

## **Council**

Meeting of Full Council held on Monday, 9 July 2018 at 6.30pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Bernadette Khan (Chair);  
Deputy Mayor Humayan Kabir (Vice Chair);  
Councillors Hamida Ali, Muhammad Ali, Jamie Audsley, Jane Avis, Jeet Bains,  
Sue Bennett, Margaret Bird, Simon Brew, Alison Butler, Jan Buttinger,  
Janet Campbell, Robert Canning, Richard Chatterjee, Sherwan Chowdhury,  
Luke Clancy, Chris Clark, Pat Clouder, Stuart Collins, Mary Croos,  
Patsy Cummings, Mario Creatura, Nina Degrads, Jerry Fitzpatrick,  
Sean Fitzsimons, Alisa Flemming, Felicity Flynn, Clive Fraser, Maria Gatland,  
Lynne Hale, Simon Hall, Patricia Hay-Justice, Maddie Henson, Simon Hoar,  
Steve Hollands, Yvette Hopley, Karen Jewitt, Shafi Khan, Stuart King,  
Toni Letts, Oliver Lewis, Stephen Mann, Maggie Mansell, Stuart Millson,  
Michael Neal, Tony Newman, Oni Oviri, Ian Parker, Andrew Pelling,  
Jason Perry, Helen Pollard, Tim Pollard, Joy Prince, Badsha Quadir,  
Helen Redfern, Scott Roche, Pat Ryan, Paul Scott, Manju Shahul-Hameed,  
Niroshan Sirisena, Andy Stranack, Gareth Streeter, Rob Ward, David Wood,  
Louisa Woodley and Callton Young

**Apologies:** Councillor Jason Cummings, Vidhi Mohan and Steve O'Connell

### **PART A**

#### **11/17 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was noted that an amendment was required on minute 7/18 resolution 3 to reflect that Councillor Stuart Collins was appointed as Deputy Leader.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to the aforementioned amendment.

#### **12/17 Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

#### **13/17 Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

The Mayor advised that in accordance with paragraph 1.2 of Part 4A of the Constitution, she would be varying the order of business for the meeting to take item 13, the report on the Members' Allowances before item 12.

#### 14/17 **Announcements**

The Mayor thanked all the volunteers, officers and organisers of the events that she had attended in her first six weeks as Mayor. The Mayor had previously highlighted in her acceptance of office speech that equality and inclusion would be her priorities and as such it had given her great joy to attend events that embraced this, such as the Faiths Together bike ride and picnic, and attending an "equalities" tea party.

In June the Mayor attended the Croydon Food and Music Festival which proved to be a fantastic, vibrant, colourful event for all generations and was attended by more than twelve thousand people. It had been a pleasure to see the coming together of Croydon's communities to enjoy such a well organised event. The Mayor had also had the privilege of attending various graduation ceremonies, including one at the Croydon Adult Learning and Training Centre (CALAT), with her attendance planned for a similar event in the near future at Beckmead College.

It had recently been Armed Forces Week, which had been made even more poignant this year in being the centenary since the end of the First World War. The Mayor had been honoured to raise the flag outside the Town Hall to mark the event and have lunch with veterans from the local area, who talked so humbly of their heroic acts.

The Mayor reminded Members that it was her Inaugural Dinner on 11 July 2018, noting that it was pleasing that so many Councillors had confirmed their attendance. Thanks was given to the various sponsors for their generous support of the event. The Mayor also thanked the new advisors to the Mayor's Charity Board for their fundraising ideas and input so far. It was highlighted that the traditional annual golf day was in the process of being planned, with it likely to be held in September.

The Leader of the Council advised that a significant level of support had been received for his proposal to nominate Roy Hodgson to receive the Freedom of the Borough. On a separate note the underfunding of the provision for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, at a cost to Croydon Council of £7m, continued to be a very serious matter and the Leader would be sending a letter outlining the concerns of the Council to the Home Secretary.

