

## For General Release

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CABINET JUNE 2018</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON 2018-22</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>JO NEGRINI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE JULIAN ELLERBY, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR TONY NEWMAN – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:</b> This report sets out the overarching ambitions of the administration for the term of office 2018-2022. It reflects on the work to be done and the priorities that will be the core focus for Croydon. It sets out the ambitions against these themes and how they will be achieved. This references the overarching timetable for delivery. The paper is in support of all the corporate priorities.	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b> There are no financial impacts arising directly from this report. There may be financial implications from the implementation of some of the priorities and these will be costed in detail as each is implemented.	
<b>KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.:</b> This is not a key decision	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note and endorse the ambitions of the administration for 2018-22
- 1.2 Note and endorse the delivery of a new Corporate Plan

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The local elections on May 3<sup>rd</sup> returned a Labour administration to serve the borough of Croydon. The ambitions for the borough were described during the election and in many cases were advanced during the previous administration from 2014-18. This paper sets out the areas that will be progressed, initiated and implemented over the next 4 years and describes the ways in which we will support and enable communities right across the borough.
- 2.2 The commitments on which the Labour administration were returned will become the basis for the organisational delivery programme. This requires that

policy decisions, resource allocations and financial management will be aligned. The organisation in September 2018 will set out its Corporate Plan detailing the outcomes that the organisation will be measured against. This plan will also establish the ways in which we will look to achieve and deliver with our residents and working closely with partners.

- 2.3 The performance management of the council will be aligned to the Corporate Plan and we will develop closer collaborative working with the voluntary sector, public sector partners and business in order to manage and maintain progress. Where there are suitable opportunities for cross-party working we will pursue this when it is to the advantage of Croydon. In turn we expect to be held to account through scrutiny, political debate and directly by our residents.

### 3. DETAIL

- 3.1 **We have an ambitious vision for our borough: We are London's growth borough where everyone has the opportunity to benefit.** This is based on the huge potential that is being realised right across Croydon. Croydon is rightfully London's growth borough with excellent transport connections, sizeable inward investment and the development of a fantastic cultural quarter and offer. There is a significant opportunity for Croydon to use this growth to address some of the real challenges including inequality, housing provision shortages and a rapidly growing population with many with increasing needs. Set out below is the progress we have made to date, our priorities going forward and the reasons why we need to focus our efforts on particular issues relevant to Croydon.
- 3.2 We are all rightfully proud of being part of Croydon. We want it to succeed and we want to use this success for the benefit of all people who live and work here. Our ambition is that Croydon becomes a destination that people choose whether it is to invest, move here or work here. We have the potential to meet the needs of our hugely diverse population through growing jobs, increasing our housing offer, creating a dynamic cultural and retail offer and spreading this success right across the borough so that all parts are benefiting and contributing to the success of Croydon.
- 3.3 The programme for the organisation will be set out in an up to date 4 year Corporate Plan to be launched in September. This will reflect our vision for the borough, the priorities we will focus on and the ways in which we will achieve progress. The Corporate Plan will be complemented by a performance framework that is aligned to the outcomes in the plan.
- 3.4 The Corporate Plan will be built around a set of key themes. Against these will be progress already achieved, an understanding of the current context we are now working in, and the ways in which we seek to achieve impact. With a plan like this it is dependent on factors beyond the organisation that we will seek to influence. This includes the development of a strong Local Strategic Partnership; a shared approach to developing our voluntary sector; collaboration with key strategic bodies like Coast to Capital and the South London Partnership; and crucially very close working with our residents.
- 3.5 In order to take our ambitions and convert them into a meaningful coordinated

plan we will be setting out a set of policy positions through cabinet over the coming months. This will provide an opportunity to set out a clear agenda but also to ensure it is understood, scrutinised and tested. Against all of these we will look to apply an evidence led approach using data and insight; reflect on how we can take actions to prevent issues and address issues relevant to local needs as well as borough-wide needs.

