

Scrutiny

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



A pair of magnifying glasses is shown, with the lens of the bottom glass in focus. The lens contains the following text: HOUSING, VITALITY, TRANSPORT, BREXIT, SAFEGUARDING, and ROAD ACCIDENTS. The text is arranged in two columns, with 'HOUSING' and 'TRANSPORT' on the left, and 'VITALITY', 'BREXIT', 'SAFEGUARDING', and 'ROAD ACCIDENTS' on the right. The words are separated by a stylized logo consisting of two curved lines.

HOUSING VITALITY
TRANSPORT BREXIT
SAFEGUARDING ROAD ACCIDENTS

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INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY, COUNCILLOR SEAN FITZSIMONS



Cllr Sean Fitzsimons

Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

I am happy to present this year's Annual Report which provides an overview of the key activities and achievements of Scrutiny in the past year. Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its Sub-Committees, myself included have been proactive in fulfilling the obligations set under the objectives of each Committee by ensuring that issues and topics brought forward were thoroughly examined in detail and led to recommendations for improvement.

As this is the final Annual Report of the 2014-18 municipal cycle it also presents an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt over the past four years and to consider possible improvements for the forthcoming 2018-2022 cycle. This is particularly pertinent in light of the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview & Scrutiny Arrangements, which came out in December 2017, and to which I gave evidence at one of the witness sessions.

A varied portfolio of topics have been scrutinised with specific focus given to strategic issues arising during year. Most notably in September 2017 when an Ofsted report on the Council's Children's Services recommended that Scrutiny take an active role in ensuring that the other recommendations made were progressed as required. Given the enormity of this issue it has impacted upon our ability to scrutinise other areas originally planned in the work programme, but it was essential to provide reassurance that the other recommendations were being progressed.

Other topics investigated during the year included the Cycling Strategy, an update on future proposals for tram safety and outcome based commissioning. Scrutiny also called in two Cabinet key decisions, firstly the decision to roll out 20mph speed limits in zones 3, 4 & 5 and secondly the operational plans for the Fairfield Halls. The Committee and its Sub-Committees have held questions and answer sessions with all Cabinet Members on a wide range of areas relating to their portfolios with a view to both determining the effectiveness of the services within their remit and providing a level of accountability on the performance of these services on behalf of the community we serve.

We have worked and continue to work tirelessly to ensure the effectiveness of scrutiny actively working to build relationships with stakeholders, officers, local residents, neighbourhood associations, unions and other external agencies. We are also keen to promote

participation in our meetings and look to encourage the written submission of questions on topics where possible.

It was clear that Croydon's Scrutiny & Overview had its own lessons to learn from the last year, with the 2017 Ofsted Report on Croydon's Children Services highlighting that Scrutiny itself did not have a good line of sight over what was happening within the Service, and that it needed to work much harder to understand the performance of the Service. Looking forward, oversight of this Service will continue to be one of the key tasks for Scrutiny in the forthcoming year and will be led by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Scrutiny and Croydon Council can also learn from the review carried out by the CLG House of Commons Select Committee. Not only does Croydon Council need to ensure that Scrutiny has Parity of Esteem with the Cabinet and the Executive, we also need to ensure that more backbench Councillors take an active and effective role within Scrutiny. This would mean rethinking the training needs of Councillors, with particular consideration needed on how to ensure that Councillors have the depth of knowledge required to give them a firm foundation to underpin their questioning of people and organisations. The third area in need of review was the process for ensuring that recommendations, when agreed, were carried out and that progress on implementation was reported back to Scrutiny. In doing so, it will help Scrutiny to evaluate its own effectiveness and provide the opportunity to learn lessons from what was reported back.

One of the other roles Scrutiny is to give voice to residents and service users in regards the services they receive. I continue to be heartened and proud of the level of interest scrutiny receives from the local community and hope that through the attendance of the public, who are warmly welcome to attend meetings, increased participation can be encouraged as it is vital to ensuring in-depth scrutiny at meetings, which have the power to influence decision making. This in turn will help to deliver real improvement in the quality of services and make a difference to the lives of people across the Borough.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the Committee Members and Officers for their contribution at our meetings over the past year.

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THE SCRUTINY YEAR 2017 /18 IN NUMBERS

30

Scrutiny meetings in Croydon

02

call-in meeting

61

recommendations made

05

meetings of Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny meetings at various locations in the capital

49

recommendations accepted

Over 40

issues scrutinised

Participation in scrutiny of approximately 26 residents, organisations and groups.



