

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET – 7 May 2019
SUBJECT:	Inform, Involve, Inspire & Create - Croydon’s Cultural and Libraries Plans
LEAD OFFICER:	Shifa Mustafa. Executive Director Paula Murray & Kirsteen Roe, Director(s)
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Oliver Lewis – Culture, Leisure and Sport
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON: The Cultural Plan for Croydon 2019-2023 sets out the council’s priorities for cultural investment in the borough, working with local and national partners, delivering the ambition of culture on every doorstep. The Library Plan sets out an ambitious programme of work within the context of the cultural plan, to take place over the next 10 years, transforming Croydon’s library service whilst retaining thirteen libraries in the borough. These plans will together contribute to 5 out of 9 of Croydon’s outcomes in the 2018-2022 corporate plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People live long, healthy, happy and independent lives;• Our children and young people thrive and reach their full potential;• Everybody has the opportunity to work and build their career;• Business moves here and invests, our existing businesses grow; and• We value the arts, culture, sports and activities.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT: The Capital Programme approved at Council in March 2019 contains £5m of capital investment for Libraries over the period 2019/20 – 2021/22 The estimated costs of the projects are detailed in the finance section below.	
KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: 0719CAB This is a Key Decision as defined in the Council’s Constitution. The decision may be implemented from 1300 hours on the expiry of 5 working days after it is made, unless the decision is referred to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee by the requisite number of Councillors.	

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:

- a. Adopt the Cultural Plan for Croydon 2019-2023, Appendix 1 hereto.
- b. Recommend adoption of the Croydon Libraries Plan 2019-28, Appendix 2 hereto, to Full Council

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Cultural Plan for Croydon 2019-2023 (Croydon Creates), sets out the council's ambition of seeing culture on every doorstep; in every locality, in every community, and in every life, because we know that culture is key to connecting communities, and creating vibrancy and opportunities to thrive.
- 2.2 The Cultural Plan for Croydon 2019-2023 seeks to build on recent successes including significant and growing external investment in culture within the borough and has been informed through national best practice. It has been developed and shaped through a series of engagement events with local artists and creative organisations and ongoing dialogue with national bodies.
- 2.3 The plan sets out six cultural ambitions for Croydon – a place where culture is for everyone; a place where people come first; a place with a stunning, inspirational public realm; a place that is energising and dynamic; a place that celebrates its past, present and future; a place of cultural entrepreneurialism and creative business – and is integral to the council's wider ambitions such as regeneration and economic growth, localities working, outcomes for young people and improving health and wellbeing.
- 2.4 Within this wider cultural context, the Libraries Plan sets out an ambitious programme of work over the next 4-10 years that will transform Croydon's thirteen libraries and provide a modern library service that will contribute to the delivery of Croydon Council's Corporate Plan and Cultural Plan.
- 2.5 The plan has been informed by best practice in delivering modern and relevant library services as set out by the national Libraries Taskforce, by engagement with Croydon residents, community groups and staff and by an options appraisal delivered by Red Quadrant in 2018 (a summary is provided as a background paper with the full report available on request).
- 2.6 The Croydon Libraries Plan (Inform, Involve, Inspire) 2019-28 is structured in four sections which can be summarised as communities, places, culture and infrastructure. It aims to create vibrant and inspirational local community spaces which inform, involve and inspire; where everyone has the opportunity to access council services and information, learn, improve their employability, enjoy the arts and cultural events, volunteer and get involved in their local community.

2.7 The Cultural Plan has purposefully been developed as a five year plan, as this is an exciting and changing landscape and what exists today will have grown, expanded and evolved in this timeframe. The Libraries Plan sets the framework for the development of the service, including an ambitious asset management approach, and therefore this is a ten year plan, reflecting the Council's commitment, including the financial investment in library buildings, over a longer term period.