- 3.6 We have huge capacity across Croydon that we need to develop and grow. We also have considerable amounts of data and insight about our borough that we can draw on to create better solutions. It allows us to develop policies that prevent issues and lets us intervene earlier on; it also allows us to recognise the differing needs across the borough and create localised and bespoke responses. We see this as the opportunity to create a modern, agile organisation creating solutions in partnership with residents to ensure that issues do not become problems. Our ambition is that the whole borough can benefit from this approach and in turn the whole borough will have a major role to play in this success.
- 4.0 There are a range of key themes that we are committed to impacting on and these are set out below

**Key theme: Creating jobs and growing the economy**

- 4.1 The borough is home to nearly 400,000 residents and a thriving business sector with many organisations setting up their headquarters alongside a strong tech sector and a huge number of start-up businesses. The potential for us to build our economy will have many benefits to people who already call Croydon home but also for the large numbers who are moving here. Our priority is to make sure that our growth benefits everyone.
- 4.2 **Our progress:** we have made positive steps forward around the growth agenda and ensured it is done in a fair and inclusive way. We have made our council a London living wage council and introduced the Croydon Good Employer Charter to encourage the supply of high quality jobs in the borough.
- 4.3 The Croydon Works programme, our jobs brokerage scheme, has enabled over 500 people to secure employment. The Value Croydon programme supports local businesses and residents to get access to contracts with the authority. We are proud that Tomorrow (TMRW) a workspace hub has opened just opposite the revitalised Surrey Street. All of these are indicators of our commitment to a modern and attractive working environment at the heart of Croydon.
- 4.4 The Growth Zone provides us with the opportunity to develop a truly successful Croydon centre and importantly to use this success to invest and support our district centres. We recognise that we have to ensure the benefits are felt right across Croydon.
- 4.5 **Our way forward:** We will promote a theme of 'Croydon is open' as a way of demonstrating that Croydon is open for business and we are inclusive and supportive of all our residents. We will also work to ensure we create a fair environment for being in work and finding work. The redevelopment of Croydon town centre, including Westfield will be a major part of the next four years and will provide new jobs, homes and investment into the heart of Croydon.

4.6 We will continue to focus on District Centre Regeneration working with residents and businesses to create healthy and vibrant high streets and surrounding areas. This will include strong partnership working with business through BIDs and business forums.

4.7 So that the growing economy of Croydon benefits both residents and local businesses, we will maintain a strong focus on high quality skills provision, including extending the university offer, and increasing the apprenticeship opportunities in the borough.

We will support new businesses to come to Croydon and we will develop our existing business base extending the Good Employer charter to increase the number of good jobs in the borough, ones that make a positive impact on the lives and prosperity of our residents. We will also develop a childcare deposit loan scheme to support people to have the opportunity to work.

4.8 We recognise that there are inequalities in the employment opportunities for the most vulnerable groups, including care leavers and people with disabilities. We will work hard to ensure that more adults with learning disabilities are in employment.

4.9 We want to develop the evening and night time economy and beyond the town centre we want to have local economic development plans as well as a new small business hub, support services for small and medium enterprises, encouraging small businesses to bid for our contracts and our larger contractors to sub-contract with local suppliers where ever possible and bring empty properties back into use. It is important that our plans for a healthy and fair economy considers the whole borough.

4.10 The infrastructure to ensure success includes supporting our credit unions, strengthening the Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund, having proper broadband, and investing in our culture through creative spaces and working towards a university campus. We will provide the space, the advice and the environment for success and do this in a way that understands how people live their lives. This is because we want a modern, inclusive economy that gives everyone an opportunity to succeed.

### **Key theme: Education and Learning**

5.1 Croydon is home to the largest youth population in London and this will soon exceed 100,000. We want to work towards a borough that can provide every young person the best possible start and recognises the different needs and challenges that they all face. Our schools are strong and we have managed to keep pace with provision requirements. Although the way schools are organised has changed it is still important that we have the right plans in place.

5.2 **Our progress:** Over 95% of our schools are above the national average for achievement and over the last few years we have managed to develop 6 new primary schools and 2 new secondary schools.

5.3 In New Addington we are opening a school to cater for children with special needs from age 2 to 19. As well as our commitment to school places we have started a council apprenticeship scheme as we look to find pathways for

Croydon young people to develop themselves within the borough. The Onside Youth Zone will be a great place for young people to enjoy but is also a place where new skills can be learnt.

