

CROYDON COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday 24th February 2014 at 6.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR YVETTE HOPLEY - PRESIDING.

Councillors Arram, Avis, Ayres, Bains, Bashford, Bass, Bee, Bonner, Butler, Buttinger, Chatterjee, Chowdhury, Clouder, Collins, Cromie, Cummings, Fisher, Fitze, Fitzsimons, Flemming, Gatland, George-Hilley, Godfrey, Gray, Hale, Hall, Harris, Hay-Justice, Hoar, Hollands, Jewitt, Kabir, Kellett, S Khan, B Khan, Lawlor, Lenton, Letts, Mansell, Marshall, D Mead, M Mead, Mohan, Neal, Newman, O'Connell, Osland, Parker, Pearson, Perry, H Pollard, T Pollard, Quadir, Rajendran, G Ryan, P Ryan, Selva, Scott, Shahul-Hameed, Slipper, Smith, Speakman, Thomas, Watson, Wentworth, Winborn, Woodley and Wright.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Kyeremeh.

2 MINUTES (agenda item 2)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27th January 2014 be signed as a correct record.

3 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST (agenda item 3)

All Members of the Council confirmed that their interests as listed in their Declaration of Interests Forms were accurate and up-to-date.

4 URGENT BUSINESS (agenda item 4)

None

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS (agenda item 5)

The Mayor thanked Members for their support of her various charity events. She reminded Members of forthcoming events, details of which were on noticeboards in the Members area.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Fisher asked Councillor Tim Pollard to make an announcement concerning Transport for children with SEN.

“Ruskin Private Hire has been one of the contractors we use for school transport for pupils with significant levels of Special Educational Need. We use a number of contractors so this contract affects only a proportion of transported children.

We were advised at the beginning of last week that Ruskin Private Hire had been placed in administration. We were advised by the administrator that they were going to continue trading while seeking to sell Ruskin as a going concern. Officers worked hard to support the administrator in this endeavour due to the service and commercial benefits of this plan, whilst in parallel continuing to mobilise our contingency plan.

We were notified late Thursday evening that unfortunately no agreement had been reached with a prospective buyer and the business would close. The Council's business continuity plan was enacted and contingency arrangements were being put in place. This affects 255 children on 59 routes.

Today 96 of the affected children required transport to school. The Council was able to secure transport provision for 87 of those children. The majority of the transport was on time. We are only aware of one parent who declined to put their child on the transport provided which we are working with the parent to ascertain why? Tomorrow when 149 children return to school after some school INSET days today, we have secured transport for 100% of children. I would like to thank Council staff for their hard work in ensuring such a strong position, and school staff and parents for their support and understanding in helping to manage this transition.

To support Ruskin staff we have signposted them to the new providers and we are aware that some staff have secured positions with the new providers.”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Fisher, made the following announcement regarding flooding in parts of the Borough:

“I sincerely hope I'm not speaking too soon when I say the bad weather now seems to be largely behind us.

However, for a significant number of residents and businesses in Purley there are still likely to be many weeks or months of disruption and rebuilding ahead.

What I'm pleased to be able to announce this evening is there will be a three-month business rates rebate and a cash grant of £1,000 to every small business which has been affected.

This is in addition to a three-month council tax rebate for every home we have had to evacuate.

We've also just set up an advice centre to give help and support to anyone who needs it as a result of the floods.

For these people it will of course come as little consolation that Croydon was not as badly affected as many other parts of the UK.

However I do want to put it on the record now – and I'm sure it goes without saying that everyone in this room would join me – that this council thanks all of those dedicated people whose collective response kept the potential for more widespread disruption under control.

The expertise and resources of many organisations was brought to bear and a huge team made up of the council, the water board, the army and the emergency services worked around the clock. They gave out 25,000 sandbags to protect those properties most at risk as well as laying kilometres of pipes to pump around 600 million litres of water away from local homes and businesses.

This mammoth effort also kept the pressure off the local water plant which, if it had failed, would have potentially seen tens of thousands of homes lose their fresh water supplies. It could also have seen sewage contamination as well as even higher levels of flooding downstream.

As I speak this operation is still underway, and we're now working alongside neighbouring authorities in Surrey to put up more defences which will reduce the pressure on properties along the course of the Caterham Bourne.

