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Table showing the revenue forecasts by Directorate

Directorate	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)	Prior Month Forecast Variance (£m)	Change in Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care and Health	141.0	85.6	141.2	0.2	1.4	(1.2)
Assistant Chief Executive	40.8	19.6	40.3	(0.5)	(0.6)	0.1
Children, Young People and Education	96.2	46.4	102.0	5.8	5.4	0.4
Housing	19.3	13.1	21.5	2.2	-	2.2
Resources	35.2	83.5	33.2	(2.0)	(2.1)	0.1
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	70.6	22.9	70.6	-	-	-
Subtotal Service Directorates	403.1	271.1	408.8	5.7	4.1	1.6
Corporate Items and Funding	(62.2)	(26.4)	(67.9)	(5.7)	(4.1)	(1.6)
Total Net Expenditure Budget	340.9	244.7	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.

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	120.9	74.1	121.7	0.8
Adult Strategic Commissioning, Policy & Improvement	18.2	10.5	17.7	(0.5)
Central ASCH	1.9	1.0	1.8	(0.1)
Total ASCH	141.0	85.6	141.2	0.2

- 4.13** At period 6 the ASCH directorate has a forecast overspend of £0.2m (0.1%) against a budget of £141.0m which is an improvement of £1.2m.
- 4.14** The ASCH Directorate has challenging savings targets totalling circa £10m to deliver in 2023-24 on placements and care packages through demand management, commissioning and review of care packages.

Adult Social Care Operations - Forecast overspend of £0.8m

- 4.15** Staffing across this division demonstrates a forecast underspend (broken down by area below) owing to periods of vacancy above the £1m MTFS 5% vacancy factor saving applied to staffing budgets in 2023-24. There is a national shortage of both social workers and occupational therapists and recruitment to many roles is proving challenging. The periods of vacancy are a barrier to achieving savings as staff are focused on statutory delivery rather than delivering transformation to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.
- 4.16** Localities & LIFE have an underspend of (£1.5m) owing to a net underspending on care and staffing costs.
- 4.17** Working Age Adults and Transitions has an overspend of £4.1m. This comprises an overspend on care of £4.2m (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 £1.3m (this has reduced from £1.4m at Period 5), 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.
- 4.18** Provider Services has a (£1.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.19** Safeguarding service has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies across the service.
- 4.20** Business Compliance and Early Intervention has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.21** Mental health services have a (£0.5m) forecast underspend owing to the application of external discharge funding.

Adult Social Care Policy and Improvement – Forecast underspend of (£0.5m)

- 4.22** The Policy and Improvement division is forecasting an underspend of (£0.5m) owing to staffing vacancies and minor contract underspends.

Central ASCH – Forecast underspend of (£0.1m)

4.23 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.

4.24 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.

4.25 Opportunities

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

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ACE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Policy, Programmes and Performance	4.1	2.2	3.7	(0.4)
Elections Service	0.9	0.2	0.9	-
Croydon Digital and Resident Access	32.2	15.0	32.1	(0.1)
Chief People Officer	3.5	1.7	3.5	-
Central ACE	0.1	0.5	0.1	-
Total ACE (General Fund)	40.8	19.6	40.3	(0.5)
Public Health Grant Ringfenced Services	-	4.7	-	-

4.26 At period 6, the ACE directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £0.5m (1.2%) against a budget of £40.8m.

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

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

Elections Service - breakeven position

4.28 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Council’s core Elections Service.

Croydon Digital and Resident Access Division - £0.1m forecast underspend

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

4.30 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

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

Central Assistant Chief Executive - breakeven position

4.32 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Central Assistant Chief Executive Division.

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

4.33 It is currently forecast that Public Health will contribute £5.0m to ring fenced Public Health reserves at the end of 2023-24.

4.34 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.

4.35 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.

4.36 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	32.7	77.4	5.0
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and UASC Care Leavers	(0.3)	2.3	-	0.3
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine	-	(6.7)	-	-
Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement	6.7	0.8	7.3	0.6
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	46.4	102.0	5.8
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Education Services	82.0	46.3	82.7	0.7
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Early Years Block	31.1	18.7	31.1	-

4.37 At period 6, the CYPE directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £5.8m (6.0%) against a budget of £96.2m. This is an adverse movement of £0.4m since period 5.

Children's Social Care Division – forecast overspend of £5.3m (including UASC and UASC Care Leavers)

£2.8m 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.

£2.0m staffing overspend, which includes a pension budget shortfall of £0.8m since 2020-21. This was previously fully offset by underspends owing to vacancies and delays in recruitment however this cannot be accommodated in 2023-24.

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

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

£0.3m overspend in the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) budget because of the disproportionate number of care experienced young people who were

formerly unaccompanied children. At 18 years old the grant provided by the Home Office to the Council for young people's care and support reduces significantly.

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

- 4.38** The division is forecasting a staffing overspend of £0.2m from the 5% vacancy factor MTFS saving of £0.3m applied to the 2023-24 budget (as 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.
- 4.39** 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

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

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

- 4.42** The SEND High Needs forecast at period 6 is an overspend of £0.678m against the budget of £82.059m. There is no movement from the period 5 position.
- 4.43** The overall variance at Period 6 represents £0.047m favourable variance from the expected overspend of £0.725m submitted to the Department of Education (DfE) Safety Valve Team as part of the approved Deficit Recovery Plan. The service is delivering all the savings strategies as set out in the Safety Valve (SV) agreement including the use of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) to help deliver more local schools places as well as improve existing provisions to meet the increasing placement demands for complex needs pupils. The service submitted the 2023-24 Quarter 2 High Needs monitoring reports to the DfE Safety Valve team by the set deadline and the DfE has confirmed the Council will receive the Quarter 2 instalment payment of 1.097m.
- 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.

(£0.622m) 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 demands pressures in Independent and Out of Borough placements owing to cost implications. Addington Valley Academy, St Nicholas, Coulsdon College Croydon, and Waddon Youth Disability Services are increasing placement numbers, which is reducing high-cost placements out of borough.

4.46 The 2023-24 period 6 High Needs forecast outturn variance of £0.678m leads to an overall DSG deficit projection of £16.062m at the end of 2023-24 compared to the Safety Valve target of £16.080m prior to the £3.290m Deficit Recovery payment from the DfE as per the Safety Valve agreement. This demonstrates that the Council is ahead of the target.

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

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

4.48 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.

4.49 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	19.2	12.9	21.4	2.2
Housing Estates and Improvement	0.1	0.2	0.1	-
Total Housing	19.3	13.1	21.5	2.2

4.50 At period 6, the Housing directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £2.2m (11.4%) against the budget of £19.3m. The forecast overspend is owing to emergency accommodation pressures resulting from evictions (including as courts action case backlogs which were paused during the Covid-19 pandemic) and accelerated Home Office decision making which is increasing the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees requiring housing in the borough. It is requested through this report to transfer £2.2m budget to the Housing directorate from the Corporate economic demand pressures budget.

4.51 There is a crisis within the London housing market that is creating significant demand for services, and it is difficult to predict how far or fast demand will continue to grow. The data available following the changeover of rent account systems to the new NEC IT system is now improving although further improvements to forecasting accuracy can be expected as data quality is addressed, reporting is developed further, and more data analysis is performed.

4.52 Current financial modelling of a worst case scenario for emergency and temporary accommodation indicates that the 2023-24 overspend could increase up to circa £7m

and this will be monitored closely over the remaining months of the financial year to check whether levels of new housing placements continue at the current higher level or return to being in line with longer term historical trends. The pressures experienced by Croydon are also being experienced across London and nationally and therefore central government may provide in-year funding such as through a potential winter pressures top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant (which has not been announced to date, but was provided in recent years).

4.53 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 the demand pressures as described are causing the forecast overspend.

4.54 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

4.55 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.

4.56 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.

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

Temporary Accommodation

- 4.58** 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

- 4.59** 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 accurately forecast expenditure and income. The income interface is now posting income from the NEC system into the Oracle finance system, however there are reconciliations still being carried out. There may be a requirement to increase the loss allowance (bad debt provision) at the end of 2023-24 depending on the level of income collection achieved in year.
- 4.60** The Housing Directorate continues to be impacted by the rapidly worsening housing market within London as private sector landlords are increasing rents or leaving the market, and tenants are struggling with cost of living pressures. The challenge for Croydon in dealing with such rapid inflation has multiple strands. There are forecasting difficulties in predicting how much prices are expected to move and at what pace.
- 4.61** 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.
- 4.62** 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.
- 4.63** 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.

- 4.64** 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.
- 4.65** 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

- 4.66** Housing will continue to ensure that the use of ringfenced Household Support Fund and Rough Sleeping initiative grants is used both within the grant terms and to maximise the mitigating effect on the general fund spend, e.g. by targeting households in rent arrears for support.
- 4.67** 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.
- 4.68** The Council is reviewing asylum seeker and refugee grant funding for allocation to related homelessness costs and also allocation from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) grant to support homelessness costs relating to the evictions backlog caused by the pausing of eviction court cases during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.69** 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	72.3	15.7	-
Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	2.3	2.5	2.5	0.2
Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk	0.6	1.5	0.5	(0.1)
Internal Audit Service	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.1
Pensions and Treasury	0.3	0.7	0.3	-
Central Resources	(2.7)	0.2	(2.7)	-
Total Resources	35.2	83.5	33.2	(2.0)

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

4.70 At period 6, the Resources directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £2.0m (5.7%) against a budget of £35.2m.

Commercial Investment Division – £2.2m forecast underspend

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

Finance Division – breakeven forecast position

4.72 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.

4.73 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.

4.74 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 – £0.2m forecast overspend

4.75 There is a £0.1m forecast underspend in the Monitoring Officer service owing to staff vacancies and an underspend against the members allowances budget.

- 4.76** There is a forecast overspend in Legal Services of £0.3m mainly owing to high levels of agency staffing.
- 4.77** 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

- 4.78** 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

- 4.79** 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.
- 4.80** There is a risk in the Finance Division in relation to Housing Benefit subsidies including the potential impact of the roll out of universal credit on the collection of overpayments.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY (SCRER)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Sustainable Communities	54.1	24.9	54.3	0.2
Culture and Community Safety	9.8	(0.8)	9.0	(0.8)
Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	6.7	(0.1)	7.3	0.6
Central SCRER	-	(1.1)	-	-
Total SCRER	70.6	22.9	70.6	-

- 4.81** At period 6, the SCRER directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven position against a budget of £70.6m. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offence and planning.

Sustainable Communities Division - forecast overspend of £0.2m

- 4.82** There is a forecast £0.7m under-achievement in parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offence income. There is a forecast pressure of £0.4m 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 also a forecast pressure of £0.3m for SEND home to school transport due to increased demand. The pressures are

being partially offset through a forecast underspend of £0.9m in staffing owing to periods of vacancy and a £0.3m forecast underspend in waste services owing to reduced level of green and food waste.

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

- 4.83** The division is forecasting an underspend of £0.8m owing to reduced utility costs in contracts (£0.7m) and periods of staffing vacancy (£0.1m).
- 4.84** In period 6 the Coroner’s Service and Resilience (Emergency Planning) Service budgets of £1.2m are included in this division following the transfer of the services from the Assistant Chief Executive directorate.
- 4.85** 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

- 4.86** The division is forecasting an income under-achievement of £0.8m owing to lower activity levels to date in planning major applications and planning performance agreements. This is being partially offset by a forecast staffing underspend of £0.2m owing to periods of vacancy in the Growth and Regeneration Team.
- 4.87** 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.
- 4.88** 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 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.

4.89 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	-	12.0	(2.2)
Risk Contingency Budget	5.0	-	1.5	(3.5)
Transformation Programme	10.0	-	10.0	-
Other corporate items	(91.4)	(26.4)	(91.4)	-
Total Corporate Items and Funding	(62.2)	(26.4)	(67.9)	(5.7)

- 4.90** At period 6, the Corporate directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £5.7m (9.2%) against a net budget of (£62.2m). The underspend relates to the economic demand pressures budget offsetting the £2.2m pressure in the Housing directorate and the risk contingency budget offsetting £3.5m of the pressures across the other directorates.
- 4.91** 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.
- 4.92** 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.
- 4.93** 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.
- 4.94** There is currently budget of £3.8m held centrally (of the original £5.5m agreed by full Council) for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon after the allocation of £1.7m budget agreed in Period 3 for Housing Benefit subsidy pressures.
- 4.95** This report is requesting the transfer of £2.2m budget from the Corporate economic demand pressures budget to the Housing directorate to take account of emergency accommodation pressures resulting from evictions (including as courts action case backlogs which were paused during the Covid-19 pandemic) and accelerated Home Office decision making which is increasing the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees requiring housing in the borough. This is just a budget transfer within directorates, not a change to overall budget, and is in line with the intended purpose of the budget agreed at full Council in March 2023.
- 4.96** 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.
- 4.97** 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.
- 4.98** 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).

4.99 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

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

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

Transformation Programme Allocations

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Transformation Revenue Budget	10.000
Transformation Reserve Funding	4.000
Total Transformation Funding	14.000
Approach to Strategic Planning and Commissioning	0.290
Parking Policy Review	0.200
Community Hubs Programme	0.250
HR Transformation	0.093
Digital & Resident Access Review/Digital Workforce	0.080
SEND Review	0.240
Passenger/SEND Transport Transformation	0.100
Family Justice Service Review	0.000
S117 Project	0.178
Joint Funding Arrangements	0.110
Sustaining Demand at the Front Door	0.190
Corporate Parenting Transformation	0.743
Dynamic Purchasing System	0.092
Callydown Transformation	0.134
Income & Debt Review	0.050
Outcomes Based Domiciliary Care Model	0.110
Transition Commissioning Care Model	0.082
Croydon Campus	0.250
Customer Access Review	0.200
Building Control Transformation	0.696
Planning & CIL Transformation	0.450
CALAT	0.050
Housing Needs Restructure	0.060
Temporary Accommodation Case Review	0.291
Housing Occupancy Checks	0.291
Rent Accounts and Data Cleanse	0.026
Housing Association Recharges	0.059
Supported Housing Review	0.080
Adult Social Care Transformation	1.100
Review of Social Care Placements	0.461
Reablement & Hospital Discharge	0.000

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Strategic Operating Model Design Partner for Adult Social Care and Health	1.194
Housing Benefit Subsidy SEA & EA/TA	0.000
PFI Contract Manager	0.000
VCS Review	0.000
Asset Rationalisation	0.124
Business Intelligence Review	0.025
Commercial & Income Opportunities	0.000
Community Equipment Service	0.090
Croydon Museum	0.270
Oracle Improvement Programme	0.915
Transformation PMO	1.100
Total Revenue Budget and Reserves Allocated to Date	10.674
Unallocated To Date	3.326

4.102 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.

4.103 The Transformation Board has agreed additional project allocations totalling £4.239m through to September 2023 and these are set out in the table below.

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

4.104 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

4.105 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 £'000	Slippage from previous year £'000	Revised Savings target £'000	Forecast savings achievable £'000	Savings slippage £'000	Not yet evidenced or (over delivery) £'000
Adult Social Care & Health	12,243	-	12,243	10,915	-	1,328
Assistant Chief Executive	2,924	-	2,924	1,771	1,153	-
Children, Young People & Education	6,920	490	7,410	5,148	-	2,262
Housing	2,305	-	2,305	1,309	1,099	(103)
Resources	6,347	-	6,347	6,347	-	-
Sustainable Communities (SCRER)	1,859	2,490	4,349	4,124	225	-
Cross-Directorate / Corporate	500	-	500	500	-	-
Total	33,098	2,980	36,078	30,114	2,477	3,487

Reserves

4.106 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

4.107 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

- 4.108** 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.
- 4.109** 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.
- 4.110** 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.
- 4.111** 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)

- 4.112** At period 6, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast remains at a revenue overspend of £12.0m owing to resolving a backlog of historic legacy repair work, reducing voids and resolving issues experienced nationally including damp and mould and fire safety. The HRA has a reserve of circa £50m as at the end of 2022-23 and this reserve will fund the 2023-24 overspend, however the HRA budget for 2024-25 will need to take account of ongoing pressures and priorities.
- 4.113** At Period 5 we set out how the legacy of repairs, disrepair works and the commissioned works on damp and mould accounts for £8.6m of the pressure against the existing budget. This pressure is a direct result of the significant under-investment over decades in our housing stock which has resulted in the backlogs the teams are now tackling. The implementation of the three new repairs contracts and the commitment to ensuring we are meeting our requirements as a landlord are driving this ongoing pressure. As a result, we will seek to rebase our responsive repairs budget at this mid-point of the budget year to reflect the position. Where underspends in other areas are insufficient to cover the pressures outlined above, we will be required to draw down from the HRA reserves into the revenue budgets.

- 4.114** The 2024-25 budget will require significant work to ensure that we are capturing and managing ongoing pressure areas within the repairs service. Stock conditions surveys have been commissioned to identify the level of major repairs and maintenance to be programmed into the future years' budgets and these capital improvements should reduce the level of responsive repairs over the medium term.
- 4.115** The remaining £3.4m pressure is attributed to disrepair and reflects the volume of historic legacy disrepair cases being cleared and the legal costs and settlements that have been the outcome.

Repairs

- 4.116** The Period 6 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.
- 4.117** 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.
- 4.118** 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 total number of damp and mould jobs completed so far is 792 (£1.6m) of which 106 jobs (£840k) were high value stage 2 jobs.
- 4.119** 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.
- 4.120** The tackling of the legacy voids has had a significant impact due to the state of disrepair in these properties and the subsequent lack of asset renewal. 499 voids have been completed so far this year. The backlog and managing the ongoing weekly voids is contributing to the cost pressures.

4.121 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.

4.122 The service has introduced controls to manage, monitor and provide assurance on ongoing responsive repairs costs:

- The NEC system allows us to manage the budget per individual line of activity with a budget set on NEC that cannot be exceeded and no payments can be made without any increase to the budget prior to any new orders being raised. Manager approval is required to increase a budget.
- A Review Panel has been established since September. Any quotes for works over a value of £5,000 must be presented to the panel and approval sought prior to the works order being raised.
- A review and approval from the Housing Directorate Management Team (DMT) will be sought for works on an individual property in excess of £40,000 to allow consideration of value for money and to ensure that there is a link being made to regeneration projects and any other cross-Council projects.

Tenancy and Income

4.123 A breakeven forecast position at period 6 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

4.124 A breakeven forecast position at period 6 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)	(42.0)	(82.1)	-
Service Charge Income	(4.6)	(2.3)	(4.6)	-
Concorde, Sycamore & Windsor (rental income for Temporary Accommodation provision)	(3.4)	(1.0)	(3.4)	-
Other Income	(6.0)	(1.7)	(6.0)	-
Subtotal Income	(96.1)	(47.0)	(96.1)	-
Housing Capital Charges	40.9	(4.9)	40.9	-
Responsive Repairs & Safety	20.4	20.6	32.4	12.0
Centralised Directorate expenditure	11.3	0.8	11.3	-
Tenancy & Resident Engagement	10.3	2.8	10.3	-
Tenant Support Services	6.7	12.6*	6.7	-
Concorde, Sycamore & Windsor expenditure	3.4	2.1	3.4	-
Asset Planning	1.6	0.8	1.6	-
Capital Delivery (Homes & Schools)	1.5	0.6	1.5	-
Subtotal Expenditure	96.1	35.4	108.1	12.0
Total HRA Net Expenditure	-	(11.6)	12.0	12.0

* Incorrect mapping from NEC has miscoded Housing Benefits rebates to tenant service charges. The actuals to date reflect the current ledger position but we are aware of the issue, a correction to the mapping has been carried out, and we are working with NEC on a solution to correct the mispostings already in the financial ledger.

4.125 The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- NEC system functionality delays:
 - Although the system went live in June 2023, we are yet to use the system to its full capacity including full reporting functionality. The repairs and income forecasting may yet be impacted once the full integration and functionality is available.
- Repairs and maintenance:
 - pressures from the exit of the Axis repairs contract that ended in August 2023.
 - extra expenditure to deal with the backlog of repairs and maintenance.
 - void and disrepair costs carried out by specialist contractors to reduce void losses and minimise future disrepair claims.
 - settlement of disrepair cases and related legal fees, including those relating to Regina Road.
- Tenancy and income:
 - the impact of cost of living pressures on rent collection (including a potential increase in bad debt cost).
 - loss of income owing to void (empty) residential properties.
 - loss of income owing to voids including void garages.

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

Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability

- 4.126** 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.
- 4.127** 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.
- 4.128** 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.
- 4.129** 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.
- 4.130** 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.

- 4.131** 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").
- 4.132** 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

- 4.133** At period 6, the General Fund capital programme has a forecast underspend of £17.6m 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	58	169	(83)
ICT	-	1	-	-
Network Refresh	348	11	152	(196)
Tech Refresh	132	304	272	140
Geographical Information Systems	312	-	312	-
Laptop Refresh	3,371	-	947	(2,424)
Cloud and DR	331	26	174	(157)
People ICT	-	3	-	-
Synergy Education System	1,045	8	723	(322)
NEC Housing System	2,725	2	2,234	(491)
Uniform ICT Upgrade	56	-	56	-
Subtotal Assistant Chief Executive	8,699	368	5,166	(3,533)
Education - Fire Safety	924	4	450	(474)
Education - Fixed Term Expansions	2,865	180	225	(2,640)
Education - Major Maintenance	5,866	3,031	3,321	(2,545)
Education - Miscellaneous	100	142	100	-
Education - Permanent Expansion	297	-	297	-
Education - SEN	6,289	507	6,289	-

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)
Children Home DFE	329	-	329	-
Subtotal CYPE	16,670	3,864	11,011	(5,659)
Disabled Facilities Grant	4,710	931	3,000	(1,710)
Empty Homes Grants	400	33	200	(200)
Subtotal Housing	5,110	964	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	963	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	966	6,375	-
Allotments	-	3	3	3
Growth Zone	15,844	168	15,844	-
Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	1,200	-	1,200	-
Highways	8,260	3,513	8,260	-
Highways - flood water management	404	303	404	-
Highways - bridges and highways structures	1,641	956	1,641	-
Highways - Tree works	50	6	50	-
Local Authority Tree Fund	83	122	83	-
Trees Sponsorship	42	10	42	-
Leisure centres equipment contractual agreement	139	(410)	139	-
Tennis Court Upgrade	75	-	75	-
Leisure Equipment Upgrade	148	-	148	-
Libraries Investment - General	1,031	1	224	(807)
Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	175	-	-	(175)
New Investment to South Norwood Library	520	-	-	(520)
Parking	1,843	93	1,843	-
Cashless Pay & Display	1,463	-	485	(978)
Play Equipment	17	161	161	144
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	1,421	(3,147)
Cycle Parking	106	-	135	29

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)
Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	3	-	43	40
Park Asset Management	700	-	700	-
Waste and Recycling Investment	2,558	-	2,558	-
Subtotal SCRER	44,814	5,251	38,341	(6,473)
Capitalisation Direction	63,000	-	63,000	-
Subtotal Corporate Items and Funding	63,000	-	63,000	-
TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL	144,668	11,413	127,093	(17,575)

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	-
CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	3,084	1,477	(1,607)
Section 106	1,190	262	(928)
Grants & Other Contributions	25,430	16,399	(9,031)
Growth Zone	15,844	15,844	-
HRA Contributions	1,772	1,452	(320)
Capital Receipts	45,000	45,000	-
Borrowing	45,749	40,059	(5,689)
Total General Fund Financing	144,668	127,093	(17,575)

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

HRA Capital Programme

4.135 At period 6, 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	3,133	37,180	5,704
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	1,772	-
Total HRA Capital	33,248	3,133	38,952	5,704

HRA Capital Programme Financing

HRA Capital Financing	2023-24 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

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

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

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

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

- 8.2.3** In addition, the Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council's Chief Finance Officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council's proper financial administration. These include procedures for budgetary control. It is consistent with these arrangements for Cabinet to receive information about the revenue and capital budgets as set out in this report.
- 8.2.4** The monitoring of financial information is also a significant contributor to meeting the Council's Best Value legal duty. The Council as a best value authority "must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Section 3 Local Government Act (LGA) 1999). The Best Value Duty applies to all functions of the Council including delivering and setting a balanced budget, providing statutory services such as adult social care and children's services and securing value for money in all spending decisions.
- 8.2.5** 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, 2/11/2023.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1** There are no immediate workforce implications arising from the content of this report, albeit there is potential for a number of the proposals to have an impact on staffing. Any mitigation of budget implications that may have direct effect on staffing will be managed in accordance with relevant human resources policies and, where necessary, consultation with the recognised trade unions.
- 8.3.2** The Council is aware that many staff may also be impacted by the increase in cost of living. Many staff are also Croydon residents and may seek support from the Council including via the cost of living hub on the intranet. The Council offers support through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and staff may seek help via and be signposted to the EAP, the Guardians' programme, and other appropriate sources of assistance and advice on the Council's intranet, including the trade unions.

Comments approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 31/10/2023.

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, 31/10/2023.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Cabinet	
DATE OF DECISION:	6 December 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Fees and Charges 2024-25	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR:	Jane West Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 officer	
LEAD OFFICER:	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance	
DECISION TAKER:	Executive Mayor in Cabinet	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Reference number: 6923EM 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 details the proposed changes to fees and charges across the Council for the financial year 2024-25.
- 1.2 Fees and charges detailed in this report generally fall into two broad categories:
- Discretionary - those set at the discretion of local authorities, for example venue charges and commercial waste collection.
 - Statutory/Regulatory - those prescribed by government statute, for example planning fees and charging for residential adult social care.
- 1.3 Cabinet should be aware that many regulatory functions have statutory fees which are set or required to be considered by the relevant regulatory committees as they are precluded from being executive functions.
- 1.4 The level of inflation (CPI 8.7% at April 2023) along with rounding the charge to the nearest 5p, 10p, etc for practical purposes have been key factors in

determining the recommended changes. Other factors such as service demand, the projected cost of providing the different services, benchmarking with other local authorities and the impact of general economic factors including cost of living on the Council's residents have also been considered.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 Have due regard to the equalities impact assessment in Appendix 2 in making the decisions set out in these recommendations.
- 2.2 Approve the fees and charges as set out in Appendix 1 to the extent that they fall within the authority of the Executive to determine.
- 2.3 Note that changes to parking charges are linked to the parking policy transformation and separate consultation is taking place on the draft parking policy.
- 2.4 Approve delegation for further in-year amendments to fees and charges for the financial year 2024-25, to the relevant Corporate Director following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and the Executive Mayor.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Fees and charges are reviewed annually as part of the Council's budget setting process. This ensures that they are set at the appropriate level for the prevailing economic conditions and represent good practice in terms of the Council's aim to provide value for money.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 The Council provides a wide range of services to residents and businesses. For some of these the Council is entitled to make a charge. Reasons for making a charge include:
 - There is a statutory charge - for example, planning fees and licensing fees.
 - It is the Council's policy to recover its costs in relation to the discretionary or incidental provision of goods or services provided so that they are not funded by the council taxpayer.
 - It may be the Council's policy to partially subsidise a service to encourage take-up (e.g. sports) or to support a policy objective (e.g. bulky waste collections to reduce fly tipping).
 - There is an existing market that would be distorted if the Council did not charge the market rate - for example, trade refuse collection - although charges are still subject to the cost recovery basis set out in statute.

- 4.2 Like other businesses, the Council's costs are affected by economic conditions (including inflation), demand and supply factors. It is good practice for the Council to review its charging policies and the level of charges annually to ensure that they stay relevant and reflect the Council's underlying costs.
- 4.3 The Council is required to ensure that the income from charges does not exceed the costs of provision as this would be contrary to the statutory basis which permits the Council to charge in relation to discretionary or incidental services.
- 4.4 Fees and charges are reviewed annually as part of the Council's budget setting process. This is to ensure that they are set at the appropriate level for the prevailing economic conditions and represent good practice in terms of the Council's aim to provide value for money. The level of inflation (CPI 8.7% at April 2023) along with rounding the charge to the nearest 5p, 10p, etc for practical purposes have been key factors in determining the recommended changes. Other factors such as service demand, the projected cost of providing the different services, benchmarking with other local authorities and the impact of general economic factors including cost of living on the Council's residents have also been considered.
- 4.5 Appendix 1 details the proposed changes to fees and charges for 2024-25. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of all fees and charges. For example, property rental income and facilities management and utilities cost recharges are excluded. Licensing and regulatory related fees are non-executive functions and are reserved for consideration by non-executive committees of the Council. There are also officer delegations in place from the relevant regulatory committees in relation to certain highways charges (skip licences, scaffolding licences, etc).
- 4.6 In relation to fees and charges which relate to non-executive functions, separate approvals will be sought from the relevant Committees or officers. For example, planning fees which are approved by the Director of Planning and Sustainable Regeneration.
- 4.7 For Building Control fees there is existing delegation to the Head of Building Control in the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery (SCRER) directorate Scheme of Management for "Authority to modify the Charges Scheme to ensure recovery of the proper costs incurred in performing the Council's building control functions under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulation 2010". These fees are therefore excluded from the schedule and officers will ensure that the fact that we have produced a charges scheme will be publicised before any changes come into effect, in line with the regulation.
- 4.8 Changes to parking charges are linked to the parking policy transformation and separate consultation is taking place on the draft parking policy.

