

Cabinet

Meeting of Cabinet held on Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Jason Perry (Chair);

Lynne Hale (Deputy (Statutory) Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes (Vice-Chair)), Councillors Jeet Bains (Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration), Jason Cummings (Cabinet Member for Finance), Maria Gatland (Cabinet Member for Children and Callton Young People), Ola Kolade (Cabinet Member for Community Safety) and Scott Roche (Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment)

Also Present: Councillors, Rowenna Davis (Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee), Stuart King (Leader of the Opposition), Callton Young (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance), Amy Foster (Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Janet Campbell (Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), Chrishni Reshekaron (Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes), Chris Clark (Shadow Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration), Nina Degradis (Shadow Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture), Richard Chatterjee, Lalia Ben-Hassel and Karen Jewitt

PART A

60/23 **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

61/23 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The part A minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 were agreed with the following amendments:

In paragraphs 4 and 5, under the Future of Croydon Affordable Homes item to be changed to:

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young asked for a few words of explanation on this most technical of accounting issues that reassures residents that money has not been taken by anyone.

The Corporate Director for Resources (Section 151 Officer), Jane West, responded that it has taken a very large number of accountants in Grant Thornton discussing at length to get to the bottom of it. Absolutely no money ever went missing. It was simply a misunderstanding of the accounting arrangements that needed to be put in place for Croydon Affordable Homes. The conclusion is that the Council cannot take the full £70m of income into account in the year 2019/20. We need to spread it over 40 years which caused a hole in the Council's budget.

62/23

Urgent Business (If any)

There were no items of urgent business.

63/23

Scrutiny Stage 1

The Executive Mayor introduced the Scrutiny Stage One report which detailed the recommendations from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee relating to Housing with particular focus on the transformation programme, repairs contract and the Housing Strategy.

The Chair of Scrutiny and Overview Committee (the Committee), Councillor Rowenna Davis, addressed the Cabinet concerning:

- The financial performance report:

The latest report had shown slight improvement in department overspend in previous months, though the biggest spends in adults and childrens department remained in overspend largely due to the small number of extremely expensive placements.

The Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) was also projecting an overspend though the Committee was reassured that the present levels was a constructive use of funds to fix a huge backlog of repairs under a new housing repairs contract.

Concerns were also raised for the high levels of vacancies across the council with £4.5 million pounds worth of projected vacancies this year. The Committee would be seeking more reassurance as the borough should not be in a situation where the council only met their budgets due to not hiring the staff required.

- Medium Term Financial Strategy (4-year view of council finances): Though the Committee was reassured that the council was under the guidance of the Improvement and Assurance Panel by picking up pace and moving in the right direction, the reality was without the structural intervention from central government, this council's financial position was projected to worsen due to the unsustainable

debt. 19p of every £1 that Croydon spent was projected to go directly on servicing debt, by meeting interest's payments on the debt.

- Lastly, the proposals for the new Purley leisure centre development was highly welcomed, and the Committee was heightened with officers understanding of the risks and plans put in place for mitigation, with reassurance that the council would have the power to take back control of the site should the developer fail to honour their commitment to regenerate it and commended all involved in this approach.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, acknowledged the position the council was in financially and added that though support was required from central government, efforts should not be taken away from the staff to upkeep the work they had put in.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- 1.1. Receive the recommendations arising from the meetings of the Homes Sub-Committee held on 24 July 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2. To provide a substantive response to the recommendation (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 6 December 2023.

64/23

IAP Exit Strategy

The Executive Mayor introduced the Improvement and Assurance Panel Exit Strategy report which detailed the exit plan and actions that the Improvement and Assurance Panel would need to see happen in order for the Secretary of State to be able to recommend their exit from Croydon.

This aligned with the Business Plan and captured work already in train across Croydon.

