

Scrutiny & Overview Committee Agenda



To: Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair), Councillor Robert Ward (Vice-Chair), Sherwan Chowdhury, Jerry Fitzpatrick, Joy Prince and Andy Stranack

Reserve Members: Richard Chatterjee, Felicity Flynn, Maddie Henson, Stephen Mann, Stuart Millson and Callton Young

A meeting of the **Scrutiny & Overview Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Monday, 11 February 2019** at **6.30 pm** in **F10 - Town Hall**

Jacqueline Harris Baker
Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Simon Trevaskis
0208 7266000
simon.trevaskis@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Friday, 1 February 2019

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.
If you require any assistance, please contact the person detailed above, on the righthand side.

N.B This meeting will be paperless. The agenda can be accessed online at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2019 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosure of Interests

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality to the value of which exceeds £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve month period. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Democratic Services representative at the start of the meeting. The Chair will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Development Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon (Pages 15 - 58)

To provide comment and inform the development of a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon Council.

6. Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Development of a Culture Plan and a Libraries Plan for Croydon (Pages 59 - 64)

To provide comment and inform the development of the Culture Plan and a Libraries Plan for Croydon Council.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

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

PART B

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Scrutiny & Overview Committee

Meeting held on Tuesday, 15 January 2019 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber - Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair); Councillor Robert Ward (Vice-Chair); Jerry Fitzpatrick, Joy Prince and Andy Stranack

Also Present: Councillor Simon Hall and Tony Newman

Apologies: Councillor Sherwan Chowdhury

PART A

1/19 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

It was highlighted that the recommendation to provide Members with updates on Section 106 and Cil funding available in their Wards had not yet been implemented. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources advised that the recommendation had been accepted by the Cabinet and work was underway to prepare information on the quarter three S106 and Cil awards.

It was agreed that going forward requests for information would be listed separately from recommendations to prevent delays in the requested information being circulated to Members.

2/19 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

3/19 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

4/19 **Question Time: Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tony Newman, was in attendance at the meeting to provide an update for the Committee and answer questions arising. During the introduction to this item the following points were noted:-

- In light of ongoing cuts to the Council budget from central Government, the Administration had taken a clear view that the Budget proposals for 2019/20 would seek the maximum increase in both Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept to continue to protect frontline funding.
- The redevelopment of the Fairfield Halls continued towards completion, with the venue due to reopen in September 2019.
- Work was underway on building the Legacy Onside Youth Zone, which once complete would have provision for 200 – 250 young people to use the facility every night of the week.
- Progress continued to be made on a number of different housing developments through Brick by Brick, with families from across the borough starting to move into properties as they were completed. Work was continuing on the redevelopment of the Taberner House site which would provide over 500 homes, 50% of which would be affordable.
- The Council continued to maintain ongoing investment into the Children's Service following the disappointing results from an Ofsted inspection in July 2017. As a result the Service was starting to see improvement in performance data and was heading in the right direction. A key priority for the budget was to maintain the increased investment to ensure that the good work continued.
- There had initially been controversy over changes made to bins as part of the Sustainable Croydon project, but the change was required if the Council was to achieve its targeted recycling rate of 50%.
- Croydon's Violence Reduction Unit was a priority for the Administration as part of its work for Safer Croydon.
- The Council had recently been awarded funding of £500,000 to help to develop a Creative Enterprise Zone in the borough. Work was also underway on the Music City project which would give recognition to the music coming out of Croydon, as well as the musical heritage of the borough.
- The Sustainable City project was aimed at ensuring that growth in the borough provided benefits to the residents of Croydon. The project covered a wide range of factors including the need to create sustainable jobs and transport as well as environmental measures. The key challenge for the Council was to ensure that infrastructure in the borough matched the growth.

It was noted that the Government's review of Fair Funding was due to conclude in February and as such it was questioned what the Council could do to ensure that the funding issues facing itself and other outer London borough were addressed. The Leader highlighted that the Fair Funding Campaign in Croydon had always received cross party support. A strong case had been made to the review on behalf of Croydon, with the initial indication

being encouraging that outer London boroughs may come out in a better position than at present, but this was still uncertain.

Concern was raised that despite increased resources being invested in the Children's Service the outcomes were not improving as quickly as may have been hoped. In response it was highlighted that the changes made to the service, including the extra resources, had led to improvements in many of the key indicators, but others would take longer to turn around.

As a follow up it was questioned when looked after children would start to see the results of the improvement work, to which it was advised that they were already seeing results. Recent Ofsted reports had shown that outcomes for young people were improving and the Administration was committed to delivering long term improvement.

It was noted that Croydon was looking to adopt the Glasgow model to reducing knife crime through using a public health approach and as such it was questioned how this would work in practice in the borough. The Leader advised that the first event with partners involved in the project had been held earlier that day and given the strong history of partnership working in the borough and a strong voluntary sector there was every reason to hope that positive results could be achieved. A lot of the work would be from the ground up such as a long term preventative approach in schools.

As it had been highlighted that the Council was aiming to achieve a recycling rate of 50%, it was questioned whether there were similar targets for the reduction of waste and to encourage reuse. It was advised that there was a key role for both local and national government to educate and encourage people to reduce waste, with a lot of good work taking place in schools on a local level.

In response to a question about how delays to developments were effecting the local community it was advised that it had been the right decision to extend the redevelopment of the Fairfield Halls. This was to take into account unforeseen work arising from the building, which was the second biggest cultural venue in London after the Southbank, as the final development would be excellent. The Westfield development was still looking very positive and in a challenging retail environment, Croydon was looking as strong as anywhere.

As a follow up the start date for the Westfield project was questioned. It was advised that the exact start was currently been determined, but a recent meeting with the new Chief Executive had given very encouraging signs about their commitment to Croydon and the green agenda with positive discussions on transport provision and car parking.

In response to a question about the loss of senior officers, it was advised that while it was always disappointing to lose senior officers, the current team was excellent in terms of skills and was also a reflection of the borough. It was often the case that if you employed talented people, then they would be attractive to other organisations.

The Leader was questioned about his expectations for the Governance Review that was currently in progress. It was advised that it was hoped that it would be radical and would take into account factors such as the use of technology and devolution. It would also be positive to look at how the Council used its influence with other organisations and partners to deliver improvements for residents and the local area.

As there had been concerns about the new bin collection and street cleaning service, introduced in September 2018, the Leader was asked for his view on how well the new service was performing. It was advised that although these services had improved since the new contract commenced in September, there were issues around the consistency of the service across the borough which were being addressed with Veolia by the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Stuart Collins on a weekly basis. If the service did not improve then it would be escalated to the highest level to ensure that the people of Croydon received the standard of service they expected.

As a lack of affordable housing continued to be an issue for many people in the borough, it was questioned whether any thought had been given to developing greenbelt land for housing. In response it was highlighted that the Mayor of London had made clear that he would not countenance allowing development in the greenbelt, so this was not an avenue to pursue. At the moment the Council was working on a number of developments through Brick By Brick that would increase the supply of affordable homes.

It was questioned whether there was any prospect of a university being delivered for the borough. In response it was advised that the Council was open to having discussions with potential providers about the provision of a university and wanted to keep the options for its delivery open.

It was highlighted that there was an issue with people travelling to and from Croydon to South London with a lack of interconnectivity in public transport provision, which was not easily improved as an extension of the tram network was not a priority in the Mayor's Transport Strategy. As such it was questioned what the Council could do to improve provision. It was advised that future public transport provision needed serious consideration if it was going to be able to cope with the planned growth in the borough.

The Chair thanked the Leader and Officers for their attendance at the meeting and answering the Committee's questions.

Conclusions

Following the discussion of this item, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

1. The Committee were concerned about the lack of clarity on the start of the Westfield redevelopment and felt that further information was needed to provide reassurance.

2. The Committee agreed that the relevant partners in the Westfield project would be invited to a future Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting to provide an update on the project.

5/19 **Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Proposed General Fund Revenue Budget 2019-20**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Simon Hall introduced the report with a summary of the key points of the budget in the year ahead. It was noted that the financial landscape for local government continued to be challenging, with the outlook for beyond April 2020 unknown at the present time. From the introduction, the following points were noted.

- There were no material changes to the Local Government Settlement, which had seen our funding from government fall by 6.5% as predicted.
- There was an assumption in the Budget that Council Tax would rise by 3%, the Adult Social Care Precept would also rise by 3% and the Greater London Authority were planning to raise the Police Precept by £24 per annum.
- Nationally £180m had been released to local authorities from the Central Business Rate Account, with £1.1m of this awarded to Croydon.
- The budget for 2019/2020 was balanced, but in the Medium Term Financial Strategy it was predicted that there would be a £20m gap in funding in the subsequent two years.
- Substantial growth in demand was predicted in the services for the people of the borough and in particular vulnerable residents. £12m had been allocated to Children's Services, £10.2m to Adult Social Care and £3.2m to the Gateway Service to account for the growth in demand.
- Within the budget there was an assumption that there would be a rise in income from car parking and also through investing in assets, such as the recently purchased Colonades. It was also proposed to transfer property owned by the Council to the pension fund to reduce the cash contribution on the fund deficit.
- Brexit and the impact it would have upon both the local and national economy was a significant unknown risk to the budget.
- The Capital Programme included provision for a new Special Educational Needs School, which would help to reduce the reliance on the private sector. There were also plans to deliver £150m of affordable housing, investment in the Growth Zone, a new leisure centre in New Addington and investment in libraries across the borough.

It was questioned whether representations were being made on behalf of Croydon to the Fair Funding Consultation. In response it was advised that

representations were being made on both a national and regional level, as well as individual representation on the circumstances specific to Croydon, such as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

It was questioned how the budget would be impacted if Council Tax was not increased by the planned 3%. It was advised that should Council Tax remain at its current level, an additional £7m would need to be found within the budget which was likely to mean there would be a significant impact upon services provided to residents.

It was confirmed that the Council was on track to save £1m over half a year from the new Waste and Recycling contract. This had been extrapolated for a full year and used as a basis for the assumed income from the contract for 2019/2020.

As the Business Rate Retention Scheme was being reduced from 100% to 75%, it was questioned how this would impact upon the budget. It was confirmed that as the Council had been pessimistic in predicting the income from the scheme, the reduction had not cause significant problems. The 25% reduction equated to approximately £1.5m.

As the Council was now pursuing additional income streams through the purchase of assets, it was questioned whether there was a specific strategy in place to guide the type of assets the Council would and would not invest in. It was advised that the Council had a three year programme of investment, which was set out in the Asset Acquisition Strategy that sat alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy and informed the type of investments the Council would pursue. It was agreed to share a copy of the Strategy with the members of the Committee.

In response to a question about the basis for the predicted increased income from parking and penalty charge notices, it was advised that it was based on a combination of factors. In 2017/2018 the Service had been cautious in predicting its income, so the base rate for 2018/2019 had been underestimated. As the growth rate was expected to continue, the increase had be carried forward into the next year. The size of the enforcement team had also been increased which would lead to a likely increase in income from penalty charge notices.

It was noted that the Budget had assumed that there would be a saving from the charging policy in the Adults Service. As the charging policy was still being consulted upon, it was questioned what had been used as the basis for the assumption. It was advised that although the consultation was still underway, it was assumed that the proposals set out in the consultation would be endorsed. If there were major changes arising from the consultation, then the budget would have to be adjusted.

In response to a question about the assumed dividend of £2.2m from Brick by Brick, it was highlighted that the Council had not taken a dividend since the company was set up. As there were now 20 separate schemes in the process

of completion, the dividend had been based on a prudent assumption of profit available in 2019/20.

The low level of reserves held by the Council in comparison to other local authorities was highlighted and questioned whether this should be any cause for concern. It was advised that the level of reserves held by the Council was something that was tracked and balanced as needed. In the Medium Term Financial Strategy there was an aim for the level of reserves held to be 5% of the net budget, which equated to £12m, but since 2010 the level of reserves had varied between £10m - £11m.

In response to a question about the increased demand for Adults Social Care, it was advised that demand was increasing as people were now living for longer and the complexity of cases had increased. It was also highlighted that demand for Children's Services had also increased, with a large increase in the number of foster children, including additional pressures from Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. It was agreed that statistics on the numbers of children in the care system over the past few years would be provided to the Committee to demonstrate the increased demand.

It was noted that the Budget included an assumption of reduced costs in the Revenues and Benefits team and as such it was questioned what this assumption had been based upon. It was advised that it had been based upon the introduction of news systems and increased engagement through the new Gateway Service, which would reduce the level of engagement with the Revenues and Benefits team.

It was highlighted that voluntary organisations were finding they were having to help people with applications for grants and benefits more frequently due to issues caused by many of the application now being online. As such concern was raised that the Council may be adding to this problem by introducing new systems. Reassurance was given that the Council was determined to safeguard the face to face option for those residents who preferred to interact with the Council in this way. Additionally the ongoing work on locality based services was about providing support for people where it was most needed.

As it was noted that the Election team was being reshaped, it was questioned whether the team would be able to cope in the event of having to deliver either the European Elections or a snap General Election. It was confirmed that contingency plans had been made should either of these elections happen this year.

In response to a question about what lessons had been learned from past budgets, it was advised that the Finance team now had a stronger handle on the areas for growth and pressures within the budget. There were better systems in place for tracking the budget and there had been more detailed work undertaken focussed upon the key areas of pressure within the Council. However there would always be unknowns and risks to the budget and it was essential to prepare for these where possible.

It was suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to meet with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources early in the budget setting for 2020/2021 to focus on the actual process of setting the budget in more detail and ensure it was fit for purpose.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and the Officers for their attendance at the meeting and answering the Committees questions. In particular extending the thanks of the Committee to the Executive Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer, Richard Simpson, who was attending his last Scrutiny meeting before leaving the Council.

Additional Information Requested

1. Figures providing a breakdown on the number of Looked After Children in the borough over the past few years, broken down to provide data on the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and locally Looked After Children.
2. A copy of the Asset Acquisition Strategy.

Conclusions

Following the discussion of this item, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

1. That the Budget being proposed by the Administration was reasonable and took into account potential risks where possible.
2. That it would be beneficial to scrutinise the budget setting process in the new municipal year, to provide reassurance on the preparation of the budget at an early stage.

Recommendation

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee agreed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources that he be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee early in the new municipal year to discuss with Members on the process for setting the next budget.

6/19

Work Programme 2018 - 2019

It was confirmed that the Chair of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee would provide the Annual Report of the Sub-Committee at the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting scheduled for 30 April 2019.

It was highlighted that new guidance for scrutiny was expected to be published by the Government later this month and as such an item on this may need to be scheduled for a future meeting.

The Work Programme was noted.

