

Cabinet Agenda



To: Mayor Jason Perry (Chair)

Councillors Jeet Bains, Jason Cummings, Maria Gatland, Lynne Hale,
Yvette Hopley, Ola Kolade, Scott Roche and Andy Stranack

A meeting of the **Cabinet** which you are hereby invited to attend, will be held
**Wednesday, 28 June 2023 at 6.30 pm. Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine
Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 5 - 24)**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on Wednesday 24 May 2023 as an accurate record.

3. **Disclosure of Interests**

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider **in advance of each meeting** whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer **in good time before the meeting**.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting.

- Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.
- Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation.
- Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation. Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, section 9 of Appendix B of the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the Member to decide whether disclosure is required.

The Chair will invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3, to be recorded in the minutes.

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. **Croydon SEND Local Area and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023 - 2026** (Pages 25 - 82)
6. **STAGE 1: RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM SCRUTINY**
(Pages 83 - 94)
7. **Future options for Maintained Nursery Schools** (Pages 95 - 124)
8. **2023-24 Period 1 Financial Performance Report** (Pages 125 - 138)
9. **Joint Children's Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Experienced Young People** (Pages 139 - 182)
10. **Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report 2022** (Pages 183 - 256)
11. **Quarterly Procurement Plan Update** (Pages 257 - 264)
12. **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 AGENDA

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Cabinet

Meeting of Cabinet held on Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Executive Mayor Jason Perry (Chair);

Lynne Hale (Deputy (Statutory) Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes (Vice-Chair)), Councillors Jeet Bains (Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration), Jason Cummings (Cabinet Member for Finance), Maria Gatland (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Yvette Hopley (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), Ola Kolade (Cabinet Member for Community Safety), Scott Roche (Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment) and Andy Stranack (Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture)

Also Present: Councillors Mario Creatura, Rowenna Davis (Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee), Stuart King (Leader of the Opposition), Callton Young (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance), Janet Campbell (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), Amy Foster (Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Ben Herman (Shadow Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment), Enid Mollyneaux (Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety), Chrishni Reshekaron (Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes), Joseph Lee (Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Robert Ward (Deputy Cabinet Member for Contract Management).

Apologies: Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense (Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer)

PART A

1/23 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the Part A and Part B (not for publication) minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet, held on 22 March 2023, were approved as correct records.

2/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

Urgent Business (If any)

The Executive Mayor addressed that an urgent report relating to the heating element of the Housing Repairs contract was published as a supplementary agenda item, in conjunction with the Chair of Scrutiny as the Special Urgency Notice was published with details. Given this item included Part B information, the Executive Mayor considered the urgent report at the end of the published agenda.

Other Announcements:Regina Road

The Executive Mayor announced there were major steps taken towards the regeneration of Regina Road. A recent ballot of residents on the estate had shown overwhelming support of the proposal to demolish and redevelop Regina Road Estate [82% of eligible residents voting and 88% of those in favour of the plans]. The Executive Mayor thanked officers for the achievement of the ballot which was a success and looked forward to the next phase of the work to ensure Regina Road was resolved.

Scrutiny Stage 1: Recommendations arising from Scrutiny

The Executive Mayor considered the Scrutiny Stage 1 and Scrutiny Stage 2 reports which detailed recommendations on the newly launched £2 million pounds Council Tax Hardship Scheme and the corporate transformation programme, and also responses from the administration on Planning and building improvement and parking services.

The Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Councillor Davis, addressed the Cabinet and highlighted three points:

- Latest Financial Performance Report: Scrutiny welcomed the news that the monthly reports would have a dedicated page on the Croydon website purely for the financial performance reports, which would increase transparency and accountability. Scrutiny was concerned that they were only able to evaluate the February data in the second half of May, therefore Scrutiny had recommended to bring forward the publication date as far as possible subject to checks aiming for a maximum lag-time of 8 weeks. Other risks in the budget reviewed in more detail included the persistent overspend in temporary and emergency accommodation; continuance high vacancy rates and the delays with the ANPR cameras that are hitting enforcement rates.
- Asset Disposal Plan: Following the recent disruption at the last Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting, the discussions were curtailed and with no formal recommendations, Councillor Davis shared what the Committee had discussed. Scrutiny welcomed conformation that the Mayor would have sign offs to any assets on

the disposal list. With the council aiming to sale £50 million pounds of assets this year, should this continue next year and the following year the council would have lost half of their total assets, which would not resolve the debt problem. Scrutiny therefore welcomed the publication of a comparative list of the rental stream income to sale income for any item on the dispersal list from the Cabinet Member of Finance; Maximum notice of sale to any users of the assets should also be considered for an opportunity to present any business case which could have a long-term financial interest for the council and public; and Ward Councillors should also be informed of any sales in their ward directly to help support those affected.

- New Waste Contract: With no formal recommendations, Scrutiny Members were reassured with a number of elements in the contract, particularly that there were no plans to shift to three-weekly or less frequent bin collections; Scrutiny Members welcomed the idea of giving council access to cameras on the top of refuse trucks to ensure bins were properly cleared; Reassurance that the contract had the capacity to respond to increased recycling targets; and concerns raised relating to the department not having sufficient resources to do its part to clean the borough, though officers acknowledged the council needed a stronger approach to public engagement.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Cummings shared with Cabinet that the period monitoring reports would be published following the MAB process before Cabinet and noted that Period 11 Monitoring Report went to Scrutiny prior to being heard at Cabinet. With regards to the Asset Disposals, Councillor Cummings corrected his commitment to provide information to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and not publicly due to commercial sensitivity.

The Executive Mayor thanked Councillor Davis for her comments.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**: To

- 1.1. Receive the recommendation arising from the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 28 March 2023 (Appendix 1)
- 1.2. To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) within two months (i.e. at the Cabinet meeting on 26 July 2023).

5/23

Scrutiny Stage 2: Responses to Recommendations arising from Streets & Environment Sub-Committee

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

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

6/23

Month 11 Financial Performance Report 2022/23

The Executive Mayor considered the Month 11 Financial Performance Report 2022/23 which provided the Council's forecast outturn as at Month 11 (February 2023) for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme. The report formed part of the Council's financial management process for publicly reporting financial performance monthly.

The Executive Mayor highlighted that the Council continued to ensure tight financial control and assurance oversight were maintained in line with the Mayor's priority to ensure the council balanced its budget. This had been a reflection following the Financial Performance report for Period 2 that had shown a projected overspend of £12 million pounds and further optional risks totalling £14 million pounds.

The Executive Mayor welcomed the positive General Fund revenue forecast outturn for Month 11 that had shown a balance position for the sixth month in a row. The report further addressed the potential risks of £0.3 million pounds and nil opportunities - risks and opportunities had diminished in the latter part of the financial year, as in-year financial forecasting accuracy had been improved and the potential impacts of risks and opportunities had been revealed.

The Executive Mayor thanked officers for their diligence in this area.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Cummings, addressed the Cabinet and stated that the housing revenue account was in line with expectation. In terms of the capital programme there was a significant gap with the current actual and forecast overspend due to the capitalisation directions which had not been applied and an underspend of £20.4 million pounds which was to be reviewed. Further, the report highlighted an improvement with the narrative within each department. The risk highlighted was the potential for additional issues for any account, which had yet to be signed off. Finally, the service had met their target for the first account to be signed off for the end of June.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Young, welcomed the actual forecast for General Fund for 2022-23 as a balanced budget presented to Cabinet and raised a question around the underspend on staff vacancies across departments where an underspend could affect the 2023/24 financial year.

In response, the Interim Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, Debbie Jones, informed Cabinet of the position Children's

Social Care were in. Recruitment to social workers had been a challenging issue. Further, the service attempted to recruit and fill all vacancies which included agency staff. There was a recruitment strategy and a positive response to senior staff, though basic grade social workers continued to be a huge challenge and therefore the service was to review the circumstances of uncovered vacancies. The turnover and vacancy rate were below the London average, which resulted in an approved underspend within the services.

Additionally, the Corporate Director for Adults Social Care, Annette McPartland, informed Cabinet that the Adult Social Care Service had considered skill mixing across with Health colleagues and partners and also across South West London to ascertain how social workers could be brought in and trained; there was also a brilliant programme for newly qualified social workers for both children and adults services, and services were also using apprenticeships. Services were doing all they could to recruit and retain staff in a difficult market.

Further, the Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Elaine Jackson shared with Cabinet on the People Strategy that this year the service had developed a co-design with colleagues within their networks. In addition, there was exciting work with Palace for Life to bring young people in through the front door apprenticeship level; further the service was working together with health colleagues in Croydon. This was positive for the organisation.

The Executive Mayor acknowledged the work all services were going through particularly in retaining and recruiting staff; and welcomed the discipline and remaining balance in the financial year.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**: To

- 1.1. Note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to be balanced at Month 11.
- 1.2. Note the forecast elimination of the planned contribution to General Fund Reserves of £6.9m for 2022-23.
- 1.3. Note the progress of the MTFS savings as summarised in Table 4 and detailed in Appendix 3.
- 1.4. Note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast overspend of £1.2m.
- 1.5. Note the Capital Programme spend to date for the General Fund of £25.6m (which excludes forecast capitalisation direction of £186.6m to come) against a budget of £254.5m) with a forecast underspend of £19.7m.

- 1.6. Note the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme spend to date of £21.6m (against a budget of £27.4m), with a forecast underspend of £0.7m.
- 1.7. Note the above figures are predicated on forecasts from Month 11 to the year end and therefore could be subject to change as forecasts are made based on the best available information at the time.
- 1.8. Note the Council continues to operate Spending Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained. A new financial management culture is being implemented across the organisation through increased scrutiny such as the monthly assurance meetings, improved communication, and budget manager training from CIPFA.

7/23

Waste and Street Cleansing Service Commissioning approach for service delivery (Re-procurement Waste and Street Cleansing Service)

The Executive Mayor considered the Waste and Street Cleaning Service Commissioning approach for service deliver (Re-procurement Waste and Street Cleaning Service) report which presented the Councils approach to reshape the future waste collection and street cleansing service in line with the Executive Mayor Business Plan.

The Executive Mayor addressed that as part of his pledge to improve the quality and appearance of the street scene, ensuring contractors were held to account and delivering value for money, he did not extend Croydon's eight-year contract with Veolia beyond March 2025 following views of the residents and the recommendations of the South London Waste Partnership to which this council was a member.

The Executive Mayor was pleased to announce that the council were taking important steps to procure a new waste and street cleaning service for the borough from April 2025. Additionally, following feedback from residents, set expectations had been designed which would assist what the Council required from potential bidders. The council proposed to ensure the new contract provided better value to residents, whilst focusing on promoting increased recycling performance, proactively tackling fly-tipping across the borough and provide a consistent bin collection service for residents.

The Executive Mayor thanked colleagues and officers in particular Councillors Scott and Ward for all the work they had achieved and a special thank you to the Director of Sustainable Communities, Steve Iles, and his team.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Roche informed Cabinet that the report was built on an early decision in November of 2022 to not extend the service and this was the only decision made. Three key areas were highlighted to Cabinet which were the service delivery model; the procurement strategy; and specification and scope of services. The report noted the options for provision namely Direct Service Organisation (which would service in-house), outsourced contracted services, and local authority trading company. The report further highlighted the best value which illustrated financial risks; and that the contract out of service was the best option. Councillor Roche continued to acknowledge the specification scope of the current services to be robust.

In response to the report, the Shadow Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Herman raised a question relating to the decarbonisation of the waste service, and what changes the Executive Mayor would like to see in the waste service for goals to be met.

In response, the Executive Mayor shared that there was an effective waste service cleaning the streets and ensuring deliverance was valued for money, further, decarbonisation was part of the council's overall strategy and would play a part in the contract.

The Corporate Director for Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, Nick Hibberd, added that the design of the waste and recycling collection services would play a key role contributing to the council's emergency climate action plan. Further, the service proposed a two-stage dialogue process with potential bidders, to address the innovation they could bring relating to contributing to the climate change and carbon neutral agenda.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1. To approve the procurement strategy set out in this report for the procurement (via a Competitive Dialogue process) of waste and recycling collections, footway winter maintenance, vehicle maintenance and street cleaning, for a term of 8 years, with an option to extend for a further two periods of 8 years each by mutual consent for a maximum contract value of £432m over the maximum contract term of 24 years
- 1.2. To agree that better and more economic options for the provision of a Clinical Waste Service will be explored as a separate procurement
- 1.3. To agree that the procurement of new recycle off-take contracts for the Council's domestic recycling material will be explored through the South London Waste Partnership and that any proposed commissioning of such services will be subject to the Council's governance process.

- 1.4. To note the findings from the recent resident engagement survey and focus groups to help shape the design and specification of the new service.
- 1.5. To note that the final specification to be issued with the Invitation to Submit Final Tenders (following the discussions with bidders under the Competitive Dialogue process) will be subject to the approval of the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Lead Cabinet Member for Street and Environment
- 1.6. To note that a report will be presented to Cabinet in June 2024 highlighting the outcome of the proposed procurement along with recommendation of Preferred Bidder and their proposed fully costed solution. This will include details of the proposed governance arrangements to manage the contract supported by the resourcing levels for the monitoring of the services performance

8/23

A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Croydon Thornton Heath

The Executive Mayor considered the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Croydon Thornton Heath report and addressed that making Croydon a safer, cleaner and healthier place to live for all was a top priority as Executive Mayor and also for the residents.

Building on the successful role out of the Town Centre PSPO, the report had set out proposals to introduce another PSPO targeting antisocial behaviour in Thornton Heath to ensure residents and visitors felt safe and welcomed. As Thornton Heath was highlighted a priority area in the Safer Croydon Partnership's Community Safety Strategy, in conjunction with this proposal, the Partnership continued to work with the community to develop a safety plan for the area.

The Executive Mayor added that antisocial behaviour would not be tolerated in the borough, and introducing a PSPO in Thornton Heath would give the police more powers to tackle problem behaviours as they arise, and from positive results following the new town centre PSPO, these additional powers could make a major difference.

The report also outlined plans for a formal six-week consultation for residents to have their say on the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order in the area.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Kolade informed Cabinet that this was the second Public Space Protection Order following the Town Centre. Thornton Heath had a higher level of antisocial crime in the borough (6% overall). The council had removed street furniture to

deter street drinking and antisocial behaviour and had received positive feedback from residents. This was also strongly supported by the local police who had increased patrols in the area. Further, the service proposed in working with local residence to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime. Councillor Kolade thanked staff for the work they had achieved.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor King, addressed Cabinet highlighting they were in support for the Public Space Protection Order though was disappointed that no consultation had taken place with Ward Councillors prior to the development proposals. Councillor King acknowledged the exclusion for Thornton Heath Pond in the proposal, and proposed for an amendment in the recommendations to include Thornton Heath Pond which would have no impact on the timescale.

The Executive Mayor welcomed the consultation proposals from Councillor King and requested for a submission of his request and his points raised which would not delay the timescale.

In response to the report, the Shadow Cabinet for Community Safety, Councillor Mollyneaux raised a question on the proactive steps that would be taken during the initial period should the Public Space Protection Order go ahead to ensure avoidance of displacement. The Executive Mayor informed that the town centre report recognised the displacement around the boundaries, and the council ensured to monitor boundaries to review the displacement elsewhere.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

To authorise consultation with members of the public and partners on implementing a PSPO in the Thornton Heath and surrounding area

9/23

Household Support Fund April 2023 – March 2024 Allocation Proposal

The Executive Mayor considered the Household Support Fund April 2023 – March 2023 Allocation Proposal report.

The Executive Mayor informed that earlier this year Croydon secured an additional £6 million pounds from the Government through the extension of the Household Support Fund. This extension ensured that the Council could help thousands more vulnerable households to cope with increased cost of food and energy bills.

The report outlined the Council's proposals to distribute the Household Support Fund and so working closely with schools, health and wellbeing practitioners as well as voluntary and community sector organisations. Over the next 12 months the Council aimed to deliver targeted funding to

those most in need, ensuring it reached the maximum number of people possible.

The Executive Mayor added that using a targeted approach, the Council aimed to reach residents who may have missed out on other cost of living support and had not previously been helped through the Housing Support Fund. The scheme would be reviewed at the six month point to ensure the council continued to meet the needs of residents.

The Statutory Deputy Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Hale informed Cabinet that the service proposed to stagger the payments of the housing funds back to ensure sufficient funds were reserved for the colder months and the duration of the scheme.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Reshekaron queried on the cost of living challenges that many residents were facing and queried the approach the council would take if actual demands required for all funding used before the winter arrived.

in response, the Corporate Director of Housing, Susmita Sen informed that the budget had monitored its spending year on year, and the service had reviewed the areas that were underspent, areas on demand and on excessive demand, and this was repurposed with the authority delegated Section 151 officer if required. The service was conscious that the budget was still available during the winter months.

The Executive Mayor added that the voluntary and community sector often worked with the community that the council were unable to reach, and this was the first time the council was working through the process to deliver support with the voluntary sector.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1. To agree to accept the UK Government allocation of £6,027,379 Household Support Fund (HSF) extension for Croydon for the period 1 April 2023 – March 2024, and make the necessary budget provisions.
- 1.2. To consider and agree the proposed allocation and administration of the HSF as defined in the HSF Allocation Proposal (Appendix 1 to this report)
- 1.3. To note the requirement for and to delegate authority to Cllr Lynne Hale Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes and Jane West Corporate Director of Resources to sign off the delivery plan for submission to the DWP by 2 June 2023, and for Jane West Corporate Director of Resources and S.151 Officer to sign off the periodic Management Information (MI) reports for DWP thereafter.

- 1.4. To delegate authority to allow for the flexibility of repurposing funds to Jane West Corporate Director of Resources and S.151 Officer in consultation with DWP.
- 1.5. To agree the proposal for officers to update the Executive Mayor and Cllr Lynne Hale Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes on progress on the delivery of the fund in November 2023

10/23

Council Approach to Damp and Mould

The Executive Mayor considered the Council Approach to Damp and Mould report which detailed the Council's approach to manage damp and mould in council properties and the private rented sector in response to the directive from the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and the Regulator of Social Housing.

The Executive Mayor addressed on the commitment he made to invest in and improve standards in council homes and put residents at the heart of decisions about the housing service. He noted that improving the housing stock would take time to achieve.

Additionally, earlier this year the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities announced Awaab's Law, following the tragic death of two-year-old, Awaab Ishak. In response, new legislation required Social Landlords to fix damp and mould issues within a strict timescale. The report detailed the Council's wider approach to managing damp and mould in council properties and the private rented sector in line with Awaab's Law and provided detailed stock conditions.

The Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Hale informed Cabinet that the report provided an update for the council's progress in responding to the recent national directives regarding the management of damp and mould in the council homes and private sector. A damp and mould task force met weekly with other services for joint work, providing a proactive approach to ensure damp and mould appropriately and effectively reported as a serious risk to health and safety. There was also zero tolerance approach to resolve high levels of damp and mould in private sectors.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Reshekaron noted that the report was silent on the engagement with the residents and requested for more information on how the council tenants and representatives from housing association and private sector tenants and partners would be involved going forward.

In response, the Corporate Director for Housing, Susmita Sen, informed Cabinet that the housing association were landlords and were responsible for tackling damp and mould for their homes; additionally, the service was working closely with the private sector team. Council would refer tenants

to their landlord to assist on their issue and would only intervene through the environmental health team if action was not addressed by their landlord.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor King noted that the Secretary of State announced the plans to set timeframes for landlords to investigate necessary repairs which the suggested timeframe was fourteen days to commence work, and queried on what proportion of the work began within fourteen days of notice.

In response, the Damp and Mould Manager, Jolene Lorraine responded that the council aimed to attend all properties within six working days to carry out a mould wash and conduct a whole house inspection, before the remedial work.

The Executive Mayor thanked the team and staff for work they have carried out.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

To note the Council's approach to damp and mould in council homes and the private rented sector.

11/23

Annual Asset Disposal Plan 2023/24 and Lease Renewals and Rent Review Settlements for Various Commercial Properties

The Executive Mayor considered the Annual Asset Disposal Plan 2023/24 and Lease Renewals and Rent Review Settlements for Various Commercial Properties report which sought approval to delegate the authority to approve the terms for all lettings, leases and rent review settlements to the Corporate Director Resources and S151 Officer.

The Executive Mayor took the opportunity to thank the Head of Estates, Asset Management and Facilities, Stephen Wingrave, who was retiring from his service in Asset management after thirteen years. Stephen had managed his role with expertise and professionalism and had always been willing to support Members and colleagues across the Council and would surely be missed.

The Executive Mayor reminded Cabinet of the debt the council was in which accumulated to over £1.6 billion pounds, where large amounts were unbacked by assets, and led to £161 million pounds of additional Capitalisation required from Government, who had requested for Croydon to do all they could to reduce its debt by reducing the size of the asset base.

The report had additionally set out this financial year's proposed Annual Assets Disposal Plan, targeting income of at least £50 million pounds from asset sales.

The report further proposed streamlined governance arrangements which enabled the Council to act in a faster and more commercial manner, maximising returns and increasing pace.

Many of the assets were familiar as they had previously appeared on previous lists. Many of the proposed disposals listed in Appendix 1 were offered to market with existing leases which would protect current tenants. The council was also consulting with the NHS as the preferred partner for specific sites in Coulsdon and New Addington which would result in new health facilities for the community.

The Executive Mayor acknowledged that whilst asset disposals were often challenging, this was an important element of work to reduce the current debt and reduce the size of the council's estate to make it more cost-efficient for taxpayers.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Cummings reinforced that that disposal value was a minimal of £50 million pounds and it was the expectation and target to overachieve against that figure. The more the council could bring in terms of assets receipt would better the model.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Young welcomed the asset disposal 2023/24 plan and its target set.

The Executive Mayor highlighted that balancing books and reducing the council debt was a priority and demonstrated to the Government that the council were fixing its finances.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To approve the Annual Assets Disposal Plan (AADP) for the financial year 2023/24, which includes lettings and re-lettings, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report together with indicative values in Appendix 2 (exempt appendix).
- 1.2. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and s151 Officer to agree the terms and final price for each disposal included within the AADP.
- 1.3. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Executive Mayor, to agree any variance to the list of proposed disposals.
- 1.4. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and s151 Officer to agree terms for all lettings, leases and rent review settlements for all Council assets.
- 1.5. The delegations in this report shall only be exercised following:

- i. sign off of a business case by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) including full financial assessment;
 - ii. formal Red Book valuation, if required on a property to be sold; and
 - iii. formal marketing unless there is a clear special purchaser or offer made considerably in excess of the market value.
- 1.6. To note that the target value for disposals for 2023 /2024 is a minimum of £50m.
- 1.7. To note that progress against the AADP and any variations, shall be reported to Cabinet annually.
- 1.8. To approve a re-drafting of the Financial Regulations to reflect the proposed decision-making changes relating to Assets, set out in this report (and any clarifications thereto), to be reported to the Constitution Working Group with a view to seeking recommendations from the General Purposes Committee and/ or the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Executive Mayor in Cabinet for onward recommendations to Full Council.

12/23

Croydon Council Companies (excluding Brick by Brick Croydon Ltd) Update Report

The Executive Mayor considered the Croydon Council Companies (excluding Brick by Brick Croydon Ltd) Update report, which provided an update from the Croydon Companies Supervision and Monitoring Panel established as a response to the Report in the Public Interest 2020. Additionally, the report provided an update on the status of Council companies that existed and made a recommendation to dissolve companies that were no longer required.

The Cabinet Member of Finance, Councillor Cummings informed Cabinet that Croydon had a significant number of companies that was operating, though the service were reducing the number of companies involved. The Head of Finance, Allister Bannin, referred Cabinet to the appendix which highlighted the property management companies and noted that Croydon owned some residences as a leaseholder. A representative for Croydon would attend annual meetings in relation to those properties to discuss freeholders doing improvements of repairs to roof, external walls, and windows of the whole block.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Young welcomed the report and queried on the benefits of the relationship between the council and freeholders.

In response, the Corporate Director for Resources (Section 151), Jane West, addressed that this information would be explained within the next updated report.

The Executive Mayor thanked officers for their work.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To approve the expansion of the Croydon Companies Supervision and Monitoring Panel (CCSMP) Terms of Reference to include oversight of charities.
- 1.2. To approve that the Interim Director of Commercial Investment & Capital may seek the dissolution of Croydon Affordable Dwellings LLP and Croydon Affordable Homes (Taberner House) LLP (subject to formal decision making of the LLPs) and delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer to take any steps to finalise and sign any relevant documents to give effect to a dissolution (if approved).
- 1.3. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer to review, and remove where appropriate, Council Officers from being Directors of companies and charities in those cases whereby the companies/charities are not controlled by the Council.
- 1.4. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer to approve indemnities for Directors, following the protocol for outside bodies and in consultation with CCSMP.
- 1.5. To note the update on the current position of Croydon Affordable Homes and Croydon Affordable Tenures.
- 1.6. To note the status of companies that the Council has an ownership interest or other interest in, included in the Company companies' matrix in Appendix 1.

13/23

Adult Social Care & Health Market Position Statement

The Executive Mayor considered the Adult Social Care and Health Market Position Statement report.

The Executive Mayor highlighted that the Market Position Statement was intended to be used by providers to plan for the future and to inform business choices such as future investment.

The report reflected on the current picture of demand for care and support alongside the design, supply and utilisation of provision across the market. This ensured the changing needs from the local people were met,

despite the challenging financial context for both Croydon and across health and social care.

The Market Position Statement was considered to be best practice and would support the council to work with providers to deliver services more efficiently to get the best outcomes for the people of Croydon.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Hopley added that the up to date Market Position Statement outlined the carers support needs and provided innovative ideas; this further formed a solid base for commissioning's and future development in the Adults Social Care and health practitioners.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Campbell thanked officers for the informative report, and raised a question on the plans to increase the older population and dementia care whilst promoting early intervention, equity of access and the retention of resilience for social care workforce in the midst of the budget cuts.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Hopley informed that the service was managing demand, particularly on the deliverance in working with sectors through innovative ways to help shape the pathway for people and changing the way services were delivered to the people who were in most need. The Corporate Director for Adults Social Care, Annette McPartland added that evidence base practice would be managed through data to ensure all needs on demand were met.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**: To

- 1.1. Support the content of the ASCH Market Position Statement (Appendix 1) to ensure ASCH can signal clear intentions and opportunities to the market;
- 1.2. Note the feedback from residents and local providers following consultation on the contents of the Market Position Statement at our Resident Voice Group and Provider Forums as outlined in section 4.4;
- 1.3. Note the publication of the ASCH Market Position Statement on the London Borough of Croydon website.

14/23

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Report Finding of Fault causing Injustice and Report by the Monitoring Officer under section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

The Executive Mayor considered the Local Government and social Care Ombudsman Report Finding of Fault causing Injustice and Report by the

monitoring Officer under section 5A of the Local Government and housing Act 1989 report which outlined recommendations made by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman following findings that the Council was at significant fault for events that took place between 2016 – 2019. The report related to a young person leaving foster care and the Council's failure to provide the support required as a young, single parent. It was also found that the Council failed to safeguard Miss Y and her young child from the risk of gang-related violence when her brother moved into her property in late 2018.

The Executive Mayor informed that the Council has since accepted all recommendations and ensured that all staff in the care leavers service were clear on their duty to ensure that care experienced young people were supported to find suitable and affordable accommodation.

It was further outlined in the report that a comprehensive review of the Council's response and provision for care experienced young people had undertaken and continued through a programme of transformation to deliver a 'Whole Council' approach to corporate parenting.

The Executive Mayor concluded that the council must accept the findings and agree the recommendations set out in the public interest report included in Appendix A and endorsed the actions taken by the Council to date to implement the recommendations set out in section 7 of the report.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Gatland addressed Cabinet with an apology to the former care experienced young person who did not receive the care she was entitled to at the time. The accommodation issue would be addressed through a revised protocol for care experienced adults accessing housing which would be heard at the June Cabinet meeting. Councillor Gatland further informed that it was the responsibility of all key agencies including the council to ensure adequate care to care experienced young people; there was better improvements in responding to complaints relating to children's services; and the Corporate Parenting Strategy was in development and would be heard at Cabinet in the later future.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Foster shared an apology to the former care experienced young person and queried on the details of work around better listening and more understanding in safeguarding care experienced young people.

In response, the Corporate Director for Children also shared an apology to the former care experienced young person and highlighted that Children's Services was rated inadequate by Ofsted at the time of the reported incident and the risks of placement had not been adequately assessed, though the difference now was considerable and the lessons learned had shown that a huge amount of work would be done to assess risks for care experience young person and their relatives that remained in the property.

The Executive Mayor extended his apologies on behalf of the council to the former care experienced young person for what she and her family had experienced.

The Executive Mayor **RESOLVED**: To

- 1.1. Consider the public interest report dated 29 November 2022 regarding the events from 2016 – 19, and the recommendations made by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in relation to Croydon Council set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. Accept the findings and agree the recommendations set out in the public interest report.
- 1.3. Endorse the actions taken by the Council and note the steps, progress, and timeline to implement the recommendations set out in section 7 of this report.
- 1.4. Adopt the report as the Council's formal response under section 31 of the Local Government Act 1974 to be communicated to the Ombudsman.
- 1.5. Adopt the report as the Executive's formal response as required by section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for distribution to all members and the Monitoring Officer

15/23

Heating Services Procurement - Revised Award Report

The Executive Mayor considered the urgent report and shared that the new Housing Repairs contract was to improve the way the social housing stock was maintained. It was agreed that a separate heating services contract was awarded to British Gas Social Housing Ltd trading as PH Jones, though the company had since withdrawn their tender for this contract following internal business decisions unrelated to Croydon.

Cabinet heard that the new housing repairs contracts were due to mobilise in the coming months, and this report had set out urgent recommendations to appoint an alternative bidder.

The Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Hale added that it was important to have a good quality to long term best value heating services to residents and for contract to be awarded to bidder I.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To agree the award of a contract to deliver Heating Services to Bidder K & T Heating Services Ltd for a period with an initial

contract term of 6 years and 8 months with a break option at that point and a total maximum contract duration of 10 years and 8 months (plus a 1year defects liability period) for the maximum contract value of £40.9m.

- 1.2. To note, the break options referred to in recommendation 1.1 above shall follow the same governance process as a permitted extension under the Tenders and Contracts Regulations (as amended).

16/23

Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Cabinet	
DATE OF DECISION	28th June 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Croydon SEND Local Area and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023 - 2026	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones, Interim Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies, Director of Education	
LEAD OFFICERS:	Kathy Roberts, Head of SEND Delivery and Transformation Kathy.roberts@croydon.gov.uk Telephone: 07845 499572 Monique Morgan, SEND Strategy and Transformation Manager Email: Monique.morgan@croydon.gov.uk Telephone: 07536 101 410	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	3023EM Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All – Local Area Approach	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

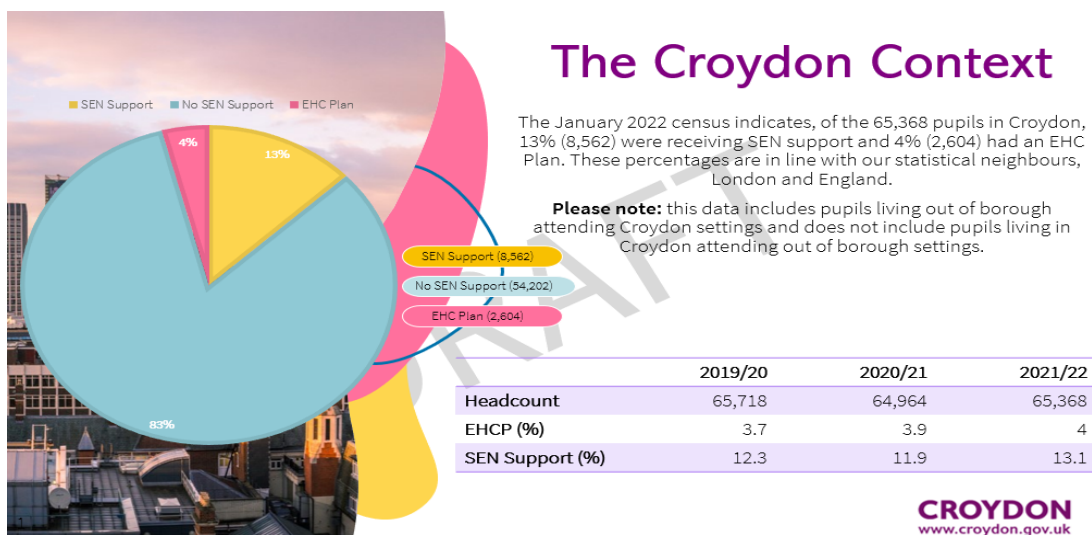
- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the updated Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy 2023-2026. It sets out the aims, principles, and priorities for the next 3 years (2023-2026), with the aim to improve outcomes for children, young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families and the whole system approach to achieve the improvements needed.

- 1.2 The updated strategy for Croydon Council has been developed collaboratively by Local Area partners and approved by the SEND Forum and SEND Strategic Board, as well as reference to required legislative frameworks, other related local authority strategies and recommendations.
- 1.3 This strategy is supported by Croydon Council, the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), Croydon's Voluntary Sector, Croydon's Alternative provisions, Children, Young People (CYP) and Families, Croydon Active Voices, and Croydon SENDIASS. Croydon Active Voices have supported the Croydon Local Area to hear the perspectives of Croydon parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.
- 1.4 It is vital that the strategy is currently adopted at a rapid pace, since the demand for Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) has expanded considerably, influencing the timeliness of the delivery of new plans. This has also resulted in increased demand for special school placements and a high number of out-of-area placements, all of which have a considerable impact on Dedicated School Grant (DSG) High Needs funds.
- 1.5 Croydon is in receipt of an allocation of £11.68m of High Needs Capital Grant which will support this strategy.
- 1.6 The current SEND Code of Practice guides SEND practice and is supported by law in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Children and Families Act 2014 defines Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in the following way:
- **Special Educational Needs:** A child or young person has special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty or a disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
 - **Learning Difficulty:** A child or a young person of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they:
 - Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or
 - Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions or in employment without support.

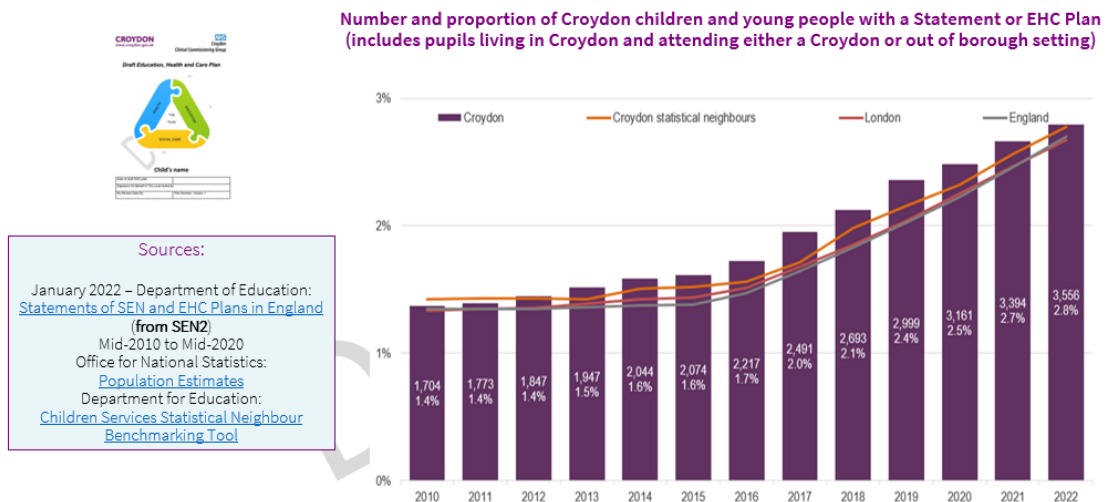
SEND needs can be met in a number of ways including:

- a) Support from a setting, school, or college’s own resources.
- b) Support from other agencies.
- c) Additional top up funding.
- d) And, for a number of children and young people, through an Education, Health and Care Plan

Local Context



National Context

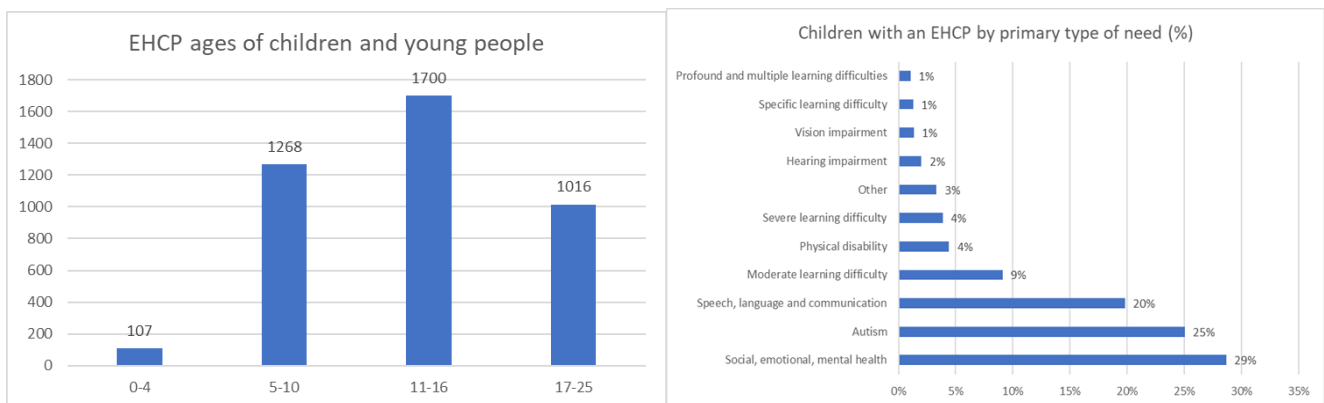


1.7 Croydon Context

In January 2023, there are just under 57,000 pupils in state-funded nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools, and pupil referral units. 13.6% of pupils were receiving SEN support and 4.4% had an EHCP in Croydon.

In line with national trends, the increasing growth of the population with an EHC Plan has been most pronounced since 2015, coinciding with the SEND reforms of 2014 when EHC Plans were introduced. EHC Plans have a lower threshold than the previous Statement of SEN and an extended age range up to the age of 25.

Latest data shows the number of EHCPs continue to increase. In January 2023, a total of 4091 children and young people living in Croydon had an EHCP, of which 73% are boys and 42% are aged between 11-16. The most common primary type of need is social, emotional and mental health (29%), followed by autistic spectrum disorder (25%) and speech, language and communication needs (20%).



1.8 The SEND strategy reflects Croydon and the Executive Mayor's vision to be "a place where children and young people thrive." The SEND strategy's aim is: "We want all of our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to have access to excellent support and services so that we can provide timely, high-quality integrated services that allow children and young people to thrive in their own communities and celebrate their accomplishments."

We think that all children and young people should:

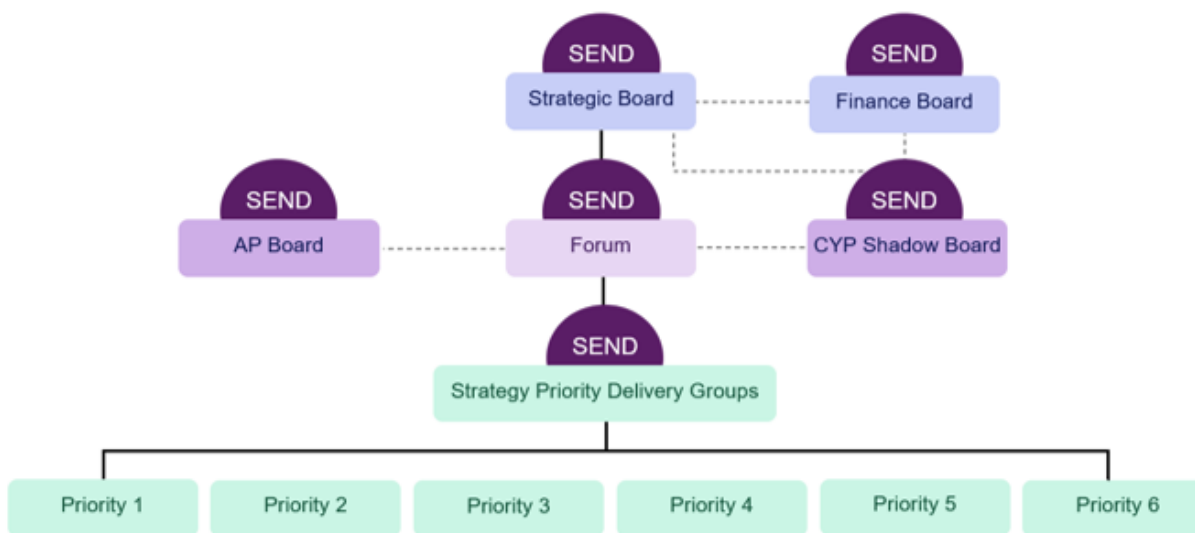
- Access accurate, easy to read information in a timely manner.
- Build trusting relationships with those who work with them.
- Feel confident and empowered to share their views, wishes and aspirations.
- Enjoy being with people that make them feel happy, safe, secure, and understood.
- Feel supported to reach their goals.
- Know that their health and wellbeing will be a priority to all who work with them.

The 6 Key priorities identified are:

- **Priority 1:** Early identification and support.
- **Priority 2:** Providing the support needed by children and young people with SEND during key life transitions.

- **Priority 3:** Children, young people and families, co-production, and collaboration.
- **Priority 4:** Partnership delivery of transparent robust and co-produced processes to deliver quality SEN Support and EHC plans.
- **Priority 5:** Integrated commissioning and data forecasting across all phases.
- **Priority 6:** Workforce development, support, and wellbeing.

1.9 A refreshed membership of the SEND Strategic Board, Forum and priority work streams will be introduced to oversee the delivery and governance of the strategy. The SEND Strategic Board is chaired by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, and the Forum by the Director of Education. The Local Area including Children’s Social Care (CSC), Health, Children, Young People (CYP) and their Families and School Leaders are represented at all levels of the governance structure. SEND and Inclusion is also a feature within the School Improvement Governance.



