

REPORT TO:	SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 30 March 2021
SUBJECT:	Establishment of Town Centre Task & Finish Group
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Councillor Sean Fitzsimons – Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:

The future of the Croydon Town Centre one of the key drivers to the vitality of the borough and touches upon many aspects of the Corporate Plan.

[Corporate Plan for Croydon 2018-2022](#)

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Scrutiny Chairs, Councillors Ben-Hassel, Fitzsimons and Ward, have identified scrutiny of the recovery of the town centre following the covid-19 pandemic as one of the key priorities for the Scrutiny Work Programme in 2021-22
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is asked to:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to set up a task and finish group to undertake a review on the future of the Town Centre in Croydon. 2. To review and agree the scope for the Task and Finish Group, set out in the report.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on the UK as a whole, which will likely bring significant change to the country going forward as the vaccination programme is rolled out and lockdown is exited for, what is hoped to be, the final time.
- 1.2. Beyond the immediate health and wellbeing challenges, one of the key challenges facing the country as it exits the lockdown will be the recovery of the economy. In Croydon specifically the recovery of the town centre economy will be crucial to the borough.
- 1.3. The Scrutiny Chairs, Councillors Leila Ben Hassel, Sean Fitzsimons and Robert Ward, have identified reviewing the recovery of the town centre as one of the key areas of work it would like to prioritise in the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021-22 and have agreed that given the potential scale of this review, that it will be best achieved through the formation of a task and finish group.

2. TOWN CENTRE TASK & FINISH GROUP

Intended Outcome of the Review

- 2.1 To produce a report covering the following:-
1. Identifying the key risks and challenges facing Croydon town centre in its recovery from the effects of the covid-19 pandemic,
 2. An evaluation on the viability of potential models and options for the future of the town centre,
 3. Creating a set of both short term and long term recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet on the future of Croydon Town Centre.

Scope of the Review

- 2.2 The Town Centre Task and Finish Group is asked to:-
1. Receive evidence from key stakeholders on the challenges facing Croydon town centre as it exits the pandemic lockdown,
 2. Receive evidence from key stakeholders and expert witnesses on potential short term options to aid the recovery of Croydon town centre,
 3. Receive evidence from expert witnesses on the possible options for the long term future of town centres
 4. To work with the Growth Zone project to gain an understanding of the viability of development opportunities within the town centre,
 5. To investigate potential options for attracting outward investment into the town centre.
 6. In light of the financial challenges facing the Council, to establish the most effective means for the Council to support the recovery of the town centre and to influence its future.

Membership of the Task & Finish Group

- 2.3 The Task and Finish Group will have a politically balanced membership of five scrutiny councillors (3 Labour & 2 Conservative).
- 2.4 The Task and Finish Group will be chaired by Chair of the Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee and include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee as members, along with two other scrutiny members.

Timeframe for the Task & Finish Group

- 2.5 The work of the Town Centre Task and Finish Group will start in June 2021 and will deliver its final report to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting on 7 December 2021.

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