3. DETAIL

3.1 Background and context

- 3.1.1 As London's growth borough, culture is at the heart of everything that we do in Croydon. Our Corporate Plan 2018-2022 outlines our key priorities for the borough, which importantly include our approach to Croydon's cultural offer to enhance our town, and to create places where people want to live, work and visit.
- 3.1.2 Never has the timing been more appropriate to launch an ambitious cultural plan for the borough. With a newly refurbished Fairfield Halls due to open later this year, managed by BH Live and hosting exciting residencies such as Talawa, the UK's premier Black theatre company; recent funding announcements such as Croydon's selection as one of six new Creative Enterprise Zones for London and one of five national Arts Council England funded youth performance partnerships; a burgeoning music scene building on Croydon's historical success in this sphere; the council's cultural partnership fund attracting over £3 into Croydon for every £1 of council investment; and an annual calendar of flagship events in Croydon such as Croydon Pride, the Mela, our street arts festival and a return visit from Dance Umbrella, Croydon's cultural scene is growing fast.
- 3.1.3 An ambitious plan of this scale cannot be achieved by council alone, and Croydon's Cultural Network, our local schools and colleges, our Local Strategic Partnership; they are all key to the delivery of our Cultural Plan for Croydon and have been involved in developing this plan.
- 3.1.4 Within the wider context of Croydon's cultural growth and investment, our thirteen libraries are important community and cultural places, free for residents to access and attracting almost 2 million visits per year. Libraries are a statutory service and local authorities have a duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service.
- 3.1.5 Library usage nationally is constantly changing but the biggest changes have come over the last ten years. Borrowing of books is on a national decline since the age of the internet and increased online access to information and reading material. Local authorities that have managed to preserve the service and in some cases enhance it have adapted to the way libraries are being used by communities, providing innovative technology, more study space and meeting space, cafes and an increased programme of events to attract families and people of all ages and backgrounds.

- 3.1.6 Since taking the library service back in house in January 2018, the Council has focused on developing a comprehensive, integrated programme of library events and activities working with internal and external partners whilst also developing plans to improve the service and the buildings it operates from. The plan presented is the culmination of that work, setting out an ambitious future for Croydon's libraries, which transforms the service whilst retaining 13 libraries.
- 3.1.7 Launching both a cultural and a libraries plan at this point in time, builds on the successes achieved over the last two years and signals the council's ongoing commitment to investing in cultural activity and infrastructure and achieving the wider benefits for Croydon residents that this can enable; connected and cohesive communities; employment and economic growth; physical regeneration of our high streets; positive outcomes for young people; and improving health and wellbeing for all residents.

3.2 Key highlights of the documents

- 3.2.1 Throughout the two plans, there are a number of key themes:

Inclusion and diversity

- 3.2.2 In Croydon we are proud of our diversity and that translates into a very wide spectrum of cultural output. Croydon's cultural offer must be for the whole borough both in terms of our residents and different communities and also geographically. One of the Scrutiny recommendations made in the February pre-scrutiny session on the plan relates to this theme in particular:

That actions in the Cultural Plan should cover the whole of the borough and be a reflection of the diverse population in Croydon

- 3.2.3 Likewise our libraries are located in different areas of the borough, serving different populations with different needs and a data, evidence and resident led approach will be taken to programming activities within libraries, whilst also delivering a core universal offer across the borough. Outreach activities will help to reach a wider audience with a particular focus on those sections of the community that are least likely to access their library.

Young people

- 3.2.4 We could not have a Cultural Plan for Croydon that did not highlight the needs of young people in the borough and the role that culture is able to play in their futures. As the borough with the highest population of under 25s in London, young people are a very significant part of our demographic and culture is one of the most powerful tools to engage with young people.
- 3.2.5 There are some particularly strong elements of delivery in the plan relating to opportunities for young people from the chance to perform on the Croydon stage at The Ends Festival to apprenticeships and engagement in the 3 year Youth Partnership Performance Programme that starts in September of this year.

