

Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee Agenda



To: Councillors Councillor Ria Patel (Chair), Councillor Louis Carserides (Vice-Chair), Danielle Denton, Gayle Gander, Stella Nabukeera, Ellily Ponnuthurai and Luke Shortland

Reserve Members: Leila Ben-Hassel, Adele Benson, Sherwan Chowdhury, Samir Dwesar, Simon Fox, Mohammed Islam and Esther Sutton

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Wednesday, 1 November 2023** at **6.30 pm** in **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
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Tom Downs
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www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Tuesday, 24 October 2023

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AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 20)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosure of Interests

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and other registrable and non-registrable interests they may have in relation to any item(s) of business on today's agenda.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

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

5. Period 4 Financial Performance Report (Pages 21 - 56)

The Sub-Committee is provided the latest Financial Performance Monitoring report, to review by exception, with a view to considering whether it is reassured about the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget.

6. Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028

To receive a presentation on the Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 to allow the Sub-Committee to provide early feedback in advance of the full report to Cabinet in December 2023. *(To Follow)*

7. Cleaner Croydon (Pages 57 - 82)

To receive an update on the Council's work on the Mayor's priority for delivering 'Cleaner Croydon'. The Sub-Committee will also receive feedback on its recommendations concerning the Waste & Recycling Contract.

8. Local Plan Review (Pages 83 - 94)

For the reasons set out in the report, the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. To note this report, the proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 and the publication of the Local Plan Review for a

second consultation under Regulation 19 of the of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012; and,

2. To consider whether it wishes to make any comments on the proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 to be taken account of by the Executive.

9. Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 95 - 102)

The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is presented with an up to date list of responses from Cabinet to recommendations made by the Sub-Committee for review.

10. Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24 (Pages 103 - 108)

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

1. Note the draft work programme for 2023-24, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

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

PART B

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Scrutiny Streets & Environment Sub-Committee

Meeting held on Tuesday, 11 July 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Councillor Ria Patel (Chair), Councillor Louis Carserides (Vice-Chair), Danielle Denton, Gayle Gander, Stella Nabukeera, Ellily Ponnuthurai and Luke Shortland

Also Present: Councillor Scott Roche (Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment)
Councillor Rowenna Davis (Present Virtually)

Apologies: None

PART A

16/23 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

17/23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

18/23 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

19/23 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

20/23 Period 1 Financial Performance Report

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 43 to 58 of the agenda that provided the Cabinet Report on Period 1 Financial Performance for Members to ascertain whether they are reassured about the delivery of the 2022-23 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery

(SCRER) Budget. The Director of Sustainable Communities introduced the item.

The Chair asked about the timeline for resolving issues with the ANPR camera contract, and heard that conversations were ongoing with the contractor and that it was hoped issues would be fully resolved by the end of August 2023. In response to questions from the Vice-Chair, Members heard that there had been a delay in the rollout of cameras for some School and Healthy Streets, which had lowered the forecasted income for these areas in 23/24. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that they would not be able to comment on the loss of income to the Council in the current year due to commercial sensitivity.

The Sub-Committee asked about the possible additional financial burdens that the Council might face as a result of the Environment Act 2021, noting the government funding that had been announced to assist Councils in delivering some aspects of the legislation. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the Council would lobby government to ensure it received all available funding, and gave some examples of the possible changes the Act could bring, for example, no longer being able to charge for the collection of garden waste and the introduction of deposit return schemes. The Chair asked if there was a requirement on delivering 'Biodiversity Net Gain' in the Act, and the Director of Sustainable Communities committed to answering this question after the meeting.

Requests for Information

The Sub-Committee requested that information on the percentage Biodiversity Net Gain the Council would be asked to achieve as a result of the Environment Act 2021 be provided once available, alongside any risks to not achieving this target.

Conclusions

The Sub-Committee requested that a briefing on ANPR cameras be provided to Members once issues with the ANPR contract were resolved, and that the Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee also be invited to attend.

21/23 Cabinet Report: Parking Policy Transformation Project

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 3 to 22 of the supplementary agenda, which provided the draft Parking Policy and Action Plan 2023, due for consideration at Cabinet on the 26th July 2023. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment introduced the item followed by some additional commentary from the Head of Highways & Parking Services.

The Sub-Committee enquired as to how the 'Key Policy Drivers' had been chosen, and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that these had been chosen to ensure that the policy was customer focussed and served the Mayor's Business Plan whilst delivering efficiencies where possible. The Chair asked how this policy would fit into Croydon's wider transport policy, which it was noted would be coming up for renewal soon. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the Parking Policy Project Board had been attended by Strategic Transport officers so that they could feed into its development and ensure it aligned with their own work.

The Vice-Chair asked about delivery milestones and how the success of the Policy would be measured. The Sub-Committee heard that a more defined Action Plan would be developed once the consultation on the policy had concluded, and that this would include a timeline for achieving each action.

Members raised concerns about the resources available to deliver a new Parking Policy. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that this sat under the Council's Transformation Programme, and had been allocated transformation funding of £200,000 for the development and implementation of the Policy. External resources had been brought in where specialist work would need to be undertaken, for example on designing kerbside controls, and someone was already in post for this; specialist consultants had supported the development and initial delivery of the consultation on the Policy. The Sub-Committee heard that data would be used in a more effective way going forward, and that the 38 Civil Enforcement Officers currently employed by the Council would be deployed in a more targeted way. The Council had an established Parking Design team, which sat in within Highways, and would be responsible for delivering changes that resulted from the new Policy. The Sub-Committee asked about the timeline for implementation of the new Policy, and heard that it was expected that the Policy would go out to public consultation for six weeks in summer 2023, with delivery of the full Policy expected to be implemented by the end of the 24/25 financial year.

Members asked how communication with residents would be undertaken to ensure that they were aware of what was changing with parking in Croydon and that individuals were not unfairly penalised. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the Council had learnt lessons from its consultations on Healthy Neighbourhoods and School Streets schemes, and would be using a multi-channelled approach for communications, including workshops, publications on the Council website and on social media. In response to questions about whether there would be a 'bedding in period' on any Policy changes with warnings for first time offences for an initial period, Members heard the Council had already adopted this approach.

In response to questions about the budget impact of the Policy, Members heard that the policy was expected to deliver £250,000 in efficiencies under the Transformation Programme, but that currently only impacts on potential income were being modelled, as the Policy had not yet gone out for consultation. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that resident

behaviours had changed over the last few years, and that modelling this was one of the key challenges in developing a new Policy. The Sub-Committee heard that, whilst it was acknowledged that free parking in certain areas was important, the turnover of parked vehicles was central to ensuring that a balance was struck that could best support both residents and local businesses. The Director of Sustainable Communities highlighted a trial in Southend around pay and display machines, that was seeking to establish if meter feeding was taking place and explained that this would inform any future Policy changes.

The Chair asked if the Policy had been designed with the consideration of aims to increase walking and cycling journeys, increase the length of time people spent in District Centres, and reducing short distance car trips through a Public Health approach. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that this sat outside of the Parking Policy, but acknowledged it was important that the Policy was flexible enough to account for emerging policy in these areas through collaboration with Strategic Transport colleagues.

In response to questions from the Vice-Chair on the consultation process, the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the Communications team had been involved through the Parking Policy Project Board, and were mapping out a communication and consultation plan, accounting for the different methods and channels which could be used to engage residents. It was reiterated that the lessons learnt in consulting on previous schemes would be applied to the consultation, and that the Council website, social media and contacts from residents registered for 'My Account' would be used to target communications, as written communications to the entire borough would not be an efficient use of resource. Members heard RingGo had technology that could measure parking stress and duration of stay in specified areas, and this data would be used in developing the Policy. It was confirmed that the Policy would be a live document and would change over its lifetime to ensure it was still relevant and applicable, but that the Policy Objectives would remain fixed. The Head of Highways & Parking Services confirmed that the Parking department would be working with the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) across the Borough in shaping the Policy and identifying the needs of businesses in these areas. The Chair asked how District Centres without BIDs would be engaged with, and the Sub-Committee heard that there would be use of the Councils existing networks to identify and contact businesses, and that letter drops had been undertaken in Southend before the start of the current parking trial, which may be replicated for other areas in the future.

The Sub-Committee asked about the parking trial in South Croydon, and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the number of overall transactions had reduced, whilst income had increased. Members were asked not to take this information as conclusive as the scheme had not yet concluded, but that initial findings implied that there had been meter reading in this area.

Members asked if transport assessments had been undertaken in different localities across the borough to account for their differences to ensure that any policy applied would be effective. The Head of Highways & Parking Services acknowledged that kerbside policy could not be 'one size fits all' to be effective, and that currently policy varied by area; it was expected that this approach would be continued following the consultation. The Sub-Committee heard that kerbside data collection would be used to support the development of policy and that the approach to different localities would be data-led.

The Sub-Committee asked if there would be a discount to tariffs for Electric Vehicles (EVs), or if there would be emissions based tariffs. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that this was currently the case, but that no decisions had yet been made for the new Policy on emissions based parking. Members heard that 400 EV parking spaces had been implemented on the highway by the end of 22/23, and that it needed to be reviewed whether EV charging spaces on the highway was the right approach going forward, but that this would be a matter for the new Transport Strategy. The Chair asked if the Council's current tariffs were comparable with other London boroughs. The Head of Highways & Parking Services responded that benchmarking activities had taken place looking at tariffs and permits, and that the average EV parking permit in London sat at around £34, but was currently £6.50 in Croydon; this would be reviewed as part of the new Policy.

The Vice-Chair asked if there were plans to remove EV discounts in pay and display tariffs. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that this would be looked at as a part of reviewing pay and display charges, but that no decision had yet been made. The Vice-Chair asked what consultation findings would suggest that this was an action that needed to be taken, and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that it would depend on whether residents felt the current charges were fair. The Vice-Chair asked for assurances that any changes would be done in the interests of fairness, and not for financial reasons. The Director of Sustainable Communities responded that they were clear on their responsibilities under the Transport Act to set parking charges that covered the cost of running the service, with any surplus being reinvested into transport related activity; currently all surplus from parking charges went to funding Croydon's contributions to the Freedom Pass scheme.

The Sub-Committee asked about EV tariffs in the current policy, and heard that these had been implemented to incentivise people to invest in lower emission vehicles, but it was acknowledged that this alone had probably not been a significant driver in encouraging consumers to purchase EVs. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment elaborated that those who could afford EVs were least likely to need the tariff discount.

In response to questions about the aims of reducing parking allocations in new developments, the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the Policy had been developed in close collaboration with Planning Colleagues to ensure that it was complimentary to the Local Plan. Members heard that new properties could create challenges for on-street parking which

could lead to the Parking department being asked to consult on the introduction of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), which were often unpopular with residents. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the new Policy would seek to look at the introduction of alternatives to CPZs. The Chair asked about how CPZs were mapped across the borough, and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that a map was available on the Council website. The Sub-Committee commented that the map was of poor quality and required improvement.

The Chair asked how the Policy would be made to fit for individual District Centres and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that, should the current trial in Southend be successful, then RingGo would be rolled out further, which would allow wider data collection to shape policies that accounted for local differences. The Chair asked if any additional cashless parking trials would be considered for areas of the borough with different parking pressures, and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the move to cashless parking did not form a part of the Policy and had previously been agreed at Budget Council in March 2022. Once this was fully rolled out, more granular detail would be available due to the absence of cash payments, and this data could be used to better inform policy decisions.

The Sub-Committee asked how the Council would ensure that disabled bays were still in the most accessible places for Blue Badge holders, and that Croydon was following best practice to support disabled residents. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the Blue Badge scheme was a national initiative that sat with the person and not a vehicle. The Sub-Committee heard that as part of the Policy, there would be a review of where Blue Badge holders could park, but that holders were not currently restricted to just parking in disabled bays, and could park on single yellow lines or in pay and display bays for an unlimited time. It was noted that some disabled bays were time limited to ensure there was good turnover in areas with higher parking pressures. The Sub-Committee asked about roadways that were inaccessible for wheelchair users due to footway parking. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that it was an ambition of the Policy to tackle this, but it was not yet known exactly how this would be done; footway parking would be reviewed to ensure it was not detrimental to the accessibility of other highway users.

Members asked how it would be ensured that those who genuinely needed Blue Badges were not unfairly penalised by the Blue Badge fraud initiative, and how fraud would be tackled. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that the Travel Services department in the Council were responsible for working with the national Blue Badge database, and that Civil Enforcement Officers had recently been given access to this information so that they could report any Blue Badges listed in the database as stolen. The Sub-Committee heard that the full action plan to tackle Blue Badge fraud was still under development.

The Vice-Chair asked that particular effort be made to engage with disabled residents, as well as disability interests groups, to ensure their views were

captured. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that work on this was already planned, and that the department was in contact with individuals who had previously contributed their views to past highways change schemes, as well as disability interest groups. Members highlighted that there should be joined up working with the police to tackle Blue Badge fraud that relied on the theft of permits.

Members encouraged officers to ensure that disabled bay placements were in the absolute most accessible locations for Blue Badge holders. The Vice-Chair asked about the average wait time for requested disability bays outside of residences, and it was stated that this could be provided outside of the meeting. The Sub-Committee asked about enforcement for the misuse of disabled bays, and heard that enforcement could be reactive if residents called the Council enforcement hotline or reported through the 'Love Clean Streets' app. Members asked if there was any data on how often a resident reports through the hotline or app led to an enforcement action, and the Director of Sustainable Communities said that this data could be provided outside of the meeting.

The Sub-Committee asked about the possibility of feedback for residents who reported parking offences, as to whether this had led to an enforcement action. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that these reports did go through to enforcement supervisors in real-time, but the current software did not allow for feedback to the reporting resident. Members commented that this lack of feedback could be frustrating for residents, and the Director of Sustainable Communities responded that this was something that could be looked at in future. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that it was hoped that intelligence-led enforcement would reduce this frustration by targeting enforcement at hotspot areas, the identification of which would be informed by resident reporting.

The Chair asked if 'White Badges' were being considered for Croydon, and was informed that this was not currently being considered. In response to questions on where Croydon sat nationally for Blue Badge fraud, it was heard that this was not currently known, but it was expected that this would be similar to other London boroughs. Members asked about the number of Blue Badges in use in Croydon, and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that numbers were available for those issued in Croydon, but not for those issued outside of the borough but being used on Croydon streets.

Members asked about areas of persistent parking violations away from District Centres, such as outside of schools, and whether any additional enforcement resources would be directed to these. The Head of Highways & Parking Services responded that, as part of the rollout of the School Streets programme, there was a rota of where Civil Enforcement Officers were deployed to schools at drop off and pick up times. Safer Neighbourhood Teams had also been contacted so that they could engage with school communities to ensure the behaviour of parents and carers was not causing road safety incidents. The Sub-Committee explained that anecdotally they were aware of schools where this was not happening, and asked if Civil

Enforcement Officers could attend to provide a deterrent. The Director of Sustainable Communities asked that Members provided the relevant details and that this could then be looked into.

The Vice-Chair commented on parking enforcement in Croydon, and that this was poor in their view, but that they welcomed the policy on 'intelligence-led enforcement'; the Vice-Chair stated that they would like to see strong communications from the Council when new enforcement initiatives were introduced and actions taken, as they felt that this would provide a good soft deterrent. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the Council did issue a large number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for contravention, and that a breakdown of PCNs issued by Civil Enforcement Officers or camera could be provided if requested. The Sub-Committee heard that these were issued across Croydon, not just in the Town Centre, and information on the distribution of where PCNs were issued could also be provided. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that it was the ambition of the new Policy to 'follow the data' to make sure enforcement action was focussed where parking contraventions were taking place.

The Sub-Committee asked what would be done for residents affected by 'digital exclusion' with the removal of pay and display machines, and if any educational communications would be provided to assist residents with the transition. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that it was not necessarily the case that all pay and display machines would be removed, and that payments could be made by phone call or app. The Sub-Committee heard that the Council had looked at other boroughs who had moved to cashless parking, and that a number of alternative payment options were being considered, including through shops using 'PayPoint'. The Chair asked if visitor vouchers had been considered, and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that it had been discussed in the round.

Members asked for clarity on whether 'efficient' in the policy referred to efficient use of the roadway, or budget efficiencies. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that this was about making the best use of the Council's resources by best using technology, and removing duplication of work in the service. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that some processes had to be done on paper by legislation that did provide some limits on the efficiencies that could be achieved. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment added that it also meant efficiency through everyone paying the same tariffs, as currently those not paying through the app were charged at the highest rate; it was confirmed that those paying by phone were charged at the correct tariff when they provided their car details.

Members asked why RingGo had been chosen as the provider when there were a substantial number of negative reviews of the company. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that this had been chosen through a contract framework in 2022, but that work was ongoing to unify parking app experiences for parking users at a national level through the Department for Transport.

The Sub-Committee asked about communications with residents to ensure they understood the virtual permit process, and the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that residents with access to email would receive a confirmation, and that the details of the permit would be accessible on their individual profile; a reminder email was sent to residents ahead of the permits expiry.

Members asked what provisions there were to mitigate for when things went wrong, for example if RingGo's service went down. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that there were service level agreements with RingGo that meant that their service needed to be available 99% of the time, with defined escalations for outages and penalties in the contract. In the instance of an outage, the Council would be contacted but not individual residents, and this data was used when residents appealed PCNs that were issued in error due to a RingGo outage.

Requests for information

The Sub-Committee requested that the results of South Croydon trial parking scheme were provided to Members once available, including what KPIs were used and the performance against these.

The Sub-Committee requested that data was provided showing the number of resident calls to the parking enforcement hotline and reports to the 'Love Clean Streets' app, and the number of enforcement actions that resulted from these reports.

The Sub-Committee requested that information on the timeline for reviewing kerbside parking be provided.

The Sub-Committee requested information on the number of active Blue Badge permits issued in Croydon.

The Sub-Committee requested that they were updated with the solutions being sought by the Council on inaccessible footways as a result of parking.

The Sub-Committee requested that the average wait-time for requested disabled parking bays outside of residences be provided.