#### 15/17 **Croydon Adults Peer Review**

The Council received a report on the recent Peer Review of Croydon's Adults Service. The Review Lead, Aileen Buckton was in attendance at the meeting

to present a summary of the review's findings. During the presentation the following points were noted:-

- i. The review had been carried out over three days and had taken a light touch approach. The team carrying out the review was made up of eight professionals, all with an Adult Social Care background.
- ii. The review had focused on the use of resources within Adult Social Care, which included reviewing budgets, commissioning and the use of market. The review had met with service users to inform its findings, using both interviews and focus groups to gather evidence.
- iii. The Review had met with a great deal of enthusiasm from staff and it was evident that a significant amount of preparation had been invested in the process. The review team had been impressed by everyone they met, including both senior staff and staff on the ground, all of whom reflected the view that Croydon was a Council with ambition and vision.
- iv. The Review presented an opportunity to reflect on what was going well within the Service, as well as being used to identify new learning and new ways of working. It was highlighted that it would be beneficial for the Service to mirror the excellent approach it took to working with the over 65's to those under 65; such as young adults leaving care.
- v. The review had found that service users understood the direction of travel in the Service towards a more preventative approach with a focus on residents working together. Residents were complementary about the changes made to date, but it was emphasised that it was important that they should be kept informed as progress was made. The move towards more digital ways of working was a slight concern for service users and how this was approached needed further consideration.

The Cabinet Member for Families, Health and Social Care, Councillor Avis, extended her thanks to the Review Team for their report, particularly for delivering it in the short timeframe they had been given to complete the review. It was pleasing to note that the results of the Review had found a Service being delivered in the right way, with vision and passion. The Review had also helped to provide reassurance that the Service was moving in the right direction for the people of Croydon.

The mission for the Service was to deliver a sustainable future, in terms of money, the workforce and partnerships. This vision was presented under the heading of 'a life not a care plan'. It was intended that residents would be provided with support to allow them to live a life they both deserved and wanted, through the introduction of a system focused on prevention and early intervention. A key driver for this would be the One Croydon Alliance, which aimed to integrate health and social care partners to deliver service improvements despite cuts of 74% in the Adult Social Care budget.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, Councillor Hopley, also extended her thanks to the team for its work, noting that it was pleasing to see that there was an agreed method set out in the report and concurred that this approach should be followed. It was suggested that further work should be undertaken to provide information at a more granular level.

Concern was raised about the targeted budgets for Adult Social Care, which had not been met, with a view that greater scrutiny was required in this area. Concern was also raised about the speed of progress being made with the One Croydon Alliance, with it highlighted that Personal Independence Coordinators still needed to be appointed to cover the south of the Borough, which was felt to be particularly pressing given the high level of elderly need in the area.

The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board, Councillor Woodley, also extended her thanks to the team for their work in undertaking the review, noting that it presented a timely affirmation on the direction of travel for the Service, with it being particularly pleasing to note that service users appreciated the work being undertaken by the Council.

The Council **resolved** to note the content of the report and its appendices.

#### 16/17 **Croydon Question Time**

The Mayor began the item with questions from the public.

Brian Longman asked why the new waste and recycling system would provide households with a larger bin for paper and cardboard recycling, when a greater level of plastic and glass was recycled and whether a more bespoke system could be used to meet residents' needs. Councillor Collins advised that it would not be practical for a bespoke system to be used as the collections needed to be designed to all households rather than individual circumstances. There was also evidence to indicate that a greater capacity for paper and cardboard recycling was required across the Borough.

Brian Longman asked a supplementary question about the assisted collection scheme for people unable to move their own bins. Councillor Collins confirmed that residents could register for this service by either phoning or emailing the Council and that it would take the bins to and from a resident's door. It was highlighted that the new bins provided were only 22.5 inches larger than the current system, but should issues arise it could be reviewed once it was operating.

Mark Samuels asked a question about the procedure for recouping any overpayment of housing benefit. Councillor Hall advised that in the first instance overpayment was something the Council tried to avoid, but when it occurred it would be pursued.

Oscar Dahling asked whether, following the demolition of Taberner House, local community groups who had been allowed to use the site were informed about the potential risk from asbestos found during the demolition of the building. The Leader agreed to provide a detailed written response to this question following the meeting.

Oscar Dahling asked a supplementary question about whether the Council had commissioned a report into the possibility of asbestos on the site and the possible impact from this. The Leader also agreed to provide a detailed written response to this question following the meeting.

The Mayor then moved to Councillor questions to the Leader.

Councillor Tim Pollard asked whether given that the GMB Trade Union had come out in favour of Council leaders being elected by the Labour Group, would the Leader support this approach. The Leader advised that in November 2018 he would be writing to all colleagues across the Council to participate in a governance review and all suggestions would be welcome.