We are also already using the lessons we've learned from this situation to build a strong case for additional funding, which, over future years, will enable us to strengthen our flood defences and reduce the risk of a situation such as this recurring.

The last few weeks saw Croydon receive the personal attention and support of Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Boris Johnston, The Mayor of London.

What stood out for them about Croydon's flood response was how well all of the agencies worked together to find imaginative and effective ways of tackling some enormous challenges.

At the outset of the crisis we had council staff out talking personally to local residents to prepare them for the worst case scenario of evacuation and we distributed information to many more homes so people knew what was going on and what might happen.

By mobilising all our resources before the problem got too bad we were able to contain or divert much of the water – however there were some roads where despite everyone's best efforts the combination of rising groundwater levels and heavy rain was just too much to hold back.

Mr Pickles commented particularly on our decision to close the subway in Purley and use it, as well as a local church car park and the nearby cricket pitch, as balancing ponds. He saw this as an ingenious solution.

And indeed, this approach was widely reported in the national media and praised as representing the kind of thinking needed to handle what has been the heaviest and

most prolonged spell of wet weather this country has had to face since records began.

It shouldn't be too long before the flood levels drop and those in Dale Road and surrounding areas see things return to normal.

Right now the closure of the A22 Godstone Road remains the cause of the greatest inconvenience for the majority people, however a section of the road was re-opened to local traffic this morning and we're working with TfL to get the rest open as soon as possible.

So once again, my hat comes off to everyone who has played a part of Croydon's flood defence efforts over these past few weeks – hopefully many of them will soon be able to take some well-deserved rest.

But at the same time I want to extend my sympathy and that of the Council to those people who will be spending the coming few months getting their homes and businesses back in order.

Hopefully the financial assistance we are able to offer will go some way to helping with this work.”

The Mayor added her thanks to everyone concerned with the coordinated approach in assisting those dealing with and affected by the flooding.

Council Newman, Leader of the Opposition welcomed the statement from Councillor Fisher and said he had visited the area and praised the efforts of the public service, volunteers and council staff who had helped at this difficult time.

The Mayor advised Council that a change to the order of business had been requested to take Agenda item 7, The Council Tax Debate would be taken before Agenda item 6, the Business report of the Cabinet and Councillors Written Question to Cabinet Members.

6 COUNCIL TAX DEBATE (Agenda item 7)

The Council debated the Recommendations as contained in the Leader and Cabinet Business Report (agenda item 6), including the following reports:

Financial Strategy 2014/15

- 1) General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budget for 2014/15
- 2) Treasury management strategy statement, minimum revenue provision policy statement & Annual investment strategy 2014/15; including the revised Appendix D previously circulated.

Councillor Mike Fisher moved the recommendations contained in the report as printed in the Council agenda under agenda item 7, Business Report of the Leader and Cabinet and Councillor Steve O'Connell seconded.

Councillor Fisher opened the debate saying that this Conservative administration had never taken the easy way out and that their focus had been and always will be on doing the right thing, not the easy thing for our residents and our borough.

He went on to say that the focus of this Conservative administration has been not only to deal with the challenges we face now but to lay a solid foundation to secure a brighter future for the hard working people, communities and businesses of Croydon.

Through the combined strengths of rigorous planning, bold decision making and excellent financial management, council tax had been frozen for the third time in four years and a £25 refund would be given to each and every council tax paying household.

He said that despite much criticism from the opposition, who try to divide the people of Croydon into “north” and “south”; “rich” and “poor” the administration did not distinguish between those who work hard and contribute.

He listed some of the key achievements such as:

- the £1bn Westfield/Hammerson plan given the go-ahead by the council’s planning committee and the Mayor of London in November.
- the £50m Connected Croydon programme – with improvements already evident through the new crossings at Wellesley Road, the footbridge at East Croydon and the regeneration of New Addington to name but a few.
- the Pathways to Employment programme which aims to get thousands of local people into work with the creation of 16,000 jobs over the next five years.
- with a 27% reduction in youth unemployment during 2013.

Croydon is the top authority in London for reducing levels of unemployment.

The Leader asked what the Labour plans were for the Borough not only with regard to making the necessary budget reductions over the next three years but also in terms of investing in essential infrastructure and in attracting businesses.