The Sub-Committee requested information on the number of PCNs issued be provided, including a breakdown on the areas where these were issued and whether they were issued by a Civil Enforcement Officer or a camera.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that 'Letter Drops', or similar targeted communications, on Parking Policy were undertaken for District Centres that had not already been engaged, or who were not

actively being engaged through Business Improvement Districts before any changes to the Parking Policy are enacted.

2. The Sub-Committee recommended that an improved parking map was developed for the Council website, which included Controlled Parking Zones and Restricted Parking Areas.
3. The Sub-Committee recommended that a Task Group was established for engaging with disabled residents and disabled-led organisations (such as Transport for All) on parking policy, to ensure that disabled parking bays were best placed on the road for users and that roads and footways were accessible, to tie in with the Policy three - 'Supporting our Disabled Residents'.
4. The Sub-Committee requested that the Council should provide follow up communication to residents who reported parking for enforcement action through the parking hotline or 'Love Clean Streets' app.
5. The Sub-Committee recommended that there was comprehensive communications with residents should areas transition from parking meters to cashless parking, including a full publicity campaign and video walk-through.

22/23 Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 59 to 116 of the agenda, which provided an update the ongoing consultation with residents, local businesses, and other stakeholders on a draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Croydon. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment and Senior Engineer introduced the item and went through the presentation at Appendix 3.

The Chair commented on the thoroughness of the Draft Strategy, but raised concerns that quarterly meetings of the Flood Group had not taken place for a long time, and that the Flood Risk Action Plan had not been reviewed since 2021, which suggested a lack of resources. The Senior Engineer explained that the Draft Strategy had been developed to be deliverable within the available resources, and that the Action Plan would continue to be reviewed quarterly; currently the Flood Group was internal, but would invite external partners where appropriate to contribute. The last meeting of the Group had taken place recently, and the next date could be provided after the meeting.

The Sub-Committee asked how consultation results could feed into what was a complex and technical Strategy. The Senior Engineer explained that the consultation was in two parts, one looking at whether the objectives of the Strategy were correct, and the second looking to collect resident intelligence on flood risks the Council may not be aware of. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment explained that every effort had been made to reduce

jargon and to make the Strategy and consultation as accessible as possible. The Chair asked how residents who were at higher risk of flood would be engaged, and heard that this group would be directly targeted for their involvement. Members asked if the Council kept flooding reports, and if this data would be used to target communications. The Senior Engineer explained that there was an action in the Action Plan to make sure the information collected on flooding events was consistent through development of a template for use in the contact centre; currently data was logged on an Excel spreadsheet stored in a SharePoint and specific information from this could be provided to residents on request. The Chair asked if data was collected on the source of a flood, and whether the Flood Incident Register could be published on the website. The Senior Engineer explained that this data was collected where available, but that there were no plans to publish the Register, although information from the Register was available to residents on request. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that the statutory Section 19 flooding reports the Council produced were published on the website; the Chair stated that one had not been published since 2017, and the Senior Engineer explained the circumstances that would require a Section 19 report to be produced.

Members asked if there was a specific department responsible for flood risk, and heard that this sat in Highways, but that many departments worked together through the Flood Risk group to meet the Council's obligations. The Sub-Committee asked if the Council had the resources to deliver on the Strategy within current limited resources. The Director of Sustainable Communities responded that the consultation would be important in determining the resources needed to deliver the Strategy, and that the final report for Cabinet would take this into consideration. The Chair asked what lessons had been learned from the previous Strategy, and how these would feed into the new iteration. The Senior Engineer explained that the original Strategy had been the Council's first attempt, and that it had some issues. There had been significant efforts to simplify the Strategy, and to remove jargon, as well as making sure actions in the Action Plan were achievable and manageable. Members asked about the impact the loss of trees through development had on flood risk and whether an arborist had been consulted in its development. The Senior Engineer stated they had not, but that they would take this away as an action.

The Sub-Committee asked about the maintenance of drainage through cleaning, repair and pumping, and how often this was being conducted and whether the condition of these assets was recorded. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that not all of these systems were owned by the Council, but that there were around 25,000 road gullies on the highway that were on an annual cleaning programme; it was acknowledged that there were challenges around this with parked cars blocking access at times. The frequency of drainage cleansing in known flood risk areas was conducted quarterly, with some cleansed even more regularly. There were around 3,500 soakaways across the borough that were also on a cyclical cleaning programme. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that some of the networks were the responsibility of water authorities, particularly where

there were combined foul and surface water sewers, who the Council engaged with in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). The Sub-Committee heard that one of the challenges in developing the Strategy was the lack of, or inconsistent, data, but that new technology was now being used, such as flow monitoring of rivers and deep bore ground water monitoring, which allowed the Council to react to flood risk faster. The Director of Sustainable Communities commented on the importance of providing flood prevention advice to residents who were at risk; this involved engagement at resident meetings, publicising available funding, leafleting and speaking with individuals where possible to provide advice on possible mitigations. Members heard that the Council was looking to have a more co-ordinated and efficient approach through the new Strategy, in providing advice on flood mitigations, active flood prevention and its reaction to flooding events.

Members asked if the Council had any enforcement or powers to compel utility companies where they were not providing upkeep on flood prevention assets they owned. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that this power sat with the Environment Agency, but that one of the main challenges in Croydon was understanding where all of the infrastructure was, who it was owned by, and who was responsible for maintaining it. The Sub-Committee were informed that this was why engagement with the utility companies was so important in developing the new Strategy. The Chair asked about the Council's power to issue fines to utility companies, and it was explained that the Council granted permits for utility companies to work on the highway and could issue fines where the conditions of the permit were breached.

The Chair asked about engagement with residents around flood risk prevention and the Senior Engineer explained that they attended the Caterham and Old Coulson Flood Action Group, alongside officers from other authorities, to provide support to residents through leaflets and providing information on available funding. Where individuals approached the Council directly, they would speak with them to provide advice where possible. The Senior Engineer explained that they worked directly with utility companies to resolve any issues where their assets were contributing to flooding or flood risk, but where flooding was occurring on private land the Council was not necessarily able to intervene.

The Sub-Committee asked how the Council worked with partners like landowners, such as the Corporation of London, to reduce the risk of flooding. The Senior Engineer explained that they worked with landowners, where these could be identified, to make recommendations on methods that could reduce flooding risk. The Strategy did not include flood prevention methods on private land, but the Council would always work with residents to provide advice on measures they could implement to ensure that they were meeting their responsibilities for maintaining watercourses on their own land. The Director of Sustainable Communities confirmed that the Council could take legal action against landowners who were failing to uphold their responsibility for maintaining flood prevention measures on their property.

Members asked about sustainable urban drainage on developments, and whether work was being done with Planning colleagues on including this in the Local Plan as opposed to by condition on a per application basis. The Director of Sustainable Communities confirmed that there was a good relationship with the Planning department, and that the LLFA were a statutory consultee on all major development applications. The Director of Sustainable Communities explained that they could take away the suggestions on including sustainable urban drainage in the review of the Local Plan to the relevant director.

The Chair commented on the importance of nature-based solutions for flood prevention, and the Senior Engineer explained that the plan did not contain any specific measures, but that grant funding for this was available and that the Council was investigating if it met the criteria to apply for this. The Chair asked about how 'blue corridors' would be accounted for in the Strategy, and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that there were plans to develop this further in Croydon, and encouraged Members to feed this into the consultation.

The Vice-Chair commented on the ambitious nature of the strategy, and asked how confident the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment was that the Strategy was deliverable. The Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment responded that the full scale of the Strategy would only be apparent once the consultation was completed, but that they were confident that the final Strategy would be deliverable. The Sub-Committee heard that they would be tracking the progress of implementing the Strategy on a weekly basis, as they did with a number of areas.

Members explained that an interest group had approach Councillors about the South Norwood Lake, and asked the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment if there was any planned work on the site, and if there were any known risks to the lake from Climate Change. The Sub-Committee heard that the Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment had met with the group a number of times since May 2022 to discuss a number of issues.

The Sub-Committee asked if there was any additional funding streams available outside of that available from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The Director for Sustainable Communities explained that the vast majority of the funding did come from DEFRA; once the Strategy was adopted, the resource profile would be looked at to ensure it could be delivered. Members commented that the work being done to standardise the information captured on flooding events was vital, as this information was important to ensuring the Council had accurate data to meet thresholds to receive DEFRA funding.

The Sub-Committee asked how private landowners were provided with flood prevention advice, and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that there was substantial information on the Council website as well as the Environment Agency website. Where there were known flooding issues, or flooding investigations or Section 19 reports had been written, the Council

then looked at what prevention and mitigation methods could be put in place. The Director for Sustainable Communities stated that, where residents were at risk of imminent flooding, the Council would help through the Emergency Planning process. The Sub-Committee commented that a public awareness campaign on flooding could be very useful, and were informed that winter preparedness campaigns did feature flooding but it was acknowledged that this could be expanded.

Request for information

The Sub-Committee requested that they be provided with the next meeting date of the Council's internal Flood Risk Group.

Conclusions

The Sub-Committee concluded that a briefing should be provided to Members on how the Local Flood Risk Management fed into the development of the Local Plan.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that the Flood Risk Register be published on the Council's website to ensure that this was transparent and accessible to residents.
3. The Sub-Committee recommended the implementation of a publicly accessible Geographic Information System (GIS) for Croydon.
4. The Sub-Committee recommended that an the expertise of an arborist be used to feed into the Strategy, and that more thought should be put into how Blue and Green corridors can be expanded, alongside other nature based solutions, to provide additional flood prevention measures using any available grant funding available to the Council.
5. The Sub-Committee recommended that the Council implement a year-round publicity campaign on flood prevention, as it felt that beginning this in the winter was too late to be as effective as possible.

23/23 Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations

The Vice-Chair highlighted recommendation 3 in Appendix 1, and that the data on the outcomes of experimental School Streets had not been provided to this meeting as planned, due to the department having not yet had time to analyse this information. The Sub-Committee noted that a report on this had been planned for Cabinet in July 2023, but had been deferred to September 2023. The Chair requested that a briefing on this be provided to Members before the report went to Cabinet.

24/23 Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

The meeting ended at 9.08 pm

Signed:

Date:

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	1 November 2023
REPORT TITLE:	Period 4 Financial Performance Report
LEAD OFFICER:	Nick Hibberd - Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Nick Hibberd - Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery
LEAD MEMBER:	<p style="text-align: right;">Councillor Scott Roche Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Councillor Jeet Bains Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration</p>
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item is included on the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee Work Programme for 2023/24 as a standing item to be reviewed by exception.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Sub-Committee is asked to scrutinise the information provided with a view to considering whether it is reassured about the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 PERIOD 1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 1.1. The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee has asked to be provided with the most recent Cabinet Financial Performance report to review the delivery of the 2023-24 Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget
- 1.2. The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is asked to review the information on the Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Budget contained in the Cabinet report on Period 4 Financial Performance and to consider whether Members are reassured about its delivery.

2 APPENDICES

2.1 Appendix 1 - Period 4 Financial Performance Report

3 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

3.1 None

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	25 October 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	2023-24 Period 4 Financial Performance Report	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	Jane West Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)	
LEAD OFFICER:	Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151)	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jason Cummings, Cabinet Member for Finance	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	Reason: Key Decision – Decision incurs expenditure, or makes savings, of more than £1,000,000 or such smaller sum which the decision-taker considers is significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public Grounds for the exemption: N/A
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Council’s financial performance as at Period 4 (July 2023) for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme. The report forms part of the Council’s financial management process for publicly reporting financial performance on a monthly basis.

Financial Performance Summary Table

Financial Performance Area	2023-24 Revised Budget (£m)	2023-24 Forecast (£m)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£m)
Revenue Forecast (General Fund)	340.9	340.9	-
Revenue Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	-	3.8	3.8
Capital Forecast (General Fund)	144.7	130.8	(13.9)
Capital Forecast (Housing Revenue Account)	33.2	37.3	4.1

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended:

- 2.1** to note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 4, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.1m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.
- 2.2** to note the progress in MTFS savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.82.
- 2.3** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.77.
- 2.4** to note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £3.8m.
- 2.5** to approve a net budget increase to the 2022-26 General Fund capital programme budget of £0.336m, owing to slippage, changes in grant funding and the removal of the transformation budget (originally slipped from 2022-23), as set out in paragraph 4.97.
- 2.6** to approve the allocation of £4.000m reserves funding for transformation expenditure, as set out in paragraph 4.77.
- 2.7** to note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £13.9m against the revised capital budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) of £144.7m.
- 2.8** to note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £4.1m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 2.9** to note the Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.
- 2.10** to note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 2.11** to note that current forecasts are based on the best available information at the time and will be subject to review and change during the financial year.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The Financial Performance Report is presented monthly to Cabinet and provides a detailed breakdown of the Council's financial position and the in-year challenges it faces. It covers the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme. The Financial Performance Report ensures there is transparency in the financial position, and enables scrutiny by the Executive Mayor, Cabinet, Scrutiny & Overview Committee and the public. It offers reassurance regarding the commitment by Chief Officers to more effective financial management and discipline.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1** The 2023-24 budget approved by Council in March 2023 set a net revenue budget of £340.9m. This required capitalisation directions from government of £63m to balance, owing to resolving historical inaccurate accounting treatments and to fund the ongoing annual servicing of debt.
- 4.2** The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.
- 4.3** The current forecast is that the Council will breakeven against the 2023-24 General Fund revenue budget, however this is following the forecast utilisation of the £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.1m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Cost of Living Considerations

- 4.4** There are a number of inflationary pressures that the Council, like all local authorities, is managing. The UK's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate was 6.8% in the 12 months to July 2023, remaining high albeit lower than the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting in November 2022 that the CPI hit 11.1% in October 2022. This impact goes beyond the Council as the cost of living is affecting all households and businesses.
- 4.5** These macro-economic factors are impacted by international events and, therefore, well beyond the control of Croydon Council. Despite the limitations, the Council is seeking to support households wherever possible.
- 4.6** A dedicated cost of living information hub has been established on the Council's website. This provides a single source of information, informing residents of the financial support available and signposting to further support, advice and guidance. This information is continually reviewed, updated and improved.
- 4.7** The Council provides a wide range of support for residents that may be struggling owing to cost of living pressures. These include:

- Discretionary support for residents in financial hardship, including the Household Support Fund
- Council Tax support – for residents on a low income or in receipt of benefits, Council Tax bills could be reduced by up to 100%
- Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax)
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) discretionary fund targeted for tenants that are not in receipt of housing benefit
- Benefits calculator, to ensure residents receive the support to which they are entitled
- Energy advice, including heating and money saving options, through our Croydon Healthy Homes service
- Free holiday activity clubs with healthy meals for children
- Croydon Works to help residents into employment or to receive training to support them into work and funding of the voluntary sector to provide advice and guidance

4.8 The cost of living information hub also signposts residents to a range of support provided by other organisations in Croydon, including:

- NHS Healthy Start vouchers for families
- Free school meals
- Support from voluntary, community and faith sector organisations
- Support for businesses through the London Business Hub and the British Business Bank
- CroydonPlus credit union which offers affordable ways to manage money, including savings accounts and loans

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY

4.9 The General Fund revenue forecast outturn shows an overall balanced position following the forecast utilisation of the £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC. The service directorates show a forecast overspend of £4.1m which is offset by utilisation of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.

Table showing the revenue forecasts by Directorate

Directorate	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)	Prior Month Forecast Variance (£m)	Change in Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care and Health	138.7	57.3	140.1	1.4	1.2	0.2
Assistant Chief Executive	42.0	4.8	41.4	(0.6)	(0.3)	(0.3)
Children, Young People and Education	96.2	21.0	101.6	5.4	5.2	0.2
Housing	21.6	12.8	21.6	-	-	-
Resources	35.2	56.2	33.1	(2.1)	(1.6)	(0.5)
Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery	69.4	18.2	69.4	-	-	-
Subtotal Service Directorates	403.1	170.3	407.2	4.1	4.5	(0.4)
Corporate Items and Funding	(62.2)	(6.1)	(66.3)	(4.1)	(4.5)	0.4
Total Net Expenditure Budget	340.9	164.2	340.9	-	-	-

- 4.10** Work will continue through to the end of the year to manage those areas with forecast overspends to ensure the Council remains within budget.
- 4.11** The Council continues to build on the improvements in financial management that were made last financial year. However, there is a considerable amount yet to do, which is fully recognised within the organisation.
- 4.12** A monthly budget assurance process and independent challenge of expenditure takes place. This is in addition to Cabinet and Scrutiny & Overview Committee review. The assurance meetings provide the Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the Chief Executive with an opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the forecast outturn, review risks and opportunities, and ensure that savings are delivered and income targets are met. The meetings ensure the Council is doing all it can to reduce overspends and deliver a balanced budget.

DIRECTORATE VARIANCES

Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Adult Social Care Operations	118.6	49.9	120.2	1.6
Adult Strategic Commissioning, Policy & Improvement	18.2	6.6	18.1	(0.1)
Central ASCH	1.9	0.6	1.8	(0.1)
Total ASCH	138.7	57.1	140.1	1.4

- 4.13** At period 4, the ASCH directorate has a forecast overspend of £1.4m (1.0%) against a budget of £138.7m.

- 4.14** The ASCH Directorate has challenging savings targets totalling circa £10m to deliver in 2023-24 on placements and care packages through demand management, commissioning and review of care packages.
- 4.15** Risks:
- Risks continue in the provider market from inflation including higher fuel, labour and property costs which may result in claims for increased fees and/or financial instability with the potential for 'handing back' contracts. The potential reprovisioning costs if providers exit the market could be significant.
 - There is a risk that as the spend in the Equipment Service has increased by 4%, the pooled budget can potentially overspend as variables such as partner contributions, risk share agreements and winter pressures cannot be accurately forecast at this stage.