- 5.4 We are also committed to hearing the voice of young people and knowing their concerns. We are proud to have a Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor. We held a large Youth Congress in 2017 and our Local Strategic Partnership has committed to supporting young people as its core ambition.
- 5.5 **Our way forward:** We know that education is crucial for everyone's success and we will support a culture of lifelong learning in the borough. The benefits from collaboration means that we will encourage sixth forms to work more closely and for business and tech industries to be education partners so that young people can learn and find pathways into work.
- 5.6 The environment in which young people grow means we need to improve the air quality around our schools and reduce car pollution. We will continue to provide a supportive place for everyone to learn so that we can reduce exclusions. We will work with our schools to ensure they are inclusive places for all, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Beyond this we will work to reduce youth unemployment.
- 5.7 All of these ambitions are dependent on having good schools and colleges. We will protect school playing fields and continue to plan and provide the school places that we need.
- 5.8 Parents, young people and communities need to feel confident that the educational environment is one that adds real value and is run well. The benefits from this will be felt right across the borough and importantly will give our young people the best possible opportunity to achieve their ambitions.
- 5.9 We will continue our work on Healthy Schools, promoting Sugar Smart and the daily mile to support the positive development of physical and mental wellbeing.

**Key theme: Providing decent and safe homes for all**

- 6.1 The demand and cost of housing is something that we are all acutely aware of. The population of Croydon will exceed 400,000 in the next few years and in the last year alone approximately 5,000 more residents have moved in to the area around East Croydon. We also know that circumstances vary hugely for our residents and the answer to our housing issues is complex. We have taken a wide range of actions to date and are committed to a Croydon where everyone has a decent and safe home to live in.
- 6.2 **Our progress:** With the establishment of Brick by Brick we have a wide variety of schemes across the borough that are being developed. These schemes will supply properties in a range of tenures and ensure there is a supply of affordable properties. An important aspect of these schemes is that they give people from Croydon priority.
- 6.3 An important theme is fairness. People need to know they will be protected which is why we introduced the Landlord Licensing scheme. It is also why we agreed to fit sprinklers into our taller blocks and it is why we are taking action to

address homelessness working with a variety of partners.

- 6.4 One of the most important pieces of work has been through our Gateway Services. It has taken action to support people dealing with debt or coping with welfare reform and ensuring that they can stay in their homes. This is a real example of preventing issues before they become problems and as a model it is one we want to see grow right across the council.
- 6.5 There are a number of other initiatives we have developed including FairBnB to match spare rooms to those needing emergency accommodation; the Social Letting Agency pilot to help people find suitable property and get them good terms; Croydon Choice – our choice based lettings scheme; and the development of Croydon first Community Land Trust (CLT). All these schemes and initiatives are giving every person in Croydon a chance of a decent and safe home but it is an area we will need to keep a strong focus on over the next four years.
- 6.6 **Our way forward:** Our ambition is to deliver properties, support people based on their circumstances and make sure that people and communities already established are considered as part of any future plans. We will make sure that people can get advice, feel confident that they are protected and have the best possible opportunity to stay in a decent home once they are in it.
- 6.7 We are committed to building 2,000 homes and to give Croydon residents priority for them. We will also ensure that there is local resident engagement that can help us determine how schemes should be developed and implemented. We will also look to buy 250 homes to give relief to those needing an affordable property and to return 100 vacant houses to use in the private sector to further increase supply.
- 6.8 One of the challenges we have with a changing borough is ensuring that we are looking at how it impacts on local areas. That is why we will introduce a borough-wide Article 4 Direction on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). We will also look at giving local people a voice through improving support for tenants in the private sector and regeneration ballots for residents where homes may be demolished.
- 6.9 A really important part of our approach is making sure we respond to individual needs. That is why we will reintroduce wardens into our sheltered accommodation; it is why we will support key workers find property; it is why we will support those from the Armed and Reserve forces find social housing; and it is why we will grow our Social Lettings Agency.

### **Key theme: A cleaner, greener Croydon**

- 7.1 Our Don't Mess With Croydon, Take Pride campaign is important for setting out our ambitions for how we expect Croydon to be. It shows that where we need to take action we will, with over 200 prosecutions for fly-tipping, alongside supporting the community through the Street Champions and community clean-ups. We know that residents and business have to be our partners in tackling the issues we have with litter and fly-tipping and this will be a major priority for us going forward.

