

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET 22 JUNE 2022
SUBJECT:	THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CROYDON'S PRIORITIES
LEAD OFFICER:	Katherine Kerswell, Chief Executive Gavin Handford, Director of Policy, Programmes and Performance
CABINET MEMBER:	JASON PERRY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CROYDON
WARDS:	All
FINANCIAL IMPACT The short-term financial cost of the priorities set out in this report will be accommodated within the Council's existing budget for 2022/23. Where there are potential ongoing costs in later years, sources of funding for the priorities will be proposed in the future reports on the proposed Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2026 and the Capital Strategy 2023/26 which are due to be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in early 2023.	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Not a key decision	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the summary of the Executive Mayor's priorities and manifesto commitments and the work to date to map these against current council activity.
- 1.2 Note that the Council's strategic objectives and plan will be developed to set out how manifesto commitments will be delivered over the next four years and brought back to a future meeting of the Cabinet for agreement.
- 1.3 Note that any additional costs in 2022/23 of the Council's strategic objectives and plan will be funded from existing budgets. Future year costs will be built into the reports on the proposed Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2026 and the Capital Strategy 2023/26 which are due to be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in early 2023.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report summarises the commitments the Executive Mayor of Croydon made during the recent mayoral election campaign. It sets out the work carried out so far to assess the implications of each in order to prepare a four-year implementation programme. The Council's strategic objectives and plan will be

developed detailing the Council's actions to deliver the priorities and the outcomes that will be achieved. The plan for 2022-2026 will be presented at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

3. THE MAYOR'S PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The Executive Mayor of Croydon was elected on a programme of change with a mandate to "restore pride in our borough to once again make it a great place to live, work and stay." The Mayor's Manifesto sets out the commitments he has made including the following key areas.

Listening to Croydon

- 3.2 The Council will change the way it works to ensure that the public is more involved, and residents' views are valued and utilised, to help design council services, improve performance and make better decisions. This will include holding Mayor and Cabinet roadshows round the borough, actively listening to consultations and taking action based on resident feedback, and working in closer partnership with community and faith groups. The Council will also make it easier for residents to contact the Council in a way which works for them, whether it is in person, by phone or email.

- 3.3 The Council will seek to ensure that residents contributing to planning meetings know that they have been heard and their contributions considered. To hold the Executive Mayor to account, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee will be chaired by a member of the Opposition.

Clean up Croydon

- 3.4 Residents deserve to feel proud of the borough as they walk down the street. The Council will clean up Croydon and ensure services are carried out as they should be. This will include improving street cleaning and refuse collection through effective contract management and enforcement against fly-tippers. There will be better access to recycling and waste centres, and reinstated free bulky waste collections when financially possible. A graffiti removal service will be reintroduced and the grass cutting regime increased.

Children and Young People

- 3.5 Croydon is a young borough, with the largest population of under-18s in London. Our children and young people are the future. The Council values the huge potential they represent for the borough and will celebrate their talents and achievements. It will work with schools, colleges and other providers of education and training to raise young people's aspirations to learn and fulfil their potential in their lives and contribute to the community. It will also work with the voluntary and community sector (VCS), providers and businesses to expand the offer for all young people in the borough, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 3.6 The Council will work with partners including schools to deliver earlier interventions when problems arise and targeted responses to children and young adults in need where these are necessary, supporting families through good quality statutory services. It will fulfil its responsibilities as a corporate parent to ensure children and young people in the Council's care have the best start in life.

Crime and Safety

- 3.7 The Council will tackle crime and violence by working with the Police and developing a strong partnership between the voluntary, business and statutory sectors in Croydon. It will support schools in their work on early intervention to prevent exclusions and collaborate with them, partners and the community to secure government funding to cut youth crime. There will be a strong emphasis on protecting young people from violence, through development of a youth safety strategy with young people, partners and the community, and working for the provision of mentors for all who are permanently excluded from school to reduce their vulnerability to involvement with gangs and criminal activity. The Community Safety Strategy will be reviewed and will be supported by the dedicated youth safety strategy.

Community and Culture

- 3.8 The VCS has an excellent track record of reaching out to the most vulnerable in the community and identifying local issues. With its partners in the statutory and business sectors, the Council will build support for community groups that play this vital role and work with VCS and faith organisations to establish self-help wellness groups across the borough. It will also support groups that contribute in other ways, such as Friends of green spaces, and celebrate their achievements. Purley Pool and Leisure Centre will be reopened using unallocated community infrastructure levy (CIL) monies. This will restore facilities for health and wellbeing in this community hub and bring increased footfall to the district centre.
- 3.9 Croydon has an amazing cultural base in arts and music. Fairfield Halls has always been the centre of its cultural offer. Croydon's London Borough of Culture 2023 will be delivered with local artists and cultural organisations. The Council will use it as an opportunity to improve the management of Fairfield Halls and offer a programme that appeals to local residents and brings visitors back into Croydon.