Councillor Henson asked for an update on the improvement work being carried out in Ashburton Park. The Leader thanked Councillor Henson for her work in helping to deliver improvements in the Park. It was confirmed that at present the finishing touches were being made to the café. Looking further forward, it was envisaged that the Council would work with the local community to drive through continuing improvement in the park.

Councillor Henson asked a supplementary question about the decision to bring the grass cutting contract back in-house and whether this would present opportunities for local councillors to deliver further improvements. In response it was advised that through bringing the contract back in-house it would provide greater scope for communities to inform how those services were delivered.

Councillor Brew asked why the new waste and recycling scheme had not been included in the Labour Party Manifesto. In response it was highlighted that the Manifesto had contained a clear commitment to increase recycling by 10%. To achieve this it was essential for the Council to increase the amount of recycling it could collect. The new scheme was a practical demonstration of the Administration's commitment to achieving this. Additionally, it would also save Council Tax payers millions of pounds from reducing the amount of landfill tax paid, as well as making Croydon one of the greenest boroughs in London.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Brew queried whether the introduction of larger bins was the right option to deliver increased recycling rates and suggested that as an alternative it would be better to survey the areas which had low recycling rates and introduce measures to target improvement in these areas. In response it was highlighted that there was evidence from the London Borough of Sutton, who had introduced a similar

scheme to the one proposed for Croydon, which had led to increased recycling rates. Croydon Council had also been able to learn from the implementation in Sutton, which would lead to an improved implementation process for Croydon.

Councillor Pelling welcomed the Leader's approach to modernising the Council's governance, but questioned why there was sometimes an excessive delay in receiving a response to questions submitted. In response it was confirmed that the provision of responses to Councillor Questions would be reviewed to ensure that timely responses were provided. The Administration was keen to ensure that all Members had the opportunity to play a part in the Council and it may be the case that increased devolution should be considered, which could include ensuring that Ward Councillors were provided with the information needed to fulfil their roles.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Pelling acknowledged that it was a challenge to keep everyone involved and noted that Cabinet Members were quick to respond, but questioned why there had been delays to recent responses provided. In reply it was advised that these delays may have been due to the purdah period during the run up to the recent local election, but the process would be looked at to ensure that going forward Councillors received timely responses to their questions.

The Mayor then moved the item onto Councillor Questions for the first pool of Cabinet Members.

Councillor Collins advised that the Council would be working with a local Croydon company to launch a new app to improve the mechanism for reporting fly-tipping. The new app would include features such as GPS tracking and functionality to provide updates to the people on the status of their case.

Councillor Hall announced that the grounds maintenance and grass cutting service would be brought back in house from January 2019. He also paid tribute to the finance staff for delivering the Council's accounts to the auditors within the new timescale, with the initial feedback from the auditors being very complementary.

Councillor Clancy questioned the cost of the new waste and recycling scheme and the action being taken to tackle fly-tipping. In response, Councillor Collins advised that the contractor had offered a £5m saving on the cost of the current waste and recycling scheme, with the possibility of further savings from increased cardboard and paper recycling and reduced Landfill Tax. Regarding fly-tipping it was highlighted that enforcement action had been taken in 19 instances of fly-tipping in 2014. As a result of increased resources being made available to the surveillance team this had increased to 40 enforcement cases in the past year, with further increases likely going forward.

Councillor Clancy asked a supplementary question on the possibility of expanding the range of recycling offered to include polystyrene. Councillor Collins advised that he would investigate whether this would be possible and would provide a response to Councillor Clancy outside of the meeting.

Councillor Hay-Justice questioned whether there had been any new technical advances to assist with tackling the issue of pot holes. Councillor King advised that the Council had recently started to use a new thermal technology which heated the road when damaged allowing the surface to be reshaped to repair the pot hole. The benefits of this process allowed for much quicker repairs without the need to either provide new material or remove the old material.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Hay-Justice asked when this technology would be deployed. Councillor King advised that it had already been successfully tested and as a result the Council was looking to roll it out across the borough, with it highlighted that it would mainly be used to repair shallower holes in residential roads.

Councillor Bains reported a concern from a resident that the frontage of local properties may be too narrow for the new bins and asked the Cabinet Member whether this could be clarified. In response Councillor Collins highlighted that a briefing had been held for all Councillors on the subject, which included information on the phone number and email address available for any residents with concerns. It was advised that if after the roll out of the new system issues were discovered, then it could be reviewed, but if there was space to store the bins in a line on the property then this would be considered to be acceptable. Councillor Collins also advised that if needed he would speak directly to residents to discuss their concerns, but in the first instance they should be referred to either the phone line or email contact provided.