- 7.2 **Our progress:** We have taken major steps to address our household collection services through a new waste contract and have invested an additional £1.3million which has allowed us to invest in new on-street equipment as well as introduce two free bulky waste collections and an electrical goods collection. Fly-tipping clearance is higher than ever with over 87% cleared within 48 hours. Our garden waste collection is now all year round. We have also introduced tighter monitoring of our contract so that more residents can feel reassured about the service they receive.
- 7.3 The need to make sure all our neighbourhood and high streets are clean and accessible is important for the wellbeing of local people and the success of our local economy. We have nearly 350 street champions who have taken part in 150 community clean ups right across the borough. We have strong enforcement procedures and we also have good relationships with the Business Improvement Districts so that they in turn are helping us to keep Croydon cleaner.
- 7.4 **Our way forward:** The major emphasis for us over the next four years is to forge a really strong relationship with residents and business to make a step change in how we deal with waste. This means we have to do our part well and place real emphasis on getting the waste contract right so that we can set out our expectations of others.
- 7.5 We are going to set ourselves the target of exceeding 50% for recycling as a borough. The benefits on savings with landfill will be very positive but importantly it is the right thing to do. That is why we will also work to make major reductions in our use of plastics and are going to call on all businesses to do their part.
- 7.6 We will continue to take tough action on those who are not willing to do their part and will increase the number of enforcement officers. We will also continue to remove fly-tips quickly and continue to raise the profile of a clean borough through our campaigning. This is about a borough where everyone can enjoy living in a well-kept environment and everyone can do their part.

### **Key theme: Transport and environment**

- 8.1 Croydon is one of the largest London boroughs with connections via road and rail down to the coast or up into the centre of London. It is a busy working place where people expect to be able to move about freely and quickly. The Croydon tram is a fantastic part of our infrastructure and we want to invest in it further as well as our cycling network. Our overall view is that we can make decisions that will improve the environment, reduce the use of short car journeys and make our roads truly safe.
- 8.2 **Our progress:** We have delivered 20 MPH speed limits across residential areas and put in 3 pedestrian pilot schemes around local schools. We also developed Play Streets as a way for local communities to be able to use their area in a safe and protected way. We have replaced all our street lighting, agreed an air quality action plan and looked at introducing community energy schemes helping local people to generate zero carbon energy. All these initiatives have been about making our area safer and better environmentally. We know air pollution is a big issue for the capital and Croydon is taking action to address this.

- 8.3 The work we do to support people getting out and about is important for how people interact and feel. That is why we have ensured that over 8,300 blue badges, taxi cards and freedom passes have been approved.
- 8.4 The accessibility of Croydon is a key part of why we are the growth borough of London. Having excellent infrastructure is essential for businesses moving here and also enabling 1,000s of people to commute up into the capital each day. The visible improvements to the transport hubs at East and West Croydon are essential as part of this and we will continue to invest right across the borough to ensure people and business can continue to move here and invest here.
- 8.5 **Our way forward:** As with all the major themes reflected here we want to see benefits across all of Croydon and for all residents. That means we have a hugely ambitious programme to make a real change to our local environment. Many of the challenges are not specific to Croydon so as a council we will have to persuade both regional and national government to step up and take positive steps to help us.
- 8.6 Our streets should feel safe and we want residents to feel they can enjoy all of Croydon as a place to live well. This means encouraging people to stop short car journeys; it means huge investment in cycle routes; it means making our train stations truly accessible; and it means encouraging people to change their cars by investing in 400 electric vehicle points over the next 4 years.
- 8.7 The work we do to address air quality must go further and we will provide air quality monitoring systems to schools; explore and test the pedestrian zones to reduce traffic congestion around schools; and look to expand our 20 MPH zones across other residential areas. Our commitment is not only to improve and address air quality but it is also about improving our environment, which is why we will plant 3,500 new trees and continue to promote and enable community energy schemes.
- 8.8 The progress we can make will need others to do their part. As a council we need to press for a better rail franchise and to see investment in our rail hubs. We also want the tram to be extended up to Crystal Palace and to see real policy development around reducing plastics. A lot has improved already and we can be proud of the attitudes of our younger people towards the environment. It is our responsibility to make sure Croydon is a great place now as well as in the future.

**Key theme: One borough – many places**

- 9.1 As we set out plans for the next four years we are also looking at how we can implement ideas in a way that are relevant to the areas they impact. Ultimately we know people have a strong loyalty to where they live and want to see their own neighbourhoods improved and protected. Some areas have difficult issues to address and we want to be able to provide bespoke responses to these issues. This is set alongside our broad vision of developing a truly successful borough where benefits are felt by everyone.