Principles

- 4.9 The following principles have been applied in developing charging policies and setting recommended price levels:

- Charging policy will be one of the following:

Charging Policy	Description
Statutory	The price or price formula is determined by the government
Full cost recovery	The price is set to fully recover direct costs and overheads of the services or goods provided
Subsidised	The price is set at a level below full cost recovery for policy reasons
Market price	The price is determined by the market (although the Council is constrained to a maximum of full cost recovery)

- Charging policies should be reviewed and the level of income maximised in each case within the statutory and policy constraints.
- All new opportunities to charge for Council goods and services should be identified and put into effect.
- It is recognised that some prices are statutory and cannot be changed. Consideration should be given to whether the volume of sales could be influenced to increase or decrease in each case to improve the overall position.
- Full cost recovery means that the price should factor in direct costs, indirect costs such as management, training, etc and central overheads such as facilities, IT and legal services.
- Pricing structures should be simple. Requirement for complex calculation or costing should be removed wherever possible.
- Charges should be 'price pointed'. i.e. rounded to a figure that is easy to remember for customers and to administer. This reflects private sector practice and meets customer expectations.
- There should be transparency concerning charges and the reason for any subsidy. Standard fees and charges should be published on the Council's website.
- Fees and charges should be collected in advance or at point of sale wherever possible. The Council should not offer credit terms (i.e. issue a 30 day invoice after the service has been provided) unless this is required by law or there is a competitive market that operates on that basis.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Whilst the changes to existing and the introduction of new fees and charges follow a review of the current charging regime, other alternatives can be adopted by Members if they so wish. The financial impact of any alternatives will need to be reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Where changes to individual fees and charges require consultation, this will be carried out. Changes to parking charges are linked to the parking policy transformation and separate consultation on the draft parking policy has taken place.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1 The annual review of fees & charges 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 All directorates have undertaken a review of their fees and charges as part of the annual budget setting process. In general, fees and charges recover some or all of the costs of providing services. This generates income which reduces the cost of services borne by council taxpayers and can also be used to achieve other strategic objectives, such as encouraging the use of particular services. A decision to charge for, or subsidise, services needs to be based on rational consideration.
- 8.1.2 In general, it is proposed that discretionary fees and charges are increased by a minimum of inflation, unless there is a compelling reason for not increasing at all or increasing by a lesser or greater amount.
- 8.1.3 The total amount of income generated through fees and charges will depend on price as well as activity. The MTFS currently assumes fees and charges income increases within the General Fund totalling £1.1m which contribute towards meeting the overall budget gap. These include parking policy changes, introduction of administration and delivery fees for replacement household non-food waste containers, and increasing advertising and film office income. These specific changes will be covered through the main budget consultation process.
- 8.1.4 If it is decided not to increase charges in line with inflation, this will generally have the impact of increasing the level of subsidy provided by the Council to service users and alternative savings will need to be found to cover the General Fund budget gap. Once a decision is made to freeze charges, it is difficult to recover

the lost income without increasing costs by more than inflation in a future period. The financial implications of freezing charges can therefore be regarded as permanent.

- 8.1.5 Income from fees and charges is subject to risk in relation to other national and local demand factors (e.g. the buoyancy of the local economy) as well as supply factors such as the level of cost inflation. The budget proposals for 2024-25 reflect a prudent view on the level of income generated through fees and charges.

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

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services that where the relevant statute sets out a fee or charge for the service in question, the Council does not have a discretion to alter that and nothing within this report will permit such a change.
- 8.2.2 Where the Council is providing a statutory service which the Council is mandated to provide or which the Council has a duty to provide, this is not subject to an authority to charge unless this is set out in the relevant statute and accordingly such matters are not covered by this report or any associated charging policy.
- 8.2.3 There are specific powers to charge for services detailed throughout local government legislation, for example section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits charging for the use of leisure and recreational facilities and section 38 of the 1976 Act permits entering into agreements with other persons to make full use of local authority computers and equipment. However, specific powers are usually subject to parameters which the Council is required to adhere to in charging for such matters.
- 8.2.4 The Local Government Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") introduced a general power to charge for the provision of any discretionary service. The discretionary charging powers do not apply to services which an authority is mandated or has a duty to provide. However, councils can charge for discretionary services (that is, services they have power to provide but are not obliged or have a duty to provide by law). In order to do so, the recipient of the discretionary service must have agreed in advance, to pay for the provision of such services. The 2003 Act power cannot be used where charging is prohibited or where another specific charging regime applies. Charging is limited to cost recovery and statutory guidance outlines how costs and charges should be established. In setting the proposed fees, the Council is required to have regard to this guidance.
- 8.2.5 The Council may be able to rely on the subsidiary powers under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge for a service on the basis that this is "incidental" to its statutory function of providing that service. However, this power cannot be used to "raise money", and therefore it could only be relied upon to cover the costs of the service provided.
- 8.2.6 In relation to utilisation of the general power of competence in the Localism Act 2011 ("LA 2011"), these charging provisions follow, very closely, the requirements of the 2003 Act to allow local authorities to charge up to full cost

recovery for discretionary services. These provisions operate alongside rather than replace the Local Government Act 2003 powers.

- 8.2.7 The power to charge under the LA 2011 is subject to a duty to secure that, taking one financial year with another, the income from charges does not exceed the costs of provision. As with the 2003 Act powers, charging for things done in exercise of the general power of competence is not a power to make a profit from those activities.
- 8.2.8 In relation to fees pertaining to Allotments, the Council must ensure that the relevant statutory provisions pertaining to the Allotment Acts are complied with, in particular in relation to Section 10 of the Allotments Act 1950. The provisions of Section 10 must be taken into account, and the Council must also carry out some kind of valuation exercise.
- 8.2.9 With regard to the Edited Electoral Register the Council must ensure that the provisions of the Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 - which set out, among other matters, the fees which may be charged regarding the edited register - are complied with.
- 8.2.10 Finally, where the introduction of new/altered fees or charges requires consultation and/or engagement with affected users to have been undertaken prior to the proposed changes, officers will need to have satisfied themselves that the appropriate actions have been taken prior to bringing forward these proposals for Members' consideration. Where notice or publication of changes to charges is required in respect of any fees/charges under specific legislative or common law requirements, officers will ensure that the appropriate notices have been published in accordance with the relevant requirements.

Comments approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law, on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, 27/10/2023.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report.

Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR (Resources and Assistant Chief Executive Directorates) on behalf of Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 23/10/2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.4.1 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.
- 8.4.2 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.
- 8.4.3 Protected characteristics defined by law include race and ethnicity, disability, sex, gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief.
- 8.4.4 Having due regard means there is a requirement to consciously address the three tenets of the Equality Duty within decision-making processes. By law, assessments must contain sufficient information to enable the local authority to show it has paid 'due regard' to the equalities duties; and identified methods for mitigating or avoiding adverse impact on people sharing protected characteristics. Where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic it must be justified objectively.
- 8.4.5 Like many local authorities, Croydon Council utilises Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) to have due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act. An EQIA has been completed for the proposed changes in fees and charges and is attached to this report.
- 8.4.6 In summary, the EQIA has identified that whilst some of the changes may have an impact, this impact is considered to be minimal. The proposed changes are, in the majority, in line with the CPI inflation rate of 8.7% in April 2023. The EQIA also recognises that the wider economic context, with inflation at historically high levels, may impact residents.
- 8.4.7 Although the impact of changes to the Council fees and charges is considered to be low, the EQIA outlines a number of mitigations that the Council has in place to support residents with fees and charges, many of which provide a positive benefit to protected characteristic groups. A selection of examples from the full EQIA include:-
- There are discounted rates for all leisure centre activities for Croydon residents with disabilities. If a disabled person needs a carer with them in order to access leisure centre services, the carer is entitled to free entry.
 - Croydon Council Leisure Centres offer discounted rates for residents Seniors 60+ years and Juniors 4-15 years.
 - Croydon Council Money Advice Service for advice on paying your bills and debt worries. All advice is independent and confidential.
- 8.4.8 It should be noted that there are a small number of fees and charges that the council is the sole provider for. It is not possible for residents to access services from an alternative commercial supplier. It should also be noted that one household may be affected through paying several fees for a range of services and/or have multiple protected characteristics within the household.
- 8.4.9 As set out elsewhere in the report, the change in fees and charges contributes to the Council's budget for delivering services to residents. If these are not increased the resulting financial pressures could lead to

service reductions which could impact on residents more than the proposed fee changes.

8.4.10 Finally, the EQIA highlights the importance of service departments collecting and using data on their service users to identify the impact on protected characteristic groups. This is an area for improvement and a project is underway with the support of the Head of Profession for Data interpretation, business analytics and insight and the Equalities Manager, reporting to the Corporate Management Team and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Board.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmed for Equalities Programme Manager, 23/10/2023.

9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Fees and Charges Schedule 2024-25

Appendix 2: Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

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2024-25 Fees and Charges Schedule

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Basic fee including first unit of development		200.00	200.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Each additional unit from 2 to 100		130.00	130.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Each additional unit from 101		65.00	65.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Building Name (as part of new development)		280.00	280.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Street Name		570.00	570.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Renaming and renumbering: Building Name		280.00	280.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Address Management	Street Naming and Numbering - Renaming and renumbering: Per Unit		280.00	280.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Local Land Charges	LLC1 Search		35.00	35.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Local Land Charges	LLC1 Search for additional parcels (each)		5.00	5.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Local Land Charges	Con29 Search - (price inc. VAT @ 20%)		270.00	270.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Local Land Charges	Con29 search for additional parcel (each) - (price inc. VAT @ 20%)		51.60	51.60	0.0%
Discretionary	Resources	Local Land Charges	Con29O Questions (each) - (price inc. VAT @ 20%)		36.00	36.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Citizenship Ceremony Fees - Private + £80 for Home Office	Per Unit of Charge	131.00	139.00	6.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Offsite Wedding Fees - weekday	Per Unit of Charge	447.00	474.00	6.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Offsite Wedding Fees - Saturday	Per Unit of Charge	584.00	619.00	6.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Offsite Wedding Fees - Sunday & Bank Holiday	Per Unit of Charge	644.00	683.00	6.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Offsite Wedding Fees - Easter Sunday, New Years Day	Per Unit of Charge	710.00	753.00	6.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Mon-Thurs Arnhem Room	Per Unit of Charge	245.00	260.00	6.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Mon-Thurs Clocktower Room	Per Unit of Charge	278.00	295.00	6.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Fri Arnhem Room	Per Unit of Charge	321.00	340.00	5.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Fri - Clocktower Room	Per Unit of Charge	305.00	323.00	5.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Sat - Arnhem	Per Unit of Charge	305.00	323.00	5.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Sat Clocktower	Per Unit of Charge	366.00	388.00	6.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Sunday Arnhem	Per Unit of Charge	371.00	393.00	5.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Sunday Clocktower	Per Unit of Charge	430.00	456.00	6.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Easter Sunday, New Year's Day - Arnhem	Per Unit of Charge	481.00	510.00	6.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Marriage Ceremony in Town Hall Easter Sunday, New Year's Day - Clocktower	Per Unit of Charge	546.00	579.00	6.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Final Chat for marriage or civil partnership	Per Unit of Charge	60.00	64.00	6.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Booking fee to hold time and date for ceremony in diary for Town Hall	Per Unit of Charge	39.00	41.00	5.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Registrars	Admin fee for change of booking, venue, date	Per Unit of Charge	39.00	41.00	5.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Bereavement Services	Per Unit of Charge	4,055.00	4,217.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Muslim Grave – Non Resident Supplement	Per Unit of Charge	4,055.00	4,217.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Grave – General (Border or Non-border)	Per Unit of Charge	4,055.00	4,217.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Non-resident supplement for General grave purchase	Per Unit of Charge	4,055.00	4,217.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Cremation Plot – Rest Park	Per Unit of Charge	1,822.00	1,895.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Plastic Vase – each	Per Unit of Charge	19.50	20.00	2.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YR'S - NEW GRAVES - GREENLAWNS MEMORIAL PARK - Plastic Trough – each	Per Unit of Charge	26.00	27.00	3.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 3	Per Unit of Charge	2,356.00	2,450.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 2	Per Unit of Charge	2,111.00	2,195.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 1	Per Unit of Charge	1,982.00	2,061.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 3	Per Unit of Charge	2,356.00	2,450.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 2	Per Unit of Charge	2,111.00	2,195.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - MITCHAM ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 1	Per Unit of Charge	1,982.00	2,061.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 3	Per Unit of Charge	2,356.00	2,450.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 2	Per Unit of Charge	2,111.00	2,195.00	4.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	PURCHASE OF RECLAIMED BURIAL RIGHTS - 50 YRS - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 1	Per Unit of Charge	1,982.00	2,061.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 3	Per Unit of Charge	2,356.00	2,450.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 2	Per Unit of Charge	2,111.00	2,195.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	NON - RESIDENT GRAVE SUPPLEMENT - QUEENS ROAD CEMETERY - Grave capacity 1	Per Unit of Charge	1,982.00	2,061.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Depth for 1 or 2 burials	Per Unit of Charge	1,257.00	1,307.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Depth for 3 burials – all graves	Per Unit of Charge	1,672.00	1,739.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Additional fee for each additional depth	Per Unit of Charge	391.00	407.00	4.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Additional fee for each casket/Italian or last Supper coffin	Per Unit of Charge	556.00	578.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Non-resident supplement (ALL GRAVES TYPES)	Per Unit of Charge	518.00	539.00	4.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES - ALL CEMETERIES - Cremated Remains	Per Unit of Charge	258.00	268.00	3.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GRAVES/PLOTS FOR CREMATED REMAINS (50 YEARS) - Mitcham Rd – Reclaimed Graves for cremated remains	Per Unit of Charge	1,187.00	1,234.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GRAVES/PLOTS FOR CREMATED REMAINS (50 YEARS) - Queens Rd – Reclaimed Graves for cremated remains	Per Unit of Charge	1,187.00	1,234.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GRAVES/PLOTS FOR CREMATED REMAINS (50 YEARS) - Greenlawns – Rest Park	Per Unit of Charge	1,822.00	1,895.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GRAVES/PLOTS FOR CREMATED REMAINS (50 YEARS) - Interment of Cremated Remains in any of the above	Per Unit of Charge	258.00	268.00	3.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER INTERMENT CHARGES - Burial taking place at or after 3.00pm Monday to Friday	Per Unit of Charge	446.00	485.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER INTERMENT CHARGES - Use of Burial/Crem Chapel for Service (includes use of Organ, Organist Fee & recorded music facilities, per ½ hour or part thereof).	Per Unit of Charge	358.00	389.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER INTERMENT CHARGES - Use of Crematorium Chapel for double service or overrun into next period (second ½ hour or part thereof)	Per Unit of Charge	358.00	389.00	8.7%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER INTERMENT CHARGES - Cremated remains burial after 4 p.m.	Per Unit of Charge	224.00	244.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MONUMENTS - Right to place memorial for 20 y'rs – (excludes permit fee) - All grave types at Mitcham Rd and Queen's Rd Cemeteries	Per Unit of Charge	360.00	391.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MONUMENTS - Right to place memorial for 20 y'rs – (excludes permit fee) - All graves at Greenlawns sold on or before 31st March 2005	Per Unit of Charge	360.00	391.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Permit Fees - Mitcham Rd & Queens Rd Cemeteries - All graves	Per Unit of Charge	169.00	184.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Permit Fees - All graves at Greenlawns sold on or before 31st March 2005	Per Unit of Charge	360.00	391.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Permit Fees - Add inscription to existing memorial	Per Unit of Charge	129.00	140.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Permit Fees - Moulding single grave space	Per Unit of Charge	141.00	153.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Permit Fees - Turfing single grave space	Per Unit of Charge	141.00	153.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATION FEES - Adult service at or before 10.00am OR any other time of day up to 4.00pm Mon to Fri and not requiring a ceremony or use of Organ (i.e. No Service)	Per Unit of Charge	766.00	797.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATION FEES - Adult service after 10.00am. up to and including 4.00pm (Mon to Fri)	Per Unit of Charge	992.00	1,032.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATION FEES - Additional Fee for service after 4pm	Per Unit of Charge	239.00	249.00	4.2%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATION FEES - Direct Cremation	Per Unit of Charge	306.00	320.00	4.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATION FEES - Saturday morning cremation fee	Per Unit of Charge	1,371.00	1,426.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER CREMATION FEES - Burial of Cremated Remains in Cremation Plot	Per Unit of Charge	258.00	280.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER CREMATION FEES - Temporary Retention of Cremated Remains: 1st Month nil, then mthly	Per Unit of Charge	22.00	24.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER CREMATION FEES - Certified Copy of Cremation Register Entry	Per Unit of Charge	24.00	26.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	OTHER CREMATION FEES - Scattering Cremated Remains from other Crematoria	Per Unit of Charge	108.00	117.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS - Transfer of Grave Rights (Per transfer)	Per Unit of Charge	91.00	99.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS - Geneology Searches, per name, if completed by Cemeteries Staff	Per Unit of Charge	70.00	76.00	8.6%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS - Genealogy Searches, use of room, access to books: per hr or part thereof	Per Unit of Charge	70.00	76.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIA RECORDIA FOR 15 YEARS - Renewal of 2 line for 15 years	Per Unit of Charge	283.00	308.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIA RECORDIA FOR 15 YEARS - Renewal of 2 line for 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	48.00	52.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIA RECORDIA FOR 15 YEARS - Renewal of 4 line for 15 years	Per Unit of Charge	417.00	453.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIA RECORDIA FOR 15 YEARS - Renewal of 4 line for 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	54.00	59.00	9.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL LEATHER PANEL - New dedication for 7 years	Per Unit of Charge	360.00	391.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL LEATHER PANEL - Renewal of dedication for 7 years	Per Unit of Charge	305.00	332.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL LEATHER PANEL - Renewal of dedication for 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	91.00	99.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL YORK PAVING STONE – for 15 years - Size 2' x 2' including an inscription of up to 50 characters	Per Unit of Charge	811.00	882.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL YORK PAVING STONE – for 15 years - Size 3' x 2' including an inscription of up to 50 characters	Per Unit of Charge	1,217.00	1,323.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL YORK PAVING STONE – for 15 years - Additional letters over the included 50 – per character	Per Unit of Charge	15.00	16.00	6.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Replacement Stone during current dedication period: - Size 2' x 2' including an inscription of up to 50 character	Per Unit of Charge	357.00	388.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Replacement Stone during current dedication period: - Size 3' x 2' including an inscription of up to 50 characters	Per Unit of Charge	508.00	552.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Replacement Stone during current dedication period: - Renewal of Dedication for 15 years	Per Unit of Charge	512.00	557.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Replacement Stone during current dedication period: - Renewal of Dedication for 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	62.00	67.00	8.1%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Replacement Stone during current dedication period: - Lift and reface stone for added inscription	Per Unit of Charge	136.00	148.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Placed at a Standard Rose or Rose Bush for dedication period of 7 years.	Per Unit of Charge	528.00	574.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Second plaque for remainder of Dedication period	Per Unit of Charge	235.00	255.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Renewal for a further period of 7 years (inc of 1 or 2 existing plaques)	Per Unit of Charge	472.00	513.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Renewal for a further period of 1 year (inc of 1 or 2 existing plaques)	Per Unit of Charge	101.00	110.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Replacement rose plaque	Per Unit of Charge	123.00	134.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Heart Memorial Rose Plaque, placed at a Standard Rose or Rose Bush for initial dedication period of 7 years.	Per Unit of Charge	545.00	592.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Second Heart plaque for remainder of Dedication period	Per Unit of Charge	249.00	270.00	8.4%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Replacement Heart plaque	Per Unit of Charge	132.00	143.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Additional Emblem – Rose Plaque	Per Unit of Charge	26.00	28.00	7.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL ROSE PLAQUES - Additional Lines (per line) – Rose Plaque	Per Unit of Charge	16.00	17.00	6.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL SEAT - 6' 0" Teak Seat, New for 15 years – including first inscribed bronze plaque	Per Unit of Charge	2,047.00	2,225.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL SEAT - Renewal for 15 years	Per Unit of Charge	1,703.00	1,851.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL SEAT - Renewal for 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	171.00	186.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES leased for 7 years - Memorial Tree including 12"x 12" memorial tablet	Per Unit of Charge	1,991.00	2,164.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES (18" x 12" tablet) including leased for 7 years - Renewal for 7 Years	Per Unit of Charge	1,100.00	1,196.00	8.7%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES (12" x 12" tablet) leased for 7 years - Renewal for 1 Year	Per Unit of Charge	199.00	216.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES leased for 7 years - Memorial Tree including 18"x 12" memorial tablet	Per Unit of Charge	2,190.00	2,381.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES (12" x 12" tablet) leased for 7 years - Renewal for 7 Years	Per Unit of Charge	1,100.00	1,196.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - MEMORIAL TREES (18" x 12" tablet) leased for 7 years - Renewal for 1 Year	Per Unit of Charge	199.00	216.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - 2 line memorial inscription including access to on screen display	Per Unit of Charge	186.00	202.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - 5 line memorial inscription including access to on screen display	Per Unit of Charge	295.00	321.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - 8 line memorial inscription including access to on screen display	Per Unit of Charge	388.00	422.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Badge, crest or floral emblem (Emblem available with 5 or 8 line inscriptions)	Per Unit of Charge	99.00	108.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - e-BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Digitizing existing entry	Per Unit of Charge	74.00	80.00	8.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - e-BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Biographical/Poem/Prose details	Per Unit of Charge	73.00	79.00	8.2%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - e-BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Digital Photograph	Per Unit of Charge	97.00	105.00	8.2%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - e-BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Inscribing poetry or prose – per line	Per Unit of Charge	16.00	17.00	6.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - e-BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE - Additional Access Card	Per Unit of Charge	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICA TYPE "A" – MEMORIAL CARD Containing copy of 2 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	63.00	68.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICA TYPE "A" – MEMORIAL CARD Containing copy of 5 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	78.00	85.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICA TYPE "A" – MEMORIAL CARD Containing copy of 8 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	99.00	108.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICA TYPE "B" - MINIATURE BOOK (paper covers) - Containing copy of 2 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	99.00	108.00	9.1%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICIA TYPE "B" - MINIATURE BOOK (paper covers) - Containing copy of 5 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	132.00	143.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICIA TYPE "B" - MINIATURE BOOK (paper covers) - Containing copy of 8 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	143.00	155.00	8.4%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICIA TYPE "C" – MINIATURE BOOK (hard covers) - Containing copy of 2 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	149.00	162.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICIA TYPE "C" – MINIATURE BOOK (hard covers) - Containing copy of 5 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	163.00	177.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - REPLICIA TYPE "C" – MINIATURE BOOK (hard covers) - Containing copy of 8 line inscription	Per Unit of Charge	188.00	204.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	CREMATORIUM MEMORIALS - Badge, crest or floral emblem - available with replicas for additional	Per Unit of Charge	99.00	108.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - BRONZE MEMORIAL TABLETS - Size 12" x 12" (Maximum of 4 per grave) Inclusive of an inscription of not more than 75 characters	Per Unit of Charge	406.00	441.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - BRONZE MEMORIAL TABLETS - Size 18" x 12" (Cremation Plot, 1 per plot) Inclusive of an inscription of not more than 75 characters	Per Unit of Charge	541.00	588.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - BRONZE MEMORIAL TABLETS - Size 24" x 12" (Maximum of 2 per grave) Inclusive of an inscription of not more than 75 characters	Per Unit of Charge	670.00	728.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - BRONZE MEMORIAL TABLETS - Inscriptions over 75 letters - each additional character	Per Unit of Charge	16.00	17.00	6.3%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - BRONZE MEMORIAL TABLETS - Refurbishment of an existing bronze tablet	Per Unit of Charge	326.00	354.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - MOTIFS, EMBLEMS, BADGES etc - A standard plain Cross or Rose (any plaque size)	Per Unit of Charge	45.00	49.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - MOTIFS, EMBLEMS, BADGES etc - Other motifs: Please contact the Crematorium Office staff for quote	Per Unit of Charge	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - SANCTUM VAULTS - Sanctum Vault for 50 years (excludes bronze tablet)	Per Unit of Charge	1,144.00	1,244.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - SANCTUM VAULTS - Sanctum Bronze Tablet	Per Unit of Charge	307.00	334.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - FLOWER VASE - Regulation vase – includes installation	Per Unit of Charge	19.50	21.00	7.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - FLOWER VASE - Regulation trough – includes installation	Per Unit of Charge	26.00	28.00	7.7%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Initial 15 year lease of standard cell (2 urn capacity)	Per Unit of Charge	1,434.00	1,559.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Renewal of 15 year lease of standard cell	Per Unit of Charge	1,034.00	1,124.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Opening of Niche for deposit of casket and resealing	Per Unit of Charge	71.00	77.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Inscriptions engraved & guided on Urn and/or sealing stone - per character	Per Unit of Charge	15.00	16.00	6.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Motifs and other emblems can also be supplied. Price available on request	Per Unit of Charge	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - GEMINI MEMORIAL NICHEs - Wooden Gemini casket and inscription	Per Unit of Charge	123.00	134.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIUM NICHE - (refurbished - new product) - New Lease (inc. cover stone) for 10 years	Per Unit of Charge	2,357.00	2,562.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIUM NICHE - (refurbished - new product) - Renew Lease for 10 years	Per Unit of Charge	1,734.00	1,885.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIUM NICHE - (refurbished - new product) - Opening of Niche for deposit of casket and resealing	Per Unit of Charge	101.00	110.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	GREENLAWN MEMORIALS - COLUMBARIUM NICHE - (refurbished - new product) - additional inscription on plaque	Per Unit of Charge	264.00	287.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS FEES - Surrender of burial rights - paid to grave owner on surrender of rights	Per Unit of Charge	(150.00)	(163.00)	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS FEES - Renew of Lease Cremation plots Garden of Remembrance - Mitcham Road 1 year	Per Unit of Charge	124.00	135.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	MISCELLANEOUS FEES - Renew of Lease Cremation plots Garden of Remembrance - Mitcham Road 5 years	Per Unit of Charge	543.00	590.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Funerals - Administration fees for arranging funerals - Property search	Per Unit of Charge	178.00	193.00	8.4%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Funerals - Administration fees for arranging funerals - Letters (Administration of estate) £ per letter	Per Unit of Charge	17.00	18.50	8.8%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Funerals - Administration fees for arranging funerals - Treasury Solicitor Referrals	Per Unit of Charge	470.00	511.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Funerals - Administration fees for arranging funerals - Registration of Death	Per Unit of Charge	47.00	51.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Funerals - Administration fees for arranging funerals - Administration Charge incl general admin, travel, parking, phone calls etc - per hour or part thereof	Per Unit of Charge	27.00	29.00	7.4%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Cremation Fees - Child aged 6 months to 10 years non resident only	Per Unit of Charge	132.00	137.00	3.8%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Cremation Fees - Child under 6 months, still born or foetus non resident only	Per Unit of Charge	82.00	85.00	3.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES ALL CEMETERIES - Child: under 3 years, stillborn or foetus	Per Unit of Charge	101.00	105.00	4.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	INTERMENT – PURCHASED, UNPURCHASED, RECLAIMED GRAVES ALL CEMETERIES - Child: Aged 3 years to 14 years	Per Unit of Charge	206.00	214.00	3.9%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Employee Assistance Programme	EAP service for all school staff. Fee is calculated per staff member	Per Unit of Charge	300.00	326.10	8.7%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Webcast streaming of service - Live	Per Unit of Charge	33.00	33.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Webcast streaming of service - Live + 28 days + downloadable	Per Unit of Charge	49.00	49.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Webcast streaming of service - Keepsake, as live plus 1st copy DVD or USB or Blu-ray	Per Unit of Charge	55.00	55.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Webcast streaming of service - Additional keepsake copies	Per Unit of Charge	28.00	28.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Visual tributes - slideshow	Per Unit of Charge	45.00	45.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Visual tributes - pro tribute	Per Unit of Charge	70.00	70.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Assistant Chief Executive	Bereavement Services	Visual tributes - family made films	Per Unit of Charge	25.00	25.00	0.0%
	Adult Social Care and Health		ADULT SERVICES - CARELINE & TELECARE SERVICE				