Adult Social Care Operations - Forecast overspend of £1.6m

- 4.16** Staffing across this division demonstrates a forecast underspend (broken down by area below) owing to periods of vacancy above the £1m MTF5 5% vacancy factor saving applied to staffing budgets in 2023-24. There is a national shortage of both social workers and occupational therapists and recruitment to many roles is proving challenging. The periods of vacancy are a barrier to achieving savings as staff are focused on statutory delivery rather than delivering transformation to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.
- 4.17** Localities & LIFE have an underspend of (£1.6m) owing to a staffing (including agency spend) underspend of (£0.1m) and a net underspending on care costs (£1.5m).
- 4.18** Working Age Adults has an overspend of £4.1m. This comprises an overspend on care of £4.2m (owing to clients with increased care needs) which is partly mitigated by an underspend in staffing of (£0.1m). The overspend includes care package savings not yet evidenced of £1.5m (this has reduced from £1.9m at Period 3), against a challenging target of £5.3m. It should also be noted that this area was overspent by £2.3m in 2022-23. The directorate has committed to achieving further savings to offset the budget pressure.
- 4.19** Provider Services has a (£0.9m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies.
- 4.20** Mental health services have a forecast overspend of £0.1m owing to a £0.4m overspend on care packages partly mitigated by a (£0.3m) underspend on staffing. The overspend on care is owing to increasing demand and costs, work is ongoing to bring this area to a balanced budget.

- 4.21 Safeguarding service has a (£0.1m) forecast underspend on staffing owing to vacancies across the division.

Adult Social Care Policy and Improvement – Forecast underspend of (£0.1m)

- 4.22 The Policy and Improvement division is forecasting an underspend of (£0.1m) owing to staffing vacancies.

Central ASCH – Forecast underspend of (£0.1m)

- 4.23 The underspend is a result of the delays in recruitment to fixed term and temporary positions to provide additional capacity to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.

Assistant Chief Executive (ACE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Policy, Programmes and Performance	6.2	1.6	5.9	(0.3)
Croydon Digital and Resident Access	31.9	8.0	31.7	(0.2)
Chief People Officer	3.5	1.1	3.5	-
Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine	-	(6.2)	-	-
Central ACE	0.4	0.3	0.3	(0.1)
Total ACE (General Fund)	42.0	4.8	41.4	(0.6)
Public Health Grant Ringfenced Services	-	(1.5)	-	-

- 4.24 At period 4, the ACE directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £0.6m (1.4%) against a budget of £42.0m.

Policy, Programmes & Performance Division - £0.3m forecast underspend

- 4.25 Recruitment is continuing into the new staffing structure for the Policy, Programmes and Performance Division. The forecast underspend is owing to periods of vacancy of some posts in the new structure.

Croydon Digital and Resident Access Division - £0.2m forecast underspend

- 4.26 Underspends in Concessionary Travel are forecast owing to staff vacancies and a favourable final concessionary travel settlement for the year.

- 4.27 The Digital and Resident Access Division is undergoing a review to assess the achievability of in-year MTFs savings for staffing and IT contracts.

Chief People Officer Division — breakeven position

- 4.28 There is a breakeven forecast against budget for the Chief People Officer Division.

Asylum Seekers and Homes for Ukraine funding – breakeven position after movement in reserves

- 4.29** The Council has received Asylum Dispersal Scheme grant funding in 2023-24 of £0.9m. The unspent grant of £0.3m in 2022-23 has been carried forward to fund ongoing expenditure in 2023-24.
- 4.30** The Council carried forward unspent grant under the Homes for Ukraine scheme of £5.5m, of which £1.3m is ringfenced for educational purposes. This will be used to fund ongoing expenditure in 2023-24 and beyond.

Central Assistant Chief Executive – £0.1m forecast underspend

- 4.31** Underspends owing to periods of staff vacancies and lower than expected running expenses.

Public Health Division – breakeven position in ringfenced grant after movement in reserves

- 4.32** It is currently forecast that Public Health will contribute £3.2m to ring fenced Public Health reserves at the end of 2023-24.
- 4.33** A Council wide task and finish group has been set up to address underspends in the Public Health Grant (for the current year and the accumulated balance on the balance sheet as an earmarked Public Health reserve from underspends in previous years) by identifying appropriate commissioning opportunities.

Children, Young People and Education (CYPE)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Children's Social Care	72.9	16.7	77.4	4.5
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and Care Leavers	(0.7)	1.4	(0.6)	0.1
Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement	6.7	(1.0)	7.5	0.8
Non-DSG Education Services	16.8	3.7	16.8	-
Central CYPE	0.5	0.2	0.5	-
Total CYPE (General Fund)	96.2	21.0	101.6	5.4
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Education Services	82.0	45.9	82.7	0.7

- 4.34** At period 4, the CYPE directorate has a General Fund forecast overspend of £5.4m (5.6%) against a budget of £96.2m.

Children's Social Care Division – forecast overspend of £4.6m (including UASC and UASC Care Leavers)

£2.2m placements overspend owing to seven high-cost placements; four Residential Education SEND (no contribution from Health), two Semi-Independent and one Secure). Analysis is being undertaken on a continuous basis to review these placements with the aim to reduce spend where possible. Three of these placements are new in 2023-24. To illustrate the variability in care package costs, one family recently housed in the borough by another local authority is forecast to cost over £1m in 2023-24.

£2.0m staffing overspend, which includes a pension budget shortfall of £0.8m since 2020-21. This was previously fully offset by underspends owing to vacancies and delays in recruitment however this cannot be accommodated in 2023-24.

£0.2m under-achievement in income (including £0.5m unachieved 2022-23 MTFS NHS Funding savings which have been partially offset through other income).

£0.1m potential overspend on Adopt London South, over and above the agreed budget owing to interagency fees and staffing costs across the consortium calculated at year end.

£0.1m overspend on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and Care Leavers owing to more young people turning 18 years old.

4.35 Risks:

- The Children's Social Care Division is monitoring placement and care package expenditure during the year. Pressure on placement spend is due to the sufficiency challenges both locally and nationally. The introduction of regulation for supported accommodation is predicted to increase charges as providers seek to pass on costs to Local Authorities. "Costs of new Ofsted regulation and inspection regime for semi-independent placement provision could be nine times higher than government funding, whilst one in five care beds could be withdrawn", report warns – London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA).
- The division is working with Public Health to produce service level agreements for services previously funded by the HRA, and these may result in a General Fund pressure of £0.8m.
- The division is also reviewing the housing accommodation charges from the Housing General Fund for Care Experienced Young People.

4.36 Opportunities:

- There could be some staffing underspends from periods of vacancy.
- Potential underspend of £0.3m in legal costs, if the lower numbers of care proceedings and UASC age assessment challenges continue.
- The CYPE directorate, alongside other directorates, is actively checking that grant funding including the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) are allocated correctly against eligible expenditure and this could reduce the forecast overspend position.

Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement Division – forecast overspend of £0.8m

4.37 The division is forecasting a staffing overspend of £0.4m from the 5% vacancy factor MTFS saving of £0.3m applied to the 2023-24 budget (as several teams are fully staffed) plus the impact of increased quality assurance activity to track the impact of the pandemic on outcomes for children. The pressure may reduce during the year if there are periods of vacancy.

There is an anticipated Public Health contribution of £0.4m which never materialised. This relates to a 2022-23 MTFS saving and will be reviewed by the cross-Council Public Health funding task and finish group.

Non-DSG Education services – forecast breakeven

4.38 Non-DSG Education services are forecasting a breakeven position owing to an underspend from staffing vacancies which is offsetting income pressures (including £0.3m unachieved 2022-23 MTFS NHS Funding savings).

4.39 Risk

- The £0.3m unachieved income budget within the High Needs General Fund budget poses an indirect financial risk to the Safety Valve target should other activities or resources (EHCP Coordinators) required to deliver the Safety Valve target be reduced to offset the £0.3m potential shortfall. The service is exploring all mitigating options available.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services – forecast overspend of £0.680m

4.40 The SEND High Needs forecast at Period 4 is an overspend of £0.680m against the budget of £82.059m. There is a £25k adverse movement from the Period 3 position due to inflationary uplifts from some of the out of borough providers. Please note that the DfE provided updated national allocations for the High Needs Block on 20 July 2023 which has reduced Croydon Council's allocation from £82.566m to £82.059m owing to a slightly higher proportion of pupils in academies.

4.41 The overall variance at Period 4 represents £0.045m favourable variance from the expected overspend of £0.725m submitted to the Department of Education (DfE) Safety Valve Team as part of the approved Deficit Recovery Plan. The service is delivering all of the savings strategies as set out in the Safety Valve (SV) agreement including the use of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) to help deliver more local schools places as well as improve existing provisions to meet the increasing placement demands for complex needs pupils. Following submission of our 2023-24 Quarter 1 monitoring report, the DfE have given the Safety Valve payment of £3.290m.

4.42 See below the key areas:

£2.199m Out of Borough and Independent – Forecast overspend due to an increase

in complex cases above that expected, requiring out of borough placements to meet needs. The service is in discussions with some local providers to set up Enhanced Learning Provision during the Autumn Term.

£0.954m overspend due to increased placements in Mainstream Education provision exceeding the budgeted allocation. This forms part of the invest to save SEND strategy in year 2.

(£0.250m) underspend in Early Years provision.

(£0.250m) underspend in top up funding related to delayed implementation of the proposed expansion of Enhanced Learning Provision across a few schools.

(£0.953m) underspend in the Service Transformation budget set up to support the DSG Deficit Recovery strategy.

(£0.400m) underspend in funding related to staffing cost in therapies and support services owing to service re-alignment to maximise savings.

(£0.620m) expected clawback from specific Resource Provision (academies) for extra funding received from DfE.

4.43 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services will continue to closely monitor the demand pressures in Independent and Out of Borough placements owing to cost implications. Addington Valley Academy, St Nicholas, Coulsdon College Croydon, and Waddon Youth Disability Services are increasing placement numbers, which is reducing high-cost placements out of borough.

4.44 The 2023-24 period 4 High Needs forecast outturn variance of £0.680m leads to an overall DSG deficit projection of £16.064m at the end of 2023-24 compared to the Safety Valve target of £16.080m prior to the £3.290m Deficit Recovery payment received from the DfE as per the Safety Valve agreement. This demonstrates that the Council is ahead of the target.

4.45 Risks

- The service is monitoring all the risks associated with the Safety Valve target which includes increasing complexity of needs requiring additional funding for special schools and extra out of borough placements to meet the local needs of some CYP pupils with complex needs.

Housing

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Resident Engagement and Allocations	21.5	12.7	21.5	-
Housing Estates and Improvement	0.1	1.1	0.1	-
Total Housing	21.6	12.8	21.6	-

4.46 At period 4, the Housing directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven against the budget of £21.6m. Owing to the implementation of the new NEC IT system, no rental income is currently showing in the actuals for June or July.

Emergency Accommodation – breakeven forecast

4.47 Breakeven forecast at period 4. The number of households supported in homelessness accommodation have not increased significantly over the last year but as landlords are withdrawing accommodation from the temporary accommodation schemes more families are housed in the expensive nightly-paid bed & breakfast (B&B) and hotel accommodation.

4.48 A top-up to Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £1.9m has been announced by DLUHC to cover homelessness pressures related to Ukrainian refugees. This funding may also be used to fund wider homelessness pressures and reporting requirements are in line with the existing HPG requirements. The grant top-up would also help fund any potential detriment to income collection resulting in the bad debt provision being increased at year end.

4.49 Forecasting costs and income has been challenging due to the changeover to the NEC software package. Some reporting information is not yet available from the new NEC system such as the number of units of various types rented and associated costs. Therefore, purchase orders receipted to date are currently being used to forecast costs.

Temporary Accommodation – breakeven forecast

4.50 There is a potential financial risk from the fire at Sycamore House in Thornton Heath depending on the insurance claim settlement not yet finalised. This risk was considered in closing the 2022-23 accounts and so any difference in the estimated income of 70% of costs from the insurers will either be a charge or a benefit in the 2023-24 accounts.

4.51 Risks

4.51.1 Restructure

- There is currently a temporary structure within Housing, however a restructure is being carried out to strengthen the directorate.
- Pressures are expected to continue in 2023-24. The restructure for Housing Options is underway and will form the bedrock for process change and a more cohesive journey for a homeless household. An immediate switch to better practice and dramatically reduced spend on homelessness cannot be expected within 2023-24 whilst significant change is underway, and the financial benefits are expected to be realised in the longer term.

4.51.2 Inflation

- The Housing Directorate continues to be impacted by the rapidly worsening housing market within London as private sector landlords are

increasing rents or leaving the market, and tenants are struggling with cost-of-living pressures. The challenge for Croydon in dealing with such rapid inflation has multiple strands. There are forecasting difficulties in predicting how much prices are expected to move and at what pace. This is being addressed alongside a wholesale review of the forecasting process to ensure that reporting provides the full position on risk in 2023-24.

- There are difficulties in negotiating and approving price rises without losing properties or fuelling the rises further. Regular meetings with neighbouring boroughs are being held to ensure collective agreements are being made with the larger providers of emergency accommodation.

4.51.3 Reduced Supply

- There is also the issue of entering into 2 to 5 years lease deals with landlords as 39% nationally exited the market in 2022-23 and prices have dramatically increased as a result. In 2022-23 this meant a 10% increase in the use of nightly paid accommodation was seen. The strategy work currently underway in the directorate will seek to address this issue.
- There has been a concerted effort to hold homelessness accommodation costs down across London through partnerships with organisations like Capital Letters and via the agreed Pan-London temporary accommodation rates. The rates can no longer be contained though as demand outweighs available affordable supply. At a Pan London meeting, all boroughs confirmed that they are no longer paying the agreed Pan London rates to ensure they meet their demand challenges. A combination of all these factors has led to an increase in both the average cost of emergency and temporary accommodation that Croydon can secure to meet demand, as well as an increase in the use of nightly paid emergency accommodation to compensate for the loss of some longer-term leased accommodation because of landlords leaving the market.

4.51.4 Income Collection

- Income collection rates will need to be monitored closely in 2023-24. There may be a requirement to increase the loss allowance (bad debt provision) again in 2023-24 if income collection is not significantly improved. A new housing IT system (NEC) has been implemented in June 2023 which will improve monitoring and reporting when it is fully operational later in the year.
- Forecasting income has been challenging due to the changeover to the NEC system. A delay to the interfaces between NEC and the Oracle finance system has meant that no income has been posted to Oracle since 17 May from the new NEC system.

4.51.5 Temporary Accommodation Benefit Subsidy Loss

- There is a potential budget pressure, above the currently estimated £1.2m for 2023-24 which has been funded through the economic demand pressures budget transfer agreed in Period 3, in relation to housing benefit subsidies for the Guaranteed Rent Scheme for Care Experienced Young People. The pressure impacts the Housing Directorate as it forms part of the cost of temporary accommodation. The housing benefit subsidy pressure will be monitored throughout the year and mitigated where possible.
- There is a temporary accommodation cost owing to the £40/week/unit management fee for TA which is paid through Housing Benefit but not recoverable through subsidy from DWP. This forecast cost of £2.4m is covered corporately in 2023-24.

Resources

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Commercial Investment	18.6	4.0	16.3	(2.3)
Finance (<i>refer note 1</i>)	15.7	47.5	15.7	-
Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	2.3	1.4	2.4	0.1
Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk	0.6	2.4	0.6	-
Internal Audit Service	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.1
Pensions and Treasury	0.3	0.5	0.3	-
Central Resources	(2.7)	0.1	(2.7)	-
Total Resources	35.2	56.2	33.1	(2.1)

Note 1: The actuals to date are high in the Finance Division owing to Housing Benefits expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.

4.52 At period 4, the Resources directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £2.1m (6.0%) against a budget of £35.2m.

Commercial Investment Division – £2.3m forecast underspend

4.53 The division is forecasting a £2.3m underspend owing to decreased utilities costs and improved recharging to external bodies. There are also £0.6m of staffing underspends across the division, mainly in Facilities Management due to periods of staffing vacancy, which are being offset by a forecast decrease in recharges to capital.

Finance Division – breakeven forecast position

4.54 There is a breakeven forecast position for the Finance Division. The Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt Service is forecasting a staffing underspend owing to staffing vacancies and increased court costs income, but these are being offset by decreased Land Charges income and temporarily increased agency staffing in strategic finance to work through historic accounting issues including the prior years' accounts.

- 4.55** A cross Council working group is currently operating to mitigate Housing Benefit subsidy risks by maximising Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy income claims, increasing collection of HB overpayments and reducing costs. The actuals to date are high in the Division owing to Housing Benefits expenditure which will be reimbursed through DWP funding.
- 4.56** The Finance Division will undergo a restructure of the strategic finance service in 2023-24 and then commence recruitment into roles which are currently covered by agency staffing. The capacity and skills levels required in the strategic finance service have been reviewed and extra funding from growth and/or reserves has been requested for 2024-25.

Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division – £0.1m forecast overspend

- 4.57** There is a £0.1m forecast underspend in the Monitoring Officer service owing to staff vacancies and an underspend against the members allowances budget.
- 4.58** There is a forecast overspend in Legal Services of £0.2m mainly owing to high levels of agency staffing.
- 4.59** The Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division is reviewing usage of external legal advice, with a view to increase the inhouse staffing structure (moving budget from external legal expenditure in directorates) to provide more legal services internally and therefore reduce overall legal expenditure for the Council.

Other Service Areas and Central Resources - £0.1m forecast overspend

- 4.60** There is a £0.1m forecast overspend in Internal Audit expenditure. Within Insurance, Anti-Fraud and Risk a forecast overspend on insurance claims is being offset by a forecast staffing underspend due to periods of staffing vacancy.

Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER)

Division	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Sustainable Communities	54.1	16.5	54.2	0.1
Culture and Community Safety	8.6	1.5	7.9	(0.7)
Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	6.7	1.2	7.3	0.6
Central SCRER	-	(1.0)	-	-
Total SCRER	69.4	18.2	69.4	-

4.61 At period 4, the SCRER directorate has a General Fund forecast breakeven position against a budget of £69.4m. The main potential risk areas relate to income in the areas of parking, parking enforcement, moving traffic offence and planning.

Sustainable Communities Division - forecast overspend of £0.1m

4.62 There is a forecast £1.9m under-achievement in parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offence income. This is being offset through a forecast underspend of £1.3m in staffing owing to periods of vacancy and a £0.5m forecast underspend in waste services owing to reduced level of domestic waste.