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SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE



Cllr Sean Fitzsimons

Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

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

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

During the discussion of this item, Members raised concerns about the method of consultation employed, as it appeared that it had not been consistent for residents in the different zones. Members also questioned whether all the objections received as part of the consultation had been appropriately addressed, as the impression was given that suggestions offered on alternative safety measures had not been given due consideration. The Committee was reassured that there had been a significant amount of work undertaken to publicise the consultation, with an extension granted to its length to allow for further public participation. It was also confirmed that all objections received had been considered, with it highlighted that the proposed limit was just one of a number of schemes being implemented to manage road safety.

After hearing evidence from residents, Councillors and Officers, the Committee resolved not to refer the decision back to Cabinet, which meant that the original decision could be implemented. Although it was recommended that a three year impact assessment should be undertaken to review the effect of the implementation of 20mph speed limit zones and that greater care should be taken in future to ensure that consultations were consistent across the borough.

Overview

This year, the Committee has scrutinised many of the challenges facing the borough including the need to deliver housing in accordance with the Local Plan, safety in the borough, reviewing 20mph proposals as well as the aftermath of the Ofsted inspection of Children’s Services.

Cabinet Decision on 20mph Speed Limits

On 24 May the Committee called in the Cabinet’s decision to roll out 20mph limits in zones 3, 4 and 5. The reason for this was to provide greater assurance to Members that the process had been administered equitably across the whole borough and to allow for further consideration to be given to the outcomes arising from the earlier implementation in zones 1 and 2, prior to the wider introduction across the rest of the borough.

Fairfield Halls

At the April meeting, the Committee considered a “call in” item on the future proposals for the Fairfield Halls and their delivery of its business model from its operators, BH Live. The reason for the call in was to allow Members to fully understand the reasons behind the decision on the new contract. A presentation outlining the process used to redevelop the site and a timeline for the delivery of the project was provided.

At the October meeting, the Committee was provided with a further update on the redevelopment of Croydon Fairfield Halls which had commenced in June 2017, with completion targeted for winter 2019. It was confirmed that the redevelopment work was being undertaken by Vinci Construction Ltd, with the delivery and vision for Fairfield Halls overseen by BH Live, who were a social enterprise specialising in leisure and event provision.



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Members were impressed with the progress made to date at Fairfield Halls, with most of the demolition work already completed. The Committee also welcomed the vision of BH Live whose presentation covered a number of different areas including their engagement with the local community, hospitality, marketing as well as the operational work. It was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor this project as it progressed.

The Proposed Budget

At the December meeting, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury provided an update on a number of areas including the current status of the budget, the financial position of the Council and growth pressures and saving options for the 2018/19 Budget. It was advised that there were significant budgetary pressures within Adults and Children's Social Care and Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) budgets, and as such Croydon Borough Council was doing more to promote commercialisation.

The Leader's Question and Answer Session

Also at the December meeting, the Leader of Croydon Council was in attendance to provide an update on the pressures and highlights of the year to date within the borough. These included:-

- the development of the Children's Improvement Plan for Children's Services following an Ofsted's Report;
- the Brick by Brick scheme to deliver affordable housing for local residents within the borough;
- the redevelopment of the Whitgift Centre, including plans to provide seven thousand new jobs;
- the provision of a new leisure centre in New Addington;
- the transformation of Fairfield Halls;
- new investment in Surrey Street;
- the huge commitment and success of Box Park;
- the multimillion private sector investment in the Legacy Centre in Whitehorse Lane that provided the opportunity for hundreds of young people to participate in educational fun filled activities;

- the Choose Your Future Campaign, which gave young people the opportunity to advise what they wanted in their community;
- extra resources for the "Don't Mess with Croydon" campaign that was aimed at tackling fly tipping and other environmental crimes, which had achieved significant results;
- air quality in Croydon - the borough wanted to improve the quality of the air, with proposals being developed to dramatically expand the tram network.

The Leader also confirmed that in the next four years the Council would be looking to drive better standards in health devolution, get more residents signed up with their GP and receiving services, investing in providing decent wages to staff working in Croydon and the notion of Fair Funding.

