Recovery Board Minutes

26 June 2026, 14.00 – 15.30

Attendees: **Commissioners:** Ged Curran, Lead Commissioner (chair); **Members:** Mayor Jason Perry, Executive Mayor; Councillor Stuart King, Leader of the Opposition **Officers:** Elaine Jackson, Acting Chief Executive; Conrad Hall, Corporate Director, Resources (S151); Venetia Reid-Baptiste, Corporate Director, Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery (SCRER); Stuart Collins, Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education (DCS); Kevin Kewin, Local Government Association; Ella Hullett, Strategic Support Officer **Chief of Staff Team:** Lindsey Lewis, Chief of Staff to the Commissioners	
Apologies: Annette McPartland, Cllr Hale, Cllr Cummings, Debbie Warren, Jackie Belton	
1.	**Item 1. Minutes, actions and updates** Chair noted that Recovery Board would be moving to a Tuesday going forwards. Recognised meeting today would take a hybrid format due to number of apologies, as well as it being the first meeting for which the Council has been responsible for the planning of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate account of the **22 May 2026** meeting. No actions were noted from the previous meeting.
2.	**Item 2. Council Update** Mayor Perry Introduced • First Cabinet meeting has taken place since election and Council is back to business as usual. 100-day plan is in progress, activity for delivering manifesto underway. • Business plan has been agreed at Cabinet, to go to Full Council for adoption and will form corporate plan. • Attended Croydon Summit today – Secretary of State was in attendance. Positive meeting, focus was on partnership work the Council is doing with communities and voluntary sector organisation and how the Council is a leader in this work. Elaine Jackson • Circulated a document this morning, in light of conversation with Lead Commissioner regarding the desire to see 'a product' and in an attempt to narrow down what it is the Commissioners see as the Council needing to do. • Suggested Chief of Staff (MHCLG) and SSO (Council) to work together to finesse and narrow down 'a product' to agree what it is that the Council will report on going forwards. The current draft is focused on the Directions, as well as including points that have been raised by Commissioners, so that it is clear the Council is listening and taking action. • Updated on aspects of the document:

- The Council is producing a new financial strategy, as well as focusing on financial performance monitoring and working through policy decisions in star chambers with view to move towards a finance board to track the overall agreed savings. Board will allow Council to hold itself to account on delivery.
- Permanent recruitment is progressing, with the arrival of a new Assistant Chief Executive. The Council recognises it was unfortunate that Jenny Rowlands, who described Croydon as a once in lifetime opportunity, wasn't in post for longer which led to some stop-start. However, the Council has been able to appoint Stephen Gaskell from Southwark who has seen something in Croydon that excites him, has made parallels with where Southwark was 7 years ago.
- Corporate Director of Resources & S151 (Conrad Hall) is now permanent, Susmita Sen has employed senior capacity in housing with a proven track record. The Council is in the process of recruiting a Director of IT, noting that the Council sees drawing together of IT and Digital as part of a much more robust ways of monitoring and delivering.
- Council has set out timeline of travelling letter to Secretary of State with dates that the letter will be shared with Commissioners.

Susmita Sen

- Delighted to have recruited senior housing capacity to lead on the whole piece for housing – will be knitting together all projects around general fund, MTFS and landlord function in light of the inspection. Programme is ready but now finessing it with the key milestones.
- Housing Assurance Board has held 4 meetings to date – Council to discuss inspection preparation specifically there.
- Lots of discussion in star chamber around aspects already included in the Housing imrpvoement plan but need to talk through in more detail. Noted a meeting in with Debbie Warren and Jackie Belton next week. Hope to give confidence that Directorate will deliver those savings.
- Jackie Belton has asked for a separate session for sharing of more ideas and brainstorming any additionality to the plan.

Conrad Hall

- Updated on timings for financial strategy- due at 29th July Cabinet meeting. Broad outlines of strategy have been clear but need to get detail right hence series of star chamber meetings which are nearly completed.
- To summarise star chambers – a whole day session on Thursday of last week looked at underspends and growth built into the budget and building in some significant reductions that can be raised. Debbie Warren in attendance and hope Commissioners agree it was a useful and transparent session. As part of these sessions, the Council is also looking at policy options available, with a few more to go – yesterday was a joint session on all of the accommodation options and Jackie Belton was present at those meetings. Sessions have been helpful in drawing out key policy choices. Focusing on how to reduce demand for some of the core services that the Council faces and then how it can impact the price of those services and / or boost supply. Looked at the four big budget areas as well as looking at all of major policy choices as move towards finalising the budget. Been clear that the Council commits to publishing all of those choices including those which are included and not included in the final budget – intention is not to publish these in July report which will focus on overall strategy.
- Council will be publishing draft budget significantly earlier than last year which will be discussed with various groups, MHCLG and residents. This is being actively drafted

	at the moment. Commitment to very full transparency as most councils only publish what they have chosen to do. Discussion Ged Curran • Debbie Warren absolutely supports the views that have been shared – felt star chambers were thorough and rigorous with good engagement from Cllr Cummings asking the right challenging questions. • Timetable outlined fits what Commissioners expected. • Desire keep to September / October timeline for MTFS to ensure no slippage. • Jackie Belton was involved in appointment of ACE and has met with senior housing resource who she is supportive of. • One of anxieties Jackie Belton has around housing is the scale of changes needed and timescales and the danger of the Directorate getting overwhelmed and therefore not being able to prioritise. • Susmita Sen – Mindful of that, Directorate is looking at the big ticket items as part of the programme and interrogating that point. Looking at resource that is needed, clear that housing experience is needed. To give added confidence as to where we were 7 years ago and that we have already picked it up. • Programming of these meetings – offline conversation is way to go, recognise a lot of moving parts hence late report. Examples of moving parts being, rapid review, mayor's plan and therefore there is a lot to try and set out. Recognise there is a lot of work to get into a single place. Trying to get the function of these monthly meetings as almost a programme summary, showcasing where the Council is on track on what is needed to be done, where it is off track or where there are risks, as well as a summary of each of key streams of work. • Elaine Jackson – Noted that this reporting needs to be a shared view of what the Council needs to demonstrate and report upon. Recognise report that has been brought today is the bones of that. • Elaine Jackson – Have worked through rapid review with Jackie Belton, spent around 2 hours this week and the product of that will come forward shortly. • Recognise that this is an iterative approach. **ACTION: GC, LL and EH to meet to take forward reporting to board format.**
3.	**Item 3. Commissioner Update** Ged Curran • Commissioners have started to think about the letter to the Secretary of State and have sent out the areas they consider important and the areas where there are some concerns. Recognise that the Council has written back and the next stage will be to write the letter to be submitted at the end of July, with Commissioners to respond with their letter following. • Finances also in train as well as the aspects set out in the Rapid Review.
4.	**Item 4. Letter to SoS** Elaine Jackson

	• The Council have set out the timetable for their next letter to the Secretary of State, have first draft which it is working on and will share that once signed off in spirit of transparency. • Sought clarification it is just a letter which will comment on progress or not and not a report that is required. Ged Curran • Recognise in light of the current leadership changes, there could be change of personell at MHCLG. Doesn't alter submission dates but may impact how quickly the Council receives a response.
5.	**Item 5: AOB and Date of the next Board** Ged Curran • Noted that the financial strategy should be published ahead of next meeting, Council was in agreement with this. The date of the next board was noted as **21 July 2026**. Meeting End