3.2.6 The Library plan aims to modernise the service and create an innovative, inclusive, technology based service that will attract younger residents, who traditionally use libraries less. Through our libraries we will offer opportunities for young people ranging from homework clubs to study space, support with health and wellbeing, volunteering opportunities and the chance to engage with arts and performance that celebrates the written and spoken word in particular. For example, Well Versed Ink, recently spent two months in residence at Thornton Heath Library, culminating a youth performance.

Economy and investment

3.2.7 Culture plays a significant role in making a strong case for inward investment and in creating direct employment and secondary economic impacts and this is reflected in the Cultural Plan. The creative economy is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK, in the last five years. The digital and creative industries are highlighted by government as a priority for growth, and Croydon has, and will continue to contribute much to this agenda.

3.2.8 Libraries have an important role to play in supporting residents to access these and other work opportunities. Our libraries will provide valuable local volunteering opportunities through a comprehensive volunteer programme; free access to IT with improved wifi; job clubs; and will work closely with other services such as the Council's adult education offer or Croydon Works to ensure resident can easily access the right support for their situation. The libraries service will develop partnerships that support economic growth, such as Croydon's involvement in the British Libraries Start-ups in London Libraries (SiLL) project, funded by the GLA and ESIF funding.

Social outcomes

3.2.9 Creativity helps us to see the world differently and understand our place within it. A rich cultural heritage contributes to our sense of self and community, it affirms our identity and helps us to build resilience. In addition, we know that culture can reduce crime and disorder by providing purposeful activity and fostering a sense of emotional health and wellbeing. In addition, we know that street arts helps to reduce anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping, as we have seen through our work with several local communities who have used street art to prevent fly-tipping around shared bin sheds. The Cultural Plan seeks to build on the outcomes that can be achieved through a thriving cultural scene, in particular by aiming to understand and remove barriers to participation.

3.2.10 One of the scrutiny recommendations made in the February pre-scrutiny session on the plan was:

That the national outcomes for library usage should be used as a basis for the plan, with the service offered being evaluated against these outcomes.

3.2.11 The Libraries Plan is grounded in the work of the national Libraries Taskforce, which has identified seven key outcomes that libraries are well placed to deliver: cultural and creative enrichment; increased reading and literacy; improved digital access and literacy; achieving potential; greater prosperity; stronger more resilient communities; and healthier and happier lives. As well

as contributing to the emerging network of cultural venues in the borough, our libraries will also be recognised as community hubs, facilitating locality based working for Council staff and partners. By providing venues where residents can access the information and services that are most relevant to them, libraries will contribute to the council's prevention and early intervention work. They will also provide spaces where community groups can meet. An evaluation framework for the impact of our libraries will be developed based on the seven outcomes identified by the Libraries Taskforce.

Infrastructure

- 3.2.12 A key aim for the Council is to improve the quality and variety of venues available in Croydon and both plans are underpinned by an investment in infrastructure.
- 3.2.13 The Council has already committed to including the refurbishment of Fairfield Halls to create a world class venue in the heart of Croydon and the refurbishment of all thirteen libraries through a £5m capital allocation. We want to ensure that we have the right mix of establishments spread across the borough, offering a diverse range of performing and visual arts. The Council will continue to develop the Croydon Cultural Network; bring additional funds to the borough by leveraging the Council's cultural partnership fund; exploit the opportunities our public realm offers for high quality street art; develop the Croydon Music City programme; and refurbish the Clocktower space to increase awareness and usage of this significant cultural asset, with free and low cost activities where possible.
- 3.2.14 The Council has committed to open a new library in South Norwood in Spring 2020. £555k has been allocated within the council's capital programme for the development of a new library at South Norwood. This was approved by Full Council on 27 February 2018. In addition, this plan also sets out the ambition to develop a flagship library within a refurbished Clocktower improving awareness of and access to the building, and to refurbish the remaining 11 library buildings, focusing on providing modern, vibrant, inspirational spaces that meet the changing needs of our customers and have a consistent, but not identical, look and feel across the borough. £5m has been allocated within the council's capital programme for capital improvements to libraries. This was approved by Full Council on 4 March 2019. In 2019/20 the Council plans to refurbish Selsdon, Norbury and Thornton Heath libraries.
- 3.2.15 In some cases redevelopment may be a better and more cost effective option such as in the case of the new South Norwood library, and any such case would be assessed on the basis of a full options appraisal and business case which would incorporate the costs of the building as well as the impact for users of the building. Any redevelopment proposal would require a further decision to proceed.
- 3.2.16 Finally, all libraries will also receive a technology upgrade which will include new, modern hardware for staff and the public, a new Library Management System including a library app and an upgrade of self-service technology, allowing for future integration with the computer booking system and printing services. The Council will also pilot an innovative technology solution, Open +,