Community Safety

The Cabinet Member for Communities Safety and Justice attended the meeting on 6 March to answer questions about her Portfolio. During this item there were a number of questions focussed on community safety, youth crime and violence, which was particularly timely given a recent serious knife crime incident in the local community. It was confirmed that this area remained a priority within the Cabinet Member's Portfolio, with activities in this area focusing on addressing the underlying issues through further community engagement. This included working with schools, multi-agency working and working to secure more funding and resources for the borough. The Council was also working with partners on a multi-agency Serious Youth Violence Plan as part of the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) focus on young people. As a result the Committee requested that a representative from the LSP attend a future scrutiny meeting to discuss the Council's effectiveness in partnership working.

Members were pleased to note that within the wider community safety remit the Council had made progress in a number of different areas including the allocation of Section 106 funding to upgrade the borough's CCTV system, implementing tighter controls on drinking zones and upgrading the Domestic Violence Strategy.

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE



Cllr Jan Buttinger

Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee

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

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

Members agreed that the effectiveness of the Children in Care Council for Croydon needed to be strengthened through broadening its profile to include Looked after Children. Suggested proposals for achieving this included the Youth Congress scheduled for July 2017 and providing Looked after Children with the opportunity to shape Corporate Parenting. Members agreed that it would be important to monitor this area of work as it progressed, with further reports due at the next Corporate Parenting Panel to evaluate progress made to date.

The Sub-Committee welcomed the desire of the Council to meet the aspirations of young people, including helping them in overcoming any barriers they may face. Work in this area included plans for the annual election of a Youth Mayor, to evolve the existing local youth forums into three Youth Councils (one for the North, East and South respectively) and a Youth Cabinet who would shadow Cabinet Members. The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend the allocation of a specific budget for youth engagement, which would include provision for the future work of the Youth Mayor.

Children’s Improvement Plan

At its meeting in September, the Sub-Committee discussed a range of issues arising from the Ofsted inspection of Children’s Services including the action required to implement the recommendations contained in the report. As a result an Improvement Board had been established and a Transitional Action Plan had been developed with the first area to be investigated “missing children”. Members agreed that an up to date version of the Improvement Plan would be considered at each meeting for the remainder of the municipal year. Members also requested that the Improvement Plan include a “Red, Amber, Green” status column to ensure that progress could be easily followed.

Overview

At the start of the Council year the work of the Sub-Committee focused predominantly on the Council’s response to education matters and looked after children. However, following the publication of the Ofsted inspection report of Children’s Services in September 2017 the key focus became the points raised in the report and the accompanying recommendations.

At the first meeting of the Sub-Committee in June 2017 a report was received from the Director of Education and Youth Engagement outlining plans to seek the views of the children and young people in Croydon on the future of the area, including the cultural regeneration of the Borough. Members were supportive of the proposal for the Council to seek to follow the principle of the UNICEF Rights of the Child Charter and the UNICEF “Child Friendly City” initiative which had successfully been adopted in other areas of the UK.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

In addition further safeguarding training was provided for Members, on the needs of looked after children and the services provided. The Sub-Committee also agreed to organise learning and development visits for Members in order to gain further understanding of the issues involved.

Members were informed that a new Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board had been appointed and there would be further restructuring within the Service to address issues raised in the Ofsted report. The Sub-Committee raised concerns about the general high turnover of social care staff and requested regular reports on the work being undertaken to address these concerns. As part of these regular reports information was provided on the action being taken to create a good working environment, which was reflected in the Ofsted visit in December 2017 which had noted an improvement in staff morale.

Members emphasised that the value of agency staff should be recognised, with agency staff able to provide additional insight from their experiences working at different local authorities. Members agreed to recommend the introduction of a dedicated staff satisfaction survey for Children's Services to ensure recruitment and retention issues were identified and addressed as needed.

The remaining meetings of 2017/18 focused on the progress made towards the completion of 24 improvement actions. This included an update on the reconfiguration of teams in order to meet the rising demand from referrals, which had increased by 30% in the last quarter of 2017, the adoption of the Strengthening Families' model and the partnership with Camden who would act as a mentor to Croydon to build on the Improvement Strategy.

The Children and Young People Sub-Committee acknowledged that Croydon was on a long term journey and stressed the importance of the Council and its partners working together to achieve the goals, which had been set, to transform the service and improve the lives of children in the local community.