1.10 The final version of both the SEND Strategy and development plan are appended to this report for Cabinet consideration and approval.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

2.1 To approve the Croydon, SEND Local Area Strategy 2023-26 for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those accessing alternative provisions (AP) and to agree to receive an annual update report on progress against the strategy.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The recommended option is to fully implement the SEND Strategy as soon as possible to meet our statutory obligations as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2014, and to implement the recommendations from the SEND Green Paper (2022) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan, in order to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and avoid further overspending on the high needs budget in accordance with the medium-term financial plan.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

National Context

- 4.1** Councils faced a High Needs funding deficit of about £500 million in 2018/19, £806 million in 2019/20, and £1.2 billion in 2020/21, with an estimate of £3 billion by the end of 2022/23 (Local Government Association). In Croydon we are anticipating a cumulative overspend position of £11.68m in 2023-24.
- 4.2** The Government SEND Review, which was launched in 2019, concluded in March 2022, with the publication of the SEND 'Green Paper'. This paper acknowledged the current pressures around SEND nationally. The paper concluded that:
- Outcomes for children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision are poor.
 - Navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children, young people and their families.
 - The system is not delivering value for money for children, young people, and families.

The paper then sets out a programme of measures, which will create a new SEND system. In summary, this includes:

- Establish a national SEND and Alternative Provision system setting nationally consistent standards for every stage of a child's journey across education, health, and care.
- Establish new local SEND partnerships, bringing together education, health, and care partners with local government.
- Invest an additional £1bn in 2022-23 alone for children and young people with complex needs as part of a £7 billion increase in the total investment in schools' budgets by 2024-25, compared to 2021-22.
- Improve mainstream provision, building on the ambitious Schools White Paper, through teacher training and a 'what works' evidence programme.
- Set out a clear timeline that, by 2030, all children will benefit from being taught in a family of schools, with their school, including special and alternative provision, in a strong multi-academy trust (MAT), or with plans to join or form one.

- Deliver clarity in roles and responsibilities with every partner having a clear role to play and being equipped with the levers to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Introduce a standardised and digitised Education Health and Care Plan process and template to minimise bureaucracy and deliver consistency.
- Introduce a national framework of banding and price tariffs for funding, matched to levels of need and types of provision set out in the national standards.
- Establish a new National SEND Delivery Board to bring together relevant government departments with national delivery partners including parents, carers and representatives of local government, education, health and care to hold partners to account for the timely implementation of proposals.

4.3 In July 2021, the Department for Education (DFE) published a set of documents around their 'High Needs Safety Valve' project. Local Authorities with the greatest deficits in their high needs funding took part in a project to reduce deficits and build sustainable local systems. They set out 2 goals of a sustainable system:

- Appropriately managing demand for Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), including assessment processes that are fit for purpose.
- Use of appropriate and cost-effective provision. This includes ensuring mainstream schools are equipped and encouraged to meet needs where possible, whilst maintaining high standards for all pupils.

4.4 In March 2023, the Government published the SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan which sets out how we will work alongside children, young people and their families, and those who work across every part of the SEND and alternative provision system, to deliver improvements for every child and young person with SEND and in alternative provision, which outlines the following recommendations:

- A national system underpinned by National Standards.
- Successful transitions and preparation for adulthood.
- A skilled workforce and excellent leadership.
- Strengthened accountabilities and clear routes of redress.
- A financially sustainable system delivering improved outcomes.

4.5 Croydon's SEND Improvement Journey

Since the changes in the 2014 Education Act the spend in our in-year High Needs Budget has increased and as a result we have seen a continual rise in our cumulative deficit.

There has been an extensive focus within the Education Department alongside colleagues in CSC and Health on ensuring that we are delivering a value for money service across all areas whilst maintaining a good level of support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The coproduction of the 0-25 SEND strategy 2019-22 was one of the first areas of focus on our improvement journey, with five priority areas identified. All key partners including

young people were part of the consultation and development of the agreed priorities. The strategy was approved by Cabinet and young people joined the meeting to share their views about the priority areas.

To ensure delivery of the strategy we tightened our governance processes and oversight of SEND, establishing the SEND Delivery Groups, Forum and Strategic Board. All aspects of our governance structure include local area representation and leadership oversight.

As part of our improvement journey, we have developed a much more rigorous data process and we now have a comprehensive data dashboard which includes data across the local area. This enables us to focus on and identify priority areas and ensure robust actions are taken.

Our 2019-22 strategy was very much focused on educating children and young people with SEND within the borough, ensuring that they have the best provision to meet their needs without the need for extensive travel and time away from their community. We have done this through an increase of PAN at our special schools, opening a new special school and post 19 provision and developing Locality SEND support model for mainstream schools so that more children with SEND needs remain in mainstream where appropriate to support with meeting their needs.

To make it easier for multi-agency partners (including parents) to communicate information about individual children, the Council has invested in a digital case management system.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 In July 2022, we worked with our special schools and post 19 provision council members to help us understand how we have supported them so far and what can we do to support them further.
- 5.2 In addition to our visits, we worked closely with our Croydon schools, parents/carers and professionals working with children and young people with SEND to identify what has gone well throughout 2019 -2022 and what aspect of our SEND practices need to be improved.
- 5.3 We worked collaboratively with members of our SEND Governance to gather feedback on what our SEND Local Area priorities should be moving forward.
- 5.4 We launched a SEND Local Area Survey which went live to the residents of Croydon on 8th July in 2022 and ended 31st October 2022 to gather feedback on what priorities are important to the SEND community.
- 5.5 We organised a series of SEND Consultation Roadshows across Croydon community that took place in January and February 2023, where we reviewed the suggested priorities for 2023-2026.

- 5.6 We arranged 5 SEND Partnership Working Groups sessions, where we worked closely with our local area partners to co-produce Croydon's Draft SEND Local Area Strategy 2023-26.
- 5.7 Finally, we reviewed final recommendations with members of Croydon's SEND forum and Health Management Board with a final sign off from members of Croydon's SEND Board.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The SEND Local Area Strategy makes a significant contribution to the Council's priorities set in the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026. Croydon will support children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, to have a chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.

Mayor's Business Plan priorities related to the SEND Local Area Strategy are as follows:

- Enable more pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to attend and thrive in Croydon schools.
- Develop an effective Education Partnership with schools.
- Work with schools to improve support for vulnerable pupils and to continue to reduce exclusion.
- Explore with young people, the VCFS, providers and businesses how we can improve access to youth services in Croydon.
- Work with all education providers to improve attendance, inclusion and standards for all, so that more of our children and young people can fulfil their potential.
- Celebrate the talents of our young people by supporting initiatives such as 'Croydon has talent'.
- Work with partners to provide mentors for young people in care or excluded from school.
- Transform and redesign services such as early help and family hubs so families can access the right support in the right place at the right time, reducing the need for statutory support and intervention.
- Implement a programme of continuous improvement to sustain the quality of services relating to children, young people and education.
- Implement inspection recommendations and benchmark services, bringing spending on social care for children down to the average for similar London councils by 2023/24.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.1 Whilst acknowledging the financial position of the Council in respect of the General Fund, the approval of the recommendations in this strategic paper has no direct bearing on the council General Fund budget. The overall strategy incorporates the High Needs Deficit Recovery plan which is expected to yield significant savings and

extinguish the overall £27m High Needs deficit within the next few years as shown in table 1 below.

7.1.2 All the High Needs budget shown in table 1 below will be paid to the schools. It is a ring-fenced Dedicated School Grant used for the purposes of providing education to pupils with Special Education Needs in the London borough of Croydon in accordance with The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations and DfE guidance.

Table 1 – DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT – HIGH NEEDS BUDGET

	Forecast Year	3 Years - Medium Term Financial Strategy		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Budget Available	£82,293	£89,704	£92,396	£91,771
Expenditure Budget	£84,106	£90,429	£92,965	£91,658
Effect of decision from report overspend -Savings (-)	£1,813	£724	£569	-£113
Estimated cumulative High Needs Deficit at of Year (£24,502m is post Safety Valve position at end of 2021/22)	£26,315	£15,355	£7,812	£113
Deficit Amount to be Funded by DfE Safety Valve Team. Future years payment and amount is subject to conditions of the grant. Estimated figures used in 2023/24 and 2024/25*	-£10,960	-£8,268*	-£8,268*	0
Forecast Cumulative High Needs Deficit after payment from DfE	£15,355	£7,812	£113	£0

7.1.3 The Education Capital Programme with an annual budget of approximately £11.68m for 2023/24 to 2025/26 is also linked to the overall strategy hence a good strategic fit. All funded from Various government grants (School condition Allocation, Special Provision and Basic Needs funding).

7.1.4 Approved by Charles Quaye – Head of Finance (Education) on behalf of the Director of Finance on 05/05/2023

7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area. Under s.14 of the Education Act 1996, a local authority shall secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in their area. In meeting this duty, a local authority must do so with a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice.

7.2.2 The Children and Families Act 2014 made significant changes to the way that educational provision was assessed and provided for to children and young people with SEND. Section 27 of the Act requires a local authority to keep under review its

educational, training and social care provision for children and young people who have SEND and to consider the extent to which the provision is sufficient to meet need. In exercising its functions, a local authority must consult prescribed persons, including children and young people with SEND and parents. The 2014 Act is accompanied by statutory guidance for organisations to follow through (The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).)

7.2.3 S149 of the Equality Act 2010 with respect to the Public Sector Equality Duty, details the requirement when taking decisions to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups and eliminate unlawful discrimination. It is necessary the impact on those groups is analysed as part of this strategy and its development.

7.2.4 Comments approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.

7.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard 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.

7.3.2 Across the country, children and young people with SEND face inequalities in access and outcomes. This strategy outlines our local strategy for addressing these gaps and ensuring that they have access to high-quality educational provision and outcomes. Each of the priorities strives to address disparities faced by children, young people, and families. The basic work of expanding and upskilling mainstream provision will strengthen the values of inclusiveness and providing nurturing environments for everybody, regardless of their requirements.

7.3.3 An EQIA was carried out which identified a positive impact for age, disabled children and young people, between each sex and race. Further work is required to collate data across the range of characteristics including religion, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

7.3.4 Comments approved by Denise McCausland Equalities Programme Manager
22/05/23.

7.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.4.1** There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report for Council employees. However, workforce is a key aspect of the Croydon SEND Local Area Strategy, which may have HR implications for both the Council and our partners. Where this is the case, the relevant policies and procedures will be observed, and HR advice must be sought at an early stage.
- 7.4.2** Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR for Children, Young People and Education on behalf of the Director of Human Resources

7.5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.5.1** The National Health Service (NHS) and Integrated Care Board (ICB) recognise the growing need and national shortage of therapists for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in order to ensure they receive appropriate provision. Croydon is working hard to reduce waiting times for individuals affected by introducing a six-month contract that will provide Speech & Language Therapists to deliver specific interventions as a short-term solution. Our longer-term plans are for Croydon to re-commission our current therapies contract to ensure that we are providing quality statutory services and by prioritising the implementation of the new Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) clinical pathway for Croydon. This is designed to effectively reduce the waiting times for formal ASD assessment and enable early access to support services for our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities from 0 to 25.
- 7.5.2** Croydon Locality SEND Support (CLSS) was established in September 2020 as a pilot project to ensure that Croydon mainstream schools had access to early identification and intervention for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This was done to address the growing need for additional support within mainstream settings. The original pilot phase was a success, and the method of operation was extended to all Croydon Borough's mainstream schools. Croydon Locality SEND Support is now an embedded approach supporting children and young people with SEN at the earliest opportunity.

In the formal "Safety Valve" agreement signed by Croydon Council and the Department for Education, CLSS is now a vital component of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) management plan. Full implementation of CLSS is critical to maintaining compliance with the agreement's terms.

8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix A - Croydon SEND Local Area Strategy 2023-26 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Alternative Provision (AP).

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- A. OFSTED Local Area SEND Inspection Recommendations December 21
- B. New OFSTED Local Area Inspection Framework
- C. SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper March 22
- D. SENDPA Improvement Plan 2023
- E. Safety Valve (SV)
- F. Partnership Early Years Strategy
- G. A national Framework to deliver improved outcomes in all- age autism assessment pathways
- H. Developing and sustaining an effective local SEND system
- I. Autism Strategy

10. URGENCY

N/A

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Croydon SEND Local Area Strategy 2023-2026

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
(SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP)**

Version 7 – 15th June 2023





Croydon SEND Local Area Board

Right Support, Right Place, Right Time

We, the SEND Local Area Board, are committed to supporting and delivering a quality and effective SEND system based upon feedback from our SEND Community, children and young people and families and SEND Partners; our robust data that provides intelligence and information; our learning as we worked together to deliver our first SEND Strategy 2019-2022 and our rigorous SEND governance framework.

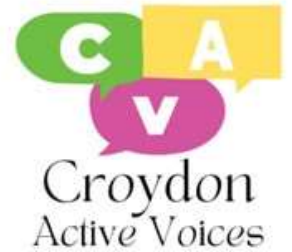
The SEND Local Area Strategy 2023 -2026 will turn our collective ambitions to improve service delivery and outcomes for all children and young people with SEND or in alternative provision in Croydon into measurable reality that makes a lasting difference in their outcomes.

Introduction

This strategy outlines the main priorities for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in Croydon from 2023 to 2026. The strategy is based on the voices of children, young people and their families and it emphasises co-production through collaboration.

The priorities were developed collaboratively by Local Area partners and approved by the SEND Forum and SEND Strategic Board. This strategy is supported by Croydon Council, the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), Croydon's Voluntary Sector, Croydon Alternative provisions, Croydon Active Voices and Croydon SENDIASS. Croydon Active Voices have supported the Croydon Local Area to hear the perspectives of Croydon parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.

This strategy has been informed by a range of activities with children, young people, parent/carers and professionals working across the Local Area to gather input on the services and their experiences. The themes that underpin this strategy have been co-produced and we will continue to collaborate across a wide range of work streams and priority areas to assess, plan, implement and review all key deliverables set out in this strategy.



CROYDON
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Aims



Croydon aspires to provide excellent support and services tailored to the needs of all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) 0-25 at the earliest opportunity.



We will co-produce and provide accessible and evidence-based interventions to embed inclusivity, equity and promote participation in all areas of life.



We will accomplish this by providing timely, high-quality integrated services that enable children and young people to thrive in their own communities and celebrate their accomplishments.



We will continue to develop high quality local provisions to build upon our excellent Local Offer.



Principles

Integrate early identification and inclusive practices to promote better outcomes across all ages

By providing:

- Early responsiveness and intervention where required.
- High quality teaching (strengthening the assess, plan, do, review practices across all educational settings).
- An integrated approach across the whole process.
- Flexible educational environments that support inclusive practices.

Be transparent, honest and accountable

By providing:

- Open lines of communication that allow for productive collaboration between all partners.
- A strong communication strategy.
- A technology-based portal that will facilitate partnership working.

Promote multi-agency collaboration to take full advantage of all resources available

We will achieve this by:

- Reflecting and improving key elements of effectively working together.
- Positive relationships between professionals, children and young people and families based on trust, transparency and shared responsibility.
- A space where professionals can share information/resources and work collaboratively towards effective and proportionate decision-making.
- Reassurance that the safety and wellbeing of individuals and families remains central to everything we do.

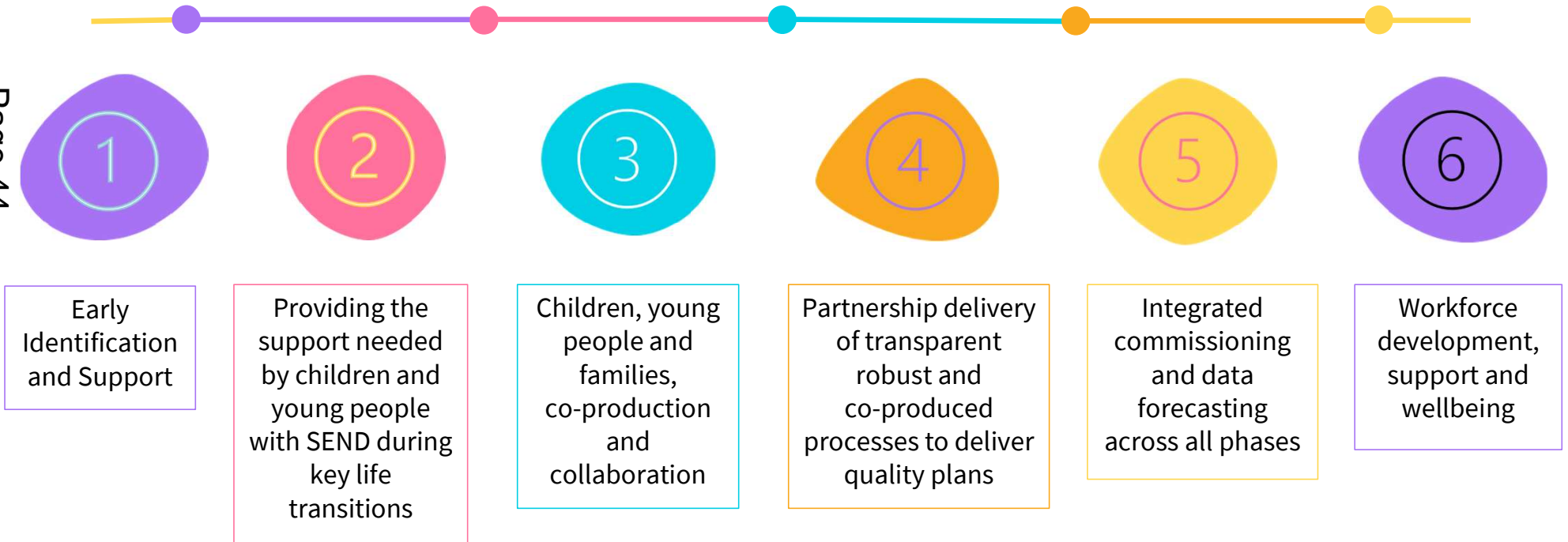


Listen to and learn from our community

We will enhance our services and practices by:

- Active listening.
- Being responsive and doing what matters.
- Incorporating 'experts by experience' into service and policy development.

Croydon's SEND Priorities 2023-26





What are the SEND priorities for Croydon residents for 2023-26?

- Early support for children under 2 in nursery provision.
- Increased children and young people's provision.
- More emphasis on the children and young people views (not labelling them and discharging them completely).
- SEND activities and events outside of working hours.
- The process for applying for support should be straightforward, clear and not onerous.
- There needs to be a strategy to assist children and young people and parents with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), upskilling staff to have a robust understanding of ADHD.
- Regular emotional support to provide techniques to handle emotions and to improve academic success.
- Therapies for post 16 and Dyslexia support for all ages.
- More transition practitioners to support children and young people with SEND.

Priority 1: Early identification and support

Early identification of SEND is crucial to support the needs of our Croydon students. We aim to achieve effective and sustainable interventions, accurate assessments and access to local early support.

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Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
1. Improve the quality of information and advice, referral pathways and access to Croydon Local Offer and SEND Inclusion.	Children and young people’s needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way.	Children and young people can access additional support if required through a fair and consistent process where children, young people families and professionals work together to put in place the right value-for-money support to meet their needs.
2. Build awareness of the Early Year stages of development and support.		Reduction in Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) and settings more confident in meeting needs.
3. Work as a partnership including the voluntary and faith sectors to create Croydon’s Family Hubs approach for all families and children from 0 to 18 and up to 25 years with SEND in Croydon, ensuring that families who need support most can access support in a place/way that suits them best.		More families able to access groups. Peer on peer support and more children with SEND accessing universal services/activities.
4. Provide an equitable service across all early years settings including school-based provision and childminders.		Fully embed the graduated response. Reduce in funding and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCPs). More children to access mainstream nursery provision.
5. Implementation of the new Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) clinical pathway for Croydon designed to effectively reduce waiting times for formal ASD assessment and early access to support services.		New ASD Pathway mobilised and more ASD assessments taking place in the borough.

Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
6. Increase access to Mentoring programmes for children and young people who have adverse childhood experiences and mental ill health.	Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way.	Reduced waiting time from initial assessments to start therapeutic intervention where clinically indicated.
7. Reduce the risk of education, health and wellbeing inequalities developing in the early years and beyond.		Young people are enabled to successfully reintegrate to mainstream school, with a greater understanding of SEND needs and personalised support plan.
8. Increase early access to Educational Psychologist universal services.		
9. Publish the pathway for children and young people who access sensory support services.		
10. Build awareness of support available for children and young people with Down syndrome.		
11. Build awareness on elective home education.		Local Authority will have oversight into the health care needs of all children and young people across Croydon on elective home education.
12. Update the Local Offer website and Croydon Council website.	Children and young people and their families will access impartial information, advice and support that enable them to make informed choices about their future.	Increased accessibility and site traffic.
13. Identify a pathway to gather support and advice on Welfare and Benefits across all ages up to 25		Established pathway, published and shared widely.

Priority 2: Providing the support needed by children and young people with SEND during key life transitions

All children and young people with SEND and their families need to have a positive experience of going through key transitions in their lives. We want children and young people with SEND to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to have choice and control at every stage and the support required to succeed.

Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
1. Map planned and not planned transitional points from 0 to age 25, or earlier if appropriate, including managed move, hospital discharged, Looked After Children and Youth Offending Service.	Children and young people are well prepared for the next steps and achieve strong outcomes.	Improved long term planning for children and young people transitioning between phases, including preparation for adulthood.
2. Improve Preparation for adulthood for young people from 14+ across education, health and social care.		
3. Access quality integrated health care to address mental and physical health, particularly when transferring to the next stage of their lives.		
4. Empower educational settings to support early decision making with regards to identifying children and young people preferred pathway and ensuring transition points are of good quality and meet statutory requirements.		There is an agreed and widely understood procedure to ensure young people are supported at key transition points.
5. Publish information on SEND local offer and have clear pathways for children moving into Croydon.		Children and young people will have their healthcare needs met irrespective of where they are educated. Children and young people will have access to equitable support and services.
6. Increase access to supported internships and employment opportunities.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased number of children and young people in education, employment, and training (EET). 2. Established Post 16 pathways such as employment opportunities and other related training courses in Croydon, ensuring inclusivity.

Priority 3: Children, young people and families, co-production and collaboration

Develop an effective pathway to embed co-production into service development to ease communication for children, young people , their families and professionals.

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Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
1. Develop a Communication Strategy for Croydon's SEND Local Area.	Children and young people with SEND are valued, visible and included in their communities.	Increased levels of satisfaction with the SEND team's communication will be reported by parents, carers, and educational settings.
2. Create and support Croydon SEND Youth Voice Forum, with key responsibilities within our SEND governance and service development.		Parent/carers will report their level of influence around strategic development.
3. Strengthen relationships with SEND Community by arranging regular participation sessions.		1. Provision and services for children and young people with SEND are available when and where they are needed.
4. Embed Co-production meetings following the needs assessment process as business as usual, ensuring that Health and social care professionals are involved.		2. Children, young people, and their families play an important role in the strategic planning and development of services throughout the Croydon SEND Local Area.
5. Improve equality by monitoring support of children and young people with SEND from ethnic minority backgrounds and LGBTQ+ communities.		

Priority 4: Partnership delivery of transparent robust and co-produced processes to deliver quality plans

To utilise skills and resources in the most effective way. Communication and collaboration to ensure the provision agreed upon meets the outcome and has a positive impact on the child or young person and their family's life.

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Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
1. Implement a locality-based model to promote and encourage relationships with educational settings and Local Area professionals.	Children and young people and their families will participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support.	Statutory compliance is effective, ensuring that deadlines are met, and quality assessments are undertaken. Processes are child-centred and compliant with legal requirements. Parents who have a thorough awareness of the process and the criteria that underpin decisions report feeling more satisfied and confident. Good quality advice will inform EHC Plans, allowing for the development of robust outcomes that accurately identify needs.
2. Publish an annual schedule of quarterly deep dive audits to ensure that the SEND operations/ EHC Plan process are operating effectively in relation to compliance, quality and experience of the children and young people, their families and partners.		
3. Implement a multi-agency approach to co-production meetings and annual reviews.		
4. Update Croydon's SEND decision making processes and implement any changes required, as well as ensuring that children and young people and their families have a clear understanding on how decision are made across the Local Area.		
5. Build awareness and understanding of a Personal Budget and financial assessments, including education, health and social care for students with an EHC Plan.		
6. Streamline the redress process to make it easier to resolve disputes earlier.		Manage to resolve issues without the need to go to tribunal

Priority 5: Integrated commissioning and data forecasting across all phases

To understand the various needs of SEND populations so that we can predict and allocate resources required through commissioning and procurement.

Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
1. Establish a SEND Inclusion Dashboard for 0-25 to incorporate the local area context across education, health, and care.	Children and young people receive the right help and support at the right time.	Integrated Commissioning and Data and Information sharing.
2. Update the school placement process to ensure appropriate capacity across all ages and implement any changes required.		Integrated South West London partnership and Local Area SEND Dashboards.
		More children will access mainstream provision and there will be a reduction in inappropriate referrals to specialist provision.
3. Establish local SEND and alternative provision partnerships.		Children and young people can access additional support through a fair and consistent process where children, young people, families and professionals work together to put in place the right value-for-money support to meet their needs.
		This should result in a Local Inclusion Plan (LIP) that sets out the provision and services to be commissioned. There is clarity about how the three-tier AP offer will feature within the graduated response.

Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures of success
4. Commissioned therapies 0-25, including Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT).	Children and young people receive the right help and support at the right time.	Improved joint working across education, health and social care for children and young people with complex needs.
5. System of funding bands and tariffs.		
6. Update Croydon's specialist care provision for children and young people with complex needs and implement any changes required.		
7. Establish different approaches to SEND Transport arrangements for children and young people with SEND.		
8. Identify a designated social care officer (DSCO).		
9. Information management System to Synergy.		

Priority 6: Workforce development, support and wellbeing

We need to upskill the workforce so that they are prepared to meet the needs of children and young people and at the same time we need to support them and balance workloads to ensure their wellbeing and job satisfaction. We need to build a strong, resilient and highly skilled workforce to meet the increasing demands for support.

Deliverables	Outcomes	Measures
1. Provide training and development for all practitioners working with children and young people with SEND within educational settings to support early identification and access to provision at the right time - with the buy in from all agencies, particularly in the delivery of the local offer/ordinarily available provision.	Adaptive environment for effective practice and multi-agency to flourish, creating an Autism friendly borough.	Upskilled workforce across the sector. Reduction in support needs from LA.
2. Continue to expand Croydon's offer and effective implementation of the Autism Education Trust training programme.		
3. Training on assessment and diagnosis pathways.		
4. Recruit and retain of staff to increase capacity and job satisfaction.		Recruit and maintain specialist support staff.
5. Support council policy on employees' mental health.		



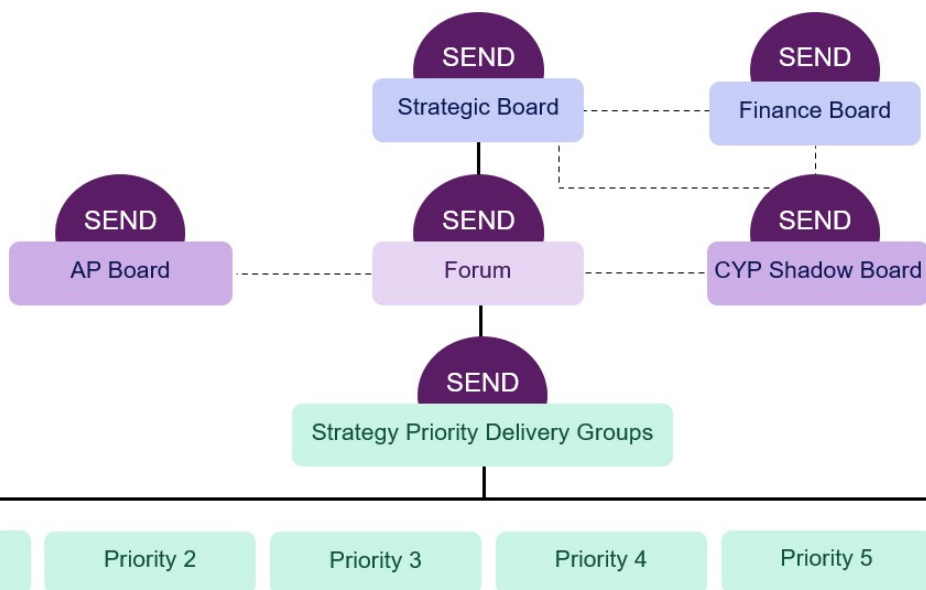
How do we identify impact?

Croydon's SEND Local Area is committed to making progress towards the positive changes outlined in this strategy.

We want to ensure that children and young people with SEND feel that they can:

- Access accurate, easy read information in a timely manner.
- Build trusting relationships with those who work with them.
- Feel confident and empowered to share their views, wishes and aspirations.
- Enjoy being with people that make them feel happy, safe, secure and understood.
- Feel supported to reach their goals.
- Know that their health and wellbeing will be a priority to all who work with them.

SEND Local Area Governance



Croydon has a robust high profile governance model, with a well-established structure and clear line of accountability.

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The SEND Strategic Board is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and the SEND Forum is chaired by the Director of Education.

The Local Area including Children's Social Care, Health, families and school leaders are represented at all levels of the governance structure. SEND and inclusion is also a feature within the School Improvement governance.

SEND Local Area Governance Meeting Schedule

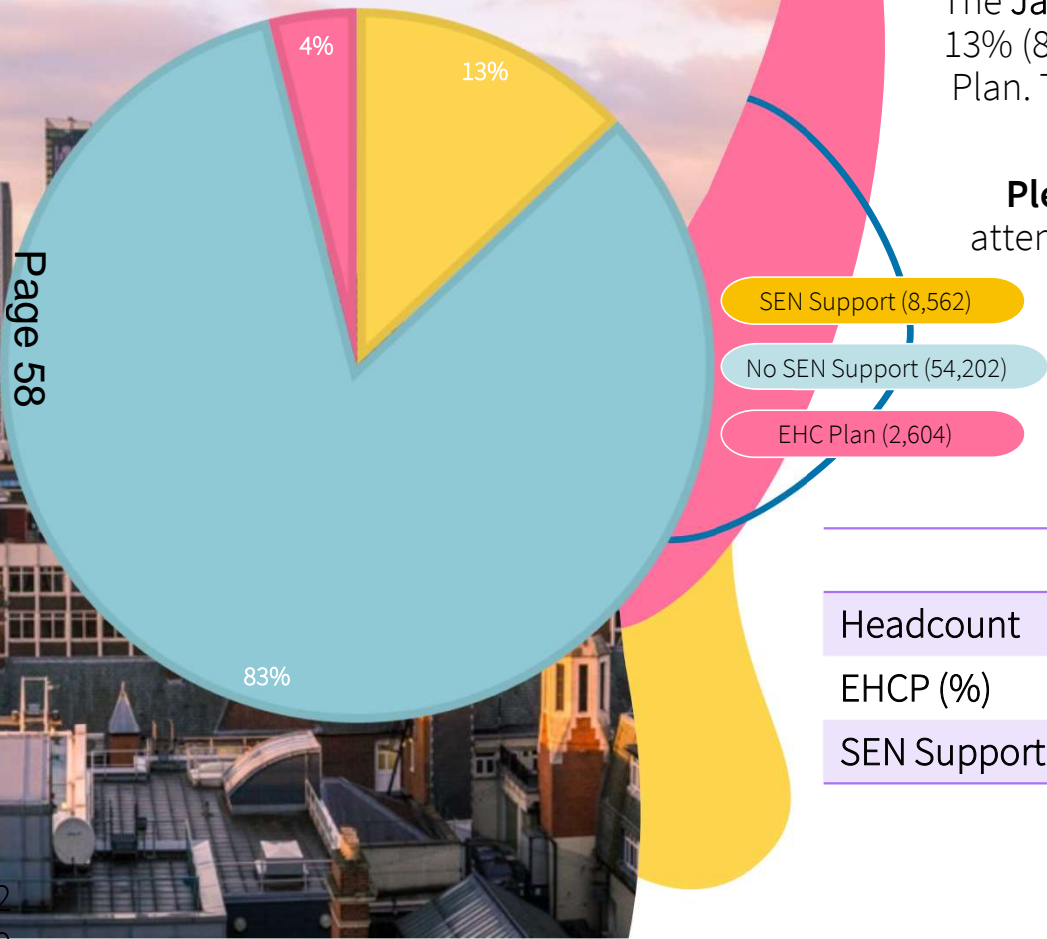
- Quarterly SEND Strategic Board
- Quarterly Strategy Priority Delivery Thematic Meeting
- Quarterly Children and Young People Youth Voice Forum
- Quarterly Parent Representative Group
- Monthly SEND Local Area Deep Dive Audit
- Monthly SEND Forum
- Monthly Strategy Priority Delivery Groups
- Monthly Learning and Development Workshops

SEND Local Area Transformation Activities

How we got here...



■ SEN Support ■ No SEN Support ■ EHC Plan



The Croydon Context

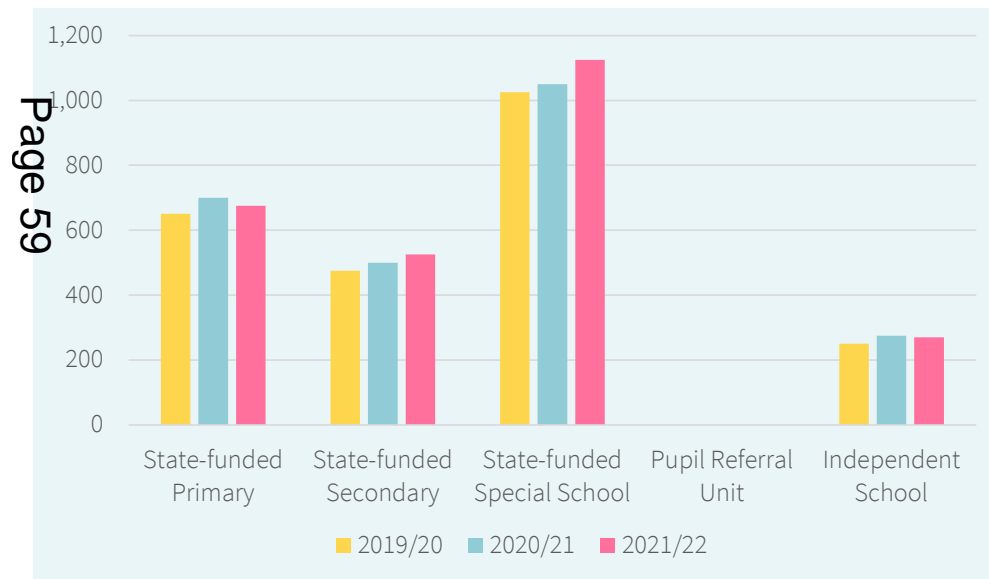
The **January 2022** census indicates, of the 65,368 pupils in Croydon, 13% (8,562) were receiving SEN support and 4% (2,604) had an EHC Plan. These percentages are in line with our statistical neighbours, London and England.

Please note: this data includes pupils living out of borough attending Croydon settings and does not include pupils living in Croydon attending out of borough settings.

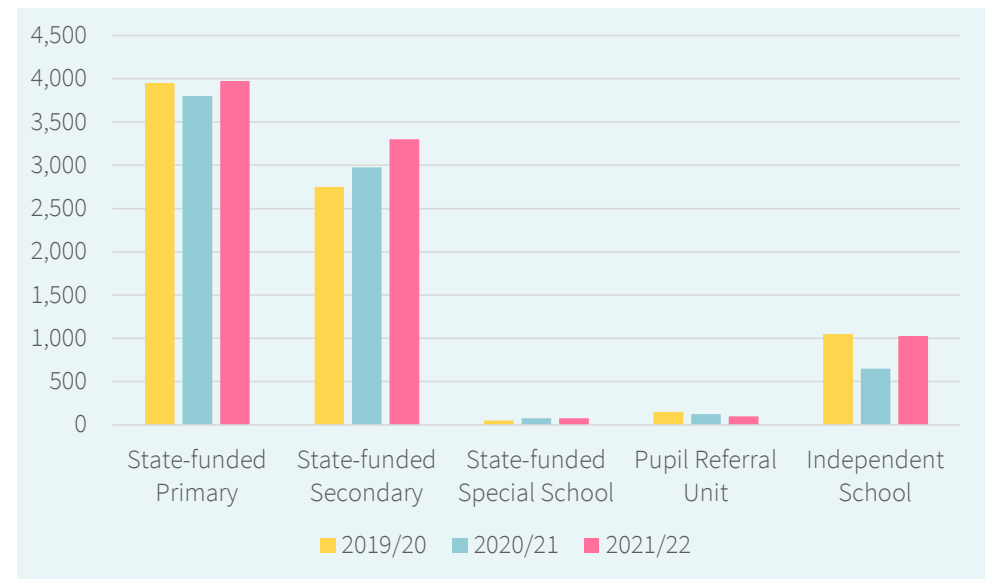
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Headcount	65,718	64,964	65,368
EHCP (%)	3.7	3.9	4.0
SEN Support (%)	12.3	11.9	13.1

In **January 2022**, a total of 3,556 children and young people living in Croydon had an EHC Plan, 109% more than in 2010. This increase is larger than that of our statistical neighbours (who saw a 102% increase) and similar to London as a whole (who saw a 114% increase) at the same time. This data includes pupils living in Croydon attending out of borough settings.

In line with national trends, the increasing growth of the population with an EHC Plan has been most pronounced since 2015, coinciding with the SEND reforms of 2014 when EHC Plans were introduced. EHC Plans have a lower threshold than the previous Statement of SEN and an extended age range up to the age of 25.



