



**Notes of the Public Meeting**

St Michael's Church Hall  
Poplar Walk, Croydon CR0 1UA  
Thursday, 17 October 2019  
7pm to 9pm

**Present:** Dominique Andrushkiv, Elizabeth Ash (Chair), Mahbub Sadiq Bhatti, Averil Coutinho, Fabion Emmanuel, Leeman Francis, Dawn Gibbons, Nicola Glover (Secretary), Rae Goonetilleke, Zuhair Hanna, Mark Johnson, Clive Locke, Linda Morris, Glenn Morfill, Ken Phipps, Alan Reynolds, Margaret Reynolds, Mark Samuel, Janet Stollery, Steve Thompson, Gordon Thompson, Sally Ward-Lee

**Apologies:** Ken Baker, Malcolm Bell, Cllr Margaret Bird, Cllr Simon Brew, Judith Burden, Naseem Butt, Pauline Childs, Kate Clark, James Crane, Anne Giles, Beryl Gowers, David Gowers, Eric Green, Jean Gulley, Jackie Hall, Maureen Levy, Rita Lewis, Grace Onions, Jean Pikett, Cllr Helen Pollard, Peter Spalding, Gillian Turner, Paul Voden, Pat Ward-Lee

**The first 25 minutes** were given to registration, refreshments and networking. There was a display of community information available and copies to take away.

**Welcome and introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Cllr Margaret Bird, Cllr Simon Brew, and Cllr Helen Pollard were noted.

There were no objections to the meeting being recorded, for the purposes of note taking, or to photos being taken.

**The following updates and notices were given:**

**Updates**

Details of Victim Support's You & Co project, supporting victims of and those likely to be affected by serious youth violence is now available on the website, thanks to Monique Smith the Youth Advocate who spoke at the last meeting. Details [here](#).

The outcome of the consultation on bus routes serving Croydon Town Centre, mentioned by Stephen Aselford at the September meeting, can be found [here](#).

**Stephen Aselford**

Stephen was a regular attender and speaker at meetings and a member of CCC. He had a keen interest in disability issues and transport. The sad news that Stephen had passed away at home early October was shared with those attending. If the details of any funeral or memorial is announced this will be shared so those who knew Stephen have the opportunity to attend. **Action:** CCC

**Notices**

**Creating Conversation in Croydon training opportunity & Death Cafes**

Death Cafes are held at various venues across the borough, giving people the opportunity to discuss the subject of death and dying, ask questions, to consider what plans they might like to put in place or to discuss bereavement. There are events held at community venues including in Croydon libraries. A Bereavement Café is held the second Friday of the month at the Clocktower café.

The opportunity for the next cohort of volunteers to be trained is coming up and there are still places available. Find details of the training and other events, including the new Death Café on 12 November with speaker and discussions over afternoon tea, [here](#).

**Dementia-friendly screening at the David Lean**

Monthly Dementia-Friendly screenings are held at the David Lean, organised by [Croydon Dementia](#)

[Action Alliance](#), which are partly sponsored by Old Coulsdon and Sanderstead ward councillors. Details [here](#).

**Croydon Freecycle** was promoted with flyer available to take away. Croydon Freecycle and other schemes also operate, allowing people to ask for or to share things they no longer need, including food, plants, equipment, furnishings and household goods at no cost to the receiver. Details [here](#).

#### **Croydon Social Prescribing's Gardening Club**

Sessions run on Weds and Saturday each week in Shirley, with a men-only session, an open-to-all and a family-friendly session. Details [here](#).

**National Hate Crime Awareness Week** runs to 19 October 2019 and CCC is promoting events going on in Croydon again this year. Details [here](#).

#### **Croydon's anti-hate crime pledge**

Join CCC and sign up to Croydon Council's anti-hate crime pledge as an individual and/or as an organisation. Find the pledge [here](#). And remember, it is important to report hate crimes. Support others to do so.

CCC committee had planned to hold this meeting on the subject of Hate Crime but the arrangements could not be put in place in time. Attendees were asked whether a meeting to explore what is Hate Crime and how to report would be useful and this was generally agreed.