7/19 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This motion was not needed.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Signed:

Date:

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For general release

REPORT TO:	Scrutiny & Overview Committee 11 February 2019
SUBJECT:	DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR STRATEGY FOR CROYDON COUNCIL
LEAD OFFICER:	Gavin Handford, Head of Policy & Partnership
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Hamida Ali, Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Councillor Hamida Ali

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:

The Corporate Plan recognises the importance of working in partnership to deliver the priorities and outcomes we have promised in new and creative ways. This includes working with the voluntary and community sector.

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	<i>Request by Councillor Hamida Ali for Scrutiny Committee to input into the development of a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon Council.</i>
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	<i>To provide comment and inform the development of a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon Council.</i>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the Council's aim to develop a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy which provides a framework for how the Council works with the sector. It summarises the Council's corporate priorities and engagement work with the sector, seeking comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to inform the strategy which will be considered by Cabinet in March.

DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR STRATEGY FOR CROYDON COUNCIL

2. VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR: CROYDON CONTEXT

2.1 Croydon benefits from a strong Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) which makes a vital contribution to the borough.

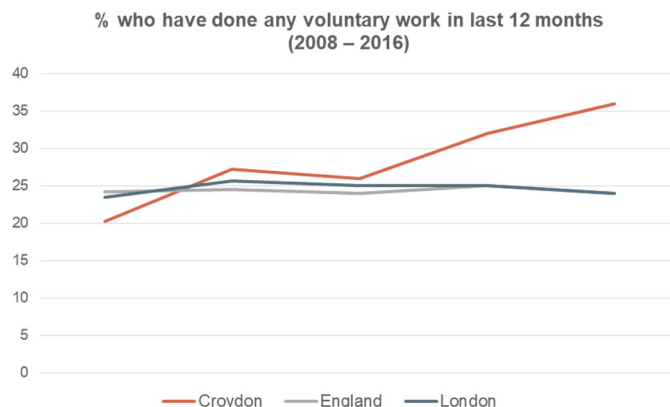
- 2.2 The VCS delivers significant services, support and advice to residents across a wide range of council services. The sector also supports community cohesion, empowerment and resilience.
- 2.3 According to the Charity Commission there are 819 registered charities in Croydon. This only captures those charities with their registered office within the borough. There are many more charities, such as national VCS organisations, that are not included within this figure but still provide a vital role in Croydon.
- 2.4 Croydon CVA have over 2,000 individuals registered within local VCS organisations, demonstrating the broader scope of the sector beyond registered charities.
- 2.5 When referring to the Voluntary & Community Sector, we are in fact referring to over a dozen different forms of organisations, including:
- Community associations
 - Community groups
 - Co-operatives and social enterprises
 - Faith organisations
 - 'Friends of' Groups
 - Grant making trusts
 - Housing Associations
 - Non-constituted groups of residents working together to make a difference in their local
 - Registered charities
 - School/parent groups
 - Social enterprises
 - Sports, environmental, arts and heritage organisations
 - Tenants and residents' groups
- 2.6 These organisations operate in all areas of the borough. Some will provide services across all of Croydon (and in some cases beyond), whilst others will focus on a particular area or neighbourhood.
- 2.7 Whilst some organisations will employ staff, most are reliant on volunteers, at least in part. In recent years Croydon has benefited from an increase in volunteering levels. In the 3 years to 2015/16 (the most recent data available), the GLA survey confirmed that 36% of people in Croydon had volunteered in the previous 12 months (see Chart 1). This was the third highest level of volunteering in London, and an increase from 20% in 2011/12.

Outer South London Context

- 2.8 Data on registered charities operating in boroughs suggests that VCS in Croydon is the largest in outer South London. This data, from 2016/17, excludes charities based outside the borough but operating services within it (see Chart 2). However, when the total income of active local registered charities is compared across the sub-region, Croydon is overshadowed by Richmond and Bromley even though those boroughs have smaller populations (see Chart 3). The level of spend in registered charities between 2001/02 and 2016/17 has risen markedly in Richmond and Bromley, and steadily in Kingston, and Sutton. This may in part be due to outsourcing to the VCS (see Chart 4). It should be noted that this

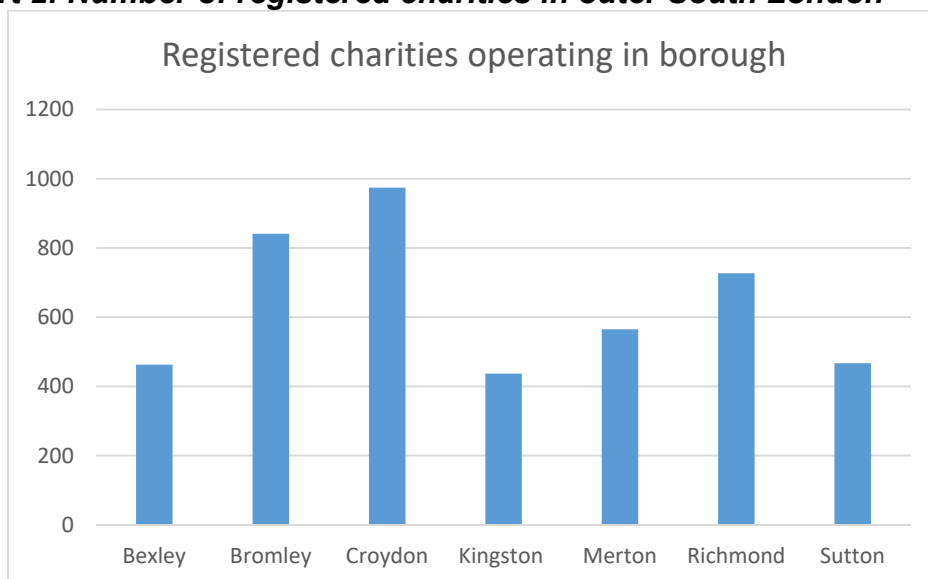
comparative analysis relates only to registered charities, which may represent only two-thirds of the VCS in Croydon; 35% of VCS organisations responding to the Council’s survey stated that they were not are not registered charities.

Chart 1: Percentage of residents in Croydon, London and England who volunteer



Data from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Taking Part survey showing levels of volunteering among the adult population (16+) by borough and region. It combines valid responses to the question 'During the last 12 months, have you done any voluntary work?' from three years of the survey, excluding 2009/10 when there was no volunteering question in the survey. It is a continuous face to face household survey.

Chart 2: Number of registered charities in outer South London



Data produced by National Council for Voluntary Organisations in conjunction with South London CVS Partnership and Croydon Voluntary Action based on Charity Commission data: Registered charities operating in borough (excludes national and regional charities based outside each borough but operating services within it):

<https://data.ncvo.org.uk/areas/croydon/intro>

Chart 3: Income of active local registered charities in outer South London

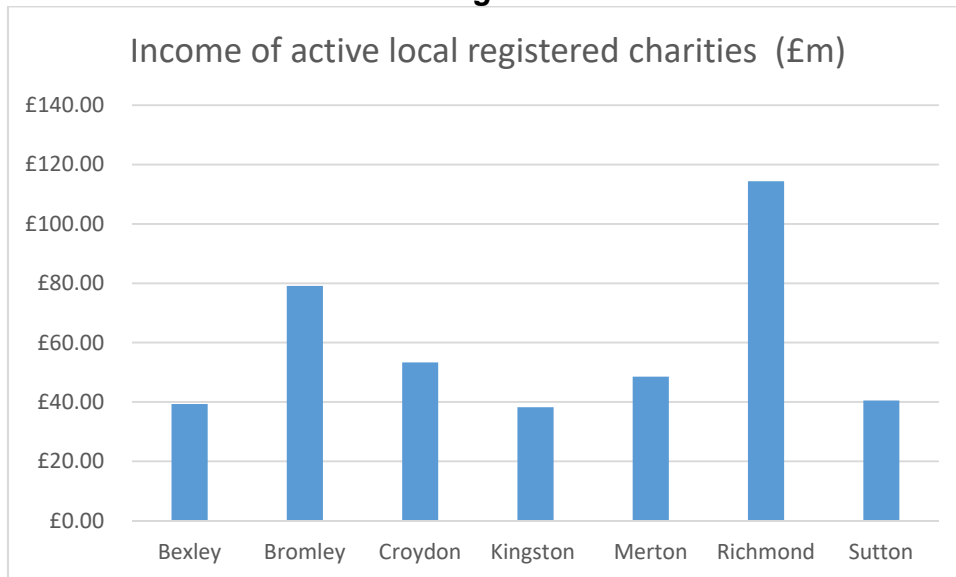
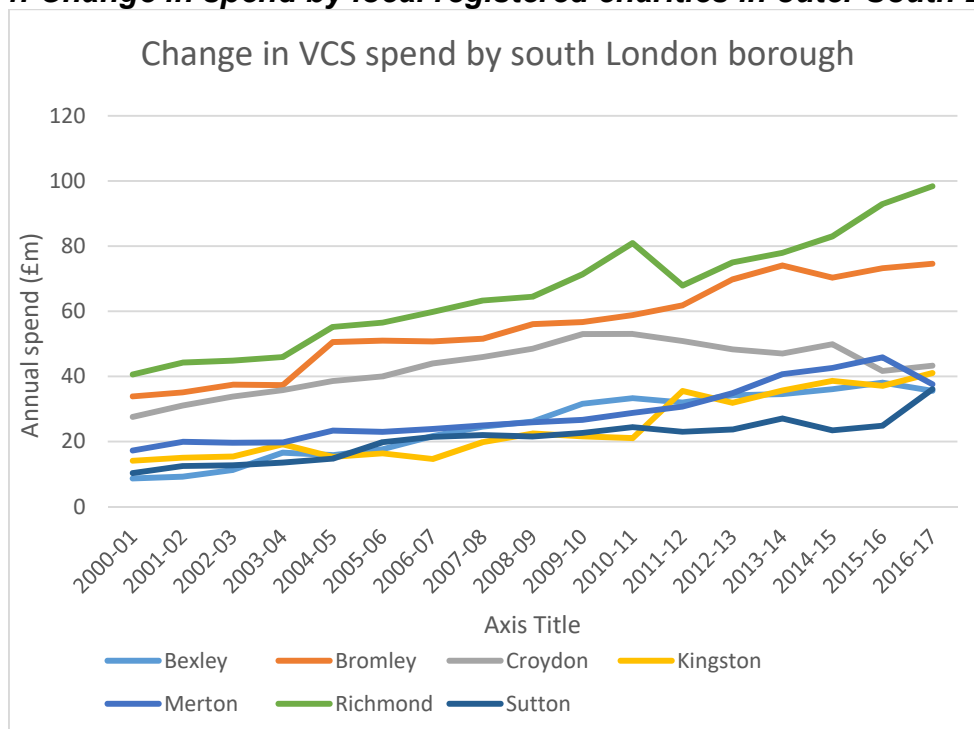


Chart 4: Change in spend by local registered charities in outer South London



3. CROYDON COUNCIL CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council adopted a new Corporate Plan in October 2018. This plan sets out the Council’s promises to residents, business and partners across nine priority themes. These are set out in Appendix 1 for ease of reference.
- 3.2 It should, therefore, be no surprise that there are multiple references to the VCS across the Corporate Plan. The VCS delivers significant services, support and advice to residents across a wide range of council services. The sector also supports community cohesion, empowerment and resilience.
- 3.3 In order to deliver the Corporate Plan, the Council is seeking to radically change the way services are delivered, with a strong focus on prevention and locality

based working. This approach is evidence-led, recognising that services need to differentiate to respond to the differing needs across the borough. It also recognises the importance of collaboration and community-based networks in order to succeed. The VCS therefore has a significant role to play in this new approach.

3.4 The Council is a strong contributor to the VCS in Croydon, providing significant funding and staff support through council teams, its commissioning and procurement function and its One Croydon partnership. It also funds infrastructure organisations (CVA, Asian Resource Centre Croydon, Croydon BME Forum and Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association) to deliver specialist support to the VCS. The table below summarises of some of the support provided directly and indirectly.

Table 1: Support provided to the VCS in Croydon

Council teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capacity within the sector • Identification of funding opportunities / bid-writing support • Administering ward budgets, discretionary business rate relief and rent subsidy programmes • Organising community events
Infrastructure bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building • Training • Identification of funding opportunities / bid-writing support • A specialist skills and employment service • Building local networks • Brokering support from other sectors • Co-ordinating engagement activities • Promoting equality and cohesion within communities
Commissioning and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the commissioning pipeline • Developing the commissioning policy, including commitments to social value including buy local • Engaging and supporting the VCS sector and local businesses to be part of the councils supply chain • Commissioning and contract management of Community Fund
One Croydon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Local Voluntary Partnerships (LVPs) model supporting people with complex needs in a locality and the link to social prescribing • VCS input into development of the models of care and commercial arrangements

3.5 However, there is no over-arching framework to inform the Council’s approach to working with and funding the VCS. Developing a VCS strategy provides an opportunity to provide a framework that informs funding priorities, our wider support for the sector and strengthens our relationship with voluntary and community sector organisations of all types and sizes.

4. COUNCIL FUNDING SUMMARY

4.1 The Council provides significant direct financial support to the VCS.

Community Fund

4.2 The Community Fund is a 3 year programme of grants that was originally awarded in September 2016. The Community Fund brought together a number of different grants programmes and VCS spend through a commissioning model. In December 2018 the Community Fund contracts were extended to 31 March 2020.

4.3 The Community Fund has a prevention focus and was commissioned against the Opportunity and Fairness Commission priorities:

- Vibrant, responsible and connected communities
- Connected borough where no one is isolated
- Supporting residents towards better times
- Leaving no child behind
- Finding homes for all

4.4 Funding was allocated for the three year period, with a declining amount each year, designed to encourage VCS organisations to seek alternative funding and improve sustainability. In 2017/18, total funding was £1.935m, which was granted to 31 VCS organisations. Grants range from £4,700 up to £270,000. 54% of funding was allocated to 5 organisations. Appendix 2 provides a visual of the funding allocation and a list of all organisations and allocations.

4.5 The procurement process involved a one stage, open tender process, which included a pre-qualification stage. Bids were managed through an electronic portal and were evaluated by two funding panels. Special dispensation is in place to pay VCS organisations (for the Community Fund only) quarterly in advance and to enable them to benefit from the premier supplier early payment programme at no cost to the organisations. Organisations were supported through the Council's P2P (Procure to Pay) processes to make payments, a time consuming exercise with organisations still needing significant support.

4.6 Performance monitoring uses KPIs that were included in the contracts. Formal monitoring is conducted on a quarterly basis. Contract management for the infrastructure organisations has been undertaken by Commissioning & Procurement Team, with the remainder being led by the respective service. Contract management has also been challenging and significant work has been required to shift a focus to outcomes rather than outputs. Monitoring is part of the Tier 1 reporting schedule, with an annual report to Cabinet.

Prevention Fund

4.7 The Prevention Fund focused on services aimed at the over-65s. Funded services include lunch clubs, befriending, outings, hospital transport and shopping services.