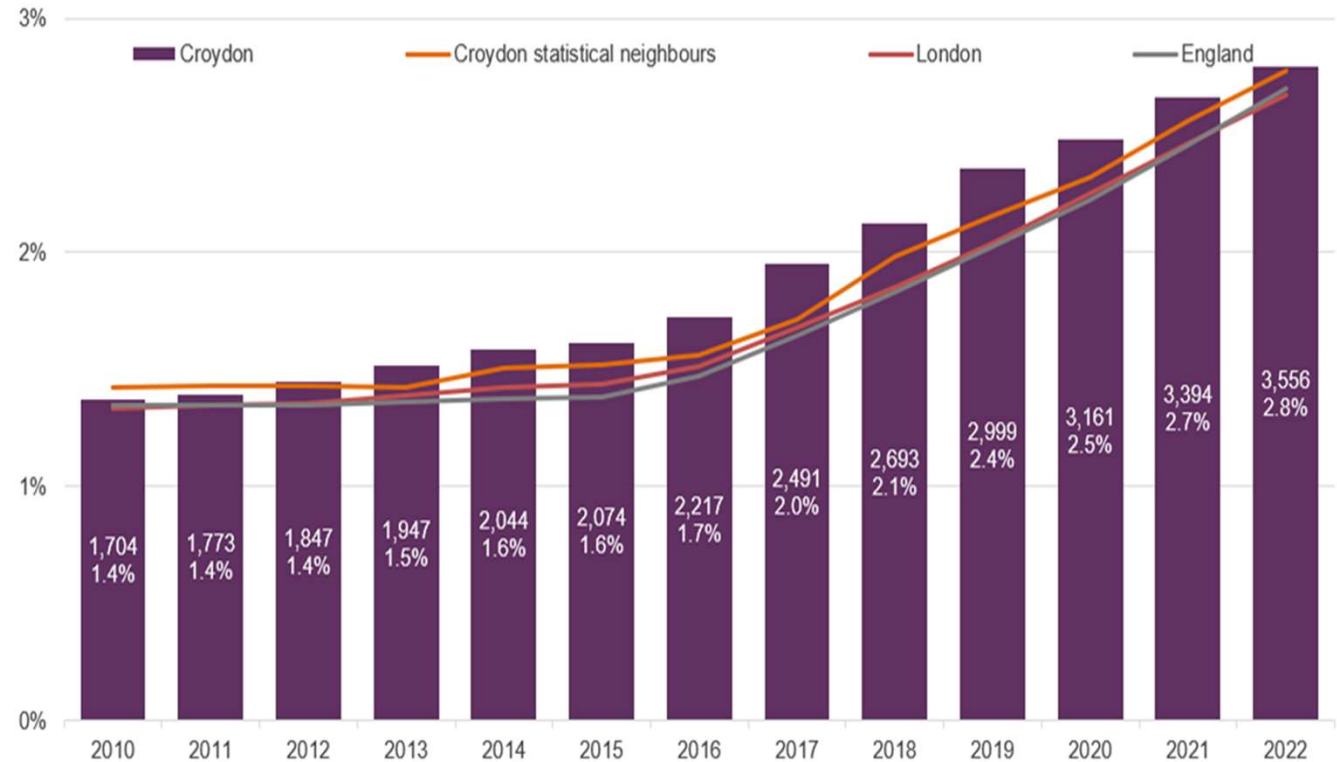
Pupils with an EHCP in Croydon schools by phase 2019/20 to 2021/22



Pupils receiving SEN Support in Croydon schools by phase 2019/20 to 2021/22



Number and proportion of Croydon children and young people with a Statement or EHC Plan (includes pupils living in Croydon and attending either a Croydon or out of borough setting)

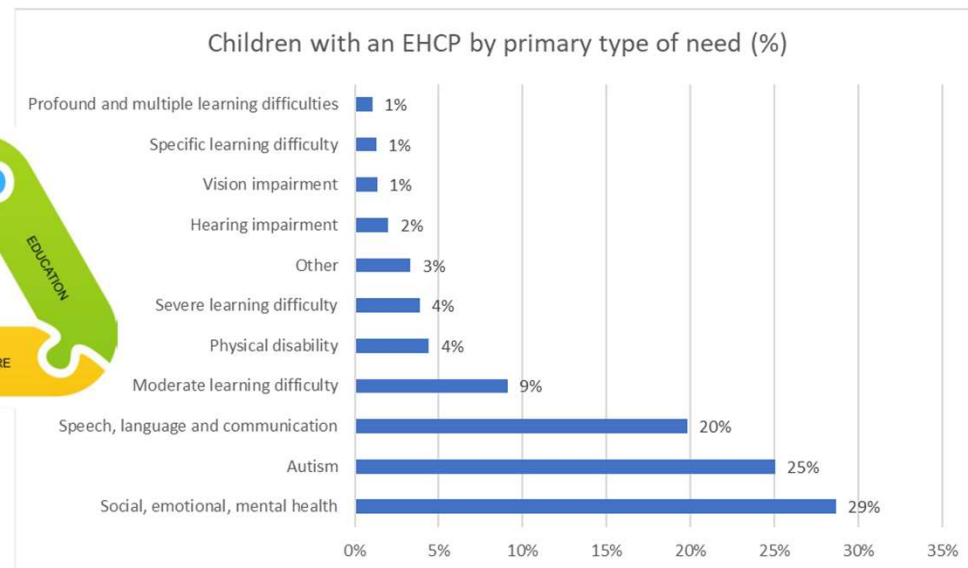
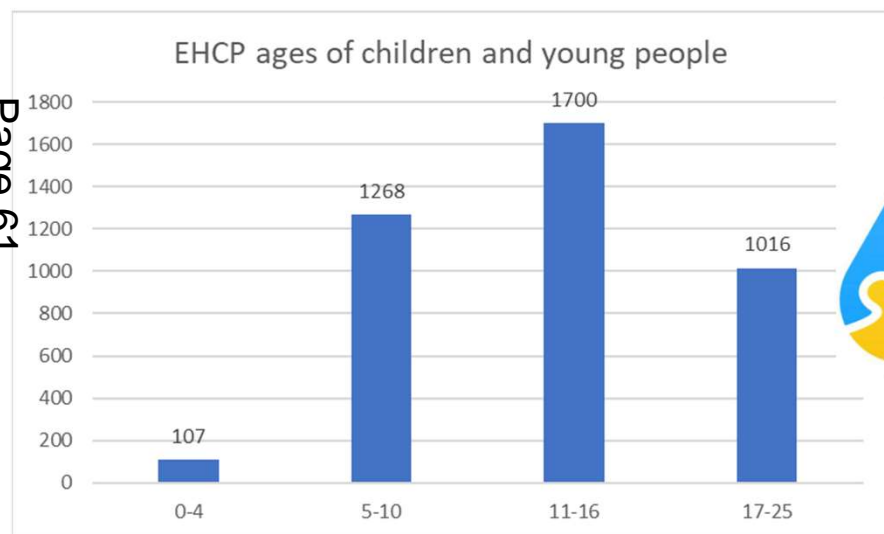


Sources:

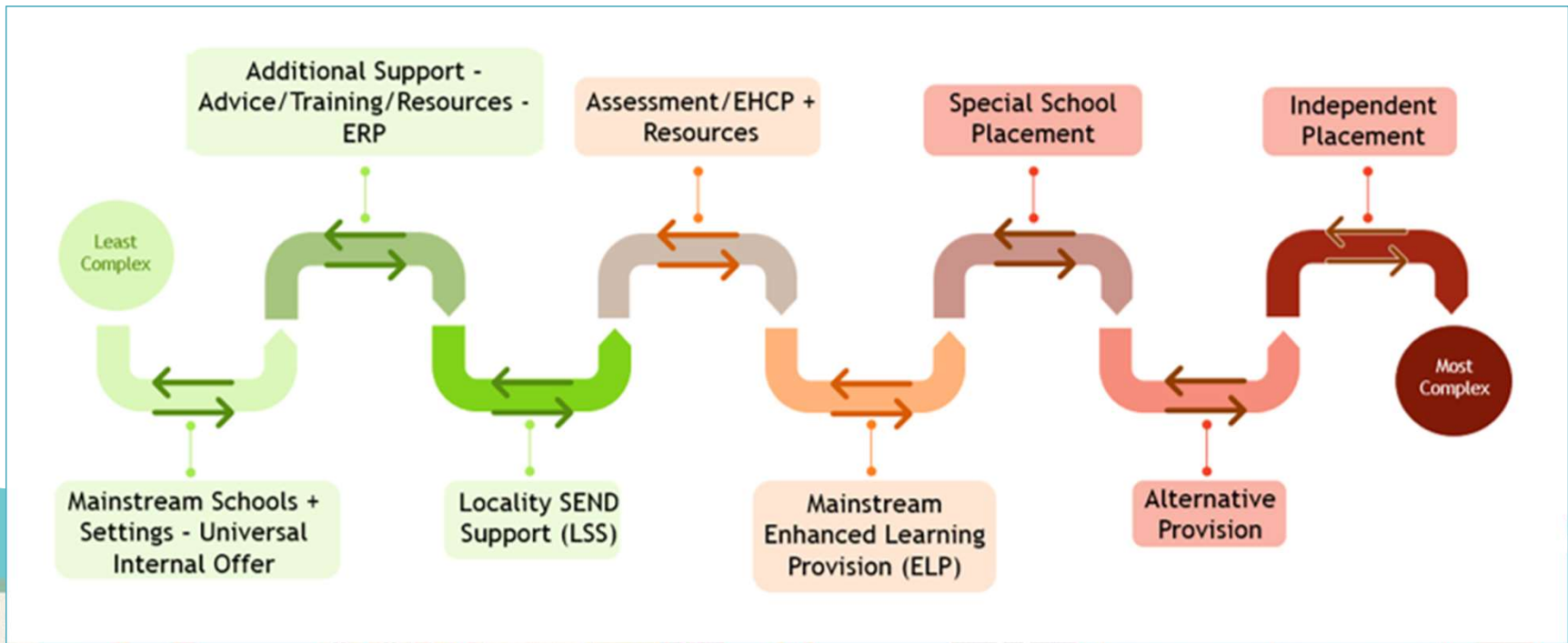
January 2022 – Department of Education:
[Statements of SEN and EHC Plans in England](#)
 (from SEN2)
 Mid-2010 to Mid-2020
 Office for National Statistics:
[Population Estimates](#)
 Department for Education:
[Children Services Statistical Neighbour](#)
[Benchmarking Tool](#)

Children with an EHCP by type of need

Latest data shows the number of EHCPs continue to increase. In **January 2023**, a total of **4091** children and young people living in Croydon had an EHCP, of which 73% are boys and 42% are aged between 11-16. The most common primary type of need is social, emotional and mental health (29%), followed by autistic spectrum disorder (25%) and speech, language and communication needs (20%).



Croydon SEND Local Offer 0-25



Croydon Locality SEND Support

Croydon Locality SEND Support (CLSS) was set up in September 2020 as a pilot project to ensure that Croydon mainstream schools had access to early identification and intervention for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The initial pilot phase was successful, and the way of working was expanded to all mainstream schools in the Borough.

Since its inception CLSS has followed this model:

- Early identification and response to needs.
- Support, advice, training, shared expertise, access to resources, access to specialists.
 - In each of the localities, the school Special Educational needs Coordinators (SENDCos) are empowered (with parental permission) to share case files of children/young people who are on their school's SEND register with their local group of SENDCos.
- This takes place at monthly SENDCo forum meetings chaired by the Area SEND Lead and overseen by a headteacher and the consultant lead. Professionals from the Croydon Education Psychology (EP) service and Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) are also present.
- A range of other professionals are invited such as from the Inclusion and Safeguarding team, Children's Social Care or the Virtual School.



Since September 2020 CLSS has supported around 3300 children and young people with SEND in Croydon mainstream schools including Informal support to 2300 children and young people and awarded resources to around 1000 Children and Young People.

CLSS is now a key aspect of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) management plan in the formal "Safety Valve" agreement signed by Croydon Council and the Department for Education.

Full implementation of CLSS is pivotal to ensuring compliance with the conditions set out in the agreement, which could result in the Department agreeing to pay to the authority an additional £10.96 million of DSG.

As a result, the Council wishes to bring the service fully under the umbrella of the Children's Services Department.

Alternative Provision – An Early Intervention Offer



Saffron Valley Collegiate

Springboard

This is the tuition service providing education to young people who are temporarily unable to attend their mainstream school for medical reasons. Young people are provided with a personalised educational package that may consist of a combination of individual tuition, online supported learning and small group tuition, leading to full-time education in an appropriate provision, for example: a return to their home school or specialist provision. The offer is enhanced by the DfE funded Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce Pilot (APST), which supports a co-located, multi-agency team of specialists: A Mental Health Lead, Speech and Language Team, Assistant Educational Psychologist, Family Worker, Youth Worker, Youth Justice Worker and Post-16 Transition Worker. This team supports a robust offer of assessment, targeted interventions and detailed reports to inform reintegration.

The Intervention Programme

The PRU offers time-limited interventions to pupils who are struggling to manage their learning in a mainstream school setting and may additionally be at risk of permanent exclusion. The objectives of the programme are:

- To provide opportunities for pupils to make social, emotional and academic progress within an appropriate environment, in preparation for returning to mainstream school;
- To work with mainstream secondary schools to support and sustain pupils within mainstream provision;
- To provide opportunities for pupils to have time to develop the skills to thrive in a mainstream classroom;
- To support schools to manage the support needs of pupils as part of their transition from the PRU back into mainstream education.

The length of stay is typically 12 weeks. Pupils on the Intervention Programme also benefit from the APST. During the first year of the pilot, 70 pupils received a range of interventions from the mental health team and 69 pupils made a successful return to mainstream schools.

Alternative Provision

Since the start of academic year 2012-22, using a three-tier model for alternative provision, Croydon has been better able to address the following:

Tier 1

Targeted support in mainstream schools

AP specialist early intervention and support to help at-risk pupils stay in mainstream school.

Tier 2

Time-limited Placements*

Short-term placements in AP schools to assess and address pupil's needs, with the expectation of returning to their mainstream school.

Tier 3

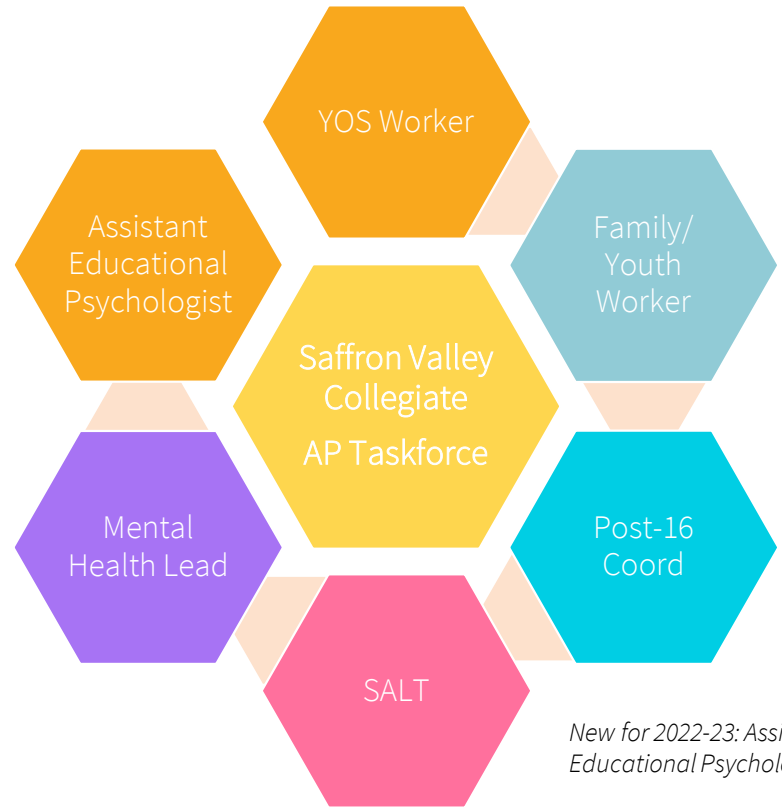
Transitional Placements*

Placements in AP schools for pupils who need support to move on to a new mainstream school or sustained post-16 destination.

**Tier 2 and Tier 3 via the Saffron Valley Intervention Programme.*

The Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) is allowing the PRU to act as a dynamic hub for mainstream secondary schools. It is re-writing the narrative for pupils with challenging behaviour and addressing their needs (including SEND) and allowing schools access to immediate assessment and therapeutic interventions.

(Pilot extension to March 2025)



New for 2022-23: Assistant Educational Psychologist



Everyone wants the best for their children but with so much conflicting advice it can be hard to know what to do for the best as a parent, especially in the early years.

Research shows that the key ingredients to ensuring babies and young children have a healthy start in life are:

- Parenting confidence
- Physical activity for little ones
- What children and families eat
- Family lifestyle habits
- Enjoying life as a family

Henry in Croydon

The programme is for parents or carers of children aged 0 to 7 years old and is free to join.

It covers five themes across 8 weeks and provides everything you need to help get your little one off to a great start.

Programmes are running online and face to face in local venues.

For more information, please contact Henry on 020 8156 6400 or email croydon@henry.org.uk

Or you can scan the QR code to complete the enquiry form.



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

CROYDON BME FORUM

Croydon Best Start

croydonvoluntaryaction

NHS
Croydon Health Services
NHS Trust

Asian Resource Centre
Croydon

HOME START
Croydon

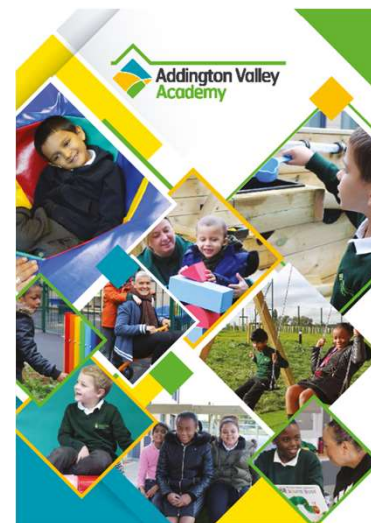
Addington Valley Academy



Addington Valley Academy is a co-educational special school specialising in autism and complex needs and addresses the social communication, cognitive, sensory and social, emotional, and behavioural needs of pupils aged 2 – 19.

The development of the new Orchard Hill Trust Special School – Addington Valley Academy has had a significant positive impact upon local placements with 120 Croydon pupils placed for September 2022.

There are a team of specialist teachers, specialist assistants, therapists and support staff to enable delivery of teaching and learning in the classroom of a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to the developmental needs of children in relation to their age and phase of education. Each class will be managed by a class teacher, supported by one or two permanent teaching assistants depending on class dynamics.



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Data:
2020/2021: 20 Year 7 placements
2021/2022: 80 placements
2022/2023: 120 placements – Reception-Post 16
2023/2024: 150 placements planned

“ The progress my son has made is phenomenal, we couldn't be happier. We feel very lucky that he is in this school. ”

Parent - February 2022

St Nicholas School

St Nicholas is a Primary Special School catering for children aged 4 – 11 years with Moderate Learning Difficulties, Speech and Communication Disorders and Autism. Some of our children also have complex needs.

The school has a maximum roll of 245 pupils. Children may be admitted from the age of 4 years up to the age of 10 years if places are available.

The school currently has 26 classrooms and pupils are grouped in small classes of around 10 pupils. Each class has a teacher and 2 teaching assistants.

The school seeks to provide a friendly caring and safe environment in which all children can develop to their full potential by having equal access to quality educational opportunities and experiences.

St Nicholas was judged as 'Good' by Ofsted in 2017.



Red Gates School



Red Gates is a special school for pupils between the ages of two and 11 years.

- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school caters for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties. Many have
- a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.



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Ofsted visited Red Gates on the 28th Feb and 1st March 2023 to complete an ungraded inspection. As a result, Red Gates remains Good, however, the inspectors report that there was enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if they were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. As a result, the school's next inspection will be a graded inspection and take place within 12-24 months.

Number of pupils: 138



Together we recognise and embrace individuality and nurture learning within a safe and empowering environment so that all can thrive and feel a sense of achievement, belonging and acceptance.



The Beckmead Trust



Chaffinch Brook

Chaffinch Brook is a primary and secondary for pupils diagnosed with ASD (Autistic Spectrum disorder) and associated mental health needs. It is part of the Beckmead family of schools.

Chaffinch Brook is currently situated on two different sites in Croydon approximately 3 miles apart. Chaffinch Lower is for pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2, has 41 students on roll; Chaffinch Upper is our Key Stage 3 and 4 provision for 49 students. Both sites meet the needs of students with Autism and challenging behaviour.

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Beckmead College

Beckmead College provides vocational training for young people aged 14 to 19 with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and Autism.

For young people aged 14 – 19 with social emotional and mental health difficulties and challenging behaviour.



100% of parents would recommend Beckmead College to others



Priory School

Priory School is a Local Authority Maintained Community school for young people from 11 to 19 with moderate to severe learning difficulties, many are on the Autistic Spectrum.

We were recognized as a Good school in all aspects of our provision at our last Ofsted Inspection in October 2017.

All students at Priory School have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which is used to personalise their learning. We passionately believe that all students should be entitled to access personalised learning and we are committed to ensure that this is what we provide for all.



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Number of pupils: 132

We were recognised as "good" in all areas of our inspection (2017), when Ofsted made the following observation:

“

You and your team have a vision for the students of 'brilliant lives' and a mission to provide 'a learning community that inspires and empowers individuals to do amazing things.

”



Bensham Manor School

Bensham Manor School is a special school for students 11 to 16 with a wide range of special needs who make provision for students who have Education, Health and Care Plans which include; autism, complex needs, speech, language and communication difficulties.

Their aim is to recognise and respond to the individual needs of students and provide them with a relevant and challenging curriculum. There is a Post 16 provision on site. All students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which is reviewed annually. Bensham Manor School works hard to ensure students are successful and celebrate and recognise achievement and effort in all areas of the curriculum.

The school's key aims:

- Raise, monitor and celebrate the achievements and diversity of our students
- Develop excellent teaching to enhance learning
- Facilitate an appropriate, well resourced, flexible, accredited and imaginative curriculum
- Provide high quality care, guidance and support ensuring everybody matters, feels respected and has a voice

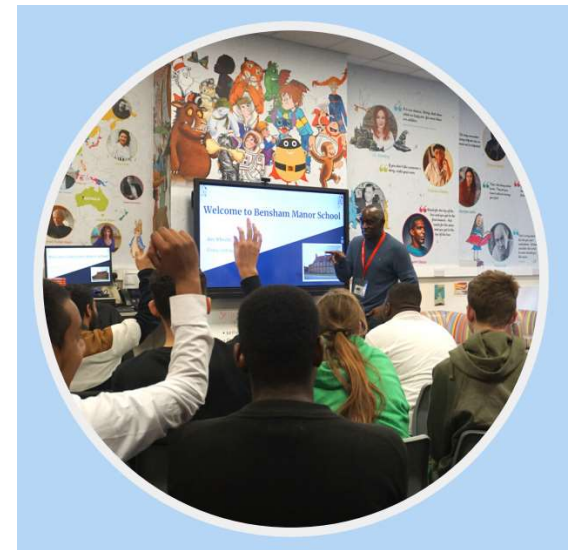
Number of pupils: 235



Bensham Manor School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.



BENSHAM MANOR SCHOOL



St Giles School



St Giles is a Croydon Local Authority Maintained Community School for pupils aged 2-19 with physical disabilities, complex medical needs, complex speech and language difficulties and associated learning difficulties, moderate (MLD), severe (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

St Giles Nursery is part of the Croydon Local Offer for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and has places for 12-part time or 6 full time nursery children aged over two with identified needs under the Croydon commissioning arrangements.

There is a Further Education Unit for pupils with PMLD aged 16-19.

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All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or are transferring to one from a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

We were recognised as a Good school at our last Ofsted inspection in December 2017.

Number of pupils: 108



“

At St Giles' we are passionate about learning. Our school community includes and values everyone, working together to achieve in a supportive, caring and professional way. Our enthusiasm and positive energy make St Giles' a truly happy and vibrant place to be.

Ofsted

”

Post 19 Pathways

The Pathways programme initially offered a 2 year 2:2 day programme for students aged 19-25 with severe and complex needs identified – 2 days based at Coulsdon College and 2 days based at Waddon Youth Centre.

The success of the placements resulted in further development of a range of pathways which now include: 2:2 original programme/3:1 (3 college:1 Waddon)/4 days – college based.

There is opportunity for progression and/or support into adult supported services as appropriate for each student.

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Good things are happening, the energy and enthusiasm have given us a glimpse of possibilities that previously we would not have considered.



THE PATHWAY CENTRE

Croydon's Pathway to Independence Learning for Life Programme

A programme delivered in partnership with

CROYDON | Delivering for Croydon
www.croydon.gov.uk

Croydon College

COULSDON
SOUTH SURREY COLLEGE

SEND Strategy 2019-22

Review and Feedback



Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
(SEND)

Strategy 2019-2022

Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group

CROYDON | Delivering
what matters most for Croydon



Our aim for 2019-22

“

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) will achieve independence and employment, whenever possible in, or near their local community so that they can live fulfilled lives and be active contributors to Croydon’s future. Croydon has high aspirations for children and young people with SEND.

”

SEND Croydon Residents Feedback

In July 2022, we worked with our special schools and post 19 provision council members to help us understand how we have supported them so far and what can we do to support them further.

Page 77 There were common themes that echoed throughout our conversations and minor but impactful changes that they would like to see.

“ You said... ”

A collection of seven colorful speech bubbles arranged in a cluster on the right side of the page. Each bubble contains a specific feedback point from SEND Croydon residents. The bubbles are: a light blue bubble at the top right with the text 'Make lots of new friends'; a pink bubble below it with 'A five day package'; an orange bubble to the left with 'After school activities'; a white bubble with a pink border to the right with 'To get a job and continue to attend college'; a yellow bubble below that with 'To get the right support when I go to my school'; a purple bubble to the right with 'Be able to communicate with others'; and a grey bubble at the bottom with 'Have access to software that will help me learn'. A large black closing quotation mark is located at the bottom right of the entire graphic area.



In addition to our visits, we have been working closely with our Croydon schools, parents/carers and professionals working with children and young people with SEND to identify what has gone well throughout 2019 -2022 and what aspect of our SEND practices need to be improved.

We completed this activity by collaborating via our SEND Governance and by launching a SEND Local Area Survey that went live to the residents of Croydon on 8th July in 2022 and ended 31st October 2022.

In addition to this, we organised a series of SEND Consultation Roadshows that took place in January and February 2023, where we reviewed the suggested priorities for 2023-2026.

Joint Working and Co-production



You said...

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What aspects have gone well?

- Parent led groups.
- SEND services are easier to contact at Croydon than before.
- Post 16 transfer, joined up work with NEET team and virtual school.



What could have been better?

- Better communication.
 - Better joined up working between Health, Children and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) and SEND.
 - More positive relationships between parents and those delivering SEND services.
- Better access to help within schools, especially secondary schools who seem to work with the mantra of 'they have to have an EHCP' or they can't do anymore for that student.
 - For professionals involved with the student to attend annual review meetings.
 - Support for parents of children with additional needs.
 - Early identification, support and access for primary schools.
- SEND training/qualification to understand the needs and support required for all children and young people supported by their services.
- Holistic approach putting the children and young people at the centre of all planning.
- Joint working with social services and education to ensure proper continuation after formal education so that young people with SEND do not get 'lost' with no support.



Improving Outcomes



You said...

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What aspects have gone well?

- Community paediatrician and occupational therapy service are supportive and responsive.
- There is an attempt to write SMART outcomes (but this is not always consistent).
- Special school support is excellent.
- Receiving direct payments which is helpful.
- There are pockets of excellence – ‘Walk with me programme and mentoring scheme’.

What could have been better?

- More funding, more awareness, and more empathy.
- More social activities in the holidays, more support for working parents when school transport is cancelled.
 - Helping the SEND parent network.
- Accessing support in mainstream settings has been diabolical.
- Access to appropriate equipment and therapy support to nurseries when the child is below school age.
- Communication with the school, parents and SALT team consistency with providing support to my child, not ‘hit and miss’ efforts and no feedback.
- An effective centralised site of all activities available and advisory support for those with additional needs.
 - Access to the right support at the right time.
- Flexibility to respond to children and young people needs, especially for those with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties.
 - Do not cease EHCP’s before all outcomes have been met.
- The council should not have disbanded the department to support young people getting into employment.

Transitions



You said...

What aspects have gone well?

- Special school are supportive and have meetings at the start of each year with children and young people and their parent/carer to ensure that the needs will be met and continue with close communication throughout the school year.
- The SEND team seem more on the ball with EHCP writing and issuing within deadlines.

What could have been better?

- Clarity on what transitional programmes are offered.
 - Communication across the board.
- The process for complex cases requires a joint working approach.
 - Support with housing for young adults with SEND.
- Support hubs in schools to educate professionals about practicalities, such as financial management.
- More opportunities for sport and leisure and arts and cultural activities.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE	28 June 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	STAGE 1: RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM SCRUTINY	
LEAD OFFICER:	Jane West, Corporate Director for Resources Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services T: 020 8726 6000 X 62529. Email: adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Rowenna Davis Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	<p>Recommendations that have been developed from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its Sub-Committees since the last Cabinet meeting are provided in the appendices to this report. The constitution requires that an interim or full response is provided within 2 months of this Cabinet meeting.</p>	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents recommendations to the Executive from Scrutiny following meetings of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 22 May and 6 June 2023 and Streets & Environment Sub-Committee in March 2023 (approved by Scrutiny Committee in May).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Executive Mayor has the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations contained within this report. The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is asked to:
- 2.2 Receive the recommendation arising from the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 22 May 2023 (Appendix 1), 6 June 2023 (Appendix 2) and the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March 2023 (Appendix 3).

- 2.3 To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 27 September 2023.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 3.1 There is a statutory requirement for Cabinet to receive the recommendations made by Scrutiny.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 22 May 2023

Item: Month 11 Financial Performance Monitoring Report

- 4.1 The Scrutiny & Overview Committee welcomed the streamlined process for publishing Financial Performance Monitoring reports, as well as the provision of a dedicated page on the Council's websites for the reports, as it would help to improve transparency.
- 4.2 The Committee was concerned that given the precarious nature of the Council's finances, the three month delay between month end and publishing financial performance monitoring report would make it challenging to identify issues affecting budget delivery at an early enough stage. However, it was noted that the current timeframe for financial reporting was not out of keeping with other local authorities.
- 4.3 The Committee had concern about whether the financial performance monitoring reports were as understandable as they could be for Members and the public, and welcomed the invitation of the Cabinet Member of Finance to meet to discuss the report.

Item: Annual Asset Disposal Plan 2023-24

- 4.4 The Scrutiny & Overview Committee welcomed the reassurance that the Mayor will have sign-off on any assets added to the list of disposals, while at the same time, officers will have delegated powers to be able to respond flexibly to the market in completing any such disposals.
- 4.5 The Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed that ward councillors may be able to provide valuable local insight on the potential implications that could arise from the disposal of council assets, particularly on those assets that were in use.
- 4.6 The Committee welcomed confirmation that individual equality impact assessments would be prepared for assets added to the disposal list that were in use or occupied.

Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 6 June 2023

Item: Executive Mayor of Croydon – Scrutiny Update

- 4.7** The Scrutiny & Overview Committee noted that it was a continuing challenge for the Council to balance the available staff resources to enable the delivery of transformation programmes at the same time as continuing to provide business as usual services. The Committee is aware that the 2023/24 budget has an allocation of £10m in 2023-24 for transformation work to fund extra capacity. The Committee agreed that it would seek reassurance in the coming year, that this budget was being effectively allocated.
- 4.8** The Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed that it would move the item on the Mayor and Council's Relationship with the Improvement & Assurance Panel from the 6 June 2023 agenda to its next meeting on 25 July 2023 and include a discussion on the duty of best value.
- 4.9** Although a response was expected from the Government, until it was received there remained a concern that the specific detail on the Improvement and Assurance Panel's new statutory role with the Council had not been clarified.
- 4.10** Of more significant concern for the long-term financial sustainability of the Council, was the clarity on the outcome of the request to Government for the treatment of its unsustainable debt. Until that outcome was known, uncertainty remains in the 2024-25 budget setting process.
- 4.11** The Scrutiny & Overview Committee was disappointed to hear that it was unlikely that a planning application for the town centre would be finalised this year, but welcomed the commitment of the Mayor to continue pushing the developer, Westfield, on the redevelopment and looked forward to seeing progress on meanwhile use within the town centre in the next year.

Streets & Environment Sub-Committee – 14 March 2023

Item Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification

- 4.12** The Sub-Committee were of the view that officers and the Cabinet Member had a good understanding of the work that needed to happen, but Members acknowledged that it was a challenging market for Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing.

Item: Cabinet Report - Local Planning Authority Service Transformation

- 4.13** The Sub-Committee were of the view that the digitalisation and workforce workstreams would be key in ensuring that transformation of the Planning department was successful, and that the Sub-Committee should continue to monitor progress in these areas.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Scrutiny meetings do not necessarily result in any recommendations to the executive.

6 CONSULTATION / PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

6.1 The recommendations were developed from the deliberations of either the Scrutiny & Overview Committee or one of its Sub-Committees.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services:

Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice The Council must learn the lessons of past failures and embed sound governance processes to ensure that decision-making is transparent, open and honest. These must ensure effective control of our projects and programmes and encourage meaningful scrutiny and challenge.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 The Scrutiny recommendations to the Executive may have financial implications. Following the recommendations being received at Cabinet, the Executive will identify and consider any financial implications as part of their response.

8.1.2 If any recommendation is subsequently progressed for consideration and decision by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, full financial (as well as legal and equalities implications) would be presented.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Under Section 9F Local Government Act 2000 ("The Act"), Scrutiny and Overview Committee (SOC) have the powers to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any executive and non-executive functions and to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. SOC also has the power to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority on matters, which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of its area.

8.2.2 Under Section 9FE of the Act, there is a duty on Cabinet to respond to the scrutiny report, indicating what (if any) action Cabinet proposes to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations.

8.2.3 Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the contents of this report

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The recommendations in the appendices to this report have equality implications and will require an EQIA as part of the development of the proposals. The implications will be explored to identify impact and mitigation utilised to negate any adverse impact where necessary.

Approved by: Denise McCausland Equality Programme Manager 16/05/2023

8.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.5.1 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the contents of this report, the report received recommendations from scrutiny, but no decision for recommendation.

8.6 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

8.6.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from the contents of this report, the report received recommendations from scrutiny, but no decision for recommendation.

8.7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

8.7.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

There are no Data Protection implications at this stage, but that the situation will be reviewed again at Stage 2 when Cabinet provide their response to the proposed recommendations.

HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Stage 1: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 22 May 2023

Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Stage 1: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 6 June 2023

Appendix 3 – Scrutiny Stage 1: Recommendation from Streets & Environment Sub-Committee – 14 March 2023

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 22 May 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3657&Ver=4>

Meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 6 June 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3510&Ver=4>

Meeting of the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 14 March 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=2947>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations arising from Scrutiny & Overview Committee; 22 May 2023

Item: Month 11 Financial Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SOC.3.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that, given the precarious nature of the Council's finances, the process for publishing monthly Financial Performance Monitoring reports is sped up, with the aim of achieving a maximum turnaround of eight week to finalise checks and go through the sign-off process before publication.	Councillor Jason Cummings	Jane West

Item: Annual Asset Disposal Plan 2023-24

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SOC.4.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that the process of adding assets to the disposal list should, as a minimum, include notifying ward councillors and where those assets are in use or occupied, there should be active engagement with ward councillors, and where appropriate the local community, to understand and manage the local implications of the sale.	Councillor Jason Cummings	Jane West
SOC.5.23/24	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee recommends that any users of assets are notified as soon as possible after they have been agreed for disposal by the Mayor, to allay any anxiety about the uncertainty on the future of their service and to give them the opportunity to present any business case that may be in the long term financial and public interests of the Council.	Councillor Jason Cummings	Jane West

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Appendix 2 – Recommendations arising from Scrutiny & Overview Committee; 6 June 2023

Item: Executive Mayor of Croydon – Scrutiny Update

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SOC.6.23/24	The Committee welcomed confirmation from the Mayor that performance indicators to track the delivery of Mayor’s Business Plan would be forthcoming, the Committee recommends that consideration be given to indicators so that they clearly demonstrate the tangible benefits delivered for residents as a result of the Plan.	Executive Mayor Jason Perry	Katherine Kerswell
SOC.7.23/24	The Committee understood the open-ended nature of the consultation process for Public Space Protection Orders to report concerns so residents would continue to do this, but also felt that a current timeline / deadline be provided, perhaps of six months after its enactment, to give residents clarity about when the scheme would be reviewed and potentially amended.	Councillor Ola Kolade	Kristian Aspinall

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Appendix 3 – Recommendations arising from Streets & Environment Sub-Committee; 14 March 2023

Item: Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Specification

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
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	Steve Iles
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	Steve Iles
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	Steve Iles

Item: Cabinet Report - Local Planning Authority Service Transformation

Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Political Lead	Officer Lead
SE.4.23/24	The Sub-Committee recommended that Councillors be invited to attend future Planning Resident Engagement events.	Councillor Jeet Bains	Heather Cheesbrough

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	28 June 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Future options for Maintained Nursery Schools	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies, Director of Education	
LEAD OFFICER:	Shelley Davies, Director of Education Denise Bushay, Head of School Place Planning, Admissions and Early Years	
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland, Lead Member Children, Young People and Education	
KEY DECISION?	Yes	0223EM Key Decision – Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. The report below outlines the high level option for the possible direction of travel for the transformation of the delivery of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) in the London Borough of Croydon.
- 1.2. The Local Authority has a statutory duty under Section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006 to provide sufficient funded three- and four-year-old places for eligible children to access. Early education is not statutory and is a parental choice. However, having enough and diversity of early years provision allow parents/carers to find childcare that meets their child's learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training.

- 1.3. A Maintained Nursery School is one of several types of provision that we have in the borough for early years education. Appendix one highlights the different type of early years providers we have in the borough. There is sufficient and diverse supply of early education and childcare provision available across the borough to meet demand.
- 1.4. MNS are considered to have a strong track record of boosting early development for all children, but especially the most vulnerable, including children with special educational needs and disability. They tend to be located in deprived areas.
- 1.5. MNS are local authority run schools that provide early education and childcare to children under 5 during school hours, usually 9am-3.30pm, during term time and does not usually include wrap around care. They have a head teacher, governing body, delegated budget and at least one teacher with qualified teacher status. Currently MNS cannot become academies. However, one of Croydon's maintained nursery schools is run by an academy chain under a Service Level Agreement.
- 1.6. There are five Maintained Nursery Schools in Croydon, of which, two have been rated by Ofsted as 'outstanding'; two graded as 'good' and one rated as 'requires improvement'. Three of the MNS are located in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough.
- 1.7. Nationally, MNS have had financial challenges for a number of years in spite of transitional and supplementary funding the future sustainability of these schools is uncertain because of budget pressures. Governing Bodies have a duty to set a balanced budget each year, however, a national survey carried out in 2020 revealed that 64% of MNS were in deficit.
- 1.8. The national and local drivers for change are rooted in the changes in relation to funding for this type of provision since 2017 and the impact of this which is already impacting on the financial viability of our local settings.
- 1.9. There is not an option for MNS to Academise.
- 1.10. Currently, a number of the five MNS in Croydon have a rising accrued deficit totalling £560,760 despite having a recovery plan to reduce ongoing costs and set a balanced budget. The council has commissioned an independent review of the finances and delivery models of two of our MNS. In order to prevent further deficit increases an urgent decision needs to be taken
- 1.11. The Council's commitment to value for money and the review of MNS provision supports the Mayor's priorities and outcomes for the council to balance its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.2 to agree to a formal consultation and publication of statutory notice on the proposed option: *to agree to reduce the number of MNS within the borough via closure or amalgamation*. This will give partners, residents, including the wider school communities and public the opportunity to comment on the proposed options.
- 2.3 to note the potential risks and benefits associated with this option
- 2.4 to note that the responses to the consultation will be presented in a report to the Mayor in cabinet later this year, so that a determination on this option can be made by the council.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To set the strategic direction for Croydon's MNS alongside the delivery of Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy approved by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, Children Centres and the development of Family Hubs.
- 3.2 The current model of Croydon's MNS is not financially sustainable. The budget deficit of the MNS provision will continue to increase and this will eventually fall on the Council for repayment.
- 3.3 We, therefore, need to consult and work collaboratively with partners to find a sustainable model to ensure MNS are financially viable and avoid any deficits increasing whilst ensuring that we retain enough provision for this age group.
- 3.4 MNS play a part in ensuring the council meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of early years provision across the borough. The Council remains committed to deliver funded early years provision that evidence value for money.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 National context and requirements
 - a) MNS were set up more than a century ago to provide Early Years education and childcare to disadvantaged children in the most deprived areas of England. Although MNS are early education providers, they are legally constituted as schools.
 - b) Under the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 Acts, a local authority has several duties relating to early education and childcare, including to secure sufficient childcare for working parents in their area; and early years provision free of charge for qualifying children.
 - c) Currently, all families with three and four-year-olds qualify for 15 hours of free childcare a week, over 38 weeks. Households can qualify for 30 hours of free

childcare if parents earn the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the national minimum or living wage.

- d) In the Spring budget, the Chancellor announced 30 hours of free childcare for every child over the age of 9 months, with support being phased in until eligible working parent of under 5s gets this support by September 2025. We are awaiting government guidance for the implementation of the new measures.
- e) The majority of Government funding for early years providers in England is delivered via three childcare entitlements:
 - 15 hours universal entitlement for all three and four-year-olds.
 - 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.
 - Extended 30 hours entitlement for three and four-year-olds of eligible working parents.

4.2 Funding for the entitlements is included in the Early Years Block of each local authority's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Additional Government funding for disadvantaged children (Early Years Pupil Premium) and children with additional needs (Disability Access Fund) is also included in the Early Years Block, along with supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools. Funding is dependent on the number of children within the setting. Local authorities are required to plan to pass-through 95% of their 3 and-4-year-old funding from the government to early years providers.

4.3 Department for Education analysis published in April 2022 suggested the mean income-to-cost-ratio (total weekly income divided by total weekly cost) for early years providers was 1.25 in 2021. The median income-to-cost ratio was 0.96, meaning half of providers were at or around the breakeven point. (*Providers' finances: survey of childcare and EY providers 2021*).

4.4 MNS tend to have a higher number of children with special educational needs and disabilities and children from disadvantaged backgrounds than other early years providers.

4.5 The national and local drivers for change are rooted in the changes in relation to funding for this type of provision since 2017. However, the Government has made changes to the way this supplementary funding for MNS is distributed from 2023/24. An additional £10 million of supplementary funding will also be provided and the impact of this which is already impacting on the financial viability of our local settings.

5 Croydon's Early Years provision and Maintained Nursery Schools

5.1 Croydon recognises the importance of early years development and education. The Early Years Strategy which was coproduced with partners and families has set the strategic direction for provision and priorities across the borough.

- 5.2. There are five MNS in Croydon: Thornton Heath, Tunstall, Purley, Crosfield and Selhurst. Two of these schools have been graded by Ofsted as ‘outstanding’; two graded as ‘good’ and one graded as ‘requires improvement’. Three of the MNS are located in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough. A map of Croydon’s MNS is attached at Appendix 2.
- 5.3 In total, there are 576 years childcare providers in Croydon, of which 345 are registered to deliver funded places. All 576 providers offer a maximum of 10,165 full time equivalent early years childcare places, of which there are five MNS. Table 1 below shows the different types of provision.
- 5.4 The data in table 1 below was correct as of November 2022

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Number of registered places</i>
Childminders*	360	900
Nursery classes in schools	43	1297
Maintained nursery schools	5	281
Private, voluntary, and independent nurseries (PVI's)	168	7,687

**Childminders usually have 2 or 3 early years aged children. For the purpose of this table, an average of 2.5 children has been assumed.*

- 5.5 Parental preference and location are key criteria in decision making for parents / carers and this impacts on whether the MNS are at capacity. Not all the MNS are at capacity.
- 5.6 It is likely that the new measures announced in the Spring budget will have implications on Croydon early years sector and providers, including Sufficiency, capacity and availability of childcare provision to meet increased demand.

6. Funding

- 6.1 Local authorities receive the funding from central Government to provide early years places, and in turn, pass the funding received on to the early years providers of early education and childcare services. School budgets are largely based on the number of children attending the provision.
- 6.2 Maintained nursery schools have higher costs than other early years providers, as they are required to employ qualified teachers and a headteacher and meet the same standards and requirements as other schools. The government confirms that they are progressing with reforms to ensure a fairer distribution of supplementary funding for MNS and to address the long-standing concerns.
- 6.3 Nationally, the funding for MNS declined over recent years and this alongside a reduction in birth rate has led to challenges with the running of each provision. Although government has increased funding for the child hourly rate, it is not enough to cover the MNS with a significant deficit.

6.4 Four out of five of Croydon’s MNS are now unable to deliver the provision on the current funding allocation and are in a deficit budget position. The leadership team of these nursery schools have taken step to reduce their outgoings via restructure and reorganisation of their school to ensure that the school’s budget was balanced. However, due to increasing costs and insufficient government funding, they are no longer able to set a balanced budget. The situation has been worsened by the pandemic, inflation and increase in energy / cost of living.

The cumulative deficit across the MNS estate is £560,760 (as of end of previous year)

6.5 Table 2 illustrates MNS supplementary grant for the 5 Nursery Schools for the last 4 and next financial year. Which has declined up to 2023/24 but is predicted to increase.

Table 2

MNS grant year	Amount	Status
19/20	508,501	Final
20/21	516,296	Final
21/22	443,971	Final
22/23	443,609	Final
23/24	673,551 (minus TPPG)	Predicted

6.6 Individual MNS have taken action within their own settings, this has included restructuring and looking at staffing levels and roles. Council Officers are working with and supporting the MNS with deficit budget to identify opportunities and/or alternative delivery models for savings/income to return to a balanced budget position. The council has commissioned an independent review of the finances and delivery models of two of our MNS.

6.7 There have been historical discussions about the provision and lack of funding for MNS but no agreed action has been taken and now we are at a critical stage due to the increasing deficit position of four of our MNS. There seems to be no realistic prospect of all of our MNS having a balanced budget and being able to reduce the cumulative deficits in the near future without intervention.

6.8 Council Officers have had informal consultation meetings with the leadership team of our MNS to seek / hear their views about potential options to address the financial challenges and re-model maintained nursery school provision in Croydon in order to move to a more financial sustainable provision.

6.9 All respondents agreed that to ‘do nothing’ is not a viable option and runs the risk of losing all four schools with a deficit, and having a bigger cumulative financial debt. It has been acknowledged that there is not a perfect solution as there are advantages and disadvantages for each of the proposed options. On this basis, we recommend that we consult partners, including residents / families, and providers, on the option listed below.