Councillor Pelling asked whether any further consideration had been given to using Heathfield House for weddings and other similar events. Councillor Hall advised that he was proud of the refurbishment work carried out at Heathfield House which respected the building's heritage. Going forward it would be used for weddings and also as a base for the Registrars.

Councillor Redfern highlighted that there were properties in her Ward with as many as 25 steps from the house to the road and as such questioned whether assistance with moving the new bins would be offered to these residents. Councillor Collins advised that if a resident currently had a landfill bin that was being taken down steps then it was likely that the property had passed the survey undertaken to assess the implementation of the new system. It was also highlighted that assisted collections were already available for residents unable to put their bins out for collection.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Redfern queried the benefits of hosting roadshows on the new scheme after roads had already been surveyed to determine the most appropriate bins for each property. In response it was confirmed that the purpose of the roadshows was to provide

residents with information about the new system and what could be recycled. For residents with concerns about the new system, the previously mentioned phone line and email address could be used.

Councillor Prince highlighted that using the Council's website to report issues could be a barrier for some residents and as such questioned whether it would be possible for carers to report issues on their behalf. In response Councillor Collins advised that the new app was designed to allow for more flexibility and carers would be able to assist residents. Going forward, the issue would continue to be monitored to ensure that Council services were as accessible as possible.

Councillor Milson asked what the impact would be upon the business case from offering a more bespoke waste collection service should there be issues with the size of the new bins. In response, Councillor Collins advised that the original costing for the new scheme was based on the results of the survey by the South London Waste Partnership on the suitability of properties for the scheme.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Millson questioned whether it would be possible to let residents across the borough choose their preference. In response it was confirmed that the new scheme had been designed to increase the recycling rate.

The Mayor then moved to questions for the second pool of Cabinet Members. Councillor Lewis announced the installation of a big screen on the High Street in Croydon to allow people to watch the Wimbledon tennis tournament. It was also confirmed that free swimming would again be offered for children during the school holidays. Following a recent fire at Croham Hurst, Councillor Lewis extended his thanks to the firefighters for bringing it under control, Council officers for their fire prevention work and to Councillor Gatland for her work during the recovery. Finally congratulations was extended to the young people from Croydon who had participated in the London Youth Games.

Councillor Flemming advised that the Council was currently working with agencies on improving staff caseloads and recruitment, with further updates on progress made to be reported back in the coming months. It was also confirmed that building work on the new Canterbury Mills Primary School was nearing completion and that it would be open to children in September 2018. Attention was also drawn to a number of youth events that had been organised over the summer along with Chris Preddie OBE working in Secondary Schools on motivational speaking.

Councillor Avis reported on the unfortunate situation with respite care, where the organisation commissioned to run the service went into administration a few months ago, leaving the Council with very short notice to find a replacement. Officers had been able to negotiate the continuation of the service until the end of June 2018. Since then respite care had continued and cover provision had been made.



With the closure of the Heather Way care home, Councillor Hopley questioned why a robust process had not been put in place to provide a selection of different opportunities for service users. Councillor Avis advised that there was a robust plan in place for service users, but there were some that would have preferred Heather Way to remain open.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Hopley queried why some residents had only been offered one alternative choice and as such what provision was in place to ensure that people could get the support they needed. Councillor Avis advised that the closure of the service had not been the decision of the Council, with the issue being one of viability with the service provider. Officers were working hard to provide alternatives and it was recognised that service users needed stability, with the Council doing everything in its power to resolve the issue.

Councillor Audsley advised that it was essential for organisations providing healthcare services to prioritise for the long term and as such questioned what work was being done to ensure that young people were able to feed into decision making on services. Councillor Avis advised that the Council was looking at the approach to public health and currently ran services such as the family therapy service. However there were serious issues to revisit, such as exclusion rates with a report due to be published that would provide further insight into the issues involved. Alongside this discussions were ongoing with partners about how to bridge any gaps in provision, with all partners committed to working together to support the young people of the borough.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Audsley asked what action would be taken against a school if it felt to be excluding too many pupils. Councillor Avis confirmed that any concerns would be raised directly with the school as it was important to address issues early to ensure that young people received the additional support they needed.