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - TELECARE SERVICE - Careline Safe At Home	Weekly	15.88	17.26	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - TELECARE SERVICE - Telecare System - 1 Device	Weekly	31.83	34.98	9.9%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - TELECARE SERVICE - Telecare System - 2 Devices	Weekly	47.71	52.24	9.5%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - TELECARE SERVICE - Telecare System - 3 Devices	Weekly	63.58	69.49	9.3%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - TELECARE SERVICE - Additional Sensor	Weekly	3.47	3.77	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - CROYDON CARELINE ALARM SERVICE - Standard Service	Weekly	9.33	10.52	12.8%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - CROYDON CARELINE ALARM SERVICE - Standard service for those in receipt of Pension Credit /Income - weekly	Weekly	5.70	6.58	15.4%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - CROYDON CARELINE ALARM SERVICE - Additional Pendants - weekly	Weekly	1.08	1.17	8.7%
	Adult Social Care and Health		ADULT SERVICES - Setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA)				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) - One off set up fee - Land registry search	One-off	3.00	3.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) - Recovery of legal fees: this covers the cost of placing the charge on a property. Fee shown is the minimum charge.	One-off	750.00	750.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) - One off set up fee	One-off	471.00	513.14	8.9%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) - One off set up fee - Property valuation: this charge may vary as it is set by the district valuers office	One-off	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - In year cost of maintaining a DPA - charged annually - Staff costs for quarterly monitoring, re-evaluations and carry out necessary sustainability tasks	Annual	251.20	273.65	8.9%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - In year cost of maintaining a DPA - charged annually - Property valuation: only when debt reaches 50% of equity or the unforeseen need for an in-depth review of the DPA's sustainability	Annual	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - In year cost of maintaining a DPA - charged annually - Land registry search	Annual	3.00	3.00	0.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES -Closing down of a DPA - Staff costs for an officer to initiate, set up and complete all the tasks required	One-off	62.80	68.41	8.9%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Closing down of a DPA - Charge set by Solicitors for removing the land registry charge against a property when the DPA is closed and the balance owed is paid in full	One-off	330.00	330.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	ADULT SERVICES - Closing down of a DPA - Interest is added based on terms of the agreement. The rate of interest is set by OBR + 0.15% default component, reviewed every 6 months	One-off	Variable	Variable	Variable
	Adult Social Care and Health		DEPUTYSHIP CHARGES (clients who lack mental capacity) - Fees set by Public Guardianship Office				
Statutory	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Category 1 charges: Preparatory work to the date court makes an order	One-off	745.00	745.00	0.0%
Statutory	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Category 2 charges: Income > £16k fixed fee or < £16k variable fee; 2.5% of savings up to £500.00 for Health and welfare and up to 3.5% for property and affairs) Annual management fee A) First year ¹	One-off	775.00	775.00	0.0%
Statutory	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	B) 2nd and subsequent years	Annual	650.00	650.00	0.0%
Statutory	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Category 3 charges: Annual property management fee	Annual	300.00	300.00	0.0%
Statutory	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Category 4 charges: Preparation and lodgement of annual report	Annual	216.00	216.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	APPOINTEESHIP CHARGE (clients who have mental capacity) As category 2 charges as set by the Public Guardianship Office for Deputyships	One-off	745.00	745.00	0.0%
	Adult Social Care and Health		HOME CARE				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Home care per hour in the community. The cost will be dependant on the level of care needs and the financially assessed contribution.	Per hour	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Live in carer per hour (another form of home care)	Per hour	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Sitting service	Per hour	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
	Adult Social Care and Health		DAY CARE				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	In-house day care : Full Day (maximum cost)	Full day / 2 sessions	68.34	74.27	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	In-house day care : Half Day (maximum cost)	Half day / 1 session	34.16	37.14	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Private or Voluntary sector day care	Session	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
	Adult Social Care and Health		RESPIRE CARE - Charge per night				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	RESPIRE CARE - In-House Charge per night (maximum cost)	Per night	117.57	127.80	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	RESPIRE CARE - Private or Voluntary home Charge per night	Per night	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
	Adult Social Care and Health		RESIDENTIAL HOMES - Weekly Charges				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Residential Care	Per week	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Nursing care (excludes funded nursing care)	Per week	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
	Adult Social Care and Health		COUNCIL OWNED RESIDENTIAL HOMES - Weekly Charges			-	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Residential standard charge	Per week	823.02	894.62	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Residential Dementia charge	Per week	862.94	938.02	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Nursing standard charge (excluding funded nursing care)	Per week	823.02	894.62	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Nursing Dementia charge (excluding funded nursing care)	Per week	862.94	938.02	8.7%
	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	EXTRA CARE HOUSING SUPPORT - Weekly Charges				
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Support Charge pre April 2003	Per week	70.63	76.77	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Support Charge post April 2003	Per week	81.22	88.29	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Laundry Service - up to 2 visits per week	Per week	9.30	10.11	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Guests and Family charges (Charge per person per night)	Per week	11.79	12.82	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Home care in Extra Care Housing (otherwise known as personal and intimate care) one carer	Per week	16.63	18.10	8.8%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Home care in Extra Care Housing (otherwise known as personal and intimate care) two or more carers	Per week	33.26	36.19	8.8%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Post April 2003 not in receipt of housing benefit	Per week	21.59	23.47	8.7%
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Fellows Court - Eldon	Per week	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Westdene / Lindsay - Eldon	Per week	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	Variable up to the lower of assessed contribution and actual cost of service	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	OTHER				

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Charges to other LA's - Recharge of the actual costs for residential care provided	Per week	Depends on placement and unit cost	Depends on placement and unit cost	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Charges to other run LA's - Recharge of the actual costs for non-residential care provided	Per week	Depends on placement and unit cost	Depends on placement and unit cost	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Maximum charging policy - Where a client refuses to provide information to enable a financial assessment to be completed, a full cost charge will be raised after 28 days of receipt of service. Maximum charges are the cost of the service provided.	Per week	Variable based on actual cost	Variable based on actual cost	
Discretionary	Adult Social Care and Health	Adults	Non residential administration charge for full cost residents who ask the Council to arrange their care	Per annum	286.26	311.16	8.7%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Educational Psychology	Educational Psychology support - fixed fee for 6 hour session	Fixed fee per 6 hour session	598.00	598.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Governor Services	Governor advice and training annual contract for schools at a fixed fee	Annual Contract Fee	2,686.00	2,780.00	3.5%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Governor Services	Governor training annual contract for schools at a fixed fee	Annual Contract Fee	1,734.00	1,795.00	3.5%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Governor Services	Bespoke governor advice, training, clerking annual contract for schools	Variable - dependant on delivery offer	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Governor Services	Clerking annual or ad-hoc contract for schools	Annual or variable for ad-hoc work	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Human Resources	Annual HR core support/advice contract for schools at fixed rate per employee	Fixed rate per employee (headcount)	96.00	99.00	3.1%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Human Resources	Annual HR enhanced support/advice contract for schools at fixed rate per employee	Fixed rate per employee (headcount)	120.00	124.00	3.3%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Human Resources	Annual HR fixed hours support contract for schools at a fixed rate per hour with minimum fee of £2500	Per hour	99.00	104.00	5.1%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Human Resources	Ad hoc HR support for schools rate per hour	Per hour	104.00	110.00	5.8%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	IT	Half day ad hoc technical IT support for schools	Per half day	248.00	257.00	3.6%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	IT	Full day ad hoc technical IT support for schools	Per full day	450.00	466.00	3.6%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	IT	Per hour annual technical IT support contracts for schools	Per hour	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	IT	Annual SIMS support contracts for schools	Annual	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	IT	Annual remote IT support services	Annual	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	HR Recruitment	Croydon Teacher Recruitment event - fixed rate per virtual room	Ceased	140.00	Ceased	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	HR Recruitment	Adhoc adverts for schools	Ceased	140.00	Ceased	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	ECT	Appropriate Body service. 2 year ECT programme - 1 term. Fee per ECT at school	Ceased	300.00	Ceased	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Development & Partnership	Half day school improvement consultancy support for schools	Half day	373.00	373.00	0.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Development & Partnership	Full day school improvement consultancy support for schools	Full day	699.00	699.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Development & Partnership	2 hour session school improvement consultancy support/training for schools	2 hour sessions	250.00	250.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Development & Partnership	1.5 hour session remote school improvement consultancy support/training for schools	1.5 hour session	186.00	186.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Development & Partnership	Access to the Staff Whistleblowing Service and example policy - price per pupil/total headcount	Annual	Free for all Croydon schools	Free for all Croydon schools	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	CLEAPPS	Annual fee for advisory service providing support for science and technology in schools - Service available to Croydon maintained schools only	Annual per pupil headcount	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education CPD Programme	Price per participant or annual school package for staff training courses and forums	Variable - dependant on delivery offer	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Children, Young People and Education	Education Traded Services	Annual contract or 'one-off' fee - Any combination of education traded services, including consultancy, training and support available as a bespoke annual package or ad-hoc arrangements upon request	Variable - dependant on delivery offer	POA	POA	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Home Office Inspections (ex VAT)	Per Inspection	180.00	196.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Housing Act Notice (ex VAT) - For first notice (£489 for 1st notice + additional £100 for each hazard)	Per Notice	450.00	489.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Housing Act Notice (ex VAT) - For subsequent notices (£489 for 1st notice + additional £100 for each hazard)	Per Notice	450.00	489.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Housing Act Notice (ex VAT) - For hazard awareness notices	Per Notice	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Housing Act Notice (ex VAT) - To review suspended notices	Per Notice	250.00	272.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Housing Act Notice (ex VAT) - Maximum per property	Per Property	1,000.00	1,087.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	Part A fee – 5 year licence. New HMO Licensing Fee Regime from 01/04/06 - Per habitable room (bedroom or living room)	Full cost recovery	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	Part A fee – 5 year licence. New HMO Licensing Fee Regime from 01/04/06 - Per habitable room (bedroom or living room)	Full cost recovery	100.00	109.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	Part A fee – 1 year licence. New HMO Licensing Fee Regime from 01/04/06 - Per habitable room (bedroom or living room)	Full cost recovery	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	Part A fee – 1 year licence. New HMO Licensing Fee Regime from 01/04/06 - Per habitable room (bedroom or living room)	Full cost recovery	20.00	22.00	10.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	New HMO Licensing Fee Regime from 01/04/06 - Maximum per property	Full cost recovery	5,000.00	5,435.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	HMO Licensing	Charge for an HMO advisory visit and report by an officer from the HMO team.	Full cost recovery	200.00	217.00	8.5%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Service of a notice under other legislation including (but not exclusively): - Section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 - Section 59 of the Building Act 1984 - Section 45 of the Public Health Act 1936 - Section 17 of the Public Health Act 1961	Charge to cover administration time	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Charge for Carrying Out Works in Default of Landlord (30% on cost)	N/A	Variable	Variable	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Fee with application for a demolition order under section 80 of the Building Act 1984 (per site)	Charge to cover administration time	200.00	217.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Housing Enforcement	Fee for receipt of a paper copy (by post) or electronic pdf copy of the HMO register	Charge to cover administration time	50.00	54.00	8.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Commercial Recycling Fees - Glass:240 Euro Bin - 1 to 4 bins (per bin)	Per Waste Container	21.00	23.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Commercial Recycling Fees - Glass:240 Euro Bin - 5 or more bins (per bin)	Per Waste Container	21.00	23.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge 240 Euro Bin	Annual	81.00	88.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge 360 Euro Bin	Annual	86.00	93.00	8.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge Paladin	Annual	167.00	182.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge 660 Euro Bin	Annual	177.00	192.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge 1100 Euro Bin	Annual	199.00	216.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	Bin Hire - Annual Charge Chamberlain	Annual	167.00	182.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Fishing - Per Rod - Adults (per day)	Per Day	7.01	7.60	8.4%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Fishing - Per Rod - Juniors (under 17) / 60+ . Disabled (per day)	Per Day	5.75	6.20	7.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Fishing - Per Rod - Adult Season Ticket	Annual (season Ticket)	99.05	107.70	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Fishing - Per Rod - Junior Season Ticket	Annual (season Ticket)	65.91	71.60	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Fishing - Per Rod - 60+ Season Ticket	Annual (season Ticket)	33.46	36.40	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Casual Play per hour - Adults	Per Hour	5.00	5.40	8.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Casual Play per hour - Juniors (under 17) / 60+ - Disabled	Per Hour	4.05	4.40	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Whole Season Tickets - Adults	Annual (season Ticket)	135.00	147.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Whole Season Tickets - Juniors (under 17)	Annual (season Ticket)	45.50	49.50	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Whole Season Tickets - 60+	Annual (season Ticket)	89.55	97.30	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Bowls - Whole Season Tickets - Disabled / Blind bowlers	Annual (season Ticket)	22.75	24.70	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Netball - Per Hour - Without dressing accommodation	Per Hour	16.07	17.50	8.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Netball - Per Hour - Block booking per game (Min 10 games)	Per Hour	12.84	14.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Netball - Per Hour - Little League (per 3 hour period)	Per Hour	23.46	25.50	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Local Clubs - Per individual match	Per Match	56.99	62.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Local Clubs - Block booking per game (minimum 10 games)	Per Block Booking (min 10 games)	49.84	54.20	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Local Clubs - Shower facilities	Per Match	26.31	28.60	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Other Clubs - Per individual match	Per Match	77.80	84.60	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Other Clubs - Block booking per game (minimum 10 games)	Per Block Booking (min 10 games)	72.61	78.90	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Seniors - Other Clubs - Shower facilities	Per Match	26.31	28.60	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Juniors (under 17) - Local Clubs - Per individual match	Per Match	25.23	27.40	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Juniors (under 17) - Local Clubs - Block booking per game (minimum 10 games)	Per Block Booking (min 10 games)	22.84	24.80	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Juniors (under 17) - Local Clubs - Shower facilities	Per Match	12.97	14.10	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Juniors (under 17) - Local Clubs - Mini Soccer 7-a-side	Per Match	15.31	16.60	8.4%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Juniors (under 17) - Other Clubs - Mini Soccer 7-a-side	Per Match	22.65	24.60	8.6%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Little League Football - Per pitch (3 hours)	Per Pitch (3 hours)	40.23	43.70	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Leagues (Seasonal) - Senior Football	Per Match	42.69	46.40	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Leagues (Seasonal) - Shower Facilities	Per Match	17.39	18.90	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Leagues (Seasonal) - Junior Football	Per Match	19.48	21.20	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Football Leagues (Seasonal) - Shower Facilities	Per Match	12.97	14.10	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Other Team Sports i.e. rugby, korfbal, lacross, baseball, rounders, hockey, etc are charged at the rates equivalent to Senior Football	Per Match	56.99	62.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - American Football is charged at double the equivalent rate for other team sports	Per Match	113.98	123.90	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Local Clubs - Per individual match	Per Match	75.79	82.40	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Local Clubs - Block booking per game (minimum 10 games)	Per Block Booking (min 10 games)	64.40	70.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Local Clubs - Shower facilities	Per Match	23.59	25.60	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Other Clubs - Per individual match	Per Match	93.17	101.30	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Other Clubs - Block booking per game (minimum 10 games)	Per Block Booking (min 10 games)	78.48	85.30	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Seniors - Other Clubs - Shower facilities	Per Match	23.59	25.60	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Cricket Juniors - per match	Per Match	18.48	20.10	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	SPORTS CHARGES - Personal Fitness Licenses	Per Session	20.00	22.00	10.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Application Fee	Per Application	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - Up to 500 people	Per Application	35.75	39.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - 501-1000 people	Per Application	63.00	68.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - 1001-2500 people	Per Application	63.00	68.00	7.9%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - 2501-4000 people	Per Application	95.15	103.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - 4001-6000 people	Per Application	118.80	129.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Admin Fee - 6000+ people	Per Application	148.50	161.00	8.4%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. Up to 500 people	Per Day	415.80	452.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 501-1000 people	Per Day	920.70	1,001.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 1001-2500 people	Per Day	6,052.75	6,579.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 2501-4000 people	Per Day	7,561.70	8,220.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 4001-6000 people	Per Day	Negotiable based on cost recovery	Negotiable based on cost recovery	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 6000+ people	Per Day	Negotiable based on cost recovery	Negotiable based on cost recovery	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	COMMERCIAL EVENTS - Site inspection	Per Site	308.90	336.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Application Fee	Per Application	42.00	46.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee - Up to 100 people	Per Application	26.10	28.00	7.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee - 101-1000 people	Per Application	26.10	28.00	7.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee -1001-2500 people	Per Application	33.30	36.00	8.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee -2501-4000 people	Per Application	39.35	43.00	9.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee -4001-6000 people	Per Application	65.45	71.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Admin Fee -6000+ people	Per Application	65.45	71.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. Up to 100 people	Per Day	99.75	108.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 101-1000 people	Per Day	181.75	198.00	8.9%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 1001-2500 people	Per Day	545.25	593.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 2501-4000 people	Per Day	690.80	751.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 4001-6000 people	Per Day	848.10	922.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	CHARITY EVENTS - Hire of ground per day e.g fairground, circus, corporate events etc.. 6000+ people	Per Day	Negotiable	Negotiable	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 10 rides - Hire fee per day	Per Day	737.10	801.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 10 rides - admin fee	Administration Fee	63.00	68.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 10 rides - Application Fee	Per Application	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 10 rides - non-operational day	Per Day	368.55	401.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 10 rides - (when part of a charity event) Hire Fee per day	Per Day	335.80	365.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 15 rides - Hire fee per day	Per Day	850.50	924.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 15 rides - admin fee	Administration Fee	63.00	68.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 15 rides - Application Fee	Per Application	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 15 rides - non-operational day	Per Day	425.25	462.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees Up to 15 rides - (when part of a charity event) Hire Fee per day	Per Day	335.80	365.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees 15+ rides - Hire fee per day	Per Day	963.90	1,048.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees 15+ rides - admin fee	Administration Fee	63.00	68.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees 15+ rides - Application Fee	Per Application	150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees 15+ rides - non-operational day	Per Day	481.95	524.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees 15+ rides - (when part of a charity event) Hire Fee per day	Per Day	335.80	365.00	8.7%

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Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Fun Fair Fees - Site inspection (per occasion)	Per Inspection	294.85	321.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Photography Session (per hour)	Per Hour	38.00	41.00	7.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Friends of Groups Hire Fee (Council Funded £NIL otherwise Negotiable)	Per Day			-
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Pavilion Hire		121.15	132.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Toilets for events - Extra Small & Small		77.55	84.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Toilets for events - Medium		115.25	125.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Toilets for events - Large		230.45	250.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Toilets for events - Extra Large		Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Allotments - No VAT - effective 1st October 2011 - Whole plot 250 M2	Per Full Plot	88.00	96.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Allotments - No VAT - effective 1st October 2011 - Half plot 125 M2	Per Half Plot	44.00	48.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Sports & Greenspaces	Allotments - No VAT - effective 1st October 2011 - Quarter plot 62.5 M2	Per Quarter Plot	22.00	24.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS (Large) E.G. UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN, Conservation area appraisals. ALL DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON CROYDON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE. THESE FEES ARE FOR PRINTING, POSTAGE AND PACKAGING OF A SPECIFIC DOCUMENT		150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	ADOPTED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (Large) e.g. Masterplans ALL DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON CROYDON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE. THESE FEES ARE FOR PRINTING, POSTAGE AND PACKAGING OF A SPECIFIC DOCUMENTS		60.00	65.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	ADOPTED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (Small) e.g. PGN1		15.00	16.00	6.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	Householder, Small Scale Development Service - Service Level A - plus VAT		300.00	300.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PRE APPLICATION MEETING SERVICE FEES - Service Level B * plus VAT		1,250.00	1,250.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PRE APPLICATION MEETING SERVICE FEES - Service Level C * plus VAT		2,500.00	2,500.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PRE APPLICATION MEETING SERVICE FEES - Service Level D * plus VAT		4,375.00	4,375.00	0.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PRE APPLICATION MEETING SERVICE FEES - Service Level F (Specialist Services - Trees) * plus VAT		250.00	250.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PRE APPLICATION MEETING SERVICE FEES - Service Level G (Specialist Services - Heritage) * plus VAT		625.00	625.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	Planning Performance Agreement Inception Meeting Fees Plus VAT Inception Meeting		5,625.00	5,625.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	Planning Performance Meeting Plus VAT Subsequent Meetings		2,500.00	2,500.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	Planning Performance Agreement Plus VAT Planning Committee Presentations		3,750.00	3,750.00	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PLANNING ENQUIRIES LETTER £30.64	Per Letter	33.70	33.70	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PLANNING ENQUIRIES LETTER INVOLVING HISTORY RESEARCH	Per Letter	61.78	61.78	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF A DECISION NOTICE OR AN APPEAL DECISION NOTICE	Per Copy	11.23	11.23	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF A PLAN - A3 OR A4 £2.04	Per Copy	2.24	2.24	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF A PLAN - A2 AND ABOVE £9.49	Per Copy	10.48	10.48	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER £32.68	Per Copy	35.94	35.94	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENT £32.68	Per Copy	35.95	35.95	0.0%
Statutory/Regulatory	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	COPY OF ENFORCEMENT NOTICE £32.68	Per Copy	35.98	35.98	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	CONTAMINATED LAND HISTORICAL SITE INVESTIGATIONS	Per Hour	55.00	60.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	HOURLY (OR PART THEREOF) CHARGE FOR RESEARCH	Per Hour	44.00	48.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	PHOTOCOPYING FIRST PAGE	Per First Page	2.20	2.40	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Development Management	SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT PAGES	Per Subsequent Page	0.22	0.24	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	1100 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		27.00	29.00	7.4%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	120 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		3.00	3.25	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	1280 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		23.00	25.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	180 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		8.00	9.00	12.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	240 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		8.00	9.00	12.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	360/340 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		15.00	16.00	6.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	660 EURO BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		16.00	17.00	6.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	CHAMBERLAIN BIN ADD-ON COLLECTION		23.00	25.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	1100 LTR HIRED BIN		199.00	216.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	240 LTR EURO BIN HIRE CHARGE		81.00	88.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	360/340 LTR EURO BIN HIRE		86.00	93.00	8.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	660 LTR EURO BIN HIRE		177.00	192.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	CHAMBERLAIN BIN HIRE		167.00	182.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	PALADIN BIN HIRE		167.00	182.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	BIN DELIVERY CHARGE		26.00	28.00	7.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	CADDY DELIVERY CHARGE		6.00	7.00	16.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	BIN REMOVAL CHARGE		26.00	28.00	7.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	CADDY REMOVAL CHARGE		6.00	7.00	16.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	CHARGE FOR POSTAGE OF INVOICE		2.00	2.20	10.0%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	9L FOOD WASTE CADDY		8.00	9.00	12.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	23L FOOD WASTE BIN		10.00	11.00	10.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 1280L CO-MINGLED RECYCLING BIN		366.00	398.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 140L FOOD WASTE BIN		105.00	114.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 180L LANDFILL BIN		42.00	46.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 240L RECYCLING BIN		21.00	23.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 240L FOOD WASTE BIN		298.00	324.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 240L LANDFILL BIN		42.00	46.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 240L PAPER & CARD RECYCLING BIN		21.00	23.00	9.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF 360/340L COMINGLED RECYCLING BIN		177.00	192.00	8.5%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	SALE OF RECYCLING BOX		12.00	13.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	GARDEN WASTE		76.00	83.00	9.2%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	BULKY WASTE (1-3 ITEMS)		36.00	39.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Waste Management	BULKY WASTE (4-6 ITEMS)		58.00	63.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Sign Plate - Supply and Installation of plate (excluding supporting poles, posts)		163.00	177.00	8.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Cleaning of gullies on private roads on request		72.00	78.00	8.3%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Retrieval of keys and other objects from road gully		166.00	180.00	8.4%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Works directed under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010: Pre-application advice or Pre-approval meeting to discuss proposed development and the scope of sustainable drainage works in connection with new development		623.00	677.00	8.7%

Approval Body	Directorate	Service Area	Fee/Charge Description	Unit of Fee/Charge	2023-24 Current Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Fee (£)	2024-25 Proposed Increase (%)
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Under Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s14 (1) anything done to temporarily restrict or prohibit traffic in order to carry out works on or near the road. Includes site meetings, making and advertising temporary traffic orders and erecting street notice. Excludes signs/road markings.		2,768.00	3,009.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Under Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s14 (2) anything done to temporarily restrict or prohibit traffic in order to carry out works on or near the road when restriction is required without delay . Includes site meetings, making temporary traffic notices and erecting street notices. Excludes signs/road markings		1,661.00	1,806.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Section 50 Street works licence		650.00	707.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Initial Parking Permit application fee		33.00	36.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Highways and Parking	Provision of Companion Badge for Disabled Blue Badge Holder		33.00	36.00	9.1%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Pollution Team	Contaminated Land - Part II A Report - single property		50.00	54.00	8.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Pollution Team	Contaminated Land - Part II A Report - wide radius		100.00	109.00	9.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Pollution Team	Contaminated Land - Part II A Report - complex site		150.00	163.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Pollution Team	Return of seized noise equipment		200.00	217.00	8.5%
Licensing Committee	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Licensing	LICENCES/PERMITS Auctions – one off fee	Administration Fee	287.00	TBC	TBC
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Food Safety	Food Hygiene - Service Charges - Condemnation with visit		160.00	174.00	8.8%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Food Safety	Food Hygiene - Service Charges - Food Export Certificate (per consignment) with visit		356.00	387.00	8.7%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Food Safety	Food Hygiene - Service Charges - Food Export Certificate (per consignment) without visit		259.00	282.00	8.9%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Food Safety	Food Hygiene - Rescore		222.00	250.00	12.6%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Food Safety	Food Hygiene - Statement of Fact	Per Hour	Variable	Variable	N/A
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	Place Review - first review		4,500.00	4,500.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	Place Review - Follow up reviews		4,000.00	4,000.00	0.0%
Discretionary	Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	Spatial Planning	Place Review - Post submission reviews		4,000.00	4,000.00	0.0%

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Equality Analysis: Fees & Charges

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

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

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

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

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

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

2. Proposed change

Directorate	All
Title of proposed change	Fees and Charges 2024-25
Name of Officers carrying out Equality Analysis	Allister Bannin

2.1 Purpose of proposed change

Croydon Council supports delivery of a wide range of services. The ability to charge where appropriate, is a key funding source to support the cost of providing the service. There are specific powers to charge and the Councils charging policy is set out under paragraph four of the main report.

- Parking and property rental fees and charges are excluded from this report.
- Licensing and regulatory related fees are non-executive functions and are reserved for consideration by non-executive committees of the Council.
- There are also Officer delegations in place from the relevant regulatory committees in relation to certain highway charges (skip and scaffolding licences, etc). These are not included in the report.

Context for Change

Changing Demographics

Data from the 2021 census shows that Croydon's population has grown by 7.5% since the 2011 census to 390,800. This is slightly lower than the increase for London (7.7%). Other comparative data from 2021 Census

- Croydon ranked 16th for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England.
- Croydon has the highest population in London.
- The number of households has increased to close to 160,000 compared to 145,000 recorded in Census 2011.
- Croydon is the 10th least densely populated of London's 33 local authority areas

In Croydon,

- 52% of the population are females.
- 19.3% of the population are under 15 and 13.6% over 65

Based on the age bandings for delivering services in Croydon:

- 23.1% of residents in Croydon are aged 0-17 years
- 63.3% are aged between 18 and 64 years
- 13.6% are aged 65 years or over

Fees and Charges

Residents and customers currently pay specific fees and charges for a wide range of activities and services such as planning application, leisure activities, care related charges, etc. Some of these fees and charges are set nationally and the Council is legally required to adopt these levels, whilst other fees and charges are set at levels using the Council's discretion.