The Leader went on to ask how Labour would pay for their plans.

This Conservative administration invest

- with £325million of funding from the Department of Education, spread over four years. This will enable a continuation of the aggressive school building programme. A recent report showed that once past the early years’ foundation stage, children from Croydon typically do better than those from elsewhere. Indeed, reading, writing and maths skills at age seven are generally better than London and national averages. Last year, while many parts of the country had declining GCSE and A’ Level exam results, Croydon achieved yet another year of improved scores.

- Turning to Bernard Weatherill House the Leader said this was a hub of public services – bringing together many different agencies under one roof, including Job Centre Plus, Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Clinical Commissioning Group. So, not only does this make it easier for customers it is also a clean, welcoming space – in a way that Taberner House could never hope to be at its age.
- In addition, the Community Space' within BWH is used by community groups across the borough and for celebratory events, such as Diwali, but also more recently in times of crisis – such as for the flood victims forced to evacuate from their homes in Kenley.
- Invested heavily across many of the borough's 120 parks. In July 2013, Wandle Park reopened with more than 7,000 people coming to the opening which followed £3.5million investment. 11 of the parks received green flags in 2013, the highest accolade. The green flag awards are supported by Keep Britain Tidy.
- The investments made to prevent fly tipping; increased enforcement patrols, put in new CCTV cameras, better signage, new bins and security gates, and visiting local businesses to see how to improve things.

The launch of the My Croydon app. would enable resident stop report issues such as fly tipping and to date, over 2000 people have downloaded the app.

In summing up, the Leader said that the Conservative administration would continue to do what was best for all the people of Croydon

Councillor Newman moved an amendment to the recommendations contained in the report. Councillor Hall seconded the amendment.

Councillor Newman opened by talking about how decisions in the Town Hall are made and how local democracy has to become more accountable. Croydon is demanding a new politics and asks for an end to the macho and personal abuse that dominates too many Town Hall meetings. A Labour council if elected in May will seek to devolve where possible decision making to local communities, will empower Scrutiny, increase public questions, embrace social media and ensure that all Council meetings are webcast and broadcast on Croydon Radio. In presenting Labour's budget plan for Croydon he said that a business forum, fairness commission and housing partnership will hit the ground running within 100 days of a Labour administration being elected.

Cllr Newman went on to say that for a council to play the role required of it in the 21st century we must embrace new technology and modern methods of working but also embrace the values that the Founding Fathers of local government stood for, civic pride, improving public health, fairness and tackling inequality.

He spoke about dirty streets, fly tipping, freedom passes being cut, youth service cut and that it was not right that these should happen whilst £140million was spend on the new Council headquarters.

In proposing the Labour budget Councillor Newman said that street cleaning would be tackled, there would be new 10 enforcement officers and police officers, fund street cleaning and prevent fly tipping, CCTV will be installed in New Addington, one hour free parking in all district centres and reduce by 10% the first residents parking permit fees. He went on to say that Labour would freeze Council Tax next year and with no above inflation rise after that. Fly tippers will be prosecuted, streets kept clean and safe, they would work with local business to deliver quality skilled jobs for local people.

The amendments to the Budget are attached as an appendix to these Minutes.

Councillor Thomas speaking for the original motion and against the Labour amendment said that he had been waiting for Labours proposals and these were nothing new for the people of Croydon to look at. He went on to speak about the good news in the Conservative budget, a £25 Council Tax refund, freeze in parking charges and permits, £7.5 million Road improvements, funds for improvements in recycling, better road safety outside schools, improved street lighting to fight crime, we support for Westfield/Hammerson development. In summing up he said that Labour were against Council Tax cuts and all the policies of this Council that have been successful over the last 8 years , residents don't want to see 27% tax rises or for the Town to be concreted over with road humps.

Councillor Letts speaking for the amendment described the Conservative proposals as dull uninspiring about cutting services and jobs with an element of trickery. She went on to say that the 'gimmick' of a gift of a Council Tax refund of £25 or in real terms was only giving back 7pence per day. A Labour administration would make Croydon an ambitious council, for jobs, homes and services. This budget amendment is just a small taste of their plans, which include, a one-stop business centre, a one hour street parking in district centres, all council contracts revisited and aim for most of them to be provided by local firms and local people, launch a Croydon business forum with quarterly meetings, work with Croydon Tech City so that Croydon can become a true international business centre.