which is already used in around 20% of UK libraries, to enable library buildings to be open for longer hours, enabling customers and community groups more access to library services and spaces. This system works from the residents' library card and will be age restricted. Libraries are equipped with monitored CCTV.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 To inform the development of the Cultural Plan there were a series of workshops over a period of months with the Croydon Cultural Network, building initially on the planning work done for both Croydon's London Borough of Culture bid and the Creative Enterprise Zone bid. There was also a special consultation exercise with over 100 young people at Croydon College. Key findings are reflected in the final plan.

4.2 To inform the development of the Libraries Plan, the Council commissioned RedQuadrant's specialist library consultants to carry out:

- Initial engagement on the future of Croydon's library service with public, staff and stakeholders;
- An analysis of current performance and need;
- A review of assets;
- A best practise review; and deliver;
- An option appraisal for the future delivery of our libraries.

Key findings from the report and the public engagement are reflected in the final plan. A summary of the Red Quadrant report is provided as a background paper.

4.3 Both the Cultural Plan and the Libraries Plan also went to a pre-Scrutiny meeting on 11 February 2019 and recommendations provided by the Scrutiny and Overview Panel have been incorporated into both plans.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Council in March 2019 approved £5m capital investment spread over the period 2019/20 – 2021/22 as set out below for the libraries infrastructure and ICT Upgrades.

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Capital Budget approved				
Expenditure	2,000	2,000	1,000	

Effect of decision

Expenditure

Selsdon	327
Norbury	1,186
Thornton Heath	900
ICT	1,430

Ashburton		342	
Purley		384	
Shirley		167	
Bradmore Green		108	
Sanderstead		156	
Total spend	3,843	1,157	0

Remaining budget	0	0	0	
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- 5.2 The table above sets out the original budget profile, the revised budget profile and the anticipated project costs.

This figure includes contingencies and it's fully anticipated that the total cost will not exceed the £5m budget.

The slippage from 2018/19 has not been factored in, this will be reported in the July 2019 Budget Review Report to cabinet.

- 5.3 The capital expenditure needs to be re-profiled to generate value for money by coordinating the refurbishment of Norbury Library at the same time as major repairs to the roof. In addition, Thornton Heath has been brought forward in the programme. The approved capital budget in 2020/21 and 2021/22 will need to be brought forward to meet the re-profiled expenditure.

2 The effect of the decision

The overall estimated costs will be met from the approved budget available.

3 Risks

- 4 There is a risk that the planned works could exceed the available budget and careful budget management needs to be undertaken to ensure costs are managed and contained. If costs exceed budget then additional capital funding will be required, this will impact on the Council's future Capital Programme as there could be less funding for other capital projects in the future.

5 Options

The options considered are set out in section 12 below.

6 Future savings/efficiencies

There are no direct financial savings anticipated. However, it is expected that this investment will generate more efficient and effective libraries and enhance the use of these facilities in Croydon.

Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Director of Finance, Investment and Risk / S151 Officer

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (“The Act”) sets out the Council’s duties in relation to Libraries including in relation to the requirement in section 7 to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof. In fulfilling its duty under Section 7(1) , a library authority shall in particular have regard to the desirability—
- (a) of securing, by the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangements with other library authorities, and by any other appropriate means, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter, and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children; and
 - (b) of encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service, and of providing advice as to its use and of making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it; and
 - (c) of securing, in relation to any matter concerning the functions both of the library authority as such and any other authority whose functions are exercisable within the library area, that there is full co-operation between the persons engaged in carrying out those functions.
- 6.2 The approval of the library plan under the Public Libraries and Museums Act are Full Council functions.
- 6.3 Section 12 of the Act makes arrangements for the provision and maintenance of museums and galleries within the borough.
- 6.4 As part of the work undertaken for Libraries and in development of the cultural offer as part of the Libraries and Cultural plans respectively, the Council will need to continue to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation including in relation to the reference made in the Libraries Plan to changing the way library user data is captured, reported and used to enable services to be targeted more effectively to residents’ needs and interests. This will include ensuring that any relevant Privacy Notices are updated and Privacy Impact Assessments undertaken.

Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There is no human resources impact arising from this report.

Approved by: Jennifer Sankar on behalf of the Director of Human Resources

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 An Equality Analysis has been carried out for both plans and these can be found in the appendices
- 8.2 The equality analysis for libraries found that: “the proposed change is likely to help the Council in advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to any protected groups and those who do not.”
- 8.3 The analysis also states, “the proposed change relates to a service area where there are already local or national equality indicators. It will help the Council meet the equality objectives below;
- To increase the rate of employment for disabled people, young people, over 50s and lone parents who are furthest away from the job market
 - To reduce social isolation among disabled people and older people
 - To improve the proportion of people from different backgrounds who get on well together
 - To improve attainment levels for white working class and Black Caribbean heritages, those in receipt of Free School Meals and Looked After Children, particularly at Key Stage 2 including those living in six most deprived wards”
- 8.4 The Equalities Analysis for the Cultural Plan states: “cultural activity and programming can traditionally be seen as exclusive and exclusionary, with barriers to entry ranging from the cost of ticket prices to the lack of accessible venues. The new Culture Plan acknowledges this, and deliberately sets out clear objectives in relation to widening access to cultural activity, breaking down barriers and opening up opportunities for a broad range of groups who are traditionally under-represented in cultural activity and the creative industries.”
- 8.5 Neither analysis identified any disadvantages to any groups of stakeholders.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 Capital works to libraries will be undertaken in line with current environmental requirements and legislation.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 Providing modern spaces and activities which target young people, for example youth cafes within libraries, could reduce anti-social behavior in some areas.

10.2 A full risk assessment of pilots to use technology solutions to enable libraries to be accessed out of hours will be carried out involving lessons from libraries where this solution has already been installed elsewhere in the country and input from relevant services and partners, in order to fully consider any crime and disorder reduction impact.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

11.1 Adopting both plans sets a clear vision and direction for culture and libraries in the borough and how these will contribute to the council's priorities as set out in the corporate plan.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 Not to adopt a Libraries Plan.

12.2 Not to adopt a Cultural Plan

12.3 To adopt the Cultural plan but not the Libraries Plan

12.4 To adopt the Libraries Plan but not the Cultural Plan

12.5 Adopting both a cultural plan and a libraries plan enables us to articulate a clear vision for culture and libraries in the borough and how these contribute to corporate priorities as set out in the corporate plan. The two plans are complimentary, with libraries providing a cultural function across the borough as well as a wider council "front door." The cultural plan is the overarching framework within which libraries will develop their cultural offer. However the cultural plan is also a key component of the borough's approach to growth and regeneration.

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 – Croydon Cultural Plan 2019-2023
Appendix 2 – Croydon Library Plan 2019-2028
Appendix 3 – Equality Analysis – Cultural Plan
Appendix 4 – Equality Analysis – Library Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Executive summary of options appraisal for the future of the library service London Borough of Croydon – RedQuadrant