7. Preferred Option:

7.1 **To reduce the number of MNS within the borough**

This option would reduce the number of MNS within the borough, ensuring enough provision but over a smaller number of sites.

An admissions criterion would need to be developed for the places to ensure that the LA was able to provide targeted support to the most vulnerable children in the LA. The LA would also look at creating a central admissions process for all MNS schools for the targeted places. Individual school governing bodies would still retain responsibility for universal places at settings, which could be offered under the current admissions criteria, which would enable local children to access the provision.

If following consultation, the decision was to reduce the number of MNS, by closure or amalgamation, there would need to be consideration about the use of the site(s).

Advantages

A reduction in the number of MNS would reduce overhead costs and help in developing a sustainable MNS provision. Birth rate currently decreasing meaning less places will be required. Any displaced children would be accommodated in the other MNS or alternative early years provision. Currently, there is sufficient alternative nursery provision and childcare available to accommodate demand. The building could be used to support the development of the Family Hubs.

Disadvantages

The deficit incurred by the closure of one of the MNS would be the responsibility of the Council and likely to put pressure on the general fund. Possible redundancy costs. Could lead to less available places via MNS and a reduction in the MNS supplement. The statutory process for closing school would need to be followed, including formal consultation. Government guidelines on school closures include a presumption against the closure of nursery schools unless there is a strong case that there would be alternative provision in the area. The government announced in the Spring budget a range of measures to help parents with childcare so they can return to work more easily. This is likely to increase demand for places.

8. Alternative Options considered but not recommended.

8.1 Option 1:

Federate the Maintained Nursery Schools under one leadership model

The accountability for the quality of each MNS would be under one formal leadership team and overall Governing Board with representation from all the settings. Individual MNS may have a local Governing Body.

Each setting would require a named lead but there would not need to be separate leadership teams or back-office staff which would enable the budget to be spread across each school.

Advantages

This option would:

- provide greater financial stability and ensure that MNS continue to provide services to children and their families.
- Protection of available places
- Ensure each MNS would support each other with sustainability of nursery school provision.
- Allowing the sharing of back-office staff
- provide more development opportunities for staff, enabling the schools to continue to offer high quality nursery education.

Disadvantages

- This would not address the historical deficit.

8.2 **Option 2:**

Reprovision of one MNS into Early Years SEND setting:

We are seeing an increasing number of children in the Early Years with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and whilst it is important that children with SEND are mostly educated in mainstream settings there is some requirement for specialist nursery settings as we have at St Giles School.

Advantages

There is a higher number of children with SEND unable to access flexible childcare and this option would provide specialist provision.

This would reduce places at independent and out of borough provision.

Disadvantages

This would not address the historical deficit.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 Informal consultation with the settings both individually and collectively to seek their views on the proposed options and to add suggested options which evolved from these meetings

9.2 If preferred option is approved by The Mayor in Cabinet a period of consultation will follow the decision making. This will include families, providers and all key partners.

10 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

10.1 Become a council which listens to, respects and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities and businesses.

10.2 Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.

11 IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Financial Implications

11.1.1 Maintained Nursery Schools are funded via the Dedicated Schools Grant. Any changes to the provision will not impact on the council's General Fund but will prevent any rising deficits which should a setting close would be the responsibility of the Local Authority. The change in the formulae calculated by the DfE has created a positive effect on the MNS supplement for Croydon and is welcomed. However, the increase is unlikely to move schools in a greater deficit to a surplus budget.

11.1.2 Although MNS are early education providers, they are legally constituted as schools. Like maintained schools, they have a head teacher, governing body, delegated budget and at least one teacher with qualified teacher status (QTS). Staffing costs are high for MNS with all 5 spending over 50% of their budget on staffing alone. Table 6 provides information on how the 5 Nursery Schools budgets are spent.

Table 3

	N:1	N:2	N:3	N:4	N:5
Staffing	53.1%	83.7%	60.7%	67%	76.5%
Premises & Utilities	5.7%	7.4%	6.8%	8%	8.5%
Teaching supplies	2.2%	1.5%	1.1%	1.9%	1.7%
Food	0%	0%	0%	1.2%	0%
Other	39%	7.4%	31.4%	21.9%	13.3%

Comments approved by Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer) 14/06/2023

11.2 Legal Implications

11.2.1 The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to agree to a formal consultation and publication of statutory notice on the proposal to agree to reduce the number of Maintained Nursery Schools within the borough via closure or amalgamation.

11.2.2 Section 3 Local Government Act 1999 imposes a duty on the Council to "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" (the best value duty). It also obliges the Council

to consult certain groups of people 'for the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty' (s.3(2)).

- 11.2.3 In taking decisions the Council must act lawfully, including acting within its powers, following its own procedures as well as those required by law.
- 11.2.4 The Council must have regard to Section 15 Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 20133 (the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations). Under section 15 of EIA 2006, a local authority can propose the closure of, amongst others, a maintained nursery school. The statutory process is set out in the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations and in the statutory process section of the Opening and Closing Maintained Schools - Statutory Guidance for Proposers and Decision Maker (2023).
- 11.2.5 The Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance. This includes details of consultation required when making changes to maintained schools and proposing to close them. The Council must make rational, evidence-based decisions, for a proper purpose, that are proportionate decisions. The decisions must be properly reasoned and take into account all relevant considerations, as well as be compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 11.2.6 As set out above section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on the Council to secure sufficient free early years provision for eligible children.
- 11.2.7 Section 8 of the Childcare Act 2006 describes the 'Powers of local authority in relation to the provision of childcare' as (3) An English local authority may not provide childcare for a particular child or group of children unless the local authority are satisfied that (a) that no other person is willing to provide the childcare (whether in pursuance of arrangements made with the authority or otherwise), or (b) if another person is willing to do so, that in the circumstances it is appropriate for the local authority to provide the childcare. This does not affect the provision of childcare by the governing body of a maintained school, or the provision of day care for children in need in accordance with section 18 of the Children Act 1989.
- 11.2.8 Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA 2014), to keep under review educational provision, training provision and social care provision made both in and outside of their area for children and young people with SEN or a disability and for whom they are responsible.

Comments approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 19/06/2023)

11.3 Equalities Implications

Attached as Appendix 3.

The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out which has identified a positive impact across characteristics. It also identified that males and other genders are underrepresented in the children's workforce. The department will mitigate against this by identifying ways to increase representation in the workforce.

Approved by: Denise McCausland – Equality Programme Manager 24/05/2

11.4 Other Implications

11.4.1 Human Resources impact

The reduction of the MNS provision across the borough may have staffing implications. Any implications that may have effect on direct staffing will be managed in accordance with relevant human resources policies and were necessary consultation with recognised trade unions. We have recently seen an increase in industrial action when significant service changes have been explored by the council, such as the Red Gates School. It is possible a change in the provision of MNS may see similar action from the trades union.

11.4.2 Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer. (Date 15/06/2023)

12 APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix 1 – Different types of early years providers

12.2 Appendix 2 – Map of Maintained Nursery Schools and other settings in the same ward.

12.3 Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT – N/A

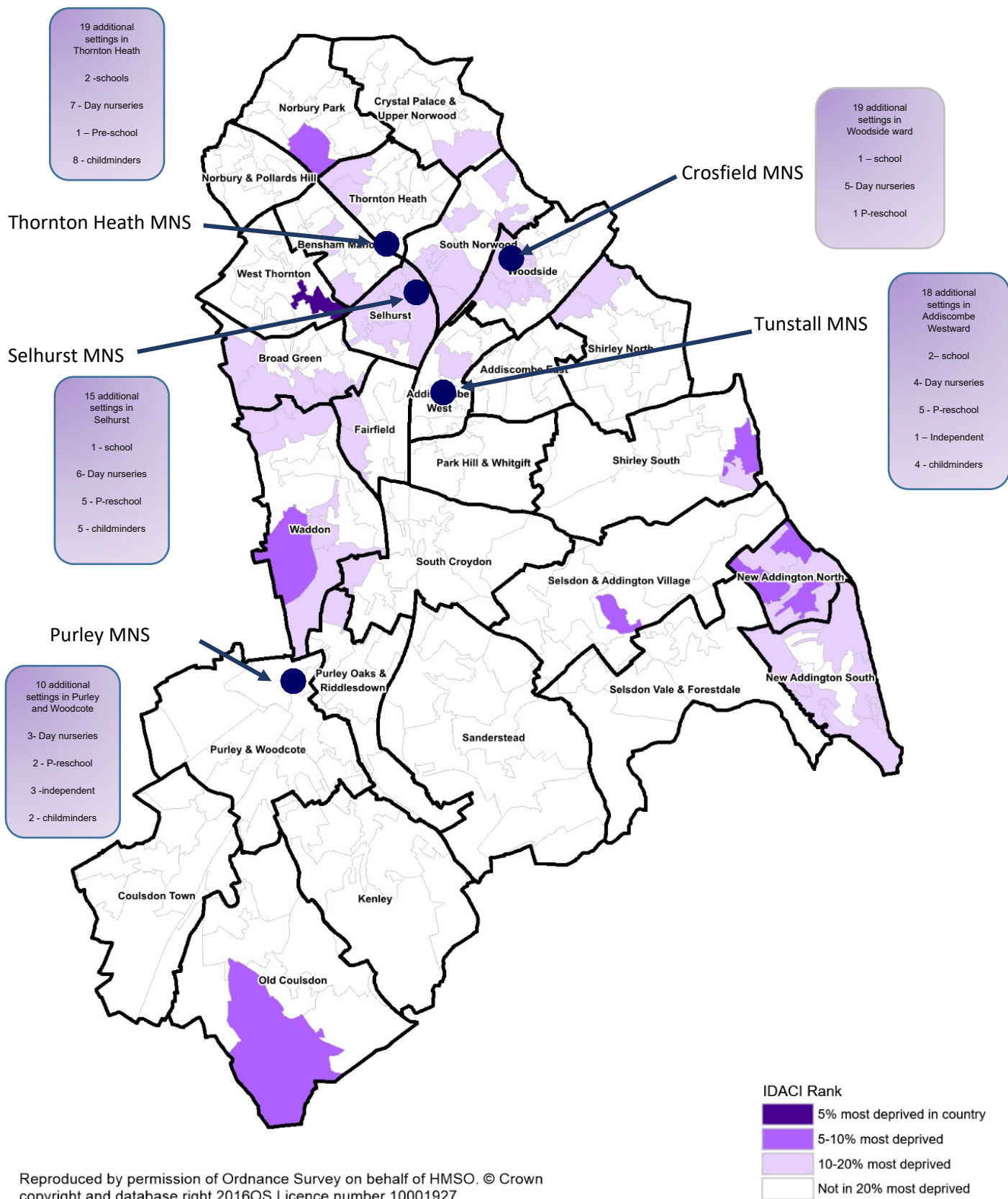
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Different types of early years providers - Appendix 1

	Provision	Description of offer	Ofsted
Private, voluntary or independent (PVI)	Day Nursery	Generally open all year round; usual core hours 8am – 6pm; registered with Ofsted to take children from 3 months – 5 years; can be a stand-alone setting or part of a chain of nurseries; often privately run with a single proprietor	Must join the Early Years register if caring for children aged from birth to 31 August after their fifth birthday.
	Pre-school	Usually operate in line with school hours so open term time only, 9am – 3.30pm; often run from church/community halls; often “pack-away” (need to clear rooms on a daily or weekly basis to allow for other uses); Often committee run	Need to meet all the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements of the Statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage.
	Independent	Operate as part of an independent school; term-time only; hours based on the school day	Not required to register on early years register unless taking children under 2 years
	Childminder	Most commonly a lone practitioner working from own home; all year round provision; usually core hours 8am-6pm; able to work with assistants; several now affiliated to a Childminding Agency	Must join the Early Years register if caring for children aged from birth to 31 August after their fifth birthday. Need to meet all the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements of the Statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage.
School	Maintained Nursery School	Stand-alone nursery school with head teacher and at least one Qualified Teacher Status staff member; qualified school SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator); term-time only; usual hours 9am-3.30pm	Not required to register on early years register unless taking children under 2 years
	Nursery Class	Operate as part of a school or academy, led by school headteacher/principal; term-time only; usual hours 9am-3.30pm	
	Nanny/Au pair	Also known as ‘home childcarers’; look after children of any age in the child’s own home. Can look after children from 2 different families at the home of one of the families.	Only need to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register if want parents to be able to get help with childcare costs.

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Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) Rank 2015



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Equality Analysis Form

Croydon's Maintained Nursery Schools

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

The council has an important role in creating a fair society through the services we provide, the people we employ and the money we spend. Equality is integral to everything the council does. We are committed to making Croydon a stronger, fairer borough where no community or individual is held back.

Undertaking an Equality Analysis helps to determine whether a proposed change will have a positive, negative, or no impact on groups that share a protected characteristic. Conclusions drawn from Equality Analyses helps us to better understand the needs of all our communities, enable us to target services and budgets more effectively and also helps us to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

An equality analysis must be completed as early as possible during the planning stages of any proposed change to ensure information gained from the process is incorporated in any decisions made.

In practice, the term '**proposed change**' broadly covers the following:-

- Policies, strategies and plans;
- Projects and programmes;
- Commissioning (including re-commissioning and de-commissioning);
- Service review;
- Budget allocation/analysis;

- Staff restructures (including outsourcing);
- Business transformation programmes;
- Organisational change programmes;
- Processes (for example thresholds, eligibility, entitlements, and access criteria).

2. Proposed change

Directorate	Education
Title of proposed change	Future options for Maintained Nursery Schools
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Denise Bushay

2.1 Purpose of proposed change (see 1.1 above for examples of proposed changes)

MNS are local authority run schools that provide early education and childcare to children under 5 during school hours and term time. They are one of several different types of early education and childcare provision across the borough, each offering a range of options for families.

Croydon has five Maintained Nursery Schools: three are located in the North; one in the Centre; and one in the South of the Borough. Four of the five MNS are unable to balance their budget and have an increasing deficit.

Under Section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006, Croydon has a statutory duty to provide sufficient funded three- and four-year-old places for eligible children to access. Early education is not statutory and is a parental choice. However, having enough and diversity of early years provision allow parents/carers to find childcare that meets their child's learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training.

There is sufficient and diverse supply of early education and childcare provision available across the borough to meet demand.

There are approximately 27,372 children under the age of five who are resident in Croydon.

MNS contribute to the Mayor's outcome - Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their Potential; and priority to: "Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential."

The council is proposing to consult on high level options for the possible direction of travel for the transformation of the delivery of Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) in Croydon so that they can be financially viable.

The cabinet report sets out 3 possible options, including advantages and disadvantages for each of the proposed options to consult partners on, including residents / families, and early years providers..

Informal consultation has already taken place with the MNS leadership team to seek their views on possible options which have helped to inform the proposed options outlined in the cabinet report.

External consultation - All those with an interest, including parents/carers will be consulted on the proposed options using different means/mode of communication, including via online survey, and partner events if required.

3. Impact of the proposed change

Important Note: It is necessary to determine how each of the protected groups could be impacted by the proposed change. Who benefits and how (and who, therefore doesn't and why?) Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic.

Where an impact is unknown, state so. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports, complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact

For each protected characteristic group show whether the impact of the proposed change on service users and/or staff is positive or negative by briefly outlining the nature of the impact in the appropriate column. If it is decided that analysis is not relevant to some groups, this should be recorded and explained. In all circumstances you should list the source of the evidence used to make this judgement where possible.

Developing this strategy in a partnership / collaboration with parents and carers, colleagues across and beyond the council, including Early Help, Public Health, NHS, Croydon's Clinical Commissioning Group and early years sector, residents and wider stakeholders will allow universal services to better support the most vulnerable children, including those with protected characteristics, and their families.

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
Age	<p>Yes.</p> <p>MNS provides early education and childcare for children under 5 and covers all pre-school up to when they start school in the Reception year and is in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).</p> <p>The proposed options include parents of any age.</p> <p>The proposed options promote and support diversity of age within the Early Years and Childcare workforce.</p> <p>The proposed options will ensure that support is directed to children and families which will benefit most from it. Evidence suggests this is the most effective form of early intervention for addressing inequality and promoting more equal outcomes.</p>		<p>We know that approximately 6000 babies are born each year in Croydon.</p> <p>Data is collected on the uptake of the 2 and 3 year funded nursery places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49% of the eligible 2-year-old population benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020. • 85% of 3- and 4-year-olds benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020. For both age groups, take up is below the London and England averages. • In 2020 74.6% of pupils achieved a good level of development in Croydon in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in line with London and above England (71.8%)
Disability	<p>Yes. The proposed options promote and supports diversity within the Early Years Partnership workforce.</p> <p>Parents / carers of young children with additional / special educational needs will be</p>		<p>Evidence will be provided by ensuring there is representation from disabled parents /carers and parents of disabled children through the ongoing parent</p>

consulted. This included on-line surveys, and stakeholder events.
Respondents will be asked to declare if they have a disability but this is voluntary.

An objective of the proposed options is to seek to ensure the future viability of MNS as currently some are at risk due to significant deficit budget.

One of the proposed options is the re-provision of one MNS into Early Years SEND setting.

Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCOs) are available for children with special educational needs and disability. SENCOs are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the early years settings.

The proposed options will improve the outcomes for children with special educational needs and disability through targeted services/support.

SEND training for staff in early years and childcare settings covers all aspects of the Equalities Act to ensure the setting meets the needs of the children and families it serves.

All children up to the age of 5, including those who have a disability and/or special educational needs and their families are included in the proposed options.

The council will continue to support settings to provide childcare for children with special educational needs through use of the Dedicated Schools Grant – high needs block.

engagement and consultation activities.

The proposed options are in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability strategy.

Croydon population suggests there are potentially 11,219 children and young people (aged 0-25) in the borough with disabilities. The most frequent impairment type reported by children nationally is social / behavioural, with an estimated 5,024 children in Croydon potentially affected.

Source: Department for Work and Pensions. Family Resources Survey

Sex	<p>Yes. The proposed options promote and supports diversity within the Early Years settings and workforce. This includes single parent families – male, female, and gender neutral.</p> <p>Females make up the largest percentage of the workforce.</p> <p>The strategy will affect all pregnant people, their families and families with children up to the age of 5 across the Borough. Fathers and carers are included as a key group.</p> <p>Improved access to childcare will mean improved services for both men, women and carers,</p>	Most of the Early Years and Childcare workforce is women. This Strategy could be seen to be less favorable towards men, however, male and other genders are not discriminated against.	Children under 5 are tracked within early years settings to ensure they make a good level of development. Comparisons are made between the achievements of girls and boys.
Gender Reassignment/Identity	Yes. The proposed options promote and support diversity within MNS and the Early Years sector and Childcare workforce. Equalities Act training ensures that parents/carers are not discriminated against due to their gender or gender identity. This will include consultation with parents about their preferred language with respect to identity and inclusivity.		Respondents to the survey will be asked to identify their gender.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	Yes. The proposed options promote and support diversity within the MNS and Early Years sector and Childcare workforce.		The department will need to collect equality data on this characteristic.
Religion or belief	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within MNS, Early Years sector and Childcare workforce.</p> <p>The proposed options support places being available for all children regardless of religion or belief.</p>		The department will collect data on this characteristic.

	<p>MNS have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>As part of the delivery planning process, and the commitment to inclusive practice, the possibility of an equality dashboard including data from across the system partners will be explored.</p> <p>All children aged up to the age of 5 and their families, regardless of their religion or belief are included in the proposed options..</p>																				
<p>Race</p>	<p>Yes. The proposed options promote and support diversity within MNS, the Early Years sector and Childcare settings and workforce.</p> <p>The proposed options support places being available for all children regardless of Race</p> <p>There will be targeting of children and their families of under-represented ethnic groups to improve take up and outcomes.</p> <p>The proposed options support children whose first language is not English and those who have come from war torn countries, e.g. asylum seeking and refugee parents and children.</p> <p>The proposed options support a workforce which is representative of the people it serves. Largely not Council employees or in commissioned services.</p>		<p>The 0 to 5 population is very diverse compared to London.</p> <table border="1"> <caption>0 to 5 Population by Race: Croydon vs London</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Race</th> <th>Croydon (%)</th> <th>London (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>30</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black</td> <td>28</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>18</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td> <td>18</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Race	Croydon (%)	London (%)	White	30	42	Black	28	28	Asian	18	18	Mixed	18	18	Other	5	5
Race	Croydon (%)	London (%)																			
White	30	42																			
Black	28	28																			
Asian	18	18																			
Mixed	18	18																			
Other	5	5																			
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Yes. The proposed options promote and support diversity within MNS and the Early Years settings and workforce.</p> <p>Early Years providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the</p>		<p>The department will collect data on this characteristic.</p>																		

	<p>requirements of the Equalities Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>The survey used ONS data questions to ask parents and carers about their sexual orientation.</p>		
Pregnancy or Maternity	<p>Yes. The proposed options promote and support diversity within MNS and the early Years settings and workforce.</p> <p>The scope of the proposed option is up to the age of 5, so incorporates pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Pregnant mothers and those with young babies may be advantaged by the provision of childcare places in their locality.</p>		6000 babies are born on average each year in Croydon.

Important note: You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.

When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics. **Please use table 4 to record actions that will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact**

3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

Table 2 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:		
Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
No negative impacts have been identified at this stage, before consultation on the proposed options. MNS have a positive impact on children and families with protected characteristics.		Census data, school population data ,health statistics informal

		knowledge from schools and communities

For guidance and support with consultation and engagement visit <https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/communications/consultation-and-engagement/starting-engagement-or-consultation>

3.3 Impact scores

Example

If we are going to reduce parking provision in a particular location, officers will need to assess the equality impact as follows;

1. Determine the Likelihood of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the likelihood of impact score is 2 (likely to impact)
2. Determine the Severity of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the Severity of impact score is also 2 (likely to impact)
3. Calculate the equality impact score using table 4 below and the formula **Likelihood x Severity** and record it in table 5, for the purpose of this example - **Likelihood (2) x Severity (2) = 4**

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

Severity of Impact	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
	Likelihood of Impact			

Key

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
6 – 9	High
3 – 5	Medium
1 – 3	Low

Table 3 – Impact scores

Column 1 PROTECTED GROUP	Column 2 LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT SCORE Use the key below to score the likelihood of the proposed change impacting each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group. 1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact	Column 3 SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCORE Use the key below to score the severity of impact of the proposed change on each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group. 1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact	Column 4 EQUALITY IMPACT SCORE Calculate the equality impact score for each protected group by multiplying scores in column 2 by scores in column 3. Enter the results below against each protected group. Equality impact score = likelihood of impact score x severity of impact score.
Age	2	2	4
Disability	2	2	4
Gender	2	3	6
Gender reassignment	2	2	4
Marriage / Civil Partnership	2	2	4
Race	2	2	4
Religion or belief	2	2	4
Sexual Orientation	2	2	4
Pregnancy or Maternity	2	2	4

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

Tick the relevant box(es) to indicate whether the proposed change will adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties in the Equality Act 2010 set out below.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups X

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups X

Important note: If the proposed change adversely impacts the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out above, mitigating actions must be outlined in the Action Plan in section 5 below.

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

Important note: Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact identified in Table 1. Attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc:

Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.				
Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability				
Race				
Sex (gender)	The majority of the EY workforce is female	Include ways to increase male and other genders representation in the workforce through the work of the	Partnership Early Years Strategy Workforce workstream	TBA

Equality Analysis

		workforce stream in the Partnership Early Years Strategy.		
Gender reassignment				
Sexual orientation				
Age				
Religion or belief				
Pregnancy or maternity				
Marriage/civil partnership				

6. Decision on the proposed change

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Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter X in column 3 (Conclusion) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.		
Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the strategy is robust. There has been consultation with parents, carers and partners which has informed the working principles, objectives and workstream priorities. Implementation of the strategy through the delivery planning phase will include the detailed actions on inclusive practice and reducing inequalities. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination, and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.	
Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. We will ensure that the views of partners are taken into consideration when reviewing the decision making and options within this area. If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form	x
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful	

Equality Analysis

	discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.	
Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet	Meeting title: Date:	

7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision		
Equalities Lead	Name: John Mukungunugwa	Date: 15/05/2023
	Position:	
Director	Name: Shelley Davies	Date: 14/06/2023
	Position: Director of Education	

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	28 June 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	2023-24 Period 1 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?	No	Reason: N/A
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 1 (April 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.
- 1.2** It is not common practice for a Council to report at Period 1 due to the prioritisation of closing the accounts for the previous financial year, however it was agreed at Audit and Governance Committee on 13/10/22 that a narrative only report would be provided for Period 1 of 2023-24. This recognises the financial difficulties that Croydon Council continues to face and the changing financial position during 2022-23 arising from the Opening the Books exercise.
- 1.3** The Council's 2023-24 budget required capitalisation directions from government of £63m to balance. The main reason for this is the Council's historic legacy borrowing and debt burden which continues to be critical to the sustainability of the Council's revenue budget.

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 risks as detailed in the directorate sections of the report
- 2.2** to note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget risks as detailed in the report
- 2.3** 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.
- 2.4** to note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 2.5** to note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.43.

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 end of year closing of the financial accounts for 2022-23 is still underway. It is expected that the Council will breakeven against the General Fund 2022-23 budget, however this is following the utilisation of capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC to resolve historical inaccurate accounting treatments and to fund the ongoing annual servicing of debt.

Cost of Living Considerations

- 4.2** 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 10.1% in the 12 months to March 2023, remaining consistently high following the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reporting in November 2022 that the CPI hit 11.1% in October 2022 (reaching the highest level since 1981). This impact goes beyond the Council as the cost of living is affecting all households and businesses.
- 4.3** 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.
- 4.4** 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.
- 4.5** At a national level, household support was announced in the form of a revised energy price guarantee, designed to limit the inflation on household energy bills. Households with a domestic energy connection have been eligible for a £400 discount over the winter and residents on means-tested benefits have been eligible for a £650 cost of living payment from Government.
- 4.6** The Council provides a wide range of support for residents that may be struggling due to the 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)
 - 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
- 4.7** 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

Savings

- 4.8** The 2023-24 budgets include a challenging savings target of £33.1m. Progress in achieving savings will be monitored throughout the year and reported in monthly financial performance reports to Cabinet from Period 2.
- 4.9** Directorates will identify any risks to achievement of individual savings and make plans to mitigate these risks where possible or identify alternative savings as required.

Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)

- 4.10** 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. 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.
- 4.11** Staffing underspends are expected to continue from periods of vacancy above the £1m MTFS 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 focussed on statutory delivery rather than delivering transformation to improve performance, data management and reduce operational risks across the directorate.

Assistant Chief Executive (ACE)

- 4.12** Recruitment is continuing into the new staffing structure for the Policy, Programmes and Performance Division and there may be a short-term underspend in 2023-24 from periods of vacancy.
- 4.13** Learning & Organisational Development is commissioning and delivering a cross-Council package of training and it is expected that the training budget will be utilised in full.
- 4.14** The Croydon Digital and Resident Access Division will undergo a restructure to achieve MTFS staffing savings and is also working on MTFS savings in IT contracts.
- 4.15** The Public Health Division is expecting to underspend again in 2023-24. This is on top of increased one-off contributions to Public Health eligible spend across the Council, pending 2024-25 MTFS General Fund savings to be found through permanent Public Health grant allocations.

- 4.16** The Council has received grant funding towards the support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and the underspend from 2022-23 has been carried forward in an earmarked reserve to fund ongoing expenditure in 2023-24.

Children, Young People and Education (CYPE)

- 4.17** The Children's Social Care Division will monitor placement and care package expenditure during the year. There may be staffing underspends from periods of vacancy and an underspend in legal costs (if the lower numbers of care proceedings and UASC age assessment challenges continue) to help mitigate pressures. The Division is producing service level agreements for reviewed HRA funding towards Youth Engagement and Youth Offending services, and these may result in a General Fund pressure. The Division is also reviewing the housing accommodation charges from the Housing General Fund for Care Experienced Young People.
- 4.18** The Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement Division may continue to experience a staffing underspend from periods of vacancy (above the 5% vacancy factor MTFS saving of £0.3m applied to the 2023-24 budget).
- 4.19** Non-DSG Education services may continue to experience underspends from periods of staffing vacancy and increased Traded Services income. There is a continuing pressure of £0.3m from under-achievement in income due to a prior year MTFS income saving (NHS funding towards speech and language therapy) not achieved.
- 4.20** Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs education services will be closely monitoring the cost pressures in Special School placements and Out of Borough placement costs. There are ongoing transformation projects which are delivering savings to reduce pressures within the high needs block as part of the DfE Safety Valve programme.

Housing

- 4.21** 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.
- 4.22** 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.
- 4.23** 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.
- 4.24** There is also the issue of entering into 2 to 5 years lease deals with landlords as 39% 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 address this issue.

- 4.25** There has also 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.
- 4.26** 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.
- 4.27** 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) is being implemented which will improve monitoring and reporting.

Resources

- 4.28** The Finance Division will undergo a restructure of the accountancy 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 accountancy service are being reviewed and a growth bid may be submitted for 2024-25 if needed.
- 4.29** There could be an underspend in the Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt Service from income over-achievement in court awarded costs, however this will be monitored throughout the year as the level is activity-based.
- 4.30** The Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Division is reviewing usage of external legal advice. It is planned 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.

Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery (SCRER)

- 4.31** The biggest pressure in the directorate continues to be from under-achievement in parking, parking enforcement and moving traffic offence income. 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.

- 4.32** Parking Services continue to have delays in connection with the roll out of new ANPR cameras which affect the income levels within the service. The Parking budget has been rebased for 2023-24 based on a timetabled roll out of Healthy Neighbourhood Schemes, so the delays in the implementation of the cameras continue to have a detrimental effect.
- 4.33** The SCRER directorate is expected to continue to have a staffing underspend in 2023-24 due to periods of vacancy.
- 4.34** 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.
- 4.35** 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.

Corporate Items and Funding

- 4.36** The corporate area holds funding streams such as Council Tax, retained share of Business Rates and Core Grants. The corporate budget also holds a Council-wide risk contingency budget (£5m) and the budgets for borrowing and interest received.
- 4.37** 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 due to the implementation of staffing savings.
- 4.38** The corporate area holds the central budget for pay and non-pay inflation. The requirement for directorates will be reviewed during 2023-24 (based on inflation experienced on contracts and NJC national negotiations on the pay award for staff) and the required budget allocation may create a pressure above the central allowance of £32.9m. There is a further budget of £5.5m held centrally for the potential impact of economic demand pressures on Croydon.
- 4.39** 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.

- 4.40** There is £7.3m budget held in Corporate for adjustments to correct General Fund recharge budgets for recharges to the HRA and corporate support (overhead) recharges. This budget will be allocated during 2023-24 as the service level agreements (SLA's) are finalised for HRA recharges and when the review of corporate support recharges is finalised.
- 4.41** 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).
- 4.42** 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).

Transformation Programme

- 4.43** The Transformation Programme has £14m of resources allocated to it, £4m in the 2022-23 Capital Programme and £10m in the 2023-24 revenue budget. The Transformation Programme published in November 2022 set out £5.9m of project commitments with recognition that further sums were still to be confirmed.
- 4.44** A new project to review the Croydon Adult Learning and Training (CALAT) service has been added to the programme with an initial £0.050m budget approved by the Corporate Director of Resources (S151 Officer).
- 4.45** Highlights from the transformation progress made to date include:
- The Business Intelligence Project is a cross-discipline officer group to identify areas where the council may be funding activities/discounts for residents who are not eligible. To date 1,911 invalid single person discounts have been cancelled, increasing Council Tax income by circa £0.9m. The project has also deactivated 474 Freedom Passes with investigations ongoing.
 - The HR Transformation work has concluded the restructure of the payroll team and is moving to implement the service changes.
 - The Housing Needs and Homelessness Service is undergoing major restructure affecting 168 staff within the division - 138 full-time and 30 part-time posts. The restructure will ensure that the Housing Needs and Homelessness service is fit-for-purpose and that all staff are skills-matched to the roles needed to deliver an efficient and effective Service. Formal consultation closed on 28th April 2023.
 - A review of the Community Equipment Service is proceeding at pace with a range of options being developed.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

4.46 The main risks within the Housing Revenue Account are:

- Repairs and maintenance:
 - pressures from the current Axis repairs contract, ending in August 2023, due to agreed changes in the payment model and negotiated inflationary increases.
 - 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:
 - pressures in utility costs related to higher energy prices
 - the impact of cost of living pressures on rent collection (including a potential increase in bad debt cost)
 - loss of income due to void (empty) residential properties
 - loss of income due 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.

4.47 There may be potential underspends in the HRA due to:

- staffing vacancies due to difficulties recruiting to specialist posts
- underspends in non-pay expenditure budgets including the contingency budget

Capital Programme and Financial Sustainability

4.48 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 find itself. 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.

4.49 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.

- 4.50** 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.
- 4.51** An estimated circa £66m is required to service this debt from the General Fund which represents around 16% 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.
- 4.52** 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.
- 4.53** 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.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1** It is not common practice for a Council to report at Period 1 due to the prioritisation of closing the accounts for the previous financial year, however it was agreed at Audit and Governance Committee on 13/10/22 that a narrative only report would be provided for Period 1 of 2023-24. This recognises the financial difficulties that Croydon Council continues to face and the changing financial position during 2022-23 arising from the Opening the Books exercise, however it is not expected that a Period 1 report will be presented next financial year.

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 Reserve of £27.5m which serves 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.

8.1.4 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.

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

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that 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 and therefore this report also demonstrates compliance with that legal duty.

Comments approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.

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 Assistant 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.

Comments approved by Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must therefore have due regard 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 have been hit 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 characterises 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 been 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 Denise McCausland, Equalities Programme Manager, Policy and Strategy.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	28 JUNE 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Joint Children’s Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Experienced Young People	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	DEBBIE JONES, INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SUSMITA SEN, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING	
LEAD OFFICER:	JANE SCOTT, TRANSFORMATION LEAD, CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE Jane.Scott@croydon.gov.uk BEATRICE CINGTHO-TAYLOR, INTERIM HEAD OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION Beatrice.Cingtho-Taylor@croydon.gov.uk Ext: 26013	
LEAD MEMBER:	CLLR MARIA GATLAND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CLLR LYNNE HALE DEPUTY MAYOR AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES	
KEY DECISION?	YES	3123EM Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards.
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 As a Corporate Parent, the council is ambitious and wants to provide the same level of care and support that other young people get from their parents. However, the report outlines the current arrangements in place for Care Experienced Young People transitioning from care into independence and highlights housing provision as one of the challenges for Croydon Council in delivering a good standard of provision to these young people.

- 1.2 To address the issues, the report sets out the improved pathway developed jointly between Housing and Children's Services and acknowledges that Care Experienced Young People are a vulnerable group of young adults who need support to ensure they have the necessary skills to live independently and are provided with safe, affordable and suitable homes as they move onto independence.
- 1.3 The report also outlines that there is an increasing demand expected from Care Experienced Young People over the next few years. The revised pathway will provide corporate financial efficiencies to enable the Council to effectively respond and address the current and future housing and support needs to ensure every young person reaches their potential to become independent, confident adults.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 To approve Croydon's Joint Children's Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Experienced Young People which underpins a new way of working to improve outcomes for young people.
- 2.2 To note that the effectiveness of the new arrangements and measures of success will be reported through the Corporate Parenting Board and existing directorate performance management frameworks to ensure decisive actions are taken to address any issues.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To adopt a strategic and shared approach to responding to the housing and support needs of Care Experienced Young People as part of a Croydon Corporate Parenting three-year strategy.
- 3.2 To support a smooth transition from care to independence by ensuring all young people have access to suitable accommodation advice and support.
- 3.3 To avoid homelessness amongst Care Experienced Young People.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 Croydon Council has committed to a Whole Council Approach to Corporate Parenting of Looked After Children and Care Experienced young people up to the age of 25 years.
- 4.2 Care Experienced young people's experiences of attempting to access a home and support when leaving care at age 18 is varied and can often lead to them feeling that

they are no longer cared for or held in mind. This can result in experiences of instability in their home and education/employment arrangements, impact negatively on their mental and physical health and wellbeing, as they sometimes have no other option than to 'sofa surf' or become homeless.

- 4.3** “I struggled to manage my first independent housing experience when I left care. I sofa surfed for a while. My personal advisor helped me to realise that I needed a new home, that was safe and a stable base. I was ready but not expecting to be treated like I was a stranger by the Council that had looked after me for 12 years. I was made to use the homelessness route to access my next home.” (Composite feedback from Care Experienced Young People).
- 4.4** Currently, a total of 458 of our Care Experienced young people between the age of 18 and 25 are living in temporary accommodation, mainly in studio flats and shared rooms in a house without a move-on plan. The young people are referred by Children’s Service to Housing a few months before their 18th birthday. Housing Service maintains a waiting list and sources accommodation in the private rented sector to meet this housing need.
- 4.5** The temporary accommodation allocation to Care Experienced young people is not linked to a homelessness application or assessment and is therefore not included in the temporary accommodation quarterly returns to the government which in turn impacts on the level of homelessness grant that the Council is allocated.
- 4.6** The temporary accommodation schemes used to accommodate the Care Experienced young people is procured based on a Private Sector Model (PSL) which means that rent charges are limited under Housing Benefit regulations to 90% of Jan 2011 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels. However, the landlords are paid higher current LHA rates plus a management fee to secure the required level of property supply. Therefore, the costs are not fully recovered through rents.
- 4.7** Children’s Services cover some of the cost by paying equivalent of 25% of the rent of each young person who is entitled to claim benefits (those who have recourse to Public Funds). This charge is used to offset non-payment of rent, mainly due to a shortfall in housing benefit claims. Children’s Services also cover the full rent of each young person who is not entitled to claim benefits (those who have no recourse to Public Funds). This position is being reviewed a part of an improvement programme which will incorporate benchmarking effective joint housing and children’s social care practice and cost effectiveness measures to realise a positive impact on wider council savings.
- 4.8 Preventing homelessness and promoting positive outcomes**
- 4.9** The average age that young people leave their family home to live independently in England has increased to 23 years old (Office of National Statistics 2022). Care Experienced young people are often facing this transition at a much earlier age and require wrap around support and care from their Corporate Parent. In Croydon we are committed through the Mayor’s Business Plan and Croydon’s Corporate Parenting

Strategy, to actively develop more opportunities for care experienced young people to have the best start into their early adulthood. Having a safe and stable home forms part of the key foundations to achieving success. As with all young people, there will be times when plans do not work out for a variety of reasons and Care Experienced young people will need support.

- 4.10** Under homelessness legislation young people who were formerly in care aged 18-20 are automatically in 'priority need'. This means that if they become homeless there is a duty to provide accommodation.
- 4.11** Care leavers aged 21 and over do not have an automatic priority need under homelessness legislation, but the local housing authority must take into account the effect that being in care may have had on that young person in assessing whether they should be deemed as vulnerable. If they are found to be vulnerable, they will be owed the same housing duties as 18–20-year-olds in terms of the local authority having a duty to provide accommodation.
- 4.12** The duty to provide permanent accommodation does not arise where someone has been found to have become intentionally homeless. This refers to a deliberate act or omission which has resulted in that person's homelessness; for example, a deliberate non-payment of rent or giving up accommodation which was otherwise suitable. However, the Homelessness Code of Guidance states that local authorities should do all they can to avoid the impact of 'intentionally homeless' decisions on Care Leavers. [Chapter 22 of the Homelessness code of guidance](#) lays out the good practice guidance in this area.
- 4.13** As set out in 4.4. above, most Care Experienced young people move on from care into temporary accommodation without going through the homelessness assessment process and most can initially sustain their own accommodation with or without support. It is once the young person has been in their accommodation for a few months that the risk of homelessness can occur. This may be due to not feeling safe in their location, difficulties managing money and rent arrears, isolation and mental wellbeing challenges.
- 4.14** The independent Review of Children's Social Care was a commitment from the Governments manifesto to ensure that children and young people get the support that they need. The review launched in March 2021, the findings and recommendations were published on the 23.5.22. The Governments response to the review on the 2.2.23 stated that Local Authorities are required to introduce a stronger safety net against care leaver homelessness.
- 4.15** Housing legislation encourages decision-making based on individual circumstances rather than 'blanket' positions. A key driver for the revised pathway is to better support Care experienced Young People to ensure homelessness is not part of their experience. Housing and Children's Social Care are working together to analyse conditions that contribute to the determination of intentional homelessness amongst Care Experienced Young People. The analyse will inform a joint agreement between

Housing and Children's Social Care regarding how to ensure support is provided to mitigate against the impact of this change in approach.

4.16 Local Offer

4.17 An increase in demand is expected from Care Experienced Young People over the next few years which demonstrates the need for change for the Council and its partners to not only work differently, but to also improve the accommodation pathway escalation.

4.18 The joint protocol is an opportunity for staff from Children and Housing services to work together and build shared responsibility for supporting care leavers through a successful transition to adulthood and independent living.

4.19 Young people leaving care have a variety of needs and each person requires an accommodation and support package to meet their individual needs. To manage this process a Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Panel consisting of Housing and Children's services professionals will be established and will meet regularly to discuss the housing and support needs of each young person and agree a clear pathway to securing accommodation.

4.20 The basic principle for young people transitioning to independence is that every child is an individual with different wishes, needs and aspirations. Therefore, good preparation, a gradual transition and flexible ongoing support and housing options are key to helping Care Experienced Young People achieve a successful move to independent living. The improved pathway which is summarised below will be based on this principle:

- i. Children Services will work with a young person to identify, develop, and review a holistic Pathway Plan. As part of this, they will assess the young person's housing needs and discuss accommodation options before the age of 18.
- ii. Housing Services will act as the Housing Agent for Children's Services for the purposes of identifying, sourcing and allocating the appropriate housing solution for the young person.
- iii. The Joint Panel will consider the housing and support needs and agree the likely and most suitable accommodation option.
- iv. This pathway will apply to both current young people living in temporary accommodation and new ones transitioning into adulthood. For the former, a review of their circumstances will be carried out to determine the suitable accommodation option.

4.21 The accommodation options considered by the joint panel will include the following:

- a) **Supported living:** - Supported Lodgings, Staying Put with Foster carers, Shared lives accommodation and support for adults living with a family in the community. Semi-independent shared housing with support and University accommodation.

