

# **Council Assembly (Council Tax Setting Meeting)**

Wednesday 24 February 2016

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## **Supplemental Agenda No.1**

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Date: 19 February 2016



## Council Assembly (Ordinary/Council Tax Base Meeting)

MINUTES of the Council Assembly (Ordinary/Council Tax Base Meeting held on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 7.00 pm at Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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### **PRESENT:**

The Worshipful the Mayor for 2015/16, Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE (Chair)

Councillor Anood Al-Samerai  
Councillor Jasmine Ali  
Councillor Maisie Anderson  
Councillor James Barber  
Councillor Radha Burgess  
Councillor Fiona Colley  
Councillor Stephanie Cryan  
Councillor Catherine Dale  
Councillor Helen Dennis  
Councillor Nick Dolezal  
Councillor Karl Eastham  
Councillor Gavin Edwards  
Councillor Paul Fleming  
Councillor Tom Flynn  
Councillor Lucas Green  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Barrie Hargrove  
Councillor Jon Hartley  
Councillor Helen Hayes  
Councillor David Hubber  
Councillor Peter John OBE  
Councillor Ben Johnson  
Councillor Samantha Jury-Dada  
Councillor Eleanor Kerslake  
Councillor Sarah King  
Councillor Anne Kirby  
Councillor Sunny Lambe  
Councillor Octavia Lamb  
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE

Councillor Richard Livingstone  
Councillor Rebecca Lury  
Councillor Jane Lyons  
Councillor Eliza Mann  
Councillor Hamish McCallum  
Councillor Darren Merrill  
Councillor Victoria Mills  
Councillor Michael Mitchell  
Councillor Jamille Mohammed  
Councillor Adele Morris  
Councillor David Noakes  
Councillor Damian O'Brien  
Councillor James Okosun  
Councillor Leo Pollak  
Councillor Lisa Rajan  
Councillor Sandra Rhule  
Councillor Martin Seaton  
Councillor Rosie Shimell  
Councillor Andy Simmons  
Councillor Johnson Situ  
Councillor Michael Situ  
Councillor Charlie Smith  
Councillor Cleo Soanes  
Councillor Kath Whittam  
Councillor Bill Williams  
Councillor Kieron Williams  
Councillor Mark Williams  
Councillor Ian Wingfield

## **1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS**

### **1.1 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Following the by-election on 21 January 2016, the Mayor welcomed Councillor Samantha Jury-Dada to her first meeting of council assembly.

The Mayor also congratulated the Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter John, on being awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's New Year Honours. A list of other Southwark recipients had been circulated around the chamber and the meeting sent its congratulations to those who had been awarded an honour.

### **1.2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE MAYOR DEEMS URGENT**

The Mayor formally moved the programme motion.

The programme motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the meeting be conducted as follows:

#### **Item 3 - Themed debate**

##### **Community Evidence Submissions**

To receive submissions from the group listed in the themed section of the agenda:

- The New Aylesbury Trust Ltd, Known As Creation
- Team London Bridge

Five minute presentation from each group, followed by a question from each group to the relevant cabinet member; and up to five minutes for questions from members.

##### **Themed debate**

1. Councillor Mark Williams, cabinet member for regeneration and new homes (3½ minutes).
2. Councillor Darren Merrill, cabinet member for environment and public realm (3½ minutes).
3. Councillor Rosie Shimell, opposition spokesperson, to speak on the motion and move Amendment A (5 minutes).
4. Themed debate open to all other councillors (30 minutes).
5. Cabinet member's right of reply to the debate (3 minutes).

#### **Item 4 – Deputations**

Meeting to agree to hear a deputation from:

- Southwark Defend Council Housing.

### **Item 5.2 - General Motions**

General motions to be taken in order set out in agenda:

1. Transport in Rotherhithe
2. The power to set a real living wage
3. Blacklisting.

Each motion to have a single debate, subject to the guillotine.

Motion 3 – Blacklisting:

- To seek the meeting's consent to change 'Constructing Association' to 'Consulting Association', in paragraph 2 of page 6 of the main agenda.

**Note:** Relevant procedure rules will be suspended.

- CAPR 1.14(4) Single debate.
- CAPR 2.7(2) Length of themed debate.

## **1.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

### **Item 5.2: Members Motions: Motion 2 – The power to set a real living wage**

Councillor Leo Pollak declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Motion 2 – The power to set a real living wage, as he is regularly employed by the Living Wage Foundation. He left the room whilst the motion was debated and voted upon.

### **Item 5.2: Members Motions: Motion 3 –Blacklisting**

Councillor Gavin Edwards declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item as he is employed by a trade union. He left the room whilst the motion was voted upon.

Councillor Paul Fleming, declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item as he is employed by a trade union. He left the room whilst the motion was voted upon..

Councillor Victoria Mills, declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item as her partner is employed by a trade union. She left the room whilst the motion was voted upon.

## **1.4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for lateness were received on behalf of Councillors James Barber, Renata Hamvas and Helen Hayes. Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Evelyn Akoto, Sunil Chopra, Neil Coyle, Maria Linforth-Hall and Vijay Luthra.

## 1.5 MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That the open minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

## 2. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

### 2.1 PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

### 2.2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

## 3. THEMED DEBATE - ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC REALM AND REGENERATION

### 4. COMMUNITY EVIDENCE

As part of the programme motion the meeting agreed to receive submissions from the following:

#### **The New Aylesbury Trust Ltd, known as Creation**

Council assembly heard evidence from two representatives from The New Aylesbury Trust Ltd, known as Creation. Thereafter they asked a question of the leader of the council.

The following members had questions of the submission: Councillors Ian Wingfield, Lorraine Lauder, Adele Morris and Barrie Hargrove.

At the close of the questioning, the Mayor thanked The New Aylesbury Trust Ltd, known as Creation for their submission.

#### **Team London Bridge**

Council assembly heard evidence from a representative from Team London Bridge. Thereafter she asked a question of the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes.

The following members had questions of the submission: Councillors Michael Situ, Eliza Mann, Fiona Colley and Anood Al-Samerai.

At the close of the questioning, the Mayor thanked Team London Bridge for their submission.

### 4.1 MOTION ON THE THEME

**MOTION ON THE THEME – ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC REALM AND REGENERATION**  
(see pages 1 - 3 of the main agenda)

As the subject matter of the motion covered two portfolios both cabinet members spoke on the motion. The cabinet member for environment and public realm, Councillor Darren Merrill, and the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes, Councillor Mark Williams, presented the motion on the themed debate.

Councillor Rosie Shimell, the majority opposition group spokesperson, responded to the cabinet members motion and proposed Amendment A.

Following debate (Councillors Barrie Hargrove, Adele Morris, Samantha Jury-Dada, David Noakes, Helen Dennis, Anood Al-Samerai, Tom Flynn, Ben Johnson, Michael Situ, Damian O'Brien and Peter John), the cabinet member for environment and public realm, Councillor Darren Merrill, and the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes, Councillor Mark Williams, responded to the debate.

Amendment A was put to the vote and declared to be lost.

The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

## **RESOLVED:**

### **Regeneration**

1. That council assembly recognises that Southwark is one of the most exciting boroughs in the country in terms of regeneration, with significant investment in the borough delivering new affordable homes, jobs and community benefits.
2. That council assembly commends this administration's approach to regeneration, which has secured the second highest level of affordable house-building in the country, with 3,760 new affordable homes built in Southwark between 2010-11 and 2014-15.
3. That council assembly welcomes this administration's commitment to ensuring regeneration benefits local people by delivering affordable homes to rent and for low cost home ownership, building new community facilities and creating jobs and opportunities for Southwark residents.
4. That council assembly notes that Southwark also has the most ambitious council house building programme in the country - 11,000 new council homes built by 2043, with the first 1,500 by 2018, with every one of the new homes available to Southwark residents at council rents.
5. That council assembly calls on other London boroughs to play their part in solving London's housing crisis by following Southwark's lead and building new affordable homes.
6. That council assembly condemns the previous Liberal Democrat and Conservative Coalition government's cut to the affordable housing grant, which has made it more difficult for local authorities to build new council homes.

7. That council assembly also condemns the government's proposals to limit new affordable housing and to force the sell off of council homes through the Housing and Planning Bill, which will significantly reduce council housing in Southwark, damage our ability to build much needed new homes and lead to an increase in homelessness and overcrowding.
8. That council assembly calls on the cabinet to:
  - Work with partners across the borough to increase local employment in construction so that Southwark residents are able to take advantage of opportunities from regeneration programmes.
  - Lobby the government to reconsider it's disastrous proposals on the forced sale of council homes.
  - Lobby the government for an exemption for local authorities on council house building programmes from 'starter home' quotas, which will be unaffordable for the majority of Southwark residents, to ensure new homes in the borough are genuinely affordable to households on lower incomes.

### **Environment and public realm**

9. That council assembly recognises the importance of ensuring development in our borough is sustainable and welcomes this administration's commitment to the environment, including:
  - Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill to less than 1%, with Southwark now the best recycling borough in inner city London.
  - Committing to run entirely on green energy by 2050.
  - Delivering a new energy hub that will deliver zero-carbon, affordable heat and hot water to residents and businesses across Elephant Park.
10. That council assembly recognises that poor air quality is a significant problem for Southwark and that 28,800 children in our borough breathe poor air and approximately 110 people die in Southwark prematurely every year from poor air quality. Council assembly therefore calls on Transport for London (TfL) to take action on air quality and to extend the ultra low emissions zone to cover the whole borough and the rest of inner London.
11. That council assembly reaffirms the council's formal objection to TfL's plans for the new Silvertown Tunnel due to the negative impact increased congestion will have on air pollution levels in Southwark, particularly on approaches to the Rotherhithe tunnel, and calls on TfL to address the council's concerns and recommendations in its proposals.
12. That council assembly welcomes this administration's commitment to sustainable transport, to promote active journeys, minimise the environmental impact of transport and improve the public realm to make the borough a safer, cleaner and healthier place to live and work.
13. That council assembly welcomes the 2.7 miles of quietways that have already been

introduced in the borough and the commitment to deliver 21.26 more miles, as well as the introduction of the Southwark Spine, which will improve cycling in the borough and help increase the number of people choosing to cycle.

14. That council assembly welcomes the steps being taken to improve the public realm, including at Canada Water, Peckham and the Aylesbury, to clean up the borough's high streets, such as Rye Lane and Walworth Road, and to invest in the social infrastructure of our borough, including new libraries, a new leisure centre and new parks, such as the new Camberwell library, the new Castle leisure centre and a £6m investment in 6 parks around Elephant and Castle.

**Note:** This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

## 5. DEPUTATIONS

*(See pages 3 - 4 of supplemental agenda 3)*

As part of the programme motion the meeting agreed to hear a deputation from:

### **Southwark Defend Council Housing**

The deputation's spokesperson, Tanya Murat, addressed the meeting. The deputation asked a question of the cabinet member for housing.

Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, Bill Williams, Ben Johnson and Martin Seaton asked questions of the deputation.

Thereafter the deputation returned to their seats in the public seating area.

## 6. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

### 6.1 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

*(See pages 1 - 5 of the supplemental agenda 1 and the blue and yellow papers circulated at the meeting)*

There was one late questions to the leader of the council, the written response to which was circulated on blue paper at the meeting. Two supplemental questions were asked of the leader of the council. The written questions and responses are set out in Appendix 1. There were 30 members' questions, the written responses to which were circulated on yellow paper at the meeting. There were 15 supplemental questions. The written questions and responses are set out in Appendix 2

### 6.2 MEMBERS' MOTIONS

#### **MOTION 1 – TRANSPORT IN ROTHERHITHE** *(See page 5 of the main agenda)*

This motion was considered prior to the guillotine having fallen.

Councillor Kath Whittam, seconded by Councillor Bill Williams, moved the motion.



Following debate (Councillors Victoria Mills, David Hubber, James Okosun, Damian O'Brien, Eliza Mann, Richard Livingstone and Anood Al-Samerai), the motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That council assembly recognises that there are significant traffic problems on the Rotherhithe peninsula, with the high demand for river crossings making the Rotherhithe area particularly susceptible to congestion from tunnel related traffic, which is detrimental to the local environment, particularly air quality, and can make local trips difficult.
2. That council assembly further recognises that the significant growth planned in the Canada Water area, including an increase in new homes and job opportunities, will require a significant investment in transport infrastructure.
3. That council assembly therefore calls on Transport for London and the Mayor of London to:
  - Upgrade the existing public transport network, including increasing capacity on the overground, tube and buses
  - Take action to tackle congestion on Jamaica Road
  - Enhance pedestrian and cycle links and bring forward plans for a pedestrian and cycling bridge from Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf to alleviate congestion
  - Extend the cycle hire scheme to Rotherhithe
  - Explore means of integrating river transport into the network to make sure that residents in Rotherhithe get the full benefit from the river as a mode of transport
  - Address in a full and proper manner the concerns and recommendations raised by the council in relation to the proposals for the new Silvertown Tunnel, which will impact negatively on the quality of life of a vast number of people who live and work in the borough.

