

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE	15 th July 2024	
REPORT TITLE:	STAGE 1: RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM SCRUTINY	
LEAD OFFICER:	Jane West, Corporate Director for Resources Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services T: 020 8726 6000 X 62529. Email: adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Rowenna Davis Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	Recommendations that have been developed from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its Sub-Committees since the last Cabinet meeting are provided in the appendices to this report. The constitution requires that an interim or full response is provided within 2 months of this Cabinet meeting.	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out recommendations from Scrutiny for the consideration of the Executive Mayor. These recommendations originate from the meeting of the Homes Sub-Committee on 29 January 2024, Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 19 March 2024, the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 2 April 2024 and the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 22 April 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the reasons as set out in this report and appendices, Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED to agree to:

1. Receive the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Homes Sub-Committee on 29 January 2024 (Appendix 1), Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 19 March 2024 (Appendix 2), the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 2 April 2024 (Appendix 3), the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 22 April 2024 (Appendix 3).

2. Provide a substantive response to the recommendations (a Scrutiny Stage 2 Report) at the Cabinet meeting on 25 September 2024.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 3.1 Part 4E of the Council's Constitution: Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules (paragraphs 8.5 – 8.7) and Section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000 require the executive to consider and respond to a Scrutiny and Overview report within 2 months beginning with the date on which the executive receive the report or recommendation.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 To provide additional context to the recommendations appended to this report, this section provides the conclusions reached by Scrutiny on the items under consideration.

Homes Sub-Committee

Item: Responsive Repairs Contract Update

- 4.2 The Sub-Committee commended the team for the significant amount of work that has been delivered in a short space of time since the mobilisation of the new responsive repairs and heating contracts, particularly in the context of a larger than anticipated backlog of historic repairs.
- 4.3 The Sub-Committee agreed that data would be a key driver in the delivery of service improvement. As the service was going through the process of validating the data it was collecting, the Sub-Committee agreed that there were areas, such as those related to contractor performance, that would need to be revisited once this process had been completed.
- 4.4 The Sub-Committee identified that capacity remained a key issue for the service and accepted that it would be an ongoing challenge to plan staffing resource for the contact centre which would require a higher number of temporary staff to manage demand, until there was greater degree of certainty about the ongoing volume of repairs.
- 4.5 The Sub-Committee welcomed confirmation that the number of gas safety checks completed had significantly improved, although it agreed to continue to monitor performance in this area while it remained below the key performance indicator target.

Children & Young People Sub-Committee

Item: Health Visiting

- 4.6 Members thanked the Chief Executive of Croydon Health Services and Chief Nurse of Croydon Health Services for their open and thorough engagement with the Sub-Committee's questions. The Sub-Committee also thanked the Director of Education

for their offer of a tour of the Woodlands Children's Centre Family Hub and stated that they would look to take this up in the near future.

- 4.7** The Sub-Committee commended the priority given to service improvement in the Health Visiting service by the Chief Executive of Croydon Health Services and the Chief Nurse of Croydon Health Services and stated that they were keen to see this trend continue.
- 4.8** The Sub-Committee were positive about improvements to New Birth Visits and 6-8 Week Checks and were encouraged to hear that the service was now looking at how to increase performance for 12 month and 2-2.5 year mandated checks.
- 4.9** Members requested that the next update provide information on how flexible seven-day working had been implemented in a way that worked positively for staff whilst increasing the accessibility of service.

Streets & Environment Sub-Committee

Item: Cabinet Report: Proposed Parking Charge Amendments 2024-25

- 4.10** The Sub-Committee welcomed confirmation that the proposed parking tariffs would continue to use an emission-based charging scheme.
- 4.11** The Sub-Committee were encouraged that the Council would be exploring the possible adoption of Workplace Parking Levies (WPL) and asked to be kept informed of this work as it developed.