Councillor Stranack asked for further information on the key points of the strategy for respite care going forward. Councillor Avis advised that plans for the future provision of respite care were being finalised and highlighted that it was not known that the service provider would collapse. The Council had worked quickly to negotiate a deal to ensure the service remained open until the end of June 2018 and had arranged for the Whitgift Foundation to provide support in the interim until a permanent arrangement was put in place. A detailed strategy was being worked upon and would be brought forward at a future date.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Stranack asked whether it would be possible to confirm a date when the service would be fully restored. Councillor Hall advised that a contract had been awarded to the Whitgift Foundation for both advice and respite services, which were already being provided.

Councillor Canning asked what steps were being taken to keep Wandle Park free from litter. Councillor Lewis agreed that it was important to look after parks to ensure they remained neat and tidy. However, it was a reasonable

expectation that people should be disposing of their own waste and as such the Council would fine individuals caught littering. Measures being taken to ensure that parks remained clean included increased signage and enforcement.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Canning suggested that the introduction of larger bins in Croydon's parks might also contribute towards reducing the risk of littering. Councillor Lewis advised that from an operational point of view it may be difficult to introduce larger bins, with further information to be shared with Councillor Canning outside of the meeting.

Councillor Oviri questioned what support was available for carers in the Borough, now that the Help for Carers facility no longer existed. Councillor Avis highlighted that the Carers Centre in George Street still provided support to carers in the borough. Although at present this was the only centre providing facilities for carers in Croydon, there was an ambition to roll out a similar service out across the borough.

Councillor Oviri suggested that signposting from the Council's website to the George Street facility could be improved. Councillor Avis confirmed that the Centre had been going for many years at the same location and was well known.

The Mayor then moved to the third pool of Cabinet Members.

Councillor Butler announced that she had recently held a successful meeting with James Murray, the Deputy Mayor for Housing, which had included a discussion on how more homes could be delivered locally through funding from the Mayor of London.

Councillor Hamida Ali advised she had recently attended a knife crime summit and confirmed that knife crime in Croydon had decreased by 10% against a 20% increase across London as a whole. It was acknowledged that although knife crime was a complex, long term, nation-wide issue, Croydon was increasingly recognised for taking a research and evidence led approach to the issue.

The Council's work in piloting a new approach to tackling perpetrators of domestic violence was also highlighted. This approach placed increased importance on holding perpetrators to account, looking at addressing their behaviour and reporting it, if it did not stop. Where this approach had been employed elsewhere in the country it had resulted in a 75% decrease in offending.

Councillor Shahul-Hameed advised that there had recently been an employment and training event organised for young people not in employment, which had been successful, leading to plans for another event in the future. Also being planned was an event at Box Park for long term unemployed with healthcare issues. It was also highlighted that Chinese

regional government had visited Croydon last month, which had provided an opportunity to highlight investment and new development opportunities within the borough.

Mindful of the important business remaining on the agenda, a motion to suspend standing orders and move to the next item of business was proposed by the Leader and seconded by Councillor Collins. This motion was put to the vote and carried.

## 17/17 **Member Petitions**

The Mayor invited Councillor Clancy to read out the title of the submitted Member petition which read:

“We being residents of GROVE WOOD HILL petition Croydon Council to REMOVE IMMEDIATELY its Woodcote Schools Parent Access Ban scheme. Banning motor vehicles from the Dunsfold rise loop at school times has forced school parents to park in our road instead. This has meant more vehicles driving and parking in our road, more blocking of private drives, and more traffic congestion, causing us inconvenience and annoyance. Overall the scheme had led to an increase in disruption and a decrease in road safety.”

In response to the petition, Councillor King advised that the pilot scheme had been initiated in response to residents’ concerns about an unsafe environment outside the school. A report would be consider by the Traffic Management Advisory Committee on 12 July 2018 and the concerns outlaid in the petition would be included in the report and taken into account by the Committee Members.

The Mayor invited Councillor Fitzsimons to read out the title of the submitted Member petition which read:

“The new owners of the Glamorgan Pub, Croydon, want to demolish it and replace it with flats. We, the undersigned want to save it, and make it a community pub for all to enjoy. We urge Croydon Council & Croydon Planning Department, to recognise this historic building as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), so that it can be preserved and kept as a pub.”