- 9.2 **Our progress:** The Local Plan sets out in detail our ambitions for the borough and its many areas. The plan is now approved and will be a major driver for the way we develop the borough. The approach we want to build on is around the enabling of local communities to have a real say in how their areas develop. With the use of ward budgets we have enabled local councillors to support hundreds of local initiatives and the devolution pilots have helped us to properly test how we can empower both councillors and communities.
- 9.3 We have made real investment into many of our district centres including nearly £3million of improvements to Thornton Heath. Surrey Street has been revitalised and we have supported a number of community markets. Alongside these investments we have brought in rules to protect our local pubs and restricted the use of fast-food takeaways.
- 9.4 **Our way forward:** Having successful local districts with busy high streets gives a real lift and allows for a strong local economy. We intend to take action to tackle the problem of empty premises by taking tough action on landlords who allow this but also to work with community groups to give them opportunities to take them over. We will also reintroduce town centre managers because we know they can be a really effective link between local needs and the work of the council.
- 9.5 There is an opportunity for us to provide space for local communities, for new businesses but also for council services. We want to create a network of hubs that support local initiatives and meet local needs. Using our Community Fund and other forms of revenue and grants we can give our local voluntary sector the support it needs to make a real difference.
- 9.6 We will match this with local economic development plans so that we have a clear idea about how each area needs to grow and develop. The cumulative benefit of this approach is to make all of Croydon stronger now and into the future.

#### **Key theme: our cultural offer**

- 10.1 We know that a successful cultural offering is an important part of a healthy borough and a great driver for the economy. The talent of our young people whether stepping forward to be Youth Mayor, leading the annual Youth Takeover Festival or performing at the Brit School are all expressions of their ambitions and talent. We want to see this diverse and excellent cultural offer grow and for everyone to be able to benefit.
- 10.2 **Our progress:** The cultural offer in Croydon is growing and being invested in. Our role is to make sure we create an environment where all forms of culture can continue to grow, from the amazing street art to the home grown talent like Stormzy to integrated dance and theatre and stand out original spoken word and poetry. That is why we are investing £30million into Fairfield Halls but also ensuring as a future venue it will offer something to everyone.

- 10.3 An area that we have started to make real progress in is around our library service. With the service coming back in house we have used it as an opportunity to review and develop our offering. This is complemented by the work we have done with the community around Upper Norwood library and the investment into South Norwood library. Alongside this we have an established Museum, Gallery and Archive Service with plans to expand and regain formal accreditation. These are all important as showing our commitment to our history particularly as we will be celebrating the centenary of the Armistice this year.
- 10.4 Croydon is vibrant and we have an increasing number of events and celebrations taking place including our annual Mela and our annual Pride-fest. This is all part of celebrating our people and place. We also know that working with our venues and in our public spaces, we have the opportunity to revitalise our night time economy based around culture.
- 10.5 **Our way forward:** For us our cultural offer will be a major part of the growth in Croydon. It will be a reason for people to come to Croydon as well as be an opportunity for those already here. Croydon's annual programme of events will continue to grow, working with local, national and international partners; taking successful events like the Mela and Pride-fest from strength to strength and shaping commissioned programmes to support the night time economy.
- 10.6 The groundwork we have put in will now start to be realised. The Fairfield Halls opening in 2019 will provide a unique venue for the borough and we want to see an ambitious programme delivered across all art forms, in particular we will work with a range of partners including Fairfield to support new theatre production for Croydon.
- 10.7 We will invest in our libraries and grow the Book Fund. We will also work with a wide range of partners to develop Croydon's heritage offer as well as develop the role and use of the Croydon Clocktower including the David Lean cinema. Our ambition is to celebrate our cultural offer right across the borough and to encourage all ages to really benefit from it.