With the cost of providing goods and services going up due to inflation and other factors, the Council needs to increase its charges by an equivalent amount to ensure that it continues to recover its costs.

The Council has a need to balance its budget which an increase in fees supports. The Council is also mindful of the impact that an increase may have on the residents that it delivers its services to.

Our current equality analysis is focused on the public sector equality duty:

- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups.
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment.
- Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected groups.

The increase in fees and charges should also be considered in the current wider economic context, with inflation at historically high levels. The cumulative effect from other increases that is likely to impact on residents, including where often lower-income households face higher impacts by having to use methods for bills such as a payment meter, instead of direct debit, which has an accompanying higher cost. This impact will be across residents and may include some with protected characteristics.

The proposed change in fees and charges is, in the majority, in line with the inflation rate of 8.7% at April 2023.

There are mitigations in place which the Council currently provide to support those in need and these are detailed in section 5 of this Equality Impact Assessment.

3. Impact of the proposed change

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

Where an impact is unknown, state so. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports, complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact

	<p>For each protected characteristic group show whether the impact of the proposed change on service users and/or staff is positive or negative by briefly outlining the nature of the impact in the appropriate column. If it is decided that analysis is not relevant to some groups, this should be recorded and explained. In all circumstances you should list the source of the evidence used to make this judgement where possible.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: As this report covers a wide range of Council services, the equalities impact caused by a change in charges will differ in line with the service in question, and the demographics of those individuals &/or communities who use or benefit from the service.</p> <p>This EQIA addresses the general impact of a review of fees and charges, along with any planned mitigations to the impact on groups and individuals that share protected characteristics and utilises data currently available.</p> <p>The fees and charges subject to increase will impact on all residents that use those services, some fees and charges will have more of an impact on some characteristics than others and are detailed below. Mitigating actions are in place for all of these and detailed later in the EQIA.</p>		
Protected characteristic group(s)	Negative Impact	Positive impact	Source of evidence
Age	<p>The change in fees is unlikely to have any impact on this protected characteristic group that is greater than any other resident.</p> <p>The fees in relation to cremation/burial may affect older residents more. However, the impact is considered to be low as the fee increases for a lot of burial, interment and cremation fees are proposed at around 4% which is below inflation levels.</p> <p>Fees in relation to adult social care could impact this protected group more, but financial assessments are in place for these services.</p>		<p>Croydon's population continues to age with those over 65 increasing by 19.7% since the 2011 Census. The median age also increased by two years, from 35 to 37 years of age.</p> <p>The borough data regarding age is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97,900 0-19 year olds. This is the highest in London. (2021 Census) • 239,700 20-64 year olds. This is the highest in London. (2021 Census) • 53,100 65+ year olds. This is the 3rd highest in London. (2021 Census)
Disability	<p>The change in fees is unlikely to have any impact on this protected characteristic group that is greater than any other resident.</p>		<p>Census 2011 indicated that 6.7% of Croydon residents have their day-to day activities "limited a lot" and 7.9% "limited a little" by a long-term health problem or disability</p>

	<p>However, external factors mean some disabled residents face higher costs in areas such as energy use. The mitigating factors shown later in the EQIA will therefore be essential to supporting this group of residents.</p>		<p>We are expecting this data to be updated to be released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) later this month.</p> <p>Employment rates for disabled people, across all ages, are significantly lower than those of non-disabled people.</p> <p>The employment of disabled people 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Sex	<p>The change in fees is unlikely to have any impact on this protected characteristic group that is greater than any other resident.</p> <p>The fees in relation to sports may affect one sex more than another if usage varies by sex.</p> <p>Examples of participation of both sexes in traditionally single sex sports are numerous and vice versa.</p> <p>However, sports are open to all residents and the fee increases are not considered to have a bearing on participation levels by sex.</p>		<p>203,000 (51.9%) residents in Croydon are female and 187,600 are male (48.1%).</p> <p>(Source 2021 Census)</p>
Gender reassignment/identity	<p>The change in fees is unlikely to have any impact on this protected characteristic group that is greater than any other resident.</p> <p>The fees in relation to sports may affect one gender more than another if usage varies by gender identity.</p> <p>However, sports are open to all residents and the fee increases are not considered to have a bearing on participation levels by gender identity.</p>		<p>According to the ONS Census 2021, of all the Croydon residents aged 16 years and over who responded, 91.6% stated that their gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth.</p> <p>7.5% of those who responded did not answer the gender identity question Only 0.9% stated that they had a different gender identity.</p>
Marriage or Civil Partnership	<p>The changes in registrars' fees may negatively impact residents based on their intention of entering into marriage or civil partnership.</p> <p>However, the cost of an average wedding is approximately £17,000, therefore the impact of a change in registrars fees is considered to be</p>		<p>The borough data on marital status is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32.8% Married • 34.1% Single • 8.5% Divorced or Separated • 3.7% Widowed • 20.6% No response to question <p>493 people were registered in a same sex civil partnership</p>

	<p>minimal in comparison to these other potential costs associated with getting married/having a Civil Partnership. Also the maximum fee increase proposed is 6.7% in this area which is below the April 2023 CPI inflation.</p> <p>The Council offers different burial plots which could be purchased more by people in this protected characteristic group (e.g. double plot may be more popular with those residents that are married or in a civil partnership). However, the fee increase is consistent and therefore there is no impact considered for this protected characteristic.</p>		<p>279 people were registered in an opposite sex civil partnership.</p> <p>(Source: Census 2021)</p>
Religion or belief	<p>The changes in bereavement fees may impact residents based on their religion or belief.</p> <p>The Hindu faith, for example, believes in cremation as opposed to burial. Therefore, changes in cremation fees may impact them more.</p> <p>Christian ceremonies often incorporate the singing of hymns, and therefore the change in organist fee could be seen to impact them more than other faiths.</p> <p>However, the fee increases are in line with CPI inflation (with rounding for practical purposes) or below CPI inflation and the percentage change between burial and cremation is consistent.</p> <p>Therefore, no impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic group.</p>		<p>The predominant religion of Croydon is Christianity. According to the 2021 census, the borough has over 190,880 Christians (48.9%), 40,717 Muslims (10.4%) and 23,145 Hindu (5.9%) residents.</p> <p>101,119 (25.9%) Croydon residents stated that they are atheist or non-religious in the 2021 Census.</p> <p>6.9% did not answer the question on religion.</p>

	<p>In relation to registrars' fees, marriage rates may vary by religious groups and therefore it could be suggested that the change in fee would impact this group more. However, and as set out above, the registrars fee is a small proportion of the cost of the average wedding and therefore the change is considered to have minimal impact. Also the maximum fee increase proposed is 6.7% in this area which is below April 2023 CPI inflation.</p>																				
<p>Race</p>	<p>The change in fees is unlikely to have any impact on this protected characteristic group that is significantly greater than any other resident.</p> <p>The citizenship ceremony fee may impact residents of different ethnic groups. However, this information is not collected at this time. The proposed change in fee is below the inflation level and the impact is therefore considered to be low.</p> <p>The change on fee for hiring of grounds and green spaces may impact residents of different ethnic groups. For example, funfairs and circuses were historically run by individuals from the Gypsy and Traveller community. However, there is no data that identifies whether funfairs or circuses are run by the Gypsy and Traveller community in Croydon. Therefore, the impact is considered to be low.</p>	<p>Community events can support the delivery of the public sector equality duty by fostering or encouraging good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.</p> <p>The change in fee is in line with inflation (and rounding for practical purposes) and therefore minimal impact is anticipated.</p>	<p>Broad Ethnic Group Changes in Croydon from Census 2011 to Census 2021</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>White</th> <th>Black</th> <th>Asian</th> <th>Mixed</th> <th>Other</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>55.1%</td> <td>20.2%</td> <td>16.4%</td> <td>6.6%</td> <td>1.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>48.4%</td> <td>22.6%</td> <td>17.5%</td> <td>7.65</td> <td>3.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In 2021, 22.6% of Croydon residents identified their ethnic group within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" category, up from 20.2% in 2011. The 2.5 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area.</p> <p>Across London, the percentage of people from the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" ethnic group increased from 13.3% to 13.5%, while across England the percentage increased from 3.5% to 4.2%.</p> <p>In 2021, 48.4% of people in Croydon identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 55.1% in 2011), while 17.5% identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category (compared with 16.4% the previous decade).</p> <p>The percentage of people who identified their ethnic group within the "Mixed or Multiple" category increased from 6.6% in 2011 to 7.6% in 2021.</p>		White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other	2011	55.1%	20.2%	16.4%	6.6%	1.8%	2021	48.4%	22.6%	17.5%	7.65	3.9%
	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other																
2011	55.1%	20.2%	16.4%	6.6%	1.8%																
2021	48.4%	22.6%	17.5%	7.65	3.9%																

			<p>Languages in Croydon</p> <p>According to the Census 2021,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84.0% of the residents who can speak in Croydon speak English as their first language. • 7.8% speak a European language. • 6.3% speak an Asian language. <p>Mayor urges Government to tackle the cost of living crisis London City Hall</p> <p>December 2022 - GLA YouGov Cost of living poll results.pdf (airdrive-secure.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com)</p>
Sexual Orientation	None of the proposed changes are anticipated to impact this protected characteristic group more than other residents.		<p>According to the ONS Census 2021, of the residents aged 16 years and over who responded to the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 87.8% self-classified as Straight or Heterosexual. • 1.5% stated they were Gay. • 1.2% stated they were Bi-Sexual • 0.4% stated All other sexual orientations • 9.1% did not respond to the question
Pregnancy or Maternity	Changes in fees may impact on residents that are pregnant or on maternity if they are not working. However, additional benefits are provided for residents in this situation and therefore the proposed changes are expected to have minimal impact.		<p>Maternity leave: Cost of living crisis highlights need for support (personneltoday.com)</p> <p>There were 5,252 births in Croydon in 2020. An estimated 30,000 women lose their jobs as a result of pregnancy every year, according to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).</p>

Note: Data disaggregating level of service use by protected characteristic group is unavailable or available in sufficient granularity to draw conclusions in many cases. This will be explored and refined iteratively to inform mitigating strategies wherever practical to do so.

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

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

3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

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

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

Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
<p>The council's current data collection of protected characteristics is weak in some areas and rich in others. We are currently carrying out a project to tackle this imbalance with the support of the Head of Profession for Business Intelligence and the Equalities Manager as well as analysts and services across the organisation.</p> <p>The Corporate Management Team and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board are the driving force behind this work stream.</p> <p>Currently an 'as is' exercise is taking place to identify areas of weakness in collection that needs to be addressed. This will be followed by a 'to be' looking at the information across the council that we will want to collect and how we go about doing this. Due to having to implement new processes for collection this project will take place in phases.</p>	<p>Index of Deprivation by Lower Layer Super Output Areas (gov.uk). Other data sources to be identified and investigated.</p>	<p>Iterative</p>

For guidance and support with consultation and engagement visit <https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/communications/consultation-andengagement/starting-engagement-or-consultation>

3.3 Impact scores

Example

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

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

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

					Severity of Impact	3	3	6	9
						2	2	4	6
						1	1	2	3
		1	2	3					
	Likelihood of Impact								

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
- 9	High
- 5	Medium
- 3	Low

Key

Equality Analysis

Table 3 – Impact scores

Note: The data to populate is table is not available to inform the Equality Impact Score. Evidence for the above is drawn from the Index of Deprivation Score for the 5% most deprived areas in the country and should not be used to draw conclusions. Further research is planned to develop a more reliable indicator. And as stated previously, individual fee changes will require their own assessment, the table below represents a generic view:

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

Equality Analysis

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

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

- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

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

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

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

Mitigations

Residents currently pay specific fees and charges for a wide range of activities and services such as registrars services, leisure activities, care related charges, etc. An increase in fees will affect all those in, and out of the borough, who pay to use specific service(s). It appears that there is no significant disproportionate impact on groups or individuals that share one or more protected characteristic. The Council has in place various schemes to support residents who experience financial difficulty, some of whom will fall within the protected characteristic groups and may be affected by the proposed increases, to help mitigate impact. Listed below are some examples of what support is currently available, taken from a wide range of support schemes across the council.

Equality Analysis

- The Council in partnership with Nimbus Disability offer a discount card to all children and young people on our disability register. The card is free and is part of a national access card scheme, giving benefits and discounts to facilities and activities across the country, such as leisure, sports and fitness, cinema etc.
- There are discounted rates for all leisure centre activities for Croydon residents with disabilities. If a disabled person needs a carer with them in order to access leisure centre services, the carer is entitled to free entry.
- Free holiday activity clubs with healthy meals for children.
- Croydon Council Leisure Centres offer discounted rates for residents Seniors 60+ years and Juniors 4-15 years old.
- Croydon Council Money Advice Service for advice on paying your bills and debt worries. All advice is independent and confidential.
- Healthy Homes is Croydon Council's free energy advice service aimed at Croydon residents on low incomes, and those more vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (especially families with young children, older residents, and residents with pre-existing medical conditions).
- Council tax discount for care leavers, single person occupier, residents with disabilities and full-time students.
- The Council has a statutory duty to protect those on low or, or no income, and supports claims for Council Tax support, Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.
- Adult Social Care users are subject to a means tested financial assessment which will assess affordability to contribute to, or not, to service provision required (as defined by the Care Act 2014).
- 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.

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Table 6. Decision on proposed change

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter X in column 3 (Conclusion) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.		
Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.	

Equality Analysis

Adjust the proposed change	<p>We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council’s ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form</p> <p>Whilst changes in fees and charges may impact in some cases, this impact is considered to be minimal as set out in the information above.</p> <p>Mitigations and adjustments are already in place to support residents that may help them manage debt or financial vulnerability detailed. This includes signposting and discretionary support.</p> <p>Service departments will need to collate data on their service users to monitor impact. Some departments will have existing service level data regarding some protected characteristics and not others. Where data does not currently exist, each service must create an action around collecting data across all protected characteristics. As data is received the EQIA should be updated, demonstrating data and evidence where change has been made.</p> <p>Residents should be provided with details of support organisations in both digital and non-digital formats.</p>	X
Continue the proposed change	<p>We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.</p>	
Stop or amend the proposed change	<p>Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.</p>	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting?		Meeting title: Cabinet Date: 6 December 2023

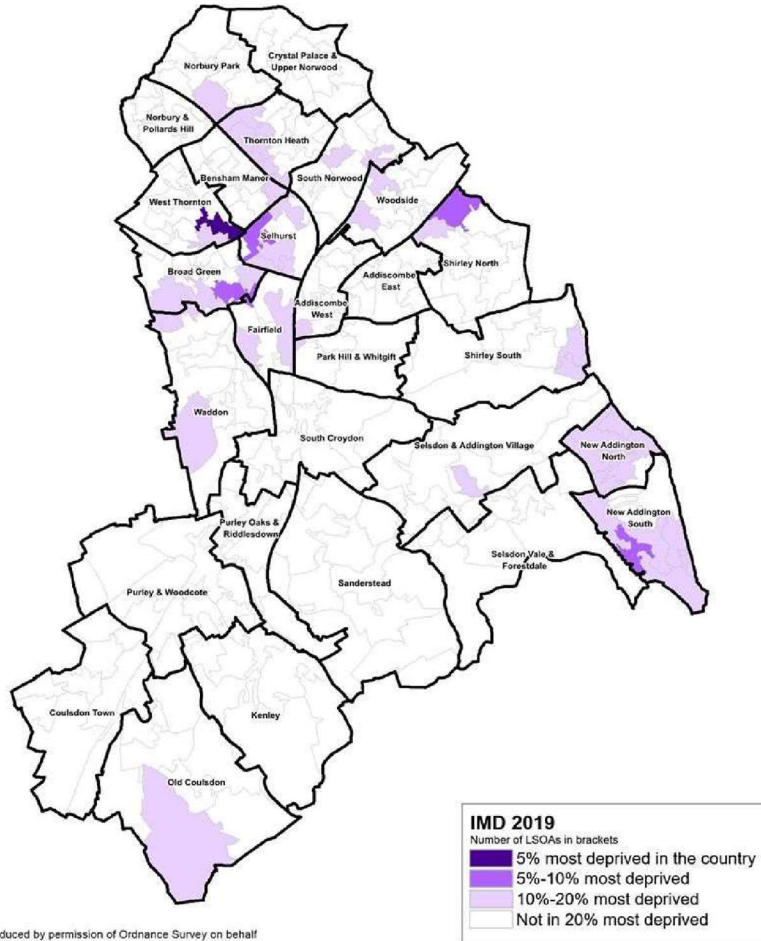
Equality Analysis

7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision	
Equalities Lead	Name: Denise McCausland Position: Equalities Programme Manager
Director	Name: Allister Bannin Date: 03/11/2023 Position: Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer)

Equality Analysis

Indices of Deprivation 2019 Croydon Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)



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INFOGRAPHIC 1

In Croydon, 1567 people live amongst the 5% most deprived in the country (Dark Blue)

In this area,

- 50% are male (Croydon 49%)
- 27% are 0-15 (Croydon 22%)
- 30% are White ethnic group (Croydon 55%)
- 35% are Black / African / Caribbean / Black British ethnic group (Croydon 20%)
- 24% are Asian / Asian British ethnic group (Croydon 16%)
- 7% are Mixed / multiple ethnic group (Croydon 7%)
- 4% are Other ethnic group (Croydon 2%)

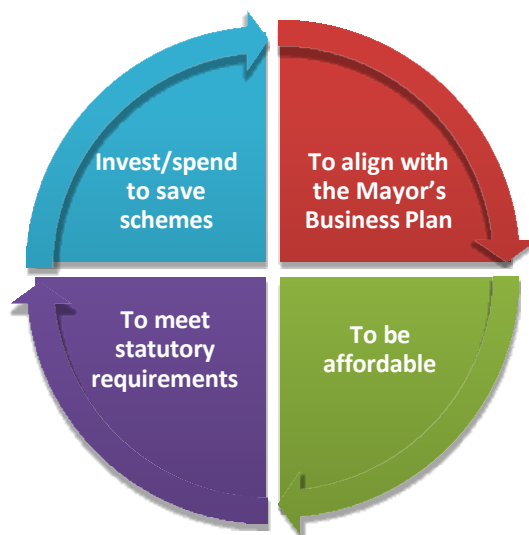
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Cabinet	
DATE OF DECISION	6 December 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2023-29	
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	
DECISION TAKER:	Executive Mayor in Cabinet	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	<p style="text-align: right;">Reference number: 7023EM</p> <p style="text-align: right;">REASON:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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</p> <p style="text-align: right;">and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Key Decision – Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards</p>
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public Grounds for the exemption: N/A
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** This report sets out the updated Capital Programme for 2023-29 for the Council’s General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) with a forecast of resources available over that period. A specific update of the 2023-24 programme including the forecast and variance as at Period 6 is also provided.
- 1.2** The Capital Programme sets out the strategic direction for Croydon’s capital management and investment plans, as detailed in Appendix A, and is an integral part of the medium to long term financial and service planning and budget setting process. Capital investment impacts the prudential indicators which are required under the 2020 Prudential Code and they will be included in the Treasury Management Strategy report to Cabinet in early 2024.

- 1.3** The Council continues to deliver significant capital investment across the borough which will provide improved facilities and infrastructure, whilst ensuring the impact on debt costs within the revenue budget is managed.
- 1.4** Croydon's aim is to ensure the Capital Programme delivers value for money and therefore, the drivers are:



2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to approve and to recommend the following to Full Council:

- 2.1** Approve the Council's 2023-29 General Fund Capital Programme which includes planned expenditure of £486.53m (including capitalisation directions) across the six years.
- 2.2** Approve the Council incurring nil borrowing for 2023-24, with borrowing projected of £28.38m in 2024-25 and £175.17m over the four years after 2024-25. The cost of this borrowing will be factored into the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for final agreement at Full Council resulting in 2024-25 total interest charge and Minimum Revenue Provision of £72.5m.
- 2.3** Approve the Council 2024-25 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme with a total investment planned of £57.26m with borrowing of £24.80m.
- 2.4** Approve an increase to the 2023-24 HRA capital budget from £33.248m to £37.162m, owing to increased major repairs and improvements, with this £3.914m increase funded by HRA reserves.

- 2.5** Approve the Council's Capital Strategy, as detailed within Appendix A of this report.
- 2.6** Note the Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The Executive Mayor in Cabinet and Full Council are required to approve the Council's Capital Programme under the Council's Constitution and all expenditure of £1m requires Cabinet approval for capital spend under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1** The General Fund Capital Programme has spent £264.84m in the two years 2021-23 (including £100.6m for Capitalisation Direction) of which over £53.43m in borrowing has been incurred to finance the spend.
- 4.2** The Council's key objectives are set out in the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 which can be found on the Council's website under the following link:

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/s41649/6a%20Appendix%20-%20Executive%20Mayors%20Business%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf>

These key objectives comprise:

1. The council balances its books, listens to residents, and delivers good, sustainable services.
 2. Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning.
 3. Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.
 4. Croydon is a cleaner, safer, and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home.
 5. People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.
- 4.3** Capital investment should evidence how it will support the priorities and principles set out in Business Plan along with individual directorate strategies. New bids to the Capital Programme have been assessed against the Council's objectives and the other Capital Strategy drivers outlined within Appendix A as part of the Capital budget setting process.

Capital Governance Arrangements

- 4.4** The Council has an established governance arrangement embedded within its current Constitution in Part 4C - Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. The Executive is responsible for the preparation of proposed plans, strategies or budgets that form part of the Budget and Policy Framework.
- 4.5** Just in the same manner as for the Revenue Budget, the Capital Budgets under Part 4C require Full Council approval. Part 4H – Financial Regulations provide the governance framework for managing the Council’s financial affairs. They apply to all Members, Officers of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf. It is likely to be considered a disciplinary offence to breach these Financial Regulations and procedures.
- 4.6** The Regulations apply to capital budgets and the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that a capital programme is set annually along with financial management process to enable capital budgets to be monitored effectively. The Council has reported the 2023-24 capital programme as part of the monthly Financial Performance reports to Cabinet.
- 4.7** To strengthen the scrutiny and review of Capital delivery and progress against budget, the Council established a Capital Internal Control Board which meets monthly and consists of key Officers from across the expert areas and services. Whilst the Capital Board is not a formal arrangement within the Constitution, it forms a key part of the improvements that have been made to capital management within the Council.
- 4.8** The Capital Board provides the added review and scrutiny role on delivery of the capital programme along with submission of new bids. The Board acts as a key gateway to support the Corporate Management Team and the Executive Mayor in making informed decisions whilst ensuring risks are identified and managed.

Capital Spend Key Principles

4.9 Consideration should be given to the following key principles before submitting a capital bid:

- Spend included in business cases must conform to the definition of capital expenditure i.e., “the purchase or enhancement of assets where the benefits last longer than the year of expenditure”. Croydon applies a de-minimis level of £10k meaning that anything below this value individually is classed and treated as revenue.
- Given the Council’s challenging financial position, projects coming forward that require Croydon to borrow funding should be kept to a bare minimum.
- Feasibility/planning costs must be met from a revenue budget until approval to spend has been agreed through the relevant route, these should therefore be built into the revenue budget and be considered as part of the budget build process.
- Ongoing revenue implications must be included within business cases and identified as pressures in the revenue budget.
- Realistic profiling of budgets must be provided from the outset. Without this, the limited funding available could be assigned to a project which is delayed, preventing an alternative but more viable project from proceeding. In many cases grants and external funding are time limited and delays in the project could lead to losing precious external funds.
- Where the Council is required to provide match funding in order to receive external funding, consideration must be given to Council’s objectives. Is the project sufficiently aligned to meeting the Council’s strategic outcomes to warrant the match funding? The Council has identified sufficient resources to match fund these projects? Consideration must also be given to grant or external funding conditions and officer time and cost it will take to comply.
- Maximise use of existing assets where it is cost effective to do so. Look for full occupancy of the asset in terms of space and length of time the asset is in use. This could mean looking for synergies with other organisations (for example, the One Public Estate programme with key partners).

- Longevity/flexibility of asset – consider how the asset will conform with longer term service delivery plans. Has flexibility of the use of the asset been considered?
- Officers and Members must not commit funds until projects have been through the correct governance procedure.
- Robust financial, legal, HR, equalities and other related impact assessments are needed for the Council’s investment decisions.
- All schemes must pass through the Capital Board for necessary scrutiny and approval to the next stage. This ensures each project receives a review to assess wider Council implications and to test all relevant matters are discussed and best practice is shared.

Capital Expenditure

- 4.10** The Council will ensure that appropriate capital budget is allocated on a risk assessed approach, to meet statutory requirements, such as basic need, health and safety, disability discrimination act (DDA) and other legal requirements as directed by Government. Nonetheless, just because there is a statutory requirement, capital bids will still need to explore alternative options to satisfy the affordability requirement. This will need to include proactively seeking external funding, such as grants or alternative contributions to finance capital spend.
- 4.11** Slippage from 2022-23 into 2023-24 has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet through monthly financial performance reports to Cabinet. The review ensured that the Council only carries out schemes that are value for money and meet the Council’s priorities in line with the Mayor’s Business Plan.
- 4.12** The Council is projecting to spend £126.09m in 2023-24 and is expecting to spend £359.46m in 2024-29. The table below provides a summary level breakdown of spend per directorate with scheme detail provided in Appendix B of this report. Services have reviewed the profiling of their capital projects across 2023-24 and future years and this is reflected in the table below and Appendix B.

Table showing General Fund capital programme estimates

Directorate	2023-24 Budget	Forecast	Variance		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	£000's	£000's	£000's		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£'000
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE	5,070	5,166	96		6,292	33			
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION	329	329	0						
HOUSING	3,400	3,200	(200)		3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335
RESOURCES	12,001	17,057	5,056		11,643	9,037	8,587	5,689	3,000
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGEN & ECONOMIC RECOVERY	43,271	37,335	(5,936)		26,710	23,993	20,293	18,716	18,791
CORPORATE	63,000	63,000	0		38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000
Total General Fund Capital Programme	127,071	126,087	(984)		85,980	74,398	70,215	65,740	63,126

Please note that the Education capital delivery team has moved into the Commercial Investment and Capital Division in the Resources Directorate, so the Education capital schemes are now shown in Resources rather than the Children, Young People and Education Directorate.

- 4.13** Capitalisation directions contribute significantly to the Capital Programme. These have been included as a worst case scenario in future years in case dialogue with DLUHC does not result in a financial solution to the historic legacy debt issues of the Council. However, it needs to be noted that capitalisation of revenue spend increases the cost of borrowing in following years and is not a solution that would support the Council in becoming financially sustainable. The table above includes previously approved projects along with new bids requested by directorates for current and future years.
- 4.14** The Capital Programme focuses on repairs and maintenance spend to ensure the Council's assets are maintained to decent standards and so they continue to perform in the delivery of the Council services to residents.

- 4.15** A Parks stock condition survey has been commissioned and the report is expected in December 2023. Growth above the current capital budget of £1m per annum for Park Asset Management may be required to meet health and safety requirements. Financing for any growth would be sought first from s106 or CIL before consideration of borrowing.
- 4.16** The Council has been successful in gaining £305k funding from the Lottery Fund for capital improvements at Ashburton Park. Therefore the Ashburton Park Heritage Fund project has been added into the capital programme in 2023-24.
- 4.17** Within the Capital Programme the Council is also committing significant monies towards investing in various information technology and property assets so that it leads to an improved service provision whilst ensuring a more cost-effective delivery of services. The Council is carrying out a review of the Oracle financial IT system utilising transformation funding and it should be noted that this is not currently in the programme but a proposal for inclusion in the capital programme will come forward once the due diligence is completed identifying what is required.
- 4.18** The Croydon Digital Service is carrying out market testing to check purchase and lease options for a refresh of end user devices (laptops, tablets, etc). The result of this value for money (VFM) assessment and analysis may change the level and timing of capital and/or revenue budgets to be considered for approval as part of the MTF5 in February 2024.
- 4.19** The Council may need to contribute towards improvements for mortuary services in the borough. This could include contributing towards a new building. Croydon public mortuary is used for the reception and storage of bodies of those who have died in the borough. The service is run under the jurisdiction of HM Coroner and we handle deaths that have been referred to the coroner or where a death certificate cannot be issued.
- 4.20** The Council's ambition to protect educational infrastructure and improve pupil attainment to support the local economy form a large proportion of the capital programme. A total of £21.83m over 4 years is provided for upgrading and expanding schools' infrastructure. This includes the vital investment in Special Education Need schools to ensure children and their parents have Council support, a key pledge within the Mayor's Business Plan.
- 4.21** A total of £76.41m over 5 years is earmarked to be spent on the Borough's infrastructure ranging from highway maintenance to tree works and working with TfL to deliver the Local Implementation Plan. This investment is important to support the ambition of Croydon becoming a cleaner, safer and healthier place.