- b) **Supported housing accommodation** - This accommodation may be suitable for young people not ready or able to manage their own tenancy.
- c) **Private rented accommodation** – most young people capable of independent living, with some support, will be offered accommodation in the private rented sector. For most, this will be shared accommodation which can reduce social isolation among young people and help with the transition to their own flat where they will be responsible for all utilities and others bills. In addition, support from a Personal Adviser can move with the young person as they transition to settled accommodation.
- d) **Social housing** - due to the very limited supply of social housing available, a quota will be established to ensure the housing needs of young people with complex needs is met. We will also explore all opportunities with all supply partners, such as Registered Providers to increase the supply. Housing Tenancy Services will provide a package of support for those allocated such accommodation, including furnished flats, decorated homes, and dedicated tenancy support while the young person is in their new home to help sustain the tenancy.
- e) **Emergency accommodation** - every effort will be made to avoid a placement into emergency accommodation such as bed and breakfast (B&B); this is unsuitable accommodation for Care Experienced young people save in the most exceptional circumstances.

4.22 Supporting Care Leavers to be the best they can be.

4.23 As a Corporate Parent, the council wants to be ambitious for its' Care Experienced Young People and provide them with a range of support so they can be the best they can be and help them deal with the challenges of stepping up into homeownership.

4.24 They will be signposted and supported to consider home ownership or shared ownership opportunities where appropriate. The Housing Department can provide signposting to a variety of schemes.

4.25 Governance

Effectiveness of the new arrangements and report measures of success through our Corporate Parenting Board and existing directorate performance management frameworks to ensure decisive actions are taken to address any issues.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1. The Council could choose not to revise the current pathway. This would not be in the interests of the Council or the Care Experienced Young People as it is not considered good Corporate Parenting practice and is therefore not recommended.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1** Independent review of children's social care incorporates wide consultation.
- 6.2** The recommendation is also based on Croydon's learning from Complaints by Croydon Care Experienced young people regarding their experiences of struggling to obtain a stable home and safety.
- 6.3** Further consultation is planned to monitor ongoing needs and experiences to inform improvement plan.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1** The proposals contained within this report contribute to the following outcome in the Mayors Business Plan for 2022- 2026.
 - Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.
- 7.2** It also aligns with Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2025

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1** This report sets an intention to change the pathway for care leavers, managed by the Housing Service working alongside colleagues in Children's Social Care services.
- 8.1.2** There will be financial implications to these changes depending on the mix of new pathways and the level of support being generally provided to Care Experienced Young People
- 8.1.3** There are currently 458 care experienced young people living in temporary accommodation who are unable to fully maximise housing benefit claims alongside due to benefits rules. With an agreed approach to transfer these young people from temporary accommodation to settled accommodation, full benefit maximisation will be realised with reduced reliance on wider council resources. Temporary accommodation costs are historically high because in addition to rent, accommodation costs may include management fees and bond claims as an example.

- 8.1.4 A client-by-client review is required to fully understand the potential pressure that each Directorate may face going forward. With agreed transformation funding further detailed analysis will commence. Due to the number of young people and the complications involved this will require time to understand the full financial implications.
- 8.1.5 Further work and detailed analysis is required to assess the full impact of this revision. The current route for care leavers is both expensive and inadequate for vulnerable young adults moving out of care. Making this change should initially have minimal financial impact with potentially large non-financial benefits which will deliver cost avoidance benefits related to council and other agency services.

Approved by: Sarah Attwood (Head of Housing Finance). 02/05/2023. Maiyani Henry-Hercules (Head of Children's Social Care Finance. 15/6/2023).

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1 Local authorities have a duty under Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, to support young people and promote their welfare when they have ceased to look after them. The plan for each young person is set out in their pathway plan where their goals and aspirations are clearly outlined.
- 8.2.2 The new duties in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 extended support to care leavers to age 25. This has increased the number of young people entitled to support.
- 8.2.3 The Local Authority is obliged to ensure Care Leavers can access key services, including suitable housing, emotional wellbeing support and support to access education, training and employment.
- 8.2.4 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (CWSA) strengthened the role of local authorities as corporate parents and applies to all local authorities as set out in section 1(3) of the Act. The CWSA also extended the provision of Personal Adviser support to care leavers up to the age of 25, whether or not they are in education or training, which the care leaver can choose to take up. It is therefore important that joint housing protocols cover the support available from a local authority area to care leavers up to the age of 25.
- 8.2.5 All local authorities have a legal obligation to support young people making a transition from care to independence. Local authorities are required under section 2 of the CWSA to publish a local offer, which sets out the services and the support available for care leavers. The local offer should provide information about the Care Leavers' statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support available. It should set out how care leavers are supported to access suitable accommodation, including the support available from housing services. Joint housing protocols should be aligned with the local offer and can help to ensure that the commitments to support care leavers to access and sustain accommodation are met.

Approved by Doutimi Aseh on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (07/06/2023)

- 8.2.6 Housing Authorities must have regard to the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities issued by the Department for Levelling, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in exercising their functions under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2022.
- 8.2.7 Social services authorities must also adhere to the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities issued by DLUHC and the guidance issued by the Department of Education when exercising their functions that relate to homelessness and the prevention of homelessness. The current Department for Education guidance is '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*'. [Chapter 22 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance](#) sets out specific guidance on the provision of homelessness services and specific duties to Care Leavers who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The following is covered:
- (a) Corporate parenting duties placed on housing authorities;
 - (b) Joint working arrangements between housing authorities and children's services authorities;
 - (c) Prevention and relief of homelessness;
 - (d) Assessing Care Leavers priority need for accommodation: and
 - (e) Provision of suitable accommodation.

Approved by Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (19/06/2023)

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1 This recommendation promotes Care Experienced Young People, as a priority group, to enable them to achieve a safe and stable home.
- 8.3.2 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must evidence consideration of any potential impacts of proposals on groups who share the protected characteristics, before decisions are taken. This includes any decisions relating to how authorities act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and also how they commission and procure services from others.
- 8.3.3 Section 149 of the Act requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

8.3.4 Protected characteristics defined by law include race and ethnicity, disability, sex, gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The Joint Children’s Social Care and Housing Protocol will promote the equality of opportunity for Care Experienced young people, who although not currently a protected characteristic reflect many of the protected characteristics defined by law. We are committed to continually reviewing equalities and the range and impact of care and housing provisions. This is to ensure that the needs of those protected under the Equality act 2010 are continuously considered and reflected in Childrens Social Care and Housing improvements.

8.3.5 The EQIA that was carried out concluded that there are no potential negative equality implications. It is however necessary for the department to collect data based on all equality characteristics to ensure that young people may receive a service which meets their needs. It is particularly important that data is collected regarding disability to ensure that young people affected by mental health or other disabilities are looked after in line with the protocol.

Approved by: John Mukungunugwa, Interim Senior Equalities Officer on behalf of Denise McCausland, the Equalities Programme Manager. Date: 12/06/2023

8.4 HUMAN RESOURES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 There is no immediate HR impact in regard to this report.

Approved by Jennifer Sankar (Head of HR for Housing Directorate & Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Directorate) on behalf of the Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer. Date: 14/06/2023

9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Joint Children’s Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Experienced Young People.

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment.

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

11 URGENCY – N/A

TITLE	London Borough of Croydon Joint Children's Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Experienced Young People
DATE OF ISSUE	15.6.23
VERSION NUMBER	FINAL
REVIEW DATE	15.6.24
DOCUMENT OWNERS	Jane Scott/Hamid Khan.
Section	Contents
	Introduction
1	Legislative Framework
2	Aims and Objectives
3	Transitions planning for care leavers before they leave care
4	Helping care leavers to prepare for independent living
5	Accommodation options for care leavers
6	Joint contingency planning
7	Care leavers leaving custody
8	Care leavers living outside the children's services authority area
9	Care Leavers Housing Pathway Panel
10	A care leaver's accommodation preferences
11	Statutory homeless assessments
12	Avoiding the use of Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Emergency Accommodation
13	Homeless applications outside of the Pathway Panel.
14	Homeless application review rights
15	Dispute Resolution
16	Monitoring and Review
Appendix A	Terms of reference Care Leavers Housing Pathways Panel
Appendix B	Using 'Duty to refer'

Introduction

This is a protocol between Children's Social Care and Housing services covering the arrangements for care leavers transitioning to independent living. The protocol sets out how the services will work together to assess housing options and support care leavers into appropriate accommodation and ensure the effective management of housing crises for young people where they occur. It seeks to proactively identify care leavers at risk of homelessness and act to prevent it. Where care leavers do become homeless, the protocol seeks to ensure a swift, safe, and integrated response.

The protocol has been written for:

- Young people leaving Croydon's care.
- Young people up to the age of 25 owed a duty under the Leaving Care Act 2000
- Children's Social Care and Housing Teams
- Voluntary sector advice, support and accommodation providers
- Other statutory services, e.g., Youth Offending Service

1. Legislative Framework

- [Housing Act 1996](#) - Part 6 (Allocations) and Part 7 (Homelessness), as amended by the [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#)
- [Homelessness \(Priority Need for Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2002](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) - sections 1, 2 and 3

The following is a list of relevant statutory guidance:

- [Homelessness code of guidance](#)
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers](#)
- [Children Act 1989: care planning, placement and case review](#)
- [Children Act 1989: transition to adulthood for care leavers](#)
- [Extending Personal Adviser support for all care leavers to age 25](#)
- [Local offer guidance](#)

The protocol has also been developed taking account of the non- statutory guidance 'Joint housing protocols for care leavers: good practice advice'.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (CSWA) strengthened the role of local authorities as corporate parents and applies to all local authorities as set out in section 1(3) of the Act.

Corporate parenting means local authorities doing the most they can for looked after children and care leavers, to give them the same opportunities as other children and promote the best possible outcome. As a corporate parent we are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were our own.

The Act sets out corporate parenting principles to be applied when supporting children in care and care leavers. In carrying out their functions, the local authority must have regard to the following needs:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and care leavers.
- to encourage those children and care leavers to express their views, wishes and feelings.
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and care leavers.
- to help those children and care leavers gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and care leavers.
- for those children and care leavers to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- to prepare those children and care leavers for adulthood and independent living

The DfE statutory guidance on applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers stresses the importance of joint working in supporting care leavers to navigate their way through the transition to adulthood:

“Good preparation, a gradual transition and flexible ongoing support are key to helping care leavers achieve a successful move to independent living. The most effective local authorities establish joint working arrangements between children’s services, housing and other specialist services to help care leavers prepare for the realities of living independently, involve them in planning and decisions.

about their housing options, ensure suitable housing and support is in place and are ready to respond with contingency arrangements if things do go wrong. (Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers - Chapter 2).”

The CSWA also extended the provision of Personal Adviser support to care leavers up to the age of 25, whether or not they are in education or training, which the care leaver can choose to take up. Local authorities have a duty to provide care leavers with Personal Adviser support and a pathway plan up to their 21st birthday.

For care leavers aged 21 or over the duty to assess needs and develop and keep under review a pathway plan – apply only where the young person requests support.

It is therefore important that joint housing protocols cover the support available from a local authority area to care leavers up to the age of 25.

The Local Offer

All local authorities have a legal obligation to support young people making a transition from care to independence. Local authorities are required under section 2 of the CSWA to publish a local offer, which sets out the services and the support available for care leavers.

The local offer should provide information about the Care Leavers statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support available. It should set out how care leavers are supported to access suitable accommodation, including the support available from housing services. Joint housing protocols should be aligned with the local offer and can help to ensure that the commitments to support care leavers to access and sustain accommodation are met.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) amended the Housing Act 1996, introducing significant new duties for local housing authorities and partners. Particularly relevant for care leavers are:

- a duty to provide advice and information on homelessness free of charge to all residents, including advice to meet the needs of care leavers.
- duties to help prevent and relieve homelessness for those who are eligible irrespective of priority need or intentional homelessness. Provision of a Personalised Housing Plan to applicants threatened with homelessness or homeless, which sets out the steps the local authority and applicant will take to prevent or relieve homelessness.
- changes in local connection requirements for care leavers which provide more choice to those who have lived out of the placing authority area, or who are looked after by a county council within two-tier areas.
- a ‘duty to refer’ placed on specified public bodies, including children’s services, where their service users are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance was revised in 2018 to reflect changes introduced by the HRA with chapter 22 of the Code focusing specifically on care leavers. The Code outlines the importance of joint working when planning housing options for care leavers and states that:

‘By working together, housing authorities and children’s services authorities can better ensure that as a corporate parent, the appropriate accommodation and support is available to care leavers. (Homelessness code of guidance - Chapter 22: Care leavers).’

Furthermore, the guidance also advises that authorities should have in place joint protocols which clearly outline jointly held corporate parenting responsibilities for care leavers. Joint protocols should cover:

- arrangements for achieving planned, supportive transitions to independent living
- identifying homelessness risk early and acting to prevent it
- providing a quick, safe, joined up response for care leavers who do become homeless.

The protocol sets out the processes that the council will follow to support care leavers to transition to independent living and avoid homelessness. This joint protocol is an opportunity to bring together staff from across services and to build shared responsibility for supporting care leavers through a successful transition to adulthood and independent living.

2. Aims and Objectives

Aims

To ensure the effective discharge of corporate responsibilities between Housing Services and Children's Social Care by jointly addressing the diverse accommodation needs of young people leaving care.

To prevent care leavers becoming homeless

To support young people to become responsible and successful tenants.

Due to the diverse needs of care leavers and the way in which these will change over time, a range of accommodation options will be required.

The protocol will work at a number of levels:

- Undertaking joint Housing / Young People's team assessments of individual housing need;
- Monitoring and reviewing the accommodation needs of care leavers;
- Ensuring that the right housing option is given to a care leaver recognizing their individual wishes but also understanding the provision available of different accommodation types;
- To ensure bed and breakfast accommodation is only used in exceptional circumstances;
- Joint work to ensure that young people are accommodated in safe environments which meet health, safety and wellbeing requirements.
- Ensuring that holistic tenancy sustainment is available for all care leavers for as long as necessary.

Objectives

- To jointly assess and meet the diverse housing and support needs of young people leaving care, through the application of a clear consistent process.
- To ensure care leavers achieve a successful transition into independent living through support, preparation, and provision of suitable accommodation.
- To identify gaps in service provision for young people and to work together with other agencies to address these gaps, feeding information into the relevant strategies.
- To reduce the likelihood of a care leaver becoming homeless and where this cannot be prevented ensure that a rapid assessment can be carried out.
- To jointly ensure that all staff are aware of the housing needs of young people leaving care and the obligations of each agency to address these needs.

3. Transitions planning for care leavers before they leave care.

The council is committed to supporting all our care leavers to ensure that they are provided with appropriate accommodation based on their individual needs. The transition to independent living includes preparation for independence with planned sustainable moves into supported or independent accommodation.

The journey out of care is a particularly important, and sometimes challenging transition where young people can become an adult in one area of their lives, but not in others. For many young people, their transition to adulthood can be extended and delayed until they are emotionally and financially ready, and they have the qualifications they need and aspire to. Securing suitable accommodation for care leavers is therefore much more than just finding them somewhere to stay.

Care leavers should expect the same level of care and support that others would expect from a parent. Croydon Council is responsible for their care and should make sure that they are provided with the opportunities they need. It is important to remember that there is no one appropriate pathway for young people to move to independent living. Leaving care too early presents looked after young people with significant challenges which will impact on their life chances. Care leavers, like all young people, will make mistakes and require support to learn from their experiences. Young people leaving care may need longer to achieve some of their goals than their peers who have not been in care.

Care leavers need to be well prepared to live independently and their housing needs must be addressed before they leave care via pathway planning and joint assessment. The intention is to ensure well planned moves, which will involve care leavers and take account of their individual needs. Social Workers, foster carers and the professional network will begin transition planning with young people well advance of the expected date of leaving care and plans will be reviewed by the Independent Reviewing Officer as part of the looked after children's review process.

The pathway plan should be a comprehensive document that identifies the actions and services required to meet the needs and outcomes of the young person during his/her transition into adulthood and independence. Where young people have complex needs and a range of agencies (including for example adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Housing related support providers, the Youth Justice Service and the National Probation Service) are involved in supporting their pathway plan it may be helpful to agree arrangements for information sharing at a multi-agency meeting to confirm or to review the pathway plan.

Working with the young person and Social Worker / Personal Adviser the aim will be to agree accommodation and support pathways when they leave care which may include:

- The local accommodation options for care leavers, including Staying Put.
- Living away at university and needing vacation accommodation.
- Living in supported lodgings/ Shared lives arrangements.
- Living in supported housing.
- Sharing a house with other people.
- Living in a self-contained social housing or private rented tenancy.
- Returning to live with family.
- Offer of a secure tenancy

4. Helping care leavers to prepare for independent living

A key principle of corporate parenting is a responsibility to prepare children and care leavers for adulthood and independent living. Care leavers who are well prepared and supported through the transition will have greater resilience and be less likely to become homeless after they leave care.

It is essential that young people are supported by the Young People's Team with active programmes which

will support them in their preparation for independent living. There will be a need to build personal and emotional resilience as well as practical knowledge and skills, such as financial confidence, budgeting skills, access to welfare benefits, tenancy rights and responsibilities.

Children Looked After Children's 0-16 Service

The Children Looked After Teams will support children and young people in care, until the age of 16. The children in care Social Workers are responsible for all aspects of the young person's care, including Children Looked After children's reviews, health, education, and future planning.

When a young person is 16, they transition to a Social Worker in the Young People's team who will continue to oversee children social care's statutory responsibilities and ensure a smooth transition to the leaving care service for the young person.

Young People's 16+ Service

The Young People's Service supports young people getting ready to leave care and care leavers up to the age of 25, whether they are in education/ training or not.

The service consists of Social Workers and Personal Advisers (PA) who help young to prepare to live independently and offer advice and support as they leave care.

Care leavers that have been residing out of the local authority area and those in custody are also entitled to receive the same support to prepare for independent living as any other care leavers within the LA.

Personal Advisers will be required to support care leavers in pursuit of their housing options with the local authority where a local connection applies. A young person entitled to leaving care duties under the Children Act 1989 has a local connection to the area of the children services authority that owed them the duties.

Under the Homelessness Code of Guidance - Where a care leaver is aged under 21 and normally lives in a different area to that of a local authority that owes them leaving care duties, and has done for at least 2 years including some time before they turned 16, the young person will also have a local connection in that area. This will entitle the young person to make an informed choice on where they wish to pursue their housing pathway. This should include the Personal Adviser contacting the local authority where the young person resides to explore what accommodation options may be available in advance of them leaving care.

5. Accommodation options for care leavers

The Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and the Secretary of State for Education consider that all young people leaving care should have safe and appropriate accommodation to meet their needs.

A young person's housing options will be considered on an individual basis and based on an assessment of need. For each of the potential options listed below a young person will be supported by their social worker / PA to make relevant applications.

a) Staying Put

A staying put arrangement enables a care leaver to remain living with the foster carer with whom they are placed with when they turned 18. It is an arrangement based upon both parties, that is the young person and the foster carer(s), expressing the wish to enter into such an arrangement when a young person becomes 18. As stated in the good practice guide: *'ultimately it is the young person and their foster carer who make the joint decision to establish the arrangement. This is based on their commitment to each other and applies in the same way whether the foster carer is approved by a local authority or by an independent fostering provider'*.

Staying put is referred to as an 'arrangement' to differentiate it from a foster 'placement'. The young person staying put is no longer a looked after child after they reach 18 years of age. They are a young adult and a care leaver. They are entitled to support as a care leaver up to the age of 25. A staying put arrangement is governed by the care leavers' legislation and statutory guidance which places a duty on the local authority to support this arrangement, meeting the financial costs attached to this.

b) Staying Close

A number of Staying Close pilot schemes are currently operating around England with support from the DfE, helping care leavers moving on from residential care to continue receiving support from their residential home after they have left care.

c) Friends or Family

Some care leavers choose to return to live with immediate or extended family when they leave care. A 'friends or family' arrangement can be an option for some young people. This arrangement can be a temporary one, acting as a bridge to the next accommodation, or as a longer-term solution, depending on what is right for the young person. Support can be provided to the young person and their family to build and maintain positive relationships.

d) Training/Taster flats

Although not currently in place in Croydon, short term training flats for care leavers can help care leavers to gain a sense of the responsibilities that comes with independent living, and experience the reality of living alone, which may identify other challenges such as loneliness, isolation and accessing support. This would ideally be part of the pathway planning and upskilling of young people prior to leaving care and administered by Young Peoples Team.

e) Supported Lodging

Supported lodgings involves a young person still living in a home, with someone there to support them. The living arrangement may involve living with a single person, a couple, and/or with other young people or children. Supported lodgings is normally for young people 16 and over.

Supported lodgings is often seen as a 'steppingstone' to independence, and often is a good opportunity to have a little more time to strengthen their independence skills in a supportive environment, before moving on to full independence

There is an expectation that the young person will financially contribute towards costs such as accommodation, food and bills, to help them prepare for independent living.

f) Commissioned Supported Accommodation

Many care leavers who do not 'Stay Put' or 'Stay Close' will need further accommodation and support beyond their 18th birthday, before taking on their own tenancy. Supported accommodation involves a young person having their own room, sometimes their own kitchen and bathroom with support on site from members of staff.

g) Supported Housing in Croydon

Croydon council currently provides accommodation for those young people in need of accommodation and support. In addition, a supported lodgings provision is available for those young people seeking more independence in a home environment.

h) Shared Lives

The Shared Lives Service in Croydon delivers safe and supported home environments for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health needs. In addition, there is specific provision for homeless women who are pregnant or have a child under 5 years and need care and support in preparation for being able to live independently in their own accommodation.

i) Privately Rented Accommodation

The private rented sector can be a suitable option for some care leavers. It can provide the young person with choice regarding the area that they wish to reside in, who they wish to reside with and enables them to find a good fit for their individual circumstances.

In most cases young people leaving care will be ready to move into independent living with the support of Social Care service. If the young person is ready to move-on and have developed the required life skills, such as managing a budget, cooking, cleaning, the council can support them to find suitable private rented accommodation.

Accessing the private rented sector can be difficult without a deposit or previous experience of holding a tenancy. Financial support may be provided from a cash limited budget through a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). These payments can be awarded in addition to any housing benefit and universal credit.

DHP can be awarded for rent in advance and/or deposit but not service charges, gas, electric, food, water rates or shortfall in council tax. You can only receive a DHP towards your rent if you are in receipt of/or will be entitled to housing benefit or Universal Credit with a housing element.

In addition to DHP there is also the possibility of financial support from the Homeless Prevention Service in order to secure suitable and affordable housing in the private sector. The Homeless Prevention Service will discuss this option with the young person and their personal advisor if the young person consents, based on their circumstances at the time.

The shared accommodation rate (SAR) is applied to renters aged under 35 claiming support through Local Housing Allowance (LHA). It adjusts their benefit to the cost of renting a room in shared accommodation, but there is a higher, one-bedroom rate for people who need to rent solo housing who are over 35 years of age. Care leavers can now claim the higher one-bedroom LHA rate up until the age of 25 where rent allowance would revert to the SAR.

j) Social housing

Applications for social housing are based on the social housing allocation scheme operating in the local authority area. Applicants need to be aged 18 or over and comply with the eligibility and qualification criteria of the area concerned. Care leavers aged 18 or over can apply to Croydon or other local authority areas to join the housing register. The Social Worker or Personal Adviser can assist with this.

Croydon Council receives many enquiries from people looking to rent a home in the borough. Like other boroughs, there is a shortage of homes compared with the number of people who need them. Therefore, care leavers are encouraged to continue searching for privately rented accommodation in order to obtain suitable housing.

Applicants will need to demonstrate a local connection with Croydon. Local connection within the terms of the allocation scheme will normally mean that an applicant has lived in Croydon, through their own choice, for a minimum of 5 years up to and including the date of their application, or the date on which a decision is made on their application whichever is later. For purposes of continuous residence, care leavers housed outside the borough will also be considered as having a local connection with Croydon.

For some young people whose support needs are high and accommodation in the private rented sector would have a detrimental effect on their transition to independent living, their housing application will be considered by the Care Leavers Housing Pathway Panel (Section 9) who will determine whether to

award priority for social housing.

The Care Leavers Housing Pathway Panel consists of senior officers from Housing and Social Care Services. The panel assesses each referral individually to ensure the needs of any particularly vulnerable or at-risk young person is addressed.

To be considered for social housing, the care leaver must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Young people subject to Care Orders under section S31 of the Children Act 1989 where the council has parental responsibility (Looked after children).
- Young people with moderate learning difficulties or disability or those who are subject to a statement of educational needs or a psychological assessment.
- Young people with significant mental health issues – who have been involved with CAMHS or CMHT for a period of three months or longer and are continuing to receive treatment.
- Young people with a complex need assessed as requiring independent accommodation with/without support.
- Young people with significant offending behavior, which limits access to other types of suitable accommodation.
- Young people leaving care who are also parents and also meet one other criteria listed (e.g., they or their baby are especially vulnerable).
- Those with other mitigating circumstances.

Care leavers meeting the criteria will be awarded a Band B on the housing waiting list.

Additional priority (Band A) may be awarded to those who; have a local connection by living in the borough continuously for a minimum period of ten years or are in employment for a minimum of 24 hours per week.

Young people in Armed Forces

Croydon Council is committed to supporting forces personnel (including young people in armed forces) and their families settle into suitable accommodation. The council gives special dispensation for social housing to anyone who has served in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and British Army and have not been dishonorably discharged.

Applications should be made within five years of discharge and could be awarded Band B.

k) University Halls of residence

Most universities can provide places for first-year students in their own halls of residence that are safe, comfortable and good value. These are usually furnished flats with a shared kitchen, toilet, bathroom, possibly a lounge area and en-suites. They can be either catered, part-catered or self-catered, mixed or single-sex.

Universities guarantee that care leaver and estranged students living in university accommodation will have the option to stay on campus for the full year and that you'll be placed in accommodation with the majority of new students. In addition, some of them will waive the usual deposit payment taken as part of the booking process.

As a care leaver, they could be given priority consideration for 365 days per year university student Hall accommodation throughout their academic term.

They will be required to provide a confirmation letter from the Leaving Care team to confirm that they're a care leaver and require accommodation.

For more information about university support for care leavers see [Propel | Become \(becomecharity.org.uk\)](https://propel.becomecharity.org.uk)

I) Shared accommodation for young people with no recourse to public funds

Where the young person's assessed needs at 18 years old and their status will not allow them to have recourse to public funds a focus on the possibility for staying put with their foster carers is considered. When this is not possible a request to housing is made for the allocation of shared housing, until the legal status of the young person is concluded. Continued support and advice is offered as part of the wider Care Leaver Local Offer.

Joint contingency planning

Most care leavers move on from care into independent accommodation without being put at risk of becoming homeless and can sustain their own accommodation with or without support. The pathway plan will detail accommodation needs and the type of housing related support that the young person may require in order to successfully maintain a tenancy.

However, there will always be a need for contingency planning and a readiness to respond to emergencies, including the loss of accommodation as part of the pathway plan.

The Homeless Prevention Service should always be included in the support plan that is put in place on the commencement of the tenancy, ensuring joint meetings take place regularly, between housing, leaving care and the young person, at least quarterly within the first year (during the probationary tenancy).

Both housing and leaving care services should ensure that young people fully understand what is required of them as a tenant, who is to support them, and what they should do in a crisis. The success of tenancies should be monitored by each service, where applicable, and potential difficulties dealt with promptly involving the young person.

Social Housing - New tenant visits will be made by a Tenancy Management Team within 4 – 8 weeks of tenancy commencement if a Croydon Council social tenancy is awarded. Housing associations will offer a similar initial visit. Specific requests can be considered for particularly vulnerable young people.

Private rented or supported housing - The Personal Adviser will make themselves known to the landlord and act as an intermediary if a tenancy is granted in the private sector. The Personal Adviser will also support the young people in maintaining the tenancy.

If there is evidence that a tenancy is unlikely to be sustained, prompt communication between agencies is essential and a review of the pathway plan will be undertaken identifying current and any future needs.

Consultation should take place between all associated services, and agreement reached, prior to any formal action being taken to end a tenancy.

Returning home to live with family does not always work out for young people in the way they had hoped. If a care leaver decides to move home and later decide to change their decision, they should speak to the care leavers service and will be supported to find alternative arrangements.

6. Care leavers leaving custody.

Care leavers leaving custody will need additional support to secure suitable accommodation on release. The Personal Adviser will be responsible for ensuring that accommodation needs are identified early and will work with the Homelessness Prevention Service to ensure care leavers do not leave custody without an accommodation plan in place.

The following public bodies, who may be involved with care leavers, are required to notify a housing authority of service users they identify who may be at risk of becoming homeless:

- Prisons
- Youth offending institutions
- Youth offending team
- Probation service

- Social service authorities
- The secretary of State for Defence

At the point of entry into custody, the Personal Adviser will assist the care leaver with ensuring that the Universal Credit Rent Element continues to be paid, provided the sentence (custodial) is under 6 months, to ensure easy return upon release.

When a young person has been sentenced more than 6 months, twelve weeks prior to release, there should be a meeting called, chaired by the Resettlement Team at the establishment (HMP¹ or YOI²), to discuss the care leaver's release, including discussion of accommodation and it would be expected that the Personal Adviser attends this, alongside other key partners. The Personal Adviser will make contact to confirm a meeting if arrangements have not been made. If the care leaver is a high-risk MAPPA³ offender, they will be able to be referred for and careful consideration given to planning and support for suitable approved Premises, to enhance the efficacy of their Risk Management Plan. This should be completed at least three months prior to release, by their Youth Justice Manager/Probation Officer.

56 days prior to release, the Prison Offender Manager or Resettlement Team, in community probation officer (if the young person will be released on license) responsible for the care leaver whilst in custody, should complete a referral to a Local Housing Authority on behalf of the care leaver. The Personal Adviser from Young People services should ensure that such arrangements/referrals have been made and reflected in the young person's pathway plan.

Throughout the final period of three months, the Personal Adviser can explore all the usual options, for example advice, guidance and offers of suitable accommodation, where appropriate, as for any other young person supported by Young People Services.

There will be greater focus on early joined up work to identify the needs of a young person in order to aid pre-release planning. The aim will be to identify suitable and safe accommodation for the young person in advance of their release to avoid the possibility of rough sleeping/street homeless.

7. Care leavers living outside the children's services authority area.

The Personal Adviser will be required to support care leavers in pursuit of their housing options with the local authority where a local connection applies. A young person entitled to leaving care duties under the Children Act 1989 has a local connection to the area of the children services authority that owed them the duties.

The Homelessness Reduction Act introduced amendments to the way local connection is assessed for care leavers who are homeless. Where a care leaver is aged under 21 and normally lives in a different area to that of a local authority that owes them leaving care duties and has done for at least 2 years including some time before they turned 16, the young person will also have a local connection in that area. This will entitle the young person to make an informed choice on where they wish to pursue their housing pathway. This should include the Personal Adviser contacting the local authority where the young person resides to explore what accommodation options may be available in advance of them leaving care.

Support should be made available to care leavers from other areas living in the borough and there will be an expectation to join up with the Parent LA to so that young people receive the support they want and are entitled to avoid homelessness or rough sleeping.

¹ His Majesty's Prison

² Young Offenders Institute

³ Multi-agency public protection arrangement

8. Croydon Care Leavers Housing Pathway Panel

A specific Housing Pathway Panel is held ensure that all care leavers in Croydon are smoothly transitioned between Children's Social Services and the Homeless Prevention Service, this panel will individually assess all care leavers as they become ready to lead independent lives.

The terms of reference for the pathway panel are set out in Appendix A and the panel meets on a monthly basis.

The purpose of the panel is to create a bespoke housing solution for each young person based on their individual needs. The panel, having due regard to this protocol, will set out the appropriate and available housing options and be the first step in securing a post care housing solution.

It is the intention that all care leavers go through the panel, but it is also recognized that in emergency or exceptional circumstances a young people may need referring to the Homeless Prevention Service outside of the panel set up. In these cases, they will be subsequently reviewed at the next available panel meeting.

All housing solutions provided by the Homeless Prevention Service are done so within a statutory homeless framework that is set out in Section 10. The only housing option that can be provided outside of homeless legislation is an allocation of social housing that may be made at the panel (Section 5j).

Priority need and Intentional homelessness

The application of the statutory homeless framework will consider the needs of Care Experienced young people up to the age of 25 years. The wider council and partnership corporate parenting approach will be applied to ensure that young people are safeguarded and given access to suitable accommodation and support.

The panel therefore acts as a conduit between services and ensures that the needs of care leavers are appropriately assessed before a decision on the type of move-on accommodation that will be offered.

The panel will at make initial determinations on the following housing options.

- a. Allocation of a priority banding on the housing register
- b. Referral for supported housing.
- c. Referral for private rented accommodation with a private landlord either inside or outside of Croydon

Option 'a' will require the care leaver to complete a housing registration application and will then be able to bid for suitable permanent properties.

Options 'b' & 'c' will require a statutory homeless assessment.

Although the panel will make recommendations for housing solutions it must be noted that this is still the first step in determining a young care leaver's housing options and therefore decisions can be changed if a young person's circumstances change. A young person can be brought back to panel at any time even after a housing solution has been given should it be necessary due to a breakdown of the placement or for any other reason.

9. A care leaver's accommodation preferences

There will be no blanket presumption that at 18 years old a young person who has left care will be ready for their own tenancy; this will be a matter of individual assessment.

Options will be based on the care leaver's individual preferences, needs, circumstances, and the local provision available.

The specific needs and circumstances of care leavers will be considered in determining suitability of accommodation in relation to its location. For example, in the absence of strong family support networks they may wish to live as near as possible to another significant adult such as a friend or ex-foster carer; or need to avoid certain locations due to childhood experiences or associations.

10. Statutory homeless assessments

For ease of reference the homelessness 'prevention' and 'relief' duties are described as follows –

Prevention duty – an applicant is threatened with homelessness.

Relief duty – an applicant is homeless.

Where a care leaver is directed to make a homeless application, they will receive a written assessment and a personalised housing plan. The housing plan will set out what housing options are available.

The Personal Adviser will also be involved in the homelessness assessment process and the personal housing plan with the care leaver's consent. The Personal Housing Plan will also be informed by the young person's Pathway Plan provided by Children's Social Care.

Advisory service provided by housing authorities under section 179 must be designed to meet the needs of care leavers in their area (section 179(2)(b)). The Homeless Prevention Service will work with children's services authorities and consult with care leavers themselves to ensure the advice and information is:

- designed and delivered in an appropriate format for the age of the client group.
- available through communication channels which care leavers are most likely to access.
- understood by children's services authority staff.

The initial homeless 'prevention' duty lasts for 56 days (just under 2 months) but it is expected that a housing option can be put in place before the 56 days has expired. Whilst the care leaver is being assessed they would usually remain in their accommodation that has been provided for them by Children's Social Services.

If a housing option has not been secured within the 56-day period, then the duty can be extended if it is likely that a housing option will be available in the near future (within a week or so of the expiry date).

It is not expected that the care leaver will become homeless and have to leave their current accommodation during this assessment period. The purpose of the panel and early notification of care leavers ready for move-on should ensure that there is sufficient time for a housing option to be secured. If, however a care leaver does have to leave their accommodation through an emergency, and no other accommodation can be secured by Children's Social Services, then a homeless 'relief' duty can be taken and emergency accommodation can be provided.

Referrals to other Local Authorities will be made where appropriate, for young people or their household who face domestic and gang related issues. Croydon will ensure that they are represented at MARAC by Children's Services and/or the Homeless Prevention Service.

11. Avoiding the use of Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Emergency Accommodation

It is very important to note that both the Homeless Prevention Service and Children's Social Care want to avoid the use of B&B accommodation for care leavers. Statutory guidance issued to both services sets out that this type of short-term accommodation is not suitable for young people leaving care.

B&B accommodation can be defined as emergency accommodation that can be allocated to homeless applicants as part of an initial homeless assessment duty. For single people it is often in shared accommodation where an applicant has to share facilities with other residents. It offers no support and can therefore be very isolating for a care leaver.

One of the aims of this Protocol is to reduce to zero the number of times a care leaver has had to be placed into B&B accommodation and this will be a key determinant of the protocol's success.

12. Homeless applications outside of the Pathway Panel.

Joint working arrangements between housing and the Young People's aim to identify homelessness risk early and act to prevent it. However, where a care leaver makes a homeless application outside of this protocol then a rapid & safe response must be provided.

Examples may include a prison discharge or eviction from their current supported accommodation due to significant Anti-Social Behaviour.

With consent from the young person, Children's Services will be informed if a young person known to be a care leaver or who says that are a care leaver and is under the age of 25 approaches the Homelessness Prevention Service.

The personalised housing plan should be reviewed and both services will work together with the young person to resolve the housing crisis. All homeless applications received in this way will be subsequently reviewed at the next available panel meeting.

In assessing support need the Homelessness Prevention Team will take particular care in assessing whether a care leaver aged 21 or over is vulnerable, and will consider whether, if homeless, they would be at particular risk of exploitation, abuse or involvement in offending behavior as a result of having been looked after, accommodated or fostered.

13. Homeless application review rights

If a care leaver refuses an offer of accommodation which is made within the aims of this protocol, then they have the right to review the suitability of an offer and appeal any subsequent discharge of the homeless duty. They are required to do this within 21 days of receipt of the decision or offer. Ideally this should be done in writing including all the reasons and any information they think should be considered. The Personal Advisor or significant individual that the young person nominates may support them with this process.

14. Dispute Resolution

Any disputes should be raised with the respective Personal Adviser or Homeless Prevention Officer in the first instance. In the event the matter is not resolved, it should be then escalated to their own respective line managers to discuss, followed up head of service if applicable.

15. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this protocol will be monitored at both an operational and strategic level and a progress report will be submitted to the Corporate Parenting Board annually. Initially this will take place after 6 months, thereafter, will be reviewed 12 monthly.

Appendix A - Terms of reference Croydon Care Leavers Housing Pathways Panel

Joint London Borough of Croydon Housing and Children's Social Care

Leavers Housing Pathway Panel

Terms of Reference

1. Core Membership

- Homelessness and Prevention Manager/Service Manager Young People's Service (Chair)
- Housing Register & Allocations Manager
- Senior Housing Register & Allocations Officer
- Senior Options & Homeless Prevention Officer
- Team manager from Young People's Service
- Service Manager Placements CSC

Additional Membership Request

- DWP
- Mental Health Practitioner
- Adult Safeguarding Practitioner

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Care Leavers housing pathway panel is to consider the housing needs of looked after children and care leavers and agree housing options to meet their current and future housing needs and facilitate the smooth transition into independence.

3. Objectives

To meet on a monthly basis and discuss cases referred which fall into the following categories:

- All Looked after children aged 17.5 or over who are ready for move-on accommodation as determined by their pathway plan.
- Care leavers at risk of, or are homelessness (aged 25)
- Care leavers that have in the preceding month made homeless applications directly to the Homeless Prevention Service outside of a referral by the panel.
- Care leavers in temporary accommodation
- Care leavers who may meet the criteria under the Council's Social Housing Allocations Policy and have evidenced to PA's that they can meet the responsibilities of a tenancy, and where Band B is advocated for by the relevant team manager.

4. Meeting format

- A shared list of relevant young persons will be provided prior to the meeting, and each case outcome agreed at the meeting.
- The meeting will agree pathways and options for each case.
- Review cases presented at previous meetings where review agreed.
- Review and recommend any policy or protocol changes that will enhance and support wider council strategic objectives.
- Review best practice examples from other LAs/housing organisations to identify opportunities to amend/improve local practice.
- To enable monitoring activity and data collation to inform future service development.

5. Chairing arrangements

Will be on rotation between identified Chairs.

6. Minute taking and administration.

Dedicated business support capacity will be jointly identified to run this panel.

7. Outcomes

The outcomes being sought through the work of the group is the following:

- A case-by-case assessment of care leavers who require suitable housing to enable the Council to meet its statutory duties.
- To provide advice, support, assistance and be committed to, and actively involved in helping to enable young people to move accommodation in a planned manner.
- Improved information systems including clearly documented outcomes of each case assessed and pathways agreed for each care leaver.
- Monthly reporting of case volumes /outcomes in both social care and housing performance reports
- Improved working relationships
- Collation of key themes, or challenges, for discussion at the Corporate Parenting

8. Governance & accountability

The panel will report into the Care Leavers housing pathways strategy task and finish group, and will be reviewed by the group, alongside the development of the joint protocol on a regular basis.

9. Escalation

In the event that agreement in respect of housing pathways for care leavers cannot be agreed at the panel meeting, this will be escalated to Head of Service in housing and children's social care. In the event that a HOS is present at the meeting, or cannot find resolution, this will be escalated to Director level.

10. Review

The effectiveness and membership of the group to be reviewed every 4 meetings.

Appendix B – Using ‘Duty to refer’

1. Overview

The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 introduced a duty on specified Public Authorities/services to refer service users, with their consent, who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, to local Authorities.

This duty, s213B Duty to refer became effective on the 1st October 2018.

Public authorities that have a duty include:

- Prisons
- Young Offender Institutions
- Secure Training Centres
- Secure Colleges
- Youth Offending Teams
- Probation Services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentres in England
- **Social Service Authorities (both Adult and Children’s)**
- Emergency Departments
- Urgent Treatment Centers
- Hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care.
- Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces

All care leavers assessed at panel will automatically be treated as having been referred.

If a care leaver needs to be referred to the Homeless Prevention Service outside of the panel arrangements (as set out in 12 of the Protocol) then this process must be followed. If it is an emergency, then the referring officer in Children’s Social Care must also escalate through a team manager to ensure that the young person can be assessed rapidly.

To make the process as simple as possible, all public bodies can send referrals directly to the service through the Duty to Refer process.

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Equality Analysis Form

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

The council has an important role in creating a fair society through the services we provide, the people we employ and the money we spend. Equality is integral to everything the council does. We are committed to making Croydon a stronger, fairer borough where no community or individual is held back.