**Action: CCC to arrange**

**Black History Month** runs throughout October with a host over events in Croydon, thanks to the Croydon BME Forum and partners. Details [here](#).

**South East Cancer Help Centre's Paint Purley Purple fundraiser** runs throughout October. There are lots of ways to support. Details [here](#)

#### **The UK animal killer**

SNARL is still after the person or persons responsible and there is a new flyer. Find it [here](#). Note the updated contact details. Help by reporting any incidents or suspicions and download a flyer to help spread the word. Copies were made available at the meeting.

**Girguiding in Croydon** welcome more volunteers to support their work in a variety of roles on offer to suit different time commitments, skills and interests of volunteers. Full details [here](#).

#### **Boot Fairs**

These run each weekend in two locations with special rates for different times of entry and discount with a flyer. Details [here](#).

#### **Sanderstead Road Bridge Replacement, South Croydon**

This is planned to run through to January 2020. Full details [here](#). There will be some road closures and access to parts of South Croydon Rec likely to be affected.

**Organ Recitals 2019 at St Michael's, Croydon** continue, with the next on Weds 23 October at 1.10pm – All welcome. Details [here](#). FREE but donations welcome.

**Autumn 2019 Lunchtime Recitals on Fridays at Croydon Minster** These are all at 1.10pm on Fridays through to 29 November 2019. Attendees are welcome to take a packed lunch with them. These are free but donations are welcome. Details [here](#).

**Croydon Trading Standards are holding an Open Day** on 23 Oct 2019 – scams info, small electricals testing and more at this free event. If you want to bring along an electric blanket or other small electrical items for testing at no cost to you. Do pre-book. Full details [here](#).

The latest bulletin and leaflets supplied by Croydon Trading Standards were made available at the meeting, with copies to take away.

**West End Gala** at the Fairfield Halls is in aid of the Mayor of Croydon's charities on 3 Nov. Find the details [here](#).

### **Club Soda presents... SODA BEAT**

7-10pm, Mon 21 October at the Fairfield Halls. This event is a live music run by young people with learning disabilities. Details [here](#).

**Food and Fun holiday club for 8 to 15 yr olds for Oct half-term** is now booking! Run by Guiding Hands CIC at the Peppermint Children's Centre, 9-4 daily from 21-24 Oct, 2019. Special weekly rate and FREE places available. Details [here](#).

### **Cassandra Lunch Club in Norbury**

Run on Fridays, generally towards the end of the month. The next are on Friday, 25 October and 29 Nov, 11am to 3pm. £5 a head. Details [here](#).

**Mistletoe Ball** on 29 Nov is now booking. This is a fundraising event for the Chartwell Trust's Lily Pad Appeal to refurbish CUH's Children's Oncology Unit. Details [here](#)

### **Policing in Croydon**

#### **- Updates on policing**

Inspector Warnes is producing a fortnightly communication to highlight what is happening about policing in the borough. Find them [here](#).

Croydon Police are also running [fortnightly online forums](#) using Facebook. All are on a Tuesday evening, 7-8pm.

#### **- Community Safety Meeting with the Borough Commander**

Thornton Heath - 22 Oct 2019, 6-8pm. Full details [here](#).

#### **- Local policing team newsletters**

Anyone can sign up to receive these newsletters and occasional important updates from their local policing team. Newsletters also contain details of ward panel meetings.

Local policing teams are keen to hear from residents and business owners/workers on their priorities and concerns for the ward.

CCC post all local [policing team ward newsletters on the website](#) but in order to avoid delay and to ensure that people receive important updates as soon as they are released, do sign up directly with the local policing team to get the information as soon as it is released.

### **The Herbert Protocol**

The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme introduced by the Metropolitan Police and other agencies which encourages carers to compile useful information which could be used in the event of a vulnerable person going missing. Details [here](#)

**Victim Support's 'You & Co'**, is an initiative run by Victim Support, supporting young victims of crime (4-17yrs), now in Croydon. Find the Local contact details and links to their very useful website [here](#).