Councillor Jason Cummings speaking for the original motion spoke of the current administration record of low Council Tax, prudent spending efficiency and innovation. When compared to Labour's last 4 years in administration when Council Tax increased each year by more than the Conservative rises over 8 years. He went on to say that if you average the change the council in this tory council it would take 20 years to match a single rise from 2003 of a labour rise in Council Tax.

Councillor Mark Watson speaking for the amendment spoke of the cost of living crisis putting pressure on family budgets. He went on to say that a Labour administration would use polices to fund local residents. Stopping anti social behaviour was a priority and 10 additional enforcement officers would be managed

by the council and not outsources. Extra police offices and CCTV in New Addington and the London Road and invest in youth services.

Councillor Margaret Mead supporting the original motion spoke of the investment for real growth in the budget for adult social care and public health functions, extra money for care for those with mental health problems and for young people transitions to adulthood. The budget would mean that there would be continued help for people to live independently. Performance figures show a 15% increase in self-directed support, nearly 82% to help vulnerable people to reach independent living and nearly 1200 people helped to stay in their own homes. Croydon is a Heart Town to help improve heart health across the borough.

Councillor Butler, speaking for the amendment said she was saddened by the Tory budget saying it was short sighted and did nothing for the people of Croydon and would not benefit the poorest in the borough. She went on to speak about the numbers in bed and breakfast, rent increases, food and fuel increases. A Labour administration would ensure affordable housing, a landlord registration scheme and support district centres.

Councillor Dudley Mead speaking for the original recommendations and specifically appendices K, L and M of the HRA. Rents are proposed to increase by 4.5% which is the Government's recommendations, something this Council has followed since 2003. This will be the last year of statutory recommendations in future there will be consultations between the Council and its tenants. The Conservative administration recognises that tenants have difficulties and a 2 week holiday for rent will be offered to those that pay rent. This has been achieved through careful financial management of the HRA and for the first time ever collections rates are 99% of rents totalling £85million. He also said that the Council does hold bad landlords to account and prosecution do take place where there is a case to answer. The reserves held in the HRA are recommended by the District Auditor. All Council homes meet the decent homes standard by March 2011 and bathroom and kitchen refurbishment would continue.

Councillor Alisa Flemming speaking for the amendment spoke of the continued lack of transparency relating to Bernard Weatherill House costs. Front line services have been cut, withdrawal of council tax and housing benefits, housing rents have increased and local government finances have been slashed. She went on to say that a Labour administration would freeze Council Tax for two years, seek assurances from developers for more affordable housing, take back control of the libraries, improve recycling, clean up the street and protect front line services.

Councillor Steve O'Connell seconding the original recommendation spoke of the 'appalling' state of Council finances the Conservative administration took over in 2006 when there were no reserves. This administration have balanced the budget and restored reserves, improved services across all the borough and this has been recognised by the auditor. He went on to say that residents pay less in Council Tax, in real terms, in 2013/14 than they did in 2006/7. This administration is freezing Council tax and offering a £25 refund, compare this to Labour's previous rises of 35% and 27%. With the financial pressures to come over the next few years this Conservative administration will continue to balance the budget whilst offering quality

services. He went on to say that there was no sustainability in the Labour budget after two years and that the only way they could maintain the services suggested was to raise council taxes.

Councillor Simon Hall in seconding the amendment said that the Conservative budget had flawed priorities and was short term. The £25 refund was a gimmick. Front line services had been cut, debt has spiralled, the cost of BWH is £140million, capital spend and spend on consultant fees. He went on to say that the Labour amendments to the budget were only the start, by removing the £25 refund reserves would be used to clean streets and clear fly tipping, improve street lighting and make Croydon a safer place to live with CCTV and extra enforcement officers. A Labour administration will work in partnership with others to deliver more.

