

Council

Meeting held on Monday, 15 July 2019 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

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

PART A

41/19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

42/19 Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of pecuninary interests. Members confirmed their disclosure of interest forms were accurate and up-to-date.

43/19 Urgent Business (if any)

The Leader, Councillor Newman, provided the Council with an urgent update regarding those services for which there was no recourse to public funds, specifically citing the example of the lack of funding for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children which left a £17m hole in the Council's budget. It was reported that London Councils, comprising all parties across all London boroughs, was supportive of Croydon's approach in taking a tough position with the Government. This was to continue as part of the anticipated local government spending review and reflected the Council's determination to ensure fair funding for Croydon and its vulnerable children and young people.

44/19 **Announcements**

The Mayor, Councillor Kabir, provided Council with his announcements. It was noted that he had undertaken 93 Mayoral events during the preceding seven weeks including a multi faith remembrance event with the Croydon Sri Lankan Society for the victims and families of the Easter Sunday terror attacks. The Mayor had also hosted an international business delegation and was hopeful of successful working relationships as a result. Members were encouraged to participate in the Mayor's forthcoming fundraising activities and a Mayoral newsletter providing more information on his activities was anticipated.

The Mayor then took the opportunity to acknowledge Colonel McRobbie who had recently retired after 23 years of service as Croydon's Deputy Lieutenant. The Colonel was warmly thanked for the invaluable support and guidance he had given to Councillors and Council officers on many areas of civic life. His role in establishing the Military Community Covenant in Croydon and involvement in the organisation of the borough's Remembrance and Armistice commemorations was noted along with his work with a number of Croydon charities including Home-Start Croydon, of which he was the Chair.

The Mayor invited the Leader, Councillor Newman, to make his own tribute to Colonel McRobbie. The Leader ascribed the many attendances at events in Croydon by members of the Royal Family to the Colonel's success as Deputy Lieutenant along with his achievement in raising £1.5m for local charities. The Colonel was described as part of the fabric of Croydon who would be very much missed.

Councillor Tim Pollard, the Leader of the Opposition Group, was also asked by the Mayor to make a speech in honour of the Colonel. In this, Councillor Pollard noted that the Colonel had worked with 26 Mayors and would be particularly remembered for his contribution to the Remembrance Day parade. He was described as having made an immense contribution to Croydon and was wished a long and happy retirement.

The Mayor provided the Colonel with a gift in thanks and invited him to make a speech in response. The Colonel apologised for not being able to attend Annual Council and offered his thanks for the kind words that had been

spoken. He noted how much he had enjoyed the honour of working with Croydon and that it had been wonderful to work with all 26 Mayors. The Colonel described how he had reached out to many Councillors and officers and had always been provided with support, particularly in connection with the honours process. He reiterated his thanks for having received the Freedom of Borough and stated that he would maintain his links with the borough.

45/19 **The Croydon Debate**

The Mayor informed Council that a Borough Petition had been received for Debate. As required by the Constitution in order to be valid, this had been reviewed in accordance with the provisions in Part 4A of the Constitution. As a result it was determined that some wording of the original petition was invalid due to a lack of material accuracy and it having been debated by Council in the previous six months.

The Mayor asked the Chief Executive to read out the permitted wording of the petition: *"We the undersigned call on Croydon Council to pursue a brownfield First policy"*.

The Mayor invited the Lead Petitioner, Mr Sony Nair, to address Council. Mr Nair explained that whilst the need for more housing was understood across the borough it was asked that this be developed in a tasteful and appropriate way in order to preserve Croydon for the future. It was stressed that by law Croydon was required to have a brownfield land register and that this should be given the priority for development. It was asked that those making planning decisions listen to local people who felt planning permission was being given disproportionality for intensification of Croydon's suburbs. Croydon was described as wonderful and the Council was called on to act to ensure this remained the case for future generations.

The Mayor called on Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (Job Share) to respond. The Cabinet Member highlighted the housing crisis that was affecting Croydon meaning that there simply was not enough housing to meet needs with extra homes urgently needed. It was noted that all those attending the meeting were Croydon residents and were at the Council meeting because they cared about their local area. However, providing for the accommodation needs of all of Croydon's residents meant the provision of new homes and consequently that every Croydon neighbourhood needed to change and grow. Councillor Scott described how thousands of new homes were being built in the town centre. Conversely, Croydon's Brownfield register was full of open retail and employment sites. Croydon did not have lots of derelict sites that could be used for building the new homes needed. Technically, Croydon did have a Brownfield first policy as the definition of Brownfield includes sites which have been subject to any previous development including residential homes. A Brownfield only policy would actually mean all development would be in the

suburbs. However, the Administration felt that a gradual change would be much more preferable enabling planning policy to respect and enhance the local character of Croydon's communities. It was highlighted that work was happening to look at schemes to avoid intensification.

Councillor Perry, who was called by the Mayor to speak on the motion, expressed his disappointment that the motion had been amended using constitutional rules. The Administration was described as not listening or caring and that Croydon residents were suffering as a result of planning policy that was determined locally rather than nationally. Councillor Perry noted that planning policy was in contrast to that in neighbouring boroughs which did concentrate on Brownfield first. He called for local planning policies to be amended accordingly to stop the attack on daily life and to listen to the concerns and voices of residents. Councillor Perry noted his support for residents and the Borough Petition.

The Mayor called on Councillor Muhammad Ali to provide a further response on behalf of the Administration. Councillor Ali highlighted that the then Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government had also acknowledged the housing crisis and agreed that the only way for this to be addressed was by building more homes. It was described how these would be spread fairly across the borough with a third to be located in the town centre, a third on brownfield sites and a third in the suburbs. It was noted that the focus of growth was in the town centre whilst brownfield sites were mainly used for retail and employment. Councillor Ali stressed that there was not enough previously used sites available to accommodate all the new homes that needed to be built and that intensification was not a new phenomenon. Councillor Ali noted that growth in southern wards in the Borough had been lower than in other areas but that every neighbourhood would need to grow and change in a sustainable manner.

Councillor Roche, who was called by the Mayor to speak on the motion, noted that residents felt ignored and had not been listened to for too long. This was reflected in the submission of petition after petition reflecting that their concerns were continually being pushed aside by the Planning Committee and that there was a preference in favour of intensification rather than brownfield development. Councillor Roche reported that this had led to huge anger and frustration with residents feeling the granting of planning permission was leading to inappropriate effects on their neighbourhoods. It was described how residents felt the granting of planning permission was now a rubber stamping exercise in Croydon with residents having lost faith in the process. Councillor Roche stated that strategic aims and objectives should not be prioritised over local concerns; a Brownfield First policy should be adopted as this was needed to retain the wonderful character of the local area. It was stated that it was necessary to bring the community along with planning development as opposed to fighting with residents. Councillor Roche expressed his support for the Borough Petition.

