

## Cabinet

Meeting of held on Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

### MINUTES

**Present:** 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) and Scott Roche (Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment)

**Also Present:** Councillors Andy Stranack (Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture), Lara Fish (Deputy Cabinet Member for Customer Service), Margaret Bird (Deputy Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), 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), Amy Foster (Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Christopher Herman (Shadow Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment), Enid Mollyneaux (Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety), Richard Chatterjee

**Apologies:** Councillor Andy Stranack who attended online

### PART A

The Executive Mayor reflected on the devastating event which led to a loss of a young teenage girl's life, on Wednesday morning. With the community shocked and saddened with the news, the Executive Mayor thanked those who responded quickly to the incident including the Police, Ambulance and Emergency Services and the community groups in Croydon and ensured the council's support to the Police in their investigations.

The Executive Mayor and the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, extended their deepest heartfelt condolences to the family.

Members of Cabinet and those present at the meeting stood to join the Executive Mayor in a one-minute silence.

43/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

44/23 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Part A and Part B minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 26 July 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

45/23 **Urgent Business (If any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

46/23 **Scrutiny Stage 1**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Scrutiny Stage One and Stage Two reports together where the recommendation detailed on Early Help, Parking Policy consultation, Flood Risks, Equalities, and other areas. Further, there were responses to Scrutiny recommendations on the Financial Performance, Asset Disposals, and the Waste Contract.

The Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Councillor Rowenna Davis, addressed the Cabinet highlighting the following concerns from Scrutiny:

- Upon reflection on the recent Birmingham Council bankruptcy news: Scrutiny was assured by the Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) that this council had no outstanding equal pay claims, and the request for extra funding for Croydon's Oracle system was very different to that in the Midlands, where it was functioning and able to meet capacity, though the funding was still a lot of the public's money.
- The Period 3 Finance Monitoring Report: Scrutiny were concerned that the General Fund was projected to balance with £4.5m from the corporate contingency fund with a projected departmental overspends, with more contingency fund spent than in the month before and could impact the Period 4 financial report should the trajectory continue. Officers acknowledged the scale of the challenge and assured Scrutiny that corporate control would be inserted into departments that were in breach of their budgets, which was welcomed.
- People's Finance: Following the rise in Council Tax, the hardship support funds was introduced, and Scrutiny welcomed the transparency following their request for the applications and awards of the scheme broken down into each ward. The total

number of households receiving the support was still very low as only 181 awards had been made. Scrutiny welcomed the Cabinet Member of Finance's commitment to change the back of the council's reminder and summons notifications to include a link to the hardship schemes.

- People Strategy Action Plan: The council's plan to transform its workforce concluded with excellent staff engagement on the project marking a real change in culture in the council. Scrutiny strongly recommended for target and action plan be reviewed to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound).

The Executive Mayor thanked the Chair of Scrutiny for her comments, and pointed out to the dedicated webpage for all the monitoring financial reports which were published online upon sign off instead of waiting to be heard at Cabinet meetings.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, responded to the point raised noting that the council was not in a position to be operating in a faster and more comprehensive financial procedures in relation to the Period Monitoring Report, and was working towards efficient working using standard operating procedures with the resources available. It was further noted that due to the council's financial position, reports were provided monthly, and published at the earliest possible opportunity. Secondly, it was to be noted that the hardship fund was specifically targeted following the council tax raise that was above the referendum level last year and should not be mistaken as a general hardship fund for the cost of living crisis or other financial pressures. There were other avenues of support provided by the council.

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

- 1.1. Receive the recommendations arising from the meetings of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee held on 27 June 2023 (Appendix 1), the Streets and Environment Sub-Committee held on 11 July 2023 (Appendices 2) and the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 25 July 2023 (Appendix 3).
- 1.2. To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 22 November 2023.

47/23

## **Scrutiny Stage 2**

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.

48/23

## **A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Croydon Thornton Heath**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Croydon Thornton Heath report which also include the surrounding areas.

The report highlighted the support from residents with over 78% in agreement.

The Executive Mayor highlighted that as a result of the feedback provided by the Local Policing team, the PSPO footprint should be extended to include Thornton Heath Pond and the entirety of Grangewood Park. Ward Councillors were also consulted, and a petition was also received.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, addressed Cabinet highlighting that Thornton Heath was identified as an areas for crime and disorder and had been committed to the PSPO following consultation with the public and support from the Police.

The Police Inspector Ryan Holliday addressed Cabinet, highlighting their support for the PSPO in the Thornton Heath area which would bring positive outcome to residents residing within that area.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Enid Mollyneaux, raised a question around the learning of the process as this was now the second PSPO in the borough, and asked what key learning could be taken forward following the responses from the consultation and organisations who responded on behalf of the public, further noting that a petition of residents voices was not included.