- 4.22** The General Fund capital programme includes the addition of £543k in 2024-25 for the Public Switched Telephone Network Digital Migration Phase 1 project responding to the national analogue to digital telephone network switchover. By 2025, Openreach will have phased out all copper analogue telephone lines in favour of optical fibre networks and therefore, phone lines in buildings need to be updated. This phase 1 work, financed through borrowing, will identify the full level of works involved and further General Fund capital budget financed by borrowing is likely to be required.
- 4.23** Similarly the phase 1 work will identify the requirement for the HRA capital programme, with a high level of works expected for digital migration of elevator alarms. As part of the Remote Alarm on Passenger and Goods Passenger Lifts Standards EN 81-28 (2003), all lifts in the UK are required to have an emergency alarm that was traditionally connected to a rescue service via telephone. With the analogue to digital switchover, lift owners must now manage the transition of their emergency alarms from analogue phone lines to other digital alternatives.

Capitalisation Direction

- 4.24** The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy includes the provision of capitalisation direction in future years from government to support the budget gap within the General Fund Revenue Account. This is included as a worst case scenario while the Council continues dialogue with DLUHC to find an alternative solution to resolve the cost of borrowing relating to historic legacy debt.
- 4.25** Capitalisation direction allows local authorities to charge its revenue expenditure to capital monies and hence pay for revenue costs using capital funds. Capital funds that can be applied include capital receipts and borrowing and it will be up to the Council to identify the best financing source at year end.
- 4.26** The capitalisation direction is a relaxation of the accounting convention that ensures that revenue costs should be met from revenue resources only and that councils should not "borrow" or use capital funds to fund revenue expenditure. This does mean that if the Council chooses to borrow to fund its direction, relevant interest costs will be charged to the Council's revenue account along with additional minimum revenue provision charges which will need to be set aside from revenue to pay back the principal repayments for the borrowing. Therefore, capitalisation direction is not a financially sustainable solution for the Council's revenue budget as the cost of borrowing increases for future years.
- 4.27** 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"). 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.

4.28 There is a risk that if the Council has to continue with capitalisation directions that further reductions in the capital programme would need to be considered. The capital programme has already been significantly reduced over the last two years through detailed value for money review of projects and further reductions to investment in necessary infrastructure could prevent the Council from meeting its Best Value duty. Borrowing for long term infrastructure (such as highways) is normal practice for local authorities and reductions could create cost pressures in revenue budgets (e.g. reactive short-term repairs and maintenance, and legal claims) and result in the Council not meeting statutory requirements.

4.29 Croydon has been supported by capitalisation directions to date as shown in the below table:

Financial Year	Status	Previously agreed Directions £m	In-Principle Directions – secured Feb 2023 £m	Potential need for further Capitalisation Directions £m	Total Capitalisation Directions £m
2019-20	Draft		126,000		126,000
2020-21	Draft	70,000	10,000		80,000
2021-22	Draft	50,000	14,400		64,400
2022-23	Draft		36,200		36,200
Total March 2023		120,000	186,600		306,600
2023-24	Planned		63,000		63,000
2024-25	Potential			38,000	38,000
2025-26	Potential			38,000	38,000
2026-27	Potential			38,000	38,000
2027-28	Potential			38,000	38,000
2028-29	Potential			38,000	38,000
Total October 2023		120,000	249,600	190,000	559,600

Key:

- Draft indicates the agreed and in-principle Capitalisation Directions have been applied in full to the Council's draft accounts, but that the audit of the accounts has not yet concluded.
- Planned indicates the intention to use the in-principle Capitalisation Direction in year
- Potential indicates the need for potential further borrowing in line with the comments in paragraph 4.13.

4.30 These directions have come with specific request from government which includes:

- Any further borrowing from the date of the capitalisation up to and including, but not exceeding, the increase in the financing requirement must be obtained from the PWLB (Public Works Loan Board) and must be subject to an additional 1 percentage point premium on the interest rate above the rate the loan would otherwise be subject to and;
- The Council shall charge annual Minimum Revenue Provision using the asset life method with a proxy 'asset life' of no more than 20 years.

Capital Financing

4.31 The table below provides a summary of the key funding sources the Council expects to use to pay for the proposed General Fund capital programme.

Table showing capital financing of the General Fund capital programme

Funding Source	2023-24 Budget	Forecast	Variance		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
CIL	(8,025)	(8,077)	(52)		(8,290)	(7100)	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)
s106	(1,186)	(262)	924		(697)	(691)	(411)		
HRA Contribution	(1,772)	(1,452)	320						
Reserves - Growth Zone	(15,341)	(15,341)	-		(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Grant	(17,678)	(16,399)	1,279		(14,618)	(12,904)	(10,040)	(7,024)	(4,335)
Capital Receipts	(83,069)	(84,556)	(1,487)		(30,000)	(20,000)			
Borrowing	-	-	-		(28,375)	(29,703)	(49,164)	(48,116)	(48,191)
Total GF Capital Funding	(127,071)	(126,087)	984		(85,980)	(74,398)	(70,215)	(65,740)	(63,126)

4.32 The capital programme is required to have its own funding sources and whilst revenue resources can be used to fund capital spend, capital funds cannot be used to fund revenue spend.

- 4.33** It is always cost effective for the Council to utilise non-debt financing to fund the capital spend as this does not result in increased revenue costs which include Minimum Revenue Provision and interest charges. However, such alternative sources of funding are not always available to finance projects that are driven by the Council's own priorities. If sufficient capital receipts or revenue are also not available, borrowing becomes a necessity.
- 4.34** The current capital programme relies significantly on debt financing and the implications of this are further explained below. Between 2023-24 to 2028-29 of the capital programme the Council is estimating to borrow £203.55m, which represents 41.8% of the total financing sources. Capital receipts, at £133.07m, is the next main source of financing the capital programme.
- 4.35** The Council is exploring options to generate further capital receipts and an update on the Asset Management and Disposal Plan was presented to Cabinet in November 2023 which detailed the delivery plan along with a range of assets the Council is proposing to dispose.

Debt Financing

- 4.36** Croydon currently has a borrowing requirement (CFR) of £1.425bn in the General Fund and a further £0.364bn in the Housing Revenue Account. This means that the Council is already considerably highly leveraged and the MTFs indicates that c£70m is set aside to pay for Minimum Revenue Provision and interest costs. Any further borrowing for the Capital Programme will only add to the level of debt and further increase costs to the revenue account. The projected General Fund borrowing of £203.55m represents approximately 14% of additional debt on top of the existing General Fund debt balance. This poses considerable future risks particularly to the revenue account because of servicing the debt. Serious consideration on sustainability will need to be assessed and the Treasury Management Strategy will further highlight the resulting risk.
- 4.37** When delivering the capital programme, the Council is required to have due regard for the Prudential Code and ensure that the Council's debt levels and borrowing levels do not exceed its own prudential limits. The Code requires councils to formulate plans that are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The MTFs report has made it clear that current debt levels are not sustainable, and the Council has sought extraordinary financial support from Government to ensure the Council's finances are put on a sustainable footing for the future.

Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

- 4.38** The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) continues to make improvements to housing stock management and the Council appointed Savills to carry out a detailed review of the capital programme to continue the necessary investment within the Housing Stock. Stock condition surveys, which will inform the HRA business plan, are still underway and therefore the HRA capital programme contained in this report is a draft version which will be updated prior to full Council in February.
- 4.39** The stock conditions survey will further inform the current housing service's asset management strategy, transformation and improvement plans, and the long-term plan for the management of the investment of Council housing assets. The 2023-24 capital programme is overspending against the original capital plan owing to increased damp/mould and fire safety works, and dealing with the current backlog of repairs and maintenance work. It is requested through this report to approve an increase to the 2023-24 HRA capital budget from £33.248m to £37.162m, with this £3.914m increase funded by HRA reserves.
- 4.40** The table below shows the 2023-24 forecast at Period 6 and the draft allocations for future years which are under review to ensure that sufficient financial resources are set aside to support the development of the asset management strategy aims of meeting the manifesto promise to turn around and provide a housing service which we can be proud of.

Table showing HRA capital programme estimates

HRA Capital Expenditure	Revised Budget 2023-24	Forecast 2023-24	Variance 2023-24	Budget 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	21,355	37,180	15,825	23,045	32,627	26,349	28,615	28,615
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	(1,772)	-	-	-	-	-
Regina Road	1,500	-	(1,500)	14,105	14,105	14,105	14,105	14,105
Building Safety Works	3,735	-	(3,735)	8,610	42,850	22,550	11,065	2,550
Repairs Referrals	8,800	-	(8,800)	11,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Total HRA Capital Expenditure	37,162	37,180	18	57,260	97,082	70,504	61,285	52,770

4.41 The scale of social housing is extensive as the plan indicates a total investment of £338.9m between 2024-25 and 2028-29. The programme will deliver extensive repairs and improvement works to the existing housing stock which will improve the living conditions of all tenants. Extensive refurbishment works planned on older buildings along with a whole new re-build of Regina Road Estate is planned to commence as key engagement has already taken place with the residents.

4.42 The HRA has capacity within its account to take on more debt and through work done with Savills a sustainable financing solution is being developed by the housing service to meet the capital expenditure plans. The table below details the draft key funding sources the HRA has earmarked to apply to the delivery programme which includes a projection of £175.65m of new borrowing for 2023-29 which will be financed through HRA reserves and/or the revenue account.

Table showing capital financing of the draft HRA capital programme

HRA Capital Funding Source	Revised Budget 2023-24	Forecast 2023-24	Variance 2023-24	Budget 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Major Repairs Reserve	(15,457)	(16,082)	(625)	(14,879)	(15,191)	(15,434)	(15,683)	(15,683)
Revenue	(13,900)	(13,900)	-	(15,443)	(15,615)	(14,072)	(16,123)	(16,123)
RTB Receipts	(2,118)	(2,118)	-	(2,140)	(2,161)	(2,183)	(2,149)	(2,149)
Reserves	(3,914)	(6,852)	(2,938)					
Borrowing	(1,772)	-	1,772	(24,798)	(64,115)	(38,816)	(27,330)	(18,815)
Total HRA Capital Financing	(37,162)	(38,952)	(18)	(57,260)	(97,082)	(70,504)	(61,285)	(52,770)

Next Steps and Ongoing Improvements

4.43 Over the course of 2022-23 significant issues with regards to capital were addressed. Oversight of the Capital Programme was brought into the corporate finance team where a holistic and council wide approach was provided and which enabled an improved approach to the way capital monitoring and budget setting was consolidated. This has allowed the Council to better profile its budgets over the life of the projects and to present a 5 years capital programme rather than a single year position.

4.44 The implementation of a Capital Internal Control Board in 2022 and the introduction of the post of Director of Commercial Investment and Capital has provided much needed structure and focus to managing delivery of the capital programme.

- 4.45** However, there is much more to be done and whilst key foundations have been set within the Council to manage the Capital Programme, there are a number of improvements still to implement. As indicated within the Capital Strategy (Appendix A) the Council has a number of key areas of improvement that continue to be addressed. The focus of the capital programme operational arrangements will be to ensure that whilst meeting the requirements as detailed within this report, the further recommendations advised by PwC are also delivered.
- 4.46** The Capital Internal Control Board is overseeing work to further improve capital governance arrangements and the preparation of business case templates in line with the Five Case Model. The Five Case Model is an approach for developing business cases recommended by HM Treasury and the UK Office of Government Commerce, and is widely used across central government departments and public sector organisations.

Contribution to Improvement and Assurance Panel (IAP) Exit Strategy

- 4.47** The IAP published its Exit Strategy in October 2023. Delivery of the Exit Strategy will provide confidence that the Council is able to drive its own continuous improvement and demonstrate Best Value without a need for external intervention by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 4.48** The Capital Programme and Strategy demonstrates the delivery of Best Value and supports the following objectives of the Exit Strategy:
- Operation of Governance Structures – the setting of the 2024-25 budget following timely and well-engaged process for deliberation.
 - Council’s finances on a sustainable footing – a balanced budget achieved for 2024-25 (with exceptional financial government support).
 - Robust finance governance procedures are in place – progress against the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.
 - Maximise asset sales to reduce debt – delivery of asset disposal plan.
 - To deliver best value in respect to community assets including Libraries/Community Hubs.
 - Parking Policy Review – Roll out and installation of new ANPR cameras.
 - Croydon’s housing stock is rendered safe and compliant, meeting consumer and home standards.
 - The Council understands its stock, condition and the residents who live there. It has robust data assembled and uses this to inform service delivery and maximise income.
 - The Council develops and implements a Housing Regeneration and Supply Strategy.

- Put in place robust systems and sound procedures including the Oracle Improvement Project.
- Contract management arrangements to be improved.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The development of the Capital Programme forms part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the Council. The 2024-25 budget engagement is underway and views on capital priorities are welcomed from residents, community organisations and local businesses.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The capital programme and capital strategy 2023-29 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 Financial implications have been provided throughout this report. The Capital Programme will be provided for within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

8.1.2 The Council has high costs of borrowing and therefore careful and prudent management of the capital budget is required to avoid unnecessary costs to the revenue account.

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

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Under Section 1 of the Local Government Act 2003 ("LGA") ("Power to borrow"), a local authority may borrow for any purpose relevant to its functions or for "the prudent management of its financial affairs".

8.2.2 Under Section 3(1) and (8) of the LGA ("Duty to determine affordable borrowing limit") the Council must determine and keep under review how much money it can afford to borrow, and the function of determining and keeping these levels under review must be discharged by full Council, rather than by the executive.

- 8.2.3** Sections 15 and 21 (1A) of the LGA requires the Council to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State and guidance about accounting practices to be followed in particular with respect to the charging of expenditure to a revenue account. Consequently, the Council is required to have regard to the “Statutory guidance on Local Government Investments (3rd Edition)” and the “Capital finance: guidance on minimum revenue provision (fourth edition)” issued under these provisions.
- 8.2.4** The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) make provisions for the capital finance and accounts under the LGA 2003. Regulation 2 requires the Council to have regard to the “Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities” issued by CIPFA when determining, under section 3 of the LGA, how much money they can afford to borrow. Regulations 23 and 24 provide respectively that capital receipts may only be used for specified purposes and that in carrying out its capital finance functions, the Council must have regard to the code of practice in “Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross- Sectoral Guidance Notes” issued by CIPFA.
- 8.2.5** Regulations 25 and 26 provide for expenditure which is, and which is not, to be treated as capital expenditure for the purposes of the LGA 2003. Regulation 27 provides that local authorities must charge to a revenue account a minimum amount (“minimum revenue provision”) and may charge to a revenue account an additional amount, in respect of the financing of capital expenditure. The minimum revenue provision is calculated in accordance with regulations 28 to 29.
- 8.2.6** Under the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Executive is responsible for the preparation of proposed plans, strategies or budgets that form part of the Budget and Policy Framework, including plans or strategies for the control of the Council’s borrowing or capital requirement. The proposals in this report will therefore form part of proposals for submission to full Council.
- 8.2.7** Under the Council’s Financial Regulations, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that a balanced revenue budget and capital programme and budget, are prepared on an annual basis.
- 8.2.8** Under Directions dated 20 July 2023, issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council must, amongst other things “secure as soon as practicable that all the Authority’s functions are exercised in conformity with the best value duty, thereby delivering improvements in services and outcomes for the people of Croydon”.

Comments approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, 07/11/2023.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report.

Comments approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer, 3/11/2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 As a public body, the Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED], as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the Council being exposed to costly, time consuming and reputation-damaging legal challenges.

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

8.4.3 The objectives of the Mayor's Business Plan are focused on delivering good sustainable services and creating opportunities for all residents of Croydon including children and young people. The proposals in the capital programme are likely to impact on residents, the extent of which and the characteristics most affected can only be identified following further analysis once the proposals have been developed.

8.4.4 During the MTFs process, proposals which impact on people are subjected to equality analysis using a data driven approach and offer mitigation to people most affected.

8.4.5 We commit to ensuring that we meet our legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010 to our residents including disabled residents and the parents of disabled residents in respect of children and young people.

8.4.6 We have identified areas of improvement in relation to the collection of data across directorates and are committed to improving this to enable our decisions to be more evidence based and robust.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmed for Equalities Programme Manager, 06/11/2023.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix B – 2023-24 to 2028-29 Capital Programme
Appendix A - Capital Strategy 2024-25

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

Appendix B – 23-24 to 28-29

**CAPITAL
PROGRAMME**

REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME

CAP BID No.	PROJECT NAME	SPEND and Funding TYPE	2023-24 (£,000's)	2024-25 (£,000's)	2025-26 (£,000's)	2026-27 (£,000's)	2027-28 (£,000's)	2028-29 (£,000's)
GF CAP 03	Bereavement Services	Spend	127					
GF CAP 85	My Resources Interface Enhancement	Spend	169	83				
GF CAP 86	Network Refresh	Spend	152	789	33			
GF CAP 87	Tech Refresh	Spend	292	0				
GF CAP 88	Geographical Information Systems	Spend	312					
GF CAP 90	Laptop Refresh	Spend	212	4,423				
GF CAP 91	Cloud and DR	Spend	167	268				
GF CAP 89	Synergy Education System	Spend	858	187				
GF CAP 93	NEC Housing System	Spend	2,725					
GF CAP 93	NEC Housing System	HRA Contribution	(1,772)					
GF CAP 66	Uniform ICT Upgrade	Spend	56					
NEW BID	Public Switched Telephone Network	Spend		543				

	Digital Migration Phase 1							
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE			3,298	6,292	33	0	0	0
GF CAP 79	Children Home DFE	Spend	329					
GF CAP 79	Children Home DFE	Grant	(329)					
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION			0	0	0	0	0	0
GF CAP 04	Disabled Facilities Grant	Spend	3,000	3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335
GF CAP 04	Disabled Facilities Grant	Grant	(3,000)	(3,335)	(3,335)	(3,335)	(3,335)	(3,335)
GF CAP 05	Empty Homes Grants	Spend	400					
HOUSING			400	0	0	0	0	0
GF CAP 56	Asset Strategy - Stubbs Mead	Spend	500	150				
GF CAP 57	Asset Strategy Programme	Spend	240	113				
GF CAP 59	Clocktower Chillers	Spend	15	367				
GF CAP 60	Corporate Property Maintenance Programme	Spend	2,780	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
GF CAP 18	Fairfield Halls - Council	Spend	625	500				
GF CAP 78	Former New Addington Leisure Centre	Spend	600					
GF CAP 24	Fieldway Cluster (Timebridge Community Centre)	Spend	248	0				
GF CAP 100	Contingency	Spend	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
GF CAP 08	Education - Fire Safety	Spend	450	473				

GF CAP 08	Education - Fire Safety	Grant	(450)	(473)				
GF CAP 09	Education - Fixed Term Expansions	Spend	225	1,500	1,493	2,640		
GF CAP 09	Education - Fixed Term Expansions	Grant	(225)	(1,500)	(1,493)	(2,640)		
GF CAP 10	Education - Major Maintenance	Spend	3,321	4,200	2,544			
GF CAP 10	Education - Major Maintenance	Grant	(3,321)	(4,200)	(2,544)			
GF CAP 11	Education - Miscellaneous	Spend	100					
GF CAP 11	Education - Miscellaneous	Grant	(100)					
GF CAP 12	Education - Permanent Expansion	Spend	297					
GF CAP 12	Education - Permanent Expansion	Grant	(297)					
GF CAP 14	Education - SEN	Spend	1,600	1,340	2,000	2,947	2,689	
GF CAP 14	Education - SEN	Grant	(517)	(1,340)	(2,000)	(2,947)	(2,689)	
GF CAP 14	Education - SEN	LMP CIL	(873)					
GF CAP 14	Education - SEN	Grant	(210)					
RESOURCES			6,008	4,130	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
GF CAP 25	Growth Zone	Spend	15,341	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
GF CAP 25	Growth Zone	Growth Zone Fund	(15,341)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
GF CAP 26	Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	Spend	1,200					
GF CAP 27	Highways	Spend	8,260	8,618	8,618	8,618	8,618	8,618
GF CAP 29	Highways - flood water management	Spend	404	435	435	435	435	435
GF CAP 30	Highways - bridges and highways structures	Spend	1,641	2,663	5,513	5,513	5,513	5,513
GF CAP 30	Highways - bridges and highways structures	Grant	(1,481)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)

GF CAP 31	Highways - Tree works	Spend	50					
GF CAP 31	Highways - Tree works	Grant	(50)					
GF CAP 81	Local Authority Tree Fund	Spend	83	67	67			
GF CAP 81	Local Authority Tree Fund	Grant	(83)	(67)	(67)			
GF CAP 82	Trees Sponsorship	Spend	42					
GF CAP 82	Trees Sponsorship	Grant	(42)					
GF CAP 84	Leisure centres equipment Contractual Agr	Spend		174	204	198	150	225
GF CAP 83	Tennis Court Upgrade	Spend	75					
GF CAP 33	Leisure Equipment Upgrade	Spend	148					
GF CAP 34	Libraries Investment - General	Spend	224	1,390				
GF CAP 34	Libraries Investment - General	LMP CIL	(224)	(1,390)				
GF CAP 80	Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	Spend		175				
GF CAP 80	Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	Grant		(150)				
GF CAP 77	New Investment to South Norwood Library	Spend		520				
GF CAP 39	Parking	Spend	1,843	1,662				
GF CAP 39	Parking	Grant	(166)					
GF CAP 95	Cashless Pay & Display	Spend	1,463					
GF CAP 41	Play Equipment	Spend	300					
GF CAP 41	Play Equipment	LMP CIL	(28)					
GF CAP 41	Play Equipment	s106	(125)					
GF CAP 41	Play Equipment	Grant	(50)					
GF CAP 43	Safety - digital upgrade of CCTV	Spend	1,540					
GF CAP 46	HIGHWAY Road Markings/Signs	Spend	137					

	(Refresh)							
GF CAP 47	South Norwood Good Growth	Spend	773					
GF CAP 47	South Norwood Good Growth	s106	(45)					
GF CAP 47	South Norwood Good Growth	Grant	(692)					
GF CAP 47	South Norwood Good Growth	Grant	(36)					
GF CAP 48	Kenley Good Growth	Spend	304	90				
GF CAP 48	Kenley Good Growth	s106	(254)					
GF CAP 48	Kenley Good Growth	Grant	(50)	(90)				
GF CAP 49	Sustainability Programme	Spend	300	300	500			
GF CAP 49	Sustainability Programme	LMP CIL	(300)	(300)	(500)			
GF CAP 50	LIP	Spend	7,427	3,150	3,150			
GF CAP 50	LIP	s106	(762)	(300)	(300)			
GF CAP 50	LIP	Grant	(6,165)	(2,350)	(2,350)			
GF CAP 96	Cycle Parking	Spend	106	118	124	133		
GF CAP 96	Cycle Parking	S106	0	(75)	(79)	(85)		
GF CAP 96	Cycle Parking	Grant	(106)	(43)	(45)	(48)		
GF CAP 97	Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	Spend	3	392	382	396		
GF CAP 97	Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	s106	0	(322)	(312)	(326)		
GF CAP 97	Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	Grant	0	(70)	(70)	(70)		
GF CAP 97	Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	Grant	(3)					
NEW BID	Ashburton Park Heritage Fund	Spend	305					
NEW BID	Ashburton Park Heritage Fund	Grant	(305)					
GF CAP 99	Park Asset	Spend	700	1,000	1,000	1,000		

	Management							
GF CAP 53	Waste and Recycling Investment	Spend	602	1,956				
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGEN & ECONOMIC DVLPT			16,963	16,553	15,270	14,764	13,716	13,791
GF CAP 101	Capitalisation Direction	Spend	63,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000
GF CAP 101	Capital Receipts	Capital Receipts	(83,070)	(30,000)	(20,000)	-	-	-
GF CAP 70	Further CIL (to be allocated)	CIL	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)
CORPORATE			(26,670)	1400	11,400	31,400	31,400	31,400

TOTAL NET GENERAL FUND CAPITAL - Borrowing	-	28,375	29,703	49,164	48,116	48,191
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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

CAPITAL STRATEGY

2024-25

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1 FOREWORD

- 1.1.1. The Capital Strategy is a key strategic document providing a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing, investments, liabilities and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services, together with an overview of how associated risk is managed.
- 1.1.2. The Capital Strategy recognises the complex and challenging financial and operational circumstances in which the Council continues to find itself. The Mayoral Business Plan Objective 1 is that the Council *'balances its book, listens to residents and delivers good, sustainable services'*. This 2024-25 Capital Strategy continues on from the 2023-24 Capital Programme in being reduced in scale and cost compared to previous years. With circa £1.4bn of General Fund debt and an environment of higher 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, is essential to mitigate rising cost pressures, reduce the overall debt burden and help the Council balance its books.
- 1.1.3. The Capital Strategy presented here and associated capital framework will continue to be improved over coming months and years.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 Local Authorities are required by regulation to have regard for the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code 2021 which sets out a framework to ensure that the capital expenditure plans of Local Authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The 2018 revision of the Prudential Code introduced the requirement for local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy representing their approach to financial planning. The 2021 revision of the Prudential Code further amended the requirements for a Capital Strategy including the need to address environmental sustainability consistent with the Council's corporate policies and setting and revising prudential indicators with regards to decision making on capital investment.
- 2.1.2 Capital expenditure referred to in the strategy is consistent with the definition within CIPFA Accounting Code of Practice as:

"...Expenditure that results in the acquisition, construction, or the enhancement of non-current assets (tangible or intangible) in accordance with proper practices... All other expenditure must be accounted for as revenue expenditure unless specifically directed by the Secretary of State."
- 2.1.3 A Capital Strategy is defined as a key strategic document that provides a high level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing, investments, liabilities and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of

services, together with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

- 2.1.4 A Capital Programme is defined as an internal working document for elected councillors and officers that identifies agreed capital projects, showing the total cost of capital projects and the projected phasing of those capital projects over current and future financial years.
- 2.1.5 This document sets out how the Council takes capital expenditure and investment decisions in line with service objectives and overall organisational strategy. Its aim is to ensure decisions are being made with sufficient regard to the long-term financing implications and potential risks to the authority.
- 2.1.6 This Capital Strategy provides the foundation for the Council's long-term management and delivery of its Capital Programme. It sets the policy framework for the Capital Programme and shows how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activities will be undertaken to drive the Council's ambition to achieve long-term financial sustainability.
- 2.1.7 The Capital Strategy forms a fundamental part of the ongoing strategic planning of the Council together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and HRA 30 Year Business Plan. Subject to Cabinet approval, it will be updated periodically and at least once a year to reflect new priorities, schemes and methods of finance introduced.
- 2.1.8 This document is a continuation of the improved Capital Strategy developed for 2023-24 with the Council recognising it is still on a journey towards developing a robust and effective Capital Framework. The document reflects 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.

3 CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 The Capital Strategy recognises the complex and challenging financial and operational circumstances in which the Council continues to find itself following two Reports in the Public Interest (RIPI) published by its external auditor (Grant Thornton UK LLP) in October 2020¹ and January 2022² and subsequent reviews into its financial management arrangements. The reports highlighted grave governance, operational and financial failures within the Council and made a

¹ Report in the Public Interest (RIPI 1) concerning the Council's financial position and related governance arrangements

² Report in the Public Interest (RIPI 2) concerning the refurbishment of Fairfield Halls and related governance arrangements.

series of recommendations in relation to capital that are considered throughout this document.

- 3.1.2 The review also highlighted concerns regarding value for money and investment decisions as the Council has incurred £300m of 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 2017-18 and 2019-20 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.
- 3.1.3 The Council's current debt burden is circa £1.789bn and includes circa £0.364bn Housing Revenue Account debt. At present, an estimated £66m per annum is required to service this debt from the General Fund which represents around 19% of the Council's net budget. The Council's borrowing and debt burden has, therefore, become critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.
- 3.1.4 The Council has concluded that the expenditure it is anticipated to incur in each year of the period 2024-28 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) demonstrates an ongoing estimated budget gap of £38m per annum from 2024-25. Each additional £38m borrowed through capitalisation directions would add an estimated £3m per annum to future borrowing costs.
- 3.1.5 In response to its financial situation the Council is considering a range of actions including flexible use of Growth Zone business rates, asset disposals and a range of transformation proposals. 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.
- 3.1.6 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").
- 3.1.7 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.