Missing Children and Return Home Interviews

At its meeting in October 2017 the Sub-Committee started an investigation into the support provided for Missing Children in Croydon and their return home interviews, which was followed up throughout the remainder of the year.

At its final meeting the Sub-Committee recognised the progress made to date by officers and agreed that further updates would be needed to continue to assess the effectiveness of the work that was being carried out.

Education Quality and Standards

The Sub-Committee discussed the Education Quality and Standards report which was presented annually to Cabinet. It was confirmed that standards in early years, and KS4 progress were above national average. The Sub-Committee were also pleased to note that 90% of Croydon secondary schools were rated as good and 47% as outstanding by Ofsted, with almost 50% of pupils attending an outstanding school and 86% attending a good school. 86% of primary schools were rated good.

There had been an increase in the rate of permanent exclusions, particularly primary school exclusions, which presented a challenge to the team, who continued to work to reduce exclusions and provide support for pupil at risk of exclusion. A managed move protocol as used in secondary schools was being developed and trialled for primary schools.

Members acknowledged the hard work that had been carried out in this area which had resulted in improved performance in schools across the borough.

The Dedicated Schools Grant

At the 6 February 2018 meeting, the Sub-Committee was provided with information on the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant in the forthcoming year. Members noted that funding would be split into separate rates for primary and secondary schools and that the allocation for 2018/19 had increased by £10.3m from the previous year. Some schools had increased their funding and this was pleasing, but there were still some others which were dissatisfied.

Conclusion

The Children and Young People Sub-Committee have been involved in a huge amount of work over the past year and we look forward to monitoring the future activities in the forthcoming year.

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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SUB-COMMITTEE



Cllr Carole Bonner

Chair of the Health And Social Care Sub-Committee

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

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

Overview

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee’s work programme for 2017/18 was varied and focus on a range of different issues including the bid for Dementia Friendly Croydon and Alliance and Outcome Based Commissioning. The Committee also scrutinised the Cabinet Member on the strengths weaknesses and challenges from the portfolio. In addition an annual report from the Director of Public Health and the South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) annual report, provision was also made to provide comment on the Quality Accounts for both SLaM and Croydon NHS Trust.

The municipal year 2017/18 began with what would be a very busy and interesting year for the Sub-Committee. The work programme aimed to achieve a balance to scrutinise both areas of health and social care provision of services for the community and residents of Croydon.

At the first meeting of the year, the Sub-Committee received the draft quality accounts from Croydon NHS Trust and were encouraged by the progress made in making significant improvement to the quality of their services following a challenging year where they had been placed in special measures.

In particular the Trust’s continued commitment to engagement with patients, staff and the wider community received praise. Members noted the rise in individuals attending A&E with mental health issues and suggested that the trust work in partnership with SLaM to explore methods to address the presenting needs of patients. The draft SLaM quality accounts were also received which highlighted the significant increase in patient demand for services and urged the Trust to work to identify causes and trends in order to respond appropriately and manage the situation. Members raised concerns for staff welfare due to experiences of harassment including physical violence and requested a detailed response on measures to address these issues to be provided at the next quality account meeting,

The municipal year continues to be challenging for the health and social care sector of the borough with Members continuing to work hard to ensure engagement, strengthening relationships with partners whilst fulfilling its statutory obligation to assert the role and purpose of scrutiny.

At the July meeting, Members received an update on the work of the alliance for older adults and were provided with details on the Transformation Plan following the commencement with partners on a 10 year alliance agreement. It was agreed for a further meeting to take place later in the year to provide in-depth details on the Outcome Based Commissioning programme. The Sub-Committee was also presented with a draft plan which identified six areas for action in response to the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. Croydon has the 5th highest hospital admission rate for self-harm and in response. Croydon’s priorities to tackle the growing issue included joint working and building strong relationships with partners to ensure all services played a key role in identification, management and response to patients prior to and in crisis.

Members expressed a need for the Council to widen the range of stakeholder contribution to the strategy to include wider sectors of the community and for more to be done to improve awareness in the community.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SUB-COMMITTEE

At the November meeting the Outcome Based Commissioning review was presented to Members which highlighted the work that had been carried out in the initial 12 months of the programme. The Sub-Committee meeting was attended by one of the personal independence co-ordinators and a representative from Age Concern who were able to provide case studies detailing the person centred work that had been taking place. Members welcomed the opportunity to hear of the challenges as well as the successes of the multiagency support provision and recognised that the achievements to date was commendable.