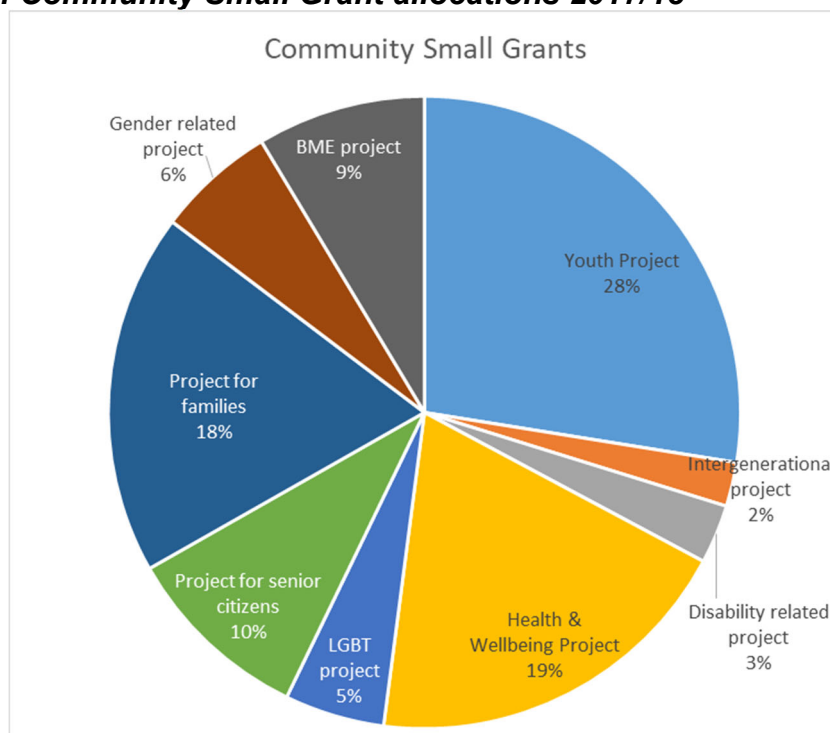
4.8 Under the Prevention Fund, £450k was allocated to 21 VCS organisations in 2017/18. Grants ranged from £1.4k up to £72k, with nearly 60% of funding allocated to 5 organisations. Appendix 3 provides a visual of the funding allocation and a list of all organisations and allocations.

- 4.9 The procurement process involved a one stage, open tender process, which included a pre-qualification stage. Bidding was managed through an electronic portal. A panel evaluated bids basing their evaluation on a 40/60 price/quality ratio. Contracts were awarded for three years and extended for a further two.
- 4.10 Performance monitoring was based on KPIs that were included in the contracts. Reporting is part of the Tier 1 reporting schedule. Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association monitors 17 contracts for the Council's Prevention Fund; small amounts are involved (c. £3,500).

Community Small Grants

- 4.11 Under the Community Fund, £100k per year is retained for small grants to VCS groups. Grants of up to £5k each are available through a simple application process. The grants are allocated up to 6 times per year to support community resilience, community development and sustainability. Chart 2 below shows how the small grants were allocated in 2017/18.

Chart 5: Community Small Grant allocations 2017/18



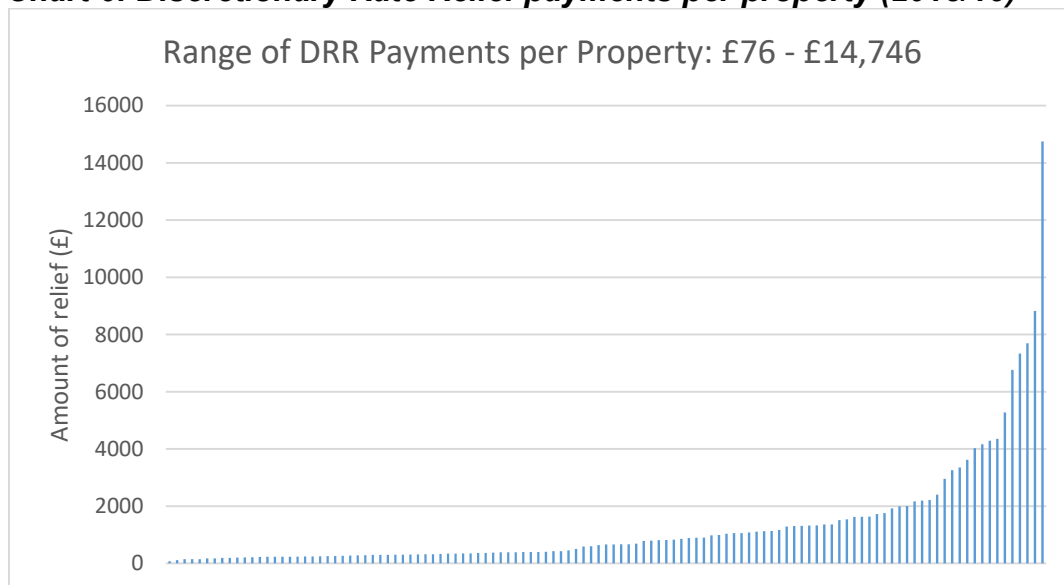
Premises and associated subsidies

- 4.12 Premises are a critical area of support for VCS organisations. They are also, however, an expensive resource that is often in short supply. The Council supports VCS organisations in a number of ways.
- 4.13 The Communities Team and Property Team work together to identify appropriate venues for VCS organisations. This includes seeking the right location and ensuring the building is fit for purpose. In order to improve the affordability for these premises, many are charged only a peppercorn rent (51 premises), or the Council provides Rental Grant Subsidy to support the premises costs.
- 4.14 The Council currently provides £247k in Rent Subsidy. This benefits a range of organisations including sports clubs, scouts associations, residents associations, youth and community centres as well as larger organisations such as the CAB,

Law Centre and CVA. Appendix 4 lists the organisations receiving Rent Subsidy and occupying properties at a peppercorn rent.

- 4.15 The Council also provides Discretionary Business Rate Relief (DRR) in addition to the 80% mandatory rate relief that may apply. In 2018/19 just under £156k was awarded. 112 organisations received the 20% top-up to their mandatory rate relief, whilst 5 payments covered 100% discretionary relief. Most of the payments were low value; however, nearly 50% of the total budget is paid to six organisations (see Chart 3). The budget is fully allocated against historic commitments, and the Council is therefore not able to consider any new applications for discretionary rate relief.
- 4.16 The Council's approach to premises related subsidy and support to the VCS has lacked an integrated approach, with no overarching quality monitoring system to ensure value for money for the Council's support. Currently there is no formal adopted policy or procedure for determining which organisations should benefit from rent subsidy and discretionary rate relief. Consequently there is no formal mechanism for ending current arrangements.
- 4.17 There are no criteria for assessing the community benefit of an organisation when deciding whether to award it DRR. Organisations that qualify for mandatory rate relief also qualify for top-up discretionary relief to provide 100% relief if they make a formal application, irrespective of whether they occupy a council owned property. The allocation is not time limited and there is no process for assessing performance. Four simple eligibility requirements are that the organisation is:
- Croydon based
 - set up as a not-for-profit organisation
 - meets basic requirements on governance, management, financial competence and equalities.
 - already funded by Croydon Council – we suggest this condition be revoked.
- 4.18 However, practice departs from these requirements in two respects:
- Despite the view that discretionary rate relief should be awarded to not-for-profit organisations only where it is part of a wider support package, currently 27 organisations receive DRR without any other form of funding.
 - Four organisations receiving DRR are not receiving 80% mandatory rate relief, suggesting that they do not meet the requirement of being set up as a not-for-profit organisation.
- 4.19 As with other financial support including from the Community Fund and rent subsidy, organisations applying for DRR must clearly show their commitment to Croydon's corporate priorities.

Chart 6: Discretionary Rate Relief payments per property (2018/19)



Community Ward Budgets

4.20 In addition to the above funding, each Councillor holds a Community Ward Budget of £8k per year. These budgets are a dedicated and flexible resource for supporting specific local issues within their Ward. The funding is intended to encourage activities that are independent and self-sustaining. The majority of these budgets is allocated to VCS organisations, including £67k to Residents' Associations, £39k to faith groups and £30k to 'friends of' groups in 2017/18.

Other sources of funding

4.21 There is also significant spend not covered by these grant schemes. The Council has a £400m annual commissioning budget and is working to increase opportunities for VCS organisations to bid to provide services in the same way as any other public or private sector organisation. In addition, since the Community Fund and Prevention Fund were allocated, additional funding has often been announced by Government (e.g. Best Start, Early Help Strategy initiatives). Delivery of many of these projects involve VCS groups.

4.22 The Council is not the only organisation that provides funding to the VCS in Croydon. The CCG has a significant VCS spend, with £4.7m in 2018/19. Through One Croydon Alliance, Local Voluntary Partnerships will be allocating £329k in small grants. The sector has also had success in bidding for funding from other organisations, such as Big Lottery, national grant schemes and the Mayor of London (e.g. MOPAC projects).

5. ENGAGEMENT

5.1 It is critical that a VCS strategy is informed by strong evidence and engagement with a range of VCS organisations across Croydon.

VCS Survey

5.2 In order to use the latest evidence and feedback, the Council has embarked on an engagement programme. In December 2018 the Council launched a survey to seek feedback from voluntary & community sector organisations. The survey was developed with input from across the Council, as well as through external

challenge from another council and meetings with the infrastructure organisations in Croydon.

- 5.3 The survey was hosted online through the ‘Get Involved’ section of the Council’s website. It was circulated through the Council’s existing VCS networks across all services. It was also shared via the VCS infrastructure organisations, which have regular newsletters, e-bulletins and network meetings.
- 5.4 The survey included questions across a range of issues:
- Challenges and opportunities
 - Support for the VCS
 - Service sector and beneficiaries
 - The size of VCS organisations
 - Financial matters
 - Geographical area of operation
- 5.5 Over 200 responses to the survey were received. It is difficult to confirm a response rate; as we encouraged organisations to forward the link to the survey, we do not know the total number of organisations it was sent to.
- 5.6 Appendix 5 provides a summary of some of the feedback received in the survey.

Engagement events

- 5.9 In addition, an engagement event was held on 22 January, attended by 89 representatives of VCS organisations and groups, both large and small. A wide range of needs groups and localities were represented. Another event is scheduled on 5 February.
- 5.10 The event included a number of questions that were considered in breakout group discussions. These questions are set out in Appendix 6. Comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to these questions are sought to inform the development of the VCS Strategy.

6 FINDINGS FROM VCS ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 A SWOT analysis has been produced based on VCS responses through the survey, engagement event and interviews (see Table 2).

Table 2: SWOT analysis of the VCS in Croydon

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passion and volunteers. • Resilient, given limited funding. • Able to access grants from other sources • People-oriented – listen to voice of user • Know their community and market: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reach places and people that statutory agencies cannot ○ act as mediator/link with community ○ increase community self-reliance ○ offer opportunity to get involved • Support people who fall below statutory service threshold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of VCS are unaware of funding available or lack bid writing and fundraising skills • Lack of skills to generate income • Staffing recruitment/retention due to low pay • Ability to expand services to meet demand • Governance: hard to attract skilled trustees • Many volunteers older/disabled; burn out. • Smaller organisations lack capacity to train volunteers • Unaware of other VCS services, limits partnership opportunities; risks duplication

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, personalised service: able to address complex needs • Focus on prevention and early intervention • Willing to collaborate, especially in a crisis, to counter hate crime • Faster: less red tape/governance rules • Lower costs (use of volunteers helps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership development (for some organisations)
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration within the VCS • Involving the community/service users • Delivery of statutory services through VCS (some resent this) • Work on employment and skills • Council/CCG commissioning • Social prescribing, Local Voluntary Partnerships • High volunteering rate in Croydon: tap potential of young people • Locality meetings – to gain knowledge of local provision and good practice. • Share back office functions and premises to cut costs • Sell services, let premises, crowd funding. • Cross-borough delivery. • Corporate Social Responsibility. • Regeneration of Central Croydon 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS (CHALLENGES)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding: trust funds tend to support new projects; core funding is a challenge. Turns collaborators into competitors • Premises – unavailable or costly • Increasing demand • Sustainability of volunteering: more people work or are carers; young people needed • Not enough support to recruit/train volunteers • Increased training requirements: GDPR, safeguarding, social media. • Disproportionate monitoring • Council staff turnover: loss of knowledge and silo working –don't think of overall impact of decisions.

6.2 The main observations and recommendations made by VCS respondents are set out below:

Funding

6.3 Some representatives were surprised at the range of VCS funding available and felt that the Council supported the usual recipients. A lack of funding turned potential collaborators into competitors: organisations might come together in partnership bids, but this might not continue into delivery. Lead bidders might not pass funding on.

6.4 Suggestions concerning funding included:

- Updating the Council website with funding streams, amounts, guidance, deadlines, support provided, contacts and Croydon Observatory data.
- The Council should provide core funding especially for VCS organisations delivering statutory services.
- Split infrastructure funding from the Community Fund to avoid a conflict of interest between bidding for funding and supporting smaller organisations to bid.
- List not just funding priorities, but localities where services are needed.
- Provide a list of organisations already funded and services provided to avoid duplication.
- Have a process proportionate to the funding involved, offer pre-application chats, bid-writing support and publicise the work of the Invest to Save Officer

- To support collaborative bids:
 - Provide pre-application networking events focussed on each Corporate Plan outcome and invite VCS organisations thinking of bidding for contracts that support that outcome
 - Allow time for partnerships and consortium bids to form
 - Provide access to community hubs
 - Arrange training, a toolkit and mentoring on developing and maintaining partnerships.

Premises

6.5 Affordable premises and free event space are major challenges for the VCS and the disappearance of the Community Space was a huge loss. The Council is not considered to be transparent about how and why organisations are allocated premises or receive rent subsidy or rate relief (DRR), when so many others do not receive support. Too much support was allocated on a historical basis. There was a strong call for clear guidelines that are communicated via the web page, so that all organisations have an equal opportunity to apply and understand how decisions are made.

6.6 The main suggestions were:

- Develop clear criteria, provide an opportunity to apply, and make time-limited (5 year?) allocations.
- Monitor performance/intensity of use of premises and have mechanism for ending leases in cases of unsatisfactory performance or usage.
- Provide a directory of venues, allowing VCS groups to offer/seek premises.
- Review council leases to allow sharing/subletting and offer some properties as hubs
- Encourage owners of long-term empty properties to offer them to the VCS free

Infrastructure support

6.7 Information on funding/commissioning opportunities was identified by survey respondents as the most common type of support being received. Support was also widely received for training, developing consortiums and developing funding bids. Generally, a high proportion of the support received was from Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) or Croydon Council, particularly for information on funding/commissioning opportunities and for premises (over half said support was received from Council or CVA) and training, developing consortiums and developing funding bids (just under half).