### **Purley Food Hub**

Purley Food Hub serves people across Croydon. They are always looking for donations to support their work in order to deal with increasing demand. A list of items sought each month is produced. The latest list is [here](#). CCC will always accept donations at meetings. Contributed made at this meeting will be passed on and are always gratefully received.

### **David Lean screenings**

The next month's screenings go on sale early the month before and are very popular so book early to avoid disappointment! View the latest screening [here](#).

### **Keeping up to date**

Everyone was reminded to keep an eye on the website where these and future notices would be posted. It is possible to subscribe to posts in order to get email notifications. Click the link in the right sidebar on the website. Links to posts are also posted to Twitter and Facebook.

### **Main agenda item**

#### **Croydon Libraries**

Dawn Gibbons, Croydon Unison rep for library workers, was introduced and welcomed to the meeting. Cllr Helen Pollard had sent apologies. It was explained that a library manager was also unable to attend but was keen to receive feedback from the meeting on the experience of

residents and is happy to provide a response from the library service team to any points and questions raised as a result of the meeting. These will be shared at a future meeting and on the website.

The Chair declared her interest as a library campaigner.

### **Library booklet/ email newsletter**

The Chair introduced the topic, recommending the What's On Guide for Croydon libraries produced quarterly, listing the activities and events in libraries, plus details of what services are on offer. This booklet is set out in a very accessible style and much improved on the previous versions produced under Carillion. It is also possible to sign up to emailed newsletter and copies of this and the What's On Guide were made available at the meeting.

All links to Croydon libraries can be found on the Council's website, [here](#). Residents can sign up to the library newsletter, download a What's On guide, view details for each library and more [here](#). It is also possible to join Croydon Libraries [here](#).

### **Social Media**

The library service runs a Facebook page at [@CroydonLibraries](#), Twitter at [@CroydonLibs](#) and Instagram is [@Croydonlibraries](#)

### **Update on Croydon Libraries**

The Chair shared the following update provided by a manager for Croydon Libraries:

All libraries will have a new, faster network by the end of 2019. This means that the free WiFi service and updated IT equipment will have much improved access speeds.

The new online library catalogue coming in November 2019 gives library users access to the 6 million books within the Libraries Consortium. New features include notifications by email or text, for example, when books need to be returned. Library users will be able to search the entire catalogue, reserve and renew items easily through an app. Library users will be able to visit and use their Croydon Library card for books and services at all libraries within any of the following boroughs: Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge, Brent, Kingston Upon Thames, Sutton, Ealing, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, Enfield, Luton, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Merton, Harrow, Newham

In order to prepare for this changeover, please note that there will be no access to the existing online catalogue from Monday 14 October until Monday 4 November. This means library users will not be able to access their online library account, or place reservations for items in libraries or online, but they can still borrow and return books.

### **Activities and services on offer**

Dawn highlighted the various services and facilities on offer in Croydon libraries. These include access to the National Careers Service (phone 0800 100 900 to book an appointment), reading groups, a chess club and Knit and Natter sessions. Wriggle and Jiggle and Rhymetime events for young children are very popular. Code Clubs and Lego also run.

English as a Second Language sessions are also extremely popular and run on Thursdays and Fridays in Central library.

There are talks at libraries also. It was noted that not everything gets included in the What's On Guide so it is worth checking at the local library and online for other details of events.

The Healthy Living Hub is also separate to but right by Croydon Central Library, offering health advice and information.

Displays by Central Library were also noted including the current Sarees Exhibition and a Friends of the Earth display is due in November.

An event for adults on Diabetes at Sanderstead Library was promoted. This will be held on Friday 25 October at 2pm. There is ample parking by Sanderstead Library and it is also on the 403 bus route from West Croydon.

A Christmas Craft Fair is taking place at the Croydon Central Library and Clocktower Cafe on

Saturday 30 November 2019. There should be around 20 stalls on the day.

### **Code Club and Lego Club**

**Q:** What is Code Club and what age is it relevant for?

**A:** Code Club is pitched at 9-13 year olds. It involves basic computer coding where children can build and share their ideas including using Scratch, HTML, CMS and Python by making games, animations and websites.