**Note:** This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

**MOTION 2 – THE POWER TO SET A REAL LIVING WAGE** *(See pages 5 – 6 of the main agenda)*

Councillor Leo Pollak, having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, left the room for the debate and vote upon the motion.

This motion was considered prior to the guillotine having fallen.

Councillor Hamish McCallum, seconded by Anood Al-Samerai, moved the motion.

Councillors Gavin Edwards, seconded by Councillor Maisie Anderson, moved Amendment B.

Following debate (Councillor Ian Wingfield), at 10.03pm the Mayor announced that the guillotine had fallen.

The guillotine having fallen Amendment B was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That council assembly welcomes the cross-party support for the London Living Wage since the motion agreed by council in November 2008 and the steps taken in Southwark in 2012 to introduce the London Living Wage for all staff, including contractors as well as the council's directly employed staff.
2. That council assembly notes the progress in implementing the London Living Wage policy in Southwark and the proposal for a Living Wage Zone as part of the Canada Water regeneration area.
3. That council assembly welcomes the council's on-going work to support the Living Wage, including:
  - Celebrating employers who are promoting and encouraging the practice of paying the Living Wage to apprentices through our Southwark apprenticeship standards.
  - Working with organisations across London to inform the development of new policy and activities relating to Living Wage through the upcoming Living Wage Symposium.
  - Supporting the creation of a London Living Wage zone at More London.
4. That council assembly further notes that Preston City Council in partnership with 'Unlock Democracy' is considering submitting the following proposal to government under the Sustainable Communities Act:
 

*'To delegate power to local authorities to compel all private and public sector employers within their area to pay the Living Wage. The rate of the Living Wage to be determined in accordance with the rates set by the Living Wage Foundation for London and outside London.'*
5. That council assembly believes that this power could reduce in-work poverty in Southwark and benefit the local economy through a multiplier effect in each local authority area it is introduced.
6. That council assembly further believes that as part of the negotiating process with the relevant Secretary of State, all or some of the benefits to government through

increased income tax revenue and reduced welfare spending be used to enforce the new power and help local businesses which may struggle to move to the new rate. The case should also be strongly made for additional resources, so that councils can enforce the Living Wage effectively.

7. That council assembly therefore calls on the cabinet to express its interest in joining Preston City Council in any collective submission to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act, and to work together with the Unlock Democracy campaign to gain support for the proposal from other councils in London and across the country.

**Note:** This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

**MOTION 3 – BLACKLISTING** *(See pages 6 – 7 of the main agenda)*

Councillors Gavin Edwards, Paul Fleming and Victoria Mills, having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, left the room prior to the motion being formally moved and voted upon. As part of the programme motion the meeting agreed to change 'Constructing Association' to 'Consulting Association', in paragraph 2 of the motion..

The guillotine haven fallen, Councillors Richard Livingstone and Mark Williams, formally moved and seconded the motion.

The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That council assembly is aware of the destructive practice of blacklisting that occurred for decades in the UK construction industry and the disastrous effects it had on many of the workers that were included on the blacklist.
2. That council assembly notes that most of the workers on the blacklist of The Consulting Association were trade unionists, many of them were blacklisted for raising legitimate health and safety concerns with their employer.
3. That council assembly recognise that because of this administration's commitment to new affordable housing, lots of new homes are being built in Southwark, which is also providing opportunities for local people in construction work. We take the safety of our residents, staff and contractors very seriously and believe strongly that people who raise health and safety concerns should not be blighted for their working life through blacklisting.
4. That council assembly notes that the council already has a process in place for Major Works contracts to identify any companies that have made use of the blacklist in the past to ensure that they have put in place actions to prevent such behaviour recurring and to compensate those victimised by the practice. Council assembly believes that this good practice should be adopted in its other contracts.
5. That this council is determined that blacklisting should never occur again and calls on cabinet to:

- Make provision in Southwark Council's public tendering procedures to exclude blacklisters from public contracts if they are either still blacklisting or have not put into place genuine actions agreed by the blacklisted workers or their representatives concerning past blacklisting activities
- Make provision in the council's terms and conditions for public works that provide for the termination of the contract if a supplier is found to engage in blacklisting activities during the course of that contract
- Make provision to include blacklisting and trade union membership in the pre-qualification questionnaire for new construction contracts.

**Note:** This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

## 7. OTHER REPORTS

### 7.1 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES BASE 2016/17

*(See pages 8 - 23 of the main agenda)*

This report was considered after the guillotine had fallen, therefore in accordance with council assembly procedure rule 1.12 (3) and (4), the report was afforded up to a maximum of 15 minutes.

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.11 (2), the report was formally moved by the Mayor.

Following debate (Councillors Fiona Colley and Hamish McCallum), the recommendations contained within the report were put to the vote and declared to be carried.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That council assembly note that in accordance with the decisions of council assembly about council tax on 28 November 2012:
  - 1) That the local discretionary premium for homes counted as long-term empty (over 2 years) shall remain unchanged and be set at 150%, this premium is statutory and is the maximum that can be charged.
  - 2) That the discount for second homes shall remain unchanged and be set at 0%.
  - 3) That the discount to replace class A exemptions shall remain unchanged and be set at 0%.
2. That the local discount for empty and unfurnished properties be set to zero with effect from 1 April 2016, as discussed in paragraphs 16 to 17 of the report.
3. That the council tax base for 2016/17 be set at 91,231.00 band D equivalent dwellings, as shown in paragraph 41 of the report.

4. That the assumed council tax collection level should be increased to 97.00% noting the risks outlined in paragraph 31 of the report.
5. That the council tax base for 2016/17 for St. Mary Newington be set at 10,978.81 band D equivalent dwellings.
6. That the council tax base for 2016/17 for St. Saviour's be set at 1,174.07 band D equivalent dwellings.
7. That the council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) for both working and pensionable age claimants shall remain unchanged in 2016/17, and note the consequential reduction in tax base of 17,997 band D equivalent dwellings as shown in paragraph 50 of the report.
8. That it be noted that:
  - Any minor and consequential amendments to the CTRS written policy are to remain delegated to the strategic director of finance and governance, in consultation with the monitoring officer.
  - No changes were made under the strategic director of finance and Governance's authority during 2015/16.
9. That it be noted that, as for 2015/16, the NNDR1 return showing the national non-domestic rates base will be signed off by the council's section.151 officer (strategic director of finance and governance).

## 8. AMENDMENTS

Amendments are set out in supplemental agenda 3.

The meeting closed at 10.13 pm.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

**APPENDIX 1****COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY)****TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2016****LATE QUESTION****1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Can the Leader update members on the recent tragic case of pensioner and council tenant, Kingsley Idahosa, who was found to have been dead in his home for over a month, despite several calls from neighbours to the Council?

**RESPONSE**

I am sure that all members will want to pass on their condolences to the family and friends of Mr Idahosa who sadly passed away recently.

We have reviewed the actions of officers at the time and are reassured that the right steps were taken to locate Mr Idahosa as soon as concerns were raised about his whereabouts.

At the beginning of December Mr Idahosa's neighbour contacted the Area Housing team to raise concerns. The team responded within 24 hours, by visiting the address and then conducting a further follow up visit.

Mr Idahosa's neighbour was present at both visits, and there were no signs of an emergency on either visit. The neighbour advised the team that Mr Idahosa's car was missing so it was highly likely that he was therefore away with family or friends for the Christmas period.

A friend of Mr Idahosa's reported him missing to the police after he did not show up to a pre-arranged visit at Christmas. We therefore conducted a welfare visit with the police on 7 January 2016 when Mr Idahosa was discovered.

As a responsible landlord, we take the welfare of our residents very seriously and do our best to balance engagement with local people, particularly the most vulnerable, without intruding on their private lives.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION 1 TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you to the Leader for his answer and I think we all echo the condolences and how tragic this case is and I have to say I am a bit concerned by the response being a bit glib or not taking it quite seriously or maybe being a bit complacent. I mean was he known to Social Services? Was he on the list that housing officers have of pensioners they visit? Is there any more information because I am sure every councillor in this room is really concerned and just would like to hear a bit more about how seriously he is personally taking it.

## **RESPONSE**

Thank you Madam Mayor, I thank Councillor Al-Samerai and I repeat what I said at the start of my answer, this is obviously a very sad case and I am sure all of our thoughts are with Mr Idahosa's family. My understanding and I have looked into this case, my understanding is that he had had some medical history which was known to us and given his age, I think he was also on our list of people we had to keep an eye on. Unfortunately in this case the visit before Christmas which was made by our officers and where this tenants car was missing, gave, I suppose false hope to everyone concerned, including his neighbour, that he was away and had gone away because his car wasn't parked in its usual position and it was only after Christmas when another friend of his contacted him and he normally makes contact over the Christmas period and he hadn't heard from him that the investigation was made. I don't regard any case like this in a glib manner, of course I don't and I have asked the Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Housing for us to review what we do in cases where older people, for whatever reason, haven't been seen or where behaviour in respect of their rent account or whatever might give some cause for concern or where previous patterns of interaction with either the community or officers has been disrupted. In this case clearly there was a neighbour who was looking out and who was raising concerns and I do say to everybody here and anyone who obviously has elderly neighbours to keep an eye out for them, an eye out for any strange disruption to their usual patterns of behaviour and don't be afraid to go and knock on the door. Sometimes we are afraid to go and knock on the door because we think it is an invasion of people's privacy but in this case of course, very sad consequences, we didn't find this tenant sooner, so in terms of what we are doing with this, we are reviewing what we can do to tighten up these procedures, to tighten up contact that we make with potentially vulnerable tenants and any lessons that can be learned from this very sad case and any others that might occur, will be.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION 2 TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Thanks Madam Mayor. I do feel a bit reassured that you are actually reviewing processes and if you like cross party involvement in that, I think that is really important and that certainly is better than the original written answer response. It doesn't entirely add up though because, I mean talking about the visit at the beginning of December and then Christmas, it just feels a long period and my slight concern is maybe because of the Christmas period and officers being on leave, that was an issue and that is something I would hope to be taking part in the review. Also, I don't know if you remember the case in 2008 of Mrs Lambert where you had actually called an extraordinary council meeting and had a vote of no confidence in Councillor Noakes who was the cabinet member at the time and frankly tried to score political points out of it and I am not suggesting that we do that, I am not calling for no confidence votes, so the point I was making is I am not suggesting that he calls an extraordinary council meeting and does votes of no confidence, I think tragedies happen. What happened at that time that the administration did initiate was an independent investigation and so that is my request tonight that there is actually an independent investigator that isn't the strategic director, that there is an external investigation into what happened here so that I think we can all be confident, we are not calling to blame individuals,

either councillors or officers but actually I don't feel comfortable that this review that has happened has really been that robust.

## **RESPONSE**

Well as I say, this has all been fairly recent; there are clearly lessons that can be learnt. I think we should look at what any review that we can do internally can throw up. I mean if I remember rightly, the circumstances of the case you are talking about in 2008 was different, that was the lady who had much more direct involvement with social services, if I remember rightly, I will look back at Southwark News and remind myself what we were saying at the time, but we will look at what we can learn out of this case. I am not sure – you know the sad reality is that people will die who are living alone in our properties, that is the sad reality of the case, the particular sadness in cases like this is when someone is not noticed or their absence is noticed and nothing is done to pick it up and as I say we will look at how we can do that better and at the moment I feel confident that we don't need someone from outside to tell us how we can do this but in the first instance we can look ourselves and if it is something which Scrutiny wants to look at in due course, then I think that that would be something very worthwhile for Scrutiny to look at because there might be a process we can put in place where somebody is potentially on an at risk category but not considered particularly vulnerable but because of their age are at risk, that we can do something better and I think if you are not satisfied with what that throws up, then I think come back and ask me if we should have an independent investigation to look into it but as I say, the learning is still very fresh in this and we are looking at how we can tighten things up. As I said, there are all sorts of things that you can do - reviewing somebody's rent account and their statement and how they pay and where they pay and people are listened to. I kind of take exception because once they encounter somebody throwing doubt on the good intentions of officers who didn't put the phone down and do nothing, it is really not good enough for her to keep coming along, she does it not just on this but on other issues where she criticises council officers and I just think that is unacceptable. People are doing hard work and hard jobs and what we saw in this case was not an officer who put the phone down and did nothing, they went round and knocked on the door and visited the neighbour. Now that is the appropriate action for them to have done at that stage and it was the conclusion of everyone including the neighbour that he was probably away because his car was not there. Now I think the reasonable thing to do and I don't criticise any officer for what they did for doing it. If she wants to go and criticise officers, so be it but I'm not going to join her in doing that.



**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY)****TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2016****MEMBERS' QUESTIONS****1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE DALE**

Can the leader give an update on the Council's commitment to build 1,500 new council homes by 2018?

**RESPONSE**

131 new council homes have already been delivered, including the completion last year of 75 new homes at Willow Walk, all of which are now occupied. In addition, we are expecting the completion of a further 7 developments in the coming spring and summer, providing another 113 council rented homes, as well as 8 homes for shared ownership and 10 for private sale. A further scheme creating 112 new homes, including 50 at council rent, is due to start on site in the spring.