6.8 Overall only 51% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they receive from infrastructure groups and the council. However, almost three-quarters of organisations delivering services in New Addington/ Fieldway said they were satisfied or very satisfied. Those dissatisfied or very dissatisfied range between 8% and 15% across the borough, with the highest levels among organisations with Borough-wide, or North and Central coverage. Some respondents considered that infrastructure groups are not fulfilling their responsibilities. Respondents suggested that there is too little information about available funding; some specialist interest infrastructure organisations are not promoting the relevant groups; and the support provided does not warrant the membership fee, which was expensive for smaller groups.

6.9 Some VCS participants at the event said that insufficient support was available, while others said that there was not enough publicity, preventing them from taking up support that existed. Overall, a third of VCS organisations responding to the survey stated that their support needs were not being met. However, in organisations delivering services in North Croydon and New Addington/Fieldway, the proportion of stating their needs were not met was only 10%-15%. Further support needs were identified as:

- Sustainable funding, paid promptly, with sufficient notice of decisions
- Affordable premises
- Capacity building / business planning
- Up to date support contacts
- Advice, information, training and help with bid writing, fundraising and income generation
- Marketing, IT, social media, finance
- Sharing best practice, skills and knowledge.
- Sponsorship – matching VCS organisations with businesses interested in supporting community projects
- Partnership development, facilitation of collaboration.
- Recruitment and training of volunteers
- A peer review process.

6.10 There was a lack of knowledge of which VCS organisations deliver what services, with a widespread call for a directory of services. This was seen as having a dual impact:

- increasing risk of duplication and lessening opportunities for partnership
- leaving the public unaware of what is available.

6.11 Recommendations concerning infrastructure support included:

- the VCS Strategy should list and set out roles for infrastructure organisations, what the offer is and how VCS organisations can access it
- the Council should ensure that support promised was actually delivered
- a directory of support/training available from the Council and other organisations, supplemented by an email newsletter
- One organisation should be responsible for asset mapping – current arrangements involved duplication and time-wasting.
- Increase the frequency and publicity of training, particularly on bid writing and ways to enable the VCS to become more sustainable
- Capacity building ensuring accessibility for groups that may have a language barrier.

The Role of the Council

6.12 The survey and feedback in engagement events suggested that the Council should play a wide role in supporting the VCS sector:

- Facilitating collaboration and partnership, identifying useful contacts / connections
- Promoting the work, services and achievements of the VCS
- Providing access to space and premises that are affordable
- Providing information and signposting
- Recognising the importance and value of the VCS
- Funding

- Capacity building, allowing VCS to draw on advice and expertise
- Proportionate monitoring – with constructive feedback
- Challenging VCS organisations where the governance or services are poorly delivered and managed, or possibly duplicated.

6.12 The Council should link Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the VCS:

- Promote CSR to other organisations in the form of mentoring, sharing skills, access to low cost premises and reusable goods (like IT equipment and furniture) for local VCS organisations, and adopt it as Council practice. Have a webpage to advertise what is on offer.
- Make CSR support of VCS organisations a condition of funding agreements for larger organisations.

6.13 In addition to its current practice of enabling access to supply chain opportunities for local VCS organisations through its 'Value Croydon' approach, the Council should encourage local anchor organisations (such as the Police, hospitals and local colleges) to do the same.

Feedback from VCS infrastructure organisations

6.14 Interviews were conducted in November/December 2018 with the four infrastructure organisations in Croydon: Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA), Croydon BME Forum, Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA) and the Asian Resource Centre (ARC).

Partnership

6.15 There was a strong basis for partnership, but no setting for regular coherent VCS-Council dialogue. Council staff turnover was high, so there was limited continuity of knowledge of services or organisations and it was hard for VCS organisations to keep track. A wish was expressed for an equal level of partnership to be offered to infrastructure organisations by the Council.

6.16 Recommendations included

- Establish a regular corporate Council-VCS dialogue avoiding multiple separate dialogues, possibly involving Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group and Croydon University Hospital.
- Have a council 'Who's Who Directory' for the VCS
- Provide handovers for new staff about contracts & groups
- Continued partnership work with Council
- Council officers to continue sharing their skills with VCS: media team training on social media, marketing and communication; Communities team training on fundraising.

Funding

6.17 The question was how to resource the VCS strategically to ensure maximum impact. If funding priorities were changed after three years, it would be difficult to demonstrate the impact of funding decisions as outcomes were likely to become evident over a longer term (say seven years). It was thought that some funders believe the VCS can deliver services for little funding, ignoring the cost of venue, staff and volunteers. Paying staff low salaries (due to low funding) affects the calibre, skills and length of stay of staff. Organisations worry that social prescribing will overwhelm them with demand unless funding is increased. There was a concern also that One Croydon Alliance would focus exclusively on social isolation and mental health, when older people still need to be taken to the GP

and chemist.

6.18 The funding climate was seen as fostering competition between VCS organisations, when partnerships and consortiums are more effective. Some organisations were not skilled at winning funding bids, even though their work was good. They needed support. Other funding sources that can be tapped include Government programmes, the Lottery, the Bridge Trust, and the Council's Regeneration Team. However, trusts only fund new projects, not existing work and core costs. They rely on councils to fund salaries. Big trusts and the Lottery are very prescriptive in their criteria: one organisation said 75% of grant applications fail, so they avoided this source of funding.

6.19 Recommendations concerning funding included:

- Continue infrastructure organisation's leadership and brokerage between Council and small organisations to give groups confidence and enable them to engage with commissioning and monitoring
- Devolve grants budgets to VCS infrastructure organisations that know bona fide VCS organisations
- Provide a realistic level of funding for the outcomes sought.
- Train up community builders in each funded project, so Asset Based Community Development can continue sustainably
- In recommissioning the Community Fund consider how to maximise investment in Croydon
- Provide time in the commissioning process to set up workshops to develop partnerships and consortiums
- Tap into other funding: government programmes, Big Lottery, Trusts, work with the Council's Regeneration Team
- The Council should consider funding salaries; anonymous funders and non-trust money with no conditions can also help to support ongoing work
- Fund a tiered service to achieve better outcomes for older people in tiers 2 and 3
- The Council should involve infrastructure organisations when planning bids for the community
- Infrastructure organisations would continue to help organisations with funding bids, bid for external funding and earn fees from conducting training.

Monitoring.

6.20 Monitoring was regarded as disproportionate to the sums involved and sometimes the new data requests were made after the work had been done, overwhelming smaller groups. Council staff turnover meant that some officers did not know about the schemes concerned and were less effective at challenging performance. The Community Fund did not build in the capacity for infrastructure organisations to evaluate and learn from the schemes.

6.21 Recommendations concerning monitoring included

- Designing proportionate monitoring with a VCS organisation after funding has been allocated and before the service starts.
- If monitoring changes during a project, this should be acknowledged and agreed with the group before the relevant period has started.

- Centralise analysts so that an overall picture is achieved, not one by funding programme
- Celebrating the outcomes achieved by Community Fund projects.

Gaps in services

6.22 Social care: Croydon has a lot of Tier 1 services but very few Tier 2 and even fewer Tier 3, so there is no scope for transition as a person's condition changes (Tier 1 is for people who are walking, talking and able, with no cognitive impairment; Tier 2 is for those needing some support, walking aid, have had a fall, with early stage dementia or a long term condition such as COPD; Tier 3 is for the frail elderly, at a high risk of falls, housebound, with advanced dementia or incontinence. Possibly there is only 1 FTE service in Croydon: CNCA's complex befriending service)

6.23 Mental health: there was not enough early intervention and a suggestion that hospital stays were longer and medication administered stronger for people with BME backgrounds. Croydon BME Forum is working with South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. Mental health and dementia are taboo in Asian society. The ARC is aiming at coproducing services with agencies.

6.24 Young people: services should think of all young people, not just those in gangs, and work with them holistically as part of families, friendship networks and school. There was a lack of activities in Purley and Coulsdon.

6.25 Domestic abuse and sexual violence, honour killings and forced marriage. The ARC said that women were frightened of being recognised if they used the Family Justice Centre and so they used a discrete drop-in run by ARC.

6.26 Locality differences: Partnership work can be seamless in New Addington and North Croydon, but not as strong in other areas, so various approaches are needed. North Croydon has younger, working, less settled population with fewer volunteers, so more paid staff are needed. The South has a more settled population with more retired people and volunteers. They can afford smaller funded groups. They are affiliated with churches that offer premises at a low cost.

Content of the Strategy

6.27 The VCS Strategy should be a long term plan with consistent aims, sticking to the Opportunity and Fairness Commission's recommendations. The most important work for strategy is Partnership and Communications. It should recognise the massive VCS contribution to prevention in Community safety; health and wellbeing, social regeneration and localities. The needs of older people should be differentiated. The VCS would like to feel trusted by the Council, with the strategy celebrating the good news of level of volunteering in Croydon.

7. GOOD PRACTICE

7.1 A key part of the research phase has involved considering different Council's approaches to VCS Strategy, speaking with peers and reading national materials. This research provided practical insights around some familiar challenges, as well as serving to highlight areas of good practice. A summary is

set out at Appendix 6.

- 7.2 It was notable that the majority of councils did not have a VCS strategy. Greenwich took a similar approach to engagement, with a survey and events. Their strategy included an analysis of key issues, many of which have also been identified in Croydon, priorities, outcomes and objectives. In particular, Islington Council's VCS strategy stood out from the others due to its clarity and simplicity. They segment their VCS sector by income, structure, by activity, premises and location. This key information is used to inform how the Council can best interact with each organisation in order to best serve local needs and to further collaborative working. Both Islington and Greenwich recognise the need for wider support beyond funding, and the critical role of the VCS in working with local government.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Feedback from stakeholders, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee and staff.
- 8.2 The timetable has been developed to provide as much time as possible for organisations and groups from across the Voluntary & Community Sector to develop proposals and prepare submissions. This is in response to feedback received through the engagement process and previous tender processes.
- 8.3 The Council will engage with the Voluntary & Community Sector in April and May to develop the framework for commissioning. It is anticipated that the tender process for the Prevention and Community Funds will open in June.
- 8.4 Throughout the tender process the Council will offer support sessions and advice for any organisation that is considering a submission, or developing a submission.
- 8.5 The tender process is expected to close in November, with proposals evaluated and reported to Cabinet in December for decision. Decommissioning support will be provided between January and March 2020, with new contracts commencing from 1 April 2020.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 This report provides an outline of the VCS context in Croydon and the issues to consider in developing a VCS Strategy for Croydon Council. Significant engagement with the sector has taken place to inform this work.
- 9.2 Comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee are sought to inform the strategy. This includes the approach to VCS funding, the wider support for the sector and the content / priorities to include within the Strategy.

Appendices

<i>Appendix 1:</i>	<i>Corporate Plan Priorities</i>
<i>Appendix 2:</i>	<i>Community Fund 2017/18</i>
<i>Appendix 3:</i>	<i>Prevention Fund 2017/18</i>
<i>Appendix 4:</i>	<i>Rent subsidy and properties occupied at a peppercorn rent.</i>

Appendix 5: Summary of VCS Survey Results
Appendix 6: VCS Engagement Questions
Appendix 7: Other boroughs' VCS strategies

CONTACT OFFICER: *Gavin Handford, Head of Policy & Partnership*

Appendix 1: Corporate Plan Priorities

People live long, healthy, happy and independent lives

- More equal place
- Happy, healthy and independent lives
- Access to effective health services and care services

Our children and young people thrive and reach their full potential

- Safe, healthy and happy
- Aspire to be the best they can be
- High quality education and youth facilities
- More young people involved

Good, decent homes, affordable to all

- New homes, including genuinely affordable
- Decent homes, including private rented
- Avoiding homelessness

Everyone feels safer in their street, neighbourhood and home

- Reducing crime in partnership
- Tackling ASB
- Public protection

A cleaner and more sustainable environment

- Improve education and information
- Better air quality and recycling rates

Everybody has the opportunity to work and build their career

- London living wage, employ local, buy local
- Residents benefit from investment in Croydon
- Skills and training

Business moves here and invests, our existing businesses grow

- Transport, digital and social infrastructure
- SMEs thrive
- Thriving communities and high streets

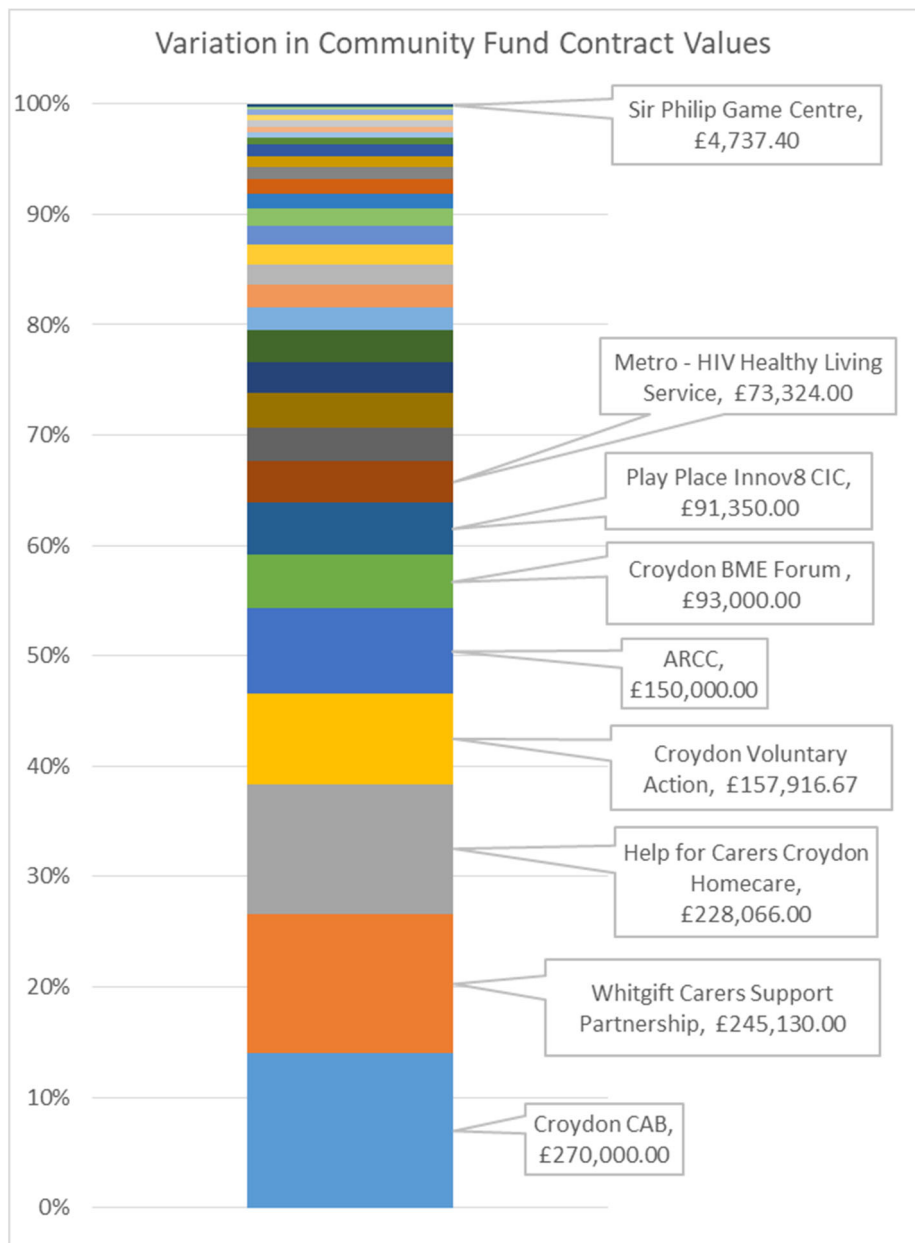
An excellent transport network that is safe, reliable and accessible to all