### **Key theme: Parks, Leisure and sports**

- 11.1 Our parks and open spaces are beautiful and important for the wellbeing and health of our residents. Along with our leisure and sports facilities we have a great environment here in Croydon. We need to ensure we make the most of all of this working with our new contractor for Leisure, GLL, and ensuring that all our open spaces are protected with a commitment not to build on them.
- 11.2 **Our progress:** We have made a commitment to ensure all our parks and open spaces are protected and will not be built on. We also founded the Friends of Parks and Open Spaces so that we can work with local communities to look after these spaces. This has involved pilot schemes across 6 areas to look at how we can use our spaces well.
- 11.3 The new contract with GLL allows us to improve the way our sports and leisure centres operate. We want to really encourage more people to make use of what is available and with the imminent opening of a new leisure centre in New Addington we have real provision right across Croydon. The free swimming for under 16s over the summer is all part of supporting young people to be active.

- 11.4 We also work closely with our sporting partners to help the local communities. The work of the Crystal Palace foundation is important for supporting the work we do with young people and tackling serious issues like knife crime. We are really proud to see a premiership football club in our borough and working with us to help local people.
- 11.5 **Our way forward:** We want to get more people using and enjoying what is available to them. This means thinking about the different opportunities and working with local residents, contractors and partners to make it a real success. To help with this we will provide coordinated oversight for all our parks and will look to bring parks maintenance back in house.
- 11.6 Our allotments are one of our best kept secrets and we want to make sure we support them and even expand them. We will work with the Federation of Allotment Societies to look at how they are run and see if there is space to provide more.
- 11.7 Supporting people being healthy means we are going to establish the Croydon marathon. We will also develop the Croydon Arena and establish 2 centres for football. The old Sainsbury's down at Purley needs attention so that it can be a really good leisure and sports centre and this will be a priority over the next 4 years. And we want to see more Active Outdoor Space Gyms. Overall it is an ambitious programme but it is an important part of developing a healthy and happy place where residents can be active in welcoming safe spaces.

### **Key theme: Our Young People**

- 12.1 We have nearly a 100,000 young people in Croydon. They are a massive part of Croydon and we have a huge responsibility to give them the best possible start in life. This can be about early years, supporting parent and carers during the pre-school years, good schools, opportunities to get into work, a safe and caring environment and hearing from them about their ambitions and concerns.
- 12.2 **Our progress:** The Ofsted judgement in 2017 was disappointing and we knew that we needed to respond positively and collectively. The work we have done in setting up the Children's Improvement Board and establishing a peer mentoring relationship with Camden has enabled us to positively impact on children's services. We know there is more to be done but the recent announcement from DfE recognised the work we are doing and has backed us to continue our improvement journey.
- 12.3 An important theme for us over the last year has been about giving young people a voice. We ran the Youth Congress last summer to hear about the issues that matter to young people and have since seen the election of our first Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor. With our campaign, Choose Your Future, we have a strong story about young people choosing positive options and a way for them to tell their own stories.
- 12.4 **Our way forward:** The work we are doing to improve our Children's services will continue and we will work with peers, partners, staff and our young people to make the service truly effective and responsive.

- 12.5 There needs to be a balance between celebrating the talent and achievements of our young people whilst continuing to address some of our major issues such as youth violence. The Local Strategic Partnership has agreed that young people will be the core priority of the partnership and over the coming year will be taking this work forward.
- 12.6 As an authority we have corporate parenting responsibilities and as part of this we will publish details about how we support our care leavers. This is about the way we look after everyone in our care and give them the best possible future.
- 12.7 We will create a series of opportunities to hear more from our young people and give them more ways to implement their ambitions. We will hold an annual youth congress, a youth festival and let young people develop their own Croydon manifesto on the back of the leadership of the Youth Mayor. We will look to devolve responsibilities and monies where appropriate as well.
- 12.8 Although we may recognise that young people have specific issues we also know that across all our themes they have a vital role to play. From successful schools to a better environment they can help shape both the current borough but also the future one. So as we develop and implement our programme we will consider young people and the part they can play against all our themes.

**Key theme: Keeping Croydon safe**

- 13.1 We read too often about the latest violent incident and hear of too many tragic stories. However the borough is a wonderful, diverse, inclusive and active borough full of people living busy lives and with many people giving of their time to make it a great place. It is in this context that our ambition must be to make people feel safer but celebrate our great successes as well. The level of commitment that we all witness working to solve and reduce serious youth violence reveals a genuine commitment to make Croydon the safest London borough for young people and we will continue to prioritise this issue.
- 13.2 **Our progress:** We have approved a Community Safety strategy for Croydon which sets out our ambitions to impact on a range of key safety concerns. Through the Safer Croydon Board we have established a new Serious Youth Violence and Gangs Working Group which has direct oversight over the partnership activity currently at work to tackle the issue. We are working closely with all our key partners such as the police, health, voluntary sector and schools, whilst also ensuring that young people are involved in the work to solve the problem.
- 13.3 There have been a number of important programmes that we have supported including becoming a White Ribbon Borough and we have put in a Public Space Protection Order in the town centre. Along with CCTV investment and a huge 23,000 streetlights replaced there are many practical pieces in place to make things safer.