4.63 Risks

- Demand for parking services has not returned to pre-pandemic levels and this is affecting all areas of parking which includes Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), pay and display and on-street parking.
- Parking Services have had delays in connection with the roll out of new ANPR cameras which affect the income levels within the service.
- The Environment Act 2021 operates as the UK's new framework of environmental protection. Given that the UK has left the EU, new laws that relate to nature protection, water quality, clean air, as well as additional environmental protections that originally came from Brussels, needed to be established. The Act is a vehicle for a number of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) different environmental policies and sets out the legal framework for significant reforms to local authority waste and recycling services, as well as creating new statutory duties for local authorities on nature recovery. The government has stated that additional burdens funding will be provided to local authorities for the new requirements as they come into force, however the Council will need to monitor closely the extra costs involved.
- Waste services are demand led which represents a potential risk to the current forecast underspend. Levels of tonnage are monitored on a monthly basis and the forecast will be updated throughout the year.
- There is a pressure on the Street Lighting PFI contract due to an increase in the energy unit cost caused by wider inflationary pressures upon energy prices.
- There is a potential risk to new Roads and Street Works Act income owing to delays and disputes with utility companies. Further work is being undertaken to quantify these risks and where possible mitigate the effect.

Culture and Community Safety Division – forecast underspend of £0.7m

4.64 The division is forecasting an underspend of £0.7m due to reduced costs on utilities in contracts (£0.6m) and periods of staffing vacancy (£0.1m).

4.65 The Culture and Community Safety Division leads on the London Borough of Culture 2023 activities, funded through external funding sources. This is a year-long celebration of Croydon’s unique identity, diverse communities and rich heritage, culture and creativity. The programme for “This is Croydon” showcases Croydon to the world. It includes major events with international headliners performing alongside emerging home-grown talent, plus hundreds of cultural activities from our communities.

Planning and Sustainable Regeneration Division – forecast overspend of £0.6m

4.66 The division is forecasting an income under-achievement of £0.6m owing to lower activity levels to date in planning major applications and planning performance agreements.

Corporate Items and Funding

Area of Spend	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Inflation and Economic Demand Pressures	14.2	-	14.2	-
Risk Contingency Budget	5.0	-	0.9	(4.1)
Transformation Programme	10.0	-	10.0	-
Other corporate items	(91.4)	(6.1)	(91.4)	-
Total Corporate items and Funding	(62.2)	(6.1)	(66.3)	(4.1)

4.67 At period 4, the Corporate directorate has a General Fund forecast underspend of £4.1m (6.6%) against a net budget of (£62.2m). The underspend relates to the risk contingency budget which is offsetting the pressures across the service areas.

4.68 The corporate area holds funding streams such as Council Tax, retained share of Business Rates and Core Grants. The corporate budget also holds the Council-wide risk contingency budget (£5m) and the budgets for borrowing and interest received.

4.69 The corporate area funds redundancy, severance and pension strain costs which contribute to achieving General Fund MTFs savings. There may be a pressure in 2023-24 from this area of costs owing to the implementation of staffing savings.

4.70 The NJC national negotiations on the 2023-24 pay award for staff are ongoing and the resulting required budget allocation may create a pressure above the central allowance of £10.4m.

4.71 There is budget of £3.8m still held centrally for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon after the allocation of £1.7m budget agreed in Period 3 for Housing Benefit subsidy pressures.

4.72 The corporate area also holds the 2023-24 Transformation budget of £10m, which will fund work carried out in directorates and cross-Council to achieve MTFs savings and improve services for local residents and businesses. The Transformation budget reduces to £5m from 2024-25.

- 4.73** There is £7.3m budget held in Corporate for adjustments to correct General Fund recharge budgets for recharges to the HRA, Public Health, capitalisation of salaries and corporate support (overhead) recharges. This budget will be allocated during 2023-24 as the service level agreements (SLA's) are finalised for HRA and Public Health recharges, and when the review of salary capitalisation and corporate support recharges is finalised.
- 4.74** There is borrowing cost uncertainty from interest rates (with the Bank of England currently continuing to increase the base rate) and the timing of capital receipts from asset disposals (assumed in the MTFs at circa £50m per annum).
- 4.75** There is a funding risk in the Collection Fund if cost of living pressures impact the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates income. The impact of the Council Tax increase is partially mitigated through the Council Tax Hardship Fund (supporting low income households that cannot afford to pay their full increase in Council Tax).

Transformation Programme

- 4.76** The Transformation Programme has £14m of resources allocated to it. Through this report, it has been requested in the capital section to remove the capital funding for transformation (which was slipped from 2022-23 and now not required for capital purposes) and to approve the allocation of £4.000m earmarked reserves funding for transformation expenditure to replace the capital funding. The identified reserves funding is from within non-ringfenced General Fund reserves and does not impact the General Fund balances of £27.5m.
- 4.77** In total there is currently £9.4m of the Transformation Programme budget allocated with £4.6m unallocated to date. The Transformation Programme will provide a return on investment through service improvement benefits and the identification and delivery of savings for the medium term financial strategy, providing a significant level of savings towards the £20m per annum savings required from 2025-26 onwards.

Transformation Programme Allocations

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
Transformation Revenue Budget	10.000
Transformation Reserve Funding	4.000
Total Transformation Funding	14.000
Approach to Strategic Planning and Commissioning	0.290
Parking Policy Review	0.200
Community Hubs Programme	0.250
HR Transformation	0.078
Digital & Resident Access Review/Digital Workforce	0.080

Project	2023-24 Draft Budget Allocation (£m)
SEND Review	0.240
Passenger/SEND Transport Transformation	0.100
Family Justice Service Review	0.100
S117 Project	0.178
Joint Funding Arrangements	0.110
Sustaining Demand at the Front Door	0.190
Fostering Transformation	0.286
Corporate Parenting Transformation	0.457
Dynamic Purchasing System	0.092
Callydown Transformation	0.134
Income & Debt Review	0.050
Outcomes Based Domiciliary Care Model	0.110
Transition Commissioning Care Model	0.082
Croydon Campus	0.250
Customer Access Review	0.200
Building Control Transformation	0.450
Planning& CIL Transformation	0.300
CALAT	0.050
Housing Needs Restructure	0.060
Temporary Accommodation Case Review	0.291
Housing Occupancy Checks	0.291
Rent Accounts and Data Cleanse	0.026
Housing Association Recharges	0.059
Supported Housing Review	0.080
Adult Social Care Transformation	1.100
Review of Social Care Placements	0.461
Reablement & Hospital Discharge	0.060
Strategic Operating Model Design Partner for Adult Social Care and Health	1.134
Housing Benefit Subsidy SEA & EA/TA	0.000
PFI Contract Manager	0.000
VCS Review	0.000
Asset Rationalisation	0.000
Business Intelligence Review	0.000
Commercial & Income Opportunities	0.000
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Croydon Museum	0.270
Oracle Improvement Programme	0.175
Transformation PMO	1.100
Total Revenue Budget and Reserves Allocated to Date	9.424
Unallocated To Date	4.576

- 4.78** The Transformation Programme published in November 2022 set out £5.9m of project commitments with recognition that further sums were still to be confirmed. Please note that project plans are under development and following review of these project plans the draft budget allocations to projects as listed above could change through the year.
- 4.79** The Transformation Board has agreed additional project allocations totalling £2.99m through to July 2023 and these are set out in the table below.

Project Allocations	£m
Fostering transformation	0.194
Sustaining demand at the front door	0.080
Callydown transformation	0.134
Review of Social Care Placements	0.456
CALAT (New)	0.050
Strategic operating model design partner	0.500
Strategic operating model design partner – project team	0.634
Corporate Parenting Transformation (New)	0.457
Community Equipment Service	0.040
Museum Transformation	0.270
Oracle Cloud Improvement (New)	0.175
Total of Allocations	2.990

- 4.80** The ‘Review of Social Care Placements’ project has secured £600,000 alternative funding from the Market Sustainability Grant thereby reducing the funding required from the Transformation budget. The revenue budget also funds the costs of the transformation Programme Management Office currently estimated at £1.1m.

Savings

- 4.81** The 2023-24 budgets include a challenging new savings target of £33.1m. Progress in achieving savings is being monitored throughout the year. Directorates are identifying any risks to achievement of individual savings and making plans to mitigate these risks where possible or identify alternative savings as required.

Table showing 2023-24 forecast savings achievement by directorate

2023-24					
Savings target £'000	Slippage from previous year £'000	Revised Savings target £'000	Forecast savings achievable £'000	Savings slippage £'000	Not yet evidenced or (over delivery) £'000

Directorate
Adult Social Care & Health
Assistant Chief Executive
Children, Young People & Education
Housing
Resources
Sustainable Communities (SCRER)
Cross-Directorate / Corporate

12,243	-	12,243	10,790	-	1,453
2,924	-	2,924	1,771	1,153	-
6,920	490	7,410	5,130	18	2,262
2,305	-	2,305	1,309	1,099	(103)
6,347	-	6,347	6,347	-	-
1,859	2,490	4,349	4,124	225	-
500	-	500	500	-	-

Total	33,098	2,980	36,078	29,971	2,495	3,612
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Reserves

4.82 There are no budgeted contributions to, or drawdowns from, the General Fund balances of £27.5m in 2023-24. The current breakeven forecast for 2023-24 maintains this reserve.

General Fund Balances	Forecast (£m)
Balance at 1 April 2023	27.5
Forecast Contribution to/(Drawdown from) Reserves	-
Forecast Balance at 31 March 2024	27.5

4.83 The General Fund balances serve as a cushion should any overspend materialise by the end of 2023-24. The use of reserves to support the budget is not a permanent solution and reserves must be replenished back to a prudent level in subsequent years if used.

Unresolved Issues

4.84 The Council's overall financial position is still subject to a number of unresolved historic legacy issues. The latest position on these was set out in the 22 February 2023 Cabinet report titled 'Revenue Budget and Council Tax Levels 2023-24' which incorporated the findings of the 'Opening the Books' review undertaken in 2022-23. The report stated that a request has also been made of government to provide the Council with a Capitalisation Direction of £161.6m to cover the historic finance issues that have been revealed through the 'Opening the Books' programme.

4.85 The Council needs to correct a range of misstatements in its legacy accounts from 2019-20 which are currently still not fully closed. This was more than the £74.6m previously identified in the MTFs Update report to Cabinet in November 2022.

- 4.86** The Council's Provision for Bad Debt was found to be understated by £46m rather than the £20m previously assumed and a prudent decision was made to include the potential £70m gap in the accounts caused by incorrect accounting for Croydon Affordable Homes and Tenures, instead of the £9m previously assumed.
- 4.87** With four years of accounts still open, there remains a risk that further legacy issues will be uncovered. The Capital Programme for 2022-23 included the £161.6m Capitalisation Direction requested, which was in addition to the £25m capitalisation direction previously approved.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 4.88** At period 4, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has a forecast overspend of £3.8m. Work is underway on a deep dive of the repairs forecast following the implementation of the NEC IT system, and the forecast overspend is likely to increase as we deliver increased repairs and maintenance activity.

Repairs

The Period 4 position of £3.8m overspend on disrepair costs including void and repair costs, legal fees and settlement costs remains as per the prior period.

Although the new NEC IT system went live in June 2023 it is not yet possible to generate reporting from it that would better inform the forecast spend on repairs. Work is ongoing to prioritise the NEC ability to interface with our financial systems so that a more accurate full year forecasting can be generated.

Tenancy and Income

A breakeven forecast at period 4 has been set based on a financial forecast. The NEC reporting functionality is not yet available to report on actuals to date.

Staffing and other

A breakeven forecast at period 4 has been set and reflects additional budget was allocated in 2023-24 to meet known pressures.

Table showing the 2023-24 HRA forecast

Description	Net Budget (£m)	Actuals to Date (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Forecast Variance (£m)
Rental Income	(82.1)	(12.1)	(82.1)	-
Service Charge Income	(4.6)	(0.7)	(4.6)	-
Other Income	(9.4)	1.0	(9.4)	-
Subtotal Income	(96.1)	(11.8)	(96.1)	-
Centralised Directorate expenditure	52.2	(0.9)	52.2	-
Responsive Repairs & Safety	20.4	4.6	24.2	3.8
Asset Planning	1.6	0.1	1.6	-
Capital Delivery (Homes & Schools)	1.5	0.1	1.5	-
Tenancy & Resident Engagement	10.3	4.6	10.3	-
Homelessness & Assessments	3.4	0.4	3.4	-
Service development and income	6.7	-	6.7	-
Subtotal Expenditure	96.1	8.9	99.9	3.8
Total HRA Net Expenditure	-	(2.9)	3.8	3.8

4.89 The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- Repairs and maintenance:
 - pressures from the exit of the current Axis repairs contract, ending in August 2023.
 - extra expenditure to deal with the backlog of repairs and maintenance.
 - void and disrepair costs carried out by specialist contractors to reduce void losses and minimise future disrepair claims.
 - settlement of disrepair cases and related legal fees, including those relating to Regina Road.
- Tenancy and income:
 - the impact of cost-of-living pressures on rent collection (including a potential increase in bad debt cost).
 - loss of income owing to void (empty) residential properties.
 - loss of income owing to void garages.
- Recharge review:
 - General Fund services are producing service level agreements (SLA's) to evidence recharges of costs to the HRA, which could result in increased charges to the HRA.
- NEC system functionality delays:
 - Although the system has gone live in June 2023 there has not yet been feeds into the financial Oracle system. Therefore, the income & repairs forecasting could be understated and will not be known until actuals can be properly analysed.

Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability

- 4.90** The Capital strategy and programme was approved by Council in March 2023. This recognised the complex and challenging financial and operational circumstances in which the Council continues to operate. It showed a 2023-24 Capital Programme that is reduced in scale and cost compared to previous years. With circa £1.3bn of General Fund debt and an environment of rising interest rates, the delivery of an effective Asset Management Plan and an ambitious Asset Disposal Strategy, including reducing the number of buildings used by the Council, will be essential to mitigate rising cost pressures, reduce the overall debt burden and help the Council balance its books.
- 4.91** The strategy reflected the progress made to date by the Council to improve the governance and financial management of the Capital Programme following recommendations from the two Reports in the Public Interest (RIPI). The Council understands that the initial improvements put in place are the foundations of good practice and is focused on building upon these over the coming months and years.
- 4.92** Concerns were highlighted regarding value for money and investment decisions as the Council has incurred debt in investing in assets which have not retained their value and, therefore, the level of debt exceeds the value of the investment assets. In the three years between 2017-20 the Council borrowed £545m with no focused debt management plan in place. The majority of this debt comprises short-term borrowings which has left the Council exposed to current higher interest rates. The debt is anticipated to be refinanced from 2023 onwards and therefore likely to drive significant increases in annual repayment levels.
- 4.93** An estimated circa £66m is required to service this debt from the General Fund which represents around 19% of the Council's net budget. The Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden has, therefore, become critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.
- 4.94** The Council has concluded that the expenditure it is anticipated to incur in each year of the period of 2023-27 is likely to exceed the financial resources available and that reaching financial and operational sustainability without further government assistance will not be possible. The Council's 2023-24 budget required capitalisation directions from government of £63m to balance and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) demonstrated an ongoing estimated budget gap of £38m per annum from 2024-25.
- 4.95** Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government in regards to its level of historic legacy indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services. It must be noted that annual capitalisation directions (transferring revenue cost into capital cost which must be funded over 20 years) increases the Council's debt burden. Debt write-off is the Council's preferred option and, therefore, a request was made to DLUHC in January 2023 for government funding to write-off £540m of the Council's General Fund debt. DLUHC has subsequently asked the Council to propose a wider range of options, and these are currently being worked on.

Capital Programme Budget Changes

4.96 The following General Fund capital budget adjustments are requested to be agreed by Cabinet:

Scheme	2023-24 budget increase / (decrease) £m	Comments
Growth Zone	4.599	Increase to apply increased slippage from 2022-23 following a deep dive into the financing of expenditure between TFL LIP and the Growth Zone reserve.
Highways	0.174	Increase to apply increased slippage from 2022-23 following a deep dive into expenditure.
Highways – bridges and structures	0.673	Increase owing to increased TFL funding.
Cycle Parking	(0.226)	Decrease owing to 2023-24 funding from TFL and Section 106 not confirmed to date.
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	(1.016)	Decrease owing to 2023-24 funding from TFL and Section 106 not confirmed to date.
Transformation Spend (Flexible Capital Receipts)	(3.868)	Removal of transformation expenditure capital budget (originally slipped from 2022-23 in the Period 2 report). This is no longer required in capital and the expenditure will be funded instead through reserves.
Total GF capital budget change	0.336m	

General Fund Capital Programme

4.97 At period 4, the General Fund capital programme has a forecast underspend of £13.9m against the revised budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) of £144.7m.

