

Cabinet

Meeting of held on Wednesday, 22 November 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Jason Perry (Chair);

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

PART A

78/23 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

79/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

80/23 **Urgent Business (If any)**

Mayor Jason Perry announced that £18.5m of funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had been received following a successful bid. This would be used to improve the town centre and to deliver the council's vision for Croydon. Mayor Perry thanked officers and internal and external partners for their work to secure this funding.

81/23 **STAGE 1: Recommendations Arising from Scrutiny**

The Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Councillor Rowenna Davis, introduced the report to Cabinet.

The Chief Executive requested that it be put on record that the communication that had been made between the council and the residents of Cornerstone House would be provided to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

Members of Cabinet made clear that there was no proposal to sell properties with leases in tact or without proper communication.

RESOLVED to:

- 2.1 Receive and consider the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee held on 26 September 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 31 January 2024

82/23

Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations

RESOLVED to:

- 2.1.1 Approve the responses and action plans attached to this report as Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6; and
- 2.1.2 Delegate authority to the officers identified in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 to report back to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, or relevant SubCommittee, within the periods specified in the agreed responses and action plans, and on progress made in implementing any action plan.

83/23

Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022/23

David Williams, Independent Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board, introduced the report to Cabinet.

In response to questions from members, it was explained that Core20PLUS5 was a scoring mechanism to demonstrate the level of deprivation and need in any specific area. Croydon scored highly on that level of deprivation compared to other South West London areas, and it was explained that the Board would work with public health partners to ensure that funding was secured to provide resources for those in need in Croydon.

RESOLVED to:

1. Note the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2022-2023.
2. Consider whether there are any considerations or concerns of the Annual Report.

3. Give consideration as to whether the Annual Report provides sufficient reassurance on the performance and effectiveness of the Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board.
4. Note that the CSAB and the Local Authority will be reviewing the funding from the partners.

84/23

Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022/23

Independent Scrutineer, Keith Makin, introduced the report to Cabinet.

In response to questions, officers explained that it was complicated to include the rates of death by suicide in the headline statistics as suicide was responded to by the service slightly differently from other safeguarding concerns.

RESOLVED to:

2.1 To note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) Annual Report for 2022-23

2.2 to note that the report provides robust evidence of the impact of the CSCP's activity to improve outcomes for children & families

2.3 to agree that the funding for the CSCP requires action to ensure the partnership is more equitable.

85/23

Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and for Community Safety, assured members that the work being undertaken on preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) would be highlighted to Council, and also that a piece of work was underway on preventing Young People leaving the youth justice system from becoming NEET (those categorised as Not in Employment, Education or Training).

RESOLVED:

2.1 To recommend the Youth Justice Plan to Full Council for approval.

86/23

2023-24 Period 5 Financial Performance Report

Members noted the issue that high-cost placements of homeless families into Croydon from other borough caused for financial performance.

Members also noted that the £70m capital receipt from Croydon Affordable Homes and Croydon Affordable Tenures was spent on transformation programmes in previous years, and that the accounts would be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in a few days' time.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 To note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 5, after the forecast utilisation of £63m capitalisation directions requested from DLUHC and £4.1m of the corporate risk contingency budget. It is not planned to utilise the risk contingency budget and directorates will work to bring the service directorate positions within budget.
- 1.2 To approve the budget movements between directorates to match the movement of service area responsibilities between directorates as set out in paragraph 4.13.
- 1.3 To note the progress in MTFs savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.101.
- 1.4 To note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.96.
- 1.5 To note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £12.0m.
- 1.6 To note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £14.3m against the revised capital budget of £144.7m.
- 1.7 To note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £5.7m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 1.8 To note the Council's historic 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.

87/23

Council Tax Empty & Second Home Premiums

Shadow Cabinet Members expressed the desire for a progress report to Council.

Cabinet Members suggested that the Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee includes monitoring of this report to its work programme.

RESOLVED

2.1 To recommend to Full Council, that Full Council make the necessary determinations as billing authority under Section 11B for financial year 2024-2025 to the effect that where permitted, for dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period of at least one year the amount of Council Tax will be increased by 100% where the period is less than 5 years, by 200% where the period is at least 5 years but less than 10 years, and by 300% where the period is at least 10 years, and that the discount under Section 11(2)(a) shall not apply. .

2.2 To recommend to Full Council, that Full Council make the necessary determinations under Section 11C as billing authority for financial year 2025-2026 to the effect that where permitted, for dwellings where there is no resident of the dwelling and the dwelling is substantially furnished, the amount of Council Tax will be increased by 100%, and the discount under Section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.

88/23

Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was not necessary to exclude the press and public from any portion of this meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.35 pm