

Cabinet

Meeting of held on Monday, 18 November 2019 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Tony Newman (Chair);
;
Councillors Alison Butler, Stuart Collins, Hamida Ali, Jane Avis, Alisa Flemming, Simon Hall, Stuart King, Oliver Lewis, Paul Scott and Manju Shahul-Hameed

Also Present: Councillor Tim Pollard, Jason Perry, Maria Gatland, Lynne Hale, Simon Hoar, Yvette Hopley, Vidhi Mohan, Helen Pollard, Sean Fitzsimons, Robert Ward, Clive Fraser, Jamie Audsley, Janet Campbell, David Wood, Louisa Woodley and Callton Young

Apologies: Councillor

PART A

96/19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The part A minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 October 2019 were agreed. The Leader of the Council signed the minutes as an accurate record.

97/19 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

98/19 Urgent Business (If any)

There were no items of urgent business.

99/19 Economic Growth Strategy

The Leader welcomed Amy Lamé, London Night Czar, to the Cabinet meeting and for her support in Croydon.

A presentation on the Economic Strategy was provided by the Cabinet Member for Economy & Jobs and outlined how, through the Strategy, Croydon would build and diversify the local economy. Members were informed that the Strategy had been developed through the joint working of three Cabinet Members; the Cabinet Member for Economy & Jobs, the Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities, and the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport; and the local business community. The intention of the Strategy, it was stated, was to put Croydon's businesses and residents

at the heart of the economy as it was recognised that work to build and deliver the Strategy had to be collaborative.

There were a number of areas of development which were outlined within the Strategy; including the development of a university in Croydon, improving open spaces, supporting local businesses and creating ambitious opportunities through sustainable growth.

Members were informed that the main query during the consultation of the Strategy had been how would success be measured, and were informed that there would be annual evaluations and plans. It was important to ensure there were good jobs in the borough and the council would continue to encourage local businesses to pay staff the London Living Wage.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities spoke on the 6 till Late Plan which recognised the importance of creating a plan which fostered an evening and night-time economy within the borough. It was the ambition to support Croydon in becoming a night-time social destination, not just for residents, but also across London which people found safe and supported local businesses. The Cabinet Member thanked the Steering Group for the night-time economy for their commitment to creating the plan which built upon the strengths of the night-time economy and recognised the individuality of different areas.

The importance of culture was recognised as an important aspect of the Strategy and the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport stated that the council wanted to see a vibrant series of events across the borough. Members were delighted that the renovated Fairfield Halls had reopened, but also recognised a number of innovative projects taking place across the borough including board game cafes, traditional pubs, music events, and the varied events which took place.

The council was congratulated by the London Night Czar for driving forward the creation of a strategy forward which was an important piece of work to support the local economy. It was stated that 1.6 million Londoners worked at night and a large number of Londoners were active at night. Furthermore, it was known that the London night-time economy was growing at a faster rate than the daytime economy and, as such, it was important to develop plans to support the growth. The London Night Czar stated that Croydon were leading the way for planning for this growth and would inspire other London boroughs to review and support their night-time economies also.

It was recognised that Croydon was undergoing a large amount of renovation which would see the population grow substantially and by planning and supporting the local economy it was suggested that the Strategy would support in making Croydon an even better place to live, work and visit.

Members thanked those involved in the development of the Strategy as it demonstrated that by working collaboratively across Cabinet Member portfolios and with the local economy that culture could be put at the heart of

regeneration which benefitted the local community. Local businesses were benefiting also by supporting and attending events held across the borough which raised awareness of their work also. The Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport & Regeneration (Job Share) confirmed that local pubs were recognised within the Local Plan and stressed the importance of Local Place Plans to support them further from redevelopment.

Members further welcomed the focus on inclusivity and diversity through supporting increased in employment rates of under-represented groups, and for the focus to support young people to socialise and get jobs.

Members noted that the Strategy had been to pre-decision scrutiny and the Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee thanked Cabinet Members and officers for taking on board the recommendations from scrutiny.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Endorse and adopt the Economic Strategy 2019-2024, attached to the report at appendix 1; and
2. Endorse and adopt 6 'til Late our Evening and Night Time Economy Plan for Croydon, attached to the report at appendix 2.