- 13.4 We have made our concerns clear about police numbers. However we recognise that addressing issues like knife crime and serious youth violence is incredibly complex. Croydon's Strategic Partnership, made up of leaders across all sectors, has made young people their sole priority for the next two years – focused on their interests and opportunities. As part of that work we have developed an important campaign called Choose Your Future highlighting the positive choices available to our young people. However this can only have an impact through the work we do with our many communities and voluntary groups to get to the heart of the issues. Only working together with communities will we beat this and break the cycle of violence taking place.
- 13.5 **Our way forward:** The resources we need to address violence and safety issues means we must continue to advocate for more. We need funding into services and to ensure our voluntary sector is strong as well as seek more police. When we can address concerns within localities through proper engagement and preventative methods we can be more successful.
- 13.6 As part of our approach we will tackle youth violence as a public health issue. This means bringing together many partners, communities and individuals to work through the issues involved and developing a long term preventative approach. We will establish a Youth Community Fund and a fund to tackle mental health issues for under 25s. We will establish a borough-wide mentoring scheme and increase the number of apprenticeships. We will also have a safe haven scheme across our district centres to help make the borough a safe place for all.
- 13.7 As well as a major focus on serious youth violence and knife crime we will continue to address domestic and sexual abuse; to support the White Ribbon commitment; to tackle FGM and all forms of harmful practices; and to fight modern day slavery. It is not only about identifying the issues that matter but being clear about how we will respond. We will focus on prevention to tackle issues before they become problems and seek to really understand our communities and localities so that we can take our approach closer to where people live.

### **Key theme: A fairer Croydon**

- 14.1 As a local authority we are able to have a great impact on how services are delivered and how we respond to local needs. The way we do this is a reflection of the values that all of us represent and it is important that we can work in a way that meets the high standards our residents expect. We want to be able to demonstrate this through how we award contracts to local suppliers; the diversity of our workforce; the running of services in-house; and a modern and agile organisation.
- 14.2 **Our progress:** We are a London Living Wage authority and have established an apprenticeship programme. We have run the Go On digital programme to tackle digital exclusion. We have webcast our meetings to make them accessible and we are investing over £6million in our voluntary sector through the Community Fund. 14.3 There are many good aspects already in place around our contact centre; our online access; our work to communicate with residents through Your Croydon magazine and online. The challenge is to take all of these elements further.

- 14.3 **Our way forward:** There is a huge opportunity to use our digital capacity to really help the borough. We have a Smart City programme that will be part of driving improvements to the infrastructure of the borough and this in turn can be used to facilitate greater civic involvement, which will be linked to the community empowerment and devolution work. We will work with businesses to recycle computers, give more IT training to residents, provide more Open Data, set up tech zones in our libraries and leisure centres and offer simple apps to access information and complete transactions.
- 14.4 There are many ways in which we intend to demonstrate our values and commitment to equalities. This includes seeking external recognition for providing services and a workplace that are truly inclusive to everyone, through the Equalities Framework for Local Government. We will continue to keep council tax low; ensure our pension investments are ethical; ensure a diverse workforce; continue to ensure that all new contracts awarded include London Living Wage and ensure our current contractors are paying the London Living Wage through effective contract management; increase civic participation; and provide a welcome pack to new residents whilst supporting those from EU countries potentially impacted by our leaving the EU.
- 14.5 The Opportunity and Fairness Commission provides much that we must still pursue including a commitment to equality of access to education and jobs. We also need to look at how we provide the best possible opportunities for all our communities and celebrate our diversity. We will do this through continued investment in our voluntary sector through the Community Fund in line with the recommendations of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission.
- 14.6 The way we work with local people will be about focusing on prevention and early intervention and addressing needs closer to where they are identified. This will mean a more agile organisation with officers working across the borough and a strong move to basing decisions on evidence, insight and data.