The Chairman of the Improvement and Assurance Panel, Tony McArdle, spoke to Cabinet detailing the Panel's guidance and intervention of the exit strategy. He highlighted that the exit strategy plan would be achievable by this council, and provided a summary of each area in aid to resolve the council's outstanding challenges.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, shared that Housing had been highlighted as a priority area. The service was working with a roadmap span of 3 to 5 years in phases to get back on track, and with the exit strategy plan, the service had reflected on a strong commitment to driving much needed improvement in the housing service which would offer some challenge.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, shared that the Finance department welcomed the plan proposed for the council to retain position of financial stability and sustainability.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, shared that the major transformation on Corporate Parenting was on track and would continue to challenge and review the status of the transformation on each milestone.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yvette Hopley, welcomed the exit strategy and addressed the strong governance processes and procedures throughout the entire health and adults social care directorates, which was supported by a number of new strategic plans and transformation projects to help with the deficit reduction strategy, though a number of workstreams was to be implemented. With focus on the residents, targets and all changes within the exit strategy were achievable.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, welcomed the exit strategy which sets out a clear pathway for sustainable future for the Fairfield Halls and providing a library service including community hubs.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, supported the transformation theme ensuring improvement services performance through conducting effective statutory requirement and how the community safety services would be delivered directly or through partners to ensure that the delivery models were sustainable.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Councillor Jeet Bains, shared that the planning and regeneration contribution looks at the capacity and capability to improve. The local plan as part of the transformation saw all Members take part in contributing to the local plan and the review of the proposals. Planning transformation had seen the backlog reduce from 1100 cases in Spring 2022 to 400 cases to date through targeted clearance weeks. A laser focus had been made on planning enforcements which had seen more responsive service and the issue of 26 enforcement and breach of condition notices since May 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, welcomed the exit strategy and noted that the issues and service pressures under streets and environment division related to residents' front facing. It was acknowledged that there was good progress with the procurement of the new waste partnership and street cleaning, additionally addressing the parking policy to support needs in the community.

The Chief Executive Officer Katherine Kerswell welcomed the exit strategy and the joint approach in putting the plan and clarity of focus together. The council was committed to deliver a sustainable local

authority for the borough and thanked the Improvement and Assurance Panel for their work.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, welcomed the development of the exit strategy, and asked what process governs or defined the use of the powers of direction. The Chairman of the Improvement and Assurance Panel, Tony McArdle, responded that the powers to instruct should it be used was upon discretion, which looked at the Secretary of State should it be used. There was no process in place, though should this action be used, the Panel would address the council of the reasons why this action was taken.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, welcomed the exit strategy which covered all basis to be commended. He asked in broad terms, what role does the Panel play in the negotiations if any, how far had the Panel reached and how they sit alongside other councils that also found themselves unable to balance their budgets without exceptional financial assistance from government. The Chairman of the Improvement and Assurance Panel, Tony McArdle, responded that the discussions taking place had been unusual, as no council would write to government to ask for their debt to be written off, thus there was no process or a procedure, and therefore there would be a variety of different methods on how to approach the matter. There was no negotiation or a set process, only a series of questions to understand the nature to the sequence of the issues arising. Other councils in similar situations had also used this approach. Further, as a Panel, they would work closely with civil servants to come to a resolution that would be in the best interest of the council.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

To note the Improvement and Assurance Panel London Borough of Croydon Intervention Exit Strategy at Appendix A.

65/23

2024-28 Medium Term Financial Strategy Update

The Executive Mayor introduced the 2024-2028 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update report which sets out how the council's financial position had stabilised in the past twelve months, which was able to be balanced with the exceptional financial support from government.