Table showing 2023-24 General Fund Capital Programme budget and forecast

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Bereavement Services	127	(45)	127	-
My Resources Interface Enhancement	252	-	252	-
ICT	-	1	-	-
Network Refresh	348	11	348	-
Tech Refresh	132	247	864	732
Geographical Information Systems	312	-	312	-
Laptop Refresh	3,371	-	3,371	-
Cloud and DR	331	26	331	-
People ICT	-	3	-	-
Synergy Education System	1,045	4	789	(256)
NEC Housing System	2,725	(19)	2,097	(628)
Uniform ICT Upgrade	56	-	56	-
Subtotal Assistant Chief Executive	8,699	228	8,547	(152)
Education – Fire Safety Works	924	4	450	(474)
Education - Fixed Term Expansions	2,865	147	325	(2,540)
Education - Major Maintenance	5,866	1,282	3,321	(2,545)
Education - Miscellaneous	100	119	100	-
Education - Permanent Expansion	297	-	297	-
Education - SEN	6,289	330	6,289	-
Angel Lodge Children Home	329	-	329	-
Subtotal CYPE	16,670	1,882	11,111	(5,559)
Disabled Facilities Grant	4,710	424	3,000	(1,710)
Empty Homes Grants	400	8	300	(100)
Subtotal Housing	5,110	432	3,300	(1,810)
Asset Strategy - Stubbs Mead	500	-	500	-
Asset Strategy Programme	240	-	240	-
Clocktower Chillers	382	-	382	-
Corporate Property Maintenance Programme	2,780	659	2,780	-
Fairfield Halls - Council	625	3	625	-
Former New Addington Leisure Centre	600	-	600	-
Fieldway Cluster (Timebridge Community Centre)	248	-	248	-
Contingency	1,000	-	1,000	-
Subtotal Resources	6,375	662	6,375	-
Allotments	-	(14)	-	-
Growth Zone	15,844	7	15,844	-
Grounds Maintenance Insourced Equipment	1,200	-	1,200	-

General Fund Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Highways	8,260	2,025	8,260	-
Highways - flood water management	404	141	404	-
Highways - bridges and highways structures	1,641	577	1,641	-
Highways - Tree works	50	26	50	-
Local Authority Tree Fund	83	50	83	-
Trees Sponsorship	42	10	42	-
Leisure centres equipment Contractual Agreement	139	(410)	139	-
Tennis Court Upgrade	75	-	75	-
Leisure Equipment Upgrade	148	-	148	-
Libraries Investment - General	1,031	1	224	(807)
Central Library Digital Discovery Zone	175	-	-	(175)
New Investment to South Norwood Library	520	-	520	-
Parking	1,843	(972)	1,843	-
Cashless Pay & Display	1,463	-	485	(978)
Play Equipment	17	49	49	32
Safety - digital upgrade of CCTV	1,540	(11)	1,540	-
Highways Road Markings/Signs (Refresh)	137	-	137	-
South Norwood Good Growth	773	9	747	(26)
Kenley Good Growth	394	(147)	394	-
Sustainability Programme	1,100	-	300	(800)
TFL - LIP	4,568	282	1,100	(3,468)
Cycle Parking	106	-	-	(106)
Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)	3	-	-	(3)
Park Asset Management	700	-	700	-
Waste and Recycling Investment	2,558	-	2,558	-
Subtotal SCRER	44,814	1,623	38,483	(6,331)
Capitalisation Direction	63,000	-	63,000	-
Subtotal Corporate Items and Funding	63,000	-	63,000	-
Total General Fund Capital	144,668	4,827	130,816	(13,852)

Table showing General Fund Capital Programme Financing

General Fund Capital Financing	2023-24 Revised Budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	6,600	6,600	-
CIL Local Meaningful Proportion (LMP)	3,084	1,477	(1,607)
Section 106	1,190	233	(957)
Grants & Other Contributions	25,430	16,265	(9,165)
Growth Zone	15,844	15,844	-
HRA Contributions	1,772	1,363	(409)
Capital Receipts	45,000	45,000	-
Borrowing	45,749	44,034	(1,714)
Total GF Capital Financing	144,668	130,816	(13,852)

4.98 The extra forecast cost of play equipment of £32k will be funded through the application of Section 106 funding.

HRA Capital Programme

4.99 At period 4, the HRA capital programme has a forecast overspend of £4.1m (12%) against the revised budget of £33.248m. This is owing to increased repairs and improvements activity to reduce the backlog of repairs.

Table showing 2023-24 HRA Capital Programme budget and forecast

HRA Capital Scheme	2023-24 Revised Budget (£000's)	2023-24 Actuals to Date (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast (£000's)	2023-24 Forecast Variance (£000's)
Major Repairs and Improvements Programme	31,476	3,221	35,549	4,073
NEC Housing System	1,772	-	1,772	-
Total HRA Capital	33,248	3,221	37,321	4,073

HRA Capital Programme Financing

HRA Capital Financing	2023-24 Proposed Revised Budget	2023-24 Forecast	2023-24 Forecast Variance
	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)
MRR	16,082	16,082	-
Revenue	13,900	13,900	-
Reserves	1,148	5,221	4,073
Right To Buy (RTB) Receipts	2,118	2,118	-
Total HRA Capital Financing	33,248	37,321	4,073

4.100 It is currently assumed that the forecast overspend in the Major Repairs and Improvements Programme will be financed through HRA reserves, however the source of HRA financing is still to be finalised.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The monthly financial performance report supports the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 objective one "The council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services".

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 Finance comments have been provided throughout this report.

8.1.2 The Council continues to operate with internal spending controls to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained. A new financial management culture is being implemented across the organisation through increased communication on financial issues and training for budget managers.

8.1.3 The Council currently has a General Fund Balances Reserve of £27.5m which serves as a cushion should any overspend materialise by the end of 2023-24. The use of the General Fund Balances Reserve to support the budget is not a permanent solution and these reserves must be replenished back to a prudent level in subsequent years if used.

- 8.1.4** The Transformation Programme has £14m of resources allocated to it, including £10m base budget. Through this report, it has been requested in the capital section to remove the capital funding for transformation (which was slipped from 2022-23 and now not required for capital purposes) and to approve the allocation of £4.000m reserves funding for transformation expenditure to replace the capital funding. The identified reserves funding is from within non-ringfenced General Fund reserves and does not impact the General Fund Balances Reserve of £27.5m. The Transformation Programme is still at the £14m funding agreed.
- 8.1.5** Paragraph 2.5 of the Financial Regulations states “Slippage of Capital schemes should be identified as soon as possible during the financial year and reported to Cabinet as part of the financial monitoring cabinet report. At the end of each financial year slippage will be approved by the Chief Financial Officer and reported to Cabinet for approval as part of the July financial review report.”
- 8.1.6** The Council’s historic legacy borrowing and debt burden continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council’s revenue budget. Dialogue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) continues, and the Council is seeking further financial support from Government regarding its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.

Comments approved by Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer).

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that it maintains a balanced budget and to take any remedial action as required in year.
- 8.2.2** Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that the Council is under a statutory duty to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends. This could include action to reduce spending, income generation or other measures to bring budget pressures under control for the rest of the year. The Council must act reasonably and in accordance with its statutory duties and responsibilities when taking the necessary action to reduce the overspend.
- 8.2.3** In addition, the Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council’s Chief Finance Officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council’s proper financial administration. These include procedures for budgetary control. It is consistent with these arrangements for Cabinet to receive information about the revenue and capital budgets as set out in this report.

8.2.4 The monitoring of financial information is also a significant contributor to meeting the Council's Best Value legal duty. The Council as a best value authority "must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Section 3 Local Government Act (LGA) 1999). The Best Value Duty applies to all functions of the Council including delivering and setting a balanced budget, providing statutory services such as adult social care and children's services and securing value for money in all spending decisions.

8.2.5 The Council is the subject of Directions from the Secretary of State requiring the Council to, amongst others, improve on the management of its finances. This report serves to ensure the Council is effectively monitoring and managing its budgetary allocations in accordance with its Best Value Duty.

8.2.6 The Council's budget and policy framework procedure rules (Part 4C of the Constitution) provides that the Executive may only take decisions which are in line with the budgetary envelop approved by Full Council.

Comments approved by Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, 27/09/23.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no immediate workforce implications as a result of the content of this report, albeit there is potential for a number of the proposals to have an impact on staffing. Any mitigation on budget implications that may have direct effect on staffing will be managed in accordance with relevant human resources policies and where necessary consultation with recognised trade unions.

8.3.2 The Council is aware that many staff may also be impacted by the increase in cost of living. Many staff are also Croydon residents and may seek support from the Council including via the cost of living hub on the intranet. The Council offers support through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and staff may seek help via and be signposted to the EAP, the Guardians' programme, and other appropriate sources of assistance and advice on the Council's intranet including the trade unions.

Comments approved by Dean Shoemith, Chief People Officer, 12/9/2023.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.4.1** The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must therefore have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.4.2** In setting the Council's budget for 2023-2024, all savings proposals must complete an Equality Impact Assessment. As Officers deliver against the approved budget, including the savings within it, they will continue to monitor for any unanticipated equality impacts. If any impacts arise, officers will offer mitigation to minimise any unintended impact.
- 8.4.3** This report sets out a number of proposals that will change the services and provisions we provide for residents across Croydon. These proposals are subject to further work decisions.
- 8.4.4** The Council must, therefore, ensure that we have considered any equality implications. The Council has an established Equality Impact Assessment [EqIA] process, with clear guidance, templates and training for managers to use whenever new policies or services changes are being considered. This approach ensures that proposals are checked in relation to the impact on people with protected characteristics under Equality Act 2010.
- 8.4.5** Assessing the impact of proposed changes to policies, procedures, services and organisational change is not just something the law requires; it is a positive opportunity for the council to ensure it makes better decisions, based on robust evidence.
- 8.4.6** Our approach is to ensure the equality impact assessments are data led, using user information, demographic data and forecasts, as well as service specific data and national evidence to fully understand the impact of each savings proposal. This enables the Council to have proper regard to its statutory equality duties.
- 8.4.7** We have a large number of vulnerable children and asylum seekers who are in need of our services. We have also been faced with the rise of costs of the provision of adult social care, which has been exasperated following the pandemic. Alongside this our residents are dealing with the increased cost of living. We have supported residents by providing mitigation for changes where possible and signposting to other support organisations in the borough who can provide support. We will continue to seek mitigation during the equality analysis process where possible.

8.4.8 Our initial data suggests that residents across all equality characteristics may be affected by changes. National and local data highlights that this may have a greater impact on race, disabilities, sex, pregnancy and maternity and age. We will continue to assess the impact and strive to improve our evidence and data collection, to enable us to make informed decisions.

8.4.9 Where consultations take place, we will ensure that we make it accessible for all characteristics including those with disabilities including neurodiversity by ensuring that we adopt Disability standards in our consultation platform. Notwithstanding those residents who are digitally excluded. We will also consult using plain English to support our residents who do not have English as a first language.

8.4.10 With regard to potential staff redundancies, as a diverse borough we will undertake equality analysis and seek mitigation for staff by offering redeployment and employability support. We will also assess the impact of job losses on protected characteristics. We will also ensure that disabled staff are treated more favourably during restructure in that they will be required to meet the minimum standard prior to being offered an interview.

8.4.11 Research from existing EQIAs identifies that rising costs impact on some Disabled groups, communities from the Global Majority, African, Asian, African Caribbean households, young people, some people aged 15 – 64 and some people in the pregnancy/maternity characteristic. Research also indicates that there is an intersectional impact on young people from the Global Majority and both Disabled and Dual Heritage communities. Deprivation in borough is largely focused in the north and the east where the Global Majority of residents from the African, African Caribbean and Asian communities reside.

Comments approved by Naseer Ahmed for Equalities Programme Manager, 12/09/2023.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub Committee	
DATE OF DECISION	1st November 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	A Cleaner Croydon Update	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Nick Hibberd, Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery	
LEAD OFFICER:	Karen Agbabiaka - Director of Street and Environment	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Scott Roche - Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment	
KEY DECISION?	No	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	
Brief for the Committee	The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is asked to receive a presentation on the councils work in delivering a 'cleaner Croydon'	
WARDS AFFECTED:	<i>Norbury and Pollards Hill</i>	

1 **Street Cleansing – A Cleaner Croydon**

- 1.1 The Street and Environment Sub Committee has asked to receive an update on the Council's work on the mayor's priority for delivering 'Cleaner Croydon' along with feedback on its recommendations concerning the Waste & Recycling Contract.
- 1.2 The supporting presentation (Appendix A) provides the Sub- Committee with an update on the first 'Targeted Neighbourhood Deep Cleaning' pilot which was undertaken in Norbury High Street, London Road. This was designed in alignment to The Mayor's Business Plan which includes a focus around 'making our streets cleaner so that Croydon is a place that residents and businesses can feel proud to call home'.

2 **'A Cleaner Croydon'**

- 2.1 In August 2023 the Sustainable Communities Directorate launched the first pilot deep cleansing programme in Norbury. The service is currently reviewing the outcomes of the pilot and are seeking input from the sub-committee prior to scoping out and implementing the next focused Neighbourhood Intervention which has been designed to support the Executive Mayor's priority for delivering a 'Cleaner Croydon'.

2.2 The cleanliness of our borough is a universal issue which affects everyone who lives, works or studies in Croydon. In line with the Executive Mayor priority to ‘make our streets cleaner’ it was agreed that a pilot would be devised to address the ‘Broken Window effect’

2.3 Looking at the areas of concern which impact the overall image of the public realm we undertook a data gathering exercise in which Norbury High Street was identified as being suitable for target intervention covering the following: -

- *Graffiti – shop fronts*
- *Graffiti – high level*
- *Gully cleansing*
- *Fly tipping*
- *Pavement washing*
- *Line marking*

2.4 The area covered within the first pilot area was from the borough boundary by Norbury Train station down London Road to the fire station on the corner with Norbury Cort road.



2.5 The first pilot was concluded in Sept 2023 following which the service is in the process of reviewing the outcomes delivered and assessing the ‘Lessons Learned ‘from the pilot. The finding will be used to assist in the planning and implementation of our next targeted approach in Thornton Heath.

2.6 It is important to note that in reviewing the learnings from the first pilot that this programme of work requires a high level of resource in the scheduling and project

management of the different workstreams and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. To support this activity the service has applied for COMF funding for the recruitment of two project officers.

Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract

- 2.7** In March 2023 the Sub-committee concluded that they would like to continue to scrutinise the re-procurement process for a new contracted service.
- 2.8** In May 2023 the Executive Mayor in Cabinet approved officers' recommendations as outlined below
- 2.9** Based on the options appraisal and reviewing the feedback from 'soft market testing' it has been determined that the most viable service delivery model is to reprocure these services taking into account the changes in the commercial market and their reluctance to take financial risk on processing of recycle material along with guaranteed income share from the sale of material.
- 2.10** The specification for **waste and recycling** is based around the current service and will maintain the current level of frequency in collection. We have noted the observations and recommendations from the sub-committee and are in the process of reviewing our contract management structure.
- 2.11** Details of our agreed approach can be seen in the May 2023 Cabinet Report (see background papers)
- 2.12** As agreed by Cabinet the service is scheduled to undertake the procurement in Q3 and Q4 of this financial year following which the outcome and preferred bidder will be subject to Cabinet review prior to any new contract commencement in April 2025.
- 2.13** To support the procurement and to ensure the final service specification meets the wider needs of our internal stakeholders the programme Board has been established and all key stakeholders will be provided with the opportunity to meet with each of the bidders through a series of competitive dialogue meetings and help shape the final tender submissions. This includes Housing, IT and Data Integration, Complaints and Communications etc.

3 Background Papers

- 3.1 Cabinet Report 24th May 2023 (pages 95-314)

[\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Cabinet, 24/05/2023 18:30 \(croydon.gov.uk\)](#)

4 Appendices

- 4.1 Appendix A - Cleaner Croydon Presentation**

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Scrutiny Street Environment Sub Committee

‘A Cleaner Croydon’

Introduction

The Mayor's Business Plan includes a focus around making our streets cleaner so that Croydon is a place that residents and businesses can feel proud to call home.

Areas covered

- 1) DATA -----Intelligence Gathering
- 2) ANALYSIS -----What is the data telling us?
- 3) HOW -----Areas of focus
- 4) ENGAGEMENT-----How we communicate?
- 5) FINANCIAL INVESTMENT
- 6) NEXT STEPS

Background

The cleanliness of our borough is a universal issue which affects everyone who lives, works or studies in Croydon. In line with the exec Mayor priority to 'make our streets cleaner' it was agreed that a pilot would be devised to address the 'Broken Window effect'

Looking at the areas of concern which impact the overall image of the public realm we undertook a data gathering exercise in which Norbury High street was identified as being suitable for target intervention

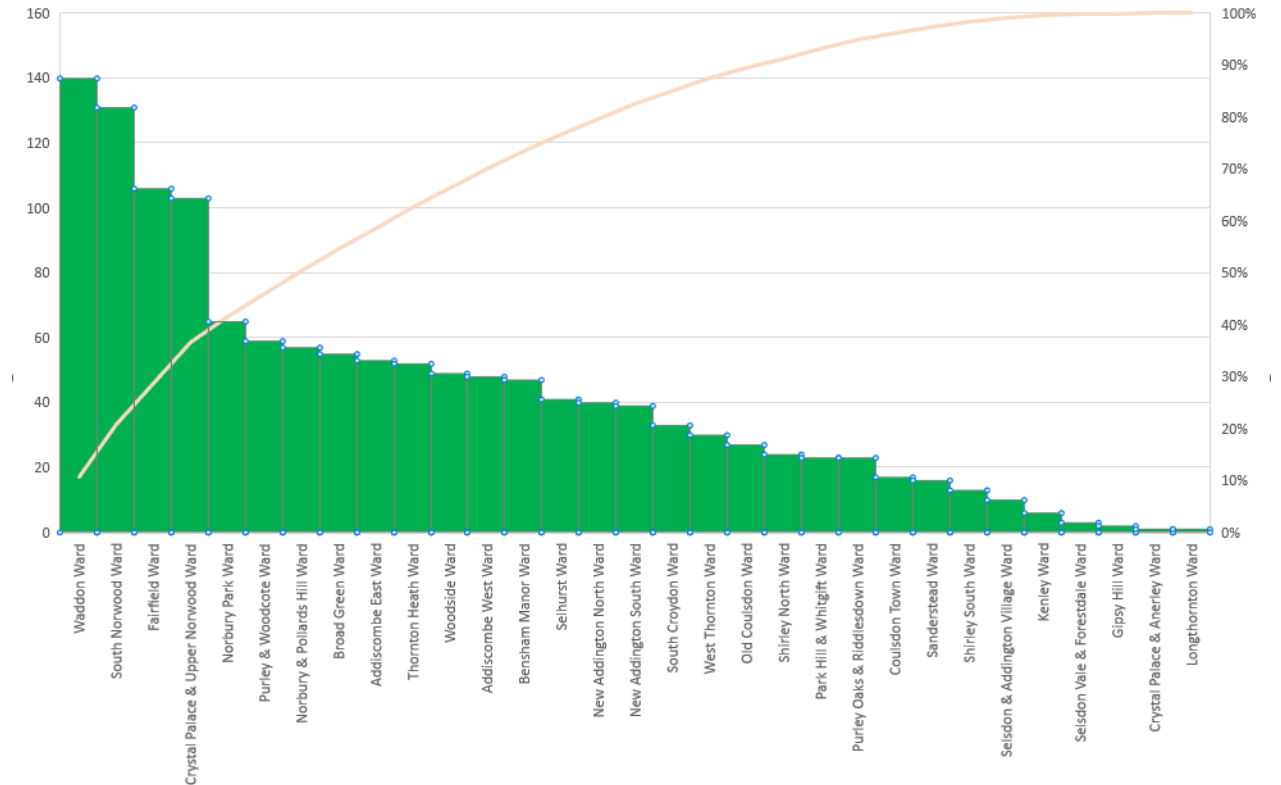
1) Intelligence gathering

Looking at the areas of concern which impact the overall image of the Public realm we have undertaken a data gathering exercise in the following areas.