The Executive Mayor noted the key issues around data collection in the Thornton Heath Pond area which was not supported at the time, additionally following set procedures, the petition did not fit the criteria of the consultation, but to be reviewed in the future. The Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery, Nick Hibberd, added that following reflection the service had ensured that the process had considered and captured the data in the geographical area, which the recommendations were amended to also include the Thornton Heath Pond and Grangewood Park area. It was acknowledged that a petition was also submitted though of a different nature to the data

captured, and thus the consultation was enough to result to the conclusions within the recommendation.

The Opposition Leader, Councillor Suart King, welcomed the outcome and recommendations within the report, and acknowledged that there was no reference of a signed petition for this consultation which drew concern for future petitions not added or referenced in consultations, additionally, the map in appendix six of the report, did not show the Thornton Heath Pond in the boundary of the new PSPO.

The Executive Mayor responded that the Thornton Heath Pond area was inclusive of the boundary. The Order did include Thornton Heath Pond and the map would be addressed accordingly. The Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery, Nick Hibberd, added that the PSPO was a regulatory order, and it was important that data was present for sound analysis, to which the form was designed for.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To consider the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in and around the geographical area of Thornton Heath;
- 1.2. To note the strong support for the proposal with over 78% of respondents agreeing with the need for a PSPO in and around the geographical area of Thornton Heath;
- 1.3. Having due regard to the outcome of the statutory consultation and in the light of the consideration of the equalities matters and the public sector equality duty detailed in this report to approve the making of the PSPO covering the geographical area in and around Thornton Heath for a term of three years and in accordance with the draft Order set out in Appendix D;
- 1.4. To approve the process for the implementation of the PSPO in and around the geographical area of Thornton Heath.

49/23

### **Youth Safety Delivery Plan**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Youth Safety Delivery Plan report highlighting the need to have a clear plan for improving youth safety. The report highlighted the commitments to work closely with the voluntary sector and community partners.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, addressed Cabinet informing that the Children Social Care department had worked very closely with community safety and the Director of Children Social Care was working closely with Councillor Ola

Kolade for this delivery plan. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, added that the plan reflected on the huge amount of work produced within the last twelve months, which continued to build and develop. The plan included the partnership of the council, young people, the community partners and residents. Lastly, officers were seeking to identify public health funding to support additional elements in this work.

The Police Inspector Ryan Holliday shared with Cabinet that he looked forward to the progression of the plan and how their service could also contribute and work together with the council.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Amy Foster highlighted points for further explanation in the delivery plan particularly around violence against young women and girls by people they know, and areas for development for sex and related education to keep girls and young women safe from male violence. Her question was around the council's out of date sex and relationship education scheme of work on the website, how can the council ensure that the future funding and priorities were also looking at the violence against young women and girls and the work to reduce male violence in the borough.

The Executive Mayor thanked Councillor Amy Foster for her comments highlighting that though the plans linked there was a separate delivery plan for the violence against young women and girls, and youth safety. There was ongoing work around each delivery plan which would review points raised.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Enid Mollyneaux, welcomed the content of the delivery plan, and was concerned of the absence of parents within the various plans. Her question asked of where the average person could illustrate and find immediate help to support their family, in terms of stopping young people becoming victims or getting involved in gang activity and criminal activity.

The Executive Mayor informed that the council worked with many community groups with a lot of focus working with the mentoring groups, groups with young people and also with parenting groups, which would be reviewed on the clarity within the delivery plan. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, informed that organisations like "Walk With Me" do support parents with youth safety issues, and as part of the delivery plan the council aimed to engage with some of the organisations that were part of the Community Safety Engagement Board to address parent support, noting the voice of parents and young people were important.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1. To endorse the work delivered to improve youth safety in the last year.

- 1.2. To agree the plan contained in appendix 1 as the three-year delivery plan.
- 1.3. To support the development of public health funded initiatives to improve youth safety.
- 1.4. To agree the commitments to working with the voluntary sector and communities as outlined in the plan and section 6.

50/23

## **Report on 10 Experimental Healthy School Streets Schemes (Group 2)**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Report on 10 Experimental Healthy School Streets Scheme (Group 2), highlighting that the report planned to make permanent nine Experimental traffic Orders covering Healthy School /streets, which were trialled over the last eighteen months.

In brief, the trial reviewed whether the measures had an impact on road safety, reducing pollution and encouraged more walking in the chosen areas. As a result of the trial, it was proposed to withdraw the scheme around Keston Primary School.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, addressed Cabinet that the ten schools named as part of the scheme were originally introduced in 2020 following the informal consultation exercise. The consultation responses were aligned with 3 key themes: (1) displacement of traffic onto surrounding roads; (2) access issues for deliveries; and (3) a money-making scheme. There was significant level of objection for Keston Primary School due to traffic displacement of concerns of the adjoining road, and Keston Primary School itself was not supportive of the scheme. As a result, only nine schools were to be made permanent of the scheme.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Christopher Herman, addressed Cabinet welcomed the permanent expansion of the scheme which was popular with schools and parents to improve safety of school children. His question was around Keston Primary School, noting a return of traffic directly outside the school gates, causing an array of congestion and increased air pollution. How would the council respond to the complaints following the removal of the healthy school street.

The Executive Mayor responded that the data supported the objections and issues raised around the school, additionally with the school itself not in support of the scheme which should be considered. The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, added that the consultation created the case for review for the removal.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1.1. To make the following 9 experimental traffic orders, which form the healthy school streets schemes (No. 1-3 and 5-10) detailed within this report, permanent:

School	Affected Road	Section	ETMO Cited As	Ref
Ecclesbourne Primary School	Atlee Close	Entire length of	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.2) Experimental Order 2022	2022/19
Harris Primary Academy Croydon	Thompson Crescent and Chapman Rd	Chapman Road Between Kingsley Road and Fairmead Road, Thomson Crescent Between Kingsley Road and Euston Road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.3) Experimental Order 2022	2022/20
St Thomas Beckett Catholic Primary School	Dickenson's Lane	Entire length of road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.4) Experimental Order 2022	2022/21
Harris Primary Academy Haling Park	Haling Rd	Between the north to south arm of Haling Road and Selsdon Road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.5) Experimental Order 2022	2022/22
Downsview Primary School	Marston Way	Entire length of road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.7) Experimental Order 2022	2022/24
Christ Church CofE Primary School	Montpellier Rd	Between Brighton Road and the common boundary of Nos. 84 and 86 Montpellier Road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.8) Experimental Order 2022	2022/25
Oasis Academy Ryelands	Sandown and Oakley	Oakley Road entire length of, Sandown entire length of	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.9) Experimental Order 2022	2022/26
Ridgeway Primary School	Southcote Rd	southcote Rd: between The Ridgeway and the westernmost junction with Ellenbridge Way	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.10) Experimental Order 2022	2022/27
St Joseph 's Catholic Primary Junior School	Woodend	Entire length of road	The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.11) Experimental Order 2022	2022/28

1.2. To withdraw The Croydon (Traffic Movement) (No.6) Experimental Order 2022 effective as of 21 October 2023 in respect of the



Keston Healthy School Street in Keston Avenue and not to proceed to make it permanent; and to authorise the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery to take steps necessary to publicise this withdrawal and remove any associated signage and other measures in place as a result of the experimental order.

- 1.3. Subject to approval of recommendation 2.1 above, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery to undertake all measures necessary to make the 9 experimental orders permanent Traffic Management Orders, including pursuant to the statutory requirements of the Road Traffic Management Act 1984 and Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and make arrangements for the enforcement thereof.

51/23

### **Equality Annual Report 2023**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Equality Annual Report 2023, which showcased the progress made against each outcome outlined within the Equality Strategy for the years 2020-2024.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, addressed Cabinet highlighting some of the achievements over the past year which included the adoption of the George Floyd Race Matters Pledge and the Croydon Equalities Pledge. Further, a new People and Cultural Transformation Strategy was agreed and there were improvements in gender, disability and ethnicity pay gap. The key challenges included a better understanding of intersectional across different protected characteristics, global majority representatives at senior officer level in the council, understanding and collecting data on protected characteristics from the customers using council services, and working in better partnership with other statutory providers and those in the business and voluntary sector to improve health outcomes to all across Croydon.

The Chief Executive, Katherine Kerswell, thanked the Equality team, staff networks and Members of the staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board who had been pivotal in this work where there was huge progress and new initiatives around this which was a huge step forward to the council.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

To note the Equality Annual Report 2023 (Appendix A).

## Refreshed Croydon Equality Strategy 2023-27

The Executive Mayor introduced the Refreshed Croydon Equality Strategy 2023-2027 report, which was a refresh of the Equality Strategy that sought to build on the foundations laid out by the original strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, addressed Cabinet that the key elements of the refreshed strategy were to ensure clear actions and measurable outcomes, and thanked all staff and Members involved in the development of the strategy.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, welcomed the report and endorsed the approach adopted and the three outcomes, and commented that the refreshed should raise new issues to consider such as the absence of a delivery plan, and asked how Members would be satisfied that there would be robust targets, key performance indicators and monitoring of all seventy-two actions. Further, why the care experienced young people and the treatment of protected characteristic not currently proposed in the strategy.