Code Club runs on alternate Saturdays at Central and at Ashburton libraries on Saturdays. Lego Club runs at Central and Coulsdon libraries on alternate Saturdays.

### **Online services**

The online services have been enhanced. Anyone registered as a library user can read the daily newspapers online with library card number and a password. Periodicals are also available. Library users can access these without the need to visit a library via Press Reader.

Ancestry UK is also available but this requires visiting a library for access. There is information about Law and Rights.

Digital books (e-books) can be downloaded for free. Theory Test Pro is also available for those interested in passing their driving theory test. A Life in the UK test is also available for those wanting to practice questions likely to come up when sitting the test to seek UK citizenship. Business Start-Up support is also available through the library service at Central Library.

### **Future Plans & key documents**

**Q:** What is the plan for Croydon libraries?

**Comments:** The plan for Croydon libraries was unclear. The papers that went to Cabinet included a report by Red Quadrant made recommendations which may or may not be implemented. The report made reference to co-locating services, potential to provide a tiered service where people would need to travel to access a higher level of services and the suggested use of volunteers to run or partly run some libraries.

The Chair made reference to a conversation with Laura Swaffield, Chair of the national charity, The Library Campaign, regarding a well-quoted stat that 40% of library users losing access to library services locally via a closure or loss of paid staff will not travel to access the service at another library. This was put in context with the Red Quadrant report suggesting, for example, that Sanderstead and New Addington library users could travel to Selsdon to access a wider range of library services if these libraries were downgraded or turned over to volunteers.

The decisions taken around this appear vague, Clarity was sought.

Laura was speaking about volunteers in libraries the same day at a conference in London. The Chair offered to share a write up of this, if it became available. **Action: EA**

Find downloads of the **Cabinet papers, The Croydon Libraries Plan 2019-2028** and **The Red Quadrant report** [here](#).

### **Closure or changes to libraries**

**Q:** Will any libraries close? There has been a suggestion that Sanderstead and Purley libraries may close.

**Comment:** The idea of potential closures was thought to link to communications by a Croydon MP. The Red Quadrant document referred to Shirley, Sanderstead and Bradmore Green libraries having the potential to be run by volunteers. Not sure that Purley was earmarked for volunteers or closure.

**Q:** Shirley library is due to be developed. Will this affect the library offer and the space available for library services?

**Q:** Will refurbishment in any of the other libraries affect the amount of available space for the library offer?

**Q:** Are there any plans for a tiered system for the local libraries, with some offering more services than others?

**Q:** What are the long-term plans for all Croydon libraries?

### **Co-location of services in libraries**

Another offered that people use libraries for different reasons. Returning to the Red Quadrant document, there was mention about co-locating services. This can eat up the available space in a

library or negatively impact on library users wanting a quiet place to read or study. There are examples of where co-location is done well. For example, the Healthy Living Hub is by the exit to Central Library but separate to the library. Activities there do not affect library users use of the library. Visitors to the Healthy Living Hub may be encouraged to visit the library while they are there, and vice versa.

Where it is not done well it can impact on the library user's use of the library e.g. noise nuisance and the work of library workers who are managing and answering queries for other things on top of their regular duties in the library which detracts from the offer in libraries.

A person remarked on someone being interviewed in a library and how this was inappropriate as the conversation could be heard by other library users.

**Q:** What plans for co-location of services are there in Croydon libraries?

**Q:** What plans are there to ensure that using libraries for other purposes do not encroach on library users' use of the library?

### **Open+ (staffless access to libraries using an automated system with a library card)**

**Q:** When will Open+ (staff-less access to libraries) be available and where will it operate?

**A:** This was expected shortly, although details were not confirmed, starting in Selsdon Library which had recently been refurbished. It will be done on a trial basis. Library managers would be asked to confirm. Library card holders would be able to access the library out of regular staffed hours to use the facilities, to return books or to borrow using the self-issue machines. CCTV cameras would be in operation.