- GRAFFITI
- GULLY CLEANSING
- FLY TIPPING
- STREETS BELOW GRADE

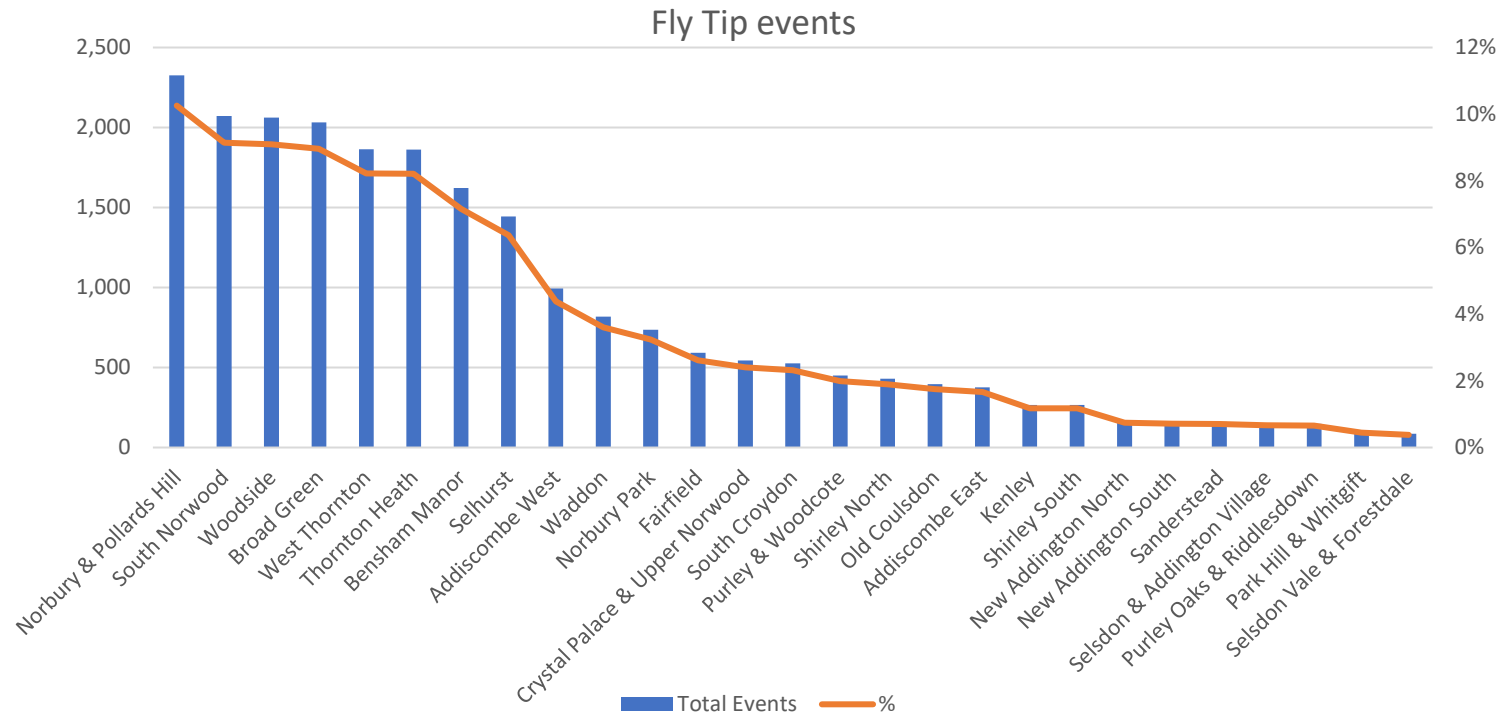
Graffiti – 1,314 recorded

Ward	Total Events	%
Waddon Ward	140	10.7%
South Norwood Ward	131	10.0%
Fairfield Ward	106	8.1%
Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood Ward	103	7.8%
Norbury Park Ward	65	4.9%
Purley & Woodcote Ward	59	4.5%
Norbury & Pollards Hill Ward	57	4.3%
Broad Green Ward	55	4.2%
Addiscombe East Ward	53	4.0%
Thornton Heath Ward	52	4.0%



1st Nov 2023

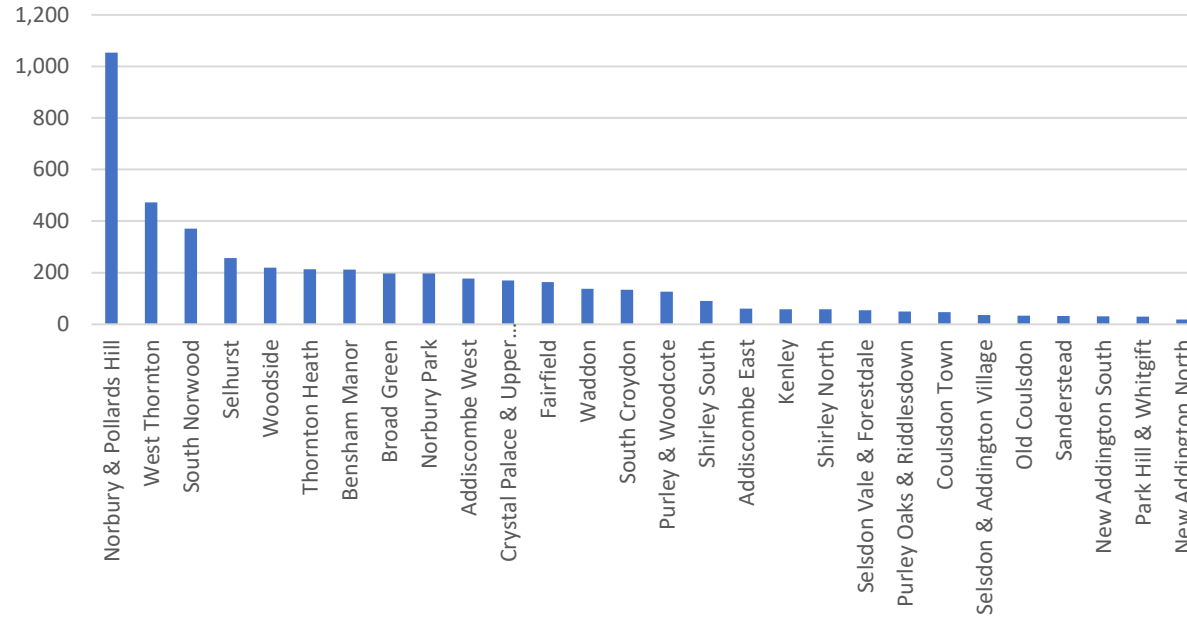
Fly Tipping



Top Ten Wards	Total Events	%
Norbury & Pollards Hill	2,327	10%
South Norwood	2,073	9%
Woodside	2,062	9%
Broad Green	2,032	9%
West Thornton	1,865	8%
Thornton Heath	1,863	8%
Bensham Manor	1,623	7%
Selhurst	1,445	6%
Addiscombe West	995	4%
Waddon	818	4%

Street Service request for cleansing

Street Below Grade



Ward	Total Events	%
Norbury & Pollards Hill	1,053	20%
West Thornton	472	9%
South Norwood	371	7%
Selhurst	257	5%
Woodside	219	4%
Thornton Heath	213	4%
Bensham Manor	212	4%
Broad Green	197	4%
Norbury Park	197	4%

2) What the data is telling us

Overall the top 5 wards affect by environmental 'anti-social' behaviour are

1. Norbury and Pollards Hill
2. Woodside
3. Thornton Heath
4. West Thornton
5. South Norwood

3) Areas of focused intervention

- Graffiti removal / engagement with commercial & resident properties
- Street cleansing
- Deep cleaning of hotspot area
- Litter bin review/audit
- Gully cleaning where necessary
- Road marking refresh

Pilot Area No 1 - Norbury & Pollards Hill

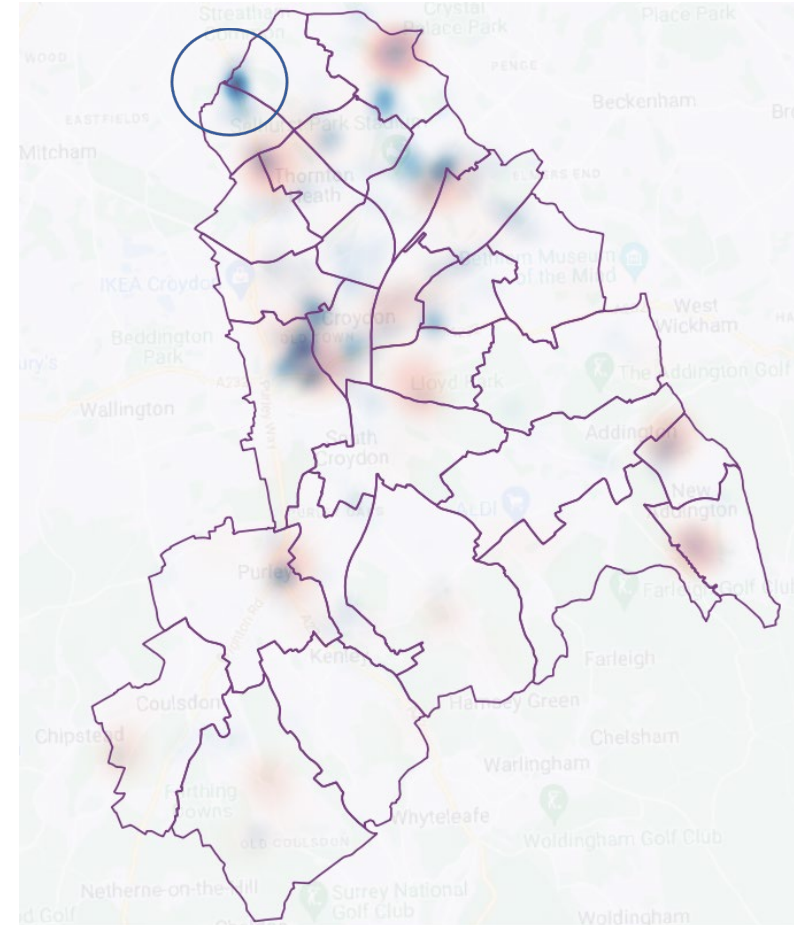
street below Grade

Stanford Road	68
Semley Road	78
Tylecroft Road	69
Northborough Road	42
Bavant Road	53
Hatch Road	113
Norton Gardens	9
Isham Road	5
Craignish Ave	15
Ederline Ave	21
Melrose Ave	18
Kilmartin Ave	18
Dunbar Ave	11
Ardfern Ave	6
Strathyre Ave	18

Fly Tipping

Stanford Road	201
Semley Road	106
Tylecroft Road	161
Northborough Road	119
Bavant Road	118
London Road	46
Norton Gardens	62
Isham Road	89
Craignish Ave	81
Ederline Ave	69
Melrose Ave	65
Kilmartin Ave	80
Dunbar Ave	84
Ardfern Ave	41
Strathyre Ave	50

Graffiti



Supporting Service Providers

Service Providers	LB CROYDON
Veolia	Waste Services
FM Conway	Highways Service
Transport for London	Communications & Engagement
Network Rail	Mayors Office

Issues addressed – Graffiti Removal



1st Nov 2023

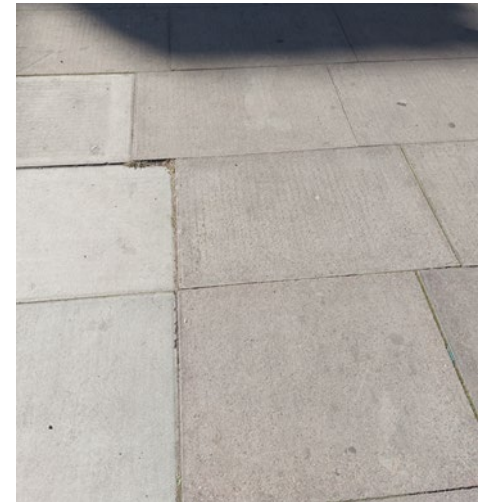
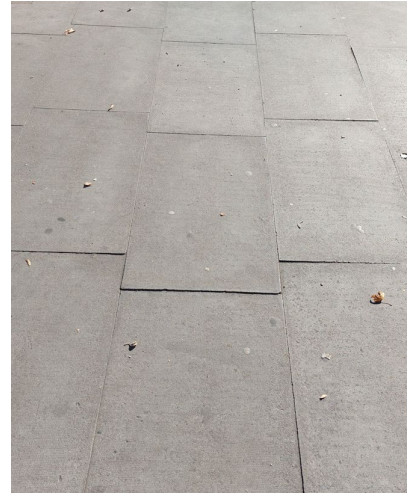
Road Painting & Railings



Weed removal – Private Land



Pavement Washing



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1st Nov 2023

Litter Bins cleansing



Discarded Domestic Waste



Fly Tipping

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1st Nov 2023

Veolia – Deep Cleaning



4) Overview - Communications

- ✓ The targeted programme represents a significant opportunity to communicate how the council is delivering on the Mayor's clean streets priority
- ✓ A full communication plan for the programme is in development

Key message:

- *We're doing our bit - help us by doing yours!*
- We're cleaning up your area. Find out about the small things you can do to help keep your neighborhood clean!

Approach:

- Targeted flyer to local residents and businesses.
- Video of Mayor on-site during blitz to use across social channels
- Press release post event
- Your Croydon Weekly e-bulletin

Detailed communication plan will be produced for each targeted area providing timelines of each activity

6) Review – Next steps

- ✓ Review of lessons learned
- ✓ Targeted engagement with flats
- ✓ Engagement / Review stakeholder
- ✓ Review of baseline data
- ✓ Review scope and size of designated project team (Funding)
- ✓ Early engagement with next target area (Thornton Heath - Oct 23)

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	STREETS & ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE
DATE OF DECISION	1 NOVEMBER 2023
REPORT TITLE:	PARTIAL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Nick Hibberd, Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Heather Cheesbrough, Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration
LEAD OFFICER:	Julia Dawe - Plan Making Team Leader Julia.dawe@croydon.gov.uk Steve Dennington – Service Head for Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration Steve.Dennington@croydon.gov.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Jeet Bains, Cabinet member for Planning and Regeneration
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** This report sets out to inform members of the Street and Environment Sub-Committee of the on-going work that has been undertaken on the Council’s review of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 post the Regulation 19 consultation which took place between January and March 2022, and the election of the Mayor Perry as Executive Mayor.
- 1.2** It also provides members of the Sub-Committee with the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the elements of the Local Plan 2018 that are subject to the partial review, which will be considered as part of the Local Plan Review scheduled to be considered by Executive Mayor Perry in Cabinet in December 2023. This engagement with the Street & Environment Sub-Committee is being undertaken alongside engagement with all Members of the Council, Residents’ Associations and key partners.
- 1.3** The main aim of the Local Plan Review is to set the framework for the sustainable growth of the borough for the next twenty years, including addressing the need to

help deliver more high-quality housing and affordable housing, balancing the growth of the borough with the borough's valuable character, enabling economic growth and town centre regeneration, whilst developing vibrant places to live, work, visit and socialise. With the adoption of the London Plan 2021, Croydon has a housing target of 33,985 new homes between 2019 and 2040.

- 1.4** A key stage in the journey of the Local Plan review was the Issues and Options consultation in late 2019, which presented three spatial strategies. Work continued on the Local Plan Review until November 2020, but with the Council issuing a Section 114 notice the Local Plan Review was paused. Work on the Local Plan Review recommenced mid-March 2021 and a Proposed Submission Draft was prepared and underwent public consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012 between 6th January and 17 February 2022.
- 1.5** Following the Regulation 19 consultation the decision was taken to pause work on the Local Plan until after the Mayoral election had taken place. This was due to the number of representations received in relation to the proposed areas of intensification in the Local Plan Review from local communities across the Borough. These concerns were also shared by Mayor Perry who stated, as part of his electoral manifesto, that he would review the Local Plan Review and seek to remove the relevant policies relating to the intensification areas should he be elected.
- 1.6** As a result of the consultation in early 2022 and following the Council issuing a further Section 114 Notice, the decision was made to "halt" work on the Local Plan Review to seek instruction from the new Executive Mayor once elected in May 2022.
- 1.7** Following the election of Mayor Perry in May 2022 the Mayor's Business Plan (2022-2026) was published in July 2022. This required changes to be made to the Urban Design Chapter of the Local Plan to remove the intensification areas and take a character over density approach to policy. This resulted in a new Council timetable for the production of the Local Plan review. Cabinet approval was subsequently given on 23 March 2023 for a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS includes the updated timetable for the production of the Local Plan Review together with the Community Infrastructure Levy 2013 review. The LDS sets the timetable for amendments to be made to the Local Plan 2018 to reflect the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 and consider the representations made in response to the Regulation 19 consultation. Following these changes, a further round of Regulation 19 consultation is proposed early in 2024 subject to Cabinet approval.
- 1.8** The Local Plan Review has been updated to comply with the London Plan adopted in March 2021 and to reflect changes in national policy and guidance since 2018. The Plan also addresses the causes of climate change associated with planning, directs sustainable growth to sustainable locations in the borough, contributes to meeting housing need and supports economic growth, especially taking account of the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

- 1.9** The Local Plan Review has also identified the need to include and has developed the following three additional chapters regarding strategic transformation:
- Purley Way;
 - North End Quarter; and
 - Brighton Mainline Upgrade.
- 1.10** The Local Plan Review has developed proposed policy updates (with varying scales of change) for thematic policy areas including; housing, affordable housing, housing design, urban design, heritage and local character, employment, retail, community facilities – health and education, community facilities – social infrastructure, environment and climate change, green grid, transport and parking. Additional evidence has been assembled to support the development of these updated policies.
- 1.11** The intensification areas have been removed from the Local Plan 2018 in accordance with the Mayor’s Business Plan 2022-26. The 16 Places of Croydon will change depending on their local character, their accessibility to services and public transport, their heritage assets and their ability to deliver sustainable growth with the required physical and social infrastructure. The Local Plan Review will set out the vision for the 16 Places as well as the proposed growth scenario for each place.
- 1.12** The proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 are summarised in this report. The information in this report is presented as work in progress. It is scheduled that the Proposed Submission Local Plan Review will be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 and, subject to approval, publish the Local Plan Review for a further six weeks Regulation 19 consultation in early 2024. All representations received together with the representations received in respect of the previous Regulation 19 consultation will inform the examination in public before a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State who will consider the soundness of the Local Plan Review and whether it can be adopted.
- 1.13** The production of a Local Plan is a statutory function of the Council as it forms the basis on which planning applications should be determined unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states policies in local plans and spatial development strategies, should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years, and should then be updated as necessary. Therefore, it is a statutory requirement for a Council to produce an up-to-date Local Plan.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** For the reasons set out in the report, the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. To note this report, the proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 and the publication of the Local Plan Review for a second consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012; and,
2. To consider whether it wishes to make any comments on the proposed changes to the Local Plan 2018 to be taken account of by the Executive.