Councillor King advised that the Glamorgan Pub had been listed as an ACV in February 2018 and this designation would remain for five years. Although the owner was looking to develop the site, any planning decision would need to take account of the new Local Plan that included provision to preserve public houses. Councillor King extended his thanks to Councillor Fitzsimons for his work on this issue.

The Mayor invited Councillor Shahul-Hameed to read out the title of the submitted Member petition which read:

“We, the residents of Mitcham Road are facing intolerable problems of traffic flows and parking our own cars in our street. We ask that the Council carries out a consultation exercise, which asks if residents want parking bays with residents permits for the Residents of Mitcham Road B/W Rochford Way & Therapia Lane which are situated in B/W House No: 531 to House No: 657, Mitcham Road, Croydon.”

Councillor King advised that Mitcham Road would be added to the list of sites that will have an informal consultation on the possible introduction of residents' parking.

## 18/17 **Maiden Speeches**

Following the Elections in May, the Mayor invited five new Members of the Council to give their maiden speeches to the Council.

Councillor Felicity Flynn, in delivering her maiden speech, paid tribute to her predecessor former Councillor Carole Bonner. Councillor Flynn also highlighted the range of training courses she had already attended in familiarising herself to her new role. Councillor Flynn had been getting involved in community events including the New Addington Carnival and the local Police Panel, where local security matters had been discussed leading to a number of actions being implemented. Councillor Flynn had also attended a meeting of the Central Parade Business Partnership and meetings regarding the new Special Needs School which will be built on the site of the current Timebridge Youth and Community Centre to discuss the arrangement for a new community facility.

Councillor Robert Ward, in delivering his maiden speech, thanked the residents of Selsdon and Addington Village for electing him as their Councillor and highlighted the positive aspects of his Ward. Tribute was also paid to the former Councillors in the Ward, Phil Thomas, Sarah Bashford and Dudley Mead. Councillor Ward highlighted that in light of the continuing challenges to the viability of high streets, it was essential to find ways to support sustainable businesses in the local area. Other threats to the wellbeing of the area highlighted included overdevelopment, too much signage and fly tipping.

Councillor Muhammad Ali, in delivering his maiden speech, thanked his predecessor, Mike Selva. Councillor Ali also paid tribute to the local community who, since the riots in 2011, had shown their resilience through working together to rebuild and recover. Since the riots a lot had changed within the Ward to rebuild community trust including investment in local infrastructure, but challenges still remained. Over the next four years Councillor Ali would be working with colleagues to develop a Broad Green Business Improvement District and Business Forum to ensure local businesses had the support and resources they needed to provide jobs for

local people. It was also proposed that Broad Green would be rebranded as Broad Green Village to help ensure people were able to take pride in their local area, provide residents with facilities that they needed and allow local businesses to grow.

Councillor Ali advised that he would be working to enhance local green spaces in Broad Green through the use of Section 106 investment and his Ward budget. This would include supporting community led initiatives such as the Broad Green Mile to ensure that there were more green spaces in the Ward. Councillor Ali would also work with his Cabinet colleagues to ensure that Transport for London (TFL) addressed air quality issues in the local area, particularly around schools. Attention was also drawn to the ongoing financial challenges facing local authorities which required the Council to take an innovative approach to providing essential services for residents including affordable housing and sustainable transport.

Councillor Oviri, in delivering her maiden speech, highlighted the history to be found in the Purley & Woodcote Ward. Councillor Oviri advised that it was her intention to draw on the strengths of Purley's history to provide infrastructure and development in keeping with the area and allow local businesses to continue to grow. Tribute was also paid to former Councillor Donald Speakman for his work in the local community over the past 16 years and thanks given to local residents for electing her.

Councillor Jerry Fitzpatrick, in delivering his maiden speech, highlighted his pride in representing the diverse, cosmopolitan Ward of Addiscombe West and stated that he was looking forward to working alongside Councillors Fitzsimons and Hay-Justice. Tribute was paid to former Councillor Mark Watson for his work in developing the Family Justice Centre and his support for lesbian and gay equality. Councillor Fitzpatrick also paid tribute to former Councillor Andrew Rendle for his work as Autism Champion and advised that he would look to build upon this work as his successor in the role. Councillor Fitzpatrick also highlighted the many inequalities in society and advised of his pride in representing a Party committed to addressing these issues.