- 3.1.8 Against this financial backdrop the Council's Capital Programme is significantly impacted. The Council's high level of short-term borrowing and cost pressures from increased interest rates means the programme has been reduced to comprise only core programmes and schemes that i) the Council are committed to commercially, ii) meet statutory obligations, iii) deliver savings in management and maintenance costs, and iv) avoid future cost increases.
- 3.1.9 The Council's property and other assets are also being reviewed to inform the approach to raise finance through sales in order to minimise borrowing costs, although the Council anticipates that the capital receipts will not reduce debt levels sufficiently to make the Council financially sustainable.
- 3.1.10 Several external macroeconomic factors may impact the delivery of the Capital Programme and its financing decisions. Recent high inflation has caused the Bank of England to increase interest rates, hence potentially putting additional cost pressures on the Council for loan repayments. Current levels of inflation as well as some challenges in the supply chain may also impact the delivery of the Capital Programme both from a cost and skill perspective. Furthermore, high debt levels incurred by the government during the Covid-19 pandemic may put additional pressure on local government funding.

4 MAYORAL BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2026

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1 The Mayoral Business Plan (MBP) 2022-26 provides the framework within which the Capital Strategy has been developed and sets out the Council's objectives and priorities to strengthen governance and management systems, achieve financial and operational sustainability and complete the transformation of the Council over the next four years.
- 4.1.2 The MBP sets out a vision for Croydon consisting of five outcomes to be achieved and priority aims and high-level actions required to deliver these outcomes as summarised below.

4.2 THE FIVE OUTCOMES

- The Council balances its book, listens to residents and delivers good, sustainable services
- Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning
- Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential
- Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home

- People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer

4.2.2 The supporting priorities for each outcome are:

- ***Outcome 1: The Council balances its book, listens to residents and delivers good, sustainable services***
 - Get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable
 - Become a Council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities and businesses
 - Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS)
 - Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice
 - Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities
- ***Outcome 2: Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning***
 - Support the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres, seeking inward investment and grants
 - Deliver a vibrant London Borough of Culture which showcases local talent and supports Croydon's recovery
 - Support the local economy and enable residents to upskill and access job opportunities
- ***Outcome 3: 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
- ***Outcome 4: Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home***
 - Make our streets and open spaces cleaner so that Croydon is a place that residents and businesses can feel proud to call home
 - Tackle anti-social behaviour, knife crime and violence

against women and girls so that Croydon feels safer

- Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service
- Ensure new homes are safe, well-designed and in keeping with the local area
- Lead action to reduce carbon emissions in Croydon
- **Outcome 5: People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer**
 - Work with partners and the VCFS to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe
 - Work closely with health services and the VCFS to improve resident health and reduce health inequalities
 - Foster a sense of community and civic life

4.2.3 Capital programme expenditure is a key tool in achieving the MBP outcomes and priorities. Targeted investment can provide the Council with the assets it needs to deliver high quality, value for money services, however, the Council's limited financial resources and capacity constraints place significant emphasis on the need to prioritise capital investment decisions to meet outcomes and priorities. In the near term this will mean the continuation of reduced spending, a wholesale transformation of working practices and embedding a strong governance structure across the authority to ensure value for money from the Capital Programme expenditure.

4.2.4 Delivering the outcomes and priorities of the MBP will have direct implications on the development of the Capital Strategy and the Capital Programme. The capital framework articulated within this document will therefore prioritise the following:

- Capital investment being targeted towards supporting the Council's corporate objectives.
- Capital investment being prudent, sustainable, affordable and providing value for money.
- Capital projects being delivered on time and within budget.
- Council staff having a common understanding of the long-term context in which capital investment decisions are made and all the financial risks to which the Council is exposed.
- Improved transparency at Capital Programme level along with a clear process for Council staff engagement.
- Improvement in approving and amending the Capital Programme and for scrutinising decisions relating to capital expenditure.
- Commitment to ensure Council staff have the skills, and expertise needed to effectively manage and deliver the Capital Programme.

- Strengthening the Capital Programme management function by streamlining governance, monitoring and reporting processes.
- Ensuring a sound financial position is maintained through sustainable deployment of resources.
- The Council is appropriately responding to the recommendations raised in the Reports in the Public Interest and Croydon Financial Review.

5 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

5.1 OVERVIEW

- 5.1.1 The Capital Programme will support the Council to achieve long term financial sustainability whilst enabling the Mayoral Business Plan over future years. It is expected that as the Council moves towards a position of financial sustainability it will become better placed to deliver on the ambition of the Business Plan. All capital projects will need to demonstrate how they will meet the Business Plan's priorities and outcomes before inclusion in the Capital Programme. The Capital Strategy and Capital Programme will therefore need to develop accordingly.
- 5.1.2 The 2024-25 Capital Programme sets out planned capital expenditure over the five year period to 2028-29, further increasing from the four year timeframe in 2023-24. The adoption of a longer timeframe is to ensure capital expenditure is profiled to mirror the delivery of the capital projects, allow longer term planning, show how each project is linked to the Council's priorities and summarises planned expenditure and funding.
- 5.1.3 The 2024-25 Capital Programme continues to reflect a reduction in scale and cost compared to years prior to 2023-24 and includes only core programmes and schemes, which have been assessed on the basis of:
- Requirement to meet health and safety
 - Supports invest to save
 - Mandatory or statutory requirement
 - Significant contribution to Council Plan and Mayor's objectives
 - Projects that have secured external funding
 - Any overspends for projects already in the Capital Programme
 - Minimum level of repairs and maintenance to retain existing asset values

5.2 CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE

- 5.2.1 Capital Programme expenditure is provided for within the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets. The annual budget is the formal resource allocation process that enables the delivery of the Council's policies and priorities. Under statutory responsibility, the Council is required to reinvest in maintaining housing stock at decent standards which is a fundamental aim of the Housing Revenue Account.
- 5.2.2 The General Fund is the core account which summarises the cost of all services (except those related to Social Housing) provided by the Council's directorates including Housing, Assistant Chief Executive, Children, Young People and Education, Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Development, Resources and Corporate.
- 5.2.3 The Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account used to manage income and costs associated with managing the Council's owned housing stock and related assets, which includes shops and garages on Council housing estates. It comprises 20,292 housing and related asset types with 13,424 General Rent dwelling stock³. The HRA is funded primarily from tenants' rents and service charges.

5.3 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 5.3.1 **Table 1** provides a summary of Capital Programme expenditure from the General Fund by future years including the current Capital Programme year of 2023-24 per Council Directorate.

³ Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan 2021- 2051 and HRA Capital Programme 22/23, Appendix 2 Details of HRA Tenant Type

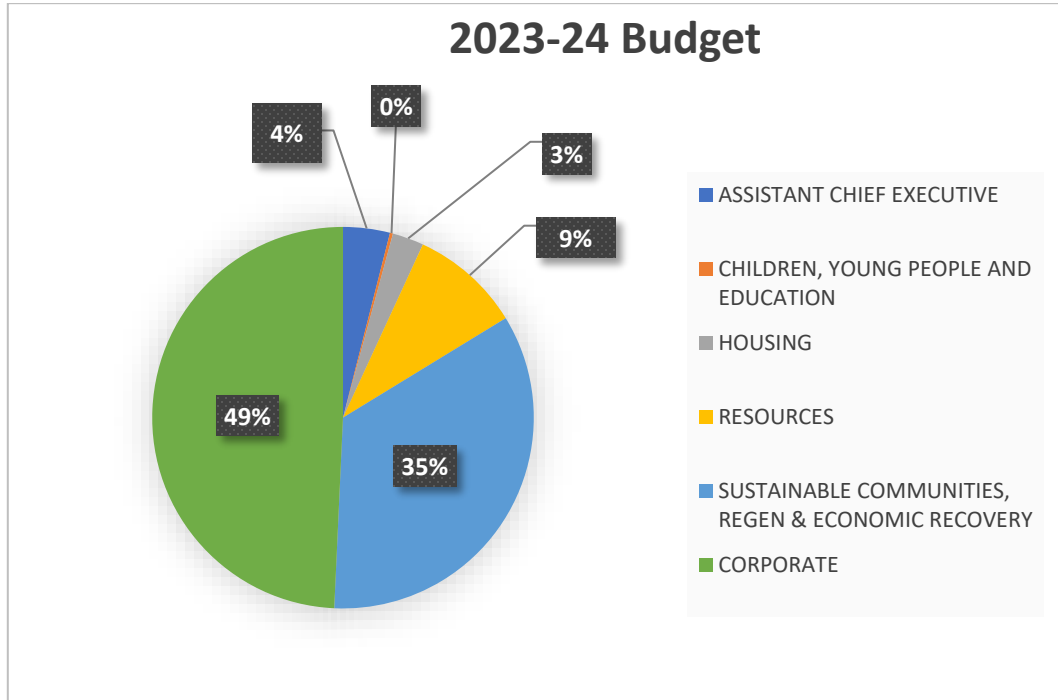
Table 1 - General Fund Capital Programme Expenditure (£'000)

Directorate	2023-24 Revised Budget	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget	2027-28 Budget	2028-29 Budget
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE	5,070	6,292	33	-	-	-
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION	329	-	-	-	-	-
HOUSING	3,400	3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335	3,335
RESOURCES	12,001	11,643	9,037	8,587	5,689	3,000
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGEN & ECONOMIC RECOVERY	43,271	26,710	23,993	20,293	18,716	18,791
CORPORATE	63,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000
Total General Fund Capital Programme	127,071	85,980	74,398	70,215	65,740	63,126

Please note that the Education capital delivery team has moved into the Commercial Investment and Capital Division in the Resources Directorate, so the Education capital schemes are now shown in Resources rather than the Children, Young People and Education Directorate.

- 5.3.2 The Council is projecting to spend £126.09m in 2023-24 and planned expenditure of £359.46m (including capitalisation directions) from 2024-25 across the five remaining years of the Capital Programme.
- 5.3.3 Capitalisation directions contribute significantly to the Capital Programme. These have been included as a worst case scenario in future years in case dialogue with DLUHC does not result in a financial solution to the historic legacy debt issues of the Council. However, it needs to be noted that capitalisation of revenue spend increases the cost of borrowing in following years and is not a solution that would support the Council in becoming financially sustainable.
- 5.3.4 **Chart 1** demonstrates the current 2023-24 Capital Programme expenditure by Directorate. The Corporate expenditure element that comprises 49% of the total budget for the year relates to the use of the £63m Capitalisation Direction approved in principle by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Chart 1 - General Fund Capital Programme Expenditure 2023-24



5.3.5 The 2024-25 Capital Programme is future looking and comprises key projects and assets continuing to incur expenditure from previous Capital Programme years and includes additional new projects that have obtained approval.

5.3.6 **Table 2** summarises the key project areas within each of the Council's Directorates and includes corporate items which comprise the Capitalisation Direction from DLUHC.

Table 2 - General Fund Capital Programme Composition

Directorates	Key Project Areas
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facilities Grant
Assistant Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavement Services • Laptop Refresh • Network Refresh • Synergy Education System
Children's, Young People & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel Lodge Children Home
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Zone • Highways • Local Authority Tree Fund • Trees Sponsorship • Parking

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Equipment • South Norwood Good Growth • Kenley Good Growth • Sustainability Programme • Waste and Recycling Investment • Park Asset Management • CCTV digital upgrade
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Strategy • Former New Addington Leisure Centre • Clocktower Chillers • Fairfield Halls • Education Fire Safety Works • Education Fixed Term Expansions • Education Major Maintenance • Education Permanent Expansion • Education Secondary Estate
Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalisation Direction

5.4 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME

5.4.1 **Table 3** provides a summary of Capital Programme expenditure from the Housing Revenue Account by future years including the current Capital Programme year of 2023-24.

Table 3 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme Expenditure (£'000)

HRA Capital Expenditure	2023-24 Revised Budget	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget	2027-28 Budget	2028-29 Budget
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	21,355	23,045	32,627	26,349	28,615	28,615
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	-	-	-	-
Regina Road	1,500	14,105	14,105	14,105	14,105	14,105
Building Safety Works	3,735	8,610	42,850	22,550	11,065	2,550
Repairs Referrals	8,800	11,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Total HRA Capital Expenditure	37,162	57,260	97,082	70,504	61,285	52,770

- 5.4.2 The Capital Programme Expenditure from the Housing Revenue Account is £37.16m for the year of 2023-24 and a total expenditure of £338.90m between 2024-25 and 2028-29.
- 5.4.3 The programme will deliver extensive repairs and improvement works to the existing housing stock which will improve the living conditions of all tenants. Extensive refurbishment works planned on older buildings along with a whole new rebuild of Regina Road Estate is planned as key engagement has already taken place with the residents.

Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

- 5.4.4 The Council has appointed Savills to support the development of the HRA 30 year business plan from 2024-25 for 30 years onwards with their report expected to go to Cabinet in February 2024. The 30-year Business Plan provides consideration to both capital and revenue investments required for the management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock. The key focus of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is on the medium-term (first five years) as there is more certainty on costs, demands, resources and pressures, to enable the prioritisation of housing investment. The Plan will be used as a tool to assess the impact of decision making around stock acquisition and maintenance and will align with the HRA Asset Management Plan.
- 5.4.5 The Housing Revenue Account 30-year Business Plan addresses the outcomes and priorities within the Mayoral Business Plan by investing in housing stock to ensure all residents' homes are safe, warm, and dry, and aims to improve the Council's housing stock and invest in significantly reducing its carbon footprint over the life of the Plan. This will help the Council to live within its means, balance the books and provide value for money for residents, along with tackling ingrained inequality and poverty within the borough and providing the best quality core services.

6 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-2027

6.1 OVERVIEW

- 6.1.1 To ensure that capital assets continue to provide maximum value for the Council and contribute to its long-term vision, a new Corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) and outline Property strategy was approved in November 2022.
- 6.1.2 The AMP provides clear guidance on the way that the Council will manage its assets⁴ effectively and strategically to reflect both corporate priorities and community demands within the Borough as articulated within the Mayor's Business Plan and the Croydon Renewal Improvement Plan. The AMP is also

⁴ The AMP does not consider the Housing Revenue Account (Housing Revenue Account) assets or community schools in any detail as these are the subject of separate strategies.

aligned to the Council's priorities for 2022-25 as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

- 6.1.3 Assets are a corporate resource and the Council, through its Resources Directorate, has responsibility for obtaining the approval and subsequent monitoring of the AMP, its constituent priorities and any related decision-making and resource allocation regarding Council assets.
- 6.1.4 The Corporate Management Team (CMT) provides oversight and direction to the Asset Management Plan to ensure management of the Council's assets is considered corporately, including decisions in relation to the Council deciding to sell, buy, rent or hold assets.

6.2 VISION AND PRIORITIES

6.2.1 The Council's property assets should support service delivery, enable regeneration and development, or generate income. Property assets will be reviewed over the next four years in line with the corporate priorities of the AMP, which are listed below:

- **Maximise the use of council assets** - this will include:
 - **Asset Review and Challenge Programme** to assess how operational buildings are used and the performance of the investment estate
 - **Property Management Governance Framework** to support asset review, challenge and decision making
 - **Disposal Strategy** to focus on the release of surplus assets
- **Review of Operational Asset Management** that focuses on a new programme of condition surveys to inform the maintenance programme, health & safety and risk
- **Housing and regeneration** focusing on delivering new housing, workplaces, and job opportunities through the identification, release and development of surplus sites
- **Future property approach** to reflect the evolving societal impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic such as flexible working practices
- **Sustainable estate** to develop a carbon re-fit, plant replacement and maintenance program to support carbon neutral targets and improve energy efficiency

6.2.2 These priorities aim to contribute to the overall ambitions of the Capital Strategy by ensuring asset decisions are being made with sufficient regard to the long-term financial position of the Council and the requirement to become financially sustainable.

6.3 SUPPORTING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.3.1 With around £1.4bn of debt for the General Fund and higher interest rates when that debt is scheduled for refinancing, the implementation of a robust Asset Management Plan, Corporate Property Strategy and Asset Disposal Strategy is essential to mitigate rising cost pressures and reduce the overall debt burden to the Council.
- 6.3.2 With the continued requirement to deliver both revenue savings and capital receipts, the number of buildings that are used by the Council to deliver services will need to be reduced. This can be achieved through the better utilisation of space, the adoption of hybrid working and adoption of different methods of delivery to residents. In some cases, changes may lead to the cessation of some non-statutory services altogether. The Asset Review and Challenge Programme will be used to review and challenge the use of property assets whilst the principles established within the Asset Disposal Strategy 2022-2027 will be used to identify and bring forward future proposals (see below).
- 6.3.3 The Housing team is developing a full asset management strategy which forms part of the housing transformation plan and will detail the long-term plan for the management of the investment of Council housing assets over a 10 years horizon.

6.4 ASSET DISPOSAL AND PROPERTY TRANSFORMATION

- 6.4.1 The Asset Disposal and Property Transformation Programme is a process to continually review the Council's portfolio on a rolling basis to ensure that only assets that are performing to acceptable levels are retained or invested in. The c.120 buildings the Council occupies and delivers core services from are included in this programme.
- 6.4.2 The programme is initially reviewing all corporate assets and considering them against current service delivery needs. The resultant proposal will include timelines to reflect known or anticipated service delivery changes and future opportunities. It will also consider the complexity around the relocation of services where this is necessary as well as opportunities that may arise through contract expiries and the release of assets currently used to deliver these functions.
- 6.4.3 As part of the ongoing governance process an officer group has been set up (Asset Disposal and Property Transformation Board) to monitor the utilisation and performance of assets which includes looking at current occupation levels, running costs and opportunities for revenue/capital generation. This will then enable asset use and performance to be reviewed against the performance of other boroughs and available benchmark data.
- 6.4.4 The asset disposal programme has already identified non-essential assets that can be disposed of. The continuation of the asset review will further inform the Asset Disposal Strategy and programme by establishing which further assets are the most fundamental to the Council's service delivery and should be retained, and which assets are low-priority or surplus. The continuation of the

programme and subsequent rationalisation and/or disposal of current assets will help to deliver further capital receipts to reduce the Council's capital financing costs, debt burden and overall running costs.

6.5 ASSET CONDITION

- 6.5.1 An important element of the overall Asset Management Plan (AMP) is the delivery of a new condition survey programme for the main corporate assets over the next 18-24 months. This was one of the key issues highlighted by the Improvement and Assurance Panel as a formal programme for undertaking condition surveys was stopped in 2016. The previous 5 year rolling programme of surveys could mean that some buildings have not been surveyed in detail for 12 years.
- 6.5.2 The new programme of surveys is an integral part of the new AMP and is being separately procured. This will provide a more detailed understanding as to the current condition of the main corporate assets. The work will also provide recommended budgets for necessary repairs and expenditure over the next 5 to 10 years to allow a more accurate basis for budgeting for both capital and revenue spend. It will also help to highlight those assets that need major investment and may no longer be cost effective to retain.

6.6 SUSTAINABLE ESTATE

- 6.6.1 The Council declared a climate change and ecological emergency in July 2019 and Cabinet agreed that the Council would become carbon neutral by 2030. A wide range of actions have already been undertaken in Croydon to combat climate change.
- 6.6.2 Achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 will require significant financial investment. The financial investment will need to be funded from a variety of sources, including Council driven expenditure as well as external allocations from the business sector and available grant-funding streams. The Council will primarily look at introducing sustainable interventions through replacing old assets that need replacement with sustainable alternatives.
- 6.6.3 One of the key elements from an asset perspective in addressing the Climate Emergency will be through better building performance. This will become more focused over the next few years with the changes to the Energy Performance requirements for buildings that are being let or disposed of. The energy performance of Council properties will be a key consideration of the Asset Review and Challenge Programme.

6.7 REGENERATION

6.7.1 The Council has wider ambitions for regeneration within the borough including the Growth Zone which is a partnership between the Central Government, the Council and the Greater London Authority. The Growth Zone will finance and deliver a 12 years redevelopment programme, which is essential to facilitate growth in Croydon town centre. The Mayoral Business Plan intends to support the regeneration of the town centre and district centres by seeking inward investment and grants. The Council continues to work with private sector partners to develop its town centre and is enhancing its planning policies to facilitate greater regeneration investment.

6.8 INVESTMENT ASSETS

6.8.1 With the uncertainties caused as a result of the pandemic and a change to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) guidance in August 2020, the purchase of investment assets has been placed on hold.

6.8.2 The Council's investment portfolio generates income to support service delivery on an annual basis. Assets are retained within the investment portfolio whilst they continue to deliver positive financial returns. These assets also require capital investment in the form of maintenance and careful asset management in order to maintain the required income stream. As a result this portfolio places a demand on the Council's annual capital programme. It is important that these assets are continually reviewed and regular reporting on their performance is provided on a six-monthly basis to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and annual report to Cabinet.

6.9 DISPOSAL APPROACH AND GOVERNANCE

6.9.1 The Corporate Property and Asset Disposal Strategy 2022-2027 has a central role within the AMP. In order to reduce the debt burden on the Council, raising money through the disposal of assets will be essential. The Asset Disposal Strategy provides a formal approach to the management of assets and in particular their disposal where they have been identified as either surplus or no longer key to the delivery of services. This will be done in a structured and controlled manner to ensure that any disposal does not cause longer-term operational difficulties or fail to achieve the best return for the Council.

6.9.2 The Disposal Strategy adopts a flexible approach so that it can support future corporate requirements. It will aim to identify properties for disposal in the short to medium (3 years) term but will be reviewed annually to reflect changes in the delivery of services.

6.9.3 All decisions to dispose of an asset must be subject to a full business case report that will include a minimum set of requirements. The full process for disposal of property is set out in the Disposal Strategy and in summary is based on:

- If operational, the asset must be declared surplus to requirements by the relevant directors. Any proposed alternative uses will be considered against the benefits of disposing of the asset

- Obtaining supporting valuation and agency advice to inform the business case and disposal approach
- Final version of the business case approved by CMT, and then Mayoral/Cabinet approval where required

6.9.4 The Council has currently identified approximately £200m of potential disposal receipts based on existing sites previously identified, a review of investment assets and other potential opportunities driven by anticipated service changes, although the latter are dependent on confirmation by service directorates and clarity on the impact on individual operational assets.

6.9.5 Any ability to achieve receipts in excess of £200m in future years will be dependent on difficult decisions in relation to the future of service delivery, with the overall value of receipts likely limited by previous programmes to rationalise the Council's property portfolio and the market value of potentially surplus assets at any point in time.

7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME FUNDING & FINANCING

7.1 OVERVIEW

7.1.1 All Capital Programme expenditure must be financed from external sources (government grants and external contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing and leasing). The Council is seeking to fund the Capital Programme expenditure from a combination of external contributions, capital receipts from disposal of Council owned assets and funding schemes through borrowing.

7.2 FUNDING SOURCES

7.2.1 There are a number of distinct sources of funding that can be utilised to finance capital expenditure. The Capital Strategy demonstrates that due consideration of funding will be made when capital projects are at the planning stage and no project will be put forward without funding having been identified to complete the delivery of the project.

7.2.2 The current Capital Programme comprises current and prospective means of funding and financing projects and the range of choices available are detailed below:

- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** - CIL is a standard charge on developments used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed because of the development.
- **S106 Contributions** – some projects within the Capital Programme are funded by contributions from private sector developers.
- **Housing Revenue Account** - An account used to manage Income and costs associated with managing the Council's owned housing stock and

related assets which is funded primarily from tenants' rents and service charges. Revenue contributions can be made from this account to fund HRA capital schemes.

- **Growth Zone** - The use of Growth Zone business rates from the town centre designated area.
- **External Grants for Specific Purposes** – these include grant allocations categorised for specific purposes to deliver specific schemes or outcomes.
- **External Grants for Non-Specific Purposes** – grant allocations for the delivery of the Council's capital plans (most often from government departments), that are categorised as non-specific.
- **Capital Receipts** – The Council can generate capital receipts through the sale of surplus assets such as land and buildings. The Council seeks to maximise the level of these resources, which will be available to support the Council's plans. This funding source will be prioritised to fund assets with the shortest useful life, such as IT equipment, to reduce the requirement to borrow for assets that attract a greater annual Minimum Revenue Provision cost.
- **Prudential Borrowing** – The introduction of the Prudential Code in 2004 allows the Council to undertake unsupported borrowing itself. This borrowing is subject to the requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Expenditure for Local Authorities. This has revenue implications for the Council in the form of financing costs, including Minimum Revenue Provision.
- **General Fund** – Revenue from the General Fund can potentially be utilised to provide contributions to the financing of the capital programme's current and prospective projects. At the current time the Council is not intending to make contributions to the programme from the General Fund due to a lack of available funding from this revenue source.

7.2.3 **Table 4** summarises how the current approved Capital Programme will be funded and provides a breakdown of the different funding sources for the General Fund.

Table 4: Funding Sources for General Fund – (£'000)

Funding Source	2023-24 Budget	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£'000
CIL	(8,025)	(8,290)	(7,100)	(6,600)	(6,600)	(6,600)
s106	(1,186)	(697)	(691)	(411)	-	-
HRA Contribution	(1,772)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves - Growth Zone	(15,341)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Grants	(17,678)	(14,618)	(12,904)	(10,040)	(7,024)	(4,335)
Capital Receipts	(83,069)	(30,000)	(20,000)	-	-	-
Borrowing	-	(28,375)	(29,703)	(49,164)	(48,116)	(48,191)
Total GF Capital Funding	(127,071)	(85,980)	(74,398)	(70,215)	(65,740)	(63,126)

7.2.4 **Table 5** summarises the funding sources for the HRA that have been earmarked to apply to the delivery programme which includes a projection of £175.65m of new borrowing which will be fully financed from the revenue account.

Table 5: Funding Sources for Housing Revenue Account – (£'000)

HRA Capital Financing	Revised Budget 2023-24	Budget 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Major Repairs Reserve	(15,457)	(14,879)	(15,191)	(15,434)	(15,683)	(15,683)
Revenue	(13,900)	(15,443)	(15,615)	(14,072)	(16,123)	(16,123)
RTB Receipts	(2,118)	(2,140)	(2,161)	(2,183)	(2,149)	(2,149)
Reserves	(3,914)	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing	(1,772)	(24,798)	(64,115)	(38,816)	(27,330)	(18,815)
Total HRA Capital Financing	(37,162)	(57,260)	(97,082)	(70,504)	(61,285)	(52,770)

7.3 FINANCING

7.3.1 The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The primary function of the treasury management operation is to ensure the cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when needed to fund the Council's capital plans. These plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that it can meet its capital spending obligations. The contribution the treasury management function makes to the Council is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity and the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects.

Affordability Prudential Indicators

7.3.2 The Treasury Management Strategy covers the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances.

Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

7.3.3 This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, (borrowing and other long-term obligation costs, net of investment income), against the net revenue stream. The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in the budget report.

Table 6: Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

	2021-22 Estimate %	2022-23 Estimate %	2023-24 Estimate %	2024-25 Estimate %	2025-26 Estimate %
Non-HRA	11.4	16.4	17.7	17.6	17.0
HRA	13.7	13.1	12.6	13.7	17.1

7.3.4 The Council estimates that the non-HRA financing costs will be between 17.0% to 17.7% of net revenue over the next three years.

7.3.5 The Council is highly leveraged and has set aside considerable money to pay for Minimum Revenue Provision and interest costs. Any further borrowing for the Capital Programme will only add to the debt pile and further increase costs to the revenue account. This poses considerable future risks particularly to the revenue account because of servicing the debt.

7.3.6 It is always cost effective for the Council to utilise non-debt financing to fund the capital spend as this does not result in increased revenue costs which include Minimum Revenue Provision and interest charges. However, such alternative sources of funding are not always available to finance projects that are driven by

the Council's own priorities. If sufficient capital receipts or revenue are also not available, borrowing becomes a necessity.

