

Croydon Advisory Forum on Active, Sustainable and Accessible Transport

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 15 October 2024 at 6.30 pm in Room 1.01 Bernard Weatherill House

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Scott Roche (Chair);

Councillor Lara Fish

Also Present:

Councillors Esther Sutton, Clive Fraser, Rowenna Davis
Jonathan Baggs (Transport for London)
Isabelle Clement (Wheels for Wellbeing)
Catherine Early (Croydon Cycling Campaign)
Charles King (Chair East Surrey Transport Committee)
Robert Varney (Transport for London)
Dominic Millen (London Borough of Croydon)
Adrian Douglas (Mott McDonald)
Alan Beattie (Croydon Living Streets)
Paul Donald (Network Rail)
Lee Pilbeam (Transport for London)
Peter Bolingbrooke (Croydon Ramblers)
Danny Creevy (Arriva)
Vivina Vincent (London Borough of Croydon)

PART A

21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Susan Underhill – Age UK
- Marcus Boyle – Croydon Living Streets
- Susanette Mansour – Croydon Vision
- Karen Ip – Age UK
- Heather Cheeseborough - Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration
- Tom Sweeney - Programme Manager
- Steven Wojcik - Strategic Transport Programme Manager

22 **Disclosure of Interests**

Councillor Lara Fish declared they were employed by Network Rail.

23 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Due to a technical issue with the recording, the previous minutes were noted down as key points.

The members of the forum agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 as an accurate record.

24 **Welcome and Introductions**

25 **Urgent Business (if any)**

No urgent business

26 **Making the Forum Effective**

Councillor Roche discussed plans to agree ongoing solutions to make the forum effective for active, sustainable and accessible transport provision in Croydon. The structure of this item was detailed as follows:

- How the council and their transport partners engage
- The role and responsibilities of partners to the forum
- Tailored information provided at meetings to specific areas of interest for attendees
- Preparation of a forward plan of topics so that the attendees have an overview of the work being carried out by the Council
- Suggestions for items for future meetings

Councillor Roche invited members of the forum to contribute to this item. Charles King raised several issues with existing bus routes in Croydon and bus shelters. Councillor Roche responded stating that the forum had been created to discuss a wider strategic approach to projects being implemented in Croydon. Charles King suggested that a separate forum was created to discuss bus route issues in the borough, Councillor Roche assured that these issues could be considered in the future.

27 **Transport for London Local Implementation Plan Funding - 3 Year Plan**

This was presented by Dominic Millen Interim Head of Strategic Transport Planning Sustainable Regeneration.

The officer advised that in 2019 the council adopted its local implementation plan which set an overarching framework for transport

programmes across the council. To support the delivery of the local implementation plan Transport for London used their funding to provide financial assistance to boroughs across London, this was referred to as LIP funding. The LIP funding worked in three-year circles with annual spending submissions from each borough. The next three-year cycle would start in 2025/26 where boroughs will prepare a 3-year LIP plan. However, there was an exception during Covid-19 pandemic where the cycle went down to three months to meet the immediate needs during the pandemic.

It was advised there were currently:

- 18 healthy school streets and 6 healthy neighbourhoods which have been
- Brighton road highway safety
- Over 2,900 children and 900 adults have received cycle training
- 33 new hangars provided for residents
- Reconnected Croydon project

The officer noted that funding for LIP came from the central government's main capital grant rather than their revenue streams, so the grant amount varied from year to year. The officer highlighted new programmes withing the LIP scheme:

- Borough Safer Streets – Value of the scheme is between 0.5 million to 5 million which manages data on historic collisions and future collisions
- Better Bus partnerships – Three boroughs a year will be allocated up to 10 million to deliver better bus infrastructure

To aid the delivery of these programmes the Council aims to support the Mayor of Croydon's business plan and the council transformation programme including:

- Further sections of active travel routes
- Tackling road safer priority location – (safer streets scheme)
- Reducing bus journey times
- More funding for Croydon town centre improvement

The officer added that identification of areas for intervention were guided by the local and TFL data which highlighted priority areas. The plan for 2025/26 funding included:

- Reconnected Croydon Programme
- Healthy neighbourhood and schools – Addiscombe East/West healthy neighbourhood
- Active Travel Route extensions – Routes in Croydon that will be brought forward in Croydon
- Cycle and Parking Training – Ongoing training for children and adults

- Bus Priority – Delivery of Addington village interchange improvement
- Safer Streets – New schemes and bringing forward the Portland Road scheme which has been identified as a priority
- Better Bus Partnership – Continuous work to unlock the 10 million pound funding for improvement of bus infrastructure in Croydon

The total estimated funding needed for these projects and schemes was £4,325,000. The officer concluded by speaking about next steps which included:

The EQIA and internal Council sign off would go to Council on 20 November 2024. This would then be submitted to TFL for comments in January 2025 with the final submission in February 2025. Once approval of funding was received in March 2025, work would commence on the programmes and projects.

After the officer's presentation, the forum was open for questions from the attendees.

Charles King asked about the possibility of a new bus route run through old town. Dominic Millen responded stating that buses cannot serve all service points within the boroughs as opposed to taxis that can convey passengers to their exact destinations. Options of new routes with reasons could be explored, dependent on the needs of members of the public.

Rob Varney, a representative from Transport for London, advised that adding further bus routes cost an average of £300,000 per year. Adding additional routes in a congested area would provide poor bus priority and lengthened route journey times.

Councillor Rowenna Davis asked about an incident near Aerodrome School in Waddon caused by an ongoing traffic issue and whether there would be funding for new healthy school street applications.