3 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 3.1** Croydon needs to review the existing Croydon Local Plan 2018 to rise to the challenges facing the borough and its communities over the next 20 years, and to ensure general conformity with the London Plan 2021. Planning is critical to ensuring that Croydon meets the needs of all its residents, businesses and visitors. This Local Plan Review sets out to consider how Croydon might contribute to meeting its own housing needs, including the need for affordable homes, balance the growth of the borough with the borough's valuable character, enable economic growth and town centre regeneration, whilst tackling the causes of climate change in the borough and ensuring it is developing vibrant places for people to live, work and visit.
- 3.2** The Local Plan review has taken account of the London Plan 2021 including the reduction of the overall housing requirement, and the fixed small sites target for each borough. The final version of the London Plan was adopted on 2nd March 2021 and needs to be reflected in the Local Plan Review. This is essential as it is a statutory requirement to produce a Local Plan which is in general conformity with the London Plan.

Strategic Option

- 3.3** During the Issues and Options consultation three strategic spatial options were set out. Each of the three options proposed a proportion of homes to be built in each of the borough's 16 places based on differing criteria linked to achieving sustainable growth. The third option which proposed strategic residential led development in the Green Belt is no longer needed due to the reduced New London Plan housing target for the Borough. Taking into account the consultation responses, the statutory Sustainability Appraisal and evidence, a proposed strategic spatial option has been developed and will be included in the Local Plan Review.
- 3.4** The proposed strategic spatial option continues with significant development in the Croydon Opportunity Area, development allocations elsewhere in the borough in sustainable locations, a step change in housing supply along the Purley Way and continued development of windfall sites. The Council's housing target as set out in the London Plan is a housing target of 20,790 dwellings between 2019-29. The total housing target proposed for the Plan period April 2019 to 31 December 2040 is 33,385 units. This target has been set using the London Plan housing target of 20,790 homes. The residual figure of the target has been calculated using the land availability as set out in the GLA Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

- 3.5** The London Plan Small Sites Policy requires the borough to accommodate a minimum of 641 units per annum from small sites, which should be in locations that have good access to a centre, social and physical infrastructure and reasonable sustainable transport. An element of the Council's housing land supply being from small sites is a requirement of both national and London Plan policy.
- 3.6** The previous Local Plan Review (2021) included proposed areas for intensification within the Borough. The inclusion of these areas within the Local Plan attracted a significant number of representations in response to the 2022 Regulation 19 consultation.
- 3.7** Following the election of Mayor Perry and the publication of his Business Plan 2022-26 all the proposed intensification areas have been removed from the Local Plan 2018 and Local Plan Review 2021. Additional work has been undertaken to assess the Council's housing land supply and alternative sources of small sites to enable the delivery of 641 units each year. In addition windfall completions on non-allocated sites over the previous 6 year period between 2026/17 and 2021/22 have averaged 1,004 units per annum well in excess of the 641 small sites requirement. This trend is expected to continue.
- 3.8** Sites are allocated in the 16 places of Croydon (see Appendix 1). Allocations total 18,987 new homes which are expected to come forward between 2022-2040.

Transformation Areas

- 3.9** The Local Plan review also identified the need to include three additional chapters relating to strategic transformation areas (see Appendix 2), which for different reasons require a comprehensive approach to plan for the change for these areas. These areas are summarised as follows;
- The Purley Way;
 - The North End Quarter; and
 - The Brighton Mainline.

The Purley Way

- 3.10** Forming a key part of the strategic spatial option, the Purley Way transformation area policies and allocations will facilitate considerable growth in residential, mixed use (outside the Strategic Employment Locations) and industrial intensification development to support economic growth along the Purley Way. In addition, it is proposed to create three new local centres at Valley Park, Waddon Marsh and Fiveways together with a new Neighbourhood Centre at Waddon Way. Alongside the development of the Local Plan Review chapter a masterplan for the Purley Way has also been developed, which will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document following the adoption of the Local Plan Review. It should be noted that the policies for the area are developed to compliment the Croydon Opportunity Area and will

enable the delivery of a significant amount of housing, whilst protecting and proposing the intensification of protected industrial designations.

The North End Quarter

- 3.11** A chapter setting out the statutory planning framework / policies for the renewal and regeneration of the Town Centre. The chapter provides a planning vision and strategy for the transformation of this area as the role of town centres change and evolve in response to the pandemic and much changed function and role of town centres. The chapter will be supplemented by URW's current master planning exercise, the Council's Town Centre Vision, Regeneration Framework and Delivery Plan commission, and the outputs from the Croydon Urban Room.

Brighton Main Line Upgrade and East Croydon Station

- 3.12** Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS) is the largest and most complex part of Network Rail's longer-term Brighton Main Line upgrade project. CARS would remove one of the most operationally challenging bottlenecks on Britain's railway network, located in the 'Selhurst triangle'. East Croydon station and East Croydon is a critical sustainable transport node, providing access to the train, tram, bus, walking and cycling networks. To support this area's transformation the East Croydon transformation area policies will cover the following:

- Set the policy context to inform the Transport Works Act Order Inquiry (should the project get DfT funding to progress), especially support for the Brighton Main Line Upgrade and setting the placemaking and renewal context for the Station Square and Station Building.
- Allocations included to phase and guide development sites adjacent to the station post construction of the project.

Policy Topic Area Changes

- 3.13** The following changes are proposed in the Local Plan Review to support the delivery of the proposed strategy outlined in paragraph 3.4 above, to update the plan so it is consistent with both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and London Plan 2021. The Local Plan Review also addresses environmental and climate change issues.

Housing - including Affordable Housing

- 3.14** To inform the housing policies a Strategic Housing Market Assessment was originally produced in 2015 and is currently being updated. The SHMA will set out the quantity and type of housing needed over the 20-year plan period. The evidence identifies that Croydon's population is gradually getting older and household sizes are getting smaller. Open market housing (both private rented and for sale) is getting less and less affordable for many households in the borough. The report will also supply the

figure for the number of affordable rented homes a year that would be needed in Croydon to meet the need of lower income households for housing.

- 3.15** A new policy is proposed to be added to the Homes chapter to manage the quality and cumulative impact of Houses in Multiple Occupation. The policies in the housing chapter have been updated recognising the housing crisis and the need to encourage significant housing delivery, especially affordable homes. However, the affordable housing target will be in alignment with the London Plan 2021.

Employment and Retail

- 3.16** Croydon is the largest metropolitan centre in London and one of only two strategic office centres outside of central London. There are also 9 District Centres, 9 Local Centres, 18 Neighbourhood Centres and 62 Shopping Parades in the borough. The following policy changes have been made to support the strategic option and align the Local Plan Review with the London Plan 2021, the NPPF, the latest Retail Needs Study and to respond to the changing function and use of all tiers of centres:

- Policies have been updated to reflect changes to the Use Classes Order;
- Additional clarity has been provided around the town centre hierarchy;
- Additional clarity has been provided for edge and out of centre developments taking into account changes to the use class order;
- With the London Plan 2021 'no net loss' provision for industrial and employment sites removed, policy has been amended to protect this land to support the borough's economy, supported by the Employment Land Review;
- Additional policies supporting the Creative economy, affordable workspaces and providing benefits to the local workforce; and,
- Strengthen the protection of employment land and the warehousing sector.

Community Facilities

- 3.17** These policies do not need significant change as they recognise and plan for the need to provide appropriate community facilities, such as education, health, religious, sporting, cultural and creative spaces, for all residents and visitors of Croydon. However, due to the increased housing delivery the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informs these policies has been updated.

Transport

- 3.18** As Croydon grows, we need to manage private car use, traffic and congestion and resultant pollution in our streets with regard to the London Mayor's Transport Strategy. Changes to the transportation policies aim to address the climate

emergency, promote sustainable transport and enable sustainable growth in the borough.

Green Grid

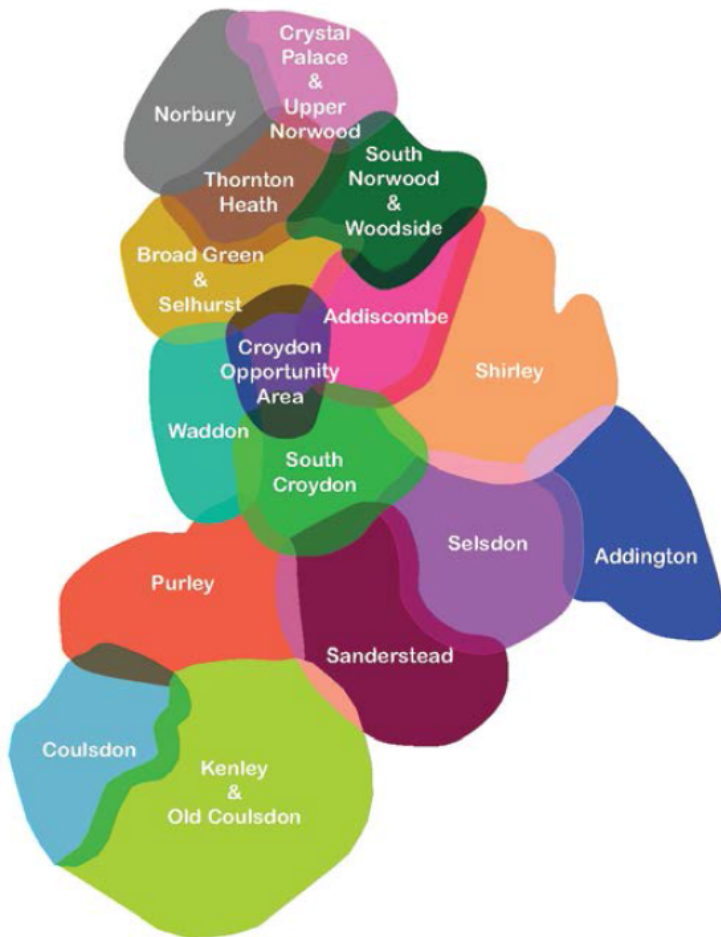
- 3.19** Reflecting the pressure that increased housing development would place on the green grid and the need to address the climate emergency, the Local Plan Review is an opportunity to strengthen these policies. This is supported by the revisions to the NPPF and the London Plan 2021.
- 3.20** Following on from the Planning Inspector removing Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan 2018, a consultation and evidence gathering exercise has been undertaken to support the introduction of Local Green Spaces as part of the Local Plan Review.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1** Appendix 1 – The Places in the Local Plan
Appendix 2 – Transformation Areas

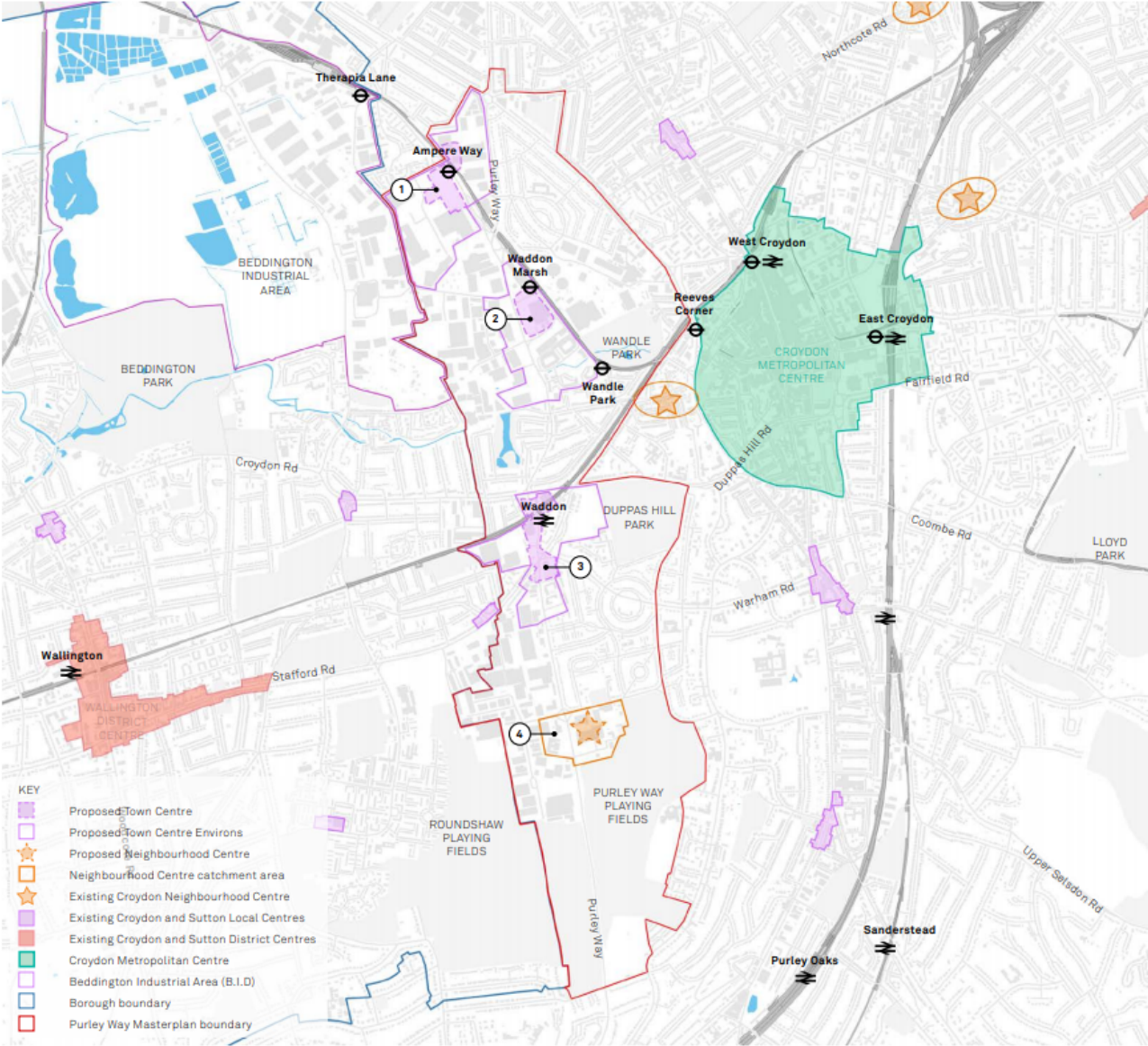
Appendix 1

The Places in the Local Plan

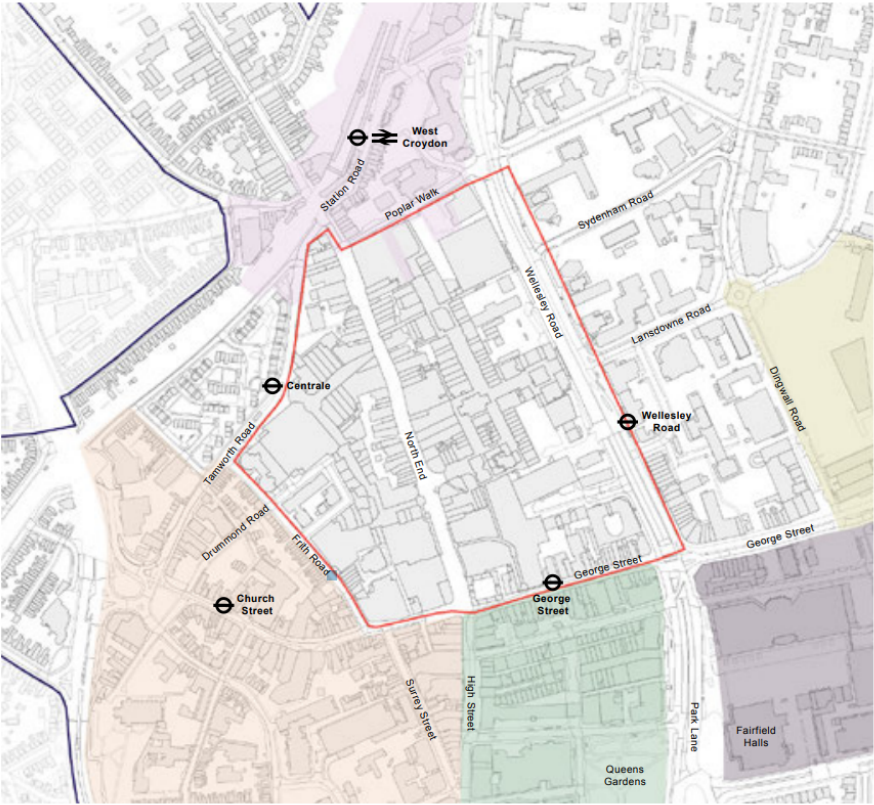


Appendix 2

Transformation Area Purley Way

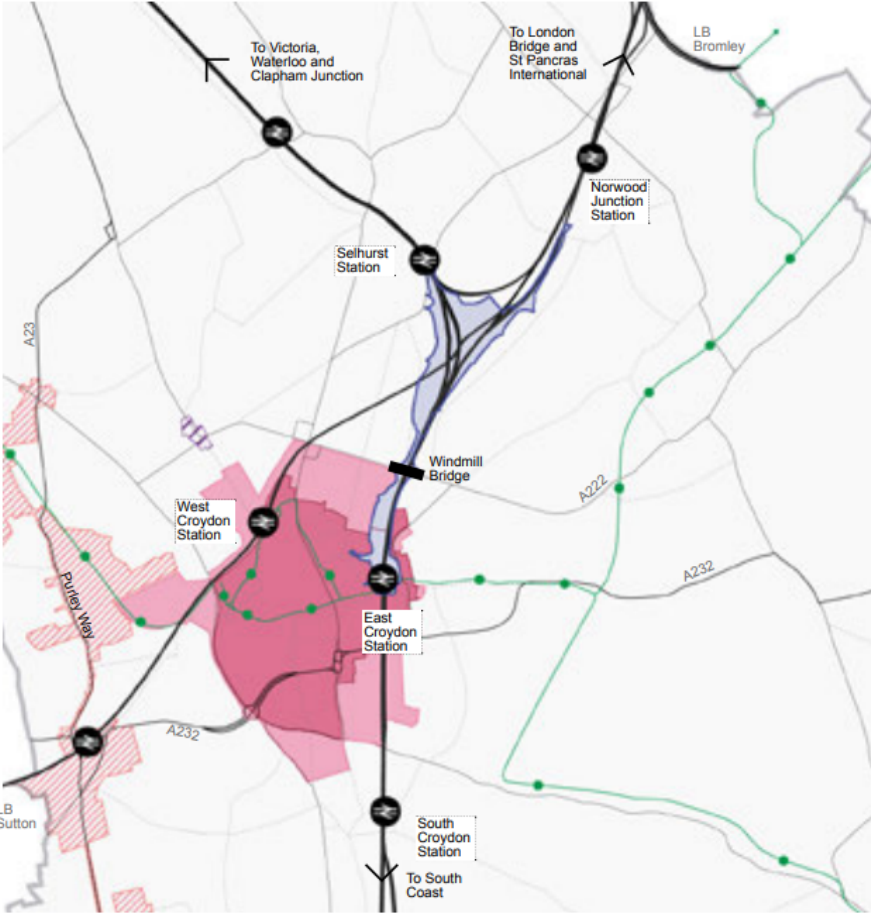


Transformation Area North End Quarter



- North End Quarter Transformation Area
- Mid-Croydon Masterplan
- Fairfield Masterplan
- East Croydon Masterplan
- West Croydon Masterplan
- Old Town Masterplan
- Opportunity Area Planning Framework

Transformation Area - Brighton Main Line Upgrade and East Croydon Station



- borough boundary
- Croydon opportunity area
- Metropolitan centre
- Local centre
- Purley Way transformation area
- Brighton Mainline upgrade project
- ⊕ Railway station
- Railway network
- TfL road network (TLRN)
- borough distributor roads
- Neighbourhood distributor roads
- Existing tram network and stops

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	1 November 2023
REPORT TITLE:	Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March 2023.
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny T:020 8726 6000 x 63779
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Cabinet response to recommendations made by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is provided for the Sub-Committee's information.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	<p>The Streets & Environment Sub-Committee is asked to note the response given by the Cabinet to recommendations made by the Committee and consider whether any further action is necessary.</p> <p>The Chair has requested that the Sub-Committee is provided with a summary of all recommendations made, and responses where available, since the establishment of the Homes Sub-Committee in November 2022. This has been provided at Appendix 3.</p>
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1** The rights of scrutiny to make recommendations to the Cabinet, Council, non-Executive Committee, Partner Agency or Partnership Board is set out in Section 8 of Part 4E – Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution.
- 1.2** When making a recommendation to the Cabinet, a response needs to be given within two months to confirm whether the recommendation has been accepted or not. If accepted, this response should include how the recommendation will be implemented.
- 1.3** To ensure the Committee can monitor the response given to its recommendations, this report will be included as a standing item on each agenda, setting out in

Appendix A the response from the Cabinet to the recommendations of the Committee.

- 1.4 The Committee is asked to review the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

3 SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Scrutiny recommendations are contained in the schedule in the appendix to this report.

- 3.2 The detailed responses, including reasons for rejected recommendations and action plans for the implementation of agreed recommendations are also contained in the appendix.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1 Appendix 1: Scrutiny Stage 2 Response - Waste Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification
Appendix 2: Scrutiny Stage 2 Response - Local Planning Authority Service Transformation
Appendix 3: Summary of Sub-Committee Recommendations since November 2022

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 Report to Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March 2023
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=2947>
- 5.2 Report to Cabinet on 27 September 2023
<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=183&MId=3574>

Appendix 1 – Item: Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract

Specification Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.1.23/24	The Sub-Committee recognised there was a large number of households in the Borough that used communal bins and recommends that the specification of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract includes a requirement for identifying a successful solution for managing waste and recycling collections from these properties.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Rejected The draft specification already sets out that the collection of communal flats collection is an individual service requirement within the contract specification. One of the advantages of Competitive Dialogue is that it allows the Service to discuss areas of innovation and service enhancements from individual bidders. It is important to note that as a 'minimum service' requirement will be to maintain the current weekly collection from all communal collection points.	Steve Iles, Director of Sustainable Communities	This is dependent on the final solution agreed through the procurement process.	April 2025	TBC
SE.2.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council plans some specific actions to help resident engagement, communication and behavioural change under the new waste contract, using data to ensure the borough's recycling rates are maximised and that residents get the most out of the contract.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Rejected – This is already built into the future draft specification. The service recognises the importance of targeted regular engagement and communication with our residents. To ensure that this is undertaken in line with the Council's priorities, the future contract will require the service provider to direct real-time data which can be extracted and analysed by our waste services team. In addition, under the future contract requirements the service provider will be required to 'support' our agreed engagement and communication initiatives which will be led by the Councils Communication Team who will be directly responsible for the design and implementation of all future engagement and communication strategies designed to deliver behavior change and increase our recycling.	Steve Iles, Director of Sustainable Communities	Yes – As part of the overall financial cost in providing the new waste collection and street cleansing service we will need to include the new additional cost of the Council's resource and budget requirement to undertake this area of work.	April 2025	TBC

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.3.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommends that there was a continuation of an 'as-is' service for residents in terms of a collection frequency.	Councillor Scott Roche SCRER	Rejected In line with Cabinet recommendations, the new Service Specification and supporting contract have been drafted to reflect the current frequency for waste collection.	Steve Iles, Director of Sustainable Communities	Yes – It is acknowledged that the new waste collection service is likely to be more expensive and is likely to be above the current Budget provision allocated for 2025/26.	The commissioning of the new service is scheduled to be completed in Q4 2023/24. Preferred Bidder status is subject to Cabinet Approval in May/June 2024. The new contract is scheduled to be in place in April 2025	TBC

Appendix 2 – Item: Local Planning Authority Service Transformation

Considered by Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March 2023

REC No.	SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENT AND CABINET MEMBER RESPONDING	ACCEPTED / PARTIALLY ACCEPTED / REJECTED (inc. reasons for rejection)	IDENTIFIED OFFICER	ANY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IF ACCEPTED (i.e. Action Plan)	DATE OF SCRUTINY MEETING TO REPORT BACK
SE.4.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommended that Councillors be invited to attend future Planning Resident Engagement events.	Councillor Jeet Bains SCRER	Accepted Members will be sent invites directly to future Resident Association meetings. Previously Members have been invited to attend these meetings through the Party Whips.	Heather Cheesbrough , Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	N/A	Immediate	TBC

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Meeting Date	Item	Rec No.	Reccommendation	Dept & Cabinet Member	Stage 1 Cabinet Date	Stage 2 Cabinet Date	Stage 2 Response (Accept/Reject)	Reasons
08/11/22	Waste Contract Performance Paper	1	The Sub-Committee were of the view that improvements to communications with residents needed to be a priority and should include updating the website and an explanation of street grading.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Accept	By April 2024
08/11/22	Waste Contract Performance Paper	2	The Sub-Committee recommended that communication with residents who had submitted reports on the 'Love Clean Streets' app needed to be improved to notify them on the resolution of the report.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Reject	The LCS App already provides two-way communication for environmental reports such as street cleansing, street bins Flytip and graffiti reports. As a principle when other areas are added to the APP the two-way communication is developed.
08/11/22	Waste Contract Performance Paper	3	The Sub-Committee recommended that Veolia and the Council work with Friends and Residents groups to analyse and help to resolve issues with repeat missed collections. Members recommended that this is achieved through mapping areas of repeated missed bin collections, especially in relation to access issues, particularly with communal recycling bins.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Reject	The Mayor and Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment have, and will continue, regular communication with the contractor and resident groups to discuss and understand the issues.
08/11/22	Waste Contract Performance Paper	4	The Sub-Committee were of the view that the option to 'raise an enquiry' needed to be more prominent on the Council website when residents were trying to submit a missed collection report following 48 hours of the intended collection date, or when making a report was otherwise unavailable.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Reject	The Council has already been reviewing the online reporting processes for missed bins which includes the ability to raise enquiries.
08/11/22	Waste Contract Performance Paper	5	The Sub-Committee requested that the Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment provided a full update on his data gathering and plans for reducing fly tipping in Croydon.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Accept	By September 2023
08/11/22	Cabinet Report - Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract	1	The Sub-Committee recommended that a Cross-Party working group be established to input into the development of any new Service Delivery Options for Waste Collection and Street Cleansing.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	25/01/23	22/03/23	Reject	All Member briefings will take place rather than a cross party working group
31/01/23	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	1	The Sub-Committee recommended that recruitment and retention formed a key workstream in the transformation work taking place in Building Control and the Planning Service, as it was felt this would be key to ensuring this could be delivered with sufficient capacity to also successfully engage with residents and stakeholders.	Cllr Jeet Bains - SCRER	22/03/23	24/05/2023	Accept	There is a 'workforce' workstream as part of the Planning Transformation Programme and therefore recruitment and retention are considered
31/01/23	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	1a	The Sub-Committee recommended that recruitment and retention formed a key workstream in the transformation work taking place in Parking Services, as it was felt this would be key to ensuring this could be delivered with sufficient capacity to also successfully engage with residents and stakeholders.	Cllr Jeet Bains - SCRER	22/03/23	24/05/2023	Reject	The Parking Policy review is a review of the Borough's parking policy and does not have a workstream on recruitment and retention; therefore, this recommendation is not accepted
14/1/2023	Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification	SE.1.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recognised there was a large number of households in the Borough that used communal bins and recommends that the specification of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract includes a requirement for identifying a successful solution for managing waste and recycling collections from these properties.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	28/06/2023	27/9/2023	Reject	The draft specification already sets out that the collection of communal flats collection is an individual service requirement within the contract specification. One of the advantages of Competitive Dialogue is that it allows the Service to discuss areas of innovation and service enhancements from individual bidders. It is important to note that as a 'minimum service' requirement will be to maintain the current weekly collection from all communal collection points.
14/1/2023	Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification	SE.2.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council plans some specific actions to help resident engagement, communication and behavioural change under the new waste contract, using data to ensure the borough's recycling rates are maximised and that residents get the most out of the contract.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	28/06/2023	27/9/2023	Reject	This is already built into the future draft specification. The service recognises the importance of targeted regular engagement and communication with our residents. To ensure that this is undertaken in line with the Council's priorities, the future contract will require the service provider to direct real-time data which can be extracted and analysed by our waste services team. In addition, under the future contract requirements the service provider will be required to 'support' our agreed engagement and communication initiatives which will be led by the Councils Communication Team who will be directly responsible for the design and implementation of all future engagement and communication strategies designed to deliver behavior change and increase our recycling.
14/1/2023	Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification	SE.3.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that there was a continuation of an 'as-is' service for residents in terms of collection frequency.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	28/06/2023	27/9/2023	Reject	In line with Cabinet recommendations, the new Service Specification and supporting contract have been drafted to reflect the current frequency for waste collection.
14/1/2023	Cabinet Report - Local Planning Authority Service Transformation	SE.4.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that Councillors be invited to attend future Resident Engagement events.	Cllr Jeet Bains - SCRER	28/06/2023	27/9/2023	Accept	Members will be sent invites directly to future Resident Association meetings. Previously Members have been invited to attend these meetings through the Party Whips.
07/11/23	Parking Policy Transformation Project	SE.5.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that 'Letter Drops', or similar targeted communications, on Parking Policy were undertaken for District Centres that had not already been engaged, or who were not actively being engaged through Business Improvement Districts before any changes to the Parking Policy are enacted.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Parking Policy Transformation Project	SE.6.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that an improved parking map was developed for the Council website, which included Controlled Parking Zones and Restricted Parking Areas.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Parking Policy Transformation Project	SE.7.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that a Task Group was established for engaging with disabled residents and disabled-led organisations (such as Transport for All) on parking policy, to ensure that disabled parking bays were best placed on the road for users and that roads and footways were accessible, to tie in with the Policy three - 'Supporting our Disabled Residents'.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Parking Policy Transformation Project	SE.8.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee requested that the Council should provide follow up communication to residents who reported parking for enforcement action through the parking hotline or 'Love Clean Streets' app.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Parking Policy Transformation Project	SE.9.23/2 4	The Sub-Committee recommended that there was comprehensive communications with residents should areas transition from parking meters to cashless parking, including a full publicity campaign and video walk-through.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	SE.10.23/ 24	The Sub-Committee recommended that the Flood Risk Register be published on the Council's website to ensure that this was transparent and accessible to residents.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	SE.11.23/ 24	The Sub-Committee recommended the implementation of a publically accessible Geographic Information System (GIS) for Croydon.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	SE.12.23/ 24	The Sub-Committee recommended that the expertise of an arborist be used to feed into the Strategy, and that more thought should be put into how Blue and Green corridors can be expanded, alongside other nature based solutions, to provide additional flood prevention measures using any available grant funding available to the Council.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		
07/11/23	Consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	SE.13.23/ 24	The Sub-Committee recommended that the Council implement a year-round publicity campaign on flood prevention, as it felt that beginning this in the winter was too late to be as effective as possible.	Cllr Scott Roche - SCRER	27/09/2023	22/11/2023		

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Streets & Environment Sub-Committee
DATE	1 November 2023
REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny T:020 8726 6000 x 63779
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Work Programme is scheduled for consideration at every ordinary meeting of the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To consider any additions, amendments, or changes to the draft work programme for the Committee in 2023/24.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This agenda item details the Sub-Committee's draft work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee has the opportunity to discuss any amendments or additions that it wishes to make to the work programme.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee is able to propose changes to its work programme, but in line with Constitution, the final decision on any changes to any of the Committee/Sub-Committee work programmes rests with the Chairs & Vice-Chairs Group, following consultation with officers.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the draft work programme for 2023-24, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2.2 Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

3 WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 The work programme

The proposed work programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members are asked to note that the lines of enquiry for some items have yet to be confirmed and that there are opportunities to add further items to the work programme.

3.2 Additional Scrutiny Topics

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to suggest any other items that they consider appropriate for the Work Programme. However, due to the time limitations at Sub-Committee meetings, it is suggested that no proposed agenda contain more than two items of substantive business in order to allow effective scrutiny of items already listed.

3.3 Participation in Scrutiny

Members of the Sub-Committee are also requested to give consideration to any persons that it wishes to attend future meetings to assist in the consideration of agenda items. This may include Cabinet Members, Council or other public agency officers or representatives of relevant communities.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1** Appendix 1: Draft Work Programme 2023/24 for the Streets & Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1** None

Streets & Environment

The below table sets out the working version of the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee work programme.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
1 November 2023	Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028	To receive a presentation on the Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 to allow the Sub-Committee to provide early feedback in advance of the full report to Cabinet in December 2023.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Nick Hibberd
	Cleaner Croydon	To receive an update on the Council's work on the Mayor's priority for delivering 'Cleaner Croydon'. The Sub-Committee will also receive feedback on its recommendations concerning the Waste & Recycling Contract.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Karen Agbabiaka
	Local Plan Review	For the Sub-Committee to receive a detailed presentation on the review of the Local Plan 2023/24, to facilitate Members to influence the content of the Local Plan Review ahead of its journey on to Cabinet and Council.	Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery Steve Dennington

30 January 2024	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	<p>The Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on three budget proposals (to be identified) and reach a conclusion on the following:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the savings deliverable, sustainable and not an unacceptable risk. 2. Is the impact on service users and the wider community understood. 3. Have all reasonable alternative options been explored and do no better options exist. 	<p>Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery</p> <p>Nick Hibberd</p>
	Local Plan/Local Development Scheme	To scrutinise any outstanding Local Plan issues, as well as early pre-decision scrutiny on the CIL charging schedule adoption and Planning obligations SPD adoption.	<p>Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery</p> <p>Heather Cheesbrough, Steve Dennington</p>
2 April 2024	Climate Change Action Plan	To review and provide feedback on the Council's Climate Action Plan.	<p>Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery</p> <p>Nick Hibberd</p>
	Waste contract procurement award- May 2024	To scrutinise the Waste contract procurement award.	<p>Sustainable Communities Regeneration & Economic Recovery</p> <p>Karen Agbabiaka</p>

Standing Items:

Work Programme Item	Notes
Financial Monitoring for SCRER	Standing Item tracking progress with the delivery of 2023/24 Budget using the latest Cabinet Financial Performance report (To review by exception).

Items of Interest

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but are highlighted as potential items of interest to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Scrutiny Officer Notes
Environment Bill Responsibilities	To review the additional responsibilities that will fall upon the Council following the adoption of the Environment Bill
Biodiversity Strategy	To review the upcoming Biodiversity Strategy once written.
Implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill	To review the possible implications of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill
Review of the Waste Contract	To review the progress on the review of the Waste Contract.
Environmental Enforcement	To review the Environmental Enforcement service.
Protection of green spaces and parks	To look at the protection of parks and green spaces in the borough, including the support fund and Council strategy.
Clean Water and Sewage (Thames Water)	To look at the water quality in the borough and the risks of contamination from sewerage.

Transport, Active Transport & School Streets	To look at the strategy for Transport, Active Transport, Healthy Streets & School Streets in the borough, alongside Road Fatalities & Speed Limits
Transformation of Independent Travel	To review the transformation of the Independent Travel Service – End of 2023/24
Habitat Action Plan	To review and provide feedback on the Council’s Habitat Action Plan.