7.3.7 Housing Revenue Account ratios

Table 7- Housing Revenue Account ratios

	2021-22 Estimate	2022-23 Estimate	2023-24 Estimate	2024-25 Estimate	2025-26 Estimate
HRA debt (£'000)	334.3	322.0	320.5	345.3	409.4
HRA debt cap (£'000)	363.5	363.5	363.5	388.3	452.4
HRA revenues (£'000)	88.1	92.7	96.1	98.3	99.6
Ratio of debt to revenues	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1

7.3.8 The Council estimates the Housing Revenue Account debt to revenue ratios to be between 3.3 to 4.1 over the next three years.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

8.1 OVERVIEW

8.1.1 The Capital Internal Control Board (CICB) was established in 2022 in response to the recommendations within the RIPI 2 report. The CICB oversees the Capital Programme and acts as a programme board for the delivery of the overall capital programme, providing assurance on all the Council plans and strategies which impact the capital programme. The creation of the CICB has provided the basis for more strategic oversight of the Capital Programme than previously existed.

8.1.2 The CICB comprises cross-discipline members and representation from each directorate. It is chaired by the Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer) and includes the Director of Commercial Investment and Capital as a member. It can challenge and review capital bids before they are submitted to the Corporate Management Team (CMT), the Mayor and Cabinet for approval but does not itself currently have delegated authority as a governing entity to make decisions.

8.1.3 Oversight of the Capital Programme and the Asset Management Plan resides with CMT to ensure alignment of projects with strategic objectives and their contribution to financial sustainability prior to referral to the Mayor, Cabinet and Full Council for final approval. CMT comprises the Chief Executive and the Corporate Directors from the different directorates.

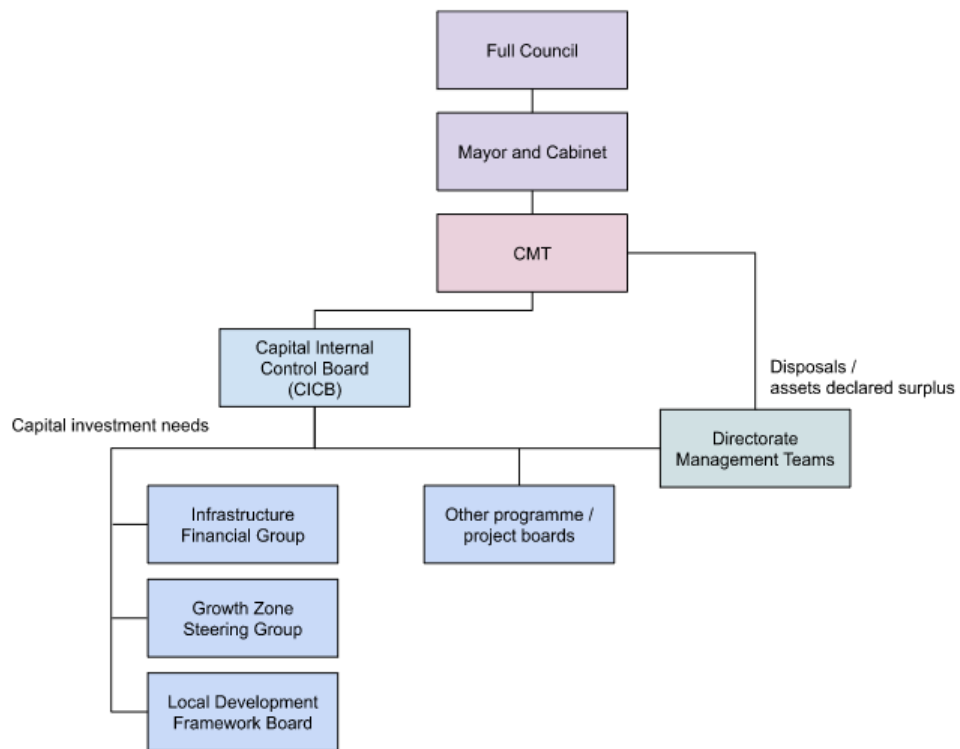
8.1.4 The Council has an established governance arrangement embedded within its current Constitution. Part 4H – Financial Regulations provide the governance framework for managing the Council’s financial affairs. They apply to all Members, officers of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf. It is likely to be considered a disciplinary offence to breach these Financial Regulations and procedures.

8.1.5 Under the Council’s Financial Regulations, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that a balanced revenue budget and capital programme and budget are prepared on an annual basis.

8.2 GOVERNANCE SUMMARY

8.2.1 The governance arrangements in relation to the Capital Programme are summarised in the diagram in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1 - Capital Programme Governance Arrangements



8.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.3.1 The Capital Internal Control Board (CICB) role is to act as the programme board for the delivery of the overall capital programme. It challenges and reviews capital bids before they are submitted for Council approval. It provides oversight and assurance of all Council Plans and Strategies which impact on the capital programme. It assures strategic alignment of the allocation of funding including S106 and CIL income.

8.3.2 The main responsibilities of the CICB are to:

- Ensure that appropriate governance and assurance is in place for the management of all capital projects and programmes including processes for project initiation, benefits identification, resource and risk management, and programme planning;
- Provide direction for matters escalated to it;
- Review and ensure appropriate mitigation for significant risks to delivery of the capital programme;
- Review and monitor delivery of the capital programme plan, including additions to the programme and consideration of interdependencies and pressures;
- Agree allocation of resources for feasibility studies and development of new projects (subject to formal Cabinet process as required).
- Recommend allocation of capital resources (subject to formal Council process as required);
- Have oversight of the Council's Asset Management Strategy and associated significant disposals and acquisitions;
- Drive and monitor the delivery of schemes and projects to ensure that capital is deployed on time and in a controlled manner;
- In respect of major projects and programmes within its remit, Capital ICB will assure itself that appropriate legal documentation, contracts and/or agreements are in place prior to making payments to third parties involved in the project or programme.
- The Board will monitor that contracts have been signed, that they are stored securely and that all legal requirements were met prior to the project proceeding.
- In respect of major projects and programmes within its remit, the Board will seek assurance that public procurement rules and UK obligations on subsidy control rules have been properly considered before entering into arrangements.

- CICB will identify opportunities to pause or remove capital expenditure from the Capital Programme.
- CICB will support the Council in assuring itself that an appropriate level of skills and knowledge is held across the Council to support capital delivery and monitoring, and support the identification and delivery of training as required.

8.4 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

- 8.4.1 CICB will evaluate the compliance of the proposed capital projects in the Capital Programme including the capital resources available to the Council, the revenue implications of the proposed expenditure and other relevant information. It will focus on the expected costs and financial sources identified and consider any risk to either the delivery or costs forecasts which will be recorded in the Council's corporate risk system following the review.
- 8.4.2 CICB will report and escalate to the CMT if tolerances are breached or likely to be breached in the following areas:
- Overspend on project budgets;
 - Timescale – where a project is going to exceed its agreed deadline;
 - Where funding (external) is at risk;
 - Scope, where significant change of scope or quality is proposed or agreed benefits are at risk of non-delivery; and
 - Risks or issues that pose significant risk to delivery.
- 8.4.3 A business impact analysis of the breaches of tolerance or proposed changes and clear recommendations will be prepared by the relevant Director when escalating to the CMT. The outcome of the approval with the decision required will be noted at the next available meeting. If a decision is urgent and required outside the timing of a Capital Board meeting, the Corporate Director of Resources (s151 Officer) in consultation with the Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer), as Chair, may take that decision outside of the meeting.
- 8.4.4 The CICB has the facility to draw upon external expertise where necessary and set up sub-groups and involve other officers as required to consider specific questions and/or undertake specific tasks and activities. Members of the CICB will be trained, as required, to provide the necessary knowledge and understanding to provide effective and constructive input to the meetings. In addition, the s106 Tracker (from the Infrastructure Group) is reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- 8.4.5 The CICB undertakes 'deep dives' into aspects of the capital programme that are of particular interest/significance, due to the amount of expenditure involved or emerging risks to delivery.

8.5 RISK REGISTER

- 8.5.1 The CICB reviews the Risk Register on a quarterly basis. The Council has introduced the use of a project management system (Verto) and the CICB provides assurance that capital projects have been entered onto Verto and reviews the risks entered.
- 8.5.2 The risk register comprises different risk scenarios and their potential impact. A RAG (Red, Amber and Green) rating system is used to measure the level of risk. Each risk is identified with a scenario of its likelihood and impact and comprising details of the existing and future controls to manage risks which are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure management of the risk as the capital project progresses.

9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

9.1 OVERVIEW

- 9.1.1 The Capital Programme Management and Monitoring Framework supports the delivery of programmes by ensuring capital projects are delivered within budget and timescales. The Council has improved and developed the management and monitoring of the programme in response to recommendations from the RIPI reports and the current financial situation.

9.2 CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 9.2.1 The present system comprises the submission of a capital bid outlining the business case and providing details of the project overview and justification, route on delivering the project, evaluation of the financial benefits, meeting key prioritisation criteria and potential risks identified. It also comprises a detailed financial breakdown of gross expenditure, itemised funding requirements and profiling of repayment over the course of the capital project.
- 9.2.2 There is a capital monitoring sheet for the final submission of capital bids that comprises a financial breakdown detailing the financial performance of the Capital Programme in the areas including approved budgets, capital savings, forecasts, borrowings, proposed and unapproved project slippage and variance. There is also a delivery plan setting out the capital projects proposed pricing and specification, procurement strategy, tender process, approvals, implementation and timescales.
- 9.2.3 The capital bids are sent to CICB for challenge and review of capital bids before they are submitted for CMT, Mayor in Cabinet and Council approval. The S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that there is an effective system for capital monitoring. This will ensure that capital investment is delivered on time and within allocated resources, whilst meeting the objectives and outcomes.

- 9.2.4 The Council have made incremental improvements to management and monitoring of the programme in response to the recommendations within the RIPI 2 report. The quality and assurance of the management and monitoring processes has improved and comprises project managers providing increased details within business cases to support capital project proposals, increased scrutiny within the capital bid process with increased qualitative questions being asked to provide frequent checks and control on projects.
- 9.2.5 The Council now has a more standardised, consistent and automated programme and project monitoring framework based on EPPMS (Electronic Project Proposal Management System). The Council has implemented Verto as its preferred EPPMS during 2023 with accompanying communication and training for project managers and key decision-makers across the Council, a priority activity as the Council seeks to strengthen and improve its capital framework.
- 9.2.6 The system supports the management, planning and execution of capital projects. It is able to manage a portfolio of capital projects across a range of teams and departments. The solution helps to coordinate and enhance workflow capabilities during the project initiation stage and project life cycle. The solution also helps to streamline areas including project budgeting, information management, risk analysis, escalation and project delivery and drive a consistent and more automated reporting to CICB on the capital programme's status to inform strategic decision-making.
- 9.2.7 The Council is continuing to develop its programme management and project monitoring framework by implementing a more mature approach to business case development based on clear governance gateways for both new projects and those already in the Capital Programme and reporting up through governance forums as projects progress.
- 9.2.8 The CICB is overseeing work to further improve capital governance arrangements and the preparation of business case templates in line with the Five Case Model. The Five Case Model is an approach for developing business cases recommended by HM Treasury and the UK Office of Government Commerce, and is widely used across central government departments and public sector organisations.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET
DATE OF DECISION	6th December 2023
REPORT TITLE:	QUARTERLY PROCUREMENT PLAN UPDATE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	JANE WEST, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	SCOTT FUNNELL, HEAD OF STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT AND GOVERNANCE Email: scott.funnell@croydon.gov.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	CLLR CUMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE
KEY DECISION?	No
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the latest quarterly update to the Annual Procurement Plan 2023/24, with proposed additions and amends to the plan for the current year.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 to approve the update to the Annual Procurement Plan for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 to approve the delegated decisions in the revised APP to those Lead Members or Officers as stated in Appendix A that includes the procurement strategy and award decisions, the duration of the contracts and contract values.
- 2.3 The delegated decisions shall only be exercised following recommendations from the Contracts & Commissioning Board, which include approval from both the Lead Cabinet Member and the Cabinet Member for Finance.

- 2.4** To allow for minor changes to proceed whilst retaining the agreed delegated so long as none of the following thresholds for changes are exceeded:
- i. Contract value exceeds that proposed in the APP/Quarterly Update Report, by the lesser of £500K or 25%, or the new aggregate value exceeds £1m and it becomes a key decision
 - ii. Substantial / material changes to procurement from that defined in the APP/Quarterly Update Report e.g. material risks are identified

(Should either of those thresholds be exceeded, the delegation cannot be exercised, and the decision shall be recommended to the Executive Mayor, unless a further delegation is approved. Where a delegated decision is a Key Decision to Officers, it must be made in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member).

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The Improving Procurement Governance Process Cabinet paper in November 2022 set out a rationale for establishing an Annual Procurement Plan, to simplify and accelerate approvals and ensuring a more strategic deployment of resources whilst maintaining decision making rigour.
- 3.2** Managing a proactive forward plan of procurement projects is fundamental to improving compliance and to ensure that contracts are re-let in time, and the APP approach is a key element of the Council's Procurement Improvement plan.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1** Procurement plans are subject to change throughout the duration of an Annual Procurement Plan, and so a quarterly update allows for any changes to be made and any new additions to be included.
- 4.2** Additions are either a new procurement that has been identified since the last version of the APP, whereas amendments are updates to existing APP entries.
- 4.3** For this quarterly update, there are 5 additions and 5 amendments to planned procurements with 4 additions and 1 amendment to contracts extensions and variations.
- 4.4** The reasons for the changes are included in the appendix, and the precise changes from the original APP are highlighted in yellow. The changes fall into the following categories:
- New Procurement identified
This is where Procurements to be undertaken this year have been identified since the original APP was published.

- Omission from original APP
This is where there may have been oversights whilst compiling the original APP, or new information has come to light which wasn't available at the time.
- Contract will have expired before a re-procurement can take place
This is where a contract should have been re-procured but this wasn't completed in time, and so an extension is required to the current contract to enable sufficient time to re-procure.
- Change in value, timescale or scope
This is generally where the strategy for a procurement has changed since the previous APP update. This is also where an error in value, timescale or scope was made on a previous APP entry.

4.5 It is important to note that procurement intentions are indicative and subject to change. For example, it may be the Council's intention to take up a permitted contract extension before the Council has agreed this with the incumbent provider.

4.6 The APP is a forward plan for procurements so does not contain any risk analysis on individual projects. These however are considered within the individual reports for decision.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No other options considered at this stage. The November 2022 Cabinet paper established this approach as the process for planning procurement activity and delegating procurement decisions.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 Services across the Council have been consulted to ensure the accuracy of the APP updates. There is no requirement for external consultation as this is an internal process.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The Mayor's Business Plan set out a requirement to review and manage Council contracts better. A proactive forward plan of procurements enables the Council to ensure that contracts are re-procured in a timely manner which is essential to managing a programme of activity, ensuring value for money and supporting the Council priority of balancing the books.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1** The amends to the Annual Procurement Plan set out in appendix A lists contracts that total £404,314,222. The existing governance processes need to be complied with to provide assurance that value for money will be delivered from these procurements.
- 8.1.2** Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Interim Head of Finance – Resources & Assistant Chief Executive on behalf of the Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer (11.09.2023).

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** The Executive Mayor has the power to exercise executive functions pursuant to s9E of the Local Government Act 2000 and has the power to delegate those functions. This report seeks relevant delegations to exercise executive functions.
- 8.2.2** In relation to any contract and procurement strategy/ award/ variation decisions that are key decisions, any delegations to officers shall be limited to “Chief Officers” as defined in the Council’s Constitution, meaning: a) the Head of Paid Service; b) the Chief Finance Officer; c) the Monitoring Officer; d) a Statutory Chief Officer; e) a Non-Statutory Chief Officer. Corporate Directors fall within the definition of “Non-statutory Chief Officer”, which has the same meaning as in section 2(7) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and includes officers who directly report to the Head of Paid Service/ Chief Executive.
- 8.2.3** At present the delegations in the Council’s Tenders and Contracts Regulations have been superseded by the Executive Mayor’s Scheme of Delegation following the introduction of the Mayoral Model.
- 8.2.4** Comments approved by the Head of Commercial & Property Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (1.11.2023).

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 of the 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.
- 8.3.2** When a service is contracted out both the contractor and the public authority that commissioned the service must give due regard to the three principles of the General Duty as set out above. Any supplier that is exercising public functions also has an obligation to fulfil the general duty.

8.3.3 The Contract Management Framework is required to work within the framework of the Equality Strategy 2020- 2024. The deliverables in the Equalities Strategy should be incorporated into the Contract Management Framework and policy documents as detailed below:

“Outline how the proposed contract(s) will comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty outlined in Section 4 of the EQIA; and meet the outcomes of the Council’s equality strategy, particularly:

- i. All Council contracts contribute towards delivering our equality objectives.
- ii. Council contractors are inclusive and supportive of vulnerable groups.
- iii. Ensure that every strategy, delivery plan, council contract and staff appraisal have an equality objective linked to it.
- iv. That contractors be requested to adopt Croydon’s Equality and George Floyd Race Matters Pledges”.

8.3.4 The Equalities Strategy including the Pledges named above, are provided to all bidders during the tendering stage of the procurement process. Social Value objectives also mirror the Council’s commitments to equalities and diversity.

8.3.5 EQIAs will be completed in respect of each contract.

8.3.6 Comment approved by Naseer Ahmed on behalf of Denise McCausland, Equalities Programme Manager (1.11.2023).

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from the content of this report. Should matters arise these will be managed under the Council’s HR policies and procedures.

8.4.2 Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives Directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer (1.11.2023).

9. APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix A - LBC Quarterly Procurement Plan Update December 2023

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 *Improving Procurement Governance* – November 2022 Cabinet

10.2 *LBC Annual Procurement Plan 2022/23* – March 2023 Cabinet

10.3 *LBC APP Quarterly Update* – June 2023 Cabinet

10.4 *LBC APP Quarterly Update* – September 2023 Cabinet

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Event Name	Directorate	Procurement Intention	Total Contract Value	Contract Length (months)	Extension Period	Planned Event Date	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Recommended Approver for Procurement Strategy	Recommended Approver for Award / Extension	Key Decision	Reason for change
ADDITIONS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN (PROCUREMENTS)												
End User Services	ACE	Direct award from framework	£1,715,000	12	0	01/11/23	16/03/24	15/03/25	n/a	CD ACE	Yes	New Procurement Identified
Technology Enabled Care	ASCH	New Procurement	£500,000	12	0	20/12/23	01/06/24	31/05/25	CM ASCH	CD ASCH	No	New Procurement Identified
Pension Fund Global Custody Services	Resources	Re-procure	£700,000	120	0	23/11/23	01/04/24	31/03/34	CM Finance	CD Resources	No	New Procurement Identified
Young People and Care Leavers Service	Housing	Re-procure	£900,000	24	0	01/01/24	01/04/24	31/03/26	CM for Homes	CD Housing	No	Omission from original APP
Residual Grounds Maintenance Vehicles (Beavertails)	SCRER	New Procurement	£500,000	12	n/a	05/01/24	01/06/24	31/05/25	n/a	CD SCRER	No	Market conditions have led to removing these vehicles from the wider GM vehicle procurement and procuring seperately
Strategic Partner for CYPE services	CYPE	New Procurement	£1,000,000	24	n/a	30/01/24	01/04/24	31/03/26	CM for CYPE	CD CYPE	Yes	New Procurement Identified
PFI Older People Residential Care Homes	ASCH	New Procurement	£81,900,000	120	36	01/02/24	01/04/25	31/03/35	CM ASCH	CD ASCH	Yes	New procurement following internal review
Voids and disrepair	Housing	Direct award	£3,000,000	6	6	01/01/24	01/03/24	28/02/25	n/a	CD Housing	Yes	New Procurement Identified
Utilities Contract - Gas supply	Resources	Direct award from framework	£11,700,000	48	0	01/01/24	01/09/24	31/08/28	n/a	CD Resources	Yes	Change in approach to mitigate market risks
Oracle Cloud Fusion (My Resources) Licence and Support Strategy	Resources	Framework direct awards and a competition	£9,200,000	60	60	01/03/24	01/04/24	31/03/29	CM for Finance	CD Resources	Yes	Strategy for procurement for the overall support programme brought forward into this financial year
Library Bookstock	SCRER	Re-procure	£700,000	24	24	01/03/24	01/04/24	31/03/26	n/a	CD SCRER	No	Omission from original APP
AMENDMENTS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN (PROCUREMENTS)												
Emergency Accomodation Spend	Housing	New DPS	£270,000,000	120	n/a	01/01/24	01/09/24	31/08/34	CM for Homes	CD Housing	Yes	Change in value and procurement dates
Regina Road Construction	Housing	New Procurement	£100,000,000	24	0	01/03/24	01/12/24	31/11/2026	Cabinet	Cabinet	yes	Reduction in proposed contract value following consultancy report
Regina Road Demolition	Housing	New Procurement	£4,000,000	6	0	01/01/24	01/04/24	30/09/24	CM for Homes	CD Housing	yes	Focussing on Regina Road, no longer LPS, therefore reduction in value

Joint Children's Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy	CYPE	Reprocure	£6,202,500	36	24	09/11/23	01/02/24	31/01/29	CM for CYPE	CD CYPE	Yes	Update to value due to exclusion of health funding, and reduction in contract length. Also updated the tender date.
Utilities contract - Unmetered street lighting supply	Resources	Reprocure	£29,000,000	12	0	02/01/24	30/09/2024	29/09/2028	CM for Finance	CD Resources	Yes	Procurement brought forward
ADDITIONS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN (EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS)												
Croydon Carers Assessment, Health and Welbeing Service	ASCH	Extend & Vary	£1,888,232	12	n/a	01/12/23	01/04/24	31/03/25	n/a	CD ASCH	Yes	Contract will have expired before a re-procurement can take place
GP and Pharmacy Health Checks Delivery	ACE	Extend & Vary	£1,043,840	12	n/a	01/12/23	01/01/24	31/12/24	n/a	CD ACE	Yes	Contract will have expired before a re-procurement can take place
Childrens Advocacy Service	CYPE	Extend & Vary	£629,650	10	n/a	31/11/2023	01/01/24	31/10/24	n/a	CD CYPE	No	Contract will have expired before a re-procurement can take place
PFI Older People Residential Care Homes	ASCH	Extend & Vary	£104,700,000	16	n/a	01/12/24	15/12/23	31/03/25	n/a	CD ASCH	Yes	Contract will have expired before a re-procurement can take place
Enhanced Learning Provisions	CYPE	Extend	£10,335,000	60	n/a	01/03/24	01/09/24	31/08/29	n/a	CD CYPE	Yes	Permitted extension, omission from original APP
Pest Control Control Contract Extension	Housing	Extend	£2,250,000	24	n/a	15/12/23	20/12/23	27/11/25	n/a	CD Housing	No	Permitted extension, omissions from original APP
AMENDMENTS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN (EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS)												
Street Homelessness Outreach and Resettlement Service	Housing	Extend & Vary	£1,900,000	11	n/a	01/12/23	01/01/24	30/11/24	n/a	CD Housing	Yes	Incorrect value on previous APP, dates updated
Young People and Care Leavers (YPCL)	Housing	Extend and Vary	£6,900,000	3	N/A	15/12/23	10/01/24	31/03/24	n/a	Corporate Director for Housing	No	Updated contract value and timescales
Single Homelessness Accomodation and Support	Housing	Extend & Vary	£4,000,000	11	n/a	01/12/23	01/01/24	30/11/24	N/A	CD Housing	Yes	Incorrect value on previous APP, dates updated

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Cabinet
DATE OF DECISION	6 December 2023
REPORT TITLE:	Progress update on tranche 1 asset disposals, seeking approval for tranche 2 of asset for disposal and approval of the update of the Community Asset Transfer Policy. PART A
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	JANE WEST, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND S151 OFFICER
LEAD OFFICER:	HUW RHYS LEWIS INTERIM DIRECTOR COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT & CAPITAL
LEAD MEMBER:	COUNCILLOR CUMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE
KEY DECISION?	Yes – Financial Implication Criteria - over £1m. Key Decision 7923EM – 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?	<p style="text-align: right;">PART A Public</p> <p>Appendix 1 Schedule of tranche 2 of proposed properties for disposal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)</p> <p>Appendix 3 Amended Draft Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy covering premises related support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PART B – Exempt</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public with exempt Part B report</p> <p>Grounds for the exemption: Exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it relates to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding disclosure outweighs the public interest in disclosure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Appendix 1 Schedule of tranche 2 of proposed properties (with current book values) for disposal</p>
WARDS AFFECTED:	VARIOUS

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** The Council's challenging financial position requires it to review its assets regularly and only hold those assets in its ownership that are vital for service provision. The Council has existing targets for asset sales of £45m in 2023-24, £50m for 2024-25 and £50m for 2025-26. By increasing or bringing forward asset sales, further financial savings can be achieved within the Council's annual budget by using the capital receipts achieved to repay the Council's outstanding borrowing which in turn reduces its annual debt charges.
- 1.2** This report provides an update on progress on asset disposals against the tranche 1 schedule of properties as listed in the approved May 2023 Cabinet report. Part B of this report sets out the financial details in relation to tranche 1.
- 1.3** The report goes on to seek approval to dispose of tranche 2 of properties as listed in this report with a target disposal value of £24.8m. Part B of this report sets out the estimates sales and book values of the sites in question.
- 1.4** The tranche 1 and tranche 2 disposals schedules replace the Annual Assets Disposals Plan approved by Cabinet in November 2022.
- 1.5** A final tranche 3 disposals list is anticipated in 2024/ 2025 which is likely to identify further sites for disposals. These further sites are likely to be identified once service-based reviews have been completed as well as the review of the potential wider use of Town Hall space, which forms part of the ongoing Croydon Campus review.
- 1.6** Finally the report sets out a draft updated Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy for the Council and recommends that a consultation is held prior to the policy being adopted. The Executive Mayor remains committed to supporting CATs where appropriate and will develop and publish a schedule of properties which may be eligible for CATs in due course. The draft updated policy aims to streamline and clarify the process for Community Asset Transfers in the borough.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1** To note the progress made on tranche 1 disposals.
- 2.2** To approve tranche 2 of sites for disposals as set out in Appendix 1 of this report together with indicative values in Appendix 1 (exempt appendix) of the Part B report.

- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and s151 Officer to agree, in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, the terms and final price for each disposal included within tranche 2.
- 2.4 The delegations in this report shall only be exercised following:
- i. sign off of a business case/ financial assessment by the Corporate Management Team (CMT)
 - ii. formal Red Book valuation, if required, on a property to be sold; and
 - iii. formal marketing unless there is a clear special purchaser or offer made considerably in excess of the market value.
- 2.5 To note that the target value for disposals for tranche 2 is £24.8m and that disposals of tranche 2 assets will commence immediately alongside tranche 1 disposals.
- 2.7 To seek approval to commence consultation with the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) on the proposed amendments to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy set out in paragraphs 4.15 to 4.21 and to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, to approve a final amended CAT Policy (Draft in Part A Appendix 3) having considered the feedback provided through the consultation with VCFS organisations.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The tranche 2 disposal list supports the requirements of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Improvement and Assurance Panel through the generation of capital receipts to facilitate a reduction in capital borrowing and associated annual revenue borrowing costs in line with the requirements of the Exit Strategy, recently published by the Improvement and Assurance Panel.
- 3.2 The disposal of assets in a timely fashion will reduce borrowing requirements as required by the Council's MTFs. The more commercially proactive approach for future disposals recommended in this report will assist the delivery of the required asset sales by delegating authority to officers to agree final terms so that sales are not held up with a need to return to Cabinet.
- 3.3 The decision in the 2021/22 Budget to end the Rent Subsidy and Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) schemes, as well as the requirement for an increased number of asset disposals, have led to the Community Asset Transfers (CAT) policy needing to be amended. As a result, it is recommended that the Council consult on the draft amended policy which reflects the new circumstances of the Council and provides increased clarity to Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector partners on the process.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 The Council has an underlying General Fund debt of £1.4billion. One of the key focus areas for Council is to reduce this debt by seeking to dispose of non-essential assets and property held by the Council.
- 4.2 A list of potential disposals was put forward as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26 Update report to Cabinet in November 2022. Subsequently further assets were added to the potential disposals list culminating in the tranche 1 list of disposals which was approved by Cabinet in May 2023. Further work has been undertaken over the summer to review all assets held by the Council which has resulted in the tranche 2 disposals list which is recommended for approval in Appendix 1 Part A (and Appendix 1 of the Exempt Part B report which includes indicative values).
- 4.3 Tranche 1 has been recently reviewed and on the basis of progress to date the total value of the tranche is estimated to be £91m.
- 4.4 Tranche 2 is estimated to total £24.6m.
- 4.5 Tranche 3 will be developed over the coming months by reviewing remaining surplus operational properties that are identified through service reviews. It is anticipated this tranche will be submitted for Cabinet approval in summer 2024.
- 4.6 For all properties that have a current lease in place, the sale will be subject to the terms of that lease continuing in order to provide the existing tenants with certainty for the remaining period of the lease. All existing tenants will be contacted prior to the formal marketing of any property to ensure that they understand the process and give to them an early opportunity to consider whether they would like to bid for the property. Any sale will, however, follow a process to ensure best consideration is achieved. Where there is an outstanding lease renewal this will be completed prior to any marketing where this is considered appropriate.
- 4.7 In order to determine what additional assets the Council could potentially dispose of, the Council established an Asset Disposal and Property Transformation Board. This Board has oversight on all property and asset matters across the Council including;
- Disposals
 - Community hubs
 - Libraries service review
 - Community and Family Hubs
 - CAT opportunities
 - Operational Properties (Corporate Landlord Function)

This was to ensure that all disposal opportunities were captured across the Council.