Air Quality Action Plan 2024-29

- 4.12** The Sub-Committee welcomed the Council's planned strategic approach to developing a forthcoming Electric Vehicle Charging Point Rollout Strategy.
- 4.13** The Sub-Committee were also encouraged that the Air Quality Action Plan would look at the feasibility of expanding Croydon's existing 'Smoke Free Zones'.

Scrutiny & Overview Committee

Item: Croydon Council's Relationship with the Voluntary Sector

- 4.14** At a meeting arranged with community and voluntary sector organisation to inform questioning on this item, the Committee heard a range of serious concerns about the sector's relationship with the Council as a whole, particularly the culture of the relationship and the perceived lack of communication with the sector. The Committee was reassured by the acknowledgement of these historic concerns by the Executive Mayor.
- 4.15** It was recognised that the Council was still in the early stages of rebuilding its relationship with the community and voluntary sector, but the work to date,

particularly around commissioning was promising, although it was too early to judge whether this would lead to new, improved ways of working in the longer term.

- 4.16** The Committee welcomed the intention to judge success on practical, tangible outcomes for local people, rather than a past overreliance on measuring inputs and processes. It was acknowledged that measuring the success in terms of these outcomes would be more challenging.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1** None. It is a statutory and constitutional requirement for the Executive to receive and respond to recommendations made by Scrutiny.

6 CONSULTATION / PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 6.1** The recommendations were developed from the deliberations of either the Scrutiny & Overview Committee or one of its Sub-Committees.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN

- 7.1** Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services:

Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice. The Council must learn the lessons of past failures and embed sound governance processes to ensure that decision-making is transparent, open and honest. These must ensure effective control of our projects and programmes and encourage meaningful scrutiny and challenge.

- 7.2** Outcome 4: Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home:

Priority 1: Make our streets and open spaces cleaner so that Croydon is a place that residents and businesses can feel proud to call home.

Priority 5: Lead action to reduce carbon emissions in Croydon.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1** The Scrutiny recommendations to the Executive may have financial implications. Following the recommendations being received at Cabinet, the Executive will identify and consider any financial implications as part of their response.

- 8.1.2** If any recommendation is subsequently progressed for consideration and decision by the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, full financial (as well as legal and equalities implications) would be presented.

Comments approved by Allister Bannin, Director of Finance (Deputy s151), 15/04/24.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Under Section 9F Local Government Act 2000 (“The Act”), Scrutiny and Overview Committee (SOC) have the powers to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any executive and non-executive functions and to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. SOC also has the power to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority on matters, which affect the authority’s area or the inhabitants of its area.

8.2.2 Under Section 9FE of the Act, there is a duty on Cabinet to respond to the scrutiny report, indicating what (if any) action Cabinet proposes to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert, Head of Corporate and Litigation on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (15/5/2024)

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

8.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Council must in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

- i. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- ii. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- iii. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.4.2 The recommendations in the appendices to this report may have equality implications and may require an EQIA as part of the development of the proposals. The implications will be explored to identify impact and mitigation utilised to negate any adverse impact where necessary.

Comments approved by Ken Orlukwu, Senior Equalities Officer, on behalf of Helen Reeves, Head of Strategy & Policy on 08/05/2024

8.7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

8.7.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF ‘PERSONAL DATA’?

There are no Data Protection implications at this stage, but that the situation will be reviewed again at Stage 2 when Cabinet provide their response to the proposed recommendations.

HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Recommendations from Homes Sub-Committee on 29 January 2024

9.2 Appendix 2: Recommendations from Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 19 March 2024

9.3 Appendix 3: Recommendations from Streets & Environment Sub-Committee on 2 April 2024

9.4 Appendix 4: Recommendations from Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 22 April 2024

10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Papers for the Homes Sub-Committee meeting on 29 January 2024

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=485&MId=3708&Ver=4>

Papers for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee meeting on 19 March 2024

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=167&MId=3505>

Papers for the Streets & Environment Sub-Committee meeting on 2 April 2024

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=3509>

Papers for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting on 22 April 2024

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3516&Ver=4>