Councillor Mike Fisher in replying said he had a sense of de ja vu, what Labour had presented was an unsustainable budget based on using reserve over a two year period with no mention of how they would deal with the £35million cut in government funding. The Labour proposals for an increased budget for fly tipping is only what this administration have already included in our budget. Labours proposed emergency summer budget will take away the proposed £25 Council Tax refund from the hard pressed residents of Croydon. This will mean that they will increase Council Tax. Labour say they will be the party for the whole of the borough. When Labour were last in power they cut street cleaning in the south of the borough so street swept every 8 weeks, and now have set up a North Croydon Street Commission to look at street cleaning whilst cutting services to the centre and south of the borough. This Conservative administration has council tax under control, good quality services and a council to be proud of, and serves all residents whatever part of the borough the live in.

The Leader moved a procedural motion 1.19.4 to call for a poll vote. This was seconded by Councillor Newman and agreed by Council

The amendment was put and lost 37 – 32.

			yes	no
Eddy	Arram	C		√
Jane	Avis	L	√	
George	Ayres	L	√	
Jeet	Bains	c		√
Sara	Bashford	C		√
Graham	Bass	C		√
Kathy	Bee	L	√	
Carole	Bonner	L	√	
Alison	Butler	L	√	
Jan	Buttinger	C		√
Richard	Chatterjee	C		√
Sherwan	Chowdhury	L	√	
Pat	Clouder	L	√	

Stuart	Collins	L	√	
Justin	Cromie	C		√
Jason	Cummings	C		√
Mike	Fisher	C		√
David	Fitze	C		√
Sean	Fitzsimons	L	√	
Alisa	Flemming	L	√	
Maria	Gatland	C		√
Timothy	Godfrey	L	√	
Donna	Gray	L	√	
Lynne	Hale	C		√
Simon	Hall	L	√	
Tony	Harris	C		√
Patricia	Hay-Justice	L	√	
Clare	Hilley	C		√
Simon	Hoar	C		√
Steve	Hollands	C		√
Karen	Jewitt	L	√	
Humayun	Kabir	L	√	
Adam	Kellett	C		√
Bernadette	Khan	L	√	
Shafi	Khan	L	√	
Matthew	Kyeremeh	L	ABSENT	
Wayne	Lawlor	L	√	
Terry	Lenton	C		√
Toni	Letts	L	√	
Maggie	Mansell	L	√	
Janet	Marshall	C		√
Dudley	Mead	C		√
Margaret	Mead	C		√
Dudley	Mead	C		√
Vidhi	Mohan	C		√
Michael	Neal	C		√
Tony	Newman	L	√	
Steve	O'Connell	C		√
David	Osland	C		√
Ian	Parker	C		√
Tony	Pearson	C		√
Jason	Perry	C		√
Helen	Pollard	C		√
Tim	Pollard	C		√
Badsha	Quadir	C		√

Raj	Rajendran	L	√	
Gerry	Ryan	L	√	
Pat	Ryan	L	√	
Paul	Scott	L	√	
Mike	Selva	L	√	
Manju	Shahul-Hameed	L	√	
Avril	Slipper	C		√
Paul	Smith	L	√	
Donald	Speakman	C		√
Phil	Thomas	C		√
Mark	Watson	L	√	
John	Wentworth	L	√	
Susan	Winborn	C		√
Louisa	Woodley	L	√	
Chris	Wright	C		√
The Mayor	Councillor			
Yvette	Hopley	C		√

The Leader requested a poll vote for the original recommendations this was seconded by Councillor Dudley Mead. The original recommendations were put and carried 37 – 32.

			yes	no
Eddy	Arram	C	√	
Jane	Avis	L		√
George	Ayres	L		√
Jeet	Bains	c	√	
Sara	Bashford	C	√	
Graham	Bass	C	√	
Kathy	Bee	L		√
Carole	Bonner	L		√
Alison	Butler	L		√
Jan	Buttinger	C	√	
Richard	Chatterjee	C	√	
Sherwan	Chowdhury	L		√
Pat	Clouder	L		√
Stuart	Collins	L		√
Justin	Cromie	C	√	
Jason	Cummings	C	√	
Mike	Fisher	C	√	
David	Fitze	C	√	