The Mayor invited the Lead Petitioner, Mr Sony Nair, to further address the Members of Council. Mr Nair summarised that whilst it was understood that

there were huge housing targets, building flats costing £300K each would not solve the problem; the new schemes that were coming forward in Croydon were not even providing sufficient parking and would not help provide affordable housing. Mr Nair stressed that home ownership was not the result of luck and that he and others had worked hard to own their own homes. He called on the Council to work with Transport for London to develop its brownfield land which was often derelict and an eye sore. Mr Nail also called for the Council to explain how funding realised from the Community Infrastructure Levy had been used to benefit infrastructure in Shirley. Lastly, Mr Nail called on the Council to act to protect existing communities.

The Mayor called on Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (Job Share) to provide a final response to the Borough Petition and then to summarise the Administration's next steps. Councillor Scott emphasised that the Administration was still listening and that the review of the local plan was in its early stages and was focused on delivering family homes in a sustainable way within the confines of planning laws. The Cabinet Member stressed that a range of solutions were being explored. For example, a housing development on the Purley Way. Capping the level of growth in each neighbourhood to where it is acceptable was being explored. Councillor Scott called on everyone to work together to meet this challenge within the system and used his final comments to stress that the Administration will deliver the homes needed.

46/19 **Croydon Question Time**

The Mayor explained that Croydon Question Time would commence with thirty minutes of public questions to the Leader and Cabinet Members with preference being given to those who had questions who were in attendance at the meeting.

Croydon resident, Mr Bernard Mickelburgh asked the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (Job Share) about the ambiguity of the parking signage at the Surrey Street Pedestrian Zone. Councillor King responded that he would be brief given that he had previously answered the same question at a recent Council meeting. It was stressed that the signage was correct, legal and this had been checked a number of times with officers.

In his supplementary question, Mr Mickelburgh asked why 22,000 Penalty Charge Notices had therefore been issued for this area. In response, the Cabinet Member noted that the use of Automated Number Plate Recognition technology to enforce the parking policy and restrictions had enabled enforcement to be more effective. It was also noted that changes to the parking restrictions in the area had been introduced to prevent parking by those using night clubs in the area affecting market traders from setting up in the early morning. It was also explained that adjudications had found in favour of the Council almost 80% of the time.

Mr Peter Underwood asked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources by when the Croydon Pension fund would achieve its objective of completely divesting of its investments linked to carbon. In response, Councillor Hall promised to provide precise details outside of the meeting but noted that a clear commitment had been made. It was noted that the Pension Committee was working with the London CIV, the pool through which investments had to be made, to identify suitable products whilst also providing the returns to which pensioners were entitled.

In his supplementary question, Mr Underwood stated that the Council would be judged by its deeds and not words. He suggest that no real progress had been made in achieving the object of carbon divestment. In response, Councillor Hall emphasised that the instruction had been given to divest and that this was clearly stated in the investment strategy. However, given the size of the Pension Fund (£1.2billion) this would take some time to implement. The Cabinet Member stated that he would be happy to provide regular updates on achieving this objective at every full Council meeting.

Croydon resident, Mr Kosta Dexiades asked the Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon by when fly tipping was going to be cleared in the borough. He highlighted the issue of rubbish being dumped by the borough's trees and called for prosecutions to be used. In response, Councillor Collins noted that he had previously met with Mr Dexiades to discuss fly tipping in Ampere Way. It was described how an enforcement exercise had recently been conducted in that area leading to a Penalty Charge Notice being issued. The Cabinet Member stressed that whilst previously there had been no prosecutions for littering there had recently been 232 prosecutions with two people in prison as a result. Councillor Collins called on the Government to undertake a nationwide campaign against fly tipping equivalent to that which had change attitudes to drink driving.

In his supplementary question, Mr Dexiade called for there to be more enforcement officers and CCTV used to address fly tipping. Councillor Collins explained that there were 30 enforcement posts with 26 of these filled. It was indicated that work was ongoing to potentially increase this number and an explanation provided that the visibility of enforcement officers was poor as much of their work was covert and happened at night necessitating extra shifts. The Cabinet Member agreed with the need to encourage greater use of the Factory Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Croydon resident, Mr Michael Taylor asked the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport about tree roots lifting memorial stones at the Greenlawns Cemetery and what would be done to address this before more damage was done. Councillor Lewis expressed regret for the upset caused. It was explained that the tree causing the issue had been in situ for many years and that this was the first complaint received of this nature. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that plaques had been disturbed. It was explained that the level of disturbance being caused would be investigated and rectified over the summer but that it wasn't the policy to remove healthy trees and that given its

maturity the tree shouldn't cause more disruption. The situation would be kept under review.

Croydon Resident, Ms Suzy Stoyel asked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources about the awarding of Croydon's accessible transport contract to a new provider putting the future of 65 local charities at risk. In response, Councillor Hall emphasised that the awarding of the contract had been subject to all the required public procurement rules. This had been reviewed and found to be in line with all requirements following queries raised by those that had been unsuccessful in bidding for the contract. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the service provided by Croydon Accessible Transport (CAT) and encouraged it to bid for funding from the Croydon Community Fund. Councillor Hall described additional efforts that were being made to offer support through meetings being held with CAT.

In her supplementary question, Ms Stoyel described how she worked with a local charity and had been concerned by reports of what had occurred with the accessible transport contract. Councillor Hall stressed the Council's commitment to the sector and that it would continue to work with CAT.

Croydon resident, Duncan McKane asked the Leader if, in the light of the declaration of a climate emergency, the Council would withdraw its support for the Gatwick expansion. In response, Councillor Newman acknowledged that this was a valid point and agreed that there was a need to fly less. The commitment was made to look very closely at this policy going forward and added that there was a need to also consider the investment in local jobs that would result from any expansion. The Leader highlighted the aspiration to make Croydon and Gatwick a centre for the green economy.

In his supplementary question, Mr McKane asked if the Council would be challenging the Government's 2030 emissions target for this to be achieved sooner. The Leader described how this was being considered by London Councils with the 2030 target being deemed realistic and potentially possible by 2025. It was explained that there was a desire to ensure targets were not set that are immediately unachievable. The 2030 target was determined based on best advice but acknowledged accelerating policy positions would be key.

Croydon resident, Mr Rob Elliot asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning if she would do everything possible to teach children and young people in Croydon to be proud of who they are and accepting of difference. In response, Councillor Alisa Flemming noted that children were the future and should be encouraged to show tolerance and love which was already part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economics curriculum. The Cabinet Member highlighted Croydon had recently successfully hosted both the Pride and Mela events which gave a clear indication of the culture of the borough.

In his supplementary question, Mr Elliot asked what the Council would do to prevent demonstrations outside of schools. The Cabinet Member explained

that she was unable to speak to individual cases. However, it was stressed that for the Borough of Croydon, across both sides of the Council Chamber, there was a commitment to tolerance and diversity. Once it was possible to look at the Government's programme in more detail, the Cabinet Member would be able to provide a more in-depth response.