Finance

- 3.10 The Council will put its finances on a sustainable footing, avoiding overspends, obtaining value for money and delivering council services on budget to a good standard. It will manage external contracts effectively and reward successful delivery rather than failure. The Council will maintain a rigorous, continuous pressure on in-year departmental spending and consider delivering services with other councils and organisations to gain economies of scale. Long-term, the Council will cut debt to below £1bn through debt repayment and asset management and seek a fairer deal for Croydon from national government, in particular on the local government funding settlement and the cost of supporting asylum seekers in the borough.

Housing

- 3.11 The Council will improve the housing service at pace into one that provides warm, dry and safe homes of which residents can be proud. It will also start building council homes again. A new housing repairs contract will deliver a responsive service which offers value for money and meets residents' needs. Better cyclical property management will help to improve repairs performance and reduce the time that council homes are left vacant. The Council will develop a homelessness strategy. The Executive Mayor will reintroduce estate walkabouts with councillors and housing officers to hear from residents directly. The complaints process will

be made fit for purpose and easy to navigate. The Housing Improvement Plan will be strengthened to bring about a more open and respectful relationship with residents, better oversight and governance by Members, effective contract and financial management, and the necessary workforce and digital improvements. As part of that relationship the Council is committed to collaborating with council tenants and leaseholders to produce a Residents Charter that will put them at the heart of decisions about the services they receive. The professionalised housing service will be attractive to staff and improve recruitment and retention.

Planning

- 3.12 New development must take account of the views of local people, enhance residential areas and recognise the need for quality amenity space. The Local Plan will be revised to ensure that the priorities of residents are paramount in local decision-making and restore a design-led approach rather than the current density-led model. This will include withdrawal of the design guide (SPD2) and removal of the intensification zones. Policies will be developed that encourage a good mix of homes both in type and tenure to ensure development is more sustainable, while delivering the number of homes stipulated by the London Plan. The emphasis will be on protecting local character and ensuring new developments are in keeping with it. To this end, conservation areas and heritage areas will be revisited, development on brownfield and central sites will be prioritised and green spaces will be protected. The Council will take planning enforcement action where possible and publicise successes. CIL and s.106 monies will be used to enhance areas being developed and improve infrastructure. The Council will review CIL and respond to the legislative changes recently announced.

Town and District Centre Regeneration

- 3.13 The Council will work with Croydon businesses and residents to develop a new, sustainable plan to regenerate Croydon town centre that responds to changes in the retail and leisure industry. It will work with Westfield and Hammerson to put town centre development back on track, bringing in investment to provide a mixed use of jobs, homes, retail, education and culture. This will involve the creation of a reshaped Town Centre Board to oversee partnerships and culture, identify issues with residents, charities and entrepreneurs, and devise collaborative strategies. The Council will work with the Board to use data and local intelligence to co-create a new vision for Croydon and rebrand the borough as a destination for investment and for a local population seeking thriving town and district centres. The partnership will repurpose unused properties, support community events and festivals, activate space for investment, and allow markets and restaurants to use temporary outdoor seating to stimulate the local economy. The Plan will consolidate and reduce retail dominance so that high streets and district hubs reflect communities' evolving needs for experiential services.
- 3.14 The Council will collaborate with Business Improvement Districts and, where they do not already exist, facilitate the establishment of business associations to set the direction for investment, marketing and entertainment in district centres across the borough.

Vulnerable people, health and social care

- 3.15 The Council will harness all the skills and experience available to improve health and wellbeing in the borough, with greater involvement of the

voluntary sector who provide many services. Service users will be at the heart of policy making and co-production, including older adults, residents with disabilities, adults with mental health needs and those experiencing social isolation. The Executive Mayor will lead the Council's work with central government to ensure improved and enhanced services at Croydon University Hospital. The Health and Wellbeing Board will be reconstituted to ensure cross party working and involve the VCS in shaping services. An independently chaired board will be developed as a platform for shaping services for older adults, disabilities and mental health. Working with partners, the Council will seek Dementia Friendly status for the borough.

- 3.16 The Council will advance the work of One Croydon with partners to ensure there is no divide in the provision of health and social care between the North and South of the borough and address all inequalities. The mental health strategies for adults, children and young people will be reviewed with South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, NHS South West London Integrated Care Board, MIND and others. Development of assisted living and homes providing opportunities for residents to remain independent for longer will be supported through the planning process. The Council will support public health partners in reducing smoking rates and teenage pregnancies, improve sexual health services, and review contracts to ensure services support better health equalities.

Climate change and carbon reduction

- 3.17 The Council will drive rapid reductions in carbon emissions to become a carbon neutral council by 2030, through implementing the recommendations of the Croydon Climate Crisis Commission (which are being given effect through the [Croydon Carbon Neutral Action Plan](#) adopted in February 2022). However, measures to reduce car use, such as further Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, must only be delivered in conjunction and partnership with local residents and businesses. The Council will not support proposals to introduce distance-based road pricing or extend the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone to outer London.

Living Wage

- 3.18 The Council will continue to be a Living Wage employer, encourage all council contractors to pay the London Living Wage, and work to increase the number of employers in Croydon doing the same.

4. THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PLAN

- 4.1 Each of the Executive Mayor's commitments have been mapped against current council activity and assessed to identify the new actions required to deliver them, the appropriate timescale, and the lead directors and heads of service responsible.
- 4.2 The Council's strategic objectives and plan will be developed with clear deliverables and measurable outcomes to ensure that the organisation delivers against the Executive Mayor's priorities over the next four years.
- 4.3 The Plan will be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation will be conducted as appropriate as proposals contained in the forthcoming strategic objectives of the Council and plan are developed into delivery and project plans.

6 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The draft strategic objectives of the Council and plan will be presented for pre-decision scrutiny, before it is put forward for decision by the Cabinet.

7 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 For 2022/23, any new expenditure will need to be contained within existing budgets. Individual proposals will be presented to Cabinet for approval setting out the source of the funding. This could include funding sources such as the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 7.2 Where there are potential ongoing costs in later years, sources of funding for the priorities will be proposed in the future reports on the proposed Budget 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2026 and the Capital Strategy 2023/26, all of which are due to be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in early 2023. Sources of funding may include efficiency savings, re-direction of funding from lower priority services or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Approved by: Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The report is for noting only.
- 8.2 The legal considerations arising from actions contained in the forthcoming strategic objectives of the Council and plan will be assessed once the Plan has been developed and projects come forward for decision making.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the interim Director of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 9.1 The key priorities set by the Executive Mayor will require a skilled, committed, and resident-focussed workforce to enable and ensure effective delivery to Croydon's residents. The delivery of the workforce cultural transformation programme will be a key element of enabling the workforce to support the delivery of the Mayor's priorities, together with actions being developed from a new people and cultural transformation strategy, which is currently in development.

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the provisions set out in the Equality Act 2010. In summary, the Council must in the exercise of all its functions, “have due regard to” the need to comply with the three aims or aims of the general equality duty. These are 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.
- 10.2 Having due regard means to consider the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that decision makers must be able to evidence that they have taken into account any impact of the proposals under consideration on people who share the protected characteristics before decisions are taken.
- 10.3 When the strategic objectives of the Council and plan are developed, an equalities analysis will be conducted of the likely effects of the plan on the relevant protected groups. Where there is evidence of an adverse impact on any of the protected groups, the Council will consider whether that policy is nevertheless justified in the light of wider aims. Even if it is justified, the Council will consider whether it should take proportionate steps to mitigate or avoid the adverse impact.
- 10.4 For the Council’s services to meet the needs of local residents, and of the community at large, it is essential that its plans and policies take into account the views of local people and others who use council services. Proportionate and relevant consultation must be carried out with relevant public bodies, voluntary, community, trade union and other interest groups, such as staff, with an interest in the matter. This will help us to take account of the potential impact of the proposals on these groups, and to mitigate these impacts where possible.
- 10.5 Improving data collection from service users across the nine protected characteristics will benefit decision making by ensuring that decisions are based on clear evidence. Departments will also evidence customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction using this method across the protected characteristics to ensure that the Council is delivering a fair and equitable service to all protected groups.
- 10.6 Consultations will ensure that fair access to disabled residents by conforming with equality standards such as those outlined by the British Dyslexia Associations and other access measures. Due regard will also be given to ensuring access to those digitally excluded or those who do not speak English as a first language.
- 10.7 The Council will also seek to continue to increase our network across groups who are seldom heard, currently identified as LGBT+, refugee and asylum seekers, and women.

- 10.8 In providing a service to residents, the Council may treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person. It should be noted that this is not unlawful discrimination under Equality Act 2010.
- 10.9 The Council will also encourage its community partners, suppliers and local business to adopt both Croydon's Equalities Pledge and the George Floyd Race Matters Pledge, the Council's standard for equality in the borough.

Approved by: Denise McCausland – Equality Programme Manager

11. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

- 11.1 The Council will drive rapid reductions in carbon emissions to become a carbon neutral council by 2030 through implementing the recommendations of the Croydon Climate Crisis Commission (which are being given effect through the [Croydon Carbon Neutral Action Plan](#) adopted in February 2022). However, any measure to reduce car use, such as further Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, must only be delivered in conjunction and partnership with local residents and businesses. The Council will not support any proposal to introduce distance-based road pricing or extend the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone to outer London.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 12.1 Community safety is a major priority of the administration. The Council will tackle crime and violence by working with the Police and developing a strong partnership between the voluntary, business and statutory sectors in Croydon. Actions will include development of a youth safety strategy, working for the provision of mentors and ensuring early intervention to reduce the number of school exclusions, and expanding the offer for young people in the borough.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The report summarises the commitments of the Executive Mayor of Croydon and informs Cabinet that they will form the basis of the strategic objectives of the Council and its plan for the period 2022 to 2026.

14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 **WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

NO

Approved by: Gavin Handford, Director of Policy, Programmes and Performance.

CONTACT OFFICER: John Montes, Senior Strategy Officer.
BACKGROUND PAPERS: None.