**Comments:** Issues with Open+ have been experienced elsewhere. These included concerns about the de-staffing of libraries and not providing access to under 16s/18s during unstaffed times. Health and Safety issues were also a concern with the potential for others to tailgate and gain access to the library. Disruptive behaviour and concerns about protecting the needs of vulnerable people were also raised.

The need for library workers and librarians to deliver the service was also underlined as being very important by residents at the meeting.

It was generally agreed that giving access on a trial basis was wise to test out this approach. Some local authorities have just put it in place without a trial. People who work cannot access a library during the week may find this extended access useful.

A resident pointed out that staffless access would not be appropriate in all libraries, particularly the smaller libraries situated separately from other community buildings and activity.

**Q:** Are there plans to give people access to a library on a Sunday?

### **Volunteers in libraries**

**Q:** Can and should libraries be turned over to volunteers? Is this approach wise or sustainable?

**A:** The Chair pointed out that this was a grey area fraught with issues. Unison are currently undertaking research on volunteers in libraries.

The Chair shared her experience of her work as Trustee of The Library Campaign. There were reports of quibbling between volunteers, volunteers taking the best book donations for personal or for selling on before volunteers could make them available to library users. Volunteer libraries often put a huge amount of time and effort into just fundraising to keep the doors open or the library running for a few sessions. Volunteer-run libraries are often independent so cut off from accessing library stock in core libraries or the library lending system. Turnover of volunteers and unreliability was also a regular issue faced.

Similarly, the competence of volunteers was raised. A library user related their experience of a library manager's time being excessively occupied by a volunteer who was unable to follow a simple request to check the screen when scanning books for return to check for reservations.

The consensus of the discussion was that volunteers can add value to a library service but cannot adequately replace the expertise and knowledge of librarians and experienced trained library workers.

**Q:** What role do volunteers fulfil in Croydon libraries?

**Q:** Do volunteers take on any tasks that paid staff would have done in the past or are there any

plans for volunteers to be used in this way in the future?

### **Staffing levels and impact**

The staffing levels in libraries has fallen quite dramatically over the years. Every library had a dedicated Children's Librarian before they were outsourced, for example. The Booktrail run years ago, Croydon's version of the Summer Reading Challenge, was far more extensive than the Summer Reading Challenge on offer now, due to greater staffing levels then. The reduction in staffing is evident too by queues in libraries and fewer staff available. Some libraries have had a single member of staff on duty in the library at times.

**Q:** Croydon libraries have been brought back in house but what has been done about addressing staffing levels?

**Q:** How many library workers, for example, were in place when the libraries were outsourced, were brought back in house and how many library workers are employed now?

**Q:** There is not the same atmosphere in libraries as there used to be and this comes down to level of staffing. When library staff leave are they replaced?

### **Council's duty to provide a service**

**Q:** Do Croydon legally have to provide a library service?

**Comment** by the Chair: All local authorities have a statutory duty under the 1964 Act to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all who wish to make use of it so this includes both residents, students and those working in the borough. There are no library standards to measure the service against in England. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) are pushing for standards to be introduced but there are arguments for and against.

### **Level of service**

**Q:** Could the library offer be cut down to a few books on a shelf?

**Comment:** The Chair stated that this would fail to meet the legal requirement for providing a comprehensive and efficient service. Local authorities have been challenged via Judicial Reviews, although many local authorities amend their plans before it reaches this stage.

### **Cost of the service to library users**

**Q:** Does the library service need to be provided for free? Could a charge for loans be made to support the service?

**A:** The basis library service is free to everyone under the 1964 Act but extra services can be charged for. For example, photocopying or audio books. Croydon makes audio books free to visually impaired library users. Applying for a library card is free.

### **Internet access in libraries**

**Q:** People use libraries for a variety of reasons, one being able to access the internet for study or job searches. The introduction of fast internet is great but will there still be restrictions on usage?

**A:** Library users can get access to the internet for two hours for free, per day, using a PC in any library in Croydon. Additional time is charged, even if the person were to travel to another library. Use of library wifi on a person's own device is free.

### **London Libraries Consortium**

**Q:** Will Croydon residents be able to request books from other local authorities in the London Libraries Consortium. If so, will there be a charge?