The Executive Mayor responded that there was work in place relating to care experienced young people through the Corporate Parenting Board which was ongoing. The assurances of delivery plan would be assured following the proposal of the report to be heard at full Council in October.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, added that the strategy was to be owned by the whole of Croydon and to develop a successful delivery plan, all departmental management teams were part of the process and though this would take time, it was to cover the whole community of Croydon. The Director of Policy, Programmes and Performance, David Courcoux, added that the delivery plan once developed, would be built on the seventy-two actions set out in the strategy, and there would be visibility of the outcomes, which would be built into a delivery plan working with the whole organisation in the council. Members would have oversight in Scrutiny and Cabinet. The Equalities Manager, Denise McCausland, added that services were working on the delivery plan in collaboration with the Directorate Management Team.

The Executive Mayor thanked all staff involved in the delivery of the refreshed plan.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To agree the refreshed Equality Strategy 2023-2027 (Appendix A) and the updated Equality Objectives at paragraph 4.11 and refer them to Full Council with a recommendation for approval.

- 1.2. To adopt the London Local Government Anti-Racism Statement, developed by the London Councils Chief Executives London Committee (Appendix B), and refer it to Full Council for noting.
- 1.3. To appoint the Executive Mayor as the political lead, and the Chief Executive as the Senior Responsible Officer, for race.
- 1.4. To delegate to the co-chairs of the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board (or any successor board), in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities, the authority to approve and monitor the delivery plan for the refreshed Equality Strategy once adopted.

53/23

### **Progress update on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Progress update on the People and Cultural Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan report, which was on a journey of improvement to ensure the council delivered good quality services for residents. The report noted the achievements to date, and providing a framework to take Croydon forward as a place that effectively recruits, manages, and invests in its staff to ensure future sustainability.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet informing that the update covered a number of areas including key activities already delivered and plans for future development and delivery.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, asked a question which overlapped with the refreshed race equality strategy, was how the council could ensure that the promised increased and opportunities for staff in underrepresented groups, translate into real and measurable outcomes overtime. Further, how would the promotion of positive action in the legal sense of the strategy be carefully managed so staff do not feel that the gap in the workplace was down to them and not systems and processes that led to race discrimination in the workplace.

The Executive Mayor responded that this strategy had been through a lot of committees and there had been a lot of involvement for positive change, and a move for a positive cultural place within the workforce ensuring plans in place to support underrepresented groups and pay gaps. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings added that the co-design requires for co-delivery, and careful monitoring would be reviewed to measure the equalities impact going forward. There was a significant journey the council was to take.

The Assistant Chief Officer, Elaine Jackson, added that as part of the strategy was to measure the success. The council had committed to a number of hard measures, in all projects there were implementation measures, culture audit, improving opportunities for staff and under representative groups with monitoring, health and wellbeing absence indicators, recruitment and retention data would also be important and many more, of which a combination of these would ensure the tools to deliver a good service.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To receive an update on the People and Culture Transformation Strategy 2022-2026 development and action plan; and,
- 1.2. To note the achievements to date, work in progress, planned actions, and the contents of the report and Action Plan.

54/23

### **Period 3 2023-24 Financial Performance Report**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Period 3 2023-24 Financial Performance Report, which remained on track for a balanced budget.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet that there had been no change for the balance position overall. Though the Children and Young People department continued to forecast an overspend, which was a result of placement costs and staffing overspend. Work was ongoing to mitigate the overspend, and such overspend was widespread across the wider local government sector. Croydon was in a position to forecast a balanced year-end position by using part of the contingency reserves set aside for such circumstances.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, raised a questioning asking what assessments had been made with the risk associated with continuing vacancies should they persist, what were the plans to bring overspending services back on track and the resolution of high placement costs. Further, what could be said of the options being prepared by the council for government in place of the original plan to write off debt.

The Executive Mayor responded that there were a wide range of options and ongoing conversations with government. With the Period 3 report, there was ongoing mitigating overspend. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, added that the potential risks relating to vacancy levels across council was varied between departments and regular communications were held in relation to this. Further, the spending of placement costs was under intense review which related to the necessary spend for extremely vulnerable individuals and complex circumstances, and the council always sought to find the best value and

reviewed provision to ensure appropriateness. In relation to the staffing overspend, this was currently under review to be reflected in future reports.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, asked a question relating to the progress being made following conversations with government concerning the council's debt, and should the council not secure a debt write off before the budget setting for 2024-25, the council would need to revert to a Plan B to balance the budget. Further could residents be reassured that threshold increase in council tax would be ruled out as part of the budget setting proposals for 2024-25.