- Safe, reliable, accessible public transport
- Less reliance on cars

We value the arts, culture, sports and activities

- Places enhanced by cultural offer
- Good, affordable, accessible health and sports facilities
- Pleasant, thriving parks and open spaces

Appendix 2: Community Fund 2017/18



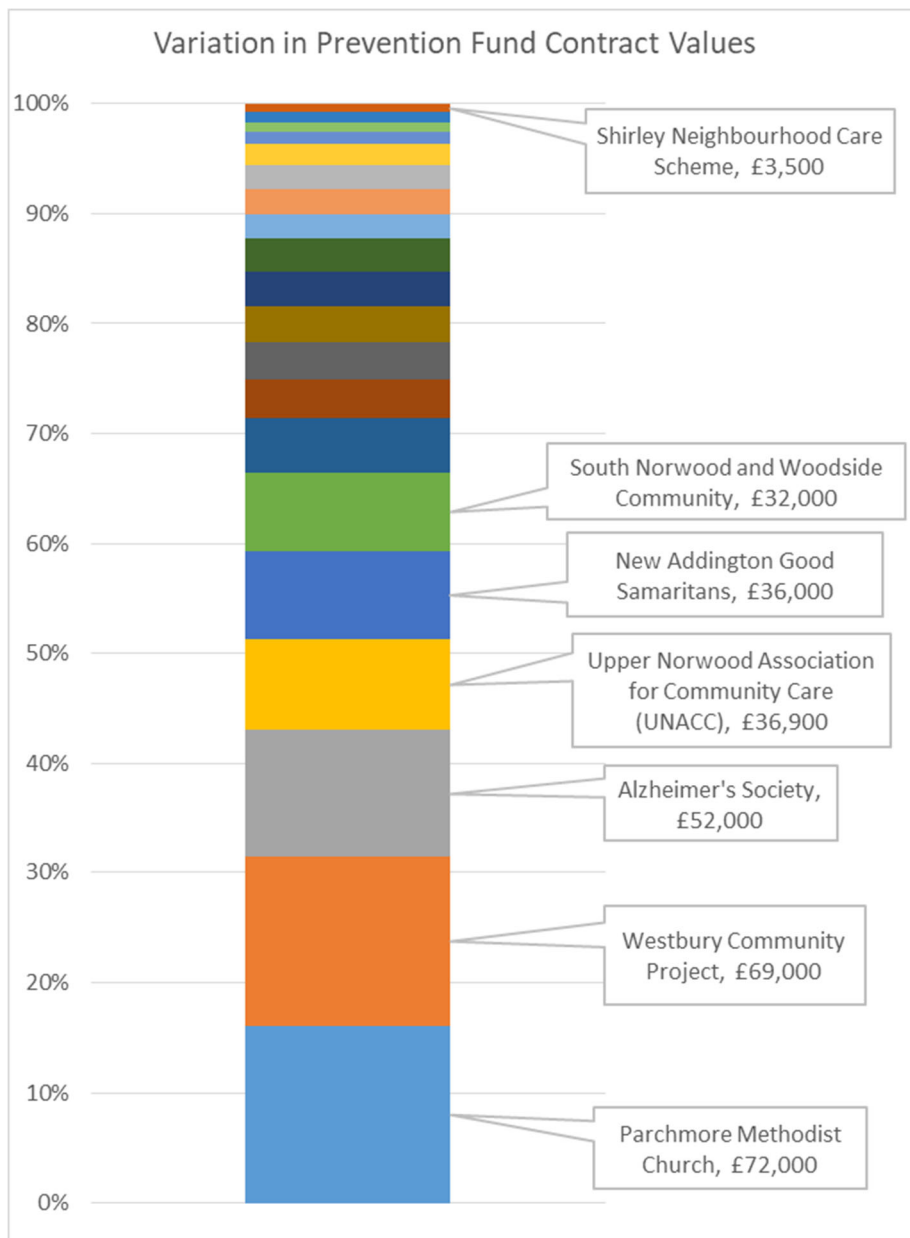
Community Fund Allocations 2016-19

Theme 1 - Vibrant Responsible and Connected Communities		
Organisation / Provision	Description	Total award
Croydon Citizens Advice	Housing, Welfare benefits and generalist advice service	£780,000
Croydon Voluntary Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering & Brokerage Support service • Capacity Building & Enterprise • Partnerships with Civil Engagement services 	£473,750
Asian Resource Centre of Croydon -	ABCD approach to delivering services to Asian groups in partnerships with grass roots	£470,000
Croydon BME -	Voice and Specialist Local Infrastructure Services	£169,500
Croydon BME	Forum partnership work with Diabetes UK Croydon	£90,000
Purley Cross Centre -	Community Gateway Information Service	£60,000
Croydon Borough Neighbourhood Watch Association -	Caring Communities - crime prevention / safety information and training	£15,000
Theme 2 – Connected Borough Where No One is Isolated		
Whitgift Foundation	Carers Support Partnership	£735,390
Whitgift Foundation	Carers Assessment Service	£390,000
Whitgift Foundation	Croydon Homecare: free short breaks	£294,198
Horizon Care and Welfare Association	Carer Support Service	£180,000
Croydon Accessible Transport	Accessible community transport (CT), training and vehicle pooling services	£105,000
Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association	Volunteer and Carers Community Outreach Service	£105,000

Organisation / Provision	Description	Total award
Royal Association for Deaf People	Deaf Choice in the Community - workshops, peer support and networking	£29,532
Theme 3 – Supporting Residents Towards Better Times		
Metro	HIV Healthy living service	£219,972
Mind in Croydon	Active Minds	£165,000
South West London Law Centres	specialist casework service on a broad range of social welfare	£99,000
Phase 1 Enterprise Training	Empowering Mothers of Croydon	£93,000
The Family Centre	inter-generational family and community hub supporting communities in Fieldway and New Addington	£75,000
Good Food Matters & Revivify Community Initiative	Food Skills for Life	£60,000
The Conservation Volunteers	The Croydon Natural Health Service (partnership)	£30,000
Theme 4 – Leaving No Child Behind		
Croydon Drop In (CDI)	- Talk bus Outreach health and information services	£180,000
Palace for Life Foundation	Develop through Sport - Community Programme	£120,000
Metro	Bridge: a holistic service for LGBTQ young people	£84,840
The Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre		£80,610
Play Place Innov8	The Family Community Fund Programme	£64,050
Play Place Innov8	Our Space - partnership approach to creating a strong community constructed youth offer	£210,000

Organisation / Provision	Description	Total award
St Francis Monks Hill		£36,999
Oasis Community Hub Ashburton Park	Developing Friends of Oasis Groups	£29,817
Reaching Higher	Full Circle Life Skills Programme - supporting care leavers who are transitioning into independent living	£15,000
Reaching Higher 2	Summer Blitz - engaging young people aged 12-16 in free positive activities	£15,000
Sir Philip Game Youth Centre	- fitness and health activities for young people	£14,212
Theme 5 – Finding Homes For All		
Croydon Community Mediation	Supporting Community Cohesion	£162,000
Crisis UK	Croydon Skylight - First Steps Away from Homelessness	£120,000
Total Allocations 2016-19		£5,861,870

Appendix 3: Prevention Fund 2017/18



Prevention Fund allocations per annum

Project name	Description	Funding per annum
Addiscombe Neighbourhood Care Association (ANCA)	Lunch club, activity classes, transport	£16,000
Alzheimer's Society	Support & Dementia Cafés	£52,000
Croham Hurst Good Neighbours	Lunch club, social outings, befriending	£4,000
Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation (CACFO)	Lunch club, activity groups, day trips	£15,150
Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association	Business Support & Community Link	£80,000
Croydon Vision	Lunch club, counselling, IT classes	£25,000
Eastern Oasis Luncheon Club	Lunch club, befriending, exercise classes, transport	£11,600
New Addington Good Samaritans	Lunch & coffee Club, activities	£36,000
Old Coulsdon Centre for the Retired	Lunch club, activities and escorted transport for those with limited mobility.	£10,000
Purley & Coulsdon Clubs for the Elderly (PACE)	Lunch club, transport	£22,000
Sanderstead Neighbourhood Care	Lunch club, befriending, home visits, hospital transport	£4,000
Selsdon Centre Trust	Lunch club, exercise classes, transport, entertainment/outings	£13,500
Selsdon Contact	Lunch club, visiting/befriending, library trips, carer support, transport	£14,000
Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme	Lunch club, hospital transport, befriending	£7,000
South Croydon Centre for the Elderly	Lunch club, befriending, carers respite, exercise/outings, activity classes, home visits, transport	£5,000
South Norwood and Woodside Community Association	Lunch club, entertainment/outings, activity classes, library	£32,000

Project name	Description	Funding per annum
	service, transport	
St Edmunds Caring Group	Lunch club, befriending, entertainment/outings, hospital transport, shopping	£1,350
The Parchmore Centre	Lunch club, activity classes, computer classes	£72,000
Topcare Network	Lunch & activities club, mental health support, carers support, volunteering opportunity	£8,500
Upper Norwood Association for Community Care	Lunch club, exercise classes, letter writing, carer support, shopping service, befriending	£36,900
Westbury Community Project	Lunch club, befriending, home visits, entertainment/outings, meals on legs	£62,100
Croydon 60 Plus	Lunch club, activity groups, exercise, art classes, IT classes	£1,600
CVA	Asset based community development in Thornton Heath.	£15,000
Shirley		£3,500
Croydon Vision		£10,000
Croydon 60 Plus		£1,600
Eastern Oasis		£1,600

Total: £561,400

Appendix 4: Rent subsidy and properties occupied at a peppercorn rent.

18 VCS organisations receiving rent subsidy (One organisation – Croydon CAB - is occupying a non-council property)

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Coulsdon Community Centre (aka Coulsdon Youth & Social Centre)	Chipstead Valley Rd, Coulsdon CR5 3BE	Council Building	Coulsdon Community Centre Association	£10,000
Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation	40 Northwood Rd, Thornton Heath CR7 8HQ	Council Building	Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation (CAFCO)	£10,000
22 & 24 Ramsey Court	122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF	Council Building	Croydon Caribbean Credit Union	£3,600
Croydon Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd	48 - 50 Portland Road, South Norwood	Non-Council Building	Croydon Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd	£25,000
17-20 Ramsey Court	122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF	Council Building	Croydon Community Mediation	£8,000
Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society	Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon	Council Building	Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society	£199
2a Garnet Road	Garnet Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8RD	Council Building	Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)	£2,500
Cornerstone House Community Centre	14 Willis Road, Croydon CR0 2XX	Council Building	Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)	£32,500
Waterside Centre	26 Avenue Rd, South Norwood SE25 4DX	Council Building	Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)	£35,000

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation, Shoestring Theatre	32 Cypress Road, London SE25 4AU	Council Building	Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation (CYTO)	£18,000
Darby & Joan Club	Harlow Hall, 14-16 Standford Road, Norbury SW16 4PR	Council Building	Darby and Joan Club	£5,850
Humdard Welfare Association Centre	Mayfield Road Scout Hut, Thornton Heath	Council Building	Humdard Welfare Association	£6,500
Longheath Community Care and Church Centre	49 Longheath Gardens, Croydon CR0 7TD	Council Building	Longheath Community Care and Church	£2,400
9-16 Ramsey Court	122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF	Council Building	Relate	£13,000
Samadoon Somali Development Organisation	47a Cromwell Road, Croydon	Council Building	Samadoon Somalis Development Organisation	£2,500
Farmfields Scout Hall	Farmfields Scout Hall	Council Building	Scouts 18th Purley	£255
Shirley Youth & Community Centre	Shrublands Avenue, Shirley CR0 8JA	Council Building	Shirley Community Centre Association	£14,250
Davis House	5th Floor Davis House, Robert St, CR0 1QQ	Council Building	South West London Law Centre	£40,000
West Thornton Community Centre	731-735 London Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 6AJ	Council Building	West Thornton Community Association	£15,000

6 properties directly managed, no rent charged to occupier.