Undertaking an Equality Analysis helps to determine whether a proposed change will have a positive, negative, or no impact on groups that share a protected characteristic. Conclusions drawn from Equality Analyses helps us to better understand the needs of all our communities, enable us to target services and budgets more effectively and also helps us to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

An equality analysis must be completed as early as possible during the planning stages of any proposed change to ensure information gained from the process is incorporated in any decisions made.

In practice, the term '**proposed change**' broadly covers the following: -

- Policies, strategies, and plans.
- Projects and programmes.
- Commissioning (including re-commissioning and de-commissioning);
- Service review.
- Budget allocation/analysis.
- Staff restructures (including outsourcing).
- Business transformation programmes.
- Organisational change programmes.
- Processes (for example thresholds, eligibility, entitlements, and access criteria).

2. Proposed change

Directorate	Children Young People and Education/Housing.
Title of proposed change	Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Protocol.
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Jane Scott-Transformation Lead.

2.1 Purpose of proposed change (see 1.1 above for examples of proposed changes)

Briefly summarise the proposed change and why it is being considered/anticipated outcomes. What is meant to achieve and how is it seeking to achieve this? Please also state if it is an amendment to an existing arrangement or a new proposal.

The new Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Protocol has been developed to address the current position for our Care Experienced Young People when they become homeless. Croydon Council currently requires them to use the same homelessness pathway as others and they can be found to be 'intentionally homeless' if they have left accommodation that the local authority deems suitable. This position does not acknowledge that we are their 'Corporate Parents' and have looked after them for a period of their childhood and remain accountable to supporting and advising them into their early adulthood, currently up to age 25 years.

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care was a commitment from the Governments manifesto to ensure that children and young people get the support that they need. The review launched in March 2021, the findings and recommendations were published on the 23.5.22. The Governments response to the review on the 2.2.23 stated that Local Authorities are required to introduce a stronger safety net against care leaver homelessness and will no longer be able to consider care leavers as 'intentionally homeless'.

A Joint Housing and Childrens Social Care Protocol currently exists from 2001. It requires further development to include the current position in Croydon, recent legislation and the government's response in relation to the Independent Review of Children's Social care related to care leaver homelessness and the removal of intentional homelessness for this group of young people.

The protocol explicitly acknowledges the enate vulnerabilities that Care Leavers can leave care with which may impact upon their ability to sustain a home and tenancy in the community The protocol addresses the joint working partnership approach to preparing and planning the appropriate home with a young person as part of their pathway plan and personalised housing plan which also focusses on contingency planning to ensure

that risks are identified and mitigated against. A focus on preparation and support prior to a Care Leaver moving to live in their new home, particularly during the first year which addresses practical as well as emotional, mental health wellbeing, helping young people to access locality and neighborhood support and also understanding how they can contribute to their community both immediate and more widely. A Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Pathway panel will monitor and review those young people preparing to move to a new home and consider the best options for individual needs. The Pathway panel will analyse the information and feedback from young people to inform future developments.

The following recommendations will be sort from the Mayor and Cabinet.

2.1 To endorse the implementation of the joint protocol.

3. Impact of the proposed change

Important Note: It is necessary to determine how each of the protected groups could be impacted by the proposed change. Who benefits and how (and who, therefore doesn't and why?) Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic.

Where an impact is unknown, state so. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports, complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact

For each protected characteristic group show whether the impact of the proposed change on service users and/or staff is positive or negative by briefly outlining the nature of the impact in the appropriate column. . If it is decided that analysis is not relevant to some groups, this should be recorded and explained. In all circumstances you should list the source of the evidence used to make this judgement where possible.

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
Age	<p>The joint protocol reflects the individual needs of Care Experienced young people (CEYP) which may impact upon their maturation as opposed to just their chronological age. The protocol will also create a greater safety net to promote stability for young people if they experience disruption in their home or locality up to age of 25 years.</p> <p>The evidence source information highlights an inversion in the Census and CEYP population. The CEYP data is representative of the national picture. In addition, the national average age of leaving home is 23 years, (Office of National Statistics 2022). The average age of a CEYP leaving care and living in their own home is 18-21 years. This protocol seeks to address this disparity.</p>		<div data-bbox="1144 560 1776 608" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1137 624 1787 911"> </div> <div data-bbox="1144 927 1776 975" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>Croydon CEYP.June 23.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1137 975 1771 1182"> </div>
Disability	<p>The joint protocol will ensure that Care Experienced young people who have disability needs will experience early</p>		<div data-bbox="1144 1385 1776 1497" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Data for Disability is currently under review</p> </div>

	<p>identification of preparation and planning with their pathway plan and personalised housing plan to address the specific needs of young people to move to their home and a location that enables them to live independently.</p>																																																				
<p>Sex</p>	<p>The pathway plan and personalized housing plan will consider the needs of each Care Experienced young person according to their sex. Ensuring that plans promote the Care Experienced young person’s individual safety, development, and enjoyment of living in a neighborhood and their own home. The Census and CEYP data informs how our service approach and provision will need to consider the specific attention to the differences in young males who will be in need of housing compared to young women who are CEYP. The overall Croydon population for this age group is more evenly balanced.</p>		<p><u>Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1122 437 1787 636"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th> <th>All persons</th> <th>Female</th> <th>Male</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Aged 17</td><td>4,913</td><td>2,347</td><td>2,566</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 18</td><td>4,109</td><td>1,909</td><td>2,200</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 19</td><td>3,583</td><td>1,690</td><td>1,893</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 20</td><td>3,425</td><td>1,636</td><td>1,789</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 21</td><td>3,923</td><td>1,956</td><td>1,967</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 22</td><td>4,405</td><td>2,195</td><td>2,210</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 23</td><td>4,785</td><td>2,437</td><td>2,348</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 24</td><td>5,082</td><td>2,541</td><td>2,541</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 25</td><td>5,168</td><td>2,720</td><td>2,448</td></tr> <tr><td>Aged 17-25</td><td>39,393</td><td>19,431</td><td>19,962</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Source: ONS Census 2021</p> <p>Croydon CEYP.June 23.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1122 794 1832 991"> <thead> <tr> <th>Female</th> <th>Male</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>228</td> <td>563</td> <td>791</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	All persons	Female	Male	Aged 17	4,913	2,347	2,566	Aged 18	4,109	1,909	2,200	Aged 19	3,583	1,690	1,893	Aged 20	3,425	1,636	1,789	Aged 21	3,923	1,956	1,967	Aged 22	4,405	2,195	2,210	Aged 23	4,785	2,437	2,348	Aged 24	5,082	2,541	2,541	Aged 25	5,168	2,720	2,448	Aged 17-25	39,393	19,431	19,962	Female	Male		228	563	791
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<p>Gender Reassignment</p>	<p>The joint protocol will ensure that a Care Experienced young person’s needs will incorporate a careful assessment of their Gender Reassignment needs with regard to establishing a new home in the right environment with a support plan. Access to advise and community links through the LGBT+ statutory and voluntary partners will be incorporated</p>		<p>Data for CEYP in the 17-25 age group is currently not routinely collected.</p>																																																		

	<p>as determined by the individual Care Experienced young person.</p>																						
<p>Marriage or Civil Partnership</p>	<p>There is no impact on this characteristic. Recorded data in relation to formal marriage status/civil partnership does not make this an area for further exploration at this stage although with all young people there will be changes in partnership status that will need to be considered and incorporated into their pathway plan</p>		<p>Croydon CEYP. June 23.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1124 432 1563 507">Marriage / Civil Partnership</th> <th data-bbox="1563 432 1778 507">Female</th> <th data-bbox="1778 432 1912 507">Male</th> <th data-bbox="1912 432 2143 507">Grand Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1124 507 1563 549">Married</td> <td data-bbox="1563 507 1778 549">1</td> <td data-bbox="1778 507 1912 549">2</td> <td data-bbox="1912 507 2143 549">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1124 549 1563 590">Single</td> <td data-bbox="1563 549 1778 590">171</td> <td data-bbox="1778 549 1912 590">449</td> <td data-bbox="1912 549 2143 590">620</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1124 590 1563 632">Not Recorded</td> <td data-bbox="1563 590 1778 632">29</td> <td data-bbox="1778 590 1912 632">68</td> <td data-bbox="1912 590 2143 632">97</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1124 632 1563 673">Grand Total</td> <td data-bbox="1563 632 1778 673">201</td> <td data-bbox="1778 632 1912 673">519</td> <td data-bbox="1912 632 2143 673">720</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Marriage / Civil Partnership	Female	Male	Grand Total	Married	1	2	3	Single	171	449	620	Not Recorded	29	68	97	Grand Total	201	519	720
Marriage / Civil Partnership	Female	Male	Grand Total																				
Married	1	2	3																				
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Religion or belief

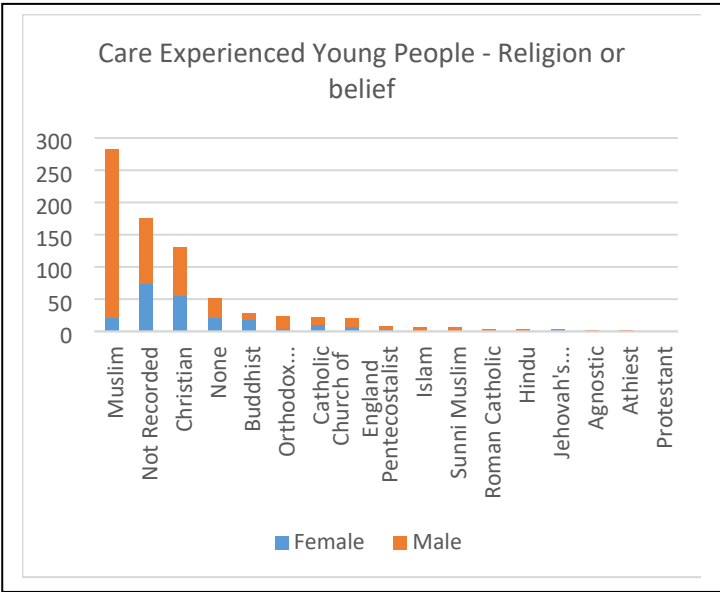
The pathway plan and personalized housing plan will ensure that a Care Experienced young person’s religion or beliefs are assessed and considered as part of the plan of securing a home, identifying a suitable neighborhood and community.

The current CEYP data reflects the importance of assessing appropriate homes, community and location for many young people in their pathway plan.

Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population

The Census data is too broad on age range to provide a comparison to CEYP young people.

Croydon CEYP. June 23.



Race

The pathway plan and personalized housing plan will assess with the Care Experienced young person their race and culture in relation to planning for a new home and community. Croydon Council in 2023 is part of the pilot CELC Tackling Racial Injustice TRI programme adopting the London Councils anti racist statement and committing to a programme of seven workstreams of which community engagement is a key focus. This is a project under development and the findings will promote the development

Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population

Age	Asian	Black	Mixed	White	C
Aged 17	940	1,530	635	1,575	
Aged 18	765	1,235	490	1,425	
Aged 19	625	1,035	485	1,190	
Aged 20	540	940	385	1,360	
Aged 21	660	1,130	405	1,550	
Aged 22	720	1,235	450	1,820	
Aged 23	775	1,210	520	2,060	
Aged 24	885	1,335	520	2,110	
Aged 25	890	1,315	465	2,265	
Aged 17-25	6,800	10,965	4,355	15,355	1

of planning for Care Experienced young people.
<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/race-equality/london-local-government-tackling-racial-inequality-programme>

A1 - White British	A2 - White Irish	A3 - Any other White background	A4 - Traveller of Irish Heritage	
81	2	146	1	
B1 - White and Black Caribbean	B2 - White and Black African	B3 - White and Asian	B4 - Any other mixed background	
29	8	4	18	
C1 - Indian	C2 - Pakistani	C3 - Bangladeshi	C4 - Any other Asian background	
3	5	1	211	
D1 - Caribbean	D2 - African	D3 - Any other Black background	E1 - Chinese	E2 - Any other ethnic group
73	147	38	2	19
E3 - Refused	E4 - Information not yet obtained			
1	2	791		

Croydon CEYP. June 23

<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>The joint protocol will ensure that a Care Experienced young persons needs will incorporate a careful assessment of their sexual orientation needs with regard to establishing a new home in the right environment with a support plan. Access to advise and community links through the LGBT+ statutory and voluntary partners will be incorporated as determined by the individual Care Experienced young person.</p>		<p><u>Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population</u></p> <p>The Census data is too broad to provide a comparison to CEYP young people.</p> <div data-bbox="1137 359 1785 411" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>Croydon CEYP.June 23.</p> </div> <p>This data is not currently collated for reporting purposes for CEYP.</p>
<p>Pregnancy or Maternity</p>	<p>The joint protocol will use the pathway plan and personalized housing plan to consider specific needs of a Care Experienced young persons circumstances related to pregnancy and establishing a home with their child/ren and partner if relevant. There are a range of options to provide a stepped approach to this support and moving to the desired home and location wherever possible.</p>		<p><u>Croydon Census Data 21.17-25 Population</u></p> <p>The Census data is too broad to provide a comparison to CEYP young people.</p> <div data-bbox="1137 842 1785 895" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>Croydon CEYP.June 23.</p> </div> <p>This data is not currently collated for reporting purposes for CEYP.</p>

Important note: You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.

When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics. **Please use table 4 to record actions that will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact**

3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

Table 2 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:		
Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
No further information is required at this stage		

For guidance and support with consultation and engagement visit <https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/communications/consultation-and-engagement/starting-engagement-or-consultation>

3.3 Impact scores

Example

If we are going to reduce parking provision in a particular location, officers will need to assess the equality impact as follows;

1. Determine the Likelihood of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the likelihood of impact score is 2 (likely to impact)
2. Determine the Severity of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the Severity of impact score is also 2 (likely to impact)
3. Calculate the equality impact score using table 4 below and the formula **Likelihood x Severity** and record it in table 5, for the purpose of this example - **Likelihood (2) x Severity (2) = 4**

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

Severity of Impact	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
	Likelihood of Impact			

Key

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
6 – 9	High
3 – 5	Medium
1 – 3	Low

Equality Analysis

Table 3 – Impact scores

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
PROTECTED GROUP	LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT SCORE	SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCORE	EQUALITY IMPACT SCORE
	<p>Use the key below to score the likelihood of the proposed change impacting each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.</p> <p>1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact</p>	<p>Use the key below to score the severity of impact of the proposed change on each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group.</p> <p>1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact</p>	<p>Calculate the equality impact score for each protected group by multiplying scores in column 2 by scores in column 3. Enter the results below against each protected group.</p> <p>Equality impact score = likelihood of impact score x severity of impact score.</p>
Age	3	1	3
Disability	2	1	2
Gender	3	1	3
Gender reassignment	2	1	2
Marriage / Civil Partnership	3	1	3
Race	3	1	2
Religion or belief	3	1	3
Sexual Orientation	2	1	2
Pregnancy or Maternity	2	1	2

Equality Analysis

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

Tick the relevant box(es) to indicate whether the proposed change will adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties in the Equality Act 2010 set out below.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

Important note: If the proposed change adversely impacts the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out above, mitigating actions must be outlined in the Action Plan in section 5 below.

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

Important note: Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact identified in Table 1. Attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc:
NA

Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.

Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability				
Race				
Sex (gender)				

Equality Analysis

Gender reassignment				
Sexual orientation				
Age				
Religion or belief				
Pregnancy or maternity				
Marriage/civil partnership				

6. Decision on the proposed change

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter **X** in column 3 (**Conclusion**) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.

Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	<p>Our analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.</p> <p>The attached protocol is an improvement to current practice for Care Experienced young people up to age 25 years. It promotes more focus on the Corporate Parenting Approach of the Council in seeking to provide a more suitable and caring approach to young people particularly when the stability of their home is difficult to sustain, and they may experience homelessness. Through promoting a more joined up process through respective assessment and planning the young person's experience and outcomes will be more positive and evidence more careful consideration of their home, environment and support needs against the above equality characteristics. The protocol addresses a system for monitoring and review of this activity.</p>	X

Equality Analysis

Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form	
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.	
Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet		Meeting title: Cabinet Date: 28 th June 23

Equality Analysis

7. Sign-Off

Officers that must approve this decision	
Equalities Lead	Name: Denise McCausland Date: 12.6.23 Position: Equality Programme Manager
Director	Name: Roisin Madden Date: 9.6.23 Position: Director Childrens Social Care

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	28 JUNE 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report 2022	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer	
LEAD OFFICER:	Maxine Benjamin, HR Policy and Equality Manager	
LEAD MEMBER:	Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
WARDS AFFECTED:	None	
EXEMPT INFORMATION	N/A	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** The gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap report outlines the mean and median pay gap calculations for gender, ethnicity, and disability characteristics applicable to the workforce for Croydon Council.
- 1.2** The council's gender pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) calculated as a mean figure was 0.0%. The council's gender pay gap calculated as a median figure was 0.0%. These pay gap figures are the same as the previous year (2021). The council's ethnicity pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) for all Global Majority ethnic groups (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) against White ethnic groups was calculated as 8.5% (median) and 5.0% (mean). This indicates that since 2021, the mean ethnicity pay gap has increased by 0.7%, whilst the median pay gap has remained the same. The council's disability pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) was calculated as -1.2% (mean) and 0.0% (median). In 2021, the disability pay gap as a mean calculation was 0.8% and as a median calculation was 0.0%. This means that the disability pay gap as a mean calculation, has reduced by 2.0% from 2021 – 22 whilst the median pay gap has remained at 0.0%.
- 1.3** The council has a statutory duty to report gender pay gap figures via the government pay gap reporting website, and to publish its figures on the external website on an

annual basis. Ethnicity and disability pay gaps have previously not been reported on the council website on a regular basis and authorization is now sought to enable this to take place in line with our commitment within the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026, pillar two) to build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workforce.

- 1.4** It is worth noting that 2021 and 2022 gender pay gap figures of 0.0% for mean and median calculations, marks the first time that the council can report statistically (since pay gap reporting started in 2017) that there was no difference between men and women in average hourly pay rates for two consecutive years.
- 1.5** Croydon council's gender pay gaps are less than the average UK gender pay gap of 8.2% (ONS 2022) and London Councils (all boroughs) pay gap averages (2.5% mean; 0.7% median) for 2021. The council's disability pay gaps are lower than the average UK disability pay gap of 13.8% (ONS 2021) and London Councils (all boroughs) pay gap averages (1.2% mean; 1.2% median) for 2021. Ethnicity pay gaps in 2021 and 2022 are lower than London Councils averages in 2021 (9.6% mean; 6.8% median).
- 1.6** The non-disclosure rate for council employees in scope for disability pay gap reporting has decreased by 5% overall from 2021-22. Non-disclosure rates for employees in scope for ethnicity pay gap reporting has decreased by 6% overall from 2021-22.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1** to note the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap reports (Appendix A, B and C)
- 2.2** to approve the action plans as detailed in the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap reports (Appendix A, B and C) to reduce pay gaps within the council.
- 2.3** to approve the publication of the disability and ethnicity pay gap reports on the Council's website - as good practice to support openness and accountability - alongside the already published gender pay gap figures (which are legally required).

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** Croydon Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) which includes:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Therefore, by publishing pay gap reports and action plans, the council is showing its commitment to compliance with the Equality Duty.

3.2 By publishing our action plans to eliminate pay gaps within the council workforce, the council is also showing our commitment to put the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026) into action by building an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workforce (***pillar 3***) that is as reflective as possible of the people of Croydon.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

4.1 Croydon Council is committed improving equality, diversity, and inclusion within our workforce. The actions the council have taken to improve diversity have had a positive impact on gender and disability pay gap figures from 2021-22.

The positive results have included:

- Croydon Council's gender pay gap figures being calculated as 0% for both mean and median across two consecutive years in 2021 and 2022. This is the first time that this has happened since pay gap reporting commenced in 2018.
- The representation of women in the highest and upper middle quartile (i.e. top 1/2 of pay rates) have remained comparable to their workforce profile representation from 2020 - 2022.
- Mean and median hourly pay gap calculations for disability, have remained close to 0% since 2020.
- The representation within all pay quartiles for disabled employees is comparable to their workforce representation in 2022 and 2021.
- Non-disclosure for pay gap reporting overall has decreased from 2020-22 and is now at the lowest level (25% ethnicity; 27% disability) since reporting started in 2018.
- Ethnicity mean and median pay gaps in 2021 and 2022 were lower than London Councils average ethnicity pay gaps in 2021.

4.2 Negative results have also been highlighted which include:

- Awareness that gender representations in the lower middle and lowest quartile (i.e. bottom 1/2 of pay rates) are less representative (compared to the workforce profile) of the division of the sexes.
- The lower middle (third quarter) gender pay quartile is increasing in female representation levels compared to male from 2020 – 2022.
- Ethnicity pay gaps have continued to be the highest pay gaps reported for Croydon Council compared to gender and disability pay gaps since 2018.
- In 2022, all Global Majority ethnic employees (as a group) have their highest representation in the lower middle (third quarter) pay quartile (42%) compared to White employees whose highest representation is in the highest (top 1/4) paid

quartile (47%). This trend was also present in 2021 for both Global Majority and White ethnic groups.

- Each Global Majority ethnic group (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) has their highest representations in the lowest (bottom 1/4) paid quartile.
- Non-disclosure of ethnicity and disability is highest in the lowest (bottom 1/4) paid quartile (over 40%), which may skew figures reported.

4.3 Action planning to reduce pay gaps (particularly ethnicity) are highlighted within the pay gap reports and include on-going and upcoming actions which are linked to objectives within the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026)

4.4 Ongoing actions:

- Taking a data driven and employee 'lived experience' approach which will include taking actions around attraction of new employees and development of existing staff. We are particularly aware that Global Majority staff from grade 15 and above are not as represented as they should be compared to our residents so will be taking actions to address this.
- **Taking actions around the attraction of new employees includes:**
 - Rebranding our website to highlight our commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce with video clips showing the diversity of our staff, the work they do, and why they work for the council.
 - Taking positive action around recruitment campaigns to encourage more applications from a wider range of individuals.
 - Capturing data to measure impact and progress.
 - Clarifying in job advertisements that the council is a hybrid working employer and flexible working options can be discussed at interview and agreed from the start of employment.
 - Putting in place inclusive recruitment practices including:
 - Anonymized applications
 - Diverse and balanced recruitment panels for all job roles – which we assess by sampling panel compositions to ensure compliance with our recruitment policy. We also intend to publish compliance rates on an on-going basis.
 - Making sure that all interview panellists have minimum training in equality and diversity, unconscious bias and recruitment learning whilst at Croydon.
- **Talent development of existing staff includes:**
 - Developing leadership and management skills for staff in under-represented groups so that they can compete effectively for senior level roles.
 - Supporting employees to develop staff diversity network groups that support all protected characteristics including ethnicity.
 - Encouraging mentoring and leadership programmes

- Encouraging secondment opportunities across the council
- Capturing data to measure impact and progress.
- In addition, we will continue to ensure that mandatory equality and unconscious bias training is undertaken by all employees.
- We will also continue to run regular campaigns to reduce non-disclosure rates within the council particularly for ethnicity. Non-disclosure is reducing for most of the council staff, but the council acknowledge that there is more work to do regarding engaging with staff with limited access to IT systems in lower pay grades.

4.5 Upcoming actions linked to the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026) will include:

- Building on work to date, a workforce EDI dashboard will be presented to the EDI internal control board to analyse the workforce profile and to highlight areas where positive action is needed to address underrepresentation. This may highlight areas of low global majority representation in directorates (***linked to Pillar 2, 'Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace'***)
- The council will develop an inclusive and distributed leadership tool which aims to improve inclusion across the council, improving employees' lived experience. This initiative also enables Pillar one, strengthening the council's leadership capability. (***linked to Pillar 2, 'Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace'***)
- The council will develop clear career and skills development pathways to ensure a systemic and holistic approach to workforce development which will be aligned to business planning and the fulfilment of the Mayor's Business Plan to optimise performance for residents' benefit. (***linked to Pillar 4, 'Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance'***)
- The council will invest in positive action development programmes for protected characteristic staff to ensure an equitable approach to address current and past organisational shortcomings. (***linked to Pillar 4, 'Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance'***)
- We will develop a range of different resourcing methods to seek to attract diverse and high-quality candidates to work for the council. As covered under Pillar 4, we aim to redevelop our recruitment landing pages to provide an authentic brand and compelling package to attract the best candidates possible. We need to be mindful around the diversity of recruitment for grade 15 and above staff levels as we know that lower levels of global majority recruits is contributing to the ethnicity pay gap. (***linked to Pillar 5, 'Acquire and retain talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive recruitment market'***)

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No alternative options have been considered.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 There is no requirement to consult on the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap publication. Action Planning to reduce gender pay gaps will have input from the EDI board (which includes staff network representatives).

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The publication of pay gap reports and action plans supports a priority under Outcome 1 of the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26 which is delivered via the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026):

- Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.

7.2 We need to strengthen leadership and management, develop behaviours aligned with the Council's values, improve staff skills, and create a psychologically safe and inclusive environment for all staff. We will support, develop, and value our staff to ensure the Council is accessible and visible to our diverse communities and that it delivers the proactive and respectful services they expect and deserve.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the Annual Equalities Report 2023 or the updated Equality Strategy 2022-26.

8.1.2 Comments approved by Lesley Shields, Head of Finance for Assistant Chief Executive and Resources on behalf of the Director of Finance. 05/5/23

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Publication of gender pay gap information is required in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

8.2.2 In addition, the Council is required by the Regulations to publish information annually to demonstrate its compliance with the public sector equality duty imposed by Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010, and that information must include information relating to employees who share relevant protected

characteristics. Therefore, publishing pay gap information helps the Council to show it is complying with this requirement.

8.2.3 Comments approved by the Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 27/04/2023)

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 As a public body, the Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED], as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities and functions. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the Council being exposed to costly, time consuming and reputation-damaging legal challenges.

8.3.2 The council is taking a positive action approach to equality which is permissible under Equality Act 2010. Positive action is defined as taking “proportionate” steps to improve equality in the workplace by removing or reducing barriers faced by certain groups with shared protected characteristics.

8.3.3 While remedial actions on gender and disability pay gaps have had positive outcomes, the actions on global majority ethnic groups pay gap against white ethnic groups has increased by 0.7%. This requires targeted positive action to ensure that no single group is left behind.

8.3.4 Comments approved by John Mukungunugwa, Equalities Officer, on behalf of Denise McCausland, the Equalities Programme Manager on 04/05/2023

8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 There are no additional human resources impacts beyond those described in the content of this report. Should any implications arise, these will be reviewed in line with the Council’s HR policies and procedures.

8.4.2 Comments approved by Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives Directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer (Date: 05/05/2023)

9. APPENDICES

9.1 *A Gender Pay Gap 2021-22*

B Ethnicity Pay Gap 2021-22

C Disability Pay Gap 2021-22

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – N/A

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Croydon Council Gender Pay Gap Report

Based on data collected from 2021 - 2022

Issued: June 2023

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Summary of Report

This report examines the gender pay gap for Croydon council calculated as mean and median figures.

We conclude that the council's gender pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) calculated as a mean figure was 0.0%. The council's gender pay gap calculated as a median figure was 0.0%. These pay gap figures are also the same as the previous year (2021).

Gender pay gap	2022 (data as of 31st March)	2021 (data as of 31st March)
Mean ordinary hourly pay gap	0.0%	0.0%
Median ordinary hourly pay gap	0.0%	0.0%

This is the first time that Croydon council has reported 0% for both pay gap figures in consecutive years since pay gap reporting started in 2017.

By calculation of a pay gap of 0% we are declaring that men and women employed at the council now earn (on average) the same hourly pay rate calculated either as a mean or median figure.

The representation of male and female employees within the highest and upper middle pay quartiles also largely shows similarity with the workforce representation of both sexes in 2021 and 2022.

Pay Quartiles	2022	2021
Upper (top ¼) – Female	67%	69%
Upper (top ¼) – Male	33%	31%
Upper Middle – Female	69%	67%
Upper Middle – Male	31%	33%
Lower Middle – Female	76%	74%
Lower Middle – Male	24%	26%
Lower (bottom ¼) – Female	62%	68%
Lower (bottom ¼) - Male	38%	32%

% representation of each sex in LBC workforce	Female	Male
2022	68%	32%
2021	68%	32%

Gender Pay Gap Report: 2021-2022

The lower middle pay quartile has increased the representation of women by 2% from 2021 - 2022 whilst the lowest paid quartile has decreased the representation of women by 6% from 2021 - 2022.

Croydon council's gender pay gaps are less than the average UK gender pay gap of 8.2% (*ONS 2022*) and London Councils (all boroughs) pay gap averages (2.5% mean; 0.7% median) for 2021.

The council aims to continue to reduce pay gaps differences between sexes by implementing specific objectives outlined in the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022 – 2026 especially Pillar 2, workforce EDI (see [Action Plans](#))

Croydon Council workforce characteristics compared to Croydon's resident population:

Sex:

	Female	Male
Croydon Council – all workforce (2021/2)	68%	32%
Croydon Residents: ONS Census 2021, November 2022	52%	48%

Ethnicity:

	Asian/ Asian British %	Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British %	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups %	Other ethnic group %	White ethnic groups (%)
Croydon council -all workforce (2021/2)	8%	30%	6%	4%	52%
Croydon Residents: ONS census 2021	17%	23%	8%	4%	48%

Disability:

Croydon Council: all workforce disclosed disability 2021/2 (%)	10%
Croydon residents disclosed disability: ONS census 2021(%)	14%

Introduction

1. What is the gender pay gap?

A gender pay gap compares the difference between the average hourly pay of women and men. As the gender pay gap looks at all roles, it shows whether men are on average occupying higher paying roles than women, or whether women are occupying higher paid roles than men. It is not a comparison of pay between people doing the same work.

2. Understanding the pay gap information

2.1 Pay gap percentages

The percentage gap represents the degree to which the average pay for women or the average 'one-off' payments for women is lower or higher than the same average payments for men.

2.2 Ordinary hourly pay rate

The ordinary hourly pay rate includes in scope:

- Basic pay
- Allowances (see [Appendix 2](#))
- Shift premium pay

It does not include in scope:

- Employees on maternity leave, long term sick leave, or other types of reduced pay
- Overtime

The calculation is based on contractual weekly hours. This gives a direct comparison between employees' hourly pay, regardless of whether they work full-time or part-time.

2.3 Mean and median calculations

- Mean calculation: adding a range of numbers together and dividing the total by how many numbers there are (often referred to as the average).
- Median calculation: the middle value in a range of numbers (which is better measure for skewed distributions).

2.4 Pay quartiles

Pay quartiles are calculated by:

- Ordering employees by their ordinary hourly pay.
- Dividing the employees into four groups, each with an equal number of employees - each group is a quartile. This creates four equally sized pay bands ranging from the lowest paid 25% (bottom 1/4) of employees to the highest paid 25% (top 1/4) of employees.
- Upper pay quartile is the top 25% or top quarter of paid employees.
- Upper middle pay quartile is the second highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lower middle pay quartile is the third highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lowest quartile is the bottom quarter grouping of all paid employees.

Quartiles allow Croydon council to compare employees' pay including allowance and shift pay, rather than using grades which only considers basic pay. It also allows us to compare all council employees across our various grade structures.

2.5 'One-off'/additional payments - pay gap percentages

For the purpose of pay gap reporting one-off or additional payments given for specific recruitment and retention purposes (e.g., social workers) and payments relating to profit sharing, productivity, performance, incentive, and commission (e.g., enforcement agents) are identified by the terminology of 'bonuses' within the pay gap reporting regulations.

3. Data Reporting

Croydon Council recognises that gender identity is not limited to the categories of male and female. Although gender pay gap regulations require Croydon Council to report on all staff as male and female, the council understands that some colleagues may not identify within this gender binary. Croydon Council welcomes and values colleagues of all gender identities.

In accordance with gender pay gap reporting guidelines, Croydon Council included 3,506 people in the scope as eligible for reporting on 31st March 2022.

4. Workforce Gender Profile

- As of 31st March 2022, 68% of Croydon Council's workforce identified as female and 32% of the workforce identified as male.
- Overall, 18% of the workforce were employed on part-time hours.

RESULTS

5. Croydon Council gender pay gap data 2020 - 2022

5.1 Ordinary hourly pay gap for gender

Figure 1 shows the mean and median hourly pay gaps for male and female employees from 2020 - 2022.

The mean pay gap decreased to 0% from 2020 – 2021 and has stayed at 0% from 2021.

The median pay gap has stayed at 0% since 2020.

	2020 (data as of 31 st March)	2021 (data as of 31 st March)	2022 (data as of 31 st March)
Mean ordinary hourly pay gap	2.0%	0%	0%
Median ordinary hourly pay gap	0.0%	0%	0%

Figure 1: Table showing mean and median ordinary hourly pay gaps for Croydon staff calculated via gender (male and female). The data is effective as of the 31st of March 2022.

Gender pay gap changes	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022
Mean	-2.0%	No change
Median	No change	No change

Figure 2: Table showing the changes to pay gaps for Croydon staff calculated via gender (male and female.)

5.2 Ordinary hourly pay gap for gender: quartile analysis

Figure 3 (below) shows the pay quartiles by gender for 2021 and 2022.

The largest representation of female employees is in the lower middle pay quartile and the percentage has increased by 2% from 74% (2021) to 76% (2022).

The lowest representation of female employees is in the lowest (bottom ¼) pay quartile which has seen a reduction from 68% (2021) to 62% (2022).

The highest and upper middle (top ½) paid quartiles show representation of female employees at similar levels to their workforce representation (68%) for both 2021 and 2022.

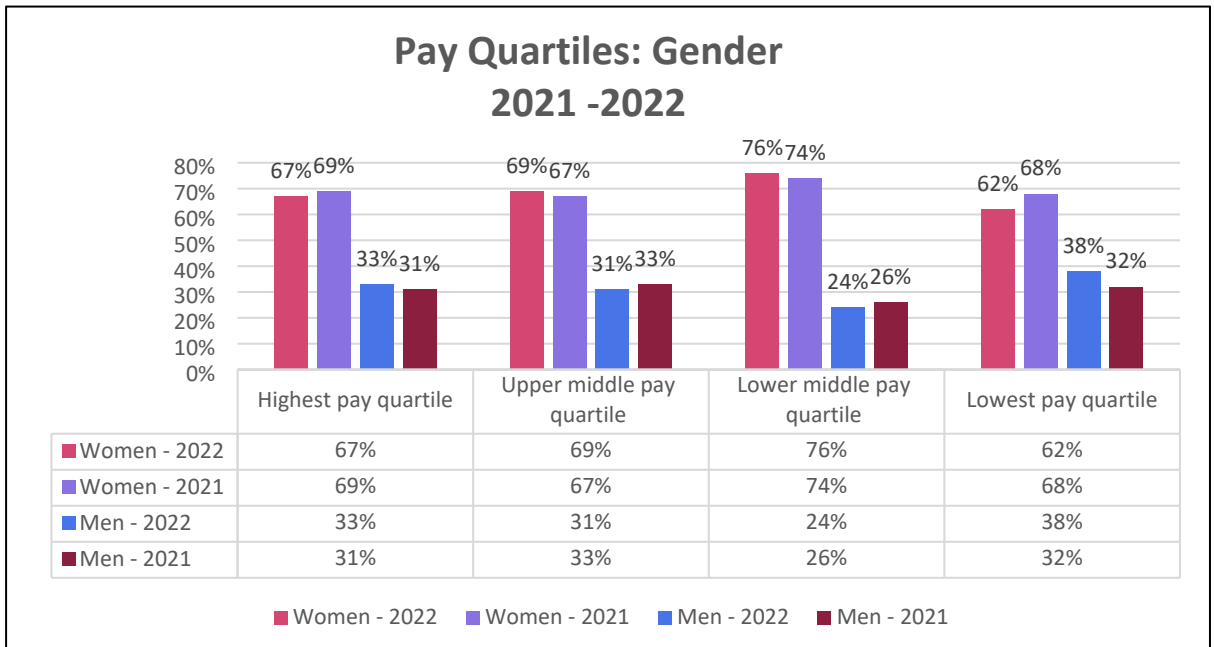


Figure 3: Chart showing pay quartiles for Croydon staff calculated via gender (male and female) in 2021 and 2022

[Appendix 4](#) maps the changes in pay quartile representation for male and female employees from 2020 – 2022.

Female employees have maintained the same representation in the highest paid quartile from 2020 – 2022 (67%) which is comparable to their workforce representation (68%). Females have increased representation in the upper middle (4%) and lower middle quartiles (6%) also in this time. Within the lowest paid quartile, female staff representation has decreased by 2% overall.

Male employees have also maintained the same representation in the highest paid quartile from 2020 – 2022 (33%) which is comparable to their workforce profile representation (32%). Males have decreased representation in the upper middle (-4%) and lower middle quartiles (-6%). However male

representation has increased in the lowest paid quartile by 2% overall from 2020 - 2022.

From 2020 - 2022 the lower middle pay quartile showed the biggest variation from the workforce profile representation, with females showing a consistently increased representation and men showing decreased representation.

5.3 'One-off'/additional payments - pay gap percentages

One-off or additional payments are given to an extremely limited number of employees for specific recruitment and retention purposes (see 2.5).

In 2021/22, these payments were made to 174 employees in total who comprised of:

- 120 female employees
- 54 male employees

In 2020/21, these payments were made to 195 employees in total who comprised of:

- 55 female employees
- 140 male employees

The number of employees receiving these payments comprise 5% of the Croydon council workforce in 2021/22 and 2020/21. Given the small numbers who received this type of payment, limited information can be drawn from the figures reported.

Figure 4 (below) shows the figures for 'one-off' payment gaps between male and female employees for 2020 - 2022.

(% that average additional pay/'one-off' payments for female employees are higher or lower than for male employees)	2021/2022	2020/2021
Gender - additional 'one-off' payment mean hourly pay gap	18.7%	28.5%
Gender - additional 'one-off' payment median hourly pay gap	0%	0.0%
Women paid additional 'one-off' payments as % of all women	5.0%	5.5%
Men paid additional 'one-off' payments as % of all men	4.9%	4.7%

Figure 4: Table showing staff one-off/ 'bonus' pay gaps calculated for gender groups 2020-2022

6. Reasons for changes to the gender pay gap from 2020 - 2022

The council's gender pay gap has remained low from 2019 onwards, with 2021 showing that (for the first time), the mean and median calculations for pay gaps were both 0%.

In 2022, pay gaps for both mean and median calculations remained at 0% which was the first time this occurred for two consecutive years since pay gap reporting commenced in 2018.

This means that on average, hourly pay rates for men are the same as for women across the council.

This could be in part due to changes in the workforce from 2020 - 2022 caused by:

- The working restrictions created by the pandemic increased opportunities for flexible working for the whole workforce including women.
- The reduction of employee numbers due to significant internal restructuring in 2020 and 2021.
- The increased number of appointments of female staff at middle and senior management levels in the workforce.

7. Action plans to improve the gender pay gap

Croydon Council is committed to improving equality, diversity, and inclusion. As outlined in our [People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022 - 2026](#), *"we aim to attract and retain diverse talent into the council, ensuring our workforce is as reflective as possible of the people of Croydon."*

The actions we have taken to improve gender diversity have had positive impacts on pay gap figures from 2020 onwards and resulted in:

- Croydon Council's pay gap figures being calculated as 0% for both mean and median across two consecutive years in 2021 and 2022. This is the first time that this has happened since pay gap reporting commenced in 2018.
- The representation of women in the lowest (bottom ¼) pay quartile has decreased overall by 2% from 2020 - 2022.
- The representation of women in the highest and upper middle pay quartiles have remained comparable to their workforce profile representation from 2020 - 2022.

Croydon Council also has seen tight financial restrictions in place since 2020. The Croydon Renewal and Improvement Plan for the next two years will continue to control spending across the council.

Gender Pay Gap Report: 2021-2022

The council will continue with its actions to improve gender pay gap differentials because:

- We are aware that gender representations in the lower middle and lowest pay quartiles are less representative of the division of the sexes within the workforce.
- The lower middle pay quartile is increasing in female representation levels compared to male from 2020 – 2022.

Current actions impacting gender pay gap	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have clarified in job advertisements that we are a hybrid working employer and flexible work options can be discussed at interview and agreed from the start of employment for all new employees. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have put in place inclusive recruitment practices including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anonymized applications ○ Diverse and balanced recruitment panels for all job roles – which we assess by sampling panel compositions to ensure compliance with our recruitment policy. We also intend to publish compliance rates on an on-going basis. ○ Making sure that all interview panellists have minimum training in equality and diversity, unconscious bias and recruitment learning whilst at Croydon 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have supported employees to develop staff diversity network groups that support all protected characteristics including gender. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory equality and unconscious bias training have been undertaken by all our employees. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council also has several family friendly policies and other initiatives to support women including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to buy additional leave. 	Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to take unpaid and sabbatical leave (up to 12 months subject to eligibility). • Shared parental leave options. • Paid additional leave options for employees when dealing with premature birth; parental bereavement leave (for bereaved parents of children aged under 18); and options for caring responsibilities. • A menopause policy and online resources on supporting women in the workplace • A 'Wellbeing Passport' to support staff in their personal lives by having open and honest conversations with management to discuss any adjustments to their working lives 	
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Our [commitment to equality](#) outlines our aim to create a workplace where all employees can be themselves.

In future months we also aim to implement actions to improve pay gap figures by implementing actions outlined below:

Upcoming actions to improve gender pay gap	People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026)	Timescale
Building on work to date, a workforce EDI dashboard will be presented to the EDI internal control board to analyse the workforce profile and to highlight areas where positive action is needed to address underrepresentation.	(Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.	2023 - 2026
The council will invest in positive action development programmes for protected characteristic staff to ensure an equitable approach to address current and past organisational shortcomings.	(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.	2023 - 2026
We will develop clear career and skills development pathways to ensure a	(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and	2023 - 2026

<p>systemic and holistic approach to workforce development which will be aligned to business planning and the fulfilment of the Mayor’s Business Plan to optimise performance for residents’ benefit.</p>	<p>optimise our performance.</p>	
<p>The council will aim to develop a more attractive employment value proposition (employment attraction package) to ensure we can recruit and retain good calibre people.</p> <p>In terms of retention there are key interdependencies with Pillar 4 and building workforce skills and capabilities.</p> <p>We will utilise our workforce exit data to pinpoint where we have issues of employee turnover and take targeted actions, including improving employee engagement</p>	<p>(Pillar 5) Acquire and retain talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive recruitment market.</p>	<p>2023 - 2026</p>
<p>The council will conduct a strategic pay review which will seek to simplify and make transparent the approach to job value, pay and rewards.</p> <p>The review will aim to benchmark the council against the external labour market to ensure pay and reward is competitive, whilst also being affordable within the council’s overall pay bill.</p>	<p>(Pillar 6) Establish a market leading pay and reward package.</p>	<p>2023 - 2026</p>

8. Croydon Council gender pay gap comparison with overall UK pay gap

We calculated our pay gap using a method set by The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

The Office for National Statistics use a different method for calculating the UK wide pay gap and therefore the two are not directly comparable. However, for context, how we compare against the UK-wide mean (average) is:

Characteristic	Croydon Council – median pay gap	UK Median ¹
Gender	0.0%	8.2%

Figure 5: Table showing gender pay gap for Croydon Council compared to UK Average pay gap 2022

In this context our gender pay gap is much lower in comparison with the UK-wide mean gap.