The thirty minute time allocation for public questions having concluded, the Mayor notified those who had submitted a question via email that they would receive a response within three weeks and that these would also be published on the Council's website.

At this point in the proceedings of the meeting, the Leader, Councillor Newman, requested to move a procedural motion to vary the order of business. This was to bring forward in the following order: item 14 (4), Climate Change Recommendations to Council and a deferral debate on those recommendations; item 13, the Council Debate Motions; and item 10, Annual Reports, before returning to the business as stated. The procedural motion was seconded by Councillor Butler.

Speaking on behalf of the Opposition Group, Councillor Redfern informed Council that it was her impression that the Majority Group Chief Whip had agreed to vary the order of business to also bring forward for debate item 14 (1), Recommendation to Council on the adoption of the Croydon Libraries Plan alongside the Climate Change Recommendations.

The Leader's motion was put to the vote and carried.

Councillor Redfern's requested procedural motion was seconded by Councillor Tim Pollard. The motion was put to the vote and fell.

The business of the meeting was reordered in accordance with the agreed procedural motion. However, the business of the meeting is reported in these minutes in accordance with the order as published in the original agenda.

Questions to the Leader

The Mayor invited the Leader, Councillor Newman to make his announcements. The opportunity was taken to thank all the staff who worked so hard to plan and deliver the recent Pride and Mela events. Over 22,000 people had attended the events which were a peaceful celebration of diversity.

Councillor Tim Pollard asked the Leader to provide clarification on the Council's performance in response to Freedom of Information requests given that Croydon had been reported as one of the worst performing authorities with only two thirds of requests being fulfilled on time. This was compared to other authorities which were achieving the targets on more than 90% of occasions.

In response, the Leader highlighted the comparison with what happened under the last Conservative Administration. It was noted that there had been no cameras allowed in Council meetings with decisions being made in secret. The Leader stressed that the focus was on openness and transparency with Freedom of Information requests being responded to when received.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Pollard asked who had approved the increase in the costs for the Fairfield Halls development. In response, the Leader described how the new Fairfield Halls would provide a cultural venue for the next 50 years with regular briefings being provided on the project. Decisions on the project were taken at an appropriate level and it was not for Councillors to sign-off every decision. The Leader stated that he would not apologise for the funding being provided for the development of a leading cultural venue.

Councillor Pelling asked about the Opposition's focus on no development outside of brownfield sites and how this aligned with the Secretary of State for Housing's stated objective of wanting an easier process of planning approvals and an increase in housing.

The Leader stated that the Opposition had no ideas or policies to address housing need in the borough.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Pelling asked if it was wrong for the Opposition to mislead local people by telling them one story about planning which was different from national policy. The Leader described how residents were having their anxiety exaggerated and driven up through fear. This was illustrated with the example of the claims being made about closures to Croydon's libraries all of which were to remain open.

Councillor Hopley asked about the quality of care in Croydon's care homes.

The Leader responded by stating the Council was addressing issues in care homes. That many of these issues were the result of outsourcing and that these were now being returned to Council ownership.

In her supplementary question, Councillor Hopley stated she had been telephoned by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which had been desperate to get hold of officers and Councillors. However, not being able to do so, she had been called instead. Councillor Hopley emphasised that responsibility for care home buildings was with the Council and it had, in the words of the CQC, failed to address issues such as the lack of hot water, bed bugs and overgrown gardens. Councillor Hopley asked if this represented a complete failure in care homes.

In response, the Leader said that he would be taking this up with the Chief Executive of the CQC and questioned the appropriateness of this having been addressed in a private conversation with a Councillor rather than officers. Councillor Newman looked forward to receiving the details.

The Mayor announced the start of Councillor questions to Councillors Butler, Hamida Ali and Shahul-Hameed and invited them to make their announcements.

Councillor Butler, the Cabinet Member for Homes and Gateway Services, took the opportunity during her announcements to highlight the MJ Achievement Award received by Gateway Staff. This was won based on the better outcomes Gateway staff were achieving for residents who have been affected by the worst of austerity and Government cuts. The Cabinet Member stressed the work of the Gateway team which went above and beyond.

Councillor Hamida Ali, the Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon and Communities, with great sadness, referred to the three murders that had recently occurred in the borough; Kye Manning in addition to Kelly Mary Fauvrelle and her baby Riley, born by caesarean who died four days later. The Cabinet Member led the Members of Council in paying deepest respects to the families in mourning. It was explained that a Gold Group meeting had been held with families to share all details possible with a further meeting planned to discuss the community impact. The Council had offered any and all resources possible. Patrols by Neighbourhood Safety Officers had been increased. The Cabinet Member welcomed future prosecutions in both cases.

Councillor Shahul-Hameed, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Jobs, took the opportunity of her announcements to highlight the Best All-Round Small Business Friendly Borough award won by the Council, supported by the London region of the Federation of Small Businesses and London Councils. She gave her congratulations to all the staff involved and thanks to those working in partnership with the Council. The Cabinet Member also spoke about the employment fair held in the borough that brought together a range of employers from a variety of sectors including health, social care and retail. A further economic summit was to be held on 24 September 2019 with Councillors encouraged to put this in their diaries.

Councillor Hale gave her congratulations to the Gateway staff who she described as a passionate and hugely committed team. The Councillor asked what was considered more important - green spaces or housing.

Councillor Butler emphasised that the borough needs housing growth for which a balanced approach was needed. The Cabinet Member described how the borough was lucky to have 127 parks and open spaces. However, the need for green spaces couldn't always be a barrier to building because housing was so important. It was stressed that there were 2,000 people in Temporary Accommodation in Croydon including hundreds of children who slept in emergency housing. These were children who did not want to stay where they were living and desperately wanted somewhere they could call home. Again the need for balance was stressed and it was described how many areas of Croydon were once something different but over time these had to change with more areas being developed. The Cabinet Member described how she felt passionately on this issue and that it was not possible to simply say to children that it wasn't possible to do anything about their

housing needs. Councillor Butler expressed her willingness to visit Monks Hill to view the area with the Councillor.

In her supplementary question, Councillor Hale highlighted how the policy on intensification had a critical role in taking away trees and grass which played a role in the reduction of dust, pollution and particulates in the air and was linked to children having breathing difficulties. The Councillor asked who would be making the decisions to protect green spaces. In her response, Councillor Butler stressed it was important that building works were correctly undertaken to lessen the effect on air quality but that it was also necessary to look at the effect of vehicles on air quality. The Cabinet Member stressed how campaigns against low cost housing can be a campaign against those living on benefits based on the assumption of how demographic changes will mean local areas won't be the same. It was shared that Councillor O'Connell had supported a campaign framed in these terms.