Property Name	Property Address	Owners	Occupier	Rent subsidy Annual amount
Canterbury Road Astro turf	Canterbury Road, Croydon	Council Building	Directly managed	
Goldcrest Way Youth & Community Centre	Goldcrest Way, New Addington CR0 0PL	Directly managed	Directly managed	
New Addington Community Centre	Central Parade, New Addington CR0 0JB	Directly managed	Directly managed	
Waddon Way Youth Centre	Waddon Way, Croydon	Directly managed	Directly Managed	
Samuel Coleridge Taylor Youth Centre (SCTYC)	194 Selhurst Road, South Norwood	Directly managed	Directly managed.	
Winterbourne Youth Centre	28 Winterbourne Road, Thornton Heath	Directly managed	Directly managed.	0

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5 Community Asset Transfers

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Selhurst Astro turf	Dagnall Park	Council Building	Communities First Foundation	
Croydon Boxing Club	Norbury Park, Norbury	Council Building	Croydon Boxing Club	
Selsdon Community Hall	132 Addington Rd, South Croydon CR2 8LA	Council Building	Croydon Jubilee Church	

Stanley Halls	12 South Norwood Hill, SE25 6AB	Council Building	Stanley People's Initiative (SPI)	
Canterbury Road Community Centre	Canterbury Road, Croydon CR0 3HH	Council Building	Managed by Acorns 2 Oaks	

40 properties occupied rent free by VCS

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Community Suite, Thornton Heath Leisure Centre	High Street, Thornton Heath	Council Building	APASENTH (under hire agreement from CVA)	£0
Selsdon Contact	132 Addington Road, South Croydon CR2 8LA	Council Building	Contact	
Pond Cottage	Coombe Lane, Croydon	Council Building	Croydon Conservation Volunteers	
Heathfield Ecology Centre	Heathfield Estate, Coombe Lane, Croydon	Council Building	Croydon Ecology Centre	
Croydon School of Gymnastics, Strand House	Zion Road, Thornton Heath CR7 8RG	Council Building	Croydon School of Gymnastics (CroySog)	
Croydon Youth & Schools Sailing Association	Adj South Norwood Lake, Woodvale Avenue	Council Building	Croydon Youth & Schools Sailing Association	
Portland Road 44b	44b Portland Road, South Norwood SE25 4PQ	Council Building	Domino Club	
Fieldway Community Centre	Fieldway New Addington	Council Building	Fieldway Residents Association	

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Shirley Windmill & Visitors Centre	Post Mill Close, Upper Shirley Road, Croydon CR9 5AS	Council Building	Friends of Shirley Windmill	
Croydon Playcare, Gingerbread Corner	Grenaby Avenue, Croydon CR0 2EG	Council Building	Gingerbread (Croydon Playcare)	
Monks Hill Community Space	Adjacent to Quest Academy Monks Hill, South Croydon, CR2	Council Building	GLL	
Good Food Matters	Mickelham Way Allotments, New Addington	Council Building	Good Food Matters	
1-8 Ramsey Court	122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF	Council Building	Homestart	
Kingfishers	Fishers Farm, North Downs Crescent	Council Building	Kingfishers Association (aka Imagine Independence)	
Valley Park Healthy Living Centre	Franklin Way, Croydon CR0 4YD	Council Building	NHS	
Old Coulsdon Centre for the Retired	Grange Park Pavilion, Coulsdon	Council Building	Old Coulsdon Centre	
Whitehorse Manor Youth and Community Centre	Whitehorse Road, off Boulogne Road Croydon CR0 2LG	Council Building	Onside Youth Centre	
Phoenix Community Centre	66 Westow St, Upper Norwood SE19 3AF	Council Building	Phoenix Community Organisation	

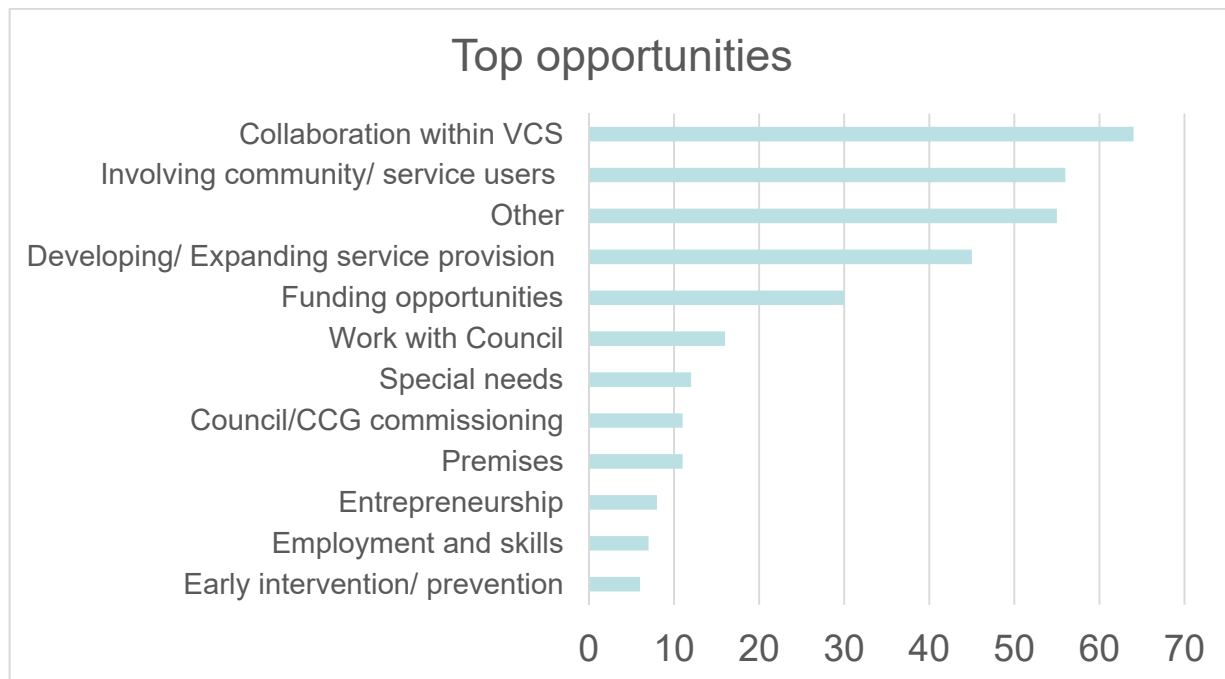
<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Regina Road Childrens Centre	110 Regina Road, SE25 4TW	Council Building	Portland Bill Pre School	
Salcot Crescent Scout Hut	Salcot Crescent, New Addington CR0 0JJ	Council Building	Salvation Army	
Land in Fourth Drive(Fourth Drive Scout Hall)	Land in Fourth Drive (Fourth Drive Scout Hall)	Council Building	Scout Association Trust Corporation - Baden Powell House	
Bears Wood Scout Camp	Bears Wood Scout Camp	Council Building	Scout Association Trust Corporation - Mr E E Stevern	
Pinewoods Scout Camp	Pinewoods Scout Camp	Council Building	Scout Association Trust Corporation - Mr M Batsford	
Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (0.2 Acre)	Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (0.2 Acre)	Council Building	Scout Association Trust Corporation (1st Coulsdon Scout Group - Mr D Garrod)	
Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (1.5 Acres)	Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (1.5 Acres)	Council Building	Scout Association Trust Corporation (1st Coulsdon Scout Group - Mr D Garrod)	
12th Caterham Scout Group Parsons Pightle Cou	12th Caterham Scout Group Parsons Pightle Coulsdon	Council Building	Scouts 12th Caterham	
Dunley Drive Fieldway	Dunley Drive Fieldway	Council Building	Scouts 15th Selsdon & Addington Scout Group	

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Farmfields West Side Sanderstead	Farmfields West Side Sanderstead	Council Building	Scouts 18th Purley	
Hillars Heath Road Scout Hut	Hillars Heath Road Scout Hut	Council Building	Scouts 24th Purley Scouts	
Kings Walk Scout Hall	Kings Walk Scout Hall	Council Building	Scouts 2nd Hamsey Green Scout Group	
Selsdon Primary & Secondary Schools Selsdon (land and right of way)	Selsdon Primary & Secondary Schools Selsdon (land and right of way)	Council Building	Scouts 2nd Selsdon Scout Group	
Endeavour Hall (Adjacent 271) Norbury Crescent	Endeavour Hall (Adjacent 271) Norbury Crescent	Council Building	Scouts 67th Croydon Scout Group	
Alverston Gardens Scout hut	Alverston Gardens Scout hut	Council Building	Scouts 9th Croydon	
Alverston Gardens Scout Hut-Air Raid Shelter	Alverston Gardens Scout Hut-Air Raid Shelter	Council Building	Scouts 9th Croydon	
Plough Lane, 1st North Wallington Scout Hall	Plough Lane, 1st North Wallington Scout Hall	Council Building	Scouts L B Sutton/1st N Wallington Group Boy Scouts	
Sir Philip Game Centre	38 Morland Road, Croydon CR0 2BX	Council Building	Sir Philip Game Centre; part sublet to Croydon Judo Club	
Timebridge Centre	Fieldway, New Addington CR0 9AZ	Council Building	Timebridge Association	

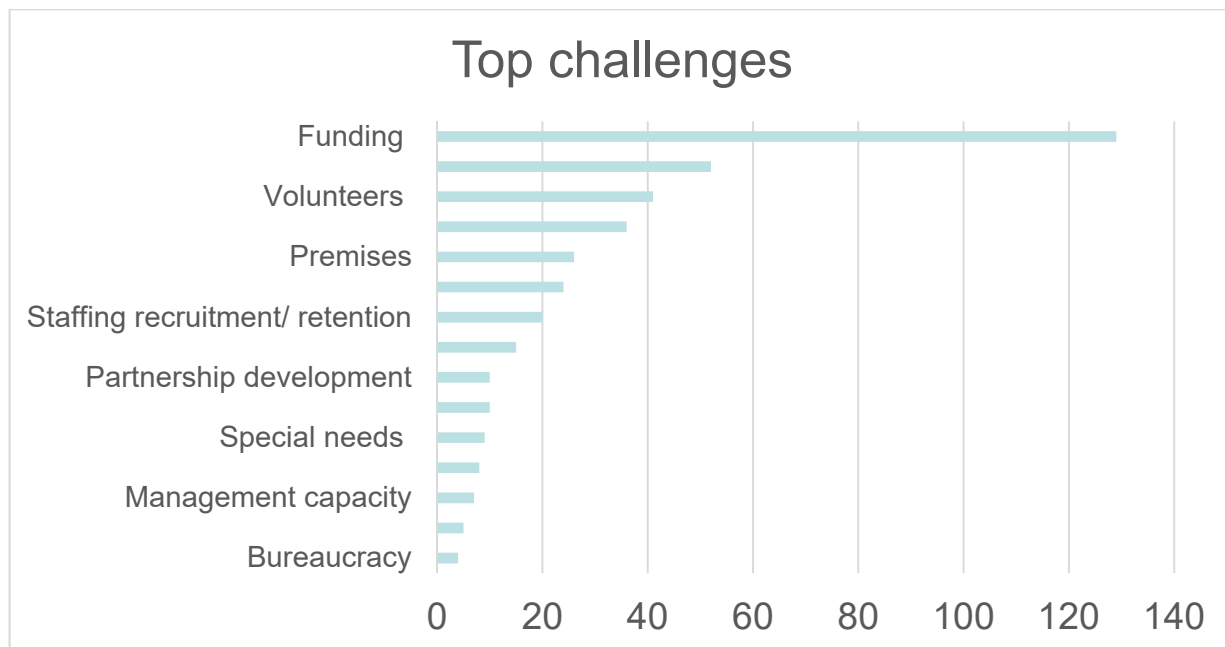
<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Property Address</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Occupier</i>	<i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i>
Norwood Grove Mansion	Norwood Grove, Gibson's Hill, Upper Norwood SE19	Council Building	Various	
111 Chertsey Crescent, New Addington	111 Chertsey Crescent	Council Building	Various including: Brenda Kirby Cancer Care, 7th Day Adventist Church, Centre of Change, New Addington Women's Centre	
Cherry Orchard Centre	Cherry Orchard Road, Addiscombe	Council Building	Whitehorse Manor Trust	

Appendix 5: Summary of VCS Survey Results

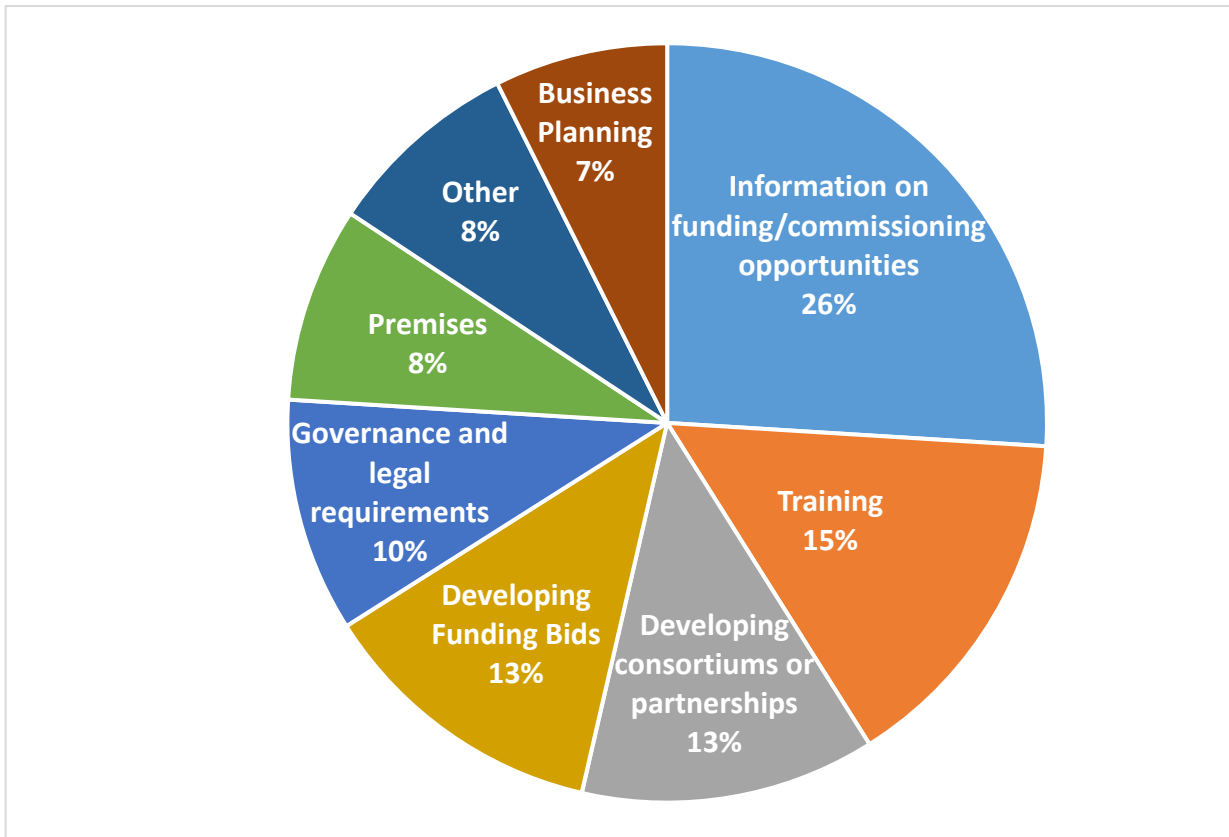
What are the top opportunities for the VCS in Croydon?