The report included the draft budget proposals for the next financial year (2024/25) which detailed how to protect essential services, living within the budget, and dealing with exceptional financial challenges.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed that the budget was being managed at a local level and thanked officers across the council for their collaborative work in savings.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, addressed Cabinet on the savings the Housing department was making under a number of transformation projects.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, addressed Cabinet on the concerns of the major underspend in the department and the huge amount of work taken internally and externally to better the financial position. The current pressures faced were reviewed through the transformation programme, and she further addressed on the savings in the department for best value.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yvette Hopley, addressed Cabinet on adult social care's trajectory to deliver savings within the department through transformation projects.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, addressed Cabinet of the tough decisions and actions needed to assist with the Mayor's overall plan to provide quality services. The MTFS set out the savings within the culture and sector.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, addressed Cabinet that the community and safety service were responding to challenges faced through funding streams that had not put additional pressures on the general fund budget. Alternative external income stream had been investigated to deliver on the medium to long term priorities.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Councillor Jeet Bains, addressed Cabinet on the emphasis upon the continuing investment in planning, regeneration and building control to ensure continuation with the planning transformation programme. Savings had been proposed within the strategic transport team, and a reduction of one post in the spatial planning team.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, addressed Cabinet that the streets and environment department had been smarter on the allocation of budgets, looking for efficiencies and working with community groups.

The Corporate Director for Resources and S151 officer, Jane West, addressed Cabinet upon reflection of the financial position acknowledging the challenges the council was facing. The service had provided assurance going through detailed modelling and checking through deliverability which was tested over the summer before being included in the financial strategy. The financial strategy was a continued strategy from March.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, asked a question relating to the £31 million pounds of cuts, and a further £6 million pounds gap to close, and asked how achievable the £31 million pounds in savings

was, how much would residents be charged to generate the money, and how specifically was the additional £6 million pounds gap going to be closed. The Executive Mayor responded that this was a budget that the deliverability of decisions had been a key part of putting the MTFS together. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, confirmed that the £31 million pounds worth of savings was achievable. The rigorous process and checks that those savings had gone through was completed in conjunction by all departmental services to deliver the savings. The £6 million gap was a significant number of variables that applied to this budget that the service does not yet know the answer to, and it was normal to have a budget gap at this stage. Additional measures should it be required would be brought in to accommodate the process, and there was confidence that the gap would close.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, asked a question whether the choices were consistent with the debate on equalities heard at Full Council earlier in the October month, or the way in which the poor and vulnerable find themselves due to the cost of living crisis, further, he sought for clarity on the impact on funding which suggested that £420,000 increase in council debt recovery was planned for 2024-25 and how the council planned to squeeze money from residents under the new debt collection arrangement. The Executive Mayor responded that the council was careful about the choices in all things they did, noting that there were few choices the council faced in the decisions made due to the financial context, thus the ability for choice was very limited. A number of hardship funds had also been put in place to support the cost of living pressures, and other funds for residents for support on council tax. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, added that the financial model was based on the settlement from government, and thus the MTFS would not be impacted by that. Further, the figures for the debt collection were correct and the council would be pursuing any debt owed by using the correct procedures.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 Note the updated financial forecast and medium-term financial strategy assumptions set out in this report.
- 1.2 Note the positive dialogue with DLUHC to develop a further package of support in order to set a sustainable and balanced budget for the future years 2024-25 to 2027-28.
- 1.3 Approve a period of public engagement, as set out in Section 4, on the proposals for returning the Council to financial and operational sustainability including the savings and growth proposals set out in Appendices B and B1.

1.4 Note the outcome of the public engagement will be reported back to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet as part of the budget and council tax setting decision making.

1.5 Consider the outcome of the review of the Council Tax Support scheme at paragraphs 3.46 to 3.54 of this report.

1.6 To approve the recommendation to Full Council that the Council Tax Support scheme is not changed from that agreed by Full Council resolution on 1st March 2023.