Councillor Flynn expressed her support for Brick By Brick's schemes and affordable housing. The Councillor asked for clarification on the methods used to consult the local community and gain its input to the final schemes for development.

Councillor Butler described the focus on being open and transparent with lists of proposed sites being published before moving forward. These sites were being surveyed to assess their suitability. They were in all different parts of the borough reflecting that there is demand for housing right across Croydon. A letter had gone out to residents explaining this and that an initial analysis would be undertaken to determine suitability for new homes to be developed. Some sites had already been determined not to be suitable. Those coming through the surveying process would result in resident engagement to discuss the design of the resulting development. The Cabinet Member stressed that it was the commitment of Brick by Brick that any resulting properties put up for sale would be offered first to local residents with any resulting profits used for affordable housing. Properties that were to be made available through shared ownership and affordable rent schemes would go to those in housing need in Croydon.

Councillor Chatterjee asked if the Brick By Brick model was unsustainable and failing at every level.

Councillor Butler disagreed and stated that Brick By Brick was delivering Council built homes right across the borough. Those for sale would generate income to be used to support the development of shared ownership and affordable rent homes. The Cabinet Member stressed how the Government had ceased funding house building whilst the *Right to Buy* policy had taken other homes out of Council stock. Brick by Brick was delivering homes for Croydon residents.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Chatterjee stated Brick by Brick was struggling to find buyers for its developments, that there was slippage in its delivery dates and therefore it should be subject to a thorough review. In

response, Councillor Butler stated that the Opposition was opposed to any new development with objections raised whomever brings forward developments. The Cabinet Member described how she had empathy for those who want the world to stay as it but that Croydon was a London borough that was continually changing with growing demand for homes. It was reiterated that Brick by Brick remained sustainable and was delivering homes in the borough.

Councillor Degrads raised the issue of knife crime in the borough, acknowledging the Public Health approach being taken to tackle the issue and asked what were the next steps to be taken.

Councillor Hamida Ali acknowledged that the Public Health approach to knife crime had been a manifesto pledge but that this needed to be properly funded by the Government. The comments by the Mayor of London that addressing knife crime should be made a national priority were referenced. The Council had established a Violence Reduction Unit with the next steps to talk to colleagues across the Council. The Cabinet Member stressed the importance of the Violence Reduction Network and how this was helping to change the approach right across the Council. It was acknowledged that the Public Health approach was long term, about creating volume and that it would take some time to interrupt and change behaviours. It was described that cultural change was beginning to happen and that the trauma of incidents was leading to a social care response happening earlier.

Councillor Creatura asked if it was believed that crime in London was getting better or worse.

Councillor Hamida Ali explained that a reduction was starting to be seen. But that this was against a backdrop of youth crime being much higher in Croydon than in the rest of London. This meant drops in Croydon appeared bigger than elsewhere in the rest of London.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Creatura stated crime was getting significantly worse in Croydon; there had been increases in knife crime and gun crime. In response, Councillor Hamida Ali called on the Opposition to be clearer; that when Boris Johnson had been Mayor of London, he had signalled his complacency of crime by cutting youth services and funding for London's police leading to a reduction by 20,000 in police numbers. The Cabinet Member shared that the Director of Public Health had highlighted the importance of the early years in terms of changing behaviours and called on the reduction in crime to be a key national policy area.

Councillor Canning described how small to medium sized business were vital and asked what steps were being taken for their promotion?

Councillor Shahul-Hameed described how there were 15,000 small to medium sized businesses (SMEs) in the borough and that efforts to support them demonstrated how Croydon meant business. The Cabinet Member highlighted how hundreds of SMEs were being supported by the Council,

resulting in employment for thousands of residents. Support for SMEs included business rate relief, an increased emphasis on local commissioning and the delivery of business networking events.

Following the reordering of business, at this point the meeting reached the time specified in the Constitution for its conclusion (10pm). The Leader proposed a procedural motion for the suspension of standing orders for the meeting to continue for not more than 20 minutes to enable outstanding announcements to be made by Cabinet Members as part of agenda item 7b, Leader and Cabinet Member Questions prior to the 'Guillotine Procedure' taking effect. The motion was seconded by Councillor Butler, put to the vote and agreed.

Councillor Collins, the Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon, took the opportunity to share that as a result of the South London Waste Partnership, 12,000 tonnes of residual waste had been avoided with the rate of recycling now hitting 47%. The Cabinet Member shared that the Council had won a Keep Britain Tidy Award. It was also highlighted that the Cabinet Member had been in touch with the Secretary of State for the Environment to request a nationwide campaign to address the issue of fly tipping.

Councillor Scott, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (Job Share), gave his congratulations to the Council's Planning Department that had won two prestigious national Planning Awards: Croydon's spatial planning team was recognised for the suburban design guide's supplementary planning design document known as SPD2 and the Planning Permission of the Year award went to Croydon's development management team's role in approving 101 George Street, which would be Europe's tallest modular, prefabricated building.

The Cabinet Member also revealed, in advance of publication, that as part of the work of the Governance Review Panel, the independent adviser from the Planning Advisory Service had advised that area planning committees would have to reflect the political balance of the Council. Councillor Scott also anticipated further training being provided for Members of Planning.

Councillor Hall, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, gave his thanks to Officers including those in the Democratic Services team which the Cabinet Member stated had unfairly been subject to criticism during the Council meeting. The Cabinet Member announced that all the Council's apprentices would receive the London Living Wage, exceeding the requirements of the London Living Wage Foundation. It was also described how the London Living Wage was being extended to more Council employees as a result of insourcing services, making Croydon a London Living Wage exemplar borough. The Cabinet Member also described how capital spend was being used to acquire hundreds of new Council owned homes. Whilst not sitting in the revenue account they did provide additional affordable homes in the borough.

Councillor Lewis, the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport, started his announcements by associating himself with the previous comments made about the Pride and Mela events. These were noted for their celebration of diversity and how well these had gone. The Cabinet Member also took the opportunity to congratulate the organisers and participants in the London Youth Games which saw Croydon placed tenth overall. Disappointment was expressed that the Council meeting didn't get the opportunity to discuss the issue of Libraries but the Cabinet Member noted this would be addressed by scrutiny providing the opportunity for a full debate. The Cabinet Member took the opportunity to congratulate the England Women's Cricket Team; pride was expressed in the team's achievement and it was noted that this success demonstrated diversity at its best which it was hoped would inspire young people.

Councillor Flemming, the Cabinet Member for Young People and Learning, explained how the Children in Care Council was now called EMPIRE, as chosen by those in care. It was described how, through this body, children in care were shaping and influencing corporate parenting at every level. It was highlighted that the Children and Young People's Pledge was being reviewed and would be sent to all Members of Council to seek their signature and commit to the pledge. The Cabinet Member shared how a full programme of events for children and young people would be offered during the summer. It was announced that the Legacy Youth Zone would have its official launch in September 2019 with a number of soft launches beforehand. Members were invited to participate. Finally, the Cabinet Member noted that the Local Government Association had chosen the *Choose Your Future* campaign to highlight as a good practice case study.