A further 22 sites have been approved by cabinet for inclusion in the programme, and these are in the initial design development or feasibility stages and are estimated to provide around 430 new homes.

On 15 September 2015, cabinet delegated the approval process for the inclusion of other sites within the programme, following initial resident consultation, to the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes. This will streamline the approval process and therefore assist with accelerating the programme.

The hidden homes programme, which brings back vacant spaces with blocks back into use by creating new homes, has already delivered 28 new homes, with a further 38 in the development pipeline.

Leathermarket JMB is also working on two schemes that could deliver 64 new homes.

**S106 Purchase**

The Council exchanged on a scheme that will provide 56 council rented units and is due to complete early 2017. Exchange is imminent with another developer that would provide 34 units of which 24 would be council rent and 10 intermediate. The Council is continuing to actively seek further opportunities.

**Southwark Regeneration in Partnership (SRIP)**

The SRIPs programme is currently at developer selection stage covering 19 sites that will deliver mixed tenure developments. Across these sites, a number of projects are due to start on site this year, delivering 294 council rent homes by 2018, along with 89 intermediate and 260 homes for sale. This element of the SRIPs programme is estimated to provide over 1,200 homes during the next 10 years.

In summary, sites to deliver around 1250 new homes by 2018 are already in the programme. Further opportunities have been identified, and will be following the process for inclusion in the programme and initial resident consultation, over the next few months. These remaining sites will provide the additional homes required to meet the 1500 target by 2018.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE DALE**

Thank you, Madam Mayor and thank you to the Leader for his response to my question and it is good to have this detail about their plan for council homes. How would the Council ensure that as these homes are built, local residents are able to stay in their communities?

#### **RESPONSE**

Well I thank you Councillor Dale for her question and her supplemental question. Of course what we are doing with our delivery of new council homes is ensuring whether these homes are delivered on or adjacent to an existing estate and at least 50% of those homes will go to residents on that estate, whether they are overcrowded or they are considered to be under-occupying and needing to move and they are the ones who have first choice on the new homes that are being built and these will be high quality, as we said, we want a borough, when you walk through the borough you are not able to identify what the tenure is of the housing you are looking at and just as I was discussing with Councillor Pollack only the other day, we want our council housing to be even better than the private housing when you look at it and so some of these existing tenants will move in to at least 50% of the housing that is built. I think that is really good, I think that is really progressive, it gives those tenants, without having the disruption of building going on around them, a stake from the outcome and if it is more than 50% of people moving in, I would be absolutely enthralled but the rest will be filled with general needs applicants and certainly from conversations with Leathermarket JMB as to how that 50% could be increased with particular developments in their area so it is giving people a stake in what is going on in their community, I think is good news and part of a council which is committed to giving quality housing for all in our borough.

#### **2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH McCALLUM**

Which frontline council services other than youth and play services are facing a 73% budget cut?

#### **RESPONSE**

It is simply not correct to say that the Council's youth and play budget is taking a 73% cut next year; our budget options are being discussed at cabinet tomorrow and are still to be finalised as we seek to balance the books. While there will be a cut in budget for one part of our youth provision, we estimate that as a minimum, this council is currently committing more than £12m to the young people of this borough, not least the continuing Youth Fund of £1m, student bursaries for those most in need, through our libraries, parks, leisure and arts programmes, the Young Offenders Team, through Secondary and FE Employment and Inclusion and through our ever ambitious apprenticeship scheme. We are also committed to on-going investment in capital projects such as the Mountview development in Peckham, Free Swim and Gym, the Old Vic scheme, the enhancements to all of our leisure centres and the new Castle

Centre opening in the coming months. This is but a small sample of the value that this council places on young people.

Over the last 5 years, this council has had to make savings of over £150m and inevitably this has involved cutting significant parts and sometimes the whole of some services, either in a single year or over a number of years. As the government continues to cut funding for Southwark, we have to find new and different ways to deliver the services that people value, with less money to pay for it. We always try to be more efficient, but the simple scale of government funding reductions means that sometimes we have to take some difficult decisions and focus on allocating the resources that we have in the way that makes most impact.

Rather than cutting the same from every service, we are looking at all services to find the best ways of making savings. For example in Children and Adult services, adult services are taking a higher cut than children's services. We are also protecting our children's social services budget to protect the most vulnerable. These are choices that we are making about limiting the negative impact and protecting our most vulnerable residents first, including our most vulnerable children, young people and families.

While none of us like making cuts in those services that we value, we have no choice but to make changes in order to make the most of the reducing resources that we have available. We are committed to working with the voluntary sector and the young people who use our services to improve and update our youth offer, and we will be undertaking further consultation over and above the widespread discussions that we have already had with both young people in Southwark and our voluntary sector partners, in order to find innovative ways to deliver the services young people in Southwark want and need.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH McCALLUM**

Thank you Madam Mayor I do have a supplemental. I would just like to first question the first line of the Leader's response which is that it is not correct to say that the Council's Youth and Play budget is taking a 72% pay cut this year, that wasn't my question. My question was about the 73% cut proposed over the budget planning cycle and as you would hopefully know, the vast majority of that about 80% of that £2.5 million reduction is planned in the first year but just putting that aside, I would like to understand how the Council can make this cut and simultaneously ensure the safeguarding of the specialist services which our youth services department is so excellent in providing, I am talking in particular about services for those in specialist educational needs, services to support teenage pregnancies and sex education, services of which can't be typically delivered as a one size fits all youth worker, how can those services be protected?

#### **RESPONSE**

That is a very good question and a detailed question and I am going to nominate Councillor Vicky Mills to answer because she is all over this issue and subject. I could give a more general answer to you Hamish but I think in fairness to this subject, I am going to ask Councillor Mills if she can.

## RESPONSE BY COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS

I would say that you will see in the council cabinet report that we have tabled tomorrow that we are looking at staging the process of reducing our expenditure on Youth and Play Services and I take those seriously the points you were making, they are absolutely at the heart of what we are trying to protect in the over £1 million budget that we will still have for Youth and Play in this borough.

### 3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS

Can the leader explain what the likely impact of the government's pay to stay proposals will be for residents in Southwark on social rents?

## RESPONSE

The most recent government proposals for 'pay to stay' are contained in the Housing and Planning Bill and a DCLG consultation document on pay to stay tapers that was published on 9 October 2015. As the Housing and Planning Bill is yet to make its passage through the House of Lords, the relevant sections of the bill are still subject to change.

As it stands, "High income social tenants" on household incomes of over £40,000 in London, or £30,000 nationally will be required to pay a market rent or close to market rent. £40,000 is not a particularly high household income in London given other higher living costs, and a household on an income of £40,000 would not be able to afford a high proportion of local market rents in Southwark, particularly for 2 beds and above, as demonstrated in the below table. It is essential that a safety net system is incorporated to ensure households are not made unintentionally homeless due to being unable to afford the increased rent relative to household income.

As the results of the consultation have not been published, it is not clear how a taper would operate. The only indication is from the DCLG impact assessment on the Housing and Planning Bill (including the pay to stay policy). This modelled income generated from the scheme from those earning between £40-50k in London paying 80% market rent, and those earning over £50k paying a market rent.

In addition it is not clear how the market rent will be defined: it could be a median or mean rent. The modelling below uses median rent, mean rents are nearly always higher due to some exceptionally high rents in Southwark. The modelling demonstrates the increases in rents from council rent to 60% market, 80% market and 100% market. Actual proportions of rent could be higher or lower once regulations are published.

### Modelling impact on rents

**Southwark average** - The weekly market rent for a Southwark two bed property is £458. 80% of market rent would be £367. This would result in an increase from social rents in the region of £267. At a household income of £40,000, 48% of gross income would be spent on housing costs. For a 3 bed, the rent increase to 80% market would be £333. 58% of gross income would go on rent, 75% for a four-bed plus property. In reality this proportion would be even higher when calculated on the basis of 'take-home' pay, rather than gross income.

**SE1** – The weekly market rent for a SE1 two bed property, our highest value area, is £548. 80% of market rent would be £438. This would result in an increase from social

rents in the region of £339. Ignoring possible benefits, 57% of gross income would be spent on housing costs at a household income of £40,000. For a 3 bed, the rent increase to 80% market would be £398. 66% of gross income would go on rent, 75% for a four bed plus property.

**SE15** - The weekly market rent for a SE15 two bed property is £345. 80% of market rent would be £276. This would result in an increase from social rents in the region of £177. Ignoring possible benefits, 36% of gross income would be spent on housing costs at a household income of £40,000. For a 3 bed, the rent increase to 80% market would be £241. 46% of gross income would go on rent, 70% for a four bed plus property.

Area	Bed	Modelling possible rent increases at 60%, 80% and full market rent								Modelling impact assessment values, £40-50k 80% market, £50k+ full market				
		South wark avg weekly council rent (LAHS 2015)	60 % median weekly market rent	80% median weekly market rent	100 % median weekly market rent	100 % weekly median rent, to compare	Weekly increase in rent to 60% market	Weekly increase in rent to 80% market	Weekly increase in rent to 100 % market	Annual 80% market rent	Annual 100 % market rent	% of £40 K gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £49.99k gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £50 k gross income at 100 % market rent
South wark	1	90	227	303	379	414	137	213	289	158 11	197 64	40%	32%	40%
South wark	2	99	275	367	458	508	176	267	359	191 33	239 16	48%	38%	48%
South wark	3	109	331	442	552	659	223	333	443	230 40	288 00	58%	46%	58%
South wark	4 +	117	434	578	723	781	316	461	605	301 63	377 04	75%	60%	75%
SE1	1	90	241	322	402	458	151	232	312	168 00	210 00	42%	34%	42%
SE1	2	99	329	438	548	585	229	339	449	228 77	285 96	57%	46%	57%
SE1	3	109	380	506	633	768	271	398	524	264 19	330 24	66%	53%	66%
SE1	4 +	117	434	578	723	765	316	461	605	301 63	377 04	75%	60%	75%
SE5	1	90	181	242	302	308	91	151	212	126 05	157 56	32%	25%	32%
SE5	2	99	227	303	379	387	128	204	279	158 11	197 64	40%	32%	40%
SE5	3	109	299	399	498	512	190	290	390	208 03	260 04	52%	42%	52%
SE5	4 +	117	422	562	703	736	304	445	585	293 28	366 60	73%	59%	73%
SE11	1	90	215	287	359	369	125	197	269	149 76	187 20	37%	30%	37%
SE11	2	99	269	359	448	455	170	259	349	187 20	234 00	47%	37%	47%
SE11	3	109	359	478	598	633	250	370	489	249	312	62%	50%	62%

		Modelling possible rent increases at 60%, 80% and full market rent								Modelling impact assessment values, £40-50k 80% market, £50k+ full market				
Area	Bed	South wark avg weekly council rent (LAHS 2015)	60 % median weekly market rent	80% median weekly market rent	100 % median weekly market rent	100 % weekly median rent, to compare	Weekly increase in rent to 60% market	Weekly increase in rent to 80% market	Weekly increase in rent to 100 % market	Annual 80% market rent	Annual 100 % market rent	% of £40 K gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £49.99k gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £50 k gross income at 100 % market rent
										60	00			
SE11	4 +	117	478	638	797	821	361	521	680	33283	41604	83%	67%	83%
SE15	1	90	185	246	308	360	95	156	218	12845	16056	32%	26%	32%
SE15	2	99	207	276	345	369	108	177	246	14400	18000	36%	29%	36%
SE15	3	109	262	350	437	486	154	241	328	18240	22800	46%	36%	46%
SE15	4 +	117	400	533	667	768	283	416	549	27830	34788	70%	56%	70%
SE16	1	90	215	287	359	365	125	197	269	14976	18720	37%	30%	37%
SE16	2	99	254	339	424	461	155	240	324	17683	22104	44%	35%	44%
SE16	3	109	338	451	563	657	229	342	455	23520	29400	59%	47%	59%
SE16	4 +	117	404	538	673	687	286	421	555	28080	35100	70%	56%	70%
SE17	1	90	191	255	319	315	101	165	229	13315	16644	33%	27%	33%
SE17	2	99	245	327	409	408	146	228	309	17059	21324	43%	34%	43%
SE17	3	109	314	419	523	530	205	310	415	21840	27300	55%	44%	55%
SE17	4 +	117	422	563	704	940	305	446	586	29376	36720	73%	59%	73%
SE21	1	90	172	230	287	289	82	140	197	12000	15000	30%	24%	30%
SE21	2	99	221	294	368	369	121	195	269	15360	19200	38%	31%	38%
SE21	3	109	262	350	437	479	154	241	328	18240	22800	46%	36%	46%
SE21	4 +	117	388	517	646	653	270	400	529	26966	33708	67%	54%	67%
SE22	1	90	179	239	299	303	89	149	209	12480	15600	31%	25%	31%
SE22	2	99	210	281	351	421	111	181	251	14640	18300	37%	29%	37%
SE22	3	109	324	432	540	557	216	324	432	22560	28200	56%	45%	56%
SE22	4	117	478	638	797	828	361	521	680	332	416	83%	67%	83%

		Modelling possible rent increases at 60%, 80% and full market rent								Modelling impact assessment values, £40-50k 80% market, £50k+ full market				
Area	Bed	South wark avg weekly council rent (LAHS 2015)	60 % median weekly market rent	80% median weekly market rent	100 % median weekly market rent	100 % weekly median rent, to compare	Weekly increase in rent to 60% market	Weekly increase in rent to 80% market	Weekly increase in rent to 100 % market	Annual 80% market rent	Annual 100 % market rent	% of £40 K gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £49.99k gross income on rent at 80% market	% of £50 k gross income at 100 % market rent
	+									83	04			
SE24	1	90	183	244	305	297	93	154	215	12720	15900	32%	25%	32%
SE24	2	99	220	293	366	368	120	193	267	15274	19092	38%	31%	38%
SE24	3	109	324	431	539	522	215	323	431	22512	28140	56%	45%	56%
SE24	4 +	117	476	635	793	823	359	517	676	33120	41400	83%	66%	83%

Sources: LAHS 2015, October 2015 Zoopla rent data from the Southwark Market Trends Bulletin

### Number of tenants affected

The council does not routinely collect data on tenant household income, therefore the council is unaware of how many tenants would have a household income over £40k. Potentially more tenants could be affected over time. The impact assessment on the Housing and Planning Bill states that: "4.4.12 As earnings increase over time, households which are currently beneath the thresholds at which higher rents are charged will break through the thresholds and be added to the higher-income cohort." Therefore more households may be affected by the pay to stay over time unless these thresholds are increased.