100/19 Borough Wide Events – A look ahead

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport presented the first annual report on events and stated that over 110 events had taken place in the previous years which were highlighted within the report.

Members were informed that over 10,000 people had attended the Pride events at Wandle Park with around two thirds of attendees coming to Croydon for Pride specifically. Mela, which took place on the same weekend as Pride, had an increased attendance number also and a greater diversity of performers and attendees than previous years. It was noted by Members that the impact of these events had helped enhance Croydon's reputation for great events.

New events such as the Ends Festival, which had been a huge success, were highlighted along with a number of events which had taken place across the borough, including the Food Festival which had taken place in South End. All the events, it was noted, helped change the way people saw Croydon.

The Events Policy was highlighted by the Cabinet Member to make it easier for event organisers and it was stated that the council worked well with the Police and other public services to support events across the borough. It was further noted that council services were supporting events better through

waste collection and encouraging event organisers to reduce the amount of single use plastic at events.

Members noted that there was a variety of great events across the borough and thanked the unsung heroes who arranged the events. It was noted that the Civic Awards nominations were open and people were encouraged to nominate those unsung heroes for awards.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Note the annual programme of events for this year; and
2. Note changes planned for an annual report to Cabinet on events.

101/19 Director of Public Health Annual Report 2019 - Food

The Director of Public Health presented her fourth annual report to Cabinet on the topic of Food. It was the ambition that all residents had access to good quality food no matter how much they earned or where they lived.

It was noted that a recent survey had found that 60% of respondents experienced food insecurity. Additionally 20% of children in Croydon received free school meals, whilst the average family wasted around £800 of food annually. In response to these concerns the Director of Public Health outlined six key recommendations which would combat these concerns. Recommendations included mandatory food labelling which would help residents understand what it was they were eating and the 'Croydon Plate'.

The recommendation of the 'Croydon Plate' was in response to most people's plates being 3 inches larger than they were in the 1960s which encourage people to have a larger portion size than necessary. As such, it was recommended that 9 inch plates become the norm again to support healthy eating.

To support and encourage healthy eating, a digital platform had been launched which provided helpful information on how to eat more healthily.

The Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care thanked the Director of Public Health for the report and recommendations. It was noted that there were a lot of agencies who needed to work together to improve access to healthy food; such as the council, Mayor of London, food agencies and central government.

The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board noted the work which had been done to support understanding of healthy eating among the BAME community. The Good Food Matters programme was highlighted for its work

with families within New Addington to support them to cook healthy and tasty food and grow their own food, where possible.

Members welcomed the report and noted that a number of the changes required, which were outlined, within the report would take time as it required a change in mind-set but that it was important that all involved supported this change. It was recognised that part of the change would involve education at a young age which made healthy eating and growing food fun; as such Members suggested support for edible playground across the borough.

The importance of appropriate portion sizes was recognised and it was stated that, particularly in terms of fast food, it would be important for the council to have more powers to encourage fast food outlets to serve more healthy options.

Members recognised that some families struggled to afford to fill nine inch plates and that it was important to tackle food poverty also. Croydon continued to work on this area and the Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services noted that the council had been awarded for their work to tackle food poverty though the implementation of an action plan, supporting and promoting the uptake of breast feeding and free school meals, increasing support and access to food during school holidays and increasing the uptake of healthy start vouchers amongst other actions.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning further noted that for some families a fast food meal was their only meal for the day and so it would be a matter of balancing any size reduction on ensuring people were eating. The Cabinet Member stated that it was important that all responsible parties supported initiatives which provided children with healthy meals when they were hungry, such as providing bowls of porridge at schools, and supermarkets ensuring that vegetables were affordable so that families did not see fast food as their only option.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Note the information and recommendations outlined in the Annual Director of Public Health Report (at Appendix 1 of the report); and
2. Approve the publication of the Annual Director of Public Health Report.