66/23

Period 4 Financial Performance Report

The Executive Mayor introduced the 2023-24 Period 4 Financial Report which highlighted that the council remained on track for a balanced budget.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, added that though the children and adult departments continued to overspend, this was robustly under review. The housing revenue accounts (HRA) also had an overspend and had reserves to fund the expenditures. Temporary accommodation costs had also caused budget issues and efforts had been made to mitigate where possible.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, added that the HRA overspends were positive. Residents were now able to contact the council for repairs and other damp and mould reporting were reviewed, further noting that the forecast overspends would increase to address the substantial backlog in delivering increase repairs and maintenance activities using the HRA reserves.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, asked a question stating what analysis had been done for indirect risk to the budget, and had any thought been made to the new risk. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, responded that no direct analysis had been made to the new risk, and the indirect risk was closely monitored, at present there was no impact on council services.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1.1 To note the General Fund revenue budget outturn is forecast to breakeven at Period 4, 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 note the progress in MTFS savings achievement as set out in paragraph 4.82.
- 1.3 To note the work that has commenced on the Council's Transformation Programme as set out from paragraph 4.77.
- 1.4 To note the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget outturn is forecast to overspend by £3.8m.
- 1.5 To approve a net budget increase to the 2022-26 General Fund capital programme budget of £0.336m, owing to slippage, changes in grant funding and the removal of the transformation budget (originally slipped from 2022-23), as set out in paragraph 4.97.
- 1.6 To approve the allocation of £4.000m reserves funding for transformation expenditure, as set out in paragraph 4.77.
- 1.7 To note the General Fund capital programme 2023-24 forecast underspend of £13.9m against the revised capital budget (to be agreed by Cabinet) of £144.7m.
- 1.8 To note the HRA capital programme 2023-24 forecast overspend of £4.1m against the revised capital budget of £33.2m.
- 1.9 To note the Council's historic legacy 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 seeing further financial support from Government in regard to its level of indebtedness and balancing the budget to ensure it can deliver sustainable local government services.
- 1.10 To note that the Council continues to operate Spend Control Panels to ensure that tight financial control and assurance oversight are maintained.
- 1.11 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.

67/23

Regina Road Project - Selection of Delivery Model - Part A

The Executive Mayor introduced the Regina Road Project – Selection of Delivery Model Report which detailed the next steps in the redevelopment of Regina Road estate. The report sets out a two-phase model of direct delivery starting with the process of organising building contracts for the early delivery of new homes. This included an increase in council housing

at Regina Road, with a minimum of 200 social rented homes which replaced the existing 191 homes.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, addressed Cabinet of the latest updated report of plans which had set out relevant considerations. The report further set out steps taken by the council, which was monitored and was cost effective. Internal resources had also been recruited for the start of the project.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Chrishni Reshekaron, welcomed the report and asked what actions would be taken to ensure that the inhouse team had the necessary expertise and skills to deliver the project under tight timescales. The Regina Road Project Lead, Robin Smith, responded that specific job descriptions were required upon the recruitment of new staff working on the project.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1.1 To consider delivery options and agree a direct delivery by the Council of:

1.1.1. **Phase 1**, comprising an estimated 86 new Council homes at Regina Road (minimum of 78 replacement social rent and up to 8 leaseholder/freeholder replacements) and an estimated 8 new social rent homes at Malton House, to the estimated household sizes set out in the report. This delivery option enables the rebuilding of the social housing as soon as practicable; and

1.1.2. **Phase 2**, comprising an estimated 139 new Council homes (122 social rent and up to 17 leaseholder/freeholder replacements) to the housing needs of local residents, and a replacement onsite kindergarten/community facility. The detail of the Phase 2 option would then be reviewed and agreed by Cabinet early in 2024 before moving forward with Phase 2.

1.2 To note that the procurement of a main contractor will be progressed in line with delegations set out in the Annual Procurement Plan and will cover Phase 1 works, with the option of Phase 2 works.

1.3 To note that the procurement of a demolition contractor will be progressed in line with delegations set out in the Annual Procurement Plan and will cover the clearance works for Phases 1, 2 & 3.

Large Panel System Tower Blocks - Outline Strategy

The Executive Mayor introduced the Update on Large Panel System Tower Blocks – Online Strategy Report which provided reassurance on

the progress made on the structural appraisal of tower blocks using the Large Panel System introduced in the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) portfolio.

The report sets out the council's trajectory to meet key safety regulation deadlines.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, added that historically nineteen tower block buildings in Croydon were built using the large panel system of which sixteen remained standing though those blocks had suffered with a variety of issues including water penetration, condensation, and mould where major refurbishment would be required in the future to address the issues. It was noted that this council had achieved registration with the building safety regulator for high rise residential buildings by 1 October 2023. This was important as since that deadline, it was now an offence to allow residents to occupy an unregistered building. With regards to the key building information which focused on the building structure and fire safety, the council was in line with others having submitted 90% of data required by the regulator by the end of September 2023.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Chrishni Reshekaron, welcomed the report and asked a question around the stock survey stating what would be done to ensure the survey don't face the same issues and resident participation engagement was high. The Regina Road Project Lead, Robin Smith, responded that there had been variable attendance of residents at meetings and more work with residents were to take place to develop strategies for the LPS blocks. The Corporate Director for Housing, Susmita Sen, added that the programme of engagement was continued, and a regular program of dialogue would be happening with residents.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 To note the progress to date on the structural appraisal of the LPS blocks and the revised early October timescale for receipt of the Stage 1 Structural Appraisal Report.
- 1.2 To note that the final structural appraisal report on the LPS blocks is forecast to be issued in Summer 2024.
- 1.3 To note that Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) has not been identified in the LPS blocks.
- 1.4 To note the proposal to meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022 relating to LPS/High-Risk Building (HRB) Registration at the end of September and provision of Key Building Information by 28 October 2023.

- 1.5 To note that procurement has commenced for additional consultancy support to complete key building information requirements.
- 1.6 To note the Regulator will request a Safety Case Report for all 13,000 HRB's in England over a 5-year period, often referred to as tranche 1-5. Safety Case Reports are for each individual HRB and need to be submitted within 28 days of the Regulator's request. The purpose of the Safety Case Report is to evidence the block is safe to occupy and to obtain a Building Assessment Certificate from the Regulator to allow the block to continue to be occupied.
- 1.7 To note that 15 LPS and 3 other HRB's are forecast to be requested by the Regulator in Year 1. The Regulator can start to request these from 1st April 2024. No's 1-87 Regina Road is an LPS block due to be fully vacated in November 2023 in advance of demolition, therefore, a Safety Case Report will not be required from 1st April 2024 for this block.
- 1.8 To note that if the Building Safety Regulator does not assess a Safety Case Report as being satisfactory, they may request a revised Safety Case Report be re-submitted within a defined period. The ultimate sanction is that the Regulator does not issue a Building Assessment Certificate and the block must be vacated.

69/23

Update on the Housing Transformation Programme

The Executive Mayor introduced the Update on the Housing Transformation Programme report which demonstrated the ongoing commitment to improve services by the breadth of work within the Housing Transformation Programme since the last quarterly update heard at Cabinet in July 2023. With fourteen closed projects, the report sets out the progress made on all thirty-one live projects.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, addressed Cabinet that the programme was a multi-year initiative to be delivered in phases. There were eight workstreams and seventy-two projects that made up the programme, with an additional five projects added. Significant projects had additional steering board to oversee the project. Several achievements had taken place since July 2023, and thanked officers for their work on the projects.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Chrishni Reshekaron, thanked officers on the work within the transformation programme thus far and asked what quantitative measures were being looked at to ensure the launch of the transformation had been smooth, and were residents being engaged for feedback following the experience of the new contract after making a report for repairable maintenance. The Corporate Director for Housing, Susmita Sen, responded that a review

was scheduled to be carried out after the first three months and independent surveys were also carried out, also she acknowledged the challenges ahead and the management of expectations.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

To note the progress since July 2023 on the Housing Transformation Programme

70/23

Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 Performance Report

The Executive Mayor introduced the Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 Performance Report which consists of five outcomes to be achieved by the council over the next four years. The new key performance indicator (KPI) report reflected on the priorities within the Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, shared the progress of three key performance indicators relating to finances.

The Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment, Councillor Scott Roche, shared that the key objector relating to repairs of broken window was an ongoing task though progress was at good pace, and five of the six areas within the key indicators were marked as exceeding targets.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Councillor Jeet Bains, shared that the major applications against the government target and non-major applications against the government target was related to planning applications. The target for affordable housing was annual and 108 CDP apprenticeships had also been delivered.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Councillor Ola Kolade, shared that the indicators had shown good progress with the first two objectives within the safety and community sector.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Culture, Councillor Andy Stranack, shared that in the first five months the borough of culture had seen several people involved in borough of culture events in person or online; a number of young participants had been involved in a number of projects delivering learning skills and performance opportunities; a number of volunteers had taken part in organising events and taking part; and there were fifty-six schools who had been engaged in the borough of culture thus far.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yvette Hopley, shared that much of the indicators would be delivered and improved by some of the transformational projects.

The Cabinet Member or Childrens and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, shared that a lot of work had gone into the NEET (Not in

Education, Employment or Training) key indicator which was positive. The exclusions key indicator was on the national average, and there were some unvalidated data for Key Stage 2 which had closed the gap by 2% on the national average which was also good. The education, health and care plans key indicator were green, though there were unrelenting pressure to maintain a good position, and there were action plans for indicators for child protection plans.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes, Councillor Lynne Hale, shared that a relatively small number of housing key indicators was shown in the report due to the transformation programme the service was undergoing and the transition of a new IT system which was not in a position to provide all information required due to the inaccuracy of data held in the old system, though data had been monitored locally. The performance key indicators would be available within the next update.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, asked of the absence of the KPI to measure grass cutting in performance, graffiti removal and the number of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) who had a named personal advisor. The Director of Education, Shelly Davies, highlighted that the KPI for NEET was rated as green, which was better than the target, further noting that the data presented was lagged as it was constantly updated through the performance data in Scrutiny. The Executive Mayor added that there were indicators presented within the report which were transparent, and there were many other KPIs not ready upon the publication of this report.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Councillor Chris Clark, asked whether within the section of regeneration that the number of empty premises within the borough would be included in the KPI report. The Executive Mayor responded that there were a number of KPIs to be added within the next report.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

Note the Mayors Business Plan performance report (Appendix A and B) with latest data available on 31 July 2023 (unless otherwise stated) regarding overall council and partnership performance.

71/23

Reopening Purley Pool and Leisure Centre: The Redevelopment Purley High Street Carpark and Leisure Centre PART A

The Executive Mayor introduced the Reopening Purley Pool and Leisure Centre: The Redevelopment Purley High Street Carpark and Leisure Centre report highlighted a key milestone in the journey to deliver a pivotal priority set in the Mayor's Business Plan.

It detailed the draft Heads of Terms between Polaska Assets Limited (Polaska) and the Council.

These Heads of Terms were a significant step forward delivering this transformative plan to redevelop Purley Leisure Centre and the surrounding site.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Councillor Chris Clark, asked a question on how confident that a new leisure centre would be opened in Purley by May 2026. The Executive Mayor responded that he had confidence a new leisure centre would be delivered in Purley, as number of works had undertaken alongside for this deliverance.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stuart King, asked what due diligence had been undertaken regarding the councils proposed development partner, and what outcome had come from this. The Interim Director of Commercial Investment and Capital, Huw Rhys-Lewis, responded that checks and balances had been considered on the developer Polaska which was in consistent with the approach taken with any developer investor into the borough, and feedback and evidence based suggested there was nothing in terms of the propositions, in continuing to work with Polaska.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 Approve the draft Heads of Terms between Polaska Assets Limited (Polaska) and the Council (as set out in Part B appendix 1) relating to the proposed redevelopment by Polaska of Purley Leisure Centre and surrounding site, and with a view to negotiating and entering into a development agreement and property agreements.
- 1.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Director for Commercial Investment and Capital, to finalise and enter into the Head of Terms (HoT) between the Council and Polaska.
- 1.3 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Director for Commercial Investment and Capital, to finalise the drafting of the development agreement and new head lease between the Council and Polaska.
- 1.4 Agree that there will be a further report presented to the Executive Mayor in Cabinet seeking authority to enter into a development agreement and lease agreements with Polaska for the redevelopment of Purley Leisure Centre and surrounding site, subject to further due diligence and planning permission.