The November meeting received a joint report from the London Ambulance Service, Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group, Croydon Council and Croydon Health Services with Members asked to review and consider the plans put in place by the services to address the upcoming winter pressures. The key challenge included patient flow and discharge, presentation of patients with mental health issues and ongoing workforce issues. In response to managing the pressures identified it was proposed that the delivery plans emphasis was on a strong joint working relationship. The use of physicians to supplement A&E consultants to manage the busy periods. Improved out of hospital care provisions through the recruitment of nurses in nursing homes and the advance block purchase of nursing beds to decrease hospital admission for patients with dementia. Additionally mental health nurses worked closely with local authorities to minimise impact of mental health patients on A&E services. Members recommended that increased communication with the community to encourage take up of vaccines would also potentially alleviate the pressures faced.

The December meeting detailed the work that was being carried out to establish Croydon as a Dementia Friendly Borough. The formal launch of Dementia Friendly Croydon was planned for March 2018. Awareness was being raised through engagement with partners, encouraging businesses and the wider community involvement. Suggestions were made for further awareness to be raised through working with third sector community groups including the Croydon Neighbourhood Care Organisation and engagement with operators such as Fairfield and New Addington Bid. Members welcomed the aspirations and drive of officers to take action on dementia and promote the borough to become dementia friendly.

Other areas scrutinised by the Sub-Committee included updates on the activities and progress made by the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board to in bed the six principles of safeguarding.

The Director of Public Health Annual Report was also presented to the Sub-Committee, its intent was to be informative and purposeful. Members acknowledged that the report was good and contained information that would be of use in their respective wards.

The year ended with scrutiny of the annual report from South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Members were interested to learn what the new structure meant for Croydon. The new structure aimed to deliver a population based way of working with borough specific targeted services which the objective of improved patient care and experiences. Members looked forward to an update in the coming year as to how this was progressing. Concerns were raised regarding the allocation of funding for Croydon which although it had the largest population, remained low and had done historically. Officers stated that they were working to maintain improvements with the funding allocated. Members were encouraged that one of the key priorities remained addressing issues with recruitment and retention and would be focusing on issues of disparity and the under representation of women and black and minority ethnic people in management roles.

Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee

At the September meeting, the Sub-Committee formally appointed two Committee Members to represent Croydon on the South East London Joint Health and Overview Committee with Lambeth Lewisham and Southwark. The JHOSC was established to scrutinise the proposals from SLaM and their commissioners to change acute in-patient care provision through the designation of separate wards according to varying mental health needs. In order to improve outcomes the Trust proposed the reconfiguration of the unit's provision to be tailored to specific needs of patients. Following a meeting in November to consider the proposals, it was agreed that patients would benefit from receiving treatment by specialist staff in specialised wards. It was also agreed for a 12 months review following implementation of the plans.

The Chair of Croydon's Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee continued to chair the South West London JHOSC which scrutinises the Sustainability and Transformation programme. The focus of the meetings had been on the realignment of services.

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STREETS ENVIRONMENT AND HOMES SUB-COMMITTEE



Cllr Sean Fitzsimons

Chair of the Streets Environment and Homes Sub-Committee

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

You can view the agendas, reports and minutes of this sub-committee by clicking on the link: www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

Overview

From the beginning of the year the Sub-Committee identified its areas of focus as being the Croydon Cycling Strategy, the South London Waste Partnership, and the Croydon Trams following the incident in November 2016. The Sub-Committee’s work programme also evolved in response to emerging areas of work such as the Supplementary Planning Guidance on housing in the suburbs, and the Fiveways improvement consultation.

Through the work of the Streets, Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee, recommendations were made on a range of topics important to the residents of Croydon, such as the performance of the waste contractor, Veolia, and improvements to cycling provisions in the borough. The safety of residents was also of paramount importance to the Sub-Committee when considering options to improve the Fiveways junction in Waddon for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, and when scrutinising the lessons learnt following the tram incident and future plans for the tram network.

13 June – Cycling Strategy

The Sub-Committee began the municipal year considering the draft Croydon Cycling Strategy that was due to cover the next twenty years. Guests from Wheels for Wellbeing, Bikeability and Croydon Cycling Campaign attended and provided the Members with a broader overview of cycling in Croydon, along with suggested improvements that could be made to encourage higher levels of cycling.