102/19 Progress report from the Independent Chair of the Children's Improvement Board

The Leader took minute number 102/19 and minute number 103/19 together at the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning introduced the report informing Members that the Improvement Board had been introduced in 2017 in response to the Ofsted findings and was attended by multi-agency partners. The Cabinet Member thanked the Chair of the Board, Eleanor Brazil, for her work in improving children's services in Croydon.

Whilst the letter from Ofsted following a recent visit could not be published during the Pre-Election Period, the Cabinet Member summarised the findings which were that the inspectors were positive about improvements being made in the service and recognised the accelerated pace of improvement. Staff members were thanked for all their hard work in improving children's services, and while improvements had been made the Cabinet Members stressed the council was not complacent and recognised that it was still on the improvement journey.

The Independent Chair of the Improvement Board, Eleanor Brazil, informed Members that she had been involved with Croydon's improvement journey for over two years and during that time she had witnessed an enormous amount of hard work across the council and its partners to improve children's services. Whilst the Ofsted focus was on children's social care it was stated that fixing the service was a whole service solution with the council, social workers, partners, families and the community working together.

The Board had sought to ensure that partners were aware of the importance of their work and themed discussions which had been important to focus the discussions. By starting on getting the basics right the Board had then been able to move to looking at quality and hearing from service heads about how their service was performing and improvements which had been made. The focus was ensuring the right systems were in place which, the Independent Chair stated, would hopefully lead to her role no longer being required after the next Ofsted inspection.

Ensuring services were the best they could be for the vulnerable young people of Croydon remained the focus of all improvements. The Leader thanked the Chair and all those involved in driving improvements in children's services and confirmed that the letter outlining Ofsted's findings from the latest visit would be published following the General Election. It was further noted that the important joint working and partnerships would support further improvements and was commended.

Members who had sat on the Improvement Board, stated that they had seen the direction of travel change and that an important cultural change had taken place in the department following the appointments of the Executive Director of Children, Families & Education and the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. It was further recognised that hearing from staff reference groups and schools had supported the work of the Improvement Board and that it was hoped that these voices would continue to be heard.

The Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee confirmed that children's improvement and safeguarding had been two important issues for scrutiny

over the previous two years and thanked officers and the Boards for fully engaging with the scrutiny process. It was recognised that there was a drive to ensure detail and quality and scrutiny had developed a greater understanding of its role and expectation which had enabled more effective scrutiny of the service. The Chair of Children & Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee confirmed that the role of scrutiny had improved and further improvements and scrutiny would take place. Whilst it was recognised the service had improved there was a strong feeling of no complacency. In response, the Leader thanked scrutiny for its work on continuing to challenge the service and improvements being made.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To note the work of the Improvement Board in helping drive improvements in children's services.

103/19 Croydon Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018/19

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning thanked the Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) for their work and focus on working in partnership which had been important when moving to new safeguarding arrangements from 2019. It was noted that the Vulnerable Adolescents Review (VAR) had received both national and local recognition and this work was congratulated.

The Chair of the CSCB, Di Smith, stated that the annual report was the last report of the CSCB as it had been replaced by multi-agency safeguarding arrangements from 1 September 2019 which had three statutory partners of the council, Police and CCG. The report, it was stated, had been written in a clear format and in line with the legislation and built upon the success and work of the Children's Improvement Board.

Members were informed that during 2018/19 there had been close engagement with the LSP and Safer Croydon Partnership, and that there had been three priority areas of review; vulnerable adolescents, neglect and safeguarding children with disabilities. By working in partnership the Board was able to identify better where there was neglect. In relation to the VAR; the Chair informed Members that requests to speak at NSPCC conferences had been received and UCL had expressed an interest to undertake further research.

Two serious case reviews had been undertaken in 2018/19 and the Chair stated that they had been reviewed and learnings had been taken from the review and were being put into action. Focus remained on the Voice of the Child and ensuring that was at the centre of all partners work, particularly on the front line.

The Board also continued to focus on multi-agency practice and, as such, an event had been organised for 25 November 2019 to bring together all partners

and ensuring learning was being shared. It was recognised, the Chair stated, that relationships with all partners were strengthened and in particular the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board (CSAB).

