

DETAILED NOTICE OF PROPOSALS

On Thursday 7th October 2021, Croydon voters are being asked to choose how they think the borough should be governed in future, following a decision made by Councillors at the Extraordinary Council meeting (ECM) on 8th February 2021.

The Council currently operates with an Executive Leader and Cabinet model of governance.

The ECM passed a resolution, in accordance with Section 9MA of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended), to hold a referendum asking voters in Croydon whether they wished to change the Council's governance arrangements. A report to that meeting can be found at

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/b8089/Extraordinary%20Council%20Meeting%20-%208%20February%202021%20-%20Supplemental%20Agenda%2008th-Feb-2021%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=9>

The law states that councils can only offer two options in the referendum (one of which must be the existing model). The alternative option will be the Mayor and Cabinet model (the 'Mayoral model').

Main features/ differences between the Leader/ Cabinet and Mayor/ Cabinet models:

Both models are set up in a similar way and are 'Executive' forms of governance.

This refers to the model of governance whereby meetings of the full Council agree the budget and council tax whilst an Executive has oversight of most day to day policy and decision making.

The Executive meet together as the 'Cabinet' but may also establish sub-committees on specific subjects or take decisions individually if such delegations have been established.

Council will then appoint Committees to be responsible for certain services including planning, licensing, scrutiny, audit and standards which, by law, cannot be the responsibility of the Executive.

The main difference between the two versions is that a Leader is selected from amongst the Councillors, whilst the Mayor is an additional elected representative, chosen directly by all electors.

This also means that a Mayor can normally only be replaced by local electors at the next local elections once every four years. A Leader could be replaced by a vote at Council should they no longer have the support of Councillors.

The other standard Executive arrangements would not change except that the Mayor replaced the Leader, such as:

1. The Mayor would select a Cabinet of between two and nine Members
2. The Mayor would present a budget to the Council
3. The Mayor and Cabinet would have oversight of the majority of the Council's day to day services

In both models the Council would appoint Committees to be responsible for certain services including planning, licensing, scrutiny, audit and ethics.

Further detailed decision-making arrangements can be set up under either model, such as having decision-making by individual Cabinet Members. There are no proposals to change other arrangements such as to introduce individual Cabinet Member decision-making but these could be amended at any time by an incoming administration.

What happens if a majority of voters agree to a change?

If a majority of voters agree to a change then the Council will continue to operate under the Leader/ Cabinet model until the local elections in May 2022, at which point the Council will move to the Mayor/ Cabinet model.

If a change is agreed by voters, the result of the referendum is binding. Any further change of this kind could only take place at least ten years after the date of the first referendum.

A report will be presented to the first Council meeting following the referendum setting out the proposed transition arrangements and seeking approval for the necessary changes required to the Council's constitutional arrangements.

What happens if a majority of voters do not agree to a change?

If a majority of voters do not agree to a change then the May 2022 local elections will be run on the current Leader and Cabinet model.

If a change is not agreed by voters, the result of the referendum is binding. Any further change of this kind could only take place at least ten years after the date of the first referendum.

The referendum details

The poll for the Referendum will be held on Thursday 7th October 2021 between the hours of 7am and 10pm.

Anyone eligible to vote in local elections will be entitled to vote in the referendum.

The question to be asked at the poll will be:

How would you like the London Borough of Croydon to be run?

By a leader who is an elected councillor chosen by a vote of the other elected councillors. This is how the council is run now.

Or

By a mayor who is elected by voters. This would be a change from how the council is run now.

The referendum will be conducted in accordance with the rules for local elections.

The referendum expenses limit for campaign organisers promoting a particular outcome is the aggregate of £2,362 plus the amount found by multiplying by 5.9 pence the number of entries in the Council's electoral register in effect on the day on which the Notice of Proposals is published (Thursday 15th July). There are 278,337 registered electors on the date of publication and therefore the expenses limit is **£18,783**.

Copies for Inspection

A copy of these proposals may be inspected by appointment at the Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon, CR9 1DE, during normal office working hours (9am to 5pm). Contact seth.alker@croydon.gov.uk (Tel 020 8604 7469) to make an appointment.

The proposals are also published on the Council's website at www.croydon.gov.uk/referendum.

Thursday 15 July 2021

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive and Counting Officer