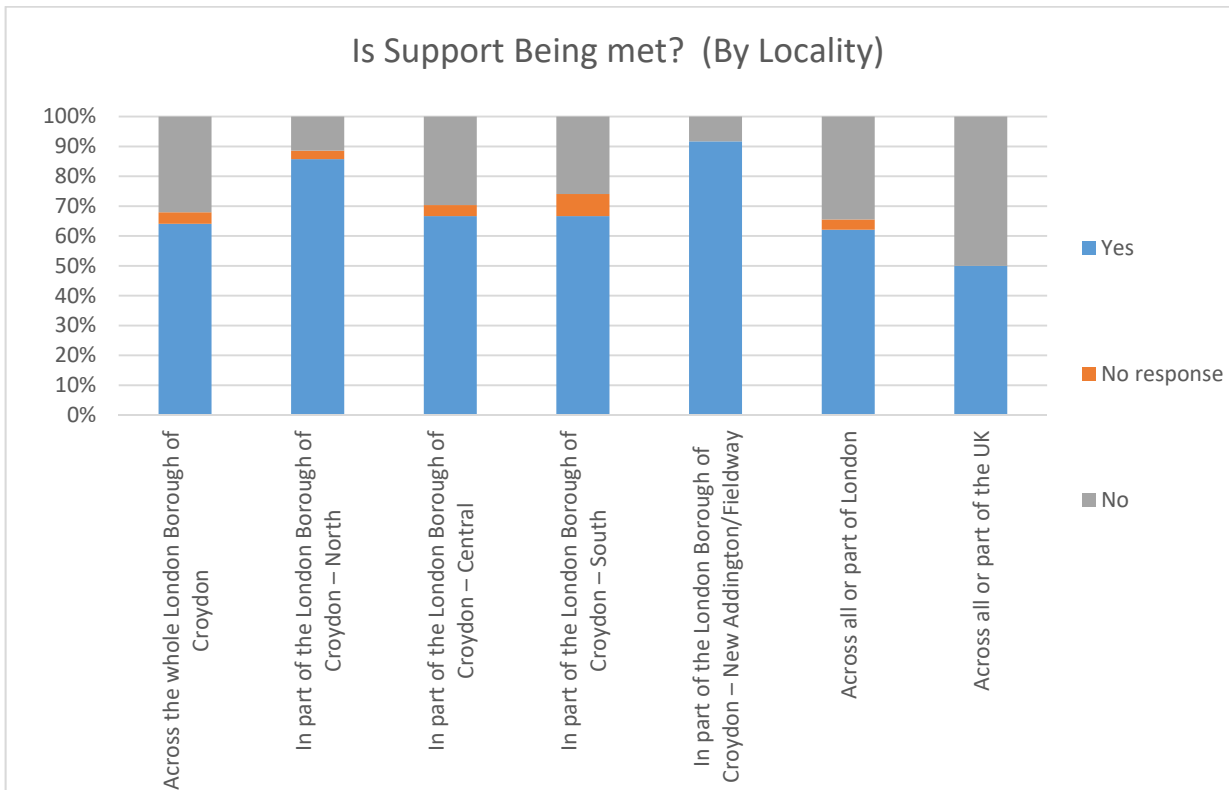
What are the main challenges for the VCS in Croydon?



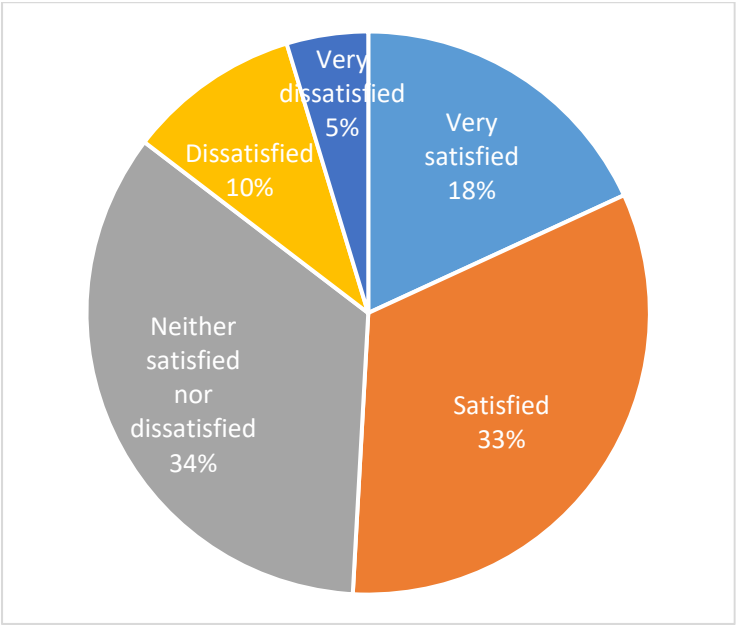
What infrastructure support have you accessed?



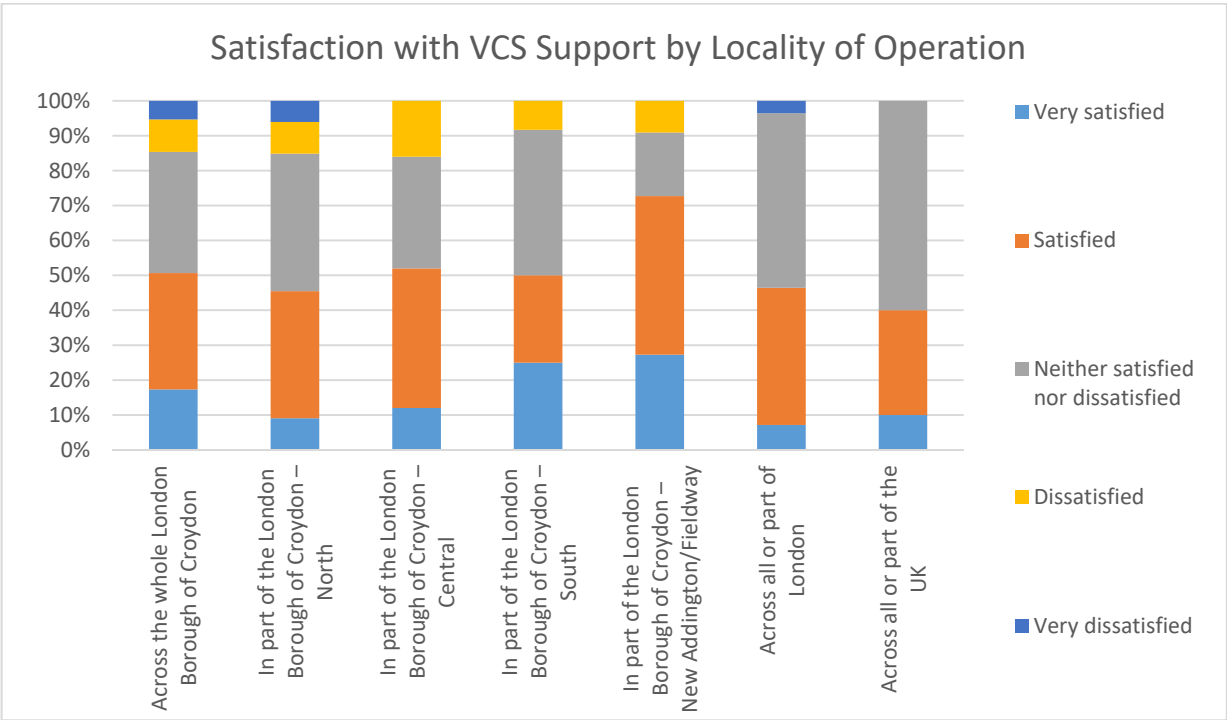
Infrastructure support needs met by locality of service delivery?



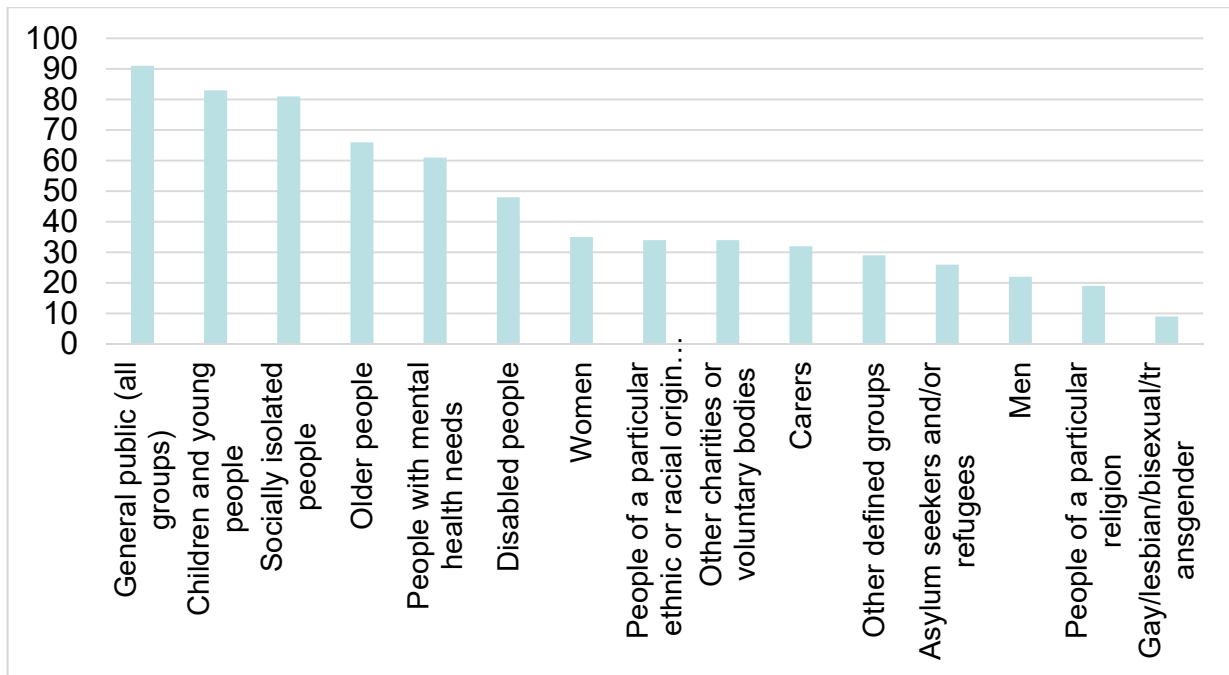
Satisfaction with Infrastructure Support



Satisfaction with Infrastructure Support by Locality



VCS Client Groups



Appendix 6: Other boroughs' VCS strategies

Borough	VCS Strategy's aims and objectives
Islington	VCS strategy segments the VCS sector by size (measured by their income), structure, location and what they do. Next, this information was used to inform a tailored approach to each organisation. Consultation on Council support to local VCS took place in 2016. It mostly focussed on Community Fund programmes, 70% of groups who attended were already supported by this fund. Some 700 local organisations including small groups engaged with or received some type of support.
Greenwich	VCS strategy developed in 2017 to support key priorities of premises, funding, collaboration, volunteering, business engagement, maximising benefits of technology whilst ensuring digital inclusion. They are looking for ways to do more with less and ways in which VCS could work in closer partnership with one another. In 2018, a new grants package was recommissioned, council owned community centres and information and advice services are also being reappraised.
Ealing	Do not have a VCS Strategy. However, in November 2018, a £2.14m grants programme was awarded over 4 years with a view to start in 04/19. This is the same amount that was awarded last time. The focus has been about managing the funding gap and a future process of funding through stronger commissioning/contracting arrangements.
Barnet	Do not have a current VCS Strategy, but intend to develop one via their community participation strategy - Barnet Together. Use a 'Community Benefit Assessment Tool' (CBAT) to assess how much business rates relief organisations are awarded. The principle is to ascertain the 'social value' of an organisation's work/output. This is done using a long calculation to determine this against the rent cost that the group pays towards rent (not service charges) for a period of five years. After this period, the presumption is that the group should have built up its financial reserves and is able to stand on a more financially stable footing. Barnet have created their own VCS infrastructure group and also manage the Barnet Giving funding pot. Crowdfunding success and take up has been limited but they are still putting on workshops.
Hackney	VCS strategy is currently being developed with VCS by exploring challenges and opportunities. Feedback suggests consultation has helped sector take stock of challenges and explore ways to address them. In June 2018, the Council launched Hackney 'A Place for Everyone' VCS grants programme for 19/20. This prospectus gives information about funding streams, eligibility criteria and how to apply. Engagement has helped the Council develop a better understanding of the sector's resilience, views on intervention and support needs. The Council also ran a survey to obtain feedback on the main grant application process. This helped them to make appropriate changes to application process and improve experience for future application rounds.

Borough	VCS Strategy's aims and objectives
Barking & Dagenham	No longer have a grants program at all, but £60k is committed for new homes in the next year. They have a local lottery and a crowdfunding programme. 'Participatory City' is spending £8M and council report it is going well with forty projects started, and two hubs opened which are providing lots of opportunities for residents to help themselves.
Harrow	Grants programme has ended. £25k has been distributed for crowdfunding. Looking at Community Lottery which is going to cabinet for approval.
Kensington & Chelsea	Their grants programme was due to end in 2019 but will now be most likely extended until 2020. How it is delivered and what is delivered may change. Community Centres may change. Their Grenfell fund and other grants funds are being considered for merging. They are listening to forums, lots of effort is being made to engage with local residents. Ward councillors' budgets are working well.
Hounslow	Do not have a current strategy, but one is being drafted. Council is under substantial financial challenges and some changes will be made. VCS sector priorities will be addressed when the budget is finalised and are likely to extend existing community funding for now. Community Engagement Strategy/Hounslow Giving 'Crowd Funding has another year of funding at £30K pa.
Brent	<p>Policy on Discretionary Rate Relief Local charities are awarded 20% discretionary relief, and non-local charities are awarded 5% relief. National charities are regarded as being in a better position financially to pay the 20% balance. Non-profit making organisations are limited to 25% relief. In exceptional circumstances this can be increased.</p> <p><i>Brent considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation provides facilities that indirectly relieve the council of the need to do so or enhance or supplement those that it does provide • The organisation should provide training or education for its members • It should have facilities provided by self-help or grant aid • It should demonstrate a major local contribution • Policies on equal opportunity, freedom of access and membership • Clarity on which members of community benefit from the organisation's work • Governance requirements • No unauthorised indebtedness to the Council or conviction for unlawful activities.

Borough	VCS Strategy's aims and objectives
Lewisham	<p><u>Policy</u> on business rates reductions and relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary relief awarded only to community organisations eligible for mandatory rate relief: registered charities, community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) and Charitable Community Benefit Societies. Property must be wholly or mainly used for these purposes. • Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ non-profit making organisations that are not registered charities or CASCs ○ charity shops and cafés operated by trading arms of charities, ○ housing associations ○ buildings used mainly for worship or to promote religious belief, ○ bodies operating a restrictive membership policy ○ profit making organisations ○ empty properties ○ car parking spaces ○ social clubs. • Eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 85% + of beneficiaries must be borough residents ○ Link with Council priorities (Community Strategy) ○ Adherence to Equality Act 2010. ○ For discretionary rate relief of over £25,000, council will set service outcomes. • Award limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As budget is limited, number of eligible organisations will exceed budget available ○ Awards capped based on rateable value; priority given to organisations with lower rateable value: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ eligible organisations will be ranked on their rateable value from lowest to highest. ▪ Discretionary rate relief will be allocated to organisations (starting with lowest rateable value on the list) until the budget runs out. ○ Cap level will vary each award year dependent on applications received. • Application and decision process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discretionary rate relief is awarded for one year. Organisations must reapply each year.