Councillor Avis, the Cabinet Member for Families, Health and Social Care, congratulated the schools that had participated in the market place event held in July 2019; the Council was leading the way in this form of school engagement. The Cabinet Member touched on the fight against obesity and how she would be working with Councillors Campbell and Flemming to tackle this issue. The Cabinet Member also noted her pride in supporting the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy and Care Plan.

47/19 **Governance Review Panel**

The recommendations contained in the Governance Review Panel were subject to the Guillotine procedure as detailed in para 3.3 of Part 4A of the Council's Constitution, put immediately to the vote and were approved.

RESOLVED: Council **AGREED** the recommendations in the report to:

1. Note the work undertaken to date and activities planned by the Panel; and

2. Agree to extend the completion date of the Panel's review, to report their recommendations to all Members in December 2019 and note the Panel's increased membership as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report.

48/19 **Member Petitions**

The Member petitions from Councillors Bains, Fitzsimons and Ryan were subject to the Guillotine procedure as detailed in para 3.3 of Part 4A of the Council's Constitution. These were noted by the Mayor who stated that he would ensure that the Members would receive written responses within three weeks which would also be published on the Council's website.

49/19 **Annual Reports**

Scrutiny and Overview Committee

The Mayor invited the Chairs of each of those bodies presenting Annual Reports to introduce these to Council initially asking Councillor Fitzsimons in his capacity as Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee to speak. Councillor Fitzsimons highlighted key achievements were that scrutiny was being conducted on a cross party basis, there was adherence to the principles of good scrutiny to hold the executive and senior officers to account. In total, 24 meetings had been held with all Cabinet Members being subject to a dedicated question time and the Leader being subject to two question times. There had been one call-in during the year on the subject of the purchase of the freehold of Croydon Park Hotel. Scrutiny had been used effectively to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the policy on the night time economy and violence reduction. Overall, scrutiny had generated 118 recommendations all of which had been accepted. Twenty six residents had actively participated in the scrutiny process. Croydon was actively participating in the Joint Health Committees and had taken an active and detailed involvement following the Children's Services Ofsted inspection. Councillor Fitzsimons described how new national scrutiny guidance had finally been released in May 2019 which was well timed with Croydon's own Governance Review. The Councillor went on to anticipate a focus for scrutiny on timely access to information, undertaking more pre-decision scrutiny and developing a more transparent decision-making structure. He was pleased to commend the report.

Councillor Ward was invited to speak by the Mayor in his capacity as Chair of the Children and Young People Sub-Committee. It was described how the preceding year had been busy, with a new team delivering a major change programme resulting in additional meetings and visits to different settings including schools and Pupil Referral Units. It was described how users had attended Sub-Committee meetings with a positive impact. It was highlighted that scrutiny of Children's Services had been a priority and as such was

covered in detail in the Annual Report. A task and finish group was undertaking in-depth scrutiny on children coming off the school roll. Thanks was given to the scrutiny team in addition to those Councillors and officers who had appeared before the Sub-Committee with specific mention being given to Councillor Fitzsimons for his support. Councillor Ward closed by appealing to more Councillors to come to meetings and to participate in visits.

Councillor Ben-Hassel was invited by the Mayor to speak in her capacity as the Chair of the Streets, Environment and Homes Sub-Committee. The Councillor stressed that she was new in the role, having been elected shortly before the start of the municipal year. She expressed her commitment to bring as many members of the public into the scrutiny process as possible and that she had already found it enlightening when residents had the opportunity to talk to rail operators. It was planned to build on the work of Councillor Fitzsimons and to continue the work of scrutiny on a cross departmental basis to look at policy across Cabinet portfolios and to work collaboratively.

There were no Councillor questions on the Scrutiny Annual Report.

Corporate Parenting Panel

Councillor Alisa Flemming was invited to speak by the Mayor in her capacity as the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel. The Councillor highlighted her pleasure in presenting the Panel's first Annual Report to Council and noted how this brought together lots of information about looked after children and young people in Croydon. It was noted that the Panel had been formed in 2007 and subject to changes with the number of meetings having increased to six a year. Councillor Flemming described how the Panel comprised a combination of Members on a cross party basis in addition to co-opted members, such as foster carers, and young people themselves. It was described how the Panel had been focused on the *Staying Put* policy and encouraging young people to stay with foster carers for longer. It was stressed that the Panel was directly influenced by the voice of young people who attended the Panel and who spoke eloquently on the reasons why they needed more support. It was noted that the Panel was also focused on missing incidents with Councillor Gatland acknowledged as a strong voice on supporting young people and the reduction of missing episodes. It was also described how it was the intention for the Panel to focus on the Youth Offending Service and the over-representation of black young people in care which the Panel aimed to reduce.

There were no Councillor questions on the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report.

General Purposes and Audit Committee

Councillor Jewitt was invited to speak by the Mayor in her capacity as Chair of the General Purposes and Audit Committee. The Councillor noted that the Annual Report covered the period from 2018 to 2019 and that she had just re-joined the Committee following the conclusion of this period. However,

Councillor Jewitt noted the report covered a successful year under Councillor Mann as Chair and that she had quickly got up to speed on the audit process to ensure it was achieved appropriately. The audit process was due to be presented again to the Committee following the Council meeting. Councillor Jewitt noted that social care and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children were some of the areas putting increased stress on the Council's budget. It was noted that the Committee worked well across the political divide to address and look at these issues. It was also highlighted that a second co-opted member had joined the Committee during the past year, expanding the expertise available with the Councillor giving her thanks to both. The Anti-Fraud Team was specifically mentioned; it was described as continuing to excel with a focus on fraud prevention and Croydon being a founding member of the counter-fraud hub. Councillor Jewitt thanked the Members of the Committee, Councillor Mann, the vice chair and officers for the past year and the year to come.

There were no Councillor questions on the General Purposes and Audit Committee Annual Report.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor Woodley was invited to speak by the Mayor in her capacity as the Chair of the Health and Well Board. It was highlighted that the Annual Report summarised the work done during the 2018 – 2019 municipal year with the main focus on the development of the health and wellbeing strategy, inequalities, prevention and youth inequalities. The report was described as capturing the considerable work that was being undertaken and the truly joined-up approach to the delivery of health services in Croydon. Councillor Woodley described how pupils of the Tudor Academy had participated in the development of the strategy through an engagement event. Pupils from three local schools had also participated in a mental health workshop resulting in areas for improvement being outlined. £4.3m of funding had been allocated for school based mental health services. However, Councillor Woodley noted that the aim was for all core mental health services to be adequately funded.