### Possible impact on rates of the right to buy and the availability of social rented housing

Some tenants faced with high proportions of market rent may choose to exercise the right to buy to avoid the high rents. For some households this may be unsustainable in the long term. The increased rate of right to buy would lead to a further reduction in the social rented stock.

### Summary

The pay to stay proposals contained in the Housing and Planning Bill could have a significant negative impact on residents in Southwark, with council tenants seeing a huge increase in their rent that would be unaffordable for many. There is also a real risk that the proposals will:

- Negatively impact on achieving mixed and balanced communities. Southwark is a very diverse borough with a very high proportion of social rented housing (42%), and considerably higher in some areas. These proposals could lead to

polarised communities if those on higher incomes move to cheaper areas to avoid paying the market rent.

- Discourage aspiration and betterment, acting as a disincentive to find work or better paid work, and also potentially increasing non reported cash in hand jobs.
- Force some tenants to exercise the right to buy for whom the costs of owning their own home are unsustainable in the longer term.
- Place a huge burden on the council in terms of administering the scheme, the cost of which would outweigh the limited and questionable benefits of implementing the scheme.

The council has raised its concerns around these proposals through the government's pay to stay consultation, and will continue to lobby the government against the disastrous Housing and Planning Bill, which could have a devastating effect on council housing in our borough.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS**

Thank you Madam Mayor and I thank the Leader for his answer so could the Leader just clarify based on the answer he has given, under these pay to stay proposals, a three bedroom council home in my ward in Peckham Rye, a family earning just over £40,000 a year which could be a nurse and a teacher, is not a huge amount of money for a household to be earning, would see their rent increase by more than £12,500 per year. Does he agree that this is absolutely ridiculous and we will reassure that the Council will do everything possible to resist this and also to prepare for what could possibly be a very damaging policy for people living in this borough?

#### **RESPONSE**

I want to thank Councillor Edwards for his supplemental question. Yes we are doing everything we can by representations that we are making through London Councils, through Central London Forward and possibly the great advantage of having two Members of Parliament within the Labour group is that they can make the case on our behalf of the impact, which this tenacious bill will have on the residents of our borough, in Parliament directly to ministers. I think we have to recognise, we have been talking about council housing and the value of council housing and I know that every member, well probably, all but two members of this council, have to be committed to council housing in this borough; you might disagree sometimes about the tactics of how you get the best council housing but we are committed to council housing and the concept of council housing. I think we have to recognise we are dealing with a government that does not believe in council housing, that does not believe in the value of social housing at all. It has one agenda, its agenda is to achieve maximum where they can home ownership and they will do that whatever they can and I believe that they probably see council housing and the future of council housing as effectively temporary accommodation, it is temporary accommodation, they will run it down, they will reduce it in size as much as possible and it will just be housing for those really who can't quite get a foot on the housing ladder or property ladder and it will become temporary accommodation. People will be churning around the system before they get thrown out much sooner than they are under the current system. That is, I believe this government's vision for council housing and social housing and we should probably be terrified of it because we know that kind of vision will not work in London and cannot



work in London where house prices and rent prices are as high as they are and nothing which this government is doing, I believe, really gets us to the position where we increase the housing supply to such an extent that you can have a system where you can have that flexibility of people moving in and through different changes so this is an attack on council housing, be under no illusion, with a vision which I think is incredibly damaging and detrimental to our borough and the example that you have cited just demonstrates, I think again, the initial effect of this bill by a government which has no interest in securing people in council housing any longer than a couple of years before they are kicked out into the private sector and whatever that may offer them, that is wrong and this council has to stand united, united in opposition to that.

#### **4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Given that the reduced play service is moving from children's services to parks and leisure at the end of March, what steps has the leader taken to ensure that all the "new" positions will be filled by 1 April so that there is continuity of service?

#### **RESPONSE**

The council is currently in formal consultation with staff and trade unions. Some staff have requested voluntary redundancy and these requests will be considered alongside our primary concern that the community needs are met. Service managers have a number of options, including redeployment of staff across the service to ensure continuity of service provision, and agreeing the timing of departure for staff taking voluntary redundancy that works for the service.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Thank you Madam Mayor and I thank the Leader for his answer but it is all very muddling unfortunately and I think part of the difficulty is the transition from one department of the Council under one cabinet portfolio into another department of the Council into another portfolio. I realise it is all very messy but for the users, for the end user, the young people, most of whom use the facilities for a number of reasons, one is to get exercise in a borough where quite frankly we still have children with a high obesity rate and they trust their play workers, they put a huge amount of trust in their play workers so we have now got this bizarre situation where nobody is really quite sure what the service is going to look like, who is going to be there and most shockingly, and I know this is to do with the government rules, but most shockingly we have the potential for staff to take enhanced redundancy packages who have been there a long time, so the problem is we have got staff who may well take enhanced redundancy packages which will amount to quite a lot of money who can then re-apply for the jobs in a month's time and carry on working for the Council having taken redundancy and it just all feels very messy and it doesn't feel like the right saving to be making so I am not reassured by your answer and I want to hear that it is really under control.

#### **RESPONSE**

I want to thank Councillor Morris for her supplemental statements and question. I think there is always uncertainty whenever there is any transformation in any service and when any service transfers between departments and when that involves some staff taking voluntary redundancy as part of any package but I have to say that given the level of difficulties faced in Southwark over the last few years, we are pretty experienced now at transformation of services within the rearrangement that follow

those transformation of those services and with transferring particular services from one department to another so whilst I can't say today absolutely this is the clear picture and this is the structure and this is the staff who will be in place, I have every confidence in our staff, come 1 April, to have a situation in place which can carry on delivering a service which will continue to be of real value to the children of our borough and to their parents and guardians so I understand the concern, we will be following it. We will make sure that it isn't chaos come April 1 but as we have done in the past, we manage the transformation of the service in a truly ordered and considered fashion.

## **5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS**

Can the leader explain how local residents will be consulted on the best location for the new Canada Water leisure centre?

### **RESPONSE**

Consultation on a site for a new leisure centre at Canada Water will run in parallel with British Land's consultation on their planning application for a new town centre to be located on the printworks, Surrey Quay's Shopping centre and Mast Leisure centre sites.

British Land will be holding four drop in exhibitions of the emerging plans [including an interactive model] at the former Apple Snow unit opposite Tesco within the Surrey Quay's Shopping centre. These will be on: Friday 5 February [11-5pm], Saturday 6 February [10-4 pm], Wednesday 10 February [4-8pm], and Saturday 13 February [10-4pm]. There will also be local mini-exhibitions on 18 February [5.30-8pm] at the Osprey Estate TRA, Thursday 25 February [3-5.30pm] at Canada Estate Tenants Hall and Thursday 25 February [6.30-9pm] at Mayflower Tenants Association Hall. Southwark Council officers will be at all these sessions to answers questions and explain the leisure centre proposal and the alternative sites which have been considered.

British Land will issue a newsletter to 23,000 residents and local organisations to promote the consultation event. The newsletter will include a section which promotes the council's consultation sessions on the leisure centre site and a weblink where residents can find additional information and details of how they can provide us with their views. There will also be a letter from the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes which will be delivered alongside this newsletter setting out the leisure centre consultation in more detail.

We will also hold an open public meeting at the Canada Water Library at which residents will be able to raise any further questions they have arising from the other consultation events.

A final cabinet decision on whether to proceed with the preferred site will not be taken until early summer 2016. The report will be publically available and residents will be able to make representations to the cabinet if they wish and these will be considered before a decision is taken. The report will include details of the consultation responses which have been received by the council in response to the consultation.

The cabinet decision making timetable means that resident's will be able to continue to provide views on the proposals and options throughout March until the end of April 2016. We will also hold meetings with interested local groups and residents during this period if requested. All the feedback from these events will be considered before

cabinet makes its final decision on whether to proceed with the preferred site in early summer.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS**

Thank you Madam Mayor, I do have a supplemental. I would like to thank the Leader for a very full and comprehensive reply to my original but as a ward councillor I am concerned about how it would be possible to ensure continuity of leisure services within Rotherhithe and environs if a decision is taken to redevelop Seven Islands Leisure Centre rather than build a state of the art leisure centre in Canada Water, can the Leader advise how that would be addressed?

#### **RESPONSE**

I want to thank Councillor Williams for his supplemental question and I think he has identified a fundamental problem if the existing site of the leisure centre were to be redeveloped as a leisure centre for the future and we have seen it at the Castle quite frankly and the redevelopment of that site, people at the Elephant and Castle and that part of that borough have been without a leisure facility for years and years now whilst that has been on-going. What we have and what we have the potential at Canada Water is creating a brand new leisure centre, this state of the art facility would be open before Seven Islands close, that would mean there would be no break in service in this ever growing part of our borough where the need for leisure facilities is absolutely paramount so I think there is an extremely good case whatever for not using the existing site because it is simply impossible to continue services on the existing site whilst redeveloping it, I mean it is absolutely obvious to everybody, it must be, so I think the best option, the clearest option is to make use of part of the Canada Water masterplan area. I hope members across all sides will get behind that because I think that is in the best interests of all the residents of that part of our borough. I think it is pretty short sighted quite frankly to go round scaring people, stirring things up for the sake of a couple of cheap political points or a letter to the local paper this time about this. The transformation at Canada Water will be immense I believe, epic, epic as another councillor might say and I hope everyone could get behind that and the fact that we are committing to delivering a new leisure centre right at the start of that epic transformation at Canada Water, I think shows how much we as a council value community facilities in any regeneration. I think that is all we have done at Elephant and Castle with the leisure centre, which is going to be one of the first parts of the Elephant and Castle regeneration available to the public, available for all to use, free for all residents to use, as Labour keeps another pledge made in its 2014 manifesto.

#### **6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Can the leader set out how many Southwark residents have responded to this year's council budget consultation so far?

#### **RESPONSE**

The main focus of the Council's budget consultation for 2015/16 has been online through the Council's website and community council meetings. There have been 303 responses to the consultation to date, which taken together with previous years consultation exercises means over 1,000 responses have been made over the last 3 years. There has also been on-going consultation with voluntary and community sector organisations, and further consultation is taking place or will take place by departments on individual proposals.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you to the Leader for his answer. It seems it promises the developers choosing where it goes rather than the community and that links I suppose to my question which is about the budget consultation so the budget consultation answer says there has been 300 responses, that seems to me to be about 0.001% of the population have responded to the Council's budget consultation. I can also tell you that about 50 or so of those responses were at our Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Community Council so ably done on the voting buttons with Councillor Livingstone. I have been pushing for a bit more engagement with residents at community councils so I'm glad we did have some voting buttons however the questions were really patronising.

Note: Question time to the leader ended at this point.

## **7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LUCAS GREEN**

How will the council respond to the government's proposals to force any schools rated "inadequate" to automatically become academies?

### **RESPONSE**

One of the Council's key commitments is to drive up standards in Southwark schools and our school improvement team works with schools to help them make improvements, secure and remain being graded as Ofsted 'Outstanding' and 'Good' and prevent them being graded as 'Inadequate'. We regularly risk assess our schools so that as benchmarks are set by the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted requirements change, we can ensure that we can take swift action to ensure we minimise the threat to schools who may be at risk against new measures. This has been highly successful to date and we have no schools rated inadequate. Currently 91% of our schools are graded as good or outstanding. We are committed to keeping this offer for schools, which is why funding for the school improvement team is being protected despite significant budget pressures.