The CSCB Chair stated that she would like the two safeguarding boards to come together to look at transitions in particular and parental vulnerability as it was recognised that there were real opportunities to improve safeguarding across the board in Croydon.

Annie Callanan, CSAB Chair, informed Members that the chairs of both safeguarding boards had met and it was felt that there was a real opportunity to work together better and align priorities, where appropriate. The CSAB outlined additional areas of possible joint working being training and development and work to combat modern day slavery.

Members recognised the excellent work which had been undertaken as part of the VAR and congratulated the Board for the recognition it had received nationally. It was further noted by Members that following serious case reviews improvements were implemented which improved safeguarding in Croydon further.

Members welcomed the joint focus on transitions as it was noted that the transition from child to adult was a very vulnerable point in a person's life and support could be improved. The Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities informed Members that the Violence Reduction Unit would be looking at the findings of the Boards as it was important that all partners worked to reduce violence and would continue to support the work and build upon the work of the VAR.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Annual Report for 2018/19 which sets out:

- The work undertaken by the CSCB to secure further improvement in partnership working following the Ofsted inspection of 2017
- Progress relating to the priorities of the CSCB
- Arrangements for managing the transition to the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as required by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

104/19 Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2018/19

The Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care welcomed the joint working of the two Boards which had been outlined by Annie Callanan, Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board (CSAB), and Di Smith, Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CBCB) at minute number 103/19.

The Cabinet Member noted that much work had been completed in 2018/19 by the CSAB and that the commitment of Board members had been excellent.

However, it was recognised that some of the information in the report made for unhappy reading with three out of five victims knowing their perpetrator.

The work of the Board and the safeguarding team was noted and all involved were thanked for their commitment to investigating over 2,000 referrals.

The Chair of the CSAB gave a presentation to Cabinet informing Members that the Care Act 2014 was the first piece of legislation which mentioned adult safeguarding. The Board which included the three statutory members of the council, Police and CCG focused on meeting the requirements of arranging reviews of adult safeguarding, publishing the Board's report and creating an annual strategic plan.

The report, the Chair stated, detailed the activity and effectiveness of the Board and, following previous requests, contained comparisons to 2017/18. Members were assured that all partners had been actively involved in the work of the Board.

The Hoarding Project with Mind was highlighted as having supported seven clients to clear their homes which had supported them to have better quality of lives. Awareness of trafficking and modern day slavery had also been raised and joint work on this would continue.

Members were informed that in terms of achievements; the Board had sought to learn from safeguarding adult review, there had been multi-agency intelligence sharing meetings, the CCG had commissioned training on the Significant 7 which taught people to recognise the seven key signs of deterioration, and the CCG had provided training on safeguarding at GP surgeries.

The Chair stated that a key priority had been to make safeguarding personal and to facilitate this feedback had been sought from those who had been safeguarding referrals in Croydon. The feedback had been positive with people feeling relieved, confident that they had a person to speak to, supported and grateful for being kept informed of progress. Whilst feedback had been positive it was recognised that this was an area which should be kept under review and improved as feedback from users was imperative to drive further improvements.

Members were informed that a new website for the Board had been launched and that there was a commitment to make better use of social media. A new Strategic Plan was in development and new themes and areas of focus were being identified. It was recognised by the Board that continued engagement with residents was important to support the desire by all Board Members to make improvements to adults safeguarding in Croydon.

Members recognised that a lot of hard work had gone into the Board and they were pleased to see the results of initiatives which had been introduced since 2014. The Homelessness Hub at Croydon University Hospital was welcomed by Members as it noted that joint working would support better outcomes.

The results of the Hoarding Project were congratulated and further work in this area was welcomed. The Chair of the CSAB confirmed that that project had been very successful and had delivered fantastic outcomes for residents and showed the value of working together.

The Leader thanked the Chairs of the CSCB and CSAB for their continued commitment to safeguarding in Croydon and welcomed the joint working of the Boards on priorities.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To note the Annual Report of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board and the report will be further considered by Cabinet on 18 November 2019.