The Sub-Committee was informed that Croydon had been identified by Transport for London (TfL) as having the highest opportunity for increasing cycling levels in the capital and that the borough had the second lowest level of bike ownership in London. These areas were identified as areas of focus, as while it was noted the topography of the borough made cycling challenging e-bikes were an option to assist those keen to cycle more.

The Director of Public Health noted that there were a number of health benefits associated with cycling, including improved rates of breast cancer recovery and reducing the effects of dementia, and that it was important to change the focus of national discussion away from the perceived risks associated with cycling.

A number of recommendations were made by the Sub-Committee including; that a greater emphasis be given to the health benefits associated with increased levels of cycling and a promotional campaigns to increase awareness of e-bikes and increasing availability. Members further recommended that all schools in the borough should be encouraged to participate in the Bikeability scheme to increase number of young people cycling, and that the park byelaws be reviewed to ensure the right balance be found between ensuring the enjoyment of the park for all while encouraging healthy and safe exercise, such as cycling.



STREETS ENVIRONMENT AND HOMES SUB-COMMITTEE

12 September – Fiveways and Public Realm

The Sub-Committee in September focused on the TfL design proposals for Fiveways and Croydon's Growth Zone's Proposed Five Year Public Realm Programme. The Deputy Cabinet Member informed the Sub-Committee of the issues facing Fiveways, with delays for motorists and dangerous conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists. Members agreed with the TfL consultation that if unaddressed these issues would continue to worsen.

Some residents were concerned about the proposed plans, particularly in regards to the provisions made for cyclists and increased air pollution. Residents were also concerned about conflict between cyclists and pedestrians especially on the North/South route, as this did not include dedicated cycle provisions. Members agreed the scheme should be reviewed to reduce the potential for conflict and that cycle lanes on Epsom Road should be altered to have both cycle lanes on the station side to increase cyclists' safety, with a dedicated cycle lane running North/South between Fiveways and Epsom Road.

Overall, Members were supportive of the aims of TfL consultation but recommended that the proposals were amended to make sure the needs of local residents, pedestrians and cyclists were better taken into account, and furthermore, to make sure disability groups were approached to ensure the plans were fully accessible.

The Director of Growth provided the Sub-Committee with an outline of the Growth Zone scheme, focusing on wellbeing, culture and financial benefit. The Interim Head of Spatial Planning informed the Sub-Committee that evidence showed that the quality of the public realm directly influenced the decisions of investors, and thus had a financial impact on the borough, and on the business rates that could be achieved. The Creative Director informed the Sub-Committee that public realm had also an impact on cultural regeneration and that culture could change the character of a space, animating it or making it feel safer. Members endorsed these principles and were positive that the scheme aimed towards a greater provision of public realm, and increased levels of walking and cycling which would facilitate in the changing perception of Croydon.

The Sub-Committee agreed that greater clarity was needed in the Engagement Programme, particularly in relation to the aims and limitations of the project, to ensure residents were aware of what could be achieved.

Officers also reflected that this was true of local and borough-wide businesses, and that it was important that a communication strategy was developed that would engage with these businesses. Members resolved again to make sure that those with disabilities were considered in these schemes.

7 November – Cabinet Member Question Time (CGC) and SLWP

In November the Sub-Committee received a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon, who outlined the ambition for Croydon to lead the way on innovation, service delivery and enforcement. The new contract with Veolia covering the South London Waste Partnership was also discussed and Members were informed on the upcoming changes to the service.

Members were informed on the number of residents reporting incidents of flytipping through the MyCroydon app. It was noted that better IT integration between Veolia and Council systems was needed to inform residents when reports had been addressed. Members recognised that there had already been two years of work to this end, but that continued work was required. Members resolved to stay updated on the ongoing work integrating the IT systems and asked to be informed of any issues encountered in delivering this.

Members were further informed that the new waste contract included an improved target for clearing fly tipping; from 48 hours to 24 hours, and that maps of flytipping hotspots had been drawn up in an effort to direct covert surveillance. Members welcomed the news that the 2016/17 figures showed there had been a 4% decrease in reports of flytipping generally and resolved that the communications strategy for the new bin collections and street cleaning be carefully planned to further support this. It was suggested that a national campaign may be required around flytipping, with more resources made available to local councils in order to ensure a minimum statutory service.