9. Croydon Council gender pay gap comparison with London Councils pay gaps

London councils who reported gender pay gaps for 2021 indicated the following figures calculated across all 32 councils:

- The mean pay gap figure for all London councils who reported was 2.5%.
- The median pay gap figure for all London councils who have reported was 0.7%.

As such Croydon Council's pay gap figures for 2021 and 2022 which are 0% for mean and 0% for median calculations indicate that the council's figures are below the average mean and median figures reported for all London boroughs.

10. Difference between pay gaps and equal pay

Equal pay calculations compare the average pay of male and female employees' doing equal work e.g., men or women doing the same job or on the same grade.

Gender pay gap is a comparison of the average pay for all men and all women within the council across all jobs.

As well as our pay strategy, gender pay gap is impacted by the grade profile of men and women. This is positively influenced by equal treatment in:

- Recruitment (including senior appointments, e.g., our CEO is currently female, and this may impact on our pay gap)
- Progression through grades
- Performance management
- Learning and development
- Maternity return rates – (e.g., more women than men tend to take unpaid leave to fulfil caring responsibilities)
- Equal use of flexible working and parental leave
- Inclusive leadership and culture

¹ Office For National Statistics April 2022

End

Appendix 1: Statutory Reporting Data Sets March 2022

The tables below show the data sets that will be uploaded to the Government portal in March 2023 in line with the gender pay gap reporting legislation.

1a. HOURLY RATE

CATEGEORY	MEAN	MEDIAN
Women's to men's hourly pay rate is	0.0% (no gap)	0.0% (no gap)

1b. PAY QUARTILES

QUARTILE	MEN	WOMEN
Upper	33%	67%
Upper Middle	31%	69%
Lower Middle	24%	76%
Lower	38%	62%

1c. 'ONE-OFF/ADDITIONAL PAY' (DEFINED AS 'BONUS' PAY IN PAY GAP REGULATIONS)

	MEAN	MEDIAN
Women's 'one-off/additional' pay is	18.7% lower than men	0.0 (no gap)

	MEN	WOMEN
Who received 'one-off/additional pay?	4.9%	5.0%
	(of men)	(of women)

Appendix 2: Allowances included in gender pay gap calculations

The following allowances are included in calculations for the gender pay gap:

- market supplements
- acting-up payments
- weekend and night working
- standby payment

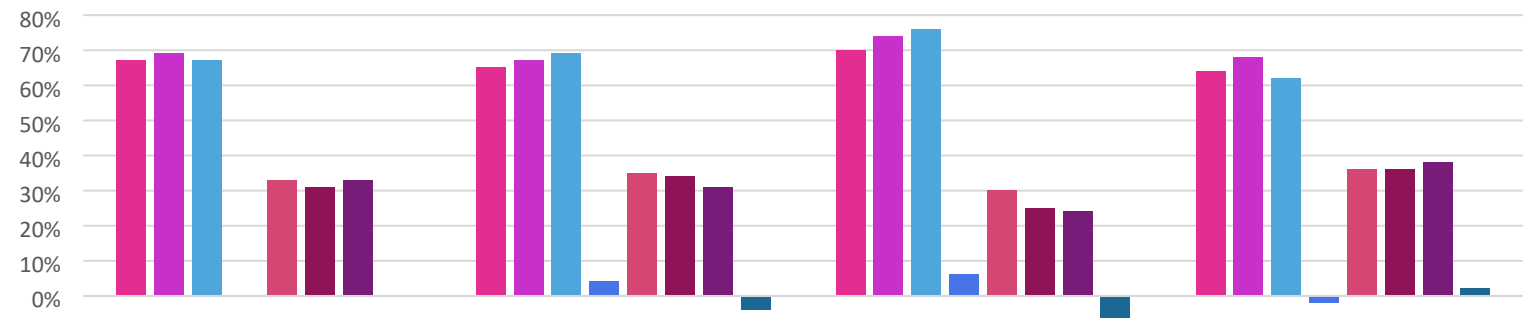
Appendix 3: Pay Quartile Information – Gender 2022

Pay quartiles	Women	Men	Total	Women headcount	Men headcount	Total headcount
Proportion of women and men in the upper quartile (paid above the 75th percentile point)	67%	33%	100%	594	283	877
Proportion of women and men in the upper middle quartile (paid above the median and at or below the 75th percentile point)	69%	31%	100%	606	271	877
Proportion of women and men in the lower middle quartile (paid above the 25th percentile point and at or below the median)	76%	24%	100%	666	210	876
Proportion of women and men in the lower quartile (paid below the 25th percentile point)	62%	38%	100%	547	329	876

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Appendix 4: Pay Quartiles 2020 - 2022

Gender Pay Gap: Pay Quartiles 2020 - 2022



	Upper - highest paid quartile (D)	Middle Upper Quartile (C)	Middle Lower Quartile (B)	Lower - Lowest paid quartile (A)
2020 - female	67%	65%	70%	64%
2021 - female	69%	67%	74%	68%
2022 - female	67%	69%	76%	62%
2020 - 22: female overall change (%)	0%	4%	6%	-2%
2020 - male	33%	35%	30%	36%
2021 - male	31%	34%	25%	36%
2022 - male	33%	31%	24%	38%
2018 - 21: male overall change (%)	0%	-4%	-6%	2%

2020 - female 2021 - female 2022 - female 2020 - 22: female overall change (%) 2020 - male 2021 - male 2022 - male 2018 - 21: male overall change (%)

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Croydon Council Ethnicity Pay Gap Report

Based on data collected from 2021 – 2022

Issued: June 2023

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Summary of Report

This report examines the ethnicity pay gap for Croydon council calculated as mean and median percentage figures.

The council's ethnicity pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) for all Global Majority ethnic groups (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) against White ethnic groups was calculated as 8.5% (median) and 5.0% (mean).

This indicates that since 2021, the mean ethnicity pay gap has increased by 0.7%, whilst the median pay gap has remained the same.

Ethnicity Pay Gaps	2021	2022
Mean	7.8%	8.5%
Median	5.0%	5.0%

Changes in ethnicity pay gaps	2020 - 21	2021 - 22
Mean	-2.6%	0.7%
Median	-0.2%	No change (5.0%)

The non-disclosure rate for employees in scope for pay gap reporting has decreased for ethnicity by 6% from 2021 – 2022.

Croydon Council's ethnicity pay gaps in 2021 and 2022 are lower than London Councils averages in 2021 (9.6% mean; 6.8% median).

Global Majority ethnic groups have their highest representation in the lower middle (3/4) quartile whilst White ethnic groups have their highest representation in the upper (top 1/4) quartile.

Quartile	Global Majority Ethnic Groups	White Ethnic Groups	Non-Disclosed
Upper (top 1/4)	33%	47%	21%
Upper Middle	39%	45%	16%

Croydon Council Ethnicity Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

Lower Middle	42%	40%	18%
Lower (bottom ¼)	32%	25%	43%

The council takes the improvement of protected characteristics disclosure rates seriously, and constantly aims to improve our levels by contacting and encouraging staff in low disclosure areas and highlighting how equality information is used via deploying information campaigns throughout the year.

The council also aims to continue to reduce pay gaps differences between global majority and white ethnic groups by implementing specific objectives outlined in the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022 – 2026 especially Pillar 2, workforce EDI (see [Action Planning](#)).

Croydon Council workforce characteristics compared to Croydon’s resident population:

Sex:

	Female	Male
Croydon Council – all workforce (2021/2)	68%	32%
Croydon Residents: ONS Census 2021, November 2022	52%	48%

Ethnicity:

Name	Asian/ Asian British %	Black/African/C aribbean/Black British %	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups %	Other ethnic group %	White ethnic groups (%)
Croydon council -all workforce (disclosed only) (2021/2)	8%	30%	6%	4%	52%
Croydon Residents: ONS census 2021	17%	23%	8%	4%	48%

Disability:

Croydon Council: all workforce disclosed disability 2021/2 (%)	10%
Croydon residents disclosed disability: ONS census 2021(%)	14%

Introduction

1. What is the ethnicity pay gap?

The ethnicity pay gap compares the difference between the average hourly pay of Global Majority ethnic groups and White ethnic groups. The ethnicity pay gap looks at all eligible employees within the council, to consider whether White ethnic groups are on average occupying higher paying roles than Global Majority, or whether Global Majority groups are occupying higher paid roles than White ethnicities. The ethnicity pay gap is not a comparison of pay between people doing the same work.

2. Understanding the pay gap information

2.1 Pay gap percentages

The pay gap data can show positive and negative percentages depending on whether the gap being measured is higher or lower for the Global Majority ethnic group compared to the White ethnic group.

In this report the percentage gap represents the degree to which the average mean or median pay rates for Global Majority ethnic group employees are higher or lower than the same payments for White ethnic group employees.

2.2 Ordinary hourly rate

The ordinary hourly pay rate includes:

- Basic pay
- Allowances (see [Appendix 3](#))
- Shift premium pay

It does not include:

- Employees on maternity leave, long term sick leave, or other types of reduced pay
- Overtime payments

The calculation is based on contractual weekly hours. This gives a direct comparison between employees' hourly pay, regardless of whether they work full-time or part-time.

2.3 Mean and median calculations

- Mean calculation: adding a range of numbers together and dividing the total by how many numbers there are (often referred to as the average).
- Median calculation: using the middle value in a range of numbers (which is better measure for skewed distributions).

2.4 Pay quartiles

Pay quartiles are calculated by:

- Ordering employees by their ordinary hourly pay rate.
- Dividing the employees into four groups, each with an equal number of employees - each group is a quartile. This creates four equally sized pay groups ranging from the lowest paid 25% (bottom 1/4) of employees to the highest paid 25% (top 1/4) of employees.
- Upper pay quartile is the top 25% or top quarter of paid employees.
- Upper middle pay quartile is the second highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lower middle pay quartile is the third highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lowest quartile is the bottom quarter grouping of all paid employees.

Quartiles allow Croydon Council to compare the spread of groups of employees by their pay including allowances and shift pay. It also allows us to compare all council employees across our various grade structures.

2.5 'One-off payments' pay gap percentages

For pay gap reporting, one-off or additional payments are defined as given for specific recruitment and retention purposes (e.g., social workers) or payments relating to profit sharing, productivity, performance, incentive, and commission (e.g., enforcement agents). These payments are identified by the terminology of 'bonuses' within the pay gap reporting regulations.

3. Ethnic group definitions for pay gap analysis

Global Majority ethnic groups are defined in line with the 2011 census and include Asian, Black, Mixed and Other groups (see [appendix 2](#)). White employees are defined as all White ethnic groups from the census (see [appendix 2](#)).

4. Limitations to ethnicity and disability pay gap data reporting

It should be noted that there are significant limitations to the figures reported for ethnicity pay gaps which may make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

The reporting of ethnicity pay gaps are based on the same principles as gender pay gap reporting which means that individuals in scope on the ‘snapshot’ date of 31st March 2022 will include ‘casual’ workers for whom no ethnicity data is currently held.

The level of non-disclosure for ethnicity may also have caused significant distortions in reporting a mean and median pay gap figure (see 5). However, the council does take the improvement of disclosure levels seriously and constantly aims to improve figures by describing how equality information is used by deploying a variety of information campaigns throughout the year.

Ethnicity pay gaps can also vary by whether individuals are UK or foreign born as well as by gender and ethnic group so an overall pay gap figure for all global majority ethnic groups may also not be fully representative ([EHRC – pay gaps explained](#))

This report also includes pay gap information for each Global Majority ethnic group (Asian; Black; Mixed; Other) compared to White ethnic groups. This may give a more detailed analysis of differentials regarding pay gaps for each group.

5. Data reporting and disclosure rate

In accordance with pay gap reporting guidelines, Croydon Council included 3,506 people in the scope as eligible for reporting on 31st March 2022.

As of 31st March 2022, the percentages for declared ethnic groups within the council’s workforce profile were:

- 6% Asian groups
- 23% Black groups
- 5% Mixed groups
- 3% Other groups
- 37% All Global Majority ethnic groups (Asian; Black; Mixed and Other)
- 39% White groups
- 25% non-disclosed ethnicity

Figure 1 (below) shows the non-disclosure rates for ethnicity for the pay gap reporting as of 31st March 2022 compared to 2021.

	31 st March 2021	31 st March 2022
Non-disclosure rate – ethnicity pay gap reporting	31%	25%

Figure1: Table showing non-disclosure rates for ethnicity pay gap reported staff as of 31st March 2021 and 2022.

RESULTS

6. Croydon Council ethnicity pay gap data 2020 - 2022

6.1 Ordinary hourly pay gap for ethnicity: Global Majority ethnic groups against White ethnic groups

Figure 2 (below) shows the mean and median hourly pay gaps for Croydon's Global Majority ethnic groups employees against disclosed White employees from 2020 to 2022. This shows the percentage of average pay for declared Global Majority ethnic groups employees is lower than for declared White employees during this period.

(% that average pay for declared Global Majority ethnicity employees is lower than for declared White employees)	2020 (data as of 31 st March)	2021 (data as of 31 st March)	2022 (data as of 31 st March)
Mean ordinary hourly pay gap	10.4%	7.8%	8.5%
Median ordinary hourly pay gap	5.2%	5.0%	5.0%

Figure 2: Table showing mean and median ordinary hourly pay gaps for Croydon staff calculated via Global Majority ethnic groups against white groups. The data is effective as of the 31st of March 2020-22.

Figure 3 shows that the mean calculation for pay rates between declared Global Majority ethnic groups employees against White employees decreased by 2.6% from 2020-21 but increased by 0.7% from 2021-22. Median calculations for ethnicity pay gaps have decreased by 0.2% from 2020–21 and remained unchanged from 2021-22.

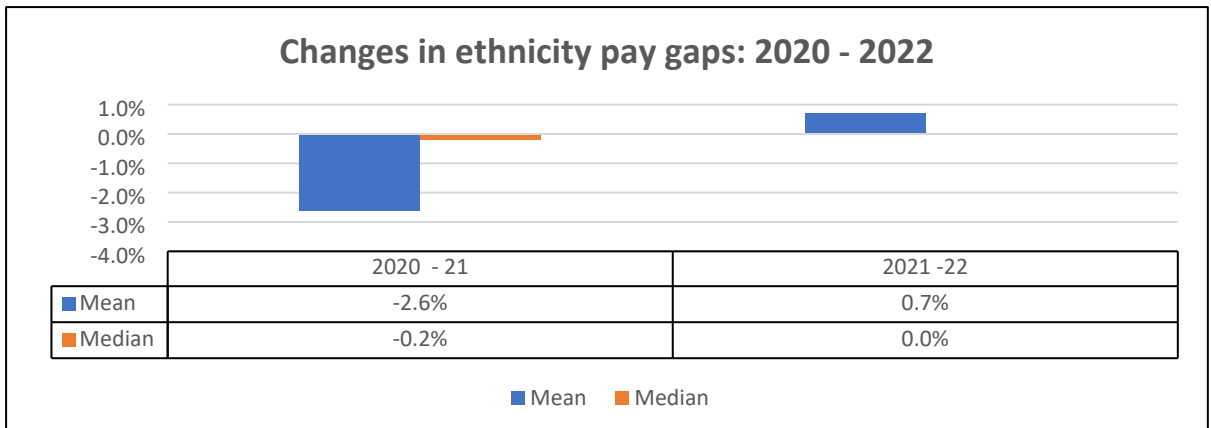


Figure 3: Chart showing the changes in pay gap calculation percentages for ethnicity from 2020 -2022.

6.2 Ordinary hourly pay gap for ethnicity: each Global Majority ethnic group against white groups

Figure 4 (below) shows the mean and median hourly pay gaps for each disclosed Global Majority ethnic group of employees against disclosed White employees as calculated on 31st March 2021 and 2022.

In 2021, Mixed groups had the highest mean pay gap (11.6%) but in 2022 this had changed to Other group employees having the highest mean gap (10.6%).

Median pay gaps were highest were highest for Mixed and Other groups in 2021 (9.2%) and these groups also have the highest median pay gaps in 2022 (6.8%)

Asian ethnic groups have the lowest pay gaps for both mean and median calculations (5.1% and 2.5% respectively) in 2021 and this group also has the lowest gaps in 2022 (5.7% and 2.6% respectively).

(% that average pay for each declared Global Majority ethnic group employees are lower than for declared White employees)	Mean ordinary hourly pay gap as of 31 st March 2021	Median ordinary hourly pay gap as of 31 st March 2021	Mean ordinary hourly pay gap as of 31 st March 2022	Median ordinary hourly pay gap as of 31 st March 2022
All Asian groups	5.1%	2.5%	5.7%	2.6%
All Black groups	7.4%	5.0%	8.6%	2.6%
All Mixed groups	11.6%	9.2%	9.6%	6.8%
All Other groups	10.0%	9.2%	10.6%	6.8%

Figure 4: Table showing mean and median ordinary hourly pay gaps for Croydon staff calculated via each ethnic group (Asian, Black, Mixed, and Other against White ethnic groups).

6.3 Pay quartile analysis for all Global Majority ethnic groups against White ethnic groups

Figure 5 (below) shows the pay quartiles for all disclosed Global Majority ethnic groups against disclosed White employees for 31st March 2021 and 2022.

In 2021, the highest percentage of Global Majority ethnic employees were in the lower middle pay quartile (37%) whilst the highest percentage of White employees are in the upper pay quartile (45%).

In 2022, the highest percentage of Global Majority ethnic employees are still in the lower middle pay quartile (42%) whilst the highest percentage of White employees is still in the upper paid quartile (47%)

The lowest percentage of Global Majority ethnic employees were in the lowest paid quartile in 2021 (28%), and this is still the case in 2022 (32%).

The lowest percentage of White employees were also in the lowest paid quartile in 2021(25%) and this has remained the same in 2022 (25%).

Non-disclosure rates have decreased in in all four pay quartiles from 2021 – 22 with the largest reduction in the lower middle pay quartile (-7%) and the lowest reduction in the lowest pay quartile (-3%).

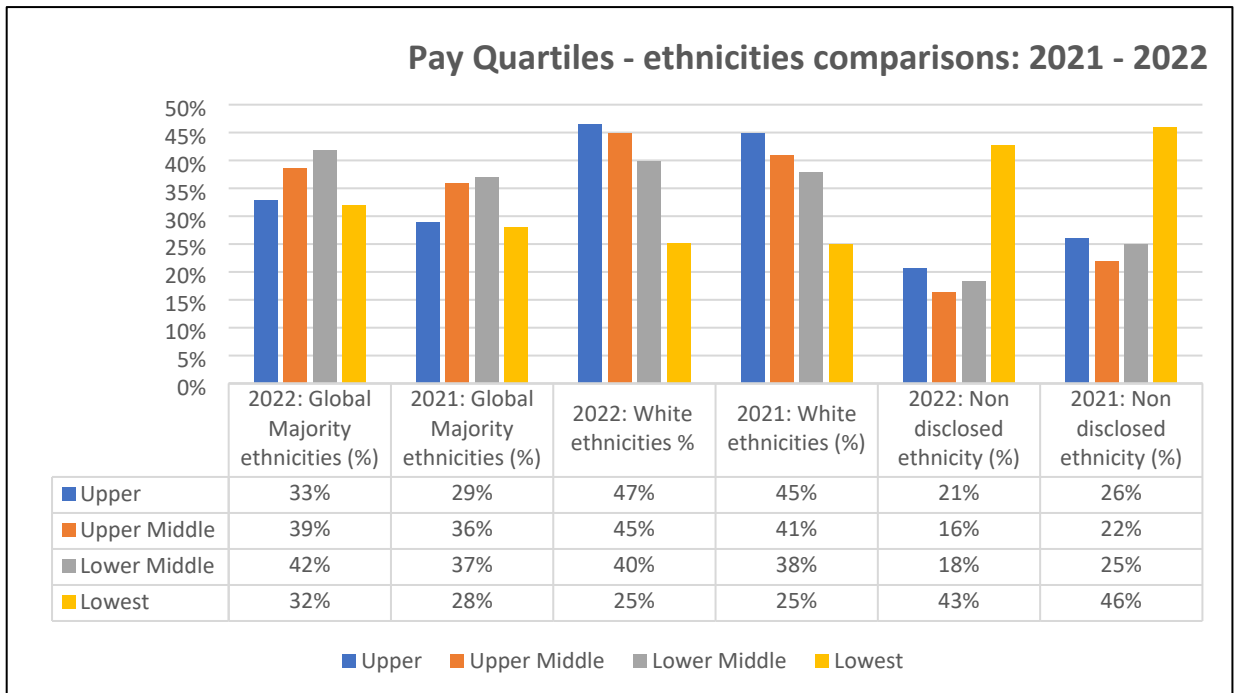


Figure 5: Chart showing pay quartiles for Croydon staff calculated via Global Majority ethnic groups (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) against White ethnic groups. The data covers 2021 -2022.

6.4 Pay quartile analysis for each Global Majority ethnic group

Figure 6 (below) shows the distribution of each Global Majority ethnic group within pay quartiles as of March 2021 and March 2022. This chart does not include any non-disclosed ethnicities.

Overall, all Global Majority ethnic groups have their highest representation in the lowest paid quartile in 2021 and 2022.

In 2022, the lowest representation of Asian, Black, and Mixed ethnic groups is in the upper pay quartile. Black, Mixed, and Other ethnic employees also have their lowest representation in the upper quartile in 2021.

Asian ethnicities are the only group that have decreased representation in the upper pay quartile from 2021 – 22 (13% v 9%). Black and Other ethnicities have increased their representation in the upper pay quartile from 2021-22 and Mixed ethnicities have stayed at the same percentage.

Black, Mixed and Other ethnicities have increased their representation in the lowest paid quartile from 2021 – 2022.

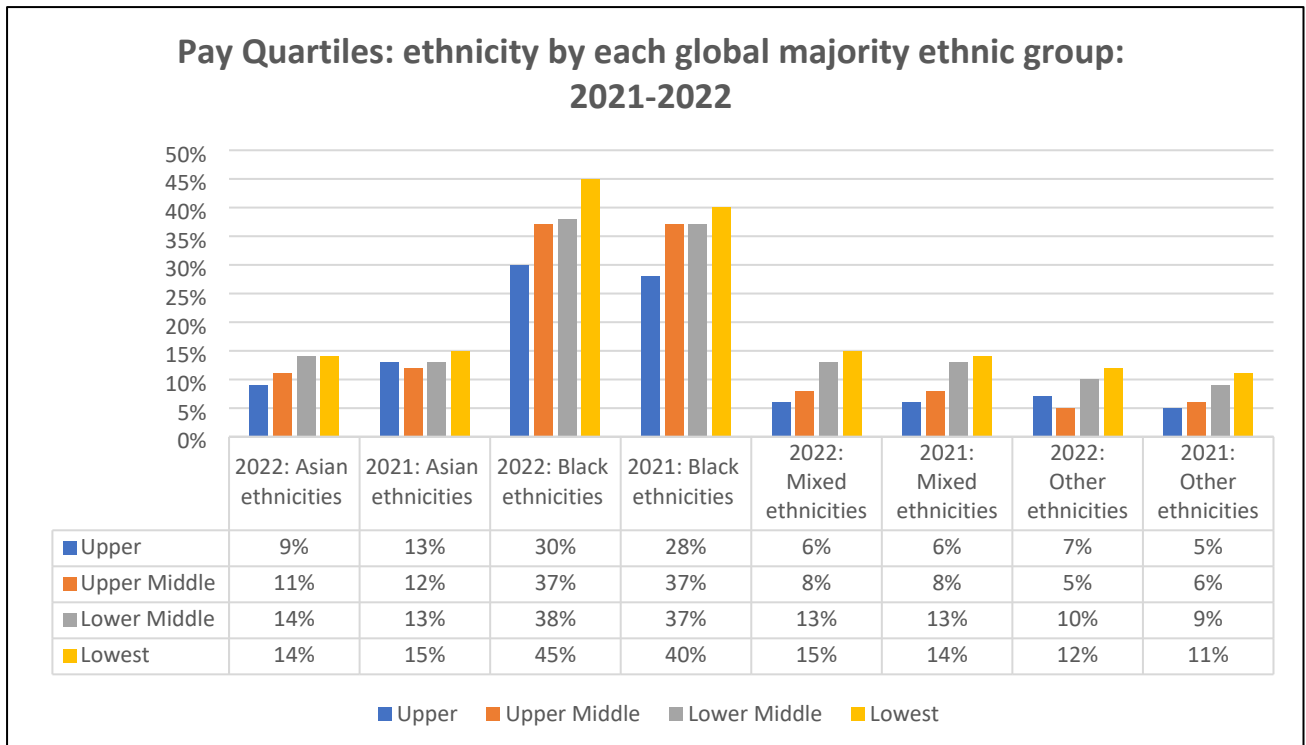


Figure 6: Chart showing pay quartiles for Croydon staff calculated via each global majority ethnic group: Asian, Black, Mixed, Other, ethnic groups. The data covers 2021-2022

6.5 ‘One-off’ payments pay gap for ethnicity

One-off payments are given to an extremely limited number of employees for specific recruitment and retention purposes (see 2.5).

Figure 7 (below) shows the figures for pay gaps between disclosed Global Majority ethnic groups employees against disclosed White ethnic group employees in 2020-21 and 2021-22

Payments were made during the 2020/21 year to 195 employees in total who comprised of:

- 65 (33%) Global Majority ethnic groups employees
- 43 (22%) White ethnic group employees
- 87 (45%) undisclosed ethnicity employees

Payments were made during the 2021/22 year to 174 employees in total who comprised of:

- 69 (40%) Global Majority ethnic group employees
- 42 (24%) White ethnic group employees

- 63 (36%) undisclosed ethnicity employees

These employees comprised 5% of the Croydon council workforce. Given the small employee numbers who received this payment, limited information can

'One-off' Payments Gap (% that average one-off payments for declared Global Majority ethnic employees are lower than for declared White employees)	2021	2022
Ethnicity – 'one-off payments' mean pay gap	8.7%	10.8%
Ethnicity - 'one-off payments' median pay gap	0.0%	0.0%
Global Majority ethnic groups staff paid 'one-off payments' as % of all minority ethnic staff groups	5.4%	3.8%
White staff paid 'one-off payments' as % of all White staff groups	3.1%	1.7%

be drawn from the figures reported.

Figure 7: Table showing 'one-off' pay gaps calculated via ethnic groups for 2020/21 & 2021/22

7. Global Majority ethnicity pay gaps and workforce profile

	Upper pay quartile	Upper middle pay quartile	Lower middle pay quartile	Lower pay quartile	Workforce profile - March 2022 (disclosed only)
All Asian groups	9%	11%	14%	14%	8%
All Black groups	30%	37%	38%	45%	30%
All Mixed groups	6%	8%	13%	15%	5%
All other groups	7%	5%	10%	12%	4%

Figure 8: Table showing all ethnic groups within pay quartiles as of 31st March 2022

In figure 8 (above), the pay quartiles for each ethnic grouping show that:

- All Global Majority groups have higher representations than their workforce profile in each quartile but have highest representations (compared to their workforce representation) in the lower middle and lower quartiles.
- Overall, all Global Majority ethnic groups (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) have their highest representations in the lower paid quartile.

8. Reasons for ethnicity pay gaps in Croydon Council

Ethnicity pay gap reporting has continued to be the highest pay gaps reported (against gender and disability) for Croydon Council in 2022. The reasons for ethnicity pay gaps may be that:

- The overall level of non-disclosed ethnicity (25%) for staff in scope may have impacted the accuracy of ethnicity pay gap figures (although it should be noted that non-disclosure is now at the lowest level since 2018).
- Levels of non-disclosure for ethnicity are particularly high in the lowest paid quartile (43%) mainly because:
 - 7% of non-disclosed staff in this quartile are 'casual workers' and will have no equalities information logged for them.
 - 12% of non-disclosed staff in this quartile are from Adult Social Care and Health and 21% are from Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery directorates. These areas have a variety of roles where staff do not have easy access to IT facilities so may find it harder to record equalities information.
- Global majority employees in Croydon have higher representations in Housing (49%) but may be less represented in corporate council areas such as Assistant Chief Executive (37%), where roles may be higher paid.
- Recent recruitment analysis for the council has highlighted that whilst Global Majority groups form most new recruits to the council in Grades 1-14, for grades 15 and above they are under-represented and are a minority of new starters compared to white ethnic groups.
- Research conducted by London Councils in 2021 has indicated that there is a 'glass ceiling' (for Global Majority employees) across all London councils, which exists at around the £50-£60,000 pay band, where representation of these staff reduces dramatically.
- Asian/Asian British staff are particularly underrepresented in all pay levels compared to the resident population.
- As can be seen in the pay quartiles, global majority staff tend to be over-represented for lower middle and lowest quartiles but under-represented in the upper middle and upper pay levels.

8. Croydon Council ethnicity pay gaps compared to London Councils

Croydon Council Ethnicity Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

London Councils have produced analysis (2021) for pay gaps and pay quartiles by ethnicity. This may provide a useful benchmark regarding the progression of ethnicity pay gap, but it is worth highlighting that the data from London Councils is based on 19 London boroughs reporting (out of 32) so there are limited conclusions to draw. No pay gap data for London councils for 2022 has yet been produced.

	Croydon Council pay gap - 2021	London Councils (average) ethnicity pay gap - 2021	Croydon Council pay gap - 2022
Ethnicity pay gap: mean calculation	7.8%	9.6%	8.5%
Ethnicity pay gap: median calculation	5.0%	6.8%	5.0%

Figure 9: Table showing ethnicity pay gaps for Croydon Council and London Councils – 2021-22

This table in figure 9 (above) shows that all of Croydon Council’s pay gap calculations in 2021 and 2022 were lower than the London Council’s average ethnicity pay gaps for 2021.

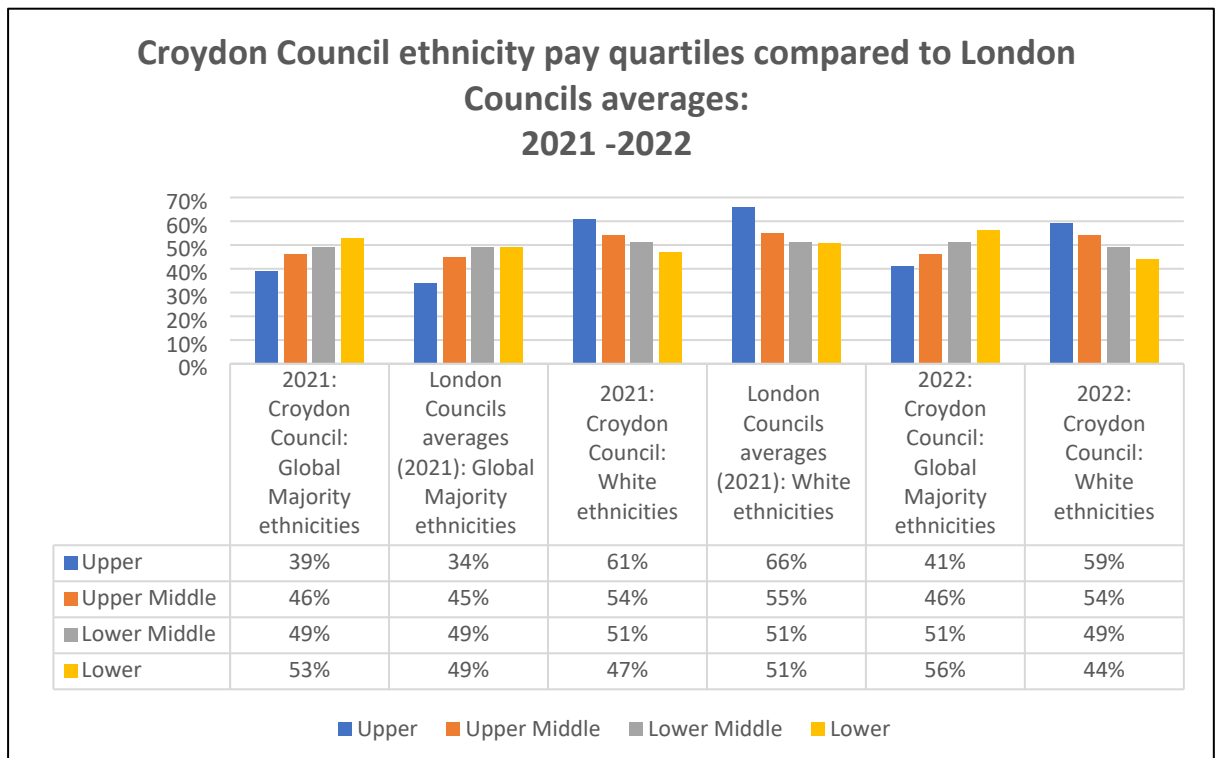


Figure10: Chart showing Croydon Council’s ethnicity pay gap compared to London Councils averages: 2021-22

This chart in figure 10 (above) shows that in 2021 and 2022 all Croydon Council Global Majority ethnicities had higher representations in all pay quartiles than London Councils averages in 2021.

9. Croydon Council ethnicity pay gaps compared with overall UK pay gap

Croydon council calculated its pay gaps using a method set by The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

The Office for National Statistics use a different method for calculating the UK wide pay gap and therefore the two are not directly comparable. However, it may still be useful to view the figures below as an indicator (figure 11).

The ethnicity pay gap in Croydon is higher than UK average figures. However, the figures for ethnicity pay gaps from the ONS were last calculated in 2019 and no recent updates are available.

Characteristic	Croydon Council median pay gap 2022	– London Average 2019
Ethnicity	5.0%	2.3% (ONS - 2019)

Figure 10: Table showing ethnicity pay gaps for Croydon Council and UK average as of 2019

10. Action planning to reduce ethnicity pay gaps

Croydon Council is committed to improving equality, diversity, and inclusion within our workforce.

The actions we have taken to improve diversity have had a positive impact on ethnicity pay gap figures from 2020 – 21.

It should be noted as a positive that:

- Non-disclosure for pay gap reporting overall has decreased from 2020-22 and is now at the lowest level (25%) since reporting started in 2018.
- Ethnicity mean and median pay gaps in 2021 and 2022 were lower than London Councils average ethnicity pay gaps in 2021.

However, on the negative side:

- Ethnicity pay gaps have continued to be the highest pay gaps reported for Croydon Council compared to gender and disability pay gaps since 2018.
- Ethnicity mean pay gap calculations have risen by 0.7% from 2021-2022

- In 2022, all Global Majority ethnic employees (as a group) have their highest representation in the lower middle pay quartile (42%) compared to White employees whose highest representation is in the highest paid quartile 47(%). This trend was also present in 2021 for both Global Majority and White ethnic groups.
- All Global Majority ethnic employees (as a group) have a higher representation than their workforce profile only in the upper middle pay quartile (39% v 37%) and lower middle pay quartile (42% v 37%), whilst White ethnic groups have higher representations than their workforce profile in the upper (47% v 39%), upper middle (45% v 39%) and lower middle pay quartiles (40% v 39%).
- Each Global Majority ethnic group (Asian, Black, Mixed and Other) have their highest representations in the lowest paid quartile.
- Non-disclosure of ethnicity is highest in the lowest paid quartile (43%) which may skew figures reported.

Croydon Council also has seen tight financial restrictions in place since 2020. The Croydon Renewal Plan for the next two years will continue to control spending across the council. However, the council will continue with its actions to improve ethnicity pay differentials.

We will be taking a data driven and employee ‘lived experience’ approach which will include taking actions around attraction of new employees and development of existing staff. We are particularly aware that Global Majority staff from grade 15 and above are not as represented as they should be compared to our residents so will be taking actions to address this.

Current actions to improve ethnicity pay gaps	Timescale
<p>Taking actions around the attraction of new employees includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebranding our website to highlight our commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce with video clips showing the diversity of our staff, the work they do, and why they work for the council. • Taking positive action around recruitment campaigns to encourage more applications from a wider range of individuals. • Capturing data to measure impact and progress. • Clarifying in job advertisements that the council is a hybrid working employer and flexible working options can be discussed 	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>at interview and agreed from the start of employment.</p>	
<p>Talent development of existing staff includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing leadership and management skills for staff in under-represented groups so that they can compete effectively for senior level roles. • Supporting employees to develop staff diversity network groups that support all protected characteristics including ethnicity. • Encouraging mentoring and leadership programmes. • Encouraging secondment opportunities across the council. • Capturing data to measure impact and progress. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to ensure that mandatory equality and unconscious bias training is undertaken by all employees. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to run regular campaigns to reduce non-disclosure rates within the council particularly for ethnicity. Non-disclosure is reducing for most of the council staff, but we acknowledge that there is more work to do regarding engaging with staff with limited access to IT systems in lower pay grades 	<p>Ongoing</p>

Our [commitment to equality](#) outlines our aim to create_a workplace where all employees can be themselves.

In future months we also aim to implement actions to improve pay gap figures by implementing actions outlined below:

Upcoming actions to improve ethnicity pay gaps	People and Cultural Transformation	Timescale
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	Strategy (2022 – 2026)	
<p>Building on work to date, a workforce EDI dashboard will be presented to the EDI internal control board to analyse the workforce profile and to highlight areas where positive action is needed to address underrepresentation.</p> <p>This may highlight areas of low global majority representation in directorates</p>	<p>(Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.</p>	2023 - 2026
<p>The council will develop an inclusive and distributed leadership tool which aims to improve inclusion across the council, improving employees' lived experience. This initiative also enables Pillar one, strengthening the council's leadership capability.</p>	<p>(Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.</p>	2023 - 2026
<p>We will develop clear career and skills development pathways to ensure a systemic and holistic approach to workforce development which will be aligned to business planning and the fulfilment of the Mayor's Business Plan to optimise performance for residents' benefit.</p>	<p>(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.</p>	2023 - 2026
<p>The council will invest in positive action development programmes for protected characteristic staff to ensure an equitable approach to address current and past organisational shortcomings.</p>	<p>(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.</p>	2023 - 2026
<p>We will develop a range of different resourcing methods to seek to attract diverse and high-quality candidates to work for the council. As covered under Pillar 4, we</p>	<p>(Pillar 5) Acquire and retain talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive</p>	2023 - 2026

<p>aim to redevelop our recruitment landing pages to provide an authentic brand and compelling package to attract the best candidates possible. We will also implement a values-based approach to recruitment to ensure candidates are assessed on their behavioural values, as well as knowledge, skills, education, and aptitude.</p> <p>We need to be mindful around the diversity of recruitment for grade 15 and above staff levels as we know that lower levels of global majority recruits is contributing to the ethnicity pay gap</p>	<p>recruitment market.</p>	
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Appendix 1: Reporting Data Sets - as reported for March 2022

The tables below show the reported data sets.

HOURLY RATE

CATEGEORY	2022: MEAN ETHNICITY PAY GAP	2022: MEDIAN ETHNICITY PAY GAP	2021: MEAN ETHNICITY PAY GAP	2021: MEDIAN ETHNCITY PAY GAP
Global Majority ethnicities hourly pay rate is:	8.5% lower than white ethnic groups	5.0% lower than white ethnic groups	7.8% lower than white ethnic group	5.0% lower than white ethnic groups
All Asian ethnic groups hourly pay rate is:	5.7% lower than white ethnic groups	2.6% lower than white ethnic groups	5.1% lower than white ethnic groups	2.5% lower than white ethnic groups
All Black ethnic groups hourly pay rate is:	8.6% lower than white ethnic groups	2.6% lower than white ethnic groups	7.4% lower than white ethnic groups	5.0% lower than white ethnic groups

Croydon Council Ethnicity Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

All Mixed ethnic groups hourly pay rate is:	9.6% lower than white ethnic groups	6.8% lower than white ethnic groups	11.6% lower than white ethnic groups	9.2% lower than white ethnic groups
All Other ethnic groups hourly pay rate is:	10.6% lower than white ethnic groups	6.8% lower than white ethnic groups	10.0% lower than white ethnic groups	9.2% lower than white ethnic groups

PAY QUANTILES: 2022

CATEGORY	UPPER QUANTILE	UPPER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER QUANTILE
All Global Majority ethnic groups (Black + Asian + Other + Mixed)	33%	39%	42%	32%
All White ethnic groups	47%	45%	40%	25%
Non-disclosed groups	21%	16%	18%	43%

CATEGORY	UPPER QUANTILE	UPPER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER QUANTILE
All Asian ethnic groups	9%	11%	14%	14%
All Black ethnic groups	30%	37%	38%	45%
All Mixed ethnic groups	6%	8%	13%	15%

Croydon Council Ethnicity Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

All Other ethnic groups	7%	5%	10%	12%
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PAY QUANTILES: 2021

CATEGORY	UPPER QUANTILE	UPPER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER QUANTILE
All Global Majority ethnic groups (Black + Asian + Other + Mixed)	29%	36%	37%	28%
All White ethnic groups	45%	41%	38%	25%
Non-disclosed groups	26%	22%	25%	46%

CATEGORY	UPPER QUANTILE	UPPER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER MIDDLE QUANTILE	LOWER QUANTILE
All Asian ethnic groups	13%	12%	13%	15%
All Black ethnic groups	28%	37%	37%	40%
All Mixed ethnic groups	6%	8%	13%	14%
All Other ethnic groups	5%	6%	9%	11%

ONE-OFF PAYMENTS

CATEGORY	2022: MEAN	2022: MEDIAN
Global Majority ethnic groups 'one-off payments 'pay is	10.8% lower than White ethnic groups	0.0% (no gap)

CATEGORY	2021: MEAN	2021: MEDIAN
Global Majority ethnic groups 'one-off payments 'pay is	8.7% lower than White ethnic groups	0.0% (no gap)

CATEGORY	2022: WHITE ETHNIC GROUPS	2022: GLOBAL MAJORITY ETHNIC GROUPS
Who received 'one-off payments?	1.7%	3.8%
	(of White ethnic groups)	(of Global Majority ethnic groups)

CATEGORY	2021: WHITE ETHNIC GROUPS	2021: GLOBAL MAJORITY ETHNIC GROUPS
Who received 'one-off payments?	3.1%	5.4%
	(of White ethnic groups)	(of Global Majority ethnic groups)

Appendix 2: Ethnic Groups

(As defined by 2011 census and the Office of National Statistics)

White

1. English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other White background, please describe.

Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups

5. White and Black Caribbean
6. White and Black African
7. White and Asian
8. Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please describe.