## 19/17 **Annual Report of Scrutiny and Overview Committee 2017/2018**

During his introduction to the Annual Report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee 2017/2018, the Chair, Councillor Fitzsimons highlighted that the report provided a useful opportunity to reflect upon lessons learned over the past year and would help to identify possible improvements going forward. Councillor Fitzsimons also extended his thanks to the Scrutiny staff and the outgoing Chairs of the other Scrutiny Sub-Committees namely Councillors Jan Buttinger and Carole Bonner.

Over the past year there had been over 30 Scrutiny meetings, with over 40 subjects scrutinised, including the call-in of two Cabinet key decisions which had resulted in 60 recommendations being made. The inadequate rating of Children's Services following an Ofsted inspection in September 2017 had led

to a change in the overall approach to Scrutiny, with additional emphasis placed on Members knowing what good looks like in order to be able to judge the performance of a Service. To achieve this Members needed to have a good knowledge of a Service area, which was acknowledged maybe harder to achieve in some areas than others and would require more work from Members outside of meetings to prepare.

Another consideration for Scrutiny going forward included how best to ensure that the voice of service users, local residents and businesses was heard as part of the process. Another challenge was ensuring the parity of esteem between Scrutiny and the Cabinet, which would be essential to promoting the value of Scrutiny.

The Chair of the Children and Young People Sub Committee, Councillor Ward advised that it was still early days for his chairmanship of the Sub-Committee but endorsed the direction of travel for Scrutiny outlined by Councillor Fitzsimons. The Sub-Committee would continue to scrutinise the implementation of the Children's Improvement Programme, an area of work that will need to be carefully balanced so as not to increase pressure upon the Service.

Priorities for the Sub-Committee would include ensuring that the voice of the child was heard within the service and ensuring that the different agencies were working together to deliver improvements. An early priority for the Sub-Committee was to get up to speed on the subject, which would enable them to ensure they were asking the right questions.

The Chair of the Health and Social Care Sub-Committee Councillor Chowdhury highlighted that the health of the people of Croydon was central to the Labour Party election manifesto and as such the Sub-Committee had a key role to play in holding service providers to account.

It was noted that of the 60 recommendations made by Scrutiny, 49 had been accepted and as such it was questioned which were the most significant. It was acknowledged that each recommendation was made for a reason, but ultimately the ones relating to the Ofsted report were the most pertinent, especially as these garnered extra strength through being agreed on a cross party basis.

In response to a question about the resources available to conduct the Scrutiny role it was advised that as well as two Scrutiny officers, the main resource was the experience of the back bench Councillors, as this was essential to delivering good scrutiny.

Council **resolved** to note the Annual Report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

## 20/17 **Annual Report of the General Purposes and Audit Committee 2017/2018**

The new Chair of the General Purposes and Audit Committee, Councillor Mann introduced the report, thanking the previous Committee for its hard work. Councillor Mann advised that he had met with the auditors in preparation for the Committee meeting on 18 July 2018. It was intended that the work of the Committee would continue to be guided by the risk register, with an intelligence led approach taken.

Council **resolved** to note the Annual Report of the General Purposes and Audit Committee.

## 21/17 **Council Debate Motions**

The item began with the Administration motion which read:

“Croydon's Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) are underfunded by national government by £7m annually. This council calls on the Home Secretary to urgently address this crisis”.

Councillor Flemming proposed the motion highlighting that the Council had worked hard to ensure UASC received the support they deserved and that it was important to remember that they were children. It was also advised that the commitment of Council staff in supporting these young people should also be recognised as a reflection that Croydon was a borough that cared and was a home to equality and diversity. The intention of the motion was not an indication that the Council did not want to support UASC, but to make a request for the right level of funding as it currently cost significantly more to support UASC than the Council was awarded.

Councillor Patsy Cummings seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Tim Pollard echoed the thanks given to Council staff for their work with UASC. It was highlighted that the underfunding of support for UASC was a long standing issue for the borough and although the Government recognised Croydon's special status as a gateway council, the funding provided was still too low. As such it was important that Councillors from across the Council worked together to ensure that the right message was given to Government Ministers on the issue.

Councillor Gatland also highlighted the positive contribution the Council had made to UASC, but acknowledged that there was still a considerable financial cost for gateway councils such as Croydon, with underfunding being a long term issue. It was highlighted that the Audit Commission had recommended for a number of years that a robust system of monitoring the funding for the service and a focus on the outcomes was needed. Concern was also raised about the impact the halt of the national transfer scheme would have upon children awaiting placement.