### **Home Library Service**

**Comment:** The Home Library Service for people who are housebound is very good. This service is not run by volunteers. Books are delivered to the person's home.

It was suggested that volunteers who were suitably checked and trained could undertake the delivery element of this service and may have more time then to chat to the library user who may be isolated if unable to get out.

### **Feedback on library user experience**

Croydon Library Service is fantastic, with excellent staff on hand to help.

Given what Croydon library service has been through, being cut then outsourced to Laings, quickly passed on to Carillion and then being brought back in house again, the staff have worked very hard to keep the service going. It has been clear that the staff have been under a good deal of

pressure at times but have always been pleasant and helpful throughout. The staff make the service.

A resident reflected on their experience of Croydon libraries. They were a quiet place to read, to study and to relax, with lots of help on hand. Now that other services and activities are running in libraries they do not feel like libraries any more. Young people will not ever have an experience of what a library has to offer as it did before.

A resident stated their great satisfaction with the library service. The reservations system is excellent and there is no longer a charge for the service. It was noted that not charging a fee for reserving books from other libraries will encourage people to use the library.

### **Libraries to get people online**

**Comment:** A resident voiced concerns that the Council is keen to drive everyone on line but this is not possible for quite a number of residents.

The new-faster internet should help to give people better access. Older equipment in libraries and slower connections have been sluggish in the past.

Volunteers are used in libraries to give one to one IT support to help library users to get online or to undertake tasks online. These sessions are bookable, are free and are usually done in one hour slots.

**Point:** There appears to be an issue with internet access and printing in libraries currently, yet there is no information or notices about this. Residents have reported being unable to print using certain browsers. Another resident is having to travel to Central Library to access the internet as he is unable to get online in the two local libraries he would usually visit.

**Q:** What are the issues here and what is being done to address them?

**Q:** Could the library service social media accounts not be used to update library users on issues and changes as well as promoting what is going on? People are less likely to be annoyed if they are informed and updated.

### **Training**

**Q:** Do Croydon provide training for people interested in becoming librarians and encourage people to seek employment in Croydon libraries?

**Comments:** People responded that providing training to become a librarian is not really the role of the local authority. It is a professional qualification. There is no point in encouraging people to seek to work in Croydon libraries if there are no positions on offer.

### **Library use and statistics**

**Q:** What numbers of people are using Croydon libraries now and has this increased or decreased in recent years?

**Q:** What are the current stats for Croydon libraries and how do these compare in the past ten years? E.g. latest CIPFA stats.

**Q:** How many books are available in the library catalogue now and how does this compare with the past?

### **Access to library services for homeless people**

**Q:** Croydon has a large homeless population. Can they register to be library users with no fixed address in a similar way that they can register with a GP?

**A:** People with no fixed abode can be registered so they can get computer access but cannot borrow books. They are welcome to use books and facilities in the libraries. Library staff will help signpost people, including homeless people, to other services where they can.

### **Leaflets in libraries**

**Q:** CCC leaflets delivered to a library have not been distributed to other libraries as usual on the past few occasions, and other organisations have been similarly affected. Leaflets in several libraries were not in date, including the library brochure. What will be done to address this?

### **Closed exit to Croydon Central Library**

**Q:** The shutter at Croydon Central Library is currently closed. When will this be repaired?

**Q:** Does the exit being closed affect the collection of visitor stats and are these being collected in all libraries?



## **Volunteering in Croydon libraries**

**Q:** What roles can volunteers fulfill in Croydon libraries? What training is required? What checks need to be done?

**Q:** How do you register your interest in volunteering?

**A:** You can do so via the Croydon Council website. See the variety of roles currently on offer and how to apply via Better Impact, [here](#).

## **The meeting was then opened to other topics, as follows**

### **Drive to get everyone to report online**

Several people spoke on this topic. Not everyone is online or happy to use the internet to report. It is discriminatory to expect everyone to report online.