### **Key theme – Managing within means**

- 15.1 We know from our data that Croydon has areas of considerable deprivation. There are many households in fuel poverty and we have worked hard to address the pressures on households so that we can prevent people becoming homeless or getting caught with pay day loan companies.
- 15.2 **Our progress:** The Gateway programme has been a major part of the way we have helped our residents as they face financial pressures. Alongside this we have seen a 19% reduction of households in emergency accommodation and our programmes to help rough sleepers are having real impact. The Community Connect programme and the New Addington and Fieldway Food Stop are making a real difference to a number of families.
- 15.3 **Our way forward:** Being able to help people through tough times is something that is reflected in many of the themes. The key is that we want to work with individuals and families to address their concerns and ensure they are not losing their home or finding it hard to live well. We are supporting our Credit Unions and want to make sure affordable banking is close to every community. We have committed to make sure our bereavement services are sympathetic to people's circumstances.

15.4 What we have learnt is that an individual's challenge is an issue that all of us have a stake in. There is the emotional and real costs involved in someone struggling and there is the community cost when we have to help those in need. That is why our efforts in partnership with residents and others will be about prevention and helping people closer to where they live.

**Key theme: A healthier Croydon**

- 16.1 Croydon's population continues to grow and there is a real pressure to ensure we have the right levels of infrastructure in place to cope. This includes having high quality health provision and an environment that promotes healthy living. Our Just Be campaign encourages and supports people to make good choices and we have invested in a range of programme to support our residents.
- 16.2 **Our Progress:** One of the most important developments has been the establishment of the One Croydon Alliance. This brings together the hospital, primary care, mental health, and social services to support the over 65s keeping them out of hospital or making sure things are ready for when they are discharged. It is a proper partnership programmes based on the idea of preventing issues.
- 16.3 We have signed up as a Sugar Smart Borough and developed a programme called Shared Lives to support adults to live in the community. The Live Well Croydon programme is about supporting people to live healthier lives and we are now accredited as a Flagship Food borough. Our Best Start programme supports from pregnancy until the age of five. All these programmes and commitments are about supporting, enabling and encouraging people to live happy and healthy lives.
- 16.4 **Our way forward:** The way we care for our residents needs to be of high quality and give people confidence. We want make sure all our special sheltered blocks and care homes meet these standards and will look to manage them in house. We will also ensure all our care support contractors are working to high standards.
- 16.5 We can see the benefit of expanding the remit of the One Croydon Alliance and looking at an all age approach. Alongside this we intend to invest in young person's mental health services. A theme that comes through many of our priorities is the ability of people to live in decent and safe homes. As part of this we will push for new-builds to be 'life-time' homes so that they are usable throughout someone's life as their health changes.
- 16.6 The way we support people to be able to work is important. We will introduce a child care deposit loan scheme. This will make it easier for parents looking to manage work and costs and we will also develop a child care cooperative to enable staff a fair living and for parents and families to be able to contribute and use the services.

## **Conclusion**

- 17.1 We have a bold programme for the next 4 years building on the work already in place. We will set this out in our Corporate Plan in September but we will not wait to begin the hard work to see Croydon improve further. We will work together to make this difference and realise the benefits for all our residents and the work begins now.

## **18. CONSULTATION**

- 18.1 The Croydon Corporate Plan will be developed over the coming months. There will be an opportunity to engage and consult with staff, partners, business, councillors and residents in order to create a meaningful plan that has measures and a delivery timetable against it. No consultation is required for this report.

## **19 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 19.1 There are no direct financial considerations arising from this report. As the priorities are further developed and implemented any financial implications will need to be considered.

(Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Director of Finance, Investment and Risk and deputy s151 officer)

## **20. COMMENTS OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER**

- 20.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

(Approved by: Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)

## **21. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 21.1 There are no immediate HR considerations that arise from the outcome of this report.

(Approved by: Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources)

## **22. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 22.1 An equalities impact assessment will be required for the new corporate plan.

## **23. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 23.1 There is no environmental impact arising directly from this report.

**24. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

24.1 There is no specific crime and disorder impact arising from this report.

**25. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION**

25.1 This report sets out the programme and intentions for the Administration and outlines the priority themes against which the work will be delivered.

**26. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

26.1 This report is for noting with no options for consideration.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:** Julian Ellerby, Director of Strategy and Partnerships.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None