Councillor Patsy Cummings noted that it was pleasing to have cross party support in lobbying central Government on this issue, as it was acknowledged that having the Home Office in Croydon meant that there were a higher level of UASC than in other areas.

The motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The Mayor then moved to the opposition motion which read:

“This Council is completely committed to increasing recycling but believes the latest proposal to move most households to having between three and five wheelie bins per property will not significantly increase recycling and will massively inconvenience residents who will have to store them. Instead of imposing unnecessary extra bins on residents who already recycle responsibly, the council should instead target those residents who don't use the current system correctly and don't separate their waste”.

Councillor Bains moving the motion, stated that there was no argument about the need to recycle more, but a major factor against this was many people not separating their waste properly and littering. Rather than introducing new bins, as an alternative it was proposed that a campaign to educate residents on how to recycle correctly should be used as a means to increase recycling rates. In addition improved monitoring should be used to indicate where waste was not being recycled correctly and using already available sanctions. In following this course of action it would present a more cost effective approach than introducing new bins across the borough.

Councillor Brew seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Collins stated that it was his view that the motion lacked ambition and mirrored the national Government's own lack of ambition on environmental improvements. Croydon Council was committed to playing its part in preserving the environment and through reducing the capacity of landfill bins it would drive recycling rates above the level of 38%. The new scheme would save the Council £5m per year, with the possibility of further savings from reduced landfill costs.

In addition to the new bins, the Council was visiting schools across the district to educate young people on the need to recycle as well as planning further awareness raising campaigns. In comparison to the present system, the new bins would only be 22.5 inches bigger, but if residents had concerns about the changes, a dedicated email address and phone line had been set up to listen to views.

Councillor Degrad also stated that in her view the motion displayed a lack of ambition. Croydon had an ambition to be the greenest borough and to have a balanced biodiversity and as such it would not be acceptable to not take significant action to achieve this aim. It was also highlighted that the most residents shared a willingness to increase recycling rates.



Councillor Brew raised concern that the leaflet distributed to inform residents about the new scheme did not address the complications created by the varying topography in the borough. Concern was also raised about the lack of consultation on the new scheme and a perceived level of confusion about the colour of bags and bins to be used.

The Mayor put the motion to the vote and it fell.

## 22/17 **Review of Members' Scheme of Allowances**

Councillor Hall introduced the item and proposed the recommendations be accepted as set out in the report. During the introduction it was highlighted that in order to have an inclusive and diverse Council, it was essential to reflect and reward the commitment involved in being a Councillor. Since 2013 all Council staff had received a salary increase of 7%, with a closer to 10% rise for low paid staff. The increase proposed for the Members' Scheme of Allowances was significantly lower than the increase received by staff.

The proposals included a freeze on those Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) already above the level recommended by the London Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), a 2% increase for those SRAs under the level recommended by the IRP and a 4% rise for the Leader and the Cabinet, which still fell below the amount recommended by the IRP.

The recommendation was seconded by the Leader.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Tim Pollard acknowledged that Members' allowances had not risen since 2005 and highlighted that they had actually been reduced by the Conservative administration in 2010. In light of staff being awarded a 2% pay rise, it was questioned why some SRAs were being increased by up to 20 times this amount. In response, Councillor Hall confirmed that SRAs had not been increased by this amount except in the instances where new roles had been created.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Pollard questioned how the level of increase could be justified in light of continuing pressure on local government finances. Councillor Hall advised that it was proposed that allowances would be increased within the recommended levels set out by the IRP, and if Croydon wanted to be an inclusive Council then it needed to pay an appropriate allowance to its Members.

The recommendations as set out in the report were put to the vote and carried.

Council **resolved**:

1. To approve and make a Members' Allowance Scheme as set out in Appendix A of the report.

2. To authorise the Director of Law to comply with the necessary statutory publicity requirements in respect of the Independent Review Panel report 2018, the on-going annual publicity of the Members' scheme of allowances which was required, and subject to Members' approval of recommendation 1.1 of this report, the approval of the revised Members' Allowance Scheme as detailed in this report.
  
3. To delegate to the General Purposes and Audit Committee authority to agree an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to the annual local government staff pay settlement where the only change made to the Scheme in any year is that effected by such annual adjustment.

23/17     **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 10:00pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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