- 4.8 This Board, supported by the in-house property team, undertook asset reviews in order to identify all possible disposal opportunities.
- 4.9 The sites in tranche 2 are more complex than those in tranche 1 as the Council moves on from 'easy wins' to the more challenging disposals, which in some case require decants and relocation of some tenants and council staff. The complexity and therefore the level of risk is likely to increase yet further as the Council moves into tranche 3 in 2024.
- 4.10 The financial summary of progress is set out below by financial year.
- **2021-22**,
Sales completed = **£47.5m**
Including Croydon Park Hotel (£24.9m) and College Green (£22m).
 - **2022-23**
Sales completed = **£22.26m**
The Council agreed the sale of Taberner House site which is opposite Bernard Weatherill House (BWH) for the sum of **£20.26m** with a deferred payment received in December 2022.
 - **2023-24 (Forecast)**
Sales completed to date = **£0.82m** (from tranche 1)
Under offer = **£51.66m**
Forecast for the year - **£52.48m minimum**
- 4.11 In addition, further assets from tranche 1 valued at £21.67m are currently being marketed.
- 4.12 The total value of disposals completed to date since the date of government intervention in 2021 is £72.9m. Other capital receipts are available to the Council e.g., from the sale of investments and from loan repayments from Brick by Brick. The Council over-achieved its £50m target for 2022-23 capital receipts and is similarly expecting to exceed the target of £45m for 2023-24. It has further targets of £50m for 2024-25 and £50m for 2025-26. Good progress is being made to achieving these future targets and a further update will be provided as part of the Council Tax Setting papers in February and March 2024.
- 4.13 By bringing forward the commencement of tranche 2 disposals – which would start immediately after Cabinet approval (subject to due diligence and any required consultation) and run in parallel with tranche 1 proposals – the Council is accelerating its delivery of asset sales. This change of approach aims to achieve the completion of tranche 1 and tranche 2 disposals by the end of March 2025. This approach increases the opportunity for the Council to reduce its borrowing costs, increasing its delivery of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- 4.14 Professional agents, auctioneers and RICS Registered Valuers are already engaged and providing advice on tranche 1 disposals and this involvement will continue into tranche 2 disposals, to ensure that the most appropriate marketing and values can be achieved for the disposal of any asset in the open market.

UPDATED COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER (CAT) POLICY

- 4.15 The Council has a Community Asset Transfer Policy (CAT) which sets out the process for the transfer of land or buildings from the Council to Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations. The existing CAT policy was adopted in 2020 at a point where the Council's governance and financial challenges were less well understood. The policy included significant focus on the now expired 2019-2023 VCS Strategy and the Rent Subsidy and Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) schemes, both of which were ended as part of the 2021-22 Budget.
- 4.16 The Council undertook considerable engagement with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector prior to the natural end of the three-year Community Fund grant funding, which ran from March 2020 to March 2023.
- 4.17 As part of these discussions VCFS organisations raised points about the impact of the withdrawal of the Rent Subsidy and Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) schemes and the corresponding impact on CATs.
- 4.18 Since 2013 the Council has completed 7 CATs to local VCFS organisations including Harlow Hall and Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation. Currently there is one application (Play Place Wayside) in the process of being legally transferred and a further application on Shirley Community Centre under consideration. Officers are also in early negotiations on possible lease arrangements with VCFS organisations on Coulsdon Community Centre and Rowdown playing field pavilion.
- 4.19 The Executive Mayor remains committed to supporting CATs where appropriate and will develop and publish a schedule of properties which may be eligible for CATs in due course. For now, it is imperative that the CAT policy is amended to enable the Council to meet its asset disposal target in line with DLUHC's and the Improvement and Assurance Panel's expectations as set out in the published Exit Strategy. The Council's medium term financial strategy requires asset disposals to generate the capital receipts that will reduce the Council's borrowing requirement.
- 4.20 The draft amended CAT policy also includes an updated CAT application process which has been strengthened to ensure that applicants are able to demonstrate a clear business plan. This must include funding proposals covering a 3 -5 year period and set out the viability, sustainability and deliverability of the proposal without

recourse to reliance on Council grant funding or business or rent relief allowances. The draft policy for consultation also removes the presumption of a peppercorn rent for CAT properties, with rents for each CAT individually assessed taking into account:

- the geographical location of the property;
- the current and proposed use of the property and its ability to support the Council's core policies;
- the physical condition of the property;
- the scale of obligations on the tenant to be fully responsible for all property repair and maintenance;
- and, the business case submission and funding proposal from successful applicants.

4.21 Given the impact on the VCFS, consultation will be undertaken with the sector on the proposed changes to the CAT Policy. This paper seeks approval to commence consultation with the VCFS to these proposed changes.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Improvement and Assurance Panel and DLUHC have been consulted on the approach being taken by the Council in managing the asset disposal programme and approach.

5.2 Any required statutory consultation for particular disposals will be undertaken, where relevant.

5.3 The report was taken to Scrutiny on November 21st, the notes below set out points discussed.

Actions

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed the following actions arising from their discussion of this item: -

1. The Committee agreed that any future reviews of the asset disposal process would look to test that the engagement process with tenants had improved.
2. That a meeting with officers is arranged for the Deputy-Chair, Cllr Ben Hassel to receive an update on the lease length of tenants and discuss how the disposal of golf courses was treated.
3. The Committee requests to be provided with a summary of the outcome from discussions with existing tenants about their lease options.

Conclusions

Following its discussion of the report on Asset Disposals and the Community Asset Transfer Policy the Committee reached the following conclusions:-

1. The Committee concluded that the Council's financial position meant that reducing its debt was essential and as such recognised that the disposal of the assets identified in tranche 2 would contribute towards this priority.

2. The Committee acknowledged that the timeline for notifying tenants of those properties listed for disposal in tranche 2 had been shortened to allow Scrutiny the opportunity to review the report before its consideration by the Mayor at Cabinet on 6 December and welcomed the apology given by the Mayor to those tenants it had not been possible to contact before the report was published.
3. The Committee welcomed confirmation that there would be forthcoming conversations with the tenants in properties listed for disposal, about their lease options.
4. The Committee welcomed confirmation that it was likely the list of properties available for Community Asset Transfer would be available before the end of the year.
5. The Committee welcomed confirmation that additional capacity had been brought into the team managing the asset disposal process to speed up the pace of disposal.

Recommendations

Following its discussion of the report on Asset Disposals and the Community Asset Transfer Policy, the Committee agreed to submit the following recommendations for the consideration of the Mayor: -

1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that existing tenants should be made aware of an asset being identified for potential disposal before any report identifying assets is published.
- 5.4 Consultation with the VCFS will be undertaken ahead of a final decision being taken on the draft CAT policy as set out at recommendation 2.6.

6. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 6.1 Do nothing – this was rejected since it would not deliver benefits and savings to the Council's MTFs and wider requirements of the Improvement and Assurance Panel and DLUHC to deliver debt reduction by the Council. The CAT policy would still require amendments due to the removal of peppercorn rent and the need for business cases as part of the submission process.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN

- 7.1 The disposal of assets will help deliver a key objective within the Executive Mayor's Business Plan:

Balancing the Books: One of the main priorities is to get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable. With the Council still reliant on Government support to stay afloat, getting a grip on the finances is a top priority. This will mean difficult but necessary decisions to make the Council financially sustainable for the future.

To do this we will:

- Deliver the savings in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and increase our income.
- Reduce council debt by selling or letting more council assets and repaying capital loans.

- The Sale and letting of assets will help deliver increased income through the rental received and wider cost savings in addition to the capital receipts.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Historic decisions regarding the capital programme mean that the Council's outstanding General Fund debt is disproportionately high compared to most councils. The revenue cost of servicing debt represented 16% of the Council's 2021-22 core spending power (and is estimated at 19% for 2023-24) when the median figure for English Councils was 8%. General Fund debt at April 2023 was £1.4bn and with interest rates rising when debt is scheduled for re-financing, the development of a disposal and lettings strategy and the subsequent sale of assets is essential to mitigate rising cost pressures and reduce the overall cost to the Council.

As part of each disposal plan the financial assessment will include the impact of the disposal on any loss of rental income alongside the impact on borrowing costs and MRP provision against each disposal site

Approved: Andrew Lord on behalf of the Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer

8.2. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1 There are various powers the Council may rely upon to dispose of its assets and the Council must comply with legal framework, including established public law principles, in relation to disposal of land and property. Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, it has a statutory duty to sell land at the best price reasonably obtainable ("best consideration"), unless it has the consent of the Secretary of State and subject to exceptions set out in the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003. Each individual disposal decision will require an analysis of the Council's legal powers to dispose of the relevant piece of land and any other legal requirements prior to disposal, such as any consultation requirements or other restrictions relevant to the particular asset.
- 8.2.2 Where land includes open space, the Council must place an advertised notice in a newspaper circulating in the area for two consecutive weeks and must consider any objections received, pursuant to Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 8.2.3 Where land or property is used to deliver services, the Council must take a decision on changing or maintaining its existing service provision before disposing of assets that are used to provide these services. This could engage the public law duty to consult service users and other affected stakeholders.
- 8.2.4 It is government policy that local authorities should dispose of surplus and under-used land and property wherever possible. Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, the Council is required to publish details of land/property which it has declared surplus to requirements or deems to be under-used.
- 8.2.5 The report proposes to consult the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations on proposals to amend the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy. The law has recognised that there are four main circumstances where a duty to consult may

arise. First, where there is a statutory duty to consult. Second, where there has been a promise to consult. Third, where there has been an established practice of consultation. Fourth, where, in exceptional cases, a failure to consult would lead to conspicuous unfairness. In the circumstances, the Council has previously undertaken consultation with the VCFS regarding the current CAT policy and has therefore established a practice of consultation.

- 8.2.6 The key features of a lawful consultation process, commonly referred to as the “Gunning” requirements are set out in R v Brent LBC ex part Gunning (1985) 84 LGR 168 QBD. These principles require that consultation should:
- a) be undertaken at a time when the relevant proposal is still at a formative stage;
 - b) give sufficient reasons for particular proposals to permit for intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
 - c) give consultees adequate time for consideration and response; and
 - d) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising any proposals.
- 8.2.7 In carrying out any consultation pursuant to recommendations in this report and prior to any final decision, the Council should follow the Gunning principles set out above.
- 8.2.8 The Executive Mayor has the power to exercise executive functions pursuant to s9E of the Local Government Act 2000 and has the power to delegate those functions. This report seeks relevant delegations to exercise executive functions. At present the delegations in the Financial Regulations have been superseded by the Executive Mayor’s Scheme of Delegation following the introduction of the Mayoral Model. As such, both the Executive Mayor’s Scheme of Delegation and the Financial Regulations will require updating in order to reflect the recommended delegations in this report, if approved.
- 8.2.5 Approved by Kiri Bailey, Head of Commercial & Property and Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer 27/10/2023

8.3. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATION

- 8.3.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from the content of this report. Should matters arise in respect of individual disposals these will be managed under the Council’s HR policies and procedures and as part of the decision process for each recommended disposal.

(Approved by Gillian Bevan Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives Directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer) 16.10.2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATION

- 8.4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQulA) has been undertaken and is included as an appendix in the Cabinet papers. The EQulA reveals that there is no direct negative impact on those protected groups. The Council remains committed to tackling inequality, recognising that there can be no fair society if some groups remain disadvantaged because of their protected characteristic. This principle also applies to how we procure services. The Council expects its service providers to adhere to the same principles of complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty ensuring that the services we procure are both fit for purpose and represent value for money.

8.4.2 On the CAT programme Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis subject to applications being approved.

Approved by Naseer Ahmad for the Equalities Manager. (17/10/2023)

8.5 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

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

NO

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

NO

(Approved by: Huw Rhys Lewis Interim Director of Commercial Investment and Capital)"

8.6 PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

8.6.1 There are no implications or risks to be considered at this stage. The procurement of the any selling/ marketing agents or advisors used by the Council has been done using public procurement compliant frameworks.

Approved by Scott Funnell Head of Procurement (27/10/2023)

CONTACT OFFICER: Huw Rhys Lewis Interim Director Commercial Investment and Capital

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Schedule of tranche 2 of proposed properties for disposal (Part A)

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment (EQulA) (Part A)

Appendix 3 Amended Draft Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy covering premises related support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (Part A)

Appendix 1 Schedule of tranche 2 of proposed properties (with current book values) for disposal (Part B)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Part A Exempt Appendix 1 - Tranche 2

Description	Current Use	Comments	Ward Description
Spring Park Road-Shirley Tennis Club	Tennis Club	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Shirley North
Ederline Avenue(Norbury Tennis Club)	Tennis Club	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Norbury and Pollards Hill
3 Imperial Way (Crosfield)	Operational Croydon Equipment Services	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Waddon
37 Tamworth Road	Community Centre/Offices	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Fairfield
Cromwell Road 47A	Office/training	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Selhurst
Shirley Park Golf Club	Golf Course	Extend the long lease to current tenant, or sell on a longer lease with lease to current tenant in place	Park Hill & Whitgift
Coulsdon Court Golf Course/Manor Hotel	Golf Course	Extend the current 125 year lease to current tenant	Old Coulsdon
PIP House, former All Saints School House	Community hub	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	West Thornton
Mind in Croydon, 26-28 Pampisford Road	Mental health charity	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Purley & Woodcote
Mitcham Road 56a	Croydon BME Forum offices/training	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Broad Green
Dering Place - Eldon Phab Centre	Clubhouse	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Waddon
Alwyn Close (British Legion)	Former social club		New Addington North
Shrublands Avenue, 25	Pre school nursery	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Shirley South
Various scout sites/huts	Scout sites/huts	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Various
Waterside Centre	Community hub		South Norwood
Davidson Pre-School Nursery	Pre school nursery	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Addiscombe West
Addington Court Golf Club	Golf course	Extend the long lease to current tenant, or sell on a longer lease with lease to current tenant in place	Selsdon Vale & Forestdale
Strand House	Part CALAT Centre, part vacant	To be sold in conjunction with relocation of existing services	Thornton Heath
Chatsworth Hall	Operational - Family Justice Centre	To be sold in conjunction with relocation of existing service, and no reduction in service level	Fairfield
Cavendish House, 51-55 South End (Turnaround Centre)	Operational - Youth Services	To be sold in conjunction with relocation of existing service, and no reduction in service level	South Croydon
Godstone Road Shelters	Workshop	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Kenley
Coombe Wood Pond Cottage	Small cottage utilised by Conservation Charity		South Croydon
Mayfield Road Sports Ground - Stands and Club House	Football Club	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	West Thornton
Willis Road, 14 Cornerstone House	Community hub		Selhurst
Parsons Pightle, Rugby Club	Rugby club	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Old Coulsdon
Northbrook Road Depot, Croydon, CR0 2QL	Operational - CES storage	To be sold with vacant possession	Selhurst
Waddon Way Community Centre/Nursery	Nursery (ground rent)	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Waddon
Early Help North Locality, 28 Winterbourne Road, Croydon	Former early help hub	To be sold with vacant possession	Bensham Manor
Heather Way, 11	Former respite home	To be sold with vacant possession	Selsdon & Addington Village
Land at former Edgecombe Community Centre	Vacant site	Vacant site	Selsdon & Addington Village
Ladels Day Nursery, Highbury Road, Croydon	Nursery in former pavilion	To be sold, with lease to current tenant in place	Norbury Park
Thornton Road - Mortuary Bungalow	Looking at redevelopment options for new mortuary	Part of site to be redeveloped. Remainder of site to be sold	West Thornton

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

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

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

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

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

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

2. Proposed change

Directorate	Resources
Title of proposed change	Various Disposals and Lettings
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Huw Rhys Lewis

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

This report sets out the details of the proposed tranche 2 of property disposals. This follows on from Tranche 1 disposals list approved by Cabinet in May 2023. A number of disposals have already taken place as part of the creation of an annual plan in Nov 2022.

This report and the May report replaces the annual disposal plan and is intent to streamline and accelerate the process of property dispels to seek to reduce the Council debt position of £1.4billion.

The VCFS bodies were also advised that the impact of the Councils planned property disposals would result in a reduction of eligible buildings being available to be included in the CAT programme.

Those properties included in the Council's disposals programme (as approved by cabinet) are excluded from the CAT programme.

Alongside this impact on the CAT programme, the key change to the CAT policy centered around the CAT application process which has been expanded to ensure that applicants must demonstrate and submit a business plan and funding proposals covering a 3 -5 year period to which sets out the viability, sustainability and deliverability of their scheme without the need to be reliant on Council grant funding or business or rent relief allowances.

Given these two key changes it has become necessary to formally update the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy

On the CAT program, Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis subject to applications being approved

3. Impact of the proposed change

Important Note: It is necessary to determine how each of the protected groups could be impacted by the proposed change. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports, complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

3.1 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change.

Table 1 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change.

If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table.

Additional information needed	Information source	Date for completion
None		

For guidance and support with consultation and engagement visit <https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/communications/consultation-and-engagement/starting-engagement-or-consultation>

3.2 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative.

Table 2 – Positive/Negative impact

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

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
Age	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		Property Management Team Please see Appendix 1 for Protected characteristic population data
Disability	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and		As above

	relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		
Gender	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Gender Reassignment	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Religion or belief	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Race	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Sexual Orientation	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		As above.
Pregnancy or Maternity	The Disposal Plans and delegation of any future letting will not directly impact any		As above.

	protected characteristic group. Decisions regarding the new flexible working styles and relocation requirements/set-ups have already been taken.		
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Important note: You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations, this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.

When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics.

3.3 Impact scores

Example

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

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

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

Severity of Impact	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
	Likelihood of Impact			

Key

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

Equality Analysis

Table 5 – Impact scores

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

Equality Analysis

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

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

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups.

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups.

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

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

Table 5 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts.

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.

Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability	N/A		Huw Rhys Lewis	
Race	N/A			
Sex (gender)	N/A			
Gender reassignment	N/A			
Sexual orientation	N/A			
Age	N/A			
Religion or belief	N/A			
Pregnancy or maternity	N/A			

Equality Analysis

Marriage/civil partnership	N/A		
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6. Decision on the proposed change

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter X in column 3 (Conclusion) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.		
Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision. The adoption of the Annual Asset Disposal Plan and delegation of decisions will have no direct impact on staff or services delivered. Where necessary individual decisions for the sale or letting of a specific building will fully consider any impact on the service delivery or staff as part of the individual report. This will be particularly pertinent where the relocation of a service is being considered.	X
Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form	
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.	
Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	

Equality Analysis

Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet No.	Meeting title: Cabinet 24 May 2023
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7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision	
Equality lead	Name: Naseer Ahmad Date: 17/10/2023 Position: Interim Senior Equalities Officer
Director	Name: Huw Rhys-Lewis Date: 17/10/2023 Position: Interim Director Commercial Investment and Capital

Appendix One: data broken down by Protected Characteristics The information below is taken from the 2011 census unless otherwise indicated.

Age groups Number of people Percentage

0-4 years 27,972 7.7%
 5-7 years 14,388 4.0%
 8-9 years 8,708 2.4%
 10-14 years 23,130 6.4%
 15 years 4,912 1.4%
 16-17 years 9,934 2.7%
 18-19 years 8,720 2.4%
 20-24 years 23,591 6.4%

Equality Analysis

25 -29 years 27,692 7.6%
30-44 years 82,439 22.7%
45-59 years 70,488 19.4%
60-64 years 17,029 4.7%
65-74 years 23,155 6.4%
75-84 years 15,318 4.2%
85-89 years 3,881 1.1%
Over 90 years 2,021 0.6%

People with long term illnesses or disabilities 363,378

Blind or visually impaired These categories were not recorded as such in the 2011 census. However, this did record that there were 24,380 people (6.7%) whose day to day activities were limited a lot by long term Deaf or hearing impaired Other communication impairment Mobility impairment Learning difficulty or disability Mental health condition 21 HIV, multiple sclerosis or cancer illness or disability and 28,733 (7.9%) whose day to day activities were limited a little (Office of National Statistics) Other (please specify)

Gender

Male 176,224 48.5%
Female 187,154 51.5%

Ethnicity

Number of people Percentage White British 171,740 47.3%
White Irish 5,369 1.5%
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller 234 0.1%
Other White background 22,852 6.3%
Black African 28,981 8.0%
Black Caribbean 31,320 8.6%
Other Black background 12,955 3.6%
Bangladeshi 2,570 0.7%
Chinese 3,925 1.1%
Indian 24,660 6.8%

Equality Analysis

Pakistani 10,865 3.0%
Other Asian background 17,607 4.8%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean 9,650 2.7%
Mixed White and Black African 3,279 0.9%
Mixed White and Asian 5,140 1.4%
Other Mixed background 5,826 1.6%
Arab 1,701 0.5%
Other ethnic group (please specify) 4,704 1.3%

Religion

Number of people Percentage Buddhist 2,381 0.70%
Christian 205,022 56.40%
Hindu 21,739 6.00%
Jewish 709 0.20%
Muslim 29,513 8.10%
Sikh 1,450 0.40%
No religion/faith 72,654 20.00%
Other (please specify) 2,153 0.60%

Sexual orientation

Lesbian There are no figures from the 2011 census. However, it is estimated that there were 20,370 lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people living in Croydon in 2001. (London LGBT)
Gay Bisexual Transgender Transgender See above.

Pregnancy or maternity Pregnant

These categories were not recorded as such in the 2011 census. However, there were 5,720 live births in 2011 (Office of National Statistics) On compulsory maternity leave Marriage or civil partnership Married 122,013 42.9% In civil partnership 796 0.3%

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COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER POLICY FOR PREMISES RELATED TO SUPPORTING THE VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTORS

Proposed draft for consultation

Community Asset Use and Transfer - Background and Strategic Aims

A Community Asset Transfer (CAT) is defined as the transfer of land or buildings from the council to the ownership and/or management of a third sector organisation (including voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and other not-for-profits). This CAT policy sets out the process the Council will follow for CAT applications and the criteria and conditions which will be considered as part of that process.

The CAT policy reflects the Council's commitment to enable local VCFS organisations to operate local assets where possible, whilst taking account of the significant financial challenge facing the Council and its need to dispose of non-essential assets in order to reduce debt payments and protect services for local residents as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Improvement and Assurance Panel's Intervention Exit Strategy.

1. Premises for the VCFS in Croydon

- 1.1 Securing premises can be a significant challenge for local voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations. In addition to offering shorter term lets and venue hires, through the policies set out in this document, the council provides the opportunity for VCFS organisations to take on long leases to directly operate and manage some council owned buildings for the benefit of the local community.
- 1.2 This policy applies to properties that are excluded from the property disposals programme.
- 1.3 Those properties that are included in the Council's disposals programme are excluded from the CAT policy.

2. Allocation of council community properties

2.1 Identification of properties to be allocated.

- 2.1.1 The Council's Property Team will work with the VCFS to identify suitable future uses for vacant space within its property portfolio. Those properties that are included in

the Council's disposals programme (as approved by cabinet) are excluded from the CAT policy.

- 2.1.2 The Council will continue to consider CATs on a case-by-case basis for its properties. CATs transfer the council asset to the occupying VCFS organisation on a long lease (the rent will depend on the nature of the asset and its income generation potential as set out in section 3). The organisation takes on full responsibility for the cost of running the building. A CAT may be appropriate in specific circumstances where a council property asset is surplus to requirements, the Council considers that the VCFS organisation is better placed than itself to deliver the service in question (for example, a community hall), and the transfer would enable them to benefit from grant funding available to organisations with longer leases.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria for the allocation of a property

- 2.2.1 To be eligible, organisations should satisfy the following criteria:

a. Eligible organisations should be:

- Properly constituted, with good governance
- Capable of sustainably, legally and safely managing an asset and delivering services
- Compliant with the Equality Act 2010
- Willing to offer space (if available) and support to smaller groups.

b. Services must be delivered primarily for the benefit of Croydon residents (more than 75% of beneficiaries must be Croydon residents)

2.3 Assessment criteria of priority for a property

- 2.3.1 As the supply of properties is insufficient for all potentially eligible VCFS organisations that may need premises, the Council will consider applications according to a number of criteria including:

- The soundness of the business case for why the building or land is needed.
- The robustness of the planned income stream for the organisation
- The community benefit offered by the organisation.
- Local need for the service
- Financial management and viability: VCFS organisations will be asked to provide their most recent audited/checked accounts, a business plan or budget, and sources of funding.
- Ability for the organisation to manage an asset and comply with the lease obligations.

- 2.3.2 Leases are excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. This means that tenants do not have an automatic right to renew the lease when it expires. The length of the lease granted by the Council depends on

a number of factors including the length of a commission agreement provided; the financial viability of the organisation; its ability to manage a property and comply with the terms of the lease; the initial investment required by the organisation to refurbish the property; and the Council's plans for the property.

- 2.3.3 Typically the length of a lease offered by the Council would be 10 – 25 years.
- 2.3.4 When the lease expires, organisations should not assume that the lease will be renewed automatically. The Council will assess whether the tenant organisation continues to meet the eligibility criteria as set out in its agreed business and service delivery plan. This will also consider if it is still appropriate for them to remain in occupation under a renewed lease or for the property to be offered to an alternative organisation.
- 2.3.5 In considering whether to renew the lease, the Council will take into account the means by which the lease was originally acquired, for example whether it was subject to a competitive tender, whether the priorities against which eligibility was assessed at the time the property was allocated are still relevant, and the organisation's satisfactory performance, compliance with the lease and regular use of the property for purposes agreed with the Council. The Council will also consider its needs and community needs at the time the decision is made.
- 2.3.6 If the Council decides not to renew the lease, it should give the lessee six months' notice.

3.0 Rent charging framework for council community properties

- 3.1 In order to deliver its legal duty to achieve Best Consideration, the council will operate a flexible rent charging framework to set the rents for council community properties. Rents for each CAT will be individually assessed and will take into account the:
 - the geographical location of the property
 - the current and proposed use of the property and its ability to support the Council's core policies.
 - this physical condition of the property
 - the scale of obligations on the tenant to be fully responsible for all property repair and maintenance.
 - the business case submission and funding proposal from successful applicants.
- 3.2 Rents for buildings that offer more potential for third party/commercial letting are likely to attract higher rents.
- 3.3 Where income generation by the tenant exceeds what has been declared in the submitted business plan then the Council will be seeking to share 50/50 of any income received above the business plan allowing for a 10% margin of growth.
- 3.4 Exceptions include scout sites, where, due to the restrictive nature of the use, a standard annual community rent will be applied.

- There will also be some instances where a volunteer group with no income is undertaking a service on behalf of the Council where it may be appropriate to charge a peppercorn.
- Where a VCFS organisation is investing capital to fit out premises, the Council may agree a rent-free period in recognition of this investment.

3.5 Any existing lease that expires the tenant will need to reapply through the CAT process and that any new lease rent level would be set taking into account the criteria set out in section 3.1 and 3.2.

4.0 Supporting Documents

To support this updated policy there are various forms, online application details and guidance notes which will be updated as part of the consultation process.

‘CAT Application Part 2’ (this covers those applicants who have met the base criteria for consideration but in order to progress to the next step of evaluation they are required to provide more information on their financial proposals and assumptions. Guidance notes will be provided to assist in the part 2 process.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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