The Mayor invited Councillor Hopley to put her question to Councillor Woodley. Councillor Hopley expressed her full support for the Health and Wellbeing Board, its strategy and welcomed the funding being made available by Central Government to support its work. However, she also expressed her concern regarding the cancellation of meetings of the Board especially where this meant as a consequence key organisations, such as Croydon University Hospitals, then not being available to attend the reorganised meeting.

Councillor Woodley responded by stressing that whilst meetings had been moved, all the required meetings had been held during the last municipal year. It was also highlighted that meetings had been moved for legitimate reasons which were beyond the control of the Chair such as a meeting clashing with a Public Health England conference and the sad passing of Councillor Mansell. It was also noted that meetings had been added to the cycle such as the workshop held in December 2018.

In her supplementary question, Councillor Hopley stated that health partners were finding it difficult to sustain their engagement with the Board without there being a clear plan for the year. Encouragement was given to get dates in the diary for the year which would then be sustained. Councillor Hopley asked if Councillor Woodley would welcome Dr Agnelo Fernandes, the current Vice-Chair and a representative of the NHS Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group, taking over the role of Chair of the Board.

Councillor Woodley responded that she and the Vice-Chair were working well together and that it was misleading to say meetings had been cancelled when these had, for a variety of circumstances, had been reorganised with none missed.

Councillor Pelling asked Councillor Woodley about working with the Clinical Commissioning Group when the Government was intent on its destruction. Councillor Pelling also asked Councillor Woodley about the importance of keeping structures in place for the benefit of residents' health.

Councillor Woodley described how Croydon was a role model for partnership approaches to health provision and that the borough's successes were a testament to joint working.

50/19 **Constitution Report**

The recommendations contained in the Constitution Amendments report were subject to the Guillotine procedure as detailed in para 3.3 of Part 4A of the Council's Constitution, put immediately to the vote and were approved.

RESOLVED: Council **AGREED** the recommendations in the report to:

1. Approve the amendments to the Constitution detailed in sections 3 and 4 of the report and detailed more specifically in Appendices 1 and 2; and
2. To note the updated Corporate Parenting Panel terms of reference in Appendix 3 and that these will be appended to the Constitution for Members' ease of reference.

51/19 **Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Care Plan**

The recommendations contained in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Care Plan report were subject to the Guillotine procedure as detailed in para 3.3 of Part 4A of the Council's Constitution, put immediately to the vote and were approved.

RESOLVED: Council **AGREED** the recommendations in the report to:

1. Agree the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (“the Strategy”) for the Borough (Appendix 1);
2. Agree Croydon’s Health and Care Transformation Plan (“the Plan”) which is the delivery plan of the Strategy (Appendix 2);
3. Delegate authority to the Health and Wellbeing Board, once Full Council has approved the Health and Wellbeing strategy for the relevant period, to agree the delivery plans of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
4. Delegate to the Health and Wellbeing Board the authority to and responsibility for monitoring the delivery plans in fulfilment of the Strategy, the outcome of which shall be reported back to full Council as part of the annual report of the Board;
5. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make consequential changes to the Constitution, Part 4 L, contingent upon the delegations in recommendation 1.4 and 1.5 above;

52/19 Council Debate Motions

The Mayor requested that the Chief Executive read out the first Council Debate Motion made on behalf of the Administration: *“This Council fully recognises the importance of all our residents living in the Private Rented Sector and their right to healthy, safe and secure accommodation. We also note the rise in the numbers of families, older people and those living on lower incomes in this sector. Nothing can be more important than the place you call home and given the support from landlords, tenants and other residents, the Council recommends that all necessary steps are taken to ensure there is a renewed landlords’ licensing scheme beyond 2020”.*

The Mayor invited Councillor Butler, the Cabinet Member for Home and Gateway Services, to propose the motion. The Cabinet Member stressed that there was nothing more important than having a home. Councillor Butler described the increase in numbers in privately rented homes and how there were landlords who took pride in their business and those who didn’t. The importance of the Council holding landlords to account was stressed; those in the private rented sector should be open to the same scrutiny as social landlords. The importance of allowing concerns with how properties were managed to be raised was noted and that this was about ensuring housing was safe. The Cabinet Member explained that the majority of landlords pay £350 for a five year registration to the Landlords’ Licensing Scheme. This allowed important advice to be given to some landlords whilst others had been banned from renting their properties and some homes had been judged too small for renting.

The Cabinet Member detailed how the Landlords’ Licensing Scheme provided powers of entry and the ability to tackle issues at a time of considerable cuts. The scheme allowed macro information on the scale of the private rented

sector to be collected on which basis it could be determined where intervention was needed. It also allowed the Council to work in partnership with the private rented sector to address issues such as anti-social behaviour, demonstrating the Council was listening to landlords and on their side. The Cabinet Member recommended the motion to the Members of Council.

Councillor Clark seconded the motion and reserved the right to speak.

The Mayor invited Councillor Hale to speak on the motion who noted that the scheme had been based on a selected consultation conducted in 2015 and had subsequently failed to drive up quality or to address anti-social behaviour effectively. Councillor Hale noted that the 36,000 registrations had raised £15m but that thus far the scheme had not been evaluated and so it was not possible to demonstrate the positives of the scheme. The call to make the scheme robust and targeted based on an evaluation was made. Councillor Hale described how 20% of those in housing covered by the scheme had raised issues but that only 19 financial penalties had been imposed as a result of the scheme and just two licenses revoked. Whilst this was evidence of the improved quality of housing there was no evidence that anti-social behaviour had been addressed. As a result the Councillor said she was unable to support the motion and would be abstaining because whilst residents had a right to good quality housing, the motion did nothing to demonstrate this would be achieved as a result of the scheme.

The Mayor invited Councillor Tim Pollard to speak on the motion who questioned the basis of the motion and suggested that it was seeking to gain endorsement of a way that Labour Councils were raising revenue. Councillor Pollard stressed that the Council already had the powers it needed to address issues with private rented accommodation and that the costs of the scheme were set against a backdrop of rents and landlord costs rising sharply. It was highlighted that there was no evidence of improvement in the quality of accommodation in the private rented sector as a result of the scheme with its voluntary status meaning the worst landlords were failing to register altogether. Councillor Pollard recommended that a lower cost scheme should be used so that landlords didn't feel the need to pass the charge onto residents. He called on the scheme to be more focused on effectiveness and not just a way of raising funds. It was emphasised that it is a role of the Council to drive up the quality of accommodation on the basis of which he would be abstaining from the vote as he did not want to give the Administration any form of blank cheque.