We believe that parents should always have a say in their child's education and completely oppose scrapping the requirement for academy sponsors to consult locally on whether they should take over schools. Changing the structure of a school does not necessarily guarantee an improvement in standards and in the case of schools rated inadequate, local experience in Southwark shows that intensive support from a local authority can help a struggling school get back on track. Over the last three years only 37% of secondary schools have actually improved their Ofsted rating after becoming academies, which the LGA has described as 'extremely worrying'.

We are constantly vigilant about the messages from the government about the proposals to move inadequate schools to academies and we have regular meetings and open lines of communication with the Regional Schools Commissioner and his representatives. We have and will continue to respond to consultations on any proposals for changes to the school system.

## 8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

Please set out the current locations and number of homes to be provided by purchasing units from developers or housing associations as part of the administration's target of 11,000 new council homes over the next thirty years.

### RESPONSE

To date 90 new dwellings have been secured or are in the course of being acquired through this initiative.

Contracts have now been exchanged for 56 units at 128-150 Blackfriars Road, SE1. Exchange is imminent on a further 34 units (10 of which are intermediate) on the site of the former Surrey Docks Stadium in Salter Road, SE16.

The potential for more acquisitions from developments in the pipeline is appraised as schemes come forward. At present several opportunities are being considered. Although it is too early to say conclusively which of these will yield additional units, there does appear to be good scope to make further contributions to the 11,000 new homes target from this source.

## 9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI

What impact will the joint Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham Better Placed Joint Committee on skills and employment have on people in the borough who are struggling to find employment?

### RESPONSE

The establishment of the Southwark Lambeth and Lewisham Joint Committee was approved by cabinet in October 2015 to ensure effective and transparent governance of the three borough *Better Placed* initiative. *Better Placed* seeks to better understand the individual needs of residents furthest away from the labour market with the most complex circumstances, and ensure that the right support is available at the right time to deliver improved employment and skills outcomes. The evidence shows that local authorities are 'better placed' to deliver this type of support for local residents.

As part of *Better Placed*, the Pathways to Employment pilot has been designed to test an integrated work and skills pathway for residents with complex barriers to employment, supporting them from universal credit/welfare application to employment using a key worker approach. Phase 1 of the Pathways to Employment pilot, delivered in 2014/15 by Tomorrow's People, supported 111 residents into work with success rates far in excess of those of the work programme, clearly demonstrating the benefits of a localised approach. The Phase 2 pilot, contracted to a consortium led by St Giles Trust, will support many more residents into work from early 2016.

## 10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

If the majority of residents say as part of the current consultation that they want the existing Seven Islands or the shopping centre overspill car park as the site for the new leisure centre at Canada Water, will the leader of the council listen?

## **RESPONSE**

A final cabinet decision on whether to proceed with our preferred site for a new leisure centre at Canada Water will not be taken until early summer 2016. We think it is important for the health and well being of our residents that we not only provide improved facilities in the area to meet the demand arising from our free swim and gym policy, as well as an increasing population, but also that we maintain continuity of leisure provision in the area. We are consulting residents about these issues through a number of drop in exhibitions which will take place during February. Residents will also be able to make their views known via the council's website until the end of April. We will consider all the information collected through this process before taking a final decision on whether to proceed with our preferred site for a new leisure centre.

### **11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (BOROUGH, BANKSIDE AND WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

What action will the Council take to prevent loss of Section 106 under government plans affecting contributions to local green spaces from future developments?

## **RESPONSE**

The government's Housing and Planning Bill includes provision for the introduction of 'starter homes', which will be new homes offered for sale at 80% of market price to first-time buyers under the age of 40. The impact is unclear at present until more detail about the implementation of the Bill emerges, however if starter homes are counted as affordable housing then they will not have to pay financial contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy or section 106.

The government has made changes to how planning obligations interact with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Southwark cannot "double charge" developers for the same infrastructure projects and since April 2015 we can no longer pool more than five S106 agreements (if they were entered into since 2010) or if it is for infrastructure capable of being funded by the CIL. This being the case, the council has made a commitment that 25% of all CIL collected in an area will remain in the area regardless of whether or not there is a local neighbourhood plan.

Furthermore the council is committed to a process by which the infrastructure priorities of local residents in an area are captured in community infrastructure project lists which will be updated yearly. Projects on these list, which can include local parks and publicly accessible green spaces, can be championed by anyone who lives, works or studies in Southwark and by local groups such as tenants and residents associations, youth groups, faith organisations, community groups or sports clubs. These lists are then approved on an annual basis by the community council. In addition, if a particular development has direct impact on a local space, S106 may be still negotiated to minimise the impacts.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (BOROUGH, BANKSIDE AND WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Thank you Madam Mayor and also thank you to the Leader for his quite detailed response, his response I will report back to the next meeting of the Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council which I should also point out had a delayed start time because members unanimously agreed to defer our start time to 2.30pm so we could attend the march against the Housing and Planning Bill. I am sure the Leader

would agree that it is clear we need an infrastructure to support new housing and Section 106 contribution forms an important part of this, yet the government is intent on giving up the award of Section 106 contributions for a new development that includes starter homes. How would the Council make the case to government that this is the wrong decision?

## **RESPONSE**

I want to thank Councillor Seaton for his supplemental question. Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council is famous for its consultation with the public demonstrating that Southwark Council actually is very good at consultation and talking to its residents and just because sometimes the residents come back and they don't like what you are saying and they don't vote for you, that is sometimes the way the consultation goes but it may be a lesson that is lost on Councillor Samerai. She can carry on making the same case right through to 2018 and we wish her well in that election.

I mean on election night last week she was saying we are back in the game. Well what game is it? What game is it when you get 255 votes and the winner gets 1,072, it is a game and you lose but Madam Mayor before I was distracted, it comes back to the point I was making earlier on and in response to Councillor Edwards, this is a government which has no interest, no commitment for social housing. Starter homes do not work in somewhere like Southwark because people simply cannot afford to buy and it actually cannot deliver housing for £450,000 in our borough to sell so the government has got it wrong for London and it has to start listening to London and what I said earlier on is particularly relevant here. We as London Councils, both as leaders and as representatives in this area are making the case to the government and I hope that there will be amendments going still for this Bill which will bring some sense to it because there has to be a different answer for London and I know that our colleagues and partners carry on making this case and we will carry on standing up for the interests of the residents of Southwark and of London for making a case which is right for us and right for the housing crisis which is unique to our city at this time and which this government is uniquely ignoring.

## **12. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU (PECKHAM AND NUNHEAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

We would like to ask the cabinet member for environment and public realm to lobby Transport for London (TfL) for the installation of a new bus stop along Peckham High Street? This was in light of the recent fatality of an elderly resident in Peckham.

## **RESPONSE**

My thoughts are with the family following the recent tragic fatality.

The council with TfL are working to deliver a road safety scheme in Peckham town centre and within this I will work with Transport for London to consider the provision of a new bus stop on Peckham High Street.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU (PECKHAM AND NUNHEAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

My supplementary question will be quite brief. I would like to thank Councillor Merrill for his comprehensive response and I am sure Peckham and Nunhead residents will very much appreciate the update from at the next the community council. In light of today's theme and also to give an update to the community council, I would like to invite, subject to availability, I would like to invite Councillor Merrill to our community council on the 21 March.

## **RESPONSE**

Subject to availability, I will be there as long as the teas and biscuits are on you. As you say in Peckham at the moment, we are looking around Peckham and improving the work in Peckham and it has a significant problem with certain things like rubbish on its streets. I am tackling this head on and with your help, I hope that we can resolve this problem because it is an on-going problem that has been happening for years and with the help and support of the local councillors there, I am looking forward to getting on with the job.

### **13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS (BERMONDSEY AND ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Can the leader of the council make sure that a full traffic management survey is carried out for the area between Great Dover Street, Borough High Street, Tower Bridge Road and the river? Also, that it includes any information obtainable from Network Rail?

## **RESPONSE**

As part of the approval of Network Rail's works at London Bridge station they are committed to providing regular traffic analysis of local area, as described in your question. I'd be very happy to share the next report with ward members.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS (BERMONDSEY AND ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Thank you Madam Mayor I do have a supplemental. Thank you to the Leader for his response. It is clear that more needs to be done to relieve the congestion on Jamaica Road and we are going to be speaking about that later on and it is welcome that there is going to be a commitment to a full traffic management survey. Will the Leader commit to continue to put pressure on TfL to deliver much needed traffic improvements to ease congestion in this area?

## **RESPONSE**

Thank you to Councillor Williams for his supplemental question. Nice question to a short answer, yes.

### **14. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

What steps is the council taking to prepare for any further closures of existing nursing homes in the borough?

## **RESPONSE**

The Council is actively developing an accommodation strategy for older people, which will look at the needs of older people (both current and future) across the borough and



how these can be met by utilising all models of care including care at home, extra care housing, shared lives arrangements, residential and nursing care. This will provide a framework for commissioning sufficient, quality nursing provision to meet future need. A workshop on this is planned for late February / early March.

In the interim, the following activity is underway:

- Re-establishing relationships with high quality providers of nursing care.
- Stabilising the current provision by continuing contract negotiations to strengthen our arrangements with them.
- Reviewing our accommodation portfolio with colleagues from housing to establish where there is potential to convert existing provision to nursing care.

#### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

Madam Mayor, thank you very much. Thank you to the cabinet member for her reply and can I just ask if she could explain why the suspension of council placements of Southwark residents to Burgess Park and Tower Bridge care homes is being lifted before the Care Quality Commission has in fact produced its pre inspection reports? Isn't that a bit premature and is that perhaps the reason maybe that we want to close Camberwell Green earlier?

#### **RESPONSE**

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you to Councillor Hubber for his question and supplemental. We have actually have been working really hard, we have had multi-disciplinary teams in both homes and we feel that from a safeguarding point of view, the actual safeguarding issues that were addressed in the original CQC reports for both homes have actually improved. We also felt that with HC-One's announcement to close Camberwell Green Nursing Home that actually as people were moving out of there, the safeguarding became less secure in that home with less people in the home and less staff to keep an eye on residents so we took a very balanced decision and felt that on a safeguarding level there were fewer safeguarding issues in Tower Bridge and Burgess Park and we felt that the work that multi-disciplinary teams had done with the teams there had actually brought it up to a standard. With CQC they can inspect anytime within six months and then it takes up to a further three months to publish their report which is an unacceptable level of time to wait to be able to place people in urgent need of care so we took a decision that actually we felt that improvements had been made in us securing the safeguarding of those residents.

#### **15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL**

Will the Council use its new powers to increase council tax by up to 2% to fund adult social care services in Southwark?

#### **RESPONSE**

We are minded to implement the government proposed precept for Adult Social Care in Southwark. Government funding to Local Authorities for Adult Social Care has been significantly reduced year on year since 2010 and this undermines quality care and effective partnership work between the NHS and social care. The c.£1.7m per annum that this precept will raise is of course welcome but wholly insufficient when compared

to the cuts that Local Authorities are facing from government. It simply makes no sense to protect the NHS and to, again, cut funding to Local Authorities for Adult Social Care. This is not a whole-system response from government and makes a challenging job for Local Authorities all the more difficult.

The government's decision to postpone the implementation of part 2 of the Care Act [Funding Reform – postponed indefinitely, likely 2020 we're told] leaves people using Adult Social Care services, their families, providers and people working in the sector in a further prolonged period of uncertainty and that is causing some instability in parts of the sector, such as care homes. Should we decide to implement the precept we will use this to stabilise local provision and to invest in quality of care, whilst continuing to lobby Government to finally take a coordinated approach, in support of integration of health and social care and to fairly funding our public care system.

**16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN DENNIS**

Can the cabinet member give an update on progress on the mental health challenge?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council has recently signed up to the Mental Health Challenge and I would like to congratulate Councillor Dennis who has been appointed as our Mental Health Champion. A working party of councillors has been established who will be raising awareness of mental health issues in the development of council policies and strategies.

The Southwark Mental Health Social Care Review was completed in August 2015. It is a vision paper which details what is needed for effective change for delivering mental health social work nearer the front of the system at the interface of primary and secondary care. In implementing and developing the review, full consultation has happened with partner organisations and full consultation with all staff members and groups.

A steering group has been established with wide membership with our partners e.g. Voluntary Sector, South London and Maudsley (SLaM), Housing, CCG and Local Care Networks, GP's, and Looked after Children.

Meetings are taking place regularly with SLaM to maintain integration that is more focussed on the primary/secondary care interface along with meeting other partner organisations including users and carers as the model of delivery is developed.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has now carried out an analysis of the capacity needed to carry out the consultation and drafting of a Southwark Joint Mental Health Strategy, which was a key recommendation of the recent Mental Health Social Care Review. CCG will publish an "expression of interest" for a specialist company to undertake this work within the next two weeks. The council will contribute resources and expertise to this work.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN DENNIS**

Thank you and thank you to the cabinet member for her response. I am looking forward to working with her and many other colleagues who I know are very committed to tackling the stigma around mental health and making sure that the issue gets the

profile that it rightly needs and deserves and mental health in Southwark is moving to joint commissioning between adult social care and the CCG and can the cabinet member explain the potential benefits of this for Southwark residents?