105/19 Amendments to the current Croydon Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme conditions and fees

The Cabinet Member for Homes & Gateway Services informed Members that the report proposed changes to the current Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme in response to court judgements. The intention was for the amendments to come into effect from 2 December 2019.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To

1. Note the changes required to the current Croydon Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme conditions and fees by virtue of changes in statutory provisions, including in relation to Data Protection; and legal interpretation by the Courts as detailed within the body of the report;
2. Approve the two stage licensing fee payment arrangement that requires the applicant make the same total payment under the scheme if the License is successfully granted, but in two stages, Part A on application and Part B if the License is granted, as detailed in section 6 of the report;
3. Authorise the Council to include a new licence condition covering smoke and carbon monoxide alarm requirements, condition no. 3.9, as detailed in section 5 of the report;
4. Authorise the amendment to the 'Private Rented Property Licensing Guide for Rented Properties in Croydon' to include reference to the statutory discretion that exists for the Council to issue a "multi-let property licence and the parameters proposed for this as detailed in section 9 of the report;

5. Approve the revised 'Private Rented Property Licensing Guide for Rented Properties in Croydon', at Appendix B of the report. The revision makes changes to the fee structure and conditions and takes account of the other statutory changes required with appropriate updates to the text. The changes are applicable to applications made and licences issued as part of the current Selective Licensing Scheme designation, that commenced in Croydon on the 1st October 2015 and that continues until the 30th September 2020; and
6. Authorise the proposed changes to have effect from Monday 2nd December 2019 and that license holders be notified of the proposed changes in advance thereof.

106/19 Workforce Strategy 2019-2022

The Leader informed Members that a Local Government Association Equality Framework for Local Government peer challenge had taken place the previous week and the feedback from the peer review had been positive. The response from the challenge would be published following the General Election.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources stated that the development of the Workforce Strategy had been an important piece of work. Members were informed that over 800 staff members had contributed to the development of the Strategy and the council had utilised the expertise of Joe Montgomery to review the workforce and form recommendations.

Members wanted to pay tribute to the council's workforce and recognised the work they did. Whilst it was recognised that the council supported staff forums, paid the London Living Wage and supported carers, it was also acknowledged that further improvements were still to be made. Improvements included; making the workforce truly representative of the local community, supporting staff to develop their careers, and establishing a strong recruitment process with the use of blind shortlisting and diverse recruitment panels.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities welcomed the paper and, in particular, the distinct theme of equality and diversity. It was noted that the council was one of a few organisations which evaluated and published the disability pay gap and was committed in its work towards ensuring equality in pay across the organisation.

The Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee also welcomed the paper and thanked the Chief Executive and relevant Cabinet Members for attending a scrutiny meeting to give an insight into how the council was performing. It was noted that workforce retention concerns were not just an issue for the council, but issues were also experienced within social care and health services, with similar themes of needing to support the development of staff and manage resources effectively.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To adopt the Workforce Strategy 2019-2022, attached as Appendix 1 of the report.

107/19 Stage 1: Recommendations arising from Scrutiny

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To receive the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee (2, 10 17 September 2019) the Streets, Environment and Homes Sub-Committee (1 October 2019) and Children & Young People Sub-Committee (5 November 2019) to provide a substantive response within two months (i.e. at the next available Cabinet meeting on **20 January 2020**).

108/19 Stage 2: Response to recommendations arising from Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 18 June 2019 and Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 16 July 2019

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To approve the response and action plans attached at Appendix 1 of the report and that these be reported to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or relevant Sub-Committees.

109/19 Investing in our Borough

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning reassured Members that there was a long-term commitment to move SEND provision for 19-25 year olds to the centre of the borough to better engage with local businesses. The contract within the background papers for modular buildings at Coulsdon College was to meet immediate demand for provision.

The Leader of the Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to make the following decisions:

RESOLVED: To note

1. The list of delegated award decisions made by the Director of Commissioning and Procurement, between 17/09/2019 – 17/10/2019; and
2. The contracts over £500,000 anticipated to be awarded by the nominated Cabinet Member, in consultation with the nominated Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources or, where the nominated Cabinet Member is the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources in consultation with the Leader.

110/19 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The item was not required.

The meeting ended at 8.41 pm

Signed:

Date:

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