Councillor Clark was invited to speak in support of the motion by the Mayor. The Councillor described the Landlords' Licensing Scheme as a significant success having achieved 35,000 registrations but that its continuation would require the approval of the Secretary of State. Councillor Clark recommended talking to Fairfield residents about their housing issues where not one of them was against the scheme. Through the scheme they had raised issues such as the length of tenancies and the safety of their accommodation, which were very real issues. Councillor Clark noted that the Government had shown where its priorities lay by not taking action and that the Permitted

Development Scheme allowed housing issues to be circumvented. Councillor Clark expressed his disappointed but that he was not surprised that the Opposition was abstaining from the motion.

The Mayor put the motion to the vote which was passed.

The Mayor requested that the Chief Executive read out the second Council Debate Motion made on behalf of the Opposition: *“This Council recognises the vital role that green spaces, trees and gardens play in providing a sustainable and healthy borough and is committed to protecting Croydon’s green spaces that do so much for our environment, our health and our well-being.*

This Council will use the Local Plan partial review as a means of protecting these vital spaces by changing policy to ensure their protection. This will include measures such as protecting garden space from encroaching backland development, and a greater protection for trees and biodiversity.

This Council will also use its development company, Brick by Brick, to lead the way and cease developing on green spaces. This Council will, therefore, remove its proposals to rip up and develop on valued land like the grass and trees on Shepherds Way where the community of Monks Hill holds its fun day, the green heart of the estate at Farnborough Avenue which was central to its original design and the green space at Covington Way in Upper Norwood that local residents are fighting to protect.

This Council also recognises that it was wrong to develop over green spaces and play areas in Montpelier Road, Heathfield Gardens, Longheath Gardens and Tollers Estate to name but a few.

Green spaces should not be destroyed as they provide a vital lung in our suburban environment and once they are destroyed they are lost forever”.

Councillor Helen Pollard, invited to propose the motion by the Mayor, opened by stressing the seriousness with which she takes the views of residents who regard the Administration’s approach to the protection of green spaces as shambolic and disingenuous. Councillor Pollard described how, during the process of adoption of the local plan, green spaces in the borough had been left vulnerable. The Administration had only started to address this in June 2019 with the implication being that they were fair game for developers. It was highlighted that green spaces were being sold to the Council’s developer Brick by Brick and that these sales had been agreed with great speed. Shock was expressed at the list of sites identified and the implication that sites at the heart of communities were to be concreted over. Having raised awareness of this development amongst residents, Councillor Pollard described how she had collected over 1,000 signatures in order to conduct a Local Petition Debate at Council. However, this had not been allowed to progress given it had been judged that it was not possible to determine that a significant number of signatures had been provided by those resident, working or studying in the Borough. Councillor Pollard stated that she would welcome a

meeting with Councillor Butler and described how letters had been sent out saying work was about to start to develop the sites sold to Brick By Brick.

Councillor Butler interjected with a point of personal information. It was clarified that the letters did not state that work was about to start. Rather the letters were about being open and transparent and gave residents notification that initial work surveying sites to assess suitability for development was about to begin.

During this exchange, Councillor Butler used unbecoming language in reference to Councillor Pollard for which the Cabinet Member gave an apology to Council.

Councillor Helen Pollard concluded in proposing the motion by stressing that residents were fed-up with being ignored by a Council that does not care.

Councillor Gatland seconded the motion and reserved the right to speak.

The Mayor invited Councillor Avis to speak on the motion who highlighted that the Opposition was not providing any solutions to housing need in the borough and that the portrayal of the surveying of sites as the start of development was misleading. Councillor Avis emphasised that Councillor Butler had been trying to explain the protection that the Council was trying to give to the borough's green spaces and called on the Opposition to stop scaring residents. At a time when the Opposition was claiming not enough was being done to protect green spaces, the Council had achieved national nature reserve status for a fourth site in the borough. The Councillor emphasised that the aim was simply to build homes for young people using Council land but that the Opposition was doing its best to thwart this in every way. This was described as a shame and pulling the ladder up on those yet to have a home.

During her comments, Councillor Avis used unbecoming language in reference to Councillor Helen Pollard for which the Cabinet Member gave an apology to Council following the interjection of the Mayor.

The Mayor invited Councillor Wood to speak on the motion who acknowledged the importance of green spaces in addition to protecting the environment and planet. It was noted that most were gardens already protected from building that required planning permission. However, this had to be balanced with the duty to act, a duty based on a belief in society. Councillor Wood emphasised that 46,000 homes were needed over the next three years meaning that the limited open space would need to be used for development but that this was just one part of the plan to strike the right balance. It was reiterated that the Opposition was providing no alternatives and that the Administration needed to make difficult decisions.

The Mayor invited Councillor Gatland to speak to the motion. She described how she had listened with great interest to the debate and commended the environmental activists who were present in the Chamber. However,

Councillor Gatland noted that the Administration would be judged on its actions and not its words. Allowing grass verges to grow was welcomed but it was wondered why the same approach wasn't being applied to those green spaces that had been identified for potential development by Brick By Brick. Councillor Gatland highlighted that these spaces were community gardens and were often the only green spaces available to those living in the surrounding area. The link to retaining green spaces and trees with action to address climate change, improving air quality and protecting health outcomes for residents was emphasised. The Administration was clearing nature rather than working with it and prioritising its relationships with developers. Councillor Gatland called for a more balanced approach similar to that taken in Sutton. This was described as standing up for residents and listening to their representations as well as planning for future need rather than rushing to implement the dictates of the Mayor of London. The Administration was called on to work alongside nature and for its Members to be brave and vote for the motion.

The Mayor put the motion to the vote and fell.

53/19 **Recommendations of Cabinet or Committees to Council for decision**

The Mayor invited the Leader, Councillor Newman, to move the recommendations contained in the Climate Change report. The Leader moved the recommendations stating that these were needed to respond to the public health and ecological emergency being caused by climate change and would ensure action to address climate change would be embedded straight into the policy making process. It was emphasised that this wasn't about charging more for parking permits for larger vehicles but rather about the young and elderly being admitted to hospital with breathing related difficulties and other health concerns linked to air quality.

The Leader emphasised that the purpose of the recommendations wasn't just about addressing the effects of climate change in Croydon but about acknowledging what happened locally could also affect communities around the world with reference being made to flooding in places such as Bangladesh. It was stressed that the recommendations would allow the needs of future generations to be put before shareholder gains and that it was time for action in Croydon, on which basis the Leader stated that he was proud to move the recommendations.

The recommendations in the report were seconded by Councillor King, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (Job-Share).

The Mayor informed the Members of Council that in accordance with Part 4A of the Constitution, notification had been received from the Majority Group of its request for the Climate Change recommendations to be deferred for debate. The Chief Executive read the referral request: "We move the

amendment of recommendation 1.5 to reflect the declaration of a climate change and ecological emergency”.