The Executive Mayor responded that as part of the conversations a number of measures were being reviewed, secondly the council tax cap was a one-off increase, to which the council would not go through the council tax cap again as a local authority. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, added that the Plan B consideration was incorrect, and the data held within the MTFs was based on forecast of a deal not received from central government, and predicted the use of capitalisation directed each year to meet the gap which was not sustainable long term. The Plan A consideration focused on the long-term stability of the council and planning for the position tabled to control.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1. To note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 3, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.5m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.
- 1.2. To approve within budget inter-directorate virements from Corporate to service directorates for non-pay inflation (£20.698m) (para 4.70), economic demand pressures (£1.716m) (para 4.72), Independent Living Fund (ILF) grant now included in the Social Care Grant (£0.960m) (para 4.68), and the transfer of equal grant income and expenditure budgets for the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund and the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund (net nil budget change) (para 4.68).
- 1.3. To note the progress in MTFs savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.82.
- 1.4. To note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.77.
- 1.5. To note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £3.8m.

- 1.6. To note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £2.8m against the revised capital budget of £144.3m.
- 1.7. To note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £4.1m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 1.8. 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.
- 1.9. To note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 1.10. To note that current forecasts are based on the best available information at the time and will be subject to review and change during the financial year.

55/23

### **Quarterly Procurement Plan Update Q2 2023-24**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Quarterly Procurement Plan Update Q2 2023-24 report, which intended to streamline and improve the Croydon's approach to procurement. The report had set out changes to the Annual Procurement Plan as well as the governance process for agreeing each contract.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet that this report formed part of the adopted reporting process for procurement. Changes made to the procurement plan were detailed by contract within Appendix A of the report.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, welcomed the report and asked how the individual contracts that encountered delays were being managed to deliver work expected. Was there a robust challenge for the delays and was the functions properly resourced given the staffing levels addressed in the financial report.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, responded that there was robust challenge method for delays. The report was a living document intended to highlight and be transparent of the current position and opportunities for current bidders. Regarding resource, the benchmarking data shows that the council was fully resourced and does not lack staff within the procurement function.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To approve the Q2 update to the Annual Procurement Plan for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. 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.
- 1.4. 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. 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).

56/23

### **Oracle Improvement Programme**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Oracle Improvement Programme report which recommended an investment of £740,000 to enhance the Council's Oracle Cloud solution for Finance, Procurement, Human Resources and Payroll, and improve the system's stability and continuity.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet that the report was recommending investment to develop the detailed implementation plan, to significantly improve operation across the council.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, supported the proposed investment of the Oracle system and asked a

question on how can successful be measured and whether consultation had been made with external auditors relating to metrics.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, responded that he had yet to consult with external auditors and would act on the recommendation.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

To allocate an investment of £740,000 from the Transformation Plan revenue budget 2023/24 to provide resources to develop a detailed plan with workstreams, milestones and costs to implement the improvements to the Council's Oracle system as set out in this report.

57/23

### **Future of Croydon Affordable Homes**

The Executive Mayor introduced the Future of Croydon Affordable Homes that updated the operations and performance of both Croydon Affordable Homes LLP and Croydon Affordable Tenures LLP.

The report noted the change made to operational arrangements including the council's relationship with the Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Board.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet that the report seeks to formulise arrangements between the council and the LLP companies and covers off the delegations needed to make the amendments. Further, there were no material financial affect from this.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young asked for a few words of explanation on this most technical of accounting issues that reassures residents that money has not been taken by anyone.

The Corporate Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer), Jane West, responded that it has taken a very large number of accountants in Grant Thornton discussing at length to get to the bottom of it. Absolutely no money ever went missing. It was simply a misunderstanding of the accounting arrangements that needed to be put in place for Croydon Affordable Homes. The conclusion is that the Council cannot take the full £70m of income into account in the year 2019/20. We need to spread it over 40 years which caused a hole in the Council's budget.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. To note the update on operations and performance of Croydon Affordable Homes LLP and Croydon Affordable Tenures LLP.



- 1.2. To note the changes to working arrangements between the Council and the LLP companies.
- 1.3. To delegate to Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer, in consultation with Cabinet Member of Finance and Croydon Companies Supervision and Monitoring Panel (CCSMP) to vary agreements between the Council and the LLP Companies.

58/23

**Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 8pm