1.5 To notes the opportunity to regenerate an important part of Purley town centre as set out in the Mayor's wider business plan (2022 – 2026).

72/23

Croydon Corporate Parenting & Care Leavers Strategy

The Executive Mayor introduced the Croydon Corporate Parenting & Care Leavers Strategy report which highlighted seven corporate parenting principles and focused on how corporate parents and partners act in the best interests of children and young people, focusing on their physical health, mental health and wellbeing.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, addressed Cabinet that the strategy demonstrated a culture shift employing a whole council and partner approach and co-working with young people and care leavers to bring forward a robust strategy, and further detailed the proposed work set out within the strategy.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Amy Foster asked could the council be confident that what was presented would show we would be taking our care experienced young people seriously and putting there needs at the heart of our work as a council. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Maria Gatland, responded that previously there was no strategy in place and everyone had worked very hard to have one in place. Jane Scott further added that there was also a transformation programme which would be delivering the key deliverables and milestones which would be more transparent.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1.1 To approve Croydon's Corporate Parenting Strategy.

1.2 To approve Croydon's Care Leavers Strategy.

1.3 To note that the effectiveness of the new arrangements and measures of success will be reported through the Corporate Parenting Board and existing directorate performance management frameworks to ensure decisive actions are taken to address any issues.

73/23

Croydon Dementia Strategic Plan

The Executive Mayor introduced the Croydon Dementia Strategic Plan report which was not just a document, but a roadmap for a more inclusive and equitable community.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yvette Hopley, addressed Cabinet that the report set out the plan for not only

residents, but also carers, workforce providers and partners which would improve outcomes with people living with dementia. The report highlighted five themes to deliver excellence on dementia care.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Janet Campbell, asked a question on whether there was assurance on the cohesive coordination of all health strategies including the autism strategy to significantly impact the cultural and systemic evolution in Croydon. The Executive Mayor responded that there was a close working relationship with the health trust and was working towards bringing strategies together. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yvette Hopley, added that there was a number of refreshed strategies and other areas of policy, and there was a cohesive policy to bring all work together to be meaningful with action plans to drive the work forward.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

To agree the strategic plan and endorse the Council's commitment to the strategic and operational integration partnership.

74/23

Council Tax Recovery - Council Tax Support Claimants

The Executive Mayor introduced the Council Tax Recovery – Council Tax Support Claimants report which looked to reinstate the council tax recovery process for residents as council tax support.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, addressed Cabinet that the measure was temporary and the failure to return to the normal recovery process had created a £3.6 million pound deficit which was currently sitting in the council's books. It was noted that this was not a new approach, and the support system was already adjusted to consider those struggling to pay. Thus, recommencing this process would mean to inform effected residents of their position of their council tax account. The Head of Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debts, Catherine Black, added that a reminder notice would be sent out to residences should they be behind in payment, given residents opportunity to contact the council. This would follow a summons notice should no payment be made for negotiations for payment. Enforcement agents trained in vulnerability would be the last call for action.

The Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Callton Young, asked how would residents be assured that the proposed council tax bailiffs would properly manage the control to ensure that the 640,000 residents affected by the proposals would not be worried about a potential knock at their door. The Executive Mayor informed that many residents were not aware of their debt and with information and support now available to residents this should help with their debts. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Jason Cummings, informed that it was

the responsibility of every person to pay the council tax they were accountable for. This would go through the normal arrears process.

The Executive Mayor in Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

To agree to reinstate the council tax recovery process for residents in receipt of council tax support.

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Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 9:14pm