The Mayor invited Councillor Sirisena to move the amendment to the recommendations contained in the report. Councillor Sirisena explained how it was the action that would be taken immediately that would ensure the survival of the planet and was an intergenerational mission. It was highlighted that there was a need to do locally what must be done nationally. A Green New Deal for Croydon was described and it was stressed how this couldn't be imposed from above but rather needed to be developed in partnership with local residents. Councillor Sirisena envisioned workers, employers, unions and residents working together to develop a Green Deal that would also deliver well paid jobs and bring Green Industry and pride to Croydon. It was noted that this would see a move away from the domination of the carbon industry with congratulations being given to the administrators of the Croydon Pension Fund who had already signalled their intention to make this change. It was suggested that Croydon could set-up its own green energy firm as had been done by Islington Council. Councillor Sirisena called for a borough-wide consensus to prioritise spending on green energy and to build solidarity across all communities. It was noted that it was black communities who were suffering most from the effects of poor air quality and therefore how those communities should be front and centre of a Green New Deal which was required to achieve racial equality in the borough. Councillor Sirisena also noted how what was happening in Croydon affected communities around the world. It was described how national Government Policy, such as increasing taxes on solar panels, was hindering action to tackle climate change with the call for a Labour Government to work alongside a Labour Council. In conclusion, the Councillor quoted that we don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors that we borrow it from our children.

Councillor Degrad's seconded the motion to amend the recommendations in the report and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor King, as the responsible Cabinet Member, was invited to speak by the Mayor on the motion to amend the recommendations in the report. The Cabinet Member described how the Administration had set out its plans on how to address climate change in its 2018 manifesto including stopping use of herbicides, increasing tree planting, taking tough action on vehicle emissions, prioritising the Council's walking and cycling programme, divesting in carbon from the Croydon Pension Fund and installing electric charging points. However, Councillor King acknowledged that the growing climate change emergency had helped create focus and generated a re-evaluation of policy with the emphasis on acting as quick and forcibly as the powers of the Council would allow. It was described how Croydon would be joining other Councils to go carbon neutral by no later than 2030. The Cabinet Member though was sanguine and acknowledged that targets do not in themselves achieve climate change. This would be the product of action. It was described how his personal passion was to get Croydon walking more and driving less but that personal endeavours will not do enough; it was for the state to act. The Cabinet Member stressed that climate change was as much a call to those in

local government as much as those in national government and that there was no free pass based on lack of funding. It was highlighted that the hope was to be able to agree the recommendations as amended on a cross party basis as political leadership was necessary and the call made to show the determination and courage needed.

Councillor Perry was invited by the Mayor to respond on the recommendations as amended. The Councillor welcomed the discussion on climate change but noted that the Opposition had not been afforded the same opportunity to debate the hidden library closures which was described as an affront to democracy.

The Leader, Councillor Newman, interjected to provide a note of personal explanation and to state there were no library closures being proposed or planned.

Councillor Perry resumed and noted that the Climate Change report had been taken to the Cabinet meeting as an urgent item and that a procedural motion had been used to debate the report rather than using the Council Debate Motion. It was questioned if this had been an appropriate action. It was stressed that addressing climate change was about actions and not words and that at the same time as the amended recommendations were being moved, Brick By Brick was building on green spaces and destroying natural ecology. Councillor Perry described how no differentiation was being made in parking charges for hybrid as opposed to diesel vehicles. Whilst the recommendations were perceived as well meaning, Councillor Perry noted the devil being in the detail.

Councillor Creatura was invited by the Mayor to respond on the recommendations as amended. The Councillor noted the Conservative Party had been a global leader since the Thatcher era on the issue of the environment; the Government was cutting emissions at a faster rate than other Governments and was now bringing in a national target to achieve zero emissions. Councillor Creatura noted the two thirds drop in coal use achieved by the Government and the growth in renewables that had been achieved. Two million green jobs had also been achieved. However, Councillor Creatura noted that the Conservative Party was not complacent. It was described how a Labour Government and its renationalisation policy would disrupt this progress with private sector investment in green technology being lost. It was recorded that the Confederation of British Industry had described how much needed investment was drying up under Labour threats. It was noted that under the previous Labour Government the UK had been at the bottom of G20 ranking for green investment. Councillor Creatura stated that it was good that the Labour Administration was seeking to change its track records on climate change. The promise to work with communities was welcomed but it was again stressed that it was deeds not words that were important. Councillor Creatura described how the Opposition would work with the Administration on action to address climate change but also continue to hold it to account. It was stressed that failure was not an option.

Councillor Tim Pollard was invited by the Mayor to respond on the recommendations as amended. It was described how the Government had set impressive targets for a reduction in emissions but that the challenge had to be grasped. Councillor Pollard highlighted how the report had been subject to little discussion or debate when introduced at Cabinet and that the deferral debate had been cynically achieved by changing very few words in the recommendations. It was noted that local authority established Climate Commissions had been talking shops but hadn't achieved a great deal. Councillor Pollard raised the issue of air quality in schools and questioned the Administration's decision to build a school on the Purley Way. In conclusion, Councillor Pollard noted that in a spirit of cross party working he was happy to support the recommendations as amended.

Councillor Degrads was invited by the Mayor to speak to the recommendations as amended. It was noted that this was not just a motion but would be embedded in policy. This was being done on behalf of the one in five households in the borough with asthma - the highest level of incidence of asthma in London. Councillor Degrads also highlighted the link between air quality and mental health. It was explained that the Administration was advocating for children in the borough which was reflected in existing policy. Hence the focus on not having to travel too far to a good school, reduction in single use plastics, increasing doorstep recycling, increasing plants in the borough, backing bees and the Croydon Pension Fund divesting in carbon. This showed how the Administration was already putting a green focus at the heart of its policy. Councillor Degrads explained how the NHS could not afford the impact of air quality on health, that therefore a collective approach was required and that the Administration was embracing the challenge. Councillor Degrads noted that Croydon was showing it was listening and would empower all to do their bit in the fight against climate change.

The Mayor put the recommendations as amended to the vote which were agreed.

The remaining recommendations from Cabinet and Committees for decision, namely Croydon's Culture and Libraries Plans, Protocol on Staff-Member relations and revised Tenders and Contracts Regulations were subject to the Guillotine motion and were immediately put to the vote with all being approved.

RESOLVED: Council **AGREED** the recommendations in the reports to:

1. Croydon's Culture and Libraries Plans:
 - 1.1. Adoption of the Croydon Libraries Plan 2019 – 20, Appendix 1A.
2. Ethics Committee and the Protocol on Staff-Member relations:
 - 2.1. The Protocol on Staff-Member relations, Part 5B of the Constitution, be updated to include, as detailed in the paper, a definition of bullying and harassment.
3. Delivering for Residents through Sustainable and Ethical Commissioning – revised Tenders and Contracts Regulations:

3.1. Adoption of the revised Tenders and Contracts Regulations, Part 4 of the Constitution (Appendix 3A).

54/19 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The motion was not required.

The meeting ended at 10.13 pm

Signed:

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Date:

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