Dominic Millen stated that the next round of funding for healthy school streets had been allocated to the progress of ongoing schemes but encouraged the Councillor to submit the application so that the team would be aware of new streets that could be included in the scheme in 2026/27. Isabelle Clement, Chief Executive of Wheels for Wellbeing, queried the budget for the bicycle hangers and cycle training and whether there would be room in next year's budget to include the hire of bicycles for disabled children. The Officer agreed to pass this information onto colleagues leading on the scheme, to include it in the next funding bid.

In response to questions about the collection of road safety data, the officer responded that information collected from TFL, London Metropolitan Police, speed cameras, speedometers and additional funding would help to identify priority areas for traffic and speed control intervention.

The officer agreed with the Chair of the forum that the items discussed would be added to the forward plan before the next meeting and suggested that subgroups were created to focus on specific areas of concern.

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LB Croydon Progress and Forthcoming Schemes

Reconnected Croydon Programme

Dominic Millen Interim Head of Strategic Transport Planning Sustainable Regeneration advised the programme would utilise £18.5 million of Government funding, £5.6 million in match from a mix of growth zone and a S106 that would improve connections and the public realm throughout Croydon's town centre. The aim was to 'Reconnect, Refresh, Revitalise and Regenerate' the town centre. The main delivery areas would be:

- East and West Croydon
- Wellesley Road
- West Croydon and Lond Road
- Old Town
- North End and South End
- Fairfield

The officer stated that the programme aimed to improve:

- Making places easier to move through by creating clearer sight lines, widening pavements, Lamp columns and better cycle routes,
- Fill empty spaces in important areas (Fairfield civic space project)
- Safe and attractive paths for walking and cycling – this will be achieved by filling in subways and providing crossings for better connections within Croydon.

The officer stated that the delivery areas were split into portfolios. There had been significant progress in:

- Programme resources secured – By external technical expertise and information gathering from the public by carrying out surveys
- Memorandum of understanding had been submitted to Central government to approve the funding
- Detailed designs of the schemes (available in reports pack)
- Design modelling and approvals for subway removal and grade crossing for Wellesley Road and the Old Town roundabout.

Changes would begin in October 2024. In response to questions about the works that have been put forward for the ILTA remedy payments and work in Surrey Street market and how those projects would run alongside

the reconnected Croydon programme. The officer advised that the Council was in communication with spatial planners to guarantee that all projects were delivered as planned.

Councillor Clive Fraser presented a question about connections in Croydon namely St Georges shopping centre being revived and access to Cherry Orchard Road from East Croydon train station. In response the officer stated that the vision for the town centre would work to address movement issues within the area.

Electric Vehicle Charging

This item was presented by Dominic Millen Interim Head of Strategic Transport Planning Sustainable Regeneration who gave an overview of the plan. There would be a focus on where the demand was for charging points and this would also be dependent on funding. Detailed information would be provided in the next meeting.

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Network Rail Updates and Opportunities

This item was presented by Paul Donald Business Manager for Network Rail who advised of planned work, potential schemes and the December 2024 timetable changes.

The updates included:

- Track improvements - Windmill bridge Junction
- Building Work – Refurbishing the train shed at London Victoria Station and a canopy refurbishment at Streatham Common Station
- Signalling – Improvements at Clapham yard and on the Selhurst to East Croydon Route
- Signalling improvements – Selhurst to East Croydon
- Structural improvements – Sydenham Road underbridge and overbridge repair
- E&P – Renewal of DC transformer rectifiers at Sutton
- The refurbishment of the canopies at East Croydon Station and Norwood Junction train station
- Improvements at Brighton Road underbridge to ensure the electricals in place are robust and fit for purpose. Paul Donald forum on works already delivered successfully by Network Rail which included:
 - Track renewal at Crystal Palace junction which was delivered in 10 days
 - Upgrading of signalling systems which took place over 7 days during the October half term between Crystal Palace, Tulse Hill and Peckham Rye.

- Upgrades of the signalling system between East Croydon and London Victoria which saw signal related delays cut by half in 2022

South Croydon train station was nominated by the Department for Transport to be upgraded to provide better accessibility, plans were currently awaiting sign off by Southern Rail after which the plans would be shared with the public. In March 2025 the central government would finalise the funding available for the project.

A question was raised by Councillor Clive Fraser about accessibility issues for disabled passengers from East Croydon Station to Cherry Orchard Road. In response it was advised that an accessible gate would not be costly, however was an issue operationally a member of staff would have to be present 24/7 to help disabled passenger access the gate. If left unmanned, it heightened the likelihood of ticket evasion.

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Transport for London Updates and Opportunities

This item was presented by Rob Varney from Transport for London. It was advised that there had been an increase in the borough funding which has made £150m available for the Healthy Street Fund, this had allowed TFL to create two new schemes borough for safer streets and better bus partnerships.

Six lines on London Overground would be renamed by the end of the year. The new Super loop bus service namely buses SL5 and SL7 which serviced the Croydon area were noted and it was announced that in Spring 2025 the Super loop fleet would be replaced with electric buses.

The forum member mentioned the success of the Super Loop and reported over 3 million users of the service in 2024. The tram fleet procurement would take place in early 2025 with a contract award in 2026. In response to a question about bikes being allowed on the tram it was advised that the policy across all trains, busses and trams allowed foldable bikes due to space and capacity.

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Possible Items of Interest for Next Meeting and Next Meeting Date

- Approach for setting speed limits and possibly inviting the Metropolitan Police to the next meeting.
- Cycle parking and training
- Electric vehicle charging updates
- Cherry orchard accessible gate project
- Forward plan to be put together and circulated

The next meeting date would be agreed after the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm