

Council Assembly

Wednesday 6 April 2011
7.00 pm
Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

Tabled Items

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COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY)

WEDNESDAY 6 APRIL 2011

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

1. QUESTION FROM TONY OSBORNE TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Should all the contents of a stage 1 complaint letter when escalated to stage 2 be responded to by the stage 2 investigator in accordance with council procedures? If they are not and there is no supporting statement for the stage 1 responses is the investigation considered to be completed?

RESPONSE

When a stage 1 complaint is escalated to stage 2, it is allocated to a complaints investigator. They will look into the details of that particular case, including speaking to officers involved, reviewing the correspondence and speaking/corresponding with the complainant. They will then produce a stage 2 outcome which is sent to the complainant, indicating if the complaint is upheld/not upheld or partially upheld. The letter will also cover if compensation is payable and if further actions are required, for example repairs to be completed.

The stage 2 investigator will normally respond to the issues from the stage 1 complaint, plus any further issues that the customer raises when requesting a stage 2 complaint. However each complaint is different and it may be that the investigator does not cover all the issues from the stage 1 complaint because they have already been resolved, or the customer wishes the investigator to concentrate on a particular area.

If the complainant does not agree with the stage 2 outcome they can escalate to stage 3, and eventually to the Local Government Ombudsman who are independent of the council.

2. QUESTION FROM MICK BARNARD TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

If an offer of half the market rent for a monthly renewable lease was made on a commercial property, unoccupied for 2 years, with a view to full market rent lease within 18 months would Southwark Property be justified in refusing the offer given the requirements of "best consideration"?

RESPONSE

Any offer received for a council commercial property to let is based on the prospective tenant being willing and able to meet their obligations under a lease. In the hypothetical question posed we would look at the prospective tenant and their abilities to meet obligations elsewhere. Typically a bank reference and other landlords' reference would be helpful. Where this could not be satisfactorily demonstrated we would decline the offer.

3. QUESTION FROM COLIN HARTRIDGE-PRICE TO THE LEADER

There has been considerable opposition from local residents to a 9/11 memorial (its correct description) in the Potters Fields Park. How will you make sure the council does not ignore the views of local residents?

RESPONSE

The 9/11 London project proposed to install a work of public art on Potters Fields Park, to act as a focus for an educational programme to educate young people about the events of 9/11, not a memorial.

The council has facilitated a consultation on this proposal so that local residents have the opportunity to make their feelings and opinions clear. Following this consultation the 9/11 London project has agreed to hold further consultation.

4. QUESTION FROM BARRY MASON TO THE LEADER

The Southwark Connect 2 project to turn the disused railway bridge by South Bermondsey station into an east-west walking/cycling route that will help regenerate the area, is now formally "at risk". The £600,000 Big Lottery grant will be lost. What is the council doing to ensure this project proceeds?

RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING

The council is not responsible for this delay. The facts are that the land ownership is not with the council and negotiating with land owners for them to give up rights and allow people to pass over their land is a complex negotiation, especially when there is no possibility of purchasing that land. Our officers have sought to get resolution of the issues over access with Network Rail and the other private land owners. This land is either side of a redundant railway bridge over Rotherhithe New Road.

Officers and the Connect 2 Steering Group are working hard to deliver the Connect2 project. The key issues for resolution are negotiation over access to Network Rail and other private land either side of the redundant railway bridge over Rotherhithe New Road.

Officers continue to negotiate with Network Rail in conjunction with partners, Sustrans. We still await formal confirmation by Network Rail of their acceptance of our land take requirements, which will enable legal agreements to be signed. It is disappointing that this has taken so long and risks delaying the project.

We believe we are very close to signing an agreement if the partners in this agreement hold to their intentions; and we believe that they will.

Renewal, the development company responsible for the Millwall Football Ground area regeneration, are also keen on a possible extension of the scheme to include a South Bermondsey Station cycle link to Bolina Road. To explore more fully this exciting proposal, I am attending a meeting at the Sustrans office with representatives from Renewal on 14 April 2011.

Meanwhile Network Rail has approved access to their site to enable the preliminary works (land/ecological surveys and due-diligence investigation), which will inform the detail design. These works are due to be completed by Monday 11 April 2011.

On the western side of the bridge, the Directors of Gainsborough Court who own the land have agreed in principle to the project and associated proposals. In the meantime further negotiations are on hold pending formal confirmation from Network Rail that their part of the land will be released to the Council.

All other parts of the project are progressing according to the agreed project timetable.

Those who are coming forward to campaign with the council should also be encouraged to talk to their local MP about Network Rail's role.

5. QUESTION FROM PETER SALTER TO THE LEADER

The "Southwark Connect 2" project to bring a railway bridge into use as a walking and cycling route is "at risk". This project would provide valuable amenity. If the Big Lottery grant is lost, can Southwark Council ensure the project proceeds?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

6. QUESTION FROM JOHN FRANKS TO THE LEADER

Due to lack of progress of the Southwark Connect 2 scheme this has been identified as 'at risk' by Sustrans. This means that the £600,000 this Big Lottery grant could be lost. What is the council doing to ensure that the scheme goes ahead?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

7. QUESTION FROM STEPHEN HILL TO THE LEADER

The Southwark Connect 2 project to turn the disused railway bridge by South Bermondsey station into an east-west walking/cycling route that will help regenerate the area, is now formally "at risk". The £600,000 Big Lottery grant will be lost. What is the council doing to ensure this project proceeds?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

8. QUESTION FROM ANN WARREN TO THE LEADER

The very popular Southwark Connect 2 project to turn the disused railway bridge by South Bermondsey station into a walking and cycling route is now formally "at risk". The £600,000 Big Lottery grant will be lost. Will the council

ensure this project goes ahead?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

9. QUESTION FROM IAN MCPHERSON TO THE LEADER

The 'Connect 2' project converting a disused railway bridge at South Bermondsey into a walking and cycling route is now reportedly 'at risk'. How will the council ensure that this project goes ahead, as it would be a travesty if the £600,000 Big Lottery grant for this scheme was lost?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

10. QUESTION FROM SALLY EVA TO THE LEADER

There is £600,000 of Lottery funding to be spent on the Southwark Connect-2 project. This could soon be lost. What is being done to spend this urgently? The scheme is to turn the unused railway bridge by South Bermondsey Station into a walking and cycling route.

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 4 above.

11. QUESTION FROM JULIAN GRIFFITHS-SEARLE TO THE LEADER

By her direct interventions to assist the 9-11 London Project Team achieve their goal to install a memorial on Potters Field Park, did the Chief Executive of Southwark act in an appropriate way?

RESPONSE

Yes. The chief executive consulted with both Councillor Stanton when he was the leader and with me when I became leader. The 9/11 London project proposed to install a work of public art on Potters Fields Park, to act as a focus for an educational programme to educate young people about the events of 9/11, not a memorial. We facilitated a consultation on this proposal, following which the 9/11 London project has agreed to hold further consultation.

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY)

WEDNESDAY 6 APRIL 2011

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – THEMED QUESTIONS

1. QUESTION FROM JANE SALMON TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

How does the leader expect residents to ask genuine questions about his vision for the Future of Southwark when public questions have to be submitted before they have heard his presentation?

RESPONSE

Public questions are an opportunity for local residents to come and share ideas or ask whether we could do things differently. That is possible through individual's own experiences of the way the council works at the moment and through their reflection on how it might act differently.

2. QUESTION FROM MAUREEN BAKER TO THE LEADER

We in the Peckham community council area strongly believe in the advantages of 'learning from each other'. Therefore, what are the council doing to encourage all ethnic minority groups and the wider community to collaborate with each other and fully engage in community cohesion in the future?

RESPONSE

The community engagement work that the council does has been nationally recognised as best practice and we are committed to ensuring that this continues as a fundamental part of our vision for Southwark. The council's role in building cohesive communities cuts right across everything we do and every service we deliver. Our vision for Southwark recognises that Southwark's strength is its people. The huge diversity of the borough is a great strength and brings with it an array of amazing talents. We recognise that the starting point for cohesive communities is unlocking people's talents. Too many of our people have not been able to access the employment and social opportunities that living in the heart of London should offer. This is unfair. Realising that potential, with nobody left behind, is what we are about as a council.

This is underpinned by empathy, openness and trust. This has not been a borough where cultures have clashed, and we want to see it continue to be a place where by coming together Southwark residents create a unique sense of community. Part of this means the council and everyone who works in it showing residents' true compassion and the same care and consideration that we show members of our own families. We work with a huge range of partners and in a wide range of ways to make sure that people trust one another and trust us to act fairly.

The community councils and other forums that the council works with have a role to play in this as places where local people come together to discuss local issues, share common concerns and arrive at solutions together. We all

recognise that it is best practice to broaden the base and attendance of all our meetings. We have been exchanging ideas from all community councils on how to do this and I hope that the second phase of the democracy commission will be able to point to ways of broadening and engaging as many people from our communities as possible.

The range of partners we work with is extensive, local residents, the police, schools, faith groups, local businesses and of course the voluntary and community sector have a key role.

Community events and activities such as Koruso the community choir, the recent very successful launch of the LGBT History Month at Tooley Street, as well as a range of other community events provide the opportunity for residents and communities to share and learn from each other.

We are also encouraging communities to submit applications for street parties, including The Big Lunch on Sunday 5 June 2011, which is another opportunity for communities to collaborate and encourage cohesion.

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY)

WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL 2011

MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME – THEMED

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

Does the leader agree that climate change is the biggest threat to the future of Southwark? What is he doing about it?

RESPONSE

Climate change remains a significant threat to the world and to Southwark, particularly given its proximity to the Thames. As an administration we have taken steps to reduce the amount of green houses gases that are emitted from Southwark by:

- Introducing a trial of food waste recycling so less of our waste goes to landfill where it releases methane or for incineration which has carbon dioxide as a bi-product
- Hoping to introduce increased parking charges for second and third vehicles and emissions-based charging
- Reducing the total emissions of the council estate by a combination of behavioural change, accommodation rationalisation and energy efficiency measures that pay for themselves within five years by virtue of reduced energy bills.
- Remaining committed to a net zero carbon development at the Elephant
- Exploring the viability of piping currently wasted heat from the SELCHP incinerator to heat homes on five estates in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe.

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN

Does the leader agree that the future of children in Newington ward is enriched by the Brandon Library? Will he commit to keeping this library open?

RESPONSE

The library review will be completed later this year and will include consultation sessions at libraries and community councils. My colleague Councillor Ward would welcome any proposals any member has for bringing down the cost of library provision that helps to protect the service.

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY

Does the leader agree a brand new shopping centre should be the future of Elephant and Castle? Does he wish this had been included in the regeneration agreement which he signed?

RESPONSE

The regeneration of the Elephant and Castle is vital to the future of Southwark as a whole, and the urban regeneration of our borough, not just in Elephant but across Southwark, and is a key part of how we can meet the challenge of rising unemployment and falling public sector spending.

With regeneration comes jobs, not just short-term construction jobs, but new medium-term jobs down the supply chain and long-term opportunities as part of a revitalised local economy.

With regeneration also comes planning gain for improvements to local infrastructure, meaning that while other parts of the country will see their opportunity to invest in capital reduced or curtailed in future years, Southwark has the opportunity to harness Section 106.

It is more important now than it has been for a generation or more that we harness the opportunity that Southwark has as a central London borough and make it work for local communities. That's why I'm proud of the progress that we've already made on the regeneration at Elephant and elsewhere and why I am always excited to hear about how we can further harness regeneration opportunities to work for local people.

We must face facts: competition for private sector investment will be fierce over the next few years, but we have a unique opportunity to attract investment to Southwark and we can't afford to pass it up.

On the specific of the shopping centre, provision was included in the Lend Lease agreement in the event that progress on collaborative working was not possible. I am delighted at the progress that has actually been made in this regard and I look forward to having that progress reported to Cabinet shortly.

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK

Does the leader agree that sports facilities are vital to the future of young people on the Tabard Estate? Will he ensure that local residents have first preference use of the Tabard Astro Turf during school holidays?

RESPONSE

Opportunities to take part in sport and outdoor activities are vital for young people across the borough, to help ensure that they live healthy and active lifestyles. There are opportunities for the council in community activism in maintaining outdoor space, as evidenced by the interest in and success of guerrilla gardening and I would be interested in any ideas that any member might have in how the council can facilitate this.

My understanding is that the existing allocation regime for the Tabard Astro Turf was set up under the previous administration. I also understand that there are a number of priority places for local residents of the Tabard Estate, and that the demands of people who live in the immediate area must be weighed against the needs of people from across the borough.

The astro turf at Tabard Gardens is reserved solely for use of residents at weekends.

Recently we have introduced a new system for booking at Tabard Gardens which only allow teams to block book a quarter in advance. Letters are sent to the teams on a quarterly basis. This allows us to ensure that there is suitable provision for resident use, and that certain teams are not monopolising the courts.

We do not have a specific school holiday policy, however during the summer months the bookings decline so there is increased access for local people.

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

Does the leader agree that the future of Cathedrals ward will be enhanced by better enforcement of the licensing saturation policy? What will he do about this?

RESPONSE

There will be a growing challenge in future years to make sure that all aspects of community safety are enforced, as the council and police face much tighter times financially. We must look at how the council can work more closely with businesses and local people to change the way we approach localised problems and it is all of our responsibility to subject our intellect and imagination to how we can go about this change.

This position applies to concerns around the current level of alcohol related crime and disorder that are reported within Cathedrals ward. The challenges provided by the increasing prominence of the area and additional footfall, particularly within the late night economy, are recognised and will be a matter for consideration by the council and its partners. As an example of this I am pleased to confirm that a multi-agency Night-Time Economy Team will commence operation in and around the area this month. Southwark is one of a handful of councils to offer this unique way of working.

On the specific issues around the local saturation policy, it should be recognised that the special policy is only one tool available to the council to try and control the cumulative impacts of late night licensed premises in the area. It is not a vehicle by which the council may retrospectively take decisions on licensed premises nor refuse to consider applications for new or varied licences. The policy provides a subtle change within the legal basis for considering applications, which helps ensure that new businesses understand local concerns around crime and disorder and nuisance and give these full and proper consideration within their business proposals. Members will be aware, that this authority currently has three special policy areas, centred around identified current 'hotspot' activity and these all contribute toward our efforts to ensure our late night town centres provide a safe and enjoyable leisure environment. Members will note that a proposal to extend the current Borough and Bankside saturation policy area is contained elsewhere on today's agenda.

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THORNTON

Does the leader agree that squash courts should be part of the future of the Elephant and Castle?

RESPONSE

High quality leisure facilities are absolutely vital for local communities to stay fit and healthy. Whilst I'm pleased with the progress that we've made towards delivering a leisure centre for the Elephant we are currently faced by a significant challenge, particularly in terms of the capital that we have to invest in improving facilities such as Seven Islands. There is a genuine opportunity for us to be innovative about looking for new investment in these facilities and I hope that members will come forward with ideas on this as part of the debate.

It may not be possible to provide a squash court at the Elephant and Castle, but we continue to look for ways that this may be possible.

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR NICK STANTON

Does the leader believe that increasing affordable housing is important for the future in Riverside ward?

RESPONSE

Over 14,000 people are currently on the housing waiting list and thousands of tenants live in homes that aren't warm, dry or safe, so investment in new and existing affordable housing

across the borough is vitally important. One innovative approach that we have been pursuing to see more funds for us to invest in housing locally is commuted sums, which would unlock large amounts of finance and give us the flexibility to invest it where it will deliver the highest return. I would welcome any ideas that any other member would have for finding additional funding for this in their ward or elsewhere in the borough.

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

Does the leader believe that Southwark residents should have a genuine say about the future of their borough? How will he achieve this outside of allowing them to ask a few questions at this meeting?

RESPONSE

I do. That's why we are looking to change the way we conduct consultation as a council so that we are genuinely finding answers with local people. Residents have already had the opportunity to take part in the most open budget setting process ever, and I hope that over the next few months the debate about how we change our relationship with local people will also be taken out to the community.

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL

Does the leader believe that devolving more budget decisions to community councils would improve the future of Southwark?

RESPONSE

I look forward to the recommendations of the next stage of the democracy commission on the future of community councils.

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA

How does the leader expect residents to genuinely question him about the future of Southwark when their questions have to be submitted before they have heard him speak?

RESPONSE

Public questions are an opportunity for local residents to come and share ideas or ask whether we could do things differently. That is possible through individual's own experiences of the way the council works at the moment and through their reflection on how it might act differently.

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

Does the leader finally accept that a new school is needed for the future of the young people in the north of the borough? Does he regret his scrutiny interview answer when he refused to look again at the figures?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 15 on the main members' questions paper.

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET

Will the leader put party politics aside to work with the Liberal Democrats in securing a new school in SE16 for the future of our young people?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 15 on the main members' questions paper.

13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

What is the leader doing to prevent EDF ruining the future of Southwark Park?

RESPONSE

The work in Southwark Park is essential to prevent power cuts in London. It will mean that EDF use a small part of the park for two years at most. We will be working with EDF to make sure that local residents are disrupted by the work as little as possible.

On the contrary to ruining the future of the park there is the potential for new funding to secure an improved future for the park if we cooperate with EDF.

14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK

Does the leader believe that the old Scott Lidget school site is a good suggestion for the future of a new school in SE16?

RESPONSE

Please see the answer to question 15 on the main members' questions paper.

15. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

Does the leader maintain that putting money into the council's contingency funds is better for the future of Southwark than supporting the Pumphouse Museum and Surrey Docks Farm?

RESPONSE

The budget has already been set and this debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

The council received a two year settlement. It would have been irresponsible to set a budget which ignored the fact that we expect to be hit by considerable cuts again in two years' time. That is why we set a budget which put money aside for those future expected government cuts.

16. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU

Does the leader maintain that putting money into the council's contingency funds is better for the future of Southwark than supporting the Ellen Brown Children's Centre?

RESPONSE

The budget has already been set and this debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

The council received a two year settlement. It would have been irresponsible to set a budget which ignored the fact that we expect to be hit by considerable cuts again in two years' time.

That is why we set a budget which put money aside for those future expected government cuts.

17. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK

Does the leader maintain that putting money into the council's contingency funds is better for the future of Southwark than supporting the Holmhurst Centre?

RESPONSE

The budget has already been set and this debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

The council received a two year settlement. It would have been irresponsible to set a budget which ignored the fact that we expect to be hit by considerable cuts again in two years' time. That is why we set a budget which put money aside for those future expected government cuts.

18. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO

Does the leader maintain that spending money on an Olympic quango is better for the future of Southwark's children than supporting the much loved community games?

RESPONSE

Southwark Council does not make financial contributions to the only Olympic quango, the Olympics Delivery Authority.

The council's delivery board and legacy group are delivered within existing budgets.

19. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER

Lewisham and Greenwich successfully made the case for the extension of the Docklands Light Railway to Woolwich Arsenal. Will the leader enhance the future of Camberwell and sustainable transport by doing the same for the Bakerloo Line?

RESPONSE

I would welcome any decision to finish the 1947 extension of the Bakerloo Line to Camberwell.

20. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

Does the leader believe that continuing the services of a local one stop shop is important for the future of Bermondsey?

RESPONSE

One stop shops provide a useful face-to-face opportunity for people to come and speak to the council.

There are important questions to be asked about how the council interacts with local people in the future. Moves towards online interaction provide excellent opportunities for a more efficient service and reducing costs, but there is also the danger of excluding the poorest in our community. While a more diverse range of options for contacting the council means that

people have a wider range of choice and are more able to interact with us as their preference dictates there are potentially heavy costs of retaining means of contact that only a few people use. My personal opinion is that face-to-face contact will always remain important, but I welcome other members' thoughts on this question.

On the specifics of the Bermondsey One Stop Shop, the previous administration took the decision to sell off the land it is currently situated on.

21. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

Does the leader maintain that putting money into the council's contingency funds is better for the future of Southwark than keeping our streets clean?

RESPONSE

The budget has already been set and this debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

The council received a two year settlement. It would have been irresponsible to set a budget which ignored the fact that we expect to be hit by considerable cuts again in two years' time. That is why we set a budget which put money aside for those future expected government cuts.

22. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL

How much has the leader managed to save by cutting consultants and communications? Has this been enough to fund the future of universal free school meals as he promised?

RESPONSE

This question is about a decision taken in the budget, which has already been set. This debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

Covering the cost of free, healthy school meals entirely by cutting consultants and communications was not one of the administration's commitments.

Spending on consultants in 2010/11 was £6,361,591 compared to £10,124,161 in 2009/10.

23. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GETTLESON

Does the leader have any evidence that universal free school meals have any direct impact on childhood obesity (and therefore the future of their health)? Please can he quote exact sources of research?

RESPONSE

"School meals can also contribute towards helping to reduce obesity in children, teaching them about making good food choices as part of their education."

Sarah Teather MP, Minister of State for Children and Families, Winter 2011 issue of *School Caterer*.

24. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

Does the leader accept that day centres were treated appallingly and will he commit to their survival as part of the future of Southwark?

RESPONSE

This question is about a decision taken in the budget, which has already been set. This debate should be about looking forward to consider how we can work with the community to provide services that we can no longer afford to deliver directly.

There is an ongoing consultation with daycare centres and while we know that we cannot afford to continue to give the same level of funding to the centres. We have provided the cushion fund to help give these centres the breathing space to find alternative funding streams.

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY)

WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL 2011

MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

Does the leader believe that the voluntary sector in Southwark has been treated in an open, transparent and fair way since he became leader of the council?

RESPONSE

Yes. Since May last year we have started to build a new relationship with the voluntary sector, as we have with our residents and businesses. We know that working more closely with voluntary sector organisations will be absolutely essential if we are going to keep on delivering for our residents.

This new relationship is fundamentally based on trust, openness and taking decisions together. That's why this year we held the most open budget setting ever, which included extensive consultation with voluntary groups and a number of opportunities for all local organisations and individuals to make formal representations to the administration. However, the budget consultation is not all that we will do to rebuild our relationship with residents, businesses and the voluntary sector, so that it is truly cooperative. Over the coming months and years we will continue our new approach, so that the future we are working towards is not just fairer but also built in partnership.

It is deeply unfortunate that the scale and speed of the government cuts have meant that we have been forced to withdraw a larger amount of funding to the voluntary sector than we otherwise would have, faster than we otherwise would have. But we have taken steps to help voluntary sector organisations meet their own funding challenges. First, we made the decision – so far as I am aware, uniquely in London – to provide a substantial transition fund so that those groups which can find other sources of funding given time are able to. This was rightly bolstered with an extra cushion for day centres and lunch clubs as agreed in the amendment to the budget decision.

We have been working very closely with Community Action Southwark, supporting their vision for a new approach to the voluntary sector in the borough based around community hubs and pooled back office support. Through these steps we are helping secure the voluntary sector for the long term.

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS

Could the leader please detail the total cost of the Belair community hub / Belair youth facility and provide details of the funding source(s)?

RESPONSE

£540,000	Youth Capital Investment Programme (£240,000 allocated in December 2007 plus £300,000 allocated in May 2008)
£190,000	Youth Capital Investment Programme – Outdoor Education Development
£400,000	Environment & Housing – Allocated in Council Executive report February 2005
£1,130,000	Total/Funding sources

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO

Please can the leader outline what the council has planned for the Olympics?

RESPONSE

The council has strengthened its commitment to London 2012 over the past 10 months in several ways. An Olympic delivery board has been created that includes the cabinet member, senior management and executives from external organisations including Tate Modern, Community Action Southwark, Volunteer Centre Southwark, London Southbank University and Southwark Arts Forum. The board is overseeing and scrutinising the Southwark's Olympic action plan. The action plan is made up of seven work streams each led by both either a senior officer or a partner organisation. The work streams are:

- Engaging young people – led by Pat Shelley, LBS Head of Youth
- Southwark experience – led by Donald Hylsop, Director of Communities and Regeneration at Tate Modern
- Volunteering and employment – led by Clive Pankhurst, Chief Executive of Volunteer Centre Southwark
- Public service operations – led by Jonathan Toy, LBS Head of Community Safety and Enforcement
- Communications and marketing – led by Robin Campbell, LBS Head of Communications
- Health challenge – led by Cllr Dora Dixon-Fyle, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social care
- Capital legacy fund – led by Cllr Peter John, Leader of Southwark Council

A revised Olympics Vision was adopted at Cabinet on 22 March 2011.

Each work stream has a series of objectives and outcomes that are linked directly to the newly adopted Olympic and Paralympic vision. A selection of plans include:

- Commission capital projects that deliver Southwark's Olympic legacy promise via the £2 million capital legacy fund.
- Sign up to the London 2012 host borough brand.
- Ensuring the volunteering legacy by creating a volunteering strategy for the borough which reflects the London 2012 theme of a legacy games and ensure that the games have a lasting and positive influence on volunteering in Southwark.
- To promote all cultural activity and events taking place in Southwark for the Olympic and Para Olympic games period.
- Increased number of outdoor events and street parties over Games times within available resources.
- Secure 'Your '2012' funding for a range of street dressing adornments for over Games time.
- Review existing public realm and regeneration programmes that could enhance the 'Southwark Experience' and identify possible programmes that improve for example:
 - Way finding and signage
 - Accessibility
 - Visitor experience
- A draft strategic and operational plan and structure for the games period and establish an integrated intelligence unit.
- Advise staff and management of temporary policy for annual leave during the games period ahead of Olympic ticket sales beginning on 15 March 2011.
- Launch the Health factor Challenge in which twelve Southwark residents are mentored in small steps to improving fitness and well-being.

- Southwark schools develop volunteering and leadership skills in young people with opportunities for accreditation.
- Develop a borough wide 'Road show' offer to deliver presentations, distribute promotional materials, answer questions and recruit young people, including those classified 'hard to reach'.
- Deliver a sports programmes over each of the school holidays based on specific Olympic/Paralympic sports (e.g. netball, kayaking, swimming) in the lead up to July 2012.
- Develop a young peoples training/volunteering programme, in collaboration with the School Sports Partnership that includes: Young Ambassadors Programme; Southwark Workforce Development group; 2011 Leadership Academy.

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

Can the leader confirm what Southwark Council will do with its allocation of 100 tickets for the 2012 Olympic Games?

RESPONSE

We do not yet have 100 tickets, but have been offered the opportunity to purchase 100 tickets. We will not spend council resources on these tickets. One of the strands we are working very hard on is to ensure schools enrol so that our young people benefit from the free tickets that will be made available through the schools network.

We will be working with our sponsor, Berkley Homes over the next year to agree how they are to be funded and allocated, remembering that they are allocated by strict rules. We have given absolute assurance that these tickets will not fall into the hands of touts.

Our priority will be young people in the borough, to reward our winners of our Health Challenge, to recognise the young people who are contributing to our borough and to help raise funds for the Mayor's Charity.

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY

Has the leader introduced voluntary redundancies yet? If not, when is he planning to do so?

RESPONSE

The term voluntary redundancy is a misnomer, in law redundancy is a factual situation arising from a defined set of circumstances. To define staff leaving in such a way can have implications for their rights to benefits or affect any insurance they may have. Public statements to that effect may therefore have deleterious consequences for staff who have lost their jobs. It is therefore important that these implications are not taken lightly.

The council's approach to workforce reduction as part of the 2011/12 budget cuts has been clear. In all cases volunteers will be sought in areas where staff are under threat and people have been encouraged to come forward; we have specifically retained entitlement to enhanced severance pay as an incentive for those indicating they wish to leave. Volunteering is the preferred solution, after agency and vacancies are removed. Thereafter we will actively look for redeployment opportunities and have identified and held a number of vacancies across the council for this purpose (for example up to 50 vacancies are available in the new revenue and benefits service). Currently it is too early in the process to measure success in each of these stages, implementation schedules run up until September, but we remain optimistic that there will be few forced redundancies.

There is not a blanket offer for staff across the council for voluntary severance at the present time. It is likely that future years workforce reductions will become tougher not least because vacancy and agency levels will be minimal. This option will be seriously considered afresh. We will also

watch closely other local authority experiences where this approach has been adopted; first reports are not wholly positive - numbers have been low without significant financial inducement and with some negative side effects where essential staff have been refused. These issues will need to be weighed up carefully. There may also be an impact from proposed changes to the pension scheme and how it may affect staff's aspirations. The risk remains that you release staff who are good and employable elsewhere to the detriment of the council.

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR NICK DOLEZAL

Does the leader agree with the Liberal Democrats' spring conference motion that the government's Health Bill will make the NHS less democratically accountable, introduce competition based on price and make the NHS less responsive to patients' needs? Does he believe the government's reforms will improve patient care in Southwark?

RESPONSE

It seems remarkable, at a time of spending cuts across the rest of the public sector and when the economy is on the brink of dipping back into recession, that the government would choose to spend £1.7 billion on a top-down restructure of the NHS for which they have no mandate, which medical professionals oppose and which is even opposed by large sections of the coalition parties. It also seems remarkable when all of this is set against the backdrop of record high satisfaction rates in the service that the NHS delivers.

No one, not even the Secretary of State for Health, knows what the impact of these changes will be. They are untried and untested and I believe that there they are posing a considerable risk to health services in Southwark. As an administration we are trying to cooperate with the department of health as much as possible so that the risk that the changes pose to our population is diminished, but this in no way lessens our deep concern.

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL

As the leader will be providing free school meals for 1040 primary school children who live in Lewisham, will he be providing any assistance for the parents of Southwark children who go to schools in Labour run Lewisham who have suffered from a 20p a day price hike in school meals?

RESPONSE

The figure for Lewisham children attending Southwark schools in the 2010 census is 974 children from reception through to year 6, who would be entitled to a meal. This excludes nursery children who are not entitled.

The authority is committed to supporting families resident in the borough, and does so through an extensive range of provision including through children's centres, youth services, and schools and other settings.

Many families want their child to attend a school that is near to their home, others may prefer a school that is further away but fits in with their family arrangements. It is each family's preference that will determine which schools are applied to.

If a family chooses to send their child to a school outside the borough, responsibility for the child's education sits with that local authority. The family would still have access to the wide range of provision on offer in Southwark, and to consider choosing a Southwark school in future.

One of the benefits of choosing a Southwark primary school includes our commitment to provide a free healthy school meal to every child attending a Southwark primary school. On the whole, parents of children in our maintained primary schools are not well off and this is a

real concern for many families in that position. This issue is if anything more pressing for families in Southwark now, at a time when the government is cutting financial assistance to children and parents.

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR SUNIL CHOPRA

Does he believe that it is right for the council to keep its promise to deliver free healthy school meals for every child in the borough?

RESPONSE

Yes. The policy is a central plank of our drive to build a fairer future for all Southwark, and a commitment we made in our manifesto. The policy supports families living in increasingly pressuring financial times, given the impact that central government funding cuts will have.

This Free Healthy School Meals policy is needed because:

- Southwark has among the highest levels of childhood obesity in the country (2009/10 academic year, obesity prevalence among Southwark year 6 pupils is 26%)
- Southwark has high levels of deprivation – it is the ninth most-deprived borough in London
- ‘Cliff edge’ issue for parents earning just above the eligibility threshold; on the whole, parents of children in our maintained primary schools are not well off; this is if anything more pressing for our families now, given the impact that funding cuts will have on them
- According to the Child Poverty Action Group, one in five children nationally who is entitled to a free school meal does not claim it, in part because of stigma
- It is widely acknowledged that the quality of children’s nutrition during the day impacts on their attention, behaviour and academic performance.

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GETTLESON

At the meeting on 31 January 2011, the leader said action would be taken within weeks for proposals on how Southwark Council could appropriately pay tribute to armed forces who are killed in action and make their final journeys from Southwark. What progress has there been?

RESPONSE

Officers are currently speaking directly with members of the deputation on the most fitting tribute. We are exploring arrangements for how a scroll could be given by the council to each of the families of servicemen and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We are also considering the most appropriate form of fixed tribute to those servicemen and women for the borough.

The deputy leader has tasked officers with drawing up a range of options for improving our housing allocations so that former services personnel are given appropriate priority and a proposal will be going out to consultation with tenants and residents. At the time of writing he had also met a major from the ministry of defence to discuss housing for forces personnel and is soon to meet with representatives of Homes for Heroes.

On a supplementary note, I hope to meet shortly with colleagues from across the chamber as well as representatives of the armed forces to discuss how the council can mark this year’s armed forces day.

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU

Does the leader believe that his decision to march against cuts to public services which go too far and too fast reflects concerns of most Southwark residents?

RESPONSE

I think that there is a growing concern about both the scale and speed of the government's cuts and recent national polling suggests that at least a plurality of people believe that the cuts are going too far and too fast. Everyone accepts that the deficit needs to be cut; the question is simply over whether we believe that the best way to do that is to encourage growth or whether it is to take a hatchet to public sector spending. As the most cut borough in London in cash terms Southwark residents are feeling and will feel the impact of these cuts more than many and I think that campaigning with them and for them against the cuts is the right thing to do.

The march for the alternative on 26 March, was striking both for its size and the peaceful way in which it was conducted and I am proud that the cabinet and I were a part of it. In contrast, I was disappointed to note this week that Simon Hughes MP did not send even one formal letter of representation to the Department for Communities and Local Government to ask for a better deal for Southwark.

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL

What is the leader doing with the 100 tickets provided by the London Organisation Committee for the Olympic and Para-Olympic Games (LOCOG)? Will he ensure that council tax payer's money will not be used to fund them?

RESPONSE

Please see the response to question 4

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL COYLE

How does the leader see the Elephant & Castle and other regeneration plans as pulling the centre of London southwards and facilitating development across Southwark?

RESPONSE

The remark that the Elephant has huge reserves of untapped potential due to its transport links and proximity to the City is not mere platitude, it's a fact. The regeneration of the Elephant & Castle and investment in other parts of our borough is about more than just sprucing up neighbourhoods; it's about unlocking that potential. I am confident that it will mark a fundamental shift in what is seen as the centre of London, pulling it south.

To me, that's about two things. It is, on the one hand, about Southwark residents increasingly being able to take advantage of the significant opportunities, whether educational, vocational, entrepreneurial or cultural, that living in London offers, wherever those opportunities arise. Living in Southwark will give our residents the edge. On the other hand, it also means that individuals, organisations and businesses from outside Southwark see our borough as the place to invest, bringing opportunities into our borough as well.

The successful regeneration of Elephant & Castle should not be seen as the end or sum total of our ambitions, but as a major catalyst for further growth throughout the borough. We will not simply wait for neighbouring communities to see the benefits of this, however, and that is why we are also – in parallel with the work that continues at the Elephant – looking at regeneration opportunities across Southwark.

13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

Please will the leader provide how much is paid annually by the corporate complaints department in compensation payments? Please will he provide a figure of how much is specifically paid for delays in processing complaints and please provide what mechanisms he will use to reduce this total?

RESPONSE

Compensation is recorded as a total figure for the council. The corporate complaint unit will recommend payment of compensation in cases where the investigation has identified maladministration (a mistake or a delay) and there is evidence that this has resulted in an injustice to the customer.

In the majority of circumstances the compensation award would be paid by the service, or if appropriate the contractor, rather than the corporate complaint unit.

The total compensation awarded across all council services between January – December 2010 was:

Stage one	£69,415
Stage two	£74,912
Stage three	£13,480

Compensation awarded for a delay in general service provision between January – December 2010 was:

Stage one	£25,349
Stage two	£35,550
Stage three	£4,895

It is not possible to analyse the delay in general service provision to show the amount awarded specifically for a delay in the investigation of a complaint. However, it is often the case that larger individual awards would be made at the latter stages of the complaint process as this generally means that the customer has had to go to significant lengths to get their problem resolved. The above figures supports the view that resolving the complaint early and awarding compensation quickly where appropriate would reduce the overall cost to the council.

The total amount paid by each service is shown in the table below.

Complaints Amount Paid by Service	Jan – Dec 2010
Service	Total
Repairs	£102,394
Engineering Services	£27,551
Freedom Passes	£3,679
Housing Options	£3,667
Complex Repairs Teams	£2,755
Voids	£2,566
Road networking and parking services	£2,221
Revenues	£1,925
Benefits	£1,116
Nunhead and Peckham Rye Area Office	£1,075
Walworth Area Office	£930
Dulwich Area Office	£905
Rotherhithe Area Office	£755
Blue Badges	£706
Borough and Bankside Area Office	£670
Enforcement Team	£575
Peckham Area Office	£500
Vangent Complaints Team	£490
Investment and Asset Management	£480
Bermondsey Area Office	£410

Complaints Amount Paid by Service	Jan – Dec 2010
Service	Total
No information given	£400
Home Ownership and TMO Team	£370
Southwark Hygiene Services	£366
Housing Renewal	£300
Development Management	£250
Corporate Complaints	£200
Debt Recovery	£150
Parks and open spaces	£100
Enforcement and creative design	£100
Waste and Recycling	£50
Development Control	£50
Council Tax	£50
Resident Involvement Team	£50
Grand Total	£157,807

85.7% of all compensation was awarded on complaints relating to Repairs and Engineering.

A significant amount of work is underway to ensure that the council provides services right first time to its customers and reduces the numbers of complaints received.

The New Housing Department has already recognised the importance of delivering services right first time and has recently started an end to end service improvement programme with the aim of creating an effective and reliable repairs service that is cost effective and efficient.

This project has used the following principles to underpin the strategic and tactical changes already identified:

- Simple business processes
- Transparency of end to end costs
- Greater accessibility of services
- Best use of IT technologies that provide frontline officers with the tools to deliver no matter where they work
- A focus on performance and quality that measures and improves end user satisfaction.

14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

Can the leader confirm what Southwark Council is doing to ensure that residents in Southwark complete their census forms?

RESPONSE

Southwark started its preparations for the 2011 Census in October 2009, earlier than most other local authorities. To convey the importance of the census to its communities, the 2011 Census programme has delivered (and continues to do so), a comprehensive range of communications and community engagement activities. Key activities are outlined below:

Community engagement

- Appointed more than 30 census community champions from “hard to count” communities who are responsible for communicating census messages to their communities
- Organised 25 census completion workshops for people who will find it difficult to complete their census forms online or on paper due to language, disability or other issue

- Held more than 15 focus groups with a range of communities to understand barriers to completing a census form amongst our communities and therefore tailor our publicity campaign
- Produced census information booklets in all key languages and circulated more than 5,000 copies to our “hard to count” communities
- Delivered over the past 18 months presentations and discussion forums on the census at mosques, other places of worship, community festivals, community meetings and other community events
- Provided census information at all citizenship ceremonies from October 2010 onwards
- Proactively promoted ONS census jobs vacancies to local communities to increase recruitment from Southwark’s residents (e.g. almost all of Southwark’s current census coordinators are Southwark residents)
- Partnered with 3 voluntary sector organisations (Community Action Southwark, Southwark Refugee Forum, Volunteer Centre Southwark) to deliver an extensive programme of community engagement activities led by these organisations, including census training sessions, census events for specific communities, publicity in community media and a digital media campaign
- Delivered census presentations to community councils and tenants’ associations.

Communications

- Published census information to all Southwark’s households through articles and whole-page advertisements in Southwark Life and Southwark Housing News
- Implemented a broadcast (radio) publicity targeted to young people (18-25) in partnership with Rerezent community radio station in Southwark
- Implemented a local media campaign in partnership with Southwark News
- Held a local history census event at John Harvard Library
- Implemented a poster publicity campaign at more than 40 bus stations (due to go live on 14 March)
- Implemented a poster campaign at all council and NHS buildings
- Implemented a digital media campaign with SE1, SE5 forums, Southwark News website, Facebook, Twitter and ethnicity blogs (e.g. Latin American UK forum)
- Implemented a publicity campaign to businesses in Southwark through the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- Since November 2009, released monthly news media releases on the census.

15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN’S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK (ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

In response to my question at last council assembly asking about the shortages of secondary school places in Rotherhithe, the cabinet member for children’s services said 'there are no acute shortages of secondary school places in the north of the borough'. However, on 15 March 2011, the council website reported that 'The council has always maintained that there is a specific need for additional places in Rotherhithe'. Please can the cabinet member confirm whether she thinks there are or are not enough secondary school places in Rotherhithe?

RESPONSE

This administration recognises the need for more secondary school places in SE16. We have always been firmly committed to a new school in SE16 - and that this has consistently been reflected in the Canada Water Action Plan.

There are secondary schools currently serving the families of Rotherhithe but many pupils have to travel elsewhere in the borough as a result of the number of places available in these schools to children locally. I welcome the review by Bacon’s College of its admissions criteria - which I hope will result in more places being made available to pupils living in SE16.

The government's decision in November 2010 to withdraw £19.6m funding for a new 5 forms-of-entry secondary school in Rotherhithe, which was planned to open in September 2013, was a devastating blow to providing much needed places in SE16.

At the same time the government did however recognise the need for more places in the area but to date has not told the council how much funding we will receive or when we will receive it.

We have asked the government - Department for Education and Partnerships for Schools - to clarify any government funding that is being made available to us for Rotherhithe and we continue to make the case for a new school in Rotherhithe to respond to demand. Once the funding position is clear we will work with local stakeholders to identify the best way to deliver the new places that are needed in SE16.

16. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU (BERMONDSEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Why has the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management massively increased the garage rents for the people of Bermondsey?

RESPONSE

Garage rents have increased by 50% across Southwark and the charges for garages in Bermondsey are similar to the charges in the other Areas. Despite this increase the garage rents remain below the inner London average. Garage rents have been suppressed in Southwark for many years resulting in under investment in the stock and subsequent increases in void garages. The additional revenue generated from the garage stock will be used to carry out repairs and increase the level of marketing so that the number of empty garages reduces. This will benefit the residents of Bermondsey and the rest of Southwark as they will have access to garages that are well used, in reasonable repair and subject to less vandalism. As part of the decision to increase the garage rents a concessionary charge has been introduced of £5 per week for tenants and leaseholders who are over 70 years old, have a blue badge or receive mobility or disability allowance.

17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER (DULWICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Does the cabinet member agree with residents, market traders, shop keepers and the Dulwich community council's recommendations that North Cross Road market should not open or operate on Sundays? And does he agree that the future continued success of this market relies on the continuing good will of local residents and shop keepers and that any Sunday opening will imperil such good?

RESPONSE

Over the last 10 years the North Cross Road market has flourished, becoming a popular site for arts and crafts, organic and home made foods and vintage goods. Fridays and Saturdays are the busiest days. Due to high demand the street trading section has set up a waiting list of traders who would like to set up a stall in the market, and a constant stream of enquiries from the website. There are currently 28 traders waiting to trade on this popular bespoke market. It is clear that traders as well as customers find North Cross Road Market an ideal place to visit for arts and crafts, fresh, organic and home made products. This also brings an increase in footfall for all the shops, cafes and restaurants in the area, including Lordship Lane.

Following consultation with residents, customers and traders the council has extended the market on Fridays and Saturdays from 20 to 30 pitches to attract new shoppers and contribute to the

ongoing cultural rejuvenation of an up and coming cultural area. There will be a permanent allocation of 20 pitches from 1 May. The creation of new street trading vacancies will contribute in achieving the objectives of Southwark's enterprise strategy by enhancing enterprise opportunities and at the same time assisting in the establishment, sustainability, growth and retention of business.

Following consultation with local residents the number of trading pitches have been reduced to 10 Monday to Thursday, and the adding of Sunday as an additional trading day has been deferred, with a view to a further consultation in the autumn. This will allow for the extended market days to bed in, and the experimental road closure to be properly evaluated. At that time a further review will be undertaken on the designation of Sunday as a further trading day, with consultation with all stakeholders with an interest in the success of this market.

18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES (BOROUGH AND BANKSIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Can the cabinet member for children's services detail what council youth facilities are available and how much money is spent on youth provision in Borough and Bankside, and compare this to the level of spend in other community council areas?

RESPONSE

Funding for council youth facilities is allocated and managed according to the 4 localities areas as follows:

Youth Service Funding 2010/11			
	Core funding	Grant funding	Total
Borough, Bankside and Walworth	£381,095	£212,756	£593,851
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	£278,193	£273,500	£551,693
Camberwell and Dulwich	£220,266	£103,000	£323,266
Peckham and Nunhead	£210,278	£152,756	£363,034
Total	£1,089,832	£742,012	£1,831,844

19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

What does the Burgess Park planning decision of 1 February 2011 mean for the future of the public open space, biodiversity and leisure in this borough?

RESPONSE

The planning decision on 1 February was a very important milestone for the Burgess Park project. Following the award of the Mayor's funding in March 2009 the council has worked extremely hard with partners and the local community to ensure that the proposals to improve the park would meet the needs of the local community including their desire to see improved biodiversity, more useable open space and opportunities for leisure. The planning decision will ensure that large numbers of Southwark residents will have improved access to these.

Improvements will significantly increase areas that are important to wildlife within the park and will encourage large numbers of new species to make their homes there. The improved Burgess Park will be a haven for wildlife and a place where residents from the surrounding areas can experience nature in what is a densely populated, inner city area.

As a result of the planning decision the open space will be improved and made more accessible for the benefit of local residents. Opportunities for leisure will become more plentiful. Generally the park will be a more welcoming, safe and accessible place for those who want to use it.

The council is delighted that the construction works will begin on site in late May/early June and that we are all set to complete the improvements by March 2012.

20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Following the successful opening of Camberwell Leisure Centre Phase 1, what are the plans for completing Phase 2 and 3 as far as finances allow?

RESPONSE

The two new pools and changing rooms; the new entrance, cafe and ancillary facilities at Camberwell opened at the end of February. The new gym and youth facilities will follow later this year. There is some additional work needed to complete phase 3 which includes full refurbishment of the central sports hall, as well as work to the exterior of the building and its immediate environs. A capital bid has been submitted to be considered by the cabinet, as part of the capital refresh, for these works. In addition, the community have submitted a bid to the Council's Olympic Legacy Fund.

Even without this additional funding, however, the leisure centre is completely transformed and the main elements are completed. It now has a sustainable future and will be a valuable asset for the community in the years to come.

21. QUESTION WITHDRAWN

22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS (NUNHEAD AND PECKHAM RYE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Can he confirm that the council will explore every option for future cemetery space and ensure there is proper consultation with the public, including over the future of Honor Oak Rec?

RESPONSE

I can confirm that every option for future cemetery space is being considered. An in-depth, detailed and wide reaching consultation exercised is planned to start in late April/early May that will consult with residents on a range of options for the future of the cemetery service in Southwark. This consultation will include discussions about the future of Honor Oak recreation ground.

23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS

Can the cabinet member for transport, environment & recycling comment on the latest available recycling figures for the borough?

RESPONSE

Provisional data is available for 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2011. This indicates that the recycling rate for the first 11 months of the current financial year is 24.6%, compared with 22.2% in the same period last year. This represents an increase of 10% in the tonnage of waste being recycled compared to a year ago. In the same period, the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill decreased from 45,725 tonnes to 40,080 tonnes.

The food waste and mixed recycling collections that we implemented on a trial basis for 10,000 street-based properties in October have proved very popular with residents and recycling rates in the areas covered have increased to over 50%. It has recently been decided that this trial will continue, and we are looking at the possibility of rolling out the collections to all other street based properties in the borough. In addition, we are piloting food waste collections from flats. Further to this, the new facilities for waste management that we are building on the Old Kent Road will further boost our recycling rates and enable us to divert even more waste from landfill.

24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

What progress has the cabinet member for transport, environment & recycling overseen since May 2010 in helping Southwark's street trading markets towards a more vibrant and viable offer?

RESPONSE

The Markets and Street Trading Strategy adopted in September 2010 set out the vision for sustaining and enhancing Southwark's Markets ensuring they play a full part in the life of Southwark residents. The strategy has been taken forward through an implementation plan and the actions detailed below will begin the journey to make Southwark's markets attractive for shoppers and tourists. The plan includes the following objectives:

- Deliver an improvement plan for markets in the borough aimed at increasing the viability and variety of street trading locations across the borough. (Examples Bankside, Camberwell, Canada Water)
- Carry out refurbishment and other street improvements to our Markets. (Examples, East Street, Bermondsey, Blue, Northcross Road)
- Set a balanced street trading budget
- Put in place marketing and publicity plan to encourage more traders and shoppers to our markets and kiosks
- Bring a more commercial approach to the markets in Southwark, promoting the retail offer and the social value that markets bring to local communities
- Review the way in which we operate the street trading service looking at various management models
- Review existing legislation for the operation of our street trading activities to establish whether Food Act 1984 is more appropriate

Actions implemented so far :

- Increased the designation of pitches on Northcross Road from 20 to 30 to take effect from 1 May 2011
- The Designation of 2 trading areas on Bankside from December 2010.
- Works to improve the trading environment in East Street and the Blue, through physical improvements of new paving, road surfacing and power supply, together with increasing pitch size to improve business opportunities for Traders on East Street. The works in East Street are due for completion this month
- Recommendation to Council Assembly in May to operate our Street Trading areas with more than 5 pitches under the Food Act 1984
- Bringing the Markets Service in-house from April 2011, to enable a more focused approach to reducing the deficit, (will break even this financial year), and continue to explore options for the long term delivery of the service
- Incentives and promotions introduced to maximise occupancy of street trading pitches across the borough including more proactively seeking traders in particular commodities that add value to street markets. Examples include reduced fees for 6 and 5 day trading, free pitches at

Bermondsey Antique Market on first trading day during August , advertising in trader press and other local papers

- Proactive advertising, e.g Southwark Life article, e.g. long requested street signage advertising Bermondsey Antiques Market, e.g. submitting North Cross Road market for a “Small Market of the Year Award”
- Special events, farmers markets etc to increase footfalls and generate income. Camberwell, Peckham, Elephant and Castle have held farmers and craft markets in the past 6 months.
- Putting in place quarterly Markets Forum to discuss matters that impact on Markets
- Working with National Markets Traders Federation (NMTF) and National Association of British Markets Authorities (NABMA) to gain knowledge and best practice in developing and growing our markets in Southwark, together with other partners, including Southwark traders (SAST).

25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR DAN GARFIELD

Does he believe the current government is doing enough to lower greenhouse gas emissions in Southwark?

RESPONSE

The government is initiating a number of new programmes, two of which will have particular relevance for Southwark - the Green Deal and the Carbon reduction Commitment. Whether they are enough depends largely on their successful implementation over the next few years.

Given that more local powers, access to finance (the Green Investment Bank will not now come in until 2015) and better data do not appear to be forthcoming, we really need government programmes that deliver,

To meet its own legally binding carbon targets (Climate Change Act), the government needs to deliver a 34%% cut in emissions by 2020.

It has announced its intention to do this by delivering a 22% cut from homes and a 13% reduction from workplaces by 2022 (compared with 2008 levels)

In Southwark where 54% of emissions come from workplaces and 30% from homes, meeting these targets would deliver a 13% reduction in total borough emissions by 2020.

Homes:

The key programme for cutting emissions from homes is the Green Deal. This will take effect from 2012 and proposes that the private sector offer loans of up to £6,500 to households to retrofit their homes. This will be repaid through the subsequent savings on the energy bill and be attached to the home rather than original purchaser.

The Council's 2008 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey estimated it would cost £142 million to deliver a 23% reduction here (by replacing outdated boilers and filling all empty cavity walls).

Since the private sector makes up only 35% of the local housing stock, the Green Deal will need to lever in far in excess of this £142 million of funding to finance the scale of retrofitting required (cross tenure) to meet the government's targets.

However, as Southwark's stock deviates from the UK standard (3 bed semi detached), there will be limited opportunity for conventional Green Deal measures in our borough. A 23% reduction may therefore require a reasonable take up of solid wall insulation which, under current government plans remains prohibitively expensive. There are plans to use a new energy supplier obligation to subsidize this but past examples (for example the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target [CERT]), have not proved effective.

Workplaces:

The 3 key programmes here are the government's new tax on carbon for large organisations (Carbon Reduction Commitment [CRC] from 2012), a Green Deal offering that is tailored to workplaces and ongoing plans to decarbonise grid electricity.

The government estimates that the new tax will cover 50% of workplace emissions. For Southwark, this would mean that organisations accounting for 27% of local emissions will be affected. The escalation in the tax and the firm commitment on the 2020 carbon price should be good news since it provides organisations with the certainty needed to factor carbon into long-term investment decisions.

On the flip side however, past initiatives to artificially inflate the cost of energy as a means of encouraging consumers to change behaviour (for example the Climate Change Levy) have been unsuccessful – as have the rapid escalation in energy price rises experienced in recent years. So, given the previous failure to drive energy consumption reduction by increasing costs, it is difficult to predict the impact of the scheme. It could be argued that it might have had a greater impact in its previous form (past government) as a carbon trading scheme with a cap on total emissions that was reduced each year.

Summary

The Green Deal needs to overcome two major barriers - lack of access to capital and short time thinking. However, since 90% of London office space is leased and 40% of buildings are multi-tenanted, wholesale retrofitting programmes are likely to prove more challenging here than in the domestic sector.

26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN

Following from the Labour cabinet's abandonment of the MUSCo project, what steps has the cabinet member taken to restart looking at options for renewable energy in the Elephant and Castle regeneration programme?

RESPONSE

As stated in the cabinet report of 25 January 2011, we are retaining the zero carbon growth strategy for the Elephant and Castle development and, in accordance with the London Plan; a major part of this must be through the use of renewable sources of energy and low-carbon technology.

The cabinet report made clear, the responsibility in the development agreement now falls to Lend Lease to bring forward alternative proposals for ensuring the sustainability of the development and Lend Lease remain committed to delivering the sustainability obligations within the Regeneration Agreement and the associated conditions.

We currently expect public consultation on the Lend Lease master plan proposals to start from May of this year, with an application for planning consent expected in spring 2012. This document will contain details of how sustainability objectives will be met at the Elephant & Castle including the use of renewable energy.

We have met with representatives of Lend Lease and await now to see their further proposals and the master plan.

27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THORNTON

Could the cabinet member explain the rationale behind proposals to remove the two park rangers from Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park with reference to the anticipated cost of any variation or addition to the grounds maintenance contract?

RESPONSE

The council has to find £34m of savings in 2011/12 and a further £27m in 2012/13. All departments and business units within the council are contributing to these savings. The Parks and Open Spaces Business Unit is contributing to these savings in a number of ways including through a £150k reduction in the staffing budget. As a result the staffing structure must be reconfigured to make the best use of the resources available. As a result 17 members of staff have been informed that their posts will be deleted including the two members of staff at Geraldine Mary Harmsworth. The proposed changes at Geraldine Mary Harmsworth will contribute a £15,000 net saving from this site (once additions and variations to the grounds maintenance contract have been taken into account). This saving is only part of the overall £150, 000 that will be saved.

We acknowledge that the staff at Geraldine Mary Harmsworth have done a great job and want to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge this, along with the good relationship that they have developed with local people.

The proposal is to replace the ranger gardener model with a more cost effective model. The posts of head gardener and apprentice will be created. These posts and others within the new structure will present redeployment opportunities for displaced members of staff including the officers currently at Geraldine Mary Harmsworth. It is the council's policy to minimise redundancies.

Under the current structure managing and maintaining Geraldine Mary Harmsworth costs £15,000 per hectare per year. This is compared to £8,000 per hectare per year at Burgess Park and £12,000 per hectare per year at Dulwich Park. Geraldine Mary Harmsworth is currently more expensive to manage and maintain than any other park in the borough and we believe that while difficult an efficiency saving should be made here.

In the new structure Geraldine Mary Harmsworth would be managed and maintained as a 'Major Park' and in the same way as Dulwich, Southwark and Peckham Rye Parks. Dulwich Park has recently won a Gold award in London in Bloom and a BALI award for the excellent way it is maintained. It is a model that works extremely well and I do not believe there is a reason why it would not work in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth.

28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER

Can the cabinet member please explain why the Labour administration has chosen to not provide new cleaner greener safer (CGS) capital funded projects for one year but has included a new central Olympics capital fund?

RESPONSE

The re-introduction of the cleaner, greener, safer programme has been delayed consequent to the paucity of capital funds left by the previous Liberal Democrat administration.

Contrary to figures provided in the Capital Programme Monitoring Report and Refresh of the 10 Year Capital Programme showing £55.486m unallocated capital funds and agreed by the then Lib Dem/Tory executive, the incoming Labour administration discovered that there was in fact only £9.230m worth of unallocated funds. Consequently, we are forced to keep a tight rein on capital expenditure and delay capital allocations for the forthcoming year for decision making by Council Assembly in July 2011.

The Olympics Legacy Fund of £2m is separate from Cleaner, Greener, Safer and is money set aside for bids of up to £500k for sports facilities. The closing date for bids is the end of this month.

29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR NICK STANTON

Can the cabinet tell me which streets of the borough have already moved, or are about to move, to alternate day litter picking and reduced frequency detritus sweeping?

RESPONSE

Despite Southwark facing the largest cuts experienced for many years, we have protected front line services as much as possible. However, the sheer size of the cuts required has meant that, inevitably, there are reductions in both manual sweeping and litter picking.

With over 1,400 streets in Southwark it isn't possible to list all those affected in this forum. I can however provide this level of detail separately.

All roads in Southwark receive a thorough sweep every two weeks. This ensures that dirt, grit, tree debris and other small pieces of rubbish are cleared regularly. The frequency will reduce to every four weeks from 4 April 2011. This applies to every road in Southwark.

Turning to litter picking activity, the cleaning team has reconfigured the entire service and have kept daily litter picking in the areas of most need. These areas are typically found in the north west of the borough leading to the majority of roads in Cathedrals ward being largely unaffected.

As the cleaning service is already tailored to the needs of each part of the borough, many roads, particularly in the south of the borough are already litter picked on alternate days. The majority of roads in the following wards will not therefore be adversely affected by the new arrangements:

- College
- East Dulwich
- Peckham Rye
- Rotherhithe
- Village
- Nunhead
- Surrey Docks

Some reduction is however inevitable and the following wards will now receive an alternate day litter picking service:

- Grange
- South
- Camberwell
- South
- Riverside
- Bermondsey
- Green
- Camberwell
- Chaucer
- Livesey
- Peckham
- East Walworth
- Faraday
- Brunswick Park
- Newington
- The Lane

All of our town centres, such as Walworth Road, Camberwell Green, Rye Lane, Tooley Street, Elephant and Castle etc. currently benefit from a permanent presence arrangement whereby teams of cleaners ensure the area is kept clean between 06.00 and 18.00 each day of the week. We are pleased that we have been able to maintain this level of service.

Over the coming months we will be monitoring the service across the borough more closely than normal to identify how the cuts that we have been forced to make will impact on the cleanliness of the borough and to respond to any deterioration appropriately in order to mitigate the impact wherever possible.

30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

What progress has the cabinet member made on bringing average speed camera technology to Southwark, particularly Salter Road?

RESPONSE

In May 2009 Transport for London (TfL) wrote to all London boroughs stating that they would like to trial 20mph Average Speed Camera Systems in approximately four to six authorities and asked whether each borough would like to be considered for inclusion in the trial.

Boroughs had to submit a number of locations that met certain specific criteria to be considered. Southwark submitted 8 separate borough locations that met the above criteria. In July 2009 TfL informed the council that it had been selected for participation in the trial and that Albany Road was the chosen location.

Since that time I understand that TfL has completed all the necessary procurement procedures and that funding has been secured but as yet the final approval for the trial to go ahead has not been given.

Southwark are very keen to take this project forward and as such included the scheme in its Transport Plan and allocated some LIP funding accordingly.

In December 2010 I wrote to the Mayor emphasising Southwark's support for this project and expressing concern over the delay in giving final approval.

Regarding Salter Road Southwark Council is presently working with a company called Pips Technology to try and achieve Home Office Type Approval for their SpeedSpike 20mph averaging camera system. The advantage this system will have over those currently approved will be that they can be mounted on existing lamp columns and do not require gantries.

31. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

Can the cabinet member please explain how the commissioning process for the environmental grants, which are being cut by this administration, will ensure that organisations such as Bankside Open Spaces Trust can continue to look after the parks in Cathedrals ward?

RESPONSE

Because of the punitive and unprecedented grant settlement by the coalition government, this council has been forced into making very painful budgetary decisions.

However, it is with great pleasure I can confirm that as part of a commissioning process Bankside Open Spaces Trust will be invited to deliver through a contractual arrangement the same important services currently delivered.

32. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET

Can the cabinet member give an update on plans to tackle congestion and improve the streetscape on Lower Road, Jamaica Road, and around the entrance to the Rotherhithe Tunnel?

RESPONSE

Transport for London are currently working on designs for improvements to Jamaica Road, commencing at the junction with Abbey Street through to the Rotherhithe tunnel roundabout. TfL recently attended Bermondsey community council to hear local views and will develop final designs by Summer 2011. Key aspects of the design include reviewing bus lane operation,

pedestrian railings, providing improvements for pedestrians and local accessibility. Delivery funding is currently being secured to commence initial works in 2011/12.

Regarding Lower Road, officers are currently identifying financing to progress designs to introduce two way working on Lower Road by removing the current one way system as identified in the Canada Water area action plan.

33. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

Does the cabinet member believe that a new organisation can be found to run South Dock Marina before the end of the 2011/12 financial year to make the savings proposed by the labour administration's recent budget, and will he comment on whether existing berth-holders will be encouraged or assisted to prepare a bid themselves should they wish?

RESPONSE

I am happy that the council should consider all options, with the proviso that the most sustainable future is found for the marina in terms of revenue, investment and management. Whether this can be achieved by the end of 2011/12 will be subject to the findings of a report which officers are currently drafting. In terms of including a bid from existing berth holders this was discussed at a public meeting held of the 20 January, where I agreed that any proposal submitted by the berth holders as part of the procurement process would be considered providing it met the council's requirements.

34. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU

Please will the cabinet member provide an update on the Connect2 project – a vital cycling and walking route for the people of South Bermondsey?

RESPONSE

The council is not responsible for this delay. The facts are that the land ownership is not with the council and negotiating with land owners for them to give up rights and allow people to pass over their land is a complex negotiation, especially when there is no possibility of purchasing that land. Our officers have sought to get resolution of the issues over access with Network Rail and the other private land owners. This land is either side of a redundant railway bridge over Rotherhithe New Road.

Officers and the Connect 2 Steering Group are working hard to deliver the Connect2 project. The key issues for resolution are negotiation over access to Network Rail and other private land either side of the redundant railway bridge over Rotherhithe New Road.

Officers continue to negotiate with Network Rail in conjunction with partners, Sustrans. We still await formal confirmation by Network Rail of their acceptance of our land take requirements, which will enable legal agreements to be signed. It is disappointing that this has taken so long and risks delaying the project.

We believe we are very close to signing an agreement if the partners in this agreement hold to their intentions; and we believe that they will.

Renewal, the development company responsible for the Millwall Football Ground area regeneration, are also keen on a possible extension of the scheme to include a South Bermondsey Station cycle link to Bolina Road. To explore more fully this exciting proposal, I am attending a meeting at the Sustrans office with representatives from Renewal on 14th April.

Meanwhile Network Rail has approved access to their site to enable the preliminary works (land /ecological surveys and due-diligence investigation), which will inform the detail design. These works are due to be completed by Monday 11 April 2011.

On the western side of the bridge, the Directors of Gainsborough Court who own the land have agreed in principle to the project and associated proposals. In the meantime further negotiations are on hold pending formal confirmation from Network Rail that their part of the land will be released to the council. All other parts of the project are progressing according to the agreed project timetable.

Those who are coming forward to campaign with the council should also be encouraged to talk to their local MP about Network Rail's role.

35. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK

How many pot holes are there across the borough? Please can the cabinet member provide a breakdown by ward?

RESPONSE

This authority has never, even throughout the eight years of Liberal Democrat administration, held complete records of potholes. Nor is it my intention that we should in current financial circumstances be using up scarce resources sending officers around the borough to get a complete daily picture of road disrepair. We are however, aware of the number of potholes brought to our attention via our cyclic inspections of the network, our "report a pothole" link to the council's web site, our inspectors on their daily travels through the borough or from resident / others complaints.

As an indication of the level of pothole repairs, the number of potholes repaired over the last year by community council area is as follows:

Bermondsey CC 24 hour – 363 28 day - 50	Nunhead and Peckham CC 24 hour - 391 28 day - 75
Borough and Bankside CC 24 hour - 177 28 day - 25	Peckham CC 24 hour - 183 28 day - 17
Cambwerwell CC 24 hour - 315 28 day - 55	Rotherhithe CC 24 hour -191 28 day - 18
Dulwich CC 24 hour - 311 28 day - 96	Walworth CC 24 hour - 302 28 day - 45

(NB: the 28 day repairs tend to be larger patches often incorporating several individual potholes)

36. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

Given the parlous state of our postal delivery in SE1/SE16, was it a good idea to remove the option to buy parking permits over the counter, and rely on the post office to deliver bought and paid for permits?

RESPONSE

The ability to order permits on-line or over the phone has been an improvement in service and delivered significant savings to the council, however the parking Service is aware of the delays with the delivery of first class post particularly in the SE1 and SE16 areas and regrets any inconvenience caused. Appeals against parking tickets received as a result are being dealt with sympathetically.

As a result of the problem permits are now being couriered to Southwark from our contractor's base in Uxbridge. Visitor permits are then delivered by hand by the civil enforcement officers on the beat. We are currently looking at expanding this service to include residents permits.

37. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK

Will the cabinet look into reorganising the placement of smart cars to more appropriate locations, such as Bacons School in Rotherhithe Community Council area?

RESPONSE

SMART cars are allocated to areas which have been identified by members of the public or the police as having a significant problem with illegal parking. They are also allocated to areas where enforcement by civil enforcement officers on the beat has proved to be ineffective. SMART cars can only enforce where there are instant contraventions which are restricted to a small number of parking contraventions, such as footway parking or loading restrictions and moving traffic contraventions such as banned turns.

The parking service has used the SMART car at Bacons College twice in the last two years following requests from the police who wanted support during the school's annual open day. The parking service will consider any further request for enforcement in the area.

38. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

To ask the cabinet member how many blue badges have been:

1. lost or stolen in the last six months?
2. how long on average have they taken for them to be replaced?
3. will he be taking any further action to stop the abuse of Blue Badges?

RESPONSE

1. Lost or stolen in the last six months?

Between September and February 2011, there were 28 thefts of blue badges in Southwark. This compares to 48 in the previous six months (decrease of 41.6%). There were 35 thefts between September 2009 and February 2010, so compared to last year, there has been a decrease of 20%.

2. how long on average have they taken for them to be replaced?

The average time it takes to replace the badge is 2-5 days providing the relevant documentation is received.

3. will he be taking any further action to stop the abuse of Blue Badges?

If the badge has been reported as being misused the Disabilities Team write to the badge holder explaining the consequences of misuse of the Blue Badge Scheme. They are then invited to attend an interview.

39. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR ROBIN CROOKSHANK HILTON

Can the cabinet member confirm when the walls of the iconic Goose Green roundabout will be repaired?

RESPONSE

Officers have recently made some changes to the southbound approach lane to try and address a recurring problem of large vehicles damaging the roundabout. We are currently assessing the success of these modifications and when we are satisfied that they are working, we will reconstruct the roundabout. I anticipate this being done in the next three months.

40. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR MARK WILLIAMS

Does the cabinet member welcome the funding for Transport for London (TfL) to carry out a feasibility study on traffic and public realm in Camberwell town centre?

RESPONSE

The initial award of £200,000 for 2011/13 is to create a viable scheme for the area which, if successful, could lead to further funding from Transport for London and other sources of nearly £7m.

Thanks to this money we can now go ahead and carry out the important first phase of works, namely to consult locally and work on the designs of any potential future development. This scheme could give Camberwell an entirely new feel, with more attractive open spaces, safer road crossings, pedestrian friendly pavements, and reduced traffic congestion, and I'm excited about what this grant could lead to.

Studies have shown that there are historical issues in the area of road and pavements layout leading to severe traffic congestion, pedestrians being unable to cross roads safely, and insufficient space on the footpaths. The ultimate aim of the scheme is to 'recreate the street' to combine highway layout changes and public space improvements, leading to a dynamic new space for London.

41. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN MORRISSEY

Can the cabinet member comment on Southwark's allocation of decent homes funding.

RESPONSE

In January 2011, Southwark Council applied for £148 million of government funding over four years to make council homes warm, dry and safe. In February, the council was informed that it has been allocated £76.9m. The breakdown of the Decent Homes funding for Southwark is as follows:

Programme year	Amount
2011/12	Nil
2012/13	£11,250,000
2013/14	£15,000,000
2014/15	£50,693,599

Programme year	Amount
Total	£76,943,599

No funding has been allocated for next year; furthermore, the availability of the £11.25 million of funding the year after is not yet certain because of changes in the housing finance rules, and the remaining funding (£65 million and the bulk of the money) is an indicative allocation only. Although Southwark's allocation is the 5th highest in the country and the highest of any non ALMO authority, given the size of our housing stock and the extent of our investment need, we think that it is disappointing that we did not receive more funding overall, that there is no funding at all next year, and that most of it is back loaded into years 3 and 4, and indicative only.

42. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH

Does he have the latest information regarding customer satisfaction with the council's housing repairs service?

RESPONSE

Customer satisfaction with repairs has been measured in two ways:

- A) Quarterly postal questionnaires. These use a random anonymous sample.
- B) Monthly telephone surveys carried out on repairs completed in recent weeks

A) Postal questionnaire

The questionnaires are sent to a random sample of 2,000 tenants per quarter. The questions and methodology are informed by the STATUS survey. The results are shown in the table below.

Performance indicator	2010/11			
	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Cumulative: 2010/11
% satisfied with the way the council deals generally with repairs and maintenance.	n/a	64.4%	69.1%	65.5%
% satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance services provided by the contractor.	71.9%	70.6%	72.8%	71.1%

B) Monthly telephone survey

This survey is conducted by Vangent on Southwark's behalf. Tenants are phoned soon after their repair is completed. This method gives a more regular snapshot of satisfaction. However the survey is not anonymous, which can mean some residents may give a higher rating.

Last year there was a significant difference between the postal and telephone survey results, with the telephone survey reporting over 90% satisfaction. Following changes to the methodology used to calculate the telephone figure, a decline in satisfaction was reported. The table below shows the figures.

Resident satisfaction with repairs service	Nov 10	Dec 10	Jan 11	Feb 11	Year to date
Engineering services	77.0%	75.8%	73.6%	70.0%	73.1%
Repairs and maintenance	68.2%	72.2%	74.4%	75.6%	73.3%
Combined	71.4%	73.6%	74%	72.9%	73.2%

The difference between the telephone and postal survey results can be explained by:

- the postal survey asks for satisfaction with a repair undertaken in the last 12 months, whereas the telephone survey asks for satisfaction on more recently completed work
- the postal survey is anonymous and the telephone survey is not.

43. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES

What does he believe the impact will be of government proposals to charge tenants rents of up to 80% of market rates, rather than the social rent at the moment?

RESPONSE

I believe that the government's proposals to charge rents at up to 80% of market rents (so called 'Affordable Rent') to new tenants of housing association (Registered Provider) new build homes, and a proportion of re-lets, will have a major impact in boroughs such as Southwark. We have relatively high land values and low income levels (for example the median household income for council tenants was £9,100 (Southwark Housing Requirements Study 2008). Modelling undertaken by the South East London Housing Partnership indicated that based on the London Plan definition of housing affordability, the level of income required to afford a one bedroom flat in SE5, at projected maximum Local Housing Allowance levels as at April 2011 would be around £35,000 per annum, rising to nearly £84,000 for a four bedroom or larger property. Generally only those on Housing Benefit would be able to afford rents at these levels. However from April 2013 the Government intends to cap the maximum amount of benefit that households can claim at £500 per week for couples and lone parents and £350 per week for single people. This could cause severe financial hardship and the build up of rent arrears, and potentially homelessness.

The proposal is also likely to lead to increased overcrowding, with families choosing to remain in homes that are too small for their needs, rather than face significantly increased rents. In general, I think we will see less turnover of Registered Provider (RP) housing, with consequences for the supply of housing to meet need.

It is likely that the amount of badly needed new housing development in the borough will reduce significantly, with RP landlords concerned at the impact of increased rent arrears and bad debt. Lenders may also consider that this form of development presents them with increased risk, and may be less willing to lend to RPs, or do so at higher interest rates, with resulting problems for scheme viability.

Finally it is hard to see how the new model will work for regeneration schemes, which are particularly important for Southwark. These would need to charge the new 'Affordable Rents' in order to attract grant, while at the same time existing tenants on secure tenancies would be unlikely to move to the new homes at these rent levels.

Southwark is currently in discussions with RPs considering making bids under the Homes and Communities Agency's new funding arrangements, but remains concerned as to how to balance the need to maintain housing supply, while at the same time as ensuring that it is affordable to those on low incomes.

44. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA

Will the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management clarify whether the report for ingress on the Manor Estate in South Bermondsey ward has been concluded? If so, what were the findings?

RESPONSE

This matter was thoroughly investigated when the problem arose in the autumn of last year. The problem is a condensation brought about by a number of issues.

The principal one being that a number of the flats had no working extraction to the bathrooms (very small volume, internal bathrooms). In addition the construction of the block (exposed concrete frame) means they suffer from cold bridging. The cold bridging issues has been addressed where it has been identified with dry lining and insulation and extractor fans have been renewed or repaired.

A full copy of the report can be provided to the member should he so wish.

45. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK

Please will the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management update the council on any progress he has made for the provision of social housing for ex-service men and women?

RESPONSE

Please see the leader's response to question 9.

46. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

Will the cabinet member commit to spending the remainder of earmarked Four Squares security works funding on the Four Squares?

RESPONSE

The unspent allocation for security works to the Four Squares estate is £1.59 million. This is what remains of the original allocation of just over £8m for security and lifts. The last estimated costs of works at Marden Square and Layards Square were £2.2m and £2.3m respectively.

Clearly, the remaining allocation is insufficient to complete the intended works to even one of the Squares. I have therefore asked officers to explore what other options there may be to respond to the issues that are still being experienced by residents of the estate.

47. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS RENATA HAMVAS

Can the cabinet member for culture, leisure, sport and the Olympics set out the terms for the council's review of library services?

RESPONSE

The proposed terms of reference for the libraries review are as follows:

- To make recommendations for savings and efficiencies of a minimum of £547,000 over years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- To review demand and usage patterns to determine appropriate choices on the future scale and nature of provision.
- To consider and make recommendations on innovative methods of service delivery including through delivery of other Council customer services.
- To maximise the use of ICT in terms of service delivery and as a service.
- To consider what other services could be delivered from libraries.
- To review the impact of opening Canada Water library on the total service offer.

The review will include extensive consultation with users, local communities and also with staff. There will be a review board with cross-council representation, an external challenger and regular reports to a member and senior officer steering group. The outcomes of the review and recommendations arising from it will be detailed in a report to cabinet anticipated for November 2011.

48. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS FROM COUNCILLOR THE RIGHT REVEREND EMMANUEL OYEWOLE

Can she comment on the future of the Southwark community games now that the working neighbourhoods fund (NHF) has been abolished?

RESPONSE

Despite the abolition of the working neighbourhood fund (WNF) and the other budget pressures on services, the council will continue to fund the Southwark community games and sports development services with £300,000 per annum. In addition, in partnership with Fusion, this funding has been boosted to £450,000 per annum.

With this funding, a challenging but achievable programme is in place which includes: continuation of the young peoples sporting programme in schools and at extra-curricular venues; sports programmes for women and girls and for people with disabilities; promotion of physical activity and advice and support for clubs and voluntary organisations.

We also have an Olympic legacy programme in train which will ensure that children in Southwark who become inspired by London 2012 have a chance to be involved in sport and physical activity at whatever level they aspire to from 'playground to podium'.

In order to make the most of available resources, staff in the service will continue to seek external funding opportunities and partnerships and to work with the School Sports Partnership to maximise direct provision and activity.

49. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY

In the light of her recent encouragement of all councillors to assist in the recruitment of suitable foster parents, can the cabinet member for children's services advise on what ethnic characteristics, if any, would preclude potential fosterers and adopters receiving placements of children with different ethnic characteristics.?"

RESPONSE

The fostering service does not exclude potential applicants to fostering on the basis of ethnicity. Carers are recruited on the basis of the needs of children in care, and that is the primary consideration of the team. Where possible we try to place children in families with similar ethnicity, although this does not preclude other placements, and we often place children in families with different ethnicity. This is important because sometimes a foster carer of a different ethnicity has particular skills or because there are no suitable vacancies with same ethnicity foster carers.

50. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL

Why has the announcement of the allocation of grants for youth work been so delayed that youth workers across the borough have had to be put on notice of redundancy?

RESPONSE

Officers were waiting on the Department for Education (DfE) to confirm the new funding streams to replace the targeted youth support grants. In addition, officers have had to assess the impact of the grant reductions in a short timescale with the final allocations only being confirmed by the DfE at the end of February.

Item No. 4.2.	Classification: Open	Date: 6 April 2011	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Alteration to Motion 4: Cabinet Priorities	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Communities, Law and Governance	

ALTERATION TO MOTION 4

A request has been received from the mover of the motion, Councillor Anood Al-Samerai, to alter motion 4 as follows:

In part 2 **insert:**

- 5) Stop making top-down and uninformed decisions; genuinely listen to local groups like the Friends of Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park and the Southwark Mediation Service about the dangers of making cuts which will actually cost the council more money in the long run; and urgently consider alternative measures for both these groups after proper consultation and discussion.

NOTE:

Prior to debating the alteration to motion 4 the consent of council assembly would need to be obtained.

- A member may alter a motion which they have given notice, with the consent of the meeting (CAPR 1.14(5)).

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Member Motions	Town Hall Peckham Road London SE5 8UB	Constitutional Team 020 7525 7228

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager
Report Author	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
Version	Final
Dated	6 April 2011