## **RESPONSE**

Thank you Councillor Dennis for her question and supplemental. A review has just been carried out by our mental health provision in the borough and at the moment all our commissioning is done by CCG so there is a very good health focus on there but what comes out and really stands out is that social care issues aren't being addressed maybe as well as they could do and it is not being given such an equal footing. I feel that if we do move to joint commissioning that social care needs for mental health sufferers will increase, we will have a more integrated approach, we will have more personalised care for people as they need it, looking at how we can support people in their homes and different choices for them, especially under the Care Act and with personalisation. I think it is also very timely to note that it is very concerning, I think we all have read today the increase in major trauma incidents in mental health and actually the increase in suicides and unexplained deaths and although I do acknowledge it is a Liberal Democrat FOI request that brought that, but I have to say that actually these relate to when the Liberal Democrats were in government and it is shameful that it takes after government, when there is very little representation from them within Parliament, when they could have used their influence to actually stop and maybe even prevent this so it is a shock and we do need to work more on it but I do think that the last government and the current government have been woefully short on tackling mental care and mental health issues and it has to stop, it has to change.

### **17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR KARL EASTHAM**

How much additional funding would the government's proposed 2% council tax precept for social care raise in Southwark? What proportion of the adult social care budget would this cover?

## **RESPONSE**

The government's proposed 2% precept for adult social care would raise in the region of £1.7m per annum for Southwark. To put this in context, the total budget for adult social care in Southwark is £80,286,536. This year we have to make approximately £30m of cuts to adult social care; the income generated through the precept represents only 5% of that amount so this precept would not even begin to plug the gap in the social care budget.

However any additional funding for social care is welcome and our focus for this additional and ring-fenced funding would be quality of service for older people and adults with disabilities living at home, in extra care housing, in care homes and especially in nursing care homes. Building on the Southwark Ethical Care Charter which is already making a significant difference to residents with care and support needs, our focus for investment is quality of care – treating our residents with dignity and respect and treating care staff fairly.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR KARL EASTHAM**

Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you Councillor Cryan for her response. The government seems to suggest that we can plug an £80 million hole in the adult social

care budget by introducing a 2% precept which will raise a welcome but inadequate £1.7 million which reminds me of David Cameron's maths on estate regeneration as well. Does the cabinet member agree that this suggestion by the government is entirely disingenuous?

## **RESPONSE**

I would like to thank Councillor Eastham for his question and his supplemental. Yes it is totally disingenuous; it is disingenuous on many accounts. First of all there is a major crisis in social care and a hole that needs plugging and cut after cut after cut over the last five years has made that even worse and to suggest that a small precept *can* actually fill that gap, that gap is just derisory and then actually having the gall to ask residents to pay for it with council tax. It is a very regressive tax, it will not address the problems, it will not fill the funding gap. I received a letter from Alastair Burt last week saying that he felt that by 2020, in real terms, we will have local authorities spending more on adult social care. Well tell him to come to Southwark, I welcome him to Southwark to show him the issues we are facing, the cuts we are facing, massive cuts in adult social care and to actually ask residents to pay for it, it is an insult, personally I feel.

### **18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE**

How many 11 year olds in the borough have taken up the Smart Savers offer and signed up to the credit union?

## **RESPONSE**

In total 512 vouchers have been redeemed by 11 year olds signing up to the credit union through the council's Smart Savers offer, which is an 11% take up rate. 91% of vouchers used were to create a new account, rather than applied to existing credit union accounts and 56 other accounts have also been set up at linked addresses (e.g. siblings). There has been a 29% increase overall in junior accounts at the credit union. The average balance on new accounts is £33, indicating additional monies being paid in and few withdrawals. We will be sending out the vouchers for this year just before February half term.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE**

Thank you to the cabinet member for her response and I think it is fantastic that so many young people are opening a Credit Union account and I really hope this smart savers programme encourages families to get involved in responsible lending. I am also hopeful that we have got some good news on the Walworth Road Credit Union, the shop front is looking fantastic and I just wondered if the cabinet member could comment on that and what that will mean for the residents of Walworth?

## **RESPONSE**

I would like to thank Councillor Kerslake for her question and supplemental. I was hoping to have some good news for you. I did meet with LMCU but I couldn't pin them down on a date but they have assured me it should be sometime in February. I would like to take this opportunity to actually thank Councillor Kerslake and all of our councillors in our Walworth wards - in Newington, East Walworth, and Faraday for the effort they have put in and helping with the local community, working with the Walworth

Road Credit Union Society and with St Peter's Church to actually raise the profile of credit unions, to actually raise the plight of people in Walworth who are happy to go to payday lenders and actually fighting their corner. We do listen, it is a really big example of Labour councillors listening to local residents, listening to what they want, listening to what they need and actually putting that into action so when I hear from the Liberal Democrats that we don't listen, this is the biggest example we have of Labour councillors doing what is right for their communities and actually listening to what people want.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Please set out the number of new requests for adult care social services that have been made by both vulnerable and non-vulnerable residents over the past five years and how many of each category have been accepted or rejected each year?

**RESPONSE**

The number of requests for adult social care services in each of the last five years are set out in the table below.

New requests for services	Year				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Services offered	2740	1975	2155	2210	2235
Services not offered	3515	3030	3865	4895	3940
Total requests	6255	5005	6020	7105	6175
Sources:	Annual Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care (RAP) returns, Tables A11, R2 and R3, HSCIC (discontinued 2013/4). Short and Long Term Support (SALT) return, Table STS1 (for 2014/15), HSCIC.				

All of those who are offered services can be considered to be "vulnerable", people who are not offered services have needs which are assessed as not being substantial or critical. Additionally, the council funds many voluntary sector services for people with lower level needs and sign-posts residents and carers where appropriate.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Thank you Madam Mayor. I thank the cabinet member for her answer. I have a supplemental question. Your answer truly demonstrates you have rejected services to more people than you have offered services, given that high number, what advice, if any, is the Council giving those residents whose request for help have been rejected by the Council?

**RESPONSE**

I would like to thank Councillor Mann for her question and her supplemental. The 2013/14 figures are actually the figures that were shown prior to the Care Act where we had spate of applications for social care health and a lot of that is for advocacy where people were encouraging people to apply prior to the Mental Health Act. As you can see, that spate goes down the following year when the actual Care Act had been implemented on that. In terms of offered and not offered, obviously everyone is

assessed under personal assessment and there will be people who don't meet the criteria, we can only help the most vulnerable but that spate itself was because of the Care Act and the implications of that and the fact that people were applying prior to the implementation.

**20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY**

What has been the initial response from GPs and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to the introduction of debt advisers in GP surgeries?

**RESPONSE**

In partnership with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other organisations, the council's local support team (Rightfully Yours) commenced a six month pilot working in one of Southwark's GP surgeries from the 9 December 2015.

With support from both the CCG and from GPs, they are providing patients attending Bermondsey Spa Medical Centre with debt support and guidance. Local support officers are based in the surgery all day on Wednesday and on Thursday afternoons. They are available to answer any queries direct from visitors to the centre and to receive any specific referrals of patients from their GPs.

GPs have told us that there is a link between an individual's capacity to manage personal finances and their health and well being. We are keen to respond to this link in a positive way so that we may help find the root cause of any financial problems that an individual may have and therefore help to improve their general health. GP's and CCG have been very positive about the pilot to date and continue to support our presence at their surgery. To date, 20 patients have been referred to us and we are continuing to work with the practice manager to increase awareness of the service being offered, both to GPs and to their patients. We are monitoring outcomes so that a decision can be made later this year on whether to roll out this service to other surgeries in Southwark.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY**

Thank you Madam Mayor and I would like to welcome the response from the cabinet member and thank her for taking forward the ideas about debt advice in GP surgeries that we made at the Health and Communities Committee. I wanted to ask, you mentioned in your response that we are monitoring outcomes in terms of our debt advice and I would be keen to know how we are doing this and when we are expecting to see some results and if you are able to indicate about what you think the likely benefits are going to be and its early intervention?

**RESPONSE**

I would like to thank Councillor Lury for her question and supplemental and I would also like to thank the Health and Communities Scrutiny Sub-committee for the work they have done on this and the encouragement to go ahead with this. We are looking at two lots of outcomes from the financial inclusion point, we are looking at the financial outcomes on how we can increase the income maximisation for people and there will be health outcomes which the CCG will be monitoring with the GPs

themselves. So far it was only launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> December and we had Christmas in between but we do have a few figures where we referred eight people to Rightfully Yours for income maximisation and three people towards the hardship fund and we can see that continuing. We also had a progress meeting today and we are looking to see if we can extend it to a couple of other surgeries. We feel that obviously with the introduction of universal credit and the welfare reform, there is a high need for this, a massive need and we want to focus on both areas. The biggest worry we have is around the changes on universal credit for housing benefit and the fact that people are going to be paid housing benefit and have to manage it themselves, we feel that is going to throw up loads and loads of problems therefore it is really important as a council, as a Labour council, we support those people and help them and give them the right support and the help that they need.

**21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR SUNIL CHOPRA**

Can the cabinet member give an update on the progress of the ethical care charter?

**RESPONSE**

The Southwark Ethical Care Charter has been implemented in all directly contracted home care services. This has improved staff retention and subsequently provided better continuity of care and lower levels of complaints amongst these services compared to the previous year. The council is currently concluding an extensive engagement programme which has included both care workers and people who use the service before advertising for new home care contracts that will ensure that all spot purchased and children's home care is fully covered by the Southwark Ethical Care Charter by the end of the next financial year.

**22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR EVELYN AKOTO**

Can the cabinet member give an update on the progress of the work to make Southwark an Age Friendly Borough?

**RESPONSE**

The council was awarded Age Friendly Borough status by the World Health Organisation in the summer of 2015 so we already have a solid foundation to build on.

Over the last few months, colleagues have been working with local organisations that represent and support older people, and key partners, on our community conversation and cabinet will consider our co-produced action plan in the spring.

Additionally Southwark is working to become a Dementia Friendly Community and has just been accepted on the national programme which means that in partnership with Southwark Dementia Action Alliance, we can issue accreditation to local organisations and businesses in our community that are taking action to be supportive of people with dementia.

**23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES OKOSUN**

What progress has there been implementing each of the Childcare Commission recommendations?

**RESPONSE**

The cabinet gave its response to the Childcare Commission in July 2015 and a full report on progress and further actions will be presented to Cabinet in April 2016.

**24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS**

Can the cabinet member confirm the number of additional reception places that will be available from September 2016?

**RESPONSE**

An additional 330 permanent reception places, and an additional 120 temporary reception places will be provided in September 2016, totalling 450 additional places for reception age children at the beginning of the next academic year.

Since September 2008, the authority has added 800 places to reception provision, an increase of around 25%.

**25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR RADHA BURGESS**

Can the cabinet member give an update on the implementation of the council tax exemption for Southwark foster carers and adopters?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council recognises that foster carers and adopters play a vital role in looking after children and young people in Southwark. This initiative recognises the huge commitment foster carers and adopters make particularly to some of our most vulnerable children in our borough. From 1 April 2015, foster carers who live in Southwark have been eligible to receive a discretionary relief from council tax if they are actively fostering, or will be actively available to foster, one or more young persons under an arrangement with the council. During 2015/16, 63 foster carers have been awarded council tax relief of £47,385.30 and the relief will continue to be available in 2016/17.

Council tax exemption for new adopters, who live in Southwark and adopt Southwark children, will be covered through post-adoption benefit payments, with council tax being paid for two years post-adoption.

**26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR SUNNY LAMBE**

Can the cabinet member explain what work is being done to ensure that pupil premium for eligible three and four year olds is being claimed?

**RESPONSE**

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) was introduced across the country from April 2015 and is targeted at children aged three and four who meet certain funding criteria, similar to those used to assess eligibility for free school meals. The funding of up to



£302 per annum is paid to the early years setting that the child is attending in order to provide for the needs of disadvantaged children.

Southwark has ensured that all early years settings with three and four year old children are aware of EYPP through providing briefings, both through meetings and letters. This has involved schools, private, voluntary and independent sector settings as well as childminders.

Southwark also has an important role in checking which parents are eligible for funding. Parents complete an application form and these are sent by the early years provider to the Council to be checked. The setting is then advised which children are eligible for funding.

Finally, Southwark is responsible for making EYPP payments to the providers. Schools, nurseries and childminders provide a census return to the local authority each term with details of which children are receiving free nursery education. This now includes details of which children are entitled to EYPP, and this is used to calculate the EYPP payments made to the setting.

**27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL**

Please confirm the overall number of flytipping incidents and actions recorded by the council in 2014-2015.