Sean	Fitzsimons	L		√
Alisa	Flemming	L		√
Maria	Gatland	C	√	
Timothy	Godfrey	L		√
Donna	Gray	L		√
Lynne	Hale	C	√	
Simon	Hall	L		√
Tony	Harris	C	√	
Patricia	Hay-Justice	L		√
Clare	Hilley	C	√	
Simon	Hoar	C	√	
Steve	Hollands	C	√	
Karen	Jewitt	L		√
Humayun	Kabir	L		√
Adam	Kellett	C	√	
Bernadette	Khan	L		√
Shafi	Khan	L		√
Matthew	Kyeremeh	L	ABSENT	
Wayne	Lawlor	L		√
Terry	Lenton	C	√	
Toni	Letts	L		√
Maggie	Mansell	L		√
Janet	Marshall	C	√	
Dudley	Mead	C	√	
Margaret	Mead	C	√	
Dudley	Mead	C	√	
Vidhi	Mohan	C	√	
Michael	Neal	C	√	
Tony	Newman	L		√
Steve	O'Connell	C	√	
David	Osland	C	√	
Ian	Parker	C	√	
Tony	Pearson	C	√	
Jason	Perry	C	√	
Helen	Pollard	C	√	
Tim	Pollard	C	√	
Badsha	Quadir	C	√	
Raj	Rajendran	L		√
Gerry	Ryan	L		√
Pat	Ryan	L		√
Paul	Scott	L		√
Mike	Selva	L		√

Manju	Shahul-Hameed	L		√
Avril	Slipper	C	√	
Paul	Smith	L		√
Donald	Speakman	C	√	
Phil	Thomas	C	√	
Mark	Watson	L		√
John	Wentworth	L		√
Susan	Winborn	C	√	
Louisa	Woodley	L		√
Chris	Wright	C	√	
The Mayor	Councillor			
Yvette	Hopley	C	√	

7. BUSINESS REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET AND COUNCILLORS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (agenda item 6)

The Council received the Business Report summarising the proceedings of the Cabinet (Council Tax reports only) meeting held on Monday 10 February 2014.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules, written questions had been submitted in advance by Council Members and written replies had been given by the relevant Cabinet Members. The questions and answers had been placed in the Chamber. Supplementary questions were asked by Members of the Council and replies were given by the relevant Cabinet Members.

Each Cabinet Member was asked in turn if they had anything to add to their report. Questions were then invited from the Chamber for each Cabinet Member who replied orally to the questions asked by Members of the Council on specific paragraphs or submitted questions.

Councillor Tony Newman moved that Questions should only be asked of the Leader in order to move onto the Extraordinary Council meetings

The following Members asked questions on the Business Report
Leader: Newman, Buttinger, P Ryan, Kellett, Chowdhury, Hale, Avis and Arram.

Council **RESOLVED** to receive the report with no votes against.

8 TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 20:25

Full copies of the Council agenda, reports and appendices are available in the Members Library and on the Council website at

www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/minutes/committees

SECTION 1 - AMENDMENT TO CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

Amendment to Paragraph 1.2

- Delete I
- Amend Paragraph X to add: 'and, in addition, uses £2 million of HRA Reserves to fund an acceleration of the programme for Kitchen & Bathrooms and Block safety initiatives'
- Add XIII

'The use of Reserves that would otherwise have been used to fund the election gimmick, the so called 'efficiency dividend' to initiate a series of costed initiatives which will make a real and lasting difference to our communities, notably in terms of creating:

- o A Safer Borough
- o A Cleaner Borough
- o A Borough that supports culture and history
- o A Borough that supports our young people and older people, including promoting preventative services.
- o A Borough that is on the side of business and providing jobs

as set out in Section 3 of this document.'

- Add XIV

'The recognition that this budget, even as amended to deliver a series of improvements as detailed in Paragraph 1.15, still essentially reflects flawed priorities of and incompetent wasteful misadministration by the current Conservative Administration, so there will be an emergency budget in Summer 2014, which will be brought to Full Council in the interests of transparency and democracy, which will start a process of radical redirection of the Council, so as to deliver for the people of Croydon, based on the principles set out in Section 4 of this document, which reflects Croydon Labour's manifesto of Ambition for Croydon.'

Additional Paragraph 1.2A

'The Council intends to make no change to Council Tax for 2015/16 for Croydon.'