Borough	VCS Strategy's aims and objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Application form and accounts submitted in October for following financial year ○ Delegated authority on awards of up to £10,000; cabinet approval needed for £10,000+ ○ Decision letter to organisations by 31 January; no appeal.
Tower Hamlets	<p>Policy on council buildings leased to VCS organisations</p> <p>Principal lease terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licence offered where organisation does not need or have exclusive use of a building full time • Length of lease: 3-5 years; up to 25 years, with landlord break clauses, if this enables organisation to obtain funding. Term to match length of Council funding period if this is sole source of funding. • Rent: Open market value based on permitted use; peppercorn rent only for recognised tenants and residents associations using a building that is part of the Housing Revenue Account • Outgoings: Tenants responsible for all charges for services, statutory testing, internal redecoration and security. • Council conducts basic repairs and redecoration and insures building only, recovering costs via service charges. • Subletting: Tenants encouraged to allow bona fide groups to use accommodation – part of assessment of community benefit; Lease requires group to enter into a Council-prescribed licence with the tenant • Break clauses: Landlord option to end lease if property required for redevelopment, etc.; Tenant break clause so it can respond to changes in its financial/other circumstances <p>Dissemination of best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good VCS organisations are encouraged to mentor other groups or take over other buildings in the area <p>Community benefit rent reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent reduction of up to 80% of rent for eligible VCS organisations providing a demonstrable community benefit • Available to VCS organisations with lease of 3-5 years, unless they receive funding through a Council contract. • Where a VCS organisation derives part of its funding from economic activity, the Council may offer 40% or 20% rent reduction according to the proportion of the organisation's activity that has a community benefit

Borough	VCS Strategy's aims and objectives
	<p><i>Eligibility criteria</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS organisation must demonstrate that it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community-led ○ Properly constituted, with good governance ○ Capable of sustainably, legally and safely managing an asset and delivering services ○ Delivering social, economic, environmental benefits, linked to Council's priorities ○ Embracing diversity, improving community cohesion, reducing inequalities ○ Willing to offer space and support to smaller groups <p><i>Monitoring and review</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility for community benefit reduction is reviewed annually for the duration of the lease (every 6 months for organisations paid over £20,000 in rent reduction). If an organisation is no longer providing community benefit, it will be required to pay full rent. <p><i>Organisations ineligible for rent reduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Care and Playgroups – rent reduction would hide the cost of providing care. • Faith groups where buildings are solely used for religious services or services limited to the congregation • Organisations wholly engaged in economic activity • Organisations whose rent is met through their current Council funding • Organisations with leases of less than three years and longer than 5 years. • Organisations that only pay ground rent • Organisations with any agreement with Council that is not a standard lease. <p><i>Proportionate rent reduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rent reduction policy excludes organisations engaged in economic (commercial) activity, as it may be considered unfair for the Council to distort competition through such subsidy. However, the exception will be when part of the organisation's use of premises (defined by floor area or time used) is solely applied to activity which has a community benefit.

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For general release

REPORT TO:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11th February 2019
SUBJECT:	Development of a Culture Plan and a Libraries Plan for Croydon
LEAD OFFICERS:	Shifa Mustafa, Executive Director – Place
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Oliver Lewis Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Councillor Oliver Lewis

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item has been identified by the Scrutiny Sub Committee as an area of scrutiny.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To provide comment and inform the development of the Culture Plan and a Libraries Plan for Croydon Council.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Both a Cultural Plan and a Libraries Plan are currently in development for Croydon and due to be agreed at the May Cabinet later this year. Both will respond to the current challenges and opportunities for these areas and build on the strengths and achievements. This report outlines current provision as a background report to the SWOT analysis presented at committee and sets out the draft priority themes of both plans.

2 A cultural plan for Croydon

- 2.1 The support of culture in Croydon within the context of the regeneration taking place has been a priority over the last 3-5 years. The focus during that time has been on activity; the major redevelopment of the Fairfield Halls and securing an operator for its future, on supporting the cultural sector in Croydon and creating opportunities for it to grow, on the consolidation and development of a calendar of cultural events and on building partnerships both in and outside of the borough. The development of a Cultural Plan for the Borough is now timely, to build on this growing groundswell of activity and create a framework for activity for the next 5-10 years. There is much on which to build, but there are also gaps and challenges.

Cultural calendar

- 2.2 Croydon has a growing and strengthening cultural sector and cultural calendar. The programme of events in Croydon over the last year have built on the success of the year before and a strong annual, regular programme is emerging. The events are at a range of scales with some events, such as Croydon Pride and the International Mela, returning and some new or one off such as the Peace Festival in the summer

and the programme of events to mark the armistice for 2018. For 2019 there is already a healthy looking cultural calendar of returning events and some new ones such as Cro Cro Land, a music festival of mainly guitar bands aiming for a gender balance both on and off stage and featuring both local and national bands.

- 2.3 Croydon's many parks and open spaces have an important role as cultural spaces where communities can come together to celebrate and enjoy performance, activities and events. Larger scale events held last year included the Butterfly Effect Festival at Lloyd Park, Croydon Pride and the Croydon Mela in Wandle Park. Smaller scale events have also taken place across other parks including the Environmental Fair and Summer of Love Festival in Wandle Park for example. 2019 sees the launch of another major and large scale outdoor event for Croydon, the 3 day music festival The Ends for Lloyds Park at the end of May.

Cultural Partnership Fund

- 2.4 The quantity and quality of bids for external funding from the cultural sector has grown and this success is largely attributable to the establishment of the Cultural Partnership Fund which has been in place since 2016. This was launched to help bring more funding into the arts in Croydon and so far **£219,443** awarded in grants which has levered in **£709,143**. That totals almost £1million in investment into the arts in Croydon over the two year period with a leverage bringing in over 3 times as much as the initial investment. The grant scheme has also provided a basis to launch a corporate sponsorship which was done as part of Croydon's bid to be the first London Borough of Culture and 5 companies joined the scheme immediately at that point.

Bids and partnerships

- 2.5 Croydon was not successful in its bid to be the first London Borough of Culture for 2019, however, the fact that the borough was able to bid and put together a credible programme was a sign of the growing strength of the cultural sector and partnerships. The work undertaken to develop the bid and the partnerships to deliver it was a valuable exercise which created a foundation for the formation of the Cultural Network which meets quarterly and whose membership numbers over 100. It also provided the basis for 2 subsequent bids: the GLA funded Creative Enterprise Zone in which Croydon was successful and a bid to the Arts Council for a scheme to support a performing arts programme for young people who have faced barriers to participation in the arts.
- 2.6 Croydon was successful in becoming one of the first of 6 Creative Enterprise Zones named by the GLA and the funding and the designation will enable a programme of support for the creative and cultural industries in the heart of Croydon's area of regeneration.

The total financial investment in Croydon for Creative Enterprise Zones is circa £1m.

This investment is made up of two elements :-

- £0.5m has been directly awarded to Croydon for the Creative Enterprise Zone Programme, to enable growth of arts in the Borough.
- A further £0.5m will be directly invested in Croydon by the GLA to procure training and development opportunities for new creative business.

Fairfield Halls

- 2.7 Fairfield Halls opens in September of this year under the operation of BHLive, a

social enterprise with a portfolio of other interests including the Bournemouth international Conference Centre and the Bournemouth Pavilion in addition to leisure and sports centres. Plans and partnerships are now well advanced under the leadership of the new venue director Neil Chandler, for a full programme in all of the venue spaces including a programme of free event in the main foyer space which is to be renamed the Arnhem Foyer. The impact of the Fairfield Halls for Croydon will be very significant both in terms of the offer for residents and visitors, the direct and indirect economic impact and the effect on the reputation and profile of the borough. A number of companies will be resident in the venue including Savvy Theatre Company, an integrated theatre company with mixed ability performers and participants.

Museum, Galleries and Archives

- 2.8 Croydon Museum, Galleries and Archives, is approaching the time when it can reapply to the Arts Council for accreditation, having lost this nearly 5 years ago. Following a review of the Accreditation System by Arts Council, officers are in discussion with the Arts Council museum lead to plan out the process and timetable for us in Croydon, including the implications of the review. This, coupled with involvement in the plans, currently at an initial stage of redesign, for the spaces and the way they are used in the Croydon Clocktower will be the main area of focus for the Museum, Archive and Gallery service going forward.

Croydon Clocktower

- 2.9 A redesigned Croydon Clocktower would be a significant piece of cultural and social infrastructure for a regenerated town centre. The plans for the Croydon Clocktower will add to the capacity of the gallery provision in particular and create opportunities to refresh the museum offer. It would also reconfigure the use of space in the central library to reflect the needs of users today and provide a suitable flagship library for the main central library of the service described below.

Cultural Plan draft priority themes

- 2.10 A Cultural Plan for Croydon is currently in development and is scheduled to be taken to Cabinet for approval in May of this year. There have been a number of engagement sessions on a Cultural Plan for Croydon with the Croydon Cultural Network, with over 100 students from Croydon College and a policy development session with Members. The current draft priority themes are as follows:

2.10.1 Inclusion: This theme will cover all aspects of inclusion and access to culture and the arts for all communities; what needs to be in place to tackle barriers to participation and to try and ensure as diverse a range of provision in the borough as possible.

2.10.2 Investment: This theme acknowledges the importance of the role culture plays in supporting both direct and indirect economic impact for Croydon. It will also cover the role of culture and creative industries in creating jobs and supporting routes to employment.

2.10.3 Infrastructure: This theme covers aspects of the buildings and venues, spaces and places that might be supported in the development of a cultural plan for the borough. This would range from the large scale refurbishment of the Fairfield Halls in the town centre to spaces for outdoor performance or studio and production spaces across the borough. It also covers support to the cultural sector, networking opportunities or training provision for example.

2.10.4 Young people: The inclusion of this theme is in response to the particular demographic in Croydon being the Borough with the largest population of under 25s. It also responds to the policy context for the local authority in prioritising opportunities for young people.

3 Libraries: the current service

- 3.1 There are 13 Croydon libraries including the main central library in the Croydon Clocktower. Just over a year ago, Croydon's library service was brought in house to the council when Carillion PLC, the previous provider, went into liquidation.
- 3.2 The provision of libraries is fairly evenly spread across the borough and just over 15% of Croydon's population are active library users. Croydon libraries are comparatively well used when compared to outer London in general, with above average visits per capita. The pattern of usage is more akin to inner city areas, with less borrowing per customer but more PC usage, and other types of usage likely to be higher.
- 3.3 Nationally, library usage is changing, library footfall and books loans are decreasing and these trends appear in Croydon too. Over 700,000 books are borrowed each year, with just under half of those being borrowed by under 16s, but approximately 50% of library visits in Croydon do not result in a book loan. The purpose of visits over the same 12 month period included:
 - Over 200,000 sessions using library computer
 - Over 100,000 visits to events and activities in libraries
 - 35,000 visits to under-5s Rhymetime sessions
 - Over 1,500 attendances at Work Club
 - Over 1,000 visits by older people to one-to-one IT skills improvement sessions
- 3.4 The Central Library is busiest with around 900,000 visits annually, followed by Thornton Heath with around 180,000. The least visited library is Sanderstead with 36,000 visits in 17/18. In terms of children and young people over 10,000 children visited libraries with their school class and 30% of existing users are under 16.
- 3.5 Libraries have received £212k of capital funds in 18/19 for the development of plans, pilot studies and a full business case for capital improvements across the service over the coming four years.

South Norwood Library: a case study

- 3.6 The development plans for South Norwood Library are one example of the kind of change needed at a more advanced stage, as the current building is no longer fit for purpose. Due to open in 2019, the new library at South Norwood will showcase a modern library facility which encompasses modern IT and facilities for visitors and flexible space that can be made available for events or meetings when not in use for library activities.
- 3.7 The existing library offer at South Norwood is a locally listed 1960s multi-level building (365 sq. m total space) next door to the Samuel Coleridge Taylor centre. It provides poor opportunity for modernisation or service development due to its restricted multi-level layout. There are currently only 8 adult and 4 children PCs and 1 study space.
- 3.8 The library is the seventh busiest library in the borough, with around 74,000 visits in 2016/17. In 2012 visits increased by 41% and the current trend shows that visits have

increased.

- 3.9 There is an opportunity to move the library offer to a purpose designed single level approx. 240 sq. metres of ground floor space in a new residential development at a peppercorn rent on 25 year lease. A space assessment has been undertaken and an enhanced and comprehensive library offer could be delivered here that:
- Provides a single level easy access layout
 - Accommodates computer and multimedia access points as well as increased study space
 - Has a flexible design that provides scope for alternative/community uses
 - Provides an attractive and flexible space that increases the council opportunities to draw in delivery partnerships to enhance and extend the current library services
- 3.10 The new library would be located at 24 Station Road which is a more favourable location given its proximity to the station and situation on a road with high footfall. Situated on the ground floor below a four storey new residential development, the space has a prominent street front presence and boasts large glazed windows that wrap around the curved façade, affording a good level of light into the internal space. The single story layout will be fully accessible.
- 3.11 The ambition for the new library is not simply to replicate the current library facility, but to provide a modern, flexible and adaptable space that can have greater community use as well as providing the core library service. Therefore, the design of the new library will be a dynamic adaptable space with flexible layouts and furniture that can be moved around and set up to support a particular event or activity. The interior will have a limited amount of fixed elements to maintain flexibility.

The draft library plan

- 3.12 A libraries plan will be taken to cabinet for approval in May 2019 and will set out the council's vision for libraries to be places that inform, involve and inspire Croydon residents and visitors. The plan will set out ambitions for libraries over the next ten years, focusing on:
- 3.12.1 Library buildings and technology:** This theme will look at how we can expand the number of book titles and online resources available to our users, how we will need to not only upgrade our existing IT but also to ensure that libraries meet the changing digital needs of their users (for example wifi, bring your own device), and the refurbishment of libraries spaces to ensure they are welcoming, attractive, vibrant, flexible spaces that are easy to manage and maintain and can be used by the service and the community for a range of activities.
- 3.12.2 Shaping the core library offer with residents and widening access:** This theme will look at opportunities to widen access to those residents who don't currently use our library service. For example by expanding the opening hours of libraries by installing technology solutions, providing outreach or pop up services and improving the libraries' online and digital presence. This also includes increasing volunteering and encouraging local people to have a say in their local library.
- 3.12.3 The role of libraries in delivering on wider corporate plan priorities:** This theme will look at the role of libraries as community hubs – connecting people with local information and services that are relevant to local needs. Our libraries can play a crucial role in delivering the wider outcomes set out in the corporate plan through their contribution to the council's Gateway approach. For example, Thornton Heath

Library has recently undergone refurbishment of the community room and a change of layout in the reception area to enable a wider range of services to meet with local people and offer drop in or bookable sessions in the library space.

3.12.4 Libraries within the context of the council's culture plan (also currently in development): This theme will look at the role of libraries as cultural hubs and their cultural offer within the context of the wider culture plan for Croydon. Libraries are uniquely placed to focus on the written and spoken word, and this can also be complemented by music, performance, visual and digital arts. Examples of library based activities in 18/19 include London Mozart Players performances to families with children based on well know fairy tales, poetry readings, a short residency by Well Versed Ink in Thornton Heath Library culminating in youth performances and collaboration with the Museum of Croydon to deliver the "Clocktower Late," a celebration and commemoration of the Armistice including visual and digital arts, poetry, film and music.