**RESPONSE**

The Council has a very strong record on clearing fly tipping quickly and efficiently. A total of 5,563 reports of fly tips were received by the Council between April 2014 and March 2015. Over 98% of these were cleared within 24 hours of being reported.

In addition to this, the cleaning service cleared an additional 20,020 fly tips proactively, before the public had seen and reported the flytipping. This demonstrates that the Council clears the vast majority of fly tips before the public even see them.

These figures are collated on a monthly basis and sent to DEFRA where they are published and available to view on their website by accessing the 'Flycapture' database. While some other boroughs only record fly tips reported by the public, Southwark ensures we report all fly tips in the borough, including those collected proactively.

We recognise that fly tipping is still a problem in the borough despite our good record of clearing it, so we are also working to reduce fly-tipping through enforcement, wardens, police and cleaning all working in the same service area, so that real joined up working is finally possible. This will mean a 'whole council' approach to these problems.

**28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR DAMIAN O'BRIEN**

What steps is the Council taking to re-introduce the cycle to work scheme for its employees?

**RESPONSE**

As part of the Council's workforce strategy, officers are exploring the re-introduction of the "cycle to work" scheme as a benefit for employees.

Two potential scheme providers have been identified, with a view to launching the scheme in spring 2016.

**29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

Please provide a table showing how long the Council has taken to approve applications by leaseholders and freeholders for works to their homes over the past five years (broken down by the number of each group receiving permission within periods of 1-3 months; 3-6 months; 6-9 months; over 9 months in each year).

**RESPONSE**

Overview						Timeframe for Consent in Principle to be granted				
Year	Total applications received	Applications withdrawn	Applications Declined	Consent in Principle Pending	Consent in Principle granted	Up to 3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Over 12 months
<b>2009</b>	18	9	0	0	<b>9</b>	1	1	1	3	3
<b>2010</b>	37	17	0	0	<b>20</b>	7	2	1	1	9
<b>2011</b>	179	82	3	1	<b>93</b>	67	11	5	2	8
<b>2012</b>	198	83	2	4	<b>109</b>	81	10	8	0	10
<b>2013</b>	290	149	3	10	<b>128</b>	89	14	13	5	7
<b>2014</b>	252	89	8	46	<b>109</b>	50	11	10	17	21
<b>2015</b>	195	13	4	103	<b>75</b>	64	8	3	0	0

Please note:

These figures reflect the status of applications for Landlord's Consent to Make Alterations received within each calendar year.

When consent in principle is granted, homeowners are permitted to commence works. Formal consent is provided when the homeowner informs the Council that works have been completed, a post-works inspection confirms that all conditions of the consent in principle have been met and all required certifications are in place.

The form of the formal consent may take a number of forms depending on the nature of the works carried out and their effect on the lease/transfer agreement.

The table above shows the number of applications received, withdrawn, declined and given consent in principle, as well as the numbers still pending and the timeframe in which permission was granted. Consent in principle is needed by leaseholders and freeholders before work can commence whilst formal consent is granted once work has been completed and post-work inspection has been carried out to confirm that the conditions of the consent in principle have been met.

The figures above show a significant increase in the number of applications by council leaseholders and freeholders for permission to carry out alterations to their properties. In 2009 there were only 18 such applications, of which 9 were later withdrawn by the applicant, whilst they have exceeded 190 in the last four years. As the figures above show, this has resulted in delays in being able to process this caseload. However, the 2015 applications where consent was given in principle were all agreed within six months.

As part of the Council's recent changes to its leaseholder services, emphasis is being put on dealing with applications more quickly, in particular the more straight-forward requests. This will further improve the timescales in which these decisions are taken.

### **30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND NEW HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR BEN JOHNSON**

Does the cabinet member agree that the government's new starter homes policy will have a negative impact on affordable housing provision in the borough and how will the policy be mitigated against in the New Southwark Plan?

#### **RESPONSE**

The Housing and Planning Bill proposes a duty on planning authorities to require a proportion of starter homes on all reasonably sized sites. The details of this requirement will be established through enabling regulations which have not yet been published in draft form. As such it is difficult to forecast the effect of the policy on the borough's affordable housing provision. The government is currently consulting on proposed changes to National Planning Policy Guidance to include starter homes within the definition of affordable housing.

It is likely that starter homes provision will not represent additional housing supply but rather it will, to some extent, be provided in place of traditional rented affordable housing. If this is confirmed in changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and in regulations following on from the Housing and Planning Bill we will have to use whatever powers we have to ensure that our priority, to provide social rented housing

to meet the real needs of the borough, prevail. This policy is backed up by hard evidence of need. The policies in the New Southwark Plan currently out to consultation on its 'preferred options' draft make it very clear what the Council's priorities are.

The Council will need to reevaluate local planning policy when further details emerge to ensure that policy continues to meet local housing needs to the greatest extent possible within the limits of what is viable and permissible under the legislation.

<b>Item No.</b> 2.1	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 24 February 2016	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Questions on reports - Policy and Resource Strategy – 2016/17 to 2018/19: Revenue Budget	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

## 1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE

As part of the Local Government Settlement the government announced an additional £300m 'transitional' funding to ease budget difficulties. How was this funding allocated in London?

## 2. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR KARL EASTHAM

The budget report sets out the council's intention to contribute £6m of reserves to the annual general fund balance in 2016/17 to relieve pressure on services. Is the cabinet member confident the council will still have sufficient ability to manage potential risks despite this proposal?

### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	19 February 2016

<b>Item No:</b> 3.1	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 24 February 2016	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Setting The Council Tax 2016/17	
<b>Wards or Groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That council assembly note the proposed Greater London Authority precept of £276.00 at Band D.
2. That the existing local war disability and war widow's schemes for housing benefit be continued in 2016/17.
3. That the Southwark element of the council tax for band D properties in Southwark, including the adult social care precept of 2%, be set at £930.38.
4. That no discount be applied to properties in the former parish of St Mary Newington.
5. That no discount be applied to properties in the former parish of St Saviours.
6. That the council tax for all band D properties in Southwark be set at £1,206.38.
7. That the formal resolution for council taxes in 2016/17 (shown in Appendix A) be approved.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

8. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the council is required to determine the level of council taxes in the borough for 2016/17. This must be completed before 11 March 2016.
9. The 2011 Localism Act requires a "council tax requirement" to be reported.
10. At the time of writing, the Greater London Authority (GLA) intends to agree its precept on 22 February 2016. This report is based on the GLA draft budget proposals. Any changes to this will reported to council assembly at this meeting.
11. This report reflects the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19 – Revenue Budget considered elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting. This reflects freezing of the Southwark element of council tax at 2015/16 levels and includes the acceptance by the council of the offer by government of a 2% precept for adult social care. For technical purposes the precept is included as part of the total council tax requirement.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### The council tax for Southwark services

12. The budget requirement for Southwark is £271,377,598 as shown in the Policy and Resources 2016/17-2018/19 report.
13. Southwark's council tax requirement for 2016/17 is calculated as follows:

	£
Budget requirement	271,377,598
Less retained business rates	(60,702,118)
Less business rates top-up	(45,339,358)
Less revenue support grant	(73,479,778)
Less growth in business rates	(4,572,608)
Less estimated 2015/16 collection fund surplus	(2,404,238)
<b>Council tax requirement (inc. ASC Precept)</b>	<b><u>84,879,498</u></b>

14. The council tax requirement of £84,879,498 when divided by the 2016/17 taxbase for Southwark of 91,231.00, agreed by council assembly on 26 January 2016, gives a band D council tax requirement for Southwark services only of £930.38 for 2016/17.
15. This includes a 2% increase on the 2015/16 council tax, all of which is attributed to the adult social care precept.
16. The council's total requirement, however has to include the amount required by the GLA as a preceptor, and Southwark Council has no control over the level of this precept.

### Preceptors requirements

17. The Greater London Authority (GLA) intends to announce its precept on 22 February 2016. The estimated amount required from Southwark is £25.180 million. This is a demand on the band D council tax of £276.00, which is a 6.4% reduction on the 2015/16 precept.
18. The Mayor has committed to raise up to £625 million from London council taxpayers as a contribution to the public sector funding package for the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games over the period 2006/07 to 2016/17.
19. The present forecast is that this £625 million will have been raised by a Band D amount of £20 for 10 years and approximately £8 in in 2016/17 (year 11). Under the Mayor's budget plans this element of the precept will therefore reduce to £8 in 2016/17 and not be required in 2017/18 as the £625 million contribution will have been secured.

### Adult social care precept

20. As part of his autumn statement the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that local authorities responsible for social care would be given the powers to raise a social care precept of up to 2% above the council's existing level of council tax.

21. A 2% increase to band D council tax is £18.24 and this has been included separately in the table below.
22. Additionally, S151 officers must write to the Secretary of State in respect of 2016/17 confirming that the amount raised through the precept will be spent entirely on adult social care functions and detail of the precept must also be reported separately on the face of the council tax bill.
23. The Secretary of State will keep under review how the precept is being applied to adult social care budgets and how it meets the public expectation. At this stage no indication has been given as to how this will be done.

#### **Council tax for Southwark in 2016/17**

24. The council tax for a band D property is shown in the table below. Full details of council taxes levels for all property bands are shown in Appendix A.

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Band D tax 2015/16 £</b>	<b>Band D tax 2016/17 £</b>	<b>change %</b>
Southwark Council Tax	912.14	912.14	(0.00)
Southwark Adult Social Care precept increase		18.24	2.00% of Band D
Southwark Council Tax with precept		930.38	2.00
GLA Precept	295.00	276.00	(6.44)
<b>Total Band D council tax</b>	<b>1,207.14</b>	<b>1,206.38</b>	<b>(0.06)</b>

#### **Differential council taxes**

25. Under the council tax legislation, surpluses on special funds can be used to reduce the level of council taxes. There are special funds in in two areas of the borough.

##### The Former Parish of St. Mary Newington - Walworth Common Estate

26. The continuing low interest rates meant that the council tax reduction given to the former parish of St Mary Newington in 2015/16 was the first since 2009/10.
27. Due to the continuing low interest rates, there will be insufficient balance available on this account at 31 March 2017 to reduce the level of council tax for this area. Therefore for 2016/17 council tax will be the standard £1,206.38 for a band D property in this area.

##### The Former Parish of St. Saviours - Borough Market

28. There has been no surplus declared by Borough Market, consequently there will be no balance available on this account at 31 March 2017 to reduce the level of council tax for this area. Therefore for 2016/17 council tax will be the standard £1,206.38 for a band D property in this area.



### **Housing benefit - Local scheme**

29. For the purpose of calculating housing benefits, local authorities are allowed discretion in disregarding war disability pension and war widows' pensions above the fixed disregard required by law (currently £10.00).
30. The council's local schemes, like most schemes in London, currently disregard the whole of these pensions for the calculation of benefits. Benefit expenditure under the local schemes does not qualify for subsidy. There are currently some 16 people receiving the disregard at an estimated cost of £25,386. Benefit expenditure under the local scheme for 2016/17 attracts subsidy at 75% capped at 0.2% of the total benefit cost to the authority. Therefore an amount of £6,347 has been allowed for in the 2016/17 budgets.
31. It is considered that the withdrawal of the local scheme focused on this small number of people would cause undue hardship. It is however for council assembly to decide the level of pension that should be disregarded. This could range from the statutory relief of £10.00 to the total level of pensions. The level of pensions for 2016/17 will be £135.15 for standard war widows' pensions and £178.20 for war disablement pensions. Each year the council has to decide formally whether to continue with the existing scheme or to make changes to it. Council assembly is recommended to agree the continuation of the local scheme. The full disregard has been included in the budget proposals.

### **Community impact statement**

32. The community impact implications of both the budget requirement and the increase in council tax levels are addressed in the Policy and Resources Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19 – Revenue Budget (the Budget and Policy Framework) – elsewhere on this agenda.

### **Consultation**

33. The council consults with relevant stakeholders with regards to the wider Policy and Resources Strategy process. The council has complied with the requirements of Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 by consulting with business rate payers on spending plans for the forthcoming year.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Law and Democracy**

34. Council assembly is being asked to agree the formal resolution setting the council tax for 2016/17 and approve the local scheme for housing benefit and council tax benefit in 2016/17 that must be approved annually. Local Government Finance Act 1992 section 30 (the LGFA 1992) requires that the council assembly sets an amount of council tax for each financial year and for each category of dwellings in its area. The amount is calculated by taking the aggregate of the calculations made by the authority under sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the LGFA 1992 together with the precept issued to the authority by the Greater London Authority. Preceptors must issue their precepts before 1 March preceding the financial year to which they relate.
35. Once the authority has set the amount of council tax relating to the different geographical areas of the borough (under Section 30 LGFA 1992), the amounts

for each valuation band are then calculated according to the ratios set out in section 5 of the LGFA 1992. That council tax requirement (required by sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the LGFA 1992) is also to be agreed by council assembly.

36. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the chief finance officer (strategic director of finance and governance) to report to the authority when it is making the calculations required by sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the LGFA 1992 on (a) the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and (b) the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. That information is set out in the Policy and Resources Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19 – Revenue Budget included elsewhere on this agenda. The authority is required to have regard to the chief finance officer's report when making the calculations.