SECTION 2 - OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The Conservative-led government has launched an unprecedented assault on local government.
- 2.2 The response of this current Conservative administration has been to make cuts and so-called efficiencies that have significantly worsened front-line services, rather than to look at the needs and priorities of the Borough. In addition, there have been a huge number of false economies and short termist measures, such as cuts to preventative services.
- 2.3 At the same time, we have seen over £140 million spent on an HQ – and, directly and indirectly, some £200 million relating to CCURV. We have also seen much of the post-riot money spent on areas that were not affected or do not address the underlying issues identified.
- 2.4 The Conservative administration raised Council tax for 2013/14 and is giving part of that back as an election gimmick in 2014/15, which will then see it go back up in 2015/16.
- 2.5 There can only be a true change of direction, where the Council delivers to the people of Croydon, if there is real political leadership and will to do so. It is clear that this Conservative administration has a flawed set of priorities, is incompetent and wasteful.
- 2.6 Given this and the fact that the Labour Group only had full detailed budget papers less than a month ago, any budget amendments, pre-change of control of the Council, must, necessarily be limited. However, we believe that these amendments will show the people of Croydon the Labour Group's ambition for Croydon.

SECTION 3 – BUDGET AMENDMENTS

3.1 In terms of the General Fund

- deletion of the efficiency dividend, included in the budget at £3.228 million
- amendments to expenditure in 2014/15 and specific reserves to ensure sustainability in future years of these initiatives, as follows:

		14-15 £'000	14-15 £'000	Specific Reserves (Note) £'000
1.	Community Safety		702	716
	a. Additional 10 Council Enforcement Officers, to clamp down on ASB and other key issues in crucial areas at key times	500		
	b. Two additional PCs for New Addington	72		
	c. CCTV - 2 additional cameras on Central Parade, New Addington and three new cameras on London Road	130		
2.	Cleanliness of the Borough		299	163
	a. Two extra teams to deal with fly-tipping and similar	154		
	b. Dedicated flytip and rubbish hotline	28		
	c. Team for deep cleans of pavements etc. (notably for district centres)	117		
3.	Parking		125	125
	a. One Hour Free parking in district Centres	77		
	b. Reduction of 10% in the cost of first resident's parking permit	48		
4.	Services for Older People		200	100
	a. Social prescribing service (GPs prescribing social activities/ groups to tackle social isolation, depression etc., where appropriate)	200		
5.	Services for Younger People		235	235
	a. Additional school crossing patrols	85		
	b. Outreach youth work to target particular teenage groups (notably those at risk of criminality) through commissioning	150		
6.	Cultural Offer		150	-
	a. Equipment at Fairfield to allow full digital projection for film & live broadcast of events	150		
7.	Business Support		60	60
	a. Support for district centres, notably through practical and logistic support for district centre business partnerships and BIDs	60		
8.	Arnhem		10	
	a. Restoration of grant in 70 th anniversary of Battle	10		
9.	Contingency Reserve			48
	TOTAL		1,781	1,447

Note: Reserve generally calculated at one year's cost on recurring items, in order to allow continuity. For the PCs, three years funding has been reserved. This will ensure that there is no material effect on the budget gap for future years.

3.2 In terms of the Housing Revenue Account, we propose the use of £2 million of balances to accelerate kitchen & bathroom programme, block security improvements and similar.

SECTION 4 – AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON

4.1 As stated previously, the Council has flawed priorities and an incompetent wasteful administration.

4.2 Croydon Labour Group is ambitious for Croydon. It knows that this ambition will only be delivered by radical approach which is not afraid to make large-scale changes.

4.3 Here, we are outlining some of the key principles, in summary format:

4.3.1 Priorities include

- A Safer Borough
- A Cleaner Borough
- An Enterprising Borough, supporting businesses, big and small, and creating jobs, across the borough
- A Caring Borough, including support for Vulnerable Groups and investment in Prevention
- A Borough that meets housing needs
- A Council that works in true partnership with other statutory bodies, as well as private sector and third sector
- Affordable Council Tax

4.3.2 Methods include

- Refocus on Service Delivery
- Fundamental renegotiation with major suppliers
- Reductions of silos and duplication
- Empowerment of staff
- Services delivered locally
- Firm but fair enforcement
- Reduction in use of agency workers, consultants, professional firms
- Delivery based on need not artificial one size fits all
- Fresh look at use of HQ building, as well as other council assets