Asian/Asian British

9. Indian
10. Pakistani
11. Bangladeshi
12. Chinese
13. Any other Asian background, please describe.

Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British

- 14. African
- 15. Caribbean
- 16. Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please describe.

Another ethnic group

- 17. Arab
- 18. Any other ethnic group, please describe.

Appendix 3: Allowances included in ethnicity and disability pay gap calculations

The following allowances are included in calculations for the ethnicity and disability pay gaps

- market supplements
- acting-up payments
- weekend and night working
- standby payments

Croydon Council Disability Pay Gap Report

Based on data collected from 2021 – 2022

Issued: June 2023

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Summary of Report

This report examines the disability pay gaps for Croydon council calculated as mean and median figures.

The council's disability pay gap (as of 31st March 2022) calculated as a mean figure was -1.2%. The council's disability pay gap calculated as a median figure was 0.0%. In 2021, the disability pay gap as a mean calculation was 0.8% and as a median

Disability pay gap	2022 (data as of 31st March)	2021 (data as of 31st March)
Mean ordinary hourly pay gap	-1.2%	0.8%
Median ordinary hourly pay gap	0.0%	0.0%

calculation was 0.0%

This means that the disability pay gap as a mean calculation, has reduced by 2.0% from 2021 – 22 whilst the median pay gap has remained at 0.0%.

Changes in disability pay gaps	2020 - 21	2021 - 22
Mean	+1.8%	-2.0%
Median	+0.4%	No change (0.0%)

In 2022 disabled staff are being paid a higher average hourly rate than non-disabled staff as mean pay rate calculation, and that there is no pay gap between disabled and non-disabled staff as a median pay rate calculation.

The representation of disabled and non-disabled employees within the upper (top ¼), upper middle and lower middle pay quartiles also largely shows similarity with the workforce representations in both 2021 and 2022.

Croydon Council Disability Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

Quartile	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Non-Disclosed
Upper (top ¼)	8%	68%	25%
Upper Middle	8%	72%	19%
Lower Middle	8%	73%	18%
Lower (bottom ¼)	5%	51%	44%

Croydon council's disability pay gaps are lower than the average UK disability pay gap of 13.8% (ONS 2021) and London Councils (all boroughs) pay gap averages (1.2% mean; 1.2% median) for 2021.

The non-disclosure rate for employees in scope for disability pay gap reporting has decreased by 5% overall from 2021-22.

The council takes the improvement of protected characteristics disclosure rates seriously, and constantly aims to improve levels by contacting and encouraging staff in low disclosure areas and highlighting how equality information is used via deploying information campaigns throughout the year.

The council also aims to continue to reduce pay gaps differences between majority and minority groups by implementing specific objectives outlined in the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022 – 2026, especially Pillar 2, workforce EDI.

Croydon Council workforce characteristics compared to Croydon's resident population:

Sex:

	Female	Male
Croydon Council – all workforce (2021/2)	68%	32%
Croydon Residents: ONS Census 2021, November 2022	52%	48%

Ethnicity:

Name	Asian/ Asian British %	Black/African/C aribbean/Black British %	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups %	Other ethnic group %	White ethnic groups (%)
Croydon council -all workforce (disclosed) (2021/2)	8%	30%	6%	4%	52%
Croydon Residents: ONS census 2021	17%	23%	8%	4%	48%

Disability:

Croydon Council: all workforce disclosed disability 2021/2 (%)	10%
Croydon residents disclosed disability: ONS census 2021(%)	14%

Introduction

1. What is a disability pay gap?

The disability pay gap compares the average hourly pay of disclosed disabled employees and non-disabled employees. All eligible roles within the council are examined and the pay gap analysis aims to find out if non-disabled employees are on average occupying higher paying roles than disabled employees. Pay gap analysis for this purpose is **not** a comparison of pay between people doing the same work.

2. Understanding the pay gap information

2.1 Pay gap percentages

The pay gap data can show positive and negative percentages depending on whether the gap being measured is higher or lower for one group compared to the other.

In this report the percentage gap represents the degree to which the average mean or median hourly pay rates for disabled employees are higher or lower than the same payments for non-disabled employees.

2.2 Ordinary hourly rate

The ordinary hourly pay rate includes:

- Basic pay
- Allowances (see Appendix 2)
- Shift premium pay

It does not include:

- Employees on maternity leave, long term sick leave, or other types of reduced pay
- Overtime payments

The calculation is based on contractual weekly hours. This gives a direct comparison between employees' hourly pay, regardless of whether they work full-time or part-time.

2.3 Mean and median calculations

- Mean calculation: adding a range of numbers together and dividing the total by how many numbers there are (often referred to as the average).

- Median calculation: using the middle value in a range of numbers (which is better measure for skewed distributions).

2.4 Pay quartiles

Pay quartiles are calculated by:

- Ordering employees by their ordinary hourly pay rate.
- Dividing the employees into four groups, each with an equal number of employees - each group is a quartile. This creates four equally sized pay bands ranging from the lowest paid 25% (bottom 1/4) of employees to the highest paid 25% (top 1/4) of employees.
- Upper pay quartile is the top 25% or top quarter of paid employees.
- Upper middle pay quartile is the second highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lower middle pay quartile is the third highest quarter grouping of paid employees.
- Lowest quartile is the bottom quarter grouping of all paid employees.

Quartiles allow Croydon Council to compare the spread of groups of employees by their pay including allowances and shift pay. It also allows us to compare all council employees across our various grade structures.

2.5 'One-off payments' pay gap percentages

For pay gap reporting, one-off payments are defined as payments given for specific recruitment and retention purposes (e.g., social workers) and payments relating to profit sharing, productivity, performance, incentive, and commission (e.g., enforcement agents). These payments are identified by the terminology of 'bonuses' within the pay gap reporting regulations.

3. Limitations to disability pay gap data reporting

It should be noted that there are significant limitations to the figures reported for disability pay gaps which may make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

The reporting of disability pay gaps is based on the same principles as gender pay gap reporting which means that individuals in scope on the 'snapshot' date of 31st March 2022 (and 2021) will include 'casual' workers for whom no disability status data is held.

The level of non-disclosure for disability may also have caused significant distortions in reporting a mean and median pay gap figure (see 4). However, the council does take the improvement of disclosure levels seriously and constantly aims to improve figures by describing how equality information is used by deploying a variety of information campaigns throughout the year.

Disability pay gaps can vary by type and degree of disability of individuals so an overall pay gap figure for all types of disability may not be fully representative ([EHRC – pay gaps explained](#))

4. Data reporting and disclosure

In accordance with pay gap reporting guidelines, Croydon Council included 3,506 people in the scope as eligible for reporting on 31st March 2022.

As of 31st March 2022, the percentages for declared disability status within the council's workforce profile were:

- 7% Disabled
- 66% non-disabled
- 26% non-disclosed disability status

Figure 1 (below) shows the non-disclosure rates for disability for the pay gap reporting as of 31st March 2022 compared to 2021.

	31 st March 2022	31 st March 2021
Non-disclosure rate – disability pay gap reporting	27%	32%

Figure1: Table showing non-disclosure rates for disability pay gap reported staff as of 31st March 2021 and 2022.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Ordinary hourly pay gap for disability

Figure 2 (below) shows the mean and median hourly pay gaps for Croydon disclosed disabled and disclosed non-disabled employees from 2020 – 2022.

All disability mean and median pay gap figures were low in the 2020 – 22 period with both numbers either slightly above or below 0%.

(% that average pay for declared disabled employees is higher or lower than for declared non-disabled employees)	2020 (data as of 31st March)	2021 (data as of 31st March)	2022 (data as of 31st March)
Mean ordinary hourly pay gap	-1.0%	0.8%	-1.2%
Median ordinary hourly pay gap	-0.4%	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 2: Table showing mean and median ordinary hourly pay gaps for Croydon staff calculated for disabled and non-disabled employees from 2020 -2022.

Figure 3 (below) shows the disability pay gaps for 2020-21 had increased by 1.8% (mean) and 0.4% (median). However, in 2021-2 the mean pay gap has decreased by 2.0% and the median pay gap has remained at 0.0% for a second consecutive year.

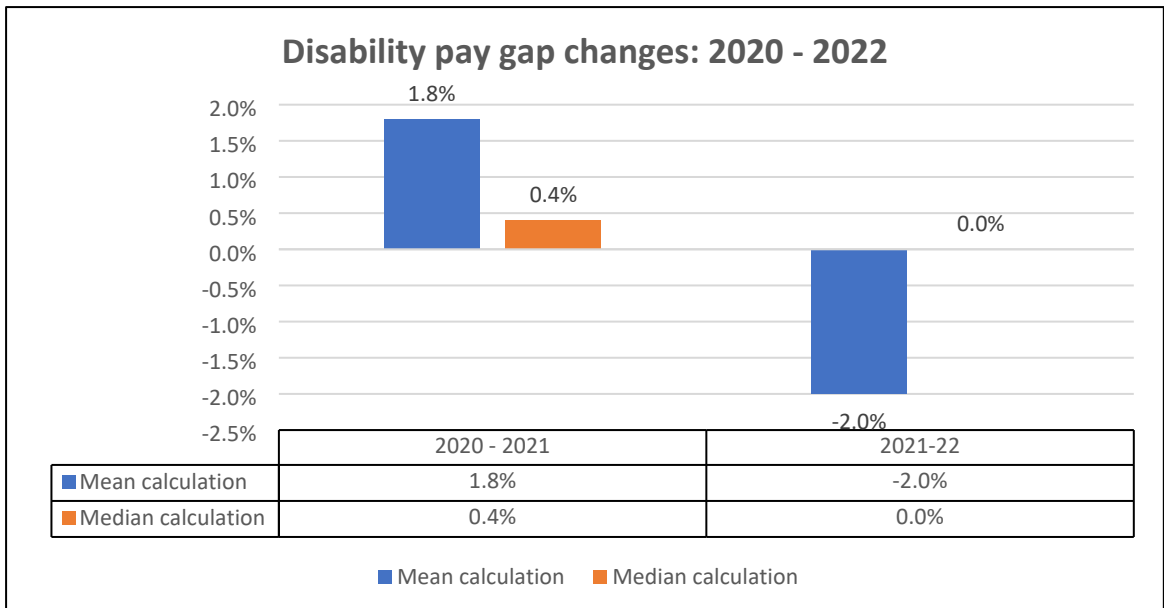


Figure 3: Chart showing pay gap changes for Croydon staff calculated for disabled and non-disabled employees from 2020 -2022.

5.2 Disability pay gap: quartile analysis

Figure 4 (below) shows the pay quartiles for disclosed disabled, disclosed non-disabled and non-disclosed employees for 2021 – 2022.

In 2022, the highest representation of disabled employees are in the upper (top ¼), upper middle, and lower middle pay quartiles (8%) whilst the highest proportion of non-disabled employees are in the lower middle pay quartile (73%).

The lowest representation of disabled employees (in 2022 and 2021) are in the lowest (bottom ¼) pay quartile (5%) whilst the lowest level of non-disabled employees are also in the lowest pay quartile (51% in 2022 and 46% in 2021).

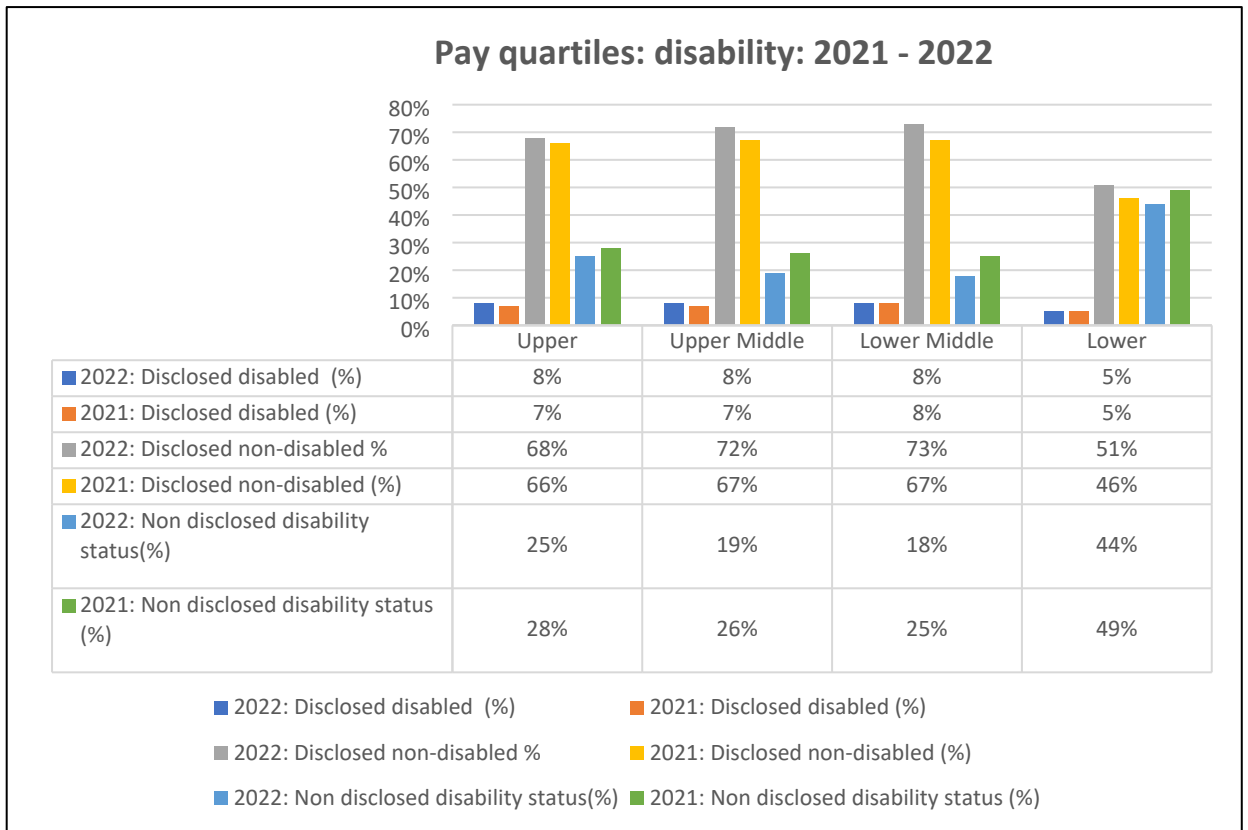


Figure 4: Chart showing pay quartiles for Croydon staff calculated for disabled and non-disabled staff group for 2021 – 2022

5.3 ‘One-off’ payments gap for disability

One-off payments are given to an extremely limited number of employees for specific recruitment and retention purposes (see 2.5). Figure 5 (below) shows the figures for pay gaps between disabled and non-disabled employees during 2020/21 and 2021/22.

These payments were made during the 2020/21 year to 195 employees in total who comprise of:

- 8 (4%) disabled employees
- 87 (45%) non-disabled employees
- 100 (51%) undisclosed disability status employees

During the 2021/22 year, these payments were made to 174 employees in total who comprised of:

- 4 (2%) disabled employees
- 36 (21%) non-disabled employees
- 134 (77%) undisclosed disability status employees

These employees comprised 5% of the Croydon council workforce. Given the small employee numbers who received this payment, limited information can be drawn from the figures reported.

'One-off' Payments Gap (% that average one-off payments for declared disabled employees are lower than for declared non-disabled employees)	2021	2022
Disability – 'one-off payments' mean pay gap	5.3%	17.7%
Disability - 'one-off payments' median pay gap	0.0%	0.0%
Disabled staff paid 'one-off payments' as % of all disabled staff groups	3.2%	3.1%
Non-disabled staff paid 'one-off payments' as % of all non-disabled staff groups	3.9%	3.4%

Figure 5: Table showing 'one-off' pay gaps calculated via for disabled and non-disabled groups for 2021 - 2022

6. Disability Pay Gap and Workforce Profile

Figure 6 (below) shows that disability pay quartiles indicate the highest representation of disabled staff are within the upper, upper middle and lower middle pay quartiles (8%) – this is higher than the workforce profile representation (7%). Overall, the representation of disabled staff in the top three pay quartiles is higher than their workforce representation. The lowest representation of disabled staff in in the lowest paid quartile (5%) but given the high levels of non-disclosure (44%) in this quartile it is possible that this figure is not reliable.

Disclosed non-disabled employees represent 66% of staff within the workforce profile. Their representation is also higher than their workforce profile in the top three pay quartiles.

	Upper pay quartile	Upper middle pay quartile	Lower middle pay quartile	Lowest pay quartile	Workforce profile - March 2022
Disabled	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%
Non-disabled	68%	72%	73%	51%	66%
Not disclosed	25%	19%	18%	44%	26%

Figure 6: Table showing pay quartiles for disabled and non-disabled staff within the council as of 31st March 2022

7. Reasons for disability pay gaps in Croydon Council

Levels of disability pay gaps have continued to be low for the last three years in Croydon Council and in 2022 show a higher average hourly rate for disabled staff than non-disabled as a mean calculation, and no pay gap as a median calculation.

However, there are areas of concern to be noted, which may potentially cause increases to pay gaps including:

- The level of non-disclosed disability status for employees in scope for pay gap reporting (27%) may impact on data produced.
- Levels of non-disclosure of disability are particularly high in the lowest pay quartile and this has only decreased by 5% from 2021-22. We know that employees in this quartile may have limited access to IT facilities so may find it harder to record equalities information.

8. Croydon Council disability pay gaps compared to London Councils

London Councils have produced analysis (2021) for pay gaps and pay quartiles by disability. This may provide a useful benchmark regarding the progression of disability pay gaps, but it is worth highlighting that the data from London Councils is based on 14 London boroughs reporting (out of 32) so there are limited conclusions to draw. No data from London Councils has yet been produced for 2022 disability pay gaps.

	Croydon Council pay gaps - 2021	London Councils pay gaps - 2021	Croydon Council pay gaps - 2022
Disability pay gap: mean calculation	0.8%	1.2%	-1.2%
Disability pay gap: median calculation	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%

Figure 7: Table showing disability pay gaps for Croydon Council and London Councils – 2021-22

Figure 7 (above) shows that disability pay gaps for Croydon in 2021 and 2022 were lower than the London Council's 2021 pay gaps.

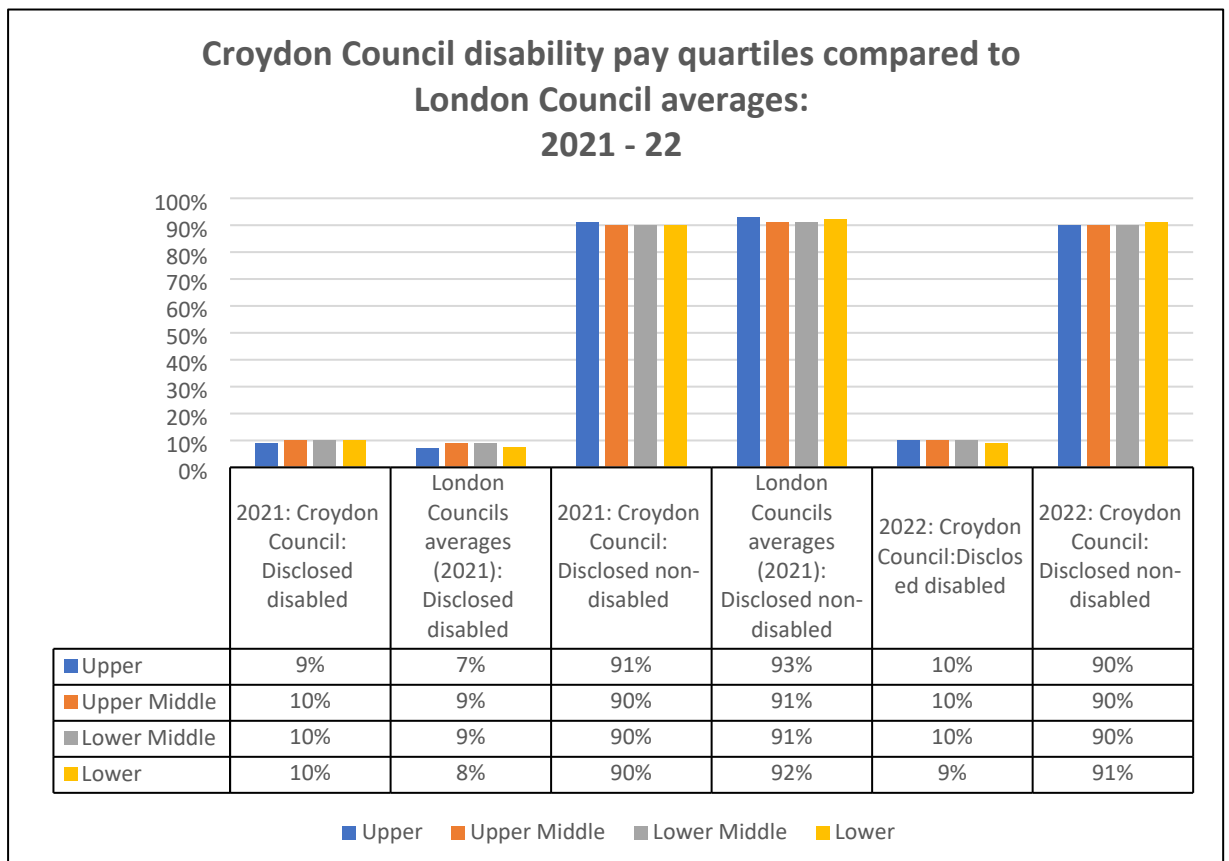


Figure 8: Chart showing Croydon Council's disability pay gap compared to London Councils averages: 2021-22

This chart in figure 8 (above) shows that in 2021 and 2022 all Croydon Council disabled employees had higher representations in all pay quartiles than London Councils averages in 2021.

9. Croydon Council disability pay gaps compared with overall UK disability pay gap

Croydon council calculated its pay gaps using a method set by The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

The Office for National Statistics use a different method for calculating the UK wide pay gap and therefore the two are not directly comparable. However, it may still be useful to view the figures below as an indicator (figure 9).

The disability pay gap in Croydon is below the UK average figures.

Characteristic	Croydon Council median pay gap 2021	–UK Average 2021
Disability	0.0%	13.8% (ONS)

Figure 9: Table showing disability pay gap for Croydon Council and UK average as of 2021

10. Keeping disability pay gaps low

Croydon Council is committed to improving equality, diversity, and inclusion within our workforce.

The actions we have taken to improve diversity have had a positive impact on disability pay gap figures since 2020.

It should be noted as a positive that:

- Disability mean and median hourly pay gap calculations have remained close to 0% since 2020.
- No pay gap has been reported for the median calculation for two consecutive years (2021 & 22).
- In 2022, the mean average pay rate for disabled employees exceeds non-disabled pay rates.
- The representation within pay quartiles for disabled employees is comparable to their workforce representation in 2022 and 2021.
- Non-disclosure for pay gap reporting overall has decreased from 2021-22 by 5%
- Disability mean and median pay gaps in 2021 were lower than London Councils figures for the same year.

However, on the negative side:

- Non-disclosure of disability (over 40%) is highest in the lowest paid quartile which may skew figures reported.

Croydon Council also has seen tight financial restrictions in place since 2020. The Croydon Renewal Plan for the next two years will continue to control spending across the council. However, the council will continue with its actions to improve disability pay gap differentials.

Current actions to improve pay gaps	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have clarified in job advertisements that hybrid working options can be discussed at interview and agreed from the start of employment for all new employees 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have put in place inclusive recruitment practices including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anonymized applications ○ Diverse and balanced recruitment panels for all job roles – which we assess by sampling panel compositions to ensure compliance with our recruitment policy. We also intend to publish compliance rates on an on-going basis. ○ Making sure that all interview panellists have minimum training in equality and diversity, unconscious bias and recruitment learning whilst at Croydon. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have supported employees to develop staff diversity network groups that support all protected characteristics including disability 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory equality and unconscious bias training have been undertaken by all our employees. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to run regular campaigns to reduce non-disclosure rates within the council particularly for ethnicity. Non-disclosure is reducing for most of the council staff, but we acknowledge that 	Ongoing

there is more work to do regarding engaging with staff with limited access to IT systems in lower pay grades.	
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- Our [commitment to equality](#) outlines our aim to create a workplace where all employees can be themselves.
- Over the coming years we also aim to implement action to improve pay gap figures:

Upcoming actions to maintain low disability pay gaps	People and Cultural Transformation Strategy (2022 – 2026)	Timescale
Building on work to date, a workforce EDI dashboard will be presented to the EDI internal control board to analyse the workforce profile and to highlight areas where positive action is needed to address underrepresentation.	(Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.	2023 - 2026
The council will develop an inclusive and distributed leadership tool which aims to improve inclusion across the council, improving employees' lived experience. This initiative also enables Pillar one, strengthening the council's leadership capability.	(Pillar 2) Build an equality driven, diverse and inclusive workplace.	2023 - 2026
We will develop clear career and skills development pathways to ensure a systemic and holistic approach to workforce development which will be aligned to business planning and the fulfilment of the Mayor's Business Plan to optimise performance for residents' benefit.	(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.	2023 - 2026

<p>The council will invest in positive action development programmes for protected characteristic staff to ensure an equitable approach to address current and past organisational shortcomings.</p>	<p>(Pillar 4) Build our skills and capabilities and optimise our performance.</p>	<p>2023 - 2026</p>
<p>We will develop a range of different resourcing methods to seek to attract diverse and high-quality candidates to work for the council. As covered under Pillar 4, we aim to redevelop our recruitment landing pages to provide an authentic brand and compelling package to attract the best candidates possible. We will also implement a values-based approach to recruitment to ensure candidates are assessed on their behavioural values, as well as knowledge, skills, education, and aptitude.</p> <p>We need to be mindful around supporting reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates/employees, and showing visual representation of this population in our workforce.</p>	<p>(Pillar 5) Acquire and retain talent, responding to skills gaps in the context of a more competitive recruitment market.</p>	<p>2023 - 2026</p>

Appendix 1: Reporting Data Sets as reported for March 2021 and March 2022

The tables below show the reported data sets.

HOURLY RATE

CATEGEORY	2022: MEAN DISABILITY PAY GAP	2022: MEDIAN DISABILITY PAY GAP	2021: MEAN DISABILITY PAY GAP	2021: MEDIAN DISABILITY PAY GAP
Disabled hourly pay rate is:	1.2% higher than non-disabled	0.0% (no gap)	0.8% lower than non-disabled	0.0% (no gap)

PAY QUANTILES: 2022

QUARTILE	NON-DISABLED	DISABLED	NON-DISCLOSED
Upper	68%	8%	25%
Upper Middle	72%	8%	19%
Lower Middle	73%	8%	18%
Lower	51%	5%	44%

PAY QUANTILES: 2021

QUARTILE	NON-DISABLED	DISABLED	NON-DISCLOSED
Upper	66%	7%	28%
Upper Middle	67%	7%	26%
Lower Middle	67%	8%	25%
Lower	46%	5%	49%

ONE-OFF PAYMENTS

CATEGORY	2022: MEAN	2022: MEDIAN
Disabled employees 'one-off payments' are:	17.7%	0.0%

Croydon Council Disability Pay Gap report: 2021-2022

CATEGORY	2021: MEAN	2021: MEDIAN
Disabled employees 'one-off payments' are:	5.3%	0.0%

CATEGORY	2022: DISABLED GROUPS	2022: NON-DISABLED GROUPS
Who received 'one-off payments?	3.1% (of disabled staff)	3.4% (of non-disabled staff)

CATEGORY	2021: DISABLED GROUPS	2021: NON-DISABLED GROUPS
Who received 'one-off payments?	3.2% (of disabled staff)	3.9% (of non-disabled staff)

Appendix 2: Allowances included in disability pay gap calculations

The following allowances are included in calculations for the ethnicity and disability pay gaps:

- market supplements
- acting-up payments
- weekend and night working
- standby payments

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET
DATE OF DECISION	28th June 2023
REPORT TITLE:	QUARTERLY PROCUREMENT PLAN UPDATE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	JANE WEST, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	SCOTT FUNNELL, HEAD OF STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT AND GOVERNANCE Email: scott.funnell@croydon.gov.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	CLLR CUMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE
KEY DECISION?	No
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the quarterly update to the Annual Procurement Plan 2023/24, with proposed additions and amends to the plan for the current year.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices], the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended:

- 2.1 to approve the revised Annual Procurement Plan for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 to approve the delegated decisions in the revised APP to those Lead Members or Officers as stated in Appendix A that includes the procurement strategy and award decisions, the duration of the contracts and contract values.
- 2.3 The delegated decisions shall only be exercised following recommendations from the Contracts & Commissioning Board, which include approval from both the Lead Cabinet Member and the Cabinet Member for Finance.
- 2.4 To allow for minor changes to proceed whilst retaining the agreed delegated so long as none of the following thresholds for changes are exceeded:

- i. Contract value exceeds that proposed in the APP/Quarterly Update Report, by the lesser of £500K or 25%, or the new aggregate value exceeds £1m and it becomes a key decision
- ii. Substantial / material changes to procurement from that defined in the APP/Quarterly Update Report e.g. material risks are identified

(Should either of those thresholds be exceeded, the delegation cannot be exercised, and the decision shall be recommended to the Executive Mayor, unless a further delegation is approved. Where a delegated decision is a Key Decision to Officers, it must be made in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member).

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Improving Procurement Governance Process Cabinet paper in November 2022 set out a rationale for establishing an Annual Procurement Plan, to simplify and accelerate approvals and ensuring a more strategic deployment of resources whilst maintaining decision making rigour.
- 3.2 Managing a proactive forward plan of procurement projects is fundamental to improving compliance and to ensure that contracts are re-let in time, and the APP approach is a key element of the Council's Procurement Improvement plan.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 Procurement plans are subject to change throughout the duration of an Annual Procurement Plan, and so a quarterly update allows for any changes to be made and any new additions to be included.
- 4.2 For this quarterly update, there are 14 additions and 15 amendments.
- 4.3 The reasons for the changes are included in the appendix, and the precise changes from the original APP are highlighted in yellow. The changes fall into the following categories:
 - New Procurement identified
This is where Procurements to be undertaken this year have been identified since the original APP was published.
 - Omission from original APP
This is where there may have been oversights whilst compiling the original APP, or new information has come to light which wasn't available at the time.
 - Process Delay
This is where a procurement is still taking place, but will be later than originally planned because of delays in the process.

- Service review delayed
This is where a procurement was dependent upon the outcome of a review into the service, but this hasn't taken place yet. The procurement may or may not take place later than originally planned, but this is dependent upon the outcome of the review.

4.4 There are also some unique reasons for change:

- Extra grant funding made available, vary the contract to increase the value
This is where additional grant funding has been made available to deliver a project or a scheme, and a variation needs to be made to the original contract value to include the additional spend.
- Extend until possible service replacement
This is where a third party may replace the service provision, so the Council needs to extend their provision until this position is confirmed.
- Originally 2 lots, but only lot 2 was awarded. Reduction in value.
This is where the procurement went ahead as planned, but of the 2 lots that were published, the Council was only able to award to the 2nd lot. Therefore the contract award for the remaining lot is significantly lower.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No other options considered at this stage as the recent November 2022 Cabinet paper established this approach as the process for planning procurement activity and delegating procurement decisions.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 Services across the Council have been consulted to ensure the accuracy of the APP updates. There is no requirement for external consultation as this is an internal process.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The Mayor's Business Plan set out a requirement to review and manage Council contracts better. A proactive forward plan of procurements enables the Council to ensure that contracts are re-procured in a timely manner which is essential to managing a programme of activity, ensuring value for money and supporting the Council priority of balancing the books.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 The Annual Procurement Plan set out in appendix A lists contracts that total £391m. The existing governance processes need to be complied with to provide assurance that value for money will be delivered from these procurements.

8.1.2 Comments approved by Darrell Jones, Acting Head of Finance on behalf of the Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer. 25th May 2023.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Executive Mayor has the power to exercise executive functions pursuant to s9E of the Local Government Act 2000 and has the power to delegate those functions. This report seeks relevant delegations to exercise executive functions.

8.2.2 In relation to any contract and procurement strategy/ award/ variation decisions that are key decisions, any delegations shall be limited to “Chief Officers” as defined in the Council’s Constitution, meaning: a) the Head of Paid Service; b) the Chief Finance Officer; c) the Monitoring Officer; d) a Statutory Chief Officer; e) a Non-Statutory Chief Officer. Corporate Directors fall within the definition of “Non-statutory Chief Officer”, which has the same meaning as in section 2(7) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and includes officers who directly report to the Head of Paid Service/ Chief Executive.

8.2.3 At present the delegations in the Council’s Tenders and Contracts Regulations have been superseded by the Executive Mayor’s Scheme of Delegation following the introduction of the Mayoral Model. The Executive Mayor has delegated executive functions as part of the Annual Procurement Plan (including updates) presented at Cabinet.

8.2.4 Comments approved by the Head of Commercial & Property Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (25.05.2023)

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.3.2 When a service is contracted out both the contractor and the public authority that commissioned the service must give due regard to the three principles of the General Duty as set out above. Any supplier that is exercising public functions also has an obligation to fulfil the general duty.

8.3.3 The Contract Management Framework is required to work within the framework of the Equality Strategy 2020- 2024. The deliverables in the Equalities Strategy

should be incorporated into the Contract Management Framework and policy documents as detailed below:

“Outline how the proposed contract(s) will comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty outlined in Section 4 of the EQIA; and meet the outcomes of the Council’s equality strategy, particularly:

- i. All Council contracts contribute towards delivering our equality objectives.
- ii. Council contractors are inclusive and supportive of vulnerable groups.
- iii. Ensure that every strategy, delivery plan, council contract and staff appraisal have an equality objective linked to it.
- iv. That contractors be requested to adopt Croydon’s Equality and George Floyd Race Matters Pledges”.

8.3.4 The Equalities Strategy including the Pledges named above, are provided to all bidders during the tendering stage of the procurement process. Social Value objectives also mirror the Council’s commitments to equalities and diversity.

8.3.5 EQIAs will be completed in respect of each contract.

8.3.6 Comment approved by John Mukungunugwa, Senior Equalities, on behalf of Denise McCausland, Equalities Programme Manager

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.4 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from the content of this report. Should matters arise these will be managed under the Council’s HR policies and procedures.

8.4.2 Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources and Assistant Chief Executives Directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. (Date: 24 May 2023)

9. APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix A - LBC Quarterly Updated Procurement Plan Q1 2023-24

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 *Improving Procurement Governance* – November 16th Cabinet

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Event Name	Directorate	Procurement Intention	Total Contract Value	Contract Length (months)	Extension Period	Planned Event Date	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Recommended Approver for Procurement Strategy	Recommended Approver for Award / Extension	Key Decision	Reason for change
ADDITIONS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN												
Croydon Council Community Equipment Service Spend	ASCH	New Procurement	£42,971,673	120	n/a	31/08/23	01/07/24	30/06/34	CM Health and Adult Social Care	CD ASCH	Yes	New procurement identified
Croydon Drug and Alcohol Integrated Engagement, Treatment and Recovery Service	ACE	Variation	£16,253,776	20	n/a	20/07/23	01/08/23	31/03/25	N/A	CD ACE	No	Extra grant funding made available, vary the contract to increase value
Respite for Adults with LD & Autism	ASCH	Extend & Vary	£7,300,000	24	n/a	15/06/23	01/07/23	30/06/25	n/a	CD ASCH	Yes	Omission from original APP
Housing and Asset Management IT System	HOUSING	Extend	£1,500,000	36	n/a	01/12/23	01/04/24	31/03/27	n/a	CD Housing	No	Omission from original APP
Supervised Contact	CYPE	Reprocure	£3,752,000	60	24	01/08/23	01/11/23	31/10/30	CM for CYP	CD CYPE	Yes	New procurement identified
Appropriate Adults	CYPE	Extend & Vary	£525,000	6	N/A	15/06/23	31/12/23	30/06/24	n/a	CD CYPE	no	Extend until possible service replacement
Regina Road and LPS Demolition	Housing	New Procurement	£5,000,000	51	N/A	01/08/23	01/12/23	31/03/28	CM for Homes	Corporate Director for Housing	Yes	New procurement identified
Regina Road and LPS Projects	Housing	New Procurement	£40,000,000	56	N/A	21/06/23	01/10/23	31/03/28	Executive Mayor	Corporate Director for Housing	Yes	New procurement identified
Malton House Construction	Housing	New Procurement	£3,000,000	12	N/A	01/10/23	01/04/24	31/03/25	CM for Homes	Corporate Director for Housing	Yes	New procurement identified
Housing First	Housing	Re-procure	£784,000	60	N/A	01/08/23	01/10/23	30/09/28	CM for Homes	Corporate Director for Housing	No	Omission from original APP
Next Generation of Highways Contract	SCRER	Extend	£130,000,000	36	N/A	01/01/24	01/10/25	30/09/28	n/a	Corporate Director for SCRER	No	Forward planning for early decision
Young People and Care Leavers (YPCL)	Housing	Extend and Vary	£6,355,000	9	N/A	15/06/23	01/07/23	31/03/24	n/a	Corporate Director for Housing	No	Omission from original APP
Housing Related Support for Women and their Children at Risk of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	Housing	Extend	£835,000	22	N/A	15/06/23	01/07/23	30/04/25	n/a	Corporate Director for Housing	No	Omission from original APP
Single Homelessness Service	Housing	Extend & Vary	£3,420,000	5	n/a	20/07/23	01/08/23	31/12/23	N/A	CD Housing	Yes	Process Delay
Alternative Education APPA	CYPE	Extend	£4,921,388	17		15/06/23	01/07/23	30/11/25	n/a	CD CYPE	Yes	Process Delay
Strategic Delivery Partner for ASCH transformation	ASCH	New Procurement	£5,000,000	6	24	15/07/23	01/09/23	19/03/26	CM Health and Adult Social Care	CD ASCH	Yes	New procurement identified
Work and Health Pioneer Place and Train	SCRER	Vary	£24,317,633	n/a	n/a	01/08/23	n/a	n/a	n/a	Corporate Director for SCRER	No	Extra grant funding made available, vary the contract to increase value
Minster Green Construction	SCRER	New Procurement	£6,700,000	12	N/A	01/07/23	01/12/23	31/12/24	CM for Planning and Regeneration	Corporate Director for SCRER	Yes	Omission from original APP
AMENDMENTS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN												
Adults & Childrens Social Care System	CYPE & ASCH	Extend	£2,989,000	36	n/a	01/07/23	01/08/23	31/03/26	n/a	CD ASCH	No	Process Delay
OHMS Housing IT system	Housing	Extend & Vary	£755,000	12	n/a	31/05/23	01/07/23	31/09/2023	n/a	CD Housing	No	Process Delay

Servelec Education Management System	CYPE	Extend	£1,129,000	36	n/a	01/07/23	01/08/23	31/03/26	n/a	CD CYPE	No	Process Delay
Capita One support	CYPE	Extend & Vary	£810,950	12	n/a	01/07/23	01/08/23	31/03/24	n/a	CD CYPE	No	Process Delay
Transportation of bodies Sutton and Croydon	ACE	Extend & Vary	£616,000	24	n/a	01/07/23	01/08/23	01/08/24	n/a	CD ACE	No	Process Delay
Floating Support for LD, ASD and MH	ASCH	REMOVE										Service review delayed
Floating Support for LD & ASD	ASCH	Extend & Vary	£3,175,550	15	n/a	15/06/23	01/07/23	30/09/24	n/a	CD ASCH	Yes	Process Delay
Floating Support for MH	ASCH	Extend & Vary	£1,292,684	15	n/a	15/06/23	01/07/23	30/09/24	n/a	Delegation already in place	Yes	Process Delay
Single Homelessness Service	Housing	Reprocure	£34,200,000	24	12	01/08/23	01/01/24	31/12/27	CM for Homes	CD Housing	Yes	Process Delay
Supported Housing Service for Ex-Offenders	Housing	Re-procure	£525,000	36	N/A	01/08/23	01/01/24	31/12/27	CM for Homes	CD Housing	No	Process Delay
Joint Children's Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy	CYPE	Extend & Vary	£5,172,000	6	3	15/06/23	01/07/23	01/04/24	N/A	Delegation already in place	No	Process Delay
Joint Children's Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy	CYPE	Reprocure	£2,700,000	60	24	01/09/23	01/02/24	31/01/31	CM for CYP	CD CYP	Yes	Process Delay
Tier 2 Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for Young People	CYPE	Extend	£1,921,500	21	N/A	29/06/23	01/07/23	31/03/25	n/a	CD CYP	Yes	Process Delay
Advocacy (Children's)	CYPE	REMOVE										Service review delayed
Page 264 FI Older People Care Services	ASCH	Reprocure	£2,800,000	54	120	13/01/23	01/10/23	31/03/28	N/A	CD ASCH	Yes	Originally 2 lots, but only lot 2 was awarded. Reduction in value
Training service provider - employees	Resources	Reprocure	£ 2,000,000	60	n/a	02/06/23	01/10/23	30/09/28	n/a	CD Resources	Yes	original plan was to extend for a year but tender brought forward
Street Homelessness Outreach and Resettlement Service	Housing	Extend & Vary	£1,800,000	6		01/07/23	01/07/23	30/12/23	N/A	CD Housing	Yes	Process Delay