#### Adult social care precept

37. The Spending Review announced that for the rest of the current Parliament, local authorities responsible for adult social care ("ASC authorities") "will be given an additional 2% flexibility on their current council tax referendum threshold to be used entirely for adult social care". This flexibility is being offered in recognition of demographic changes which are leading to growing demand for adult social care, and increased pressure on council budgets.
38. Should local authorities decide to take up the offer to charge the adult social care precept, they are required to provide certain information to the government and undertake a number of actions.
39. Tax payers must be informed on the face of the council tax bill and in the information supplied with it the part of the increase that is being used to fund adult social care.
40. Additionally, S151 officers must write to the Secretary of State in respect of 2016/17 confirming that the amount raised through the precept will be spent entirely on adult social care functions.
41. The Secretary of State will keep under review how the precept is being applied to adult social care budgets and how it meets the public expectation, however at this stage no indication has been given as to how this will be done.

#### Restrictions on Voting Under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

42. Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act applies at any time to a member of an authority, if at that time the member is due to pay council tax payments which have remained unpaid for at least two months.
43. The payments to which the section applies are any type of either sole or joint and several liability for council tax, and any failure to pay any agreed sum of council tax. Therefore members are advised that this section is likely to apply to them if they are currently two months in arrears of any amounts of council tax, even if they have made any special contractual arrangement with the council to pay off the arrears.

44. If this section applies to any member, he/she at the relevant meeting and as soon as practicable after its commencement, must disclose the fact that the section applies and not vote on any question with respect to this matter.
45. The relevant meetings are those at which any of the following are the subject of consideration, namely:

- (a) "any calculation required by chapter 111, 1V, V of part 1 of the 1992 Act".

The only calculations likely to be made by this authority are those under chapter 111 of part 1 of the act, (chapter 1V relates to precepting and chapter V limitations on council tax (i.e. capping)

The chapter 111 calculations include the calculation of the budget requirement, basic amount of tax, the additional requirements because of the special trust funds, the calculation of the tax for the different valuation bands and the basic amount of council tax to be set under section 30.

- (b) "Any recommendation, resolution or other decision which might affect the making of any such calculation"

This is an extremely wide wording and would extend well beyond merely setting the budget. It applies to virtually any matter where the financial implications directly or indirectly might affect the calculations concerning the council tax. It would therefore apply to decisions concerning the level or extent of services as well as the expenditure, receipt or forgoing of any money.

- (c) "the exercise of any function under Schedules 2-4 of the 1988 and 1992 Act"

The functions under either the 1988 or 1992 Acts concern the administration and the enforcement of community charge and council tax respectively.

46. Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 makes it a criminal offence for a member to vote when prohibited from doing so or to fail to make the necessary disclosure. There is a statutory defence, with the onus of proof on the member, to prove that he/she did not know that the section applied to him or her at the time of the meeting or that the matter in question was the subject of consideration at the meeting. Prosecutions shall not be instituted except by or on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

#### Housing & Council Tax Benefits - Local Schemes

47. Council assembly is also being asked to agree the continuation of the disregard of war disablement pensions and war widows' pensions for benefit purposes.
48. By virtue of section 139 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (as amended by the council tax legislation (the Local Government Finance Act 1992) the authority may modify any part of the housing tax benefit scheme administered by the authority (although the original scheme is determined by the Secretary of State),

- (i) So as to provide for disregarding, in determining a person's income the whole or part of any war disablement pension or war widow's pension payable to that person or to his partner or to a person to whom he is polygamously married.
- (ii) Any such modifications may be adopted by resolution of the authority, and the authority may also by resolution revoke or vary such resolution to such an extent as it may be prescribed.

49. The council is required to make this decision annually.

### REASONS FOR URGENCY

50. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the council is required to determine the level of council taxes in the borough for 2016/17. This must be completed before 11 March 2016.

51. There is not another council assembly before this date.

### REASONS FOR LATENESS

52. The lateness of the government issuing amendments to the council tax demand notice regulations with regard to the 2% flexibility on the current council tax referendum threshold to fund adult social care.

53. At the time of completion of this report, regulations had not been received.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Council Tax Base for 2016/17 report <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/jelListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&amp;MIId=5066&amp;Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/jelListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&amp;MIId=5066&amp;Ver=4</a>	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Norman Lockie 020 7525 0928
Policy and Resources Strategy 2015/16-2017/18 – revenue budget <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/b50006626/Supplemental%20Agenda%20No.%202%20Tuesday%2009-Feb-2016%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/b50006626/Supplemental%20Agenda%20No.%202%20Tuesday%2009-Feb-2016%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9</a>	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	John Braggins 020 7525 7489
Additional recommendations from budget scrutiny. <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/b50006629/Supplemental%20Agenda%20No.%203%20Tuesday%2009-Feb-2016%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/b50006629/Supplemental%20Agenda%20No.%203%20Tuesday%2009-Feb-2016%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9</a>	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Shelly Burke 020 7525 7344
The Mayor's budget for 2016/17	Greater London Authority	enquiries 020 7983

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
<a href="http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=0&amp;MId=5667&amp;Ver=4">http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=0&amp;MId=5667&amp;Ver=4</a>	City Hall The Queen's Walk More London London SE1 2AA	4100 minicom 020 7983 4458

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	2016/17 Formal Resolution
Appendix B	2016/17 Council Tax - Changes From 2015/16

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Duncan Whitfield, Strategic Director of Finance and Governance		
<b>Report Author</b>	Jennifer Seeley, Director of Finance		
<b>Version</b>	Final		
<b>Dated</b>	18 February 2016		
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes		
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>			
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>	
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes	
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes	
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		18 February 2016	

## APPENDIX A

**2016/17 FORMAL RESOLUTION**

- 1 That it be noted that at its meeting on 26 January 2016 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year (2016/17) in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- (a) 91,231.00 being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of the Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax Base for the year.

- (b) Part of the Council's Area

Former Parish of St. Mary Newington (special expense area)	10,978.81
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Former Parish of St.Saviours (special expense area)	1,174.07
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Being the amounts calculated by the council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in that parts of the area to which one or more special items relate.

- 2 To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2016/17 is

£84,879,498

- 3 That, the following amounts now be calculated by the council for the year (2016/17) in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- (a) £980,198,104  
being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act;

- (b) -£895,318,606  
being the aggregate of the amounts, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act;

- (c) £84,879,498  
being the amount by which the aggregate of 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2(b) above, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year;

- (d) £0                      credit - Parish of St Mary Newington  
£0                      credit - Parish of St. Saviours

being the amount of net income which the council estimates for these special expense areas (item (g) below)

- (e) £84,879,498  
being the amount by which the budget requirement at 2(c) above is now replaced (after adding the items 2(d) above);

- (f) £930.38  
being the amount at 2(e) divided by the amount at 1(a) above calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act as the basic amount of its council tax for the year;
- (g) £0  
being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act;
- (h) £930.38  
being the amount at 2(f) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2(g) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for the dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates;
- (i) Part of the Council's area
- |                         |         |
|-------------------------|---------|
| St. Mary Newington      | £930.38 |
| St. Saviours            | £930.38 |
| (Special Expense Areas) |         |

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2(h) above the amounts of the special items or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the council's area mentioned above divided by the amounts at 1(b) above, calculated by the council in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;

(j) Parts of the Council's Area

Band	Parish of St. Mary Newington	Parish of St Saviours	All Other Parts of the Council's Area
	£	£	£
A	620.25	620.25	620.25
B	723.63	723.63	723.63
C	827.00	827.00	827.00
D	930.38	930.38	930.38
E	1,137.13	1,137.13	1,137.13
F	1,343.88	1,343.88	1,343.88
G	1,550.63	1,550.63	1,550.63
H	1,860.76	1,860.76	1,860.76

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2(h) and 2(i) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the council in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- 4 That it be noted for the year (2016/17) the Greater London Authority stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

BAND	GLA
	£
A	184.00
B	214.67
C	245.33
D	276.00
E	337.33
F	398.67
G	460.00
H	552.00



- 5 That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2(j) and 3 above, the council, in accordance with section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following as the amounts of council tax for the year (2016/17) for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band	Former Parish of St. Mary Newington	Former Parish of St Saviours	All Other Parts of the Council's Area
	£	£	£
A	804.25	804.25	804.25
B	938.30	938.30	938.30
C	1,072.33	1,072.33	1,072.33
D	1,206.38	1,206.38	1,206.38
E	1,474.46	1,474.46	1,474.46
F	1,742.55	1,742.55	1,742.55
G	2,010.63	2,010.63	2,010.63
H	2,412.76	2,412.76	2,412.76

# 2016/17 COUNCIL TAX - CHANGES FROM 2015/16

Appendix B

## SOUTHWARK COUNCIL (INCLUDING PRECEPTORS)

				ONE ADULT HOUSEHOLD				TWO OR MORE ADULT HOUSEHOLD			
BAND	VALUATION £	DWELLINGS IN BAND NO.	DWELLINGS IN BAND %	COUNCIL TAX 2015/16 £	COUNCIL TAX 2016/17 £	CHANGE £	CHANGE %	COUNCIL TAX 2015/16 £	COUNCIL TAX 2016/17 £	CHANGE £	CHANGE %
A	Under 40,000	11,528	8.6	603.57	<b>603.19</b>	-0.38	-0.1	804.76	<b>804.25</b>	-0.51	-0.1
B	40,001 to 52,000	38,027	28.2	704.16	<b>703.73</b>	-0.44	-0.1	938.88	<b>938.30</b>	-0.58	-0.1
C	52,001 to 68,000	34,301	25.4	804.76	<b>804.25</b>	-0.51	-0.1	1,073.01	<b>1,072.33</b>	-0.68	-0.1
D	68,001 to 88,000	23,440	17.4	905.36	<b>904.79</b>	-0.57	-0.1	1,207.14	<b>1,206.38</b>	-0.76	-0.1
E	88,001 to 120,000	16,401	12.2	1,106.55	<b>1,105.85</b>	-0.71	-0.1	1,475.40	<b>1,474.46</b>	-0.94	-0.1
F	120,001 to 160,000	6,324	4.7	1,307.74	<b>1,306.91</b>	-0.83	-0.1	1,743.65	<b>1,742.55</b>	-1.10	-0.1
G	160,001 to 320,000	4,144	3.1	1,508.93	<b>1,507.97</b>	-0.95	-0.1	2,011.90	<b>2,010.63</b>	-1.27	-0.1
H	Over 320,000	625	0.5	1,810.71	<b>1,809.57</b>	-1.14	-0.1	2,414.28	<b>2,412.76</b>	-1.52	-0.1
TOTAL		134,790	100.0								

## 2016/17 COUNCIL TAX - CHANGES FROM 2015/16

### SOUTHWARK COUNCIL (EXCLUDING PRECEPTORS)

				ONE ADULT HOUSEHOLD				TWO OR MORE ADULT HOUSEHOLD			
BAND	VALUATION £	DWELLINGS IN BAND NO.	DWELLINGS IN BAND %	COUNCIL TAX 2015/16 £	COUNCIL TAX 2016/17 £	CHANGE £	CHANGE %	COUNCIL TAX 2015/16 £	COUNCIL TAX 2016/17 £	CHANGE £	CHANGE %
A	Under 40,000	11,528	8.6	456.07	<b>465.19</b>	9.12	2.0	608.09	<b>620.25</b>	12.16	2.0
B	40,001 to 52,000	38,027	28.2	532.08	<b>542.72</b>	10.64	2.0	709.44	<b>723.63</b>	14.19	2.0
C	52,001 to 68,000	34,301	25.4	608.09	<b>620.25</b>	12.16	2.0	810.79	<b>827.00</b>	16.21	2.0
D	68,001 to 88,000	23,440	17.4	684.11	<b>697.79</b>	13.68	2.0	912.14	<b>930.38</b>	18.24	2.0
E	88,001 to 120,000	16,401	12.2	836.13	<b>852.85</b>	16.72	2.0	1,114.84	<b>1,137.13</b>	22.29	2.0
F	120,001 to 160,000	6,324	4.7	988.16	<b>1,007.91</b>	19.76	2.0	1,317.54	<b>1,343.88</b>	26.34	2.0
G	160,001 to 320,000	4,144	3.1	1,140.17	<b>1,162.97</b>	22.80	2.0	1,520.23	<b>1,550.63</b>	30.40	2.0
H	Over 320,000	625	0.5	1,368.21	<b>1,395.57</b>	27.36	2.0	1,824.28	<b>1,860.76</b>	36.48	2.0
TOTAL		134,790	100.0								

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)  
(SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA)  
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/16**

**NOTE:** Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to  
Lesley John Tel: 020 7525 7228/7236

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<b>Councillors</b> (1 copy each)		<b>63</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>1</b>
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(Copies to Lesley John, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Hub 4, Tooley Street)		<b>10</b>		
			<b>Total:</b>	<b>80</b>
			<b>Last Updated:</b> February 2016	