STREETS ENVIRONMENT AND HOMES SUB-COMMITTEE

The importance of resident involvement with keeping Croydon clean was also noted, with the 120 Don't Mess with Croydon clean up events and the 300 Street Champions being highlighted. Members were informed that there had been a largely positive response from residents groups to the new contract and there remained an eagerness to see efficiency savings being put back into improving waste services.

Changes to the Veolia service were also discussed, including the reduction of agency staff and the use of different coloured bags to distinguish between residential and commercial waste. Furthermore, tablets had been installed in each collection vehicle which learnt the route used by crews and required assisted collections to be confirmed as having taken place. Members noted the struggles in delivering a consistent service to the Sutton area and were assured that lessons had been learnt going forward for the whole South London Waste Partnership. Members resolved to have the KPIs for the new contract made available, so that the expected standards of service could be better understood and analysed. It was also agreed that an update on contract delivery be brought to the Sub-Committee in a year.

23 January – Evolution of the Suburbs Supplementary Planning Document

The 23 January meeting featured an item on the proposed supplementary planning document and Members were given a presentation on the planning document to enable input and recommendations from the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee welcomed the proposal for a document that would act as a guidance for development of specific areas and was clear on aspects of the document that required further clarity to ensure that developers would be clear on what can be achieved and how effectively balance the use of space.

Members were pleased that Croydon was leading the way ahead of other Local Authorities in the development of the supplementary planning document as a reaction to working to meet the demands of London's growth, and deliver a guidance on how sustainable growth of the suburbs can be achieved, in order to deliver on the target of new homes as set in the emerging Croydon Local Plan.

Members stressed the need for the involvement of stakeholders such as Transport for London in order to ensure that policies on transport are developed in line with the supplementary planning document. This was due to the recognition that transport policy would have an impact on the Local Plan.

Following discussions, a number of recommendations were made including a thorough consultation period involving residents, small business forums and housing associations. It was further recommended that the document to be clear on its terms, design policies and for strong enforcement of any conditions placed on developments.



STREETS ENVIRONMENT AND HOMES SUB-COMMITTEE

20 February – Cabinet Member Question Time Transport and Environment

Councillor Stuart King the Cabinet Member attended the 20 February meeting for a Question Time session on his portfolio.

Members were encouraged to hear of many of the successes had included direct work, consultation and involvement of the community in various projects including the successful play street initiative, the implementation of a 5 year plan on Air Quality Control following the successful air quality summit that resulted in over 600 participants. Members were pleased with the involvement of residents in tackling issues and development of their borough.

The meeting provided an opportunity to scrutinise the challenges and the delivery of priorities as stated by the Cabinet member in order to ensure that the priorities highlighted were in line with what the community deemed was of most importance to them and to ensure continued involvement with residents. Following extensive questioning, Members concluded that information be circulated in relations to some of the priorities highlighted such as electric points for disabled cars, schools travel plans and revised cross-over policy document.

20 March – Trams Update

The 20 March meeting of the Sub-Committee focused on Tram safety following the aftermath of the tragic tram incident in 2017 and future proposals for the network. Transport for London attended to provide a presentation on lessons learnt and the measures that had been implemented as preventative measures.

The impact of the incident had a long lasting effect on the community and it was noted that TFL has awarded 150k for support to the wider community following extensive work by the Director of Public Health on proposals for this support to be made available to the people of New Addington.

Members were keen to seek clarification on some of the measures that had been introduced such as reduction of speeds levels, additional digital speed signage and the in-cab driver protection device survey. TfL was clear that the in-cab protection device which acts as an alert for developing issues on a tram was still in a trial period but the initial results were satisfactory. Continued work was being carried out on safety of trams and development of other strategies to ensure safety of passengers on the network. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that the Trams network is central to the infrastructure of the borough and would continue to work with TFL to ensure that appropriate measure are continuously sought until a risk free tram system is devised.

The Sub-Committee was provided with an update on TFLs upgrade strategy for the network work which included an analysis of passenger volumes and review of opportunities to improve operations in order to making the network more efficient. Proposals each phase of plans for growth was outlined.

Members had difficulty determining TFL's future priorities and suggested advance collaboration to take place between TFL and the Council on future recommendations and changes to the network. Operators were also requested to attend future meetings to update on the safety measures put in place for the network in order to provide reassurance whilst longer term measures of safety were being explored.

Scrutiny

ANNUAL REPORT

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