Some reported issues getting through to the Council by phone. Others found they got through quickly and were able to log issues this way, with the staff being very helpful. A resident was able to report for a neighbour when bins were not collected by phoning but unable to find out how to do so online. Another resident found that they could report issues for neighbouring properties online.

A resident made the comment that the continual message that issues can be reported online was not helpful and was very distressing for an elderly neighbor they were trying to help. Another noted that some options when phoning the council led to a dead end, with a message that the issue can be reported online and the call was then dropped, requiring the resident to then redial and choose another option to try to get through to report.

When a missed bin is reported as not presented correctly or contaminated it is not possible to report this as incorrect online. Bins noted as not presented were collected but this required phoning in the issues.

### **Queen's Gardens Redesign**

Residents involved explained that a lot of work had gone into this but there had been no final outcome. The Chair, who was also involved, offered to chase this up with HUB, Kaizen and the Council.

A really good piece of community engagement work had been undertaken by HUB in association with Kaizen. This looked at what the community wanted for this space, including different areas such as the facilities and planting. The gardens should be made fully accessible as part of the plans. Although the gardens generally appear accessible, the camber and incline on some of the pathways make it inaccessible for people such as wheelchair users or people with reduced mobility.

An interesting outcome of the project was how closely the ideas of the community, the Council, and the architects from HUB aligned. One key issue, for example, was water as part of the project. HUB and the community involved all pushed for some water element in the design throughout. This was regularly rebutted on grounds of costs and safety throughout in conversations with the council yet when the final design brief went to Council, councillors from both sides pushed for the addition of water in the design. In hindsight, it was a shame that more council officers, councillors and cabinet members were not actively involved in the open engagement process that HUB and Kaizen delivered.

**Action: EA**

### **The Croydon Local Plan / Declassification of areas of green belt**

A resident reported that areas of green spaces were being looked at again as part of the local plan. Concern expressed was that areas of green belt may be declassified as part of this process to deliver housing, although views differed as to whether or not this was true.

CCC had advertised the previous call for evidence to protect Croydon's green spaces. Several people understood that this had been evidence on green spaces of local significance but not for green belt which is already protected, but another disagreed. CCC agreed to publicise the link to info that residents had been asked to provide evidence to ensure that Green Belt maintained its status if it was provided. **Action: CCC**

Links to the Local Plan consultation would be publicized when announced.

**Action: CCC**

## Community Engagement

A resident made the point that people want answers, for example, about the stalled development in the town centre. CCC has already agreed to hold a meeting when there is the announcement of progress on this as doing so before this would be futile.

On the wider issue of community engagement, experience at CCC meetings has been that all parties involved win. Residents go away better informed, better able to understand the issues and restrictions faced and having had the opportunity to voice their opinions. Councillors, cabinet members, council officers, service providers etc. go away having had the opportunity to engage directly with the community, to explain the issues fully and with information they may not have had before.

What CCC adds to this is a record of what was discussed and any actions or promises, and report on them, plus the outcomes.

A person present said that they had not seen the outcome of a number of consultations and engagement exercises by the council. What's the point of these if residents do not get to see the results?

## The Big Conversation

This is due to be launched. When details are available, these will be advertised by CCC. There will be a toolkit which a group can use to engage on any of all of the topics. CCC committee will look at this with a view to using a meeting to do so. **Action: CCC**

## Conclusion

Everyone was thanked for attending.

The process of approving notes was explained with any key speakers and councillors received a draft copy for comment prior to anyone present indicating an interest having the opportunity to proof them. Only then would the notes be finalised and published.

Donations to support the work of CCC were welcomed and [details of membership](#) were made available. All were encouraged to look at the leaflets and take information away.

## Next meeting

The next meeting will be a general meeting on 26 November, 2019. People were encouraged to take flyers away and to spread the word.

**Meeting closed** 8.55 pm

## Croydon Communities Consortium

[CroydonNeighbourhoods@gmail.com](mailto:CroydonNeighbourhoods@gmail.com)

[CCC website](#)

Find us on Twitter [@CroydonNbrhoods](#)

Find us on [Facebook](#)

Our free events are at Eventbrite: <http://croydoncc.eventbrite.co.uk/>